

REVITALIZATION OF HISTORIC COMMERCIAL AREAS  
THROUGH THE MAIN STREET PROGRAM IN U.S.A.:  
A CASE STUDY FROM THE BOSTON MAIN STREETS PROGRAM

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO  
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF NATURAL AND APPLIED SCIENCES  
OF  
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

SİBEL YILDIRIM ESEN

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR  
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE  
IN  
ARCHITECTURE

AUGUST 2006

Approval of the Graduate School of Natural and Applied Sciences

---

Prof. Dr. Canan Özgen  
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Architecture.

---

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Selahattin Önür  
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Architecture.

---

Assoc. Prof. Dr. F. Cânâ Bilsel  
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Baykan Günay (METU,CRP) \_\_\_\_\_

Assoc. Prof. Dr. F. Cânâ Bilsel (METU,ARCH) \_\_\_\_\_

Assist. Prof. Dr. A. Güliz Bilgin Altınöz (METU,ARCH) \_\_\_\_\_

Inst. Dr. H. Ela Aral (Çankaya University,INAR) \_\_\_\_\_

Inst. Sevin Osmay (METU,CRP) \_\_\_\_\_

**I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.**

Name, Last name : Sibel Yıldırım Esen

Signature :

## ABSTRACT

### REVITALIZATION OF HISTORIC COMMERCIAL AREAS THROUGH THE MAIN STREET PROGRAM IN U.S.A.: A CASE STUDY FROM THE BOSTON MAIN STREETS PROGRAM

Yıldırım Esen, Sibel

MArch., Department of Architecture

Supervisor : Assoc. Prof. Dr. F. Cânâ Bilsel

August 2006, 223 pages

Considering revitalization as a way of improving three interrelated aspects of quality of life including physical quality, social and economic welfare, this study sets out an evaluation framework to measure the success of implementations aiming to revitalize historic commercial places. This framework emerges from the qualities of built environments which are defined with reference to the normative urban design theory developed by Kevin Lynch. Urban qualities are defined with a comprehensive approach which takes into account spatial, social, and economic aspects of creating urban places.

The Main Street Program, subject of this study, is a historic commercial district revitalization program developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in the United States. This program introduces a *preservation-based revitalization* model. Based on a comprehensive approach, the program

suggests working simultaneously on organization, design, economic restructuring, and promotion.

This study analyzes the revitalization model of the Main Street Program by looking at its various aspects including organization models, funding tools, involvement of local communities, contributions of the federal and local governments, implementation, and self-evaluation. Besides, it introduces a citywide coordinating program, Boston Main Streets. Finally, it analyzes the revitalization of Washington Street in South End, Boston, one of the places where Main Street Program has been implemented. The street has been transformed from a vacant and deteriorated commercial street into a more vital, pedestrian oriented, mixed use place in a decade. This study aims to analyze the case from three different points. First, the success of the program is evaluated within the above framework. Second, the effectiveness of the program is examined through an outcome analysis. Finally, the organizational performance of the Main Street organization is analyzed.

Keywords:

Revitalization, Urban Quality, Main Street Program, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Boston

## ÖZ

### TARİHİ TİCARET ALANLARININ A.B.D.'DE 'ANA CADDE' PROGRAMI İLE YENİDEN CANLANDIRILMASI: BOSTON ANA CADDE PROGRAMINDAN BİR ALAN ÇALIŞMASI

Yıldırım Esen, Sibel

Yüksek Lisans, Mimarlık Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi : Doç. Dr. F. Cânâ Bilsel

Ağustos 2006, 223 sayfa

Kent parçalarının yeniden canlandırılmasını, yaşam kalitesini mekansal, sosyal ve ekonomik yönlerden iyileştiren bir araç olarak ele alan bu çalışma, tarihi ticari alanların yeniden canlandırılmasını amaçlayan uygulamaların başarısını ölçmek için bir değerlendirme çerçevesi kurmayı amaçlamıştır. Bu çerçeve Kevin Lynch tarafından geliştirilen kentsel kalite ölçütlerine dayanmaktadır. Bu ölçütler, kentsel mekanları yaratmanın fiziksel, sosyal ve ekonomik yönlerini de dikkate alan kapsamlı bir yaklaşımla tanımlanmıştır.

Bu çalışmaya konu olan ve Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nde National Trust for Historic Preservation tarafından geliştirilen 'Ana Cadde Programı', tarihi ticari alanların yeniden canlandırılması programıdır. Bu program, tarihi dokuların korunmasına dayalı bir yeniden canlandırma modeli sunmaktadır. Bunun yanı sıra, örgütlenme, tasarım, ekonomik yeniden yapılanma ve alanın

promosyonu alanlarında aynı anda çalışılmasını öneren kapsamlı bir yaklaşım benimsemektedir.

Bu çalışmada, Ana Cadde Programı'nın örgütlenme, finansman araçları, halkın katılımı, devletin katkısı, uygulama ve değerlendirme gibi birçok yönü incelenmiştir. Bunun yanında çalışmada şehir genelinde koordinasyonu sağlayan Boston Ana Cadde Programı tanıtılmıştır. Son olarak, Ana Cadde Programı kapsamında uygulanan Boston'ın South End bölgesinde bulunan Washington Caddesi'nin yeniden canlandırılması incelenmiştir. Bahsekonu cadde on yıl içerisinde, terk edilmiş ve bakımsız bir yer görünümünden daha canlı, yaya merkezli ve karma kullanıma açık bir caddeye çevrilmiştir. Çalışmada, Washington Caddesi'nin Yeniden Canlandırılması Programı alan çalışması kapsamında öncelikle yukarıda açıklanan çerçeveye bağlı olarak programın başarısı, ikinci olarak çıktı analizi ile programın etkinliği ve son olarak uygulamayı yapan Ana Cadde Organizasyonunun örgütsel performansı incelenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler:

Canlandırma, Kentsel Kalite, "Ana Cadde" Programı, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Boston

To My Parents

Fatma Yıldırım and Osman Yıldırım

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. F. C  n   Bilsel for her invaluable guidance throughout the research.

Many people kindly provided me with an enormous amount of valuable information and materials, without which this study would not have been possible. For meeting with me twice to answer my questions about the Main Street Program and providing me with information about the Program, I would like to thank Kennedy Lawson Smith, who had been the director of the National Main Street Center for thirteen years. I am indebted to Emily Haber, the director of the Boston Main Streets Program, and Joshua Bloom, who was the National Main Street Center's staff person assigned to work with the Boston Main Streets program for its first ten years, for sharing their experiences and knowledge about Boston Main Streets Program.

Sheila Grove, Washington Gateway Main Street executive director, and Ellen Witt, Washington Gateway Main Street assistant director, were good enough to talk about the revitalization of Washington Street and to provide me with the program documents; their comments on the implementation of the program were invaluable in writing the case study, and I am grateful for such help. I would also like to thank Maggie Cohn, Mission Hill Main Street program manager, and Jennifer Rose, Allston Village Main Streets program manager, for providing me with information about many aspects of the implementation of the program in their districts. I also wish to thank Ellen J. Lipsey, executive director of Boston Landmarks Commission, Roysin Bennett Younkin, architectural historian from Boston Landmarks Commission, and Paul Leonard,

research assistant from Boston Redevelopment Authority for helping me find many resources about Boston.

Last, my husband, Ersin, supported and encouraged as he has done for over ten years, and helped in ways too numerous to mention. I am much indebted to them all.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM .....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ÖZ.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	xi
LIST OF TABLES .....	xv
LIST OF CHARTS,.....	xviii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xxiii
CHAPTERS	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. Problem Definition & Aim of the Study .....	4
1.2. The Method and Content of the Study.....	8
1.3. The Methodological Framework .....	10
1.3.1. The Concept of Revitalization.....	10
1.3.2. The “Dimensions of City Performance” by Kevin Lynch .....	14
1.3.3. Outcome Analysis.....	33
1.3.4. Evaluation Methodology for Nonprofit Organizations by Mark H. Moore.....	34
2. THE MAIN STREETS PROGRAM.....	37

2.1. The Context: American Cities after the World War II .....	37
2.2. The National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Main Street Program.....	40
2.3. Main Street Model: Preservation-based Commercial District Revitalization .....	48
2.3.1. Four-Point Approach.....	48
2.3.2. Eight Principles of the Main Street Program.....	51
2.4. Actors of the Program.....	53
2.4.1. The National Main Street Center.....	54
2.4.2. Coordinating Main Street Programs .....	56
2.4.3. Public Participation at the Main Street Districts .....	59
2.5. Selection of the Main Street Districts.....	60
2.6. Organization Model .....	61
2.7. Funding Resources.....	63
2.8. Planning and Implementation.....	65
2.8.1. Challenges of Implementation of the Program in the US .....	69
2.9. Evaluation of the Success .....	69
2.9.1. Evaluation of the coordinating programs by the National Main Street Center:.....	70
2.9.2. National Main Street Program Accreditation .....	71
2.9.3. Evaluation of the growth of the Main Street Program by the National Main Street Center: .....	73
2.9.4. Evaluation at the local level .....	74

3. BOSTON MAIN STREETS PROGRAM .....	76
3.1. The Context.....	77
3.1.1. Background .....	77
3.1.2. Planning Process in Boston .....	89
3.2. The Boston Main Streets Program.....	96
3.2.1. Selection of the Main Street Districts .....	97
3.2.2. Role of the Coordinating Program.....	97
4. CASE STUDY: WASHINGTON STREET IN SOUTH END .....	99
4.1. Introduction to the Case Study .....	99
4.1.1. Case Selection.....	99
4.1.2. Data Collection .....	100
4.1.3. Business Survey .....	101
4.2. The Context.....	102
4.3. Historical Development of the South End .....	108
4.4. Washington Gateway Main Street Program.....	114
4.4.1. Mission and Goals .....	115
4.4.2. Organization and Community Involvement .....	116
4.4.3. Implementation .....	119
4.4.4. Self-Evaluation of the Program’s Performance.....	126
4.5. Evaluation of the Case .....	127
4.5.1 Evaluation of the Washington Gateway Main Street Program with regard to the performance dimensions of spatial quality .....	127

4.5.2. Outcome Analysis of the Washington Gateway Main Street Program.....	197
4.5.3. Evaluation of the Performance of the WGMS as a Nonprofit Organization.....	197
5. CONCLUSION .....	202
Analyzing Urban Spatial Change as a Component of Revitalization:	
Washington Street at South End .....	206
REFERENCES .....	211
APPENDICES	
A: BUSINESS SURVEY FORM .....	221
B: THE TIMELINE OF THE SOUTH END DISTRICT .....	223

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Factors Considered in Neighborhood Quality of Life Determinants (modified from the Source: Elise M. Bright, Reviving America’s Forgotten Neighborhoods, 2000, pp.7, 8.).....	12
Table 2 Vitality relates to the measures of the quality of life and revitalization (Sources Lynch, 1981 and Bright, 2000).....	17
Table 3 Sense relates to the measures of the quality of life and revitalization (Sources Lynch, 1981 and Bright, 2000).....	20
Table 4 Fit relates to the measures of the quality of life and revitalization (Sources Lynch, 1981 and Bright, 2000).....	26
Table 5 Access relates to the measures of the quality of life and revitalization (Sources Lynch, 1981 and Bright, 2000).....	29
Table 6 Control relates to the measures of the quality of life and revitalization (Sources Lynch, 1981 and Bright, 2000).....	31
Table 7. Summary of the results of the Urban Demonstration Program applied in eight places. Modified from the Source: (Dane, 1988) .....	46

Table 8. Population change in the city of Boston and Boston metropolitan area, 1950 through 2000 .....	88
Table 9. A Comparative Overview of The South End District.....	107
Table 10. Population and Housing Comparison (1950-1985) (BRA Document, no 196).....	129
Table 11 Improvement of the vitality of Washington Street .....	131
Table 12. New developments in the South End: Changes in Housing and Occupancy (1990-2000) .....	133
Table 13. Housing Condition in 1980 (report no 196).....	141
Table 14 Sense .....	147
Table 15. Median Gross Rent and Median Property Value in South End.....	164
Table 16 Fit.....	169
Table 17 Access .....	179
Table 18. Number of Workers 16 Years and Over According to Their Means of Transportation to Work .....	187

Table 19. Number of Workers 16 Years old and Over According to Travel Time to Work.....	187
Table 20. Participation and Unemployment Rate.....	188
Table 21 Control .....	192

## LIST OF CHARTS

Chart 1: Evaluations about improvements in cleanliness and maintenance of the district by the respondents who have lived in the district for less than 10 years (in percentages).....	134
Chart 2: Evaluations about improvements in cleanliness and maintenance of the district by the respondents who have lived for 10 years or more (in percentages) .....	135
Chart 3: Evaluations about improvements in safety of the district by the respondents who have lived in the district for less than 10 years (in percentages) .....	136
Chart 4: Evaluations about improvements in safety of the district by the respondents who have lived in the district for 10 years or more (in percentages) .....	136
Chart 5: Evaluations about improvements in the problems related to vacant buildings and lands in the district by the respondents who have lived there for less than 10 years (in percentages).....	137
Chart 6: Evaluations about improvements in the problems related to vacant buildings and lands in the district by the respondents who have lived there for 10 years or more (in percentages) .....	138

Chart 7: Evaluations about improvements in the condition of sidewalks and streets of the district by the respondents who have lived in the district for less than 10 years (in percentages) .....	149
Chart 8: Evaluations about improvements in the condition of sidewalks and streets of the district by the respondents who have lived in the district for 10 years or more (in percentages) .....	149
Chart 9: Evaluations about improvements in the condition and appearance of the old buildings in the district by the respondents who have lived there for less than 10 years (in percentages) .....	150
Chart 10: Evaluations about improvements in the condition and appearance of the district's old buildings of the district by the respondents who have lived there for less than 10 years (in percentages).....	151
Chart 11: Evaluations about improvements in attractiveness of storefronts and signs of the district by the respondents who have lived there for less than 10 years (in percentages).....	152
Chart 12: Evaluations about improvements in attractiveness of storefronts and signs of the district by the respondents who have lived there for 10 years or more (in percentages) .....	152
Chart 13: Evaluations about the attractiveness of the new buildings of the district by the respondents who have lived for less than 10 years (in percentages) .....	153

Chart 14: Evaluations about the attractiveness of the new buildings of the district by the respondents who have lived for 10 years or more (in percentages) .....	154
Chart 15: Evaluations about improvements in the condition and attractiveness of the parks and green areas of the district by the respondents who have lived there for less than 10 years (in percentages).....	155
Chart 16: Evaluations about improvements in the condition and attractiveness of the parks and green areas of the district by the respondents who have lived there for 10 years or more (in percentages).....	155
Chart 17: Evaluations about improvements in liveliness of the district by the respondents who have lived for less than 10 years (in percentages).....	156
Chart 18: Evaluations about improvements in liveliness of the district by the respondents who have lived for 10 years or more (in percentages).....	157
Chart 19: Evaluations about improvements in "image" of the street and south end of the district by the respondents who have lived for less than 10 years (in percentages) .....	158
Chart 20: Evaluations about improvements in "image" of the street and south end of the district by the respondents who have lived for 10 years or more (in percentages) .....	158
Chart 21: Evaluations about improvements in availability of affordable housing of the district by the respondents who have lived for less than 10 years (in percentages) .....	171

Chart 22: Evaluations about improvements in available affordable housing of the district by the respondents who have lived for 10 years or more (in percentages) .....	171
Chart 23. Demographic Change of Ethnicity in South End .....	172
Chart 24: Evaluations about improvements in public transportation quality to the district of the district by the respondents who have lived there for less than 10 years (in percentages) .....	181
Chart 25: Evaluations about improvements in public transportation quality to the district of the district by the respondents who have lived for 10 years or more (in percentages) .....	181
Chart 26: Evaluations about improvements in available parking in the district by the respondents who have worked there for less than 10 years (in percentages) .....	183
Chart 27: Evaluations about improvements in available parking in the district by the respondents who have worked there for 10 years or more (in percentages) .....	183
Chart 28: Evaluations about improvements in economic opportunities for businesses of the district by the respondents who have owned business there for less than 10 years (in percentages).....	184
Chart 29: Evaluations about improvements in economic opportunities for businesses of the district by the respondents who have owned business there for 10 years or more (in percentages) .....	184

Chart 30: Evaluations about improvements in employment opportunities for residents of the district by the respondents who have lived for less than 10 years (in percentages).....	186
Chart 31: Evaluations about improvements in employment opportunities for residents of the district by the respondents who have lived for 10 years or more (in percentages).....	186
Chart 32. Evaluations about improvements in community involvement in the decisions related to the district by the respondents who have lived there for less than 10 years (in percentages) .....	194
Chart 33: Evaluations about improvements in community involvement in the decisions related to the district by the respondents who have lived there for 10 years or more (in percentages).....	194
Chart 34: Evaluations about improvements in Interaction among the district community by the respondents who have lived there for less than 10 years (in percentages) .....	196
Chart 35: Evaluations about improvements in Interaction among the district community by the respondents who have lived for 10 years or more (in percentages) .....	196

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Three interrelated factors of the ‘quality of life’ .....	13
Figure 2 The basic logic model. Source: W. K. Kellogg Foundation. (2004). Using Logic Models to Bring Together Planning, Evaluation, and Action. Logic Model Development Guide, p. 1.....	33
Figure 3. “Strategic Triangle” .....	35
Figure 4. Typically, the National Trust Main Street Center assists the statewide, citywide or regional Main Street coordinating programs, who select and assist neighborhood programs.....	54
Figure 5. Typical Model of Organization of the Main Streets Program .....	63
Figure 6 Four Point approach and implementation of the Main Street Program .....	66
Figure 7 Three phases of the Main Street Program implementation .....	67
Figure 8. Main Street Results as of May 2004. ....	74
Figure 9. Map of Boston, 1775 (The Boston Athenaeum). In Dunwell and Linden, p. 5. ....	78

Figure 10. Boston Map Showing The Boston Main Streets Districts. Source: The City of Boston, Discover Boston on Main Streets, Beyond Baked Beans.98	
Figure 11 South End district in Boston .....	102
Figure 12. Zoning Map Showing the Boundaries of the South End District..	103
Figure 13. Washington Street in South End. Source: WGMS Archive .....	104
Figure 14. Washington Street in the South End district, Source: Boston Main Streets .....	104
Figure 15. South End Row Houses .....	105
Figure 16. Small businesses along Washington Street.....	106
Figure 17. Cathedral Housing Project located on Washington Street: Housing Developments built after urban renewal. (December 28, 2005).....	106
Figure 18. Population Density in Boston .....	108
Figure 19. The Neck in 1774 and 1814 .....	109
Figure 20. South End in 1855 .....	110
Figure 21. Washington Street in 18 <sup>th</sup> and 19 <sup>th</sup> Century .....	110
Figure 22. Elevated train .....	112

Figure 23. 1980 - Deteriorated Buildings and Vacancy Problem.....	113
Figure 24. Task Force.....	114
Figure 25. Task Force Report .....	115
Figure 26. Washington Gateway Organization Structure.....	117
Figure 27. Transportation Connections along Silver Line .....	120
Figure 28 Kiosks located along Silver Line in South End .....	121
Figure 29. The revitalization program and milestones.....	122
Figure 30 The revitalization program and developments.....	123
Figure 31. Porter House (1996 and 2005) .....	124
Figure 32. Minot Hall (1996 and 2005) .....	124
Figure 33. Rollins Square .....	125
Figure 34. There are a few grates existing in the district. ....	139
Figure 35. Sense, New Urban Design Features .....	144
Figure 36. Station Details .....	145

Figure 37. Station Details Continued .....	146
Figure 38 Retails, Cafeumbra: Storefront improvements.....	146
Figure 39 Sidewalks .....	159
Figure 40. Maintenance of the street.....	160
Figure 41 1980 -Washington Street, First Floor Retails. Source: Regional Urban Design Teams .....	163
Figure 42. One of SENHI projects: Roxbury Corners Housing and Retail (December 28, 2005).....	165
Figure 43. Allen House located at 1682 Washington Street (1996 and 2003)	167
Figure 44. Allen House (December 12, 2005).....	167
Figure 45. Grant Manor Housing: Right picture (1997), left picture (2005)..	168
Figure 46. Park on Washington Street.....	173
Figure 47. Monsignor Reynolds Playground.....	173
Figure 48. Silver Line along Washington Street improved access in South End. .....	176
Figure 49. Don Quijote Market (Economic Restructuring).....	178

Figure 50. Urban Market ..... 189

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Pedestrian-oriented commercial streets have always been at the center of urban life as places of various daily economic, social, and cultural activities. These places are transformed as a natural consequence of changing needs due to external dynamics like economic and political forces, technological advances, vice. In fact, “[t]ransformations are occurring at every level from the global economic, political and social structures to the ways we fashion our daily lives”<sup>1</sup>.

If places are not adapted to changing circumstances, they eventually lose their vitality. Significance of *revitalizing historic commercial places* lies in spatial, economical, social and political values associated with these places. When spatial values are concerned, the continuity of these places that carry the traces of historical layers contributes to “sense of place”<sup>2</sup>, which is one of the qualities of settings.

In the late twentieth century, revitalization of historic commercial places that have lost their vitality has increasingly gained significance in developed countries. Shift from resource-based (industrial) economy to knowledge-based one (de-industrialization), which is globally organized, resulted in the change of urban functions. Especially urban centers have been subject to significant changes in urban activities and policies. Consequently, historic commercial

---

<sup>1</sup> David C. Thorns, *The Transformation of Cities : Urban Theory and Urban Life*, Palgrave, Basingstoke ; New York, 2002, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Kevin Lynch, *A Theory of Good City Form*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1981, p.140.

places started to lose their previous functions.<sup>3</sup>

In the United States, dramatic changes in cities started after the World War II, when people and jobs started to move from city cores to peripheries (suburbanization). In the 1970s, historic commercial areas had been vacant and deteriorated places for decades basically as a consequence of a number of reasons including de-industrialization, urban sprawl and emergence of suburban shopping malls. Cities faced with important population losses and economic decline. The buildings were not maintained and so they were falling apart. Therefore, various projects like urban renewal programs, building pedestrian malls or convention centers were initiated to revitalize urban business districts. However, most of these efforts have not been successful in revitalizing urban business districts.<sup>4</sup>

The National Trust for Historic Preservation, a nonprofit organization established with the primary purpose of encouraging preservation of the historic resources in the United States, realized that preserving historic buildings of traditional commercial places would not be possible without a comprehensive and incremental approach.<sup>5</sup> The Main Street Program, initiated as a pilot project in 1977 by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, was developed to revitalize dilapidated and deserted central and neighborhood business districts of U.S. cities. The program aimed to achieve grassroots-based economic development through historic preservation.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Thorns, pp 1-12.

<sup>4</sup> Suzanne G. Dane, New Directions for Urban Main Streets, National Main Street Center National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, D.C., 1988, p.11.

<sup>5</sup> Kennedy L. Smith, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen. Boston, 14 Feb 2006

<sup>6</sup> National Trust for Historic Preservation, "Main Street" <<http://www.mainstreet.org>>, (last day accessed Dec. 18 2005).

To this end, the National Trust's Main Street Project staff introduced the concept of *preservation-based commercial district revitalization*. The idea was to combine "historic preservation with economic development to restore prosperity and vitality to downtowns and neighborhood business districts".<sup>7</sup> In addition to preserving historic buildings, restructuring the economy of the business district, adopting historic buildings to new uses, guiding merchants, promoting unique qualities of the business districts to customers, and introducing a market strategy were considered crucial.<sup>8</sup>

As of 2006, the Main Streets Program has been implemented by nearly 2000 cities and neighborhoods in the US. Moreover, nearly 300-400 communities in other countries like Canada, Venezuela, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand used the Main Street Approach as a model to initiate similar programs.<sup>9</sup> Today, the Main Street Program is acclaimed as one of the most successful projects of the National Trust.<sup>10</sup>

Therefore, potentially, the Main Street Program presents various aspects and challenges of implementing a revitalization program at different places, ranging from small towns to large cities. Experiences gained since its initiation in 1977 was considered as significant resource of information about "revitalization" of historic commercial places.

It is obvious that learning from the revitalization experiences of different places is crucial to develop sound strategies for the continuity of historic

---

<sup>7</sup> National Main Street Center NMSC, "Main Street"

<[www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=1989&section=2](http://www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=1989&section=2)>, (last day accessed Dec 18 2005)

<sup>8</sup> Kennedy Lawson Smith, "Main Street at 15". *Preservation Forum*, - Spring, 1995, pp. 49-64.

<sup>9</sup> Smith, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen., National Main Street Center NMSC, "Why the "Main Street" Program?" Unpublished Program Proposal, National Main Street Center, Washington, DC, May 2004, pp. 15-21.

<sup>10</sup> Diane Lea, "America's Preservation Ethos", in *A Richer Heritage*, R. E. Stipe (ed), The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 2003, p.13.

places. Considering this and seeing the positive outcomes of the Main Streets Program in several historical commercial districts of Boston, Massachusetts in the United States, during my residence in the city from September 2004 to June 2006, I have been motivated to study this revitalization program in detail.

### **1.1. Problem Definition & Aim of the Study**

Revitalization has appeared as a strategy to find solutions to the economic and social problems of cities. Revitalization concentrates on a particular place and mainly involves eliminating blight, increasing economic activity, and supporting poverty reduction efforts by increasing the safety of the area, improving its appearance, creating economic opportunities for its residents, vice. However, there is not a consensus about what constitutes neighborhood revitalization. This results from two different approaches to revitalization. While “individual based approaches” focuses on improving the conditions for existing community in the area, “place-based approaches” consider physical (re)development of an area and increasing the economic value of there.<sup>11</sup>

Zielenbach criticizes both of these approaches as follows:

“The individual-based approaches ... tend to focus on the needs of low-income inner city residents without adequately addressing the economic development of the neighborhood as a whole. The place-based approaches focus more on the economic development and marketing of the neighborhood, but largely ignore the needs of the low-income residents currently living there.”<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Sean Zielenbach, The Art of Revitalization : Improving Conditions in Distressed Inner-City Neighborhoods, Garland, New York, 2000 pp.23-24.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. p. 30

Researchers who support this criticism about these revitalization approaches advocate strategies that address both people and place.<sup>13</sup>

According to Zielenbach, because of the presence of the competing conceptions of revitalization and the difficulty of obtaining necessary data on a neighborhood level, it is difficult to develop a single measurement tool that can effectively address the complexity of neighborhood revitalization. Therefore, indicators that are used to measure revitalization vary according to the aim of the revitalization strategy. For example, individual-based approaches to neighborhood revitalization use such social indicators as

- improved test scores
- lower dropout rates
- higher numbers of job placements
- higher levels of resident satisfaction
- the number of jobs created and/or retained
- the local employment rate
- the number of retail establishments in the area,
- the amount of sales such stores generate,
- the number of commercial space that is developed
- and reduced poverty and unemployment rates.<sup>14</sup>

In contrast, place-based approaches use following indicators to measure the success of revitalization:

---

<sup>13</sup> Karl F. Seidman, "Inner City Commercial Revitalization: A Literature Review", Fannie Mae Foundation, Boston,

<sup>14</sup> Zielenbach, pp. 24-26.

- increases in property values
- per capita incomes
- increase in local commercial activity
- the number of properties renovated or developed
- the extent of the development of the surrounding infrastructure.<sup>15</sup>

In short, the success of neighborhood revitalization is measured by social and economic indicators based on quantitative data. In fact, these two aspects relate to one another. According to Zielenbach, “improvements in a neighborhood’s economic welfare generally translate into improvements in its social conditions”<sup>16</sup>

However, *revitalization studies ignore changes in physical qualities of a particular place*. In fact, for any revitalization strategy, *the place*; a particular geographic area is where revitalization takes place. Since the place is at the center of both social and economic life, the physical qualities of a place not only affect the social health of the community living there, but also influence the economic conditions. Therefore, physical quality in addition to economic welfare and social welfare is one of the aspects of neighborhood revitalization.

With this perspective, unlike previous studies, this study aims to focus on physical/spatial aspect of revitalization. In the remainder of this chapter, a framework for evaluating changes in certain characteristics of places which are mainly due to their spatial qualities will be introduced. The framework emerges from the performance dimensions of settlements developed by Kevin Lynch.<sup>17</sup> It also takes into account improvements in a neighborhood’s economic and

---

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. pp. 26-30

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. p. 32

<sup>17</sup> Lynch, pp. 111-176

social conditions (for local residents and business owners) in relation to the spatial aspect of revitalization.

This study aims to assess the Main Street program within this framework. Because, similar to place-based revitalization strategies, evaluation of the Main Street Program is made by The National Trust and each Main Street community by using economic indicators and quantitative data such as the number of new jobs that have been created, the total amount reinvested, the number of new businesses that have been created and number of buildings that have been rehabilitated. Even though improving the design of the district is considered crucial, changes in the urban spatial quality of Main Street districts are not measured.

While analyzing the Main Street Program, the first objective will be to introduce the development of the program and its *preservation-based revitalization* model which is essentially implemented by involvement of various stakeholders. A second objective will be to perform an analysis of the implementation of the program by Boston Main Streets, the coordinating program structured in the City of Boston.

Finally, the analysis will be carried on one of the implementations of the program. The study will focus on the example of Washington Street at South End – Lower Roxbury in Boston, because, in addition to being an award-winning successful Main Street implementation, in the past ten years it has been an interesting laboratory in the realm of commercial district revitalization. The street has been transformed from a vacant and deteriorated commercial street into a more vital, pedestrian oriented, mixed use place.

This study aims to analyze the case from three different points. First, the success of the program will be evaluated within the above framework. Second,

the effectiveness of the program will be examined through an outcome analysis. Finally, the structural aspects of the program (organization models, funding tools, roles of nonprofits and local communities, contributions of federal and local governments, implementation, and self-evaluation) will be analyzed in terms of organizational performance.

In short, the contribution of this research is expected to be the introduction of performance criteria based on spatial aspect of revitalization for evaluating a revitalization approach, and determining factors affecting the success of a revitalization program by analyzing a comprehensive and widely applied revitalization program, the Main Street Program.

## **1.2. The Method and Content of the Study**

Major stages of the study include:

- Reviewing theoretical concepts of revitalization and urban quality to define *performance evaluation framework*,
- *Literature review* about the decline of the historic commercial districts in the US, and the Main Streets Program, and *interviews* with people who have been involved in the Main Streets Program at national or city levels.
- *Case study*: The Boston Main Streets Program, which is a citywide coordinating program structured in the City of Boston, and Washington Gateway Main Street at South End – Lower Roxbury in Boston, will be explored using a combination of methods including literature review, collection of statistical data, site visits, interviews, and business surveys. (Interviews were held with the coordinator of the Boston Main

Streets Program, the City of Boston, and the directors of the three main street districts.)

- *Evaluations:* The case will form the factual and subjective basis from which evaluations can be drawn.

In order to be able to analyze a revitalization effort, first, it is necessary to understand why revitalization has been needed for the commercial historic districts and downtowns in American cities. Therefore, in the second part of the thesis, the transformation and decline of American cities after the World War II will be discussed. The purpose is to understand not only the reasons that made traditional commercial areas abandoned but also problems that have been needed to be solved with revitalization efforts. Then, the Main Street Program will be introduced within the following framework. First, the background information about the program, and how the program has developed over the twenty six years will be presented. Then the program will be analyzed in terms of its revitalization approach, guiding principles, roles of federal, state and city governments, public involvement, model of organization, funding resources, criteria used to select main street districts, implementation, and self-evaluation criteria used at national and local levels.

After understanding the development and the logic of the program, the Boston Main Streets Program will be introduced as an example of coordinating programs. The Boston Main Streets Program was selected as an example because of the opportunity that I had to visit the city and contact with the people involved in the Main Streets Program. Before going into details about the Boston Main Streets Program, background information will be given about Boston to understand the special circumstances and problems of the city prior to initiating the Main Streets program. Various aspects of the coordinating program will be addressed to understand how a coordinating program works as

part of a revitalization strategy. Foundation and development of the Boston Main Street Program, the organization model, technical and financial assistance provided to the Main Street Districts by the coordinating program will be introduced. Then, Washington Gateway Main Street Program in South End district will be studied in detail to see planning, implementation and outcomes of the program in this revitalization example. After introducing the context and historical development of the South End district, specifically, the aim of this part is seeking answers for such questions as “what were the conditions and circumstances before the beginning of the Main Street program?”, “how were the mission and goals defined?”, “how was the district organization (staff, committees, volunteers) structured?”, “what are the roles and responsibilities of people involved in the program?”, “which public and private organizations does the Main Street district collaborate with?”, “what kinds of funding tools have been used to implement the program?”, how has the program been implemented?”, “what have been the milestones of the program?”, and “what kinds of improvements have been achieved throughout the different phases of the program?”. After introducing various aspects of the Boston Main Streets Program and implementation of the program in the example of the case, performance of the revitalization program will be evaluated using the previously set performance criteria for urban places. Findings of the whole study will be evaluated at the final conclusion chapter of the thesis.

### **1.3. The Methodological Framework**

This part aims to define an evaluation framework based on the spatial aspect of revitalization. The case of the study will be analyzed within this framework in the following chapters of the study.

#### **1.3.1. The Concept of Revitalization**

The concept of revitalization suggests recapturing “*the quality of life*” in built

environments<sup>18</sup>. Because, the basic difference between successful cities and declining communities lies in the “quality of life”<sup>19</sup>. Then, what determines the quality of life? Elise M. Bright, the author of the book Reviving America’s Forgotten Neighborhoods: An Investigation of Inner City Revitalization Efforts, suggests that quality of life in urban places is determined by “the quality of neighborhood safety, services, shelters and social capital” (as listed in Table 1).<sup>20</sup> Therefore, she adds, successful revitalization can be possible by improving these quality of life determinants.<sup>21</sup>

According to Bright’s list of the quality of life factors, improvements in *safety* is one of the aspects which can be measured by lower rates of violent crime and crimes against property, lower rates of death etc. Second determinant is *services*, including adequacy of government services, access to adequate business services, and adequacy of social services. Third dimension is *shelter*, sufficiency of which is decided by looking at a number of factors like number and condition of housing units by type, range and median rent, residential property value and vacant property value, availability of housing for extended families, disabled residents, access to homeownership, number of abandoned, dilapidated, or derelict properties (TOADS), and level of neighborhood maintenance. (See Table 1) Finally, the fourth dimension is *social capital*, which refers to issues such as presence of informal networks of people; urban design that provides opportunities for meeting and being with a variety of people, discouraging crime, expressing neighborhood heritage; access to city political power, regular contact with people of other incomes, races, ethnicities, and education; and presence of, and funding for, formal networks of people.

---

<sup>18</sup> The following researches are taken as reference for the definition of quality of life in built environments: Dane, , Elise M. Bright, Reviving America's Forgotten Neighborhoods : An Investigation of Inner City Revitalization Efforts, Garland Pub., New York ; London, 2000 New York, 2000, p. 6.

<sup>19</sup> Dane, p. 11

<sup>20</sup> Bright, pp. 8-9

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

Table 1. Factors Considered in Neighborhood Quality of Life Determinants (modified from the Source: Elise M. Bright, Reviving America's Forgotten Neighborhoods, 2000, pp.7, 8.)

<p><i>Safety</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower rates of violent crime and crimes against property</li> <li>• Lower rates of death</li> </ul> <p><i>Services</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequacy of government services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Age and size of water and sewer lines</li> <li>Distance to police and fire stations</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Access to adequate business services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number, pay, and types of neighborhood employment opportunities</li> <li>Distance to employment, accessibility by transit</li> <li>Number and types of retail shopping opportunities</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Adequacy of social services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primary and secondary education</li> <li>Distance to shelters</li> <li>Emergency intervention and placement services</li> <li>Number of doctors per person</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>Shelter</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and condition of housing units by type: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Range and median rent, residential property value and vacant property value</li> <li>Availability of housing for extended families, disabled residents,...</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Access to homeownership</li> <li>• Number of abandoned, dilapidated, or derelict properties (TOADS)</li> <li>• Level of neighborhood maintenance</li> </ul> <p><i>Social Capital</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presence of informal networks of people (family, friends, neighbors)</li> <li>• Urban design that provides opportunities for meeting and being with a variety of people, discouraging crime, expressing neighborhood heritage</li> <li>• Access to city political power</li> <li>• Regular contact with people of other incomes, races, ethnicities, and education</li> <li>• Presence of, and funding for, formal networks of people</li> </ul>
---

These quality of life factors can be considered as three main issues: 1. Quality of built environment, 2. Economic welfare, and 3. Social welfare (Figure 1).

*Quality of built environment* can be exemplified by number of abandoned, dilapidated, or derelict properties (TOADS), age and size of water and sewer lines and the level of neighborhood maintenance. Next, *economic welfare* relates to number, pay, and types of neighborhood employment opportunities, and number and types of retail shopping opportunities. Finally, the social welfare is significant for the quality of life. This can be measured by the level of health (lower rates of death), safety (lower rates of violent crime), education, government social programs (distance to shelters), existence of social capital, etc.

Since these three aspects of the quality of life affect one another, a revitalization strategy should address each one of them to succeed.

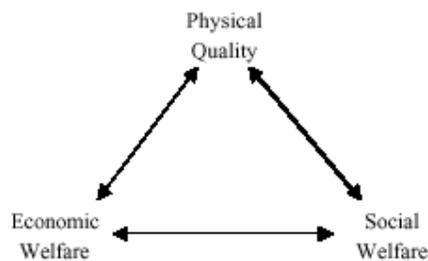


Figure 1 Three interrelated factors of the ‘quality of life’

The other important aspect of revitalization is about whose quality of life is improved. A place-based revitalization approach, which generally causes displacement of community living there, doesn’t necessarily improve the quality of life of the community even though physical improvement is

achieved. For this reason, successful revitalization can be possible by improving the quality of life of the *existing neighborhood residents*.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, for the purpose of this thesis, revitalization is defined as the improvement of the economic, social and urban / physical conditions for existing residents.

### 1.3.2. The “Dimensions of City Performance” by Kevin Lynch

Developing a set of criteria for a “good city” has been the concern of many urban designers. A set of performance dimensions for cities were proposed by Kevin Lynch in his book A Theory of Good City Form.<sup>23</sup> Performance dimensions and concepts introduced by Lynch, focusing on basic user needs and experiences in relation to built environment, has been one of the fundamental approaches to the evaluation of public spaces.

While setting performance criteria for a revitalization approach, it should be taken into account that the revitalization of a historic commercial place necessitates a comprehensive approach due to the complexity of revitalization.<sup>24</sup> “Dimensions of Performance” introduced by Lynch are comprehensive enough to take into account all aspects concerning the spatial form and the society. As Lynch points out “the quality of a place is due to the joint effect of the place and the society which occupies it”.<sup>25</sup>

Therefore, in this study, performance dimensions proposed by Lynch will be used as a framework for evaluating the Main Street Program. These performance dimensions will help define the desired conditions for urban places, including the historic commercial places, which is the context of this

---

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Lynch, p. 114.

<sup>24</sup> For more information see the “Methodological Framework” in Introduction.

<sup>25</sup> Lynch, p. 111.

study. The Main Street Program will be analyzed in terms of improvements achieved in these five basic qualities of urban places.

Kevin Lynch, who put forward a normative urban design theory in his “A Theory of Good City Form”, proposes five basic “dimensions of city performance”, to measure the quality of a place.<sup>26</sup> These dimensions, which define standards of quality, include vitality, sense, fit, access, and control. Lynch relates **vitality**, the first dimension, to vital functions and biological requirements necessary for a lively human environment. The second dimension, **sense**, is the degree to which we perceive a place according to the degree of matching of our mental capabilities with the environment. **Fit**, the third dimension, signifies the correlation between the form of a place and human behaviors. **Access** is the fourth dimension, meaning the possibility for people to reach resources, services or to other people or places. The last dimension, **control** is about control of spaces by people who use them or work there. In addition to these, Lynch also defines two “meta-criteria”: **efficiency** and **justice**. Efficiency is related with the cost of reaching the dimensions listed above. Justice underlines the distribution of environmental cost and benefits among people.<sup>27</sup>

#### 1.3.2.1 Vitality

Kevin Lynch says “an environment is a good habitat if it supports the health and biological well-functioning of the individual and the survival of the species”.<sup>28</sup> He focuses on certain aspects of the spatial environment which are critical for a healthy living, and “which make it a vital place”<sup>29</sup>. One of the

---

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Lynch, , p. 121.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

principal aspects of the environment that Lynch mentions is “**sustenance**”. According to Lynch, sufficient supply of basic human needs (food, energy, water, and air), and an appropriate disposal of wastes are necessary to sustain the spatial environment. Physical systems of supply and disposal (water supply and sewage), population density and location are some basic features of the settlements that affect sustenance.<sup>30</sup>

The second principal aspect that influences the vitality of an environment is **safety**, implying a physically protected environment in which environmental poisons, diseases, or hazards are controlled. Lynch mentions that the realization of safety also includes “the reduction of bodily accidents, defenses against violent attack, the prevention of flood and fire”.<sup>31</sup>

Consonance is the third and last aspect of a vital spatial environment. According to Lynch, the environment should be consonant with the biological human requirements. For example, it should help maintain internal temperature, support body rhythms (such as sleeping and waking), provide an optimum sensory input, and fit human size (issues of ergonometics).

Vitality is also one of the significant issues for revitalizing a place. Revitalization, which is defined by Elise M. Bright as “changes that improve the existing residents’ quality of life” (See Table 2), is directly related to improving the vitality (sustenance, safety, and consonance) of a place as defined by Kevin Lynch.

---

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

Table 2 Vitality relates to the measures of the quality of life and revitalization (Sources Lynch, 1981 and Bright, 2000)

	Performance dimensions for cities (ref: K. Lynch)	Measures of the quality of life (ref: E. M. Bright)
<b>VITALITY</b>	creating a healthy and well-functioning environment that can supply basic human needs	health
	<b>Sustenance</b>	
	<i>relates to needs for sustaining the spatial environment</i>	<u>social indicators:</u>  reduction in *the rates of death *rates of alcohol and drug abuse *degree of exposure to environmental toxins
	<u>physical systems:</u> water and sewer lines population density location of settlement	<u>physical indicators:</u> *adeaquacy of water and sewer lines  *neighborhood cleanliness
	<b>Safety</b>	
<i>refers to physically protected</i> reduction of bodily accidents	*lower rates of crime *closeness to police and fire stations	
defences against violent attack prevention of flood and fire	*reduction in the amount of vacant land and properties	
<b>Consonance</b>		
<i>relates to an environment that meets biological human needs</i>	—	
helps maintain internal temperature supports body rhythms (sleeping, waking) provides sensory input fits human size		

The quality of life determinants listed by Bright include some factors concerning health (relating to sustenance) and safety. She argues that the determinants of quality of life, accordingly the measures of successful revitalization, include reduction in the “rates of death”, in the “rates of alcohol and drug abuse”, and in the “degree of exposure to environmental toxins”. Adequacy of “water and sewer lines” and “neighborhood cleanliness” are also significant for a healthy environment. In addition, Bright points out that lower

“rates of violent crime and crimes against property”, “closeness to police and fire stations” are among the measures of successful revitalization.<sup>32</sup> Besides, reduction in the amount of vacant lands and properties can be considered in relation to the improvements in the health and safety of a place. Because, “[vacant buildings] attract vandalism, derelicts, trash, and illegal activity”<sup>33</sup> and [vacant lands] attract trash, create health hazards and discourage pedestrian movement].<sup>34</sup>

#### 1.3.2.2. Sense

Sense [of place] in a settlement is the second quality that Kevin Lynch mentions in the dimensions of performance. According to Lynch, “[sense of a settlement] is the link between the form of a spatial environment and the human processes of perception and cognition”.<sup>35</sup> **Identity**, which can be defined as “sense of place”, is the quality of a place as being recognized with its unique or distinct character.<sup>36</sup> The sense of orientation in a settlement is determined by its formal structure. In addition to spatial orientation, orientation in time is also an element of **structure**. **“Legibility”**, which is a basic component of the sense of place directly related to both the identity and structure of a settlement is defined as “the degree to which [its] inhabitants [...] are able to communicate accurately to each other via its symbolic physical features”.<sup>37</sup> The next quality of sense is **congruence** which is the match between “the parts, links, and intensities of a place” and “similar abstractions of function, economy, society, or natural process of that place”.<sup>38</sup> “Formal match between place and function” is the quality of congruence. Feeling/

---

<sup>32</sup> Bright, pp. 8-9.

<sup>33</sup> Regional Urban Design Assistance Teams, South End/Lower Roxbury, 1980 p.26.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. p.27

<sup>35</sup> Lynch, , p. 131.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 139.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 138.

sensing the processes that take place in a settlement is another quality that is called “**transparency**” by Lynch. In addition to congruence, transparency and legibility, all of which are connected to nonspatial values, “**significance**” of a settlement is mentioned by Lynch. This is again an issue of perception of a place by its users. Concerning all of these aspects of the settlements, Lynch says:

Identity and structure are the “formal” components of sense. Congruence, transparency, and legibility are specific components which connect environment to other aspects of lives. All of these can be analyzed in some rather direct and objective way. Symbolic significance, on the other hand, the deepest level of legibility, can be intuited but is at root elusive.<sup>39</sup>

Improvements in some of these aspects of sense may be necessary for revitalization of a place. Nevertheless, Elise M. Bright does not explicitly mention improvements in this quality of physical environment as one of the determinants of successful revitalization, yet she states “urban design that provides opportunities for meeting and being with a variety of people, discouraging crime, and expressing neighborhood heritage” as one of the measures of success.<sup>40</sup> (See Table 3)

---

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Bright, p.8.

Table 3 Sense relates to the measures of the quality of life and revitalization (Sources Lynch, 1981 and Bright, 2000)

	Performance dimensions for cities (ref: K. Lynch)	Measures of the quality of life (ref: E. M. Bright)
<b>SENSE</b>	<b>Identity</b> (helps people recognize a place)	quality of urban design
	<b>Structure</b> (sense of orientation)	
	<b>Legibility</b> (communicating via physical)	
	<b>Congruence</b> (formal match between space and function)	
	<b>Transperancy</b> (feeling the process)	
	<b>Significance</b> (perception of place)	

#### 1.3.2.3. Fit

According to Lynch, the third quality of a settlement is “fit”, which means “congruence”<sup>41</sup> between the spatial form of a place and the behaviors of its users. Universally, the question whether a spatial setting is suitable and adequate for activities of its users is related to the characteristics of human body and physical rules such as gravity, transmission of light, inertia, etc. However, it is also linked to cultural aspects, since the fit between a place and user behaviors is closely related to cultural norms, customs, and expectations. Therefore, while evaluating fit, the cultural background of the inhabitants is essential.

One of the aspects of fit is “quantitative adequacy”. The amount of available housing, playgrounds, open spaces, etc. are important factors in the quality of a

---

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 185.

place. The standards set to ensure the quality of the environment, define the adequate numbers for such elements. For example, the number of playground depends on “the view about play and how dense [a playground] can be”<sup>42</sup>. Therefore, Lynch says, the qualitative adequacy (accordingly the behavioral fit), which is often overlooked by planners, is the critical issue to focus on. According to Lynch, the behavioral fit, which is the extent of congruence in a setting, can be analyzed either by observing actions of users to detect misfits or by talking with them about the use of the spaces.<sup>43</sup>

Not only places are adapted to fit behaviors but also behaviors are altered to fit places. As the way of living, expectations and needs of users change, mismatches appear in places. In order to achieve compatibility between the spatial setting and daily behaviors of people, the place, or behavior, or both of them can be modified.

Existing settings can be improved by using a number of ways. One of the means of improving the present fit is **compartmenting** that means “the division of an area into many smaller settings so that different behaviors may flourish without conflict in settings proper to themselves”.<sup>44</sup> These small settings are supposed to be divided in a way that allows their communication. According to Lynch, compartmenting can also be in time. Scheduling activities may help increase the use of facilities that may otherwise be overcrowded or underutilized.<sup>45</sup>

Second way suggested by Lynch to improve the present fit is **careful programming**, which is related to the process rather than form. Careful

---

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 152.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., pp. 151-153.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 160.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., pp. 160-161.

programming is defined as “a formulation of behaviors and spatial characters that is desired, considered as an integrated whole”.<sup>46</sup> At the beginning of designing a new place or managing an existing one, programming is a helpful device that guides the following process. It can also be used repeatedly to test the performance of the setting.<sup>47</sup>

Another way to improve fit in the existing settings as explained by Lynch is **monitoring, and tuning**. Constantly testing how well a setting is performing and following this with necessary adjustments is considered as “the secret of good match”<sup>48</sup>. In a place, good maintenance, which can easily be noticed, is the indication of well functioning.<sup>49</sup>

Finally, user control can be a method to improve present fit. Behavioral fit does not necessarily develop automatically. Users can be trained to use or appreciate a place. New behaviors can be guided to ensure fit. Lynch says “[f]it can increase most dramatically when place and action develop in tandem”<sup>50</sup>.

Moreover, he states:

Perhaps the most powerful way of improving the fit of our environment, however, is to put the control of it into the hands of its immediate users, who have the stake and the knowledge to make it function well.... If users are in control, rather than some remote owner, and if the setting is sufficiently flexible for them to reshape it to their requirements, then a good match is more likely.<sup>51</sup>

Even though the criterion (of well-matched setting) is relevant for the maintenance of all settlements, application of it may change from culture to

---

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 161.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 164.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., pp. 164-165.

culture. Therefore, a number of issues should be taken into account such as cultural differences, conflicts between users, and array of behavioral settings.<sup>52</sup>

Lynch also points out “future fit”, which is linked to **adaptability**, and explains that “a good settlement should be an adaptable one” which allows us to survive in a changing world.<sup>53</sup> He suggests two general measures of adaptability. One of these is “**manipulability**”, which means “the degree to which use and form can be presently changed under specified limits of cost, time and power and a sense of continuity, without narrowing the potential range of the next round of change”.<sup>54</sup> The other rule is “**resilience**”, meaning reversibility of changes, or ability to restore a place to its previous condition.

Adaptability can be provided by certain ways. One of the means for achieving adaptability is providing **excess capacity**: such as “a framework strong enough to take extra stories on top of a structure, the provision of extra space to grow in, or sewers large enough to handle population growth”.<sup>55</sup> The second way of increasing adaptability is **improving access**<sup>56</sup>. If easy transportation and communication exist in a place, then activities can be changed easily and quickly. About improving access, Lynch says:

“[g]ood access, like excess capacity, is expensive. Unlike the latter, however, transport gives good service in the present as well as in the future. Moreover, good access does not “silt up” or convey a sense of waste or ambiguity. Thus it is one of the more powerful devices for adaptability”.<sup>57</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., pp. 185-186.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 167.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 186.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 176.

<sup>56</sup> This is itself a performance dimension introduced by Lynch.

<sup>57</sup> Lynch., p. 179.

The third measure of increasing adaptability is providing independence of parts to reduce possible interference between the parts in case of a change. For example, “if dwellings are separated into single family houses, and the family is the social unit most likely to decide on environmental change, then each family can modify its house without disturbance to its neighbor”.<sup>58</sup> However, such separation of parts may also damage the social fabric. Besides, which social units are likely to give decisions about possible environmental changes and which parts are likely to change need to be predicted.<sup>59</sup>

The use of modules is a possible method for adaptability. Using standard units repeatedly creates a setting which is potentially suitable for diverse functions, and for (re)connecting individual parts. Even though standardization has obvious advantages in terms of production and stocking, it may also result in monotony and large-scale implementation problems. Therefore, Lynch says, “[o]ne suspects that the most useful modules are not standard neighborhoods, megastructures, or building systems, but modest things like bricks, pipe threads, and lumber dimensions”.<sup>60</sup>

Finally, the reduction of recycling costs helps to achieve manipulability and resilience. In other words, easily adaptable materials, tools and techniques can be used in settings.<sup>61</sup>

In addition to formal means, Lynch brings up complementary process means for achieving manipulability and resilience. Better information at the point of decision, flexible planning procedures, and the loosening and the renewing of

---

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., pp. 179-180.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 181.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

the patterns of control are complementary means that can be used for increasing adaptability.

It is obvious that preventing behavioral misfits and ensuring future fit should be part of revitalization of a place to improve its spatial qualities (See Table 4). For existing settings, “*monitoring and tuning*” as well as “*user control*” can be relevant approaches for achieving improvement. Measures of successful revitalization suggested by Elise M. Bright include components regarding the quantitative and qualitative adequacy, particularly monitoring and tuning (which improves present fit) and improving access (which ensures future fit). For example, she mentions determinants of successful revitalization that relate to present fit including, number and condition of parks, libraries, recreation centers, other public facilities; condition of streets and sidewalks; quality of landscaping in publicly owned areas; and number and condition of housing units (availability of housing for extended families, disabled residents, the homeless, elderly individuals, and other types of nonnuclear households). Besides, she mentions the level of neighborhood maintenance as one of the determinants of successful revitalization.<sup>62</sup> In fact, improvements in these enhance “fit” and can be possible by continuous *monitoring and tuning*. Lynch expresses that well-maintained place signifies that the place is well functioning.<sup>63</sup>

In revitalizing existing settings, *user control* can be a powerful way for improving present fit. Users can be trained to use or value a place. Besides, if users can control their environment, they can make it function well. Similarly, *improving access* can help achieve *adaptability* (consequently future fit). Providing good access serves both improving present fit and increasing

---

<sup>62</sup> Bright, pp. 6-8.

<sup>63</sup> Kevin Lynch, p. 181.

adaptability. Because, easy access means that activities can be changed easily.<sup>64</sup>

Table 4 Fit relates to the measures of the quality of life and revitalization (Sources Lynch, 1981 and Bright, 2000)

	Performance dimensions for cities (ref: K. Lynch)	Measures of the quality of life (ref: E. M. Bright)
<b>Fit</b>	match between a place and the behaviours of users	
	<b>Present fit</b>	
	<u>improving fit by</u> *compartmenting - NA *careful programming - NA *monitoring and tuning  <u>*user control - fifth dimension</u>	number and condition of parks, libraries, etc. condition of streets and sidewalks quality of landscaping number and condition of housing units  level of neighborhood maintenance
	<b>Future fit (adaptability: manipulability, resilience)</b>	
	increasing adaptability by *excess capacity - NA <u>*improving access - fourth dimension</u> *independent parts - NA *use of modules - NA *reduction of recycling costs - NA	-

#### 1.3.2.4. Access

The fourth dimension of performance is **access** -reaching information, services, jobs, materials, markets, open spaces, and other people. Access has been one of the primary concerns of planners. Lynch says “[a]ccess is one fundamental advantage of an urban settlement, and its reach and distribution are a basic

---

<sup>64</sup> Lynch. p. 179.

index of settlement quality”.<sup>65</sup> There may be physical, financial, social and psychological obstacles to access.

Lynch mentions the three sub-dimensions of access: “the **diversity** of things given access to, the **equity** of access for different groups of the population, and the **control** of the access system.”<sup>66</sup>

He also explains a number of ways for improving access. First, access may be improved by **modifying routes**. For example, a road may be widened, realigned, or paved to increase the capacity. Second, the **mode of transportation** may be modified. For instance, public transits are made faster and safer. The third way of improving access may be **the rearrangement of origin and destination**. Lynch says that this is a frequently discussed, but less implemented strategy in planning. Increasing density of a settlement may decrease the distance between origin and destination, but this may also increase congestion depending on the mode of transport. Fourth, another way of reducing the load on the access system may be making **adjustments of timing** of travels. Flexible working hours and staggered vacation periods may help to increase access. Fifth strategy mentioned by Lynch is **autonomy**. He explains that “[i]f one works at home, or grows the family vegetables, or heats by sun, then one enjoys access to employment, food, and energy at less transport cost”.<sup>67</sup> He also argues that a decline in transportation need may raise “the ability to reach things”<sup>68</sup>, if the reduction of load does not result in a decay in the transport system. The sixth way of improving access may be a **substitution of communication for transport**. Reaching things and people may be replaced with reaching information. The communication devices (telephone,

---

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 203.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 197.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

television, radio, and computers) have had impacts on the general quality of life. However, Lynch says, “while they substitute for many previous routine trips, they cannot replace more subtle dialogues, and furthermore they seem to stimulate demands for new trips”.<sup>69</sup> The seventh way of increasing access is **the modification of management and control**. For example, traffic controls may decrease accidents, and accordingly increase access. Another strategy to increase access may be employing **public subsidies**, which may be used to upgrade or improve public transits as well as public roads.<sup>70</sup> Finally, **the training of the traveler** himself/herself may increase his/her access. How this approach may increase access is explained by Lynch as:

[The traveler] may be taught to orient herself in unfamiliar territory, to overcome barriers, to operate vehicles, or to use the route system or the communication network. Many people are shut in by their own fears, ignorance, or inability.<sup>71</sup>

One of the issues/problems of a not-well-functioning place that is in need of revitalization can be deficiency in its access system. Therefore, one of the measures of successful revitalization of a setting should be enhancing “access” there. Likewise, Elise M. Bright stresses that improving the ‘access’ is one of the parameters of successful revitalization. (See Table 5) Yet, she uses the term in a larger context by referring to not only *mobility / transportation* (accessibility of resources, persons, services, or places by transit) but also *availability* (of resources, services, etc.). In this study, the analysis will be made with this perspective.

---

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p., 198.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., pp., 194-199.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. p., 199.

Table 5 Access relates to the measures of the quality of life and revitalization (Sources Lynch, 1981 and Bright, 2000)

ACCESS	Performance dimensions for cities (ref: K. Lynch)	Measures of the quality of life (ref: E. M. Bright)
	access to other resources, persons, services or places	
	<b>Diversity</b>	
		condition of streets and sidewalks access to retail shopping access to social services and entertainment
	<b>Equity of Access</b>	
		access to other people neighborhood employment opportunities distance to employment frequency and types of transit services
<b>Control of the Access System</b>		
the fifth dimension		

#### 1.3.2.5. Control

Good control of living space of a society is critically significant to the continuity of the society. The last dimension of performance of a settlement is **control**. This is explained by Lynch as follows:

A good settlement is one in which place control is *certain*, *responsible*, and *congruent*, both to its users (present, potential, and future) and also to the structure of the problems of the place. The relative importance of these dimensions and their level of adequacy will depend on the social and environmental context of the settlement.<sup>72</sup>

---

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 220.

One primary dimension of control is **congruence** of use and control. A congruent place is one which is controlled by its users or inhabitants. For example, the community control on neighborhood facilities is among some proposals for increasing the congruence of use and control. One of the advantages of congruence is better fit due to the control of users, who most know the place and are willing to improve it. The other advantage is the greater autonomy and fulfillment to implement necessary changes. Still, the competence of users to exercise control is an important issue. For instance, certain problems such as air pollution may exceed local power. In other cases, the users may not have the best information. For these situations, Lynch suggests that “[g]iving local users more information, or changing the scale of the setting, may at times diminish the discrepancy between user and problem congruence”.<sup>73</sup> For this reason, the second dimension of control is **responsibility**: which is explained by Lynch as: “those who control a place should have the motives, information, and power to do it well, a commitment to the place and to the needs of others and creatures in it, a willingness to accept failure and to correct it”.<sup>74</sup> Training people and modifying management system may increase both congruence and responsibility. An incremental approach to place control may help users develop their competence to apply that control. The third and the final dimension of the place control is **certainty**, meaning to what extent people comprehend the control system. This is significant to prevent conflict and ambiguity. Consensus about their spatial rights makes people feel safer.<sup>75</sup>

Therefore, the ideal state defined by Lynch is presence of local control which is **capable, responsible and certain**. It is also important to note that

---

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p., 210-211.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., p., 211.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., pp., 187-220.

Control requires effort, and a well-controlled settlement will always demand a large degree of skillful political energy, particularly when place issues become as large and complex as they are today. The price of such control is education, committees, discussions, and the tireless maintenance of political organization.<sup>76</sup>

A place control can be congruent, if networks of people exist within a community. Besides, mechanisms of control and community participation in decision making process are important. These are also essential for a successful revitalization of a place. Elise M. Bright expresses this parameter of revitalization as “social capital”. (See Table 6)

Table 6 Control relates to the measures of the quality of life and revitalization (Sources Lynch, 1981 and Bright, 2000)

	Performance dimensions for cities (ref: K. Lynch)	Measures of the quality of life (ref: E. M. Bright)
<b>CONTROL</b>	<b>Congruence</b> control of the place by its users or inhabitants	<b>social capital</b>
	<b>Responsibility</b> having motives, information and power to do it well	presence of informal network of people access to city political power
	<b>Certainty</b> how people understand the control system	presence of and funding for formal

She exemplifies social capital as “presence of informal networks of people (family, friends, neighbors); urban design that provides opportunities for meeting and being with a variety of people; access to city political power; regular contact with people of other incomes, races, ethnicities, and education;

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 216.

presence of, and funding for, formal networks of people (Community Development Corporations, other community based organizations, interest groups)".<sup>77</sup> Improvements in these are among the indicators of successful revitalization.<sup>78</sup>

In brief, Lynch explains what a good city form is as follows:

It is vital (sustenant, safe, and consonant); it is sensible (identifiable, structured, congruent, transparent, legible, unfolding, and significant); it is well fitted (a close match of form and behavior which is stable, manipulable, and resilient); it is accessible (diverse, equitable, and locally manageable); and it is well controlled (congruent, certain, responsible, and intermittently loose).<sup>79</sup>

Kevin Lynch's approach to defining the quality of an urban place is a comprehensive one which aims to fulfill human needs (biological, psychological, physical, individual, and social). All five basic dimensions, together with the last dimension: justice, help define **social** qualities of an urban place. Among these, vitality, sense, fit and access outline **physical** qualities of the built environment. Fit and efficiency present the **economic** aspects of creating an urban place. In fact, based on human needs, Lynch's comprehensive approach (with its social, physical and economic aspects) in defining the basic qualities of an urban place relates to the concept of "quality of life" (accordingly to re-vitalization). Tables 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 summarize this relation between the quality of life factors proposed by Bright to assess the success of a revitalization project and the five basic qualities of an urban place, developed by Kevin Lynch. Therefore, this framework will be used while evaluating the revitalization of Washington Street at South End, Boston

---

<sup>77</sup> Bright, E. M. p. 8.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Lynch, p. 235.

through the Main Street Program.

### 1.3.3. Outcome Analysis

As a second methodological framework, the case will be studied with respect to its own goals. Comparing outcomes of the program with its goals will help to understand the **effectiveness of the program** to achieve its previously defined goals. The “**program logic model**”, which was introduced by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, proposes a comprehensive theory and method that help understand how a program functions. Logic models provide organizations with tools to plan, to manage and evaluate their programs in an effective way to ensure their successes. A program logic model can be used at any stage of a program from the very beginning through implementation and evaluation.<sup>80</sup>

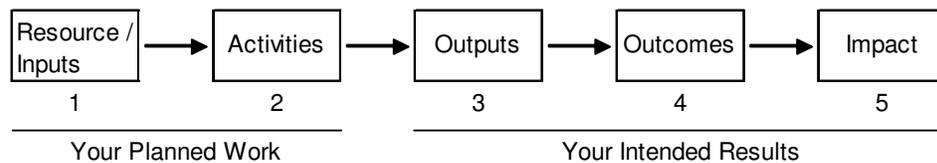


Figure 2 The basic logic model. Source: W. K. Kellogg Foundation. (2004). Using Logic Models to Bring Together Planning, Evaluation, and Action. Logic Model Development Guide, p. 1.

According to Weiss, a program is a series of activities planned to achieve certain objectives or goals.<sup>81</sup> The most “Basic Logic Model”, shown in the Figure 2, illustrates the relation between the “components” of a program. The

---

<sup>80</sup> Kellogg Foundation W.K., "Logic Model Development Guide"

<[www.wkcf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub3669.pdf](http://www.wkcf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub3669.pdf)>, (last day accessed May 10 2006)

<sup>81</sup> Carol H. Weiss, Evaluation : Methods for Studying Programs and Policies, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ, 1998, p. 55.

components of a program include inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts.<sup>82</sup>

Outputs shown in the Figure 2 refers to “the direct products of program activities”. While outcomes are “the specific changes in program participants’ behavior”, impact is “the fundamental intended or unintended change occurring in organizations, communities or systems as a result of activities within 7 to 10 years”.<sup>83</sup> In this study effectiveness of the revitalization program of the case study will be evaluated by comparing goals with outcomes and impacts of the program.

#### 1.3.4. Evaluation Methodology for Nonprofit Organizations by Mark H. Moore

Main Streets organizations are typically structured as nonprofit organizations. Finally, performance of the Washington Gateway Main Streets Inc, the nonprofit organization implementing the program, will be examined by using an evaluation method proposed by Mark H. Moore, professor at Harvard University JF Kennedy School of Government. Moore proposes a general methodology to evaluate the success of nonprofit organizations. Unlike profit-making businesses, nonprofits basically aim creating a public value for the society. Therefore, Moore says, nonprofit organizations should be evaluated by using a specific methodology. Since one of the bases of the Main Street approach is creating a community-based non profit organization; the success of the revitalization program highly depends on the success of the organization. For this reason, Moore’s framework will be used to analyze the Main Street organizations. Moore underlines in his work that realizing a mission or creating a public value necessitates building capacity and gaining support. Mark H. Moore defines this as “public value strategy”. Public value strategy can be

---

<sup>82</sup> W. K. Kellogg Foundation, "Logic Model Development Guide". 2004, p. 1.

<sup>83</sup> W.K., (last day accessed May 10 2006)

defined as building three basic requirements necessary for a successful nonprofit organization: **social mission**, the value a nonprofit organization seeks to create, **support** provided by the community and governments, and **organizational capacity**, ability of reaching the desired social mission. These three aspects of an organization constitute the “strategic triangle” (See Figure 3)<sup>84</sup>

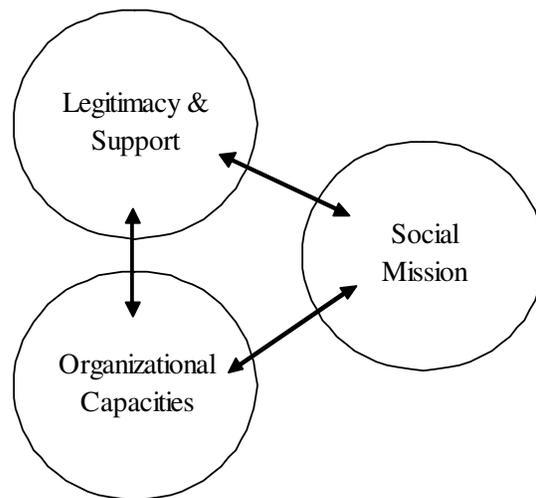


Figure 3. “Strategic Triangle”<sup>85</sup>

Moore explains the strategic triangle as follows:

The basic idea behind the public value strategy can be captured in a mnemonic device: the “strategic triangle” presented as Figure [3]... First point of the triangle – focuses attention on the key question of what constitutes the ultimate value that the organization seeks to

---

<sup>84</sup> Mark H. Moore, "The Public Value Scorecard - a Rejoinder and an Alternative to 'Strategic Performance Measurement and Management in Nonprofit Organizations' by Robert Kaplan", Harvard University, The Kennedy School of Government, The Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organizations, Boston, 2003

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

produce. ... The second point of the triangle - the legitimacy and support circle – focuses attention on [community of consumers, donors and governments]. The third point of the triangle focuses attention on “operational capacity” – the question of whether the enterprise has the ability to achieve the desired goals”.<sup>86</sup>

These three elements of the triangle, writes Moore, are “important calculations” which “become the focus of measurement systems used to monitor the execution and the success of the strategic vision.” While studying the case, these three measures will be used to understand how the program works and to evaluate the success of the strategic vision, its strengths and weaknesses.

---

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE MAIN STREETS PROGRAM

#### 2.1. The Context: American Cities after the World War II

American cities, as many other cities on the world, have been developed according to the changing needs of their communities. Naturally, downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts have been affected by the overall transformation of cities. Particularly, advancements in transportation have changed “the nature of retailing” and accordingly influenced the commercial places in the cities. However, the most dramatic changes in these places have been seen after the end of World War II, when suburbanization and construction of new transportation and communication networks began.<sup>87</sup>

Suburbanization emerged as a consequence of the changing conditions in the cities and government policies. Disinvestment, infrastructure and public transportation problems have contributed to turn central cities into less desirable places to live and work when compared to growing and attracting suburbs. Besides the problems mentioned widespread access to automobiles and increased demand of people for ownership of single family houses led to suburban developments. Federal government housing subsidies have also supported migration to the suburbs. First residences and eventually businesses have moved to suburbs. New types of commercial activities and building

---

<sup>87</sup> Smith, "Main Street at 15". pp. 49-64.

typologies have emerged. Networks of highways have been constructed to connect cities to suburbs.<sup>88</sup>

Cities' downtowns (Central Business Districts) and neighborhood business districts gradually have lost businesses to the shopping malls. Property owners of the buildings in traditional commercial places had fewer business tenants, and accordingly less rent income. Therefore, they could not provide the maintenance of the old buildings, which have ultimately deteriorated. Businesses that could not pay higher rents of the mall have come to the Main Street, which had become a mixture of marginal type of commercial places. Finally traditional commercial places have become deserted places, because they could not compete with growing suburbs.<sup>89</sup>

In order to revitalize urban business districts, quite a few strategies have been tried for decades. Dane, the editor of the book New Directions for Urban Main Streets, evaluates these efforts. The most widely implemented projects have included, writes Dane, "Urban Renewal projects, pedestrian malls, serpentine streets, convention centers, Community Development Grant Projects and public aquariums."<sup>90</sup>

However, these efforts have not been successful in revitalizing urban business districts. The reason of their failure was that they were not comprehensive approaches:

Each of these solutions dealt with urban business districts on a piecemeal basis, rather than as complex economic systems. Each

---

<sup>88</sup> Margaret Crawford, Class Notes, Gsd 5101: Histories and Theories of Urban Interventions, 2005

<sup>89</sup> Smith, "Main Street at 15". p. 52.

<sup>90</sup> Dane, p.11

sought to end urban decline by introducing a single, large project in hopes of stimulating growth and development.<sup>91</sup>

However the results of these projects were not as expected, and had adverse affects. According to Dane, “[f]ollowing the failure of many of these efforts, urban business districts found themselves not only in a state of economic decline, but also in a state of emotional trauma.”<sup>92</sup> In fact, negative impacts of some efforts, particularly those of Urban Renewal Programs have been much more severe.

The Urban Renewal Program was initiated by the federal government at the beginning of 1960’s. The aim of this program was to modernize cities, make access to cities easier and bring middle-class back to the center. However, such efforts proved to be destructive. Urban renewal projects caused extensive damage to historic commercial areas.<sup>93</sup> By the mid-1960’s, negative effects of these programs have become obvious. First, these *urban redevelopment programs* have destroyed the historic, cultural and natural areas of cities. Second, they caused replacement of older communities in order to implement the programs in their places.<sup>94</sup>

Several changes in housing legislation have changed the attitude of redevelopment towards less destructive projects and conservation. By the 1970’s the influence of historic preservation movement was noticeable in the US cities.<sup>95</sup> The National Trust for Historic Preservation was effective in the field of preservation of historic resources in the US.

---

<sup>91</sup> Ibid

<sup>92</sup> Ibid

<sup>93</sup> Smith, "Main Street at 15". p. 55.

<sup>94</sup> Lea, in (ed), p. 13.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

## **2.2. The National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Main Street Program**

Founded in 1949 as a private, nonprofit organization, the National Trust for Historic Preservation was established with the primary purpose of encouraging preservation of the historic resources in the United States. At the beginning, the founders of the Trust envisioned a primary goal of acquisition and operation of historic sites. Later, this mission of the Trust was expanded to reach more people. With this purpose, first, the Preservation Services Fund was created by the Trust in 1969 to support local preservation projects. Two years later, the first field office was opened in San Francisco “to give timely hand on assistance” to local communities. In time, new Trust offices have been opened at other regions to reach all parts of the country. The National Trust evolved into an organization which has more than 300 staff, annual budget of \$40 million, a nationwide network of regional offices, a collection of 26 historic sites and 250,000 members. It makes available to its members and communities a range of programs and services.<sup>96</sup>

Since the late 1970's, the National Trust for Historic Preservation has been involved in the revitalization of historic, traditional commercial districts in the US and eventually in other countries. In the 1980's, revitalization of commercial areas by preserving old buildings has been a widely accepted solution to central-city problems. Quoted in the May 2001, Nation's Cities Weekly, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation explained

---

<sup>96</sup> The National Trust for Historic Preservation, "History of the National Trust" <<http://www.nationaltrust.org>>, (last day accessed Jan. 7 2006)

that “[h]istoric preservation has played a key role and in some cases has been the engine that has driven the recent revitalization of America's cities”<sup>97</sup>

In the 1970s, the National Trust has started to focus on traditional commercial areas, which had been neglected and deteriorated for decades basically as a consequence of a number of reasons including de-industrialization, urban sprawl and emergence of suburban shopping malls in American cities after the World War II. Shopping malls were taking business away from downtowns. As the building owners had mostly no property income, the buildings were not maintained and so they were falling apart. At the beginning, the perspective of the National Trust was very much on the buildings vs. the economy. The National Trust wanted to be involved with this problem, because they were concerned with these historic buildings, which were eventually going to disappear. The National Trust realized that preserving historic buildings of traditional commercial places would not be possible without a comprehensive and incremental approach that would dramatically change the problematic situation downtowns and neighborhood business districts.<sup>98</sup>

At that time, there was not much experience in downtown revitalization and main street revitalization. There were a few communities trying to get federal funding to fix up their buildings. However these efforts ended up with higher rents that businesses mostly could not afford. So, the businesses in the traditional commercial districts were disappearing. There were also a few merchant organizations that focused on doing marketing events, festivals and special events to increase sales in the downtowns. But these efforts were not

---

<sup>97</sup> Laura Turner, "Historic Preservation Helps City Revitalization." Nation's Cities Weekly, 24 20, 2001, p.7.

<sup>98</sup> Smith, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

comprehensive either and therefore could not find solutions to the problems of commercial districts.<sup>99</sup>

There were federal funding available to larger cities and very small towns; however, nothing was available to the communities in between. That was the part nobody was paying attention to. Therefore, the Trust wanted to focus on the common problems of traditional business districts in communities with 5,000 to 50,000 populations.<sup>100</sup>

To this end, the National Trust's Main Street Project staff introduced the concept of "preservation-based commercial district revitalization". The idea was to combine "historic preservation with economic development to restore prosperity and vitality to downtowns and neighborhood business districts".<sup>101</sup> This was the basic idea of the Main Street Project. In addition to preserving historic buildings, restructuring the economy of the business district, adopting historic buildings to new uses, guiding merchants, promoting unique qualities of the business districts to customers, and introducing a market strategy were considered crucial.<sup>102</sup>

With this perspective, a three year demonstration project was launched in 1977. Sally H. Oldham explains the motivation of the National Trust for beginning the Main Street Project:

"With an interest in preserving the built environment, and the understanding that the buildings along America's Main Streets could only be saved by finding economically viable uses for them,

---

<sup>99</sup> Ibid

<sup>100</sup> Ibid

<sup>101</sup> National Main Street Center, 2005

<sup>102</sup> Smith, "Main Street at 15".

the National Trust for Historic Preservation launched the Main Street Project in 1977.”<sup>103</sup>

Three Midwestern towns, Madison, Ind.; Hot Springs, S.D.; and Galesburg, Ill., with a population between 5,000 and 38,000 were selected to participate in the pilot project.<sup>104</sup> Three managers were hired to each of these three cities to manage the program. During the three year period, these three managers applied different strategies and came together every three months to talk about what they had been learning. At the end of the three year Demonstration Project, they had impressive results in these three communities. At the end, they had a conference in Chicago to discuss their experiences. At this conference, they proposed an approach based on four points of the Main Street Program suggesting working simultaneously on four broad areas of design, economic restructuring, promotion, and organization.<sup>105</sup>

After the first demonstration program, the Trust was contacted by about 3000 communities that needed help for revitalizing their commercial districts. In fact, the focus of attention of the historic preservation movement in the U.S. in this period was on key landmarks and buildings, and not on vernacular buildings and downtowns.<sup>106</sup> In spite of this fact, the National Trust for Historic Preservation was encouraged to continue with the program, and founded the National Main Street Center in 1980<sup>107</sup> in order to “introduce the program to other communities, to continue learning about downtown revitalization, and to serve as a national information clearinghouse”.<sup>108</sup>

---

<sup>103</sup> Dane, , p.5

<sup>104</sup> Preservation, "Main Street" (last day accessed Dec. 18 2005)

<sup>105</sup> Smith, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Preservation, "Main Street" (last day accessed Dec. 18 2005)

<sup>108</sup> Smith, "Main Street at 15".

In 1980, the National Main Street Center initiated the Second Demonstration Program, which was called “Small-town Program”. At the beginning of this three-year program, a nationwide competition was held among the states. Six states, including Colorado, Georgia, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Texas<sup>109</sup>, were selected (from the 38 states that applied) to bring the program up one more level. Each of the states then selected five communities with populations under 50,000 to take part in the program, so that a 30-city network was formed. Again, the Center and the participants of the demonstration program were satisfied by the results. Concerning the results, Dane says “the results were impressive: more than 650 facades were improved, almost 600 buildings rehabilitated and a total investment of more than \$ 148,000,000 was realized”. After having these results, in 1984, the National Main Street Center “made its services available to all communities with populations under 50,000 either individually or through statewide programs”.<sup>110</sup>

Third Demonstration Program of the National Main Street Center was the Urban Demonstration Program, which was from 1985 to 1988. This time, the Center wanted to adjust the Main Street approach to the conditions of the urban business districts. With this purpose, eight urban business districts were selected as representatives of the urban business districts in the U.S. Four of the selected districts were located downtowns of midsize cities with populations of 50,000 to 250,000 (Cheyenne, Wyo.; Dubuque, Iowa; Joliet, Ill.; and Knoxville, Tenn.); the other four sites were neighborhood business districts located in large cities with populations over 250,000 (Albuquerque (Nob Hill), N.M.; Boston (Roslindale Village), Mass.; Chicago (Greater Milwaukee

---

<sup>109</sup> Kennedy Smith, National Trust for Historic Preservation in the United States. and National Main Street Center (U.S.), Main Street : Revitalizing Downtown, National Main Street Center National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, D.C., 1988, p.2.

<sup>110</sup> Dane, p. 11.

Avenue), Ill.; Pittsburg (South Side), Pa.). Again the program was successfully implemented (See Table 7).<sup>111</sup>

New Directions for Urban Main Streets, written at the end of the three-year Urban Demonstration Program (from 1985 to 1988) to evaluate the program, presented encouraging results of the demonstration program. The book reported the success of the seven participant business districts:

“The project proved that a commitment to preservation and good design, coupled with a dedicated organization, full-time management, enticing promotional events and a coordinated incremental approach to restructuring a community’s economy could halt Main Street’s decline and even turn it around. By almost any standard of measurement – jobs created, new businesses, dollars invested in rehabilitation – business improved in downtowns of all three demonstration sites during the pilot projects.”<sup>112</sup>

As Dane mentions, the Urban Demonstration Program led to improvements in business activities (new business starts and jobs) and investment activities (façade improvements, commercial and residential building renovations, public improvement projects and new construction projects).<sup>113</sup>

---

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., pp. 1-101.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid. p.5

<sup>113</sup> Dane, p. 11.

Table 7. Summary of the results of the Urban Demonstration Program applied in eight places. Modified from the Source: (Dane, 1988)

**Urban Demonstration Program  
Business Activity (1985-1988)**

	<b>Total</b>
number of business starts	338
number of business closings	-198
number of business expansions	149
number of business relocations to business district	54
<b>net businesses gained</b>	<b>343</b>
<b>number of jobs gained</b>	<b>1,711</b>

**Investment Activity (1985-1988)**

	<b>Total</b>
number of façade changes	253
number of commercial building renovations	372
number of residential building renovations	10
number of public improvement projects	65
number of new construction projects	14
<b>total number of projects</b>	<b>714</b>
<b>total amount invested</b>	<b>\$100,313,550</b>

As mentioned by Lea, “by the end of 1987 more than \$ 1 billion had been reinvested by public and private sources in 650 so-called Main Street Communities”.<sup>114</sup> As of 2004, the National Trust’s Four - Point Approach to revitalization, has been used by nearly 1700 cities and neighborhoods in the US

---

<sup>114</sup> Lea, p. 13.

and nearly 300-400 communities in other countries like Canada, Venezuela, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand to revitalize their traditional business districts.<sup>115</sup>

As a result, the Main Street Program was eventually evolved into a comprehensive approach aiming at revitalizing both traditional central business districts (downtowns) and neighborhood business districts of not only urban but also rural communities of the United States.<sup>116</sup>

Today, the Main Street Program is acclaimed as one of the most successful projects of the National Trust.<sup>117</sup> The program's success, explains Kennedy Smith, is based on the simultaneous work in four broad areas of organization, design, promotion and economic restructuring. Other revitalization programs which did not work, she adds, only focused on one or two of those areas. Delicate balance in these four broad areas is critical, because they are all interrelated. This also gives a framework and provides some structure to communities. Because of that, she adds, they know how they should start and how to proceed. In addition, flexibility and adaptability of the Main Street Program make it possible to successfully apply it not only in the U.S. but also other communities outside the US, even though they are all very different, i.e. high-growth, low-growth, centrally organized, vice.<sup>118</sup>

---

<sup>115</sup> Smith, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen., NMSC, "Why the "Main Street" Program?"

<sup>116</sup> National Main Street Center, "Main Street" <[www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=1989&section=2](http://www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=1989&section=2)>, (last day accessed Dec 18 2005), Preservation, "Main Street" (last day accessed Dec 18 2005)

<sup>117</sup> Lea, p. 13.

<sup>118</sup> Smith, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

### **2.3. Main Street Model: Preservation-based Commercial District Revitalization**

According to National Trust for Historic Preservation, the purpose of revitalization is to reinstate “prosperity and vitality” to traditional commercial areas, in other words, to improve the “quality of life” in these places.<sup>119</sup> In addition, the Main Street Approach is a “community-driven” approach, which is based on involvement of various stakeholders. Kennedy Smith, who had been director of the National Trust’s National Main Street Center from 1991 to 2004, mentions that

“[d]owntown revitalization is about preserving a community, not just preserving a community’s buildings. Effective downtown management requires a clear understanding of the downtown’s economy and a strategy for gradually nudging commercial sales and property improvements upward together.”<sup>120</sup>

In other words, the Main Street Program is a community-based revitalization program which aims to improve the “quality of life” of the existing inhabitants through their participation and support.

#### 2.3.1. Four-Point Approach

The “Main Street Four-Point Approach”, the framework offered to the communities, suggests building an organizational capacity, restructuring the district’s economy, promoting a positive image of the district, improving and enhancing the design of the built environment. Effective and sustainable revitalization, in other words the success of the program, depends on making advancement concurrently in these multiple areas of work.<sup>121</sup> Main Street

---

<sup>119</sup> National Trust for Historic Preservation, "Main Street" (last day accessed Dec 18, 2006).

<sup>120</sup> Smith, "Main Street at 15".

<sup>121</sup> NMSC, "Why the "Main Street" Program?"

organizations initiate or assist in the development of design projects, economic restructuring projects, organization projects and promotion projects.

Membership in the National Main Street Network of the National Main Street Center gives the Main Street Communities a chance to learn experiences of other communities in a specific type of project when they begin similar work.<sup>122</sup>

#### 2.3.1.1. Design

The basis of the design element of the Main Street approach is

“strengthening the downtown’s physical environment – rehabilitating historic buildings, building architecturally sensitive new buildings, and ensuring that streets, sidewalks, signs, lighting and other elements function well and support the overall design of the commercial district”<sup>123</sup>

Design projects that are common to many Main Street revitalization programs include initiation or assistance in completing a comprehensive plan development with provisions for the downtown area, development of comprehensive streetscape improvements, building rehabilitation projects, development of design guidelines, development of design review ordinances, construction of new housing, rehabilitation of existing housing, development of new offices, rehabilitation of existing offices, development of parking ordinances, development of parking plans and management programs, parking garage construction, development of sign guidelines and/or ordinances, sign

---

<sup>122</sup> National Main Street Center (U.S.), The ... National Main Street Network Membership Directory, National Main Street Center National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, DC, 1997

<sup>123</sup> Smith, "Main Street at 15".

improvement programs, and development of upper floors of commercial buildings, both housing and other.<sup>124</sup>

#### 2.3.1.2. Economic Restructuring

Economic restructuring element of the Four Point Approach is explained as “strengthening the downtown’s existing economic base while gradually expanding it; ensuring that real estate and commercial development take place in tandem”<sup>125</sup>

Some of the economic restructuring projects that are common to many Main Street revitalization programs include initiation or assistance in business recruitment and assistance programs, developing business incubators, developing façade easement programs, façade and/or building improvement programs (which provides funding related with design), development of incentive grants and/or loans for façade/interior improvements, business development, and signs, and extending store hours programs.<sup>126</sup>

#### 2.3.1.3. Organization

“Organization” element aims to “building collaborative partnerships among a broad range of public- and private-sector organizations, agencies, businesses and individuals; mobilizing volunteer involvement in the revitalization program”<sup>127</sup>

---

<sup>124</sup> National Main Street Center (U.S.), The National Main Street Network membership directory, pp. 20-35.

<sup>125</sup> Smith, "Main Street at 15".

<sup>126</sup> National Main Street Center (U.S.), pp. 20-35.

<sup>127</sup> Smith, "Main Street at 15".

Main Street organizations develop projects to build their organizational capacity. Some of them create “Special Assessment Districts” that tax property and/or business. Some organizations fund their operations through “Special Assessment or Business Improvement District” funding. “Tax Increment Financing” is another method used by the Main Street districts for operational funding. In addition, some of the Main Street communities comprise federal, state and local enterprise zones. Some communities receive “Community Development Block Grants” Besides, membership programs are used for funding.<sup>128</sup>

#### 2.3.1.4. Promotion

The purpose of “promotion” is “marketing the downtown’s assets to residents, visitors, investors and others”<sup>129</sup>

Promotion projects that are common to many Main Street revitalization programs include development of a coordinated retail promotion program, having corporate sponsors for promotional events, developing an image advertising program, developing special events, and tourism promotion programs.<sup>130</sup>

#### 2.3.2. Eight Principles of the Main Street Program

According to the National Main Street Center, the Main Street Four-Point Approach must be implemented with “Eight Principles”, which is “the guiding philosophy” of the Main Street strategy. Following these principles, says National Main Street Center, ensures the success of the district Main Street

---

<sup>128</sup> National Main Street Center (U.S.),

<sup>129</sup> Smith, "Main Street at 15".

<sup>130</sup> National Main Street Center, The National Main Street Network Membership Directory, National Main Street Center National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, DC, 1997

programs. These principles are

1. comprehensiveness
2. incremental changes
3. self-help
4. public-private partnership
5. identifying and capitalizing on existing assets
6. quality
7. changing attitudes
8. implementation oriented<sup>131</sup>

First principle is that complexity of business district revitalization necessitates following a **“comprehensive”** approach rather than a single project. Second, Main Street programs should implement **“incremental”** changes, because, “small projects and simple activities lead to a more sophisticated understanding of the revitalization process”. Moreover, incremental activities help to develop skills necessary to undertake more complex projects. Third principle is **“self-help”**, which emphasizes the critical significance of the community involvement in the planning and implementation for the long-term success of the Main Street program. Basically, the community takes part in the program through participation in the district’s four standing committees. Fourth, an effective **“public – private partnership”** is essential for the success of the program. Because, “both the public and private sectors have a vital interest in the economic health and physical viability of commercial areas”, therefore, their collaboration help to revitalize commercial districts. Fifth, downtown and commercial business districts should base their revitalization strategies on **“identifying and capitalizing on existing assets”**. Traditional commercial districts have unique characters like distinct physical environment which “must

---

<sup>131</sup> NMSC, "Why the "Main Street" Program?"

serve as the foundation of the all aspects of the revitalization program.” Sixth, all revitalization activities – like storefront design, promotional activities, etc. - must be undertaken with the principle of “**quality**” to ensure success. Sixth, in order to employ a successful revitalization program, certain “**changes**” in attitudes and implementation are crucial. Finally, eighth principle is to be “**implementation oriented**”. Because, small visible projects from the beginning of the program build confidence in the program and make larger projects possible. Small and continuous changes in the district remind of the progress made through the revitalization effort, and increase the level of community involvement.<sup>132</sup>

#### **2.4. Actors of the Program**

The Main Street Program is based on the involvement of both public and private organizations as well as individuals who are associated with and/or have an interest in the commercial district. Although the program is structured in different ways at different places, state and city governments play important roles in assisting the communities. On the other hand, at the district level the Main Street Program is implemented by the active participation of people from the community, including business or property owners, residents, city officials, financial institutions, schools, religious institutions, etc.<sup>133</sup>

Neighborhoods usually participate in the Main Street Program under the umbrella of a coordinating program, which can function at the city, state or regional level. These coordinating programs are structured either as government programs or nonprofit organizations. The National Main Street

---

<sup>132</sup> National Main Street Center, "Why the "Main Street" Program?" Unpublished Program Proposal, National Main Street Center, Washington, DC, May 2004

<sup>133</sup> Smith, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

Center help coordinating programs (local governments of nonprofit organizations) establish their Main Street Programs (See Figure 4).

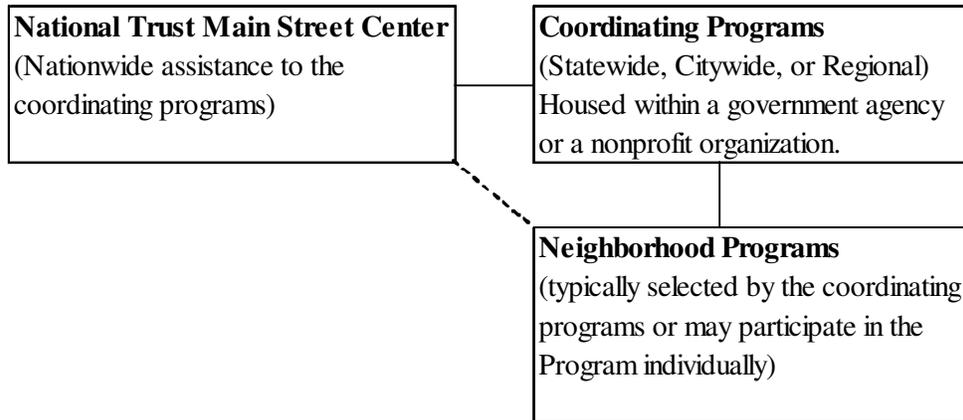


Figure 4. Typically, the National Trust Main Street Center assists the statewide, citywide or regional Main Street coordinating programs, who select and assist neighborhood programs.<sup>134</sup>

#### 2.4.1. The National Main Street Center

The National Main Street Center, which is part of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, plays a significant role in guiding city and state coordinating programs. For instance, when a City decides to create a Main Street Program, it hires the National Main Street Center to help to create the program. The assistance that the National Main Street Center provides to cities and states has two areas of focus. First, it works directly with the communities for a period of time and helps them get established. Second, it teaches the

---

<sup>134</sup> Figures, tables and charts that are not given reference to other resources belongs to the author.

citywide or statewide program staff how to manage the program. The program staff gains the necessary skills by observing what the National Main Street Center does with those communities and then also by getting acquainted with the resources they need in the program. The National Main Street Center is usually involved in the project for about five years until the statewide or citywide staff can manage the revitalization program. The National Main Street Center may sometimes be involved for a longer period of time in cases when the citywide staff leaves and new staff needs training. The National Main Street Center is also an advocate of the process. It works with other national organizations like US Chamber of Commerce and helps them get involved.<sup>135</sup>

The center also provides information for the Main Street program coordinators and the Main Street communities with its quite a few files, commissions and experienced committees, and offers nonprofit consulting.<sup>136</sup> In addition, it coordinates a membership program, called the National Main Street Network, which makes connection among main streets communities possible. They can learn from other places' experiences.<sup>137</sup> Besides, it conducts a program called the Main Street Certification Institute in Professional Downtown Management, which is a professional downtown revitalization certification program, and holds an annual convention which is called the National Town Meeting on Main Street. It rewards annually five commercial district revitalization programs which are selected through a nationwide competition.<sup>138</sup>

The National Trust owns the trademark of the Main Street Program. Cities and states can establish their Main Street Programs with no involvement with the National Trust as long as they follow the criteria established by the National

---

<sup>135</sup> Smith, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

<sup>136</sup> National Trust for Historic Preservation, "Annual Report 2004" <[www.nationaltrust.org](http://www.nationaltrust.org)>, (last day accessed January 7 2006)

<sup>137</sup> National Main Street Center (U.S.),

<sup>138</sup> Smith, "Main Street at 15".

Trust. The National Main Street Center gives certain guidelines to states and cities interested in establishing Main Street Coordinating programs. For example, there are states that have launched statewide Main Street programs with no involvement with the National Trust. In other words, even though they work closely with the National Trust's National Main Street Center, both statewide and citywide programs are independent programs.<sup>139</sup>

#### 2.4.2. Coordinating Main Street Programs

The Center underlines the significance of the coordinating programs as follows:

Coordinating Main Street programs, be they city, state, or regional, form the backbone of the national Main Street movement. While neighborhoods can participate in the Main Street program individually, the challenge can be a daunting one without the support of a coordinating entity that provides resources, a network, advocacy, and encouragement for all the Main Street programs in a city.<sup>140</sup>

In other words, coordinating programs make it possible for communities to develop strong revitalization programs. They provide communities with all the necessary tools to begin with and progress with their revitalization objectives. They assist communities with training, technical expertise, and professional advice and guidance in using the Four-Point Approach of the Main Street program.<sup>141</sup>

---

<sup>139</sup> Smith, interview with S. Yıldırım Esen.

<sup>140</sup> NMSC, "Why the "Main Street" Program?"

<sup>141</sup> National Main Street Center NMSC, "A Powerful Support System for Local Commercial District Revitalization" <<http://www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=2143&section=15>>, (last day accessed march 8 2006 2006)

Being part of a network gives communities the opportunity of learning from one another. Some of the coordinating programs also provide financial support to neighborhood Main Street programs.<sup>142</sup> After 3 to 5 year of intensive assistance offered by the coordinating programs, the neighborhood programs build capacity to work on their own. Then, coordinating programs limit their assistance to the neighborhood programs.<sup>143</sup>

In addition to providing technical assistance to the communities, the coordinating programs play other significant roles, including:

- a. "Building awareness of and support for commercial district revitalization;
- b. Building relationships and partnerships with other agencies and organizations;
- c. Serving as a liaison with the National Main Street Center;
- d. Promoting preservation-based commercial district revitalization to other communities".<sup>144</sup>

#### 2.4.2.1. Participation of the State Governments: State-Wide Coordinating Programs

Since the beginning of the program, state governments have been active participants of the Main Street Program. After the Main Street Center was created in 1980, people who started the Program wanted to have a state government partner, because having partner at the state level would make the

---

<sup>142</sup> NMSC, "Why the "Main Street" Program?"

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

regulatory environment more suitable for the traditional commercial districts. People who started the program in 1980 also thought that partnership with state governments could also result in having support from state agencies like the Department of Transportation, the Department of Urban Development and Industrial Development for downtown revitalization. They also wanted to create statewide networks.<sup>145</sup>

As each state has its own individuality, the Main Street Program is housed in the states in different ways. Some of them are established in the state government. Most of these work under the Department of Economic Development, while others are part of the State Historic Preservation Offices.<sup>146</sup> They act as the statewide coordinators of the program and help Main Street communities find necessary resources and people to implement their revitalization strategies.<sup>147</sup>

#### 2.4.2.2. Participation of the City Governments: Citywide Coordinating Programs

Eventually, city governments have had an active role in the Program since the beginning of the citywide programs in 1985. Some large cities with population over 50,000, including Boston, Ma., Washington, DC, Baltimore, San Diego

---

<sup>145</sup> Smith, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

<sup>146</sup> There are also examples of those that have been housed in private sector nonprofit organizations like in Mississippi and South Carolina. Another example is that the program in Connecticut is coordinated by a utility company which is a private business. This company supports the Main Street Program, because it has reinvested in the downtown area. As these examples present, each of these programs is structured differently at the state level. Ref: Ibid.interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

and Detroit, have established their city-wide multi-district Main Street programs.<sup>148</sup>

Similar to the statewide programs, citywide programs are coordinators of the program in city scale. In addition, like statewide programs, citywide programs can be structured differently at the city level. They can be part of a city agency or be established as private organizations. They can also be involved in the program in different ways, because every place has its own circumstances.<sup>149</sup>

#### 2.4.3. Public Participation at the Main Street Districts

Active public participation is an important aspect of the Main Street program. The community, including residents, businesses, property owners, and other stakeholders, is encouraged to involve in the planning and implementation of the revitalization program. In fact, the program is based on a basically volunteer-driven approach in the U.S., where there is, in general, a strong tradition of community involvement.<sup>150</sup>

The significance of the “volunteer-driven effort” is explained with several reasons by the National Main Street Center. First, changes necessary to revitalize a district should be recognized, directed, and implemented by the

---

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> For example, the City of Boston is very well connected to the program. The City employs people with specialized skills who actively assist the main street communities even in specific issues. On the other hand, for instance, in San Diego, the role of the city government in the program is totally different. The city government is only marginally involved in the program and the program works in a different way. In San Diego, every business has to buy business rights. The City gives business license to firms and collects money for that. All the money collected from this pool and is managed by a private organization called San Diego District Council, which is a private sector organization. The Council distributes this money to the Main Street Neighborhoods as funding. It also employs people with specialized skills who assist the Main Street communities. In fact, it does what the City does in the Boston Main Street Program. Therefore, the city government of San Diego has very limited involvement unlike the City of Boston. Ibid

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

community for the effort to be a sustainable endeavor. Second, common vision and consensus among stakeholders prevent any possible obstacles in front of the revitalization program. Besides, the power of the community as a whole establishes and increases the legitimacy of the Main Street Program. Third, public participation is important for building the capacity of the program. In other words, a large group of participants means available human resources and access to essential resources for the implementation of the program.<sup>151</sup>

People from the community, “typically a mix of business or property owners, residents, city officials, financial institutions, schools, religious institutions, civic groups, preservationist, media, etc.”, are included in the local Main Street governing body and standing committees. In addition, 40-60 active volunteers from the community take responsibilities in the planning and the implementation of the program.<sup>152</sup>

## **2.5. Selection of the Main Street Districts**

It is stated in National Main Street Center report that “the neighborhood programs are selected to receive resources through a competitive application process that demonstrates their need, ability, resources, and goals for their Main Street effort”.<sup>153</sup> The selection process is different in every state and every city. However, there is usually a selection committee. How the committee is formed again changes in every place but it usually consists of the staff of the statewide or citywide program, and people representing major agencies like State Historic Preservation Office or the Department of Urban Development, and the mayor of the community who is involved in the Main

---

<sup>151</sup> National Main Street Center NMSC, "Characteristics of Strong Coordinating Programs" <<http://www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=2287&section=15>>, (last day accessed March 9 2006)

<sup>152</sup> Ibid

<sup>153</sup> NMSC, "Why the "Main Street" Program?"

Street. Similarly, selection criteria may differ in every place. Nevertheless, most of the state and citywide programs ask following questions when they are selecting communities. As Smith points out, first, they want to know if there is community support, considering that all tasks will be done by different people in the community. Second, the presence of public and private sectors willing to provide financial support for the program is an important criterion. Third, long term commitment to the process is considered essential, because community has to be committed to continuing to the program for at least 5 to 10 years to be able to achieve substantial changes. Fourth, it is also important to prove that community has the history of taking risks and is willing to try new approaches to revitalization. In general, the most important concern is what community wants to do. Finally, the community is asked whether there is a core of historic buildings. Smith says there are not defined rules and definitions about this criterion.<sup>154</sup> The National Main Street Center also explains this criterion:

“While any commercial district could achieve success using the Four Points, Main Street is intended for traditional business districts. You should have a good concentration of older or historic buildings remaining to give yourself a base of structures to work with.”<sup>155</sup>

This explanation shows the flexibility of the Center, as what constitutes “a good concentration of historic buildings” and what is accepted as “historic” is open to interpretation.

## **2.6. Organization Model**

Even though the Coordinating Main Street programs can be structured in different ways, they all try to help communities revitalize their commercial

---

<sup>154</sup> Smith, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

<sup>155</sup> NMSC, "Main Street"

districts. With this shared goal, each coordinating program employs, at minimum, a fulltime professional coordinator. Besides, “most have a full-time architect who provides basic design assistance to the participating communities, and many have additional staff to provide other types of specialized assistance”.<sup>156</sup>

At the district level, a governing body, which is a committee, steers policy, finance, and planning of the Main Street program. This committee includes representatives from the community. A full-time Main Street manager, who is employed by the committee to manage the program, assists with program implementation and coordinates volunteers. The National Main Street Center underlines the significance of the full-time Main Street manager, whose role is explained as:

Not unlike the manager of a shopping mall or even an industrial park, the Main Street director works to ensure that the area is clean, maintained, attractive, well-marketed, programmed with events of interest to customers, that there is a point of contact for information about the district and the revitalization effort, that businesses have the support and information they need, and much more. The Main Street director is constantly vigilant about what’s happening in the commercial district and making sure that the Main Street program is responsive to and able to manage the constant change that happens in commercial districts and is acting in the best interests of the Main Street area. Without that vigilant management, the commercial district can never be anything the community desires.<sup>157</sup>

Four standing committees that represent each of the four elements - organization, design, economic restructuring, and promotion- plan and realize improvement activities. Standing committees are usually composed of 5 - 10 people who are from the community. Some Main Streets also creates issue-

---

<sup>156</sup> NMSC, "Why the "Main Street" Program?"

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

oriented task forces -such as Parking Task Force - according to their needs and priorities. In these committees and task forces, typically 40 to 60 volunteers in total work on planning and implementation of the revitalization program. In some cases, this structure, which is suggested by the National Main Street Center, may be adjusted and modified to neighborhood circumstances. New proposed structure can be reviewed by the coordinating programs, who may then propose additional modifications.<sup>158</sup> (See Figure 5)

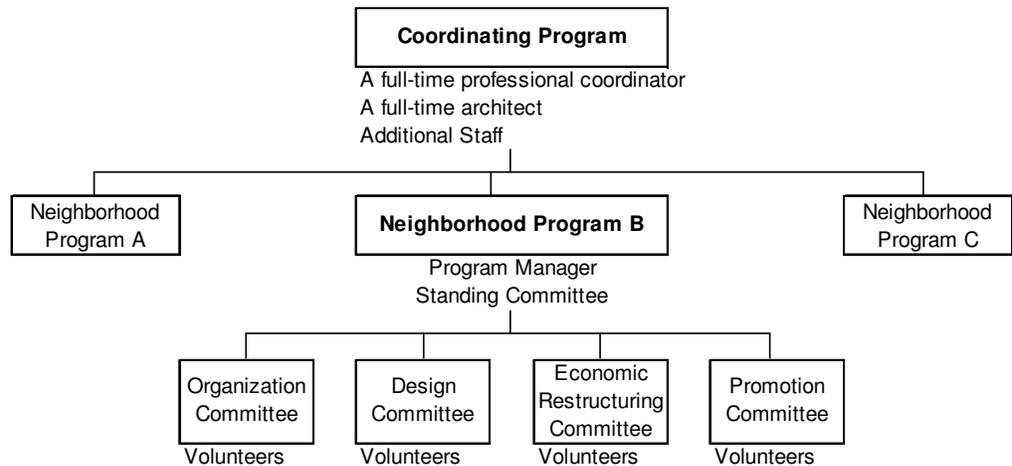


Figure 5. Typical Model of Organization of the Main Streets Program

## 2.7. Funding Resources

Even though it is a nationwide program, the federal government does not support the Main Street Program at the national level. The National Main Street Center program does not get any funding from the federal government.

---

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

However, interesting enough, the federal government involvement in the Main Street Program happens at the city level. Activities developed by the Main Street communities to reinforce their revitalization strategies are planned in terms of budget, timeline and partners. Considering the entities best suited to realize these activities, there are quite a few activities where the federal government is best suited to help with at the local level. Federal involvement could be through funding or a program federal government has.<sup>159</sup>

One of the important federal supports of the Main Street Program is the National Park Service (NPS).<sup>160</sup> Other important federal partners are the Department of Housing and Urban Development<sup>161</sup> and the Small Business Administration, which provides training and technical assistance to small businesses. The General Services Administration (GSA) is also an important partner. It is the agency that manages public buildings, federal buildings. GSA is very supportive of the Main Street activities because many buildings owned

---

<sup>159</sup> Smith, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

<sup>160</sup> According to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service is the agency that is responsible from administering the National Register of Historic Places program (The National Register of Historic Places is a program administered by National Park Service (federal government) to identify and register historic properties). In order to give some of the responsibilities of administering this program, the NPS certifies local governments to take on some of its responsibilities through the Certified Local Governments (CLG) program. If the communities have a group of skilled and trained people to work with historic buildings, then the NPS certifies them to do some of the basic work when a historic building or district is nominated to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places. When these people do historic research and survey of the buildings, they get money from the Certified Local Government Program. Ref: Ibid.interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

<sup>161</sup> This agency has several programs. One of these programs is Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), from which each state gets CDBG funding which is called Block Grant Money from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The states distribute that grant to the communities. There are two levels of CDBG funding available to the Main Street communities. One is for communities with over 50,000 in population, and the other is for communities with fewer than 50,000 in population. The communities with over 50,000 in population are called 'Entitled Communities', because, they are automatically entitled to receive the Block Grant money. However, the communities under 50,000 in population have to compete to receive the Block Grant money. Each state may have different approach in using the Grant Block money, but in general the Main Street Neighborhoods receive significant amount of money from this program. Besides, there are also Housing Programs which may be used by the Main Street communities to create upper floor housing in their districts. Ibid.

by the federal government are located on the Main Street Districts. So, the agency is involved in the program as a property owner as well.

As a result, the degree and way of involvement of the state and city governments change from place to place. The only thing that is common in all places is the implementation program. Beyond that, where they get their resources, how they make decisions about priorities and how they employ people are different.

## **2.8. Planning and Implementation**

In the planning phase of the revitalization program, each Main Street organization develops two or three strategies, based on market research.<sup>162</sup> (See Figure 6) As shown in Figure 6, at the intersection of each area of work (including organization, design, economic restructuring and promotion) and market based strategies, each Main Street organization creates a lot of tasks that reinforce this strategy. Activities are developed in each of the four broad areas to create some balance. For each activity possible partners from public sector, private sector, merchants, property owners, planning office, public works, etc. are decided.<sup>163</sup> Next, in order to implement these tasks the budget and the timeline are considered. It is to make a 5 to 10 year strategic plan for the district. Any kind of community resources are made available to help implement the Main Street revitalization program. Main street program's actual role is to coordinate this revitalization plan. In other words, the Main Street program staffs are the conductors who find and contact the right people or

---

<sup>162</sup> For instance, in Washington Gateway, they wanted Washington Street to be a mixed-use, pedestrian oriented street with ground floor retails serving to mixed-income customers.

<sup>163</sup> According to Kennedy Smith, after the implementation program is made, the next step is to decide the best organization or person to do it. At this point, the best entity to do a specific task could be one of the community organizations, agencies, property owners, banks, school groups, religious organizations, local clubs, individuals, etc. within the city.

organization and provide coordination.<sup>164</sup> Most of the activities that need to take place are done by people within the community who already get the skills to do and experienced to do. If the necessary skill does not exist within the community, the communities contact to the National Main Street Center or other communities and tailor what they have learned.<sup>165</sup>

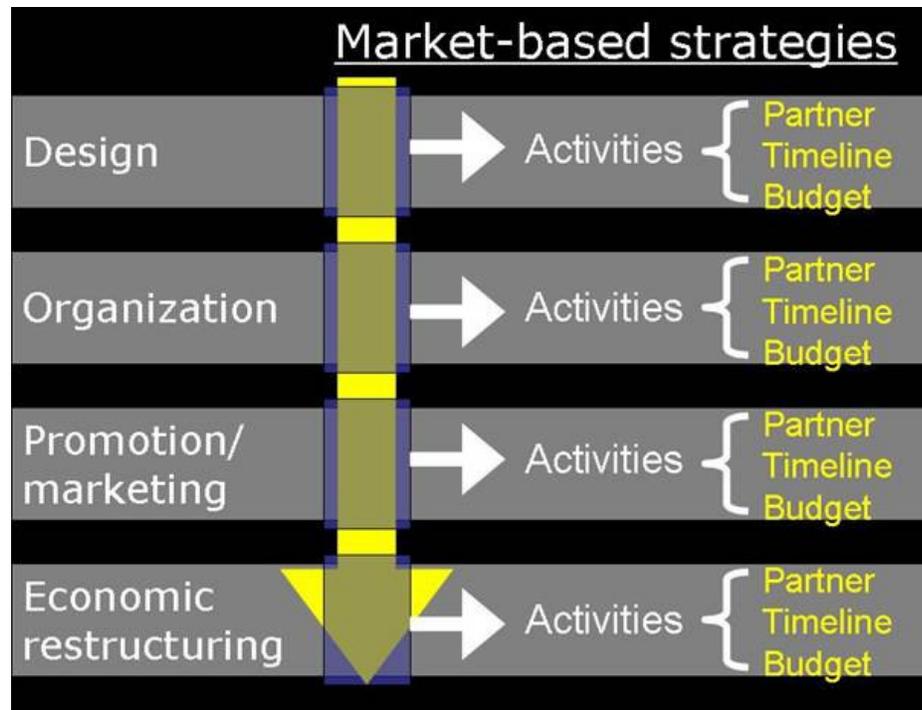


Figure 6 Four Point approach and implementation of the Main Street Program<sup>166</sup>

<sup>164</sup> For example, if it were designing the street signs, the city agency designing street signs would be asked to do that for the community. For instance, in order to do survey of the buildings in the community, a historical organization might be contacted to provide volunteers to do survey. So, mentions Smith, the key in implementing the program is contacting to people and organizations and asking them to get involved and to do what they already do.

<sup>165</sup> Smith, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

<sup>166</sup> Kennedy L. Smith, "Retail Market Analysis", Presentation for the course: GSD 5214 Analytic Methods of Urban Planning, Harvard University, Graduate School of Design, 2006

In order to implement the revitalization program, Smith says, “Main Street programs go through three distinct phases of evolution”.<sup>167</sup> The curve in the graph shown in the Figure 7 shows the evolution of the revitalization effort. The first phase is called the “catalyst” phase, the second is called the “growth” phase and the third is called the “management” phase.<sup>168</sup>

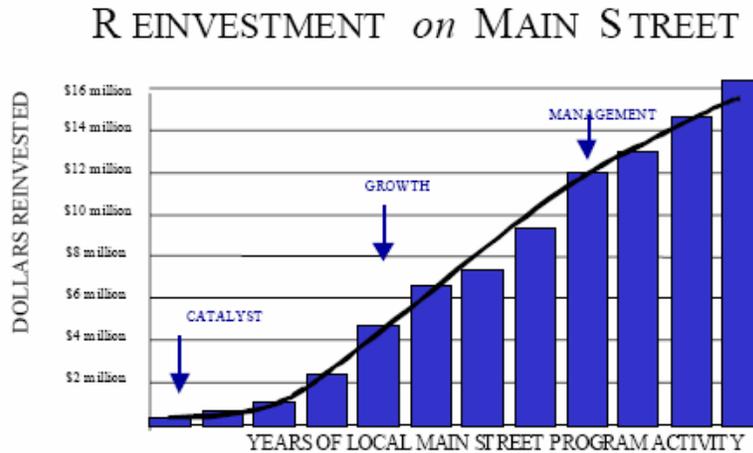


Figure 7 Three phases of the Main Street Program implementation<sup>169</sup>

The catalyst phase lasts for three to five years. During this period, broad goals are defined for the revitalization effort. Main Street revitalization program tries to settle the organizational structure and, to set up the credibility of the organization. All stakeholders develop their cooperative skills during this phase. Once a program reaches certain milestones, it is considered a transition

---

<sup>167</sup> Smith, "Main Street at 15".

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> NMSC, "Why the "Main Street" Program?" p.21

into the next growth phase.<sup>170</sup> For example, the organization starts an effective design management process, or creates a grant program like façade improvement grant. In addition, an increase in the organization's credibility and an increasing understanding of district's economic role within the region mark the transition to the next phase.<sup>171</sup>

During the growth phase, reinvestment in the district peaks. Building on the experiences, and organizational skills obtained during the catalyst phase, more complex projects are undertaken by the Main Street organization. For example, business development strategies are implemented and historic buildings are rehabilitated for new uses.<sup>172</sup> After a period of growth, usually at around 10<sup>th</sup> year, an organization changes into the management phase when the Main Street community has no more than 5 to 8 % vacancy rate as well as approximately 80% of the buildings have been rehabilitated.<sup>173</sup> During the management phase,

“the downtown revitalization program monitors the downtown's and the region's economic activity, continues strengthening and developing businesses, ensures that the district's built and natural environments are well maintained, and continuous to market the district in innovative ways. In many ways, the revitalization program serves the historic commercial district almost as a shopping mall management office serves the shopping center”.<sup>174</sup>

In other words, the revitalization program continues to manage the economic, physical and promotional activities.

---

<sup>170</sup> Smith, "Main Street at 15".

<sup>171</sup> Smith, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

<sup>172</sup> Smith, "Main Street at 15".

<sup>173</sup> Smith, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

<sup>174</sup> Smith, "Main Street at 15".

### 2.8.1. Challenges of Implementation of the Program in the US

The perception of the historic preservation, says Kennedy Smith, is a big challenge. She thinks, in many other countries, there is more sense of value than in the US. Another challenge, she adds, is political stability. Because, the Main Street program in every place is very identified with a political figure.<sup>175</sup> Another challenge, Smith mentions, is that every community in the US wants to have a Wal-mart, a super store, because they want to get a lot of property tax and retail-sales tax, which is an important part of local governments' revenues. However, having a superstore within a community has a negative impact on vulnerable traditional commercial districts.<sup>176</sup>

## **2.9. Evaluation of the Success**

Evaluation of the Main Street Programs is made at national and local levels. Both coordinating programs and Main Street organizations are evaluated at the national level by the National Main Street Center through certain guidelines established by the National Main Street Center to provide coordinating programs and Main Street organizations with feedback to improve their programs. Besides, there is an evaluation mechanism at the national level, called "National Main Street Program Accreditation", which is a partnership between the coordinating programs and the National Trust Main Street Center. At the local level, every state and city coordinating program and Main Street community evaluates its own program based on its own benchmarks.

---

<sup>175</sup> For example, in Boston, the citywide Main Street Program is highly associated with Mayor Menino. This brings vulnerability due to the fact that a new mayor who may be elected next time may not continue with the Program. Smith, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

2.9.1. Evaluation of the coordinating programs by the National Main Street Center:

The National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Main Street Center provides coordinating Main Street programs with guidelines by which the Center evaluates their success. According to these measures of success, the coordinating programs should:

- a. "Respond to and meet the needs of local Main Street programs;
- b. Build a network of local Main Street programs that exhibit a high reinvestment ratio which increases incrementally each year;
- c. Have a high percentage of local Main Street programs that remain active over time;
- d. Embody a strong preservation ethic and successfully preserve and protect historic Main Street buildings and other relevant historic resources;
- e. Garner resources from both the public and private sectors to revitalize historic and traditional commercial districts;
- f. Employ an adequate number of staff members who provide basic services to communities and help them create local programs that effectively use all four points of the Main Street approach;
- g. Develop and maintain a high level of positive visibility and credibility within their jurisdictions (state, city, or region);
- h. Garner bi-partisan political support in the jurisdiction's executive and legislative levels;
- i. Obtain adequate and stable funding from multiple public and private sector sources;
- j. Positively shape policies and legislation to support the revitalization of traditional commercial districts and the preservation of historic Main Street buildings;
- k. Encourage local Main Street programs to evolve and mature; and

1. Expand and evolve to address progressively more complex revitalization issues”.<sup>177</sup>

### 2.9.2. National Main Street Program Accreditation

There is an established evaluation system called the “National Main Street Program Accreditation”, which is administered by the coordinating programs. National Main Street Program Accreditation is created with the collaboration between the coordinating Main Street Programs and the National Trust Main Street Center. The purpose of the accreditation is to assess designated Main Street programs on the basis of ten performance standards. Those that meet these standards gain accreditation and national recognition. Furthermore, these standards provide Main Street organizations with “benchmarks and guidelines” which help them improve their programs. In other words, “the ten performance standards provide benchmarks and guidelines on how the organization should be functioning and an incentive to organizations to perform better and be more effective”.<sup>178</sup>

National Main Street Program Accreditation has three fundamental goals:

- a. “to provide local and national visibility to local Main Street programs that understand and fully utilize the Main Street Four-Point Approach and eight Main Street principles and that continue to evolve organizationally to meet new challenges;
- b. to provide national standards for performance for local Main Street programs; and

---

<sup>177</sup> NMSC, "Characteristics of Strong Coordinating Programs"

<sup>178</sup> National Main Street Center NMSC, "The National Main Street Program Accreditation" <<http://www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=2121>>, (last day accessed March 9 2006)

- c. to provide realistic goals and a tangible incentive for local Main Street programs that do not yet meet the criteria for national recognition”.<sup>179</sup>

In the essence of the “National Main Street Program Accreditation” lies rewarding organizations and increasing their visibility and credibility in their communities. Being accredited means qualifying for the National Main Street Community status. Benefits to the accredited programs include receiving a certificate, special press release, being listed on the National Trust Main Street Center’s website and in the National Trust’s Preservation Atlas. Beyond these, the most significant benefit is considered as a more effective Main Street Organization.<sup>180</sup>

Since the evaluation process is performed by the coordinating program at the city or state level, independent Main Street Programs, which can be established by the permission of the National Trust Main Street Center, can not receive accreditation. Coordinating programs select annually Main Street organizations who qualify for being designated as a National Program by using ten measurement standards, which are based on organization performance rather than economic performance.<sup>181</sup>

According to these ten standards of performance, an accredited Main Street organization:

- a. “Has broad-based community support for the commercial district revitalization process, with strong support from both the public and

---

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

private sectors.

- b. Has developed vision and mission statements relevant to community conditions and to the local Main Street program's organizational stage.
- c. Has a comprehensive Main Street work plan
- d. Possesses a historic preservation ethic
- e. Has an active board of directors and committees
- f. Has an adequate operating budget
- g. Has a paid professional program manager
- h. Conducts a program of ongoing training for staff and volunteers
- i. Reports key statistics
- j. Is a current member of the National Trust Main Street Network".<sup>182</sup>

### 2.9.3. Evaluation of the growth of the Main Street Program by the National Main Street Center:

The National Main Street Center assesses the Main Street communities' success by reviewing reports sent by every main street manager in the country. These reports include information about changes in the districts like new businesses opened, business closed, and/or physical reinvestment made, etc. The National Main Street Center evaluates the success of the program through physical improvements in the districts, changes in the attitudes of the community and the visitors, and increase in the economic vitality of districts. Economic impact statistics sent by each Main Street Community help the National Main Street Center evaluate each Main Street district as well as the success of the program at the national level. These statistics include information about new jobs that has been created, amount of money that has been reinvested in Main Street Commercial district, number of new businesses

---

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

that has been created, and number of buildings that have been rehabilitated. Figure 8 shows the Main Street results at the U.S. scale as of May 2004.<sup>183</sup>

Net new jobs that has been created.....	231,682
Total amount reinvested .....	\$ 17.0 billion
Net new businesses that have been created.....	54, 470
No of buildings that have been rehabilitated.....	93,734
Average reinvestment in participating communities.....	\$ 9,513,151

Figure 8. Main Street Results as of May 2004.<sup>184</sup>

#### 2.9.4. Evaluation at the local level

Finally, every state and city creates its own basic measurement. Each community sets its own benchmarks and evaluates its program according to these benchmarks. Most local programs have an evaluation at the end of every year for the first five years. After that, these are usually at every three years.<sup>185</sup>

Since the expectations from the program for each year is different, different evaluation criteria are used at different times. The priorities for three phases of the program were discussed earlier in the implementation section.

---

<sup>183</sup> NMSC, "Why the "Main Street" Program?"

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> Smith, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

While evaluating success within this framework, each community's uniqueness and existing situation at the beginning are taken into consideration. Since each community is somehow different, it has to establish its own benchmarks. On the other hand, the National Main Street Center helps Main Street programs understand how the program is going and what else is essential to improve, as stated by Smith.<sup>186</sup>

---

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

## CHAPTER 3

### BOSTON MAIN STREETS PROGRAM

The Boston Main Streets Program, which was established in 1995, is the first citywide multi-district program that follows the Main Street approach in the United States. The program implemented in Boston has been a model for other American cities including Baltimore, Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, Indianapolis, San Diego and Washington D.C.<sup>187</sup> Therefore, an advantage of choosing a case from the Boston Main Streets communities will be the chance to study the Boston Main Streets Program, which is accepted as the ‘model’ of involvement of the City in implementation of the Main Street Program.

This chapter aims to introduce the Boston Main Street Program as an example of coordinating programs. Before going into details of the program, background information about Boston will be given to understand the development, special circumstances and problems of the city prior to the initiation of the Main Street program. Then, the following issues will be addressed to understand how a coordinating program works as part of a revitalization strategy:

- a. Initiation of the Boston Main Streets Program
- b. Selection of the Main Street districts
- c. How the program was structured (organization model)
- d. How the coordinating program helps districts implement their program.

---

<sup>187</sup> Joshua Bloom, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen. Boston, March 17 2006

### 3.1. The Context

#### 3.1.1. Background

Located at the New England region of the United States, Boston is the capital of Massachusetts. It is a medium size city which ranks the 20<sup>th</sup> in the US with a population of 589,141, according to the 2000 census.<sup>188</sup> It is the financial and business center of New England region. The city is an important center with its medical facilities and education institutions.<sup>189</sup> Moreover, as stated in Boston Architecture, 1975-1990 by Miller and Morgan, it is “the nexus of a high-tech post industrial economy: the development of computer-based technology and communications has been a prime factor in the metamorphosis of the three-square-mile area”.<sup>190</sup>

Boston, which is considered “the most historic city in America”<sup>191</sup>, was founded in 1630 by the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.<sup>192</sup> The land, which was “almost island”, was chosen for being easily defensible, and having water supply and harbor.<sup>193</sup> (See Figure 9) The city was built on the hilly peninsula, which has been reshaped since then as more space was needed for the developing city. Hence, three largest mountains, called Trimountain, surrounding the land on which the town was founded have been leveled in the

---

<sup>188</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, "State & County Quick Facts" <<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/25/2507000.html>>, (last day accessed May 18 2006) (U.S. Census Bureau, “State & County Quick Facts”, Census 2000, Last Revised: Jan 12, 2006; <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/25/2507000.html>)

<sup>189</sup> Bright, P.70

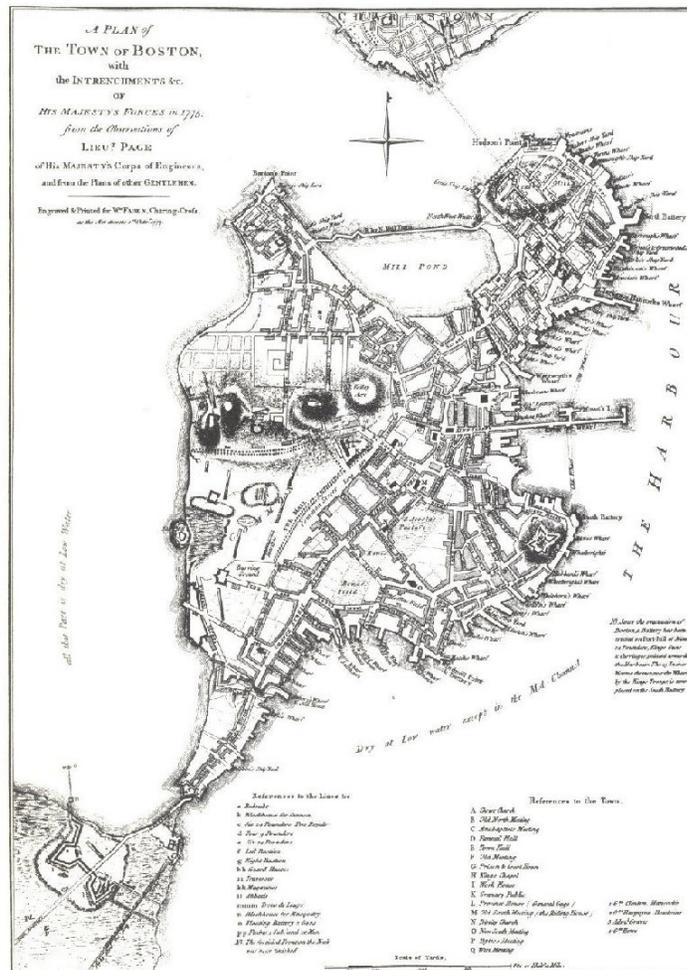
<sup>190</sup> Naomi Miller and Keith N. Morgan, Boston Architecture, 1975-1990, Prestel ; Distributed in the USA and Canada by te Neues Pub. Co., Munich New York, 1990 (p.13)

<sup>191</sup> R. W. Apple Jr., "In Boston, a Boom and New Hurrahs". New York Times, 1999

<sup>192</sup> Jack Frost, Robert Booth and Shirley Blotnick Moskow, Boston's Freedom Trail : A Souvenir Guide, Globe Pequot Press, Old Saybrook, Conn., 1998 P.1

<sup>193</sup> Lynch, P.28.

nineteenth century to gain space by filling bays.<sup>194</sup>



Lieutenant Page's Map prepared in 1775 of the Town of Boston, Population 16,000.

Figure 9. Map of Boston, 1775 (The Boston Athenaeum). In Dunwell and Linden, p. 5.<sup>195</sup>

<sup>194</sup> Miller and Morgan, p.21.

<sup>195</sup> Steve Dunwell and Blanche M. G. Linden, Boston Freedom Trail, Back Bay Press, Boston, 2005

The city has continuously been transformed since its foundation. Its location by the Atlantic Ocean has made Boston a mercantile town. It began to build its economy by facilitating commerce with England. As Naomi Miller and Keith Morgan pointed out, “[t]owards the end of the seventeenth century, Boston was a thriving seaport and the leading commercial town of the American colonies, with a population estimated at 7,000”.<sup>196</sup> The authors describe the seventeenth century Boston:

“Wharves (and later fortified breakwaters) lined the harbor, which bristled with the tall masts of the sailing ships. Against this was set the gentle sloping panorama of the town, where church steeples rose majestically above the pitched roofs of the clapboard wood-framed houses”.<sup>197</sup>

In the eighteenth century, the city flourished as a result of the developments in trade. Rapidly growing town was still detached from the mainland. The population has more than doubled with about 17,000 inhabitants. An increased density and the transformation of Boston during this period can be noted from a series of maps dating 1722, 1733, 1743 and 1769 drawn by Captain John Bonner, who mentions “houses near 3000, 1000 brick, rest timber”<sup>198</sup>. Long Wharf, built in 1710, lined with shops and warehouses, “a key to the town’s maritime prosperity”, church spires dominating the skyline were dominant characteristics of the panorama of the town. A market house, called Faneuil Hall, was built in 1742. During the eighteenth century, the growing city was destroyed several times because of fires. Therefore, the use of wood as a building material was forbidden, instead “an edict of 1803 required that all

---

<sup>196</sup> Miller and Morgan, p.22.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

buildings over ten feet [3 meter] high be constructed in stone or brick and covered with slate or tile”.<sup>199</sup>

After the Revolution in 1776, the city continued to grow. As Kevin Lynch points out, “it was still a mercantile town, both in its society and in its economic base”. He adds, “it was a center of world trade, a port of exchange. Its shipping dominated the South Atlantic, but it also traded in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, the Baltic, and the Mediterranean”.<sup>200</sup> As a result of growth, the city “expanded towards the Charles River and the Common”, however, it still kept its island character. “[I]t was only in 1786 that the 1500-foot-long [457 meters] Charles River Bridge connected the town to the Cambridge mainland, followed by another bridge six years later”.<sup>201</sup>

From 1790 to 1820, the population was more than doubled and reached to 43,000 inhabitants. The rapid growth of Boston brought the need for changing the way it was governed. Instead of town meeting, Boston was started to be governed by an elected mayor in 1822. The early nineteenth century was a turning point for the architecture of the city when Charles Bulfinch, the first professional architect of the U.S., started to practice architecture in Boston. Stone architecture appeared as the new image of the city.<sup>202</sup>

As the city population grew, the boundaries of the city expanded throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The island was enlarged by

---

<sup>199</sup> Miller and Morgan, p.19

<sup>200</sup> Lynch, P.25

<sup>201</sup> Miller and Morgan, p.21.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

filling the “waterfront with earth transferred from the tops of the Boston’s hills”.<sup>203</sup> Lynch writes the efforts to expand the land:

“The hilly, deeply indented peninsula of Boston was leveled and extended at great cost. Nine hundred acres were added to an original of less than eight hundred. The developing city was compelled to thrash about in a narrow room, and as a result few early buildings have survived. The peninsular -almost island- site had originally been chosen for its defensibility, its harbor and its water supply. The price of inadaptability that accompanied those assets was paid in the nineteenth century”.<sup>204</sup>

A remarkable transformation occurred in the late 1840’s, when the immigration of the Irish rapidly increased the population of the city. As a result, the need for space became the city’s main problem. Population increased from 93,000 to nearly 137,000 in a decade.<sup>205</sup> Irish immigrants dwelled in the old residential areas at the periphery of North End, and in Forth Hill. Old houses were adapted and tenements were built to provide housing for immigrants. Lynch writes, “the Irish lived in numbing filth and crowding. ... Cholera broke out, redoubling the native fear and hatred of the Irish, on which the economic machine depended on”.<sup>206</sup>

Morgan and Miller points out the beginning of the suburban communities in this period: “Urban congestion inspired the earliest of the efforts to create suburban communities, beginning in the Cottage Farm and Longwood sections of Brookline, across the Back Bay”. Additional lands were provided with landfill to built new districts. In the 1840s and 1850’s, South End and Back Bay residential districts were created to provide housing for the middle and

---

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> Lynch, P.20.

<sup>205</sup> Miller and Morgan, p.21.

<sup>206</sup> Lynch, P.23.

upper classes.<sup>207</sup> South End, which was initially an elite district, demographically changed. As Lynch writes, “[the district] first was converted to profitable slums and then cleared for business use”.<sup>208</sup>

Outward expansion of Boston was accelerated by the extension of horse car lines to the outside of the city in the 1850s. Unlike railroads, these lines were affordable for the lower middle and upper working class. These lines and first bridges were financially supported by real estate interests who invested in the outside of the city. “The uncoordinated car lines”, writes Lynch, “congested the downtown streets, but they gave almost a third of population a chance for better housing”. He adds, “small cottages, duplexes, and wooden two and three-decker apartments spread outward as far as 3 miles from the center, until fire laws and the declining profits in horse car service checked their extension”.<sup>209</sup>

After the depression of 1857, the overseas trade declined. This led to the transformation of Boston “from a mercantile port of exchange to a center of industrial production”. This also resulted in the change of the physical environment. Large workshops producing clothes and shoes have been built in the city. Old warehouses have been transformed to workshops. After the trade restarted, these were again returned to their old uses. Some mechanized industries moved out of the city. Others were located at the adjacent areas.<sup>210</sup>

The city continued its expansion with annexations. Roxbury was annexed in 1867, and Dorchester was annexed 3 years later. These were followed by

---

<sup>207</sup> Miller and Morgan, p.24.

<sup>208</sup> Lynch, P.32

<sup>209</sup> Ibid. p.33.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

others. Bright writes that Boston has become “a city of neighborhoods” due to these annexations.<sup>211</sup>

This expansion and growth era continued by 1880. The Civil War, which resulted in the death of “many young upper class men, the future leaders,” and “Great Fire of 1873” had negative impacts on the city.<sup>212</sup> The fire, which caused the destruction of the central parts of the city, led to reorganization efforts in the central district. “[A]fter the fire, [central district] became (and has remained) the financial and commercial center of the city”. At the end of the nineteenth century, in 1895, the city built the first subway system in the US.<sup>213</sup>

“At the turn of the century”, Miller and Morgan mention, “Boston’s dominance in New England was assured.” Boston was not only a “[f]inancial and trade center of the region”, but also it was “the nation’s leading manufacturing city for the wool, shoe, and leather industries”.<sup>214</sup>

Skyscrapers were started to be built on the sites of old buildings. First steel-frame skyscraper was built in 1893. However, unlike New York, Chicago, or San Francisco, Boston did not experience a commercial development that led to the construction of office towers in the early twentieth century. Due to 1904 local regulations of Boston, the height in commercial buildings was limited to 125 feet. In 1928, building height allowed was raised from 125 feet to 155 feet. Then, skyscrapers started to be constructed. Yet the building boom could only

---

<sup>211</sup> Bright, P.70

<sup>212</sup> Lynch, p.33.

<sup>213</sup> Miller and Morgan, p.24.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

continue until 1930s when the economy worsened as a result of the stock market crash of 1929.<sup>215</sup>

In the 1930s, similar to many American cities' experiences, the business district (downtown) of the city started to deteriorate.<sup>216</sup> "The gradual deterioration was accelerated by the flight of traditional industries like textiles and small manufacturing from the city to the South, where cheaper labor was available. There was little building activity."<sup>217</sup> Drier writes, "[a]s manufacturing, and blue-collar employment fell, the city's tax base declined and public services dwindled along with it."<sup>218</sup>

In the 1950s, physical and fiscal problems were still apparent. The only industry was the electronic industry and it was located in the suburbs. Few department stores were left in the city. A lot of land uses were nonprofit land uses such as hospitals, colleges, institutions, all of which being free of taxes. The cost of services supplied by the city was more than the income it received from the taxes. This led further deterioration with an aging infrastructure and housing.<sup>219</sup> In the 1950s, serious population losses began. The city's population has decreased by 13% from 1950 to 1960. This was followed by 8% decrease from 1960 to 1970.<sup>220</sup>

In the late 1950s, efforts have started for the economic revitalization of Boston. The strategy was clearing land in the central business district to attract new

---

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>216</sup> In the 1930s, suburban explosion, followed by disinvestment in the cities, has turned downtowns into physically deteriorated and declined places. (Crawford, GSD 5101 class notes, 2005 Fall)

<sup>217</sup> Miller and Morgan, p.26.

<sup>218</sup> Peter Dreier, "Revitalizing Urban Neighborhoods", in Studies in Government and Public Policy, W. Dennis Keating, Krumholz, Norman, Star, Philip (ed), University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, 1996 p.67

<sup>219</sup> Crawford, M.

<sup>220</sup> U.S. Census Bureau.

investment and offices, corporations as well as middle class white collar workers to live in the city.<sup>221</sup> Since shopping malls started to threaten traditional commercial places, efforts were undertaken to preserve downtown shopping area. Improvement of public transportation and renewing downtown districts were part of these efforts.<sup>222</sup> Dreier explains how people tried to reverse the decline:

“The people concerned with reversing Boston’s decline advocated a transformation of the central city and its downtown area into a commercial center to attract business, civic institutions, and middle-class residents. This process, which began in the late 1950s, laid the groundwork for the city’s economic revitalization, but it did not achieve visible success until the late 1970’s. Boston’s revitalization was driven by three primary forces: the restructuring of global economy, increased federal social spending on health care and education, and an aggressive, federally financed urban renewal program.”<sup>223</sup>

Particularly, federal urban renewal program has had great impact on the built environment of the US cities including Boston. Economic problems and physical deterioration in the cities were the main reasons of initiation of the urban renewal program. The purpose of the nationwide program was to modernize cities, to make access easier and to bring middle-class up back to the center. The program was led by political coalitions and businessmen.<sup>224</sup>

In order to take advantage of the federal funding, cities had to set up new agencies to administer the federal program. Every local redevelopment agency had to prove that they have a workable program and fulfill all requirements. The requirements of the federal government included having adequate codes, a

---

<sup>221</sup> Crawford, M.

<sup>222</sup> Miller and Morgan, p. 28.

<sup>223</sup> Dreier, in (ed), p.67

<sup>224</sup> Crawford, M., GSD 5101 Class Notes, 2005 Fall.

comprehensive plan<sup>225</sup>, determination of healing the blight (which was the central issue of urban renewal)<sup>226</sup>, an administrative organization -having a large redevelopment agency-, responsible program for relocation of displaced families, citizen participation, and adequate financial resources. These were serious demands from local governments. At the end, one of the problems of the implementation of the program was that the citizen participation was at minimum. Another problem was the relocation of the displaced families, who were moved to different places than their original neighborhoods. Furthermore, many cities' renewal areas set empty even for decades. Therefore, the urban renewal program had considerable negative affects on cities.<sup>227</sup>

Boston was one of the cities that experienced the process and consequences of urban renewal. The Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) was set up in 1957 to administer the federal government program. BRA took all city planning functions. With the political support and funding of the federal government, BRA (like every other redevelopment agency in US) became extraordinarily powerful and effective. It was not a city department but a separate agency, operating on its own.<sup>228</sup> The renewal of the central business district and adjacent residential districts was supported by “a powerful coalition of downtown business leaders, developers, and politicians capable of mobilizing and coordinating the public and private resources”.<sup>229</sup>

One of the areas scheduled for renewal was Boston's West End<sup>230</sup>, one of the old residential areas of the city. It was an ethnically mixed neighborhood. Planners undertook a survey. They thought that dark alleys and narrow streets

---

<sup>225</sup> The key element was redevelopment. The land lost value over decades; therefore the essence of plans was to recapture value in cities' land (Crawford, 2005).

<sup>226</sup> Cities had to demonstrate blight in order to demolish a place (Crawford. 2005)

<sup>227</sup> Crawford. M., GSD 5101 Fall 2005 Class notes.

<sup>228</sup> Crawford,M.

<sup>229</sup> Dreier.

<sup>230</sup> It is now called Charles River Plaza.

engendered crime. Besides, fire engines could not come thorough. It was a dilapidated and socially deteriorated environment. As a result, those who undertook the survey decided that this was a 'slum' area that had to be improved. Renewal was a popular, widely accepted idea in these years. Every Boston newspaper supported the renewal of the district. In fact, the buildings were substantially sound and interiors were much better than outside. Besides, there was strong social cohesion among the community.<sup>231</sup>

Thousands of low income residents were displaced from the area.<sup>232</sup> The relocation of people will later be one of the criticized aspects of the renewal. People were forced to move to different places. Some people were re-housed in the new public housing projects outside Boston. Others who could afford moved to suburban areas. Some people suffered, especially older people who had been living in the district for long years were psychologically affected. In addition, it is understood that total clearance was not the only alternative. Instead, the buildings could be renovated and small spot redevelopment areas could be designed for infill housing. Furthermore, because of the lack of the reluctance to build in the area, it was remained unbuilt for a long time.<sup>233</sup> Consequently, West End experience in Boston proved to be an unsuccessful urban intervention.

From 1970 to 1980, the population of the city continued to decrease by 12.2% (Table 8). While the city was experiencing losses, the population of the suburban areas outside Boston increased. However, although the metropolitan area constantly gained population, from 1970 to 1980 even the overall

---

<sup>231</sup> Crawford.

<sup>232</sup> Miller and Morgan, and Dreier, (p.67)

<sup>233</sup> Crawford.

population of the metropolitan area decreased.<sup>234</sup> Bright explains this with the serious economic problems that Boston faced with.<sup>235</sup>

Table 8. Population change in the city of Boston and Boston metropolitan area, 1950 through 2000 <sup>236</sup>

	<b>Boston City</b>	<b>Boston Metropolitan Area</b>
1950	801,444	2,263,900
1960	697,197	2,660,410
1970	641,071	3,067,639
1980	562,994	3,099,888
1990	574,283	3,209,534
2000	589,141	3,412,611

In the 1970's because of population loss and rising unemployment, most of the Boston neighborhoods were deteriorated and vacant. Dreier writes,

“Between 1970 and 1980 twelve of Boston’s sixteen neighborhoods lost population; only those adjacent to the downtown grew in numbers. Declining population and rising poverty led to considerable housing abandonment, deterioration, and arson, including arson-for-profit, during the decade. In 1980, almost one-tenth of the city’s housing stock was vacant”.<sup>237</sup>

---

<sup>234</sup> After 1980, this trend started to change. After 30 years of severe population loss period, Boston began to grow steadily. The city experienced 2% increase in its population from 1980 to 1990. This continued with 2.6% population increase from 1990 to 2000. Bureau, (last day accessed

<sup>235</sup> Bright, P.70.

<sup>236</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. For metropolitan area population see Demographia, "Boston Metropolitan Area: Population from 1790" <<http://www.demographia.com/db-bos1790.htm>>, (last day accessed May 23 2006)

<sup>237</sup> Dreier, p.67-68.

Meanwhile, unlike declining neighborhoods, the downtown and adjacent neighborhoods were subject to dramatic transformations. Boston was recovering from economic decline. Corporations started to move their offices downtown. As mentioned by Dreier, demand of housing around downtown area (not only by new white-collar workers, but also immigrants from Latin America and Asia) started to rise. This has led to dramatic increase in housing prices and rents in Boston. During this period, “the downtown economy was booming, symbolized by shiny new skyscrapers”, writes Drier, “but most Boston residents felt left out”. He explains:

“Even many middle-class homeowners (who benefited financially from rising housing values) began to worry that Boston’s hot housing market would prevent their own children from settling in their neighborhoods. In less than two decades, Boston was transformed from a depressed, low-rise city of mostly white ethnic neighborhoods to a more vibrant, high-rise city composed increasingly of young professional workers and new Third World immigrants”.<sup>238</sup>

In spite of such an economic, social and physical transformation process, the traditional commercial places (Main Streets) of Boston’s neighborhoods were not vital places, similar to many traditional commercial districts in other US cities. Therefore, the National Trust initiated its three year demonstration program in 1977, which was followed by the nationwide Main Street Program.

### 3.1.2. Planning Process in Boston

Before addressing the question of how the city of Boston has been involved in the Main Streets program, it is important to describe certain regulatory planning process in Boston. As mentioned earlier, Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), which was established in 1957 by the Boston City Council

---

<sup>238</sup> Dreier, p.68.

and the Massachusetts Legislature, acts as a combined city planning department and redevelopment agency. Previously, the Boston Housing Authority was the agency responsible of the development. The BRA extended its authority beyond public housing. Besides, in 1960, the duties of the City Planning Board were transferred to BRA.<sup>239</sup>

The BRA has the authority to review the design of real estate developments in Boston. Before mid-1980s, there were no specific criteria guiding the review process. Instead, guidelines were set for each project.<sup>240</sup> Currently, the “Boston Zoning Code” and accompanying maps regulates “the planning of use, lot size, building location and bulk, parking, open space, and development impact”.<sup>241</sup>

Each stage of the development projects (starting with schematic plans and ending with final working drawings) is thoroughly reviewed.<sup>242</sup> Wallis describes the review process as follows:

The agency’s urban design staff meets frequently with project architects and developers. Together they determine the kind of project acceptable to all interests. The process offers significantly more flexibility to both sides than traditional, as-of-right zoning<sup>243</sup>. This flexibility allows the city to adjust to market demand. When the real estate market is strong, the city can negotiate for additional

---

<sup>239</sup> [http://www.cityofboston.gov/bra/HomePageUtils/about\\_us.asp](http://www.cityofboston.gov/bra/HomePageUtils/about_us.asp)

<sup>240</sup> Allan Wallis, "The New England Life: Design Review in Boston", in *Design Review - Challenging Urban Aesthetic Control*, Brenda Case Scheer and Wolfgang F. E. Preiser (ed), Chapman & Hall, New York, 1998

<sup>241</sup> Office of Business Development, "Commercial District Design Guidelines - 2003", Boston Municipality, Boston, 2002. p.30.

<sup>242</sup> Wallis.

<sup>243</sup> In the “Glossary of most used zoning terms”, as of right use is defined as “those uses that are automatically allowed by the zoning code. They are allowed “as a matter of right.”” <http://www.ci.boston.ma.us/bra/zoning/zoning.asp#3>.

benefits from developers. In a weak market the city can offer developers more incentives.<sup>244</sup>

At the early stage of the review process, the BRA arranges a meeting called “scoping session” with the City’s public agencies and the applicant of the project in order “to aid inter-agency coordination and encourage identification of issues early in the review process”.<sup>245</sup>

Besides, the citizen review is provided at each phase of the review procedure.<sup>246</sup> Until the late 1970s, citizen input in the design review process was not required. Rather, public hearing was held at the final phase of design. Citizen review has become part of the review process when such experiences with certain projects led to significant changes in this phase. Particularly, the review process in the New England Life project at Copley Square marked the transition. The Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) representing Back Bay neighborhood interests was successful in the modification of Philippe Johnson’s design for the New England Life Project for the New England Life Insurance Company. This was the most important turning point in the treatment of citizen input in the design review process in Boston.<sup>247</sup>

Presently, the way the public review and comment take place as part of the review process is defined in the zoning code. According to the code, after the BRA has received any document relating to a proposed project, it sends a notice<sup>248</sup> not only to all the City’s public agencies but also to the Neighborhood

---

<sup>244</sup> Wallis, p. 134

<sup>245</sup> "Boston Zoning Code" <<http://www.ci.boston.ma.us/bra/pdf/ZoningCode/Article80.pdf>>, (last day accessed June 5 2006), p.40.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid. pp.16-95.

<sup>247</sup> For information about this project at Copley Place, see Allan Wallis, pp. 133-146.

<sup>248</sup> Content of notice basically include the name of the applicant, the location of the proposed project, if it is within the project scope – master plan, documents filed, a brief description of the project, kind of approval requested, the last date of sending written comments, and the time

Council<sup>249</sup> for the neighborhood in which the project site is located. If a Neighborhood Council does not exist in the neighborhood, the notice is sent to a similar community organization that reviews planning and development projects within the area. Besides, the notice of the project is published in a newspaper of general circulation in the City. In addition, the public may review any project documents at the offices of the BRA. Written public comments including the comments of other public agencies are sent to the BRA within a defined period of time after publication of the notice. These comments are taken into account by the BRA at each phase of the review process.<sup>250</sup>

Types of reviews and review processes are explained in the Boston Zoning Code. According to the Article 80 of the zoning code, four types of reviews are administered by the BRA: 1. Large Project Review, 2. Small Project Review, 3. Planned Development Area (PDA)<sup>251</sup> Review (Review of Development Plans and Master Plans), 4. Institutional Master Plan Review.<sup>252</sup>

The BRA's Economic Development Division reviews proposed large-scale development projects. The purpose of the large project review is described in the zoning code as follows:

---

and place of obtaining the copies of the project documents. For more information see the Boston Zoning Code – the Article 80, p. 42.

<sup>249</sup> "Neighborhood Council" is defined in the Article 2A of the zoning code as "any neighborhood-based council established by the Mayor to render advice to neighborhood residents, the Mayor, city departments, and the Boston Redevelopment Authority regarding any municipal issues of neighborhood concern". <<http://www.ci.boston.ma.us/bra/pdf/ZoningCode/Article2A.pdf>>

<sup>250</sup> "Boston Zoning Code".

<sup>251</sup> According to the Article 3 – Establishment of Zoning Districts: "[t]he whole or any part of a subdistrict may be established as a planned development area if such area contains not less than one acre and the commission has received from the Boston Redevelopment Authority, and has approved, a development plan or, if the area contains not less than five acres and is not located in a residential zoning district, a master plan for the development of the planned development area." <<http://www.ci.boston.ma.us/bra/pdf/ZoningCode/Article3.pdf>> p.4.

<sup>252</sup> For more information see <<http://www.ci.boston.ma.us/bra/zoning/zoning.asp#2>>

Large Project Review provides a procedure for the comprehensive review of large development projects before and during the schematic design stage and affords the public the opportunity for review and comment. The purpose of this review is to assess a project's impacts on its surroundings and on City resources and to identify necessary mitigation measures.<sup>253</sup>

The zoning code also defines to what kind of projects the large project review applies. For example, the large project review applies to projects that “erect[s] a building or structure having a gross floor area of fifty thousand (50,000) or more square feet” The review comprises eight components: 1. transportation; 2. environmental protection; 3. urban design; 4. historic resources; 5. infrastructure systems; 6. site plan; 7. tidelands; and 8. Development Impact Project<sup>254</sup>

The other architectural design review is ‘Small Project Review’. The purpose of small project review is:

“to provide a concise procedure for reviewing the design of projects that do not require Large Project Review but that can be expected to affect the surrounding area and public realm because of their size or location. Small Project Review determines whether a project is consistent with the design guidelines and site plan standards established for the project location and for the City as a whole”.<sup>255</sup>

The components of small project review include one or more of the followings: (1) design; (2) site plan; and (3) comprehensive sign design. Design review of a proposed project is guided by design guidelines established for its location as required by the underlying zoning. The scope of design guidelines is stated in the zoning code as follows:

---

<sup>253</sup> "Boston Zoning Code", p.23.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid., pp. 23 – 27.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid., p. 88.

Such design guidelines may relate to any planning area or district and may include, but need not be limited to, particular architectural requirements, including building massing, proportions, setbacks, materials, fenestration, ground level treatment, and other related architectural characteristics.<sup>256</sup>

Besides, if the project is located in a Planned Development Area, Urban Renewal Area or Institutional Master Plan Area, the project has to comply with the relevant development plan, master plan, urban renewal plan or institutional master plan.<sup>257</sup>

If a proposed project is a project for a designated historic building, ‘architectural landmark’, it is reviewed by the Boston Landmarks Commission (BLC). If it is located in a designated historic district, the design review is administered by the historic district commission of that district. The Boston Landmarks Commission and historic district commissions are set up within the Environment Department of the City of Boston. .<sup>258</sup> The BLC, established in 1975, serves as the City’s historic preservation agency. Its responsibilities consist of:

“identifying and preserving historic properties, reviewing development and demolition activities proposed in the city, providing public information and assistance on preservation practices, and providing staff support to local historic district commissions”.<sup>259</sup>

Historic districts and individual historic buildings are designated by the BLC. The BLC also develops standards and criteria for each designated building and historic district for ensuring the preservation of these historic properties. The

---

<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> The City of Boston, “Boston Landmarks Commission”, <<http://www.cityofboston.gov/environment/landmarks.asp>>, 8 August 2006.

purpose of these guidelines is explained as follows:

“These Standards and Criteria serve two purposes: one, to guide property owners in planning the rehabilitation of buildings; and two, to assist district commission in determining those architectural changes that are appropriate to district”.<sup>260</sup>

There are eight historic districts in Boston. Each historic district commission has its own ‘standards and criteria’ assisting for review and approval of proposed projects. Local historic district commissioners are volunteers who are “nominated by neighborhoods, professional organizations, or the Boston Landmarks Commission and appointed by the Mayor”.<sup>261</sup>

If proposed projects use federal funding for rehabilitation, they also have to comply with the Secretary of Interior’s “Standards for Rehabilitation and guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings”.<sup>262</sup> In addition, some of these projects may also require the Large Project Review by the BRA. For example, if the scope of a project is “to substantially rehabilitate a building or structure having, or to have after rehabilitation, a gross floor area of more than one hundred thousand (100,000) square feet”, it’s reviewed by the BRA.<sup>263</sup>

In addition to the zoning code, the Massachusetts State Building Code is consulted for issues relating to building construction, alteration, or repair to ensure public safety, health and welfare. Furthermore, handicapped accessibility requirements are regulated by the zoning code as well as the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Code of

---

<sup>260</sup> The City of Boston, ‘South End Landmark District Standards and Criteria’, Revised April 27, 1999, p.1.

<sup>261</sup> The City of Boston, “Locally Designated Historic Districts”, <<http://www.cityofboston.gov/environment/historic.asp>>, August 10, 2006.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid.

<sup>263</sup> The Boston Zoning Code, “The Article 80”, p. 24.

Massachusetts Regulation, which is administered by the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board.<sup>264</sup>

Finally, the Main Streets District organizations develop their design guidelines for their commercial districts.<sup>265</sup> They also take active roles in the decision making process of the development projects by working in close relation with developers and the city agencies. This will be discussed in detail in the case study in this chapter. In the following part, how the City of Boston has been involved in the Main Streets Program will be introduced.

### **3.2. The Boston Main Streets Program**

As mentioned earlier, the National Trust Main Street Center initiated its three year Urban Demonstration Program in 1985. The purpose was to test the Main Street approach in dilapidated and deserted urban business districts. One of the eight communities selected for the Urban Demonstration Program by the National Trust was Boston's Roslindale Village. Roslindale Village like the other seven districts was selected for the Program as a result of a nationwide competition as it was considered typical of traditional urban business districts. The results obtained at the end of three year demonstration program encouraged the National Trust to expand its program nationwide to other similar urban business districts ('See Table 7).<sup>266</sup>

Similarly, experiencing improvements in Roslindale neighborhood, the City of Boston was encouraged initiating a citywide main street program. The Boston Main Streets Program was the first urban citywide multi-district program in the

---

<sup>264</sup> Ibid.

<sup>265</sup> Emily Haber, interview with S.Yildirim Esen. Boston, May 28 2006

<sup>266</sup> Bloom, interview with S.Yildirim Esen.

United States when it was established in 1995. Thus, Boston became a citywide urban revitalization model for other American cities.<sup>267</sup>

### 3.2.1. Selection of the Main Street Districts

After the initiation of the Boston Main Streets Program by Mayor Thomas M. Menino, 10 business districts were chosen by the City of Boston at the end of a citywide competition for being revitalized. Among these districts were Cleary Square in Hyde Park, Codman Square in Dorchester, Maverick Square in East Boston; Broadway in South Boston, Chinatown, Allston Village, Egleston Square in Jamaica Plain, Uphams Corner in Dorchester, Bowdoin Street/Geneva Avenue in Dorchester, and Dudley Square in Roxbury. Allston Village, Bowdoin/Geneva, Chinatown, Dudley Square, East Boston, Egleston Square, Hyde Park, Upham's Corner still continues as 10-year-old programs. In 1997, four programs were added to Boston Main Streets (Brighton, Hyde Jackson, Mission Hill, Washington Gateway, St. Mark's Area). Two years later, four more programs were included (Fields Corner, Grove Hall, Four Corners). Finally, two business districts were designated Main Street in 2001 (Roxbury, JP Centre/South). Today, there are nineteen Main Streets Districts in this program (See Figure 11).<sup>268</sup>

### 3.2.2. Role of the Coordinating Program

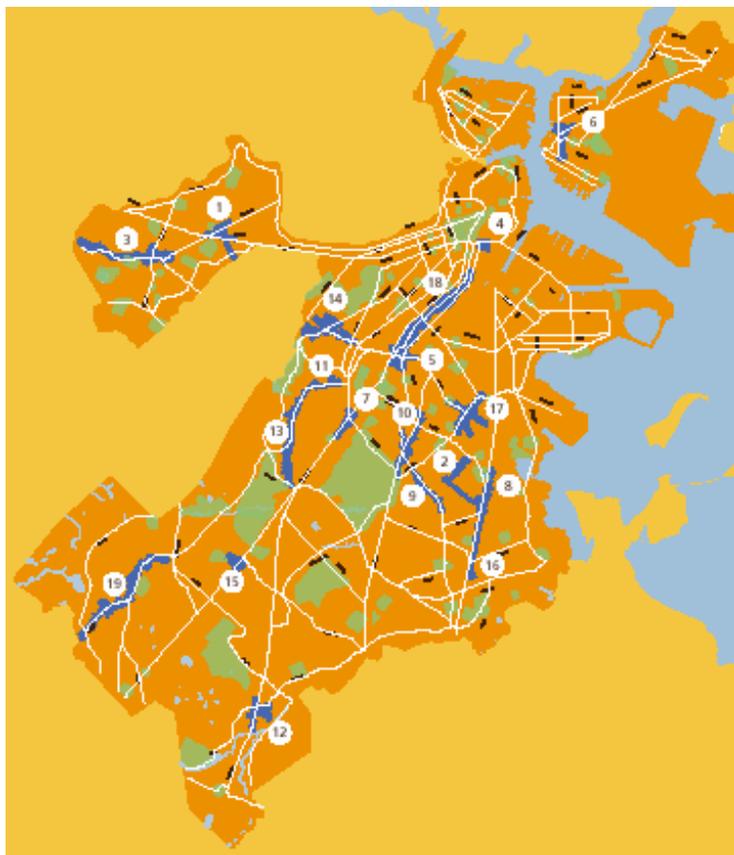
The City of Boston provides each Main Street district with technical assistance and intensive training on the four-point approach together with the National Main Street Center and local consultants.<sup>269</sup>

---

<sup>267</sup> Ibid.

<sup>268</sup> The City of Boston, "Boston Main Streets", Unpublished document, Boston Main Streets, Boston, 2006

<sup>269</sup> Haber, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.



Main Streets Districts selected for the program in Boston: 1 Allston Village, 2 Bowdoin/Geneva, 3 Brighton, 4 Chinatown, 5 Dudley Square, 6 East Boston, 7 Egleston Square, 8 Fields Corner, 9 Four Corners, 10 GroveHall, 11 Hyde / Jackson Square, 12 Hyde Park, 13 JP Centre South, 14 Mission Hill, 15 Roslindale Village, 16 St. Mark's Area, 17 Upham's Corner, 18 Washington Gateway, 19 West Roxbury

Figure 10. Boston Map Showing The Boston Main Streets Districts. Source: The City of Boston, *Discover Boston on Main Streets, Beyond Baked Beans*.<sup>270</sup>

---

<sup>270</sup> The City of Boston, *Discover Boston on Main Streets, Beyond Baked Beans*, The City of Boston, Boston, 2005, p.45

## CHAPTER 4

### CASE STUDY: WASHINGTON STREET IN SOUTH END

In this chapter, revitalization program of Washington Gateway Main Street in South End will be introduced to see the implementation of the Main Street Program at the district level. After introducing the context and historical development of the South End district, implementation of the program will be analyzed.

#### 4.1. Introduction to the Case Study

##### 4.1.1. Case Selection

Washington Gateway Main Street, which is one of the main street organizations participating in the citywide coordinating program: Boston Main Streets, had been selected as the case of the study. One of the reasons is that problems existing in the commercial district before the initiation of the revitalization program were much more extensive when compared to other districts. Washington Street, which was “originally the only land route to reach 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century Boston”,<sup>271</sup> was a place of blight and crime. Besides, it was the largest designated urban renewal area in the US. Due to urban renewal, “all but 10 blocks, two historic parks, a cathedral, and five buildings in scattered sites had been razed in the 37 blocks along Washington Street in the Gateway district”.<sup>272</sup> Besides, low-income residents had begun to be displaced due to gentrification. Quoted in the May 2005, *Main Streets News*, director of

---

<sup>271</sup> Main Street News, “2005 Great American Main Street Awards”, p.11.

<sup>272</sup> National Trust for Historic Preservation, “Washington Gateway, in Boston, Mass., Receives Great American Main Street Award”, <[www.nationaltrust.org](http://www.nationaltrust.org)>

Boston Main Streets says that “[m]any of us involved with Boston Main Streets were skeptical about how successful the application of the Main Street approach could be, given the challenges faced in the district”.<sup>273</sup> Therefore, this example presents various revitalization issues so as to give an opportunity for a detailed analysis.

The other reason for choosing this case is that it is also one of the most successful examples of implementation of the program. Due to impressive outcomes gained since 1997, WGMS received the Great American Main Street Award, given by National Trust for Historic Preservation, in 2005.

#### 4.1.2. Data Collection

At the beginning, research about all Boston Main Streets communities has been conducted. Collected information includes the historical backgrounds of the districts, federal or local designation status of the districts (such as National Historic District or Local Historic District), and their mission and goals defined for the revitalization. In addition, The Boston Main Streets Program unit of the Office of Business Development and each Main Street was contacted to learn about each program. Finally, Main Street districts have been visited.

Then the case of the study was studied in detail. Both qualitative and quantitative data have been used to evaluate the implementation of the program. Quantitative data were collected from the reports of WGMS, Boston Main Streets, Boston Redevelopment Authority Research Department and United States Census Bureau. Qualitative data were obtained from 1.literature review, 2.surveys prepared for businesses located on Washington Street,

---

<sup>273</sup> Main Street News, “2005 Great American Main Street Awards”, p.12.

3.interviews with the City officials and program directors, and 4.personal observations during site visits.

#### 4.1.3. Business Survey

Business survey was conducted in May 2006 in order to investigate the thoughts of the South End retail owners / managers about the economic revitalization efforts and improvements in the street. There are ninety two businesses along the street. Among these, 51 businesses, mostly retails, have been contacted to conduct the survey. 32 retail owners or managers who have accepted to participate in the survey have been the respondents. People from different age, sex, social class, occupation and ethnicity took part in the survey.

In order to encourage the participation of many people, survey questions which would be answered approximately in five-seven minutes have been prepared. Participants have been asked ten questions (See Appendix A). The type of business he/she owns / works in, association with the business and how long he/she has been working in the district have been asked.

They have been also asked to evaluate the changes that they have experienced in Washington Street, South End since they started to live/ work in the district. In this question eighteen evaluation criteria were listed to learn the changes in the street. They have rated the changes as “worsened”, “no change”, “slight improvement”, moderate improvement”, and “extensive improvement”. The other option to answer this question was “not applicable”.

In addition, in the following question, survey participants rated their level of satisfaction about certain characteristics of Washington Street. The aim of asking this question was to learn how users perceive existing problems and conditions of the street.

Moreover, they answered whether they know the Washington Gateway Main Streets (WGMS) Program and if so, how they rate the contributions of WGMS to the improvements in Washington Street, South End. Participants who have taken part in the WGMS activities or received its services have also rated these activities and services of WGMS.

Demographic questions about the respondents were their age and highest level of educational attainment.

#### 4.2. The Context

The Washington Gateway Main Street District is located in Boston's South End and Lower Roxbury Neighborhoods (See Figures 11 & 12) along 1.4 mile section of Washington Street, which is one of the oldest and longest streets of Boston (See Figures 13 & 14).

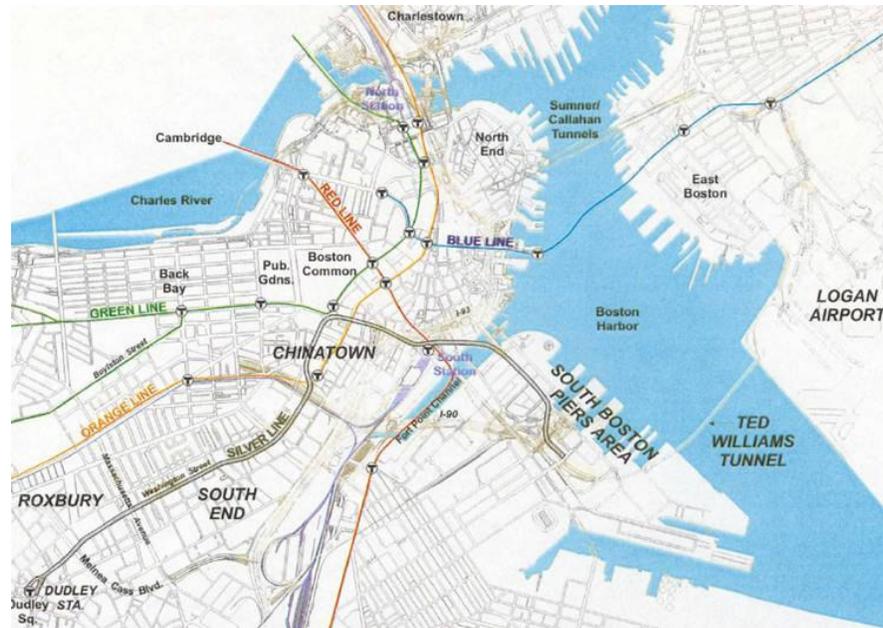


Figure 11 South End district in Boston

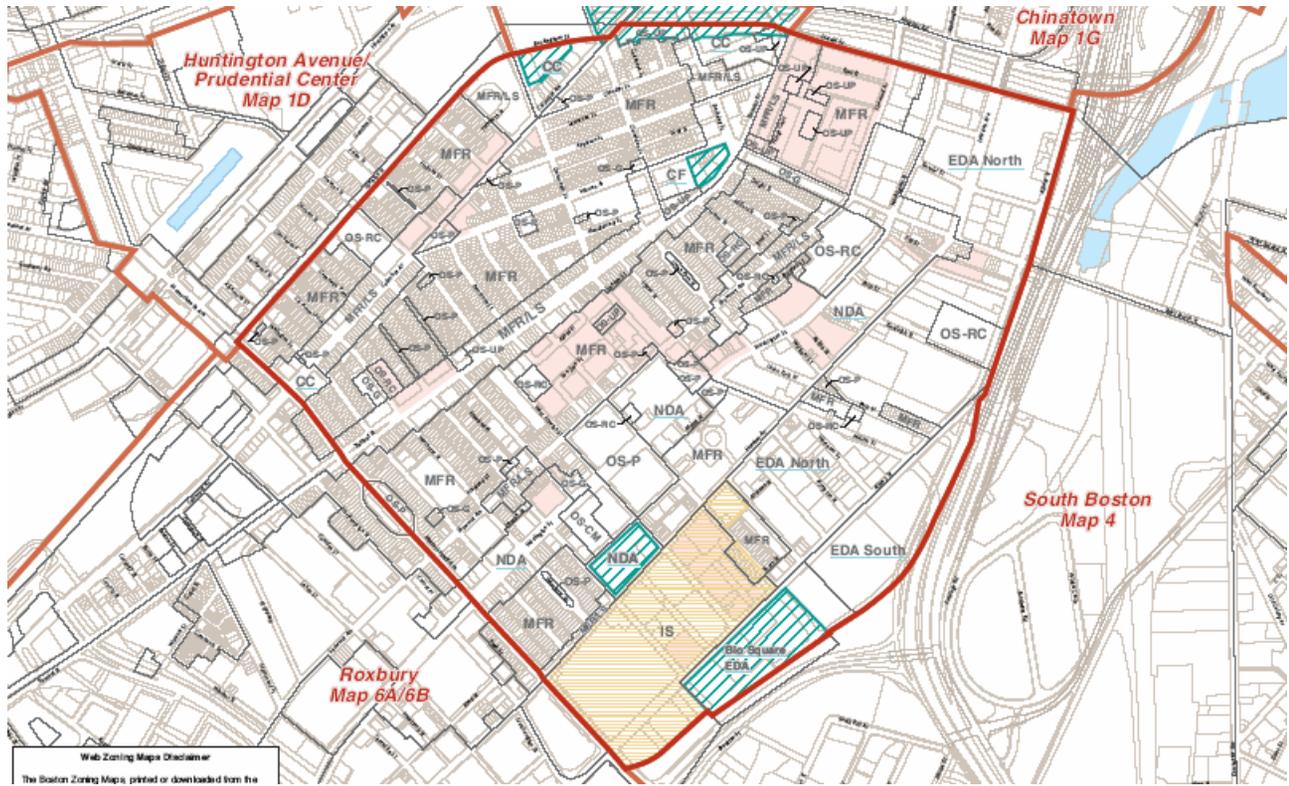


Figure 12. Zoning Map Showing the Boundaries of the South End District



Figure 13. Washington Street in South End. Source: WGMS Archive

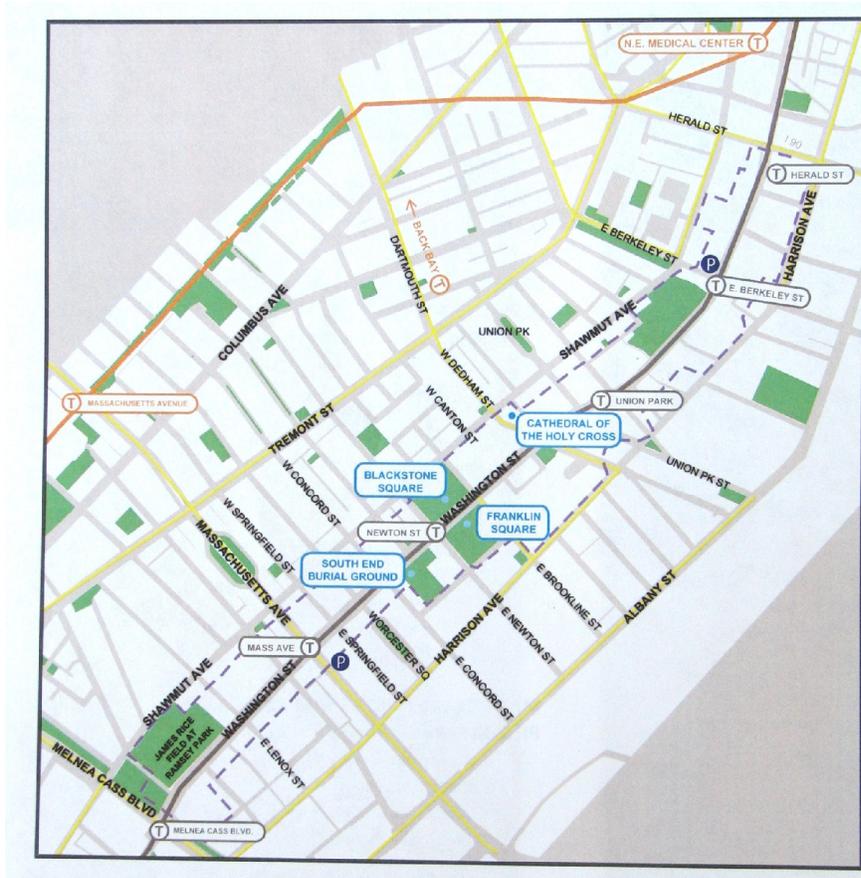


Figure 14. Washington Street in the South End district, Source: Boston Main Streets

The district is unique for being the largest intact Victorian neighborhood of the United States. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1973.<sup>274</sup> Therefore, seventy percent of the neighborhood is within the boundaries of the National Historic District. The district houses small businesses, residential, public and institutional uses (Figures 15, 16 & 17).<sup>275</sup>



Figure 15. South End Row Houses

---

<sup>274</sup> United States Department of Interior National Park Service, “National Register of Historic Places Inventory”, Unpublished Document, 1973.

<sup>275</sup> Karl F. Seidman, Revitalizing Commerce for American Cities - Practitioner's Guide, Fannie Mae Foundation, 2004



Figure 16. Small businesses along Washington Street



Figure 17. Cathedral Housing Project located on Washington Street: Housing Developments built after urban renewal. (December 28, 2005)

There are 92 businesses located on the business district. According to the Census 2000, population of the district is 28,160 people (See Table 9 and Figure 18). This is one of the ethnically diverse neighborhoods of Boston. 23.9% of the population is African-American, 24.4% is Asian, 29.5% is Caucasian, 19.4% is Hispanic and the remaining 2.7% is grouped as other. There are 11,185 households in the district. Average household income is \$ 41,590 per year.<sup>276</sup>

Table 9. A Comparative Overview of The South End District<sup>277</sup>

	South End	Boston
Land Area (in sq. miles):	1.03	48.4
Population:	28,160	589,141
Gross Population Density/Sq.mile:	27,339.8	12,172.3
Foreign Born Population	20.6%	25.8%
Race - NonHispanic White	12,751	290,972
Hispanic Population	4,578	85,199
Poverty Rate	23.9%	19.5%
Unemployment Rate	6.9%	7.2%
Median Household Income	\$41,590	\$39,629
Housing Units:	15,261	251,935
Occupied Housing Units	93.6%	95.1%
Median Gross Rent	\$707	\$802
Language Spoken at Home - Only English	67.8%	66.6%
Occupation - Service	14.4%	17.8%
Occupation - Management, Profess. Etc.	55.6%	43.3%

<sup>276</sup> Boston Main Streets, "Washington Gateway Main Streets", Unpublished report prepared for the New Urbanism Conference, The City of Boston, Boston, 2006

<sup>277</sup> (5765-end census)

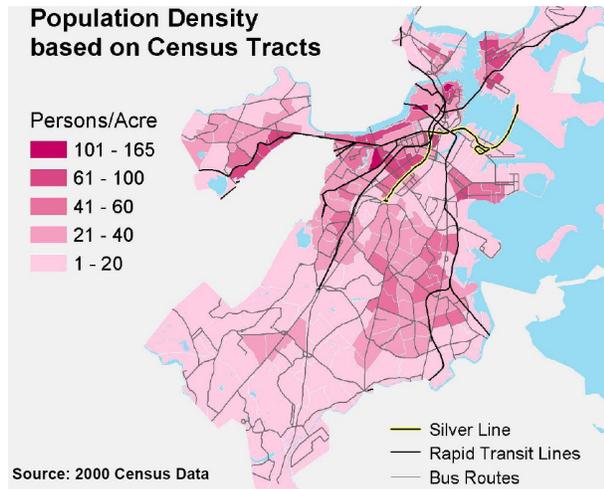


Figure 18. Population Density in Boston<sup>278</sup>

### 4.3. Historical Development of the South End<sup>279</sup>

In the early maps, the town of Boston looks like a small island connected to the main land with a “neck of land” (See Figure 19). The British built two sets of fortifications to control this strategic point of connection. Washington Street was the only link in between, passing through fortifications.<sup>280</sup>

---

<sup>278</sup> Boston Redevelopment Authority, "The Redevelopment of Washington Street a Density Success Story" <[http://www.architects.org/emplibrary/B6\\_b.pdf#search=%22The%20Redevelopment%20of%20Washington%20Street%20A%20Density%20Success%20Story%22](http://www.architects.org/emplibrary/B6_b.pdf#search=%22The%20Redevelopment%20of%20Washington%20Street%20A%20Density%20Success%20Story%22)>, (last day accessed May 16 2006)

<sup>279</sup> See Appendix B for the illustration showing the development of the South End district.

<sup>280</sup> Regional Urban Design Assistance Teams, 1980, p.4.

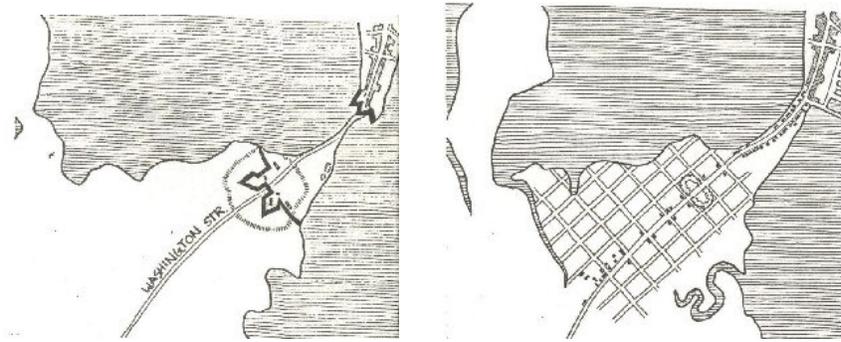


Figure 19. The Neck in 1774 and 1814<sup>281</sup>

After the Revolutionary War, the fortifications were demolished and the town started to develop along the neck (See Figure 19). First, residences were built along the Washington Street, which “became a famous carriage promenade for those wishing to escape to the country”.<sup>282</sup> In the 1830’s and 1840’s, the area was continued to be filled with new constructions because of the shortage of land in Boston. Transportation means were the horse-drawn street railways along Washington and Tremont streets connecting this area to the commercial area of Boston (See Figure 20). During this period, large row houses were built in the area to attract upper income families. Washington Street became a suburban main street filled with shops. Dover Street, crossing the Washington Street developed as a commercial center also housing an opera house.<sup>283</sup>

---

<sup>281</sup> Regional Urban Design Assistance Teams, p.5.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid.

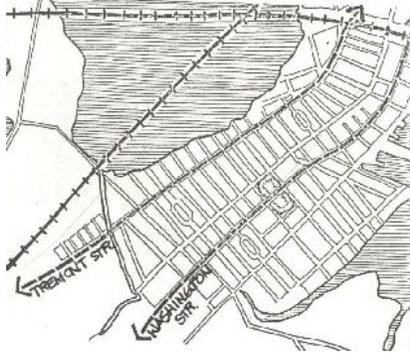


Figure 20. South End in 1855<sup>284</sup>

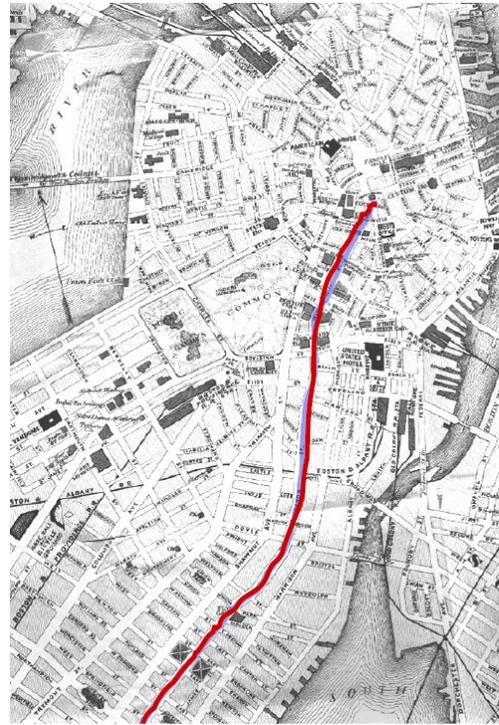
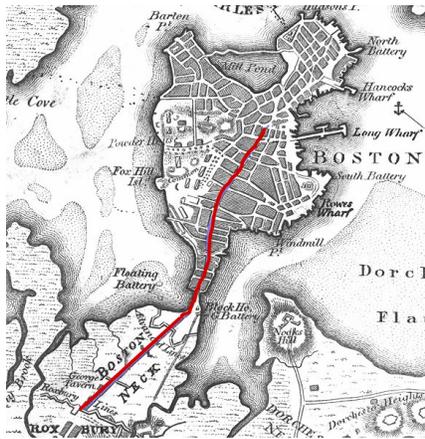


Figure 21. Washington Street in 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century<sup>285</sup>

<sup>284</sup> Ibid.

<sup>285</sup> WGMS archive

In the 1840s and 1850's, South End and Back Bay residential districts were created to provide housing for the middle and upper classes. South End was built on a landfill along the Washington Street, which had been the only natural connection between the island and the mainland. Four- and five story brick row houses were built. Figure 21 shows the development of the area during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>286</sup>

Horsecar transportation, which began in 1856, made access to the district easier. Then, immigrants started to settle in the South End. The financial crisis of 1873 undermined the development of the district. Creation of Back Bay residential neighborhood at the west of the city was an important factor in the decline of the South End. Upper income families started to move to the Back Bay and other suburban areas. Eventually, "by 1885 the South End had become predominantly a lodging house district. At the end of the century, the South End was synonymous with congested tenements, alcoholism, prostitution, and general urban decay".<sup>287</sup> According to a report outlining the profile of the district during this period, "[a]lthough still containing a working class family population, most Bostonians associated the area with alcoholism, prostitution, and drug traffic".<sup>288</sup>

In this period the transportation system was changed to street car lines, carrying residents to downtown Boston and Back Bay. In 1907, an elevated train was constructed along Washington Street (See Figure 22). As the new immigrant population increased, houses were divided to be rented to the

---

<sup>286</sup> Miller and Morgan, p.25.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid.p.25.

<sup>288</sup> Boston Redevelopment Authority, "South End Neighborhood Profile 1988", unpublished report # 319, Boston Redevelopment Authority, 1989 p.2.

newcomers as boarding houses.<sup>289</sup>

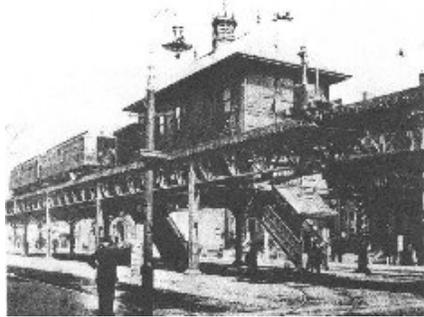


Figure 22. Elevated train<sup>290</sup>

During 1960's people were concerned with social and infrastructural problems in the cities. Federal Government initiated 'Urban Renewal Program' which would have had detrimental effects on the cities. "South End was designated as the largest renewal area in the country"<sup>291</sup>. Oppositions of the residents saved the area from the destructive urban renewal program. During this period, South End was an area with nine acres of vacant land, boarded buildings and two recreational parks. Six large low-income projects were built in the district.<sup>292</sup>

In the 1970s, construction of an interstate freeway passing through the area caused the demolition of some parts of South End and Lower Roxbury. Because of the opposition of the community, the rest of the project was not implemented.<sup>293</sup> Once the area was rediscovered by the upper-middle income families, restoration and renovation efforts began in the area. However, as

---

<sup>289</sup> Regional Urban Design Assistance Teams, 1980, p.9.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid.

<sup>292</sup> Sheila Grove, "Revitalization of Washington Street", Presentation for the New Urbanism Conference, Boston, 2006.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid.

upper income families moved in renovated houses, low-income families were forced to move out.<sup>294</sup>

By the 1980's, physical, social and economic problems in South End have reached its highest levels (See Figure 23). The district was highly deteriorated and the old buildings were in poor condition. Existence of vacant buildings and land, poor condition of open spaces, trash and litter problem, and transportation within the area were among the reasons creating the 'negative image' of the area. Besides, new constructions had a negative effect on the appearance because they were incompatible with the existing fabric. Other problems were continuing gentrification and high rate of crime.<sup>295</sup>



Figure 23. 1980 - Deteriorated Buildings and Vacancy Problem<sup>296</sup>

---

<sup>294</sup> Regional Urban Design Assistance Teams, 1980, p.9.

<sup>295</sup> Ibid., p.13-27.

<sup>296</sup> Regional Urban Design Assistance Teams, p. 30.

#### 4.4. Washington Gateway Main Street Program

In 1995, concerned neighborhood association leaders from Washington Street requested Boston's mayor to improve the condition of Washington Street. The mayor appointed the Task Force to come up with solutions to the problems of the district (See Figure 24). This task force was composed of neighborhood residents, business owners, city officials and neighborhood activists. The task force completed its report in 1997(See Figure 25). The same year the Washington Gateway Main Street (WGMS) was founded as part of the Boston Main Streets Program to realize the recommendations in the task force's report.<sup>297</sup>



Figure 24. Task Force<sup>298</sup>

---

<sup>297</sup> Seidman, Revitalizing Commerce for American Cities - Practitioner's Guide,

<sup>298</sup> WGMS archive

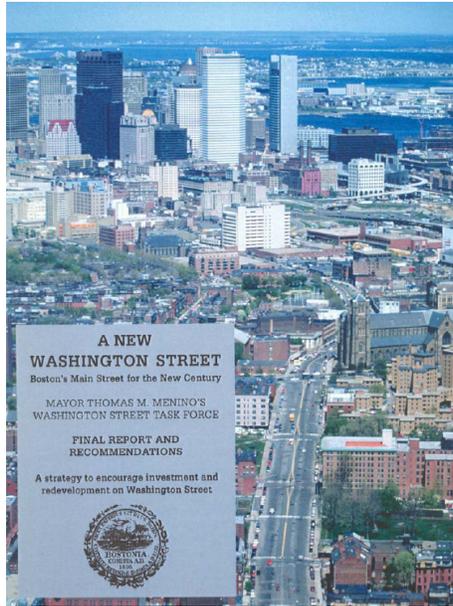


Figure 25. Task Force Report

#### 4.4.1. Mission and Goals

The basic mission of WGMS is to make Washington Street, South End, one of the oldest streets of Boston, an attractive place to live and work. The vision of the program is to make Washington Street an impressive mixed-use, pedestrian oriented place with variety of retail stores.<sup>299</sup> The four revitalization goals are defined as:

1. "Build a new Washington Street,
2. Revitalize Washington Street by creating opportunities for new jobs and businesses,
3. Promote Washington Street as an exciting destination with

---

<sup>299</sup> Washington Gateway, "Rediscover Washington Street", Booklet, Washington Gateway Main Street, Boston, 2006

diverse ethnic stores, markets and restaurants,

4. Create a new future for Washington Street”.<sup>300</sup>

The mission statement of WGMS is based on the Task Force Action Plan of 1997, which states that “[g]ateway remains committed to making Washington Street, visually appealing, socially cohesive and economically sound through its work”. Major tasks of WGMS include:

- “Facilitating positive interactions among residents and businesses,
- Addressing issues of street cleanliness, parking, loading and safety,
- Providing information and referrals for prospective developers, businesses and residents,
- Monitoring development projects,
- Assisting businesses with financing, permitting, referrals, community support, and matching funds Storefront Improvement Grants,
- Sponsoring Events - Holiday Shopping, Ribbon-Cuttings Special Events,
- Creating and distributing promotional materials such as newsletters, business map, news articles, cable TV shows.”<sup>301</sup>

Every year, each committee defines new tasks to do in a one-year period.<sup>302</sup>

#### 4.4.2. Organization and Community Involvement

The ‘working board’, which sets agenda of the Main Street Program, is composed of 10-15 members (See Figure 26). One of the board members is a

---

<sup>300</sup> Boston Redevelopment Authority. Economic Development and Industrial Corporation., A New Washington Street : Boston's Main Street for the New Century : A Strategy to Encourage Investment and Redevelopment on Washington Street : Final Report and Recommendations, The Authority, Boston, MA, 1997

<sup>301</sup> Washington Gateway, “Rediscover Washington Street”.

<sup>302</sup> Sheila Grove, interview with S.Yildirim Esen. Boston, June 3 2006 2006.

business owner. The others are residents from the community. Sheila Grove, the program director of WGMS, points out that this is a ‘residents-driven’ approach. Majority of the committee members are residents, as the business owners usually do not have time to attend meetings.<sup>303</sup> The board steers policy, finance and planning of the program, and works with partners who cooperate with WGMS.

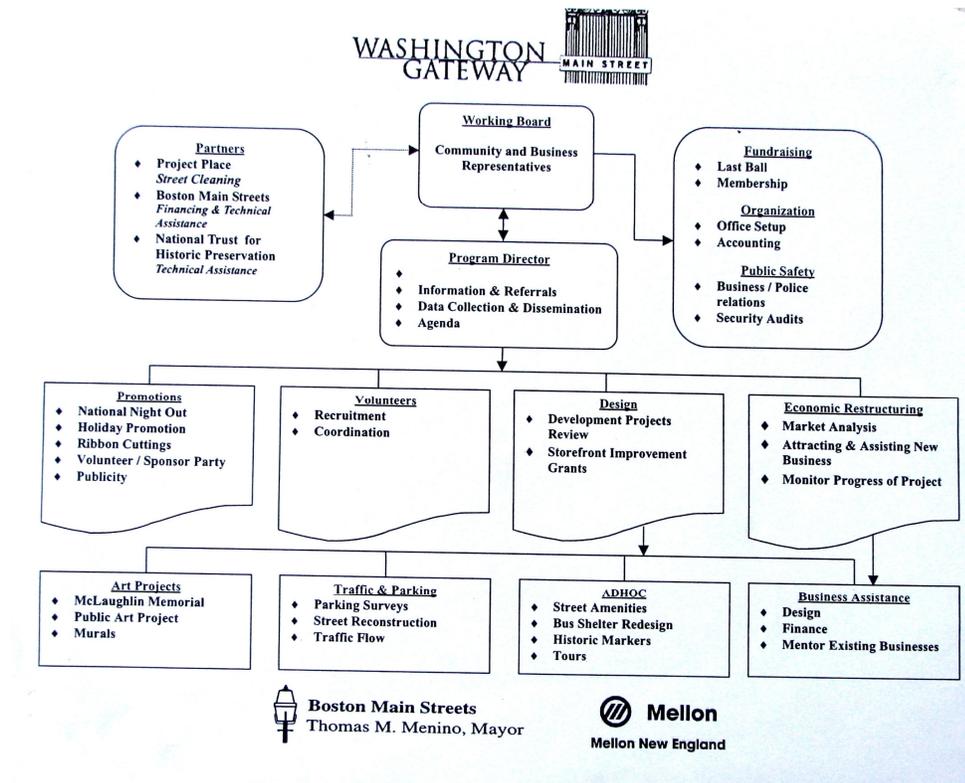


Figure 26. Washington Gateway Organization Structure<sup>304</sup>

<sup>303</sup> Ibid.

<sup>304</sup> Washington Gateway Main Street, "Organization Chart", Unpublished report, Boston, 2005

The partners of WGMS include Boston Main Streets, the coordinating program, which provides both financial and technical support, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which provides technical assistance, and Project Place<sup>305</sup>, which collaborates with WGMS on street cleaning. The working board works with a full-time program director, who manages the program, assists with program implementation, and coordinates volunteers working on four committees, including Promotions, Volunteers, Design, and Economic Restructuring. Each committee is composed of 10-15 members who are volunteers from the community. In these committees, members work on a number of tasks to implement the revitalization program.<sup>306</sup>

Participation of the community is essential for the implementation of the program. According to the executive director of WGMS “building community is essential to successful development”. According to the executive director, essential elements for community development include:

- “Strong backing from pivotal government authority
- Development plan derived from community consensus (bottom up)
- Detailed development plan
- Independent guiding entity
- Design to serve and enhance unique characteristics of district
- Access to community leaders and empowered, responsive government officials (partnering) all striving for clearly defined goals
- Move quickly while resident have “buy in”<sup>307</sup>

---

<sup>305</sup> Project Place is a nonprofit organization that “serves homeless men and women in the Boston area by offer[ing] job training, work experience; education, housing and support services to help individuals experiencing homelessness reestablish themselves in society with dignity”. <<http://www.projectplace.org/pages/aboutus.html>>, 2006.

<sup>306</sup> Grove, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

<sup>307</sup> Grove, "Revitalization of Washington Street".

Washington Gateway Main Streets achieves the publicity of the revitalization program by being on the local newspapers regularly. People can learn about WGMS and its works from the news on the newspapers. Besides, promotional events help reach to the community and make people aware of the program. In addition, catalogues promoting Washington Street and WGMS were published and distributed to the addresses. As a result of these efforts, WGMS has 2000 people in the database and 500 people in its email list.<sup>308</sup> Grove says that people get involved in the program “because [they] accomplish things”.<sup>309</sup> Ellen Witt, the assistant director of WGMS comments that people volunteer and commit their time for these projects, because this is all about the place where they live and about the quality of their life.<sup>310</sup>

#### 4.4.3. Implementation

Funding of the program is basically based on fundraising and contributions of the community. In addition, the city provides financial assistance to the revitalization program since the establishment of WGMS. Besides, two ‘corporate buddies’, BankNorth and Teradyne, support the program.

Grove says, at the beginning of the program, the neighborhood was in a bad condition due to some major mistakes made in the past. The neighborhood was “devastated by disinvestment, neglect, and urban renewal”.<sup>311</sup> WGMS aimed to make the district “clean, safe, and owned”.<sup>312</sup> Making physical improvements on the Washington Street, which was in need of repair, was among the first major tasks of the revitalization program. As a result of the efforts of WGMS, Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA), a state agency, fixed up

---

<sup>308</sup> Ibid.

<sup>309</sup> Grove, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

<sup>310</sup> Ellen Witt, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen. June 3 2006

<sup>311</sup> Grove, "Revitalization of Washington Street".

<sup>312</sup> Ibid.

the street. Design committee worked directly on the street reconstruction project. The committee worked on the plan and act as a coordinating agency between the community and MBTA. Furthermore, the committee was a big catalyst to make the project going. In addition to that, the committee members designed historic markers and bus stations. 32 panels and 8 medallions telling the history of Washington Street have been placed on SilverLine (bus line connected to the subway) kiosks along the Washington Street (See Figures 27 & 28).

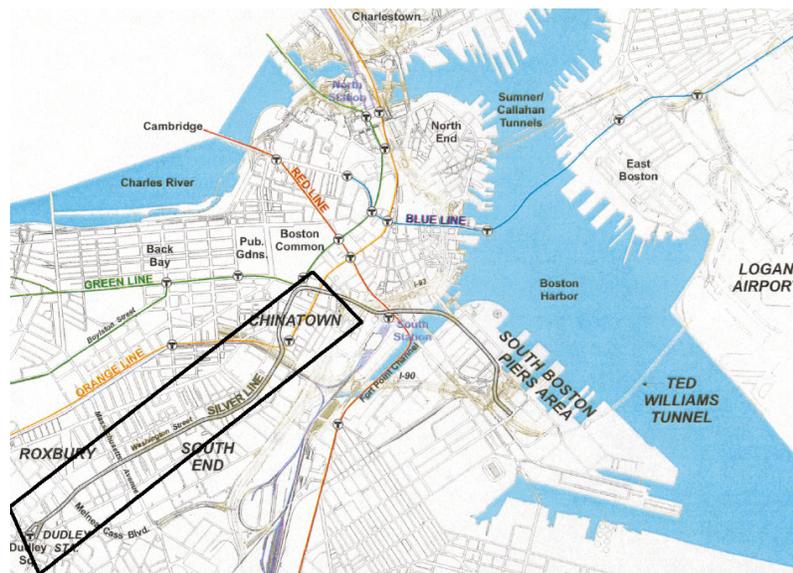


Figure 27. Transportation Connections along Silver Line<sup>313</sup>

---

<sup>313</sup> WGMS archive.



Figure 28 Kiosks located along Silver Line in South End

The reconstruction of the street was the first major milestone of the program. (See Figure 29) Another significant challenging task of the program has been getting developers involved to build new projects in the neighborhood, which was not an attractive place to invest. Having an experienced program director, who has network with real estate developers, has been effective to convince developers to invest in the neighborhood. In response to the efforts of the WGMS, new developments including new construction and rehabilitation projects have taken place in the district. (See Figure 30)

1960-70's	Urban Renewal demolishes 7 acres.	DISINVESTMENT
1985	Elevated Orange Line service discontinued.	
1990-93	BRA South End/Lower Roxbury Policy Plan.	VISION PLANNING
1995-97	Rezoning effort.	LAND USE and DENSITY CONSENSUS
1995-97	Mayor Thomas M. Menino appoints Washington Street Task Force to begin revitalization.	COMMUNITY / CITY PARTNERSHIP
1997	Elected officials sign a consensus "Framework for Implementation" to reconstruct the street with new transit.	TRANSPORTATION ACCESS
1997	Washington Street Gateway Main Streets program established.	BUSINESS COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
1998	Boston Zoning Commission adopts new zoning.	
1998	Mayor's Washington Street Design Oversight Committee finalizes design for street improvements/transit. State agencies commit \$52 million.	COMMUNITY / TRANSIT PARTNERSHIP
2002	MBTA initiates Silver Line BRT service on Washington Street	PUBLIC SERVICES IMPROVEMENTS
2003	Over 1,500 new/rehabbed housing units built or under construction along Washington Street.	PUBLIC/PRIVATE INVESTMENT

Figure 29. The revitalization program and milestones<sup>314</sup>

WGMS also achieved to be involved in the review process of the new developments. According to Grove, it is important to approach people with positive feedbacks. Besides, WGMS has built relationship with the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), the planning agency that reviews new development projects. Having a committee member who works at BRA also helped WGMS contact to and collaborate with BRA. Grove says, “when there is a new project in the neighborhood, [BRA] expect[s] to hear from [them]”.<sup>315</sup>

---

<sup>314</sup> Boston Redevelopment Authority, "The Redevelopment of Washington Street a Density Success Story" (last day accessed May 16, 2006)

<sup>315</sup> Grove, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen. .



Figure 30 The revitalization program and developments<sup>316</sup>

<sup>316</sup> Authority, "The Redevelopment of Washington Street a Density Success Story" (last day accessed May 16, 2006)

The City contributed to the revitalization of the district by stabilizing deteriorated historic buildings like Porter house (see Figure 31), which is composed of 13 housing units. In addition, developers began restorations. For example Allen House, eleven units housing has been restored. Minot Hall is another example of renovation projects which is a mixed-use development, composed of 45 units housing and 10,000 sf ground-floor retail. (See Figure 32)



Figure 31. Porter House (1996 and 2005)



Figure 32. Minot Hall (1996 and 2005)

WGMS encouraged moderate income housing in new projects. For example Rollins Square housing project was built with this perspective. 184 units of housing include 37 moderate income and 73 low income units (See Figure 33). Besides, 6,500 sf ground floor retail spaces were created in the project.



Figure 33. Rollins Square

The program is currently in the management phase. In this phase, each committee is working to accomplish its specific goals. For example, Economic Restructuring committee works for bringing the “right kinds of businesses” to the district. Therefore, making market analysis to identify needs of the community, attracting and assisting new businesses are the major tasks of the ER Committee. In addition, considering needs of the low-income residents in the neighborhood, WGMS aims to lower price level. Besides, the design committee reviews development projects and assists businesses on storefront improvements. Promotions Committee organizes several events. Annual dining event called ‘neckties’ is a fundraiser that showcases the restaurants, music and art in the South End. In 2006, twenty seven restaurants participated in neckties event. Scarf and neckties were sold to the participants and \$ 55,000 was raised

for WGMS.<sup>317</sup> The committee also organizes ‘Holiday Open Market’, which is “a benefit for WGMS featuring high quality crafts, a silent auction and food court”. Another annual event is “open studios” which is organized for the community to experience the diverse performances by several art communities located around the Gateway business district.<sup>318</sup>

#### 4.4.4. Self-Evaluation of the Program’s Performance

WGMS sends reports to the Boston Main Streets, the coordinating program of the City. Evaluation criteria include volunteer hours, no of storefronts improved, net new business opened and net jobs created. In addition to that, WGMS does self evaluation. Every year, they review what they have finished and accordingly plan what they will need to do next year.

Basically, quantitative data is used to present the growth of the program. Since its initiation in 1996, the Washington Street revitalization program has reached certain milestones, including the implementation of complex projects in the district. As of June 2006, total \$520 million (public \$120 million, private \$400 million) was reinvested in the district. 1759 housing units, 900 of which are affordable, were built. 944 parking spaces were created. 152,700 square-foot new commercial spaces have been built. \$10 million was spent for business improvements. 17 storefronts have been improved, 46 net new businesses have been opened in the district and 470 net jobs have been created. In addition, \$1.2 million was spent for open space improvements. In order to realize these goals, 17,700 volunteer hours have been committed by the community.<sup>319</sup> Because of its accomplishments in the district, WGMS was selected as the winner of the 2005 National Trust for Historic Preservation Great American

---

<sup>317</sup> Ibid.

<sup>318</sup> Boston Main Streets, "Washington Gateway Main Streets".

<sup>319</sup> Grove, "Revitalization of Washington Street".

Main Street Award.<sup>320</sup> Grove says WGMS is now “close to the management phase”. Yet, she adds, there are still projects to do in the district. For example, there are still vacant lots, and buildings need to be renovated.

#### **4.5. Evaluation of the Case**

##### 4.5.1 Evaluation of the Washington Gateway Main Street Program with regard to the performance dimensions of spatial quality

The case of the study will be evaluated according to the criteria discussed in ‘The Methodological Framework’ part of introduction. As mentioned earlier these criteria are based on the concepts introduced by Kevin Lynch about the performance dimensions of spatial environments. In the following part, therefore, the case will be evaluated in terms of improvements in vitality, sense, fit, access, and control in the Washington Street after the implementation of the program.

##### 4.5.1.1. Vitality

As mentioned in ‘The Methodological Framework’, one of the qualities of a ‘good city form’ is **vitality**.<sup>321</sup> Vitality is also one of the significant issues for revitalizing a place. Considering the sub-dimensions and measures of vitality, first, challenges influencing the vitality of Washington Street in the late 1980s and early 1990s need to be discussed. According to a report written in 1980, one of the problems affecting the vitality of the Washington Street was the **bad condition of the streets and sidewalks** on the major roads. According to the report,

---

<sup>320</sup> Boston Main Streets, unpublished report, June 2006.

<sup>321</sup> Lynch, pp.121-129.

“[p]otholes, broken sidewalks, inadequate lighting, and unreadable street signs overshadow recent efforts to create and restore small parks and other minor improvements...They are dangerous, encourage littering and contradict the pride that residents have in this community”.<sup>322</sup>

Besides, the excessive amount of **trash** throughout the area was a significant problem. Another issue mentioned in this report was the presence of **crime**. South End/Lower Roxbury was a high crime area. The degree of crime is explained in the report as “crime and the fear of crime seriously threaten the community’s social health”<sup>323</sup>. Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team preparing the report express also that “[a]mong local residents [they] talked with, all had been victims of crime or personally knew victims. This is not only dangerous to personal safety; it is wholly incompatible with healthy community life.”<sup>324</sup> In addition, **vacant buildings and lands**, used for disposal of trash, and housing criminal activities were endangering health and safety in the neighborhood.<sup>325</sup> According to a report of Boston Redevelopment Authority, in 1980, “thirteen percent of South End dwelling units were vacant in 1980: of these, 58 percent were rental and 38 percent were “other vacants” or were “held for occasional use””.<sup>326</sup> It is also mentioned in the report that

Comparatively little of the housing stock in the metropolitan region is vacant (4.5 %) but Boston and the South End, both have a high vacancy status (9,5 % and 12.7 %, respectively)<sup>327</sup>

Population decrease and demolition of some housing units during urban renewal period has led to increase in vacancy rate after 1950s (See Table 10).

---

<sup>322</sup> Regional Urban Design Teams. P.27

<sup>323</sup> Ibid.

<sup>324</sup> Ibid, p. 25.

<sup>325</sup> Ibid.

<sup>326</sup> Anne Hafrey, "Demographics and Housing in the South End, the City of Boston and the Boston Smsa: Report No 197", Boston Redevelopment Authority, Boston, 1985. p.1

<sup>327</sup> Ibid. p.13.

After 1970s, when upper income people started to move into the area, vacancy rate started to decrease while population was increasing.

Table 10. Population and Housing Comparison (1950-1985) (BRA Document, no 196)

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1985
Population	57.218	34.956	22.775	27.125	29.951
Housing Units	15.536	20.849	10.885	13.752	13.893
Vacant	490	3.268	1.763	1.733	611
Vacancy Rate	3,2%	15,7%	16,2%	12,7%	4,4%

Besides, some buildings had infrastructural problems. In 1980, six percent of housing did not have complete plumbing. This is explained in the report as follows:

The proportion of units lacking complete plumbing is very high in the South End when compared to the metropolitan rate (5.6 % vs. 1.6 %). Eighty-three percent of the units without complete plumbing in the district are rental (vs. 66 % in Boston and 67 % in the SMSA) Ten percent of such dwellings in the South End are vacant, whereas in Boston the rate climbs to 20 percent.<sup>328</sup>

In the 1990s, however, the district was still in poor condition. 1997 report of the Washington Street Task Force mentions that one of the challenges of the Washington Street was the extreme disrepair and lack of maintenance. According to the Task Force Business Survey, “[b]usiness owners expressed the sentiment that “Washington Street is like a forgotten street,” pointing to the

---

<sup>328</sup> Ibid. p.14.

large pot holes, ripped up side walks, poor quality of street repairs and trash strewn vacant lots”.<sup>329</sup>

In addition, although the crime rate was reduced by 20 % according to the information provided by the Boston Police Department, the perception of crime continued to be a problem. The Task Force Business Survey also revealed that “while the reality of crime along Washington Street, particularly during the day, [was] not significant, the perception of crime remain[ed] a problem”.<sup>330</sup> Besides, prostitutes and drug dealers were frequently loitering near certain places.

In order to deal with these problems, one of the recommendations of the Task Force was developing a maintenance program for Washington Street. Another recommendation, regarding the safety problem, was “creat[ing] an action plan to address security concerns and consider[ing] alternatives to solid storefront grates”, which cause perception of crime. Besides, the Task Force proposed continuing efforts for redeveloping vacant lands and buildings. Washington Gateway Main Street, which assumed the goals and recommendations of the Task Force, has collaborated with various State and the City agencies and with the community to overcome these problems. Table 11 summarizes the strategies developed by WGMS to improve the vitality of the street in cooperation with other parties.

---

<sup>329</sup> Boston Redevelopment Authority. Economic Development and Industrial Corporation., p.20.

<sup>330</sup> Ibid.

Table 11 Improvement of the vitality of Washington Street<sup>331</sup>

		Challenges facing Washington Street in the 1980's and 1990's	Strategies developed to deal with problems concerning vitality	Public agencies and other parties taking a lead	WGMS Committees and People involved in the implementation of these strategies
<b>VITALITY</b>	<b>Sustenance</b>	bad condition of the streets and sidewalks	developing a maintenance program	parks: BPRD; parking and enforcement: BTD; code violations: ISD; street and sidewalk maintenance, snow removal plan: PWD	Program management
		extreme disrepair and lack of maintenance			
		excessive amount of trash	keeping the district clean	Cooperating with Project Place (funded by Mellon Bank)	
	<b>Safety</b>	presence of crime	developing an action plan to address security concerns	BPD, BPRD, MOBS	Program manager & Design Committee
		loitering prostitutes and drug dealers	removal of solid storefront grates (financial and technical assistance provided to businesses)	PFD, WSBA	
		presence of vacant buildings and lands	advocating for the redevelopment of vacant lands and buildings	BRA, MOBS	

<sup>331</sup> BPRD: Boston Parks and Recreation Department, BTD: Boston Transportation Department, ISD: Inspectional Service Department, PWD: Public Works Department, BPD: Boston Police Department, MOBS: Mayor's Office of Business Services, PFD: Public Facilities Department, WSBA: Washington Street Business Association, BRA: Boston Redevelopment Authority.

In the first years of the program, one of the priorities of WGMS was making the district safe and clean. In order to keep the district clean, WGMS cooperated with Project Place<sup>332</sup>, giving an opportunity to homeless people to work and to connect with the community. This project was funded by Mellon Bank, the program's corporate buddy, for four years. In addition, roll-down grates which were associated with the existence of crime were aimed to be removed from storefronts by working with business owners.<sup>333</sup>

At the beginning, the district was not an attractive place for developers. As WGMS publicized the revitalization of the district and shown development potential to developers, development interest increased.<sup>334</sup> In the 1990s new housing units were built. From 1990 to 2000 the number of housing units increased from 14,915 to 15,267 (See Table 12).<sup>335</sup>

---

<sup>332</sup> Project Place is a nonprofit organization that "serves homeless men and women in the Boston area by offer[ing] job training, work experience; education, housing and support services to help individuals experiencing homelessness reestablish themselves in society with dignity". <<http://www.projectplace.org/pages/aboutus.html>>, 2006. (Visited on July 25, 2006)

<sup>333</sup> Seidman, *Revitalizing Commerce for American Cities - Practitioner's Guide*, and Grove, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

<sup>334</sup> Grove, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

<sup>335</sup> BRA report no. 554, 2002

Table 12. New developments in the South End: Changes in Housing and Occupancy (1990-2000)<sup>336</sup>

	1990	% share	2000	% share	1990-2000 change
<b>Housing Units</b>					
Total Housing units	14,915	100%	15,267	100%	352
As a % of City Stock	5.9%		6.1%		
<b>Occupancy Characteristics</b>					
Total Occupied housing units	13,223	88.7%	14,301	93.7%	1,078
Owner occupied	2,584	17.3%	3,904	25.6%	1,320
Renter occupied	10,638	71.3%	10,397	68.1%	-241
Total Vacant	1,692	11.3%	966	6.3%	-726
<b>Vacancy Rate</b>	<b>11.3%</b>		<b>6.3%</b>		
<b>Composition of Vacant Units</b>					
Total Vacant housing units	1,692	100%	966	100%	-726
For rent	1,172	69.3%	324	33.5%	-848
For sale only	110	6.5%	100	10.4%	-10
Rented/sold, unoccupd.	111	6.6%	95	9.8%	-16
For seas. recr., occ.use	43	2.5%	63	6.5%	20
Other vacant	255	15.1%	384	39.8%	129

As new projects started to be built on vacant lands, which were attracting crime and illegal activity, the “vitality” of Washington Street began to improve.

In order to learn how business owners evaluate the improvements in the *vitality* of the Washington Street since the establishment of the Washington Gateway Main Street Program, the questions that were addressed to the business owners

---

<sup>336</sup> Ibid.

within the business survey included those issues related to: 1.the improvements in cleanliness and maintenance, 2.the improvements in safety, and 3.the improvements in the problems of vacant lands.

According to the survey results, all respondents think that there have been improvements in the cleanliness and maintenance of Washington Street.<sup>337</sup> While the answers from the respondents who have been working in the district less than ten years include slight improvement (25 %), moderate improvement (56%), and extensive improvement (13 %), the answers from those who have been working / living in the district more than ten years include moderate improvement (79 %) and extensive improvement (21 %). (See Charts 1 & 2)

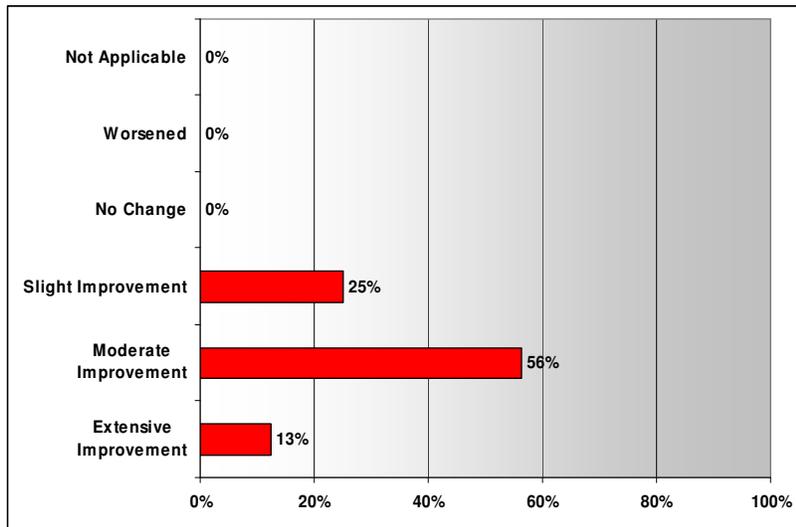


Chart 1: Evaluations about improvements in cleanliness and maintenance of the district by the respondents who have lived in the district for less than 10 years (in percentages)

---

<sup>337</sup> 4 % of the respondents did not answer this question.

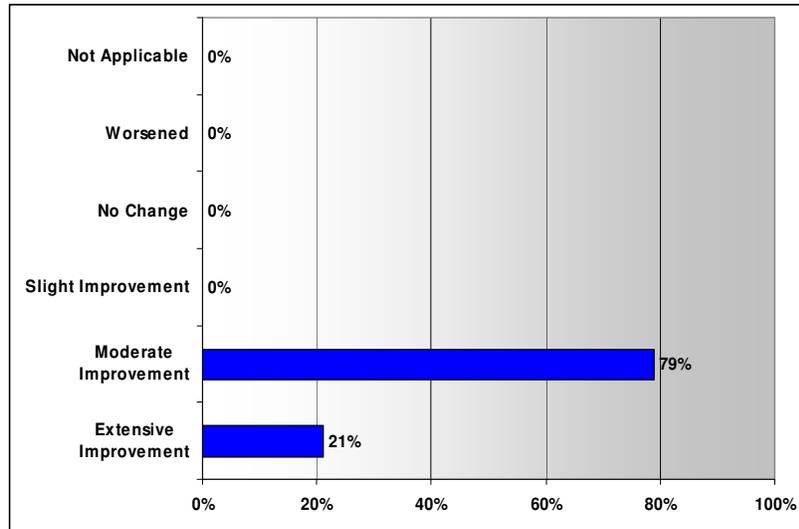


Chart 2: Evaluations about improvements in cleanliness and maintenance of the district by the respondents who have lived for 10 years or more (in percentages)

The second issue is the improvements in the safety of the district. Respondents who have been working in the district less than ten years answered the question about the change in the safety of the district as no change (6%), slight improvement (31%), moderate improvement (31%), and extensive improvement (19%). While 18% of those who have been living in the district more than ten years think that safety of the district worsened, the remaining answered this question as slight improvement (19%), moderate improvement (43%), and extensive improvement (20%). In general, answers indicate that there have been improvements in the safety of the district over the past years. (See Charts 3 & 4)

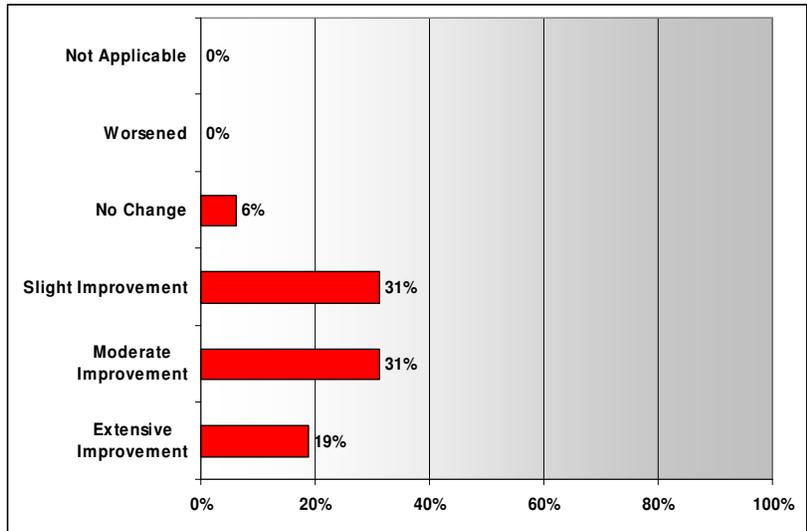


Chart 3: Evaluations about improvements in safety of the district by the respondents who have lived in the district for less than 10 years (in percentages)

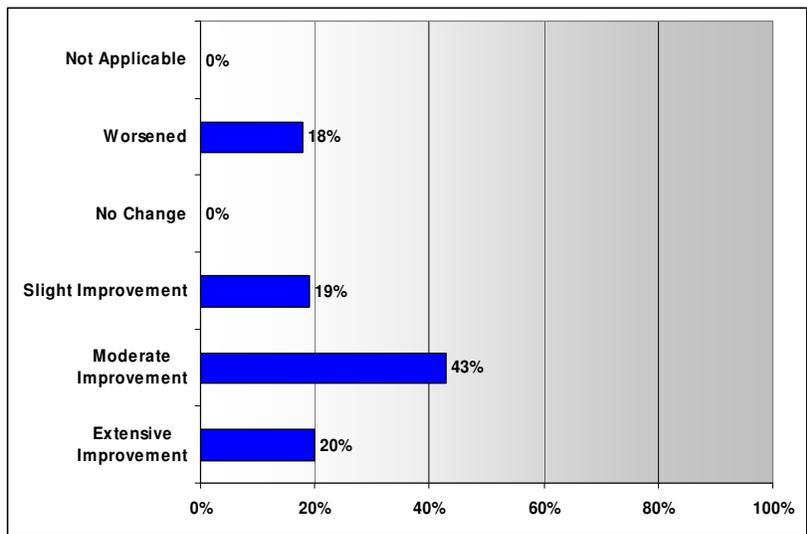


Chart 4: Evaluations about improvements in safety of the district by the respondents who have lived in the district for 10 years or more (in percentages)

The third question of the survey concerning the vitality of the district is about the improvements in the problems related to vacant lands. Except for those (6 %) who did not experience any changes in this issue, the remaining of the survey participants thinks that there have been improvements in the problems related to the vacant lands. While the majority of people who have been working in the district less than ten years have experienced slight improvements, majority of those who have been working for more than ten years have seen extensive improvements in the district in terms of vacancy problems. (See Charts 5 & 6)

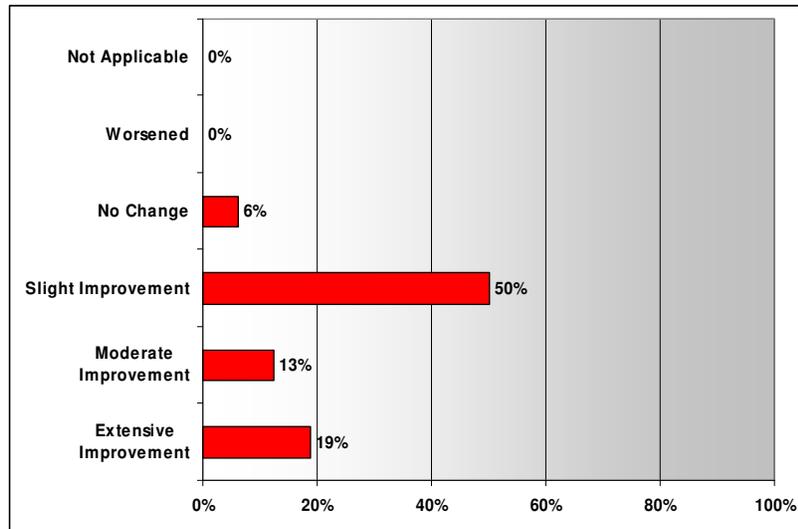


Chart 5: Evaluations about improvements in the problems related to vacant buildings and lands in the district by the respondents who have lived there for less than 10 years (in percentages)

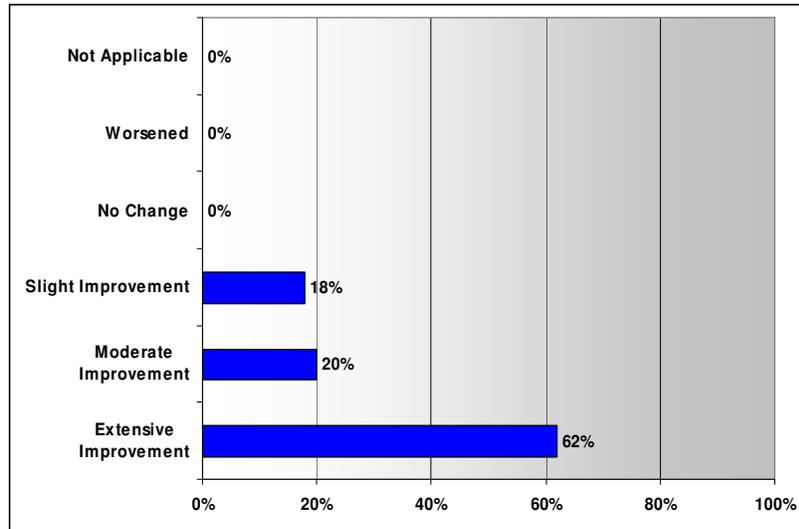


Chart 6: Evaluations about improvements in the problems related to vacant buildings and lands in the district by the respondents who have lived there for 10 years or more (in percentages)

Survey results show that there have been improvements in the cleanliness, maintenance and the safety of the district. A number of new development projects built along Washington Street since 1990's have also contributed to surmount negative conditions by reducing the number of vacant lands and bringing new population to the district. As a result, problems which once badly affected the vitality of the district do not exist today. The streets are perceived as clean and safe by the residents. The problems concerning crime or "perception of crime" have also been overcome. Currently, there are a few grates in the district (See Figure 34). Even though safety is not one of the main program tasks, WGMS Volunteer Committee also cooperates with the police department on safety of the district. This is stated by Seidman as follows:

"While public safety is not a major program activity, WGMS works with the police department and crime watch groups to help

address crime issues. When appropriate, WGMS organizes meetings between businesses and the local police department. The manager reports crime issues to the police and encourages businesses to report them; WGMS has also promoted a positive relationship with the police department by participating in police sponsored events, e.g., National Night Out, and organizing a ribbon cutting for a new police station.”<sup>338</sup>



Figure 34. There are a few grates existing in the district.

#### 4.5.1.2. Sense

As mentioned earlier, the second dimension of performance of a good city that Kevin Lynch points out is **sense**. Improvements in the sense of a place may be necessary for revitalization of a place. (See “The Methodological Framework” in the Introduction chapter).

In the example of Washington Street, Sound End, there is not a study analyzing the perception of the users prior to the beginning of the revitalization program. On the other hand, 1980 study of the Regional / Urban Design Team<sup>339</sup> reveals

---

<sup>338</sup> Seidman, p.86.

<sup>339</sup> Teams,

problems concerning the *identity* (sense of place) and *significance* (perception of place) of the district.

*Identity* of a place helps people recognize the place with its particular character. According to the 1980 study of Regional / Urban Design Teams, one of the problems of the district is connected with the **identity** of the district. This issue is expressed in the study as follows: “Persons who live here seem more oriented to their local street or neighborhood than to the area as a whole, and know little about the area beyond their own neighborhood”. This may also be considered in relation to the **structure**, the quality of sense of orientation of a place. In addition, it is mentioned that “[m]any local residents seem to know a lot about their immediate neighborhoods, but very little about shops, restaurants, services, and activities more than a couple blocks away”.<sup>340</sup>

Another problem of the district was its **negative image**, which is linked to the **significance** aspect of sense of place. This issue is expressed by the team preparing the report as follows:

“to most persons outside the area (and to many who live and work here South End / Lower Roxbury has a blurry but generally negative image. Employers report difficulty in recruiting and retaining personnel; shop owners note problems attracting customers from outside the area; financial institutions seem reluctant to invest here. A non-specific sense of racial tension, illegal activities and physical danger seem to characterize the outsider’s view. Interestingly, [they] noted a similar view among persons living here about South End/Lower Roxbury neighborhoods other than their own.”<sup>341</sup>

---

<sup>340</sup> Ibid. p.14.

<sup>341</sup> Ibid. p.13.

In addition, they mention that while entering the area through one of few gateways, first impression is so poor that affects the negative image of the whole district. Therefore, “finding the charm, warmth, history, fine architecture and business services of the area requires special effort”.<sup>342</sup> Furthermore, trash problem of the district was contributing to a negative image. This issue is mentioned in the 1980 study as follows: “[th]e excessive accumulation of trash and litter in streets, gutters, parks, alleys and vacant lots projects an attitude and initial perception of the area”.<sup>343</sup>

In the 1980s, not only the condition of streets and sidewalks (mentioned earlier), but also the condition of the historic buildings, subsidized housing projects, parks, and storefronts and signs of retails were contributing to the negative image of the area.<sup>344</sup> According to a report of the BRA, in 1980, even though interiors of the 80 % of the housing units were in very good – good condition, exteriors of 62 of those were in very good – good condition (see Table 13).

Table 13. Housing Condition in 1980 (report no 196)

	Very Good - Good	Fair – Poor
Interior Housing Condition	80	20
Exterior Housing Condition	62	38

---

<sup>342</sup> Ibid. p.14.

<sup>343</sup> Ibid. p.14.

<sup>344</sup> Ibid.

Particularly, the condition of historic buildings was poor. 1980 study of the Regional Urban Design Teams states that many historic buildings were in poor condition even though the rehabilitation efforts had already started by upper income people who were moving into the district. This is mentioned in the study as follows:

“[e]ven with the high level of rehabilitation activity now underway, a general tone of blight remains. It remains because the rehabilitation and maintenance is occurring on side streets for the most part. The major streets – Columbus, Tremont, and Washington – lag far behind, perhaps awaiting the completion of the projected sidewalk and street improvements”.<sup>345</sup>

Besides, many of the subsidized housing projects were in poor condition and in need of maintenance. Many public parks and open areas were not effectively used by the residents. Vacant buildings were also part of the negative image of the district. They were associated with vandalism, trash and illegal activities.

Most of these concerns are also mentioned in the 1997 final report of the Washington Street Task Force. In order to change the existence of blight, first, the Task Force recommendations include creating a new image for the district and enhancing the identity of it. With this perspective, the first goal of the final report of the Task Force is “[b]uild[ing] a new Washington Street”.<sup>346</sup> One of the explanations of this goal states “[r]ebuild[ing] Washington Street and design[ing] a new streetscape that includes visual improvements”.<sup>347</sup> Besides, “[c]reat[ing] an exciting streetscape that dramatically changes the current image of Washington Street [and] [c]reat[ing] a strong visual identity for the

---

<sup>345</sup> Ibid. p.26.

<sup>346</sup> Boston Redevelopment Authority. Economic Development and Industrial Corporation., p. 8.

<sup>347</sup> Ibid. p.8.

street” is suggested.<sup>348</sup> In order to supplement this objective, the Task Force also recommends “[r]e-emphasiz[ing] the important architectural, social and cultural history of the area **to restore the image and vitality** [emphasis added] of the street, and creat[ing] a new marketing strategy”.<sup>349</sup> For example, according to the report, Washington Street could be identified as “a “historic transit” corridor that links the neighborhoods with downtown Boston” by installing suitable street lighting fixtures and traffic signs.<sup>350</sup> Besides, the identity and image of Washington Street could be enhanced by “lining the street with distinctive trees and organizing parades”.<sup>351</sup>

It is expressed in the report that, as a result of the advocacy of the Task Force, the City of Boston started short-term street improvements. In particular, the potholes were filled, the cross-walks and street lines were repainted and graffiti were removed along Washington Street.

After the Washington Gateway Main Street was established in 1997, it has worked to improve the identity of Washington Street and to create a new image. WGMS, having a vision of making Washington Street a mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, thriving street with ground-floor retail stores, aimed to ensure that new developments along the street comply with the program’s vision. It has succeeded to be involved in the review process of the projects by working with developers and city agencies. Design Committee has been influential in shaping design and uses of numerous new projects according to design guidelines and vision developed for Washington Street.<sup>352</sup> Among the criteria used by the committee while reviewing new projects include “ground-floor retail space, large front windows and prominent residential entrances, a

---

<sup>348</sup> Ibid. p.22

<sup>349</sup> Ibid. p.31.

<sup>350</sup> Ibid. p.33.

<sup>351</sup> Ibid. p.34.

<sup>352</sup> Grove, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

70-foot height limit, interior ventilation to accommodate potential restaurants<sup>353</sup>, underground parking<sup>354</sup>, and lighting to illuminate the street<sup>355</sup>,<sup>356</sup>.

The reconstruction of the street was an important opportunity to enhance the image of the district. WGMS was determined to get involved in shaping the streetscape design. (See Figure 35)

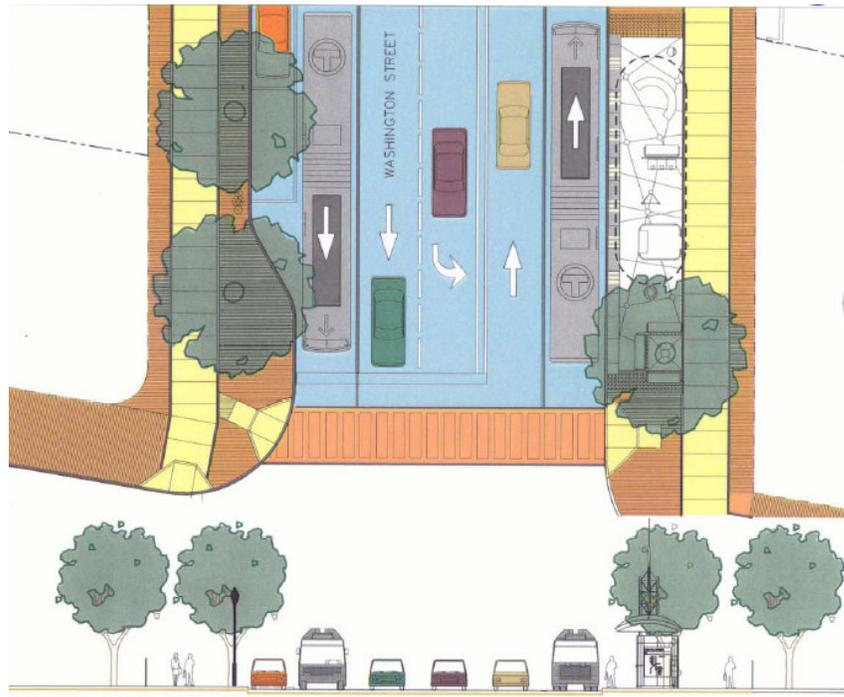


Figure 35. Sense, New Urban Design Features<sup>357</sup>

---

<sup>353</sup> This is also significant to guarantee “vitality” and “future fit”.

<sup>354</sup> This is an important measure for “access”.

<sup>355</sup> Illuminating the street is important not only for “sense”, but also safety of the district.

<sup>356</sup> Seidman, Revitalizing Commerce for American Cities - Practitioner's Guide, p. 84.

<sup>357</sup> WGMS archive

Seidman writes about the involvement of WGMS in this process:

“when WGMS did not approve of the design for new bus shelters, representatives convinced the MBTA to allow them to prepare an alternative design. A special committee worked with the MBTA to design new shelters to complement the District’s historic aesthetic, and MBTA adopted the design.”<sup>358</sup>

The design of silver line stations helps people orient themselves within the district (See Figures 36 & 37). The design committee also worked on designing kiosks, located at each silver line station. Panels were designed to give information about the development and history of Washington Street and South End district. This increases the sense of time (the sense of history) of the inhabitants in the district.



Figure 36. Station Details<sup>359</sup>

---

<sup>358</sup> Seidman, Revitalizing Commerce for American Cities - Practitioner's Guide, p. 84.

<sup>359</sup> WGMS archive



Figure 37. Station Details Continued<sup>360</sup>

Besides, facade upgrading has been a significant part of creating a new image for the district. (See Figure 38) Business and property owners have been encouraged and convinced by the design committee to improve their facades, and are supported by grants and design assistance.<sup>361</sup> Besides, public art projects have contributed to enhance the new image of the district.<sup>362</sup> Table 14 summarizes the strategies developed by WGMS to improve the sense of the street in cooperation with other parties.



Figure 38 Retails, Cafeumbra: Storefront improvements

---

<sup>360</sup> WGMS archive

<sup>361</sup> Grove, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

<sup>362</sup> Seidman, Revitalizing Commerce for American Cities - Practitioner's Guide, p.84.

Table 14 Sense<sup>363</sup>

	Challenges facing Washington Street in the 1980's and 1990's	Strategies to deal with problems concerning 'sense'	Public agencies and other parties taking a lead	WGMS Committees and People involved in the implementation of these strategies
<b>SENSE</b>	*negative image (trash, litter, crime, disrepair)	<b>creating a new image for the street</b>		
		<b>enhancing the identity of the street</b>		
	*residents know little about whole neighborhood	<b>making the street a mixed-use, pedestrian oriented place</b>	MBTA, MHD, BTD, PWD	
		by designing a new streetscape		
	*lack of sense of orientation	by reemphasizing architectural, social and cultural history	working group/ funding: SELDC	Promotions and Design Committees
	*poor condition of streets, sidewalks	by developing a new marketing strategy	MOBS, WSBA	
	*poor condition of historic buildings	by installing suitable street lighting fixtures, and traffic signs, by lining the street with trees	MBTA	
	*poor condition of subsidized housing projects	by changing the perceptions of users	Arts Festival: USEAA, OCA	
	*poor condition of parks	by advocating for the reconstruction of the street	MBTA	
	*poor condition of storefronts and signs	by designing silver line stations and kiosks		
	by encouraging storefront improvements	BMS	Economic Restructuring Committee	
*vacant buildings and properties	by encouraging development of vacant lands	BRA, MOBS	Program Manager	
	by promoting good maintenance and visible care	(see vitality table)		

<sup>363</sup> MBTA: Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, MHD: Massachusetts Highway Department, BTD: Boston Transportation Department, PWD: Public Works Department, SELDC: South End Landmarks District Commission, MOBS: Mayor's Office of Business Services, WSBA: Washington Street Business Association, USEAA: United South End Artists Association, OCA: Office of Cultural Affairs, BRA: Boston Redevelopment Authority.

In order to assess the effectiveness of these efforts, questions have been asked to the business owners to learn how they evaluate the changes in the formal components (that form identity and image) of the district. The business survey includes the questions about the improvements in the *attractiveness / appearance* of the physical elements (such as quality of sidewalks, physical appearance of the old buildings, new buildings, storefronts, signs, parks and green areas). Besides, two questions have been asked to the participants regarding their perception of the place. One question was about the change in the *liveliness* of the district. The other one was about the change in the *image* of the street.

One of the questions is about the appearance of the streets and sidewalks. 13% of the respondents, all of whom have been working in Washington Street less than ten years, did not observe any changes in terms of physical appearance of the sidewalks and the streets. The remaining participants mentioned that there have been improvements. (See Chart 7)

All respondents who have been working in the district more than ten years think that there have been improvements in the appearance of the street and sidewalks (See Chart 8).

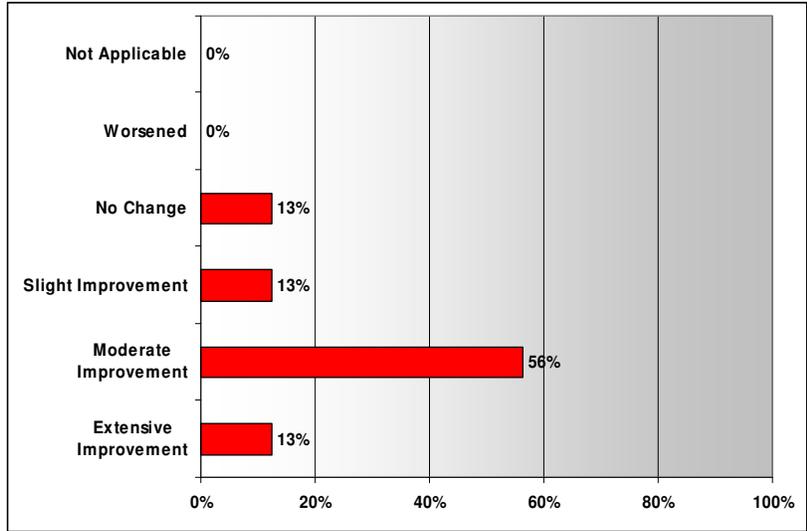


Chart 7: Evaluations about improvements in the condition of sidewalks and streets of the district by the respondents who have lived in the district for less than 10 years (in percentages)

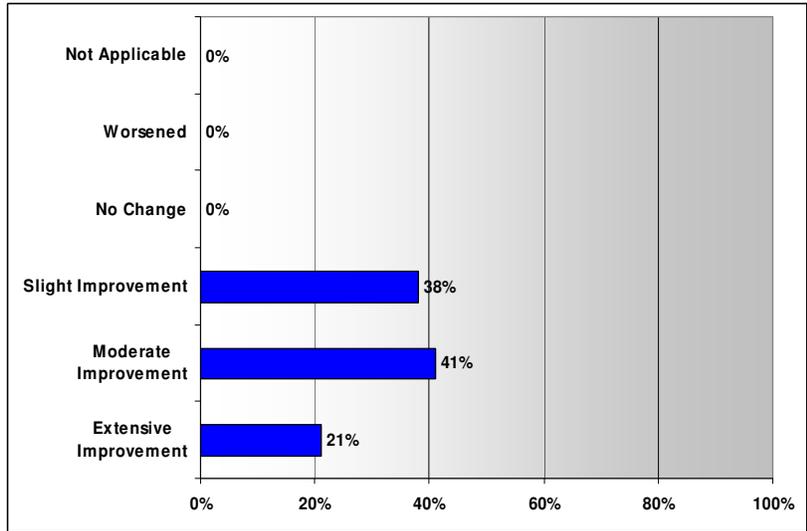


Chart 8: Evaluations about improvements in the condition of sidewalks and streets of the district by the respondents who have lived in the district for 10 years or more (in percentages)

Another question is what participants think about the changes in the appearance of the old buildings in the district. It is to note that some of these were vacant and deteriorated before the implementation of the revitalization program. 6 % of the respondents who have been working in the district for less than ten years think that the appearance of the old buildings have, “worsened”, while 13% of them choose “no change” as an answer, and the remaining (76%) state slight (19%), moderate (38%) or extensive (19%) improvements. (See Charts 9 & 10) Respondents who have their business in the district for more than ten years evaluate changes as slight (18%), moderate (22%) or extensive (40%) improvements. (See Charts 9 & 10)

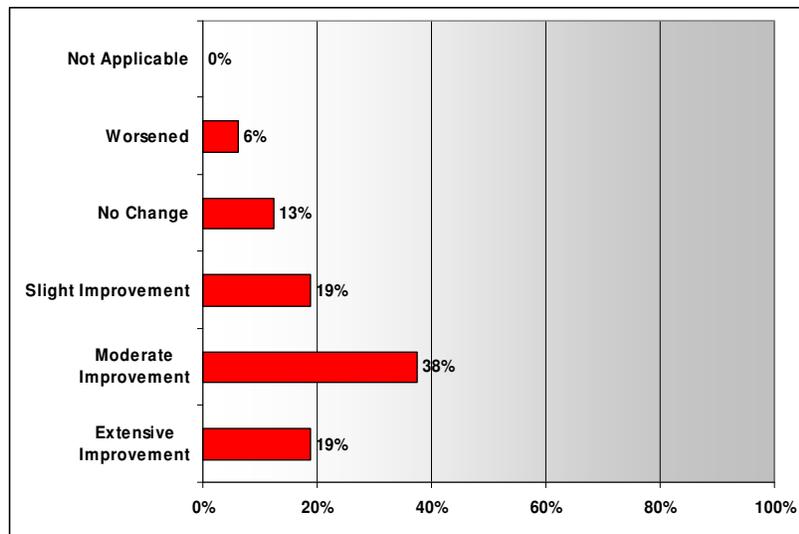


Chart 9: Evaluations about improvements in the condition and appearance of the old buildings in the district by the respondents who have lived there for less than 10 years (in percentages)

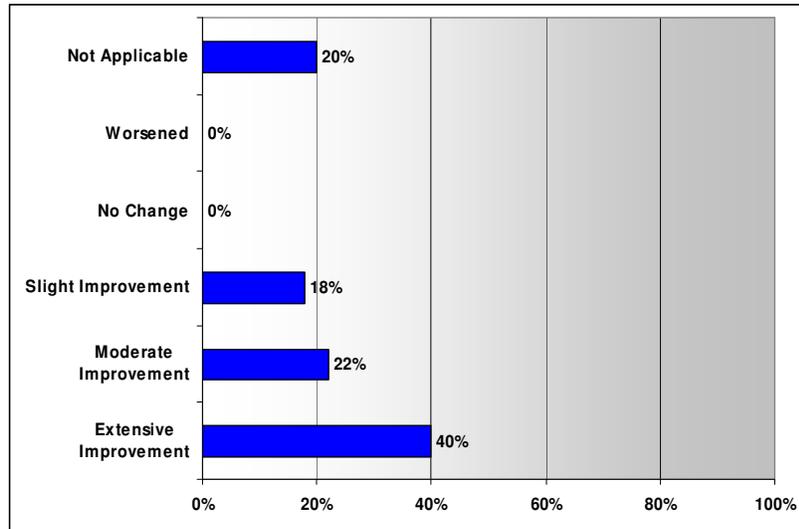


Chart 10: Evaluations about improvements in the condition and appearance of the district's old buildings of the district by the respondents who have lived there for less than 10 years (in percentages)

Another question is about the attractiveness of storefronts and signs.

Respondents who have been working in the district for less than ten years evaluate changes in the attractiveness of the storefronts and signs as “no change” (6%), slight improvement (31%), moderate improvement (25%), and extensive improvement (19%). Evaluations of the participants who have been working in the district for ten years or more are as follows: “no change” (20%), moderate improvement (69%) and extensive improvement (21%). (See Charts 11 & 12)

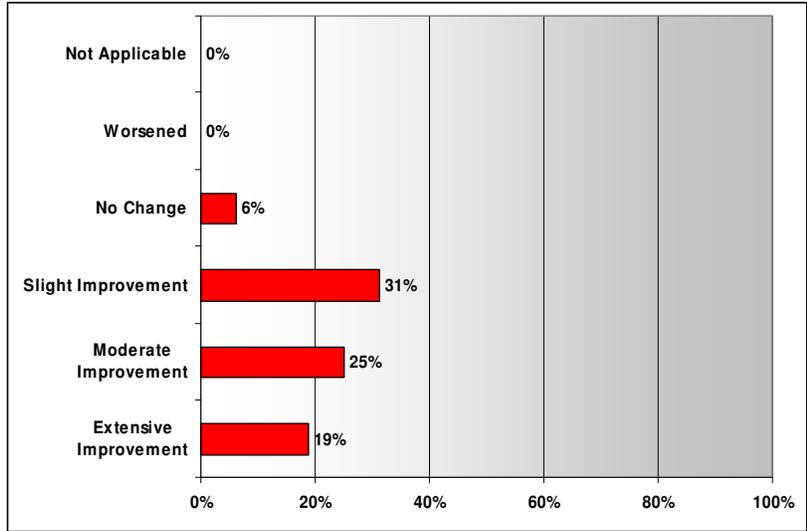


Chart 11: Evaluations about improvements in attractiveness of storefronts and signs of the district by the respondents who have lived there for less than 10 years (in percentages)

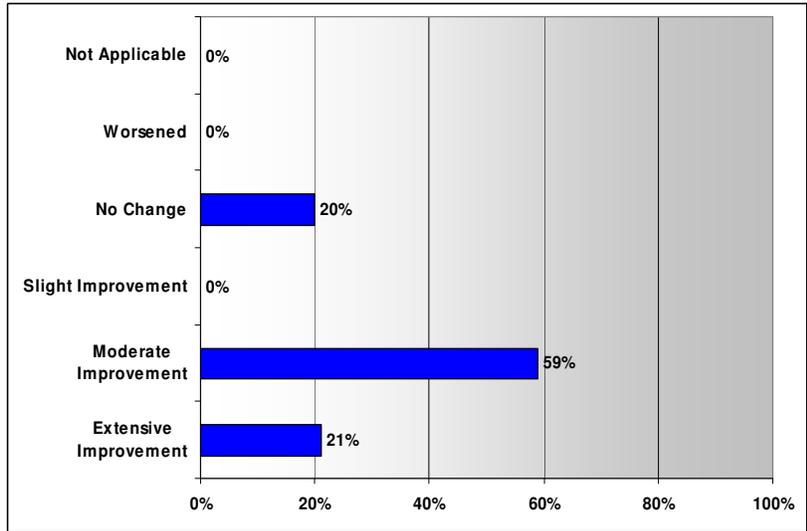


Chart 12: Evaluations about improvements in attractiveness of storefronts and signs of the district by the respondents who have lived there for 10 years or more (in percentages)

The attractiveness of the new buildings was also asked to the business owners. Majority of the respondents think that there have been improvements in this issue. While the answers of those who have been in the district less than ten years range between “no change” (6%) and “extensive improvement (38%), the answers of the remaining respondents are 69% moderate improvement and 21% extensive improvement (See Charts 13 and 14).

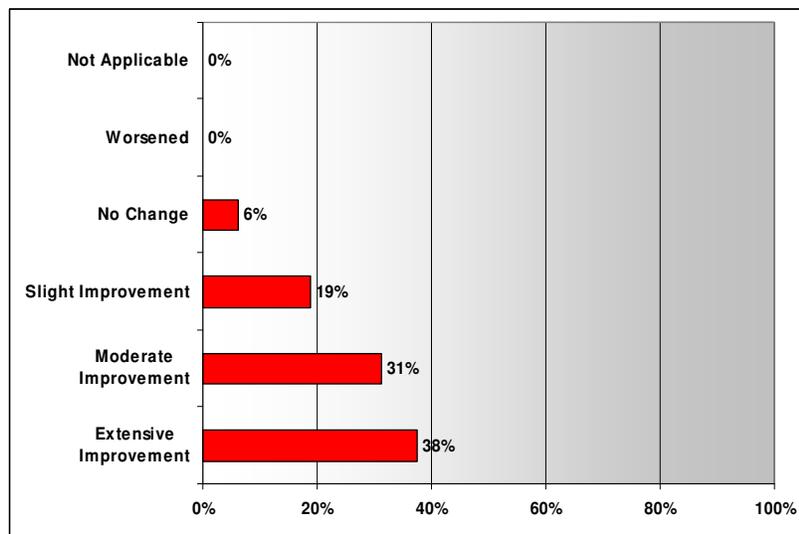


Chart 13: Evaluations about the attractiveness of the new buildings of the district by the respondents who have lived for less than 10 years (in percentages)

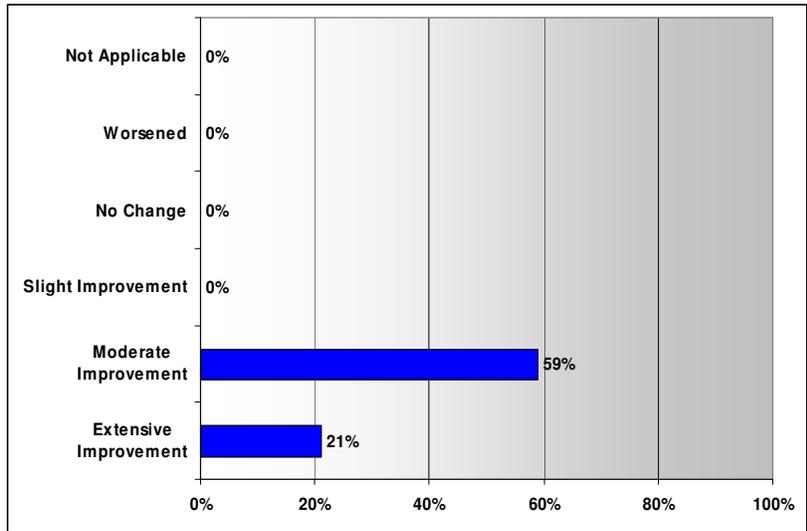


Chart 14: Evaluations about the attractiveness of the new buildings of the district by the respondents who have lived for 10 years or more (in percentages)

Similarly, the majority of the respondents to the survey assess the changes in the attractiveness of the parks and green areas with different degrees of improvements (except for 13% of those who have been working in the district for less than ten years) (see Charts 15 & 16).

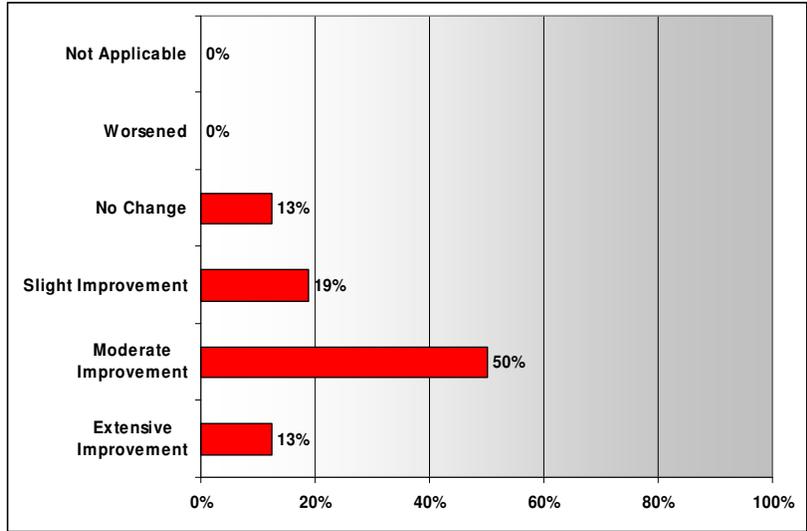


Chart 15: Evaluations about improvements in the condition and attractiveness of the parks and green areas of the district by the respondents who have lived there for less than 10 years (in percentages)

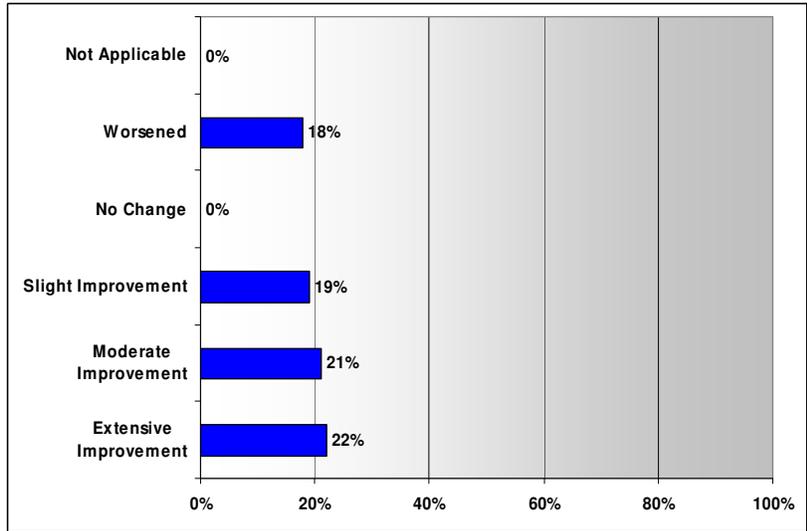


Chart 16: Evaluations about improvements in the condition and attractiveness of the parks and green areas of the district by the respondents who have lived there for 10 years or more (in percentages)

According to all respondents, the **liveliness** of the district has improved. While the majority of respondents who have been working in the district less than ten years think that there have been moderate improvements (38%), majority of those who have been working in the district more than ten years have experienced extensive improvement (61%) in the liveliness of the Washington Street (See Charts 17 & 18).

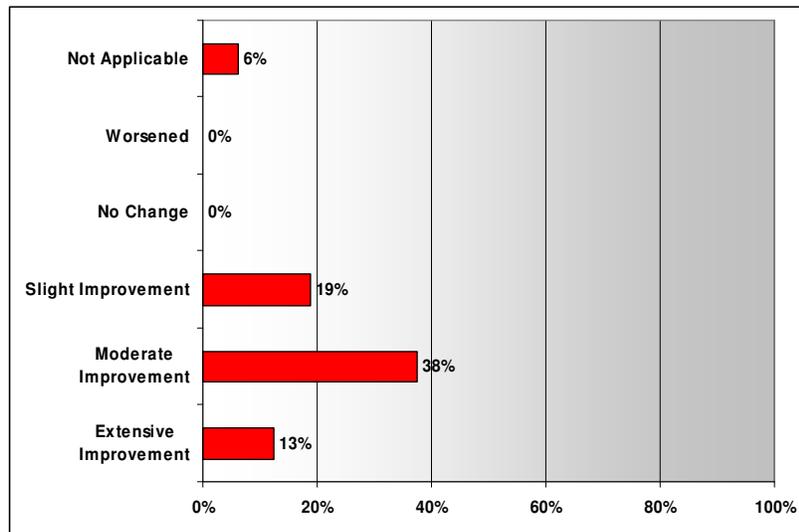


Chart 17: Evaluations about improvements in liveliness of the district by the respondents who have lived for less than 10 years (in percentages)

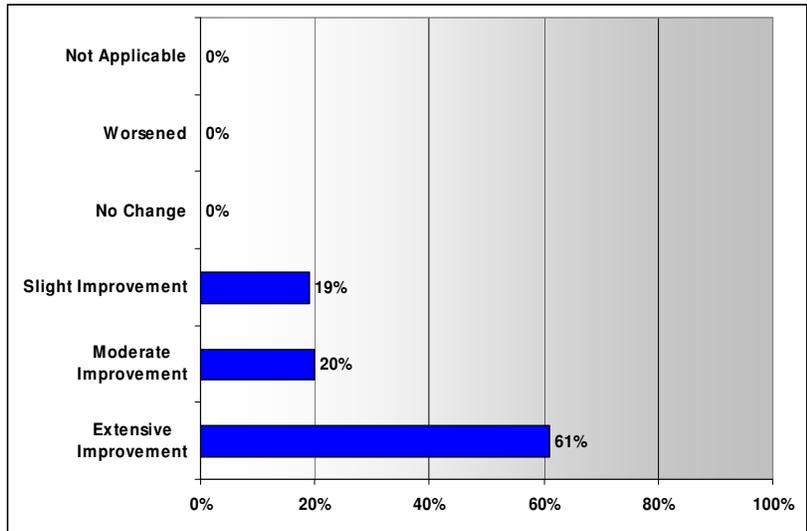


Chart 18: Evaluations about improvements in liveliness of the district by the respondents who have lived for 10 years or more (in percentages)

Finally, how the image of the district has changed is asked to the participants of the survey. All of the respondents think that the image of the district has been enhanced. While the majority of those who have been working in the district less than ten years answered the question as moderate improvement by 44%, 43 % of those who know the district for more than ten years think that there has been an extensive improvement in the image of the street (See Charts 19 & 20).

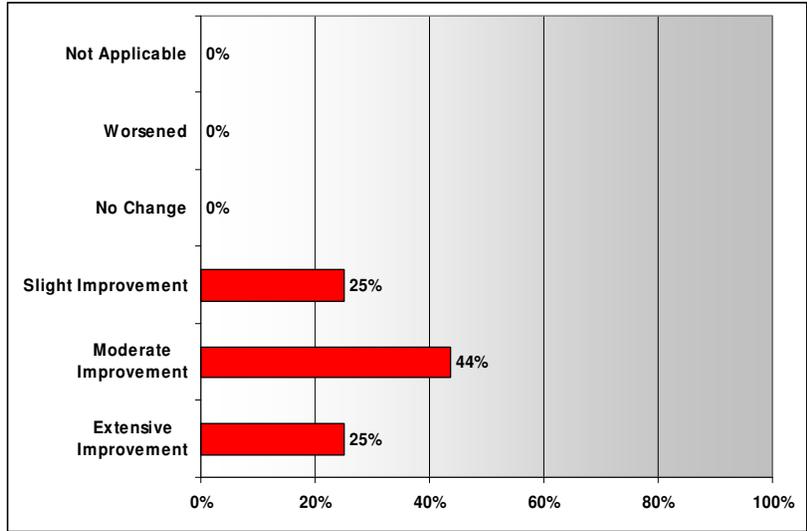


Chart 19: Evaluations about improvements in "image" of the street and south end of the district by the respondents who have lived for less than 10 years (in percentages)

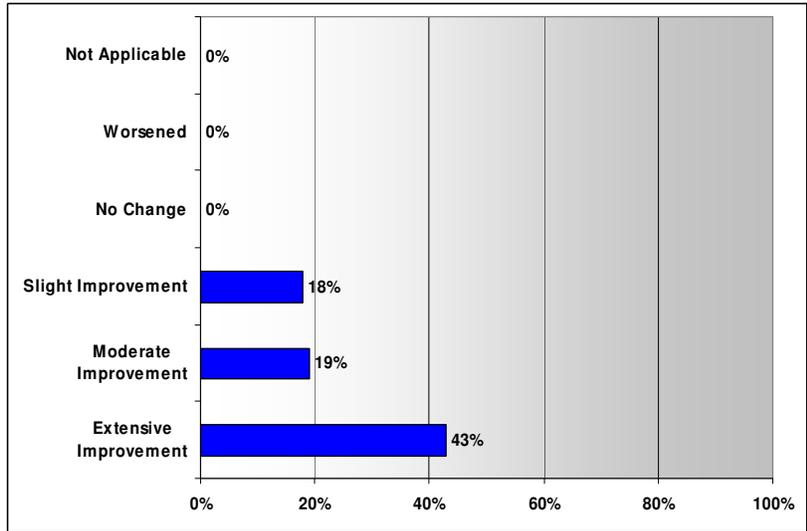


Chart 20: Evaluations about improvements in "image" of the street and south end of the district by the respondents who have lived for 10 years or more (in percentages)

According to the survey results, business owners generally think that there have been improvements in the condition and appearance of the sidewalks, streets, open areas, storefronts, and signs. Besides, it is clear that opinions about the appearance of the new buildings are positive. Finally, there is a consensus about the enhanced liveliness and image of Washington Street.

According to Lynch, the quality of “sense” can be enhanced by changing either the city form or the perceptions of users.<sup>364</sup> He gives some examples of changing the sensibility of settlements. For example, circulation system may be clarified to make the settlement structure comprehensible. In addition, identity of a place may be enhanced by creating landmarks at specific locations. Another way of increasing the sensibility of a place may be promoting “good maintenance and visible care”.<sup>365</sup> In the Washington Street example, the reconstruction of street, the new streetscape design including kiosks located at each Silver Line station, compatible design of new projects, the cleanliness and good maintenance (See Figures 39 & 40), contribute to the identity and new image of Washington Street.



Figure 39 Sidewalks

---

<sup>364</sup> Lynch, p.146.

<sup>365</sup> Ibid, p.147.



Figure 40. Maintenance of the street

Lynch mentions that designers focus on changing the city form rather than teaching users new ways of looking. Perceptions of users (accordingly, the sensibility of the settlements) may be enhanced by education. He states that “[o]ne may educate users to attend to their environment, to learn more about it, to order it, to grasp its significance”.<sup>366</sup> In Washington Street, kiosks are instrumental in educating public and orienting them in time. Panels of the kiosks present the historical developments and the significance of Washington Street. Besides, historic district signs located in the district inform inhabitants and visitors to the district.

Efforts of promoting the community are significant in changing the perceptions of users. Finally, promotions committee plays a significant role in promoting the street with its new image. It sponsors events (like shopping event, preservation event ...), “which bring the community together and foster an

---

<sup>366</sup> Lynch.

improved image for Washington Street”.<sup>367</sup> It works on publicizing the district and WGMS through media news.

In brief, it is obvious that the “sense” of the street has been improved as a result of all these efforts.

#### 4.5.1.3. Fit

As mentioned earlier, **fit** is the third dimension of performance according to Kevin Lynch. It is obvious that preventing behavioral misfits and ensuring future fit should be part of revitalization of a place to improve its spatial qualities. (For more information see the 1.3. The Methodological Framework in the Introduction chapter)

Improving “access” and “user control” also improves fit in existing settings. Both ‘access’ and ‘control’ are the other two qualities of a physical environment. Therefore, their relation to revitalization and changes in these two dimensions during the revitalization of Washington Street will be discussed in the following parts.

In order to analyze changes / improvements in quantitative and qualitative adequacy (behavioral fit) in Washington Street, it is necessary to know its previous state and relevant problems. As explained by Lynch, the behavioral fit can be analyzed either by observing actions of users to detect misfits or by talking with them about the use of the spaces.<sup>368</sup> Even though it does not aim to analyze behavioral fit, the 1980 study of the Regional / Urban Design Teams points out certain problems concerning prevailing misfits in South End / Lower

---

<sup>367</sup> Seidman, Revitalizing Commerce for American Cities - Practitioner's Guide, P.86.

<sup>368</sup> Ibid. p.151-153.

Roxbury. One of the issues mentioned in this study was the presence of vacant retail spaces that could not meet the present needs.<sup>369</sup> Such a situation is described by Lynch as a natural consequence of continuous change. He explains as follows:

Even the continuous residential use of an old house, stabilized as it is by the persistence of the human family, changes in many ways, since the family is not the original family, or it has multiplied, or at least it has grown old. Actions change: the physical setting persists. This lag gives our lives a semblance of stability, but misfits are natural consequence. We expend our energies reshaping the structure which has been handed down to us, or we reshape our actions.<sup>370</sup>

Similarly, actions and needs had changed in South End. The reasons of misfits in commercial spaces in the district are explained by the Regional / Urban Design Teams as decrease in population, changes in business climate and business methods, and change in commercial space needs (size and location). (See Figure 41) According to this study, in 1980,

South End/Lower Roxbury has an abundance of vacant space for retail and service activity: but most of it is in poor condition and in unsuitable locations, or is too small. ... Some of this space is salvageable. In fact, some has already been converted for new small businesses. But much of the remainder will never be needed, nor is it adaptable to contemporary commercial needs. At the same time, commercial space will be needed in certain locations; some of the existing spaces are poorly located for modern retail use. Unless there is demand for service use there they should be converted to residential use.<sup>371</sup>

---

<sup>369</sup> Ibid.

<sup>370</sup> Lynch. P. 165.

<sup>371</sup> Teams, p.18.



Figure 41 1980 -Washington Street, First Floor Retails. Source: Regional Urban Design Teams

Another misfit observed during the study of the Regional / Urban Design Teams is that most of the public spaces and parks were not functioning well. According to the study, “although the area [had] many public parks and open spaces, few [were] function[ing] effectively as gathering places for local residents”.<sup>372</sup> In addition, the extreme disrepair and general poor condition of streets, sidewalks, historic buildings, retail spaces, parks, vacant lands in the district can be considered as the indication of misfit in the 1980s.

Another issue mentioned in the 1980 study is decrease in the available affordable housing due to “gentrification”. As upper income people were moving into the area, the rents were getting higher. (See Table 15)

---

<sup>372</sup> Ibid. p.25.

Table 15. Median Gross Rent and Median Property Value in South End

	1980	1985	2000
Median Gross Rent (in US Dollars)	\$221	\$370	\$707
Median Owner Occupied Property Values (in US Dollars)	\$110,000	\$320,000	\$708,791

In addition to the quantity, the quality of affordable housing was an issue. Particularly, subsidized housing projects, which were poorly constructed and not well maintained, were in need of upgrading to be compatible with the day's standards.

Finally, the lack of parking area was a problem not only for "fit" (quantitative adequacy) but also for "access", which is the fourth dimension of a "good city form". Parking was not a serious problem in the 1980's but it was known that it would become a matter due to the growing population.<sup>373</sup>

The 1997 Report of the Washington Street Task Force similarly mentions the problems of underutilized land and buildings, parks and open spaces; the poor condition of the district, and the need for affordable housing and parking. On the other hand, during this period, efforts had already started to find solutions to these problems. For example, in order to meet the affordable housing need in the area, The South End Housing Initiative (SENHI) project was launched in

---

<sup>373</sup> Ibid. p.16.

1986<sup>374</sup> by the Boston Redevelopment Authority / Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (BRA/EDIC), as a partnership of non-profit community developers and private for-profit developers. The purpose of this project was to build good quality, affordable housing in the district.<sup>375</sup> As a result of this initiative, “non-profit and private developers have built limited-equity cooperatives and rental housing on publicly – owned vacant land or dilapidated buildings”.<sup>376</sup> (See Figure 42)



Figure 42. One of SENHI projects: Roxbury Corners Housing and Retail (December 28, 2005)

As mentioned earlier, in response to the advocacy of the Task Force, some interim improvements were made to Washington Street and the first steps were taken to reconstruct the Street in 1990s.<sup>377</sup> In the mean time, the Task Force together with the Boston Transportation Department and Washington Street

---

<sup>374</sup> WBUR, "A Timeline of Urban Development"

<<http://www.wbur.org/special/bostonatc/history.asp>>, (last day accessed June 03 2006)

<sup>375</sup> Affordable Housing Design Advisor, "Roxbury Corners Cooperative Housing, Boston, Massachusetts" <<http://www.designadvisor.org/gallery/roxbury.html>>, (last day accessed May 30 2006)

<sup>376</sup> Boston Redevelopment Authority. Economic Development and Industrial Corporation., p.18.

<sup>377</sup> Ibid. p.11.

Business Association initiated the development of a comprehensive parking plan for Washington Street. The City of Boston began to improve parks and public open spaces.<sup>378</sup>

The Task Force recommended continuing these efforts to overcome problems of the street. For example, redeveloping underutilized land and buildings by introducing new uses within historic buildings, improving the parks and open spaces, and improving street level retail spaces were suggested. Another proposal in the report was developing a maintenance program for Washington Street.<sup>379</sup>

The Washington Gateway Main Street Program aimed to realize these recommendations and worked with city agencies and developers. The Design Committee has technically and financially supported businesses for retail-space improvements. Besides, it has worked on park refurbishing. Rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings which do not meet contemporary needs has been one of the ways of preventing misfits. For example Allen House, which is a city-owned property, was renovated and converted into condominiums. (See Figures 43 & 44) The building was structurally stabilized and the decayed interior flooring and walls were demolished. Then, BRA has issued Requests for Proposals to developers to redevelop this property.<sup>380</sup> The architectural office who prepared the project was DHK + Associates, Inc.

---

<sup>378</sup> Ibid. p.20

<sup>379</sup> Ibid.

<sup>380</sup> Ibid. p. 13.



Figure 43. Allen House located at 1682 Washington Street (1996 and 2003)<sup>381</sup>



Figure 44. Allen House (December 12, 2005)

The availability of low income housing (both quantitative and qualitative adequacy) in a growingly attractive neighborhood like South End is a challenging issue.<sup>382</sup> WGMS is committed to preserve the social diversity of the district. Therefore, it works on inclusion of affordable units for lower income groups in new residential developments.<sup>383</sup> Seidman says,

“while city policy requires all new developments to include at least 10 percent affordable units, the Main Street Manager estimates that approximately one-third of new residential units are affordable.

---

<sup>381</sup> WGMS archive

<sup>382</sup> This is also an issue of accessibility and equity which relates to the fourth dimension: access.

<sup>383</sup> Grove, "Revitalization of Washington Street",

These efforts reflect the WGMS commitment to a revitalized Washington Street that is diverse and accessible to many cultural, age and income groups”.<sup>384</sup>

Besides, public agencies have invested in the rehabilitation of affordable housing units built in the 1960 and 1970s after urban renewal. One of these was the rehabilitation of Grant Manor Housing Development as part of Demonstration Disposition Project. Grant Manor was composed of two apartment buildings, one is seven stories and the other is four stories, and several row house style buildings. The Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency, which administered the project, “abated environmental hazards, upgraded the mechanical systems, reconfigured the unit-mix, replaced roofs, and repaired masonry”.<sup>385</sup> (See Figure 45) After the project was completed, affordability of the units has been preserved.<sup>386</sup> Table 16 summarizes the strategies developed by WGMS to improve the fit of the street in cooperation with other parties.



Figure 45. Grant Manor Housing: Right picture (1997)<sup>387</sup>, left picture (2005)

---

<sup>384</sup> Seidman, *Revitalizing Commerce for American Cities - Practitioner's Guide*, p.86.

<sup>385</sup> Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "Multifamily Property Demonstration Disposition Program: Memorandum Number: 2005-Bo-1002" <<http://www.hud.gov/oig/ig511002.pdf>>, (last day accessed Feb. 12 2006)

<sup>386</sup> Grove, "Revitalization of Washington Street",

<sup>387</sup> Courtesy of Washington Gateway Main Street

Table 16 Fit<sup>388</sup>

		<b>Challenges facing Washington Street in the 1980's and 1990's</b>	<b>Strategies to deal with problems concerning 'fit'</b>	<b>Public agencies and other parties taking a lead</b>	<b>WGMS Committees and People involved in the implementation of these strategies</b>
<b>FIT</b>	<b>Present Fit</b>	misfits in public spaces and parks	improving parks and open spaces	BPRD	ADHOC Subcommittee under the Design Committee
		disrepair and poor condition of streets, sidewalks, historic buildings, parks, vacant lands quantity and quality of affordable housing misfits in vacant retail spaces insufficient parking area	redeveloping underutilized lands, introducing new uses within historic buildings, encouraging affordable housing in new developments, rehabilitation of affordable housing units,	BRA	Program manager and Design Committee
			improving street level retail spaces	BMS	
			reconstruction of the street and sidewalks	BTD, PWD	

---

<sup>388</sup> BPRD: Boston Parks and Recreation Department, BRA: Boston Redevelopment Authority, BMS: Boston Main Streets, BTD: Boston Transportation Department, PWD: Public Works Department.

In order to evaluate the impact of the revitalization program on the improvements of the street, questions have been asked to the business owners about the improvements in the maintenance of the street; condition of the street, sidewalks, parks, open spaces and old buildings. In addition, improvements in the vacancy problem, availability of affordable housing and parking were asked. Results of some of these survey questions (maintenance of the street; condition of the street, sidewalks, parks, open spaces, old buildings, and improvements in vacancy problem) have already been discussed in the previous sections. Therefore, evaluations about available affordable housing will be analyzed in this part.

According to the survey results, the majority of survey participants (31%) who have been working in the district for less than ten years think that there have been slight improvement in the availability of affordable housing. The other answers to this question are “worsened” (25%), “no change” (25%), and moderate improvement (6%). On the other hand, the majority of business owners (39%) who have been working in the district for ten years or more consider that there has been moderate improvement in this issue. The remaining answers include “worsened” (22%), “no change” (19%), and slight improvement (20%). (See Charts 21 & 22)

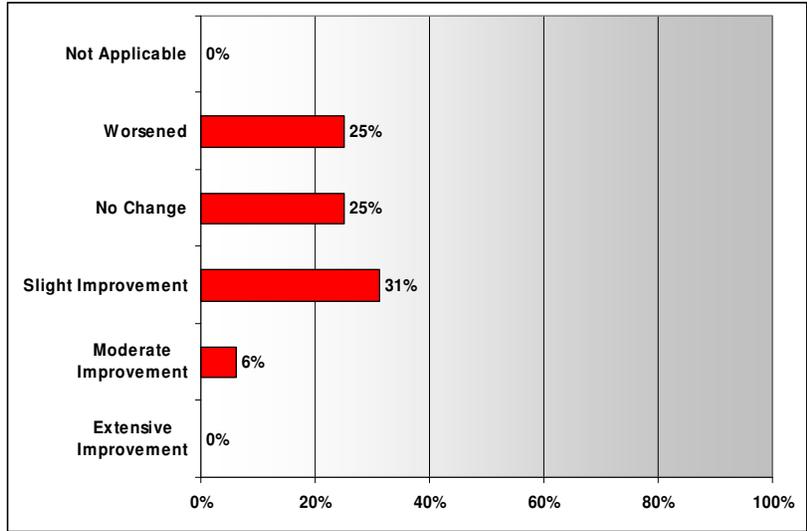


Chart 21: Evaluations about improvements in availability of affordable housing of the district by the respondents who have lived for less than 10 years (in percentages)

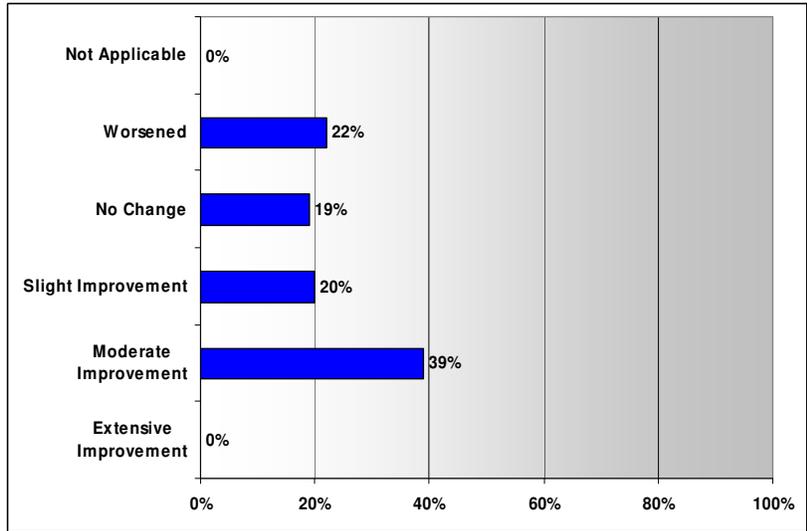


Chart 22: Evaluations about improvements in available affordable housing of the district by the respondents who have lived for 10 years or more (in percentages)

*Monitoring and tuning* is perhaps the most powerful way of improving fit. Therefore, basically, misfits along Washington Street have been eliminated as WGMS has continuously focused on the maintenance of the Street. Reconstruction of the street and sidewalks, retail space improvements, and improvements of public spaces (See Figure 46 & 47) have been significant milestones. Adaptive reuse of historic buildings and rehabilitation of affordable housing units were substantial projects that enhanced qualitative adequacy of the existing setting. Besides, inclusion of affordable housing units in new developments in response to the efforts of WGMS is remarkable (for quantitative adequacy, the equity of access, and for limiting gentrification). Chart 23 shows that the diversity of the district has been maintained since 1980.

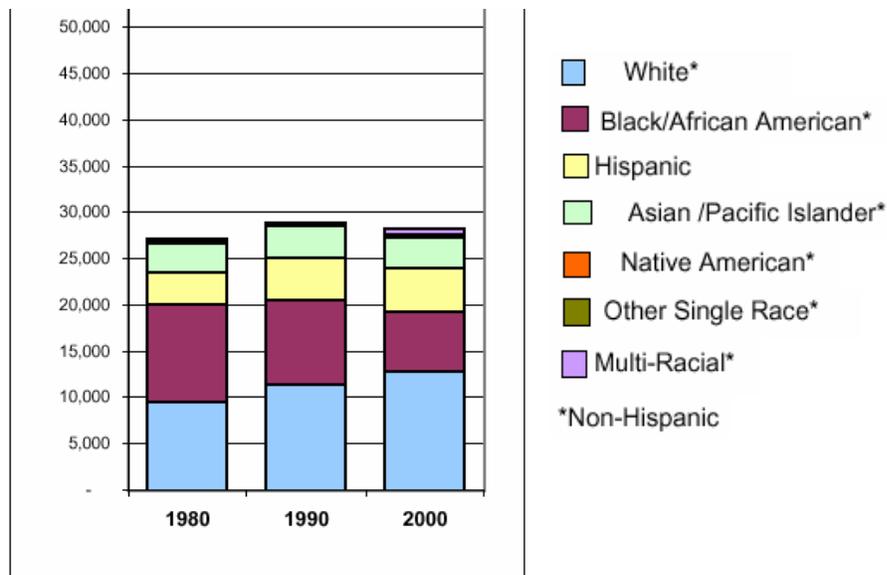


Chart 23. Demographic Change of Ethnicity in South End<sup>389</sup>

---

<sup>389</sup> Boston Redevelopment Authority, "Boston Census Report 2000", unpublished report, Boston Redevelopment Authority, 1989



Figure 46. Park on Washington Street



Figure 47. Monsignor Reynolds Playground

The other two strategies for enhancing fit in existing settings are *improving access* and user *control*. These will be analyzed in the following parts.

#### 4.5.1.4. Access

Access (to information, services, jobs, materials, markets, open spaces, and other people) is the fourth dimension of performance introduced by Kevin Lynch for evaluating the quality of built environments. Three sub-dimensions (and desirable qualities) of access are “the **diversity** of things given access to, the **equity** of access for different groups of the population, and the **control** of

the access system.”<sup>390</sup> As explained in “The Methodological Framework”, one of the measures of successful revitalization of a setting should be enhancing “access” there.

In the example of revitalization of Washington Street, one of the challenges facing the commercial street (as well as the district) was its poor transportation system. According to the 1980 report of the Regional / Urban Design Teams, transportation was an influential factor in the economic and physical decline of the district. Poor internal circulation was making it difficult for people to getting around within the area. This was also negatively affecting local businesses. Besides, access to goods and services was a problem within the district, because goods and services that were available were limited. Furthermore, stores carrying affordable products for low-income residents were not as much as needed.<sup>391</sup> The study of the Regional / Urban Design Teams also mentions that “[c]ommercial and cultural activities [were] randomly scattered throughout South End / Lower Roxbury, and [were] not well connected to transportation facilities”.<sup>392</sup>

These problems had continued in the 1990s. In order to upgrade the transportation system, the elevated transit structure passing through the district was dismantled in 1987. However, the new system was not installed for more than a decade. The street and sidewalks were in poor condition. The district was isolated from the surrounding neighborhoods. According to the report of the Task Force, “Washington Street [had] become the “backyard” to Downtown and the rest of the South End. There [was] a need to integrate Washington Street into the social and commercial fabric of its bordering

---

<sup>390</sup> Lynch. p.203.

<sup>391</sup> Teams, p.15-20. In fact, the district with its location, density and design was proper for living without owning a car. Therefore, 1980 study suggests minor physical and service improvements regarding accessibility.

<sup>392</sup> Ibid. p.20

neighborhoods: Chinatown, South Boston, and Lower Roxbury”.<sup>393</sup>

Furthermore, another challenge facing the street was the “need for jobs and economic advancement”.<sup>394</sup>

Therefore, the Task Force develops goals and recommendations concerning the problems of “access”. One of the goals in the report is building a New Washington Street. The report writes, “[t]he reconstruction of Washington Street [as part of Washington Street Transitway Project or Silver Line] is of primary importance to the successful redevelopment and revitalization of the street”.<sup>395</sup> Besides, the objective of this project is explained as “to create a plan that will connect neighborhoods, cultural amenities, open space areas, business districts and downtown locations, and better integrate them into the public realm.”<sup>396</sup> The second goal defined by the Task Force is “[r]evitaliz[ing] Washington Street by creating opportunities for new jobs and businesses”.<sup>397</sup>

Following the goals and recommendations of the Task Force, the Washington Gateway Main Street Program made improving “access” one of its priorities.<sup>398</sup> One of the main objectives of the Design Committee has been “advocating for transit and street improvements and solutions to parking concerns”.<sup>399</sup> The traffic and parking subcommittee was established under the design committee. From the beginning of the street reconstruction project, the committee was involved in the process and followed the progress of the project.<sup>400</sup> Seidman writes,

---

<sup>393</sup> Ibid.

<sup>394</sup> Ibid, p.20.

<sup>395</sup> Ibid. p.21.

<sup>396</sup> Ibid. p.22.

<sup>397</sup> Ibid. p.29.

<sup>398</sup> Grove, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

<sup>399</sup> Seidman, Revitalizing Commerce for American Cities - Practitioner's Guide, p. 84/

<sup>400</sup> Grove, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

“Via the traffic and parking subcommittee, WGMS worked to accelerate the new Silver Line transit service and street reconstruction. [See Figure 48] WGMS representatives regularly attended meetings about the Silver Line improvements with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) and Boston Transportation Department (BTD); they pushed to keep the process moving and to shape the streetscape design”.<sup>401</sup>

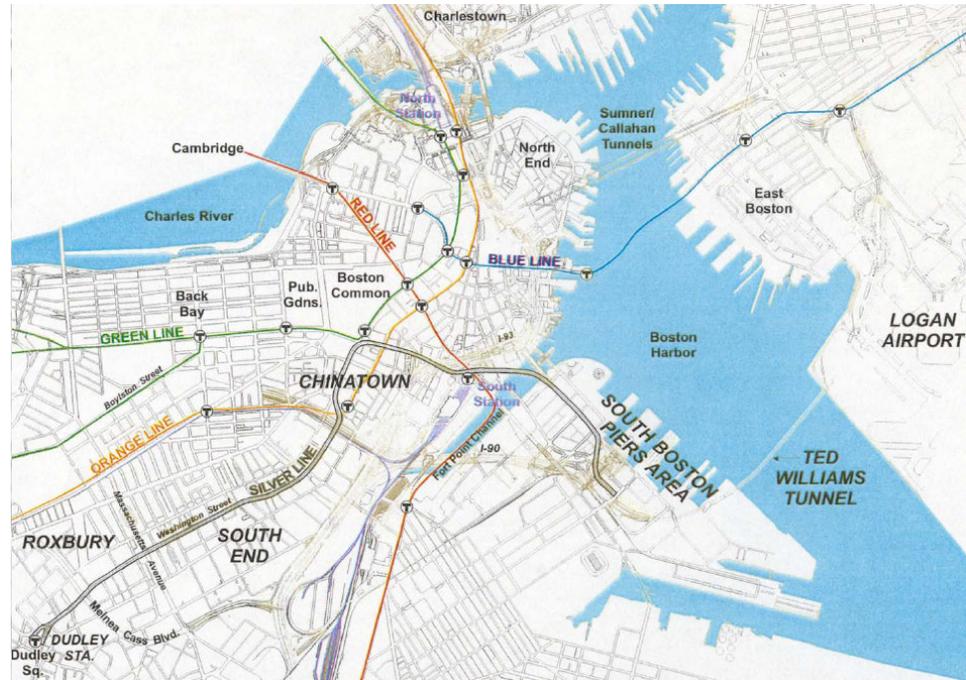


Figure 48. Silver Line along Washington Street improved access in South End.<sup>402</sup>

In addition, in order to create more parking spaces along the street, WGMS has encouraged developers to build excess underground parking. From 1997 to

---

<sup>401</sup> Seidman, *Revitalizing Commerce for American Cities - Practitioner's Guide*, p.84.

<sup>402</sup> Authority, "The Redevelopment of Washington Street a Density Success Story" (last day accessed May 16, 2006).

2004, 944 parking spaces were built in response to encouragements of WGMS.<sup>403</sup>

In addition to improving transit and streets, “the **equity** of access for different groups of the population” is critical. Especially for a heterogeneous community like South End inhabitants, this is of primary importance to prevent displacement of low-income people from the district.

Accessibility of affordable housing is one aspect of the equity of access. Efforts of WGMS regarding this have already been discussed (See 4.5.1.3. Fit). Another part of this is accessibility of markets and stores who serve low- and moderate income households. Economic restructuring committee of WGMS plays a significant role in this issue. It assists existing businesses to stay in the district and serve to the district’s varied customers.<sup>404</sup> For example,

“[WGMS] was very active in retaining Don Quijote Market [See Figure 49], a 20-year-old grocery store that serves the district’s low income and Hispanic residents. The WGMS manager helped the owner secure a long-term lease with the Boston Housing Authority and then referred him to the Boston Local Development Corporation, which provided technical assistance and financing to expand the store. WGMS also provided a façade grant for the expansion”.<sup>405</sup>

---

<sup>403</sup> Grove, "Revitalization of Washington Street",

<sup>404</sup> Grove, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

<sup>405</sup> Seidman, Revitalizing Commerce for American Cities - Practitioner's Guide, p.85.



Figure 49. Don Quijote Market (Economic Restructuring)

In addition to helping existing stores, WGMS encourages new stores that serve to middle- and high-income consumers to carry products for low-income residents as well. “For example, [the manager] convinced a new grocery store to offer products sought by the nearby public housing residents along with its gourmet foods and persuaded a new high-end restaurant to offer nutrition classes at local grammar school”.<sup>406</sup>

“The **diversity** of things given access to” can be possible by existence of vibrant economic activity. In order to support economic activities along the street, promotions committee works on organizing events and publicizing the district businesses. Besides, WGMS encourages businesses to employ district inhabitants.<sup>407</sup> Table 17 summarizes the strategies developed by WGMS to improve the access in the district in cooperation with other parties.

---

<sup>406</sup> Ibid. p.85

<sup>407</sup> Ibid. p.87.

Table 17 Access<sup>408</sup>

		Challenges facing Washington Street in the 1980's and 1990's	Strategies to deal with problems concerning 'access'	Public agencies and other parties taking a lead	WGMS Committees and People involved in the implementation of these strategies
ACCESS	Diversity	poor transportation system, isolation from the surrounding districts	<b>building a new Washington Street</b>	MBTA, BTD	Traffic and Parking Subcommittee under the design committee
			advocating for the reconstruction of the street and sidewalks, creating more parking spaces		
		limited amount of goods and services	implementation of the Silver Line Project	MBTA	ADHOC Subcommittee under the design committee
	poor condition of streets and sidewalks	promoting the business district	MOBS	Promotions committee	
	Equity	need for jobs and economic advancement	<b>creating opportunities for new jobs and businesses</b>	MOBS, BEC	Economic Restructuring Committee
need for affordable housing and affordable products		<b>controlling gentrification</b> assisting businesses carrying affordable goods and products encouraging affordable housing in new developments		Program management Economic Restructuring Committee Program manager	

<sup>408</sup> MBTA: Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, BTD: Boston Transportation Department, MOBS: Mayor's Office of Business Services, BEC: Boston Empowerment Center.

In order to learn how business owners evaluate improvements in the “access”, some of Business Survey questions were related to the access such as improvements in the condition of streets and sidewalks, availability of parking, public transportation quality, economic opportunities for businesses, and employment opportunities for residents. As improvements in the condition of the street and sidewalks have already been discussed in the previous sections of this part, these subjects will not be repeated here.

Answers of the survey participants show that public transportation quality of district has improved. 19 % of respondents who have been working in the district for less than ten years think that there has been no change in transportation quality<sup>409</sup>, while the remaining has experienced slight improvement (13%) and moderate improvement (56%) (See Chart 24). 80 % of respondents who have been living for ten years or more think that there has been improvement. Their answers are extensive improvement (21%), moderate improvement (19%), slight improvement (40%), and no change (20%) (See Chart 25).

---

<sup>409</sup> It is likely that respondents who have not experienced any change have moved into the district after the street reconstruction was completed.

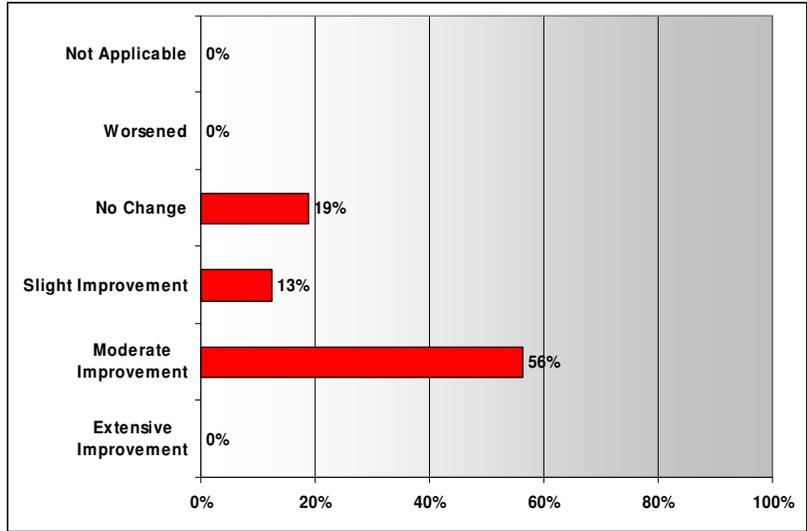


Chart 24: Evaluations about improvements in public transportation quality to the district of the district by the respondents who have lived there for less than 10 years (in percentages)

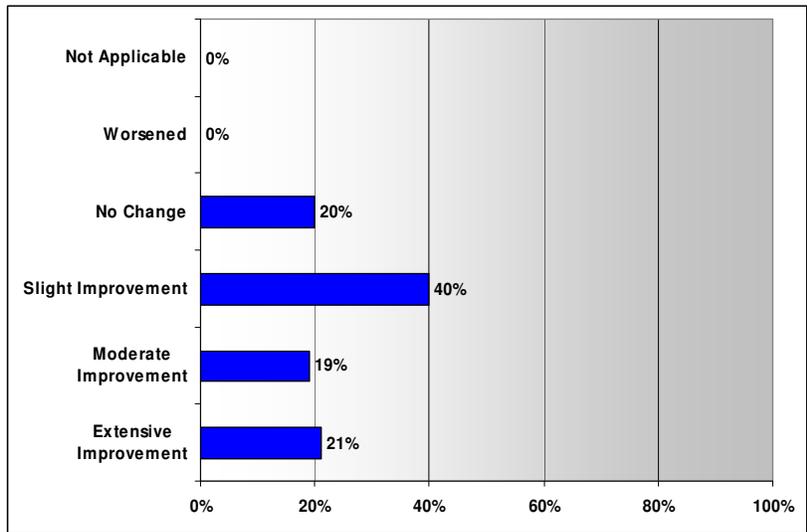


Chart 25: Evaluations about improvements in public transportation quality to the district of the district by the respondents who have lived for 10 years or more (in percentages)

Survey results show that the lack of parking continues to be a problem for Washington Street. Although 19% of users who have been working in the district less than ten years observe slight improvement in this issue, the remaining experienced no change (19 %) and even a worsened condition (44%). The results are similar for those who have been working in the district for a longer period. Their answers about the parking problem comprise slight improvement (21%), no change (41%) and worsened (38%). (See Charts 26 & 27)

Evaluating changes in economic opportunities for businesses is another survey question. The answers of those who have been working in the district for less than 10 years include 50% moderate improvement, (19%) slight improvement, and (19%) no change. Respondents who know the district for longer time evaluate this subject alike (80 % moderate improvement, 20% slight improvement) (See Charts 28 and 29). These answers present that economic conditions have been improved for businesses along Washington Street.

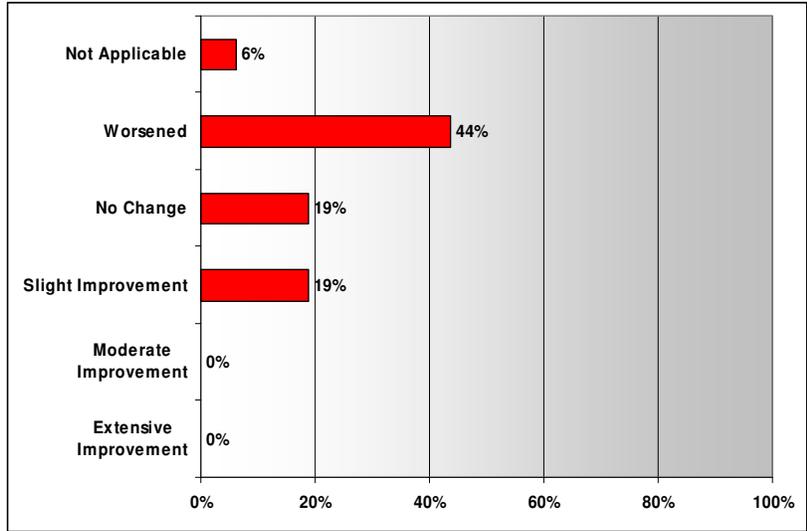


Chart 26: Evaluations about improvements in available parking in the district by the respondents who have worked there for less than 10 years (in percentages)

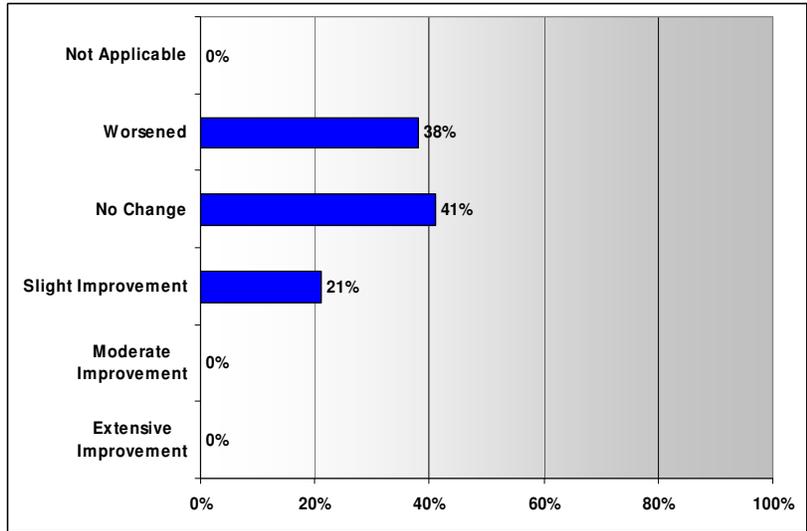


Chart 27: Evaluations about improvements in available parking in the district by the respondents who have worked there for 10 years or more (in percentages)

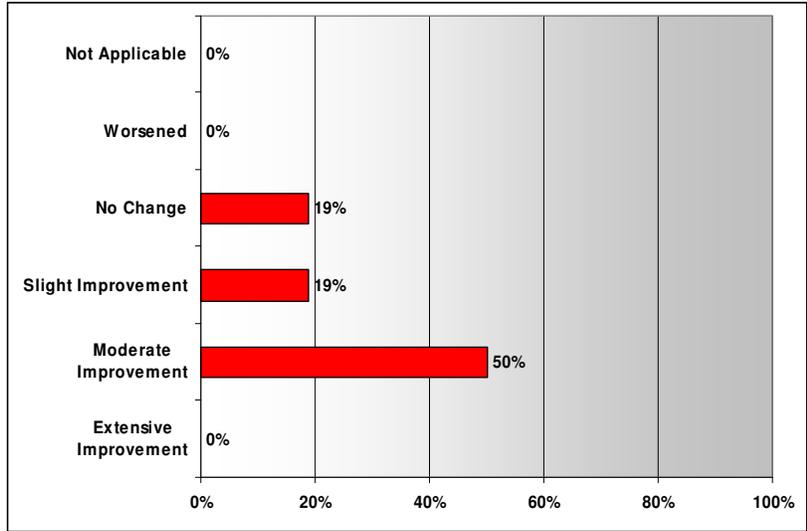


Chart 28: Evaluations about improvements in economic opportunities for businesses of the district by the respondents who have owned business there for less than 10 years (in percentages)

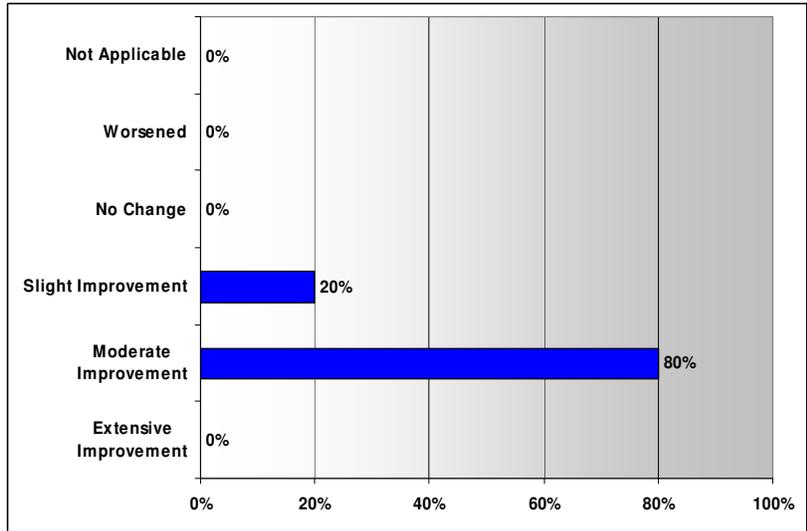


Chart 29: Evaluations about improvements in economic opportunities for businesses of the district by the respondents who have owned business there for 10 years or more (in percentages)

Finally, availability of employment opportunities for the neighborhood residents has also been asked to the business owners. According to their answers, it can be said that there has been slight improvement in this issue. (See Charts 30 & 31)

Survey results show that there have been improvements in public transportation. According to the census 2000 results, access to work does not seem to be a problem for neighborhood residents. Approximately one third of people use public transportation. (See Table 18) Besides, approximately 80 percent of workers go to their works in less than 35 minutes.<sup>410</sup> (See Table 19)

---

<sup>410</sup> Eswaran Selvarajah, "South End 2000 Census of Population and Housing: Report No: 576", Boston Redevelopment Authority, Boston, 2003

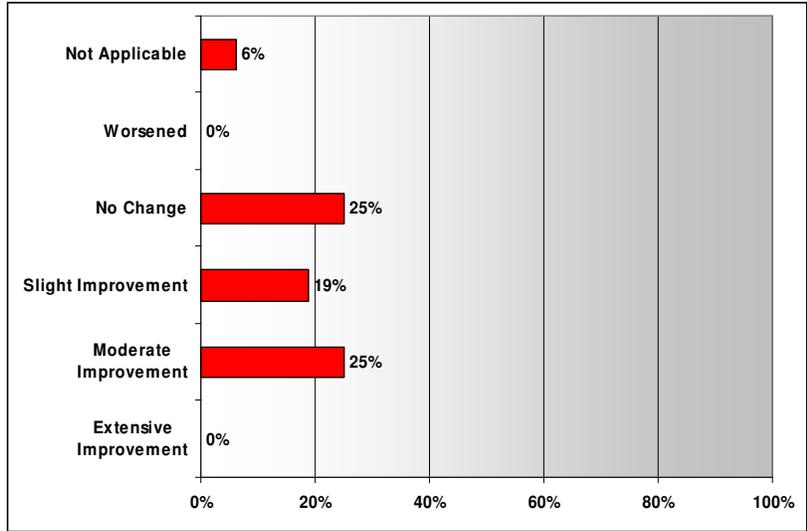


Chart 30: Evaluations about improvements in employment opportunities for residents of the district by the respondents who have lived for less than 10 years (in percentages)

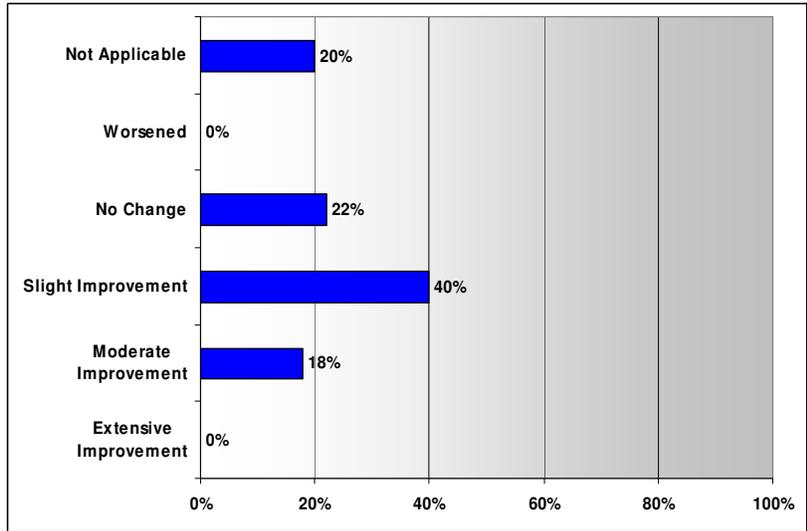


Chart 31: Evaluations about improvements in employment opportunities for residents of the district by the respondents who have lived for 10 years or more (in percentages)

Table 18. Number of Workers 16 Years and Over According to Their Means of Transportation to Work<sup>411</sup>

Total:	15,226
Car, truck, or van:	5,401
Drove alone	4,715
Carpooled	686
Public transportation:	5,312
Bus or trolley bus	1,948
Streetcar or trolley car	214
Subway or elevated	2,935
Railroad	143
Ferryboat	0
Taxicab	72
Motorcycle	0
Bicycle	314
Walked	3,477
Other means	102
Worked at home	620

Table 19. Number of Workers 16 Years old and Over According to Travel Time to Work<sup>412</sup>

Total:	15,226
Did not work at home:	14,606
Less than 5 minutes	352
5 to 9 minutes	1,082
10 to 14 minutes	1,526
15 to 19 minutes	2,725
20 to 24 minutes	2,472
25 to 29 minutes	1,036
30 to 34 minutes	2,833
35 to 39 minutes	419
40 to 44 minutes	603
45 to 59 minutes	795
60 to 69 minutes	472
90 or more minutes	291
Worked at home:	620

<sup>411</sup> Ibid.

<sup>412</sup> Ibid.

Besides, according to the survey results economic revitalization has been achieved while the employment opportunities for residents did not improve that much. Table 20 shows change in the unemployment rate in the South End district.

Table 20. Participation and Unemployment Rate<sup>413</sup>

	1985	2000
Participation Rate (%)	77	68
Unemployment Rate (%)	9	7

In conclusion, a number of strategies have been influential in the improvements of access realized by the Washington Gateway Main Street Program. As mentioned earlier, Kevin Lynch writes that access can be improved by a number of ways, including modifying routes, modifying the mode of transportation, rearranging origin and destination, adjusting timing, developing autonomy, replacing communication for transport, modifying management and control, employing public subsidies, and training the traveler.<sup>414</sup> Some of these methods of improvement have been employed in Washington Street to improve access. Specifically, routes and the mode of transportation have been modified, communication systems have been enhanced and the public subsidies have been employed. As a result of the advocacy of WGMS, street reconstruction was completed. Besides, promotional activities, working closely with business community have been effective in increasing business opportunities. Availability of affordable houses in the district (in spite of the demand of high income people) can be considered as the outcome of efforts of WGMS and

---

<sup>413</sup> Ibid. and Hafrey, pp. 20 – 23.

<sup>414</sup> Lynch. pp. 194-199. For more information see The Theoretical Framework in the Introduction chapter.

district community. Accessibility of services and products to the varied population could be possible by conducting a “resident survey”, which is out of the scope of this study. However, it is observed that even though most of the new stores and restaurants cater to the district’s high income community, markets, restaurants and stores affordable for middle- and lower income people exist. (See Figure 50)



Figure 50. Urban Market

#### 4.5.1.5. Control

The last quality of a settlement is the “control” [of place]. Ideally, a place control should be *congruent*, in other words it should be controlled by its users or inhabitants (this also provides better fit). In addition, it should be *responsible*; meaning those who control a place should have the knowledge, motivation and power to make it a better place. Finally, it should be *certain* so as to the control system is understood by people to avoid possible conflicts. These are also essential for a successful revitalization of a place. Improvements in social capital are among the indicators of successful revitalization.<sup>415</sup> (See the Methodological Framework for more information). Therefore, it is important to look at the presence and role of social capital before and during

---

<sup>415</sup> Ibid.

the revitalization efforts in Washington Street. Whether the control of Washington Street in particular and South End District in general by their inhabitants has changed in time is an important factor for the evaluation of the street's revitalization.

South End district is / has been a place for a heterogeneous community. In the study of the Regional / Urban Design Teams, it is expressed that “[s]ocial and economic diversity is what makes this community unique, but it is the biggest potential problem”.<sup>416</sup> Because, they explained, preserving this diversity needs effort. Besides, “while there [was] diversity here, there [wasn't] much interaction”.<sup>417</sup> Even though any obvious discrimination did not exist, streets were not reflecting such diversity. An important asset for the community was the existence of neighborhood associations, special interest groups and community groups within the community. Significance of this was explained as follows,

“while they may not agree on how issues should be dealt with, these groups and individuals are committed to addressing them. [Neighborhood] pride and willingness to get involved is a community asset. It ensures full discussion of local issues and encourages citizen involvement in community affairs”.

Interaction and cooperation within the community started to be established due to the efforts of the Washington Street Task Force between the years 1995 and 1997. The Task Force Report expresses that “[o]ne of the most significant accomplishments of the Task Force has been the successful collaboration between residents and the business community in recommending a comprehensive revitalization strategy”.<sup>418</sup> The local community was supportive

---

<sup>416</sup> Teams, p.23

<sup>417</sup> Ibid.

<sup>418</sup> Ibid. p.10

of new development, which was so important, because

“predictable support from the community at public hearings [was] an important incentive for developers as they go through the regulatory and zoning approval process. This pro-active constituency for revitalization and redevelopment, which includes residents, business owners and community leaders, [was] a major asset”.<sup>419</sup>

However, Washington Street was lacking a business association which would advocate the interests of businesses located on Washington Street in the South End / Lower Roxbury Area.<sup>420</sup> Therefore, the Task Force encouraged the establishment of Washington Street Business Association. Finally, issues concerning the ‘control’ of Washington Street by the district community were stated in the Task Force Report. Recommendations of the Task Force regarding the development of social capital in Washington Street community are as follows:

- “Involve schools and religious institutions in the revitalization of Washington Street”.<sup>421</sup>
- “Appoint a citizens oversight committee to guide decisions about the design and reconstruction of Washington Street and the Silver Line Transit Replacement Service”.<sup>422</sup>
- “Build on the success of recently launched business district revitalization program on Washington Street – called the Washington Gateway Main Streets Program”.<sup>423</sup>

---

<sup>419</sup> Ibid. p.19.

<sup>420</sup> Ibid. p.10.

<sup>421</sup> Ibid. p.10

<sup>422</sup> Ibid. p.8.

<sup>423</sup> Ibid. p.9.

Table 21 Control<sup>424</sup>

CONTROL	Challenges facing Washington Street in the 1980's and 1990's	Strategies to deal with problems concerning 'access'	Public agencies and other parties taking a lead	WGMS Committees and People involved in the implementation of these strategies
	absence of neighborhood organizations	encouraging collaboration between residents and the business community		Program manager & Volunteers Committee
	no interaction among community	"appointing a citizens oversight committee to guide decisions about the design and reconstruction of Washington Street"	BTD, BRA	
	lacking a business association	encouraging creation of street-wide business association	WSBA	

---

<sup>424</sup> BTD: Boston Transportation Department, BRA: Boston Redevelopment Authority, WSBA: Washington Street Business Association.

Washington Street has worked to gain legitimacy as a nonprofit organization to control spatial environment. Table 21 shows the strategies developed by WGMS to increase the control of the inhabitants and the parties collaborated with WGMS.

In order to evaluate these efforts, questions about evaluating the social capital within the community have been asked to the business owners who have participated in the survey. One of the questions is how they rate improvements in community involvement in the decisions related with the district. The answers show that there have been improvements in the “control” of the district by its inhabitants. The answers from those who have been working in the district for less than ten years are extensive improvement (13%), moderate improvement (25%), slight improvement (25%) and no change (13%) (the remaining did not answer this question). All of the survey participants who have been working in the district for more than 10 years have experienced improvements in this subject. Their answers are extensive improvement (22%), moderate improvement (21%), and slight improvement (37%). (See Charts 32 and 33)

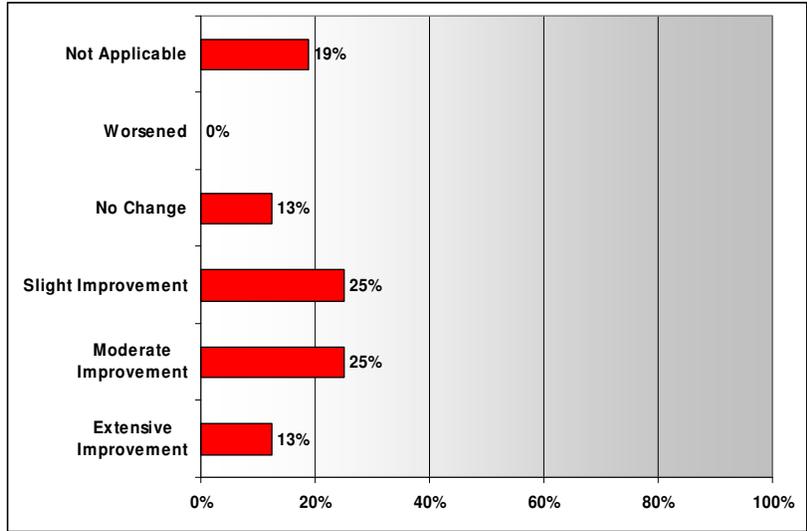


Chart 32. Evaluations about improvements in community involvement in the decisions related to the district by the respondents who have lived there for less than 10 years (in percentages)

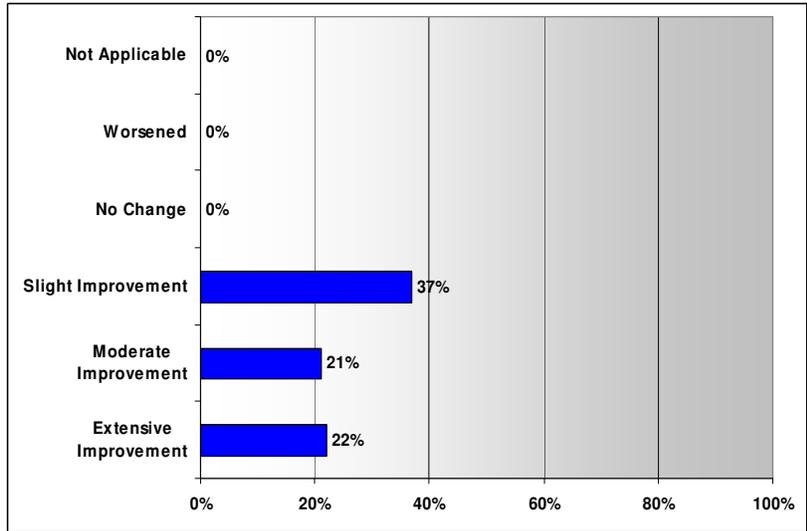


Chart 33: Evaluations about improvements in community involvement in the decisions related to the district by the respondents who have lived there for 10 years or more (in percentages)

The other question is about improvements in interaction among the district community. The majority of those who have been working in the district for less than ten years thinks that there have been improvements since they moved into the district. Their answers are as follows: extensive improvement (6%), moderate improvement (44%), slight improvement (25%), and no change (25%). On the other hand, the majority (41 %) of the survey participants who have been working in the district for ten years or more have experienced no change, while the response of the 18 % is slight improvement and the answer of the remaining 21% is moderate improvement. (See Charts 34 & 35)

Washington Gateway Main Street, which was launched by the Task Force and Washington Street Business Association, has provided growing community control over the decisions regarding the revitalization of Washington Street. Building capacity (responsibility and certainty) which is one of the dimensions of control was developed with an incremental approach and with the support of Boston Main Streets and the National Trust National Main Street Center. As a result, WGMS has contributed to increase the control of spatial environment by its users.

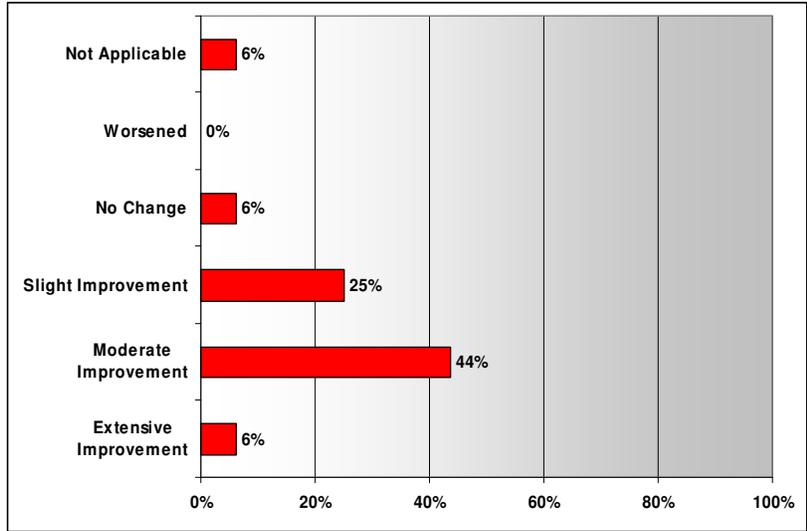


Chart 34: Evaluations about improvements in Interaction among the district community by the respondents who have lived there for less than 10 years (in percentages)

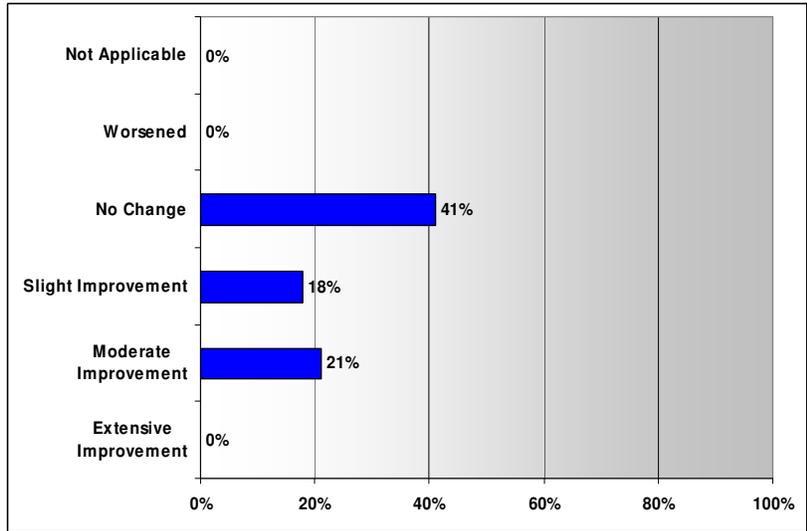


Chart 35: Evaluations about improvements in Interaction among the district community by the respondents who have lived for 10 years or more (in percentages)

#### 4.5.2. Outcome Analysis of the Washington Gateway Main Street Program

When the goals of the program are compared to the outcomes, it is concluded that the revitalization program has effectively been applied in Washington Street. First, the street was rebuilt. This helped to create a new image for the district. Second, new job and business opportunities were created. Third, the street was successfully promoted as an attractive shopping and dining place. Finally, Washington Street continues to be managed by Main Street organization for its long term vitality.

#### 4.5.3. Evaluation of the Performance of the WGMS as a Nonprofit Organization

One of the major challenges of non profit organizations was the absence of a clear tool to measure their performances. The conventional measurement system based on controlling and measuring financial performance was accepted as a sufficient method to assess the performance of an organization. However, Moore rightly proves that this method has many limitations.<sup>425</sup> Firstly, this system allows evaluating the performance only from one dimension. Secondly, financial evaluations are computed from financial records; therefore, it doesn't include intangible assets such as know-how and experience. In today's rapidly changing environment, those assets have become growingly important for long-term sustainability of organizations. Thirdly, it is not a future oriented tool to measure performance as financial performance assessment measures only the past performance.<sup>426</sup>

In order to assess the performance of non profit organizations, Moore suggests focusing on three major issues: *Value, Legitimacy and Support*, and

---

<sup>425</sup> Moore, pp. 1-27.

<sup>426</sup> Ibid.

*operational capacity*. He constructs his “Public Value Strategy” on these three main pillars.

Value, the first pillar of the Moore’s theory, focuses on the ultimate value that an organization aims to produce. The ultimate value aimed to be created by an organization usually involves social objectives or aims to serve the public at large or for a smaller community. It is obvious that success in such social objectives cannot be aggregated into some financial indicators. According to Moore,

“[t]he measurement system that focused on “value” would be some kind of pyramid of values, goals, and objectives that would allow the organization to recognize (in an accounting sense) the extent or degree to which it was achieving its intended mission. It is not clear how one moves from a very abstract, general idea of the organization’s mission to more specific and measurable objectives”.<sup>427</sup>

Within the context of this thesis, the broad mission of a Main Street Organization is supposed to be revitalizing a historic commercial district by improving the quality of life of its residents in conjunction with enhancing its spatial qualities. This comprehensive and ambitious mission guides goals and objectives which are more specific and results-oriented. For example, the mission of the Washington Street revitalization program is **to make Washington Street, South End an attractive place to live and work**. Goals that are set to achieve this mission are as follows:

1. Build a new Washington Street,
2. Revitalize Washington Street by creating opportunities for new

---

<sup>427</sup> Ibid.

jobs and businesses,

3. Promote Washington Street as an exciting destination with diverse ethnic stores, markets and restaurants,

4. Create a new future for Washington Street”.<sup>428</sup>

The second pillar, which is *legitimacy and support*, focuses on “upstream customers” or “third party payers” who do not benefit directly from the operations of the organization. Third party payers including private donors of various kinds and governments financially support non profit organizations. Besides, volunteers help nonprofits produce goods and services. Organizations receive these financial and human resources as they promise to produce a public value (which has social objectives for the public). However, aiming to produce something of public value does not ensure that a nonprofit organization will gain support and legitimacy. Rather, it has to develop a strategy to be acknowledged and supported by the community that it serves as well as by the community of donors and governments that have different public agendas.<sup>429</sup>

The more legitimacy a nonprofit organization has in the eyes of “third party payers”, the more chances of securing necessary resources it has to achieve its goals. Therefore, developing a set of performance measures regarding an organization’s relation with its “third party payers” provides information about the sustainability of the organization. It is important to emphasize that these performance measures should not only focus on third party payers, who provide financial resources, but also those that help organizations operate through providing authorizations or political legitimacy. Moreover, the

---

<sup>428</sup> Washington Gateway, Rediscover Washington Street.

<sup>429</sup> Moore.

political legitimacy of an organization may have a positive impact on its overall public legitimacy and reputation.<sup>430</sup>

WGMS has publicized the revitalization program and Washington Street from the beginning of the program. Contacting the city agencies, developers and the community regularly helped it gaining support for its activities. As it has gained legitimacy, it could be part of the review process for new development projects and could convince developers for changes demanded by the community. Support of the city government was critical for the implementation of the program.

The third pillar of Moore's framework, i.e. capacity, is about the ability of a nonprofit organization to create desired public value. This ability realizes the process that receives inputs from third party payers (like financial/human resources or legitimacy) and converts them into outputs that serve to achieve organization's overall mission.<sup>431</sup>

According to the nature of the public service, the steps of the process may be either totally internal or may lie at the boundaries of the organization. In other words, a nonprofit organization may produce services on its own (and build organizational capacity), or may need to cooperate with other organizations (and establish operational capacity with others). Therefore, Moore differentiates "operational capacity" from "organizational capacity" and emphasizes the importance of operational capacity. Because, when nonprofit organizations try to achieve their social goals, they often need other partners or collaborators. They are rarely large enough to accomplish their goals by themselves. The effective measurement of operational capacity should begin

---

<sup>430</sup> Ibid.

<sup>431</sup> Ibid.

with an *organization's capacity* to produce desired outputs, which is linked to the *value* pillar. Next, a set of *productivity and efficiency indicators* should be included. These indicators should provide information to compare the quantity and quality of output with the costs of those outputs. Finally, *staff capacity, morale and learning capacity* are other important performance measures that should be considered in operational capacity.<sup>432</sup>

WGMS build its capacity by collaborating with Boston Main Streets and other community organizations. Besides, the comprehensive revitalization program could be implemented due to the interest of the community and commitment of many volunteers working in the four committees. Therefore, a revitalization program should have an incremental approach to reach objectives step by step in the long run by building capacity of the main street community to implement the program. Besides, a revitalization program should encourage and support of the involvement of various stakeholders. The strength of the program is that it was owned and implemented by the community in partnership with the City and local organizations and supporting businesses.

As a result, organizational performance of WGMS has been critically significant in achieving revitalization goals. Beyond having a very well defined agenda, it is essential to build capacity and to gain support, as WGMS did successfully.

---

<sup>432</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

In the United States, the process of decline in the cities had started after the World War II, when the movement of people and jobs from city core to peripheries became possible by the extensive accessibility provided by the automobile. This process has accelerated by government housing policies that supported individual housing in the suburbs. As a result, city centers faced with important population losses and economic decline. Consequently, historic commercial places within cities lost their previous functions. After historic commercial places lost their previous vitality and functions, the **revitalization** of these places has become an issue particularly for local governments.<sup>433</sup>

In the 1970s, the National Trust for Historic Preservation initiated the Main Street Program to recapture the previous vitality of these historic commercial places.<sup>434</sup> As its positive outcomes have been seen at different places, the program has been an increasingly preferred approach by commercial district communities, nonprofits and state and city agencies that have interests in historic commercial places. The program has introduced the Four – Point Approach to commercial district revitalization which suggests working simultaneously on four broad areas of design improvement, promotion, economic restructuring, and organization. This model has helped communities revitalize their dilapidated and deserted central and neighborhood business districts of midsize and large cities across the United States. As a result, **grassroots-based economic development through historic preservation** has

---

<sup>433</sup> Zielenbach, p. 8.

<sup>434</sup> Dane, p. 11.

been a widely accepted solution to the problems of traditional commercial areas.<sup>435</sup>

This study has focused on the **revitalization model** of the Main Street Program and the kinds and causes of the **spatial/urban change** that could be possible through the implementation of the program. While analyzing the Main Street Program as a revitalization model for historic commercial districts, first, all structural aspects of the program including goals, roles of nonprofits and local communities, contributions of federal and local governments, funding tools, organization models, implementation strategies, and self-evaluation criteria used by the National Trust and Main Street communities have been examined in detail.

This study presented that the Main Street approach to commercial district revitalization emphasizes business district management. The program focuses on existing assets of a commercial district such as its unique character, historic buildings, community organizations etc. Like place-based approaches, it implicitly accepts physical improvements and economic development through its four point approach. Even though social issues such as improved health, education, homelessness are not addressed by the Main Street Program, it can contribute to improve the quality of life of existing low- and moderate-income residents. For example, Washington Gateway Main Street revitalization program could incorporate public safety and the control of gentrification into its revitalization strategy.

As mentioned by Seidman, “the Main Street strategy promises to be an effective approach to revitalizing inner-city commercial districts if it is adapted

---

<sup>435</sup> Seidman, Revitalizing Commerce for American Cities - Practitioner's Guide,

to fit inner-city conditions”<sup>436</sup>. It provides communities with a developed framework for revitalization and a comprehensive approach that allows simultaneously addressing building organizational capacity, physical improvements, promotion of the district and economic restructuring.

**Key Aspects of the Main Street Program’s revitalization model include:**

- **Collaboration with community-based, government and private-sector organizations:** Implementation of the Main Street Program relies on volunteers from communities. This is described as *self-help*, which is one of the principles of the Main Street Approach, by the National Trust Main Street Center. Even though the program is a community-driven approach, the success of the program depends on building partnerships with other community organizations, public and private sectors. However, it is obvious that building partnerships may be challenging task for many places.
- **Volunteer-based implementation:** Community involvement is encouraged by its “implementation oriented” approach which suggests beginning with small visible projects that build confidence in the program and ensure support for larger projects. Because, the continuing progress made through revitalization program increases the interest and involvement of the community.<sup>437</sup> On the other hand, its volunteer-driven approach can be an obstacle for urban settings. Besides, “funders may be skeptical of the capacity of a volunteer-based organization to get results”.<sup>438</sup> Finally, this may be a challenge for places where there is not a tradition of community involvement.

---

<sup>436</sup> Seidman, "Inner City Commercial Revitalization: A Literature Review",

<sup>437</sup> NMSC, "Why the "Main Street" Program?"

<sup>438</sup> Ibid, p.5

- **Comprehensiveness:** It is understood that comprehensiveness is critically important for the success of a revitalization program. A revitalization approach should be comprehensive to be able to address several issues and to have long-term positive impacts on an urban place. Main Street Program, unlike most alternative models, presents a comprehensive revitalization model as it addresses building organizational capacity, economic restructuring, promoting business district and physical improvements within its framework. On the other hand, it does not address social problems such as public safety, housing, employment issues, etc.<sup>439</sup> However, the flexibility of the program make it possible to incorporate these into its framework as it can be seen in the example of the Washington Street revitalization.
- **Incremental Changes:** As explained by National Trust, decline of commercial districts did not happen in one day, so that their problems can not be solved in a short time. Therefore, Main Street Program is based on an incremental approach that suggests **incremental changes**.<sup>440</sup> In that sense, it is not a project, which necessities being completed in a given period of time, but it is a program that does not have a due date to be completed. The strength of this approach is twofold: first, as stated by National Trust “small projects and simple activities lead to a more sophisticated understanding of the revitalization process”, second, incremental activities help communities develop their skills necessary to undertake more complex projects.<sup>441</sup> Besides, unlike other revitalization strategies, “because it requires fewer

---

<sup>439</sup> Ibid, p.5

<sup>440</sup> Smith, interview with S.Yıldırım Esen.

<sup>441</sup> NMSC, "Why the "Main Street" Program?"

resources and less capacity to get started, it can generate short-term results”.<sup>442</sup>

For that reason, in the first years of the program, Washington Gateway Main Street defined broad goals, such as ‘making the street clean and safe, building relationships with businesses, running promotional events, advocating with the city and state for transit improvements, and working to remove roll-down grates’.<sup>443</sup>

### **Analyzing Urban Spatial Change as a Component of Revitalization: Washington Street at South End**

By focusing on one of the most acclaimed implementations of the program: revitalization of Washington Street at South End – Lower Roxbury in Boston, I addressed the overarching question of how these places can engage in comprehensive strategies. I have primarily based my empirical research on Washington Street example because, in addition to being an award-winning Main Street implementation, in the past ten years it has been a significant laboratory in the realm of commercial district revitalization. I have specifically looked at whether and how these revitalization efforts made by the main street organization (Washington Gateway Main Street - WGMS) could improve the spatial quality of the commercial district (within the Kevin Lynch’s framework), and consequently enhance the quality of life there.

Analyzing a revitalization program necessitates setting the performance criteria. A single measurement tool that can assess the complexity of revitalization does not exist mainly due to competing approaches to revitalization. Besides, either economic or social measures based on

---

<sup>442</sup> Seidman, "Inner City Commercial Revitalization: A Literature Review", p.5

<sup>443</sup> Seidman, Revitalizing Commerce for American Cities - Practitioner's Guide, p.83.

quantitative data are used to measure the success of revitalization programs.<sup>444</sup>

The National Trust and each Main Street community use their own self-evaluation criteria to measure the success of the Main Street Program. Their criteria are also basically based on quantitative data such as the number of new jobs that have been created, the total amount reinvested, the number of new businesses that have been created and number of buildings that have been rehabilitated. In short, economic measures and quantitative data are used for measuring the success of the program. Even though improving the design of the district is considered crucial, changes in the urban spatial quality of Main Street districts are not measured.

In this thesis, unlike previous revitalization studies that focus on economic and social changes, physical / spatial aspect of revitalization has been addressed. Different than previously mentioned evaluation criteria used by Main Street Program, performance dimensions, based on the basic qualities of built environments have been used to analyze and assess the case of the study. Five dimensions of “a good city form” (including vitality, sense, fit, access, control), developed by Kevin Lynch have been used as the evaluation framework. The study correlated these performance dimensions with the four point approach and principles of the Main Street Program. Within this framework, the contribution of the program on the improvements of the quality of the spatial environment at Washington Street in South End, Boston has been assessed.

This study presented that vitality of district has been improved as a result of the implementation of a number of strategies by WGMS committees and the program manager in collaboration with several state and city agencies. These strategies include developing a maintenance program, keeping the district

---

<sup>444</sup> Zielenbach,

clean, developing an action plan to address security concerns, removal of solid storefront grates, and advocating for the redevelopment of vacant lands and buildings. Particularly, the program manager and the Design Committee have been involved in the implementation of these strategies.

In addition, “sense of place” in Washington Street has been enhanced by aiming to create a new image for the street, to enhance the identity of the street, and to make the street a mixed-use, pedestrian oriented place. In order to achieve these, a new streetscape was designed, architectural, social and cultural history of the district was reemphasized, many storefronts were improved, development of vacant lands were encouraged, and good maintenance was promoted. These all help change the perception of users. Support of various city and state agencies has helped WGMS achieve their objectives. Together with WGMS program manager, Design Committee and Promotions Committee have been effective implementation of these tasks. Besides, Economic Restructuring Committee has been involved in providing grants to businesses for storefront improvements.

Present fit has also been improved in Washington Street. Parks and open spaces have been improved. ADHOC Subcommittee under the Design Committee has worked on this issue. Besides, new uses have been introduced within historic buildings. In addition, affordable housing units have been encouraged in new developments and several existing low-income housing units have been rehabilitated. Various city and state agencies have taken a lead for realization of these. WGMS has advocated for controlling gentrification within the district. A number of street level retail spaces have been improved with the technical and financial assistance provided by WGMS. Design Committee has been effective in achieving these tasks.

Besides, access to other resources, persons, services or places has been improved. Building a new Washington Street was one of the goals of the revitalization program. This helped increase the diversity of things given access to. Reconstruction of the street by MBTA in collaboration with WGMS and realization of Silver Line project were among the tasks to achieve this goal. Traffic and Parking Subcommittee and ADHOC Subcommittee both of which were established under the Design Committee have worked on these issues. Moreover, the program manager together with the Economic Restructuring Committee has been involved in assisting businesses carrying affordable goods and products, and in encouraging affordable housing in new developments. These all have contributed providing equity of access.

Furthermore, the program has contributed to make Washington Street a congruent place. In other words, residents and business owners have taken active roles in controlling the street. At the beginning of the revitalization program, "appointing a citizens oversight committee to guide decisions about the design and reconstruction of Washington Street"<sup>445</sup> was among the objectives of the task force. Encouraging creation of street-wide business association was a significant step toward achieving congruence. In addition, collaboration between residents and the business community have been encouraged by WGMS. Volunteers Committee has worked on encouraging the participation of the community in the implementation of the revitalization program.

Finally, this study found that improvements in the spatial quality of Washington Street have positively contributed to the overall success of the revitalization program. Improvements in five basic qualities of a place, i.e. vitality, sense, fit, access and control, could be achieved partly due to the

---

<sup>445</sup> Boston Redevelopment Authority. Economic Development and Industrial Corporation.,

organizational model (four committees) that allow dealing with several critical issues at the same time. Since it is necessary to develop a revitalization program according to the specific circumstances and needs of a place, WGMS has modified the four point approach. Specifically, a volunteering committee instead of an organization community has been established. All committees have contributed to achieve these improvements. In addition, it is important to note that the support of the City and collaboration with numerous city and state agencies and private sector has allowed WGMS to implement its revitalization program.

Analyzing the Main Street Program as a revitalization model as well as examining conditions in Boston in general and in Washington Street 'n South End in particular offers insights into the process of revitalization in numerous other places.

## REFERENCES

Boston Zoning Code,

<<http://www.ci.boston.ma.us/bra/pdf/ZoningCode/Article80.pdf>>, (Last day accessed June 5 2006).

**Advisor, Affordable Housing Design, 2006.** Roxbury Corners Cooperative Housing, Boston, Massachusetts,

<<http://www.designadvisor.org/gallery/roxbury.html>>, (Last day accessed May 30 2006) Affordable Housing Design Advisor.

**Apple Jr., R. W., 1999**, "In Boston, a Boom and New Hurrahs" in New York Times.

**Authority, Boston Redevelopment, 1989.** Boston Census Report 2000, unpublished report, Boston Redevelopment Authority.

**Authority, Boston Redevelopment, 1989.** South End Neighborhood Profile 1988, unpublished report # 319, Boston Redevelopment Authority.

**Authority, Boston Redevelopment, 2003.** The Redevelopment of Washington Street A Density Success Story,

<[http://www.architects.org/emplibrary/B6\\_b.pdf#search=%22The%20Redevelopment%20of%20Washington%20Street%20A%20Density%20Success%20Story%22](http://www.architects.org/emplibrary/B6_b.pdf#search=%22The%20Redevelopment%20of%20Washington%20Street%20A%20Density%20Success%20Story%22)>, (Last day accessed May 16 2006).

**Bloom, Joshua, 2006 March 17,** Interview with Sibel Yıldırım Esen, Boston.

**Boston Redevelopment Authority. Economic Development and Industrial Corporation., 1997,** A New Washington Street : Boston's main street for the new century : a strategy to encourage investment and redevelopment on Washington Street : final report and recommendations, The Authority, Boston, MA.

**Boston, The City of, 2005,** Discover Boston on Main Streets, Beyond Baked Beans, The City of Boston, Boston.

**Boston, The City of, 2006.** Boston Main Streets, Unpublished document, Boston Main Streets, Boston.

**Bright, Elise M., 2000,** Reviving America's forgotten neighborhoods : an investigation of inner city revitalization efforts, Garland Pub., New York ; London.

**Bureau, U.S. Census, Census 2000.** State & County Quick Facts, <<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/25/2507000.html>>, (Last day accessed May 18 2006).

**Center, National Main Street, 1997,** The National Main Street Network membership directory, National Main Street Center National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, DC.

**Center, National Main Street, 2005.** Main Street, <[www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=1989&section=2](http://www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=1989&section=2)>, (Last day accessed Dec 18 2005) National Main Street Center.

**Center, National Main Street, May 2004.** Why the "Main Street" Program?, Unpublished Program Proposal, National Main Street Center, Washington, DC.

**Crawford, Margaret, 2005,** Class Notes, GSD 5101: Histories and Theories of Urban Interventions.

**Dane, Suzanne G., Ed. 1988,** New directions for urban main streets, National Main Street Center National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, D.C.

**Dane, Suzanne G., 1988,** New directions for urban main streets, National Main Street Center National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, D.C.

**Demographia,** Boston Metropolitan Area: Population from 1790, <<http://www.demographia.com/db-bos1790.htm>>, (Last day accessed May 23 2006).

**Development, Office of Business, 2002.** Commercial District Design Guidelines - 2003 Boston Municipality, Boston.

**Dreier, Peter, 1996,** "Revitalizing urban neighborhoods". in Studies in government and public policy, W. Dennis Keating, Krumholz, Norman, Star, Philip (ed.), University Press of Kansas, Lawrence.

**Foundation, W. K. Kellogg, 2004,** "Logic Model Development Guide" in.

**Frost, Jack, Robert Booth, et al., 1998,** Boston's Freedom Trail : a souvenir guide, Globe Pequot Press, Old Saybrook, Conn.

**Gateway, Washington, 2006.** Rediscover Washington Street, Booklet, Washington Gateway Main Street, Boston.

**Grove, Sheila, 2006.** Revitalization of Washington Street, Presentation for the New Urbanism Conference, Boston.

**Grove, Sheila, 2006 June 3 2006,** Interview with Sibel Yıldırım Esen, Boston.

**Haber, Emily, 2006 May 28,** Interview with Sibel Yıldırım Esen, Boston.

**Hafrey, Anne, 1985.** Demographics and Housing in The South End, The City of Boston and The Boston SMSA: Report No 197 Boston Redevelopment Authority, Boston.

**Lea, Diane, 2003,** "America's Preservation Ethos". in A Richer Heritage, R. E. Stipe (ed.), The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.

**Linden, Steve Dunwell and Blanche M. G., 2005,** Boston Freedom Trail, Back Bay Press, Boston.

**Lynch, Kevin, 1981,** A theory of good city form, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.

**Miller, Naomi and Keith N. Morgan, 1990,** Boston architecture, 1975-1990, Prestel ;  
Distributed in the USA and Canada by te Neues Pub. Co., Munich  
New York.

**Moore, Mark H., 2003.** The Public Value Scorecard - A Rejoinder and an Alternative to 'Strategic Performance Measurement and Management in Nonprofit Organizations' by Robert Kaplan"Harvard University, The Kennedy School of Government, The Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organizations, Boston.

**National Main Street Center (U.S.), 1997.** The ... National Main Street Network membership directory, National Main Street Center National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, DC.

**NMSC, National Main Street Center, 2005.** Main Street, <[www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=1989&section=2](http://www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=1989&section=2)>, (Last day accessed Dec 18 2005).

**NMSC, National Main Street Center, 2006.** A Powerful Support System for Local Commercial District Revitalization, <<http://www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=2143&section=15>>, (Last day accessed march 8 2006 2006).

**NMSC, National Main Street Center, 2006.** Characteristics of Strong Coordinating Programs, <<http://www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=2287&section=15>>, (Last day accessed March 9 2006) National Trust for Historic Presevation in the U.S.

**NMSC, National Main Street Center, 2006.** The National Main Street Program Accreditation, <<http://www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=2121>>, (Last day accessed March 9 2006).

**NMSC, National Main Street Center, May 2004.** Why the "Main Street" Program?, Unpublished Program Proposal, National Main Street Center, Washington, DC.

**Preservation, National Trust for Historic, 2004.** Annual Report 2004, <[http://www.nationaltrust.org/about/reports/2004\\_Annual\\_Report\\_NTHP.pdf](http://www.nationaltrust.org/about/reports/2004_Annual_Report_NTHP.pdf)>, (Last day accessed January 7 2006).

**Preservation, National Trust for Historic, 2005.** Main Street, <<http://www.nationaltrust.org/about/reports/mainstreet.pdf>>, (Last day accessed National Trust for Historic Preservation.

**Preservation, National Trust for Historic, 2005.** Main Street, <[http://www.nationaltrust.org/about/reports/main\\_st.pdf](http://www.nationaltrust.org/about/reports/main_st.pdf)>, (Last day accessed Dec. 18 2005) National Trust for Historic Preservation.

**Preservation, The National Trust for Historic, 2006.** History of the National Trust, <[http://www.nationaltrust.org/about/reports/history\\_NTHP.pdf](http://www.nationaltrust.org/about/reports/history_NTHP.pdf)>, (Last day accessed Jan. 7 2006) The National Trust for Historic Preservation.

**Seidman, Karl F.,** Inner City Commercial Revitalization: A Literature Review Fannie Mae Foundation, Boston.

**Seidman, Karl F., 2004, Revitalizing Commerce for American Cities - Practitioner's Guide, Fannie Mae Foundation.**

**Selvarajah, Eswaran, 2003. South End 2000 Census of Population and Housing: Report No: 576Boston Redevelopment Authority, Boston.**

**Smith, Kennedy L., 2006 14 Feb, Interview with Sibel Yıldırım Esen, Boston.**

**Smith, Kennedy L., 2006. Retail Market Analysis, Presentation for the course: GSD 5214 Analytic Methods of Urban Planning, Harvard University, Graduate School of Design.**

**Smith, Kennedy Lawson, 1995, "Main Street at 15" in Preservation Forum, Vol.-, No.Spring.**

**Smith, Kennedy, National Trust for Historic Preservation in the United States., et al., 1988, Main Street : revitalizing downtown, National Main Street Center National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, D.C.**

**Street, Washington Gateway Main, 2005. Organization Chart, Unpublished report, Boston.**

**Streets, Boston Main, 2006.** Washington Gateway Main Streets, Unpublished report prepared for the New Urbanism Conference, The City of Boston, Boston.

**Teams, Regional Urban Design Assistance, 1980,** South End/Lower Roxbury.

**Thorns, David C., 2002,** The transformation of cities : urban theory and urban life, Palgrave, Basingstoke ; New York.

**Turner, Laura, 2001,** "Historic Preservation Helps City Revitalization." in Nation's Cities Weekly, Vol.24, No.20.

**U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency, 2005.** Multifamily Property Demonstration Disposition Program: Memorandum Number: 2005-BO-1002, <<http://www.hud.gov/oig/ig511002.pdf>>, (Last day accessed Feb. 12 2006).

**W.K., Kellogg Foundation, 2004.** Logic Model Development Guide, <[www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub3669.pdf](http://www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub3669.pdf)>, (Last day accessed May 10 2006).

**Wallis, Allan, 1998,** "The New England Life: Design Review in Boston". in Design Review - Challenging Urban Aesthetic Control, Brenda Case Scheer and Wolfgang F. E. Preiser (ed.), Chapman & Hall, New York.

**WBUR, 2006.** A Timeline of Urban Development,  
<<http://www.wbur.org/special/bostonatc/history.asp>>, (Last day accessed June 03 2006) WBUR.

**Weiss, Carol H., 1998,** Evaluation : methods for studying programs and policies, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ.

**Witt, Ellen, 2006 June 3,** Interview with Sibel Yildirim Esen,

**Zielenbach, Sean, 2000,** The art of revitalization : improving conditions in distressed inner-city neighborhoods, Garland, New York.



**5- Please rate each of the following characteristics of the Washington Street, South End?**  
*(Please circle your choice)*

How satisfied are you with:	Completely satisfied (5)				Completely dissatisfied (1)		
Cleanliness, maintenance of the district	+	5	4	3	2	1	-
Safety		5	4	3	2	1	-
Available parking		5	4	3	2	1	-
Public transportation quality to the district		5	4	3	2	1	-
Appearance of the parks and green areas		5	4	3	2	1	-
Physical appearance of sidewalks and streets		5	4	3	2	1	-
Physical appearance of district's old buildings		5	4	3	2	1	-
Attractiveness of storefronts and signs		5	4	3	2	1	-
Attractiveness/appearance of new buildings		5	4	3	2	1	-
Investment in the neighborhood		5	4	3	2	1	-
Available affordable housing		5	4	3	2	1	-
Economic opportunities for businesses		5	4	3	2	1	-
Interaction among the district community		5	4	3	2	1	-
Community involvement in district's decisions		5	4	3	2	1	-

**6- Are you aware of the Washington Gateway Main Streets Program (WGMS)?**  
 Yes  No

**a- If so, how would you rate the contributions of WGMS to the improvements in Washington Street /South End?**  
*(Please circle your choice)*

Excellent				Poor
5	4	3	2	1

**b. If you have you taken part in any of their activities/ or received their services, how would you rate WGMS activities and services?** *(Please circle your choice)*

Excellent				Poor
5	4	3	2	1

**7- Zip code where you live?** \_\_\_\_\_

**8- If you live in the South End district, how long have you lived in the South End?**  
 Less than 1 year  1-5 years  6-10 years  1-20  1 or over

**9- Age?**  
 19 or under  20-24  25-34  35-44  45-54 or over

**10- What is your highest level of educational attainment?**  
 Some High School  High School Graduate  College or Above  Other

**THANK YOU !!!**

## APPENDIX B: THE TIMELINE OF THE SOUTH END DISTRICT

