

Economic Change and the Inner City Landscape:  
A Case Study of Hamilton, Ontario

by

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## **Author's Declaration**

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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## **Abstract**

The urban landscape reflects the social, economic, and policy changes that have taken place in a community. The inner city has been previously called a microcosm that indicates the changes that are occurring in society. The inner city can thus be studied to examine how it responds and adapts to economic change. This thesis asks in what ways are the historic and current economic transitions visible in Hamilton's inner city landscape; and how do planning policies influence the emerging urban built form. The thesis examines select characteristics of the contemporary inner city derived from the literature (i.e. art and entertainment amenities, recreational uses, residential revitalization, institutional uses, post-Fordist economy, decline in manufacturing activity, promotion of multi-modal transportation, sustainability policy, and statement place making) and their expected physical manifestations. The methods consist of a historical analysis and visual diagnosis that uses photographs and field notes in order to provide a bottom-up interpretation of downtown Hamilton's changing urban landscape. There is evidence of arts-culture led rejuvenation of downtown Hamilton and the public realm. However, there is the challenge of promoting revitalization in a context of visual urban blight and the possibilities of policy-induced loss of employment lands.

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# 1. Introduction

The phases of urban development are evident on the urban landscape<sup>1</sup> as social, economic, and policy changes materialize in specific urban forms and land uses. The current urban form and land use patterns reflect what has taken place in the community. During periods of economic expansion, there is new construction, and communities present an appearance of being vital and robust. In contrast, during times of economic contraction, construction is halted, sites are abandoned, retail suffers, services relocate, and there is a reflection of disparity on the landscape. When a city is transitioning from a period of contraction to one of growth, there is a mixed image presented to both visitors and citizens, as the city will retain its old identity while it gradually forms a new one. During this adoption period, the changes that are occurring on the ground may be gradual and may be comprised of minor developments that may cause some to not immediately recognize their importance. However, when individual components in the neighbourhood are examined as part of a whole there will be an indication that a shift is underway. Therefore, through the examination of social, economic, and policy developments it is possible to gain an understanding of their role on the alterations on the urban landscape. This thesis asks in what ways are the historic and current economic transitions visible in Hamilton's inner city landscape; and, how do planning policies influence the emerging urban built form. The research conducted an analysis of the historical evolution of

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<sup>1</sup> The phrase urban landscape is defined as a populated area of the earth's surface shaped by natural and human forces (Mayhew and Penny, 1992).



downtown Hamilton and performed a visual diagnosis using photography-- a method inspired by Deverteuil (2004)-- of its current built form to investigate if the characteristics expected in the contemporary inner city are present in Hamilton. The historical analysis tracked the changes that occurred in downtown Hamilton over time. The visual diagnosis, using photographs, examined whether the contemporary characteristics of inner cities as described in the literature are present in Hamilton today. This thesis is interpretive in nature and broad in its analysis of Hamilton's built form.

The traditional downtown area, or inner city, presents visible indicators of the changes that are being experienced by a community. It is proposed that the inner city's landscape responds and adapts to economic change (McCann and Simmons, 2000). As such, it is an area where evidence of an economy in transition may be found. Often, the downtown is one of the first areas to provide a glimpse of the changes that are occurring in a community, as it is a microcosm of the entire city (Ley and Frost, 2006). By studying the historical evolution and the current visual appearance of the inner city, the presence of economic change on the landscape that has been documented in the literature can be identified. It is important to understand the process that economic change has on the urban landscape in order to be able to create flexible and adaptive planning policies that encourage the evolution of the urban core to meet changing conditions while not inducing the elimination of existing economic operations (Ley and Dobson, 2008). As inner cities in different communities will likely face similar experiences as their economy transitions, it is important to explore in detail the appearance

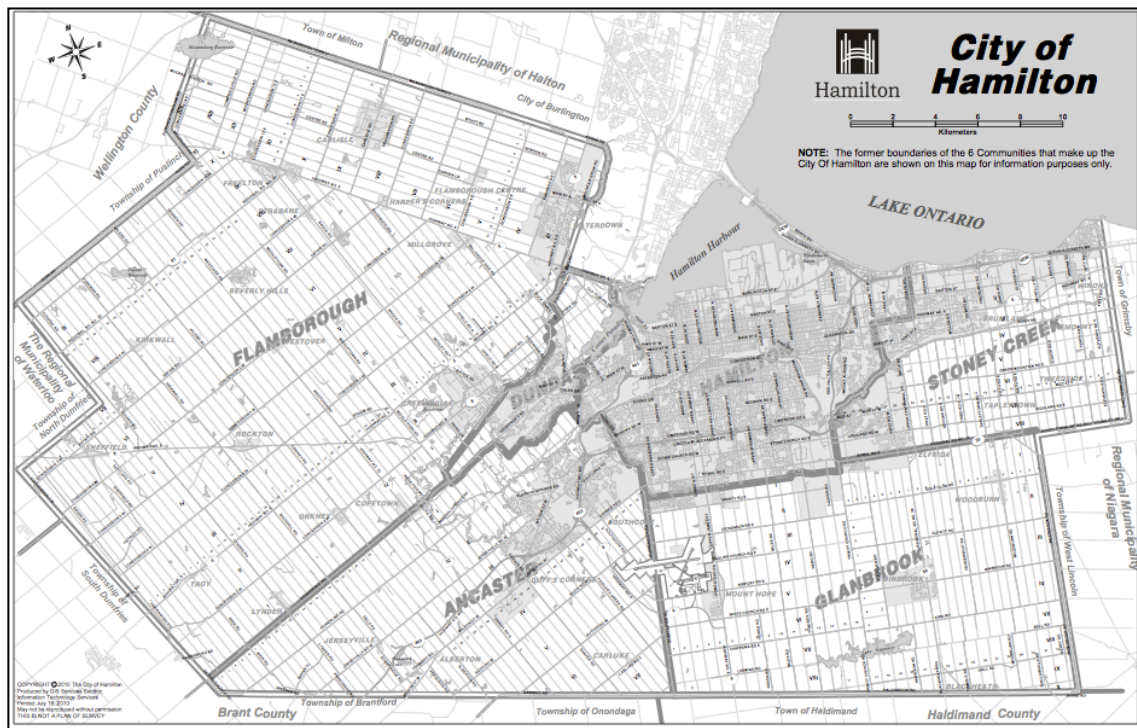
and patterns of a transitioning inner city. The ability to recognize patterns will allow planners to be able to predict and better plan future community needs.

### **1.1 Hamilton: A Case Study in Economic Change**

The City of Hamilton is situated at the edge of Lake Ontario and Burlington Bay (see Figure 1). The Niagara Escarpment forms a ridge that separates the city into two areas: the elevated upper city, called “the mountain”, and the flat lower traditional city. Hamilton has the “eighth largest population of all Canadian cities and remains the fourth largest city in Ontario (Toronto, Ottawa, and Mississauga are larger)” (City of Hamilton, 2012b). The 2006 Census indicated that the city has a population of 692 911—a 4.6% increase since 2001 (Statistics Canada, 2007a).

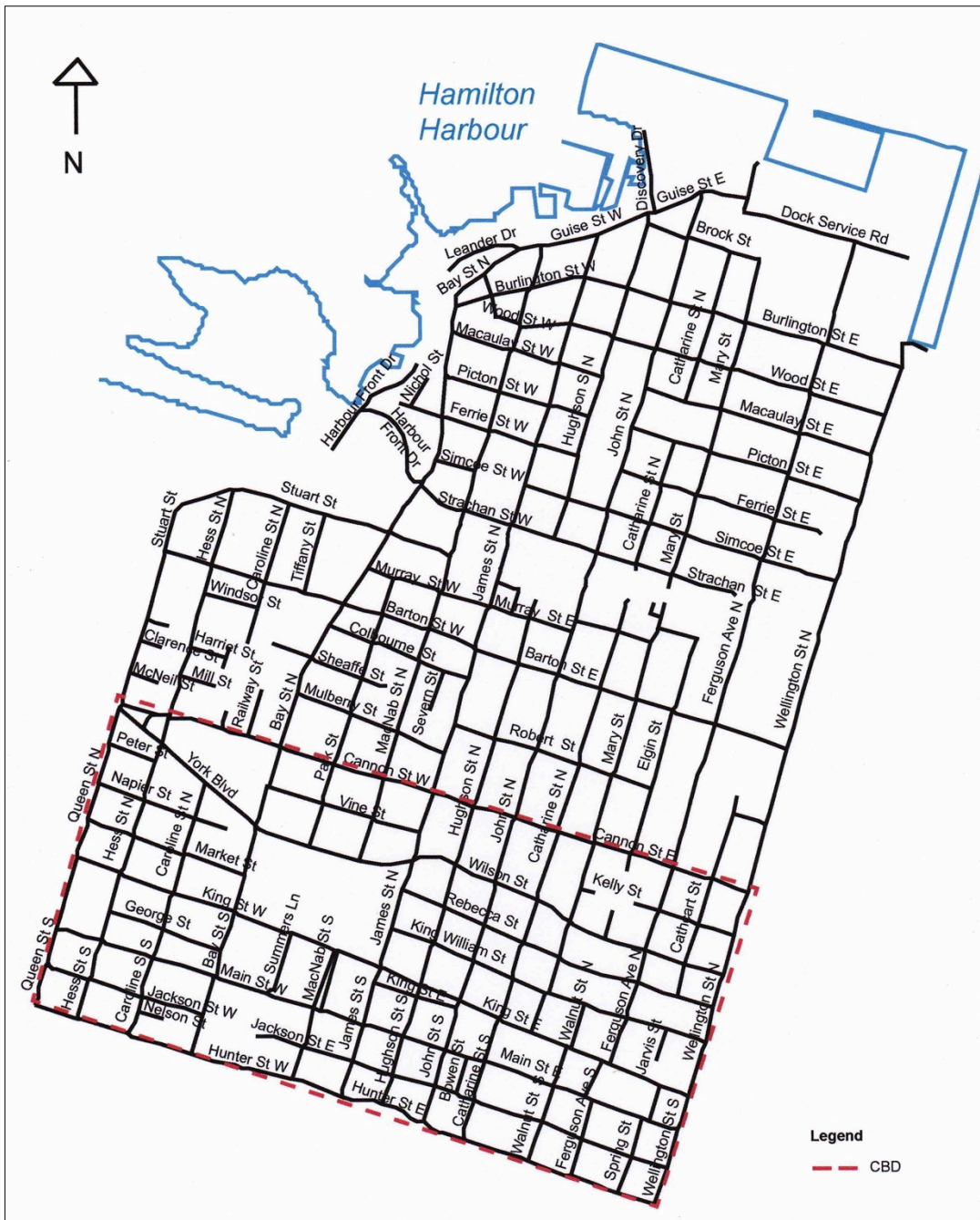
The study area is the inner city area of Hamilton, Ontario. The literature provides several different definitions of an inner city (e.g. Ley and Frost, 2006). This thesis defines the inner city according to the limits of the central area of Hamilton as outlined in the City of Hamilton Official Plan (2011). The central area of Hamilton as defined by the City includes its central business district and adjacent residential lands (see Figure 2). The central business district (CBD) boundaries are: Cannon Street, Wellington Street, Hunter Street, and Queen Street.

Figure 1: Map of the City of Hamilton, Ontario



(City of Hamilton, 2012a)

Figure 2: Map of Downtown Hamilton



(Base Map Sources: City of Hamilton, 2012c and 2012d)

This thesis will examine the historical and current visual evidence of the characteristics of urban form and development in Hamilton, Ontario in order to shed light on the ways that economic transitions materialize in specific physical changes in the urban landscape. Hamilton is an appropriate case to study as the city has been experiencing a decline in manufacturing employment and a rise in knowledge or service employment (Weaver, 1982; Statistics Canada 2012).

A historical, visual, and policy analysis of the inner city's built form and function will demonstrate the relationship that exists between changes in economic activities and how it is represented in the urban fabric. The thesis will identify socio-economic changes and their impact on the pattern and processes of the urban built form in Hamilton's inner city. In addition, it will assess the effect that the implementation of planning policies has on the urban landscape. Most significantly, it will fill a gap in the existing literature by addressing the visibility of socio-economic changes evident by a photographic and historical approach that allow us to understand the process of urban changes in the inner city landscape using the case of Hamilton, Ontario. The findings about process and form can be broadly applied to other Canadian cities undergoing similar economic changes. For instance, the evidence of arts-culture led revitalization in Hamilton's downtown provides an option for other communities to imitate; however, it is important to recognize that areas of blight are still present and need to be addressed. It is also necessary to ensure that policy does not induce the outward push of existing economic activities to the periphery as land values increase (Ley and Dobson, 2008).

This thesis is structured as follows: there will be a literature review of the concepts that provide support for the research; the methods will be outlined; contextual material regarding urban form and economic development and applicable planning policies will be provided; the findings will be presented; and finally, there will be discussion of the importance of the findings to planning practice along with concluding remarks.

## **2. Literature Review**

There are several concepts that need to be reviewed so that we are able to understand the complexity of the relationship between economic change and the urban landscape. Firstly, there must be discussion of the phases of urban development and the periods of industrialization. Both of these processes are important to outline as they provide the historical context that is necessary to understand Hamilton's development. Secondly, there will be a review of the literature that defines the inner city (that is also referred to as the downtown or urban core). Thirdly, there will be further discussion on the current period of industrialization--the new economy. Fourthly, several of the broader planning themes that have emerged in recent years that shape policy and the urban landscape will be examined: sustainability, gentrification, and amenities. These themes are dominant concepts that are discussed in the literature as being characteristic of inner city change in the new economy. By reviewing literature in these fields of study, the patterns of urban and economic development in Hamilton can be placed in the context of theory allowing for observations and comments to be made on the relationship between the form of its inner city and the economic development period.

### **2.1 Phases of Urban Development**

In order to describe and analyze the changes that have occurred in downtown Hamilton there needs to be discussion regarding the phases of urban development in Canada as identified by Bunting and Filion (2006). The first phase, the mercantile era (1600-1800), had small settlement areas with political

decisions being made in England or France. As such, economic activity was focused on resource extraction as finished products were imported from Europe. The second phase, the growth of agricultural settlements (1800-1850), had cities experience population growth as they became regional marketplaces. The export of agricultural goods required new transportation routes resulting in canals and roadways being constructed during this period.

The third phase, Great Transitions (1850-1945), experienced the growth of industry, the expansion of trade, and the formation of a national network of railways. The Canadian government, through its policies, encouraged industrialization and introduced tariffs that led to American companies opening branch plants. The result was further population growth in cities that increasingly were serviced by public transportation routes. During the 1890s, concern over the appearance of cities led to the onset of the City Beautiful movement that sought to provide monumental public structures and places (Hodge and Gordon, 2003). In the early twentieth century, there was the introduction of zoning and the expansion of expressways that altered the form of the growing city by segregating land use purposes and communities (Hodge and Gordon, 2003).

The fourth phase, that of post-World War II Fordist and Keynesian economics (1945-75), featured government-led policies and the growth of the manufacturing and service sectors. There was the onset of social programs and the government constructed new expressways and institutions to support the post-war population expansion that increasingly located in the suburbs. During the 1950s, there was increased focus on urban renewal projects, particularly on



the decay of the downtown housing stock, and there began to be a regional focus for planning as cities and their surrounding regional economy began to be more closely intertwined (Hodge and Gordon, 2003).

The fifth phase, post-Fordism and neo-liberalism (1975 to the present), experienced de-industrialization, and has had more private sector involvement in providing public services as governments began to cut spending on social and infrastructure programs. Starting in the 1970s, urban reformers have focused on creating “a city people can live in and enjoy” -- the Livable city—one that promotes public transit use, and has generous parks and public spaces (Ley, 2010,105). Downtowns began to be revitalized through the “erection of highly symbolic public buildings...intended to improve the image of the core” and had the construction of downtown malls (Bunting and Filion, 2006, 28). The introduction of “liberal zoning regulations” allowed for high-rises during a period (1960-75) of “feverish office employment growth” (Bunting and Filion, 2006, 28). Meanwhile in the suburbs there was the construction of business parks and big box power centres. In response to the earlier eras that focused on large-scale projects, by the 1980s, urban design began to have a greater role in shaping the landscape (Hodge and Gordon, 2003).

Currently, the concepts of smart growth and sustainable development are driving planning policies (Hodge and Gordon, 2003). In downtown regions, this phase has resulted in “gentrification and residential intensification (mostly as high-rise condominiums)” as the inner city has “become a highly appealing place to live for a large segment of the population sensitive to their urban amenities:

entertainment, culture, proximity to workplaces, and walking-hospitable environments” (Bunting and Filion, 2006, 34). As we will see, the different phases of urban development are still visible in Hamilton’s inner city.

## **2.2 Periods of Industrialization**

Periods of industrialization are distinguishable by changes in the process of production and the means of consumption. The economic evolution in Canada has played a role in shaping the practices that occur on the urban landscape and the resources that are needed for economic gain. The first period of pre-industrialization is when economic activity occurred in small workshops or in personal dwellings (Merriman, 1996). The Industrial Revolution (1800-1850) rapidly transformed practices as larger factories with mechanical processes were constructed on the landscape that had workers produce goods in shifts and on specialized lines (Merriman, 1996, 669). Following World War I, there was the beginning of what has been termed Fordism (named after the industrialist Henry Ford) that saw the “modernization of the consumer goods sector (for both production and consumption) and an unprecedented labour-capital compromise (largely due to the growth of unions)” (Boyer, 1990, ix).

The post-war period also saw a growth in the influence and interference of the government in economic decision-making through the creation of regulations. The regulation school, defined by the philosopher Canquihem, was “the adjustment, in conformity with certain rules or norms, of several movements or acts, and their effects or products, which are initially distinct due to their diversity or succession” (Boyer, 1990,16). It was the state that regulated the manner and

form of the economy through policy development. This was the period of Keynesian policies that sought to ensure “economic stabilization” (Boyer, 1990, 20). In the 1970s, the period of de-industrialization began. There are several characteristics of de-industrialization: the first, is that there are more manufacturing jobs that are lost than created during economic expansion, and the second, is that there are more manufacturing goods imported than exported (Cairncross, 1979, 6 & 10).

The most recent period of industrialization has several labels: post-industrialism, post-Fordism, and the new economy. Post-industrialism is a term that was coined by Daniel Bell that “anticipates the advent of a new knowledge-based social class, with occupations, values, political preferences and social behaviours differing from those of the older ‘industrial class’ “ (Bourne, Hutton, Shearmur, and Simmons, 2011, 9). Bell argued that there are four key features in a post-industrial society: “a shift from a manufacturing to a service-based economy; the centrality of new science-based industries with ‘specialized knowledge’ as a key resource, where universities replace factories as dominant institutions; the rapid rise of managerial, professional, and technical occupations; and, an artistic avant-garde led consumer culture, rather than media, corporations, or government” (Lees, Slater, and Wyly, 2008, 91). Post-Fordism (often termed as the new economy) is defined as the “decline of traditional, mass-production manufacturing and the concomitant rise of specialized ‘flexible’ production systems and labour” (Bourne et al, 2011, 9).

Schumpeter coined the phrase “Creative Destruction” to express how economic processes are followed until new innovations replace and destroy older ones. Destruction occurs when there are new technologies or products that are introduced that have a “cost or quality advantage, (and it is important to note that) it is not the margins of existing firms that are threatened, but their very foundation. Competition from superior innovation gives existing firms the hard choice of adapting, divesting, or going bankrupt” (Becker, Knudsen, and Swedberg, 2011, 18). In fact, the “macro-level changes in society (occurs) as an outcome of micro-level entrepreneurial activity” (Becker et al, 2011. 18). In *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy (1942)*, Schumpeter writes of the process as “industrial mutation...that incessantly revolutionizes the economic structure from within, incessantly destroying the old one, incessantly creating a new one. This process of Creative Destruction is the essential fact about capitalism” (Schumpeter, 2011, 316). The evolution of the economy is not static as it is constantly changing due to this cyclic pattern. Schumpeter’s work assists in the understanding of why there is the formation of distinct economic periods throughout history. Therefore, this concept will be demonstrated in a community that has experienced an abrupt economic shift, as there will be evidence of abandonment and creation on its landscape. The literature on the periods of industrialization explains the economic phases that have occurred in terms of their processes and practices. An understanding of the different industrial periods is needed in order to examine how the historic and current economic transitions are visible in Hamilton’s inner city landscape.

### **2.3 Defining the Inner City**

The terms inner city, downtown, or core, are commonly used to describe the same geographical area. A definition of inner city that encompasses both its geographic location and planning characteristics is that the area “includes the Central Business District (CBD) and the surrounding areas of mixed land uses, with high density residential development” (Ley, 2000, 274). Ley and Frost (2006) study the diversity in the appearance that an inner city displays that they argue is linked to the processes of change that have been identified as periods of: decline, stability, revitalization, and massive redevelopment. They refer to periods of decline as resulting when the local economy “collapses” and when there are few (if any) investments in the inner city (295). When the economy is constant, it is considered to be in a stable phase. They explain that during a period of revitalization, “renovation or redevelopment” occurs to the inner city’s built form and landscape (199). Lastly, their work notes that periods of massive redevelopment are typically associated with urban renewal projects.

Traditionally, the inner city is thought of as being an area that has the “public and private high-order functions, and most likely, a large percentage of a city’s jobs” (Gad and Matthew, 2000, 252). However, more recently, while some inner cities are experiencing renewal and growth in employment and population, there are others that are struggling and are “not fully participating in this renaissance” from a manufacturing to knowledge-based economy (Vey, 2009, 144). Throughout the renaissance process, “as the economic and social structures of cities change continuously in many different ways, so do their

landscapes” (McCann and Simmons, 2000, 77). This is important to note, as an examination of the visual indicators of change in the inner city will demonstrate the transformations that are occurring in the community.

The inner city traditionally forms a nucleus of economic, social, and political activity in a community. It is an area that is highly responsive and reflects change. Traditionally, the inner city housed the “working class districts... juxtaposed with local factories” (Ley, 2000, 280). Commerce, manufacturing, and residential uses occurred in close proximity creating a collective community image and a sense of place among residents (Ley, 2000). However, in many cities, the vibrant inner city was to face difficulties with the movement of industry and people to the suburbs and the international nature of the production process-- especially during the later half of the twentieth century (Shearmur and Hutton, 2011). As a result, there began to be growing concern over the “loss of vitality” and “low growth of retail sales” that, combined with “declining manufacturing employment in the inner cities” led to political and business efforts to “focus on office development and downtown malls” in the attempt to fix the perceived problem (Gad and Matthew, 2000, 253). Currently, much of the economic development efforts that focus on downtown areas is on attracting “specialized producer-service industries (such as scientific research), global financial services, and cultural and educational activities” (McCann and Simmons, 2000, 82).

However, policies cannot alone determine a successful revitalization. In order for inner cities to thrive, it is argued that communities need to foster

creativity, entrepreneurship and education that in turn encourages new ideas and the formation of businesses (Glaeser, 2011). In the majority of cases, the inner city is not geographically isolated from the rest of the community so it reflects what is occurring economically and socially around it (McCann and Simmons, 2000). For instance, Witold Rybczynski (2010) uses the analogy that “to effectively prime a pump there must be water in the well”—meaning that the inner city needs to be “part of a growing and economically healthy metropolitan region” (146). He argues there are several ways that planners can influence change on the inner city landscape as a city grows and undergoes change: by utilizing past successful planning solutions, adding rather than reinventing the landscape, creating vitality through density and the placement of urban amenities, and ensuring political and public support. Vey (2009) presents that successful cities have “distinctive physical features” (i.e. waterfronts or mountain landscapes or unique architecture), and “important economic attributes” (i.e. dense employment centers, universities, and medical facilities), and have “rich social and cultural amenities” (i.e. theatres, sports arenas, and museums) (146).

In fact, the development of a city’s form and function is determined by the values and ideas of the individuals who live, work, and interact with its physical and social environment (Lynch, 1984). The literature on inner cities describes the socio-economic characteristics and history of this geographical region. An understanding of the characteristics and development of inner cities is needed in order to examine how historical and current economic transitions are visible in Hamilton’s inner city landscape.

## **2.4 Transition to the New Economy**

It is important to understand the characteristics of the new economy as Hamilton has focused on strengthening activity in this sector following de-industrialization. There has been the transition from the traditional Fordist economy that drew its strength from manufacturing to the post-Fordist--or new economy--that is formed by the knowledge and the service sectors. The de-industrialization of the economy has had a direct impact on the landscape of cities. Coffey (2000) examines the economic transition to the new economy. He states that urban economies are becoming increasingly tertiarized (the service sector), professionalized, and are comprised of non-standard forms of employment (i.e. part time or contracts); there are changes in the manner in which work is performed (i.e. manual labour is more technical and sophisticated with some replaced by technological inventions); the production process is being organized in innovative ways (i.e. the diversity of products, and the flexibility of workers to tasks and their time); there are changes to the location of economic activity (i.e. more work is being done in urban areas—either at offices or via tele-work); and there is the integration into the global economy (121-123). He suggests in historically industrial cities, their economic importance on a national level can decline as a result of economic transition. This change in economic ranking affects a city's economic wellbeing as well as its social structure.

Hutton (2004b) discusses the key developmental features of the new economy with significance placed on the location and form of new economic activities. He argues that the new economy pursuits are “significant agents of



urban change” as there is the “reassertion of production in the inner city...the reconfiguration of the urban space-economy, and...the regeneration of local communities” (89). The prominence of the inner city to be the location of choice for technological, knowledge-based, or creative work is a distinguishing characteristic. He explains the inner city becomes a “creative habitat” as it offers “a critical mass of human capital, amenity attributes, and environmental conditions” (90). Further, he argues that an “innovative milieu” is formed and expanded due to the agglomeration of firms that allows for “knowledge spillovers” to occur and offers opportunities for greater social interaction (92). It is complemented with cultural and recreational amenities and institutions. He notes production in the inner city can either be dispersed or concentrated, and often it is found in older industrial and commercial buildings; the activities are either spontaneously induced (i.e. through zoning, land use policies, economic incentives) or market driven; and there are amenities located close to firms.

Bourne, Brunelle, Polese, and Simmons (2011) explore the rise of the new economy that they state is due to “technological change and the growth of the knowledge economy” (50). They argue that the growth of the new economy has occurred as there has been a decline in primary sector activity and manufacturing in many Canadian cities as manual work has relocated to other nations or been computerized thus requiring fewer employees. Further they note, the expansion of “information, culture, and recreation industries are founded both on changing tastes and changing technology” (52). For instance, the popular desire for greater connectivity and communication encourages the development

of new media outlets. In contrast, they state that the FIRE (finance, insurance, and real estate) sector has had less growth than in the past. Their findings indicate that while many Canadian cities have employment represented in all of the sectors, the largest cities have a greater amount of knowledge sector employment.

Filion and Rutherford (2000) study economic change in Canadian cities. They note that the process has resulted in an increase of service sector and a decline in primary and manufacturing sector employment. They argue that this is due to the decline of the Fordist era and the rise of the post-Fordist era. They characterize the post-Fordist era as offering flexibility in terms of production, techniques, and in the location of work. Consequently, the authors state that the city “can...contribute to these trends” because the “city’s built environment (buildings and infrastructures, including transportation systems) has an impact on the nature of employment” (361). For instance, the compact form of the inner city encourages businesses to locate there due to the ability to quickly interact with other businesses located nearby and the availability of public transit that workers can utilize. However, they indicate that de-industrialization threatens downtown areas as it has resulted in “an abundant inventory of vacant industrial land and buildings” that may not meet modern manufacturing requirements (372). They note that de-industrialization presents the opportunity for redevelopment and reuse of obsolete buildings. They suggest this process is transformative on the landscape as often such buildings become mixed use housing or innovative workplaces.

Filion (2001) explores the process of urban policy making and the influence of changing regulations (economic and political) on its development. Filion states that, “the inner city is shaped by, and contributes to, society-wide social and economic trends” (85). He notes that during Fordism, there was the growth of trade unions and the middle class, the consumption of mass-produced goods, and there was the development of government infrastructure projects. He finds that in post-Fordism, globalization of the economy has increased, and the government has been less financially involved in offering programs and services. With post-Fordism, policy implementation occurs with privately funded public projects.

During the transition to a post-Fordist society, there has been considerable economic restructuring in Canada. Neil Bradford (2010) examines, using the case study of London, Ontario, how municipalities change from manufacturing to service sector activities. He discovered that the shift is reflected in incremental policy changes that result due to the growing competition between various cities for new economic activity. He suggests that as a result of the competitiveness, cities need to form new identities and rethink their planning strategies in order to make a successful transition. He concludes that it is important to consider and discuss the role, impact, and influence of local economic development when local governments are developing policies.

Walks (2001) examines post-Fordist economic restructuring in the greater Toronto region. He explores the processes of socio-economic change to understand the impact it has on polarization (by exploring the occupation,

income, and immigration values) found in a particular community over time. He argues that social polarization “follows from the new employment structure dominated by service industries” (408). Further, he notes that there is a greater differential in incomes between high and low wage earners and there is greater flexibility in work hours and locations that together will impact the social structure of a city. Over time, the process of change has influenced the form of cities. He finds that with Fordism, there was urban expansion and the growth of suburbs; however, in the post-Fordist era there has been the “expansion of various professional (or quaternary) services and FIRE industries (finance, insurance, and real estate)...(that) creates a pool of gentrifiers who can out-compete the poor for space” in the inner city that results in its regeneration (409). His work shows there has been change in the socio-economic characteristics of the inner city and its suburbs as cities made the transition from Fordism to post-Fordism.

Hutton (2004a) explores a similar theme in how urban development has transformed Vancouver’s central area. He states: “since the 1960s, market forces have comprehensively reshaped the metropolitan core, as seen in the collapse of inner-city manufacturing, and in the expansion of the intermediate service industries and related cohorts” (1954). In Vancouver, the process of restructuring changed the form of the city, the economic and employment patterns, and altered the social characteristics of the core as professionals relocated to the central city (Ley, 1996; Hutton, 2004a). Hutton suggests policy (i.e. zoning and land use development regulations, design guidelines, and public investment strategies) contributed to the changes that have occurred in

Vancouver's core. Significantly, he argues, post industrialism resulted in changes to policy that encouraged the residential use of former industrial sites that were no longer required for economic production.

In other work, Hutton (2006) explores the relationship between the built form and the development of creative industries in the inner city. He argues that the built form of a city displays its industrial development as the presence of creative industries on the landscape along with new methods of employment (i.e. location, organization, and skills) distinguishes the new economy from the traditional commerce focus of the central business district. He notes that there are several characteristics of the new economy in the inner city: "firstly, firms are either concentrated or dispersed in location; secondly, clustering can either be spontaneous or induced; thirdly, the 'social and working worlds' are mixed; and fourthly, changes can vary in temporal scale" (1820). In addition, his findings suggest that the new economy is involved in the "reconstruction" of the inner city through "the retention of high-value historical building types...(and) preserving older industrial landscapes" (1820).

Wolfe and Gertler (2001) provide insight into the effect globalization and economic restructuring has had in Ontario. They state that globalization "triggered" the need for restructuring and placed greater "significance of the local context for innovative activities" (575). Their work explains that there has been the transition from manufacturing to a "knowledge intensive economy" and to creating a "learning region" that places focus on the development and interaction with local universities or colleges for research and economic activities (575). The

new economy focuses on research innovation and the application of skills and knowledge. They argue that the goal in the new economy is to create a “common culture of innovation” (578).

Often, centres of innovation in the new economy are found in post-secondary institution hosting cities. Singh and Allen (2006) explore the impact of post-secondary institutions in Pittsburgh as a means for both innovation and economic development as the city experienced significant decline of manufacturing activity. However, they argue, that due to the presence and influence of the city’s universities, the city has encouraged and benefited from increased research and development activities. They acknowledge that there are many other cities that “once enjoyed economic prosperity, population growth and vibrant institutions”, but are now “experiencing massive restructuring of their regional economy, loss of employment and population, and a sense of despair in many of their communities” (666). Their findings suggest that the presence of research facilities and spin off developments “provides new economic opportunities and cultural ethos to its residents” (666). Their research concludes that “knowledge clustering” occurs due to the close proximity and positive relationship of education institutions and industry that results in economic stability and growth (667).

The literature on the new economy details the employment shift that occurs towards the expanding knowledge and service sector. It discusses how the inner city will become the prime location for the new economy. As a result, new economy activities can regenerate both the economy and the built form of

inner cities. Consequently, an understanding of change to the new economy will inform the analysis of the historical and current economic transitions that are visible in Hamilton's inner city landscape.

## **2.5 Trend to Achieve Urban Sustainability**

The City of Hamilton has developed policies that focus on the facets of urban sustainability. In fact, urban sustainability has become more common in policy and in practice (Hodge and Gordon, 2003). Ideally, planners should create policies that balance environmental (i.e. minimum use of resources), economic (i.e. diversity, vitality, efficiency), and social (i.e. interaction, health and wellness) demands (Campbell, 1996; Maclaren, 1996; Finco and Nijkamp, 2001). Successful urban policies designed around sustainability will ensure accessibility (to resources and services), adaptability (to changes in conditions), and connectivity (to other community objectives) (Alberti, 1996). For instance, communities can be designed to ensure that there are safe, attractive, and connected active transportation routes (i.e. walking and cycling paths) that link with other public transit modes (Southworth, 2005, 248; Ewing and Handy, 2009). As well, smart growth policies, such as Ontario's *Places to Grow*, are designed to halt urban sprawl and to encourage density in urban cores to ensure efficiency of urban resources (i.e. infrastructure, social services) and offer environmental protection of outer areas (i.e. farm land and woodlots) (Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal, 2006). The literature on sustainability illustrates how sustainability shapes the inner city landscape with policies that seek higher densities and active and public transportation systems. An understanding of

sustainability is needed in order to examine how planning policies that are influenced by sustainability concepts are reflected in the built form of the inner city.

## **2.6 Process of Gentrification**

In the inner city of Hamilton, there are areas that are displaying evidence of gentrification. Gentrification is defined as “the transformation of a working-class or vacant area of the central city into middle-class residential and/or commercial use” (Lees, Slater, and Wyly, 2008, xv). The presence of gentrification will indicate that economic and social changes are occurring within an area. Clay (1979) identified four stages of gentrification: the first stage, has a small group (i.e. artists) renovating property for personal use; the second stage, has realtors promoting the area and small-scale speculators renovating properties for re-sale; the third stage, has property values increasing, the creation of urban renewal policies, and the movement of “young middle-class professionals” into the “safe” area; and the fourth stage, has the “business and managerial middle class” and “small, specialized retail and professional services or commercial activities” moving into the area “especially if the neighbourhood is located near the downtown or a major institution” (Lees, Slater, and Wyly, 2008, 31-33).

Ley and Dobson (2008) note that in communities that have transitioned to the post-industrial economy, there has been the process of gentrification as amenities, and the cultural and physical landscape have been “restored or created to enhance inner-city locations” (2473). In response, there is an increased demand for residences and businesses to operate in the area. They



found that the “pressures for inner-city change are greatest in cities with a vigorous post-industrial economy downtown” (2477). In contrast, there is limited gentrification in areas where there are industrial activities or that are considered unpleasant (largely due to noise or smell), as well as, in communities that are experiencing poor economic activity due to de-industrialization.

The gentrification process in Canadian inner cities is studied by Sinclair-Puchtinger (1991). She explores how the early twentieth century deterioration of downtown dwellings has been characterized by neglect caused by the population movement to the suburbs and peripheral areas (caused by a variety of push and pull factors). However, she notes that, in the 1970s, the deterioration process began to change due to a “new desire to live in the central city” (13). She argues this was a result of several social factors: “(desire for) nearness to place of work, a preference for older styles of architecture, perceived savings in inner city housing prices, and the opportunity to live a cosmopolitan lifestyle” (17). Her findings suggest that due to these factors, “neighbourhoods which are closest to the central business district (1/2 to 5 miles) are more likely to experience gentrification first” (20).

A study by Meligrana and Skaburskis (2005) explores gentrification in Canada’s Central Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) from 1981 – 2001. Common features they found in the gentrified areas include: close proximity to the central business district, a diverse housing stock consisting of mainly older homes, a reduction in household size, and an increase in the number of young adult and university educated residents. Overall, as a result of the characteristics listed

above, they found that “gentrification in Canada is changing the composition of the inner city” as it has “reduced population density...(while) increasing dwelling unit density” (1569). A similar study by Haase, Kabisch, Steinfuhrer, Bouzarovski, Hall and Ogden (2010) examines the re-urbanization process in Europe. They state that the re-populating of the inner city is a trend towards “city mindness as a housing preference” (443). They argue this is largely due to the greater amounts of economic and social activities that are being offered in the inner city. Their findings suggest that the combination of re-population, economic pursuits, and social opportunities has resulted in “increasing overall livability and sustainable use of compact inner-city areas” (447).

There is a particular type of gentrification that is influenced by the presence of arts and artists in a community. Sharon Zukin, in *Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change* (1989), studies how artists were attracted to the “derelict manufacturing spaces” of Soho, New York during the 1960s and 1970s that provided “a cultural impetus for the commercial redevelopment of Lower Manhattan” (Lees, Slater, and Wyly, 2008, 118). This process of gentrification is due to the “artistic mode of production” in which the “cultural industries...attract capital” that allows for investment in the area (Lees et al, 2008, 118). In fact, “precarious economic conditions were highly conducive to ‘a seemingly modest redevelopment strategy based on the arts and on historic preservation” (Lees et al, 2008, 118).

Richard Lloyd in *Neo-Bohemia* (2005) provides another example of arts led gentrification in his examination of the Wicker Park neighbourhood in

Chicago. He notes that the area previously supported industrial uses; however, by the 1980s, it “visibly bore the scars of deindustrialization, deterioration, and population decline” (9). He suggests artists were attracted to the neighbourhood due to the low rental housing that was in proximity to public transit (the “Loop”) and the city’s art schools. He indicates that in the post-industrial, neo-Bohemian city, there has been the “resurgence of old downtown”, as the growing presence of culture and art encouraged the growth of amenities in the area (13). His work argues that it was due to the high number of creative individuals in the area and the presence of a creative culture that led to a high number of creative (i.e. advertising) or technical firms operating in the area that in turn “enhanced levels of overall economic development” (16). Lloyd and Zukin note that the process of arts led gentrification will result in the displacement of an area’s low-income population and can later result in the eviction of artists from their live-work studios as was the case in Mission (a neighbourhood in San Francisco) when developers constructed or converted “higher-end forms of live-work” structures (Lees, Slater, and Wyly, 2008, 260). The literature on gentrification describes the stages of its formation and the impact that it has on the socio-economic characteristics of a community. An understanding of gentrification is needed in order to examine if there is visible evidence of socio-economic transitions in Hamilton’s inner city landscape.

## **2.7 The Desirability of Amenities**

Hamilton’s inner city landscape displays the presence of many amenities that are the result of planning initiatives and entrepreneurial action. By

examining the type and location of amenities, we are able to discuss how planning policies have influenced the emerging urban built form. An amenity is “something that conduces to comfort, convenience, or enjoyment...it is the attractiveness and value of real estate or a residential structure” (Merriam-Webster, 2012). Amenities can make an inner city attractive and ensure that it is a desirable place for both citizens and visitors. In some cases, an amenity can become the brand for its location, such as the Bilbao Guggenheim in Spain. When this occurs, the amenity can be the identifier of the community to the greater populace. Clark and Kahn (1988) focus on the importance of the ability of cultural amenities (such as museums, theatres, and zoos) to attract and retain residents and workers in a city. Interestingly, they found that just the existence of an amenity and the option for citizens to visit or use it results in a high value being assigned to it by residents. For instance, a children’s museum may be assigned a high value even by those who are childless as they value its presence in the community. In fact, Clark (2003) states that “amenities attract people” and their presence creates lively and viable neighbourhoods (132). He suggests amenities have an even stronger impact on community development as they “act jointly with human capital” to drive growth in a community in the form of innovations or construction (106).

The placement and pattern of amenities on the landscape is important to consider when examining the inner city’s built form. Hall (1997) states that communities should have integrated policy plans that address amenities, land use, and transportation needs that “concentrate residences, work areas and

amenities so as to produce the shortest possible trip distance” as it would result in environmental and social benefits (217). He argues a “seamless web” would ensure sustainable practices in neighbourhoods, and would at the same time provide support to the economic changes that are underway in many cities (216).

Recently, there has been increased focus on having amenities in the inner city as a tool for both urban renewal and economic development. This is because amenities provide vitality to a downtown area and can result in changes to the economic and urban patterns in the district. Skaburskis and Moos (2006) argue that it is desirable to have redevelopment and renovations in the downtown to “restore the land values lost due to the flight of capital” (239). They suggest the formation of policies that have also focused on the creation of amenities, such as “sports venues, revitalizing waterfronts, urban farmers markets, and marinas”, are attractive to “knowledge workers” and the “creative class” and will attract those individuals to live and work in the inner city (239). Their findings indicate that cities “left with empty manufacturing buildings and polluted industrial sites, are devising strategies to attract cultural and creative activities seen now as essential to growth in the new economy” (239). They argue this is accomplished through entrepreneurial policies that are designed to “harness the growth-generating potential of real estate markets by providing the type of infrastructure that enhances the value of land and location” (240).

Bourne (2007) explores the various patterns of change that have occurred in Canadian cities and identifies that the downtown area experiences the processes of “demolition, construction, rehabilitation, restoration, conservation

and deconversion” (124). Where there are differences in the process among Canadian cities it is in the timing of each phase and the level to which change happens. The differences, he argues, are influenced by “private capital, local history and geography, and the regulatory system” (124). His findings suggest the resulting urban landscape displays how policy impacts the space and how individuals utilize the area. Consequently, he notes the urban form reflects the changes made over time through policy and patterns of use.

While redevelopment is occurring, there is the opportunity for cities to retain and promote their built heritage. The retention of heritage buildings ensures that there is a link in the community to its past and its future through providing useable space for new endeavours. Mercier (2003) examines inner city redevelopment through the case study of the Saint-Roch district of Quebec City. He found that after World War II, there was significant urban decay and a high rate of demolition of many buildings. In fact, he argues, that it has only been in the last few decades that heritage buildings in the central city have become valued and have become an integrated part of urban renewal plans. He suggests for the inner city “protecting neighbourhood heritage ultimately leads to its rebirth” (88). The findings indicate that the redevelopment projects that are successful involve the local community in their planning, retain and restore historical buildings, and integrate multiple amenities and land uses in the area. As a result, he notes, such vibrant neighbourhoods will allow for the “marketing of urban culture” and ensure the further revival of the central city (73).

Many European cities have been actively addressing the planning issues that arise in their traditional areas. Walljasper (2005) argues that based on his conversations with Europeans in several large cities that they enjoy their urban amenities and that their deep connections and pride for the place causes them to want to “maintain vitality of their hometowns” (28). His study focus is on planning policies in such European cities as Amsterdam (Netherlands), Heidelberg (Germany), and Copenhagen (Denmark) and how they are utilizing environmental innovations, promoting and expanding the use of pedestrian zones and public squares, and ensuring that the traditional city is integrated with its larger metropolitan region. He explains that European policies are designed to ensure that the inner city has the proper amount of finances by taxing at a regional level in order to maintain infrastructure and have a setting that both attracts and supports amenities in both the inner city and the suburbs. Subsequently, his attention focuses on North American cities and he compares their situation with those in Europe. He argues that North American cities must “boost vitality and livability” in order to make “loveable cities” as those found in Europe—this is done by having a pedestrian rather than automotive focus and ensuring that there are amenities present in an attractive landscape (31).

The presence of amenities can result in an economically sustainable community that connects with residents and visitors. However, there can be barriers that prevent amenities from being accessed by all residents. Noonan (2005) studies the effects of barriers and found that there are physical barriers that can positively define a community (i.e. a river) and there are others that can

have a negative impact (i.e. a highway). Thus, he notes that barriers can both “form and separate neighbourhoods” (1817). Consequently, he argues that the “decision to construct and locate a barrier could hold significant consequences for both efficiency and equity” (1828). He suggests that policies can create “livable communities and achieve smart growth (when they) are influenced by such features” (1828). Amenities can strengthen an area when they are accessible to many in the community but where there are physical or human barriers the locality might suffer both socially and economically. The literature on amenities describes the role that they play in creating vibrant neighbourhoods and as a process of urban renewal and economic development. An understanding of amenities is needed in order to examine how planning policies influence the resulting urban built form in Hamilton.



### **3. Methodology**

This interpretation of downtown Hamilton's changing urban landscape will examine its development through a historical analysis of its economic activity, land use patterns, and planning policies using books, articles, policy documents and newspapers (Chapters 4-6) and a visual documentation of the current inner city using photographs (Chapters 7-9). The methodology was inspired by Deverteuil's (2004) study on landscape change in inner city Montreal who argues that while the theme of economic change on the inner city has been well studied few researchers have utilized a visual method to examine inner city change. Unlike Deverteuil's study (2004) that utilized photographs from two time periods to examine inner city change, this thesis will detail the historical evolution of the inner city using written material. Subsequently, it will document and illustrate the current inner city landscape with contemporary photographs. It follows the work of other urban researchers [e.g. Ley (1996), Hutton (2004, 2006), Skaburskis and Moos (2006), and Filion (2001)] that examine how the larger socio-economic changes that are occurring in turn shape the characteristics and land uses of the inner city. Within this field, the methodology used is not consistent and researchers utilize a variety of techniques--taking a more generalized and interpretive approach--in studying land uses and activities to understand the overall characteristics of the inner city.

Using a historical approach to explain the present "not only narrates past memories but also builds, in the present, a sense of distinction and authenticity"

(Lynch and Ley, 2006, 327). By understanding the history of a place, it will assist in the explanation of what is currently visible on the landscape. A visual analysis, using photography, not only engages the researcher with the study area, it also allows for a “ground-up” analysis of the neighbourhood (Deverteuil, 2004, 82). The works by Jane Jacobs and Herbert Gans utilized visual analysis techniques through their observations on the patterns of land use and the interaction that humans have with their environment. Jacobs, in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961), described the social interaction and built form of urban areas (with focus on Greenwich Village) and from her visual observations identified what practices and policies of planning worked and where they failed (Jacobs, 1961).

Gans, in *People, Plans, and Policies* (1991), observed the conditions of the city and reflected that “effective planning and policy should also be bottom-up, or street level, however, done by professionals as well as citizens, so that the final products address themselves to the conditions under which most people live” (Gans, 1991, x).

There are several methodologies that have been used by other researchers in the field of examining landscape change: good city characteristics (K. Lynch), visual preferences (A. Nellesen Assoc.), townscape evaluations, and built environment quality assessments (Alice Coleman, 1984, 1986). Lynch (1984) generated a list of criteria: vitality, sensibility, well-fitted, accessible, well controlled, efficiency and justice that can be used to evaluate if a community is a “good city” (Lynch, 1984).

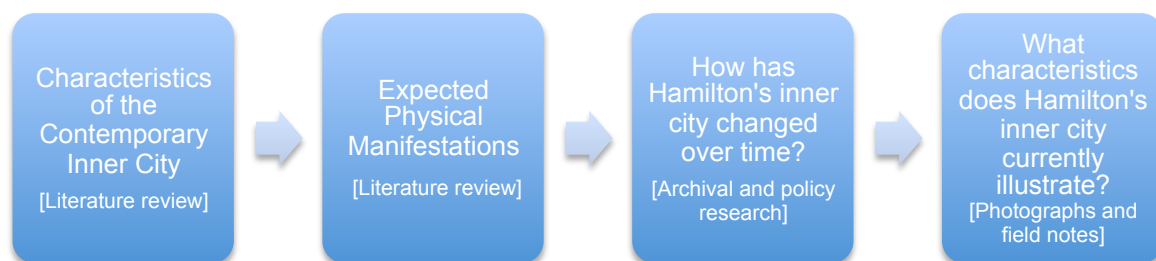
The visual preference technique has participants examine photographs to inform researchers regarding their individual preference of a feature or area. The townscape evaluation technique has researchers score a prepared form of criteria (i.e. general impressions and detailed content) based on their field observations to create maps and score sheets for a particular area (Reeve, Goodey, and Shipley, 2006). The built environment quality assessment technique is similar to townscape evaluations as researchers utilize a ranking system, however, its purpose is to conduct an environmental audit with data being collected at road intersections and between buildings “to produce a detailed analysis of public space quality” (Reeve, Goodey, and Shipley, 2006, 29).

The townscape evaluation and built environment quality assessment techniques are cheap and efficient methods to examine particular views that can be recorded with maps, photographs, and score sheets in a manner that can be compared over multiple years (Reeve, Goodey, and Shipley, 2006). The creation of a standardized form allows multiple researchers to gather data. There is the ability to utilize photographs and maps to illustrate the results. A difficulty with this method is that the questions posed in the score sheet have to focus on a particular detail or feature-- this may cause evidence of the presence of larger themes on the landscape to not be examined. As well, the use of a ranking system rather than by the asking of open-ended questions or by the recording field observations may result in unusual or unexpected observations not being recorded. This limits researchers from being able to note and comment on topics or features not included on the score sheet.

As this thesis is concerned with larger socio-economic changes and not with gathering rankings or performing a multi-year analysis, a historical analysis that interprets how the inner city has changed over time and a visual diagnosis technique that illustrates the characteristics of the current inner city landscape using photographs will be utilized. This method differs as a ranking score sheet was not generated for use in the field. The method is successful in capturing images of the landscape that indicate the presence or absence of socio-economic changes and in what way they are manifested. As well, it is important to note that this method does not rank the indicators or amounts of socio-economic change on the landscape.

Drawing from such methodologies that examined cities from the ground up, a historical, visual, and policy analysis will be undertaken. This chapter will detail the process conducted to answer the research questions (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3:** Process Flowchart



The photographs inform the viewer if the expected urban physical manifestations of the characteristics of the contemporary inner city exist on the current urban form. The literature, from policy documents, newspaper articles, and books, provides insight as to why the landscape changes occurred.

### **3.1 Photographic Analysis**

A photographic analysis is “an unconventional but established” method in examining urban landscapes (Phillips, 2010; Deverteuil, 2004). The ability to capture an image of the landscape allows for patterns in the urban form to be identified and assessed. As Allan Jacobs stated “you can tell a lot about a city by looking” at its urban and economic activities in the past, present, and can potentially, predict future areas of change (Jacobs, 1985, 1). For planners, the process of observation provides the ability for “documenting change in order to anticipate and act on the consequences, with guiding change, encouraging it, or stopping it” (Jacobs, 1985, 8). A “visual diagnosis” is performed by walking or driving through a neighbourhood and noting observations (such as building characteristics, landscaping, and existing land use) that can be compared with documents, maps, or photographs (Jacobs, 1985, 6). Dandekar (2003) refers to the same process as described by Jacobs as one of a “site reconnaissance” in which the researcher walks or drives while recording, photographing, and noting their first hand observations (29). For the purpose of this thesis, visual diagnosis will be defined as walking or driving through an area while taking photographs and recording observations of select characteristics of the contemporary inner city derived from the literature (see Figure 4 and Table 1).

**Figure 4:** Characteristics of the Contemporary Inner City



The method of using photography is becoming more common in academic work. For example, Geoffrey Deverteuil (2004) conducted a study using photography that he took over a decade in Montreal’s inner city (Southwest Montreal) to determine if the area was “up grading”, experiencing “decline and revitalization”, was in “decline”, or was showing “stability” (76). Deverteuil uses this method for his research as it “provides a ground-up representation of inner-city change to counterbalance more distant and large-scale accounts” (82). Similarly, a study by Arreola and Burkhart (2010) uses postcards to describe change in a commercial area. They discuss that a benefit of this method is that it offers a truthful and factual representation of space that can be used analytically to conduct a landscape change analysis (Arreola and Burkhart, 2010). As the photographs that were taken for this study reflect one moment in time, they will

provide information and illustrate how the inner city landscape of Hamilton reflects particular socio-economic trends.

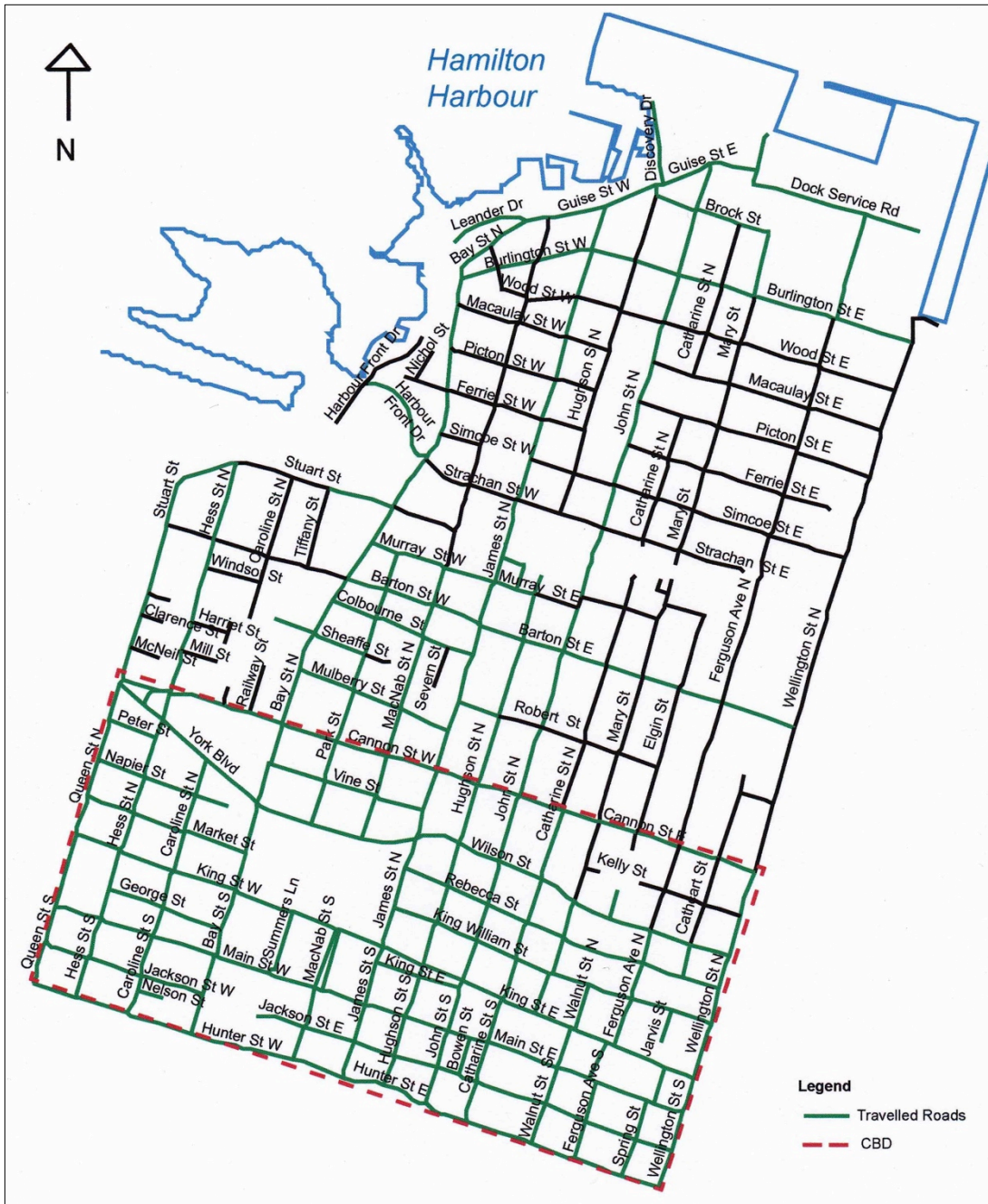
From the literature review, several characteristics of the contemporary inner city were identified that provided statements of the expected urban physical manifestation (see Table 1). The characteristics and their expected manifestations on the inner city landscape provide guiding hypotheses as to what should be visible in downtown Hamilton. The table provided the framework as to what to expect as an urban physical manifestation while taking photographs and writing field notes in the inner city.

<b>Table 1: Characteristics of the Contemporary Inner City: Literature Review</b>		
<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Expected Urban Physical Manifestation</b>	<b>Sample Studies</b>
Arts and Entertainment Amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Galleries and museums</li> <li>- “Café” experience</li> <li>- Accessible public art and street entertainment</li> </ul>	Vey (2009); Lloyd (2005); Clark & Kahn (1988); Hall (2005)
Recreational Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Waterfront improvements</li> <li>- Recreational trails &amp; linkages</li> <li>- Public squares and open spaces renovated or newly designed</li> </ul>	Hall (1997); Skaburskis & Moos (2006); Hall (2005)
Residential Revitalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mixed use, high rise condominiums</li> <li>- Adaptation of former institutional and industrial buildings into lofts or studios</li> <li>- Gentrification in working class neighbourhoods</li> </ul>	Bunting & Filion (2006); Lees, Slater, and Wyly (2008); Ley and Dobson (2008); Sinclair-Puchtinger (1991); Meligrana & Skaburskis (2005); Mercier (2003); Hall (2005)
Institutional Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expansion or introduction of post secondary institutions</li> <li>- Government facilities remain centralized</li> <li>- Service oriented facilities, i.e. social health agencies</li> </ul>	Bunting & Filion (2006); Singh and Allen (2006)
Post-Fordist Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Live-work opportunities</li> <li>- Technological, knowledge, or service based firms</li> <li>- Consumption oriented</li> <li>- Small operations that may operate in flexible, multi-purpose spaces</li> <li>- Creation of “cool spaces”—knowledge generators</li> <li>- Formation of clusters: creative, technical</li> </ul>	Lees, Slater & Wyly (2008); McCann & Simmons (2000); Coffey (2000); Hutton (2004b), (2004a), (2006); Filion (2001); Walks (2001); Hall (2005)
Decline in Manufacturing Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Empty or underutilized manufacturing plants</li> <li>- Adaptation of former manufacturing facilities to new uses</li> <li>- Vacant lots</li> </ul>	Bourne, Brunelle, Polese, & Simmons (2011); Filion & Rutherford (2000)
Promotion of Multi-modal Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Integration of walking and bicycle paths</li> <li>- Public transit Improvements, i.e. stations, service</li> <li>- Development of light rapid transit network</li> </ul>	Southworth (2005); Ewing and Handy (2009)
Sustainability Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reuse/adaptation of existing buildings</li> <li>- Infill development</li> <li>- Mixed-use</li> <li>- Promotion of active and public transit over auto use</li> <li>- Restoration of natural ecosystem</li> </ul>	Campbell (1996); Maclaren (1996); Finco & Nijkamp (2001); Alberti (1996)
Statement Place Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Formation of highly “spectacular” centres</li> <li>- Hi-Tech corridors</li> <li>- Use of heritage buildings</li> <li>- Construction of statement “superstar” buildings or open spaces</li> </ul>	Hall (2005)
Source: Inspired by Hutton (2004), Ley and Frost (2006), and Hall (2005)		



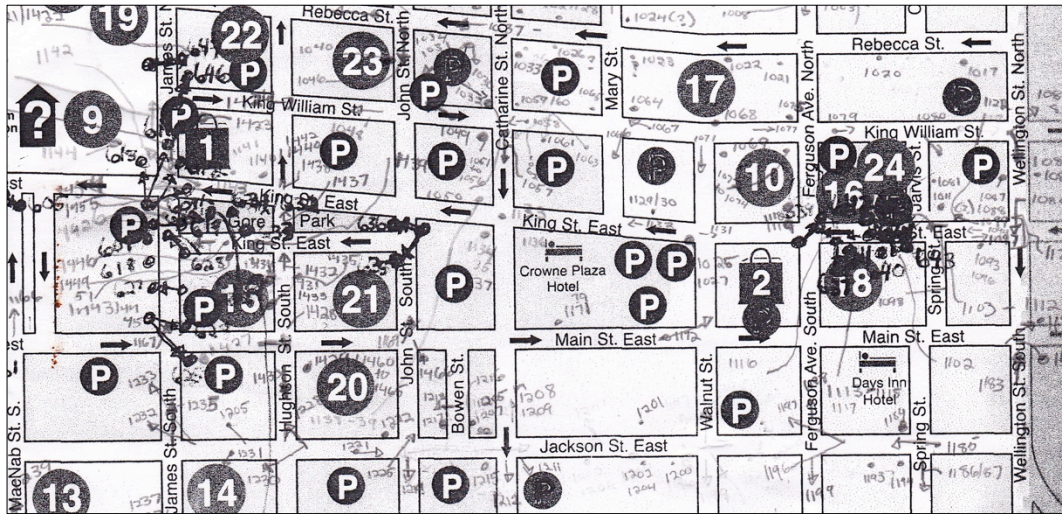
Within this study, visual diagnosis was utilized to examine Hamilton's inner city from the "ground up" (Deverteuil, 2004, 82). A map of inner city Hamilton (see Figure 5) outlines the streets travelled by the researcher in the study area, which focused on Hamilton's central business district. As the street pattern in the inner city is grid, the photograph locations similarly follow the grid and were taken from public spaces. The photographs were numerically indicated in the field on a base street map (see Figure 6) to record the geographic location of each photograph. Over eight hundred photographs were taken in the study area at regular intervals to ensure coverage—with most of the focus in the central business district—to provide a visual overview of the zone. The initial photographs were taken over several days in the summer of 2011. Additional photographs were taken in the early fall of 2011 in order to record the surroundings during an evening art festival and to visit streets that were closed for construction during the summer months.

Figure 5: Map of Inner City Streets Covered by the Research



(Base Map Sources: City of Hamilton, 2012c and 2012d)

**Figure 6:** Section of a Field Map Depicting Photograph Locations



(Base Map Source: Downtown Hamilton BIA, 2011a)

After the photographs were taken and recorded, the images were examined to determine those that fit with the expected characteristic themes of the inner city that had emerged from the literature review as well as those that did not. The analysis utilized the visual observations, documented by photographs and detailed field notes, to examine if the expected urban physical manifestations (see Table 1) were present on the inner city landscape, and in what way. The visual diagnosis approach illustrates and documents how the landscape reflects the characteristics of the contemporary inner city. It is primary to the other methodologies used as the photographs provide concrete evidence of the existence of the expected urban physical manifestations that were identified from the literature. The act of photography provides the researcher with the opportunity to gain “acquaintance with the city” and provides an “intuitive, nonlinear, and holistic” understanding of the patterns that exist in the urban landscape (Phillips, 2010, 8). It is stated that “photographic images bear

witness” to a particular setting at a particular time that as a result offer evidence that other forms of data—policy, literature, and statistics—are unable to provide (Phillips, 2010, 9). This is the greatest benefit of the use of photography in this study as it illustrates the existence of the characteristics of the contemporary inner city in Hamilton’s downtown. A drawback is that the researcher determines the images and the grouping of the theme classifications.

### **3.2 Historical Analysis**

There was an in-depth review of books, documents, and articles that describe and discuss inner city Hamilton. The books selected for Hamilton provided details of its urban, economic, and social characteristics throughout its historical development. They were identified from catalogue searches that were geographically limited to Hamilton and for such subjects as: general, history, architecture, urban, and economics. Academic books and journal articles that offered theoretical information on the applicable themes (i.e. phases of industrialization, periods of urban development, etc.) were consulted to provide the contextual background required to understand socio-economic changes. The material was identified from catalogue searches of: urban development, economic development, sustainability, gentrification, amenities, and inner city. The planning policies of Hamilton, particularly those that have focused on the downtown area, were examined to understand the role planning policy has had on the emerging urban form. The policies were identified from catalogue and Internet searches limited to Hamilton and planning in order to obtain historic and current city planning policies. In addition, newspaper articles that focused on

Hamilton's downtown, from *The Hamilton Spectator* and *The Globe and Mail*, were investigated (from the mid-1950s to the present day) to understand the changes that occurred from the viewpoint of contemporary observers of the process. The Hamilton Public Library's local history collection of newspaper articles, catalogued by subject (such as: downtown, economics, and urban renewal), that were thematically related to Hamilton's downtown and urban revitalization were examined. In addition, Internet searches for Hamilton themed newspaper articles using such search terms as: downtown, economic, revitalization, and renewal were conducted. A local Hamilton newspaper, *urbanicity*, was gathered from newsstands and consulted over the past two years (2010 - 2012) to provide information on the recent issues of the inner city region. The literature reviewed bestowed "knowledge about" the city and provided the theoretical framework to interpret the changes that took place in Hamilton's downtown (Phillips, 2010, 8). The literature informed the interpretation as to how Hamilton's downtown has changed over time. The historic and current newspaper articles provided information on the social, economic, and physical changes that were occurring in the inner city and the reaction of residents to inner city change. The limitation with using literature is that the bias of authors or organizations can shape the text. However, by using a variety of literary sources, a broader, and likely more balanced analysis can be made.

## 4. The Rise and Fall of Steel

This chapter will provide a description of the various economic stages that Hamilton has experienced. It will begin with a review of the city's mercantile roots, followed by a discussion of the industrialization phase that led to the city becoming a mecca for manufacturing processes. Subsequently, the Fordist period that began during the early decades of the twentieth century will be outlined along with an examination of the de-industrialization process that began in the late 1960s. The final economic period that is detailed is the more recent shift to the new economy and the post-Fordist era. It is necessary to examine the economic history of Hamilton in order to explore the visible consequences of economic change on the inner city landscape.

Hamilton has been called: "the Ambitious City, the Birmingham of Canada, the Lunch Bucket City, the Pittsburgh of Canada, Steel Town, and less affectionately as the Mistake by the Lake or the Armpit of Ontario" (Williams, Kitchen, DeMiglio, Eyles, Newbold and Streiner, 2010, 908). Traditionally, the city's image and economy were tied to its strong and stable manufacturing base--the steel mills and heavy industrial landscape found alongside Burlington Bay (see Figure 7). However, in the mid-twentieth century, the city experienced the collapse of its steel plants, the diminishment of its manufacturing base, and the growth of knowledge and service sector employment. Hamilton's economic transition is such that the "city once known primarily as a manufacturing centre is now also recognized for its health and education sectors" (Williams et al, 2010, 908).



**Figure 7:** Steel Mill Facilities, Burlington Bay



#### **4.1 A City with Mercantile Roots**

In the early nineteenth century, Hamilton was engaged mainly in local agricultural production and regional trade was limited. The shift to mercantilism began with the arrival of Loyalists after the War of 1812 who began to improve transportation routes, engage in commercial trade with other markets in Upper Canada and the United States, and construct grain mills in the neighbouring towns of Dundas and Ancaster (Evans, 1970, 145). The construction and opening of the Burlington Canal (July 1, 1826) increased Hamilton's ability to conduct trade more efficiently and effectively (Evans, 1970, 96). Merchants constructed wharves and warehouses alongside the canal and on the other side of the bay at James Street (Evans, 1970, 96). Sir Allan Napier MacNab, a lawyer who became a premier of the united Canadas, played a significant role in Hamilton's development during this period, as he owned a considerable amount of property, including a wharf and warehouse (Freeman, 2001, 31). In addition, he was director or president of many important companies in the city and was

responsible for the construction of the Great Western Railway (*The Canadian Encyclopedia*, 2012). This area's rapid development and high volume of produced goods resulted in the early association of Hamilton with iron and industry and a considerable number of skilled workers moved to the community (Weaver, 1978, 3).

The construction of a railroad network that serviced Hamilton and the availability of cheap, nearby electricity from DeCew Falls (located in St. Catharines) propelled mercantile activity and allowed for the expansion of steam power and with it industry. Midcentury, Hamilton was a city of foundries, textile mills, machine shops, glass manufacturers, and canning and food processing plants (Evans, 1970, 147). The *Hamilton Gazette* commented on the city's rapid industrialization: "This onward progress is rapidly gaining for Hamilton a higher standing amongst Western cities than more favoured and older communities can boast of" (Palmer, 1979, 12). The city was rapidly transforming into a manufacturing centre. Its landscape displayed the vast quantity of industrial activity that the city's citizens were engaged in. For instance, the area around the rail yard (see Figure 8) was the location of the city's manufacturing facilities and its accompanying smoke stacks. The location allowed for the movement of raw materials into and finished products out of the city in an efficient manner.



**Figure 8:** Bird's Eye Map of Hamilton Harbour, 1876



(Local History and Archives, Hamilton Public Library, 2012a)

## **4.2 A Mecca for Manufacturing**

The existence of a market for its products, the availability of raw goods, and talented workers placed Hamilton “in a unique position as the industrial revolution was getting underway” (Kendrick and Moore, 1995, 32). However, it was the construction of the Toronto, Hamilton, Buffalo railway line that “catapulted” the city into active participation in the Industrial Revolution as it restored a much needed link to other urban centres that had been lost when the Grand Truck railroad company had skirted its lines around the city (Kendrick and Moore, 1995, 31). The city also benefitted from Prime Minister Sir John A. MacDonald’s railroad and western settlement policy as the goods produced by Hamilton, such as rail ties, nails, and stoves, were in high demand (Kosydar, 1999, 68). By 1864, a “significant industrial-capitalist sector had already emerged in Hamilton” (Palmer, 1979, 15). In that year, for instance, 2300 workers (in a total population of 19 000) were employed in 46 factories-- 43 percent of which operated the newly invented steam-powered machines (Palmer,

1979, 15). Between 1864 and 1871, the “number of workers in Hamilton’s factories increased by 52%, while the number of steam-powered plants jumped by 32%” (Palmer, 1979, 16). An American journalist wrote on September 20<sup>th</sup> 1889 in *The Hamilton Spectator*:

*Today Hamilton has a population of not less than 50 000 and it has every appearance of being one of the most prosperous cities in Canada. It is now purely a manufacturing city and but little attention is given to commerce beyond the local demands of the citizens. Look down upon it from the mountaintop and it is one vast field of tall chimneys and smoke from its hundreds of factories hangs over the city like a beautiful web.*

*(Freeman, 2001, 81)*

This observation is important as it states that Hamilton was one of the wealthiest cities in Canada but notes that the cause was different than other cities as it was manufacturing, not commerce, that provided the wealth that propelled its growth. The journalist’s description of Hamilton as having a “beautiful web” of smoke provides a unique image of the community and illustrates how industrial activity was seen positively (by some) at the time. This early association of Hamilton as having an industrial landscape was to form Hamilton’s identity. In fact, the presence of manufacturing on Hamilton’s landscape would increase in the subsequent decades and the industrial image would become more concrete.

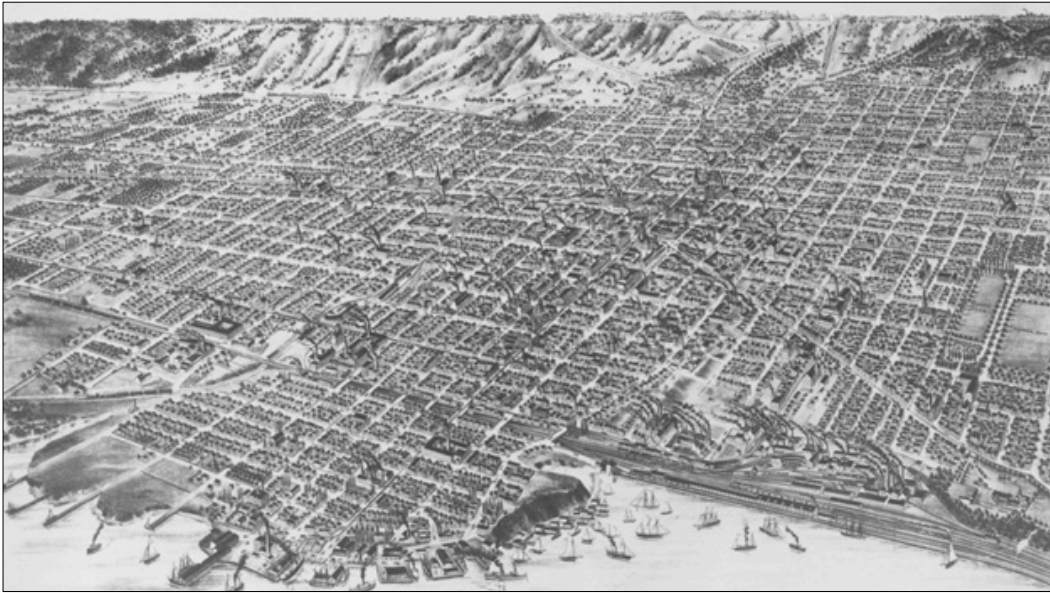
The formation of a strong steel manufacturing presence in the city was a result of it having: a good location, policies that supported manufacturing activities, and possessing politicians and business leaders who desired economic growth (Sproule-Jones, 1986; Kendrick and Moore, 1995; and Evans, 1970). For instance, the city’s entrepreneurs benefited from the high federal duties set on imports of Scottish pig iron (Sproule-Jones, 1986, 23). As they had access to

coal deposits in Pennsylvania and West Virginia and iron ore from Lake Superior they were able to produce a cheaper, locally made product (Kendrick and Moore, 1995, 32). However, it was the city's quick response to a 1890s Royal Commission report that "recommended that a blast furnace for the production of pig iron be built in Canada" that resulted in the high concentration of steel plants in Hamilton (Evans, 1970, 178). The city offered "75 acres of free land at Huckleberry Point, generous tax concessions and \$75 000" to ensure that it would receive Canada's first blast furnace (Evans, 1970, 178). The initial city investment led to the formation of the Hamilton Blast Furnace Company (1895) (Evans, 1970, 179). The city smelted its first pig iron in 1895, but it would be five years before it produced its first steel (Kosydar, 1999, 98). Other steel firms quickly opened although many were later consolidated into larger firms. In 1910, a merger of steel companies formed the Steel Company of Canada—later renamed Stelco (Freeman, 2001, 86). In 1912, the Dominion Steel Casting Company was formed—later called Dominion Steel Foundry Company, or Dofasco (Freeman, 2001, 86).

Hamilton had increasingly focused on its strong manufacturing base as the commerce and insurance offices that had been in its downtown gradually moved to Toronto-- which was becoming Ontario's commerce centre. It was due to its close proximity to Toronto and competition for economic activity that led to Hamilton focusing its future on the stability and growth of its manufacturing activities rather than attempting to retain commerce economic activity (Weaver, 1982). By the 1890s, the city had grown and manufacturing was prominent on

the landscape (see Figure 9). Its economic future was focused on steel and related manufacturing. Indeed, during this time period, a new and large manufacturing district developed around the steel plants (Heron, 1978, 21).

**Figure 9:** A Bird's Eye Map of Hamilton, 1893



(Local History and Archives, Hamilton Public Library, 2012b; Kosydar, 1999, 43)

During the first decade of the twentieth century, Hamilton's family-run industries became integrated into larger corporate enterprises and many American branch plants (i.e. Westinghouse, Deering Harvester Company, and Proctor and Gamble) moved to the city (Freeman, 2001, 85 & 86). The Fordist era of economic activity—the rigid assembly line and the growth of trade unions had begun in Hamilton (Filion, 2011). The branch firms, such as International Harvester and Canadian Westinghouse, soon “were among the city's largest employers” (Heron, 1978, 21). In addition to the manufacture of steel, Hamilton was also a large centre for the manufacture of textiles. The textile industry grew in Hamilton from previously small operations to the mass production of material

and clothing. The growth was such that in 1941, “15% of all manufacturing jobs were in the city’s spinning and knitting mills” (Weaver, 1982, 169). However, the textile industry in the city was soon to decline as goods began to be produced in cheaper locations. The decline was quick, as by 1961, only “3% of manufacturing workers were employed in the textile industries” (Weaver, 1982, 169).

After World War II, the strength of Hamilton’s economy remained in its heavy manufacturing sector—mostly in the production of steel. The reliance on steel as the backbone of Hamilton’s economy was due to the expansion of the steel companies and the fact that the other “industrial sectors remained static, collapsed or grew only marginally” (Weaver, 1982, 163). The growth of steel manufacturing in the city, largely to meet the demands of the rapidly expanding auto industry (see Figure 10), was significant: “Dofasco’s output grew 400 per cent between 1945 and 1960, while Stelco more than doubled its output from 1950 to 1962” (Freeman, 2001, 152). In 1963, the value of the gross industrial products that the city produced was estimated at \$ 1 500 000 000—significant, as it had tripled in thirteen years (Hamilton Downtown Association, 1964, 7). Hamilton was a manufacturing centre for Canada—more than 30% of the nation’s manufacturing occurred in the city (Hamilton Downtown Association, 1964, 7).

**Figure 10:** The Studebaker Auto Plant (2011), Burlington Street East

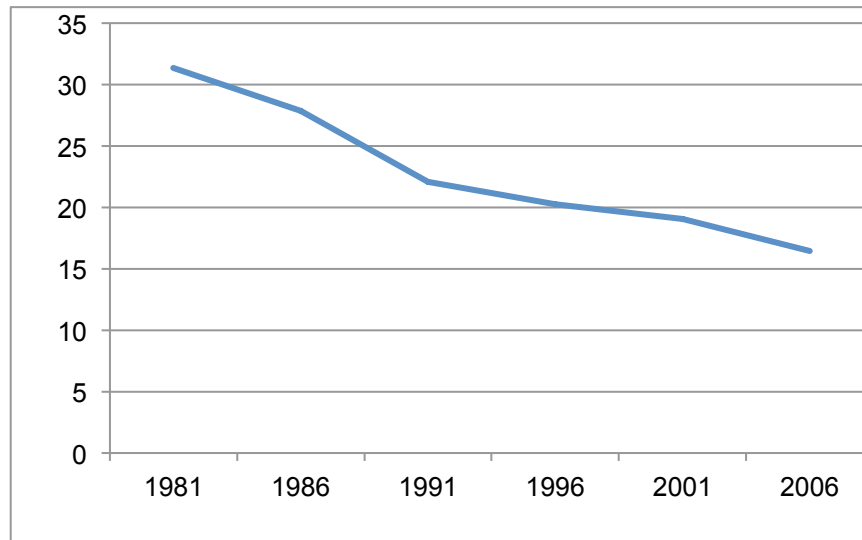


### **4.3 An Economy in Decline**

Unfortunately for Hamilton's economic stability, the manufacturing sector that had once formed the bulk of its economic activity began to falter and the city experienced de-industrialization. Companies were "diversifying into smaller, more economical units, and they closed big operations" (Freeman, 2001, 177). After the creation of NAFTA, companies moved to locations where labour and materials were cheaper and those that remained "found it difficult to compete with American imports" (Freeman, 2001, 177). These factors resulted in many companies shutting down their operations in Hamilton, for example: Hoover (closed 1966), Slater Steel (closed late 1960s), Coca Cola (closed early 1980s), Otis Elevator (closed 1987), Firestone (closed 1988), Consumers Glass (closed 1997), and International Harvester (closed 1999) (Freeman, 2001, 177). The closure of so many large manufacturing plants in the city altered its landscape from being one of production to one that was deserted (see Figures 11 and 12). The de-industrialization process created "an abundant inventory of vacant

industrial land and buildings” (Filion and Rutherford, 2000, 372). In addition, the decline in the manufacturing sector was to alter the employment patterns in the city. From 1981 to 1996, the number of manufacturing jobs went from 63 030 to 32 030 (Freeman, 2001, 178). In 2006, a further 11 000 manufacturing jobs were eliminated (Williams, Kitchen, DeMiglio, Eyles, Newbold and Streiner, 2010, 909). The decline in the employment in the manufacturing industry in Hamilton was steady as it dropped from 31.73% in 1981 to 16.43 % in 2006 (see Table 2) (Statistics Canada, 1982 and 2007).

**Table 2:** Manufacturing Industry Employment as a Percentage of the Total Employment in All Industries, Hamilton CMA, 1981-2006



(Statistics Canada: 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997, 2002, 2007)

**Figure 11:** The Closed Hamilton Works U.S. Steel Complex, Burlington Street East



**Figure 12:** Industrial Property For Sale, Burlington Street East



The large steel mills were not immune to the economic changes that were occurring. The employment loss in Hamilton's steel industries was significant. Whereas, in 1971, 36.8% of Hamilton's employment was in manufacturing, by 2006, the figure had dropped to 16.2% (Vinodrai, 2006, 98). Similarly, in 1971, 20% of Hamilton's employment was in the processing and machining occupations, but this figure had fallen to 6.5% in 2006 (Vinodrai, 2006, 99). The effect of the steel plant closures, such as Stelco in 2009, and operations reduction on Hamilton was significant—its economy and image were heavily tied to steel manufacturing (Williams, Kitchen, DeMiglio, Eyles, Newbold, and Streiner, 2010, 909).

The empty manufacturing plants left blight on the landscape as the facilities and grounds were not maintained in good repair--scars that were evidence of the economic pain the city and its citizens were experiencing. Hamilton was forced to rapidly confront the reality of its economic situation. The city has been "reinventing itself with an emphasis on health, education, and

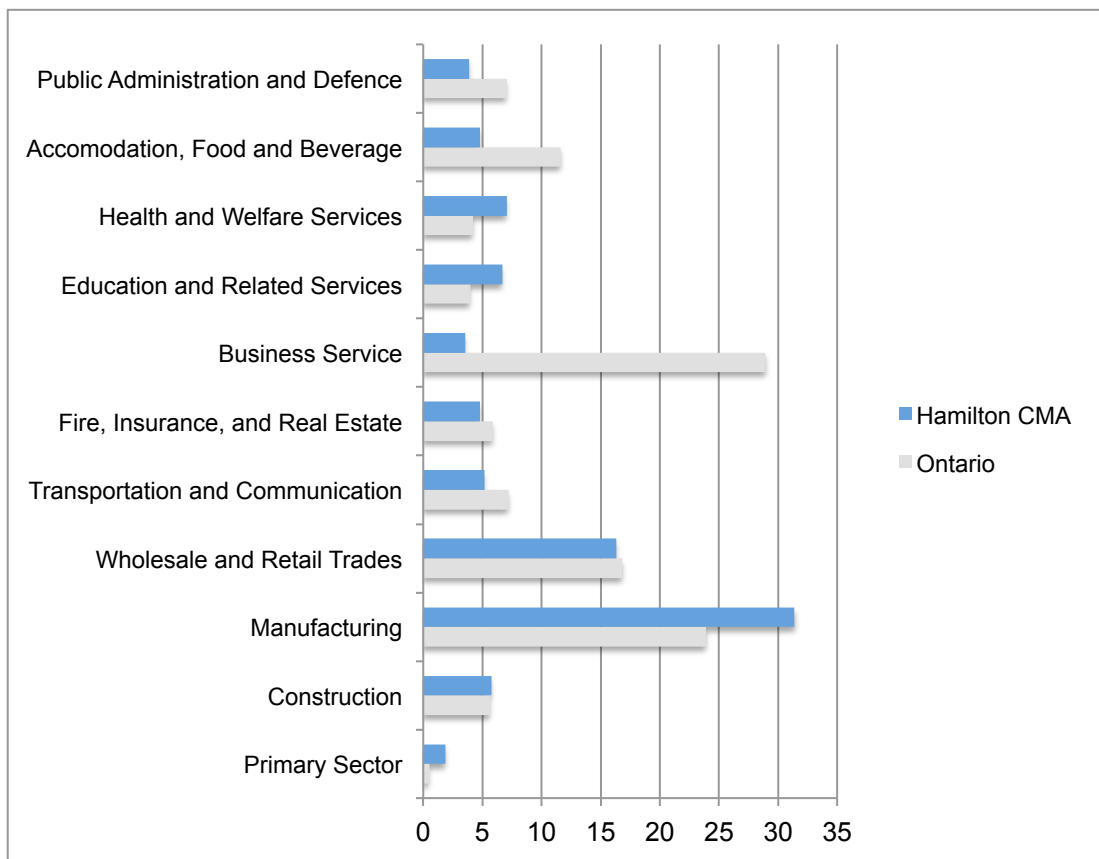


technology” and by doing so it has become an active participant in the new economy (Williams, Kitchen, DeMiglio, Eyles, Newbold, and Streiner, 2010, 922). However, it is important to note that “for former workers in the industrial sector, especially the thousands of laid-off steel workers, participation in the new sectors of the economy is proving to be a challenge, as they often lack the required qualifications and experience” (Williams et al., 2010, 922).

#### **4.4 A Shift to the New Economy**

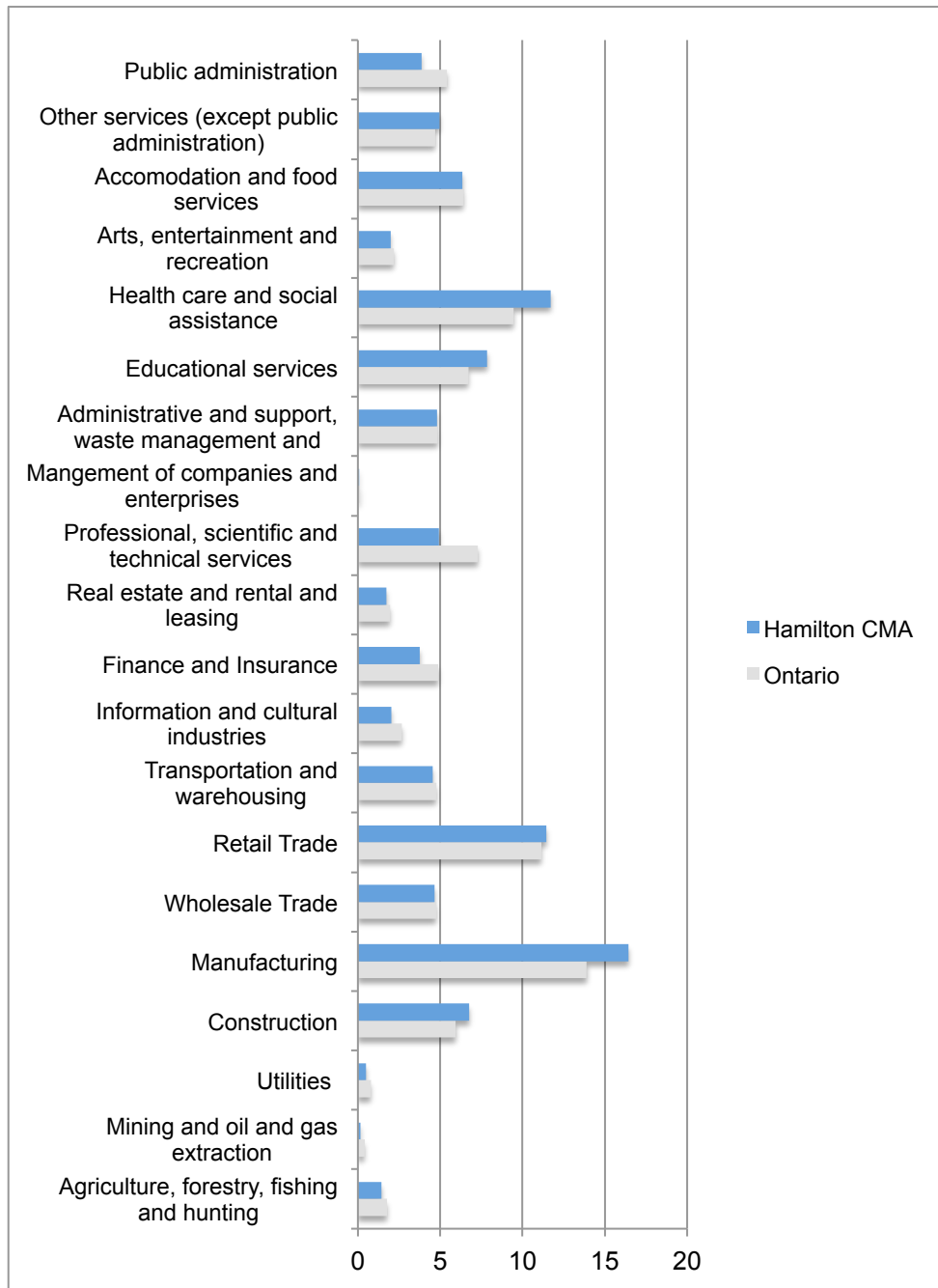
While the strength of Hamilton’s economy was long focused on its manufacturing activities, the city was able to draw on the presence of its education and health facilities as it transitioned to new economic activities and the post-Fordist era. This practice is not unique to Hamilton as other strong manufacturing based cities, such as Pittsburgh, have also benefitted from and have utilized their post-secondary institutions in adopting to the new economy (Singh and Allen, 2006). In this sense, Hamilton was fortunate that it had such strong institutions that would be able to support new economic endeavours and form a new innovative image for the oft-termed “Steel City”. The expansion of employment in the health and education sectors is demonstrated by comparing the data presented in the 1981 census with the 2006 census (see Tables 3 and 4).

**Table 3: Employment by Industry (%) for the Hamilton CMA and Ontario, 1981**



(Statistics Canada, 1982)

**Table 4: Employment by Industry (%) for the Hamilton CMA and Ontario, 2006**



(Statistics Canada, 2007b, 2012)

A comparison of the 1981 and 2006 census illustrates that there has been a decline in manufacturing employment in the city from 31.37% to 16.43%

(Statistics Canada, 1982, 2007b, 2012). However, during the same period, there has been an increase of health care employment from 7.05% to 11.71% (Statistics Canada, 1982, 2007b, 2012). In addition, education employment has increased from 6.68% to 7.86% (Statistics Canada, 1982, 2007b, 2012). It should be noted that in 2006, the proportions in the various sectors are very similar between the city and the province. In contrast, in 1981, there is divergence among the provincial and city rates, that is particularly noticeable in the manufacturing and business services sectors.

The city has focused on becoming a “learning region” that places the economic development efforts on the expansion of post-secondary institutions and their associated research facilities to ensure regional economic success (Wolfe and Gertler, 2001, 575). In addition, there was awareness among citizens, politicians, and business leaders that there needed to be an alternative path to achieve economic growth that varied from the practices of the past (Cole, 2009; Loomis, 2011; Macleod, 2011; Weaver, 1982). As a result, there was considerable focus, effort, and planning to support and encourage new business opportunities in the city. There were regional economic development initiatives, such as *The Renaissance Project*, to revitalize lagging industries, enliven dead manufacturing space, and energize new enterprises. To encourage Hamilton’s renaissance, in 1995, the Regional Economic Development Department formed a private-public grant system to create a “community-based venture capital fund” (Sleightholm, 1996, 237). The economic strategies were successful as businesses (i.e. in the health-sciences and creative industries) were introduced

that have been able “to offset the city’s industrial losses” by offering employment in the new economy (Shaker, 2011a).

The presence of McMaster University, which had relocated from Toronto to Hamilton in the 1930s, has had a large role to play in Hamilton’s economic transition (Kosydar, 1999, 1). McMaster is “a major teaching and children’s hospital” in Canada and is recognized for its scientific achievements globally (Kosydar, 1999, 93). The presence of highly respected health research and associated facilities have formed a new identity for the city as being one where significant health advances are being undertaken and performed. The city also has benefited due to the presence of Mohawk College, established in 1967, that has strong health education component (Freeman, 2001, 169). In addition, the city has several large hospitals: Chedoke, St. Joseph’s, and McMaster that draw patients from the surrounding areas.

The provision of health services has become a significant portion of Hamilton’s economy and the city is increasingly becoming identified with health care and innovations. It is argued by some that it was the health sector that “kept Hamilton going” during the years as the manufacturing plants closed (Hughes, 2011). In fact, the employment figures in the city display the importance that the health and education sectors have on Hamilton’s economy. In 2001, the largest employer in the city was the Hamilton Health Sciences Corporation, with over 9000 employees; the second largest was the school board with almost 6000; and the third largest was McMaster with 3500 employees (Freeman, 2001, 178).

McMaster has also been active in promoting manufacturing and high technology research. The McMaster Manufacturing Research Institute (MMRI) seeks to develop new products and processes for: “machining, metal forming, polymer processing, robotics and manufacturing automation” (Economic Development Division, 2006, 16). The university’s Steel Research Centre conducts research in “steel making, process control and steel product application” (Economic Development Division, 2006, 16). In addition, the Centre for Automotive Research examines new materials that are ‘strong and lightweight’ in order to decrease the weight of the components and frames of vehicles (Economic Development Division, 2006, 16).

In order to further develop its research centres and to encourage other research and operational organizations to locate nearby, McMaster opened a research centre -- Innovation Park – on a former brownfield site in western Hamilton that has attracted “leading edge technology firms” (Williams, Kitchen, DeMiglio, Eyles, Newbold, and Streiner, 2010, 906). For instance, the federal government’s CANMET Materials Technology Laboratory that studies “metals and materials fabrication, processing and evaluation” is located in Innovation Park (Economic Development Division, 2006, 14). There is also to be a new automotive research centre-- developed in partnership with General Motors (MacLeod, 2011; Economic Development Division, 2006, 14). Other projects at the site include: Xerox Centre for Engineering Entrepreneurship and Innovation; United Nations University--Institute for Water, Environment and Health; Green Marketing; and Ballagh and Edward Intellectual Property Law (McMaster

Innovation Park, 2012). Innovation Park is expected to be a major boost to the Hamilton economy, employ 3000 people, and promote the research capabilities of the community (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 2011).

At the Hamilton Economic Summit, held in May 2011, Mohawk College's president, Rob MacIsaac, stated: "There is a sense of optimism and excitement about the city's future that hasn't been here in a long time" (MacLeod, 2011). The city is attracting creative ventures such as animation studios and art galleries; its clean technology firms continue to find new ways to repurpose waste; and, small technological start-ups are opening (Sleightholm, 1996). A non-profit organization, Innovation Factory, formed in Hamilton is supported by "law firms, accounting firms, banks, technology companies, Mohawk, Mac, (and) the city's EcDev department" with the goal to create "a web of support for the next generation of quality jobs generators" (Loomis, 2011). The current focus for Hamilton's economy is on "clean technology, food processing, waterfront developments and providing essential health care" (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 2011). Hamilton has successfully transitioned to the post-Fordist new economy with its professional, technical, and service sector operations (Coffey, 2000). In fact, there has been expansion in the amount of employment in the professional occupations in the city from 8.8% in 1971 to 17.0% in 2006 (Vinodrai, 2006, 102).

Ironically, given its economic history of competitiveness with its neighbour, the city now benefits from its close proximity to Toronto. The operation of the GO commuter train service has strengthened the link between the two cities and diminished the perceived distance. Hamilton is a cost effective location for firms

that previously operated in Toronto—this has resulted in a reverse flow of businesses that are moving out of Toronto and into Hamilton. As well, the opportunity for lower housing costs has attracted residents to the city. In fact, Tyler McDiarmid, chief financial officer for Vrancor Development Group, states that “an ‘explosion’ of development is in the works for Hamilton, driven by urban-dwellers forced out of the expensive Toronto market and developers eager to cash in on lucrative renewal projects” (Macleod, 2011). Furthermore, Hamilton is the “only community in the GTA with available Greenfield development sites outside the provincial Green Belt” (Macleod, 2011). The provincial policy, *Places to Grow (2006)*, while it places constraints on urban growth patterns in order to create “compact, vibrant and complete communities...(that will) support a strong and competitive economy”, actually presents Hamilton with an advantage over its neighbouring cities (Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal, 2006, 9). This is because Hamilton’s greenfields lie outside of restricted areas (such as the Niagara Escarpment or in the case of the Greater Toronto area, the Oak Ridges Moraine). In addition, there are considerable re-development opportunities for the de-industrialized land parcels that make the city attractive to developers; however, challenges remain as the global economy is continuing to recover from recession.

In summary, Hamilton’s economy transitioned concurrently with the national phases of industrial development. During pre-industrialization, the city was involved in small-scale manufacturing and trade (Merriman, 1996). At the onset of the Industrial Revolution, Hamilton benefitted from government



economic and tariff policies that expanded manufacturing activities and encouraged American investment (Bunting and Filion, 2006). The post-war Fordist period ensured economic stability for the city due to the high demand for consumer goods (Boyer, 1990). However, in the 1970s, the city began its de-industrialization phase, as factories began to close and fewer manufacturing jobs were created (Cairncross, 1970). With post-industrialization, Hamilton's new economy focuses on the education, research, professional, and service sectors. This most recent transition is an example of Schumpeter's "Creative Destruction" process as the structure and strength of Hamilton's economy was destroyed before there was the growth of its creative and knowledge industries (Schumpeter, 2011).

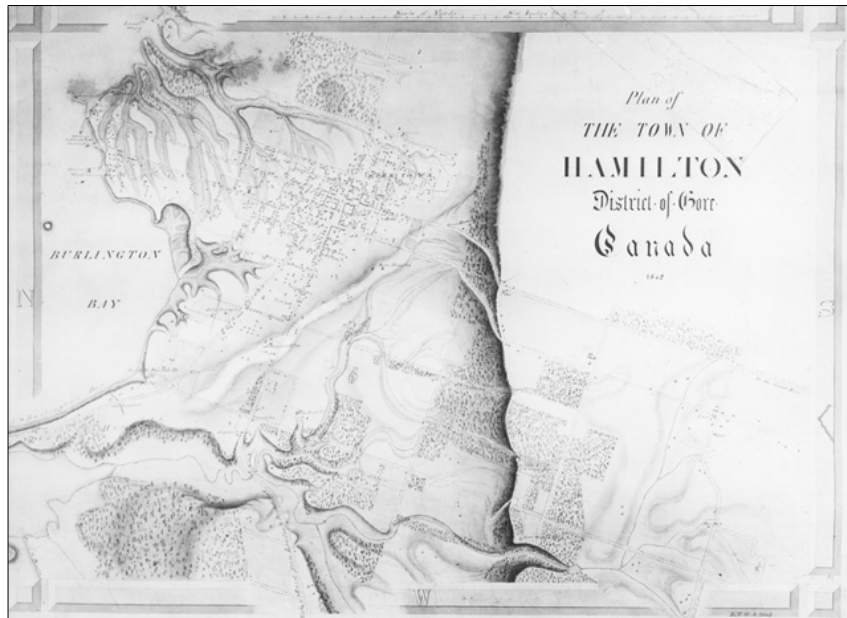
## **5. The Pattern of Urban Development**

The urban pattern of Hamilton's development was the result of accommodating and planning for both residential and economic needs. The land uses were distinguished informally before they became formally recognized under zoning regulations. The phases of the city's growth is tied to socio-economic conditions and planning decisions. As such, it is important to examine the formative patterns of land use that have occurred in the city as past decisions have created the landscape that is visible today and will explain how planning policies have influenced the urban built form. This chapter will outline the evolution of Hamilton's urban form from the nineteenth century to the twentieth century. It will start with a description of how the city was planned from its beginning and how this resulted in early segregation of land uses; it will then detail the movement of residents based on social and economic conditions that was to form the upper and lower communities. An examination of the city at its peak, from 1896 to 1913, will outline the influence of the City Beautiful movement on the urban form, and will illustrate further changes to the land use patterns. The discussion will then turn to the impact of the de-industrialization phase that created several areas of blight before examining the major urban renewal project—Civic Square—that significantly changed the landscape of Hamilton's downtown. It is important that the phases of Hamilton's urban form are outlined as the existing land use pattern reflects the city's planning policies and urban development.

## 5.1 Planning from the Onset

The form and function of Hamilton's urban landscape was largely dictated by its topography (see Figure 13) and through the implementation of planning.

**Figure 13:** Plan of the Town of Hamilton, 1842



(Local History and Archives, Hamilton Public Library, 2012c; Freeman, 2001, 67)

The urban settlement of Hamilton began on the flat plain that surrounds the bay beneath the “mountain” when George Hamilton (who the city was named after), surveyed and sold lots on King and Main Streets (Evans, 1970, 81). The survey followed the traditional grid pattern with two blocks reserved for public use—one block being the site for a proposed courthouse (Houghton, 2002, 5). The other, a triangle parcel of land-- created as a result of the main street from Queenston to Burlington (now King Street) traversing Hamilton's property—became Gore Park (Houghton, 2002, 5). An adjacent triangle parcel of land of the same dimensions, that was owned by Nathaniel Hughson, was suppose to be joined to make Gore Park a large public square; however, the deal fell through

and the parcel was sold for development (Freeman, 2001,29). Initially, the park went from James to Hughson streets—it would be forty years before it was extended to John Street (Kosydar, 1999, 60). The stimulus for increased urban growth was when legislation was passed (on March 22, 1816) that made Hamilton the judicial centre for the District of Gore (comprised of: the Counties of Wentworth, Halton, Brant, Haldimand, and the Township of Puslinch in the County of Wellington) (Freeman, 2001, 28). The construction of the district courthouse (on the land Hamilton had designated in his survey) and the accompanying jail was a status symbol that indicated Hamilton was going to be an important community (Freeman, 2001).

The continual growth in commerce, trade, and services led to “sustained urban development” during the 1830s (Weaver, 1982, 19). The expansion of economic activities both in the core and at the Port of Hamilton resulted in more development along the James Street corridor. By 1835, the level of trade was such that James Street extended from the waterfront, through the downtown, to the “mountain”— providing access to Caledonia and Port Dover (The Fountain Foundation, 1995, 49). Hamilton’s rapid urban and economic development was impressive to individuals familiar with the community. Dr. Thomas Rolph, of Ancaster, wrote in 1836:

*There are few places in North America that have increased more rapidly, or stand in a more beautiful and advantageous situation than the town of Hamilton. In the summer of 1833, my constant evening’s walk was from McBurley’s tavern to the lake shore—distance about one mile. There were then but two houses between them; now it is one continued street, intersected by side streets, branching in both directions.*

*(Freeman, 2001, 40)*

By 1835, the built urban landscape had expanded outward from the bay and was moving towards the escarpment (Weaver, 1982, 21).

The commercial centre of the community formed around Gore Park (see Figure 14). This is consistent with the formation of a “regional central place” as the early formative years of urban cores had a “mix of administrative and market functions” (Shearmur and Hutton, 2011, 110). Retail dominated the north side, while wholesale facilities were located to the south (The Fountain Foundation, 1995, 49). In fact, the pressure for increased commercial space led to City Council soon suggesting that Gore Park be sold and developed for commercial use—it was only public pressure to retain the park that prevented its sale (Kosydar, 1999, 60). Its presence in the middle of the commercial district gave the area a sense of prominence and grandeur. It offered open public space (it was only fenced for a brief period of time due to the controversy the “improvement” created) in the central city that was valued by residents.

**Figure 14:** Gore Park, 1860



(Local History and Archives, Hamilton Public Library, 2012d)

The prosperity of Hamilton and its economic expansion continued; by 1870, there were clusters of distinct land uses. The greatest density of

commercial land use was still found in the central business district. Light industrial uses were located along the John and King Street corridors and adjacent to the rail yard (Weaver, 1982, 61). The addition of manufacturing activity in the inner city “defined the emergence of the classic industrial city” (Shearmur and Hutton, 2011, 110). By 1871, most of the foundries and boiler makers were located in an area north of King Street at the fringes of the central business district (Weaver, 1982, 60). This was largely due to the north end location of the Port of Hamilton that created a new centre for trade in the city. The residential land uses were found adjacent to commercial and the light industrial enterprises. As the local movement of people and goods was done by walking or by horsepower, the interrelationship between the land uses represented efficient transportation patterns.

## **5.2 Class Distinction: Movement onto the Mountain**

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Hamilton had distinguishable land use patterns; however, there was not yet the presence of economically and socially distinct neighbourhoods (Weaver, 1982, 64). With the development of the streetcar network and with the incline railway that provided access onto the “mountain”, new residential areas were developed that were located far away from the industrial sites (Weaver, 1982). The growing middle and upper classes, financially able to commute, moved out of the downtown to “a second city segregated from the core by distance, economic function and social composition” (Weaver, 1982, 97). The exodus of the middle and upper classes left the downtown core as the residential area for the working class or those financially

unable to relocate. This process resulted in the creation of a distinct “blue-collar district” where residents shared similar economic and social conditions (Williams, Kitchen, DeMiglio, Eyles, Newbold, and Streiner, 2010, 910).

The distinctive working class neighbourhoods were found adjacent to industry as the industrial workers and their families tended to live “near the factories they worked in” (Kendrick and Moore, 1995, 33). Within this “industrial annex” there were boarding houses that housed large numbers of recent immigrants and long-term residents (Weaver, 1982, 96). The area formed a distinctive character that would provide a “collective identity” and “sense of place” for its residents (Ley, 2000). A nineteenth century north end resident, David M. Nelligan, describes the community’s character:

*A rough tough reckless lot, hard working, hard playing, hard living, hard swearing, hard drinking...the liveliest, loveliest part of Hamilton, set apart by the neighbourliness and fierce pride of its people, home of cockfights, good times and a legion of the city’s most colourful characters.*

*(Freeman, 2001, 30)*

The growing concern over public health and the living conditions in the inner city was to lead to housing reforms (Hodge and Gordon 2003, 57).

With the expansion of industry around the port, there was the corresponding eastward residential development-- the area south of Barton Street and east of Gage Avenue (Freeman, 2001, 99). Interestingly, it often was the factory owners who developed the nearby working class neighbourhoods, as they were “eager to recruit a dependable work force” (Freeman, 2001, 99). However, there was also the development of working class subdivisions by real estate speculators, in areas such as: Union Park (between Ottawa Street and Kenilworth Avenue) and

Brightside (north of Burlington Street and west of International Harvester and Stelco) (Freeman, 2001, 98 and 99). The east end working class neighbourhoods were densely populated and enveloped the area around the industrial plants (Weaver, 1982, 99). The residents experienced heavy traffic congestion, noise, and pollution from the nearby location of industry and numerous transportation arteries (Weaver, 1982, 159). The poor environmental conditions were for many city residents unappealing, and as a result, the area developed a negative image. Consequently, around the industrial plants and railroad operations—in the downtown and north end area—there were “depressed adjacent land values”, in contrast, there were “inflated values” in what were thought to be the “more remote and healthful properties on the mountain” (Weaver, 1982, 99).

The exodus of the middle and upper classes to healthier and more attractive areas of the city led to the development of desirable subdivisions and exclusive estate areas. The wealthy businessmen and industrial plant owners built large estates “at the foot of the escarpment...in the village of Westdale...alongside ravines in the Dundas Valley, and...in the original settlement of Ancaster” (Kendrick and Moore, 1995, 33). The contrast of the new housing to the older housing stock located in the inner city was great. There was a considerable amount of land for each estate that provided privacy and space to its inhabitants. The neighbourhoods were treed, often offered great views of the bay and other natural features, and for the residents presented the opportunity for a desirable lifestyle that could be enjoyed away from the nuisances of



industry. The desire of the upper and middle classes to reside away from industry and its ill effects resulted in physical barriers being constructed in the city. For instance, a railroad tunnel west of James Street was built to shield the wealthy neighbourhood from the working class conditions (Weaver, 1982, 99). The tunnel created a defined physical separation between the formerly mixed income neighbourhood (Noonan, 2005).

The introduction of zoning, in 1913, was to “manage the negative externalities of the industrial city” by separating land uses (Simmons, Bourne, Hutton and Shearmur, 2011, 91). It led to further class separations based on social and economic distinctions with further elite residential areas (such as: Duke, Markland, Forest, and the southern portions of Bay, James, and John Streets) and middle class residential areas (such as: Beulah, Westmount, Chedoke Park or Ravine, and Ravenscliffe) being developed (Weaver, 1982, 99). These new communities “created districts of architectural leviathans” that broke away from the grid pattern (Weaver, 1982, 96). The creation of distinctive neighbourhoods based on social and economic characteristics resulted due to the economic opportunities Hamilton’s growing industries offered residents and the introduction of a planning tool that formalized the process of urban development.

### **5.3 A City at its Peak**

It is argued that during the period from 1896 to 1913, Hamilton “attained much of its contemporary cadastral and land use form” (Weaver, 1982, 96). The central business district was firmly established “along and adjacent to John-

James-Main-King Streets” (The Fountain Foundation, 1995, 49). There were new commercial districts that were forming along Barton Street East and Ottawa Street. The growth of industrial activity and the pressure for more land was so great that a considerable portion of the bay was filled. Population growth continued, requiring the construction of new neighbourhoods that pushed the urban built area even further outward from the core, engulfing adjacent farmland as the city’s boundaries continued to extend. In the inner city, there was the construction of taller, multi-dwelling units—particularly, along the public transit routes. Significantly, the city’s first skyscraper, the Pigott Building, opened in March 1929 (Freeman, 2001, 133).

While Hamilton still had its areas of concern, overall, it appeared to be prosperous and full of promise for the future. The influence of the City Beautiful movement soon was displayed on Hamilton’s landscape. In particular, the City Beautiful movement began due to growing concern over the city’s appearance and this resulted in the onset of publicly funded monumental projects (Hodge and Gordon, 2003, 57). There were several city leaders who desired the scale and appearance of civic projects that the movement proposed as they felt that such projects would serve to enhance the prominence of the community. Consequently, in 1917, the city acquired 64 acres of land for Gage Park; and, in the 1920s, the city acquired the land that is now Cootes Paradise and the Royal Botanical Gardens (Freeman, 2001, 132 & 133). The creation of the Royal Botanical Gardens would bring world-renowned recognition to the city (Freeman,

2001). In all, the City Beautiful projects provided scenes of beauty amongst Hamilton's industrial surroundings.

By 1914, there had been significant land use changes that had occurred in the city (Weaver, 1982, 97). Industrial activity had moved away from the inner city to be located primarily on the land adjacent to the bay. The few pockets of industrial land not located at the bay were found beside the rail lines and at the rail yard. Commercial activity is still present in the central business district. The importance placed on open space and public parks during this time period is reflected in an increase in the amount of recreational land.

#### **5.4 An Area of Blight**

Within the first decades of the twentieth century, the central business district had begun to suffer as the new patterns in land use and economic activity had taken the focus away from the core. The inner city's distance from the middle class communities began the relocation process of commercial and retail businesses to the new residential and commercial development areas (i.e. to suburban malls). Compounding the vacancy problem the inner city was facing, there was also a lack of demand for office space in what was still a manufacturing based economy (Freeman, 2001, 157). Changes in transportation patterns, such as when the John Street mountain access road was abandoned, placed more pressure on that street's businesses--as James Street became "the commercial centre of the city" (Evans, 1970, 117). The downtown was suffering as a result of planning and political decisions.

The inner city's problems were made worst due to the negative perceptions associated with the area by some citizens. The residential areas were viewed by some in the community as "an area of disrepair, blight, and overcrowding" (Weaver, 1982, 142). The 1933 Hamilton novel, *Forgotten Men*, included a description of working-class housing in the area:

*Shabby houses jostled one another on either side of narrow streets. Occasionally one found an attempt to beautify the front garden, by coaxing a sparse lawn to grow upon ground which was a mixture of sand, and slag from nearby furnaces, and pitiful beds of geraniums and begonias grew straggly and soon became blackened by soot from neighbouring smokestacks.*

(Weaver, 1982, 145)

The novel's description of Hamilton's downtown was not positive and emphasized the unattractive characteristics of the location. The contrast between the old and new residential areas in Hamilton had become so extreme that during the Depression there were some slum clearances and a resettlement scheme performed in the attempts to improve the condition of the downtown (Weaver, 1982, 135).

After World War I, Hamilton was faced with an increased demand for residential and industrial land. In response, Hamilton's Council established its Town Planning Committee in 1930 whose purpose was "to examine, reflect, and plan for future land use" (Weaver, 1982, 179). It was thought that the Town Planning Committee could best address the pressure for urban development. There were two significant studies commissioned that have been credited with transforming Hamilton over the next thirty years: the *1945 Report on Existing Conditions* and the *1947 plan* (Weaver, 1982, 179). The first examined the

problems the city was facing and the second proposed solutions to the problems. The 1945 report outlined the traffic congestion issues, the “drabness” of the industrial lands and the lack of cultural buildings in the city (Weaver, 1982, 179). The 1947 plan was to: stimulate the redevelopment of housing, construct a new civic centre (consisting of a town hall, court house, cultural centre), and focus transportation on cars and buses (Weaver, 1982, 179).

### **5.5 Urban Renewal: The Civic Square Project**

The 1950s to 1970s was a period of urban renewal in Hamilton’s inner city. It was an era of “community planning ideas” that was focused on publicly driven and funded urban renewal and large-scale traffic engineering projects (Hodge and Gordon, 2003, 57). Until the 1950s, many of the original commercial, institutional, and residential buildings in the downtown core remained intact (The Fountain Foundation, 1995, 55). Within a few decades, the footprint of the inner city would be significantly altered. Even the flow of traffic would not remain untouched. A traffic study conducted in 1957 to examine traffic congestion resulted in the “institution of a one-way street plan” in Hamilton’s downtown (Weaver, 1982, 179). The process and impact of the changes that occurred was described by Dennis Missett, the Chairman of The Fountain Foundation, who states:

*Beginning in the late 1950s, efforts were made that attempted to play down our heritage as an industrial town in favour of a new modern image. Entire blocks of nineteenth century buildings were razed in a headlong rush into the future. Some would say that the heart of Hamilton was torn away at the same time. Certainly some of its character was lost. By no means should we condemn all of the redevelopment; much of it was necessary and its legacy has been some outstanding facilities. However some defining*

*elements of how we view ourselves as a community were sacrificed at the same time.*

*(The Fountain Foundation, 1995, 5)*

The impetus for the renewal efforts was economic growth, greater efficiency, and modernity. In fact, planners thought downtowns had to “gloss their image” and supported “ridding the CBD of eyesores” and old facilities (Filion, Hoernig, Bunting and Sands, 2004, 329). For instance, in 1955, the old City Hall was sold to Eaton’s for the expansion of the department store—as it was “felt that this would stimulate other development in the downtown” (Freeman, 2001, 158). As well, the city sold the downtown farmer’s market land as it had increased in value and relocated the market to another site (before its final location as part of the main library) (Kosydar, 1999, 25). However, it was a piece of amended federal legislation that would enable the most changes to be made to the landscape. In 1954, the National Housing Act was amended to allow federal money to be used “to acquire, clear, and service the (urban) land for reuse” (Freeman, 2001, 159). The access to federal money was a major enabler of urban renewal in Hamilton and was evident through the implementation of the Civic Square project.

In addition to the amended federal Housing Act, the other policy that resulted in urban renewal projects was the amendment of the city’s zoning bylaw in 1961 that allowed for high rises to be constructed in the central business area (Weaver, 1982, 175). Consequently, there was an increase in the number of apartment buildings constructed in the core. The bylaw amendment also resulted in the construction of numerous office towers, for example: the IBM

Building (built in 1970) and Stelco Tower (built in 1972) (Weaver, 1982, 175). The expansion of corporate office towers “reasserted its (the inner city) central-place function” (Shearmur and Hutton, 2011, 110).

The Hamilton Downtown Association became an active participant in urban and economic issues during the 1960s. The Association promoted urban renewal in “all its aspects”-- private redevelopment around Gore Park and in the core, and the publicly backed the Civic Square proposal (Hamilton Downtown Association, c.1960, 3). To do so, it reached beyond its membership to inform the public and to influence political policy. The Association produced a report-- *Hamilton at the Crossroads: Development or Deterioration*--that stressed the need for planning policies that would re-develop the core to ensure both the future growth and economic sustainability of the area. The downtown, the Association argued, is a “barometer of our economic growth” (Hamilton Downtown Association, 1964, 5). To ensure stability in the area and to aid in its growth and not further deterioration the Association proposed: the creation of a metropolitan plan (that would be implemented in phases), the servicing of the area by public transit (i.e. monorails and rapid transit lines, buses, and rail), the creation of new parking facilities by the proposed expressways, pedestrian walkways in retail areas that would be separated from traffic, parks and boulevards on major arterial roads, and the centralization of retail and commerce activity (Hamilton Downtown Association, 1964, 9).

In 1965, Murray V. Jones and Associates presented an urban renewal report to Council that recommended: the redevelopment of 260 acres in the York

Street area and a 44 acre site in the downtown that would be called Civic Square (Freeman, 2001, 159). The project would result in the removal of homes and would alter the appearance of the community. For instance, the construction of the new City Hall and its adjacent park resulted in the destruction of several blocks of buildings. More housing was demolished to construct apartment buildings to the east of the new City Hall.

The first rehabilitation area was in “the north end residential area below the C.N.R. tracks, westward from Wellington Street” where homes were leveled for “new parks, schools, a perimeter road (which never was constructed), a community centre, a shopping area, public housing, and a senior citizens’ apartment” (Evans, 1970, 207). By 1967, the city had acquired and demolished the Canadian Cottons’ mill (located in the north end) to construct 91 low-income family housing units (Henry, 1974, 130). In 1967, there was the completion of The Kenneth D. Soble Towers—that contained 146 senior apartment units (Henry, 1974, 131). In 1968, 17 low-income housing units on James Street were complete and the first Marina Tower opened (Henry, 1974, 131).

The second site was “immediately north of the new city hall, stretching from Main Street to Merrick and from James to Bay Streets. It housed 260 businesses and 500 people in small, mostly three story structures. Eighty-two per cent of the buildings had been built before 1900” (Freeman, 2001, 159). The 1968 packet of appraisal documents stated: “the area has about reached the end of its economic life...the future holds little encouragement. Redevelopment will provide modern facilities and a good future for those merchants progressive and vigorous enough



to return to the new complex (Jackson Square)” (Wilson, 1986). The development of an inner city mall had become a common occurrence in cities as it was thought that such “up to date developments (were) apt to fuel downtown growth” (Filion, Hoernig, Bunting, and Sands, 2004, 329). A difficulty for existing merchants was the high cost that would be associated with moving into the shopping centre—most did not return to the area (Wilson, 1986). It is telling that so many of the stores, in a photograph from the era, had window signs indicating large sales of inventories prior to the buildings being destroyed for the construction of Jackson Square, while others were listed for rent.

The Civic Square project would feature: “a new library, art gallery, theatre-auditorium, hotels, office towers and shopping malls coordinated with broad open areas and promenades” (Evans, 1970, 207). It was proposed to include: a planetarium, education centre, farmers’ market, and convention centre (Freeman, 2001, 160). Mayor Copps was a big advocator for inner city redevelopment when he made the comparison that: “while other cities have skyscrapers going up in the downtown area, Hamilton has 147 parking lots” (Weaver, 1982, 191). In fact, Hamilton had that many parking lots due to preliminary efforts to remove structures prior to construction plans or financing being in place. Copps was determined to have cultural amenities in the central city even if it was at the loss of old architectural buildings (Weaver, 1982, 191). Consequently, his council pushed for and saw results in the construction of Hamilton Place (1972) and the Art Gallery of Hamilton (1977). The downtown urban renewal projects displayed the city’s efforts to be progressive, modern, and stimulate new economic

opportunities and cultural activities in the area. *The Hamilton Spectator* wrote at the time that it was “undoubtedly the most ambitious attempt to resurrect a city ever undertaken in Canada” (Freeman, 2001, 160).

However, the Civic Square project faced difficulties and criticism. Due to financing issues and changes in developers, much of the land remained vacant even after it had been cleared for many years. It was only when the different levels of government began to work together that the project could be completed. For instance, the city constructed Copps Coliseum and the province constructed the convention centre and an office tower (Freeman, 2001, 163). The site characteristics and architectural design of the buildings were also criticized. The inward design of Jackson Square shopping complex was faulted for the impact it had on closing off the Square from the surrounding streets. John Mokrycke, an architect, stated:

*I think Jackson Square was the beginning of the emptying of King St between Wellington and James...Of all the malls in the city, it is the one that has had the most impact. It has done so much damage from an urban design point of view. It has killed a lot of activity on the perimeter.*

*(Peters, 1994)*

A similar sentiment was expressed by Trevor Garwood-Jones (the architect of Hamilton Place, the Art Gallery, the Convention Centre and provincial office building) who stated that the “so-called people place never materialized” (Sicoli, 1983). Some residents also experienced a sense of nostalgia and anger, at the loss of so many historical buildings in the former neighbourhoods. In contrast, others have chosen to look positively on the project, such as former Hamilton Mayor Jack MacDonald, who stated: “Imagine Hamilton if we hadn’t done the

things we did. It would be a ghost town” (Wilson 1986). The visual impact of the skyline additions from the 1960s and 1970s overpowered the scale of the traditional buildings in the downtown. During this period, Hamilton gained many modern buildings; however, it lost many of its historic structures and old neighbourhoods.

Civic Square was an example of an urban renewal project that sought to transform the downtown economically through urban design and the implementation of planning policy. It significantly altered the landscape of Hamilton’s inner city and was the first major project stemming from policy that was enacted. There has not been another urban renewal policy that has had the level of scope that it had. The amount of destruction and subsequent construction altered the manner in which the city would address issues and concerns. This reflected the shift in planning attitudes as the “earlier revitalization attempts were often held responsible for downtown downward spiral” (Filion, Hoernig, Bunting, and Sands, 2004, 329). Planning policies began to be created by the city that would guide private and public development and create renewal efforts that respected the existing urban form. The large-scale projects of the Civic Square years were not duplicated.

By the middle of the twentieth century, Hamilton’s urban patterns reflected its economic activities and its growth in population. There are several ribbons and pockets of commercial activity found throughout the city in addition to the central business district (Weaver, 1982, 180). The growth of commercial enterprises in areas outside of the core illustrates why there was so much

pressure to renew the downtown area and why such a large-scale project, such as the Civic Square Project, was put into action. There was a large stretch of industrial land that bordered Burlington Bay. In comparison, there are only small pockets of industrial activities in other areas of the city (Weaver, 1982, 180). There are numerous educational and health facilities that are present in Hamilton. The influence of the City Beautiful period on the city's landscape is witnessed with the amount of recreational land tracts that are found at the bay and along the escarpment. Since the 1960s, the land use patterns, the layout of the streets, and much of the built form has remained constant, as there has not been any subsequent large-scale urban renewal projects (see Figure 15).

**Figure 15:** View of Downtown Hamilton from the Mountain Access



In summary, Hamilton's history of urban form development mirrors the identified phases of development. For instance, in the first phase (mercantilism), a small settlement formed and focused on trade; during the second phase (agricultural), Hamilton became a regional market place, and transportation routes (such as canals and railways) were improved; with the third phase (great transitions), industrial activity was visible on the city's landscape; throughout the

fourth phase (Fordist), there was the growth of the suburbs and demand for urban renewal in its inner city; and in the fifth phase (Post-Fordist), Hamilton experienced downtown revitalization and the construction of its downtown malls (Bunting and Filion, 2006). Hamilton displays lasting evidence of the City Beautiful movement and the land use and social segregation effects resulting from the introduction of zoning in the community (Hodge and Gordon, 2003). The mid-century concern over the “loss of vitality” of its downtown led Hamilton to focus on renewal efforts and implement the Civic Square project and give approval to downtown malls and office developments (Gad and Matthew, 2000, 253).

## **6. Policy to “Restore the Core”**

The planning approaches in Hamilton have varied throughout the development of the city. The phases of its industrialization mirror the phases of its planning policies. During industrialization, despite the lack of zoning restrictions, land uses were determined through economic needs and social preferences. With the advent of Fordism and the introduction of zoning in the city, land uses were prescribed and policies, such as the 1945 and 1947 plans, examined industrial city problems—such as congestion—and proposed mitigation measures. This chapter will examine the planning processes in place in Hamilton during its de-industrialization period and subsequent post-Fordist era. These two periods are pivotal to the changes that resulted to the inner city landscape that are visible today. The discussion will begin with outlining the rehabilitation approach the city took following the Civic Square project, it then will describe how community improvement plans and the development of commerce and cultural activities dominated the policies of the 1980s. In spite of policy efforts, there still were negative associations attached to its downtown and so the focus is turned to the efforts of the city to renew the core to revitalize the area with the public funding initiatives being outlined. Finally, there will be discussion on the policies for a sustainable future that have been adopted since the new millennium. It is important to review planning documents during this period to be able to examine the current landscape of Hamilton’s downtown within the planning context.

## 6.1 The Rehabilitation Approach

The turning point to rehabilitate the downtown was the amount of criticism generated as a result of the Civic Square project. Even many years after the project's completion, there was continuing debate over the approach the city took in the 1970s. For instance, David Coming, a planner in private practice, stated: "We did all the wrong things in Hamilton... What did we learn? We learned that mega-projects don't solve downtown problems" (Freeman, 2001, 164). Consequently, the city focused on implementing beautification projects to encourage retail and commercial activities and developed economic initiatives that would stimulate growth. This reflected the trends that began in the 1970s towards planning to improve living conditions and a focus on urban design to improve city appearance (Hodge and Gordon, 2003). There was also a return to focus on "preserving or enhancing the uniqueness" of downtowns in the marketing of the street-oriented retail environment (Filion, Hoernig, Bunting, and Sands, 2004, 329).

The change in planning approach was reflected in an organizational change at the City of Hamilton that occurred during the 1970s when it formed a Community Development department. The department was created "when the two upper levels of government scrapped their bulldozer approach to urban redevelopment and established a rehabilitation approach to older areas of cities" (City of Hamilton, 1972, 13). It is significant that the city formed a department that would focus on the rehabilitation of the inner city in its existing form rather than destroying its buildings and communities. The city had been in the practice

of drafting neighbourhood plans for Greenfield development but had not drafted plans for existing neighbourhoods. Concurrent to the restructuring, the city realized that there was a need to draft neighbourhood plans for existing developed areas (City of Hamilton, 1972, 3). In fact, the city stated that the “neighbourhoods to which we affix the highest priority in terms of immediate need for study are most often within or adjacent to the central business district and are experiencing either rapid change or great pressure to do so” (City of Hamilton, 1972, 3). It is notable that the central business district and its surrounding residential land uses were specifically mentioned as it indicates that the city realized its planning approach to the area had to be altered to positively address the issues that the core faced.

Interestingly, the transition in the approach towards planning for the downtown was concurrent with the economic changes that were underway in the city. The city’s manufacturing base was weakening as it was in the process of de-industrialization, and the service and knowledge sector was beginning to strengthen as the city entered its post-Fordist phase that in time would have a stronger presence. With the de-industrialization process, there were greater opportunities to have mixed-use zoning in order to “encourage diversity and economic renewal as well as facilitating social interaction and overall urban vitality” (Simmons, Bourne, Hutton and Shearmur, 2011, 91). Despite all of the changes experienced by the inner city, it remained the nucleus of economic, social, and political decisions and activities. For the downtown, the economic transition would present opportunities; however, there would be a period of



hardship before the new economy activities and their corresponding optimism would appear on the landscape of Hamilton's inner city.

## **6.2 Commerce, Culture and Community**

With the presence of the art gallery, convention centre, and coliseum, downtown Hamilton was becoming the centre for cultural activities in the city. The venues listed had been planned and implemented by politicians; however, private interests were to initiate urban renewal projects that were to greatly add to the city's cultural landscape. For instance, the creation of the popular Hess Village began when a lawyer renovated a structure for his office and then went on to improve others (Kosydar, 1999, 12). The process of gentrification in Hess Village had "attractive but old and somewhat rundown single and semi-detached Victorian Houses (being) converted into shops, restaurants and offices" (Kosydar, 1999, 12). Hess Village became a trendy place to shop and eat. Perhaps more significantly, it offered an example of a successful renewal project that other areas in the downtown core could later follow.

Throughout the 1980s, the city began several beautification projects, focused on Gore Park and streetscaping, with the purpose to revive the core and stimulate growth. It is important to note that the post-Fordist period "focus (was) on privately funded" renewal efforts as public money went to fund infrastructure and beautification projects rather than construct new facilities (Filion, 2001, 101). The *Central Area Plan* of 1981 sought to create: "An attractive, lively, human scale environment with the physical, social, and human infrastructure in place that will both improve the downtown quality of life and draw people to the area

and thus, encourage the private sector to expand the residential, commercial and industrial sectors” (duTOIT Associates Limited, DI Design & Development Consultants Inc, Baton Aschman Canada Limited, 1983, 1). The plan was creative in its approach to improving pedestrian movement throughout the core. It called for innovative transportation networks that: “Wherever feasible and desirable, vehicular and pedestrian traffic will be separated by means of plus 15 walkways, tunnelization of streets, pedestrian malls, underground bus terminal or other means. In the area circumscribing Jackson Square on the north, west and south, the plus 15 circulation system will be extended as new development occurs” (Paikin Nolan, 1993). The plan emphasized pedestrian routes and sought to have a clear separation of pedestrians from vehicular traffic; however, only two overhead routes were built: one between the Sheraton hotel and Convention Centre (across King Street) and the other between Eaton’s and the parking ramp (at York Blvd) (see Figure 16) (Paikin Nolan, 1993).

In addition, the plan would: target parking lots and dirty alleyways, plant trees, create more open space and parkettes, and transform alleyways by having them house shops and cafes (Davison, 1987). The popular Gore Park area was to be the focus of a \$2.87 million facelift project that would include: a ban on cars and trucks (on the southern portion of King Street between Catharine and James Streets), bus shelters and widened sidewalks (on the south side of the park), a sunken amphitheatre, trees and shrubs to separate pedestrians from traffic, and special paving in public areas (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 1983a). Another beautification program would alter the area from James to Wellington streets

between Main Street and York Blvd from 1984 to 1988 at a cost of \$6 million (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 1984a). The area would be “made more attractive and distinctive with paving stones, benches, planters, special street lights, banners, and signs“ (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 1984a).

**Figure 16:** “Plus 15” Overhead route between the former Eaton Centre and Parking Garage, York Blvd



The *Downtown Action Plan* (1983) reflected the objectives of the *Central Area Plan* (1981). Similarly, it examined the conditions of the core and proposed measures to improve the economic activity and appearance of the area. This was in keeping with the “entrepreneurial public sector” that sought to “remake urban places” to reclaim the public space for pedestrians, “inner-city leisure”, and to result in greater livability to encourage residents and tourists into the core (Lynch and Ley, 2010, 332). The plan proposed two methods upon which retail activity could be generated and improved: through promotional activities and improved visual appearances. It was recognized that there was a problem with the “plus 15” system as it “separates pedestrian and vehicular modes vertically”

and does not integrate pedestrians with the street which in turn hurts commercial activity (duTOIT Associates Limited, DI Design & Development Consultants Inc, Barton Aschman Canada Limited, 1983, 28). This indicates a shift towards urban entrepreneurialism policies that were “growth-orientated” to create jobs, result in the growth of existing firms and “crucially attract new forms of investment” (Hubbard and Hall, 1998, 5).

Consequently the 1983 Plan, proposed the “pedestrianization of main shopping areas” and the “improvement of pedestrian linkages” between streets or alleyways and parking lots by creating wider sidewalks with decorative pavings and streetscaping (i.e. the planting of trees, flower beds, and placement of benches) (duTOIT Associates Limited, DI Design & Development Consultants Inc, Barton Aschman Canada Limited, 1983, 21 and 28). It was also recognized that the downtown needed to have a “co-ordinated facelift program for facades and store windows” (duTOIT Associates Limited et al, 1983, 14). The plan proposed that there be consistent signage, that remodeling or new buildings complement the area’s architectural styles, and that there be climatic moderation (i.e. by having awnings and sheltering features) efforts made by retailers to make the pedestrian experience more enjoyable in inclement weather (duTOIT Associates Limited et al, 1983, 29 and 37). To create an identity for the area, the plan proposed gateway treatments at all vehicular routes into the core and the hanging of banners along arterial roads (duTOIT Associates Limited et al, 1983, 70 and 72). The plan placed considerable focus on strengthening existing retail operations that would cater to all citizens rather than creating a specialized

market (duTOIT Associates Limited et al, 1983, 15). It was thought that by having successful marketing campaigns and special events (i.e. sidewalk sales) that citizens would have an awareness of what they could purchase in the downtown. By 1989, Hamilton had spent almost \$10 million on its seven year *Downtown Action Plan* revitalization program and had budgeted approximately \$600 000 on low-interest loans for building facades (Christmas, 1988).

Despite the city's efforts, unfortunately, there was not a great demand for commercial and office space in the core. An article in *The Hamilton Spectator* stated: "It's a curious anomaly that, in a city core which is enjoying a physical renaissance and ought to be riding the bull market of consumer spending, more than a score of stores on King, James and John streets remain empty" (Christmas, 1988). In spite of many empty retail and commercial spaces, in the late 1980s, there was construction of the CIBC tower (at the location of the old CIBC bank) and Eaton's shopping centre—built adjacent to Jackson Square (Morison, 1989). However, Eaton Centre (see Figure 17) was not to be a successful venture and it contributed to the lack of activity on the street as its stores all faced inward-- soon its empty storefronts joined the many others that abutted the city's downtown streets. This is not an uncommon occurrence as many inner city malls in Southern Ontario "regressed from prestige retail venues...to devalued structures, afflicted by high vacancy rates and hosting mainly low-order activities such as bargain stores. In their present condition, many such malls have become liabilities rather than assets for their respective downtowns" (Filion and Hammond, 2008, 2).

**Figure 17:** The Former Eaton Centre (now called the Hamilton City Centre), York Blvd



What was successful in the downtown's renewal was the increase in the amount of housing as it was recognized that the city needed both higher densities and the opportunity for live-work arrangements in the core (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 1988). Consequently, in the mid-1980s, there were re-development proposals for the re-zoned Pigott and Sun Life buildings to convert the office towers into condominiums with shopping and office space on the ground floor level (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 1986). There were other mixed use proposals at that time, for example: a building to be constructed at the north-west corner of Main Street West and Caroline Street South; another at John Street South; one at the north side of York Blvd between Magill and Crooks streets; and, one at the south west corner of Bay and Main streets (Gray-Grant, 1987). A luxury condominium complex at Jackson Street West and Caroline Street South was also proposed (Gray-Grant, 1987).

By the late 1980s, it was stated: "Commerce and culture have been the stars of Hamilton's downtown renewal and they've been a sizzling success" (*The*

*Hamilton Spectator*, 1988). However, there were still underlying problems that the city had been unable to address in spite of their beautification efforts, which included: firstly, the lack of upkeep of buildings that appeared ‘tired’ and ‘neglected’ that was attributed to older retail operators and the lack of turnover in building ownership; and secondly, the “visible nucleus of transients, panhandlers and other street people” (Christmas, 1988).

### **6.3 Renewal to Revitalize the Core**

The downtown possessed both the “cultural jewels” and was the “political centre” of the city (Peters, 1994). The city had spent considerable time, money and expended much effort to improve the core. There were several active BIA organizations that represented different sections of the downtown that over their history have petitioned for beautification, parking improvements, and the reduction of city fees (i.e. patio spaces). There had been several beautification projects and Gore Park had received improvements. However, even in the 1990s, the downtown was considered to be “desolate and dangerous at night. It is an area that has seemingly been taken over by seedy bars, arcades and discount stores” (Peters, 1994). Alderman Bill McCulloch stated: “It’s devastating what’s happening to the downtown. One by one, we are losing stores” (Poling, 1994). In addition, it suffered from the inconveniences and cost of parking (Phillips, 1994). Citizens found the one-way street system and the lack of housing as additional issues of concern (Peters, 1994). The downtown core had declined in appearance and had suffered economic losses so much that “Restore the core has become the ‘90s rallying cry” (Sleightholm, 1996, 237).

In the 1990s, discussion on what direction downtown revitalization should take began to move away from its previous focus on the stimulus of retail activity. Mayor Morror stated: "I think the old retail base is not as it has been...I think we'll have to supplement it with other ways of attracting people" (Phillips, 1994). Government and citizens began to propose redevelopment by promoting the core as an ideal location for government and private institutions and education facilities (Phillips, 1994). In addition, there was a desire for more residential development. By changing the focus from obtaining new retail opportunities to the creation of a vibrant live - work community it was thought that the downtown would provide both the social and economic opportunities for the area that the city wanted and needed.

The *Central Business District Study (1992)* proposed the: "creation of a pedestrian promenade stretching from the former Toronto Hamilton & Buffalo station along a blocked-off Hughson Street, through Gore Park to King William Street, a public plaza in front of the Hunter Street terminal with traffic going in an underpass, a tree-lined corridor featuring statues, cafes, restaurants, and a new Gore fountain" (Peters, 1992). A pedestrian orientated design was preferred as it was thought that increased foot traffic would stimulate economic growth and activity in the core. The plan also called for "lower taxes in the downtown (a major factor hindering opportunity for growth according to business owners), stronger measures to prevent the demolition of older buildings, and stricter controls over signage" (Honywill, 1995).



Before the downtown could attract new development, it was thought that the city needed to “make streets attractive, brighter, and safer” (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 1994). In order to stimulate improvements in the area, citizens suggested that the city: put “flowers in medians and baskets; upgrade lighting, improve garbage collection and clean up streets, (have a) stronger police presence, lower property taxes, (and introduce) innovative parking arrangements” (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 1994). A Mayor’s Task Force on the downtown submitted a report on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 1994 that recommended the city: lower property taxes, examine free parking arrangements, construct a multi-tiered parking structure, ensure police priority is downtown, examine traffic flows to encourage commercial growth, make the courthouse entrance on King Street, make the Region find a use for the county court building at Main and John, encourage major institutions to locate in the downtown east of James Street (i.e. McMaster and Mohawk, and the Federal and Provincial governments), encourage residential complexes especially east of James, encourage the growth of ethnic communities (i.e. a Chinatown), support beautification by BIAs in spite of budget cutbacks, consider upgrading street lighting, removal of posters, ensure snow and garbage removal, clean bus shelters regularly, and support the fountain project in Gage Park (Morrow, 1994).

A 1995 forum hosted by McMaster University and a sub-committee of Hamilton’s Planning and Development Committee focused on revitalizing Hamilton’s downtown was open to citizens. The participants at the forum drafted a proposal that was later presented to the Greater Hamilton Downtown

Community Development Corporation. The revitalization proposal suggested that the city consider: dropping development fees, turning the core into a no-zone zone (that would allow flexibility with proposals that may not meet traditional zoning regulations), providing more parking on King and Main streets (“to generate shopping”), closing the southern portion of King Street between James and John streets in the summer to create a pedestrian thoroughfare, targeting specific businesses (i.e. entertainment and office centres, and an interactive museum), encouraging or forcing property owners to fix up their buildings, and demolishing derelict properties “which have no historical, cultural or heritage value—to allow for new development” (Dreschel, 1996).

A subsequent workshop, *The Downtown: A Market Place for Ideas*, was held in February 1998 that expressed similar strategies. Ideas generated included: that the city redevelop under-utilized properties, create an entertainment strategy to enrich the arts community, encourage businesses to relocate to the core, promote downtown mixed income residential development, strengthen building bylaws to improve the upkeep of buildings and beautify city streets, create linkages between natural areas and the core, convert streets to two way where possible and improve pedestrian linkages between the different amenities, establish green corridors, improve parking, and promote visits to the area by tourists (American Communities Partnership, 1998, 8- 13). The various forums that were held throughout the decade are indicative of the condition the downtown was thought to be in and the strong level of concern and desire to make improvements on the part of citizens and politicians.

### **6.3 Feasibility through Funding**

The succeeding decade saw a transition from the city's focus on streetscaping and design improvements to economic incentives. It was realized that the inner city had a large percentage of workers that came daily into the area. For instance, in 2001, "In the downtown, many stores are sitting vacant and the office vacancy rate hovers at around 20 per cent. Despite these conditions, 78% of all jobs in Hamilton are located in the lower city" (Freeman, 2001, 179). It was the downtown's vacancy rates that needed to be addressed more than undertaking more beautification projects. There were potential clients and shoppers already daily in the area—it was a case of capturing the market. As a result, the city formed a Downtown Renewal Division of its Planning and Development Department whose objective was "to foster excellence in development and to promote the rehabilitation and development of properties" as well as to provide a "single point contact" for inquiries (Marini and Goodram, 2003, 1). It has promoted economic development initiatives and has completed a downtown database that provides such information as: owner, address, occupancy status, business name and photos of the site (Marini and Goodram, 2003, 3). The division has focused on the creation of loan and grant programs (see Table 5) "to encourage the development of Downtown properties, the creation of new housing on a sustainable basis in Downtown Hamilton, and the upgrading of commercial properties" (Marini and Goodram, 2003, 3).

<b>Table 5: City of Hamilton Downtown Loan and Grant Programs</b>	
Property of Excellence awards	- recognizes individual property and business owners efforts to upkeep and beautify their buildings.
Enterprise Zone—Municipal Realty Incentive Grant Program	- provides an “economic catalyst” for developing, redeveloping, or renovating residential/commercial lands and buildings located within the Enterprise Zone (reduces tax increase effects).
Hamilton Downtown Residential Loan Program/ Hamilton Downtown Multi-Residential Property Investment Program	- provides a financial incentive (interest free loan based on 25% of the construction costs) to developers to assist with costs: to convert commercial space into apartments, construct new apartments on vacant land, or renovate existing residential units.
Commercial Property Improvement Grant Program	- provides financial assistance to improve facades and entrance features. - Up to \$15 000 for signage, lighting, architectural detailing and façade repair work. - up to \$5000 for interior work—entrance and display areas.
Open for Business program (created 1996; concluded Dec. 31, 2002)	- refunds planning application fees, building permit fees, and parkland dedications
Development charge exemption (Hamilton’s Development Charges By-law No. 99-118)	- specifies that no Downtown projects will have to pay development charges.
Downtown Hamilton Heritage Property Grant Program	-provides financial assistance (up to \$150 000) for structural/stability projects that conserve and restore heritage features.
Main Street Housing Loan and Grant Program	-assist with conversion of built commercial to residential units; renovate existing or construct new residential units on vacant land.
Hamilton Downtown Office Tenancy Assistance Program	-provides low interest loan up to \$450 000 to support eligible leasehold improvements to downtown office buildings.
Sources: (Marini and Goodram, 2003, 3-4, 6-9); (Downtown Hamilton BIA, 2011b); and (Perspectives, 2011, 22); (Hamilton Economic Development, 2010).	

An initiative to address “a deteriorating” Barton Street by a group of artists, neighbourhood residents, and government officials resulted in an artists village

being proposed for that area of the city and a task force was set up to study feasibility and propose implementation strategies (Kendrick and Moore, 1995, 104). Consequently, several new funds were developed that could be accessed for other inner city areas: a Cultural Industry Investment Fund that would provide financing to small to medium sized cultural enterprises; an Urban Trust Fund that would provide equity to purchase property for live-work space; and, Community Venture Loans that would be made available to reduce dependency on grants (Kendrick and Moore, 1995, 104). The creation of these funds and loan programs has allowed small businesses and creative enterprises to function in the city. The presence of cultural or creative industries has encouraged an artistic collective to form and has revitalized a neighbourhood that formerly was in decline.

The rehabilitation of existing structures was another focus for policy makers. Under its ERASE (Environmental Remediation and Site Enhancement) plan, the city promoted the reuse of brownfield (underproductive or abandoned) sites for development. Through ERASE, the city provided grants: up to \$10 000 for EIA studies, equal up to 80% of the increase in property tax on redeveloped land, to aid with property and development fees, and to assist with upgrades of the water and sewer lines (Pettapiece, 2001a). Another incentive program, the LEEDing the Way Community Improvement plan, encourages “sustainable building and land development practices” (Perspectives, 2011, 22). The funding of both programs has benefitted the city: under ERASE, twenty-seven sites have been remediated totaling \$260 million in construction expenditures; and, the

LEEDing program has resulted in municipal tax increases of approximately \$1 500 000 and market value assessment increases of approximately \$38 000 000 (Perspectives, 2011, 23). As a result, there have been several successful redevelopment projects, for example: Lister Block and LIUNA station (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 2001). The city's funding programs have been credited with several construction projects that have occurred in downtown Hamilton, some examples include: Canada Place on Bay Street (2002); Ferguson Station at Ferguson Avenue South and King Street East (2002); Chateau Royal with 192 residential units at 135 James Street South; and the conversion of a funeral home into eight apartments on Cannon Street (Marini and Goodram, 2003, 14-19). The grant and loan programs have encouraged developers to reuse existing properties for new uses and to develop underutilized sites (Marini and Goodram, 2003, 14-19). The economic development strategy has resulted in the infusion of economic stimulus in the form of reduced construction costs leading to new entrepreneurial endeavours.

#### **6.4 A Sustainable Future**

From the 1990s to the present, local planning policies have focused on sustainable development (comprising of social, environmental and economic components) with provincial policies supporting smart growth principles in order to ensure efficiency and good environmental stewardship (Hodge and Gordon, 2003, 57). Consequently, the most recent planning policies for Hamilton's downtown focus on the sustainability of the area. The three components of sustainability—economic, social, and environmental—are represented in the

plans that have been developed and implemented over the past decade. One of the first documents to illustrate the new principles is the *Downtown: A Market Place for Ideas* workshop report (1998). It includes the following vision statement that was written by participants:

*The Downtown Hamilton of the future will be a vibrant focus of attraction where all our diverse people can live, work and play. The future Downtown must be built on a human scale, with streetscapes offering comfort, access and safety for pedestrians. The future Downtown will combine the best of our heritage with new commercial and domestic architecture and use. The future Downtown will redirect our gaze from the urban core to the surrounding neighbourhoods, the waterfront, and the escarpment, seamlessly linking commerce, housing and recreation.*

*(City of Hamilton, 2005, 4)*

The sentiment was positive, forward looking and hopeful for the future. The citizens wanted a downtown that was vibrant, inclusive, respectful and connected. The built and natural landscapes were appreciated and were seen as desirable to retain and to have a major presence in the urban setting. It was to be an environment where people could “live, work and play” (City of Hamilton, 2005, 4). The values expressed in the vision statement would shape the planning documents for the area for the next ten years.

The *Central Area 2001 Plan* sought to have an increase in the number of downtown residents by having a variety of housing options, the promotion of public transit, and the goal to reduce energy consumption in buildings and infrastructure (Campbell, 2001). The plan proposed the expansion of open public space with a larger Gore Park and the creation of a waterfront park. It also discussed the need to invest in improvements to existing parks. There was to be a greater emphasis on the pedestrian experience by diverting “through-traffic

away from downtown”, making King Street a pedestrian route, improving streetscapes, and creating nearby parking structures (Campbell, 2001). The goal was to make downtown the “major shopping area in the region” with a strong focus on Hess Village and the commercial districts of James Street North and South (Campbell, 2001). It was significant that this plan sought to make the area the major regional shopping destination as it was in 2001 when the adjacent municipalities (Ancaster, Dundas, Flamborough, Glanbrook, and Stoney Creek) were amalgamated with the City of Hamilton thus creating a larger population to draw into the core (Freeman, 2001, 181). This meant that the downtown was to be given a stronger role in the economic and social pursuits of the larger city. Another benefit of the amalgamation was that the increased tax revenue to the city’s coffers meant that there would be more funds that could be devoted to downtown revitalization plans.

In 2002, Council approved a new downtown secondary plan, *Putting People First*, along with a ten year Capital Budget Plan (City of Hamilton, 2003, 1). It was the first time that a long range capital budget accompanied a planning policy and was significant as it provided funding strategies to enact the secondary plan’s objectives. An amended version of *Putting People First* was released in 2005, and although it is undergoing review, it is the current downtown secondary plan. The plan was structured to “build on existing strengths” though it recognizes that there are challenges for as “the Downtown’s retail prominence has declined it is still a destination for those seeking specialized experiences, products, and services” (City of Hamilton, 2005, 5). Considerable focus of the



plan is on increasing residential units as “creating a residential neighbourhood in the Downtown core has long been recognized as a key to its revitalization” (City of Hamilton, 2005, 5). There are several policy themes that are discussed in the document: “respecting design and heritage, carving out a distinct economic role, creating quality residential neighbourhoods, and, enhancing streets and public spaces” (City of Hamilton, 2005, 7).

The first theme, respecting design and heritage, discusses how the presence of historic buildings assists in forming an identity for the downtown. Instead of removing the buildings from the landscape as was done in the past, the plan now proposes that they be reused for new purposes, i.e. residential and commercial units. The alteration or construction of new buildings “must be viewed in relationship to all the buildings, streets, and public spaces around it” (City of Hamilton, 2005, 13). It recommends that new construction adopt architectural features that complement the historical buildings and are of “sustainable building design and construction practices to address energy efficiency, water conservation, waste reduction, and air quality technology” (City of Hamilton, 2005, 11).

The urban landscape will protect the following sightline views: Gore Park, the Hamilton Harbour, Niagara Escarpment, the Toronto, Hamilton and Buffalo Station, and Main Street and Ferguson Avenue (City of Hamilton, 2005, 15). There is the desire to eliminate street level parking and vacant lots, to create a sense of place through public art installations, to enhance and restore Gore Park, and to make streetscape improvements particularly around the Jackson Square

and Civic Square complexes (i.e. widened sidewalks, installations of public art, tree plantings, etc.) (City of Hamilton, 2005, 17). An interesting proposal in the plan is to examine “the feasibility of reintroducing streets...and orientating new buildings” if and when Jackson Square is renovated (City of Hamilton, 2005, 17).

The second theme, carving out a distinct economic role, realizes that the area must adjust to new economic realities. The city’s market research “indicates that there is limited potential for major office development...there is increasing demand for entertainment related commercial activities as well as specialty retailing” (City of Hamilton, 2005, 7). The city will allow live - work arrangements that are compatible with surrounding land uses, it will target any new office developments to the CBD, and it will encourage specialized retail to be situated to the street (including over time the Jackson Square complex) particularly targeting James and King Streets (City of Hamilton, 2005, 19 and 20). The cultural areas will remain unchanged and there will be targeted entertainment areas at Hess Village and King William Street.

The third theme, creating quality residential neighbourhoods, recognizes the need for an “overall balancing of commercial and residential development for a vibrant healthy core” (City of Hamilton, 2005, 25). There is the opportunity for infill, greyfield, or adaptive reuse residential developments that will provide diverse and inclusive housing options. The city is promoting mixed-use facilities for the core that will provide services for residents and visitors and will complete and complement the surrounding built landscape in both form and function.

Overall, the city seeks “to repair and complete the open grid” and “retain existing residential properties” (City of Hamilton, 2005, 25 and 26).

The fourth theme, enhancing streets and public spaces, will have the city focus on “better quality streets, the creation of new parks and the establishment of new landmarks...(all of which) demonstrate civic pride” (City of Hamilton, 2005, 7). It is recognized that attractive, safe, and efficient linkages and open space ensures good connectivity that in turn has a positive effect on investments in the area. The streets will retain the grid pattern, be landscaped, and have amenities (i.e. seating, transit shelters) (City of Hamilton, 2005, 31). The city will convert portions of James and John Streets to two-way traffic (City of Hamilton, 2005, 43). Public spaces are to be visible and accessible from private developments (City of Hamilton, 2005, 30). Open space designs will “promote comfort, safety, enjoyment, accessibility, a sense of nature and usability” that can be used for passive activities or public celebrations (City of Hamilton, 2005, 33). There will be “gateway features” installed at “key entrance points” to the Downtown (City of Hamilton, 2005, 33).

In addition to the planning documents created by the City of Hamilton there are also several provincial policies that have had an impact on municipal policies due to their implementation that will be briefly discussed. The provincial policies are designed to produce smart growth which is defined as the “limit (of) outward growth, promoting compact mixed-use development, reducing automobile dependency, preserving large amounts of open space, and creating a greater sense of community” (Hodge and Gordon, 203, 168). A key Provincial

document that has shaped Hamilton's policies is *Places to Grow (2006)*. This policy seeks "to increase densities through intensification, to encourage nodal development and mixed uses, and to co-ordinate land-use, employment, and transportation decisions" (Bourne, Britton, and Leslie, 2011, 262). There will be the management of growth through the creation of "complete communities" (where employment, residential units, and services are in close proximity) that are serviced by public transportation to reduce the level of auto-dependency (Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal, 2006, 14). Hamilton's downtown policies seek to intensify the core, provide amenities and services for residents and visitors, and offer a live-work option for citizens.

In addition to smart growth policies, the Province is also focused on improving and developing public transportation networks. The *Big Move (2008)* produced by Metrolinx is the "blueprint for a more sustainable transportation" network that will integrate municipal and regional public transportation systems in a modern and efficient manner to "ease congestion and commute times, and reduce transportation-related emissions" (Metrolinx, 2008, 1-2). In Hamilton, there is community and political pressure to increase public transit ridership that may prove to be difficult to accomplish under the existing system. The city's *Transportation Master Plan (Phase 2 Policy Papers)* strategic targets for public transit are: firstly, an increase "in transit's share of daily trips from 5% in 2001 to 12% by 2021" and, secondly, an increase "in annual transit trips per capita (city-wide) from 40 in 2001 to between 80 and 100 in 2021" (MRC and IBI, 2007, 6). It was recognized that in order to accomplish its targets mixed land use zoning

would be needed to allow for “compact transit-supportive development adjacent to designated transit corridors” and that the system would have to improve its operations and image to be competitive with the use of the private automobile (MRC and IBI, 2007, 6). To accommodate the potential ridership numbers, a light rail transit system (LRT) has been proposed and approved (in principle—final approvals have not yet occurred) by the city’s Council. The City of Hamilton’s LRT system is proposed to have five lines that will provide rapid transit linkages in the urban area—the LRT will be supplemented with regular bus service (Rapid Transit Office, 2011). The focus on smart growth and public transportation aims to manage growth, efficiently move people, and ensure economic stability, as congestion will be lessened.

The planning policies that have been implemented in Hamilton over the past decade encourage the reuse of existing buildings, place emphasis on preserving the natural landscape, utilize smart growth principles, and encourage pedestrian and public transit activities. The sustainability policies ensure that the inner city is accessible (to resources and services), adaptable (to meet changing conditions) and connected (with the natural landscape and adjacent neighbourhoods) (Alberti, 1996). As well, the economic incentives have stimulated development and façade improvements in the downtown. Hamilton’s core reflects the city’s policies objectives and is demonstrating that policy has influenced the resulting urban landscape.

In summary, since the 1970s, Hamilton’s planning policies have focused on restoring and rebuilding its core. The urban renewal process that began with

the Civic Square project was an effort to make the inner city more attractive and to avoid investment losses (Hodge and Gordon, 2003). However, its implementation was to alter how planning was undertaken in the city's future. During the 1980s, Hamilton began to use a neighbourhood development approach and encouraged public involvement early on in the planning process (Hodge and Gordon, 2003). The resulting integrated plans for its downtown considered urban design, amenities, land use, and transportation patterns in order to create "a seamless web" thus forming a livable, sustainable community (Hall, 1997, 216). Hamilton created entrepreneurial policies to attract new investment, such as "cultural and creative activities", to its downtown that were "essential to growth"-- particularly in fueling the shift from the city's de-industrialization to the new economy (Skaburskis and Moos, 2006, 239). The concepts of smart growth and sustainable development figure prominently in the most recent planning policies (Hodge and Gordon, 2003). With an examination of Hamilton's downtown planning policies we are able to understand the "organizational logic" and land use patterns of the urban landscape over time (Bourne, 2007, 129).

## 7. Art Not Steel

The slogan “art not steel” (see Figure 18) is found on the t-shirts worn by people walking in the downtown and it is printed on the aprons worn by servers at the busy Mulberry Street Coffee Shop at the corner of James Street North and Mulberry Street. The slogan seems to reflect the changes that are occurring on the city’s landscape as galleries, cafes, art studios, and public art are having a growing presence in the inner city. The integration of art with the urban lifestyle is displayed with the regularly themed events that the arts community and business improvement areas put on. In fact, many of the amenities offered to residents and visitors in Hamilton’s downtown are cultural in nature. Consequently, the slogan “art not steel” is symbolic of several assertions. It represents a changing landscape from the city’s previously heavy manufacturing land use to one where the arts and culture are active participants and are highly visible in the urban domain. It demonstrates the shift in identity that citizens have for the city—one where the present and the future social and economic activities are focused on the presence and creation of art rather than on steel. In doing so, it represents the fundamental economic shift that is occurring in Hamilton—that is, towards the creative and knowledge based sectors and not the previously dominant manufacturing and industrial based activities. As Hamilton’s Mayor Bratina has stated, “we are on the cusp of change” (Downtown Hamilton BIA, 2011a, 1). It is argued that it is the art community that is leading the changes in Hamilton as creative activities are becoming more visible on the landscape and

are having a positive impact on the appearance and economic wellbeing of the inner city.

In Hamilton, the presence of the arts community has resulted in the arts led gentrification of the core. This is a form of gentrification that is classified (Rukin, 1982) as being an “artistic mode of production” that has artists utilize “derelict manufacturing spaces...(that provides) a cultural impetus for commercial redevelopment” (Lees, Slater, and Wyly, 2008, 118). This chapter will provide evidence of the cultural and artistic pursuits that are occurring in the downtown. Through a visual interpretation of the landscape, it is evident that the area is at the nucleus of artistic endeavours in the city and that due to their presence and expansion there has been a transformation in the identity and the landscape of Hamilton’s inner city. The discussion begins with detailing how planning initiated the development of a creative core then it will examine the various arts and entertainment districts that have formed in the downtown. It will conclude with a description of how public art has been integrated into the urban landscape. The process of gentrification through art is a significant topic to discuss as it has provided an interjection of new opportunities and investment in the core but also could lead to issues of displacement and affordability.



**Figure 18:** “Art is the New Steel” Screen Art



### **7.1 A Planned Creative Core**

The downtown has been given the label as the “ground zero for much of Hamilton’s art and culture scene” (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 2011). That the area is called the focal point for the city’s cultural amenities is important as it draws attention to the presence of both public institutions (i.e. the Art Gallery of Hamilton) and the private commercial creative ventures. There are distinct clusters of creative and entertainment activities throughout the core, for instance, at James Street North and Hess Village. As the creative pursuits have increased in number, and expanded their visibility on the landscape, the core has gradually assumed an association with culture in a manner that previously did not exist. The new creative identity has brought life back to some of the struggling sections of the downtown and has offered a new method of downtown renewal that in Hamilton’s case has the appearance of being successful.

The impetus for a creative core was outlined and implemented with the Civic Square project. The planners and politicians who worked on the project envisioned an organized nucleus of cultural amenities in the inner city that would

attract residents and visitors to Hamilton's downtown (Evans, 1970; Freeman, 2001; Weaver, 1982). Thus, the "cultural makeover" began with the government led projects that interjected galleries, concert halls, and recreation and leisure space to the inner city landscape (Shearmur and Hutton, 2011, 112). Within three amenity rich, dense urban blocks, the majority of the large cultural facilities may be found integrated within the central business district and alongside the majority of the city's institutional buildings. Such a strong concentration of publicly funded amenities has provided the city with an urban identity and created a strong awareness of the geographical centroid of the cultural activities present in Hamilton.

The largest building footprints are found in the York Blvd, James Street North, King Street West, and Bay Street North block. At the corner of York Blvd and Bay Street North sits Copps Coliseum (see Figure 19)—a massive concrete structure that regularly hosts large concerts. Beside it on York Street, is the Central Library (see Figure 20)—that recently had a large glass addition constructed that in addition to providing more internal space (for computer internet access and reading lounges) has connected the activities in the library with the street. The rejuvenated library serves as a hub for community interaction—its open architectural design creates a comfortable and safe environment for users to enjoy. Adjacent to the library, at the corner of York Blvd and James Street North is the Hamilton Market. Unfortunately, as it is integrated architecturally with the library it does not have a highly visible presence on the landscape in spite of its strong downtown history. There are windows that look

down onto the market from the street and from inside the library; however, the location of the market has to be previously known in order for it to be easily identified on the landscape. On the remainder of the block is found: the Lloyd D. Jackson Square shopping complex, the City Centre Mall (the former Eaton Centre), and the Sheraton hotel.

**Figure 19:** Copps Coliseum, Bay Street North and York Blvd



**Figure 20:** Hamilton Public Library-Central Branch, York Blvd



The second block that houses a large number of cultural amenities is located to the south of the Jackson Square complex and is bordered by King Street West, MacNab Street South (where the new bus terminal is located), Main Street West, and Bay Street North. On King Street West, there is the renovated Art Gallery of Hamilton (AGH) with a sign projecting outward over the street making it easily visible on the landscape (see Figure 21). The AGH draws 150 000 visitors per year and is noted for its Group of Seven paintings and collection of contemporary art (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 2011). Its public programming extends beyond the gallery's holdings as it regularly has free film showings and presents an annual International Film Festival. The Hamilton Convention Centre

is located at the corner of King Street West and MacNab Street South. In addition, Hamilton Place, a venue that hosts concerts and other entertainment events (see Figure 22), is located at Main Street West and MacNab Street South. Amongst the buildings described, to the east of the current Board of Education building is the Irving Zucker Sculpture Court (see Figure 23).

**Figure 21:** Art Gallery of Hamilton, King Street West



**Figure 22:** Hamilton Place, Main Street West and MacNab Street South



**Figure 23:** Irving Zucker Sculpture Court, off Main Street West



**Figure 24:** Canadian Football Hall of Fame, Jackson Street East and MacNab Street South



The third block of Main Street West, MacNab Street South, Hunter Street West and Bay Street South has a few publicly owned cultural amenities as the City Hall and the Provincial Courthouse (housed in the former public library) dominate the block. The Canadian Football Hall of Fame (see Figure 24) is located at the corner of Jackson Square East and MacNab Street South. It has displays of memorabilia from the various CFL teams, houses the football trophies, and has busts of famous football players. The Whitehern Museum and Gardens (see Figure 25), located at the corner of Hunter Street West and MacNab Street South, is an interpretive historic site that was the residence of the McQuesten family.

**Figure 25:** Whitehern Museum and Gardens, Hunter Street West and MacNab Street South



The foundation for a culturally based core was due to the planning efforts associated with the Civic Square project. The publically owned amenities, depicted in Figures 19–25, serve to attract residents and private investment to the area. The presence of creative amenities is a visible indicator of the inner city change that occurs due to the implementation of planning policy. However, the continuing presence of the cultural facilities on the landscape is evidence of

the support they have received by residents and visitors to the city. The close proximity of Toronto and its cultural and entertainment facilities could have resulted in Hamilton being unable to expand and modernize cultural amenities if local fundraising had not been available. In fact, the recent renewal projects, such as the Central Public Library and the Art Gallery of Hamilton, display the civic pride the city has in maintaining and cultivating cultural amenities. The visible presence of so many publicly owned cultural amenities may not be the first image potential visitors to the city may have as its industrial landscape near major transportation routes continues to be what is identified with the city. But it is likely that as the art and entertainment districts expand and become better known to non-residents, that Hamilton will be gradually identified with culture and art and will be known for its arts culture.

## **7.2 Hamilton's Art and Entertainment Districts**

While planning policies and public funds developed the cultural nucleus in Hamilton's downtown, there has been the establishment of privately owned cultural amenities. The experience of Barton Street's renewal efforts through artistic endeavours was applied on a grass-roots level in the inner city. The "recolonization" of downtown areas by artists was to result in "innovation and restructuring" by encouraging the development of a cultural landscape and creative new economy pursuits, such as gaming design and graphic art production (Shearmur and Hutton, 2011, 112). Artists and other creative investors were attracted to the downtown, likely due to the availability of cheap rent and low land values, and they began the process of transforming the

landscape from one of empty storefronts to galleries and locally owned cafes. The movement of artists into the area has created a new vibe and produced a new urban image for the inner city. The visual representation of creativity in the core has resulted in the expression that “the influx of artists is creating a new identity as Hamilton’s Arts District is recognized across the country as a successful model of urban renewal lead by the creative class” (The Downtowner, 2011). The shift towards artistic pursuits and a cultural lifestyle has created districts that are centered on the arts and entertainment. Each of these unique districts, that will be subsequently described, offer cultural amenities and has creative enterprises that are visible on the urban fabric resulting in an artistic image for the area.

### **7.2.1 James Street North**

The art district known as James Street North begins north of York Blvd and ends south of Barton Street West. It has been called “the heart of the city’s burgeoning artist’s colony” as there is a strong presence of creative outlets and artists at work in the area (Arnold, 2011). Many of the existing historical buildings have been utilized for commercial ventures or for studio space and as there has not been a standardized façade policy implemented by the city it allows creativity to flourish in façade designs. There has also been the construction of several new buildings (i.e. the Hamilton Artists Inc facility and the AGH Design Exchange and CBC Hamilton building) that will house creative outlets on the street. This suggests that there is a willingness among investors and community

organizations to invest large sums in the district as it is now seen as a viable location where returns can be had.

In spite of the changes that have occurred, James Street North still retains elements of the ethnic and social communities that exist in this section of the downtown. There are Portuguese restaurants (see Figure 26) and stores. There is an outdoor market (see Figure 27) that borders the sidewalk selling fruit, vegetables, and flowers where local residents shop. Amongst the staidness of the Armory (see Figure 28) and Christ Church, the Anglican Cathedral (see Figure 29), there are colourful storefronts with many of the old advertisements still visible on the sides of historic buildings (see Figure 30). Informal art installations often appear in the public square at the intersection of James Street and Wilson Street—for example, one was done in the manner of loops of yarn knitted or otherwise strung through the branches of trees. There are trendy cafés (see Figure 31), restaurants (see Figure 32), an art supply shop (see Figure 33), art studios and galleries (see Figures 34 - 39), and shops (see Figures 40 - 43)—many of which sell locally created products. Nearby, the Print Studio offers workshops in printmaking, drawing, photography, and desktop publishing (see Figure 44). The recently constructed and opened Hamilton Artists Inc-- Artist Run Centre (often referred to as The Inc) presents gallery space for Hamilton's artists to display their art (see Figure 45 and 46). Opposite The Inc, at the corner of Cannon Street on what was formerly an old theatre site, a new building has been built that will house the Design Exchange—an Art Gallery of Hamilton--store and a CBC Studio (see Figure 47).



**Figure 26:** Ventura's Signature Restaurant (Authentic Portuguese food), James Street North



**Figure 27:** Fruit and Vegetable Market, James Street North



**Figure 28:** The Armory, James Street North



**Figure 29:** Christ Church Cathedral, James Street North



**Figure 30:** James Street North Streetscape, south of Mulberry Street



**Figure 31:** Mulberry Street Coffeehouse, James Street North and Mulberry Street





**Figure 32:** Acclamation Bar & Grill, James Street North at Mulberry Street



**Figure 33:** Mixed Media, James Street North at Cannon Street East



**Figure 34:** Musial Studio Gallery, James Street North



**Figure 35:** b contemporary, James Street North



**Figure 36:** The Blue Angel Gallery, James Street North



**Figure 37:** The Clay Studio, James Street North



**Figure 38:** Hammer City Records, James Street North



**Figure 39:** HIStory + HERitage, James Street North



**Figure 40:** Relish, Cannon Street East



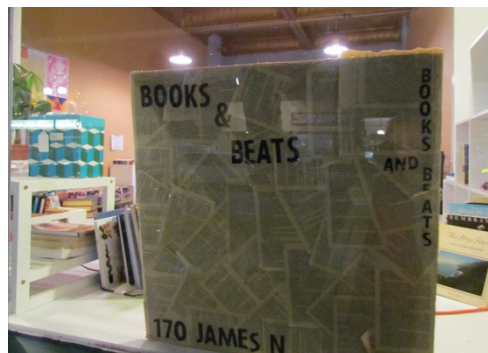
**Figure 41:** White Elephant, James Street North



**Figure 42:** The Tibetan Gallery, James Street North



**Figure 43:** Books & Beats, James Street North





**Figure 44:** The Print Studio, James Street North



**Figure 45:** Hamilton Artists Inc (The Inc), James Street North at Cannon Street West



**Figure 46:** Interior of the Hamilton Artists Inc, James Street North



**Figure 47:** Future Site of the Design Annex--an Art Gallery of Hamilton Shop and the CBC, James Street North and Cannon Street East



James Street North has developed into a vibrant creative community, as indicated by Figures 26-47, that offers different ways for residents and visitors to engage in art. The photographs illustrate the high level of interaction on the street as people utilize the public space, and gather in the cafés and art galleries. In addition to its daily offerings, the district has promotional events that have assisted in having this stretch of street being identified as a place where art can be created and found. For instance, Christ Church Cathedral is the site for the

“Makers Market” that is held weekly and is part of the Art Crawl (see Figure 48). The James North Art Crawl is held on the second Friday of the month in the evening. The Art Crawl promotes the area as an arts destination. It highlights the area’s artists and galleries as most, in conjunction with the art crawl, will host openings on those evenings. In addition, there is a Super Crawl that is held annually in September-- the popularity and success of the event is such that it was named by *The National Post* as “one of the top 100 things to do in Canada in the Fall of 2010” (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 2011).

**Figure 48:** Makers Market (held during an Art Crawl), James Street North



**Figure 49:** Openstreets Hamilton festival, James Street North



The district hosts the bi-annual Openstreets Hamilton festival that promotes healthy living and active transportation. During the festival, James Street North is closed to vehicles and residents are encouraged to bike, walk, or ride while enjoying the activities on the street. There are community and food booths, musical performances, community dance classes, and a display and demonstration of old bicycles (see Figure 49). The festivals ensure that James Street North continually draws individuals into the area for the vitality of the

district. In addition, there is also the Liuna Station Banquet and Convention Centre, housed in a former railroad station, that hosts events in the area (see Figure 50).

**Figure 50:** Liuna Station Banquet and Convention Centre, James Street North



There are visible signs of change on the James Street North streetscape as it evolves to house more artistic and creative ventures. The availability of cafes, restaurants, and galleries offers urban amenities that are valued by those employed in the new economy or the “creative class” and by those who want to have a livable city (Skaburskis and Moos, 2010). In fact, the “amenities attract people” to neighbourhoods (Clark, 2003, 132). James Street North is a locality that has cultural and entertainment opportunities available for residents to enjoy during their off-work hours (Skaburskis and Moos, 2010). James Street North has maintained its historical buildings and has repurposed them to meet the needs of the artistic district as it undergoes urban renewal.

## 7.2.2 King William Street

In contrast to the success of James Street North, King William Street-- though it has been targeted to be an entertainment and dining area in the city's *Putting People First* secondary plan-- is a street that has yet to significantly transform since the plan was completed in 2005. The plan's objective is for it to become a vibrant, art filled street. The city has recently completed new streetscaping to make it unique (accomplished through the interlocking brick paving) from adjacent streets that may stimulate further development in the area (see Figure 51).

**Figure 51:** Streetscape, King William Street



The section between James Street North and Ferguson Avenue South is being branded as the “King William Art Walk”—a project that is being undertaken by the city, the BIA, and business owners. Mauro Brunetti, Chairman of the King William Art Walk Steering Committee, states that its goal is to “enhance the streetscape on King William and help focus economic revitalization along this important street in Hamilton” (The Downtowner, 2011). Currently, the street

features light post banners (see Figure 52) that brand the street as an art walk—though there are currently few art installations. There are several “street canvas” projects on electric and traffic boxes (see Figure 53). A mural depicts a historic image of the Lister building on the side of a building near Hughson Street North (see Figure 54). As well, there is a graffiti wall (see Figure 55), that stretches from Hughson Street North to John Street North, that while it was likely not a planned installation, provides urban art to the parking lot setting. It is reported that there will shortly be an art installation in the Central Police Station forecourt (The Downtowner, 2011). In the future, there will be “proposals for bench designs as well as sculptures to be placed in key locations” (The Downtowner, 2011). There are also grants available to business owners on the street to “improve facades by incorporating art into the design” (The Downtowner, 2011). At the intersection of Ferguson Avenue North, is Theatre Aquarius (see Figure 56) that performs several plays yearly. Located on the front lawn of the Theatre is a metal sculpture (see Figure 57). In spite of few art installations currently on the street, the city is making an effort to increase public art in this zone in the future.



**Figure 52:** Branding banner, King William Street



**Figure 53:** Electric/Traffic Box Canvas, King William Street



**Figure 54:** Lister Building Mural, King William Street at Hughson Street North



**Figure 55:** Graffiti Wall, King William Street



**Figure 56:** Theatre Aquarius, King William Street at Ferguson Avenue North



**Figure 57:** Sculpture at Theatre Aquarius, King William Street at Ferguson Avenue North



Due to its central location, particularly in regards to its close proximity to the James Street North and International Village districts, King William Street has potential to create an entertainment strip with restaurants and art installations that is anchored by the existence of Theatre Aquarius. The photographs from this street (Figures 51-57) illustrate the policy-led implementation of art installations to create accessible public art and to brand the city street as an “art walk”.

### **7.2.3 International Village**

International Village is a defined district with its own BIA that extends from Main Street East to King Street East, King William Street--from Mary Street to Wellington Street South, and includes Ferguson Station. It is said that the “stretch of King Street East from the Wellington gates to about Mary Street, for example, has undergone a slow, yet obvious transformation” (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 2011). The BIA regularly holds cultural events to draw visitors to the area. For instance, on the first Friday of each month a “Night in the Village” is held that showcases musical entertainment in the area’s restaurants and includes an art crawl (between Arts Hamilton, Intolerant Gallery, and Volunteer Hamilton) (The Downtowner, 2011). As well, at Ferguson Station, during the summer months, “Music in the City” is held that promotes local musicians; and, each Saturday a Sabawoon Outdoor Art Fair occupies the space (The Downtowner, 2011). The Sabawoon Outdoor Art Fair has local musicians play in the Ferguson Station courtyard while artists have set up art booths selling goods

inside the Station (see Figure 58). The sound of music, perhaps more than the promotional banners, attracts visitors to the event.

The setting of Ferguson Station and the pedestrian promenade that continues on to Ferguson Avenue (North and South) can be utilized for cultural events. The Black Forest Inn, offering German and Austrian Cuisine, has a patio setting that is adjacent to the promenade (see Figure 59). To illustrate the area's railroad setting, there is a mural of a locomotive (see Figure 60) on the side of a building at the intersection of Ferguson Avenue North and King Street East. In the block between Ferguson Avenue North and Spring Street, there is a local jewelry designer's store (see Figure 61) and the Arts Hamilton store (see Figure 62). A fine dining restaurant, Brownies Downtown, is located within the block. On the opposite side of the street, is the main branch of Denninger's— a local food emporium landmark (see Figure 63). In addition, the area boasts several restaurants, cafes, and antique stores.



**Figure 58:** The Sabawoon Outdoor Art Fair, Ferguson Station



**Figure 59:** Ferguson Avenue, King Street East at Ferguson Avenue North



**Figure 60:** Locomotive Mural, King Street East at Ferguson Avenue North



**Figure 61:** Zoran Designs Jewelry, King Street East



**Figure 62:** Arts Hamilton, King Street East



**Figure 63:** Denninger's, King Street East



International Village offers cultural amenities through the activities that the BIA schedules to utilize Ferguson Station and to promote the community's musical and visual arts. The photographs (Figures 58-63) depict the entertainment diversity of International Village to provide social amenities along with specialized retail for residents. There is the potential for further restaurants and new culturally based shops to open on King Street East moving towards Gore Park.

#### **7.2.4 Hess Village**

Hess Village has much of its activity located on Hess Street North between Main Street West and King Street West. The Village extends outward onto George Street for a block on either side. In contrast to the other districts described so far, Hess Village features restaurants and bars. The Village has a sense of intimacy and uniqueness in the inner city due to the archways, cobblestone roads, and mature trees that form a canopy over the patios that face onto the street creating a café experience (see Figures 64 and 65). The district contributes to the vitality of Hamilton's downtown as it draws residents into the trendy quarter. The Village has a lively social atmosphere, which contributes to the cultural and entertainment setting of Hamilton's inner city.

**Figure 64:** Hess Village,  
Hess Street South



**Figure 65:** Hess Village,  
George Street



### **7.3 A Space for Public Art**

Throughout Hamilton's inner city, in its public spaces there are installations of public art. For instance, along the waterfront park near to where the HMCS Haida is docked, there are paintings created by local elementary classes on sheets of plywood that focus on the Hamilton Harbour environment (see Figure 66). As the colourful art is set against the side of an industrial warehouse, the panels enliven the industrial dominated views along the paved trail. The art also enriches the experience that users of the trail may have as it illustrates issues of the ecological system in a simple manner. In contrast, the formal public settings tend to have more monumental, civic displays of art. For instance, in Gore Park there is a monument to Queen Victoria, the Cenotaph, and a photo wrapped block of an historical scene (see Figure 67). Due to its central location, local music troupes often use Gore Park as an open-air performance space (see Figure 68). In Immigration Park, located in front of Liuna Station Banquet and Convention Centre on James Street North, there is a monument to immigrants in the city (see Figure 69). In addition to the formal



commemorative pieces, the downtown has retained the art form of historical billboards that remind visitors of the businesses that were once part of the landscape (see Figure 70). The images (Figures 66-70) of accessible public art throughout Hamilton's inner city are characteristic of a city that is encouraging the development of art and entertainment amenities.

**Figure 66:** Art along Waterfront Trail, near Catherine Street North



**Figure 67:** Historical photo used as public art, Gore Park



**Figure 68:** Performers in Gore Park



**Figure 69:** "Courage, Hope, and Dreams", Immigration Park, James Street North



**Figure 70:** Advertisement, King Street West



In summary, Hamilton’s downtown has become its cultural hotspot as it hosts a large number of private and public artistic amenities. The process of creating an entertainment and art-focused area began through planning policies. Hamilton’s publically run cultural amenities, such as the art gallery and museums, have attracted individuals to the area (Clark and Kahn, 1988). This was further enhanced by private efforts that led to the movement of artists and the willingness of creative entrepreneurs to open retail and food venues in the area that have served to revitalize the downtown. This process is not unique to Hamilton as Richard Lloyd in *Neo-Bohemia* (2005) described how artists and creative entrepreneurs led to the growth of amenities that economically and socially provided a “resurgence of old downtown” (Lloyd, 2005, 13). In fact, in many communities the “artistic mode of production” attracts further investment (Lees, Slater, and Wyly, 2008, 118). The process has resulted in the creation of a “new cultural economy” and “creative class” (Shearmur and Hutton, 2011, 112). There is concern raised with arts led gentrification as it displaces low-income residents, and later on the artists, as developers construct “higher-end forms of live-work” units (Lees, Slater, and Wyly, 2008, 260).



## **8. Creation of a Livable Core**

The process to create a livable community form is influenced by the planning policies (outlined in chapter 7) and the economic changes (outlined in chapter 5). In Hamilton, this has been further stimulated by the arts led gentrification (outlined in chapter 8) that has renewed the downtown housing stock; however, the process raises issues of displacement and affordability. A livable core represents a new phase in the inner city's development, as there is evidence of new practices being applied to what was often under-utilized or abandoned land. This chapter's discussion will begin by exploring Hamilton's rehabilitated recreation lands with focus on waterfront renewal, it will then report on the renewed residential development that is occurring in the core, and will conclude with comments on institutional retention and relocation. The movement to a livable core is important to document as it indicates that the downtown is evolving and displaying the trends associated with the new economy, such as the desire for a live-work lifestyle, that can be had within an urban setting.

In recent years, there have been improvements made to Hamilton's urban landscape that have resulted in the engagement of residents with their surroundings. The city transformed the waterfront in a manner that engages individuals to interact with the formerly industrial dominated section of their city. There have been enhancements to the streetscapes of the major downtown arteries that have refreshed the landscape. Developers have adapted commercial buildings for residential use and have constructed new residential units. The increase in inner city housing has allowed for a greater number of

citizens to live in close proximity to where they work and to participate in the cultural amenities that the core provides. The changes that have occurred have encouraged gentrification to form in the residential areas adjacent to the central business district. Hamilton's inner city is displaying evidence of a community that is undergoing change that in the process is resulting in the creation of a livable city. It is suggested that the pattern of renewal that is occurring is such that its core can become one of the known "walkable, livable, economically vibrant places" as can be found in other Canadian cities (Leinberger, 2011).

### **8.1 Rehabilitating Recreational Land**

Previously, the majority of Hamilton's waterfront was utilized for industrial purposes. The concentration of industry, and associated pollution, prevented the use of the area for recreational purposes. There has been a concentrated effort over several decades to rehabilitate the harbour ecosystem to improve environmental conditions that would allow for greater human use. The waterfront was a neglected section that was believed to hold high potential for recreation and tourism activities. In the most recent planning policy, *Putting People First*, the awareness to reorient and utilize this vital resource is outlined with plans to provide linkages to the waterfront with the downtown through urban design strategies. While there have not yet been significant linkage improvements along the main routes that join the two areas, it is apparent that the city has designated resources to improve the appearance and increase public use of this valuable natural resource.

The land west of Catherine Street North extending to Harbour Front Drive (located off Bay Street North) has been made into an extensive park system. At Catherine Street, the HMCS Haida is docked having been transformed into a naval museum (see Figure 71). The presence of the HMCS Haida offers visitors an attraction at the eastern most point of the waterfront park. A broad paved promenade that is adjacent to the water's edge begins where the HMCS Haida is docked and then wraps around several joined industrial buildings before continuing on in the green park space allowing residents to walk, ride or blade along the route (see Figure 72). The combination of industrial and recreational space in what is still a functioning harbour makes it an interesting experience. In fact, the presence of tugboats, the vista of the steel plants and their fire stacks, and the Skyway ensure that Hamilton's industrial roots are on display—that is in contrast with the view of the heavily treed residential neighbourhood on the opposite side of the harbour. At the end of the promenade, near the Harbour West Marina (see Figure 73), is the Parks Canada Discovery Centre (see Figure 74). Unfortunately, this newly constructed building has already closed due to federal budget shortfalls. The park that surrounds the Discovery Centre and the Marina, has a Williams coffee shop (see Figure 75), an amphitheatre, and open space. A paved trail links this park with the Pier 4 Park that begins at the end of Lender Drive just past the Royal Hamilton Yacht Club. Pier 4 Park offers considerable green space and further extends the waterfront recreational path system. Throughout the waterfront trail, there is a trolley system that operates allowing users to hop on and off at various intervals to visit attractions (see

Figure 76). The trend towards waterfront improvements for recreational use is illustrated (Figures 71-76) with Hamilton's creation of its waterfront park system and recreational trails that link the different park sections together.

**Figure 71:** HMCS Haida, docked at Catharine Street North



**Figure 72:** Promenade



**Figure 73:** Harbour West Marina



**Figure 74:** Parks Canada Discovery Centre



**Figure 75:** Williams Coffee Shop



**Figure 76:** Waterfront Trolley



The waterfront park provides the largest continuous open space in the downtown. It offers both passive and active recreational opportunities and has amenities that offer an education opportunity and enjoyment for both residents and visitors. The creation of the park has connected the urban landscape with its natural surroundings as was proposed in *Putting People First* (City of Hamilton, 2005).

A different form of recreational space is offered by Gore Park, located in the middle of the central business district on King Street between James and John Streets. It is a relatively small green island surrounded by a sea of traffic. Gore Park provides an oasis of manicured lawn, mature trees, monumental sculptures, and a large fountain amongst retail and office land uses. Unlike Hamilton's Waterfront Park, Gore Park offers passive recreation and is more formal in structure. While the benches in the public square near James Street get used, the rest of the park is not often utilized. In fact, the fountain area (the replacement to the original) offers white noise that assists in drowning out the surrounding sounds (see Figure 77). Thus, the noisiest and busiest section of the park is found adjacent to James Street where community information booths will locate or where musical groups perform (see Figure 78). The images of Gore Park (Figures 77 and 78) provide an example of the on-going revitalization efforts that have occurred--with the replacement of the fountain perhaps being the most significant as it restored the "sense of place" for the community.

**Figure 77:** Gore Park fountain



**Figure 78:** Public Square, Gore Park (view from James Street)



Opposite Gore Park, is a paved public square found at the entrance to Jackson Square at the intersection of James Street and King Street (see Figure 79). This is a highly traveled space and popular ‘hang-out’ spot—likely due to its location as it is at the intersection of two main streets, has several bus stops, and has much pedestrian traffic from visitors to Jackson Square and nearby business towers. Another paved public square—though with some trees—is found at the intersection of York Blvd and James Street North (see Figure 80). Adjacent to the City Hall is a large paved public square (at the front facing Main Street West) that is used for public events (see Figure 81). As well, along the Bay Street South stretch of the City Hall property, there is a small park with mature trees and summer plantings (see Figure 82). There are other examples of similar public squares around other institutional buildings, such as the Federal building, Board of Education office, and the McMaster Downtown Campus. However, in front of Liuna Station, on James Street North (south of Strachan Street West), a formal garden has been planted in Immigration Square (see Figures 83 and 84).



The variety in the size and type of Hamilton's public squares and open space that contribute to livability in its inner city are illustrated in Figures 77-86.

**Figure 79:** Public Square: King and James Streets



**Figure 80:** Public Square: York Blvd and James Street North



**Figure 81:** Public Square: Main Street West



**Figure 82:** City Hall Grounds, Bay Street South



**Figure 83:** Immigration Square Garden, James Street North



**Figure 84:** Immigration Square Garden, James Street North



The inner city provides little opportunity for active recreation; however, there are small parkettes near residential areas (see Figure 85). The area's largest sports field complex, Eastwood Park, is located off Mary Street and Burlington Street East. It has an arena, baseball diamonds, playground equipment, and sport fields (see Figure 86). Other recreational space is found adjacent to schools in the area.

**Figure 85:** Beasley Park,  
Mary Street and Wilson Street



**Figure 86:** Eastwood Park,  
Mary Street and Burlington Street East



The rejuvenation of Hamilton's recreational lands in the inner city has assisted in creating a more lively and active community. With the exception of its waterfront park, there is limited open space available for public use in the downtown.

## **8.2 Renewed Residential Development**

Hamilton's downtown has long had a diverse range of housing options available to residents. However, as the inner city has made gains in amenities and in attractiveness, there are new opportunities for residential developments being presented to residents. The strengthening of Hamilton's economy, the



reliability of employment in such sectors as health care and education (two of Hamilton's strongholds), and the availability of relatively cheap land have made Hamilton's downtown a desirable area for developers. The tie of residential development to the economy and political policies is evident in the downtown landscape as it illustrates several periods of development: the industrial workers homes of the late 1800s-early 1900s, the modern apartment buildings of the 1960s and 1970s, and the current redevelopment period. In fact, the post-industrial phase has resulted in the residential use of sites that are no longer required for economic production (Hutton, 2004a). Hamilton's downtown is well positioned to be a place where residential units can be constructed as it has the current GO Station (with another one proposed to be constructed on James Street North), is the public transportation hub of the city, has a high amount of institutional and professional employment land, and has a growing quantity and quality of cultural amenities to offer residents. With the enhancement of more amenities there is gentrification that has occurred—a process that is typical in communities that have transitioned to the new economy (Ley and Dobson, 2008). Consequently, the downtown that was once considered to be Hamilton's "worse part and rough" now has a desirable "cultural vibe" and is becoming a more popular and acceptable place to live (Hughes, 2011). This transformative process is what is driving the expansion of residential units in downtown Hamilton.

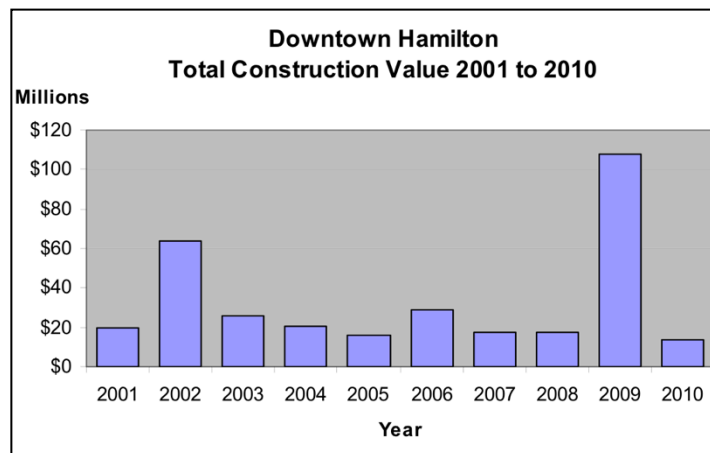
On first glance, the downtown's residential land use appears to be dominated by tall, modern apartment buildings constructed during the 1960s and

1970s—many fill entire city blocks (see Figures 87 and 88). However, there have been several multiple story residential rental projects that have been constructed in the past twenty years. On Hess Street South, there is a newer apartment building (see Figure 89). On King Street East, beside Denninger’s—a popular food emporium—a multiple use building, King’s Terrace, was constructed (see Figure 90). Nearby, at the corner of King William Street and Walnut Street North, is City Place (see Figure 91). The construction of new buildings is increasing the number of residential units and provides evidence that there is a market for housing in the core. However, the images (Figures 87-91) depict Hamilton’s traditional dependency on high-rise apartment buildings rather than the construction of high-rise condominium buildings in its urban core.

It is important to examine the amount of construction in downtown Hamilton, in particular, its ratio of non-residential to residential construction. In 2010, a total of 119 building permits representing over \$13.5 million in construction, were issued (Waterfield, 2011, 2). The construction value in the downtown has been consistent between 2001 and 2010 (see Table 6) with two years of increased growth: in 2002 and 2009. It is important to note that the high value in 2009 was due to the “public investment to rehabilitate: City Hall, Lister Block, Hamilton Farmer’s Market and the Public Library, the construction of MacNab Street Transit Terminal and Dr. J. Edgar Davey Public School and community centre” (Waterfield, 2011, 2). Such public investments have “increased overall livability and sustainable use of compact inner-city areas” (Haase, Kabisch, Steinfuhrer, Bouzarovski, Hall and Ogden, 2010, 447).

However, in spite of a high amount of construction in the downtown, the new residential units have not yet reached the targeted goal of 150 units per year (Waterfield, 2011,6). In 2010, the “ratio of non-residential to residential construction was 74:26—the non-residential permits accounted for \$10 million of the total construction value” (Waterfield, 2011, 3). There was a “balance (\$3.5 million) in residential permits (that were) issued primarily for alterations and renovations” (Waterfield, 2011, 3). In spite of what appears to be low growth, there has been an increase since 2001 of “1200 residents” in the central business district area (Waterfield, 2011, 4).

**Table 6:** Downtown Hamilton Total Construction Values, 2001-2010



(Waterfield, 2011, 2)

**Figure 87:** Apartments on Bay Street South  
(note: Bank of Montreal building on right)



**Figure 88:** First Place, Wellington Street South and King Street East



**Figure 89:** Apartment Complex, Hess Street South



**Figure 90:** King's Terrace, King Street East



**Figure 91:** City Place, King William Street and Walnut Street North



During the same period as the construction of new high-rise residential units, there was the conversion of former office towers and commercial buildings into residential units. The adaptive reuse of historic buildings ensures that Hamilton's commercial and architectural history is maintained while meeting the growing demand for inner city housing. In fact, a trend in urban renewal plans is to integrate adaptive re-use into policies as it "leads to its (the inner city's) rebirth" (Mercier, 2003, 88). The characteristic to revitalize inner city residential stock through the adaptation of former institutional, commerce, and industrial buildings is illustrated in Figures 92-95. The Pigott building (see Figure 92), on James Street South, is an excellent example of an adapted use facility that has maintained its exterior architectural details as it transitioned from commercial to residential use. The former Hamilton Spectator building, on King William Street, has been transformed into the Film Work Lofts (see Figure 93). There are plans to soon re-purpose the empty Royal Connaught hotel, located on King Street East, into condominiums (see Figure 94). On Murray Street, the former McIlwraith School is currently "being transformed into 36 condo units dubbed the Whitton Lofts" (see Figure 95) (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 2011). The lofts will retain the historical façade of the school with several additional modern stories added to the site. In addition, outside of the study area adjacent to the CBD, another century old school on Stinson Street is being converted into lofts (Hughes, 2011). As well, there are plans for a vacant office building on Wellington Street North to be adopted into 10 new condo units (Arnold, 2011). The conversion of historical buildings in the downtown not only will increase the

amount of residents living downtown, it will also increase its liveliness and livability. In addition, the increase in residential units represents the existence of a new economy as participants have a preference for “loft living” and the “live-work lifestyles (found) within the landscapes of the city core” (Shearmur and Hutton, 2011, 113).

**Figure 92:** The Pigott Building, James Street South



**Figure 93:** Film Work Lofts, King William Street



**Figure 94:** Royal Connaught Hotel, King Street East



**Figure 95:** The Whitton Lofts, Murray Street



While the older high-rise residential units may dominate the skyline of the downtown, outside of the central business district one to two story dwellings

dominate (see Figure 96). The brick homes are set close to the road and on narrow lots. The downtown streets feature both single detached units (see Figures 97 and 98) and townhouses (see Figures 99 and 100)—that would have housed Hamilton’s industrial workers. The majority of the housing stock comes from pre-World War II. During the 1960s-1970s, there was the construction of townhouses on James Street (see Figure 101). More recently, there has been the construction of single dwelling homes on Hess Street North near Windsor Street (see Figure 102). Hamilton’s inner city displays more low-rise housing stock than new high-rise built structures (evident in Figures 97-102) suggesting that there is not yet significant redevelopment pressure.

While there is little evidence of the recent construction of single dwelling or townhouse units in downtown Hamilton, there are changes being made to the existing structures. For instance, developers are buying large older homes and turning them into multi-unit apartment buildings (Hughes, 2011). Other homeowners are undergoing restoration projects that offer evidence of the growing process of gentrification that is happening in Hamilton’s inner city. There is now a process of co-gentrification underway that has “higher-order services and their professional employees... co-locating in central districts around the traditional core” that results in the adaption of “older industrial buildings and workers’ houses” (Shearmur and Hutton, 2011, 114). The gentrified homes featuring façade improvements are often found adjacent to each other and illustrate that the area is changing in contrast to its surroundings (see Figures 103 – 107). The gentrified areas that display façade improvements offer insight



as to what Hamilton's downtown can resemble if more people who are financially able and willing decide to invest in the community. However, there is concern that professionals who have a growing desire for urban living will create "a pool of gentrifiers who can out compete the poor for space" (Walks, 2001, 409).

**Figure 96:** Traditional and Modern Skyline, Wilson Street near Cathcart Street



**Figure 97:** Single Detached House, Murray Street East near Hughson Street North



**Figure 98:** Single Detached House, Oliver Street near Wentworth Street North



**Figure 99:** Semi-Detached Homes, Wellington Street North near Wilson Street





**Figure 100:** Semi-Detached Homes  
Wentworth Street North near Burlington Street  
East



**Figure 101:** Semi-Detached Homes,  
James Street North near Macaulay Street East



**Figure 102:** Single Dwelling Homes,  
Hess Street North near Windsor Street



**Figure 103:** Semi-Detached Homes,  
MacNab Street North near Murray Street



**Figure 104:** Semi-Detached Homes  
Wilson Street and Ferguson Avenue North



**Figure 105:** Semi-Detached Homes  
Spring Street at Jackson Street East



**Figure 106:** Semi-Detached Homes  
Jackson Street East near Ferguson Avenue South



**Figure 107:** Semi-Detached Homes  
Hess Street North near Mill Street



In addition to the existing residential developments, there are many projects that are soon to begin construction as evident in the photographs by the presence of fencing and signage for projects that are characteristic of residential revitalization that are mixed use condominium designs (Figures 108-111). There is construction scaffolding at the corner of Main Street and John Street (see Figure 108) that will have a former gas station site developed with condominiums, office suites, and a hotel (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 2011). Adjacent to Hess Village at the intersection of George Street and Caroline Street South, on what was a parking lot, a developer has begun erecting a condominium tower (see Figure 109) (Hughes, 2011). The former Federal Building on Main Street West (see Figure 110) was recently demolished for a hotel, restaurants, and condominium residential units to be built on the site (Hughes, 2011). On the site of a former gas station, at Queen Street South and Main Street West, (see Figure 111) there are plans for a mixed-use building (Hughes, 2011). For an example of the potential cost and the targeted demography of buyers, an advertisement for two condominium towers, called



City Square, can be examined that are being built two blocks south of the study area. They will have auto share and bike share programs and feature geothermal heating. The units are targeted to urbanites—units start at 640 square feet and are priced from \$221 990 (New Horizon Development Group Inc, March 2012). All of the proposed projects indicate the willingness on the part of investors to develop underutilized land in Hamilton and reflect the residential development investment that is occurring in the downtown region.

**Figure 108:** Construction Scaffolding, Main Street East and John Street South



**Figure 109:** Construction in Progress, George Street and Caroline Street South



**Figure 110:** Tearing Down the Federal Building, Main Street West



**Figure 111:** Former Gas Station Site, Queen Street South and Main Street West



The presence of gentrified housing units, the adaptation of historical commercial buildings for residential use, and the construction projects underway illustrate that there is a revival in having residences in Hamilton's downtown. While the process may be guided by Smart Growth principles and the city's policies for residential density in its core, the ventures for new residential units would not occur in an area that is, or is perceived to be, in decline as there would not be a market for new housing. As Hamilton's urban core has visible signs of renewal for its existing structures, and has construction plans for new residential units, it can be concluded that investors are willing to interject money into the area and that there are purchasers for the projects. The increase in the number of units and inhabitants presents new opportunities for the area to further integrate residential units with commercial uses. The integration of land uses will allow residents to pursue a urban lifestyle that will in turn further create a livable community where housing, amenities, and employment are intertwined in the landscape. The inner city will be an "appealing place to live for a large segment of the population sensitive to their urban amenities" (Bunting and Filion, 2006, 34).

### **8.3 Institutional Retention and Relocation**

The presence of institutional facilities emphasizes the continuing role the downtown plays in the government and enrichment of the city's citizens. The early development focus of Hamilton as a regional centre resulted in it having institutional buildings from all three levels of government. However, the amalgamation of surrounding communities to the City of Hamilton (2001) has

intensified the centre of government operations in the downtown. It is important to note that the downtown does face threats to retain institutional facilities, as there is the continual draw of the suburbs. For instance, there currently is a debate over the potential relocation of the Board of Education to new facilities by Lime Ridge Mall. However, the site on which it sits (at the corner of Main and Bay streets), would then house McMaster's health campus—"4000 students and 450 new workers to the core, as well as 30 new doctors-in-training...(the) Department of Family Medicine and family residency training program would be located there...(and) would include a family health clinic that would see 54,000 patient visits each year" (Perspectives, 2011, 7).

It was the Civic Square project that resulted in and influenced the construction of modern institutional facilities on the urban landscape: a new City Hall, new Provincial courthouses, a new library, and the Board of Education building (see Figure 112). While some of the older institutional buildings were torn down in the modernization process, others have transitioned to new institutional purposes. For instance, the Toronto, Hamilton, and Buffalo railroad station on Hunter Street is now a terminal for the Hamilton GO station (see Figure 113). The former public library on Main Street West is now a provincial court building (see Figure 114). The former Post Office at the corner of Main and John Streets is now a courthouse (see Figure 115) (Hughes, 2011). In addition, the former provincial courthouse on Main Street West at Hughson Street is now home to the downtown campus for McMaster University (see Figure 116). This in turn has led to apartment residences being targeted to students. As so many

of the original institutional buildings have been retained even though they have been given a new purpose (since the 1960s), the only recent institutional building to be constructed is the new federal government building on Bay Street (see Figure 117). The photographs (Figures 112-117) provide evidence of the continuing centralization of government facilities and indicate that there has been the introduction of post secondary institutions on the inner city landscape.

**Figure 112:** Board of Education, Main Street South and Bay Street North



**Figure 113:** GO Station, Hunter Street East



**Figure 114:** Provincial Court House, Main Street West



**Figure 115:** Courthouse, Main Street West and John Street South



**Figure 116:** Downtown McMaster Campus, Main Street West and Hughson Street South



**Figure 117:** New Federal Government Building, Bay Street North



Consistent with the health focus of Hamilton's economy, there are many health and social facilities present. On Main Street, there is the Hamilton Endoscopy Centre. The Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Services (CSMLS) building is located at 33 Wellington Street North (see Figure 118). On Wilson Street, there is the Wilson Medical Centre and Beasley Community Centre (see Figure 119). The Immigrant Women Centre (IWC) (see Figure 120) and the Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre are located on Rebecca Street (see Figure 121). The Hamilton Health Sciences foundation is located on Wellington Street North. The downtown also contains branches of the YMCA (see Figure 122) and YWCA. The visibility of many health and social agencies (Figures 118- 122) in the downtown reflects the availability of these services for the city's residents-- many offer programs for low-income residents. While the city's health research facilities continue to be largely located on the main campus of McMaster, in the future, with the construction of the McMaster public health



centre and research facility in the core, there may be further opportunities for additional health research projects to cluster in the core (Perspectives, 2011, 3).

**Figure 118:** Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Services, Wellington Street North



**Figure 119:** Wilson Medical Centre and Beasley Community Centre, Wilson Street



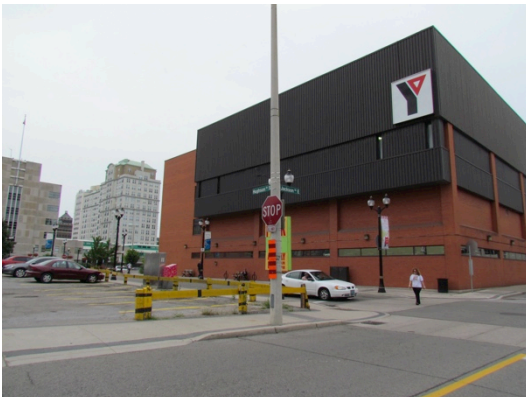
**Figure 120:** Immigrant Women Centre, Rebecca Street



**Figure 121:** Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre, Rebecca Street



**Figure 122:** YMCA, Jackson Street East and Hughson Street South





Hamilton's downtown has been able to retain a significant institutional presence on its landscape. In the recent decade, there has been the relocation of a McMaster University campus. The presence of education and research facilities in the inner city provides "new economic opportunities and cultural ethos to its residents" (Singh and Allen, 2006, 66). The ability of Hamilton's institutions to reuse existing buildings for new purposes—whether it is a courthouse or an academic institution—is impressive as it ensures that the urban landscape retains publicly significant buildings, as well, it is a sustainable practice. It illustrates that the inner city continues to be a place where government and public agencies locate in order to best meet the needs of the populace. This is important as it maintains the downtown as the centre of operations for the city and its people and ensures that there are people working and interacting daily in the core who can contribute to the area's economic and social wellbeing.

In summary, through making improvements to its open spaces, encouraging adaptive reuse of commercial buildings for residential use, approving new residential developments, and retaining and expanding public and private institutions, the city has encouraged a livable community to form in its downtown. While the city's plans are designed to have this result, the onus to implement many of the policies rests in the private sector. The transition of Hamilton's downtown has encouraged the private sector to invest in this area; it also has encouraged citizens to utilize public spaces, and to relocate for urban lifestyle housing options. This reflects the "new desire (of residents) to live in the central city" to be close to work and to have a "cosmopolitan lifestyle" (Sinclair-

Puchtinger, 1991, 17). In fact, the reuse of Hamilton's heritage buildings offers the "marketing of urban culture" that will encourage further revitalization (Mercier, 2003, 73). The process of creating a livable downtown has been steady although it has been in the recent two decades that there is evidence of new investments being made in the core. The presence of new and renovated amenities in Hamilton, such as "sports venues, revitalized waterfronts, urban farmers markets and marinas" are attractive to "knowledge workers and the creative class"—these amenities will encourage further development (Skaburskis and Moos, 2006, 239). It is through the rehabilitation of its recreational land, renewed residential development, and institutional retention and relocation that there has been an increase in the livability of Hamilton's inner city.

## 9. Downtown New Economic Opportunities

As a result of policy implementation, on the landscape there appears to have been a change in the type of economic activities that are occurring in downtown Hamilton. The inner city is displaying new commercial activity that is breathing new life into the older commercial region. There is a transition away from empty storefronts and decaying facades into new gallery spaces, restaurants, and commercial pursuits. In addition to retail and food establishments, there is the presence of professional services on the landscape. The large, multi-storied glass towers and stretches of refurbished Victorian townhouses offer office space for the new economy of Hamilton to function and thrive in. As Tyler Macleod, chair of the Hamilton Economic Summit Challenge held in May 2011 stated: “We have started the already recognized transition to a new economy, but need to see continued concentration of strategic investment. Our lower city is vibrant, profitable and home to a lot of creative people. It is ripe for investment; we all have to focus on these aspects” (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 2011).

Hamilton has transitioned to participate in the new economy, which is largely due to the decline of manufacturing and the growth in education and research facilities in the city. This process has resulted in new opportunities being presented to the city’s downtown as the existing built form can be utilized to meet the needs of firms that are relocating to the area. This chapter will outline the new economic activity occurring in the inner city and recognize the lingering brownfields. The discussion will start by exploring the economic

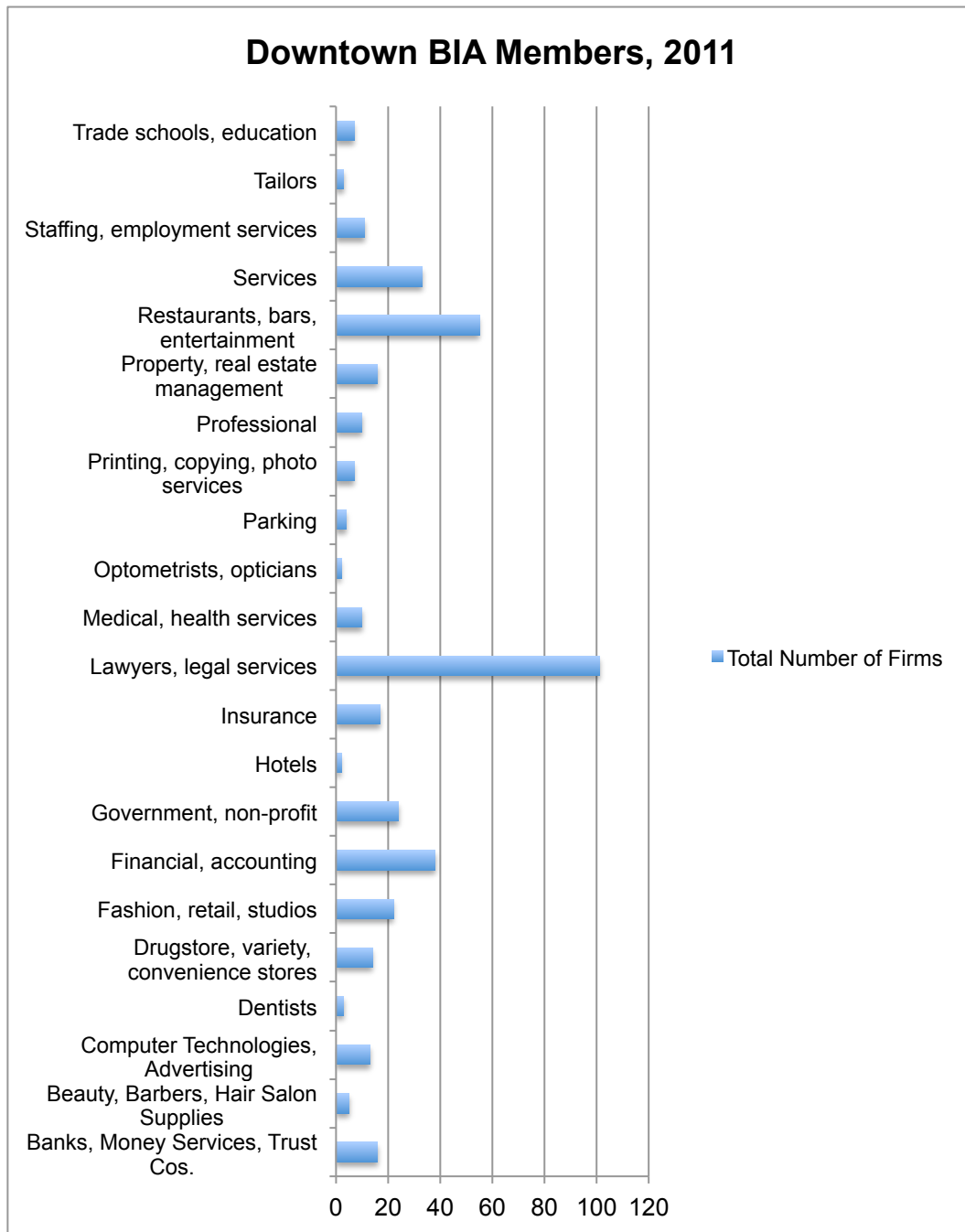
diversity that exists in the core, it will then outline the renewed investment that is transpiring in the area before commenting on the challenges that remain with the existence of brownfield in the core. It is important to detail the current economic pursuits that are present on the landscape as they indicate that a transition to post-Fordism and the new economy is underway in Hamilton's downtown as there are many professionals and creative entrepreneurs operating in the core.

### **9.1 Economic Diversity in Core**

As previously discussed, the core traditionally was the centre of commercial and light manufacturing activity in the city. While the manufacturing firms have relocated to the suburbs or industrial parks, there remains commercial activity in the inner city. Throughout the transition period as Hamilton has moved towards embracing the new economy, there has been a growing diversity displayed in the type of economic activities that occur in the central business district. This is due to the availability of empty or underutilized buildings that offer low rent and the opportunity to create flexible spaces. The city's economic loan and grant programs (see Table 5) have encouraged the re-location and retention of businesses in its inner city. The City's Economic Development Director, Neil Everson, has stated: "We are trying to diversify the economy and that is starting to pay dividends" (Arnold, 2011). However, it is important to note that in other cities, such as Vancouver, who have actively pursued in their policies new economic activities and the increase of residential units over retaining manufacturing in the core, it has resulted in the further de-industrialization of the area as remaining manufacturers leave the inner city for cheaper locations at the

periphery (Hutton, 2004a). The core's revitalization is a continual process but much headway has been made due to the area's varying economic activities and functions. The number of galleries, studios, restaurants and other commercial venues attract individuals to the core where public servants, consultants and other professionals are present in their daily operations. The economic success of Hamilton's downtown is such that it "houses a workforce of 23 000 people, about 71 per cent of them holding well paid, full-time jobs" (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 2011). In fact, the core has seen an expansion in employment numbers as between "2001 and 2010 more than 1500 jobs have been added...the vast majority in the private sector" (Perspectives, 2011,19). The chart of membership classes in the Hamilton Downtown BIA from 2011 (see Table 7) is not exhaustive but is likely indicative of the quantity and type of firms that exist in the core. From the list, it is evident that there are a high number of professionals that work in the inner city: lawyers, accountants, government and non-profit workers, and insurance brokerage workers. The large number of restaurants and retail members indicate that there is a strong commercial presence in the downtown. Together, the professional, computer technologies and advertising, services, trade schools and education members represent the growing presence of new economy activities in Hamilton's inner city. In fact, in the core, the "creative industries employ more people than education and manufacturing combined" (Perspectives, 2011, 19). There is a draw to locate in the downtown due to availability of public transit, easy collaboration with clients and other firms, and quick access to resources (Filion and Rutherford, 2003).

**Table 7: Classification of Hamilton Downtown BIA Membership, 2011**



(Downtown Hamilton BIA, 2011)

Traditionally, much of Hamilton's commerce and professional workforce has been located in office towers. While there is the movement toward repurposing older skyscrapers for residential uses, the bulk of Hamilton's office towers remain dedicated to employment purposes. Hamilton's landscape has many modern skyscrapers such as Commerce Place (see Figure 123) and the Standard Life Centre (see Figure 124). There has also been the restoration of older office buildings to meet the needs of modern knowledge and service sectors (see Figures 125 and 126). For instance, the Lister building has recently undergone a restoration of its exterior and updating of its interior (see Figure 125). The Right House building at one time housed a popular local department store that since its closing has been transformed into individual office units above a Tim Hortons outlet (see Figure 126). Many professional offices have set up in former residential units (see Figure 127); however, there has been the recent construction of midrise commercial buildings (see Figure 128). Hamilton's inner city continues to support many firms as the economy has transitioned and is beginning to attract more amenities and new residents to the core.

**Figure 123:** Commerce Place,  
James Street South and King Street West



**Figure 124:** Standard Life Centre,  
Bay Street North and King Street West



**Figure 125:** Lister Building,  
James Street North and King William Street



**Figure 126:** The Right House,  
King Street East and Hughson Street North



**Figure 127:** Duplex Commercial building,  
Hunter Street East



**Figure 128:** Mid-rise Commercial building,  
Hunter Street East



## 9.2 Renewed Investment in Core

The economic transition in Hamilton has encouraged economic investment in the inner city. The new economy participants benefit from the “social density” and the “mixture of human, social, and cultural capital” that exists in Hamilton (Shearmur and Hutton, 2011,113). At the Hamilton Economic Summit held in May 2011, it was announced that six companies would be moving into downtown Hamilton— an investment of more than \$4.5 million to the core (Arnold, 2011). Among the group are two animation studios that are relocating to



the city, taking advantage of a provincial tax credit “(that was) designed to lure animation and gaming studios out of Toronto” (Arnold, 2011). One studio, Pipeline, is locating in two locations—near Hess Village and on Main Street West. The other, Chuck Gammage Animation Inc, is locating in a new building recently constructed at the corner of James Street North and Cannon Street. In addition, there is going to be the renovation of a derelict bar into a five-story office building “featuring a rooftop lounge, private fitness centre and bicycle parking” (Arnold, 2011). A unit of a national daycare chain (Kids and Co) will soon open on Main Street West, and Southern Ontario College (which caters to foreign students) is going to relocate to Rebecca Street (Arnold, 2011). The projects are a tremendous boost for a city that in the early 1980s was dealt a large economic blow.

The level of confidence in the city and the potential for economic success in the downtown is such that Amed Dirani, a video storeowner and developer, states: “Anyone who underestimates Hamilton is losing a real opportunity. We don’t have any problem building and selling so I don’t understand why there isn’t more of it going on” (Arnold, 2011). In fact, it is argued that the designation of the downtown as a heritage district might aid in further economic recovery— as it would “create an economic environment conducive to further attract businesses in the knowledge-based and creative sectors. Fundamentally, this is about establishing a cycle of wealth generation that begins with the recognition of the value of built heritage and then proceeding to harness that value rather than eliminate it” (Shaker, 2011b). Hamilton’s built structures can be adapted to meet

the needs of the new economy activities. The inner city offers several locations where new construction can occur; however, the trend in Hamilton appears to be towards utilizing existing housing units and office towers for professional and consulting offices.

### **9.3 The Brownfield Challenge**

Although there is evidence of economic opportunities being realized in downtown Hamilton, the existence of brownfields in the core, largely in the form of parking lots and vacant fields, indicates that there is not yet a demand for new office developments. Immediately behind King Street West on the western portions of King William and Rebecca streets, there are both vacant grass areas and parking lots. For instance, on Rebecca Street, there is the city's former bus terminal that was abandoned when a new terminal was constructed on MacNab Street South (between Main and King Streets) (see Figure 129). An empty field lies across from the terminal (see Figure 130). On King William Street, west of John Street, there is a long stretch of parking lots (see Figure 131). The noticeable lack of buildings on this street for several blocks forms a ribbon of under-utilized land that is adjacent to well travelled streets (see Figure 132). In fact, the King William Street parking lots are bordered on one side by a solid wall that is formed by the backs of the King Street retail buildings--creating a strong physical barrier between the streets. The presence of distinct zones, or even individual buildings, where investment has occurred displays areas of economic growth and prosperity that indicates the willingness of owners and/or tenants to invest in their properties that in turn attract and retain business. Unfortunately, in

contrast, the vacant lots (see Figure 133) or vacant storefronts (see Figure 134) do not contribute to the creation of a vibrant core though they do provide parking facilities. They indicate that there is still rehabilitation work to be done in Hamilton's downtown to encourage further economic development. Hamilton's downtown has made an economic transition and has seen vibrant changes being made to its landscape that both attract residents and entrepreneurs. It is not to be expected that rapid change would occur resulting in the immediate elimination of all the brownfields in spite of the ERASE program; however, the recent construction boom and renewal of existing buildings indicates that the downtown is evolving from its past condition.

**Figure 129:** Former City Bus Terminal, Rebecca Street



**Figure 130:** Fenced Vacant Lot, Rebecca Street



**Figure 131:** Parking Lot, King William Street (view towards John Street)



**Figure 132:** Parking Lot Stretch, King William Street (view towards Wellington Street North)



**Figure 133:** Vacant Field  
Queen Street North and Napier Street



**Figure 134:** Empty Storefronts,  
James Street North



In summary, Hamilton’s economy has shifted to occupations of the new economy. The new economic pursuits are “significant agents of urban change” as production returns to the inner city resulting in the “regeneration of local communities” (Hutton, 2004b, 89). The existing built structures are able to be adapted to meet the needs of smaller creative, professional, or consulting firms. There has been limited construction of new commercial structures—in fact, the bulk of the new units has been gained through mixed-use developments. Downtown Hamilton is enjoying a revival with the relocation of firms to the area and is able to support the new start-ups that open in its districts. The inner city is able to attract and retain new economic activities due to the presence of cultural and recreational amenities and institutions (Hutton, 2004b, 93). In spite of the positive transition that is occurring on its landscape and its economy, it is important to note that there are still areas of blight in the inner city. However, there is the opportunity to redevelop and reuse the “abundant inventory of vacant industrial land and buildings” caused by the de-industrialization process (Filion

and Rutherford, 2000, 372). It is expected that as the downtown continues the revitalization process that there will be increased pressure and desire to develop what is now underutilized land.

## 10. Conclusion

From the historical, visual, and policy analysis that was conducted, it is evident that there is a relationship between economic change and urban form in Hamilton's inner city landscape. While there have been several economic stages that have occurred during Hamilton's development, the "creative destruction" process that resulted from the decline of manufacturing and the transition to the new economy has rapidly altered the land use demands required by economic practices in the city (Schumpeter, 2011). There is concern that the creative destruction process, combined with economic and planning policies that support the growth of new economy activities, will result in the removal of the remaining manufacturing facilities out of the inner city (Ley and Dobson, 2008). In addition, there is the risk that as downtown Hamilton undergoes the various stages of gentrification (Clay, 1979) the area could become unaffordable for the current arts-culture residents and entrepreneurs, and the smaller new-economy firms (Lees, Slater, and Wyly, 2008; Lloyd, 2005). These concerns should be at the forefront of policy maker's attention in the creation of future economic and planning policies for the city.

This chapter will provide concluding comments based on the historical analysis and visual diagnosis that historic and current economic transitions are visible in Hamilton's inner city landscape and that planning policies have had an influence on the emerging urban built form. There will be discussion on how the urban form displays the characteristics of socio-economic change, and the role economic and planning policies have had on Hamilton's downtown throughout its

history. The importance for planners is to develop resilient policies that will be able to respond to changing socio-economic conditions driven by the shift to the new economy. This thesis provides evidence of the changes occurring to Hamilton's built form due to economic transitions and planning policies. It indicates that policies need to ensure that downtowns remain affordable and conducive to both Fordist and Post-Fordist economic activity. There will be concluding comments on the research process and the contribution and opportunities for further research in the field.

### **10.1 Form Displays Visible Evidence of Socio-Economic Change**

Hamilton's urban form developed to meet the needs of its social and economic demands. The nucleus of the city has always been its traditional downtown area as it has contained the majority of its political and institutional activities even during periods of economic decline. In addition, it has been an area that serves as a visible indicator of the socio-economic changes that are being experienced by the greater community. Hamilton's contemporary inner city displays many of the expected urban physical manifestations (see Table 8). However, there are several exemptions in its transformation to becoming a post-industrial city—most notably in the application of sustainable policies, promotion of multi-modal transportation, and urban form reconstruction. In contrast, Hamilton has a considerable amount of arts and entertainment amenities, it has improved recreational and retained institutional uses, and it has begun to experience residential revitalization and show evidence of having a post-Fordist economy.

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Expected Urban Physical Manifestation</b>	<b>Visible in Inner City Hamilton</b>
Arts and Entertainment Amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Galleries and museums</li> <li>- "Café" experience</li> <li>- Accessible public art and street entertainment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Art Gallery of Hamilton</li> <li>-Football Hall of Fame and Whitehern museum</li> <li>-Private art galleries and shops.</li> <li>-New location for Hamilton Artists Inc.</li> <li>-Restaurants and bars—many with outside patios in Hess Village.</li> <li>-Public art in parks and in front of institutions. Largest collection is in the Irving Zucker Sculpture Court.</li> <li>-Regular art themed walks and festivals in James Street North and International Village.</li> </ul>
Recreational Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Waterfront improvements</li> <li>- Recreational trails &amp; linkages</li> <li>- Public squares and open spaces renovated or newly designed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Pier 4 and Waterfront park are indicative of waterfront improvements.</li> <li>-Recreational trail and promenade in waterfront park system.</li> <li>-However, there are no cycling lanes or recreational trails that provide linkages to the inner city.</li> <li>-Gore Park has received numerous renovations.</li> <li>-Other public squares and open spaces have annual plantings and updates done as needed.</li> <li>-The inner city is lacking large or numerous recreational spaces.</li> </ul>
Residential Revitalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mixed use, high rise condominiums</li> <li>- Adaptation of former institutional and industrial buildings into lofts or studios</li> <li>- Gentrification in working class neighbourhoods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-High rises are mainly rental units.</li> <li>-Projects under construction are mixed use condominiums.</li> <li>-There has been the adaptation of former commercial and institutional buildings into residential units.</li> <li>-Gentrification is occurring sporadically throughout the downtown.</li> </ul>
Institutional Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expansion or introduction of post secondary institutions</li> <li>- Government facilities remain centralized</li> <li>- Service oriented facilities, i.e. social health agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Introduction of a McMaster downtown campus.</li> <li>-Government facilities remain downtown—there has been the recent construction of a new federal building.</li> <li>-Service (i.e. social and health) agencies are located downtown.</li> </ul>
Post-Fordist Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Live-work opportunities</li> <li>- Technological, knowledge, or service based firms</li> <li>- Consumption oriented</li> <li>- Small operations that may operate in flexible, multi-purpose spaces</li> <li>- Creation of "cool spaces"—knowledge generators</li> <li>- Formation of clusters: creative, technical</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-There is some opportunity for live-work arrangements.</li> <li>-There is not evidence of technical firms in the area.</li> <li>-There is the presence of professional, creative, and service based firms.</li> <li>-Much of the street level frontage in the CBD is for consumptive (retail, entertainment) purposes.</li> <li>-The firms are utilizing the existing built firm—although there has been some new builds—by re-using heritage housing and existing office buildings.</li> <li>-There has not yet been the formation of a knowledge cluster although there is a significant creative cluster forming around James Street North.</li> </ul>



Decline in Manufacturing Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Empty or underutilized manufacturing plants</li> <li>- Adaptation of former manufacturing facilities to new uses</li> <li>- Vacant lots</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Several empty facilities—more are located further east along the Harbour.</li> <li>-There has been the adaptation of older units for housing.</li> <li>-There are many vacant lots in the inner city as buildings have had a fire or been torn down.</li> </ul>
Promotion of Multi-modal Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Integration of walking and bicycle paths</li> <li>- Public transit Improvements, i.e. stations, service</li> <li>- Development of light rapid transit network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-There is not the integration of walking and bicycle paths downtown.</li> <li>-There is a new bus bay built but it and the stops have traditional transit amenities.</li> <li>-While there are plans to build a light rail network, the city is still serviced by buses.</li> </ul>
Sustainability Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reuse/adaptation of existing buildings</li> <li>- Infill development</li> <li>- Mixed-use</li> <li>- Promotion of active and public transit over auto use</li> <li>- Restoration of natural ecosystem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-There has been a significant number of reuse and adaptation of existing buildings.</li> <li>-There has not yet been infill development—construction is currently underway for several projects.</li> <li>-While policy might promote active and public transit, the inner city landscape currently does not.</li> <li>-At the waterfront, improvements to the landscape and water quality have occurred but the focus has not been to be a restoration project.</li> </ul>
Statement Place Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Formation of highly “spectacular” centres</li> <li>- Hi-Tech corridors</li> <li>- Use of heritage buildings</li> <li>- Construction of statement “superstar” buildings or open spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-There has not been the formation of a hi-tech corridor or a spectacular centre.</li> <li>-There has been the use of heritage buildings.</li> <li>-There has not been the construction of a statement “super star” building or statement open space.</li> </ul>
Source: Inspired by Hutton (2004), Ley and Frost (2006), and Hall (2005)		

The high visibility of art and entertainment amenities in Hamilton’s downtown fits with what the literature associates as being in the contemporary city, as there are: public galleries and museums, private art stores and workshop spaces, and restaurants offering the café experience. Throughout the downtown region, there is accessible public art and regular street entertainment festivals. The facilities, installations, and events in Hamilton’s core illustrate the role that art and entertainment has played in revitalizing the area.

The contemporary city literature indicates that recreational areas will be revitalized and improved. Unfortunately in Hamilton, with the exception of Gore

Park and the public squares, there is a lack of recreational land in its downtown. Hamilton has revitalized its waterfront by creating a park system that offers a connective trail network and open space beside the harbour. This has re-connected the city's citizens to their waterfront. It is a visual indicator of the trend towards waterfront improvement that is occurring in contemporary cities.

The downtown has a visible mixture of low-rise pre-World War II housing and mid-twentieth century high-rise apartment buildings. Unlike other contemporary cities, Hamilton lacks high-rise condominium buildings. There are visible indications that the city is beginning to construct new mixed-use condominium buildings. As well, there is evidence of commercial heritage buildings being re-adapted for residential use in Hamilton's core. There are pockets of gentrified housing--this is consistent with the former working class housing stock being gentrified in the inner city as it undergoes positive economic change.

Within the central business district, a nucleus of institutional buildings is found that provide city, regional, and federal services. Many of Hamilton's historic institutional buildings have been repurposed for new institutional use-- for instance, the post office is now a courthouse. The presence of a downtown campus of McMaster University indicates that the city is beginning to introduce post-secondary institutions to its core that is indicative of a contemporary city. In addition, Hamilton has many service agencies that are visible on its downtown streets that fulfill the needs of its residents.

There is notable presence of the professional and service occupations in Hamilton's downtown. However, the high technological firms that are expected on the new economy landscape are not visible. Instead, there is evidence that Hamilton is beginning to form creative clusters in its art districts. Hamilton's firms utilize the existing office towers and the former commercial or residential units to conduct business. Overall, Hamilton's inner city landscape indicates that consumption-oriented, knowledge and service based firms are located in its downtown.

The decline in manufacturing is particularly evident around Hamilton Harbour and on the streets adjacent to the downtown. There is a considerable amount of brownfield visible in the core that indicates that there is not yet a demand for infill or redevelopment projects. However, there has been the reuse of some of the former manufacturing buildings, such as the Spectator building that has been turned into lofts.

While Hamilton's plans and Provincial policies encourage the promotion of multi-modal transportation, it is not yet visible on the landscape. There has not been the integration of bike and walking paths within the inner city and there has not been new technological advances or modern amenities introduced to bus stations or stops.

Hamilton's efforts at sustainable practices lag behind what is expected based on the literature. There is evidence of adaptive reuse of historic buildings for residential, commercial, and institutional purposes. However, there is not yet evidence of infill development occurring in the inner city.

Finally, Hamilton's urban landscape has not transformed into being a highly "spectacular" centre with the construction of "superstar" buildings or amazing public spaces (Hall, 2005). However, it is notable that the city displays many heritage buildings that are still in use.

A thematic map of the contemporary inner city characteristics (see Figure 135) demonstrates the spatial patterns that exist in Hamilton's downtown. There are three distinct arts and entertainment districts that have formed. The majority of the contemporary city features are clustered in the central business district. The institutional uses are found near King and Main Streets. There are scattered brownfield sites; however, a ribbon of underutilized land is located on Rebecca and King William Streets. Similarly, the recreational use sites are found adjacent to major institutions (i.e. City Hall) and form a stretch that borders the harbour.



The historical analysis provides context for the landscape of the contemporary city. The nineteenth century saw commercial and residential growth in the core. The early industrialization, adjacent to the downtown and the bay, was to result in a long association and footprint of industrial activity in the city. Until residential construction was able to occur on the “mountain”, the community was centred on the streets that surround Gore Park. Innovation in transit was the first threat to the downtown as it effectively resulted in the development of two cities—one above and one below the “mountain”.

As early as the 1940s, planning policies were created in the attempt to modernize the design and function of the inner city. As the city spread outwards during the twentieth century, the downtown retained its institutional presence but lost its commercial dominance as other retail areas developed. In addition, there was not a significant amount of office space needed in the core for what was primarily an industrial based economy. The downtown began to suffer further with de-industrialization and with the further expansion and decentralization of the city. A turning point, and arguably, the most significant inner city revitalization plan was the Civic Square project as it has had a lasting impact on the form of Hamilton’s downtown. Since the 1980s, planners have focused on restoring the area’s appearance and economy and to build upon its past in order to create for it an environmental and economical sustainable future. Currently, Hamilton’s inner city is displaying visual evidence of being in a “period of revitalization” as “renovation and redevelopment” is present on its landscape (Ley and Frost, 2006, 199).

As Hamilton transitioned from being a Fordist to a post-Fordist economy, it is interesting to note the impact economic change had on land use. For instance, large industrial facilities were vacated that have left a post-industrial hollow barren of economic activity. This is a visible example of the creative destruction process which occurred as the new economy activities in Hamilton did not require the same facilities or have the same locational requirements as were needed in the past. However, economic transitioning has offered new opportunities to Hamilton's core. The inner city is well positioned to attract and retain new economy firms, as there is a variety of space available that is flexible in terms of cost, location, and size (Hutton, 2004b). There is also the opportunity to utilize vacant industrial lands for new industrial purposes while following Smart Growth principles by allowing commercial activity on industrial zoned sites, by having public transit service the facilities, and by encouraging the development of green companies (i.e. recycling facilities) in the inner city to ensure that the sites remain economically significant (Leigh and Hoelzel, 2012). Already there has been the transformation of single-family homes into professional offices and some of the existing built form has been restored and adapted (i.e. the Lister Building) to meet modern commercial and institutional needs.

The proximity of residential units, amenities, and open space for recreation that Hamilton's downtown offers are attractive features for participants in the new economy that are not provided in the suburban industrial parks. For instance, there has been the adaptation of abandoned commercial (i.e. the Pigott

building), institutional (i.e. the Whitton street school), and light industrial (i.e. the Hamilton Spectator building) facilities for residential units. The city's historic retail storefronts are able to accommodate art studios, galleries, small cafes and restaurants. Hamilton's downtown is transforming into a vibrant, livable place. It has retained many of the traditional institutional facilities that have long been associated with the downtown while at the same time is able to attract new amenities and new economic activity.

However, there are considerable areas of urban blight that remain in the inner city of Hamilton. The parking lots, empty fields, and vacant buildings are not yet being revitalized. They do not assist in the portrayal of an area that is undergoing economic change and renewal. Their presence along with the large empty industrial lands around the harbour present both challenges and opportunities for the city. There is opportunity for these underutilized lands to be redeveloped. The challenge is for the city to retain sufficient employment lands in the process as the current policies for the downtown are for mixed use commercial and residential land use rather than encouraging the retention of manufacturing activity in its inner city (Ley and Dobson, 2008). A further challenge may be the potential of the gentrification process to relocate the current arts community to other areas of the city if downtown property values become excessively high (Lloyd, 2005). However, Hamilton could ensure affordable housing continues to exist in the inner city by: "mandating a percentage of affordable (rental or owned) residential units that will be contained in new mixed income facilities, providing development charge and property tax



relief for owners who guarantee long-term affordable housing units, and supporting infill rental housing projects” (City of Toronto, 2012). While housing is still affordable in downtown Hamilton, as evidenced by the movement of artists into the area, the literature and experience elsewhere [i.e. in Chicago (Lloyd, 2005)], suggests that the gentrification process will lead to housing affordability problems down the road. Consequently, the implementation of the measures formed by the City of Toronto (2012) will ensure that there will continue to be affordable, mixed income housing and rental units in Hamilton’s core. Planning should not intervene in the gentrification process as it aids in revitalizing downtown neighbourhoods; however, there needs to be affordable housing policies that will provide a variety of housing options and costs to residents.

Hamilton’s economy is still recovering from the recent economic downturn and the destruction of its manufacturing base. As the economy improves, the downtown is well positioned to witness further investment. The city’s economic and planning policies have encouraged the re-development of its inner city. However, policies alone do not ensure that the plans will be implemented and that the desired results contained within them will occur. As has been described throughout this study, there has been a willingness to accept change and a drive among citizens and investors who see the potential in Hamilton’s downtown. The renaissance of Hamilton’s downtown by the private sector and its embracement of the new economy is a display of the enthusiasm the community has in being economically vibrant in the post-Fordist era.

A difficulty that remains for Hamilton is that its brand is still associated with it being a steel town. The city needs to re-brand its marketing strategies in order to present its diverse knowledge and service economy and its numerous cultural and natural attractions to outsiders (Parkerson and Saunders, 2004, 242). With greater awareness of the tourism and business opportunities that exist in Hamilton, the city can experience further economic growth. Inspiration can be gained by examining other industrial cities-- such as Birmingham, UK and Brooklyn, NY-- that have successfully re-branded from industrial to cultural hot spots (Parkerson, 2007; Parkerson and Saunders, 2004). The branding initiatives in Birmingham and Brooklyn have altered non-resident perceptions by presenting a relevant, current, and consistent brand. Hamilton can utilize their branding initiatives to create an “umbrella” brand that allows for the diversity of activities and various cost advantages in the city to be marketed (Parkerson and Saunders, 2004, 256).

This thesis has utilized the characteristics of the contemporary inner city to examine if the expected urban physical manifestations that are indicative of socio-economic change are present on Hamilton’s inner city landscape. The subject of exploring the role socio-economic change has on the characteristics and land uses of the inner city has not been previously studied in Hamilton. The historical analysis details how Hamilton’s economic and urban development and its planning policies have influenced the emerging form of the downtown. It is important to identify the current physical manifestations of economic changes and policy implementation on the urban landscape in order to mitigate negative

results (i.e. the forced relocation of older industries) while effecting positive change (i.e. downtown revitalization) in Canadian inner cities. In addition, the use of visual diagnosis contributes to planning research, which does not often explicitly document the impact of the changing economic conditions on the urban landscape using photography, although the method is of course commonly used in urban design and heritage planning.

## **10.2 Lessons for Planners**

This thesis assists in the understanding of how larger socio-economic changes shape the features and land uses of an inner city. The identification of the characteristics of the contemporary inner city allows for the investigation of the listed trends or expected physical manifestations in other communities. The use of the visual diagnosis method should be utilized to document the landscape as it will assist in determining if the expected changes are or are not occurring and in what manner are they present. The research illustrates how the inner city reflects socio-economic change over time and how its built form can adapt to meet the needs of a changing economy. For instance, in Hamilton, there is evidence that there has been the successful adaptive reuse of former manufacturing and commercial buildings for residential and commercial uses that has been encouraged through planning policies. The research aids in our understanding of the inner city's ability to adopt its built structures to meet new economic demands and residential needs. The historic analysis has illustrated how the implementation of planning and economic policies can alter the urban landscape. The thesis also points to the evidence of the arts led gentrification in

Hamilton that demonstrates how the arts community can effectively revitalize an area. The range of economic grant programs that have encouraged the re-development of Hamilton's inner city may be examined to determine if they are applicable to other localities.

The research indicates how policies can induce change (directly or indirectly) by encouraging one economic form (i.e. service and knowledge based employment) over another (i.e. manufacturing based employment). It has been noted by other researchers (Ley and Dobson, 2008) how this process may have a negative impact on existing land use and employment patterns in a community. These are important considerations for those developing planning and economic policies—particularly in cities, such as Hamilton, that are promoting the development of the new economy.

Further, there is discussion regarding how planning policies can position the inner city to take advantage of opportunities and to influence the decisions of private investors: by having financial incentive programs for restoring and adopting existing buildings, encouraging new development through development charge exemptions, managing shifts in property values so to not exclude current business entrepreneurs and residents, and by providing leasehold improvement loans for businesses.

### **10.3 Limitations**

The research was limited in that the photographs taken by the researcher reflect the current landscape. As a result, the research can only examine evidence of the physical manifestations of socio-economic change. In addition,

the results from computer generated newspaper article searches may not have found all applicable articles. The literature on Hamilton reflects the perspectives and focuses of the authors and publishers and they may not reflect the views of events of all in the community. The selection process of material held by the Hamilton Public Library and the Ontario university libraries may limit the historical information available to the researcher.

The application of other methodologies would have provided additional material regarding how individuals view socio-economic change on the urban landscape. They were not performed, as the data would be outside the scope of the research questions; however, it is important to note their non-use as being a potential limitation of the study. For instance, the use of interviews or surveys would have gathered the opinions and observations of participants on the socio-economic changes, and their views on the impact that they have had on the inner city landscape. As well, the use of the visual preference method would have gathered information of the importance participants place on a particular economic activity over another and the how they rate the appearance and activities that take place downtown.

#### **10.4 Contribution and Further Opportunities For Research**

This thesis contributes to the existing literature on the economic transition process and its reflection on the inner city landscape by documenting the urban form of an emerging new economy based inner city. It has outlined Hamilton's phases of industrialization and periods of urban development. The work documents how economic and policy changes have determined the urban form

and land uses in inner city Hamilton. The photographs provide visual evidence of the adaptability of the urban form to meet the spatial demands of the new economy. They also illustrate the aesthetics, for instance, of sidewalk cafes and public art, that emerge as socio-economic changes occur. The manner in which the city's urban form has been able to adopt to support new activities in its core provides an example of downtown revitalization as much of the built form has been restored and readapted to new purposes. It offers evidence of the arts-culture led rejuvenation and notes that there are still challenges to the locality as there are still areas of blight. In addition, it is noted that there is the possibility for policy-led loss of employment lands and that the potential for increased land values in the future could jeopardize the existence of the arts-culture community in the inner city (Ley and Dobson, 2008; Lloyd, 2005). As there have been limited studies of the impact of economic change on the urban form of Canadian cities, especially outside the largest three metropolitan areas, it provides a Canadian context to the existing literature on the urban development process and phases of industrialization and the resulting inner city landscape.

The lessons of studying the effects of an emerging new economy to the inner city's urban form that can be learned from the complexity of Hamilton's economic transition are not limited to that locality. Hamilton provides an excellent case study for other municipalities to examine as it has undergone the process of "creative destruction" with the collapse of its manufacturing and industrial economic base (Schumpeter, 2011). There are many locations in Canada and around the globe that are undergoing similar economic

restructuring. For instance, there are other manufacturing focused communities that have relied largely on one industry for economic stability that have been in transition after its collapse.

The opportunity exists for further academic research to be conducted to detail the impact of economic change on the form and function of downtowns in other Canadian cities. There is also the opportunity to study the effect of heritage preservation and grants on the revitalization of the inner city. Through examining the situation in Hamilton, we are able to appreciate the process of economic transition that a city goes through and to recognize the patterns on its landscape. There is the potential for future studies to examine the continuing process in Hamilton to further understand the long-term influence of economic change on the urban form.

### **10.5 Hamilton: A City of Change**

Hamilton provides an example of how economic transitions influenced the land use patterns and processes in the inner city. Its changing economy has created for the city a new identity of “arts not steel” rather than the previous “steel city” title that Hamilton had long been associated with. The shift from a large manufacturing base to new economy activities has resulted in a renaissance in Hamilton’s downtown. This is displayed in the restoration and construction of buildings, the visibility of art on the landscape, and the presence of individuals being engaged in the downtown core. The current period is in marked contrast to when the area was in decay and there was a lack of new initiatives and interest in the downtown. There has been the expansion of knowledge and service

oriented endeavours. There has been the placement of cafes, restaurants and shops on the landscape that have encouraged individuals to visit and interact in the downtown streets. The presence of amenities has in turn encouraged the “creative class” to live and work in Hamilton’s downtown (Skaburskis and Moos, 2006). While there has been limited new construction to date, there are many examples of the adaptive reuse of historic buildings for residential and commercial purposes. The result is that Hamilton is creating a livable and amenity filled downtown.

Throughout its history, the city has supported the process of change and recognized the need to be open to redevelopment in order to thrive in a changing economic climate. As discussed throughout this thesis, Hamilton’s downtown reflects the economic realities and policy implementations throughout the different stages of its development. More recently, there has been an emphasis on the role of art and culture to rejuvenate areas in decline and to inject vitality and economic wellbeing in its inner city. This is due to the success of the cultural districts in what had been lagging sections of the downtown following the city’s economic decline in the 1980s. The importance of cultural amenities in Hamilton’s renewal signifies that this is an approach that can be applied towards driving downtown economic improvements in other localities. The analysis of Hamilton’s planning policies demonstrates that the presence of cultural amenities in the inner city was determined through policy; in addition, the emerging arts communities have stimulated further investment (i.e. in new residential units) and interest in the area. Other communities would be able to examine the experience



in Hamilton in order to develop economic and downtown revitalization policies that would encourage cultural amenities and other new economy businesses to locate in their cores. The service and knowledge based sectors are also visible in Hamilton's inner city. The economic policies that encouraged redevelopment and adaptation of existing structures have served the city well as it has made the downtown attractive to the new economy firms as it has provided funds to improve building façades and support leasehold improvements to downtown office buildings. By combining economic policies and grants with overall planning goals, the city of Hamilton has been able to encourage the revitalization of its downtown. The plans have built on the foundation of the past in order to create a viable future by creating an urban form that supports residential use and promotes economic opportunities. The observations of Hamilton's economic transitions and the adaptation of its inner city landscape to meet new conditions provides lessons to planners in the need to create policies that will be supportive of new economy endeavours. As other cities go through a similar process of economic change, the observations made of Hamilton's inner city may be examined in order to give planners guidance as how to best support and mold the manner of a downtown's future form and economic functions. This research indicates that there are visible changes that occur to the built form and aesthetic of the inner city landscape as its economy transitions. In addition, it is evident through the examination of Hamilton's planning policies that they do influence the emerging urban built form. In conclusion, the historic and current economic

transitions and the implementation of planning policies are reflected in Hamilton's existing inner city landscape.

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Plan of the Town of Hamilton, 1842	page 68

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Map of the City of Hamilton, Ontario	page 4
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