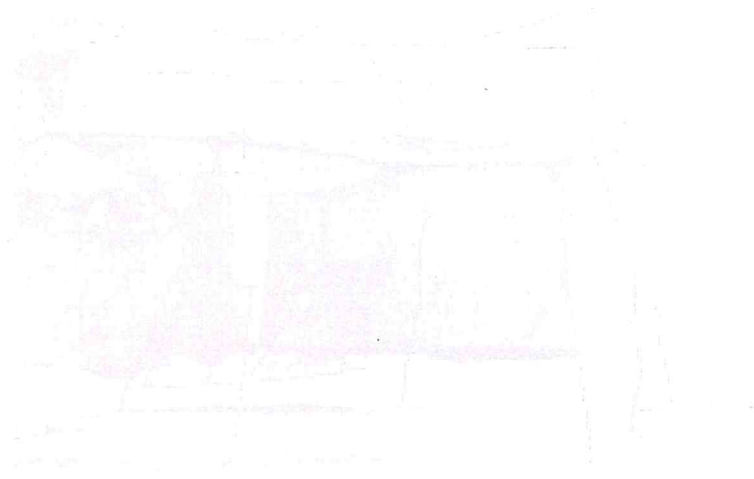


making sense of  
place



understanding human existence and the spirit of place

**architectural thesis**

Cory Stechyshyn

RAIC Syllabus – Thunder Bay Chapter

July 12, 2005

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## CONTENTS – PART ONE, “Theory of Place – making sense of place”

<u>Thesis Proposal</u>	..... 1-2
<u>Preface</u>	..... 1-3
<u>Thesis Objectives</u>	..... 1-4
<u>Part One – Theoretical Concept</u>	..... 1-5
<u>Three themes of place</u>	..... 1-6
<u>Man</u>	..... 1-7
Human existence	.....1-7
Existentialism	.....1-8
Phenomenology	.....1-9
<u>Nature</u>	..... 1-10
Genius Loci	.....1-10
Natural place	.....1-11
Mysterious place	.....1-12
<u>Space</u>	..... 1-13
Spatial awareness	.....1-14
Spatial definition	.....1-16
Spatial identity	.....1-17
Gestalt	.....1-18
Personal space	.....1-19
Public space	.....1-20
Man-made place	.....1-21
<u>Placelessness</u>	..... 1-22
<u>Precedents</u>	..... 1-23
Past	.....1-23
Present	.....1-24
Future	.....1-26

part

1

## CONTENTS – PART ONE continued

### **Precedents (continued)...**

Response to man and nature .....	1-28
Response to man and city .....	1-29
Precedents concluded .....	1-30

### **Concluding thoughts .....** 1-31

## CONTENTS – PART TWO, “Site – what the site wants to be.”

<u>Site – Creating an Awareness of Place</u>	<u>2-1</u>
<u>Spirit of Place</u>	<u>2-2</u>
<u>Life of the City – Water</u>	<u>2-3</u>
<u>Site Selection</u>	<u>2-4</u>
<u>History of the Development of the Waterfront</u>	<u>2-5</u>
<u>The Waterfront Today</u>	<u>2-6</u>
<u>Selection Criteria</u>	<u>2-7</u>
Bare Point	2-9
Mouth of Current River	2-9
Mouth of McVicar Creek	2-10
Former Pool Six Site	2-10
Former Ore Dock	2-11
Mouth of McIntyre Floodway	2-11
Kam River Heritage Park	2-12
Hydro Generating Station	2-13
<u>Final Selection</u>	<u>2-14</u>
<u>Former Pool Six Site</u>	<u>2-15</u>
<u>Pool Six Site Today</u>	<u>2-17</u>
<u>What the Site Wants to be</u>	<u>2-18</u>
<u>Existing Environment</u>	<u>2-19</u>
<u>Site Characteristic / Identity</u>	<u>2-20</u>
<u>Existing Elements</u>	<u>2-25</u>

## CONTENTS — PART TWO, continued.

Proposed Site Development ..... 2-29

Site Conclusion ..... 2-31

Part Two Presentation Boards .....

## CONTENTS – PART THREE, “Program – city, life and water .”

<u>Introduction</u>	<u>3-1</u>
<u>Basic Elements</u>	<u>3-2</u>
<u>Programme Objectives</u>	<u>3-3</u>
<u>Functional Program</u>	<u>3-5</u>
<u>Functional Concept</u>	<u>3-6</u>
<u>Land Mass Study</u>	<u>3-8</u>
<u>Site Development Approach One</u>	<u>3-9</u>
<u>Site Development Approach Two</u>	<u>3-10</u>
<u>Program Spaces and Precedents</u>	<u>3-11</u>
Public Waterfront Building	3-11
PUBLIC Component	3-13
ACTIVITY Component	3-17
HERITAGE Component	3-21
CULTURAL Component	3-27
SHARED USE / Common Spaces	3-32
Building Management Systems	3-33
<u>Program Development Conclusion</u>	<u>3-34</u>
<u>Presentation Boards</u>	



## CONTENTS – PART FOUR, “Design – history comes to be known.”

<u>Introduction</u>	<u>4-1</u>
<u>Development of the Building Concept</u>	<u>4-2</u>
<u>Conceptual Ideas</u>	<u>.....</u>
Form	4-3
Rhythm	4-5
Colour	4-6
Material	4-7
Structure	4-8
Light	4-9
Artifacts	4-10
<u>The Design</u>	<u>4-11</u>
<u>Accessibility</u>	<u>4-12</u>
<u>Arrival</u>	<u>4-13</u>
<u>Site Access</u>	<u>4-14</u>
<u>Program Spaces</u>	<u>4-15</u>
<u>Building Exterior</u>	<u>4-19</u>
<u>Concluding Thoughts</u>	<u>4-21</u>
<u>Final Presentation Boards</u>	<u>.....</u>
<u>Appendix</u>	

thesis  
proposal

# making sense of place

thesis proposal

*The bridge swings over the stream with ease and power. It does not just connect banks that are already there, the banks emerge as banks only as the bridge crosses the stream. The bridge designedly causes them to lie across from each other. One side is set off against the other by the bridge. Nor do the banks stretch along the stream as indifferent border strips of the dry land. With the banks, the bridge brings to the stream the one and the other expanse of the landscape lying behind them. It brings stream and bank and land into each other's neighborhood. The bridge gathers the earth as landscape around the stream.<sup>1</sup>*

This poem by Heidegger illustrates the hidden structure of our world that is not immediately apparent to the casual observer. What is suggested by this poem is the ability for architecture to create place. Architecture reveals to us that which is unknown, giving our world new meaning.

There has been a loss of meaning in our physical environment, in our cities and our buildings. Christian Norberg Schulz argues that the changes in the structure of our cities following the conclusion of the second world war has resulted in the loss of a sense of place and meaning in human settlements. He attributes this loss to changes in the structure of human settlements. This structure he defines, in terms of space and character. *"Lost is the settlement as a place in nature, lost are the urban foci as places for common living, lost is the building as a meaningful sub-place where man may simultaneously experience individuality and belonging."*<sup>2</sup>

This thesis will focus on the concept of *sense of place*, and the hidden theoretical phenomena of *place* that give meaning to our everyday world. Place is a spatial experience, and I will be exploring it within the context of the city. My thesis will explore the locality of an active industrial port in Lake Superior's Thunder Bay harbor. Like so many port cities, the changes in transportation, technology and industry has left abandoned lands and buildings on the waterfront. The buildings and activity that once characterized the city and created its image are now the cause of its lost sense of place and loss of *imageability*.<sup>3</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz, Genius Loci, quotes Martin Heidegger from Language in Poetry, 1971.

<sup>2</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz, Genius Loci, Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture. Rizzoli International Publications Inc., 1979.

<sup>3</sup> Kevin Lynch, The Image of the City. The M.I.T. Press, 1960.

My goal is to create an awareness of place on the local waterfront by introducing an architecture that 'gathers the landscape' and reveal its true character and meaning to the city. This creation of public awareness of the value of the waterfront will encourage its development and contribute in the creation of a renewed sense of place and character that will enhance the city as a whole.

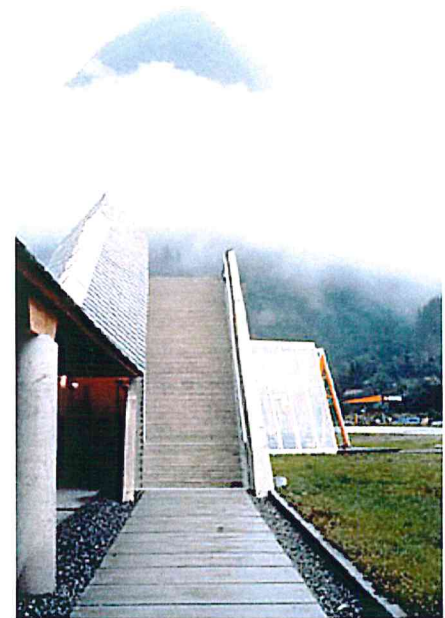
## scope of research

My goals can only be examined through research into the theories of place and the architects, philosophers and theorists who have ventured into understanding the phenomena that give our physical environments a sense of place. It will also require the investigation into a sense of place with respect to the city as a whole and an understanding of what make places, cities and our lives meaningful.

To make this thesis successful will require the development of a building program that not only captures the culture, history, heritage and essence of place; but as well takes on the characteristics of its surroundings and by doing so makes its presence and the place meaningful to the observer.

*"Architecture literally and symbolically overcomes the forces of nature to provide shelter. In the pre-industrial past, the production of meaning in architecture relied upon structured references to and associations with nature. Modern architecture embraced the machine analogy instead of the organic analogy. Although machines are often designed on the basis of natural systems, their use as a formal model prevented architecture from referring directly to nature. This is problematic because despite technological advances, symbolizing man's position within the natural world remains one of architecture's roles."*<sup>4</sup>

Cory Stechyshyn  
RAIC Syllabus, D9 - Thesis  
ON-880006



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<sup>4</sup> Kate Nesbitt, editor. Theorizing A New Agenda for Architecture. An Anthology of Architectural Theory, 1965-1995. Princeton Architectural Press, 1996.

part

1



## PREFACE

*“Architecture literally and symbolically overcomes the forces of nature to provide shelter, in the pre-industrial past, the production of meaning in architecture relied upon structured references to and associations with nature. Modern architecture embraced the machine analogy instead of the organic analogy. Although machines are often designed on the basis of natural systems, their use as a formal model prevented architecture from referring directly to nature. This is problematic, because despite technological advances, symbolizing man’s position within the natural world remains one of architecture’s primary roles”<sup>1</sup>*

This quote was written by author Kate Nesbit and captures the position that was taken in this thesis of the need for architectural thinking that acknowledges both the physical and the emotional qualities of man-made space. The concept of place appears in numerous theoretical writings which encouraged the investigation of the philosophical, psychological and architectural theories and concepts that encompass its meaning. There is no simple written underlying principle to explain the concepts of place; it is a complex and highly subjective concept that demands attention in architectural thinking.

The goal of this thesis was first to create an understanding of the concepts of place and secondly to create an awareness of place through the creation of man-made space based on my learned understanding of the concepts of place. What I have learned from this thesis is that there are both shared and personal experiences of place, inferring that some experience spaces differently than others. Our most meaningful experiences of place therefore are the personal experiences of place. It becomes important to recognize both the qualities of a place that will involve the larger whole, while understanding the spatial experiences that allow each individual to become involved in the spaces more personally and in a more meaningful way. We need to provide an environment to encourage each individual to create their own understanding and sense of place. I have also come to realize that “place” is not a theory, it is the starting point from which all design for built environments should begin. It presumes free-will, a desire to understand and a search for meaning. All other theories, philosophies, practicalities, economies and personal opinions take over from there.

This thesis was an important step in my architectural education, one that has allowed me to explore my personal beliefs in such a way that I can better understand human existence and how our physical world is complimented by the spirit of place. This thesis has influenced me in a way that I hope will impact my architectural thinking and that will always challenge me to better understand our place on this earth and how that understanding should be translated to built form.





## THESIS OBJECTIVES

People continually ask what *architecture is* while architects continue to try and define it. An explanation of architecture can only begin with an understanding of the concept of place. This thesis is based on place and the theoretical principles related to human dwelling and human existence. All too often our focus is on individual building design with disregard either to the larger whole or to the individual experience. This thesis will explore the complexity of architectural design based on the concept of place.

### i. explore the concept of place as an approach to architecture that acknowledges the existence of man and the spirit of place.

Architecture facilitates our physical existence, while philosophy satisfies our pursuit for wisdom and knowledge. Norberg Schulz claims that architecture is "*the art of place.*"<sup>2</sup> Place permits us to gain an awareness and understanding of our existence. Place is about our desire to find meaning in our life and how our natural and man made environment facilitates and enhances this aspect of our life. Part one of this thesis will explore the depth of meaning and understanding that is necessary in forming a theory for a concept of place in architectural design.

### ii. to create an awareness of place within an existing placeless environment through the design of a man-made space that addresses the concept of place as an architectural theory.

All human life has some form of relationship with the natural environment. From the beginning of time man has relied on the land to live and water for life. Water has become a vehicle for transportation and a utility for industry while its value for life has become a secondary consideration. Industry soon relied on the presence of water and the city grew in relation to its success as an economic figure within the world economy. Our waterfronts are for industry, leaving us the task of recreating nature within the urban fabric of our cities. Part two of this thesis will focus on creating an awareness of place within an abandoned industrial waterfront site.

# part one

## theoretical concept - the study of place

*"The bridge swings over the stream with ease and power. It does not just connect banks that are already there, the banks emerge as banks only as the bridge crosses the stream. The bridge designedly causes them to lie across from each other. One side is set off against the other by the bridge. Nor do the banks stretch along the stream as indifferent border strips of the dry land. With the banks, the bridge brings to the stream the one and the other expanse of the landscape lying behind them. It brings stream and bank and land into each other's neighborhood. The bridge gathers the earth as landscape around the stream."<sup>3</sup>*



This quotation by Martin Heidegger captures the depth of meaning and understanding that is presented to our experience of space. These experiences are not immediately apparent to the participants; some may never fully understand the emotions that are present when they experience a space that is meaningful. This is the role of architecture, to make these experiences meaningful and understood without direct knowledge of the elements that are at work or the intentions of the architect that are at play.

Probably the simplest way for one to understand place is to imagine the fond memories of childhood, the home that we were raised in and the city that we grew up in. The memories that we have gained throughout our life, of our past experiences, of the places that we have lived or visited, are what the concept of place attempts to reveal and to understand in order that we can design spaces that are experienced as meaningful.

Through the extensive theoretical research that was undertaken, this thesis has reduced the complex and subjective material forming the concept of place to three basic elements that must exist in order for place to be experienced as meaningful. These three elements are man, nature and space. Architecture presumes the presence of man and a relationship that exists between man and nature. We strive to understand our life by understanding our position within the world. We build our world to reflect this relationship and understanding that we have of the world. We build to create a sense of place.

# three themes of place

## man, nature and space – *the concept of place*

We live among concrete phenomena throughout our daily lives, living among the trees, the rocks, the roads and buildings. We accept these phenomena without question as we go about our busy lives, often unaware of our physical surroundings – we take them for granted. There are less tangible phenomena that we experience daily as well, such as our feelings. These intangible phenomena are given little attention within our physical settings, yet these phenomena have the most direct influence on us personally. My aim is to create an awareness of the intangible phenomena that need to be understood in order to address them properly in architectural design.



man

- meaning
- existence
- phenomenology

+



nature

- genius loci
- natural place
- mysterious place

+



space

- consciousness
- spatial perception
- spatial definition
- spatial identity
- public space
- private space
- man made place



# man

## understanding the human qualities of place

### HUMAN EXISTENCE

Mankind has always delved into the meaning of our existence as we have witnessed through the philosophers and theorists that have influenced the laws, sciences, politics and religions that make up our world today. *"Mankind is the only known animal that defines itself through the act of living. In other words, first we exist, then we spend a lifetime changing our essence. Without life there can be no meaning, the search for meaning is the search for self."*<sup>4</sup> Architectural theory also shares this same interest in developing an understanding to the meaning of our existence and examines how we can use it to create buildings and cities that enhance this aspect of human life.

Architecture, through the ages, has made attempts to deal with human experience and meaning. Ancient architecture was intrigued by man's relationship with the universe and paid tribute to the gods and the rulers of their time, late century architects attempted to refine the architecture of their predecessors, but it wasn't until the modern movement of the early 1950's that human value once again entered architectural theory. Modernism, in its attempt to *"repair the fracture between thought and feeling"*<sup>5</sup>, failed to relate built-form with the environment and became an architecture of image. The movements that followed; high-tech structuralism that was intended to satisfy thought, post-modernism that was intended to express feeling and deconstructivism that negated all meaning, never managed to complete the necessary components for an architecture of meaning.

We achieve meaning through our existence as individuals, living between heaven and earth, developing an understanding of our relationship with the natural world. This is a broad statement that finds many differences of opinion among architects, theorists and philosophers. Place is deeply rooted in the relationship between man and nature and how we experience this relationship. This level of discussion often approaches theological views of life, primarily because it is our desire to understand who we are and why we are here that gives our life meaning.

Through the research for this thesis there have been two philosophical themes that have revealed themselves consistently that are closely associated with the concept of place. These two themes provide a history of study into the difficult discussions surrounding human existence and the meaning of everyday phenomena.



## EXISTENTIALISM

Existentialism attempts to describe our desire to make *rational decisions despite existing in an irrational universe*; we are forced to define our own meaning, our existence. We look at our self, our being, aside from the objects of our reality. This philosophy adds a personal experience of space to the concept of place. Philosopher Martin Heidegger had the position that humans “*coexist among all that exists*”<sup>6</sup>. Insight into existentialism offers us with an opportunity to explore human experience separate from the things that make up the world. An existentialist position is that we exist within the world and not as a separate entity. The underlying concepts of existentialism consist of:

- mankind has free will
- life is a series of choices, creating stress
- few decisions are without any negative consequences
- some things are irrational or absurd, without explanation
- if one makes a decision, they must follow through

Existential space begins with the environment. Nature provides us with variable existential experiences that suit our own personal experiences of space. This is defined by the structures of nature. Where nature does not satisfy our human existential needs, we modify it to suit - constructing our own physical world that represents our personal existential beliefs. Attention to existentialism must respect that individuals create their own being, we can be negatively affected when our life-path is affected or where our beliefs are discouraged. When others make the decisions on our behalf, our self being is often disregarded. What is important to learn from the study of existentialism is an understanding that the human aspect of architecture must also be considered separate from the objects that make up our environments so that the human experience of place is not artificially imposed.

## PHENOMENOLOGY

Phenomenology explores everyday phenomena for what they are, as opposed to what they may appear to be. Our being cannot be grasped through thought and feeling alone, an understanding of our physical existence is also necessary. Phenomenology offers a means of reference between our life-world and those things within the physical and natural world that provide us meaning. Philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) writes in *Being and Time* that “*what is within the world is also within space.*” Heidegger claims that the primary purpose of architecture is to *make the world visible*. We make the world visible through the creation of space. Phenomenology has become a useful interdisciplinary for psychologists as an enquiry into the meaning of the objects of our man-made and natural environments. Phenomenology approaches things with the same naturalness with which they present themselves, *absent of preconceived notions or scientific reason*. Phenomenology reveals the objects of our consciousness irrespective of whether they actually exist physically. Every situation in life is perceived through our relationship with some form of object. What these objects mean to us and how we perceive them is of useful knowledge to architecture.

## PHENOMENA

Phenomenology deals with the phenomena that make up our physical world. There are tangible phenomena such as rocks, water, trees, sun, moon, stars, animals and houses – and there are intangible phenomena such as our feelings. These are what are “given”, what Norberg Schulz claims are the *content of our existence*. Everything else; atoms, molecules and data, are abstractions – they are tools that serve other purposes. The concept of place is concerned directly with the content of our existence, rather than the tools that are not necessary to understand in order to experience life.



# nature

## understanding our relationship with nature

In the same way that we attempt to define man-made space, we also look to gain a sense of place from our natural environments. The natural environment is the physical canvas on which we build. We need to understand the meaningful and identifiable characteristics within our environment that provide us with a pronounced sense of place. The objective is to *“translate the landscape that has been understood into architecture, so that the use of place can be attained and a natural landscape can be transformed into a cultural landscape.”*<sup>8</sup> Often when referring to place we infer an understanding of our interaction with the natural environment, or natural place. Nature offers us an example of the elements we attempt to recreate, or alter to meet our human needs. We interact with the environment through the creation of built form, or man-made place.

Place *“is a concrete term for environment”*. Norberg Schulz proposes that architecture is the *“art of place”*<sup>9</sup> and that place exists within the world of life. Schulz identifies three ways that man-made places are related to nature. Through **visualization** we strive to structure nature more precisely, while we **compliment** the given landscape by adding what we feel is lacking, and by doing so we **symbolize** the understanding that we have of nature. Through these three acts we gather what is known from the world, build upon it, and give meaning to our existence.

### GENIUS LOCI

*“Nature and life are mutually reinforcing elements of a whole that, ever since ancient times, has been recognized as the genius loci. The place, then, is the concrete manifestation of the world of life, and as an instrumental art, architecture is the art of place.”*<sup>10</sup>

Another aspect of nature that Schulz has provided is founded on the Roman concept of the *genius loci*, or the *spirit of place*. This concept describes a “genius” or guardian spirit that is believed to accompany people and places from birth to death that determines their character or the essence of a place. This concept denotes what a thing “wants to be”, and demonstrates the importance that man has placed on developing an understanding of our relationship with the natural world, recognizing the distinctive character of place. These aspects of place are demonstrated most clearly in understanding the characteristics of the natural places that exist within the world that we experience as meaningful.



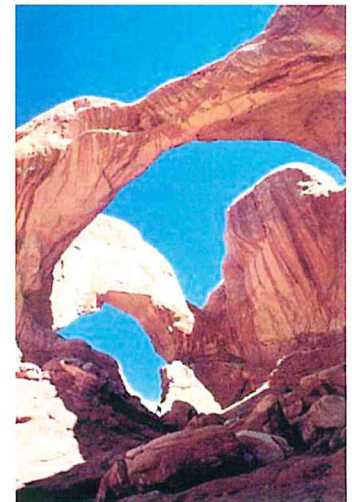
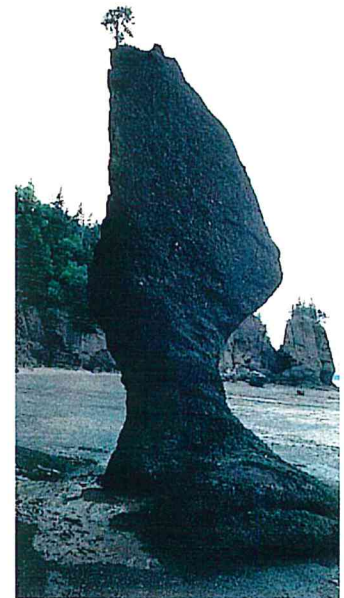
## natural place

For most of us, the essence of place is felt when we experience a place that is naturally meaningful. A clearing in the forest or a bend in the creek, a place where we feel it is safe to rest or to contemplate the day. *"There once was a place, a place that I happened upon, not by choice – but by chance. I know it was a place because I felt that I was somewhere. There was a view to the water and it was set amongst nature. A stone had once been laid there, a presence had been revealed to me. I have experienced a place, a place that even now has meaning".*

Nature exists between heaven and earth. Our desire to understand nature is a need to understand the heavens, the gods and the cosmos, the earth and all its natural things. This understanding is not scientific in nature; it is an existential concept that involves experiencing meaning. Meaning of self within the world. Even when we consider nature as an existential concept, there exists an ability to define a structure to the natural places that make up our existence. These structural elements, or phenomena as Norberg Schulz describes, come out of a multitude of living forces. The first is an understanding of the **things** that exist naturally. Existence is said to be *"a marriage of heaven and earth"*. Those *'things that are'*, are concrete things such as trees, rock, water and sky. A mountain, for example, is a place within a landscape; a place because it gathers known things (rock, trees) and gives meaning to their existence. Mountains alone; however, do not provide man a place to dwell.

The second element, Schulz claims, is the cosmic **order**. These orders have defined man-made space since Egyptian times and represent different qualities of meaning through different cultures. The third element of natural places is **character**, which relates human characteristics to nature. The topographic features of the landscape offer suggestions of the character of a place. The Greeks were well known for their use of 'orders', which often took on the characteristics of certain gods or goddesses. This relationship of man to nature is a means of understanding our world. The last two elements that Schulz identifies are **light** and **time**. Light is observed as a 'divine light', the love of god. It is the most natural phenomena we experience. *Light* reveals texture and color and gives life. *Time*, with respect to place, relates to our existence, and refers to man's own life and the life of nature. *"Time has constancy and change and makes space and character part of a living reality."*<sup>11</sup>

These elements form the unique character or spirit of a place. Our architecture must attempt to find the spirit of place within the environments that we build so that it can be interpreted from the landscape and man-made spaces can compliment what is given and provide spatial experiences that are naturally meaningful.



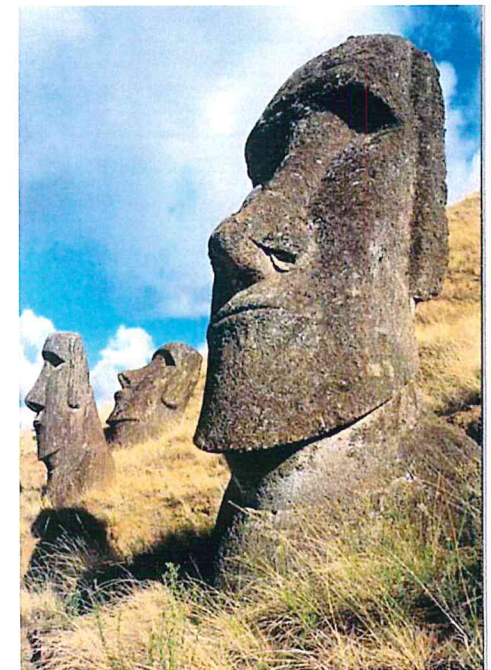
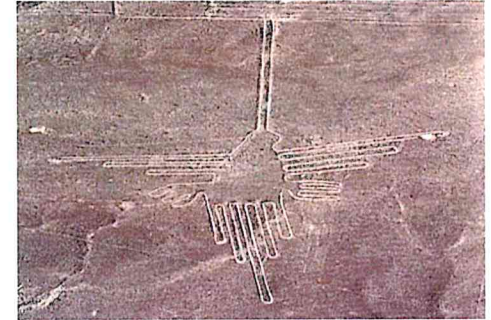


## mysterious place

Mystery is already the epitome of place. We have been left with places that remain a mystery to us that tantalize our quest for answers into the unknown. We are left to wonder if these places are even humanly feasible – or are they a result of some other greater force? If these places are nothing more than reminders of the depth of meaning that can remain with a place through time, then they have served their purpose. While we look for answers to their existence, we should be looking for clues of how to create places that retain meaning and address a sense of place as these places have proven to do through the element of time.

Mysterious place is generally associated with religious or sacred spaces, identifying the general uncertainty that we share with the origin of our existence and the mystery of the unknown. These types of spaces often have strong reference to cosmic order and a dedicated loyalty to a god or particular cultural beliefs.

It is often difficult to find modern day examples of architecture that recapture the immense skill and intellect that once existed at the time when these places were created, nor can we find any that match their understanding of true existential meaning. What we can gain from our investigation into such places is knowledge that prior to the present constraints that face architectural design, there exists a greater sense of meaning that we are only now again beginning to realize and explore in our current theories for design. Historic man appeared to have a clearer dedication to the concepts of place that we are today only beginning to recognize. The three themes explored in part-one of this thesis have drawn on this historic knowledge and offers it as a basis for a philosophy of place.



# space

## understanding how we experience space

Space, according to E. Relph from his book *Place and Placelessness*, is “*amorphous and intangible*.”<sup>12</sup> It consists of the sky, the land and the universe. It is vast and requires space defining elements in order for us to organize it within our conscious understanding of space that we have developed. In his book, Relph introduces us to three categories of space, which he defines as:

- PRIMITIVE SPACE; this is the space that is instinctive, that we understand unselfconsciously, that we learn from infancy through the development of our cognitive skills. This space is recognized through the basic fundamental experience of front and back, in front of and behind of, left and right, out-of-reach and within reach.
- PERCEPTUAL SPACE; this is our personal space, based on our individual experience.
- EXISTENTIAL SPACE; this is the inner structure of space as it appears in our experiences of the world as members of a cultural group. These spaces are constantly being created and changed by human activity. These are the spaces that our human intentions inscribe themselves on the earth and are culturally defined.

The spaces of our lived-world are made up of varying types of spatial experiences. Architecture attempts to organize these spaces so that we can understand them in a meaningful way, whether they are understood personally or publicly. The ways in which these spaces are structured in order for them to become physical objects of our consciousness is the topic of this theme.

- Personal space
- Public space
- Spatial awareness / consciousness
- Spatial definition / boundary
- Spatial identity / character
- Man-made place





# spatial awareness

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## consciousness

The problem of consciousness - perhaps together with the question of the origin of our universe -- lies at the very *limits of human understanding*. Sigmund Freud was the first known to propose the concept of personal unconscious in the early 1900's which he developed during his research in neurology. The psychology of our conscience proposes that we do not experience phenomena for what they are – we experience them for what they mean to us. We experience our world through our understanding of the objects that are presented to our conscience. The concept of place considers two fields of thought on consciousness. The first has been explored in the work of psychologist Jean Piaget and his **Stage Theory of Development**, while the second has been explored by Carl Jung who expanded Freud's insight with his own concept of the *collective unconscious*.

## stage theory of development

The mental process by which we acquire knowledge is the psychology of cognition. Cognitive studies help us to understand how our minds gradually construct knowledge of the objects that make up our structured world stemming from the content of our consciousness. This mental process of inquiry is achieved through our senses, of which one can argue that perception plays a primary role. The dictionary defines perception as *"the action of the mind in referring sensations to the object which caused them."*<sup>13</sup> It is through perception that we develop an understanding of our physical world and associate meaning between our conscience and the physical objects of our life world. *Perceptual Constancy*, the concept that once we identify with an object it takes on permanent characteristics despite variations in light, distance, angle of view, etc. lends itself to earlier discussions with respect to phenomenology and to Piaget's stage theory of development.

How perception and cognition affect our understanding of the physical world has been explored in the work of psychologist Jean Piaget and his *Stage Theory of Development*. Piaget argues that it is not possible to arrive at any cognition without having an emotional relationship to an object, or without understanding the object in a *spatial and temporal context*. We develop an identity of our world at an early age that remains with us throughout our life. Piaget's theory is based on the following four stages of development:

- Sensorimotor stage: development motor reflexes.
- Preoperational stage: development of mental imagery.
- Concrete Operational stage: recognize transformation and other points of view.
- Formal Operational stage: begin to think logically and abstractly.



## the collective unconscious

The second field of thought deals with the more intangible concepts of our conscience – such as our feelings. The *collective unconscious*, proposed by psychologist Carl Jung, consists of re-occurring forms or “symbols” that exist within our sub-consciousness that are believed to influence the way we perceive things and affect our personal and emotional experiences. Jung describes these symbols as **archetypes**, indicating definite forms in the psyche that are always present. These archetypes shape our perception of nature as well as the human mind. Jung claims that the collective unconscious is inherited; it pre-exists, and becomes known to our conscience when we recognize it as something meaningful, through a personal and physical experience. The “archetypes” that Jung proposes “pre-exist” in every human are as follow:

- The Shadow: expressing the human psychic possibilities that we deny ourselves and project onto others, our fantasies.
- The Anima or Animus: the soul, our inner opposite. Our hidden desired personality.
- The Syzygy: divine couple, wholeness and integration. King and Queen.
- The Child: hope and promise for new beginning, the birth of the Christ child.
- The Self: the God image, human self and the divine self.

Jung’s insight into our consciousness as having a universal existence is helpful in defending an architectural philosophy that proposes to create space that is meaningful to an entire community or culture. The presence of a collective conscious may support the claim that there can be common characteristics of a place that reveal a meaningful existence to larger groups of people, beyond that of our personal experiences. The primary reason for us to understand these concepts is so that we can create physical environments that are based on the objects that form our universal and collective conscious, the easier it is for us to understand what we perceive, the more legible and meaningful our world will likely become, and in such a way that is perhaps more *universally understood*.





# spatial definition

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## boundary

Often when we hear the word space we think of outer space, the universe. Our universe is inconceivable, it is infinite – a concept we find incomprehensible. We only begin to understand the universe in terms of our cognitive abilities once we look at it in relationship to physical objects that define spatial characteristics. The sun, the moon, mars, Jupiter and other stellar objects begin to define our understanding of space, an otherwise intangible concept. Without physical objects we would not be able to gain an understanding of our world or its relationship to our existence; our world would become meaningless. Spatial awareness heightens our awareness of place, whereby it *“engages the full range of senses and feelings, requiring involvement of the whole self”*.<sup>14</sup> When we say that we exist between heaven and earth, we relate our existence to a *“physical position in the universe that is relative to geographic or astronomic features or in relation to elements of the built environment.”*<sup>15</sup> Place consists of space within the lived world of daily experience, space defines the three-dimensional organization of the elements that make up our physical world.

Architecture is the creation of space for human life. The creation of space occurs when space is defined by way of enclosure, *“its character and spatial properties are determined by how it is enclosed.”*<sup>16</sup> It is important to define the qualitative difference between a building and its surroundings. Enclosure is defined by boundaries, the point at which a building *“begins its presencing”*.<sup>17</sup> Interior spaces are defined by floors, walls and ceilings; while exterior spaces are defined similarly by the ground, landscape and the sky. These boundaries define space and provide orientation and an understanding of the contents of place. Boundaries define our personal space as well as our communities, towns, districts and the continent. Robert Venturi wrote that *“architecture occurs at the meeting of interior and exterior forces of use and space”*<sup>18</sup> Boundaries help to define the inside from the outside and the horizontal from the vertical. The ways in which these boundaries enclose space define a particular character. Character denotes an atmosphere or the form of the space-defining elements of a place. Together, space and character constitute what can be termed as the *“basic structure of place”*<sup>19</sup>, and when these two aspects exist a place becomes known or *meaningful*. It is no longer only a mental image, it now takes on a physical presence that we can experience and an experience that can be shared by others.



# spatial identity

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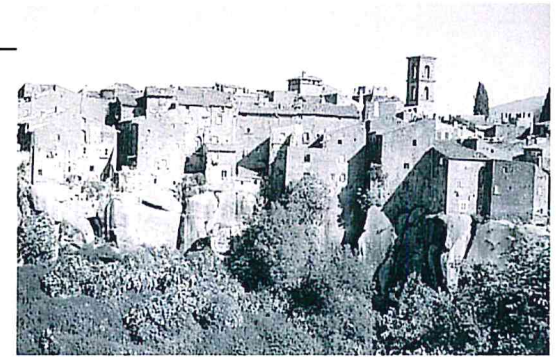
## character

The character of a man-made place is determined by its degree of openness, or enclosure and how it relates to the landscape. A building is characterized by "how" it stands on the ground, within the landscape and in relation to the sky. A building has a presence, it has meaning – its meaning is expressed by its physical structure. Character establishes an atmosphere, giving our world form and substance. The physical structure of our buildings is geographically and culturally defined. How the structure is articulated, based on certain aspects, determines its character. There are three aspects of our environment that can be considered as factors that affect the character of our buildings; these being use, custom and style.

Use of a building or place affects how it is built and can determine its character. Use is not only in reference to a particular function that the space is to conform to; it is also related to how we move about in the world and how we experience place – how we use it. These other aspects of use pertain to arrival (path / entrance), departure, encounter (experience / atmosphere), meeting (social encounter), clarification (context), retreat and isolation.

Customs are a response to the traditions that are found within a locality or culture, or by the vernacular of a particular environment. How a building is structured or constructed should be characteristic of the local traditions, materials and customs. This is seen more evidently in countries such as Rome, Italy, Spain and Norway – where the traditions of building and the use of material have clearly defined the character of the buildings and places of their time.

Style also determines the character of place. Style reflects a *language* that can be understood from country to country because it reflects common meanings or those values found in our universal conscious. Style is composed of forms that are used to create a new totality, as has been evident in the classical, gothic and Romanesque styles of architecture. It is of the opinion of Norberg Schulz that style can renew itself in accordance with "*the spirit of the period which it belongs to*".<sup>20</sup> Style may very well be the result of architecture's attempt to create permanence in the presence of change, which can be viewed as a timeless response to place. Style often becomes indicative of use, where the gothic had been used for churches, the classical for universities and museums or such as today's Frank Gehry and the use of his stylistic approach to architecture which is commonly found to house exhibition spaces.

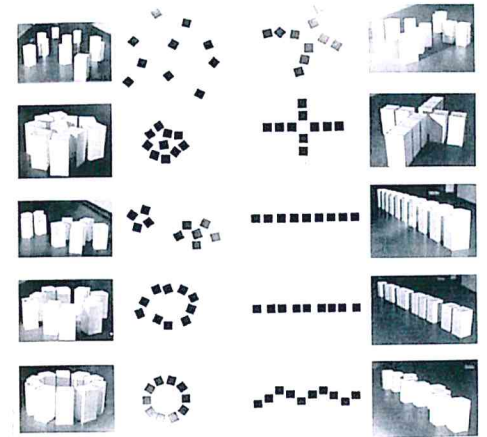




## gestalt psychology

One of the few concepts dealing with spatial perception that has been consistently found in the concept of place has been that of gestalt psychology. This theory claims that *"the whole is greater than the sum of its parts."* Gestalt psychology proposes that our perception of things is made up of a collection of phenomena (visual stimulus) that comprise an understood meaning, one that would not exist if the phenomena were to be looked at individually. Gestalt psychology has offered laws of grouping which lend themselves to architecture with respect to our perception of form in architecture through relationships of the whole of objects grouped in space by proximity, similarity, continuity, closure, commonality and simplicity.

The concepts covered in this theme offer us insight into how we experience our surroundings and how the boundaries that define them can affect us socially, mentally and physically. Space is the tool that architecture uses to attribute meaning to human existence. This meaning is achieved from the value that we give to the forms that comprise our physical environments. We need to recognize that *"space is a necessary part of the structure of our existence"* <sup>21</sup>, and that space consists of an assembly of objects that have individual meaning as well as within a larger context of multiple space and object relationships.



# personal space

Architectural space is where we experience the meaningful events of our existence. Throughout our daily-life we are faced with the public on a regular basis, under a variety of circumstances. People behave differently in different social settings; this aspect of our spatial experience has been the basis for sociologists exploring social psychology. One of the studies of the social effects of space was written by Robert Sommer, entitled *Personal Space, The Behavioral Basis of Design*. In reading this text, we learn the depth of knowledge that is needed in understanding the personal affects of the three types of spaces that exist in every place; the private (primary), semi-private (secondary) and public space. These spaces are explored in depth through a look at the social psychological aspects that affect how humans interact socially in daily life in a variety of settings.

The social aspects of our spatial experience serve as a reminder that building design should not only be focused on building form and its interaction with the environment, but that it must also pay attention to *user behavior*. The social aspect of place deserves strong consideration and should be visibly apparent both inside and outside our building designs. Built environments are there for people and they should demonstrate this through attention to user behavior, social interaction and spaces that suit human nature and human scale. As Sommer states in his text, *"rarely are design awards based on the experiences of the buildings users ...the present system (design based on formal quality) is reasonable if architects are giving themselves awards for sculpture..."*<sup>22</sup>





# public space

One of the six essential needs of human life is social interaction. According to Abraham Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs*, social needs follow the need for life and safety. People have the need to escape the feeling of loneliness and alienation, to give as well as receive love, and to achieve a sense of belonging. This need for belonging and survival has evolved into the cities of today. The city challenges architecture in new ways, providing complex social, cultural, historical, economical and political aspects to the design of place. These aspects will be explored more closely in part two of this thesis as they are more closely related to the site specific. What is note worthy at this time is the work of Kevin Lynch in his book *The Image of The City*.

Spatial awareness is suggested throughout Lynch's book where he speaks of the need for our cities to be legible, *"the ease with which its parts can be recognized and can be organized into a coherent pattern."*<sup>23</sup> People need to structure and identify their environments in order to recognize and find their way in daily life. What is needed within our cities is a strong "environmental image", which is a product of immediate sensation and the memory of past experience. Lynch defines the structure of an environmental image as being its *identity, structure and meaning*.

What Lynch has left us with for the design of cities is a list of the five elements of physical forms that contribute to the image and identity of our cities.

- Path; the path on which the observer moves while observing the city and the other elements that are arranged along or relating to it.
- Edge; linear space defining edge elements, boundaries.
- District; medium to large sections of the city with two-dimensional conceivable extents or limits that have a unique identity of their own.
- Nodes; focal points, the convergence of paths, parks, squares.
- Landmarks; a type of external point reference, a simply defined physical object.

The varying degrees of enclosure afford different opportunities for us to experience space in relation to the landscape and the social fabric of our cities. The degree of openness or enclosure will suggest what sort of interaction is anticipated, welcomed or discouraged. Failure to recognize this aspect of enclosure can create behavioral disorders that disrespect the human aspect of place. We need not only consider spatial characteristics within individual buildings, we also need to create environments that possess an understandable environmental character in consideration of a larger whole.

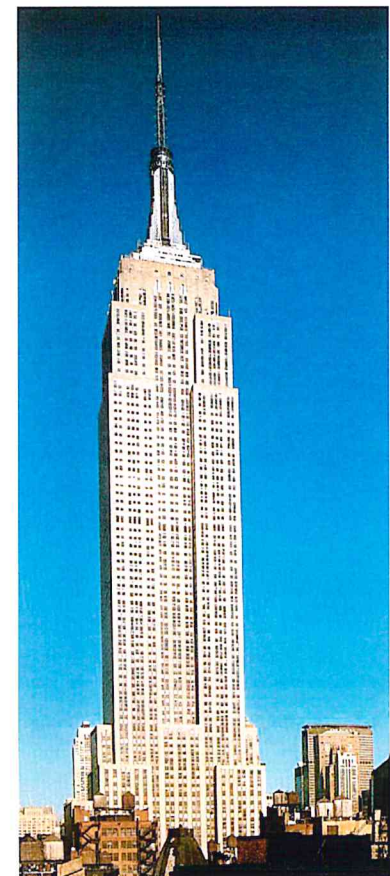


# man made place

Nature exists naturally without the presence of human life. Nature, as we have come to understand, exists for human life and we must therefore live in harmony with it. How man-made place exists in relation to the natural world determines the quality of place and demonstrates a respect between man and nature. We create our built environments to dwell, between heaven and earth. The way in which we choose to dwell symbolizes our existential being and compliments a relationship we share with the natural environment. Therefore man made place must have structure, it must have a sense of enclosure that allows it to relate to its environment. *"A building stands on the ground and reaches toward the sky in a particular way, expressive of its character and responding to its natural surrounding."*<sup>24</sup> Man builds his world, Schulz explains, to symbolize his understanding of nature (things, order, character, light and time).

There are very good early examples of how man built to interpret nature, one being the early Egyptian pyramids, which were symbolic of primordial mountains reaching to the heavens of the sun god. Another is the Ionic temple, with its colonnades that serve as a 'sacred grove' with columns that imitate plant forms of the Egyptian forest. Earlier civilizations have demonstrated to us their understanding of nature in terms of *things, order, character, light and time*. As noted earlier, the process of building man-made place involves a translation of the characteristics of nature through *visualization, complementation and symbolization*.

The creation of man-made place must begin by attempting to concretize our understanding of **nature** and gather **meaning** from the environment, or landscape. Buildings should clearly stand between the **earth and sky**, and should address the **landscape** as an extension of the interior space. Man-made space must also have **order** to define what would otherwise be an intangible natural world. These need be considered in order to reflect a **character** that symbolizes our understanding of place and must address the local culture, customs and style. Man-made place must also comprise the element of **time**, which is the order of succession and change. Time can be represented by the use of spatial properties such as rhythm and direction, but must also be presented through an architecture that presents stability and the ability to retain its identity through time. Changes that occur through time must continue to recognize the genius loci and local qualities of place, which would allow existing places to be interpreted in new ways. As discussed earlier, **style** can be considered to be a timeless response to place that successfully resolves the issues of building form and change through history and time.





# PLACELESSNESS

We are in a new and changing world of science and technology, one that has left us with the inability to distinguish where one place ends and another begins. It is beneficial to talk about what place “is not” in order that we better understand just what *place* is today. The title ‘placelessness’ is borrowed from geographer E. Relph and his book *Place and Placelessness*, in which he attributes the loss of place as an “inauthentic” attitude toward place. Often the loss of place is attributed to changing technologies, those being mass communication, transportation, mass culture, big business, central authority and the economy, to name a few. This loss exists in how buildings relate to human experience, the landscape and the totality of place. Norberg Schulz claims that the Second World War was the turning point from which we begin to experience a loss of place. New settlements are lacking a clear definition of enclosure and density, streets have lost their traditional use and buildings are viewed independently. There is a loss of identity, lack of character; buildings are no longer meaningful in their attention to human experience or their relationship to the earth and sky.



An inauthentic attitude toward place results in environments that are “*closed to the world and to man’s possibilities*”<sup>25</sup>. They become an accepted way of behavior, often found within larger populations or communities and often the result of government imposed regulations or standards resulting in environments that become manipulated for public rather than personal interest. These places fail to address the local context and lack originality, becoming a socially accepted standard based on other criteria, such as efficiency and economy. Other factors that have contributed to placeless environments can be attributed to suburban sprawl, mega-structures, destruction such as that caused by war, abandonment, attitudes and fashion created by mass-media, and the implications caused by changes in transportation. Our experience of space has changed significantly when we consider how we can now visit places across the continent through video or the world-wide-web, gaining knowledge of the place without actually having physically experienced it. Or consider now that we can experience a hot-humid climate, sandy beach and the waves of an ocean, all within a shopping centre amusement park during a cold snowy winter day. While in Vegas, you can visit New York City or Paris, gaining an experience based on someone else’s preconceived notion of *what* you should experience and *how* you will experience it.

Many of today’s man-made environments fail to recognize the importance of their relationship with man and nature and those concepts that have been presented in the first part of this thesis. What is needed today is an architecture that uses as its basis - principles for design that are based on a philosophy derived from the concept of place, giving buildings and places individuality with regards to space and character, addressing local customs and style and recognizing their primary purpose for human experience.

# PRECEDENTS

Following are examples of how architecture poses questions and offers new directions of thought. These are not abstract ideas; they are actual built works by architects. They all represent attempts toward an architecture of place, demonstrating the principles that have been explored in part one of this thesis. These examples will be evaluated on their ability to address the concepts of meaning, space and the environment.

## PAST

We often make reference to places of ancient time, finding them full of mystery and meaning, wisdom and intrigue. The architecture and societies of ancient Rome and Greece offer fine examples of environments that demonstrate the concepts of place. Although they had their problems associated with their time, they have held with them a sense of place that can be understood and experienced to this day. Many of these places we now refer to as the wonders of the world, some have held this title for thousands of years, experienced as we experience them now some thousand years ago today.

### the great pyramid – giza, egypt

#### meaning

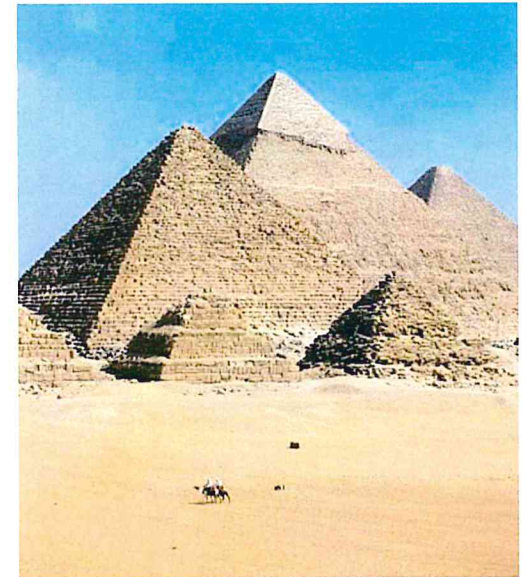
The pyramid is aligned with the cardinal points of the compass, a relationship to the cosmos that extends within through the filtration of light along its tunnels as well as externally as its form sits firmly on the earth and directs attention toward the heavens. What remains of its meaning is through the mystery surrounding its creation and its purpose, although believed to be burials for the Pharaohs, no corpses were ever reported to be found within the pyramids tombs.

#### space

The external form of the pyramid is based on one of the most common geometric solids that form many of today's archetypes, the triangle. Internally, the pyramids are a mass of material, giving way only to a areas that were believed to house the tomb of the pharaohs and kings. In relation to human scale, the pyramids are successful in stating their permanence and an awareness of their social hierarchy, representing the eternity of Egyptian culture and the eternity of death.

#### environment

It is not only the form of the pyramids that express their permanence; the limestone used in its construction is also a symbol of permanence and the locality. The material and shape would respond well to the local climate and harsh environment of the desert. The form used clearly identifies the significance of the buildings purpose and leaves us with an unmistakable sense of place.





## PRESENT

The modern movement started an era in which architects decided there was a need for change, a time to do away with the remnants of the past and focus on a new architecture. Early modernism was successful in its attempt to define a new style, free from historic references or images of the past. It did not succeed in its attention to human experience and held a consequential relationship to locality. This failure was recognized by several noteworthy architects of the early modern era whose works can be seen as an attempt at a recovery of place. Following are the contributions that these architects have given to the present period in architectural thought.

### frank lloyd wright

Wright has continually demonstrated to us his attention to the relationship between building and site. Wright dissolved what was becoming the traditional box into an interplay of horizontal and vertical planes and elements. Wright reminds us that architecture does not only take place within walls, that it also extends into the landscape.

#### fallingwater – 1937



### alvar aalto

Aalto's approach toward architecture adapts the spatial structure of his buildings with the surrounding space, giving his buildings an outspoken local character and individuality. Aalto's work was said to have been a return to an architecture of regionalism where he created new ways that resulted in buildings that responded to site through the use of material and form.

#### Church of three crosses – 1955



### le corbusier

LeCorbusier had gone through a *patient search for reality* as his architecture developed into one that demonstrated true presence and character. Corbusier blamed the turmoil of his time on the fact that people lived badly. Corbusier wanted to create a new adobe, one where the institutions are determined by the experience of living and not imposed by government. The result would be a traditional relationship between community and private life.

#### ronchamp – 1955



## louis kahn

Kahn's approach to architecture had shown a sense of self-confidence and faith that was lacking in earlier modern works. Kahn answers his own question of "what a building wants to be" through the use of space, character and light. Kahn interplays open and closed spaces while recognizing the threshold between interior and exterior space. Kahn addresses the many aspects of place that can be summed up in his quote *"the sun was not aware of its wonder until it struck the side of a building"*.<sup>26</sup> Kahn's work revealed a built order, returning to traditions of building that recovered a sense of truth in building design.

### unitarian church – 1959



## jorn utzon

Utzon's contribution is found in his design of buildings that demonstrate strong figural character in relation to their landscape. Utzon's work has expression that goes beyond the function, which reaches out to new possibilities. What Utzon has done is recaptured the relationship that a building has with the earth and the sky.

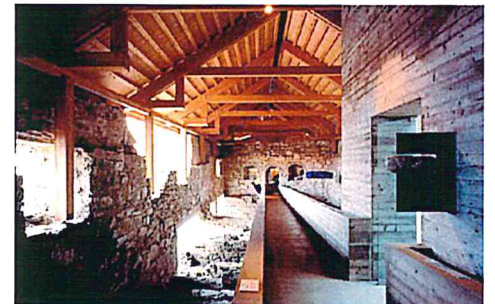
### sydney opera house – 1973



## sverre fehn

The architecture of Norwegian architect Sverre Fehn provides examples of works that exhibit a will to exist. Fehn bases his forms on clear construction and the use of common building typologies; such as hallway, porch, bridge, tower, etc. creating buildings that respond more to our common knowledge of place rather than pure locality, giving meaning to a much larger context. Fehn cites his architecture as *"a construction of harmony, rhythm and honesty"*<sup>27</sup> in an attempt to make people aware of the beauty of the site through a poetic quality of building.

### hedmark cathedral museum – 1991





## FUTURE

Architecture has always had its constraints and difficulties to overcome or adapt to in order to resolve the programmatic, economic and building design issues. Today's philosophical, social, economical and technological issues bring unique and never before considered factors to the forefront of design – but the approach remains the same as it has since ancient times, what is needed is an architecture that returns to man and nature and the things themselves. The following works are those that approach today's changing world with new direction to create buildings that challenge our willingness to accept change and provide us with a renewed sense of their place in our physical world. These are followed by a select few projects that demonstrate how a difficult program can address a functional use and still respects a meaningful existence and a relationship to nature.

### renzo piano – environment

Italian architect Renzo Piano illustrates strong visual character in his buildings that respond well, not only to the locality, but to the local culture and customs as well. His architecture is said to be a rare “melding of art, architecture and engineering”<sup>28</sup> with a deep understanding in his use of material and respect for habitability.

*“The structure on which the building stands is normally made out of materials from the place itself: it is like a bas-relief carved into the site. This means that every project has a topographical component. To interpret the “placeform”, every project requires a specific study, a deep understanding of its history, geography, geology, and climate.”<sup>29</sup>*

It's certainly reassuring that architects continue to speak of such respect for the relationship between building, form, material and site. As long as we continue to understand the importance of this relationship, the architecture should continue to address it.



## frank gehry – built form

Gehry's belief has long been that architecture is art, in his intelligent and controlled use of sculptural geometric forms and materials that offer original works of architecture. His buildings are viewed as *"juxtaposed collages of space and material"*<sup>30</sup>, often like the setting of a stage for the theatre that is to take place inside them. His buildings are stylistic to the extent that they work closely with a use that can be suited to almost any country. Gehry claims his buildings exhibit a sense of discovery and delight to its users, creating an adventurous and sculptural form that resolves the synthesis of form and function in an architecture that is creative art.



## tadao ando – meaning

Ando *"combines artistic and intellectual sensitivity"*<sup>31</sup> in an architecture that *"serves and inspires"*<sup>32</sup>. In an interview recently with Architectural Record magazine, Ando states that *"people always relate to spirit of place, or a spirit of the time – without this spirit modern architecture cannot fully exist."*<sup>33</sup> Ando successfully manipulates form, space and light, taking the site as its queue, creating an architecture that balances tangible man-made form with an intangible natural world.





## RESPONSE TO MAN AND NATURE

### waste water treatment plant – cold spring harbor, long island

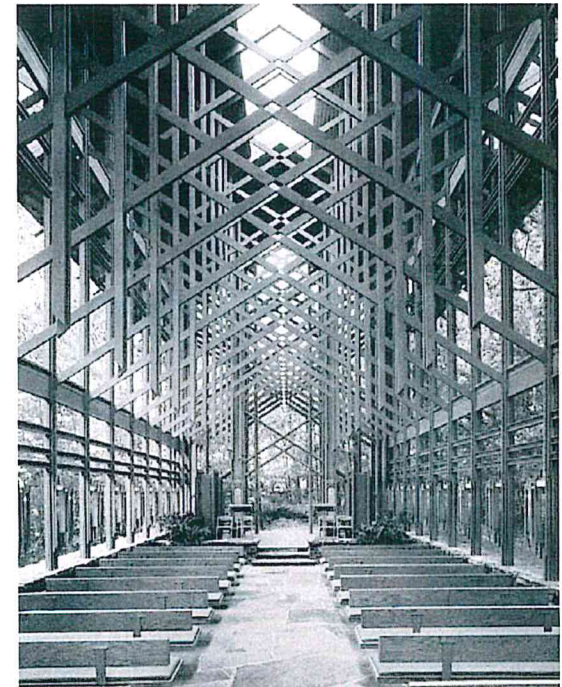
This project has made a biological waste water treatment plant into a sensitive treatment of natural views, landscape and public space. The need for an expansion to Cold Spring Laboratory for a waste water treatment facility faced the fact that the most suited location for the treatment plant was also one of the most desirable landscapes with opportune views of Cold Spring Harbor. By burying the building as deep into the landscape as possible and creating a landscaped terrace and public viewing area above it, the design generated a building that was a visual asset to the landscape.



### thorncrown chapel – eureka springs, arkansas

The desire to construct a chapel on an eight-acre wooded hillside without destroying the natural elements of the site has resulted in a rather gothic feeling wood and glass structure that stands at one with the site as well as with itself. While the building respects the natural site, it is also successful in creating a space of its own - characteristic of its adjacent site and poetic with its structure.

This building had to respect the fragile natural setting and allow for its construction with materials that could be carried along a narrow hillside path by men. The resulting building is a display of a poetic wood structure clad in glass that receives an ever changing play of light and shadow creating a *"natural ornamentation of the structure and the space"*<sup>34</sup>.



## RESPONSE TO MAN AND CITY

### housing the homeless – street city: toronto, ontario

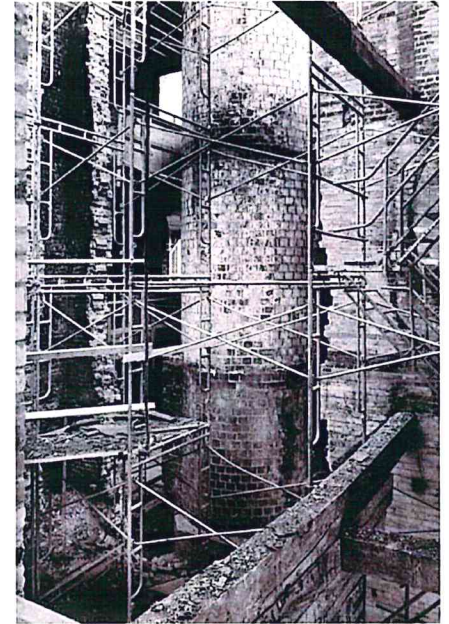
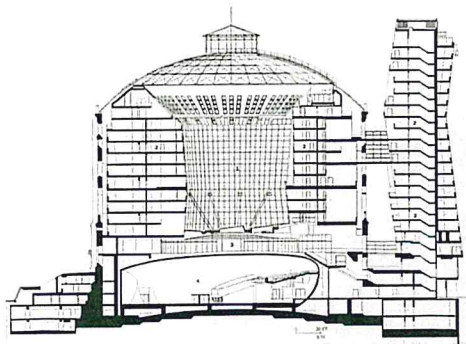
Often looked at as having negative impact on the image of our communities, low income housing projects very seldom take on such grand meaning as this project by Public Works Architects. This project looked at housing, not for the low income but for the homeless. What was needed was an environment that met the needs of the homeless, street people. The architects transformed a turn-of-the-century warehouse into a street-city, three floors of housing linked by internal public streets. Each floor deals with special needs, from those recovering from addictions to those with illness, who have been battered to all male and all female housing.

The project is a difficult undertaking, whose success can not be predicted, but yet it is a note-worthy endeavor for architecture to try and resolve the problems of a homeless society.

### housing and preservation – gasometer: vienna, austria

In search for a permanent means to reuse the landmark structures that were the remains of four 230-foot diameter masonry fuel storage tanks built in 1896 that surprisingly were originally built with a brick castle-theme exterior, Coop Himmelb(l)au architect was selected for his creative design solution for 600 housing units.

The solution restores the masonry cylinders with a separate internal structure that supports 13 stories of apartments, shops, offices and a 3,000 seat performance hall. In order to satisfy the housing requirement, a separate building was added as a structure that was to resemble the “void of the cylinder unrolled”, resulting in what the architect says is a structure that was to be “at least equal to what was there”.



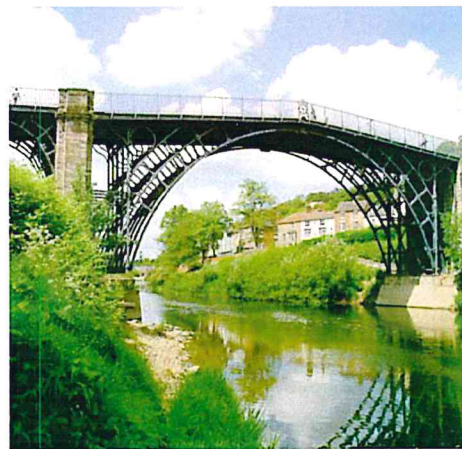


## precedents concluded

It is difficult to decide where to end this overview of noteworthy architects and architectural projects. It is impossible to choose only a few, but it is necessary to limit them to only those that have been thoroughly covered by other architectural sources. It should be considered a good sign that we can find so many examples of work by architects that demonstrate an attempt at recognizing place as the basis for their resolution of programme and site.

There is an intentional hesitance to continue further for the reason that has been expressed earlier under the topic of placelessness; that we can now be lead to believe that we have actually experienced a place by way of magazine articles, television shows, photos, videos or a friend describing their own experience of a particular place, without having actually experienced the place ourselves physically. How can we describe an emotional response to a place that we have never physically experienced? We can't. For this reason I have tried to generalize my statements for the examples I have included in this section titled PRECEDENTS. The comments have been based on reviews of previously written articles, personal knowledge and insight from the extensive research on place that has been gained in this thesis.

The samples covered by these precedents are those that have contributed positively toward a recovery of place, not only in architectural design – but in the world.



## concluding thoughts

To ask what is architecture is really no different than asking what is place? Three elements must be present in order for *place* to exist - **man**, **nature** and **space**. The presence of these elements alone do not create meaningful places; these three elements can also be present in placeless environments. The purpose of this thesis in defining the concept of place is in an attempt to reveal the characteristics of these three elements that must be present in order for a place to be experienced as meaningful. This was the basis for part one of this thesis.

## what is place?

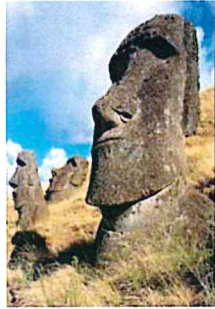
Place is the philosophical aspect of architectural theory that recognizes the existence of man and the spirit of nature. This has been the basis of architectural design and philosophical thought since the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle and was the primary intent of the modern movement that saw LeCorbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright, Louis Kahn and others search for an architecture that would *restore the fracture between thought and feeling*.

## does place exist today?

This thesis does not suggest that place does not exist nor that it has never existed in architectural design. The purpose of this thesis is to recognize the physiological aspects of our existence and understand the need for meaning in our built-environments; because all too often in today's changing technological world, missing are those qualities that facilitate a meaningful existence between man and nature. It is through the meaningful intentions of the architect, and not the process of building – that we can heal the *"fracture between thought and feeling"*<sup>35</sup> and create places that are *"open to man's possibilities"*.<sup>36</sup>







$$\begin{array}{ccccc}
 \text{past} & + & \text{present} & = & \text{future} \\
 \hline
 \text{man} & + & \text{nature} & = & \text{space}
 \end{array}$$



In conclusion we can consider this interesting comparison of natural evolution through history and time and the three elements of place.

The past demonstrated to us man's strong association with the heavens and the gods. Man's existential relationship with the world was the primary emphasis.

The present has recognized the significance of nature and our relationship to the earth. Technological change has caused us to realize that we have lost sight of the importance of the relationship between man and nature.

Together, these two aspects – past and present, and man and nature; represent our future and the future of architecture and the creation of space for human dwelling.

The following two pages were presentation boards used for Part One of this thesis.  
(Refer to the end of the thesis report for noted Appendices).

# making sense of place

We live in a city that is situated in a beautiful natural environment - but there is a weak connection between the city and its natural environment. What is needed is a bridge, which is representative of the opportunity that exists in creating an awareness of place, a connection between man and nature through the act of building.



## OBJECTIVES

- i. re-establish a connection between man and nature through a philosophy of place  
*"to symbolize man's position within the natural world"*
- ii. establish a spirit of place that will guide the design of a built-environment on the local waterfront  
*"determine what the site wants the building to be"*

## a philosophy of place

### i. man

- human existence
- existentialism / phenomenology
- consciousness
- perception / cognition



We build to create order within the natural world - we build in reflection of our inner self and how we view our internal world in relation to the external world. If the external built environment is universally understandable, it will provide us with a meaningful existence. We must foster this spiritual and philosophical aspect of the human character in our built environments - engaging man both physically and emotionally, otherwise the environment becomes meaningless and lacking in originality.



### ii. nature

- genius loci
- feng shui / pattern language
- natural place
- man-made place
- mysterious place

We need to interpret the site so that we can appropriately modify it to suit our needs in such a way that we compliment its existing character and the spirit of place.



### iii. space

- boundary
- space
- character
- personal space
- public space
- gestalt

Our external world is defined by an arrangement of objects in space, referred to as the built environment. Our understanding of the built environment is a reflection of our conscious knowledge of space. This knowledge can be universal among certain cultures and is affected by the influences of the external world. We need to be reminded that architecture is not only an act of construction, but that it should acknowledge the existence of man and the spirit of nature.



## characteristics of place

- give meaning to our existence by facilitating our existential connection with nature
- emphasize the local atmosphere or spirit of place
- give value to built-form through a respect of the local customs, traditions, culture and history
- provide a unique spatial experience through a clear definition of structure, space and boundary, while still permitting the space to extend into the locality

"architecture literally and symbolically overcomes the forces of nature to provide shelter. In the pre-industrial past, the production of meaning in architecture relied upon structured references to and associations with nature. Modern architecture embraced the machine analogy instead of the organic analogy. Although machines are often designed on the basis of natural systems, their use as a formal model prevented architecture from referring directly to nature. This is problematic because despite technological advances, symbolizing man's position within the natural world remains one of architecture's primary roles."

Kate Hesbitt, on the recovery of place in architecture



## theoretical component

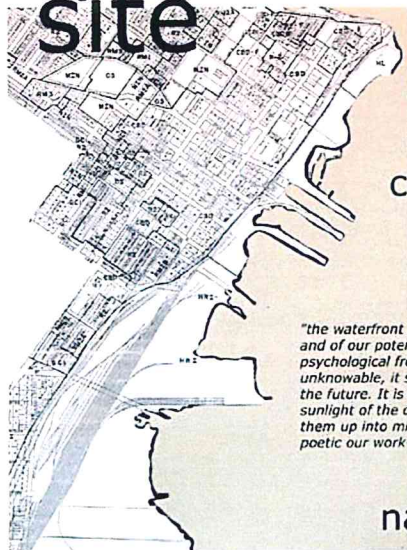
"acknowledging the existence of man and the spirit of nature"

Thunder Bay Chapter of the RAIC Syllabus D9 - Thesis Studio Cory Stechynshyn (ON880006) June 2002



making sense of

# site



## context



"the waterfront becomes symbolic of our human limitations - and of our potential. It functions as both a physical and psychological frontier. By representing what is deep and unknowable, it suggests both our hopes and our fears for the future. It is a shimmering mirror which reflects the sunlight of the day and the city lights of the night, breaking them up into millions of sparkling rays, abstracting and making poetic our work-a-day world"

Jon Rubin, on waterfront access.

## nature



## history



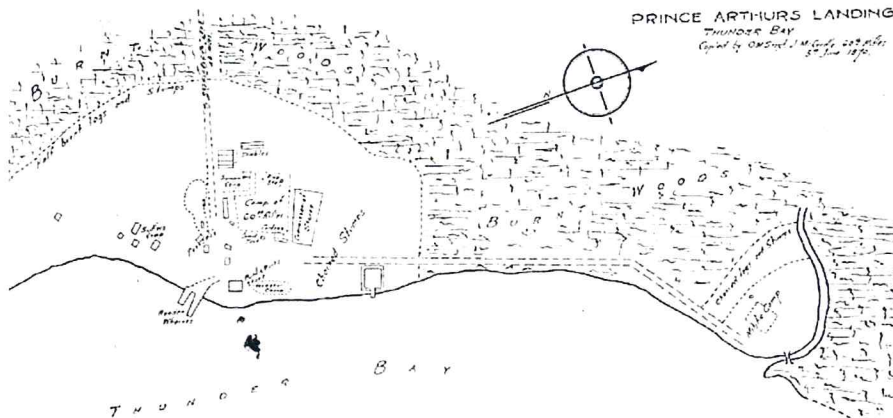
## influence of man



## OBJECTIVE:

- ii. establish a spirit of place that will guide the design of a built-environment on the local waterfront.

The focus of part-two of this thesis will be on the idea that city planning and architecture should evolve from a respect for human values and human experience within a community that affords opportunities for a meaningful experience between man and nature while recognizing the need for economic development, technology and growth.



The waterfront represents the local spirit - the character of the city. Mechanization has taken control of the local waterfront, man has lost his connection with nature, resulting in a loss of place - a lost opportunity for developing an identity and creating a sense of place.

The challenge now is to restore man's relationship with nature in a way that is harmonious with the locality, history and industrial activity that contribute to its unique sense of place.



## sense of place

"acknowledging the existence of man and the spirit of nature"

Thunder Bay Chapter of the RAIC Syllabus: D9 - Thesis Studio: Cory Stechshyn (ON880006) June 2002

## ENDNOTES – PART ONE.

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- <sup>1</sup> Kate Nesbitt, Theorizing A New Agenda for Architecture – An Anthology of Architectural Theory.
- <sup>2</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz, Architecture: Presence, Language, Place. Skira Editore, Milan. 2000.
- <sup>3</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz, Genius Loci, quotes Martin Heidegger from Language in Poetry , 1971.
- <sup>4</sup> Existentialism – A Primer, *weblink: [www.tameri.com/csw/exist/exist.html](http://www.tameri.com/csw/exist/exist.html)*. Christopher Scott Wyatt.
- <sup>5</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz, Architecture: Presence, Language, Place, *quotes LeCorbusier*.
- <sup>6</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz, Genius Loci, *quotes Martin Heidegger from Language in Poetry* , 1971.
- <sup>7</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz, Architecture: Presence, Language, Place, *quotes Martin Heidegger*.
- <sup>8</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz, Architecture: Presence, Language, Place. Skira Editore, Milan. 2000.
- <sup>9</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz, Architecture: Presence, Language, Place. Skira Editore, Milan. 2000.
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- <sup>11</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz, Genius Loci, Towards A Phenomenology of Architecture. Rizzoli, New York, 1984.
- <sup>12</sup> E. Relph, Place and Placelessness. Pion Ltd., 1976.
- <sup>13</sup> Webster's Dictionary.
- <sup>14</sup> Edmund Bacon, Design of Cities.
- <sup>15</sup> E. Relph, Place and Placelessness. Pion Ltd., 1976.
- <sup>16</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz, Genius Loci, Towards A Phenomenology of Architecture. Rizzoli, New York, 1984.
- <sup>17</sup> Martin Heidegger, quotation from his book The Poetics of Dwelling.
- <sup>18</sup> Robert Venturi, Complexities and Contradiction in Architecture. Baronet Litho Inc., NY, 1977.
- <sup>19</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz, Genius Loci, Towards A Phenomenology of Architecture. Rizzoli, New York, 1984.
- <sup>20</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz, Architecture: Presence, Language, Place. Skira Editore, Milan. 2000.
- <sup>21</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz, Genius Loci, Towards A Phenomenology of Architecture. Rizzoli, New York, 1984.
- <sup>22</sup> Robert Sommer, Personal Space, The Behavioral Basis of Design. Prentice-Hall, 1969.
- <sup>23</sup> Kevin Lynch, The Image of The City. M.I.T. Press, 1960.
- <sup>24</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz, Genius Loci, Towards A Phenomenology of Architecture. Rizzoli, New York, 1984.
- <sup>25</sup> E. Relph, quoting Heidegger. Place and Placelessness. Pion Ltd., 1976.
- <sup>26</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz, Genius Loci, Towards A Phenomenology of Architecture. Rizzoli, New York, 1984.



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- <sup>27</sup> The Pritzker Architecture Prize website, [www.pritzkerprize.com](http://www.pritzkerprize.com)
- <sup>28</sup> The Pritzker Architecture Prize website, [www.pritzkerprize.com](http://www.pritzkerprize.com)
- <sup>29</sup> Renzo Piano quote. Renzo Piano Workshop website. [http://www.rpwf.org/frame\\_works.htm](http://www.rpwf.org/frame_works.htm)
- <sup>30</sup> The Pritzker Architecture Prize website, [www.pritzkerprize.com](http://www.pritzkerprize.com)
- <sup>31</sup> The Pritzker Architecture Prize website, [www.pritzkerprize.com](http://www.pritzkerprize.com)
- <sup>32</sup> The Pritzker Architecture Prize website, [www.pritzkerprize.com](http://www.pritzkerprize.com)
- <sup>33</sup> Tadao Ando Speaks for the Record, p.172. Architectural Record, 05/2002. McGraw Hill Company.
- <sup>34</sup> Places: Quarterly Journal of Environmental Design, Vol. 4 No. 4. MIT Press, 1987.
- <sup>35</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz, Architecture: Presence, Language, Place, *quotes LeCorbusier*.
- <sup>36</sup> Kate Nesbitt, Theorizing A New Agenda for Architecture – An Anthology of Architectural Theory.



part  
2

# part two

## site - creating an awareness of place

Place, in part, is a learned experience - it is therefore quite personal and is interpreted differently by each individual as well as by our cultural influences. Part Two of this thesis is interested in creating a sense of place that is experienced meaningfully both by the individual as well as larger groups of people. We are not always aware of the place around us, the places where we live, work and play. The purpose of this thesis is to create awareness, where we become more aware of our surroundings and how they play a significant role in our quality of life.

Part One began by developing an understanding of our personal experiences of space and concluded with a proposal that there are three elements that must be present in order for place to exist and that the way in which these elements were presented to us developed meaning to our existence and our experience of space. *Man, Nature and Space* need to have a meaningful presence in order for us to experience space in a way that creates what we have come to understand as a sense of place. Because our fondest memories are developed while we are growing up, we find the place that we were raised to be the most memorable and meaningful. In cities this is found in how we identify with the city throughout our daily lives, how our place on this earth symbolizes our personal understanding and memory of place that we prefer to call *home*.

The primary reason we leave the places in which we live is for work. The primary reason we remain in any given place is family and friends. Whether we live in a place by choice or by necessity, our lives will be more meaningful when our conscious memories of home exist, when there exists a greater sense of place or meaning within our lives. It is for this reason that cities need to establish an identity that define the values of its people and the physical characteristics that define it as a place. Kevin Lynch explored this aspect of our physical world in his book *"The Image of the City"* in which he explores the *"Imageability"*<sup>1</sup> of our cities – the ability for the physical objects of our environments to evoke an image that is recognizable and meaningful to a general population of a given area. The entire city reads cohesively to create an image that reflects its purpose, its past, its direction and the people who choose to live there.

My aim is to establish the qualities of place in the City of Thunder Bay that keep us here and perhaps one day will be responsible for our return. This city prides itself on its quality of life. We seem to know why we want to live here, yet we haven't figured out how (see Appendix – History of Thunder Bay). What is missing within the city is a local image in which the connection between man, nature and space is physically present to differentiate our place among others. This image would be representative of the local heritage, attitudes and beliefs that define our quality of life.



## spirit of place

This strikingly mysterious concept is spoken of far more than it is understood. It is my opinion that it would take us a life-time of study only to find that we have misunderstood the meaning of the concept. This is certainly a phenomenologicalistic attitude, but one that is in keeping with the existential depth of this subject matter. The term originated from a Greek myth, *genius loci*, which was a guardian spirit that gave life to people and places. This would imply that each spirit is unique, in that it defines the person or the place among other people or places. It is in this way that we can begin to understand the concept of place, in that we need to draw out the unique character or '*spirit of place*' in order to define its presence and our existence in a meaningful way among that which exists within the rest of the universe.

The importance of an appropriate site selection is in finding a place within the city that has an identity, those characteristics or elements of the site and locality that define the local spirit of place. These characteristics will define the sense of place and form the basis for development of a building programme for this site, determining *what the site wants to be*.

*"Architecture comes into being by means of buildings which gather the properties of the place and bring them closer to man."*<sup>2</sup>

Thunder Bay has the advantage of being near the geographical centre of the country. As a result we experience a unique cosmic connection with the universe. We are blessed to be able to experience some of the countries most impressive sunrise and sunsets. Our city sits at the waters edge under a vast sky; we enjoy some of the countries longest daylight hours and appreciate the moonlit nights that highlight the mystery of the waters and the landscape that surround us.

Due in part to our location and largely to our size, we have a greater connection with our natural surroundings than many of the larger communities throughout the world. We desire to work close to nature, strive to protect and maintain it and anticipate the opportunity to experience it. Our quality of life is largely defined by our relationship with the natural surroundings. Local tradition and customs come from this environmental connection, defined by the local cultures and heritage of the community, from the Native customs that live off the land and the European influences that created the industries that thrive off the land and its resources, to the local attitude of settlement and a quality of life that maintains mans connection with nature - our growth and survival as a settlement has been due in part to our location and natural environment. It is difficult to maintain an appropriate balance between continued growth and prosperity of the community while maintaining the quality of our natural environment. This is where we stand out from the rest of the world and this is what defines our *spirit of place*.





# the life of the city

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## our sense of place

### water

Life, without water, would not exist. In our universe, the earth is the only planet with enough water to sustain life. The earth's surface consists of about seventy percent water. Water has become symbolic of life in western religion. Symbols have different meanings to different cultural groups, but water as a symbol of life is widely understood as it is factual in that it is necessary in order to sustain life on the planet. Human settlements depend on a source of water as it is a fundamental aspect of civilization (see Appendix – *Settlement and the City*). Psychologically, water has been most closely associated with our feelings. There is a strong emotional aspect in our experience of space and feelings are related to our emotions. Water therefore, has psychological as well as spiritual and fundamental characteristics to human life.

The City of Thunder Bay is one such settlement that owes its existence to the presence of water. Recognizing the presence of water and its importance to the life and future of our city is an important aspect in defining our sense of place. As the glaciers receded some hundred thousand years ago, they left behind a rich environment that supported a new life. Thunder Bay was left with the presence of a vast body of water; the surrounding lands were rich in mineral deposits and a flourishing natural forested environment evolved. Life took place and today we need to recognize who we are and why we are here. Recognition of the waterfront will facilitate this understanding.

The waterfront is symbolic, meaningful and rich in history - it has a presence and defines the city as a place. Many are aware of the presence of water in this community; however, it has not been recognized as being fundamental to the establishment of an identity for the city. Unfortunately for much of the life that goes on within the city the water has no physical presence, and since place is made present to our conscience through our spatial experiences - we are not aware of its significance in defining our sense of place and in forming an identity for the city.

The aim of Part Two of this thesis is to emphasize the importance of the water in defining a local identity and its role in the history and heritage of the city – creating an awareness of place.



## site selection

### finding our sense of place

It was important to establish the value of the waterfront in creating an awareness of place within the city in order to direct attention to where the land meets the water, where man meets nature. Some 27 miles or 43 km of waterfront define the physical edge to our city. The water shapes our city like it has shaped the land (see Appendix, *The Local Waterfront*). The city has grown in a lineal direction along with the industries that have spread out along the waterfront, creating the economic base that is responsible for the early growth and survival of the city. As industry consumed the land along the water, the community grew and the people focused their attention elsewhere. We can say that mans existential connection to nature had become severed; the city grew out of necessity rather than choice. In an attempt to recognize our existential connection with the environment, we must look for ways to approach the waters edge, where the land meets the water, and become aware of its presence and its significance in defining what this connection means to our lives and to the future of our city.

*"The waterfront becomes symbolic of our human limitations - and of our potential. It functions as both a physical and a psychological frontier. By representing what is deep and unknowable, it suggests both our hopes and our fears for the future. It is a shimmering mirror which reflects the sunlight of the day and the city lights of the night, breaking them up into millions of sparkling rays, abstracting and making poetic our work-a-day world"<sup>3</sup>*

As we look at the good and the bad that has come from advancements in technology and how our lives and cities have changed or have been affected - we can now appreciate that the current trends are creating situations where the once undesirable, abandoned and vacant lands that we had all but forgotten, are becoming available for integration into the communities that they belong to. Our attention can once again be turned toward the source that nourishes our community and begin to utilize its presence to enhance our quality of life. The primary purpose of development on waterfront land will be to provide an opportunity to create a local and regional awareness of the important role that the city has in maintaining equilibrium between the growth of our cities and in maintaining the quality of the environment.





## history of development on the waterfront

Our existence relies on water and the city the waterfront. The local history (see Appendix) is abundant, going back thousands of years to the earliest native settlements. Some 9,900 years ago the earliest inhabitants the 'Anishinabeg' (original people) arrived to hunt bison around Lake Minong as the glacial formations receded. By 1679 the European fur trade brought the first fur trading post to the Kaministiquia River and by 1807 the North West Company established the Fort William near the mouth of the same river. As settlements took shape in and around the area, the minerals that enriched the soils were discovered. In 1865 gold, silver, copper and iron ore mining became prevalent in and around the area, leaving us with the Silver Islet and Sleeping Giant heritage (see Appendix – *Urban Legends*).

In 1870, the terms of the Dominion of Canada were to see the Pacific Coast joined to the remainder of the country by a transportation system. The construction of Dawson Road began in 1871 at Prince Arthur's Landing, just south of the current Pool Six site. This road was to join the area to the western provinces. This was the beginning of activity in the north harbor. In 1875 the Canadian Pacific Railway made a decision to construct the first local railway station along the Kam River, in close proximity to the Fort William. The creation of a rail system that would join the east and west provinces of the country brought a demand for railway ties, train trestles, bridges and wharf structures which can be attributed to the beginning of the forest industry in this area. Along with the forest industry, the impact of the railway also saw the construction of the Canadian Car and Foundry Company (Can Car) built in the early 1900's to manufacture rail cars. In an attempt to save face for losing a bid to have the rail car foundry constructed on the north side of the city, the Ontario and Western Car Company was built in 1908 which as early as 1909 was re-established by James Whalen as the Western Dry Dock and Ship Building Company, what is now known as the Port Arthur Ship Building Company.

With the railway and shipping came the grain movement and the construction of the local grain elevators, the first of which was built in 1883. It wasn't long before the local waterfront became home to the first elevator constructed from concrete as well as one of the largest grain elevators ever built in the world. Industry was the focus and the people at the time of Thunder Bay's early industrial history were *"willing to endure great hazards and discomforts for the sake of what such factories represented – progress, wealth, power and urban maturity."*<sup>4</sup>

The growth of industrial activity on our harbourfront has brought the city to where it is today; we are now mature enough to accept what we have done wrong and to appreciate what we have done right, and it is now time to decide how we want to proceed into the future.





## the waterfront today

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### the working harbor

Characterized by its monolithic concrete structures, rail-yards, pulp trucks and overwhelming stacks of stockpiled trees, the Thunder Bay waterfront is known as a place of heavy industry and public inaccessibility. Lake Superior's beauty and power are camouflaged by grain elevators, mile long railcars and massive rail-yards. We are afforded very few reminders that the city exists next to one of the largest fresh water lakes in the world.

Thunder Bay's harbour consists of over 43 km of natural lakefront, where the city meets the waters edge. This edge has become inaccessible to the public and the visitors to our city. The industrial waterfront has been the life thread to the city's economic stability, providing employment and a commercial tax base since local history was recorded. This lakefront has clearly been utilized for industrial purposes primarily and it has left a city physically and emotionally separated from it. There are 27 industries that remain in operation within the city today and of these 16 are located on the waterfront. Today the waterfront hosts few select industrial facilities that are still actively operating and several abandoned or derelict facilities that have ceased operations. *"Grain elevators, railway, iron ore and shipping have all been ravaged by the passage of time."*<sup>5</sup> This is a global reality and another era in the evolution of industry and technological advancement. Along the waterfront is only one publicly accessible park and marina. The remainder is disassociated from the city and viewed as unusable industrial wasteland. This disassociation is quite contradictory to the local sense of place and presents a challenge that we face in finding a balance between man and nature and the growth of our city and its economy.

We have now come to the realization that our waterfront is no longer the industrial metropolis that our fore-fathers had once envisioned it to be, and there is a local understanding that we no longer believe that it should be consumed almost entirely by industry. A number of land use studies have been undertaken over the past several years (see Appendix – *Land Use Studies*) and through several local workshops it has become commonplace to hear the words "quality of life" and "environmental quality" in describing the future relationship between the people, the city and the waterfront.

*"There has been clear recognition of the important contribution that the City's natural setting and environmental features make to the quality of life in the City."*<sup>6</sup>



## selection criteria

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Whether we are here by choice or by necessity, it is important for us to feel at home in the place in which we live. Thunder Bay is a community that desires to be close to nature and promotes a better quality of life. We appreciate a greater sense of community and prefer more personal and private relationships. This interpersonal nature has developed a locally talented and qualified economic base that only recently has started to promote itself as an internationally competitive community that aspires to grow and prosper with the rest of the world.

At a time when we aspire to grow to international recognition, we find ourselves lacking in definition of our own unique personal identity. We need to establish who we are as a community so that we can promote ourselves as a unique commodity and provide the community with the quality of life they desire while creating the opportunities we require to grow and prosper.

Several locations along the local waterfront were considered. While there are several kilometers of undeveloped and available lands, there is a need to recognize those that will provide the greatest potential in maximizing a presence and increasing the opportunities for a meaningful experience and awareness of place. The criteria that have been considered in evaluating locations that offered an opportunity for development - are grouped into five characteristics. From these, nine locations were evaluated.

- qualities that are characteristic of our locality
- physical presence within the city
- have significance to the local community
- exists as an undeveloped - placeless environment
- offers opportunities for contributing to community development
- facilitates public access to the waterfront

1. Bare Point Water Treatment Facility – northern most end of north harbor.
2. Mouth of Current River – southerly end of north harbor.
3. Mouth of McVicar's Creek – central harbor.
4. Former Saskatchewan Wheat Pool Site – central harbor.
5. Former Ore Dock – central harbor.
6. Mouth of Neebing / McIntyre Floodway – southerly end of central harbor.
7. Kaministiquia River Heritage Park – on river feeding south harbor.
8. Hardisty Street Warehouse District – next to river feeding south harbor.
9. Hydro Generating Station / Mission River – southerly most end of south harbor.







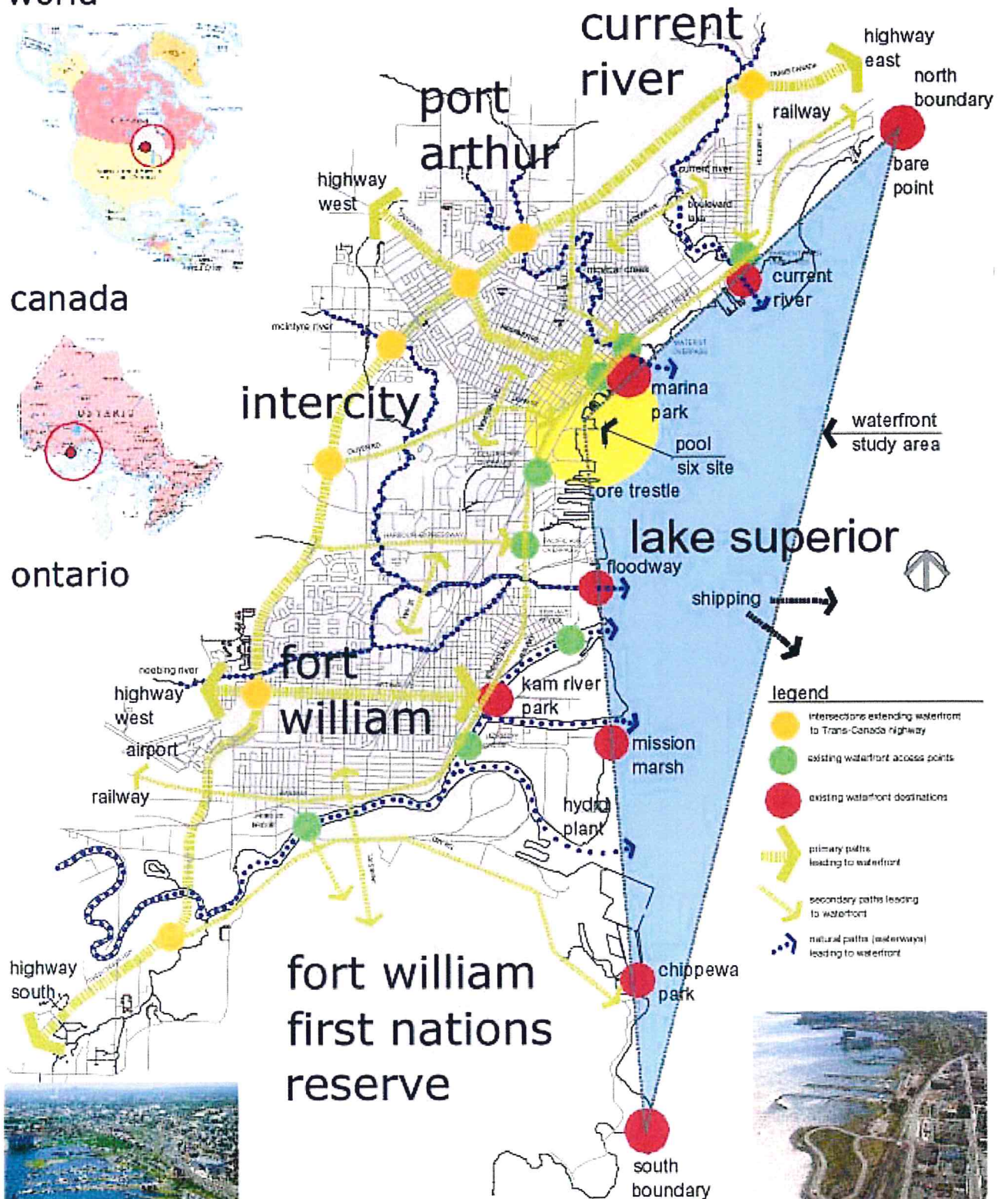
world



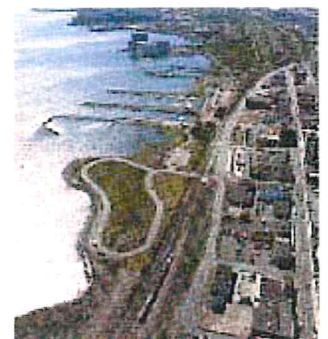
canada



ontario



thunder bay waterfront





# 1. bare point water treatment site

Development of public property would demonstrate a positive civic attitude toward integration of public property and industrial land use. This location was considered for the opportunity it presented in utilizing lands that are remnants of the water treatment facility use and are currently underutilized. This approach was demonstrated in the Precedents in Part One, see page 29 - *Cold Spring Laboratory, Long Island*. Bare point is situated at the most northerly end of what is considered to be the Thunder Bay Waterfront. The presence of wildlife, expansive views and plentiful lands made this location a potential candidate.



## 2. mouth of current river

This location boasts one of the most naturally inspiring waterways that flow into Lake Superior. Connecting back to the city's largest public beach and parkland, the Current River flows from Boulevard Lake, both providing scenic and recreational feature to the north end of the City. At the mouth of the river, the local bedrock creates soothing rapids and a pool for fish habitation. The mouth is set aside the local Port Arthur Ship Builders, which has seen both navy and commercial marine vessels manufactured and repaired. The natural landscape around the mouth of the River is very characteristic of the northwestern landscape, set among active industrial and port activities.





### 3. mouth of mcvicar creek

Another natural waterway that connects back through the city, offering nature and bicycle paths and providing a natural backdrop, McVicar Creek enters Lake Superior just north of the existing Marina Park development – the only publicly accessible marina and park land on the lake. The waterfront land adjacent the mouth of the creek is currently underutilized. The location affords a view along the shoreline and is connected to the existing Marina Park by an existing roadway. One of the largest active industries on the waterfront is located north of the property. The lumber manufacturer utilizes an abandoned grain elevator that sits immediately adjacent the property for loading lumber onto barges.



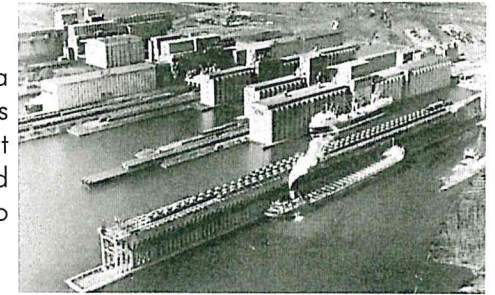
### 4. former pool six site

One of the most publicized and controversial properties in the city, the site of the former Saskatchewan Wheat Pool Six grain elevator is located at the center of the central harbor, immediately adjacent the existing Marina Park to the north and a Lumber Preserving manufacturer to the south. The former Pool Six elevator once sat abandoned and partially demolished until the city acquired the property and, through a joint partnership with an out-of-town developer, had the elevator imploded to make way for future development opportunities. This property is considered to have the most potential for waterfront development with its 53 acres of cleared and undeveloped land.



## 5. former ore dock

Unquestionably one of the cities premier landmarks, this gothic looking structure once served as a transferring facility for the shipment of iron ore from railway cars to sea-going cargo ships. This structure has had a visible presence in the city since it was constructed, and to this day it stands out among the many large grain elevators along the local harbor. The dock sits surrounded by inactive and active elevators to the south and the Lumber Preserving manufacturer to the north. This structure is so large and massive that a reuse would be justified by the potential cost of demolition.



## 6. mouth of mcintyre floodway

The mouth of the floodway, constructed to alleviate flood waters from the cities two main river systems, exits to Lake Superior in a secluded and densely treed waterfront area. The lands surrounding the floodway are undeveloped and are secluded from the adjacent industries. The floodway enters Lake Superior at what has been named the Central Harbor district.





## 7. kam river heritage park

Already showing signs of development, the Kam River Heritage Park is being developed along the cities largest and most historical river. Once providing fur trade transportation to the west, this river system is a large part of the cities local heritage. The river is located at the south end of the city and it enters Lake Superior at what has been named the South Harbor district. This area forms the edge to the downtown south development and the Mission and McKellar Islands. The park is already being developed on the heritage theme, and the future plans are to integrate its development as an extension of the adjacent downtown fabric and through an interconnected system of roads and pathways, connect it to the north waterfront.



## 8. hardisty street warehouse district

North of the Kam River Park, the Hardisty Street area presents an opportunity for commercial and retail development alongside the Kam River, a natural extension to the Kam River parkway. Historic warehouses line the west side of Hardisty Street, creating a pleasant façade against which pedestrian activity would compliment the rivers parkway setting, providing opportunity for local business to establish retail and commercial activity. The east side of Hardisty Street is burdened by one of the cities largest rail yards, cutting off the natural view and access to the river.



## 9. hydro generating station / mission river

Set within a rather dramatic location at the mouth of Mission River, the local Hydro Generating Station offers another opportunity for the development of public property that would demonstrate a positive attitude toward integration of public use property and industrial land. This river is interconnected with the Kam River and forms the southern edge of the Mission and McKellar Islands. The southern side of the river boasts industrial mill activity and ship loading dock facilities. A private marina facility is situated adjacent the site to the west, while the hydro generating station occupies the lands to the east. Access to the area is by Mission Island, an island that exhibits the cities only marsh and marine habitat park on the east edge of Lake Superior.



## final selection

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Consideration was given to all nine of these sites and several visits were made to experience the qualities and conditions that existed at these locations and the opportunities that each presented. Although five criteria were utilized to select the evaluated sites, to finalize my site selection additional criteria were required to be developed in order to choose the site that provided the greatest potential in maximizing a presence and increasing the opportunities for a meaningful experience and awareness of place.

It was important to locate a site that represented an opportunity to express our local spirit of place, a site that would define the identity of our city as a unique and separate place within the region and internationally within a world of changing technology, economy and mass global character.

- qualities that are characteristic of our locality
  - physical presence within the city
  - have significance to the local community
  - exists as an undeveloped - placeless environment
  - offers opportunities for contributing to community development
  - facilitates public access to the waterfront
- 
- has historical significance / value
  - existing conditions and features conducive to redevelopment
  - visual and physical accessibility to existing urban development



## former pool six site

Having been a resident of the city for over 36 years, it seemed undisputable that the Pool Six site would be the one that would fulfill the goal of Part Two of this thesis. None-the-less, it was warranted to consider other opportunities that may have otherwise been overlooked along the remainder of our cities expansive 27 mile waterfront. The other locations that were evaluated certainly present other opportunities that would warrant further study, each having a specific role in the long-term overall development of our cities waterfront and expression of our local sense of place.

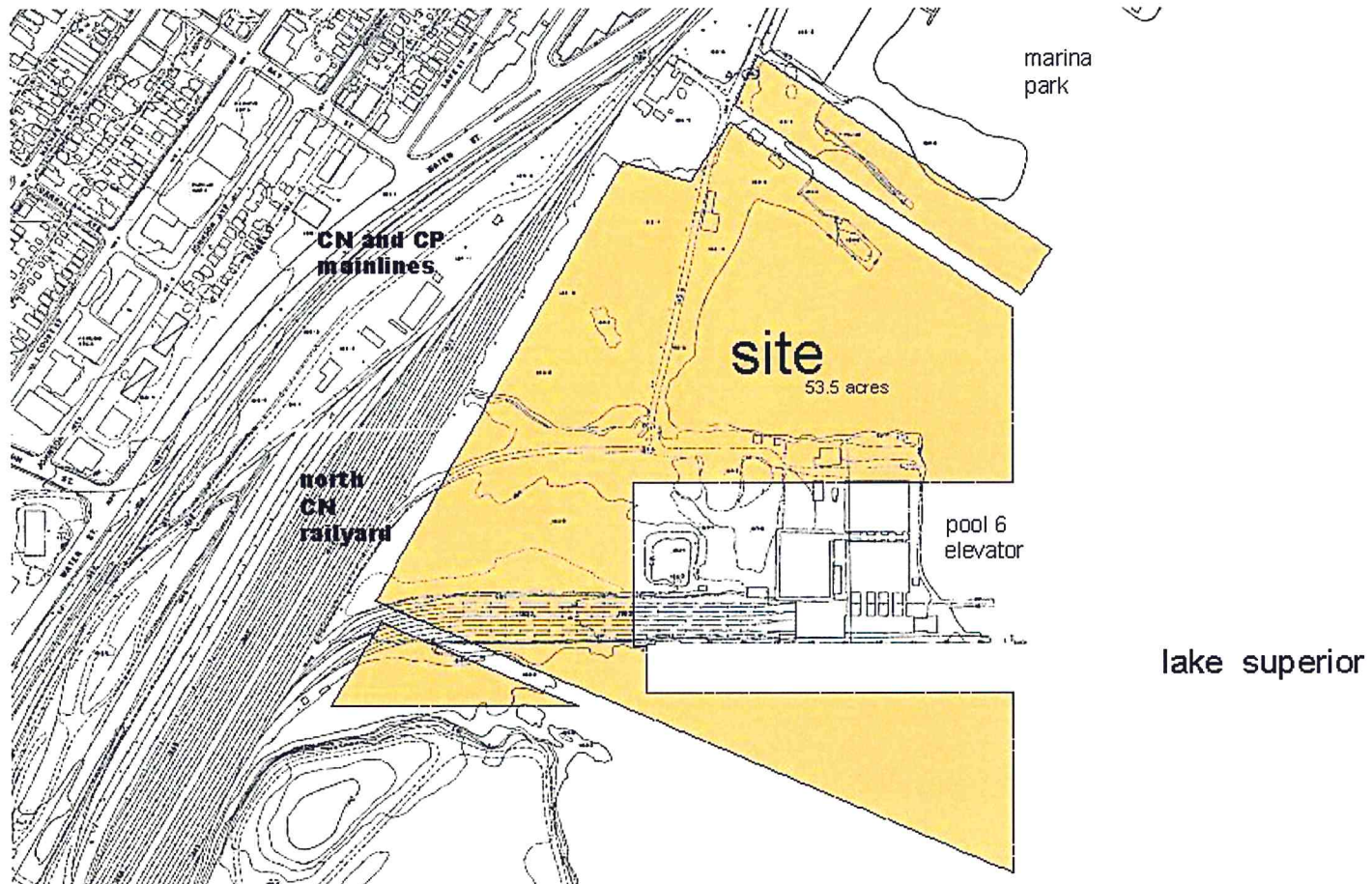
The Pool Six site was chosen because it is most characteristic of the local history, culture and heritage of Thunder Bay and its waterfront and as well it represents the greatest potential for maximizing the success of a development that would be aimed at defining an identity for our city as a place within the universe that is determined to be internationally recognized for its rich natural heritage and unique quality of life that has established a place where our daily-life exists in harmony with the surrounding environment.

Development of the Pool Six site will emphasize the importance of the lake and the local waterfront as an important defining element of a local identity and sense of place within the community. In these times of universal globalization it is important to identify our place within the world. Universalization constitutes a destruction of traditional cultures, where everywhere we travel within the world we can find the same things. This aspect of civilization is the focus of Critical Regionalism, an architectural theory that is *"based in part on phenomenology and seeks the possibility of dwelling in an architecture of greater experiential meaning"*.<sup>7</sup> Author Kate Nesbitt notes that *"critical regionalism has a common concern for place and the use of regional design elements to confront a universalizing architecture"*.<sup>8</sup> The Pool Six site offers an opportunity for greater experiential meaning to the local community and the region at large and this should be the focus of development on the site.



## Existing Site Boundaries.

53.5 acres of land sits vacant abounding the former pool six elevator property. This thesis utilizes the 53.5 acre land area that includes the former pool six site.



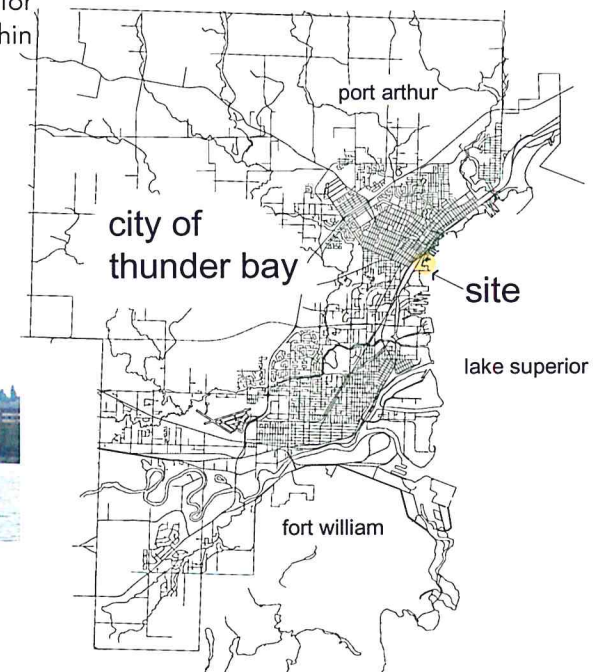


## the pool six site today

Today the Pool Six site sits empty, cleared of its industrial past - all that remain are piles of concrete rubble, remnants of a dock trestle and an office building. Most importantly and soon to be lost is the memory of what this site represents to the history of this city.

The site is nestled between a four-lane roadway running parallel to the waterfront, C.N. and C.P. Railway mainlines, a C.N. rail-yard and sits adjacent an area woodlands operation and a diminished wetland. The property is currently owned by the City of Thunder Bay following a long and very controversial land acquisition that took several years and millions of dollars to finalize. The almost 53.5 acres of property ownership includes water –rights that extend beyond the shoreline and include an area of Lake Superior.

There have been several Land Use Studies over the past 50 years (see Appendix – Past Land Use Studies) that have seen some implementation and others that; although significantly well developed, saw little if any implementation due in part to constrained municipal power and primarily to plans that did not appropriately reflect the local scale, economy or population. So without any definitive plans for development of the pool six site, it warrants a proper evaluation of its potential and of its place within the community.





# what the site wants to be

## genius loci

*"You have the railway on one side, and the water on the other, and with these two you must be a great city. You must be a wealthy city, and I am quite sure the enterprise of those men who have made this their home will be sufficient to make this town what God and nature has designed it to be."*

It was not surprising to come across this speech made by Sir John A. McDonald made upon his visit to this city in 1886 for the ceremonial opening of the western leg of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The most significant reference from this speech is that this town will be *"what God and nature has designed it to be"*. This statement bears a striking resemblance to the theoretical position of a well known architect named Tadao Ando who places significant philosophical value on the building site. *"The presence of architecture – regardless of its self-contained character – inevitably creates a new landscape. This implies the necessity of discovering the architecture which the site itself is seeking."*<sup>10</sup> His position implies a strong presence of place and reinforces the statement made by McDonald in 1886.

It is difficult to understand how a site *wants to be anything* – one may argue that it ends up being what ever anyone wants to put on it. This is true with respect to a self-imposed use, but what if we were to evaluate the locality, the surrounding environment and the existing conditions of the site. Consider the local community and the local image, the sense of place – and let the site speak for itself? Would that not tell us what the site wants to be? Let us consider a lengthy street. As you move along the street there is house, after house, after house. Suddenly you happen upon an empty site between two houses. Does this site want to be another house? Perhaps, or perhaps there is a need now for a convenience store or a chapel to serve the community. Perhaps the site happens to back onto a stream and it is discovered that the stream has supported a grove of oak trees that happen to be the oldest trees in the city. Perhaps then this site wants to be a park so that this can be preserved and shared by the community. This may be the only remaining natural setting for several city blocks.

This simplified example demonstrates the necessity in determining the spirit of a place so that our architecture makes the environment visible and in doing so it involves our daily lives in a way that creates a sense of belonging to the place.



# existing environment

In order to address the question of *what the site wants to be*, we need to first to look at the properties that are present and interpret them in a manner that can be useful in determining what the site wants to be.

The Pool Six site, although mainly created from a filled land base, creates an extension of the inhabited landscape and offers uninterrupted views of the local harbor and distant landscape. There is an abundance of historical reminders that suggest what the site has been and the role it might have played in the larger scheme of things. From within the city, the dramatic location of this property is seen best from Hillcrest Park. There are some scattered forested areas around the perimeter of the site, as well as a small wetland pond that collects rainwater and runoff. Because of the former use of the site, very little natural vegetation exists, except for a growth area on the north-east corner. From the water, this small area of growth provides subtle relief from the vast open space that this abandoned site has created.

The site is surrounded on three sides by the waters of Lake Superior. As a backdrop to the site is the downtown area of former Port Arthur. As one approaches the east end of the property, at the waters edge, it reveals a pebbled beach area that is not found elsewhere along the shoreline.

Characteristic of waterfront lands, this currently unsheltered land mass is subject to the winds off the land from the north-west and the water from the east and south. Tides and waves do not pose a serious threat to the site as there is a controlled water environment within the break wall. Waves do still form, but not to the extent that they do outside the break water.

Being at the edge of the city, the site has a clear view of the expansive sky which sets its place beneath the stars. Sunlight exposure is presently maximized on the site as it is primarily a south-east facing site and there are currently no obstructions creating shade or shadows on the property.





## site characteristics / identity

natural and man-made phenomena

### north shoreline

The north shoreline forms the edge of a sheltered bay that formerly housed a tug boat operation. There are some remaining past references to the tug operation, but currently any added character that would have been gained by the presence of tug vessels and the associated activity remain as only a memory.

Also visible in the adjacent bay are remnants of wooden dock pilings, protruding from the shoreline like soldiers of lost fortune – they compliment the existing natural vegetation growth and create a pattern along the shoreline.

Views along this edge are toward the picturesque Marina Park and further to an abandoned grain elevator and the Great West Timber Mill. Marina activity creates an interesting visual backdrop during the summer season.

This edge of the site is exposed to more extreme climatic conditions with its north facing and unprotected exposure. The shoreline is more rugged and not currently conducive to pedestrian foot traffic.

There is a strong horizontal character along this edge; reinforced by the presence of concrete piers or pile caps that protrude from the ground like tomb stones, reminders of the past Pool Six structure. These piers are aligned lineally in an east – west direction and gradually rise as you move away from the shoreline.



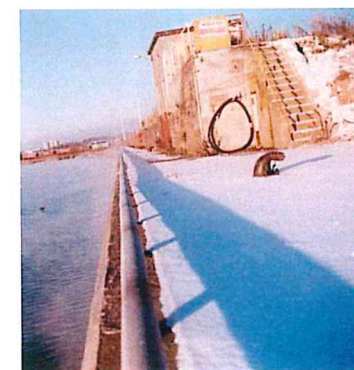
## south shoreline

The south shoreline forms another edge of an embayment for an existing soils remediation project for contaminated soils resulting from the adjacent Northern Woods Preservative Plant operations. This remediation is suggestive of the marine habitat wetland that once occupied this area of the waterfront before it was overcome by local industrial operations. The environmental concern that forced the soils remediation brings light to the fact that we should be focusing more attention on remediation of this area to rehabilitate it as a wetland. This somewhat natural setting in amongst the active industrial backdrop is quite relieving and further development would prove promising in that it would represent a positive attitude toward sensitive management of our local resources and can demonstrate a respect for the local community.



The embayment gives way to a series of industrial properties that continue down the south end of the waterfront, several of which are still active. Flanking these is the unmistakable monolithic structure of the ore dock foundation that remains following the dismantling of the iron ore trestle. This dock is currently one of the most dominant forms on the waterfront.

Along the southern edge of the site remains the original concrete wharf that once received large ships that came to collect the grain for shipment across the Great Lakes. This edge is quite defined by this man made edge, stretching along almost the entire length of the site.





## east shoreline

This would have to be the most characteristic edge of the site, defining how it brings the city toward the water and the water toward the land. The view is astonishing with set against a backdrop of the Sleeping Giant the vast open waters. Standing there you are set out against the sky and the water, standing on the land, you are made aware of the place – what it is, what it once was and what it wants to be.



From the south-east corner the remains of the dock structure extend proudly into the depths of the waters, extending our connection to the lake. We are taken beyond the constraints of the land. The structure is rhythmic, its reflection dances across the water, its vertical elements in harmonious contrast to the horizontal plain of the waters.



Standing like some mythic structure, the concrete remains of the elevators are piled at construed angles among one another. Reminders of a man-made place the large soft masses create a connection between the earth and the sky.



From this shoreline the entire Thunder Bay Harbor opens to sight and the views appear endless down the north and south harbor fronts, creating a strong connection back to the sites place among the locality.



## west boundary

Set as a backdrop along the west boundary of the site is the downtown Port Arthur district. The site extends out from the eastern edge of the city, bringing man closer to nature. This connection however is not physical and at most is not even visual. Physical and visual access is often interrupted by the four lane road way and railway tracks stretching along the waterfront.



Land is plentiful to the west of the site, yet it has been extremely underutilized, due mainly to its inaccessibility and use as a rail car yard.



From this end of the site you are physically connected to the remainder of the waterfront lands. A myriad of roads, railways and paths extend, weave and interconnect the various industrial activities spread out along the waterfront. The dominating presence of the railway is strongly felt and a feeling of intrusion hangs over your head as you attempt to find your way from one location to another.







### CITY AS BACKDROP

*involving the locality...*

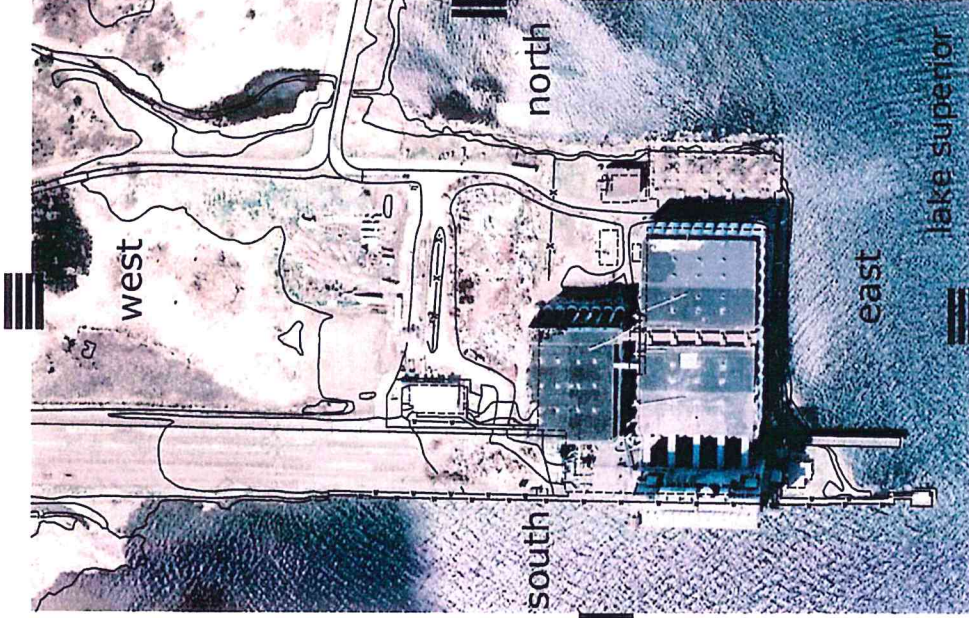
- addressing the presence of city
- extension and access from the city to the waterfront
- gateway to the waterfront
- recognizing opportunity



### INDUSTRIAL PRESENCE

*focus on the future of the interaction between man and nature*

- the activity of the place
- industrial presence
- man-made / edge
- preservation / rehabilitation



### MEMORIES OF THE PAST

*man's influence on place through the passage of time ... the past*

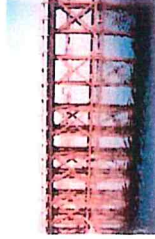
- memories
- remnants, history
- rugged, natural edge
- horizontal, linear patterns
- climate / "sheltering"
- education / awareness
- patterns / symbols



### DESTINATION / WATER'S EDGE

*creating an awareness of what is presently unknown...*

- presence / exposure
- connection to nature / water
- reflection / contemplation
- extended vistas / views
- growth / vision

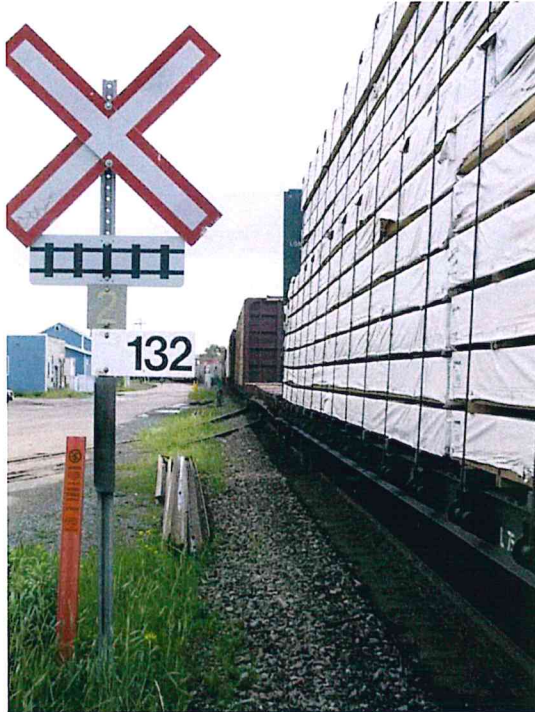




## existing elements

### railway

Although a visual reminder of our transportation and industrial heritage, it is its physical presence that has caused hardship in bringing the city toward the waterfront. The railway has created physical and visual barriers, disconnecting the city from the presence of the water. The railway continues to operate along the waterfront, serving the remaining grain and lumber operations. The Canadian National Railway's north rail yard that occupies a large parcel of land to the west of the site has been earmarked for closure and the lands will one day be available for purchase and development. The goal will be to symbolize the railway in a positive way that reinforces the important role it has played to local industry, prosperity and the history of the city.





## industry

We owe the industrial growth along the harbor front for the growth and maturity of this city. Several primary industries have developed along the water as well as smaller secondary supportive businesses. The most dominant have been the grain elevators, lumber mills, shipping and ship building facilities. These remain the most dominant man-made structures on the waterfront today. While these buildings contribute to the character of the waterfront, they also deteriorate a sense of scale. They often serve as large containers with insignificant activities occurring around them. The land they occupy is not publicly accessible, yet they continue to contribute to our local economy.



## recreation

To date the development of waterfront lands that have been publicly acquired have been primarily for recreational use. This is easily accepted as it affords the public with access to the water and protects a natural environment. This sort of development contributes directly to our local quality of life, but it is passive and is not indicative of a regional identity for the city.

Development should respect and expand on the existing active and passive activities that typically nurture the life and character of urban waterfronts. There is a need to extend access along the vast 27 miles of waterfront, considering pedestrian movement, vehicular, rail and boat traffic.





## nature

Obviously the most distinctive character of the waterfront is the presence of water. The meeting of land and water represents the extent of man's existential being. We meet the water with contemplation; we are mystified at the depths of what is not known. This is perhaps second only to the mystery of the universe and what it represents to our theological knowledge. We have longed to understand life and the universe's natural system of order. Where we have failed to appropriately understand it, we have learned to adapt nature to suit our own needs.

The vegetation that once flourished along the waterfront has been replaced by roadways and concrete structures. The rich wildlife and marine habitat that fed off the environment has been replaced by ships and railway cars. In times when these activities are beginning to diminish and are replaced with more environmentally friendly activities and new technologies, it warrants consideration of what we have taken from the environment. We can now return things to the way they were meant to be and adjust to the natural human ways of working in harmony with nature rather than against it, because after all as far as we know – *"there is only one earth"*.



## proposed site development

### making sense of place

During the months that I visited and documented the existing site, through changing seasons and developing undergrowth, it had become evident that there were four characteristic “edges” that the existing site was revealing. As you make your way through and around its defining edges, boundaries and spaces the site begins to speak to you; each defining edge with its own unique characteristic, meaning and purpose. The site awaits an urban presence; it is alive with memories, it opens your eyes to the surrounding activity and draws you toward the water’s edge; a destination that leaves you in a relaxed state of contemplation – refreshed and clear, your mind wanders to the mysteries that the depths of the lake dare reveal and the legends of the lands that define the local landscape. What this site deserves is a building that addresses these characteristics and makes us aware of their presence, their meaning, their mystery and their value to the life of the city and the region.

*“the building should gather the properties of the place and bring them closer to man.”*

Three underlying principles evolved through the site analysis that supported the original purpose for this thesis. The underlying principles for the development of the site were to “gather, extend and connect”.

#### **gather**

Representing the bringing together of the city to the waterfront, the region to the community, the people to the place. Like the bridge that “gathers the landscape”, this site should bring the city and the water together as one – creating an awareness of the importance of the one and the other.

#### **extend**

The location exhibits qualities that extend itself beyond the immediate and into the region, providing a greater awareness of place. Meaningful experiences should become apparent that challenge our depth of knowledge and understanding, informing us of the unique qualities of the place.

#### **connect**

Ultimately there should be both a physical and an emotional, *if not spiritual*, connection between the people and the place. This is the connection that is made with the locality, an awareness of the importance and meaning of the place and how it defines the locality. This will create an identity, revealing the true spirit of the place.

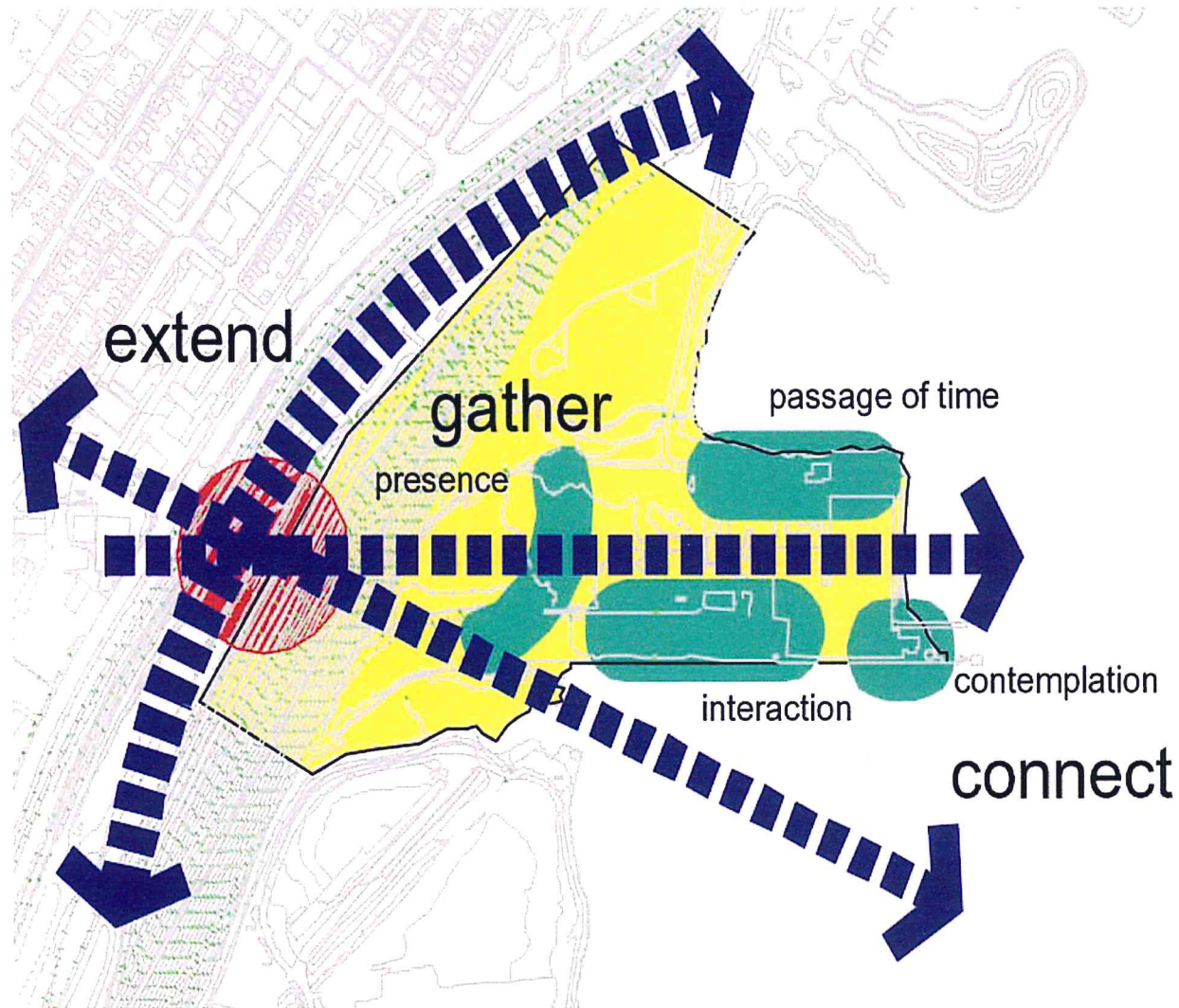
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<sup>1</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz



## conceptual diagram

The three principles that should guide the site development.



## site conclusions

Like the legends that tell the story of Thunder Bay (see appendix - Nanabozo), there are stories to be told about the local history and how it has influenced the local heritage, culture and the traditions that have made the city what it has become today. These stories need to be told so that the memories of place are kept as an important part of the local identity. The former pool six site offers the best opportunity along the local waterfront for development of a project that will help tell this story. The site is set at the “heart of the harbor” in amongst a familiar context with the urban city sitting patiently on its doorstep, awaiting access to the local waterfront.

The characteristics of the site, its memories and the stories it has to tell will reveal the local spirit to the community and put the site in a position that will *bridge the barriers* that have stood between the city and the waters edge for centuries – giving way for the development of the site as a *place for the people* of this city and of the region.





presentation  
boards



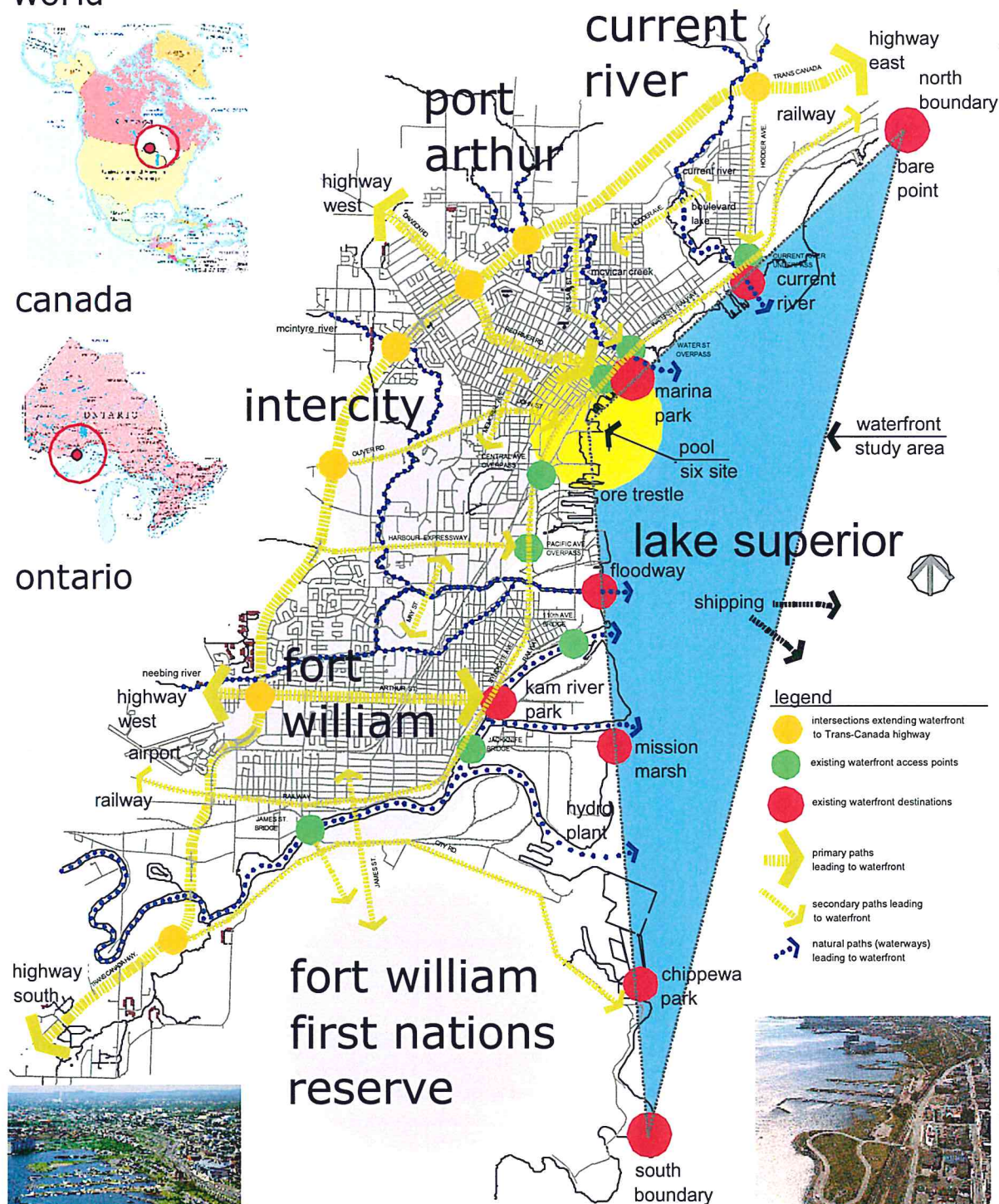
world



canada



ontario



# thunder bay waterfront

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cory stechyshyn - April 2003

understanding human existence and the spirit of place

making sense of place





# the building should be symbolic

*"we use symbols to demonstrate an understanding of our conscious world"*

Carl Jung

## life

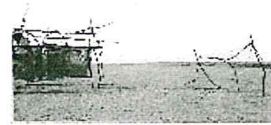
- celebrating the life of man, our existence and our place on the earth - our desire to live, to prosper and to understand.

## city

- sharing our common goals and values and our rich history and cultural heritage - the spaces in which we live.

## water

- understanding the importance and value of the water in defining our existence, our past, our present and our future.



In order for us to experience place, there must be a meaningful existence between man, nature and space. Today we share this experience within the life of our cities and our relationship with nature. This is what defines our place on this earth. This is found locally through the presence of life, city and water.

# the building's three characteristics

*"the building should gather the properties of the place and bring them closer to man"*

Christian Norberg Schulz

## extend

- being part of the locality as well as the region, to become more knowledgeable and have a greater understanding and appreciation.

## gather

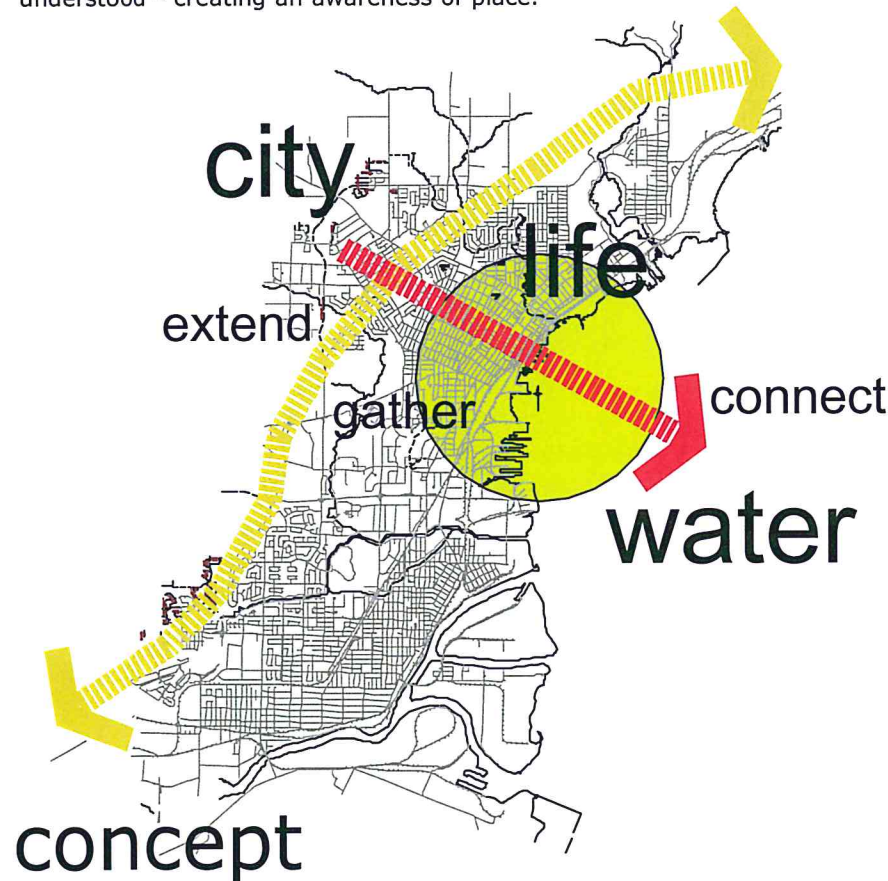
- a coming together of city and life, a physical presence, a gathering of the local culture, heritage and traditions.

## connect

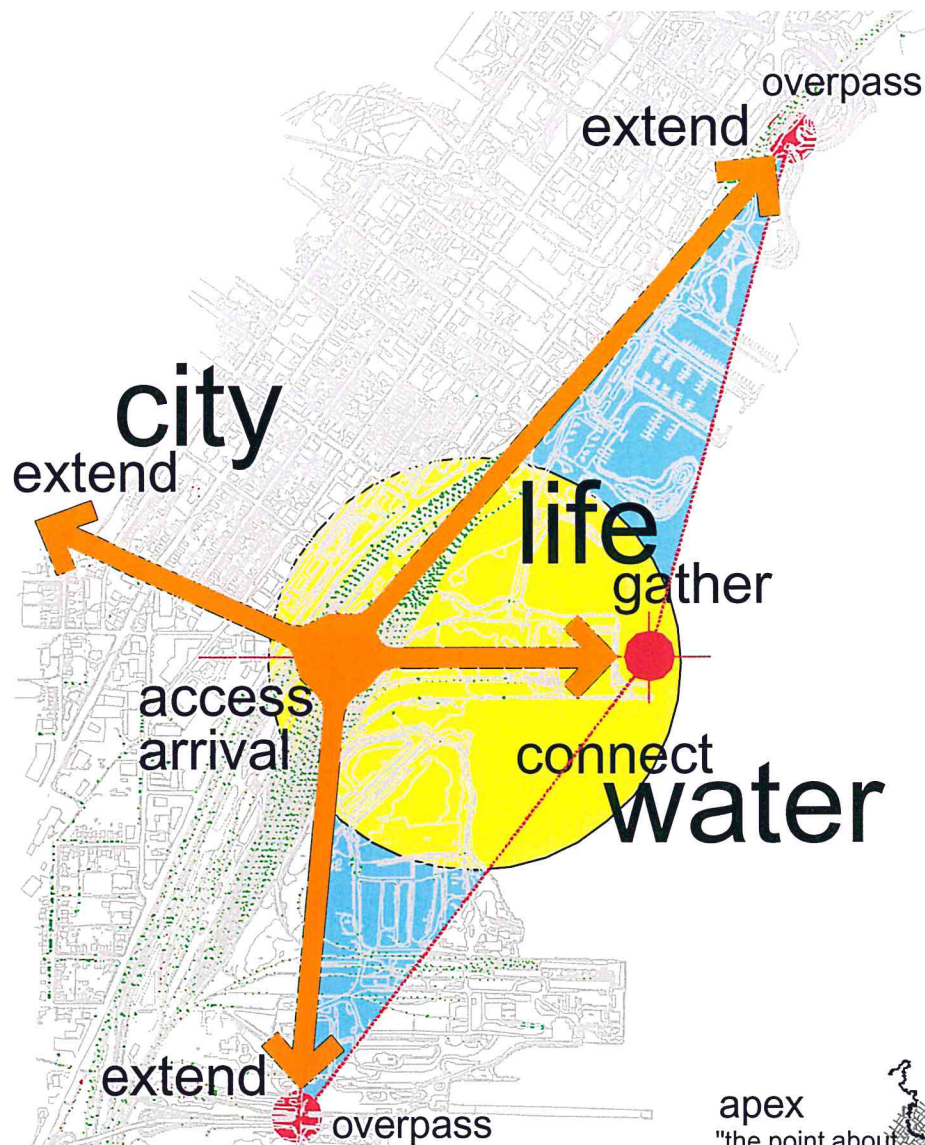
- a connection between what is already there and what we have not yet understood - creating an awareness of place.



Like the bridge that "gathers the earth as landscape around the stream", the building must gather the life of man and the presence of city and cause them to become aware - not of what they already know to be there - but to create a new awareness, an experience of thought and feeling - an awareness of place.







where city meets water

### extend

how the site interacts with the city and the remainder of the waterfront...

### gather

the project area, natural and man-made, the building gathers...

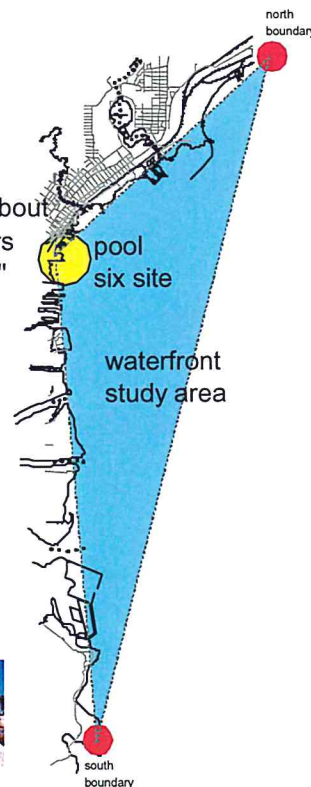
### connect

where city meets the water, an awareness of place...



### apex

"the point about which others are relative"



site

the site as the apex

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understanding human existence and the spirit of place



making sense of place



## city

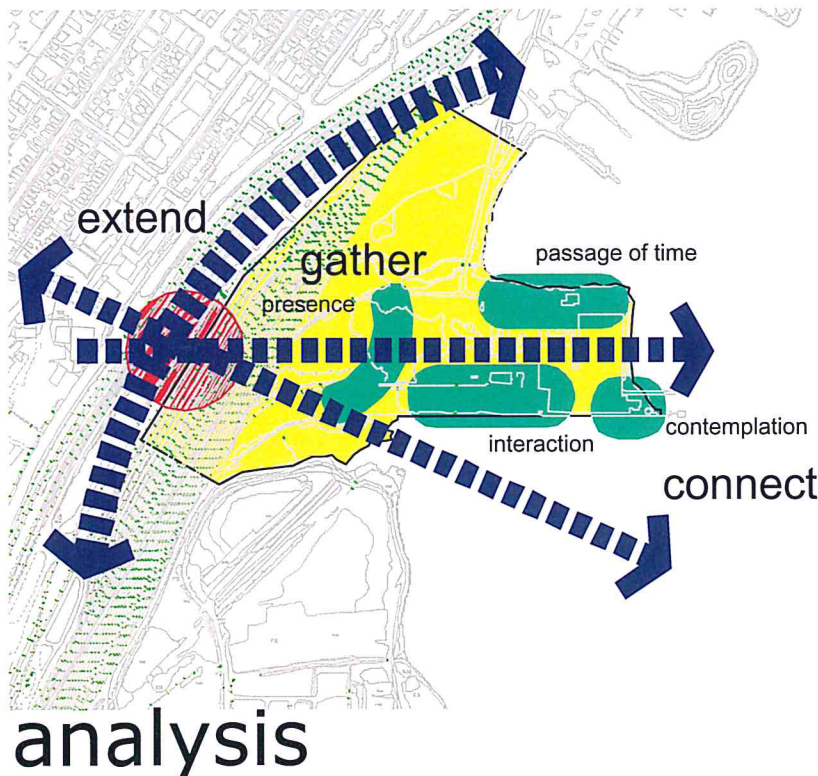
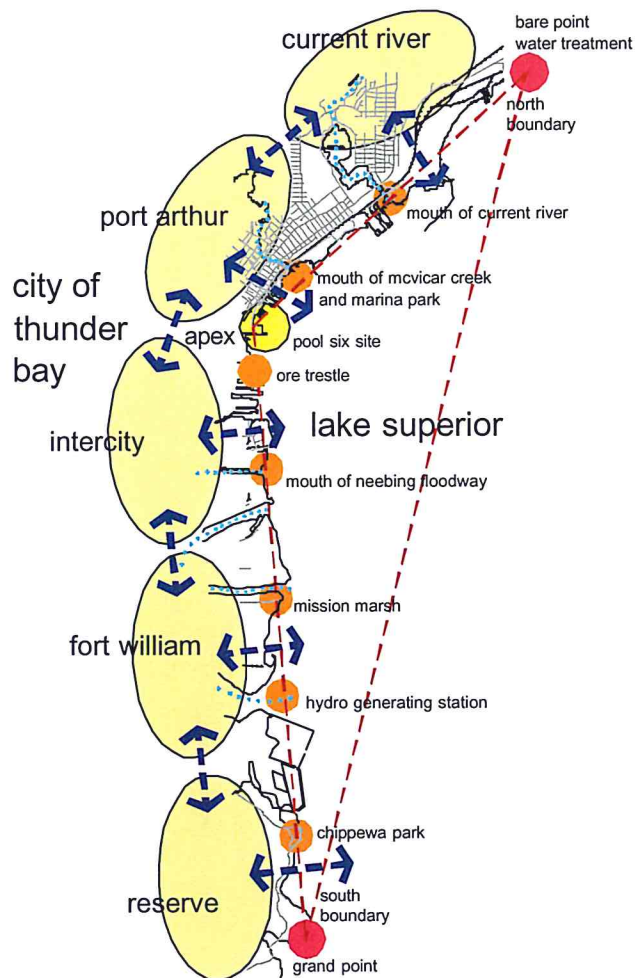
- districts arranged lineally along waterfront
- interconnected by roadways
- separated by waterways and railway
- limited physical and visual access to the waterfront
- unaware of the presence of the water from within the community
- connected to the region by highways, railway, air and water; yet we remain disconnected from our own waterfront.

## life

- the city aspires growth and economic prosperity
- appreciate value of life found in our natural surroundings
- natural environment is an attraction, yet has been overlooked for its contribution to the cities existence, our value of life and sense of place.

## water

- development of waterfront lands is primarily industrial
- activity along the waterfront is primarily passive
- opportunities exist where waterways meet the waterfront
- waterways shape the city but do not lead the city to the waterfront
- points of interest and existing activity are not currently interconnected
- waterfront has very little presence or demonstrated awareness within the city.



## city

- an apex, from where all other activity is related
- provide the city with an opportunity to experience the waterfront
- Will help address the local values and quality of life.*

## life

- encourage a public presence
- a center of activity
- memory of the past, recognizing its effect on the present and providing a vision for the future of the city.

## water

- create an awareness
- demonstrate and educate
- reflect on local industry, culture, traditions and and heritage

# analysis







#### CITY AS BACKDROP

*involving the locality...*

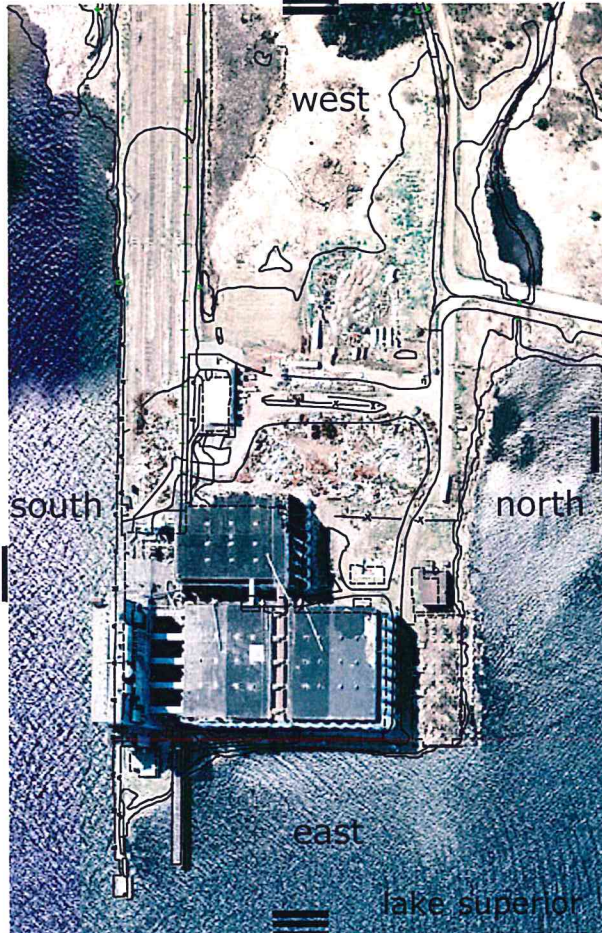
- addressing the presence of city
- extension and access from the city to the waterfront
- gateway to the waterfront
- recognizing opportunity



#### INDUSTRIAL PRESENCE

*focus on the future of the interaction between man and nature*

- the activity of the place
- industrial presence
- man-made / edge
- preservation / rehabilitation



#### DESTINATION / WATER'S EDGE

*creating an awareness of what is presently unknown...*

- presence / exposure
- connection to nature / water
- reflection / contemplation
- extended vistas / views
- growth / vision



#### MEMORIES OF THE PAST

*man's influence on place through the passage of time ... the past*

- memories
- remnants, history
- rugged, natural edge
- horizontal, linear patterns
- climate / "sheltering"
- education / awareness
- patterns / symbols



# what the site wants to be

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cory stechyshyn - April 2003

understanding human existence and the spirit of place

making sense of place





## ENDNOTES - SITE

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<sup>1</sup> Imageability: that quality in a physical object which gives it a high probability of evoking a strong image in any given observer. Kevin Lynch, The Image of the City, The M.I.T. Press, 1960.

<sup>2</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz, , Genius Loci: Towards A Phenomenology of Architecture, Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 1980.

<sup>3</sup> Jon Rubin. Chapter 12. Urban Waterfronts: Accent on Access. The Waterfront Press, 1989.

<sup>4</sup> Thorold J. Tronrud, Building the Industrial City, Chapter Six. Thunder Bay, From Rivalry to Unity. Edited by Thorold J. Tronrud and A. Ernest Epp. The Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society, 1995.

<sup>5</sup> Bruce Muirhead from "The Evolution of the Lakehead's Commercial and Transportaion Infrastructure, Chapter Five. Thunder Bay, From Rivalry to Unity. Edited by Thorold J. Tronrud and A. Ernest Epp. The Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society, 1995.

<sup>6</sup> Official Plan Review, Discussion Paper No. 8 – Waterfront Development. City of Thunder Bay, Long Range Planning, 1996.

<sup>7</sup> Kate Nesbit, speaking on Critical Regionalism. Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture, an Anthology of Architectural Theory 1965 – 1995. Princeton Architectural Press. 1996.

<sup>8</sup> Kate Nesbit, Chapter 11 - Critical Regionalism. Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture, an Anthology of Architectural Theory 1965 – 1995. Princeton Architectural Press. 1996.

<sup>9</sup> Mauro, Joseph M. A History of Thunder Bay. 1981. Quoting a speech made by Sir John A. MacDonald on a stop in Port Arthur, September 3, 1886.

<sup>10</sup> Tadao Ando, Toward New Horizons in Architecture (Chapter 10), Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture, an Anthology of Architectural Theory 1965 – 1995. Kate Nesbitt, Editor. Princeton Architectural Press. 1996.

part

3



# part three - program

## symbolizing city, life and water

*"...translate the landscape that has been understood into architecture, so that the use of place can be attained and a natural landscape can be transformed into a cultural landscape."*<sup>1</sup>

The exploration of the existing site in part two of this thesis "what the site wants to be" has helped reveal the existing characteristics of the site and its relationship within the locality - the importance of its role in the local history and heritage, the importance it has retained and the opportunities it has to contribute to the life of the city. The existing features of the site reveal to us the memories of its past which enhance the spirit of place, giving way to a meaningful relationship with its surroundings and creating a sense of place. Understanding what the site has to offer and recognizing its role in defining the past, present and future relationship with the city and the locality will lead to a greater awareness of place for the local and regional population. Development of this site must capitalize on this characteristic and how it contributes to this cities sense of place, or more appropriately, *spirit of place*.

*"The site awaits an urban presence; it is alive with memories, it opens your eyes to the surrounding activity and draws you toward the water's edge in a relaxed state of contemplation."*<sup>2</sup>



## basic elements

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The basic elements for development of the site should emphasize and compliment the underlying principles already noted in part two. This would be through the use of symbolic themes that would recognize and exhibit the unique qualities of the site. The three symbolic themes that should be emphasized are **city**, **life** and **water**. These three symbolic themes should become evident in the form, the function and the character of the building and the site development.

### city

*Symbolizing space and our built environment.*

The focus should be toward public use and should address the needs of the community as well as the promotion of the city to the rest of the region and the rest of the world. Place theory deals with very specific personal emotions and the implications at a public level must be carefully understood in order that a sense of place is maintained at both a personal and public level.

Emphasis must be placed on public use and public access to the waterfront. Only in this way can the community begin to recognize the relationship between the city and its waterfront and the importance in defining it as an integral part of the image of our city.

### life

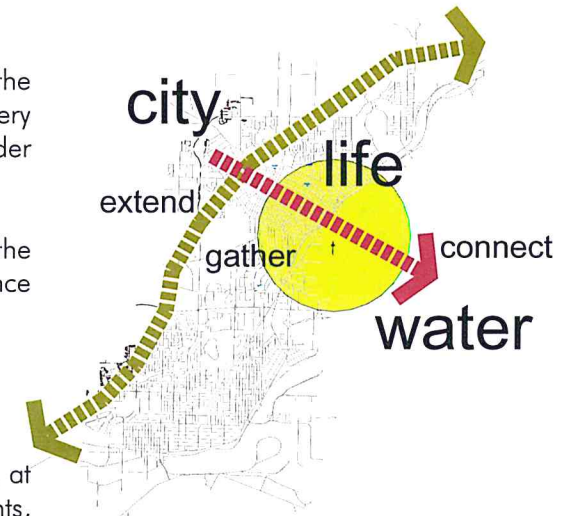
*Symbolizing mans place on earth – our being.*

This development will be at the centre of where life takes place within the city, and more specifically, at the waterfront. There needs to be an atmosphere that exemplifies the life of our city – our thoughts, beliefs and feelings need to be recognized and shared with the remainder of the region.

### water

*Symbolizing our natural world and the relationship between man and nature.*

Recognizing the strong symbolic characteristic of water, the development should capitalize on this aspect of the site and enhance the presence, understanding and recognition of the importance of the waterfront on the life and existence of the community.





## building program

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In order to address the conceptual intent for the development of the site, a building type had to be determined that appropriately fulfilled the objectives set out in the earlier parts of this thesis. It has been demonstrated already that the Pool Six site sits prominently at the *apex* (heart) along the cities extensive waterfront. The *apex* is defined as *a point from which all others are related*. This designation is demanding and implicates any decision that is made for development of this site. Decisions need to recognize the importance of the site as defined by its location and relationship to the remainder of the waterfront and the spirit of place.

The building programme should involve the community in an awareness of place, creating a focus on the waterfront that will enrich the image of the city and symbolize the local spirit of place.

## programmatic objectives

1. Fulfill its role as an apex, a point from which all other activity is related, a center.

In as much as this will be a center of activity, it is intended to be a point from where further development of the local waterfront would stem from. It is as much a point along the waterfront as it is a point from which all else begins. The development should act as a "gateway", not only for access to the waterfront but also for development of other parts of the waterfront.

2. Facilitate year-round activity on the waterfront.

At present the waterfront essentially shuts down during in-climate weather and during the winter season. This should be addressed in order to create a steady presence on the waterfront and as a means of treating the waterfront as an integral part of the cities urban fabric.

3. Educate and inform.

There should be opportunity to create a better understanding of the relationship of the city with the waterfront and its benefits to the future of the city and in defining our sense of place. This, at the same time, should be used to inform others of the various opportunities that exist throughout the remainder of the city and the region. In this way the centre does not become a single source or independent entity but is part of a larger whole that recognizes the importance and benefit of the individual parts as much as the value of the whole.

4. Use a sustainable approach to development.

This term is used in both its literal and its implied meaning. The development should demonstrate a cooperative approach toward the design, construction and management of the facility and recognize the importance of the environment on the past, present and future of the locality. At the same time there needs to be an understanding of the economics of such a development.

There will need to be a well balanced mix of private, municipal, provincial and federal funding opportunities, in order to not only guarantee the undertaking of a such a facility, but primarily to ensure its existence and effectiveness. The development should encourage both private and municipal tenants to enhance the daily activity at the facility. Phased construction should be considered to allow the facility to be developed as the demand and resources become available. Common services and facilities should be shared and where possible, uses combined into a cohesive and cooperative whole.

Opportunities exist locally and regionally to utilize our natural resources not only in a profitable way, but in a sustainable and rehabilitative way. This development should be open to utilize natural local and regional resources and to promote the management of these resources in a way that benefits both the public and industrial interests.

5. Create an identity for the city.

The primary reason for this thesis was to explore the theory of place and the concept of the genius loci, or spirit of place - our sense of place, to understand those qualities of a place that play a part of our daily lives, affecting us physically, emotionally and spiritually. These qualities form the basis for our identity as a city, defining us from others and other places on this earth. These qualities need to be recognized and presented to the public in the development of any use on the site. In this way the development will serve the purpose of supporting and instilling an identity within the city and to the region and the remainder of this world.

To appropriately fulfill its role as an "apex", one that defines the future for development of the local waterfront, such a facility will need to have a strong visual presence. The development will need to encourage a substantial amount of public activity and offer a variety of space and venues. In as much as the development will enhance the image of the city, the built form itself will need its own identity, one that sets it apart from others within the local context as well as within the region.



## functional program

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The functional program has grown as the result of intense study surrounding a theory of place and through the discovery of the local spirit of place. Understanding what the site wants to be in a way that enhances the image of our city and that demonstrates to the community the uniqueness and importance of our place within the local waterscape. The city exists as a result of our location at the water's edge and our future depends on how we address its presence and the role it plays in defining our sense of place, our quality of life and the image our city portrays to the region.

In order to experience a public presence at the waterfront we need to maximize public access and involve the community in an awareness and the celebration of the *spirit of place*. Private ownership would fail to provide the sort of access that is necessary for the city to experience this unique sense of place. Development must capitalize on the value of the waterfront not only as a commodity, but also as an emotional, physical and psychological presence and a contributor to the quality of life in our city.

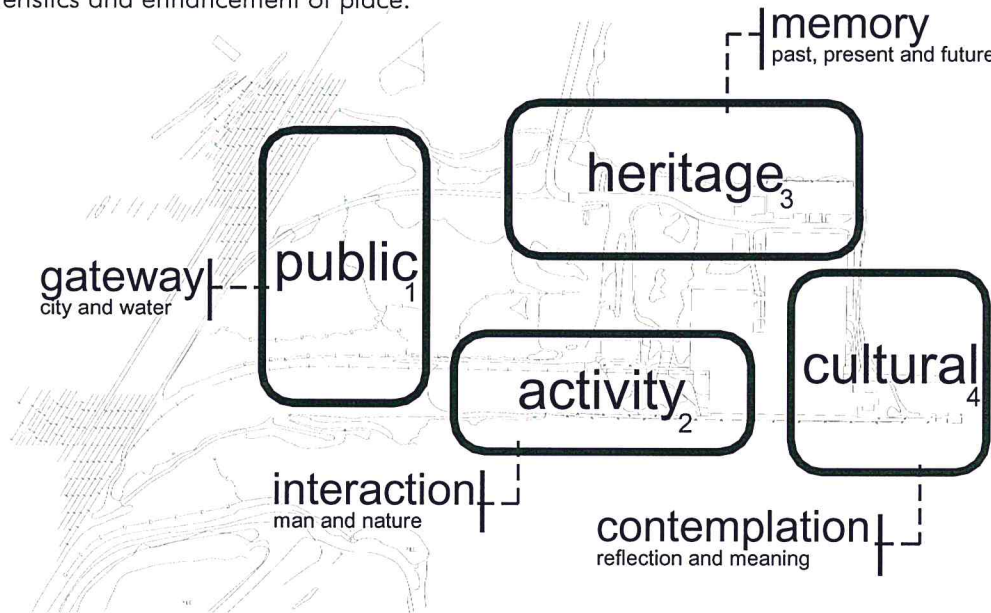
In order satisfy the objectives of this thesis it is felt that the building program should be based on a multi-purpose public facility to meet the demands that are imposed by the site and the locality. The building program will focus on defining a *sense of place* for the city and will demonstrate the value of our waterfront, the importance of our natural resources and their role in identifying our local history, the culture and heritage that define the character of our city – our quality of life and our *sense of place*. The program will involve characteristics that will extend, gather and connect. *Extend* with respect to a more meaningful understanding of our sense of place, being related to the region and to the remainder of the waterfront. *Gather* with respect to the function of the program in that it will gather the community and the region and create a centre of activity. *Connect* with respect to the success of bringing the community to the waterfront and in an emotional and spiritual connection with the value and importance of our local waterfront. The program would facilitate a building that will symbolize the city in its function as a gathering place, one that openly celebrates life at the waters edge, and will serve to raise our awareness of the importance of place.

There is a story to be told and memories to recall that are important in helping us understand not only our place within the community – but the importance of our community in the larger scheme of things.

## functional concept

There are four functional components that have evolved from a study of the characteristics of the site and the locality. These components will form the primary design blocks that can be further broken down by program area requirements and functional relationships. These design blocks are a result of the analysis completed in part two that will serve to fulfill the goals and objectives of this thesis.

Each design block is associated with a respective edge or boundary pertaining to the function that they serve in relation to the landscape and to create a presence that reflects on the sites unique characteristics and enhancement of place.



Although each design block is identified as serving a separate function, they are not considered to be separate entities. Each design block interacts with the other and without the presence of all four components; there would not be a successful experience of place.



There are four very strong programmatic components that are revealed by the landscape and the spirit of the locality. These programmatic components; as shown in the above diagram, consist of **PUBLIC** spaces gathered at the western edge of the site that address the community, providing freedom of movement in and around the waterfront site. These spaces will gather the community and people from around the region as they arrive from land or water and provide them with the amenities needed to complete their waterfront experience. **ACTIVITY** spaces would occupy the southern edge of the site and function to gather and distribute the activity within, around and through the building and site. This edge is defined by an existing hard concrete wharf that overlooks the majority of existing working industrial waterfront lands. There are opportunities to acknowledge the hardships and rewards of local workmanship, industry and businesses through an indoor market place, conference centre, and the ability to dock larger cruise and excursion vessels along the existing concrete wharf.



The north edge of the site would consist of **HERITAGE** spaces that overlook and are set among the artifacts that exist on and around the site providing memories and reminders of the rich local history and heritage. This side of the site faces the prevailing wind direction and receives the least amount of daylight which will be well suited to lower enclosed spaces for the exhibit and gallery spaces. Part of the north edge of the site will be preserved as a natural outdoor walking exhibit. The eastern edge of the site deserves to be used primarily for **CULTURAL** spaces that are set against the pristine natural backdrop of Lake Superior and the legendary Sleeping Giant. These spaces are dedicated to the appreciation and experience of local and regional culture and traditions. Movement through these spaces will be choreographed and provide an emotional experience of place.



## site development approach – land mass study

A variety of approaches were considered for development of the site to accommodate the building program. Each considered land area, building mass, access and their relationship to the site and to the locality. Although each component was just previously described independently, it is not to imply that they would occupy separate buildings or that either could exist independent of the other – quite the contrary, each component is a sum of the whole and without the other does not complete the experience of place that is being explored by this thesis. Each of the approaches was weighed on their ability to address the primary objectives for the building program as already outlined.

### One – single building mass

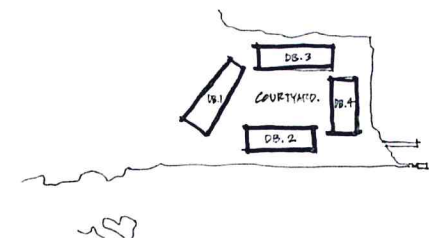
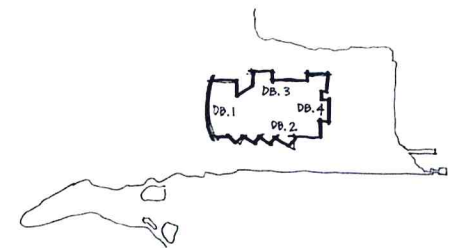
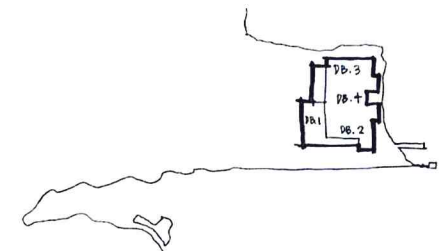
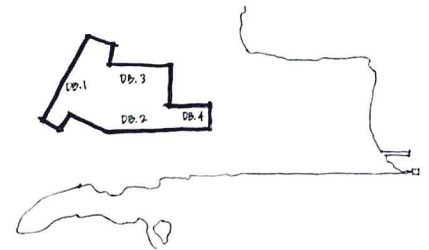
The single building mass approach serves to contain all programmatic spaces within one building mass, focusing on the organized experience of program spaces. There would be very little “new” landscape, preserving a relationship with the natural edges. This approach permits a properly controlled indoor environment and maximizes year-round use and interaction between all program spaces.

### Two – individual building masses

This approach distributes the building mass throughout the site and offers opportunities for views and a variety of access points. The building mass is broken down in overall scale, similar to a village of sorts. The opportunity to preserve the natural edges of the site would still exist and would provide uninterrupted movement through the site to the water's edges. Building masses could be used to provide shelter from in-climate weather that often affects outdoor activities on the waterfront. This approach would require the creation of new landscape to integrate the individual building masses into one cohesive whole. Moving between the independent program spaces would be uncomfortable in bad weather and the focus of outdoor man-made space may distract from an appreciation of the natural surroundings.

Of these two approaches to the development of the site that were considered, it was felt that each of the two concepts offered unique opportunities for the fulfillment of the objectives set out by this thesis that could be explored further in a functional programming exercise. It is interesting to note the three main characteristics of the objectives that governed this exercise in site development.

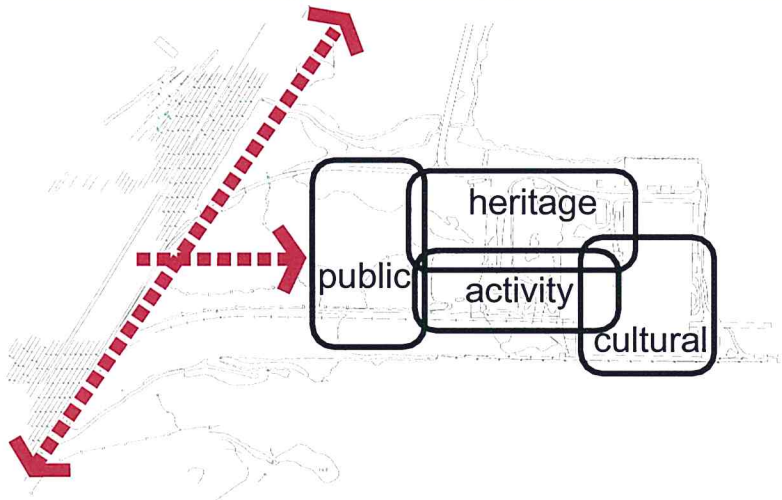
1. Year Round Use of Building and its Site.
2. Visual Impact.
3. Integration with the Site.





## site development approach – one.

single building mass



In this approach, each of the design components are within a single building. This approach would provide a single - identifiable building mass that would provide movement through the building interior in a protected and controlled environment. This approach would require a strong interconnection between the building interior and exterior in order to maintain an important relationship between building and site.

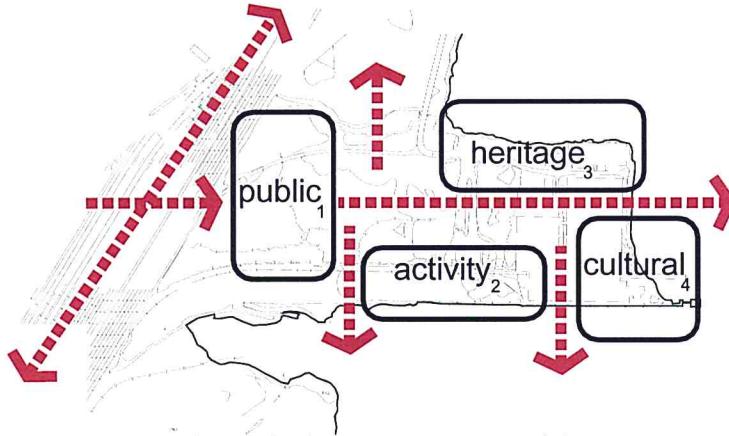
Each of the design components can be connected internally, which would allow for a wider variety of indoor activity and the ability to provide shared spaces. The building would be situated on the site in a manner that permits each design component to address its respective edge and that maintains uninterrupted public access along the outdoor edges of the site.

It became apparent that this was the concept that would best suit the objectives of this thesis and the criteria for the building program. By combining all the design components into one building mass, there would be better opportunity for an enhanced spatial experience, a more meaningful and efficient use of space, and opportunity for interaction between building and site.

The development of a single mass public use building will form the functional program requirements for the development of a building concept on the former Pool Six site. This will be completed in the final phase, Part Four, of this thesis.

## site development approach – two.

### independent buildings



In this approach, each design component of the program occupies its own building footprint, offering individual identity and a defined collection of spaces. Each component individually addresses its edge or boundary of site and locality, allowing unique characteristics to be explored independent of the others and simplifying the phasing of development. This arrangement of buildings would provide a sheltered exterior courtyard and maximizes the uninterrupted exterior access to the water's edge.

It was found that this concept failed to meet several of the criteria established from the objectives. With individual building areas determined, it was found that in order to appropriately address the edges of the site, each of the buildings would become quite distant from the other, resulting in a disassociation between interrelated program spaces. The overall building costs would also exceed the cost for a single building concept and would also represent considerably greater land development costs.

Although this concept would easily support phasing of construction and site development, the risk would be that any one component of the overall concept could be forfeited at the sake of the others. This would deteriorate the overall concept for the building program and would put its success at risk. The sharing of spaces between individual components would not be easily achieved and movement between buildings would be exposed to the inclement weather conditions that frequent waterfront lands.

There would not be an independent identity with this concept, with each building taking on its own identity and purpose. Although each building could address its relative characteristics of the site, a single overall image and identity would be difficult to achieve. In order for the building to function as a center of activity, there would need to be a close relationship and integration between the building components, something which this concept would have difficulty in achieving.



## programme spaces and their precedents

There are few buildings that fully represent the ideas being presented by this thesis for the Pool Six site. The programme ideas are derived from an analysis of what the site wants to be, focusing on those elements that will enhance the sense of place, specifically for the Thunder Bay Waterfront.

### PUBLIC WATERFRONT BUILDING

#### NAVY PIER, CHICAGO

Of all the examples I have found, Navy Pier is likely the closest example to the idea of this thesis. The Pier first opened in 1916 on the shores of Lake Michigan, Chicago, and was intended to be a shipping and entertainment area. During World War I and II, the pier was used as a military training site and fell into disuse in the 1970's. In 1994 the Navy Pier was redeveloped into a recreation and exposition facility consisting of unique restaurants, shops, exhibition facilities and an entertainment area. The Pier is accessed through "Gateway Park" consisting of some 19-acres, developed just west of the pier it provides visitors both an aesthetic and dramatic entrance to the pier.

Navy Pier consists of the following general programmatic spaces;

#### NORTH DOCK

A 50 foot wide dock added to the north of the pier for service access.

#### FAMILY PAVILION

Houses a children's museum and lmax theatre, restaurants, retail shops and a botanical garden.

#### SOUTH ARCADE

Houses additional shops, restaurants and attractions.

#### NAVY PIER PARK

Houses a Ferris wheel and miniature golf course, adjacent a popular restaurant.

#### SKYLINE STAGE

A 1,500 seat performance pavilion showcasing local and national arts.



## DOCK STREET

Runs the length of the pier, acting as an exterior public / pedestrian space.

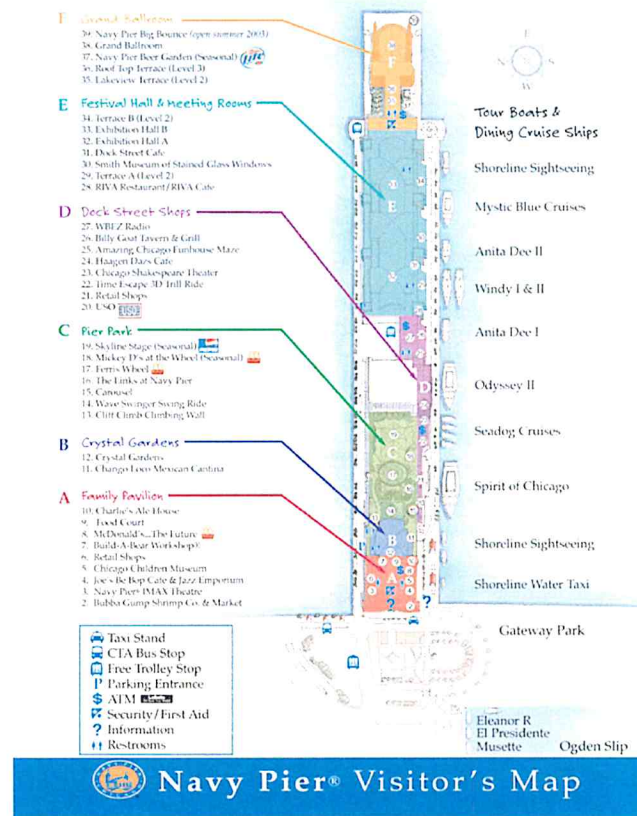
## FESTIVAL HALL

Consists of 170,000 sq.ft. of exhibition space accommodating trade shows and conferences.

## MEETING ROOMS

There are 48,000 sq. ft. of meeting rooms for seminars and conferences.

Chicago's Navy Pier has become a landmark that defines a relationship between the waterfront and the city through its reference to the historical significance of the site. This is much the same idea that is being presented by this thesis for the Pool Six site.





The program has been broken down into four major components; Public, Activity, Heritage and Culture. Each component has similarities to known building types, but as a single cohesive program - it is quite unique. Each component, described here on their own, requires the others in order for there to be a meaningful experience of place.

## 1. PUBLIC COMPONENT PRECEDENTS

### GRAND CENTRAL STATION, NEW YORK CITY, USA.

The idea of a public circulation space is well demonstrated by the public movement system stations around the world, such as the Grand Central Station in New York. This space receives, organizes and distributes pedestrian movement and offers amenities that acknowledge the idea of public transportation, information and services.



### INFORMATION AND TOURISM CENTERS

Public information space is intended to permit easy physical and visual access to information resources for public knowledge. The use of displays, information services and brochures assure that the public is made well aware of all activities available for any given place. Businesses and landmarks are promoted and the hope is that new places will be discovered and we will be made more aware of what is available to involve our daily lives.



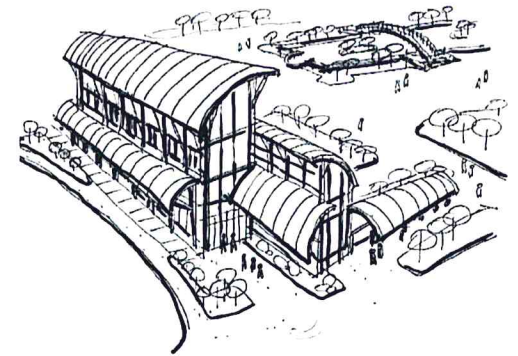
## PUBLIC COMPONENT PROGRAM CONCEPT

### A Gateway, opening a path between the city and the waterfront.

The idea for the Public component is that it would be situated on the westerly side of the site where it serves to address the community and forms an arrival or gateway to the site, as well it would present itself as a destination along the remainder of the waterfront. This component will need to include a public lobby space that provides freedom of movement in passing or for the gathering of larger crowds – similar to the Grand Central Station. There should be amenities that would serve the public and provide information and services regarding local waterfront, local community and regional activities.

As the “gateway” to the Waterfront Centre, the formal qualities of this component should have a strong visual impact, provide access to the indoor spaces and other major functional spaces, and should permit access through to the site while addressing movement along the remainder of the waterfront.

There would be minimal retail components with the primary focus being that of information and public service. This could attract private excursions, tour operators and information services. It would be advantageous for a component of the cities tourist and recreation services to locate within this area of the building.





## PUBLIC COMPONENT PROGRAM SPACES

### FIRST FLOOR

#### public arrival plaza and lobby

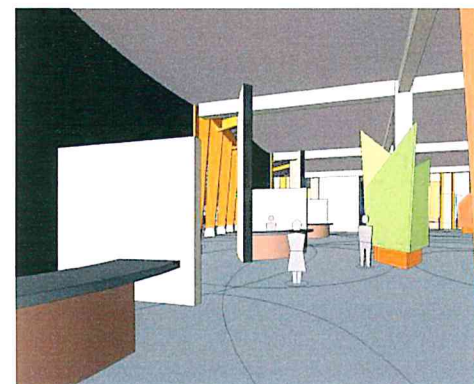
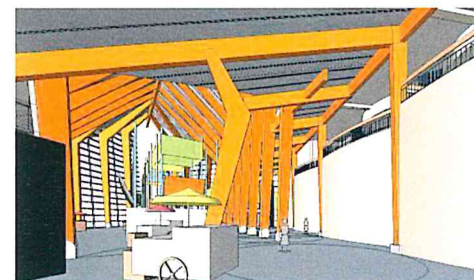
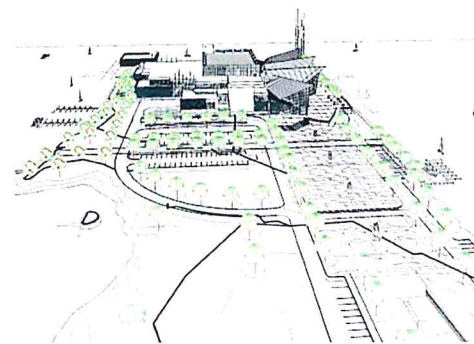
This will be the main entrance and lobby to receive pedestrian traffic flow moving along the waterfront and the visitors coming into the building. The purpose of this space is to act as a “gateway” to the waterfront, providing access to the site and the spaces within the building from one main focal point. This space should be large, naturally lit open space with freedom of movement, clear visual way finding and should provide direct access to building, visitor and tourist information.

The arrival plaza reaches out toward the community that awaits it and provides ample outdoor gathering space that can double as performance and vendor space. Fountains that are symbolic of the dust collectors that are seen on the outside of many of the industries along the waterfront lead the visitor along the plaza and into the main entrance of the building. These fountains are both aesthetic and functional as they will serve to provide evaporative cooling for the buildings hydronic heating and cooling system, reinforcing the importance of and our reliance on the presence of water.

Inside the main entrance, the space opens up to a large naturally lit market space framed from bent glu-lam structures that symbolize the ribs of the wooden hulls of the ships that were once built at the local waterfront ship building plants. There are also curving theme walls that are symbolic of the vertical faces of the mountain ranges found in and around the great lakes that draw the visitor in from the main circulation space to the information and excursion booking area.

#### information and excursion booking services

This area will provide the local visitors and tourists alike with information pertaining to activities that can be found within the building, elsewhere along the waterfront and within the locality and region. The idea is that any day of the week, local and regional activities can be found and arranged for from this location. There will be bookings for local excursions, events and entertainment as well as access to regional excursion, event and entertainment bookings. This information and booking service would be tied to other local and regional tourist and travel agencies, excursions and venues – allowing for the visitors to access and learn about the wide variety of local and regional information and activity. These services will also serve other locally based water excursions, such as the existing Welcome Cruise excursions.

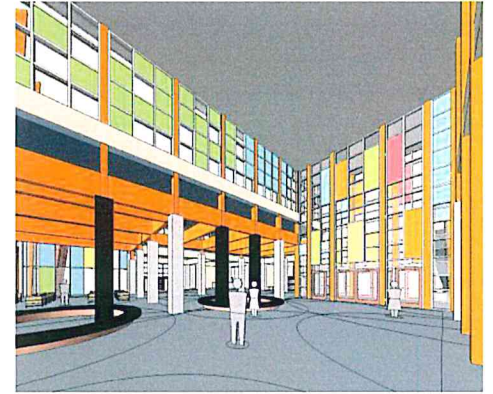


### rental and visitor services

There will be availability to rentals for bicycles, strollers, canoes and other amenities to assist the visitors in their total waterfront experience, providing the necessities they may require to take in a particular excursion or activity. Daily locker rentals and washroom facilities will also be readily available. These amenities will be available for persons visiting any area within the building or requiring the facilities while they are enjoying any other waterfront activity on an hourly or daily basis. Ample space will be available for the loading and off-loading of cruise passengers as well as appropriate facilities to handle cruise ship arrivals, docking and servicing.

This program area is situated to take advantage of access to the main entrance as well as the north side of the site that overlooks the existing Marina Park development. The interior space is naturally lit, taking advantage of clerestory windows offered by the high volumes of interconnected space.

This area is intended to receive visitors that are attending activities within the building, those visitors to the city that are using water based transportation and the public that are on their way along the waterfront walking paths and vehicular driving routes.





## 2. ACTIVITY COMPONENT PRECEDENTS

### ST. LAWRENCE MARKET, TORONTO, CANADA

There is nothing like the sounds, sights and smells found at a market place. Historically, civilizations formed around areas that gatherings occurred for the purpose of commerce. These gatherings became a social event and have evolved today into what we know as shopping malls and market places around the world. They continue in their role for civilizations to gather for the purpose of commerce and socialization.

The market spaces provide for variety in a large open space. We are exposed to an assortment of colour, sights, sounds, smells, craftsmanship and entrepreneurship. The atmospheres that need to be created are those that resemble the outdoor open-air market place that brings us back to historical times and to those that are still experienced today in warmer climates. The inter-mix of culture and society creates a vibrant atmosphere that supports life's everyday activities.



### CANADA PLACE, VANCOUVER

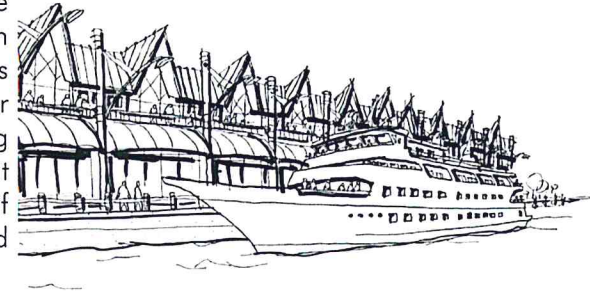
Canada Place is a mixed-use commercial facility that is home to the Vancouver Convention and Exhibition Centre, the Pan-Pacific Hotel, Cruise Terminal, Imax theatre, World Trade Center and a parking facility. Built as part of the Canada Pavilion for the 1986 Expo, the award winning facility is coined the "graceful lady of the harbor", like a great ship at port – capitalizing on Canada's legendary maritime heritage.



## ACTIVITY COMPONENT PROGRAM CONCEPT

### Involving the life of the city with the waterfront.

The idea for the Activity component is that it would be related to the southern edge of the site with the primary view being along an existing working waterfront and an existing man-made edge that can serve one of the intended functions as a wharf for tourist boat and ocean vessel docking. This component would focus on how we interact with the environment on a daily basis, providing spaces for an indoor craft and farmers market, multi-cultural foods, and a wharf area that can serve as a docking facility for cruise ships and the local welcome ship cruise excursions. This would be a large, naturally lit open space, it would act as an indoor mall that interconnects with other main functional components of the program and the site. The space would be flexible and will provide for a great deal variety and activity.



The formal qualities of this component should recognize the flexibility and interaction of space while providing for an exciting atmosphere that would be characteristic of the activity that we find along our working waterfront. Natural lighting and visual proportion would reinforce the character of this space significantly.

This component would encourage local entrepreneurs, farmers and craftsmen to rent retail spaces on both a temporary and permanent basis. The market space could change depending on the season and would promote local entrepreneurs and destinations. The cruise ship services would share space with the Welcome Cruise office, recognizing the limited cruise ship activity that we currently experience. This component would house the majority of the retail spaces within the building program.





# ACTIVITY COMPONENT

## PROGRAM SPACES

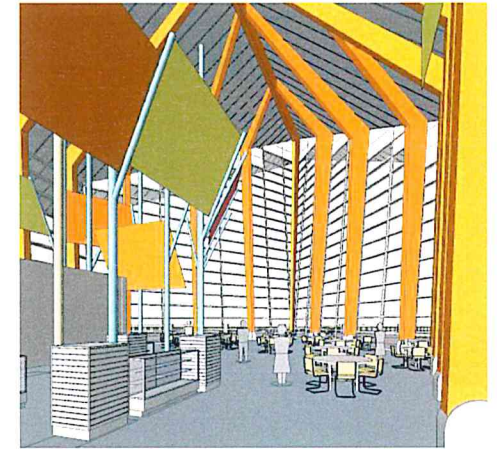
### FIRST FLOOR

#### indoor market place

This will be the focus of the main center of activity and circulation within the building. This will be a large open and vibrant space with ample natural lighting that will boast all sorts of vendors, including crafts, seafood, produce, and meats. The character of the interior space will be symbolic of the local ship building heritage with the presence of four distinct "ships hulls" that are glu-lam timber framed spaces that draw the visitor into the vendor spaces and toward the southern edge of the site.

The market should cater to all ages and therefore will need to provide for a children's craft market and play area. The market will be the primary source of retail and vendor space for all areas of the building, providing for the display and sale of artisans crafts, souvenirs and the provision of general catering services for the meeting and seminar spaces throughout the building. Vendors will be associated with local entrepreneurs, grocers and wholesalers – encouraging people to venture outside of the market and into the cities downtown areas.

Spaces will be available for rent on a daily, weekly, monthly and yearly basis. The emphasis will be on the sights, sounds and smells and will offer variety to the local and visiting population. The indoor market area will have the ability to extend to the outdoor terrace when the weather permits, expanding the indoor space in order to make it available for peak summertime market vendors.



## SECOND FLOOR

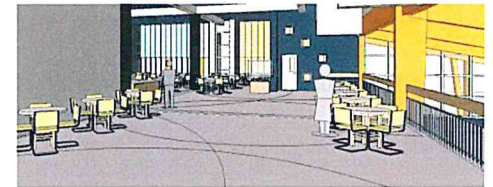
### conference and seminar rooms

There will be conference and meeting rooms with the flexibility of being expanded into larger conference spaces. The functional placement of these meeting rooms serve to allow the extension of the cultural program spaces into these areas for teaching, seminars and as well they can act as temporary exhibit spaces. These rooms are also served by an internal service space from the main kitchen area.



### "nations" dining and lounge area

There will be a relaxing "piano" lounge on the second level overlooking Lake Superior that will offer a unique dining experience within a relaxing atmosphere. The associated Kitchen area will also serve as a catering service for functions within other areas of the building and primarily within the Conference Centre. The lounge will offer live instrumental music and offer food and beverages with changing cultural themes, celebrating a different ethnic culture each month.



## LOWER FLOOR

### winter lounge

The lower floor will offer an entrance off the east lakeside to a common foyer and elevator lobby providing access to the spaces within the building for visitors arriving either by water or for those that are walking the waterfront. This entrance will also provide access to the water from within should the need exist. Off this entrance foyer you can enter the lower floor of the Arts Centre, take an elevator to the main or second floor level, use the public washrooms or visit the "winter lounge" that will be available to the public year round. The lounge will have rental lockers a fireplace and lounge area with views out to Lake Superior.

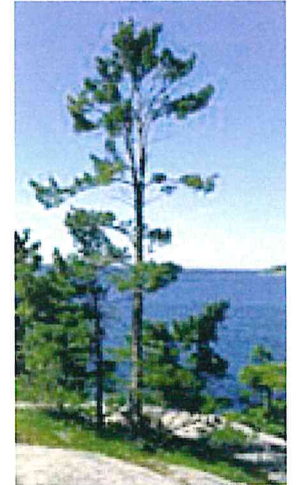




### 3. HERITAGE COMPONENT PRECEDENTS

#### GREAT LAKES HERITAGE COAST

This new government venture into the recognition, enhancement, enjoyment and protection of our great lakes heritage coast is the primary influence for the heritage component of the building program. The vision for the creation of the heritage coast was meant to *“encourage and challenge people along the coast to come forward with ideas to attract more tourists, build new business, strengthen communities and make the coast available to the world, while protecting its many and varied ecosystems”*<sup>3</sup>. This venture recognizes the importance that industry related to water has had on the Great Lakes communities. The strategy for the Great Lakes Heritage Coast includes the recognition of the need for improvements to infrastructure that improve access to and recognition of the Great Lakes coast. The heritage component of the building program is intended to help fulfill the interpretive role and to raise awareness of the importance of the Great Lakes and the heritage of its coast.



#### HEDMARK CATHEDRAL MUSEUM, NORWAY

Norwegian architect Sverre Fehn preserves the memories of a cathedral in a way that attempts to respect his position in architecture which is a construction of harmony, rhythm and honesty. The museum is built in and around the ruins of a former cathedral, preserving the memories into a new and modern building that interprets the past.

It is in this integration of building and site that the memories are preserved and available for interpretation for the generations to come.



### IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM, GREAT BRITAIN

The Imperial War Museum was established to collect, preserve and display material and information connected with military operations since 1914. The building is based on the concept of a world shattered by conflict, a fragmented globe reassembled in three interlocking shards - representing land, air and water. Each shard represents one of the three main themes. The Air Shard is an open air element that houses a viewing platform with views to the surroundings. The Earth Shard houses the main public areas, museum and exhibit space. The Water Shard overlooks the Manchester shipping Canal, where supplies were brought in during the war period.

The buildings form is not representative of the site or context - the form is strictly symbolic and representative of the building program.



### GREAT LAKES MARITIME HERITAGE CENTER, KINGSTON, ONTARIO

The goal of the heritage center is to enhance the historic Kingston waterfront and existing heritage structures through the telling of the story of the local maritime commerce, labour and life that affect the city to this day. The intention is to restore an 1890 dry-dock as a permanent berth for the coast guard icebreaker Alexander Henry, and provide a public promenade and walkway along the waterfront interlinking the historic Pump House and Steam Museum.

This proposed development will involve actual historic building structures and create a physical and visual link between these historic structures, the community and the waterfront.





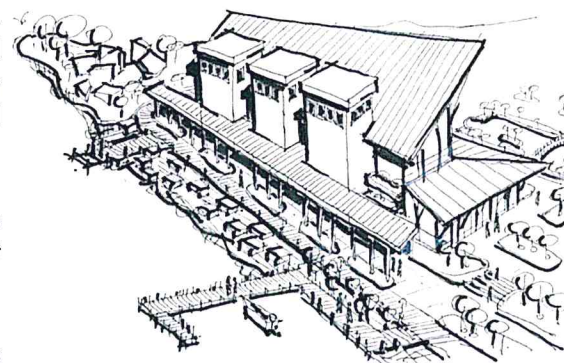
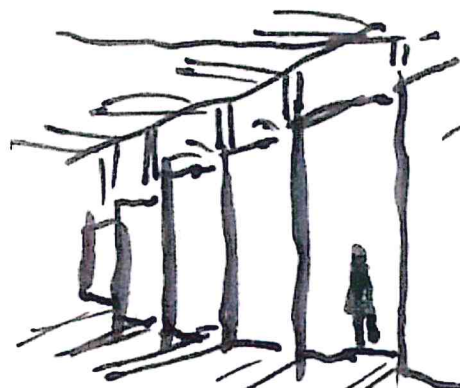
## HERITAGE COMPONENT PROGRAM CONCEPT

Exhibiting memories, local contributions to the Great Lakes heritage.

The Heritage component would be situated along the northern edge of the site, facing the existing Marina Park lands. This area presently contains several remnants and reminders of the past use of the property. Several of these remnants provide natural sculptural forms that can be incorporated into outdoor exhibits. This side of the site would be subject to some of the more severe climatic conditions, and as such the building form could act as a barrier to shelter other areas of the site. This area would house those activities that rely on the memories of the past and display of present and future activity along the waterfront and within the region. There could be interpretive exhibits, displays and conference facilities that would focus on our marine and industrial heritage.

The formal qualities of this component should be symbolic of the forms that have become commonplace along our waterfront lands and should consider the sheltering aspects, qualities of light and volume required for the intended use.

There has been tremendous movement in the region with respect to the natural environment and this component could serve as a much needed interpretive component for the Great Lakes Heritage Coast. There would be office space available to serve this component that could be shared with other local ministry offices looking to reduce office overhead. There would also be a resource and training component that would provide training, workshop and seminar spaces for the community, local groups and businesses. These spaces could support traveling seminars dealing with management and protection of the environment and natural resources and would be available for other interest groups requiring meeting or training space.



# HERITAGE COMPONENT

## PROGRAM SPACES

### FIRST FLOOR

#### entrance lobby

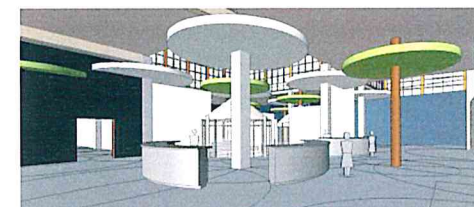
The heritage space will be accessed through its own entrance lobby to address operational hours and security. The lobby space will open onto a seating and reception area with cost-check, a gift shop and washrooms and will have access to a shared elevator lobby. Washrooms are accessed through the shared public program space, next to the elevator lobby.

#### exhibit spaces

The themes for the exhibits will address the local contributions to the heritage of the Great Lakes coast. There will be six themes including forestry, mining, shipping, railway, grain and tourism - all related to the areas natural resources. The overall purpose of the exhibit spaces will be to act as a formal interpretive center for the Great Lakes Heritage Coast project currently under way with the provincial government. No such facility yet exists along the Great Lakes coastline that fulfills this role. The exhibit spaces will occupy the lower and first floor with some spaces taking advantage of two and possibly three storey ceiling spaces and a variety of natural and artificial lighting opportunities.

The exhibits will host permanent as well as changing exhibits and space will be provided for local businesses and industry to host traveling displays as part of local conferences. There is an exhibit area dedicated to the ship wrecks of the Great Lakes that also houses a small theatre for viewing documentaries and such.

The journey through the heritage exhibits is arranged in such a way that it terminates through a ramped Aquatic Exhibit that leads the visitor through an underwater tunnel that enters into the Great Lakes Exhibit sitting mysteriously out on top of old wooden piles that remain from a former elevator workhouse. The Great Lakes Exhibit is meant to evoke the visitors curiosity and draw them into the exhibits in order to discover what the purpose of this "black-box" sitting out on the water is – set against a backdrop of the Sleeping Giant, a local landmark with a remarkable legend that is told within the exhibit space. The tunnel will be glazed on one side offering views under Lake Superior to a lit sunken tug that serves as an outdoor diving exhibit and an aquarium on the other side that will exhibit the aquatic and plant life commonly found in the Great Lakes.





### outdoor exhibit space

The heritage component is situated along the northern edge of the site which is adorned with remnants of past building structures and materials that retain the memories of the site. These remnants will be incorporated into the design of an outdoor exhibit space to be known as the “ruins” that will form part of an exterior pathway providing un-interrupted access along the waterfront and building site. These exhibits will have both heritage and cultural elements that breakdown the division between the buildings individual component spaces, reinforcing the building as a whole. These outdoor exhibits will require a secondary access to and from the indoor exhibit spaces that will require security and control.

Views out from the lower exhibit spaces will look through the “ruins” and beyond to the tug boat bay that serves as an extension to the existing marina, providing boat docking, services and a means of accessing the site from the water.



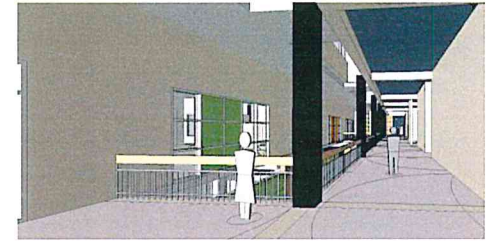
## SECOND FLOOR

### exhibit office and administration space

The heritage coast and exhibit offices will likely be located on the second and third floor areas with shared access to administration, meeting and seminar space. In addition, the exhibit aspect will require exhibit storage, exhibit workshop and layout space which will be located in the basement level along with the primary storage and repair spaces. Archival and research spaces will also be located on the third level in an education and resource center facilitating the cultural and heritage programs as well as public interest groups.

### heritage coast space

While the overall intent of the exhibit spaces will be to promote and interpret the Great Lakes heritage coast, additional spaces will be required as part of the Great Lakes Heritage Coast project. It is expected that office and administration space and seminar and meeting rooms will be necessary to fulfill this program requirement.





## 4. CULTURAL COMPONENT PRECEDENTS

### LIVING ARTS CENTER, MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO

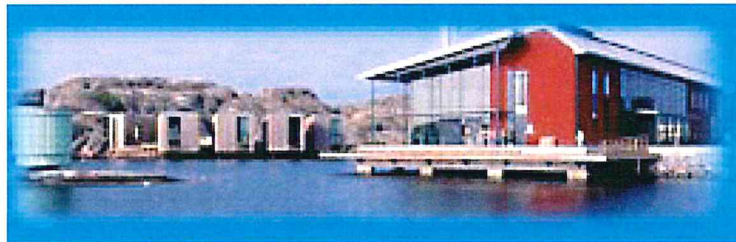
The Living Arts Center is the result of a vision to create a center for which the community could become involved. The center includes four performance halls, craft studios, visual, media and computer arts studios, teaching labs, practice rooms, exhibition spaces, multiple use rooms, gift shop, restaurant, cafe and offices.



### NORDIC WATERCOLOUR MUSEUM

The museum serves as a Nordic centre for contemporary art, for research and training, with the stress laid on techniques of watercolour art. Dramatic natural scenery, inspiring art and lively discussion combine to create an irresistible attraction. There is a stimulation of the senses, either in some form of activity or in contemplative reflection. The placement of the buildings forward of the rocky terrain facilitates accessibility and retains existing bathing areas – establishing an open and natural relationship between building, landscape and sea.

The museum hosts exhibition galleries for temporary and permanent exhibitions, an assembly hall, children's studio, study rooms, studios and workshops, administration and a restaurant.



### BFA STUDIOWORKS, RHODE ISLAND

Studioworks is a working studio and art gallery that brings the local artists and the community together. There is a wide range of studio and teaching spaces available for local artists to work, create and for the community to experience and learn.



### DELAWARE CENTER FOR THE CONTEMPORARY ARTS, WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

The Delaware Centre houses thirty artists studios, seven exhibition galleries, lecture theatres, a 100 seat lecture hall, workshops, a gift shop, café and offices.





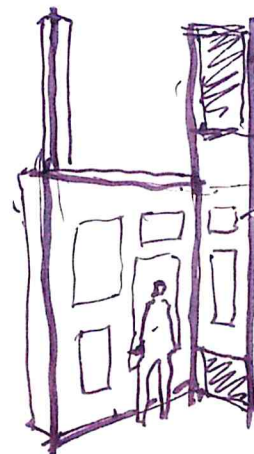
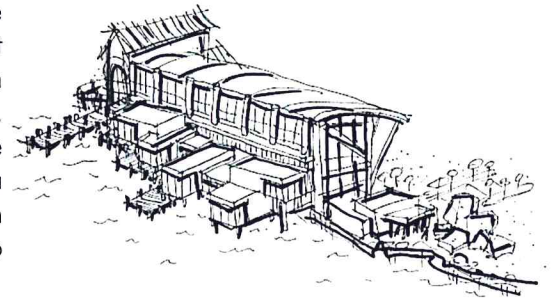
## CULTURAL COMPONENT PROGRAM CONCEPT

### Communicating ideas, thought and feeling.

The Cultural component would be situated on the eastern edge at the end of the site, overlooking Lake Superior and occupying one of the most pristine views on the local waterfront. With the Sleeping Giant as its backdrop this is the component whose aim would be to enhance our emotional connection with the water and would facilitate the coming together of city and life to experience the presence of *place*. This component would provide contemplative qualities that allow visitors to become connected with the locality and the region. Local artisans would display their works and demonstrate their talents in a living, working and vibrant atmosphere of the local arts and entertainment. There would be provision for gallery spaces, workshops, studio and smaller performance spaces that are not readily available to groups within the community.

The formal qualities of this component would address the creative aspects of the visual and performing arts and provide for variation in spatial, visual and light qualities. The spaces should offer a variety of opportunities for contemplation, interaction with the arts and for an experience with the existing qualities of the site and environment.

This component would attract local artists, theatre and performance groups and could be home for local dance and music studios as well as providing for gallery and workshop space. This component would look to attract local artists groups as well as municipal or provincially funded cultural services. This component could easily serve as home for an Arts Center, bringing together local artisans and craftsperson's under one cooperative umbrella.



# CULTURAL COMPONENT – ARTS CENTRE

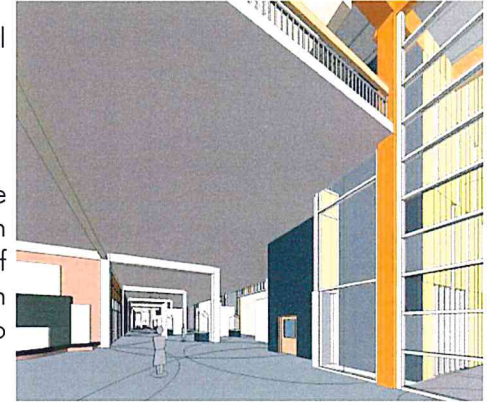
## PROGRAM SPACES

### FIRST FLOOR

The first floor of the Cultural program space is primarily for the involvement of the public in the local arts and culture, providing space for the communication of ideas, thought and feeling.

#### entrances from public space

As with the heritage component, the cultural component will also require separate entrances off the main circulation spaces in order to address operational hours and security. This access will serve both the public and resident artists who have studio or teaching space within the building. The placement of these spaces along the buildings main circulation space will reinforce the integration and interaction between all of the buildings program spaces. This also permits these spaces and adjacent spaces to serve as multi-purpose spaces with flexibility to lend additional program space as required.



#### performance space

This area is accessible off the main circulation space and there will be two rental dance studios and a 200 seat performance hall – all of which are flexible use spaces that serve programmatic as well as local group functions. The emphasis is on bringing local community events under one roof where children, adults and families can come to attend and observe dance, art, photography and music classes.



#### gallery space

The gallery spaces will be used for the display of resident and local artists as well as providing space for traveling exhibits. There will be several gallery spaces of varying sizes and shapes located on the first and second floors of the building, as well as opportunities for outdoor exhibit space that will form part of the outdoor public plaza. The idea is also for various crafts people and artisans to take advantage of the indoor market place to setup displays and demonstrations of their work. It is the intent to create opportunities to display arts and craftworks throughout the building in all program spaces.

The gallery spaces are intended to become a “part of” the visitors movement through the building, rather than being separate spaces that are entered into. This will maximize the use of circulation areas and involve the visitor in a choreographed experience of a continuously changing cultural experience.





### living gallery / studio space

The intent of the living gallery / studio spaces is to provide local artists with working space where they can create and demonstrate their artistic skills. These studio spaces will be an extension of the gallery space where visitors can not only observe completed work but also observe artists at work. There will be a variety of studio spaces for local artist groups including painting, pottery, photography, jewelry, glass, computer graphics and woodworking. The idea is to provide studio space that can be on display to the public to create a "living" gallery experience.

An earlier proposal was to incorporate these spaces as components added on to the existing wood trestle that extends out the east side of the site and into the lake, creating an environment characteristic of a fishing wharf. This idea was challenged and it was encouraged that these spaces be internally located in larger shared use areas, rather than individual private spaces.

The trestle remains an integral part of the overall building character and is accessible from the east end of the indoor and outdoor public spaces, permitting flexibility of use and change as time may demand.

### LOWER FLOOR

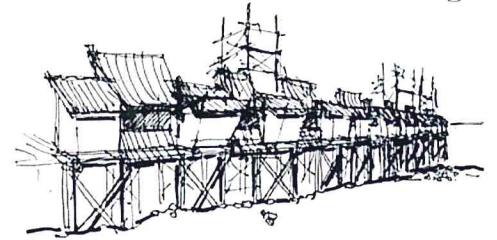
The lower floor of the Cultural program is for the education and practice of the arts. These spaces are educational and informative and also provide local artists with affordable spaces in which to teach, express and work in their fields of art.

### studio space

There is additional studio and teaching space on the lower floor with east windows facing Lake Superior, along with the associated amenities and dedicated artists storage space.

### administration space

The administration space will provide artists with a cooperative style approach to their business management where reception, marketing and managerial services are provided as part of the rental fee for private studio space. Tenants of this program space will have access to computer, reproduction and printing services located on the second floor for personal and business use. The administrative function will organize art exhibits, classes, workshops, seminars and marketing for the artists and community groups utilizing the program spaces within the building. This area is accessed either from the main floor or directly from the parkade area.



## SHARED USE / COMMON SPACES

There will be four main programmatic uses for the shared use spaces that are to be located on the second floor, including meeting and conference space, educational and research space and building administration space.

### SECOND FLOOR

#### research / resource space

There will be a research library with access to computers and reproduction equipment. This space will be shared between the Cultural and Heritage Components and will be accessible to the general public for general interest research and reading. The reading areas will be provided on projecting balconies that span across a two-storey interconnected space overlooking the east shoreline of Lake Superior.

#### administration space

Each component will have space available for offices and administration and will be arranged to provide administrative services for the tenants, resident artists and vendors. This space will provide the main building management service and will be responsible for the marketing, maintenance and financial activities of the Great Lakes Heritage Centre.

#### meeting and seminar rooms

As part of the administrative activities, this area will have access to and will provide booking services for the second floor conference centre and meeting rooms.

#### storage space

There will be leasable storage spaces available which will be located mainly on the lower floor level.





## BUILDING MANAGEMENT / SYSTEMS

The building is proposed to be operated like a “not-for-profit” cooperative, with a management office that would oversee the planning of events and activities, marketing, maintenance and meeting space. These functions would form part of the “shared use space”. The management group would comprise of a board of members ranging from city officials and local arts representatives to elected individuals from the public.



### THIRD FLOOR - Penthouse

The penthouse level will contain the majority of the buildings electrical, heating, cooling and air handling service spaces. This area of the building will be characterized by vertical forms that are symbolic of the vertical forms of the grain elevators as well as the colors and patterns of the railway box cars that stand in line along the cities railway. These forms will be both aesthetic as well as practical as they will provide a means for intake and exhaust air, vertical service spaces and natural sky lighting to the interior of the second floor spaces.

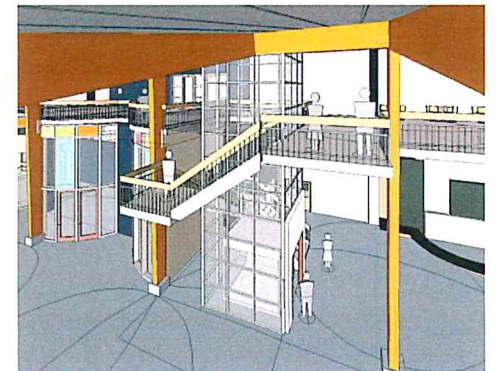
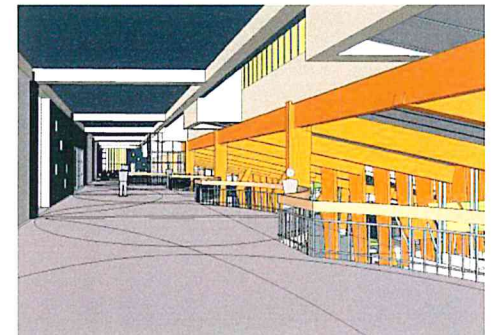
### BASEMENT SERVICE SPACES

Services that generate vibration and risk of water damage to finished building areas will be located at this basement level, along with storage and materials handling functions. The main shipping and receiving area is located on the north-west corner camouflaged by the placement of the concrete remnants that have been left behind from the demolition of the previous grain elevator.

Vendors and program spaces will have access from the Shipping / Receiving area through a freight area served by three freight elevators reaching all floor areas.

### PARKING / DOCKING FACILITIES

The parking will be provided both on-grade as well as within a parkade located below the main outdoor public plaza. Access is provided to the building from all parking areas with full wheelchair accessibility. There are also docking facilities for visitors arriving by boat.



## program development conclusion

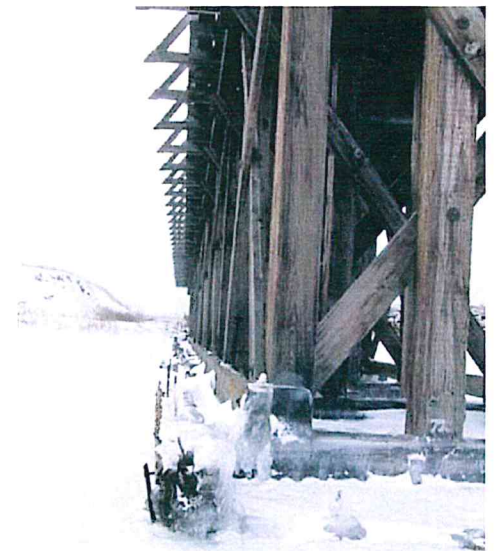
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The building program evolved from an understanding of the presence of a spirit on the site. After several years of walking around the property, through all the seasons and particularly the winter months, it began to speak to me – telling me stories and evoking my curiosity to learn more about what once was there. These are the stories that need to be told and the memories that will reveal the spirit of place. This is what I tried to capture in the development of the building program and it is for the purpose of revealing the spirit of place and evoking curiosities so that the visitors and locals alike will be encouraged to understand more. The building will inform and raise an awareness of place, providing meaning to our physical presence that now exists at the water's edge.

The building program is meant to create an atmosphere that celebrates a presence, bringing together the people, the local cultures, traditions and heritage and integrating them with the landscape. There will be as much to experience and learn from what is around the site as there is to experience and learn from what is within the building. One cannot exist without the other, each strengthening the sense of place.

The program needs to be flexible to recognize the effects of time, being able to change and adapt to change. The program caters to the locals and to the region; it promotes local industry and businesses, artisans and entrepreneurs. The program also recognizes the changing seasons and the in-climate weather that we so frequently experience along the shores of Lake Superior, allowing the visitor to access all the program spaces and to experience a connection with the landscape from within. It is a multi-use, multi-season building that will promote and support waterfront activity and create a much needed identity for the City of Thunder Bay.

*"History exists as long as an object is in use, so long as its form relates to its original function – when form and function are severed, and only form remains as vital, history shifts into the realm of memory. History comes to be known through the relationship between a collective memory of events, the singularity of place, and the sign of the place expressed in form."*<sup>4</sup>







presentation  
boards

# summary

## part one

theoretical parameters for this thesis

acknowledging the importance of place in architectural theory - an approach to restoring the fracture between thought and feeling.



finding the spirit that exists in a placeless environment so that when we build, we create a meaningful existence between man, nature and space.

## part two

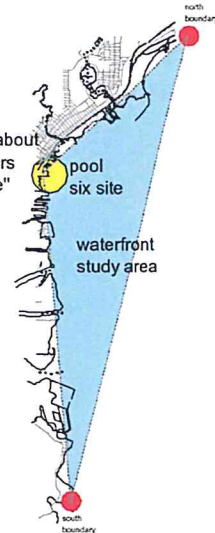
determine most suitable location to demonstrate the theoretical parameters

the former pool six site sits at the apex of the local waterfront - the point from which all other waterfront activity can be related

- rich in history, heritage and memories
- placeless abandoned industrial site
- strong visual presence

apex

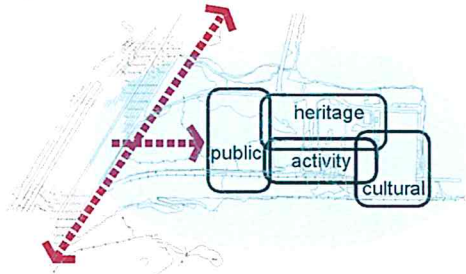
"the point about which others are relative"



## part three

examine the existing site and establish objectives for a design solution

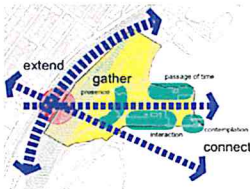
finding the spirit that exists in a place so that when we build, we create a meaningful existence between man, nature and space.



## building program and conceptual design

over-riding idea

to create a building that exhibits the ability to "gather, extend and connect"



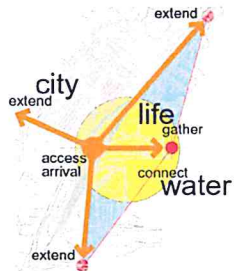
gather - bringing the people, the community, and the region together to create a presence

extend - reaching beyond the locality to involve and inform

connect - physical and emotional awareness of place

emphasis

the way in which the building exists on the site should symbolize "city, life and water"



the water brings life to the city

city - symbolizing community and our built environment

life - symbolizing our existence and everyday life

water - symbolizing our relationship with nature





# building program

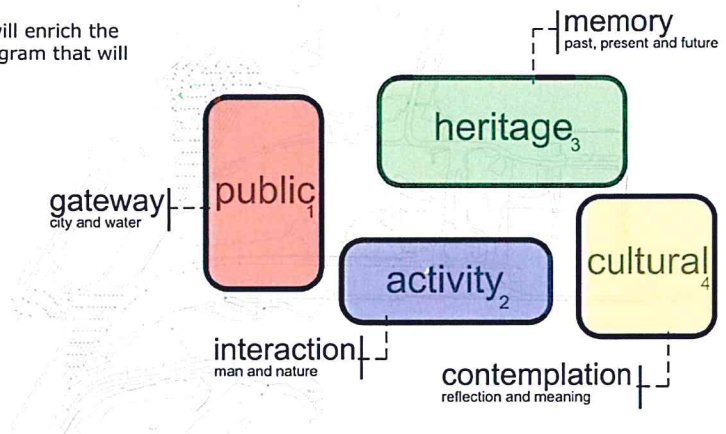
developed as a response to the theoretical objective -  
the building should involve the community in an awareness of place through a program that results in a building with a specific character symbolizing the local spirit of place -  
linking the past and present in a building that creates an image of the future of the city.

## program objectives

1. APEX: address the site's position as an apex, a place on the waterfront that defines an image for the city and establishes a place along the waterfront from where all local and regional activity is related.
2. ACCESS: facilitate year-round access and create a public presence to enhance the role of the local waterfront as an integral part of the urban fabric.
3. INFORM: create a better understanding of the importance of the waterfront as a defining element for our city.
4. SUSTAINABILITY: the building should address both the ecological and economical viability of a public building development on the local waterfront.
5. IDENTITY: creating a strong visual presence, presenting a local identity with a regional influence.

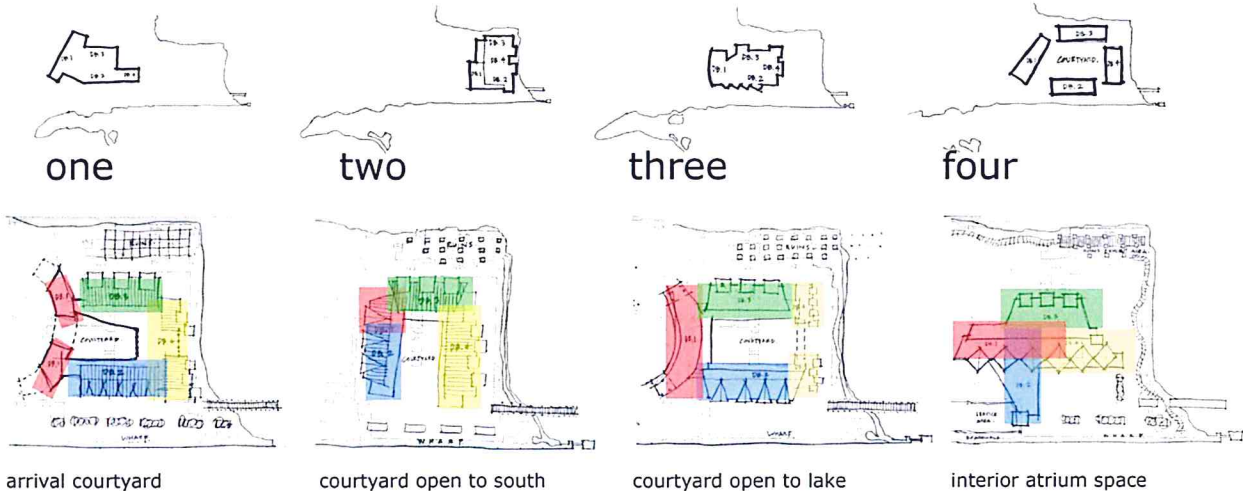
## functional concept

develop a center of focus on the local waterfront that will enrich the image of the city through the creation of a building program that will involve the community in the spirit of place.



## siting options

the placement of the program spaces on the site affect how the building addresses the locality



the building program has been designed to suit the site, the locality and with the intent of defining the waterfront as a place -  
a place that will invoke thought and feeling and raise awareness of the quality of life and spirit of place that the city endures  
from its location and the presence of the waterfront.

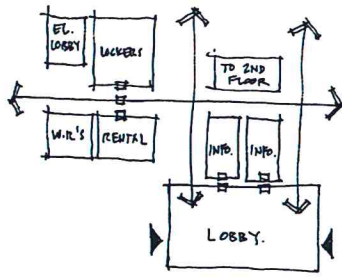


## public component space

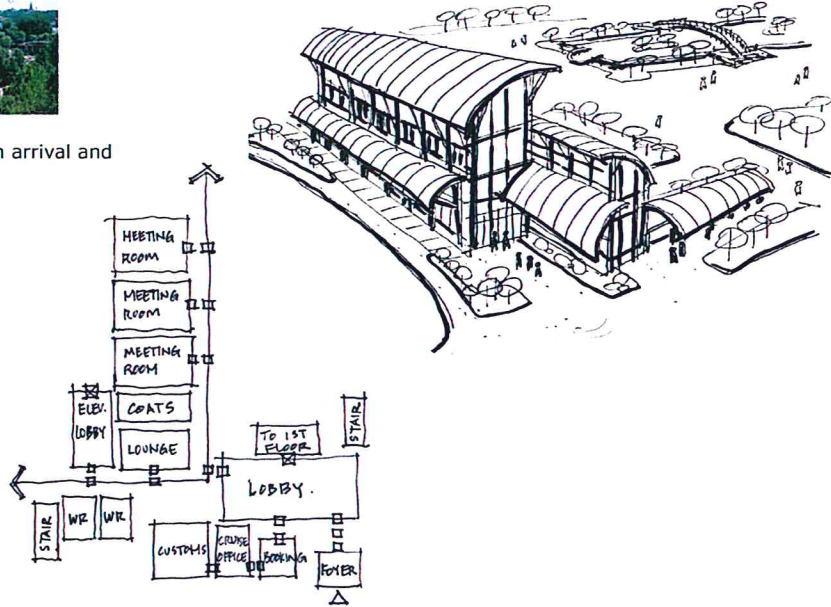
a gateway - creating a path between the city and the waterfront



addressing the community and forming an arrival and gateway to the waterfront



first floor



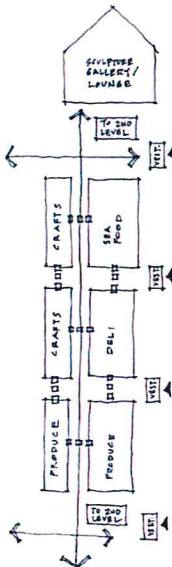
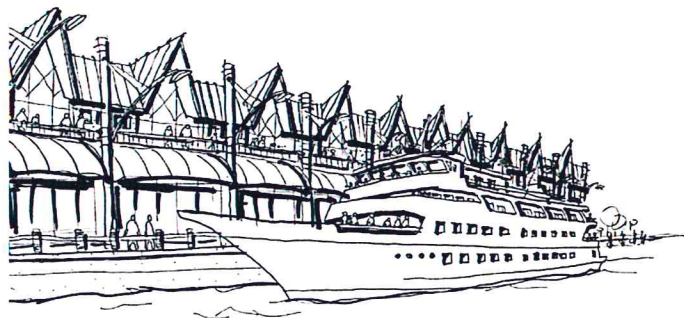
second floor

## activity component space

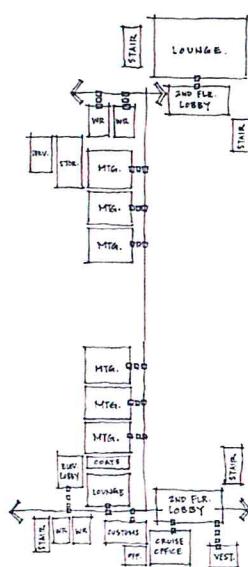


focus on how we interact with the environment in our daily lives, facilitating interaction between people, building spaces and the locality

involving the life of the city with the waterfront



first floor



second floor





heritage component space

exhibiting memories and local contributions to the Great Lakes heritage



## cultural component space

communicating ideas, thought and feeling



## ENDNOTES – PART THREE, PROGRAM

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<sup>1</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz, Architecture: Presence, Language, Place. Skira Editore, Milan. 2000.

<sup>2</sup> Quote by the thesis author, Cory Stechyshyn.

<sup>3</sup> The Great Lakes Heritage Coast, Part of Ontario's Living Legacy. Charting the Course Report, MNR, 2001.

<sup>4</sup> Aldo Rossi, The Architecture of the City, MIT Press, 1989.



part

4

# part four - design

## creating an awareness of place

This thesis began with a theoretical exploration of the theory of place in architecture. It was proposed that three important elements; *man, nature and space*, needed to exist in a meaningful and complimentary way in order for there to be an experience of **place** (*Part One, "three themes of place"*). It was also demonstrated that either or all of these three elements could exist at any given time, in any given space - but it is the quality of their existence and how they are experienced that define the success of a place as meaningful. Through our evolution mankind has developed an existential relationship with the heavens and the gods; we have found interest in our relationship with nature and now we have developed an understanding of their importance in defining meaning to our existence.

There is a spirit to be found in every place (*Part Two, "what the site wants to be"*). Some are discovered spiritually while others are revealed by memories of the past. We need to find the spirit that exists within the environments in which we build in order to create a meaningful existence between man, nature and space. When the building becomes involved in the spirit of a place, a meaningful experience is made present to us and we experience a **sense of place**.

The position of this thesis is that any building proposed on the former Pool Six site should involve the community in an awareness of place, and it should invoke our thoughts and feelings so that we can experience the space as being a meaningful part of the existence of the city and our quality of life. We need not ask why the waterfront is of such an importance to the life of this city - we need only to ask why we have not yet realized its significance in defining our city, our quality of life and a *sense of place*.

The primary objective of the design for the former Pool Six site is to develop a centre of focus on the local waterfront that will enrich the image of our city through the creation of a building with a memorable and specific character that symbolizes the local spirit of place, while linking the past and present into a building that provides us with a vision for the future (*Part Three, "building program"*).





## development of the building concept.

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### GREAT LAKES HERITAGE CENTRE

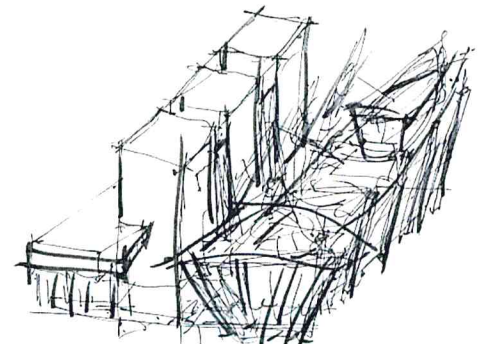
The local waterfront is defined by its natural and man-made edges and is characterized by the images resulting from the industrial activity and its rich heritage as a working waterfront. The strongest physical image that we can attribute to our local waterfront is that of the ocean freighter (Laker) pulled up alongside the grain elevators – an image that characterizes our success and prosperity. This image, as with many waterfronts around the world today, is slowly disappearing – along with the many memories that it represents.



*"In order to understand architecture, it is important that we should keep in mind the most subtle and powerful principle of all arts: the agreement between material and form, made as intimate and thorough as possible by the nature of things".<sup>1</sup>*

The idea for the development of the Pool Six site comes from the symbolic forms of our working waterfront. These forms were once present on the site which was home of the former Saskatchewan Wheat Pool Six Grain Elevator, demolished in the year 2000 to make way for commercial development of the waterfront. The building concept is of a public, cultural, heritage and activity centre - a **Great Lakes Heritage Centre**, modeled as a form of Waterfront Center that will bring the community together to celebrate the local culture, heritage and quality of life. The form of the building will be symbolic of the "Laker" pulled up next to the "Grain Elevators", the concrete giants of our local waterfront. The building will involve the community in the many memories of our culture and heritage in a place that interacts, respects and emphasizes our relationship with the natural environment and its importance to the region.

For this place to become a center of activity for our local waterfront, it must compete with the forms and images that have and still exist within the locality. The idea to symbolize an image that has become common place along the waterfront will not only preserve the memories of our past – it will remind us of the importance that man's interaction with nature has had on the growth and survival of our community. The building will allow us to celebrate, it will inform us and it will involve us with the locality.



## conceptual ideas

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*"our forefathers were willing to endure great hazards and discomforts for the sake of what such factories represented ... progress, wealth, power and urban maturity"*<sup>2</sup>

### FORM

There will be two distinctive symbolic forms that will characterize the building, each considered with respect to the functional programs that will be housed within them. The use of these forms will not be literal – the intent is that they will be implied through the use of symbolic forms, materials, structure, colour and texture.

The main "organizing" form is symbolic of the grain elevators that have adorned our waterfront since 1902. This typological form will permit the use of larger scale vertical spaces that will also serve to create a distinct identity for the *Heritage Centre* among the other familiar and strong visual forms that already dominate the waterfront. The exterior form will create an anchor, a mass that stabilizes the overall massing of the building. The presence of vertical space will allow for a varied use of natural and artificial lighting and allows multi-storey program spaces that will support the Culture and Heritage components of the building program.

This form will represent the "aspirations of man" and commemorate the progress, wealth and power that local industry has brought to the city. It is hoped that the industries that are often looked at as negatively contributing factors on the local waterfront can be expressed in a way that turns them into a positively contributing factor. These forms are as much a hindrance to our views out to the water as they are a meaningful part of our history and heritage.

Thunder Bay historically was known as the site of Canada's first concrete slip formed elevator bins, dating back as early as 1939 and is one of the world's largest grain handling ports. The grain elevators place in our history is one to be recognized and may soon be forgotten as the politics of the world are affecting local port activity and grain movement is diminishing.

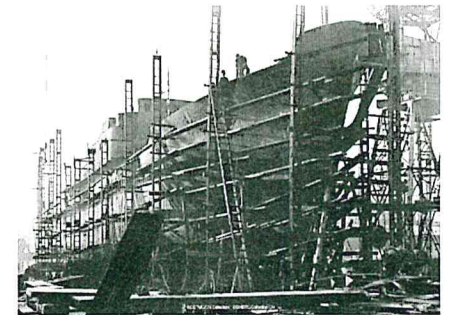




The other form that has inspired the building concept is one that is meant to be “evolving” and is that of the Laker or Salty, an ocean freighter as they are known. As already noted, the presence of a Laker next to the grain elevators symbolizes the growth and prosperity that signifies this cities existence. It is a visual reminder of our past and the local Great Lakes heritage. This form will be enriched by creating interior and exterior formal and spatial qualities that are suggestive of our local ship building heritage. This will permit the use of structure and light to create a large and open interior space that will support the Public and Activity components of the building program.

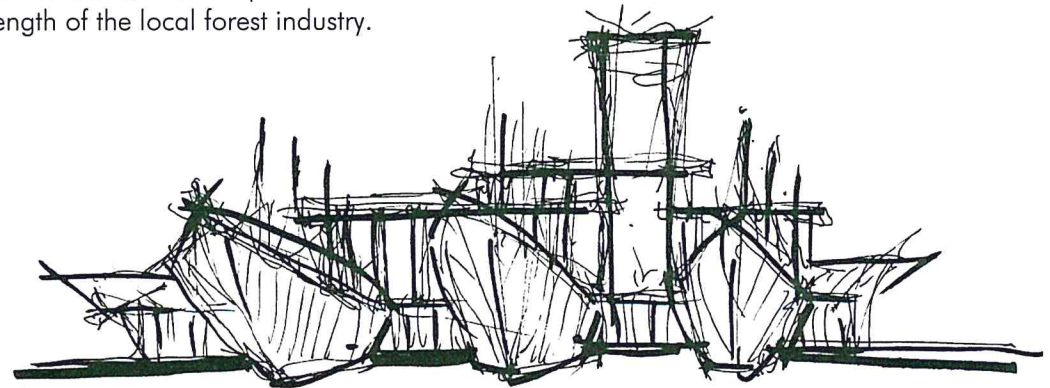
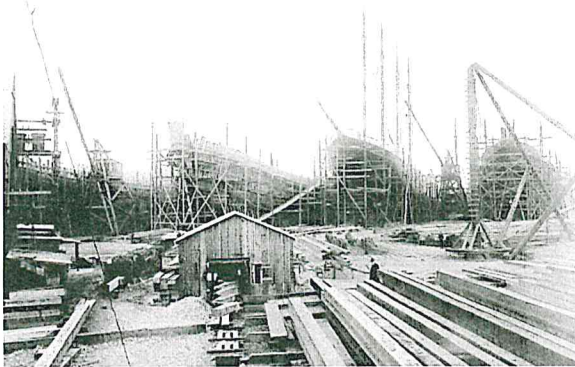


The locality is rich in mining, forestry, pulp, paper, shipping and industrial pioneering heritage and it is the pioneering expertise that built this city and continues to build this city today. The Great Lakes Heritage Centre building will exhibit the pioneering skills and structures that are part of our rich heritage and these will support the buildings functional program and will express them in a way that informs the community, involving them physically and emotionally while creating an awareness of place.



The historic photo of the local Port Arthur Shipyards during its days when ship building was a major contributor to our local industry has inspired the expressive forms that will house the indoor market place and act as visual elements that lead the visitor along the south edge of the site to come to the place where the land meets the water. This path will be reinforced by an observation tower that will anchor the end of the existing concrete wharf and stand brilliantly as a visual marker to be seen from throughout the city and out on the water.

The main structural element will be glued-laminated timber frames that will be reminiscent of the wood ships hulls seen in historic photos of ships under construction, and these elements will provide both the framing for a structural enclosure as well as exposed structure to define interior space. The use of wood is also significant in recognizing local traditions and the strength of the local forest industry.





## RHYTHM

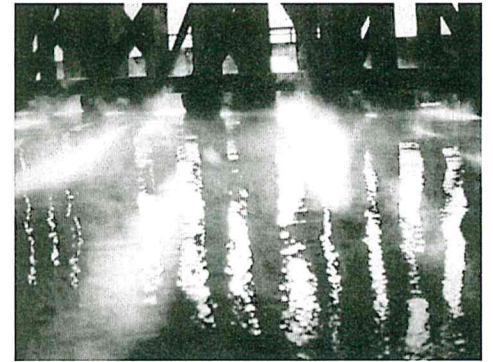
*"Rhythm or recurrence of certain pattern of sounds, numbers, figures, colors or movements is so closely associated with life that it seems to be the very expression of life itself".<sup>3</sup>*

There is a sense of rhythm that can be found within the existing structures and landscape along the waterfront. Patterns are revealed, evolving from the presence of materials, structures and colour that find their way into the buildings, artifacts and natural landscapes along the waterfront.

There are existing patterns of rhythm that are found in the wooden train trestle that extends out into the water on the south-east corner of the site. The sunlight creates visual patterns that dance and reflect the structure, revealing itself on the surface of the water.

The concrete plinths of a former workhouse on the north edge of the site create a rhythmic pattern of forms that seem to lead your imagination on a journey through time and out toward the remnants that occupy the waters edge.

The industrial buildings sit as markers along the eastern shoreline of Lake Superior awaiting the arrival of grain by either ship or rail. These forms create a distinct rhythm and presence that add a strong contrast to the linear expanse of the shoreline. Each form draws your attention outward toward the water, extending the land into the landscape.





## COLOUR

*"When a painting loses its color it no longer exists as a work of art but this is not true of architecture, for the art of building is first and foremost concerned with form; with dividing and articulating space. In architecture color is used to emphasize the character of the building, to accentuate its form and material, and to elucidate its divisions."<sup>4</sup>*

Although many of the waterfront structures are colorless, being of either concrete or steel, there is a presence of colour – revealed by the variety of industrial mechanisms, the artifacts and the natural colors that attach themselves to so many of the surfaces along the water.

Color will be used to add visual character to the building to allow it to stand out among the rich landscape, expansive water filled backdrop and large existing industrial structures. The color will bring a renewed vibrancy to the area and provide a visual stimulus that we have become accustomed to within public marina and waterfront developments.



## MATERIAL

*"Keeping in mind the principle of unity, we are again led to the conclusion that the less different materials we use in a building, the better the building will be, at least in regard to consistency. By consistency, we mean the close union of material and design so that one seems to be the necessary result of the other to such an extent that it becomes difficult to decide if the design was the result of the material, or if the material was chosen because of the design."<sup>5</sup>*

Through the selection and use of materials - the texture, scale, structure, and local customs and traditions are revealed to us. Materials were chosen for their natural colors and textures and used to strengthen the overall character and form of the building.



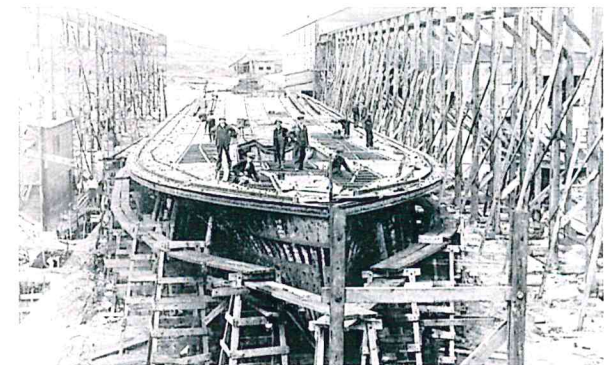


## STRUCTURE

*"The Architect, by his arrangement of forms, realizes an order which is a pure creation of his spirit; by forms and shapes he affects our senses to an acute degree, and provokes plastic emotions; by the relationships which he creates he wakes in us profound echoes, he gives us the measures of an order which we feel to be in accordance with that of our world, he determines the various movements of our heart and of our understanding; it is then that we experience the sense of beauty."*<sup>6</sup>

The buildings structure should be revealed to us as a representation of the successes of local industry and labor, expressing what is behind the image is as important as the image that is being portrayed. The use of concrete and wood is predominantly displayed throughout the existing structures and artifacts that define the character of the waterfront and these will be the two main structural materials for the Great Lakes Heritage Centre.

The use of concrete is meant to symbolize permanence and stability while wood is intended to add warmth and visual interest, to allow openness and symbolize the local traditions and structures.



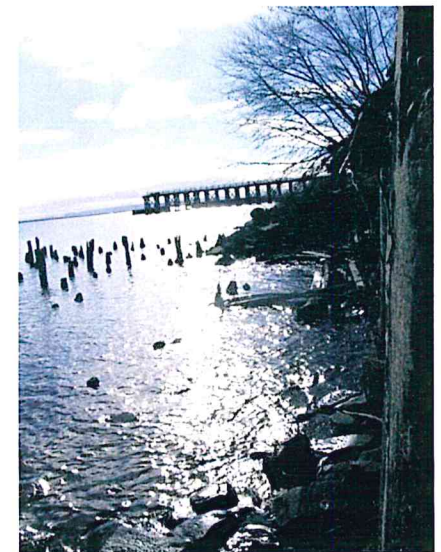
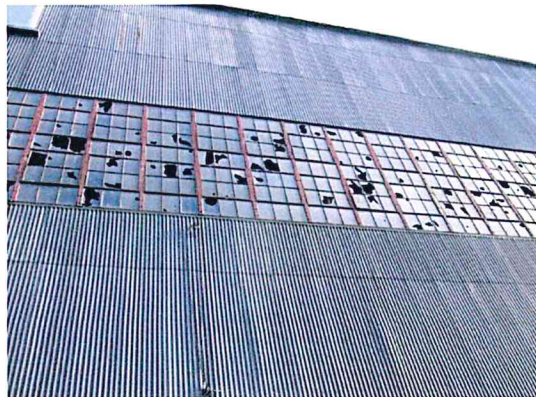
## LIGHT

*"The architect can fix the dimensions of solids and cavities, he can designate the orientation of his building, he can specify the materials and the way they are to be treated; he can describe precisely the quantities and qualities he desires in his building before a stone has been laid. Daylight alone he cannot control. It changes from morning to evening, from day to day, both in intensity and in color."*<sup>7</sup>

Without light we could not make sense of objects, shape or form. Surfaces are revealed by the presence of light. During our short daylight hours of winter and on our late summer evenings, we can often look out toward the water and see the shimmering lights cast across the waves from the ocean freighters or lighthouse that guide them safely. It is a relief against a vast open and dark backdrop. They are romantic, like the city lights from a distance at night. Natural light brings warmth and comfort. Light and shadow create patterns and rhythms that create a sense of scale and proportion.

The building will take advantage of natural sources of light for day lighting that will also create a connectedness with the exterior, integrating the interior with the exterior and providing views and vistas of the surrounding context and landscape. The interior spaces will be filled with variations of natural and artificial lighting to create unique and controlled experiences. Windows and openings will be purposely located to afford views into and out of the building, raising curiosity and awareness.

The building will also be artificially lit from the exterior, expressing the buildings forms in the night and creating a silhouette against the dark open water.



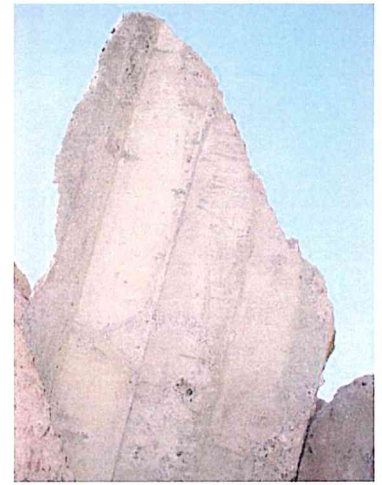


## ARTIFACTS

*"..persistence in an urban artifact often causes it to become identified as a monument, and that a monument persists in the city both symbolically and physically. A monument's persistence or permanence is a result of its capacity to constitute the city, its history and art, its being and memory."*<sup>8</sup>

The waterfront itself can be considered to be a natural exhibit, displaying its artifacts to us, revealing the memories of the past relationship man has had with the landscape – a relationship that has shaped our existing waterfront.

These artifacts have told the story for this thesis and they will also function to tell the story to the visitors of the Great Lakes Heritage Centre. Artifacts will be used as natural outdoor exhibits. Their materials and color will be used as part of the character of the building and nothing will be removed from the site. Every piece of artifact will become an integral part of the development of the building and site, giving them a renewed meaning.



# the design

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## GOALS

- to involve the community in an awareness of place.
- to create a focus on the local waterfront that enriches the image of the city and symbolizes the local spirit of place.
- to reunite the urban city with its waterfront.



## STATEMENT OF INTENT

Cities worldwide are addressing the disappearance of industry on their waterfront lands and they begin by looking to capitalize on the use of these lands for commercial use, replacing the diminishing tax base. The character that we often see is one that is a universal image characteristic to waterfront development worldwide. There is a lack of consideration being given to public accessibility and the need to identify with the unique character of place.

This thesis gives consideration to the appropriate use of a waterfront site with the purpose of public accessibility and a desire to create an awareness of place. The building along with its functional program should bring the community together to celebrate the local heritage while thriving to create an image for the city that is based on the local spirit of place.

*"You have the railway on one side, and the water on the other, and with these two you must be a great city. You must be a wealthy city, and I am quite sure the enterprise of those men who have made this their home will be sufficient to make this town what God and nature has designed it to be."*<sup>9</sup>





# GREAT LAKES HERITAGE CENTRE



Where history becomes known – inspired by the local industrial heritage, the forms, materials and colors act as reminders of the history that is slowly disappearing from the local waterfront; revealing a spirit of place through the memories that are revealed and its connectedness with the landscape.

## ACCESSIBILITY

The primary approach to the Heritage Centre would be from the west, the edge of the site that has the urban city set as its backdrop. This edge is also divided from the urban city by several main railway arteries, a rail yard and a four lane roadway that links the north and south communities of the city. There is the need to create both a visual and a physical connection between the urban city and its waterfront. Currently views from the city are cut-off by a long line of railway cars, industrial waste or simply a lack of visual definition. This can be overcome by the creation of a unique character that will help define a “waterfront district”, through the use of signage, lighting, landscape, flags and color. The visual and physical access points should be emphasized and encouraging.

It is assumed that the site would be accessed from a newly developed “waterfront drive” that would extend the length of the waterfront, accessed from various pedestrian pathways, as well as vehicular access from the Current River underpass, Marina Park overpass, the Central Avenue overpass, the Pacific Avenue overpass and the new 110<sup>th</sup> Avenue bridge.

Pedestrian access will be developed for walking, biking and roller-blading along a shoreline walk-way that will continue around the Heritage Centre site. This “Lakefront Walk” will interconnect with all the other pedestrian access routes and will weave the various waterfront areas together. Rail and water access will also be encouraged with the proposal for a tourist train station that utilizes one of the existing rail lines and the two existing railway stations as bus and terminal stations. Water taxi service would be available between this site and the existing Kam River Park development. Docking will also be available for cruise ships, excursion boats and pleasure craft.



Accessibility is not limited to physical access; the primary concern with accessibility is that the community and the region have full access to the waterfront, affording access to everyone and anyone. This goal has influenced many of the design decisions, primarily in limiting the commercial content of the Heritage Centre so that the building maintains a “public” image and encourages people to come and be involved in the waterfront experience.

## ARRIVAL

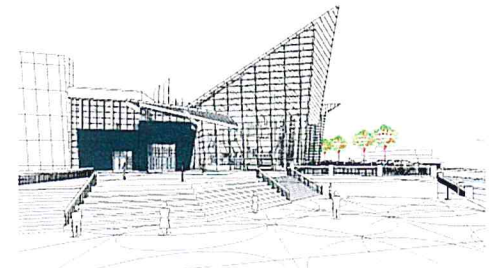
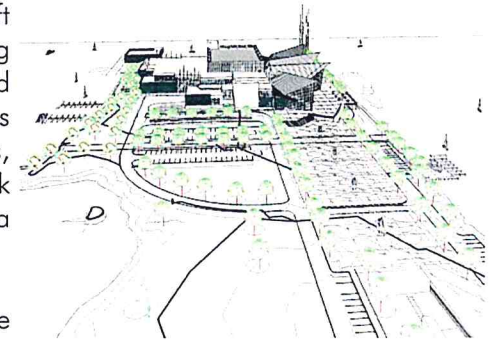
The main arrival is intended to be from the west along the “arrival plaza”, a variety of hard and soft landscaped surfaces. The main drive will enter along this east-west axis which intersects the strong natural north-south axis of the waterfront and urban edge. The soft landscape of the plaza will extend through to the urban edge to introduce views toward the Heritage Centre and to encourage access from one of the many access points. There is also a tourist rail line proposed to extend along this axis, replacing the rail line that once existed for rail cars to deliver or ship grain products. The lakefront walk will also cut across the arrival plaza with a strong north-south axis via a walking plaza, providing a direct connection between the north and south edges of the site.

As you arrive along the plaza several large fountains, modeled after the dust collectors seen outside the local industries, enliven the procession with water that symbolizes the connection between city, water and life and which provide evaporative cooling for the buildings heating and cooling systems.

Parking is available on grade at various locations as well as in an underground open-air parkade. The parkade affords access into the lower floor of the Arts Centre and through to the east waters edge.

As you arrive at the foot of the public plaza that ties the south edge of the site with the building, terraced stairs and seat steps as well as a curving ramp provide a variety of movement opportunities, leading into the main entrance or outside to the south plaza. Entering the building you are met with tall curving theme walls set off aside the expanse of open space framed with ribbed glu-lam structures that are reminiscent of the local ship building heritage. Your view is drawn forward down the market space along the public circulation area and out to the lake at the east end. The theme walls are intended to distract your attention and draw you into the Information and Excursion Booking Area for access to local and regional information and excursion and event bookings.

All entrances are clad in black granite panels that demark their significance and add visual contrast to the adjacent glazed surfaces. The entrances are intended to be “transition” spaces that take you from the exterior to the interior experience, or visa-versa. Moving through the entrances, your attention is changed from what was to what is to come.





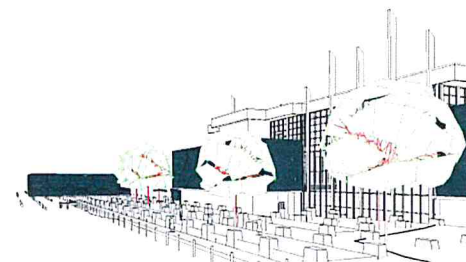
## SITE ACCESS

The main arrival has already been described, but what needs to be noted as importantly as the arrival are the various means of accessing the site and building aside from the main arrival. A bus-drop is located adjacent the main entrance at grade level, avoiding the need for ramps or stairs. Excursion and water-taxi docking access the existing concrete wharf on the south edge of the site which is tied into the main arrival plaza via the north-south walking plaza and by ramps up to the south exterior public plaza. There is also on-grade parking and bus pick-up adjacent the docking area. Cruise ships that are starting to frequent the area during the summer months will also be accommodated along the south concrete wharf with access to the building and site similar to that for the excursion and water-taxi service.



There is an existing wooden trestle on the east edge that extends out into Lake Superior and ties back into the main floor of the building. This trestle is multi-purpose and will have the atmosphere of a fishing wharf, allowing street vendors to setup along it as the public venture out to take in the views. Adjacent the trestle is a public boat docking area for those travelers arriving by boat. These docks tie into the lakefront walking path that finds its way around the site as well as to a lower floor entrance lobby providing access to the winter lounge and to all other floors of the building.

The north edge has been left primarily natural with the exception of a boardwalk and the “birch grove walking trails”. The north edge is currently home to the only vegetation on the site with a tall stand of healthy birch trees grown in among the remains or “ruins” of the former workhouse. These ruins are to form a natural outdoor walking exhibit that will be viewed from a variety of vantage points. The boardwalk will provide pedestrian access around the ruins to help preserve its natural beauty. The lakefront walking path will tie into the birch grove and continue along the boardwalk, interrupted occasionally by north-south oriented pathways or plazas providing access to the main arrival plaza and the building. The north edge continues north toward the existing Marina Park. The lands between the existing park and this site are available for development and would support such things as an extension of the public marina, a yacht and rowing club facilities, and potentially some medium density commercial development that could include a hotel facility that could be themed after a “boat house” – providing boaters the opportunity to pull up and dock next to their hotel room.



## THE PROGRAM SPACES

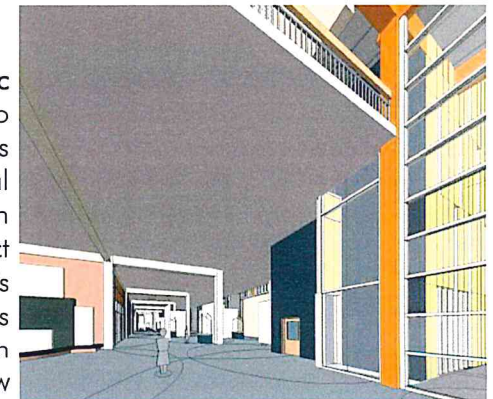
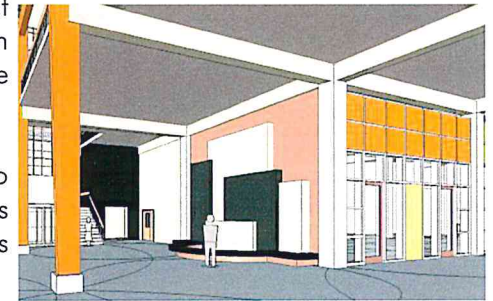
As noted already in Part-3, Program Development, there are four primary programmatic themes that the Heritage Centre would house. These program spaces, along with the building character, have been carefully chosen to reinforce the spirit of place and to raise the awareness of the visitor to the importance, meaning and the presence of place.

The Great Lakes Heritage Centre is not to be mistaken for an interpretive centre, it is this but yet so much more. The idea is for the visitor to become involved in the spirit of the place, whether their visit is intended for this or not – everyone will leave with some greater form of awareness of the locality, its history, the local culture and traditions and the importance of the city and the water to our lives.

The Centre offers passers-by with amenities to better prepare them for their waterfront experience. The **Visitor Services** area offers day lockers, bike and stroller rentals, washroom facilities, an emergency medical assistance office, providing the passer-by with the means to continue their day elsewhere along the waterfront. This area is located so that there is direct access out to the north edge of the site and onto the lakefront walking and biking path.

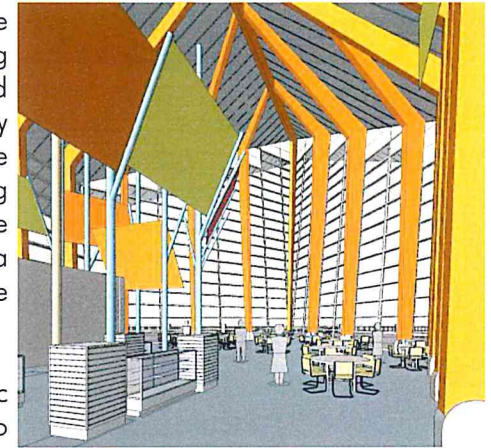
There is an **Information and Excursion Booking** area that is intended to provide other local entrepreneurs and regional tourist attractions to be displayed and marketed. Train tours, fishing excursions, rock climbing, concert tickets and hotel bookings can all be taken care of from within the Heritage Centre which will be affiliated with these amenities throughout the region. This is intended to serve as the place where everyone comes to find out what to do in and around the region. Special events and tourist attractions will be marketed and promoted with arrangements for various means of travel also available from the Centre.

The key experience to the visitor will be their movement through the building along the **Public Circulation Spaces**. Each and every path they take will involve them in an awareness and lead them to something different. The public circulation space is utilized for displaying works of art and memories and will be a choreographed experience that provides access to and views out to the natural landscape. The circulation space becomes a part of the program space, breaking down the distinction between corridor and space. The floor surfaces throughout the public spaces are patterned to reflect the structural pattern of the former pool six elevator that once stood on this site. This pattern extends into the landscape and the buildings exterior faces. The visitor will be lead through and into the various spaces and be provided with a glimpse of what can be seen within those areas that require admission fees. The intent is that each visitor will take home something different from their experience, a new understanding, a souvenir and particularly a memory.





The **Market Place** is one of the main program spaces and is situated along the southern edge of the site to take advantage of the daylighting, existing wharf and views out along the industrial working waterfront. The market is part of the main public circulation space on the main floor and is overlooked by a continuous second floor balcony whose edges protrude out into the open space to create a variety of areas for visitors to congregate and take-in the spaces below. The market experience is meant to be reminiscent of the “manufacturing and assembly” that took place at the local Can-Car Manufacturing and the Port Arthur Ship Building plants. The space is framed with ribbed glu-lam structures that are reminiscent of the wooden hulls of the ships built at the local ship yards and the structures offer a natural warmth and colour to the space. These structures are experienced as both supporting the enclosure as well as defining the space as the visitor moves through the various vendor areas.

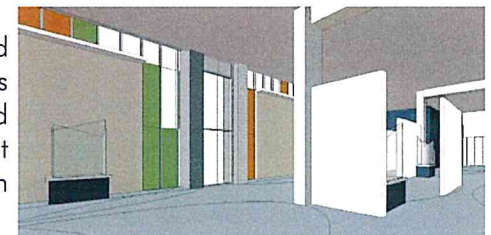


The market is structured around the image of four ships under construction, inspired from a historic photo of the Port Arthur Ship Yards at a time of heightened port activity. These “boat” forms appear to dance along the south edge of the site, leading your eye toward the front of the site. The market is intended to have a “street vendor” atmosphere as well, allowing a varied assortment of vendor experiences from small portable carts to larger deli and produce vendors. These vendor spaces will be the main retail spaces within the building, allowing artisans to display and sell their works. The market extends out to the exterior to the south public plaza, allowing vendors to set up outdoor kiosks and displays as weather permits. This market forms the backdrop for the arrival of cruise ships and excursion boats, leaving a lasting “first impression” for foreign visitors.



The **Arts Centre** provides spaces for all forms of the arts to be taught, experienced and viewed. Spaces are available for classes, rental, performances and display. The Arts Centre will offer local artists with the amenities that they may otherwise not be able to afford, providing them with space to also teach, display and sell their works. The classrooms, studios and performance spaces are available for rent during the day or evenings and year round. These spaces are flexible to permit a variety of uses a may be needed, permitting them to change with time.

There are a variety of galleries that are conveniently located throughout the building and are accessed along the main public circulation spaces. This is intended to increase the accessibility and opportunities for the works being displayed to be publicly viewed. Each gallery area can be re-arranged and closed off if needed, allowing maximum flexibility as the exhibits may require. These galleries are meant primarily for the display and sale of the works of local artists but will also display traveling exhibits from other galleries throughout the world.

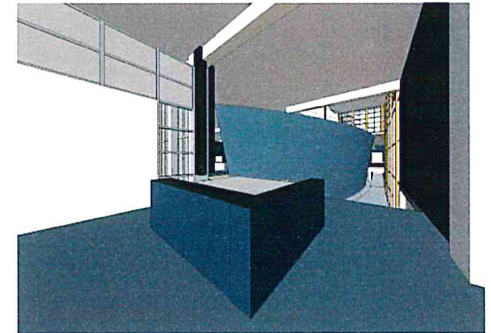


The **Heritage Centre**, although the name of the building – is one of the other main program spaces that will provide permanent and non-permanent exhibit and interpretive spaces with the primary content being the promotion and display of the great lakes heritage coast initiative. The exhibits will raise the visitors' awareness of the local heritage and history of the waterfront and the importance and preservation of the great lakes. These spaces are also flexible with some structural features being more permanent. The exhibits will be themed and will cover such things as native culture, the fur trade, mining, shipping, forestry, the railway, manufacturing, the grain elevators and the great lakes habitat.

One exhibit will familiarize visitors with the ship wrecks of the Great Lakes with a steel ships hull that extends between two floor levels and houses displays and a film theatre. As visitors are lead through the exhibits opportunities are taken to expose them to the exterior or to the interior public circulation spaces. The lower level exhibits are accessed by an internal stair and elevator lobby and are interconnected with the exhibits above to provide a seamless experience. The final destination at the lower level is the aquatic exhibit that is dedicated to the Great Lakes habitat.

The **Great Lakes Exhibit** space is a black granite box sitting mysteriously out on the water, resting on the wooden piles that remain from a former elevator workhouse. The exhibit is set against a remarkable backdrop of the Sleeping Giant and Lake Superior and is meant to evoke the same mysticism as the legends that surround the Sleeping Giant. The curiosity is aroused as the visitor walks around the site or glances out any of the east facing windows along the main public circulation areas. As boaters pass by the Centre, they become curios as to the purpose of this structure, the same curiosity that exists of the Sleeping Giant. It draws you in to the building to find answers. The journey to the Great Lakes Exhibit raises your awareness of the local heritage and history and the cultures that have come to live here. This journey leads you down a ramped aquatic exhibit that takes you under the lake into a tunnel that directs your attention to the depths of Lake Superior.

The tunnel experience will change with the seasons and different times of the day. A sunken tug diving exhibit that will be purposely sunk in the adjacent bay will be lit underwater to provide visual interest as the visitors move through the tunnel. Their views will be through the existing wooden piles and may provide opportunities to see some natural aquatic plant or animal life. On the interior side of the tunnel there will be interpretive exhibits and a long narrow aquarium that will show the types of plant, aquatic and animal life that would be found throughout the great lakes region.





Upon arriving inside the *Great Lakes Exhibit*, the visitor is met with a maze of exhibits inside a controlled lighted volume of space. Movement is planned to take the visitor on a journey through the history and the heritage of the Great Lakes. The last exhibit introduces the visitor to the legends that surround the City of Thunder Bay (Animikie, the thunderbird), the Sleeping Giant (Nannabijou, legendary indian) and Lake Superior (Gitche Manitou, the spirit of the deep sea water). Immediately following this introduction to the local legends the visitor leaves the dimly lit exhibit area and enters a large volume of naturally lit space enclosed on three sides by floor to ceiling glass that opens to a view of the Sleeping Giant and Lake Superior. There are no words needed to describe this natural exhibit, the visitor becomes involved as part of the experience of place and the spirit is felt within.



On the second floor of the Centre are the **General Office and Administration** spaces for the Great Lakes Heritage Coast as well as the Heritage Centres main administration offices from where the Heritage Centre will be managed, marketed and maintained. Also on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor is the **Conference Centre** which will be open for rentals to the general public, businesses and tenants alike. These spaces can be subdivided or opened for larger events as required. They are serviced directly from the Kitchen for catering if required.



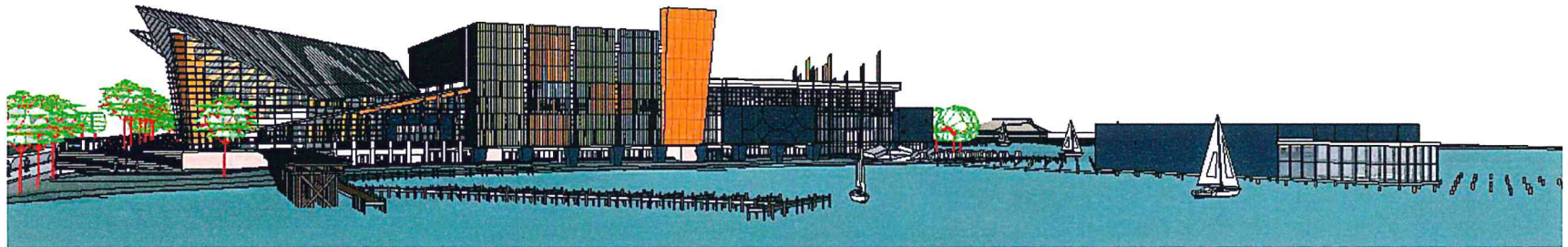
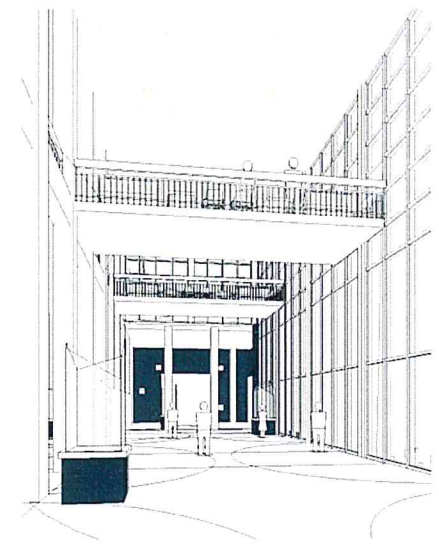
Much of the second floor circulation space is open to the spaces below through an interconnected floor space and is naturally lit by skylights that surround the penthouse floor above. This provides a seamless integration of the program spaces between the two floors and maintains an enlivened atmosphere throughout the building.

The **Nations Piano Lounge** is the main commercial restaurant whose kitchen services are sized to also provide catering services for the Conference Centre and other spaces within the Centre. Nations is a multi-cultural dining experience whose menu will change monthly to introduce visitors to tastes from around the world. The atmosphere will change to reflect the cultures whose tastes are being featured, including live and recorded music and sounds for a total cultural experience. The intent during peak daytime use of the Centre is to encourage visitors to purchase from the vendors within the Market, so the cultural dining experiences will be limited to nighttime dining between the hours of 6pm and 11pm. During off-times, the lounge will feature a piano bar that will host local and regional jazz, blues and folk musicians and offer an appetizer menu.



The second floor also hosts a **Resource Library** which is meant to provide local artisans and craftspeople with access to research and reading materials not typically carried by local libraries or bookstores. The information is available for reading, research or purchase and there will be facilities available for photocopying, reproduction and other necessary amenities. There will be an archive that will also serve the Heritage Centre programs and will supplement the cities archive and library system.

The library is intended to provide literary arts with an area to gather and a second floor gallery is available for literary readings, poetry and exhibits. The second floor library reading areas are set out over an interconnected floor space, like piers out on the water – extending the reading areas out toward a two-storey expanse of glass that overlooks the eastern shores of Lake Superior.



## THE BUILDINGS EXTERIOR

As already noted, the main formal composition of the building is symbolic of a laker pulled up next to a grain elevator. The grain elevator is symbolized by a pattern of vertical volumes that define the buildings penthouse that are colored to mimic a line of railway cars parked along the tracks, an image that is all too well known in this city. The colors are intended to help the building become a recognizable form on a waterfront that is built up of large competing visual industrial buildings whose forms are overpowering. The vertical forms of the penthouse structure allow vertical service spaces to penetrate from the basement floor level up to the roof level, they will house the elevator shafts and permit natural light to penetrate interior floor spaces through the use clerestory lighting.

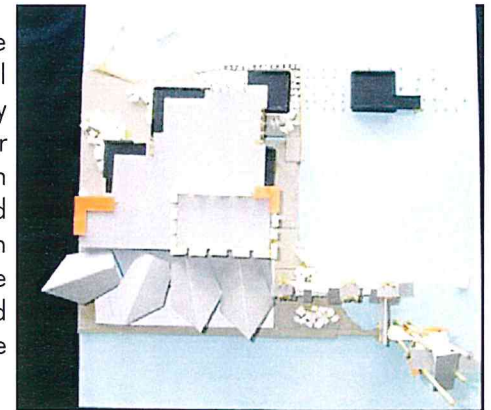
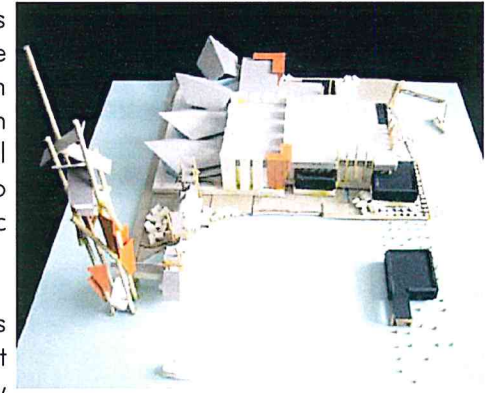


The laker has been symbolized by the boat forms that dance along the south face of the building, each form facing a slightly different orientation and each roof having a slightly different height and angle. These forms are intended to draw the visitor's attention into and through the building to the water's edge on the east side of the site. The boat forms are meant to add a visual interest that is more expressive and less structured than the forms of the grain elevator, symbolizing man's interaction with nature. These boats are framed of exposed glu-lam frames that represent the framing of the wooden hull of ships once built at the local shipyards. These frames allow for an expression of structure as well as defining the space. The boats are fully glazed to allow an expanse of natural light year round and to minimize the distinction between the interior and exterior spaces. The roofs are of standing seam zinc and will reflect the sun's rays to enhance their visual impact.

The main exhibit spaces are enclosed by a black granite facing, reminiscent of the mountain ranges and bedrock surfaces seen all around this region. The granite panels are etched in a pattern that reflects the structural layout that was originally used to construct the grain bins that once stood proudly on this site. This pattern repeats itself on the outdoor plaza surfaces and throughout the public circulation floor surfaces inside the building. The granite is interrupted only at strategic locations by square openings that will afford natural lighting into the exhibit spaces, an interior character that would be similar to that inside Le Corbusier's Ronchamp.

In order to maintain a strong relationship with the landscape, every opportunity to breakdown the distinction between interior and exterior has been taken by introducing glazed curtainwalls that will utilize solid panels as required, depending on the interior spaces. These curtainwalls are supported by vertical glu-lam timbers that extend vertically beyond the roof to symbolize the local forests and their stand of trees. These frames provide visual interest as well as support for wind loading on the curtain wall system. The curtain wall at the upper floors of the building are divided into square panels and contain a mix of colored and mirrored glass to create a visual pattern that is reminiscent of the broken glass that can be seen along many of the waterfront structures. The patterns are arranged to lead the eye around the building and to the entrances and exits where the glass touches the ground around black granite planes that separate the interior from the exterior – creating a defined transition for the visitor when moving between the interior and exterior.

Anchoring the building forms and materials at two corners of the building are large sloping steel forms that are constructed of core-ten steel to take on a natural rusted steel appearance. These forms are reminiscent of the steel ships hulls and are intended to pull together the various other forms and materials and help the building be read as a distinctive whole.



In order to utilize every artifact that remains on the existing site, the piles of concrete slabs that are left behind from the demolition of the former pool six elevators will be used to create the transition between the new landscaped area and the building face. The building will rise from the landscape out of the ruins. The building is intended to address the current environmental issues and will incorporate elements in the design that address sustainability and respect for the environment.

## concluding thoughts

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This thesis represents my resolution of a thesis proposal, recognizing several goals and a statement of intent. The proposed Great Lakes Heritage Centre will serve to create an awareness of place – a place that deserves to be recognized, whose spirit runs deep, and the lives that are kept here by a quality of life that satisfies our universal conscious, our understanding of our place on this earth. We are often unaware of why we like to live here, we question ourselves - we question those who choose to stay and those who decide to leave. In the end we find that for those who chose to leave, they wish that they could have taken the quality of life they had here with them. This quality of life is unique to the place and cannot be taken with you, which is why it is impossible to experience place without a physical presence. Place is both a physical and an emotional experience and requires the presence of *man, nature and space* in order for there to be a meaningful experience of place.



*"The waterfront becomes symbolic of our human limitations and of our potential, by reflecting what is deep and unknowable, it suggests both our hopes and our fears for the future. It is a shimmering mirror which reflects the sunlight of the day and the city lights of the night, breaking them into millions of sparkling rays, abstracting and making poetic our work-a-day world."*<sup>10</sup>



## ENDNOTES – PART FOUR, DESIGN

<sup>1</sup> Paul Valery, from the book Form, Function & Design (page 50) by Paul Jacques Grillo. Dover Publications Inc. New York. 1960.

<sup>2</sup> Thorald J. Tronrud, Thunder Bay, From Rivalry to Unity, Chapter Six, Building the Industrial City, Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society, 1995.

<sup>3</sup> Paul Jacques Grillo, Form, Function & Design . Dover Publications Inc. New York. 1960.

<sup>4</sup> Steen Eiler Rasmussen, Experiencing Architecture, Chapter IX – Color in Architecture, The M.I.T. Press, 1964.

<sup>5</sup> Paul Jacques Grillo, Form, Function & Design . Dover Publications Inc. New York. 1960.

<sup>6</sup> Le Corbusier, Towards a New Architecture, The Architectural Press, 1946.

<sup>7</sup> Steen Eiler Rasmussen, Experiencing Architecture, Chapter VIII – Daylight in Architecture, The M.I.T. Press, 1964.

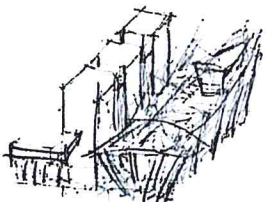
<sup>8</sup> Aldo Rossi, The Architecture of the City, The M.I.T. Press, 1989.

<sup>9</sup> Sir John A. MacDonald, a speech made in the city upon the opening of the railway, from the book Thunder Bay, From Rivalry to Unity, Chapter Six, Building the Industrial City, Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society, 1995.

<sup>10</sup> Jon Rubin, Urban Waterfronts – Accent on Access, The Waterfront Press, Washington, D.C., 1989.

final  
presentation





**organizing structure**  
concrete cathedrals, the grain elevator  
symbolizes the local aspirations of man  
and the local industrial heritage

Inspired by the local industrial heritage,  
the forms, materials and colors should  
act as reminders of the history that is  
disappearing from the waterfront so that  
the memories will remain for the people  
to become aware of the essence of place

## inspiration

"our forefathers were willing to endure great hazards and discomforts for the sake of what  
such factories represented...progress, wealth, power and urban maturity" *Thorold J. Thornd*

## statement of intent

Cities worldwide are addressing the disappearance of industry on their  
waterfronts, looking at opportunities to capitalize on the use of the lands.  
There is a lack of consideration being given to public accessibility and the  
need to raise an awareness of place. This thesis gives consideration to the  
appropriate use of a waterfront site with the purpose of public accessibility  
and a desire to create an awareness of place. The building and its functional  
program should bring the community together to celebrate the local heritage  
while enforcing an image for the city that is based on the local spirit of place.

## underlying principles

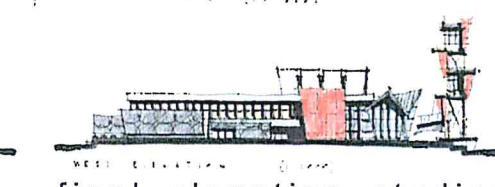
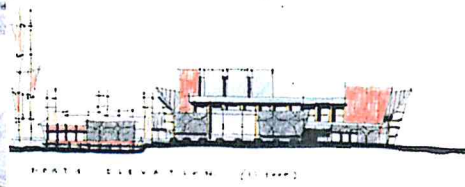
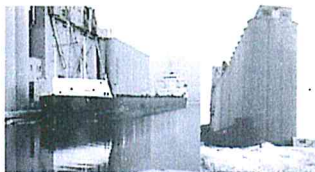
- gather - bringing the community and region together.
- extend - encouraging a broader understanding.
- connect - a greater awareness of place.

## basic elements

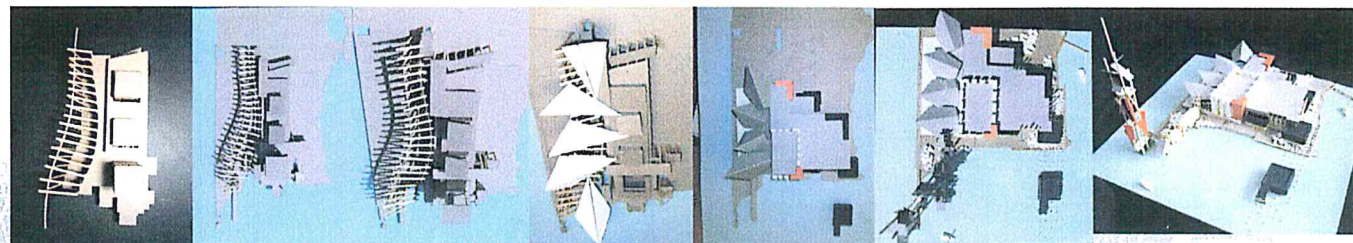
- city - history, heritage, culture and traditions.
- life - quality of life.
- water - symbolizing the existence of life and of the city.

## goals

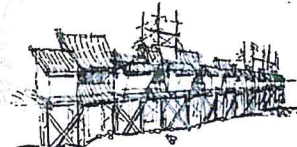
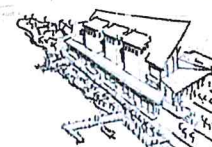
- to involve the community in an awareness of place.
- to create a focus on the local waterfront that enriches the image of the city  
and symbolizes the local spirit of place.
- to reunite a city with its waterfront.



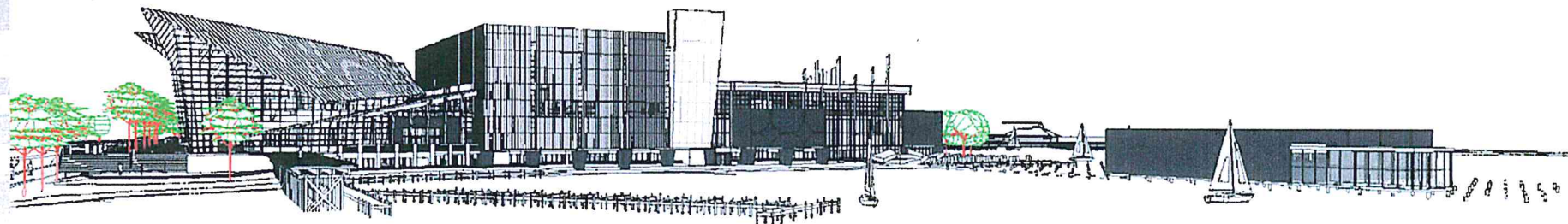
## final elevation studies



## study models



## concept sketches



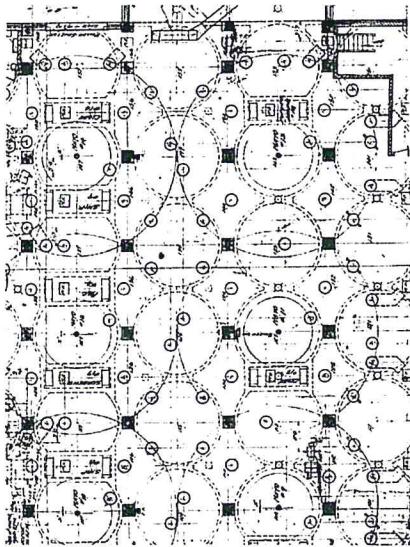
## concept development summary

**making sense of place**  
developing an understanding of human existence and the spirit of place

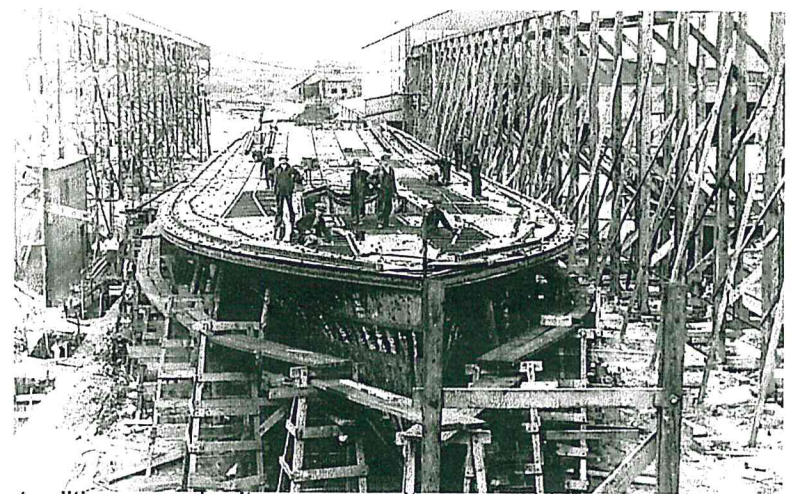
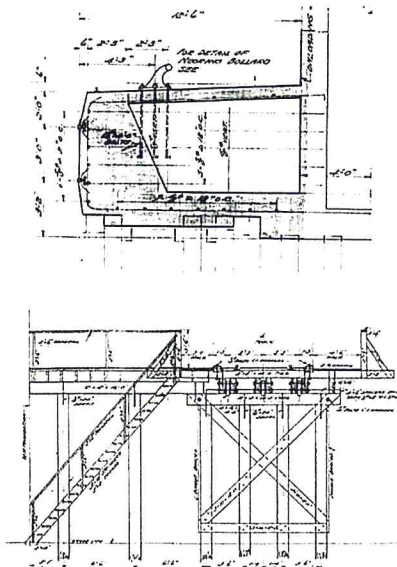
## Great Lakes Heritage Centre

Architectural Firm  
RAIC Systems, Thunder Bay, Ontario  
C. Stetyniuk, CH2009  
July 2009

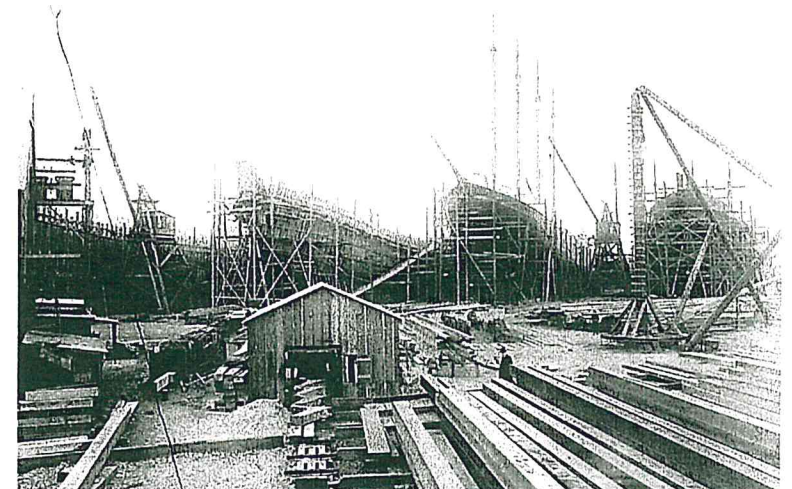
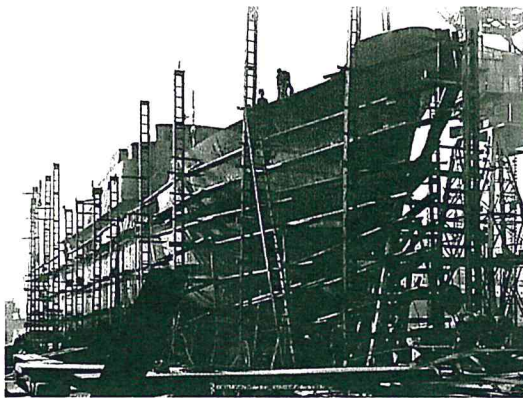




structure form scale rhythm



traditions heritage culture history legends



indigenous peoples settlers fur trade ship building transportation grain railway mining natural resources forestry pulp and paper economy

historic influences

"history will come to be known"

Great Lakes Heritage Centre

Produced by  
Rita S. Hall, Treasurer  
C. Shulman, Chairman  
2004





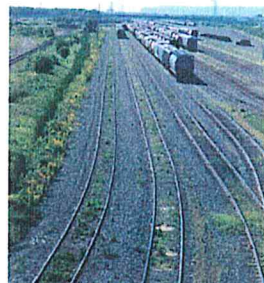
aerial photo of north waterfront area



grain alley - at a time when the elevators were still seeing profitable shipments



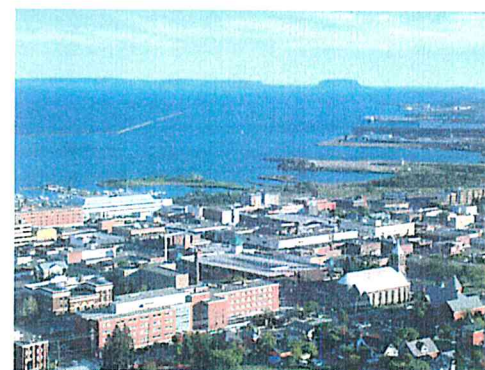
our forefathers fought over the location of the first railway terminus in the area - which is now seen as the burden that severs the city in two and isolates us from much of the waterfront lands



north rail yard - an obstacle to the public but a much needed service for the local industry



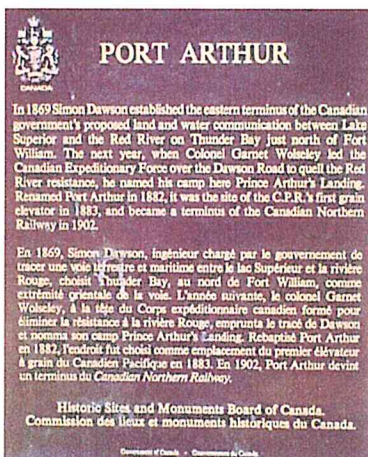
marina park (former prince arthur's landing)



aerial photo looking south - the site sits proudly vacant at centre



aerial photo looking east - the sleeping giant and the sallie, two local legends



historic plaque at park overlooking the site



First Train from Prince Arthur's Landing to Winnipeg, Friday July 7th, 1882. Photographed by J. F. Cooke.  
Prince Arthur's Landing



"History exists so long as an object is in use, so long as its form relates to its function - when form and function are severed, and only form remains as vital, history shifts into the realm of memory. History comes to be known through the relationship between a collective memory of events, the singularity of place, and the sign of the place expressed in form."

Ado Rosal, *The Architecture of the City*.



view looking north - the urban city sits at the doorstep, waiting to be let in

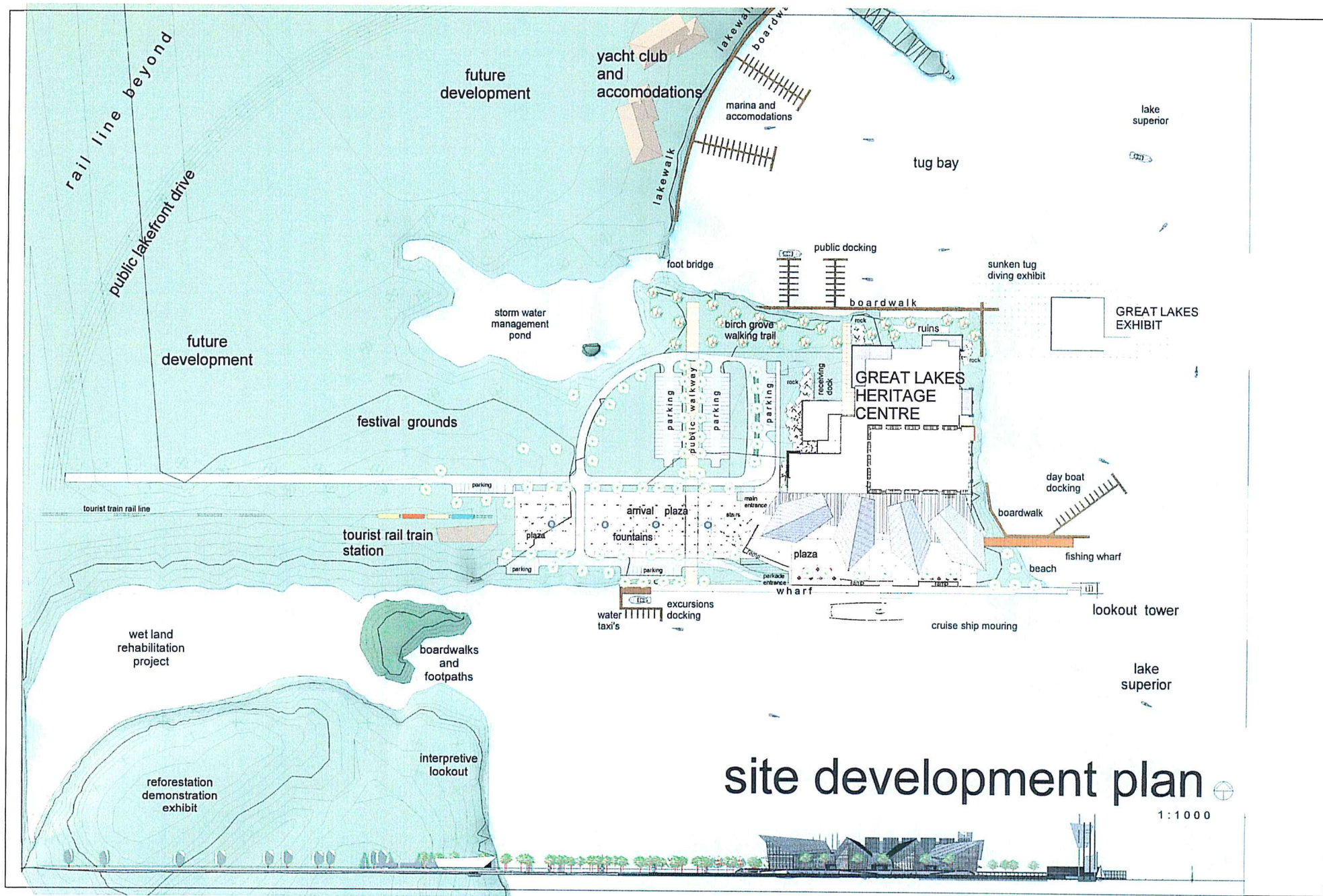
the waterfront

understanding the locality

Great Lakes Heritage Centre

architectural thesis  
RAIC Syllabus, Thunder Bay, Ontario  
C. Stachyryn, CH280006  
July 2005

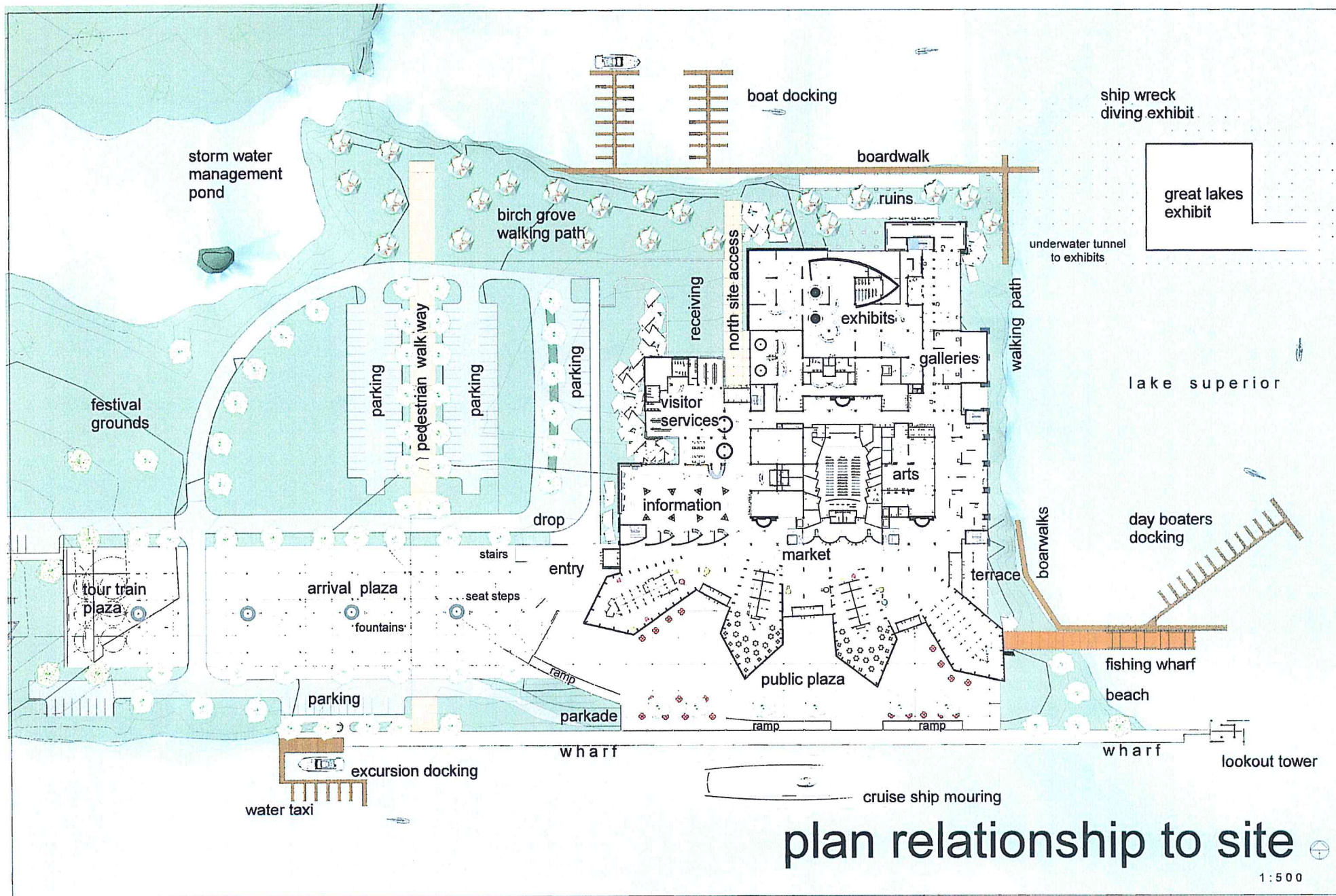




# site development plan

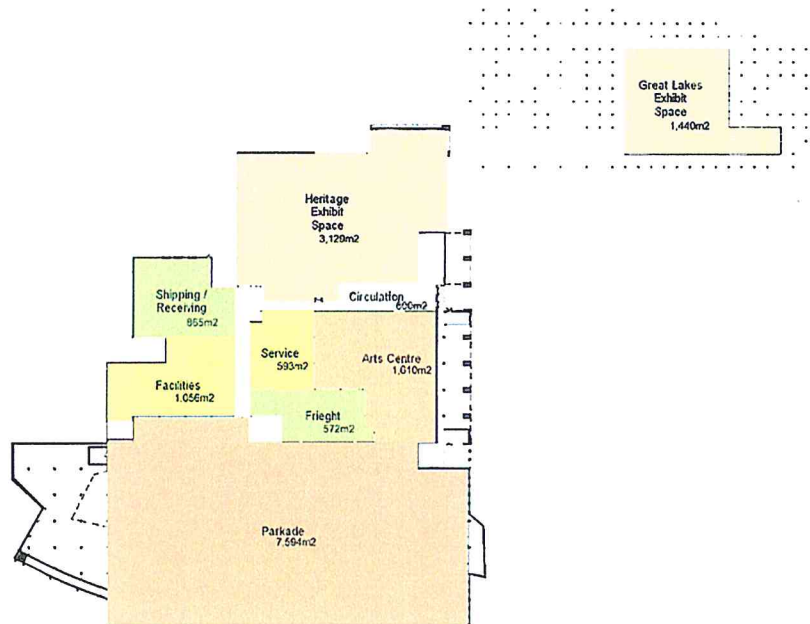
1:1000





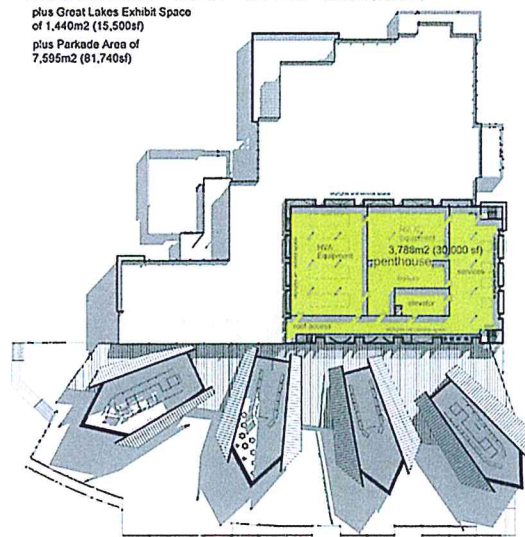
plan relationship to site

1:500

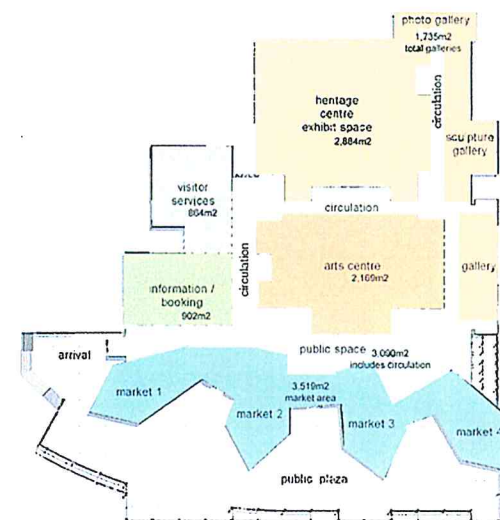


basement floor level 8,286m<sup>2</sup> (89,189 sf)

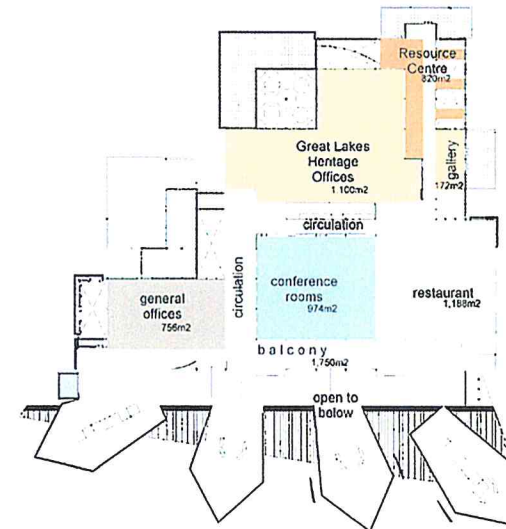
plus Great Lakes Exhibit Space  
of 1,440m<sup>2</sup> (15,500sf)  
plus Parkade Area of  
7,595m<sup>2</sup> (81,740sf)



penthouse floor level 3,788m<sup>2</sup> (30,000sf)



main floor level 12,382m<sup>2</sup> (133,280sf)



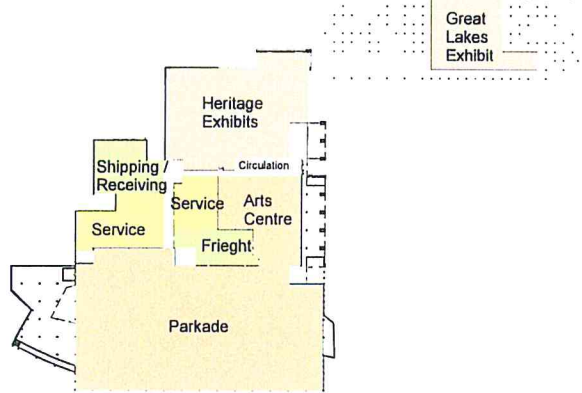
second floor level 6,758m<sup>2</sup> (72,742sf)

program space areas

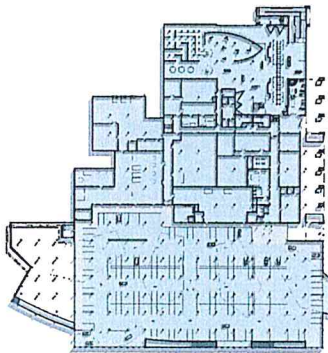
Great Lakes Heritage Centre  
architectural thesis

RAIC Syllabus, Thunder Bay, Ontario  
C. Stachyryn, ON880006  
July 2005



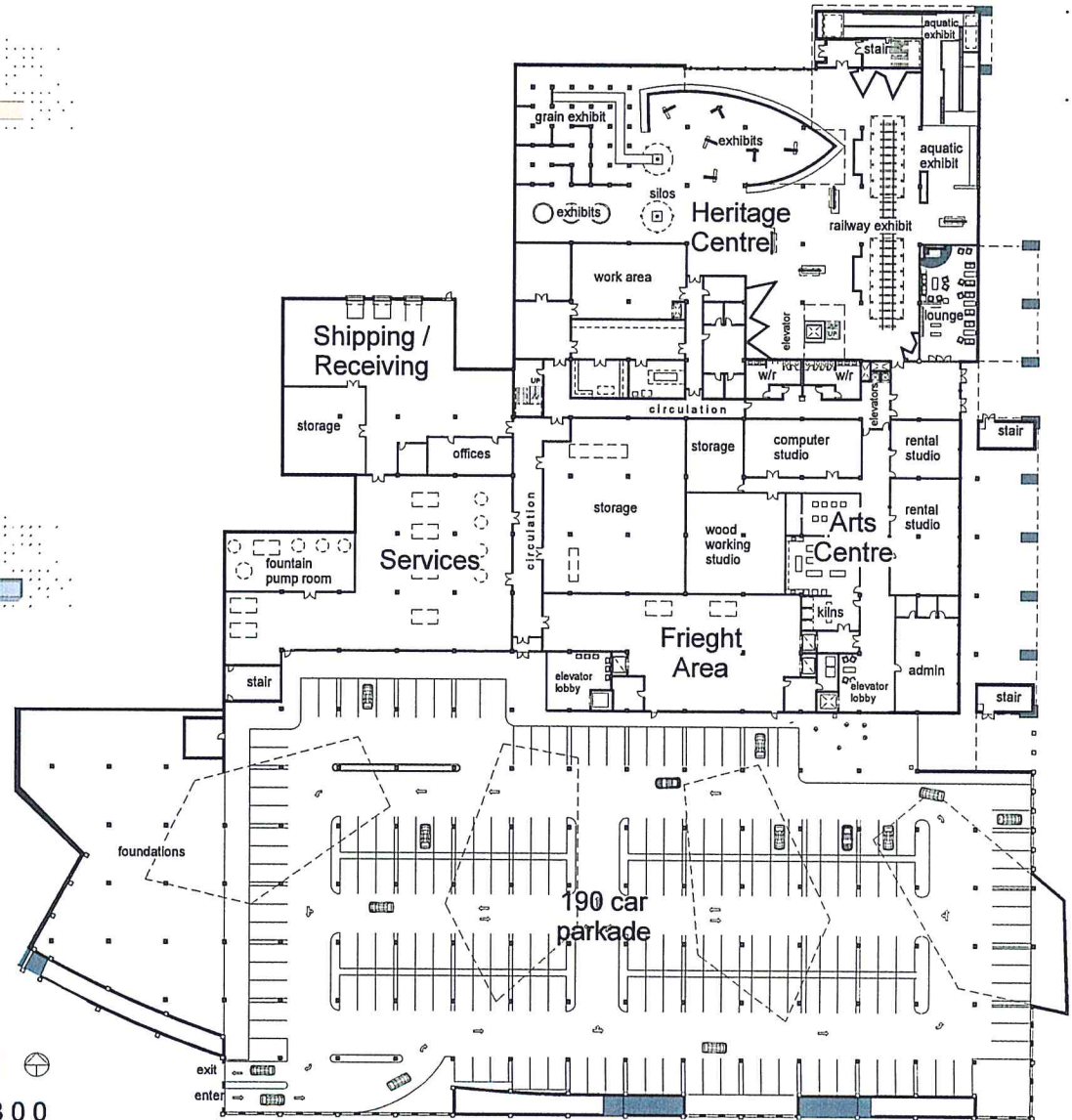


program space diagram



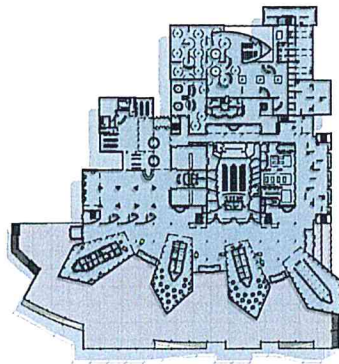
basement floor plan

1:300



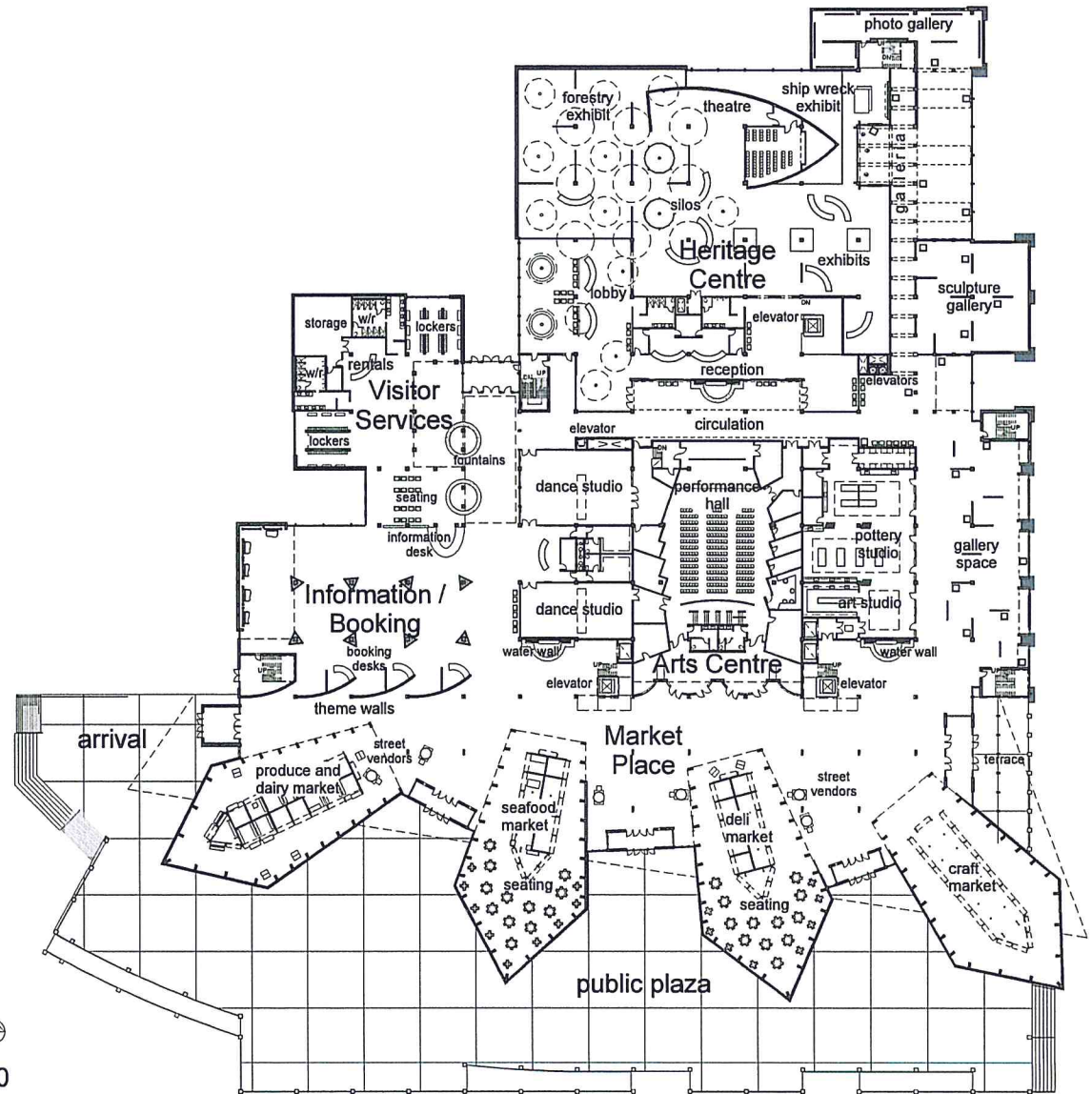


program space diagram

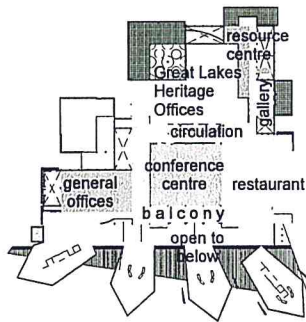


main floor plan

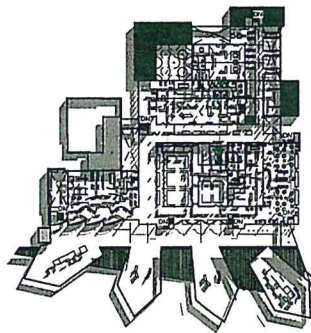
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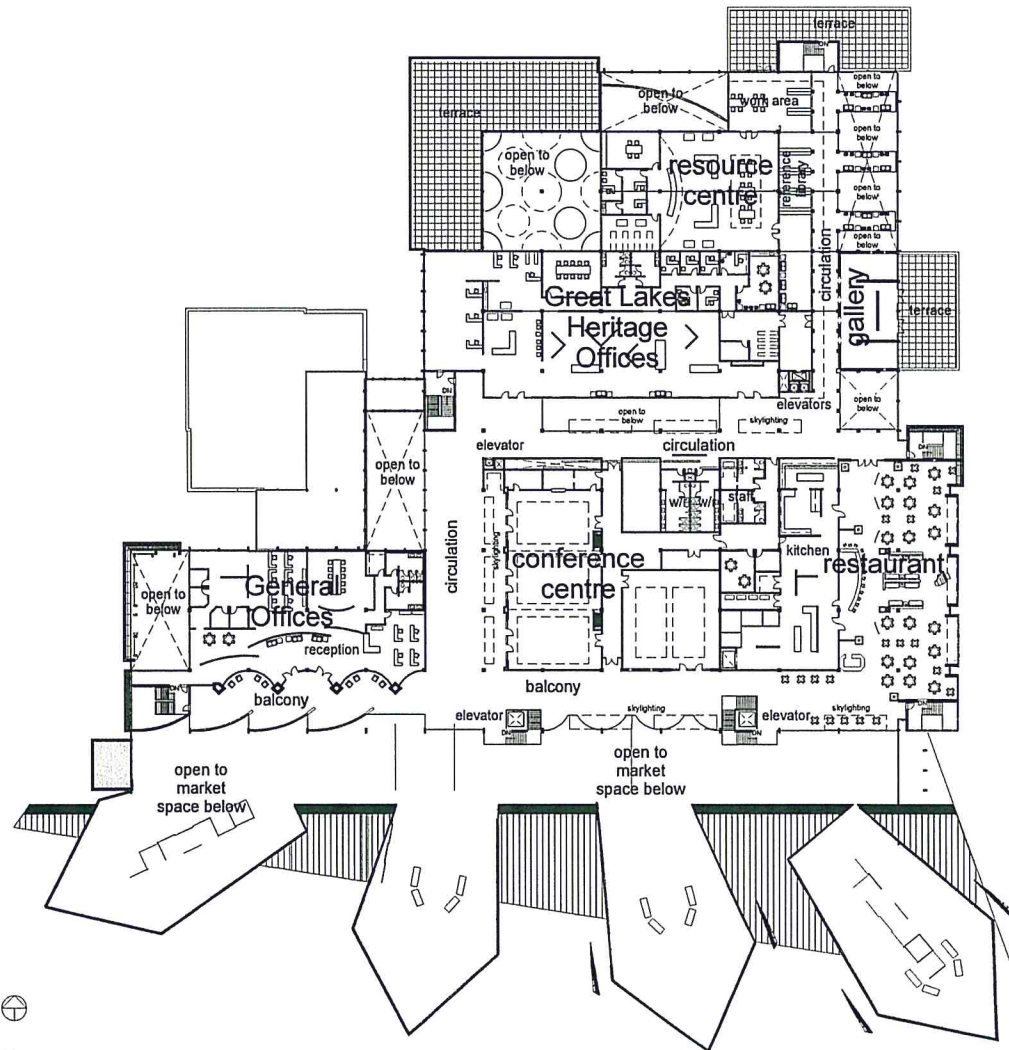


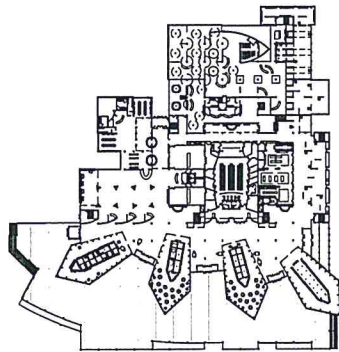
program space diagram



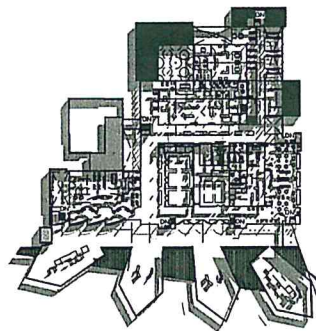
second floor plan

1:300





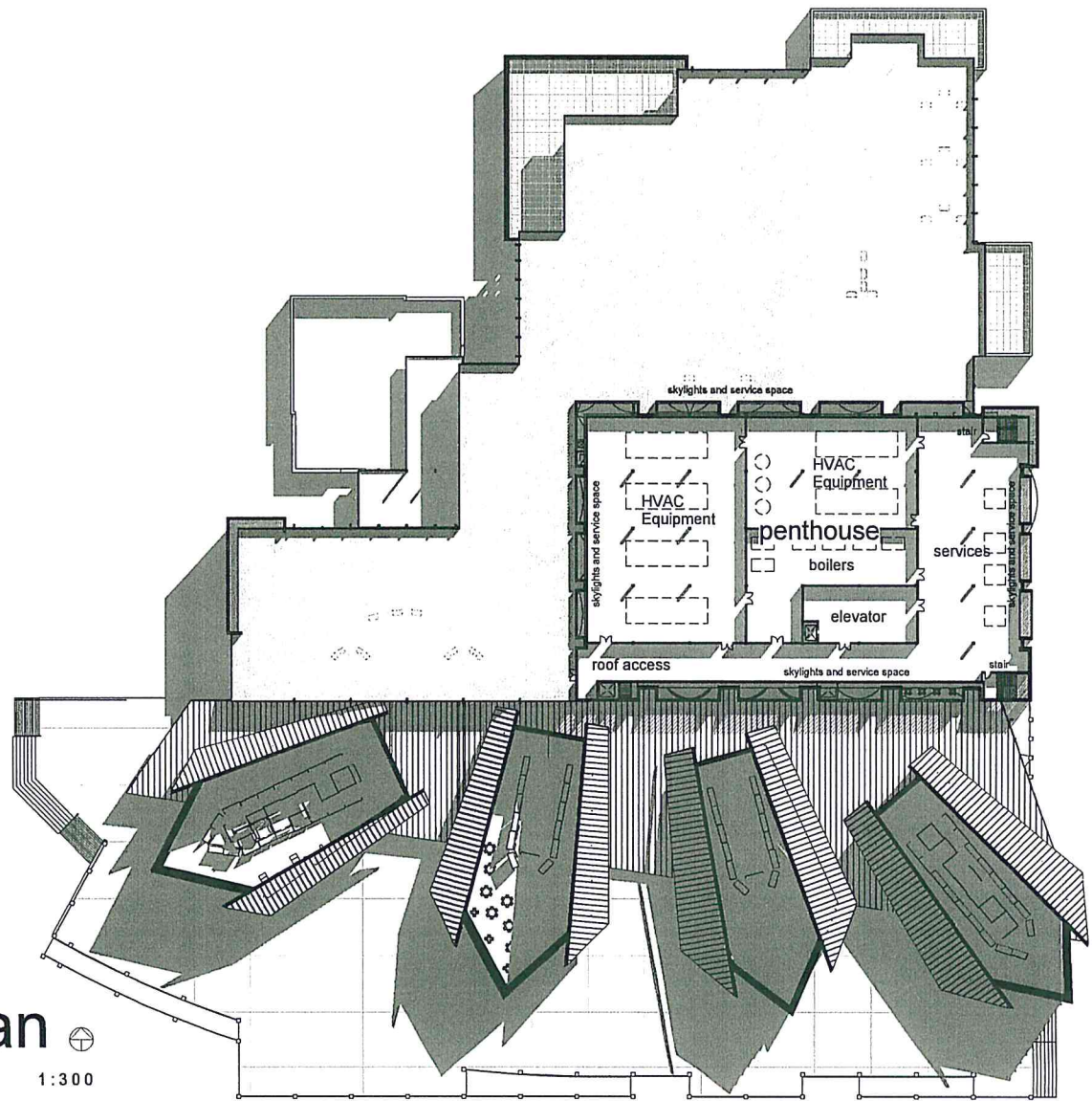
first floor reference plan



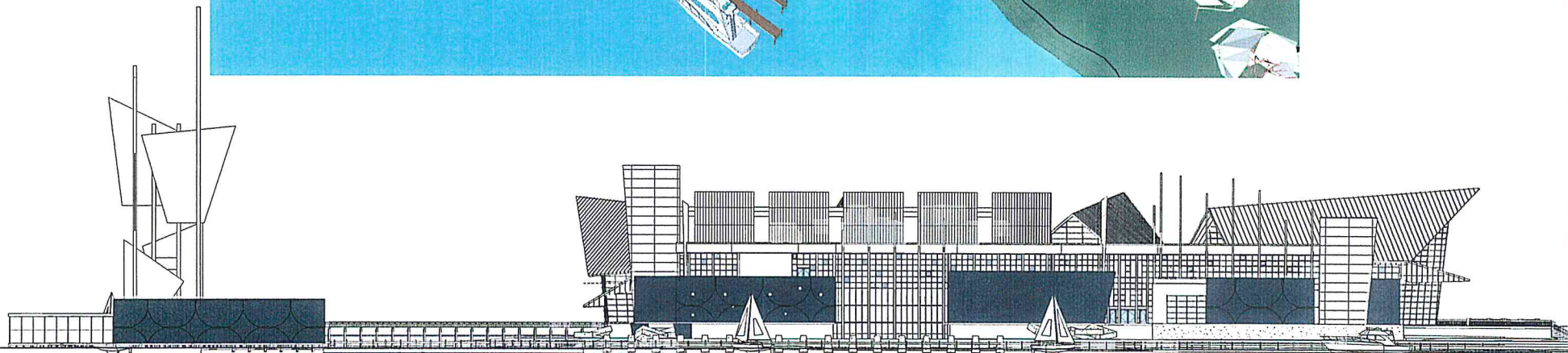
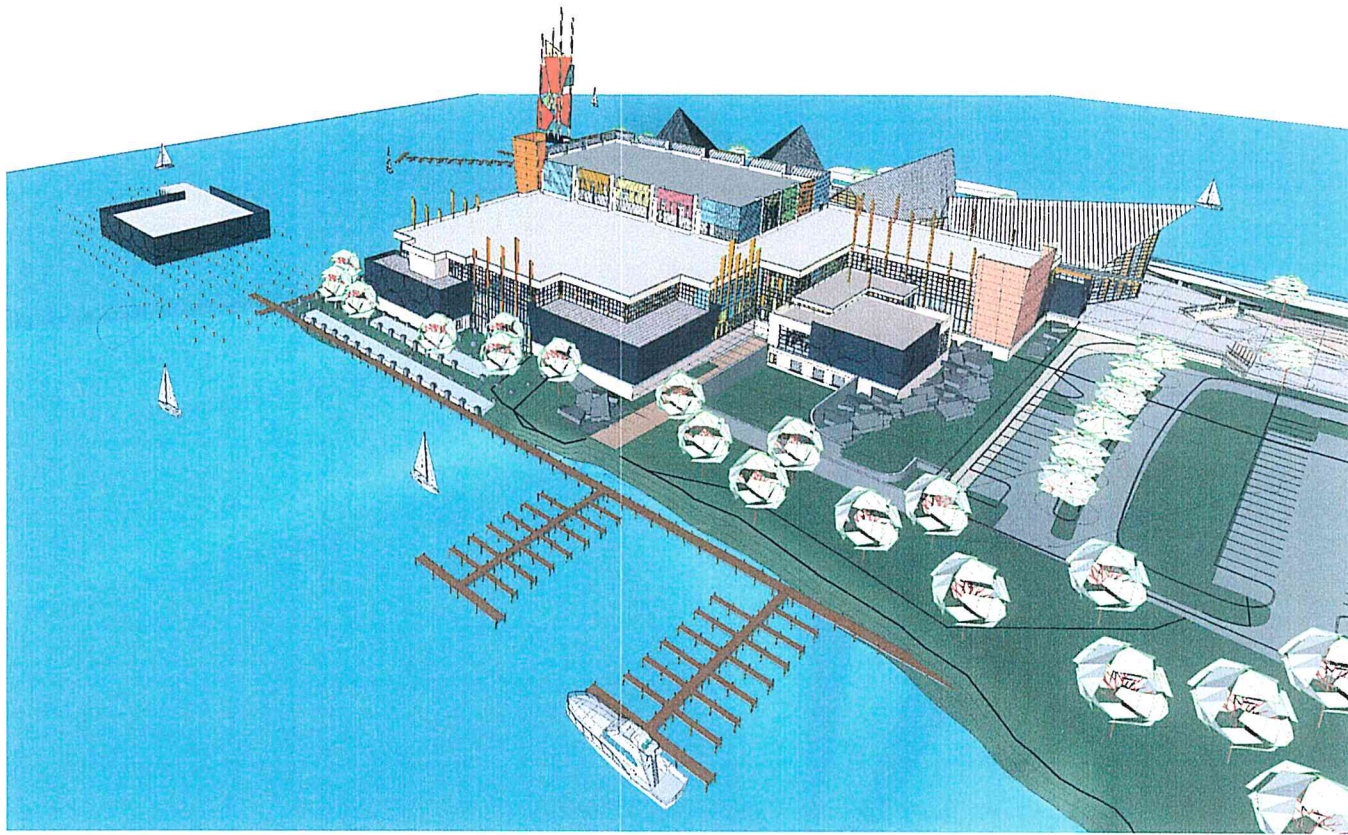
second floor reference plan

# penthouse floor plan

1:300

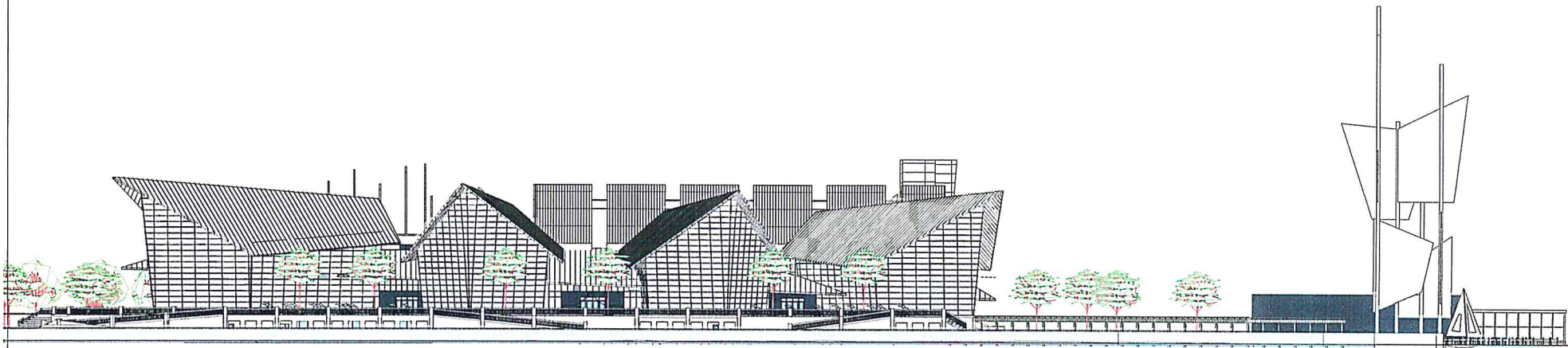
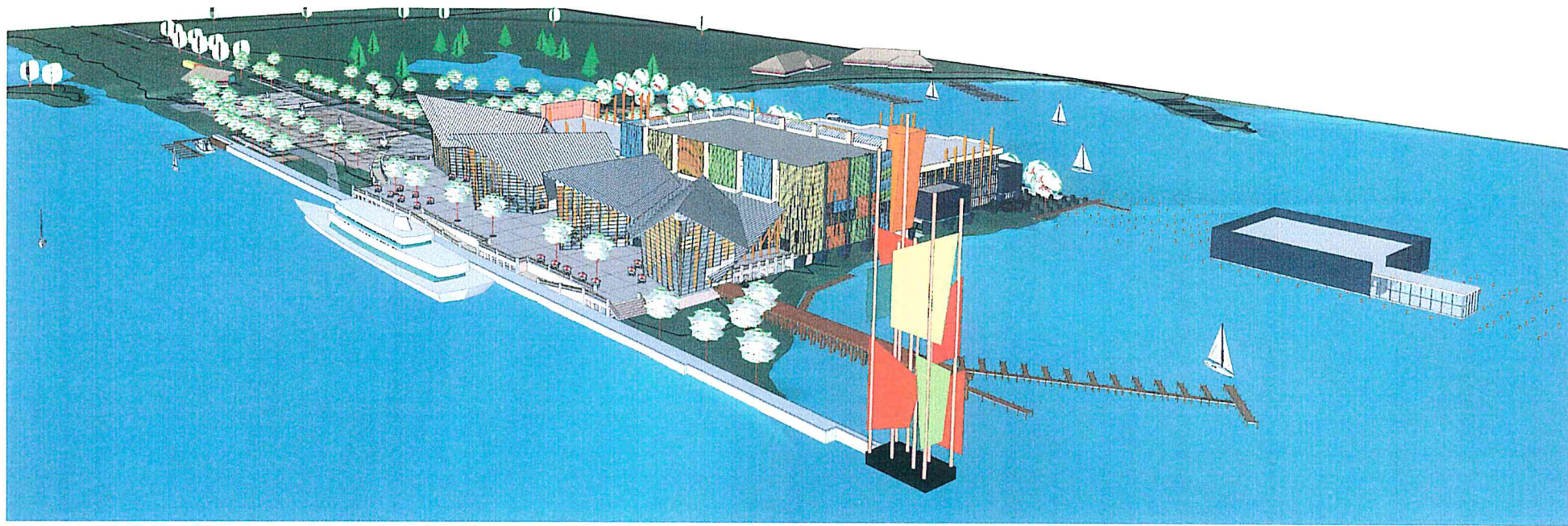






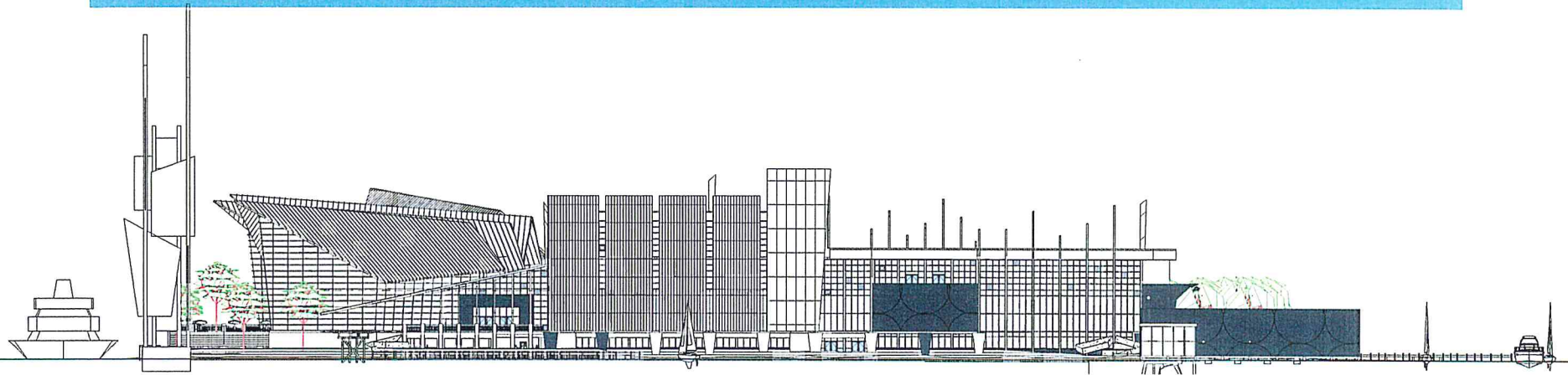
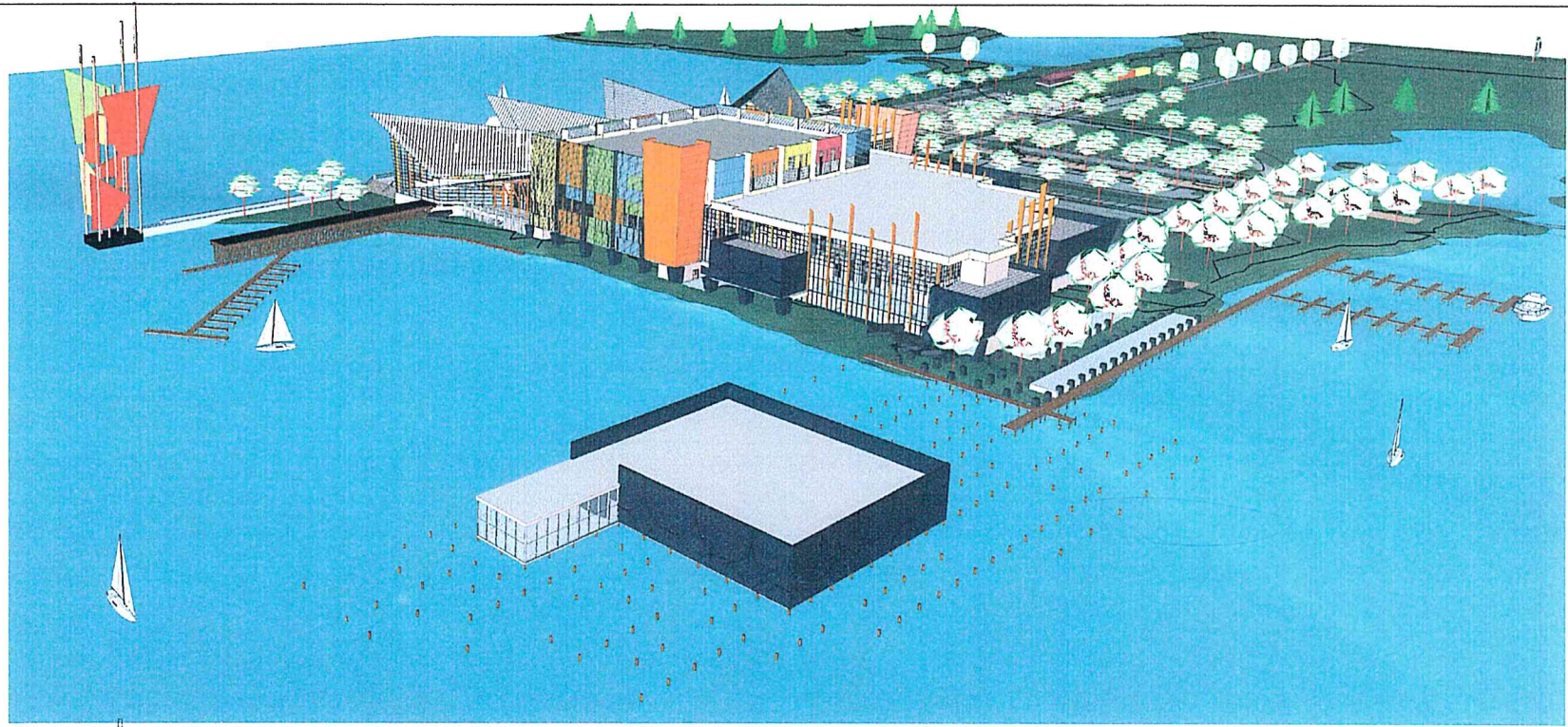
**north edge** "memories of the past - encouragement for our future"





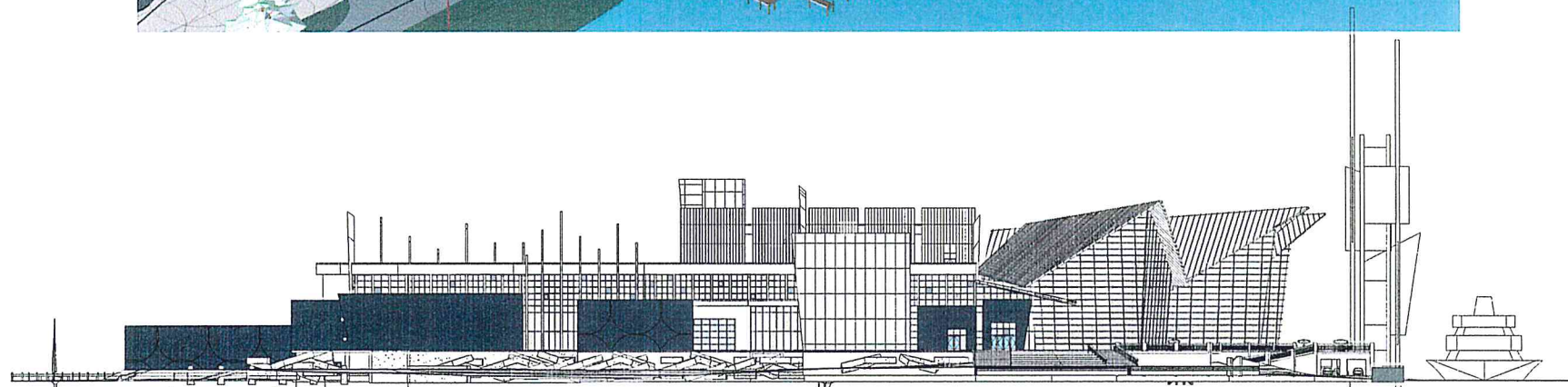
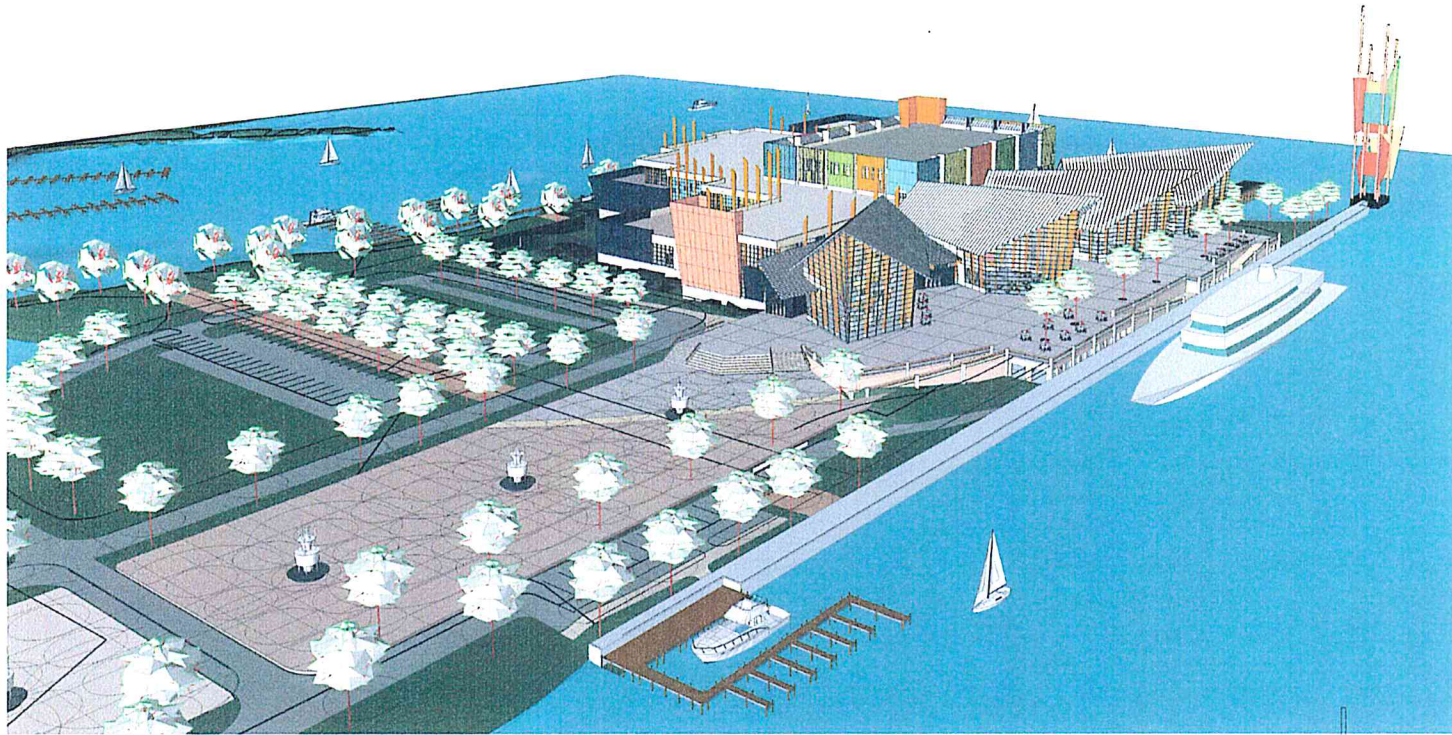
**south edge** "celebrating life amongst a working waterfront"





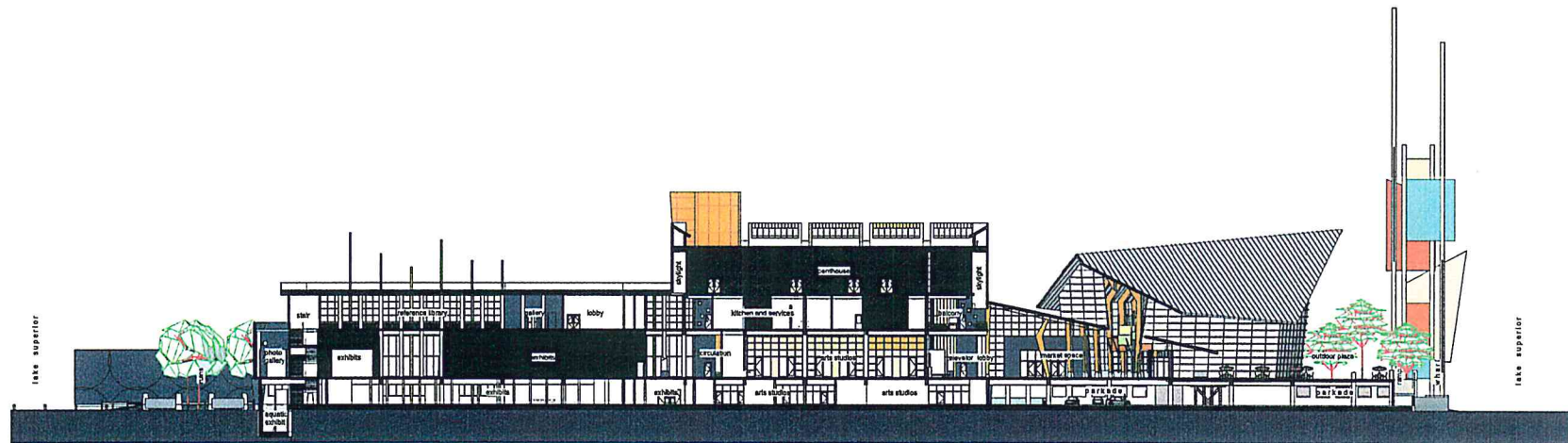
east edge "reflecting on the past, present and the future"



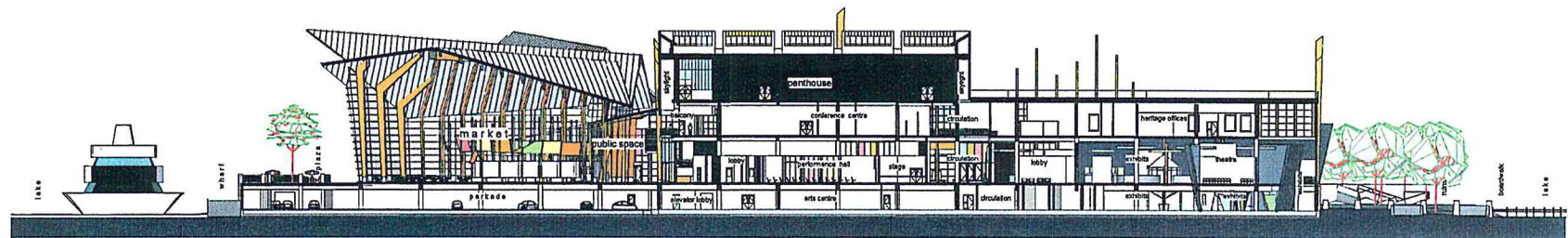


west edge "gathering the people - bringing the city to the water"





building section - a  
1:300



building section - b  
1:300







main arrival entrance stair (south edge)



the ruins boardwalk and outdoor natural exhibit (north edge)



public plaza looking south toward industrial area (south edge)



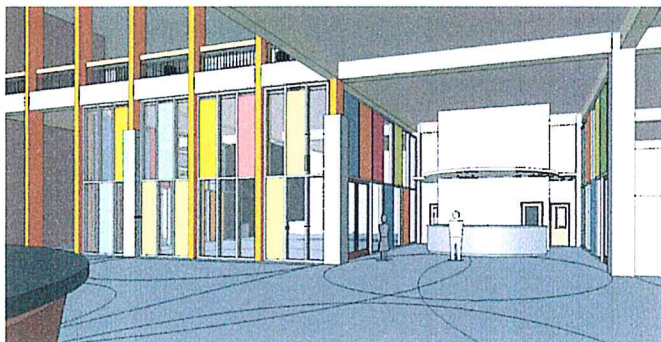
lakefront view of beach and fishing pier (east edge)

exterior renderings  
selective views

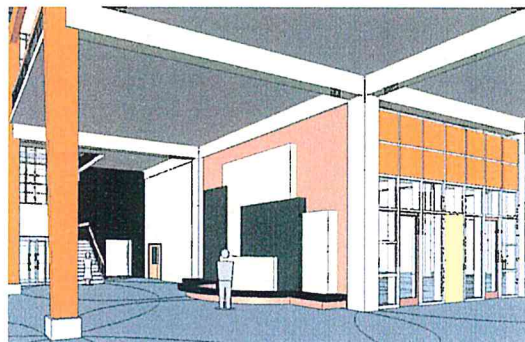
Great Lakes Heritage Centre

architectural studio  
RAIC/Sylvester, Thacker/Say, Ontario  
C. Stachyshyn, CHS00006  
July 2015





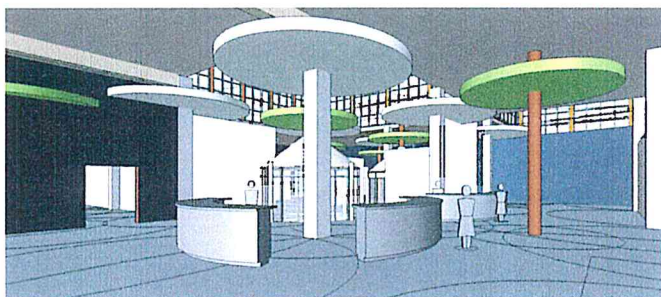
dance studios area



east end water wall feature



gallery looking into ship wreck exhibit



forestry exhibit



heritage centre main entryway



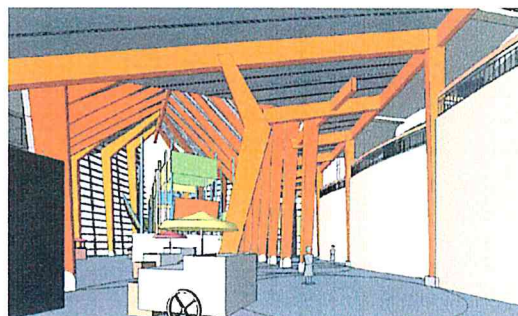
performance hall entrance from market area



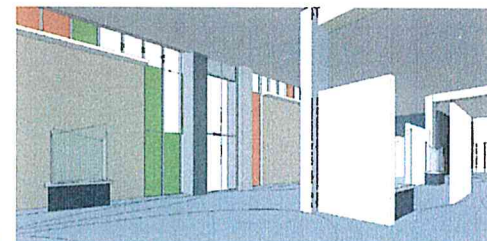
entering gallery one



north entrance



main entryway theme wall



gallery one

# interior renderings

main floor selective views

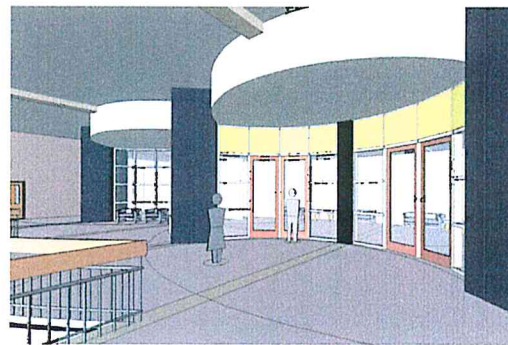
Great Lakes Heritage Centre

Architectural Firm  
RAC Sylabus, Toronto, Ontario  
C. Stachysyn, CH280305  
July 2005





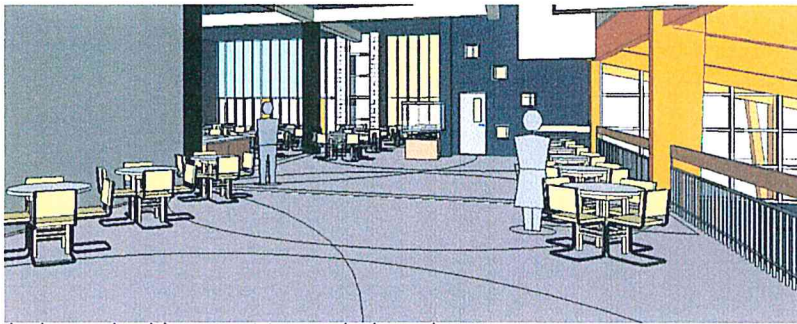
conference centre - auditoria entrances



general office entrance



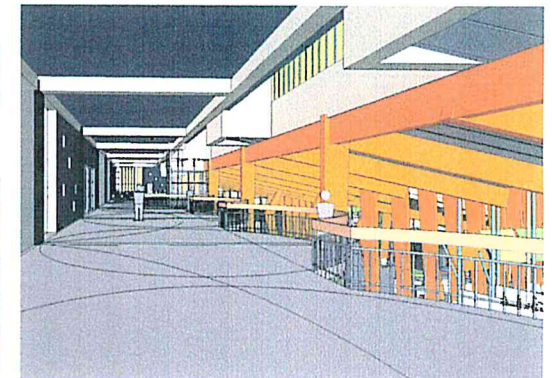
great lakes heritage offices entrance area



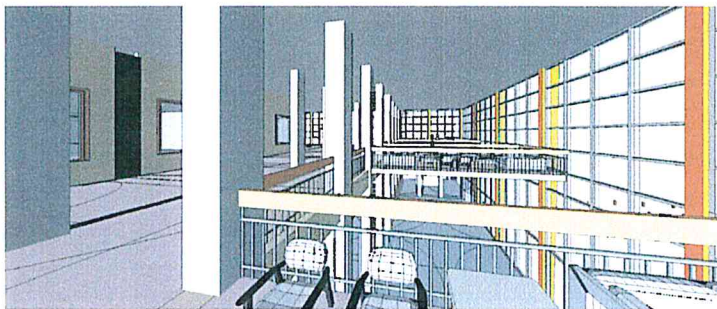
balcony looking east toward piano bar



view from balcony into market



balcony area



resource library



balcony area accoudered



piano bar interior

# interior renderings

second floor - selective views

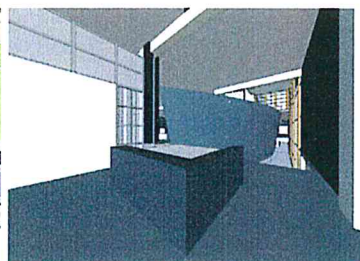
Great Lakes Heritage Centre

architectural firm  
RAID Sybilas, Thunder Bay, Ontario  
C. Stechly, Ch. 200000  
July 2005





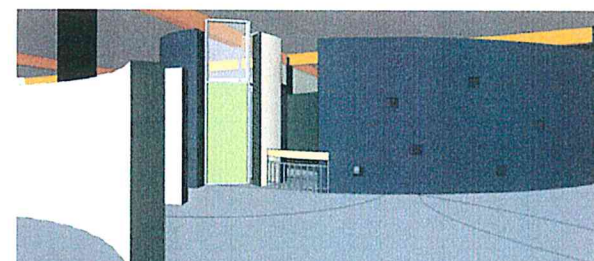
performance hall



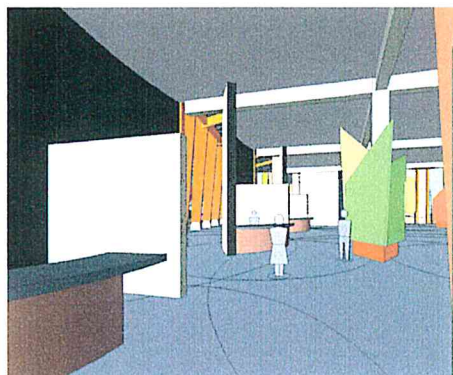
ship wreck exhibit



heritage centre lobby



great lakes exhibit - arrival from tunnel



excursion booking

"like the legend of the sleeping giant that sits as the backdrop, the great lakes exhibit space rests out on the water creating its own sense of mystery ... this is the place that legends are told"



information area



galleria



great lakes exhibit destination

interior renderings  
main floor selective views

Great Lakes Heritage Centre

architectural thesis  
RAIC Spillies, Thunder Bay, Ontario  
C. Stechshyn, CHS00006  
July 2005

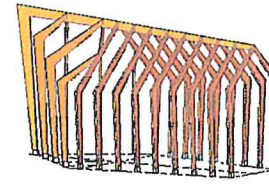




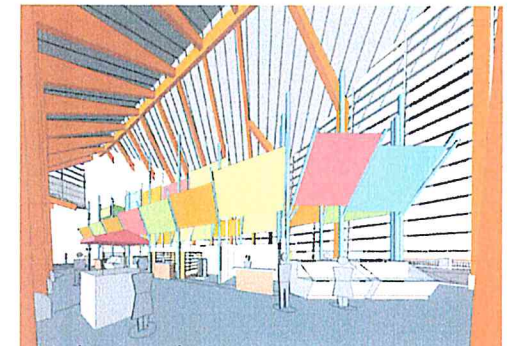
market food court



interior main entrance



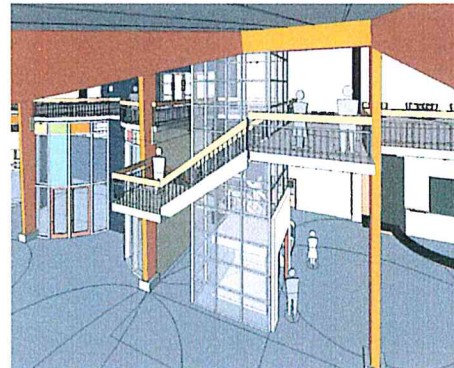
structural frame



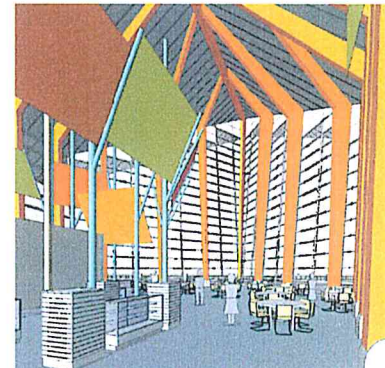
vendors market



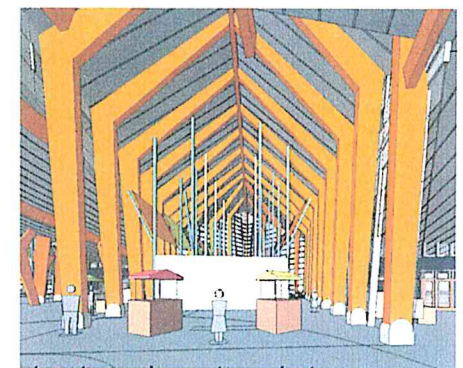
market looking west



market stair and elevator lobby



entering market food court



street vendors at market areas

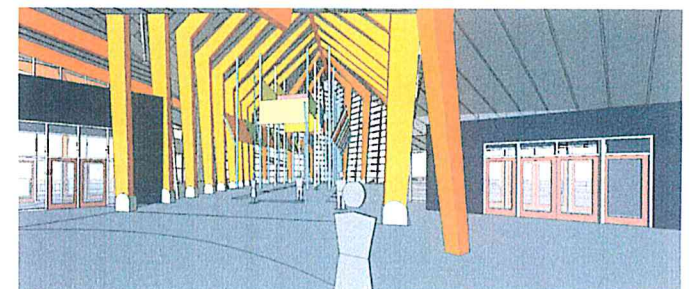


market looking east



inspiration for market interior

ship building at port arthur ship yards



market area inside entrance from public plaza

# interior renderings

main floor market place - selective views

Great Lakes Heritage Centre

architectural thesis  
RAIC Syllabus, Thunder Bay, Ontario  
C. Steinhilber, CH1300006  
July 2005

appendix



# APPENDIX

URBAN LEGEND - NANABOZHO

FENG SHUI

PATTERN LANGUAGE

E. RELPH – THE COMPONENTS OF PLACE

LOCAL HISTORY

HISTORY OF SETTLEMENTS AND CITIES

PAST – LOCAL – WATERFRONT STUDIES

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## URBAN LEGENDS

### NANABOZHO AND THE FIERY EAGLE

Although there are no known records that indicate the city was founded on any particular *rites or ritual*, that is not to say that the Paleo-Indians (*Anishinabeg*, or *first man*) hadn't been influenced by their gods to once live off the lands now called Thunder Bay. There are legends that exist that may indicate that there were in fact some mystical influences in the early founding of the city, or at least to indicate that the land was not happened upon by complete chance.

The one legend that exists (in varying forms) is that of *Nanabozho*, the Sleeping Giant. Legend has it that there was a legendary Indian named Nanabozho who was credited with bringing fire to his people at a time when fire was believed to have been evil and was being kept from others by the guard of a magician. At a later age, Nanabozho was led to an area of land by his great spirit, *Gitche Manitou* (the spirit of the deep sea water), and upon arrival with his tribe they were confronted by *Animikie* (Thunderbird). Animikie was upset at the intrusion of his land and brought thunderous lightning and storm to the bay off the land where they had settled. While the tribe was frightened, Nanabizho befriended the Thunderbird and the two kept watch over the bay and the people, bringing deathtaking storm to the waters upon the sign of any threat.

It was soon after that Nanabozho discovered a shiny vein, *Shuniah* (silver) within the land. The Great Spirit warned Nanabozho to keep it secret and to protect his people. Nanabizho kept it secret until one day when outsiders tricked some tribesmen into leading them to the silver, Nanbizho was angered. A fierce storm developed that sank the canoe carrying the intruders, killing them. Gitche Monitou was angered that this had happened, and as punishment to Nanbizho he was turned to stone. Nanabizho (Nanna Bijou as it is known locally) lay across the bay as to keep watch over his people until the day that Gitche Monitou feels that his return is needed for his people and the land.

Although these legends may not suggest any certain evidence of the founding of place, they certainly allow us to consider a deeper and somewhat of a *spiritual* meaning to the presence of place. That we happen upon a place by mere chance, or that we are drawn to it by some mystical power, our choice to remain there only proves that it holds some special meaning to us that others will come to discover and appreciate.



## FENG SHUI

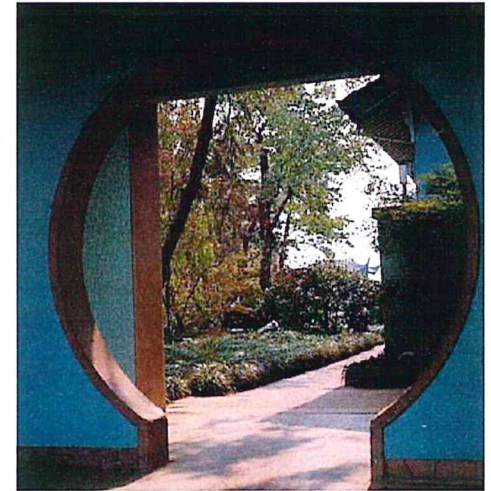
Feng Shui is an eastern cultural concept called, which originated as an environmental science. The principles of Feng Shui consist of the following: the philosophy of *Tao* or 'the way' - which involves the way that we order our lives to live in harmony with ourselves, the principles of *Yin and Yang* – representing the positive and negative forces that act together in order to create energy and the concept of *Chi* - the life force of all animate things, the quality of the sun, the moon and the weather systems and the driving force in human beings. The purpose of Feng Shui is to create environments in which the chi flows smoothly to achieve physical and mental health.

There are five elements of energy that exist in Feng Shui which arise from the interplay of yin and yang and represent the manifestations of chi. There should be a balance of the five elements in order to achieve chi. The five elements of energy are *Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal* and *Water*. Each of these elements have their related characteristics:

- Wood: symbolizes spring, growth, nurturing; people who are public-spirited and energetic, artistic yet impatient and angry.
- Fire: symbolizes summer, fire and heat, honor; people who are leaders and crave action, innovative yet impatient and exploit others.
- Earth: symbolizes the nurturing environment, wisdom; people who are supportive and loyal, dependable and patient yet obsessional and picky.
- Metal: symbolizes autumn and strength, justice; people are dogmatic and resolute, strong and intuitive yet inflexible and serious.
- Water: symbolizes winter and water, nurturing; people who communicate well, artistic and sociable yet sensitive and intrusive.

Feng Shui, the "art of placement", prescribes certain rules for the proper design of all man-made objects. Feng Shui involves the "interpretation of the natural world and the study of the movement of heavenly bodies in order to determine the passage of time."<sup>1</sup> There are three approaches to the art of Feng Shui;

- Environmental: determined by the forms of the land.
- Compass; determined by the energy of the cosmos.
- Intuitive; determined by the shape of the mountains and the watercourses.



## PATTERN LANGUAGE

Another approach that has been explored in the western world of architecture is the theory of design for buildings and towns proposed by Christopher Alexander in his books *A Timeless Way of Building* and *A Pattern Language* - which, unlike Feng Shui, was developed through scientific methods using empirical research into patterns of collective experience. Alexander believes that the living structure, or order, in our buildings and towns depend on features that make a close connection with the human self and that the quality of the building is defined in its capacity to affect human growth and human well-being. He believes this to be the way that all the great buildings and towns of the past were built.

*"It is shown that the towns and buildings will not be able to become alive, unless they are made by all the people in society, and unless these people share a common pattern language, within which to make these buildings, and unless this common pattern language is alive itself."*<sup>2</sup>

In his book *A Pattern Language*, Alexander develops 253 patterns that would create a philosophically based global context. The patterns describe a problem which occurs repeatedly in our environments, and then describes the core of the solution to that problem, in such a way that the solution can be used over differently every time. The patterns are broken down into three categories; *Towns, Buildings and Construction*.

- TOWNS; describes 94 large-scale patterns which structure the environment and from which a variety of individual acts help to create a larger global pattern. This category is based on the following criteria.
  - The region is made up of a hierarchy of social and political groups.
  - Each group makes its own decisions about the environment.
  - Each group takes responsibility for those patterns relevant to its own internal structure.
  - Each neighborhood, community or city is freed to find various ways of persuading its constituent groups and individuals to implement these patterns gradually.
  - Implementation should be loose and voluntary, based on social responsibility, and not on legislation or coercion.
  - Once a community has adopted patterns, groups wishing to build should follow these patterns.
  - Individual acts of building can work toward larger communal patterns before neighborhoods or communities are formed.



- BUILDINGS; describes patterns that can be designed or built to give shape to three dimensional individual and groups of buildings and the spaces between them. These are based on the following sequence of design.
  - Take the patterns in the order of sequence and let the form grow from the fusion of these patterns, the site and your own instincts.
  - It is essential to work on the site, inside the room and with the people, let the site tell you its secrets.
  - The form will grow gradually, becoming more complicated, more refined and more finished.
  - Take one pattern at a time.
  - Imagine how each pattern can be implemented on the particular site.
  - Complete each pattern before moving on to the next.
  - The sequence of the language will minimize the number of changes that need to be made as decisions are made.
  - Keep the design as fluid as possible while you go from one pattern to another.
  - While imagining how to establish a pattern, consider the other related patterns.
- STRUCTURE; describes how to make a buildable building from a rough scheme of spaces. These patterns present a physical attitude toward construction, presenting the principles of structure and material. These patterns lead to buildings that are unique and tailored to their sites.

## E. RELPH – THE COMPONENTS OF PLACE

The last model worth noting is from a book written by geographer E. Relph entitled *Place and Placelessness*, in which Relph looks at the phenomena of the lived-world of immediate experience. In the first chapter, Relph notes the presence of ambiguity in the sciences concerning human thought in quoting the National Academy of Science in 1965, stating that “*not much is yet known of **sense of place** as its secrets are locked in our inadequate knowledge of nervous systems.*” This inadequacy of knowledge is what has been brought to the forefront in the first part of this thesis, in the hope of providing insight into the complex philosophical aspects of place that are often misunderstood when referring to place in architectural theory. Relph’s theory is written in a clear and easily understood fashion, focusing on place as a phenomenological basis for geography. In his book he begins by making reference to six major components of place that were defined by another geographer named Lukerman in 1964, which are used to evaluate the ability for a man-made environment to be experienced as a meaningful place.

- LOCATION; as it relates to other things and places.
- INTEGRATION; of the elements of nature and culture, distinguishing one place from the next.
- INTERCONNECTIDNOUS; concerning spatial interactions.
- LOCALIZATION; recognized as being part of a larger whole.
- BECOMING; ability to change with cultural or historical change.
- MEANING; characterized by the beliefs of man, giving meaning to a place.

The landscape is an “*extension of one self*”<sup>3</sup>, how we build upon it is an interpretation of our understanding of the world we live in. The understanding we have of our world develops from a basic relationship between man and nature. Nature has, as its name implies, natural qualities of place as well as its own physical structure. Through the addition of man-made place, we gather the meaning that exists within nature and interpret it for others through the act of building. The success by which a building develops an existential meaning is gauged by way of how well it addresses the human experience of place and in achieving a phenomenological understanding of the basic elements of architecture, structure and materials.



## LOCAL HISTORY

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### A CITY DIVIDED

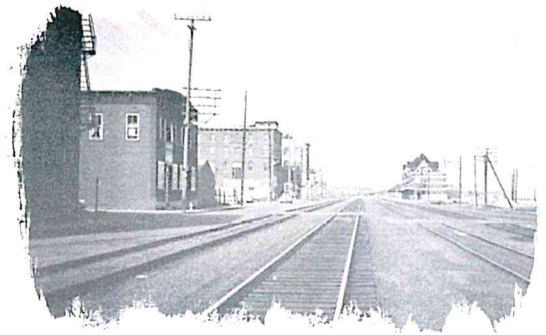
*"You have the railway on one side, and the water on the other, and with these two you must be a great city. You must be a wealthy city, and I am quite sure the enterprise of those men who have made this their home will be sufficient to make this town what God and nature has designed it to be."*<sup>4</sup>

This speech by Sir John A. MacDonald in 1886 is ironic in a sense that it not only captured the spirit of the progress which had been made in the two towns, it also exposes the mindset of the *enterprise of commerce* that has lead to the dis-association and the inaccessibility between the City and its waterfront. The very heart of this speech, the existence of the *railway* and the water, has become one of the leading obstacles that must be observed, the other is a result of the two, that being *industry*.

Thunder Bay; or the *Twin Cities* as it was often referred to, has a history that dates back to the end of the fourth Ice Age - some 20,000 years ago. It was around 9350 BC when Paleo-Indians, hunting caribou as they migrated behind the melting glacier, settled along the Northern shores of Lake Superior (Minong, as it was known at that time). It wasn't long before silver and copper deposits were discovered by the Shield-Archaic culture (descendents of the Paleo-Indians), which were used to create tools and weapons for hunting and cooking.

By the late 1600's, voyageurs began utilizing the Kaministiquia River, off the northern shore of Lake Superior, to gain access to the West for purpose of trade. By 1804, the Fort William had been completed along the northern bank of the Kaministiquia River just upstream from its entrance off Lake Superior. The shores of Lake Superior became landing areas for the many items of trade that were being moved around by the waterways. The Fort began to take shape as the first post office was established in 1860, delivering mail between Fort William and Grand Portage (USA). The *Depot* was established northeast of the Fort William in 1868-1869.

The growing use of the Lake Superior route to the west lead to the governing body of Lower Canada assigning the task of prospecting and surveying the Lake Superior region up to Saskatchewan River to one Simon Dawson and professor Hind. Dawson set up camp on the Lake Superior shoreline at a place then known as the *Landing*.



It wasn't until 1869, when Simon Dawson returned as superintendent of the construction of a road between the shores of Lake Superior and the Red River that structures began to appear and a community had been formed. In 1870 when Colonel Wolseley arrived with the 60<sup>th</sup> Rifles and asked that the *Landing* be named after visiting royalty to Canada, it became known as *Prince Arthur's Landing*. In 1871, the Government of Ontario completed its first official survey of the town site of Prince Arthur's Landing. The Landing was dubbed the 'silver city', and became the focal point of the mineral rich region.

Seven years later, the Transcontinental Railway began construction and the first steam engine rolled into Prince Arthur's Landing on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 1878, marking the beginning of the local rail and shipping traffic. It wasn't long before the first grain elevator appeared on the banks of the Kaministiquia River; in 1884, C.P.R. completed the second elevator on the banks of the Kam, dubbed the 'castles of commerce', by one Rudyard Kipling.

In 1883, William Van Horne affixed a sign to the train station that read 'Port Arthur', and when the town site was incorporated into a town, the name Port Arthur stayed with it. March 25, 1884 marked the official incorporation of the Town of Port Arthur (formerly Prince Arthur's Landing). Fort William followed in 1892. This was the beginning of a long dual of indifferences that still exists to this day between the towns of Port Arthur and Fort William. For me probably the most significant reminder of this indifference is the introduction of the electric streetcar in 1891. It was the aim of the town of Port Arthur to extend its electric railway service into Fort William that was met with great resistance. It wasn't until almost 2 years later that Port Arthur had, through the Ontario Legislature ruling, been granted access to extend the rail service into the Westfort community of the town of Fort William. In 1909, a roadway, later named Memorial Avenue, was built that also linked these two towns.

It wasn't until after the Trans-Canada Highway officially opened (July 31<sup>st</sup>, 1935), and World War 2 had ended (1945) that the two towns of Fort William and Port Arthur became the single lakehead City of Thunder Bay on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1970. Bill 118 was passed by legislature to mark the beginning of a new City.

The waterfront, that once received the voyageurs of the North-West fur trade, welcomed the steam ship of Colonel Wolseley and set as backdrop to the celebration for the arrival of the transcontinental railway, was changing shape as the grain elevators and ship yards began to prosper during the wheat boom. By 1971 there were 71 industries operating from the Thunder Bay waterfront. These included grain elevators, flourmills, shipbuilding, shipping terminals and paper mills.





## SETTLEMENT AND THE CITY

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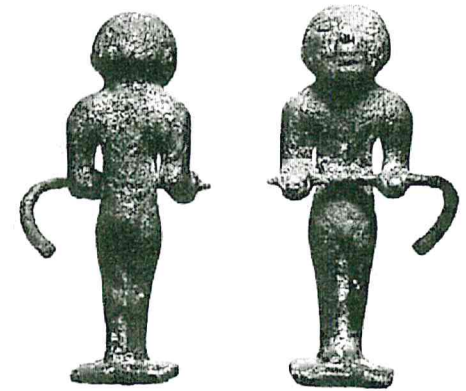
*"The gods had demonstrated their benevolence towards the community, the site had been purified and marked out, and the auger had taken supernatural stock of it. The community had taken possession of the ground".<sup>5</sup>*

As early as 8,000 BC the cities of Jericho and Babylon were founded on human impulse to form and celebrate as a society. Society came together for religious ceremony, for commerce and to share in an interrelated human existence. The idea of town as Joseph Rykwert proposes in his book *'The Idea of Town'*, did not come as just some arbitrary location. Instead, he finds that it followed some religious rite dating back to the times of Romulus and Remus and the founding of Rome.

This existential meaning behind the siting of ancient cities can also be found in the buildings of that time. The existential being of man is expressed in a society through the act of architecture. If the purpose of building is to gather what is known (meaning) and to represent the understanding man has of nature and of himself, then cities should also be founded on the concept of gathering. It must gather its locality and the meanings brought with man from other locations. This occurs through visualizing, complementing and symbolizing meaning, which can be found socially within different cultural groups. A city deliberately breaks down the separation of cultures and mixes them together.

Cities differ in what they gather and this represents an identity or image. Kevin Lynch proposes in his book *'The Image of the City'* the presence of certain elements that are present that enable us to visualize and symbolize our existence and sense of place within our cities. He refers to this as the *'imageability or legibility'* of our cities and it is represented by objects that give a high probability of evoking a strong memorable image in any given observer. This he reduces to five elements, consisting of paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks. These elements help us to define the *character* and *boundaries* of our communities.

*"When a town pleases us because of its distinct character, it is usually because a majority of its buildings are related to the earth and the sky in the same way; they seem to express a common form of life, a common way of being on the earth."<sup>6</sup>*







## PAST LAND USE STUDIES

There have, over the past 30 years, been several reports prepared from studies of the Thunder Bay waterfront. Of the more than ten major studies completed, the major themes focused on were; wetlands protection and conservation, local port industry, and recreation and tourism. The latest study completed; *'The Next Wave –Charting A Course for Thunder Bay's Waterfront'* by *The Planning Partnership and Moriyama & Toshima Architects and Planners*, was by far the most motivated attempt for the cities planners to put in place a 100 year plan for developing the Thunder Bay waterfront. The previous reports show the continued and consistent efforts of local planners and agencies over the years to improve and integrate the vast local waterfront with the urban city for environmental, economic and leisurely purposes. To date little, if anything, has been implemented.

Following is a synopsis of some of these studies, indicating their major focus and comments;

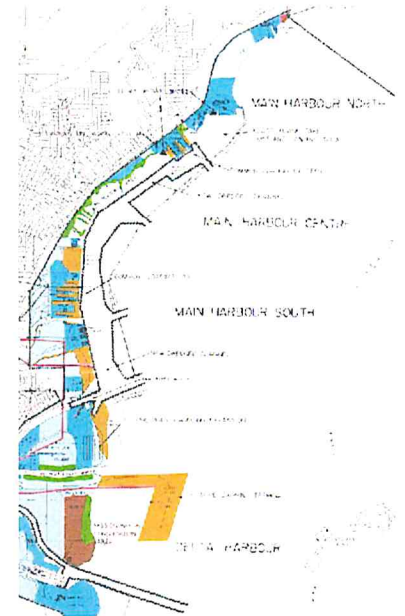
**1967 – CITY OF PORT ARTHUR, Urban Renewal Plan.** *Proctor & Redfern, Bousfield & Bacon, Read Voorhees & Associates, and A.E. Lepage Ltd.*

- The purpose of the report was to study the downtown Port Arthur core area for the purpose of redevelopment, rehabilitation and conservation.
- The plan included three areas of focus;
  1. FUTURE LAND USE: which was to accommodate Commercial Areas, Residential Areas, Open Space and Institutional Areas.
  2. TRANSPORTATION: which was to accommodate traffic flow, parking and transit over a 20-year forecast.
  3. SERVICING: considerations for extending and upgrading water, sanitary and storm sewer systems.
- Of importance to this thesis is the recommendation of this report for the development of a Lakefront Park, *"which would be an attraction for the entire City and not just Port Arthur alone"*. The development of the park would *"initially be a receiving area for fill from downtown reconstruction and ultimately as a major water-oriented recreation area serving the Downtown, City and the tourist trade"*. Today this park is known as Marina Park, the only public park on either of the downtown waterfronts.



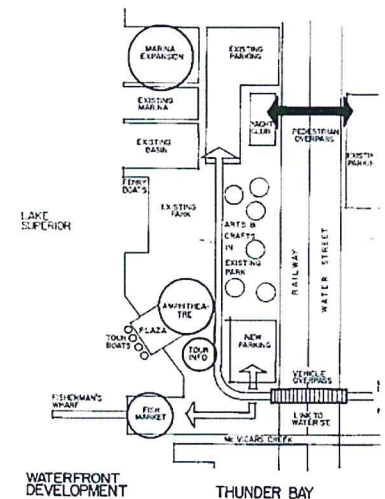
## 1982 – MASTER PLAN – PORT OF THUNDER BAY, *Lakehead Harbour Commission.*

- The purpose of the report was to study and assess the factors that have an impact on the Port of Thunder Bay and to develop a Master Plan to establish a guideline for the orderly and compatible development of the waterside port areas. It was stated that the public needs to become aware of the Port and its importance to the economic well being of the City and the nation.
- Recommendations included provision for recreation and conservation areas, continued improvements to road systems within the port, maintaining ship building and repair facilities, and improvements to facilitate vessel movement within the Main Harbour (Bearpoint to Richardson's Elevator). The waterfront was still viewed mainly as heavy industrial use.
- Other recommendations were made for an area of lakefront named Main Harbour Centre (Richardson's Terminal Elevator to Sakatchewan Wheat Pool #6) which includes the Marina Park area. The report recommended to reserve lands between the two elevators that define it for recreational use as a "buffer" and concluded that this land was not suitable for industrial use due to the lack of land depth that is often required.



## 1983 – AN ACTION STRATEGY FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT, *Marshall Macklin Monaghan, Thorne Stevenson and Kellogg.*

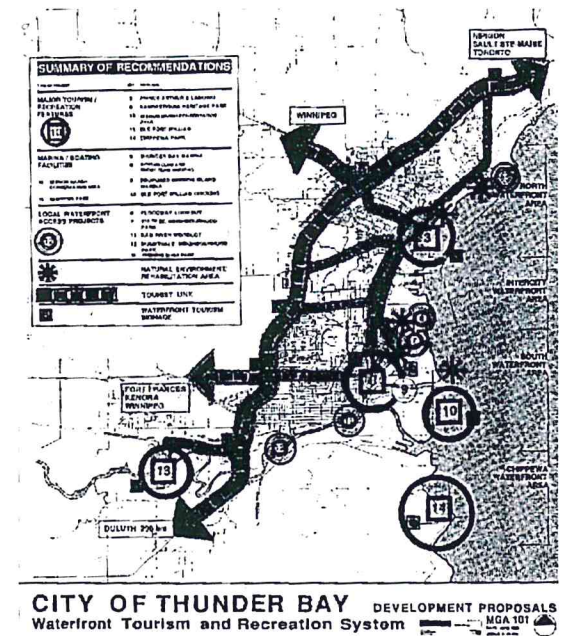
- The purpose of the report was for preparation of a Tourism Master Plan.
- Recommendations were made to develop an image for the City as a tourism destination. Several waterfront attractions were proposed, including an overhead pedestrian access to Marina Park, an expansion of the existing marina facility, and additional park development.





1990 – WATERFRONT TOURISM AND RECREATION PLAN, City of Thunder Bay. Moore George Associates Inc.

- The purpose of the report was to prepare an imaginative master plan for waterfront tourism and recreation development, which maximizes the year-round opportunities.
- Recommendations were made to integrate the waterfront into a recreation and tourism system to capitalize on the potential of Thunder Bay's waterfront for such things as boating facilities, waterfront access projects, natural rehabilitation areas, heritage interpretation areas, and waterfront activity programs. It was believed that the City should be seen as a special waterfront place and should portray an image of re-establishing environmental quality.

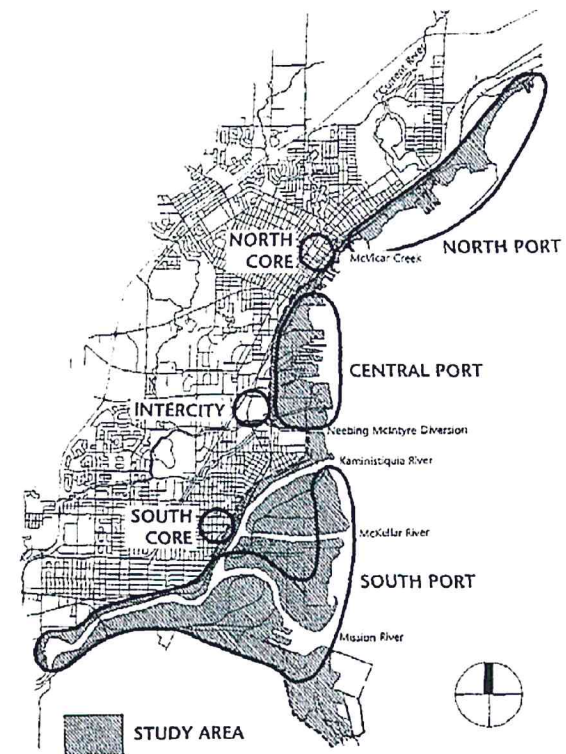


1993 – THUNDER BAY TOURISM – Developing a Competitive Edge for the 90's, *The Randolph Group*.

- The purpose of this report was to evaluate and recommend a development strategy for tourism in Thunder Bay
- Recommendations were made to develop the waterfront as a major draw for tourism, identifying the lands between Marina Park and the Mission Islands as the development area. Suggestions were also made for streetscape improvements and the development of tourism oriented businesses within this area.

**1996 – OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW – WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT, Long Range Planning & Building Department.**

- The purpose of the review was to revise the City's Official Plan to make it consistent with provincial policy statements on land use planning. The key objective was to reflect in the Plan the current community values. The review involved workshops that provided for public input. Not surprisingly, some of the key issues arising from the early workshops included future development of the City's waterfront, adequacy of existing parkland, desire for greater control over urban design, and concern over environmental issues.
- Recommendations were made to provide for an appropriate mix of use of the waterfront. Heavy Industrial use would remain in areas that were appropriate over a long term. Residential development would be encouraged on the waterfront at desirable locations, provided they are appropriately separated from non-compatible uses. Mixed use development through a "Mixed-Use" land-use designation. It was proposed that a "Waterfront Commercial" land use designation be developed for certain areas of the waterfront.
- It had become quite clear by the outcome of the Plan Review that the community members had shown significant interest in redevelopment of the local waterfront for uses other than heavy industrial.



**1996 – REVITALIZING THUNDER BAY'S WATERFRONT – Creating a Vision and Opportunities for the New Millennium, Waterfront Development Advisory Committee.**

- This report was compiled from several workshops held locally which were a result of the establishment of the *Waterfront Development Committee* stemming from recommendations made in the 1990 *Waterfront Recreation and Tourism Master Plan Report*. The committee is responsible for assisting in the development of a long term vision for the waterfront.
- Two concluding recommendations arising from this report were for the development of a waterfront plan, and for a strengthened infrastructure.



**1998 – THE NEXT WAVE – Charting a Course for Thunder Bay’s Waterfront, *The Planning Partnership, Moriyama & Teshima Architects and Planners.***

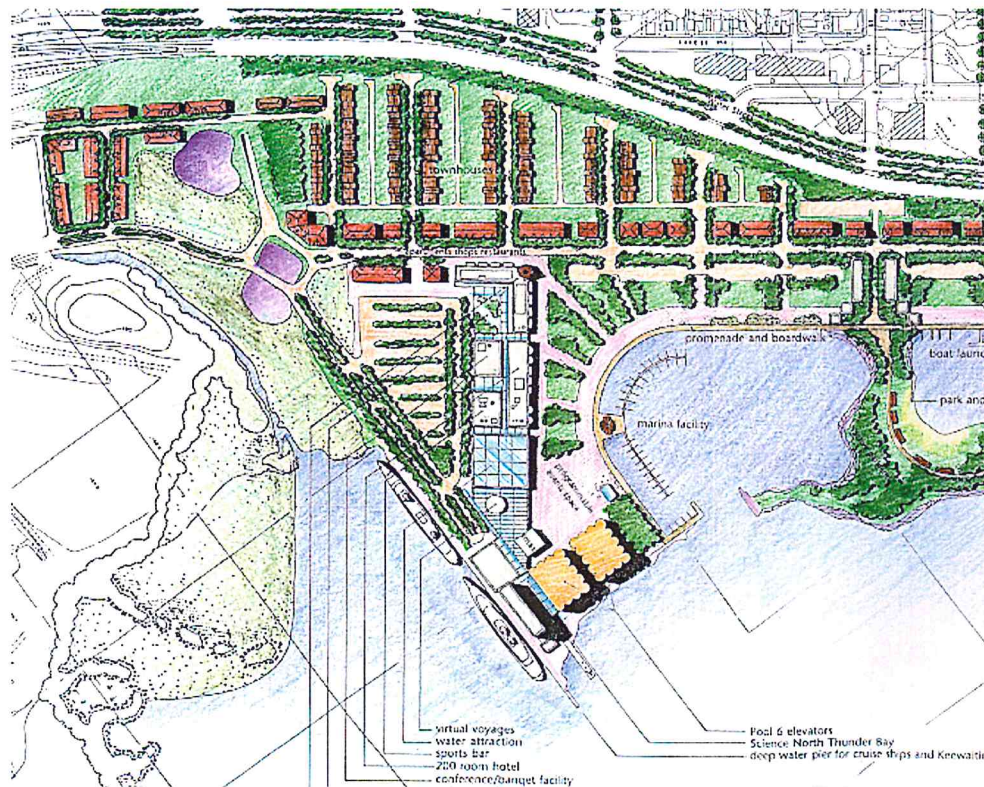
This leads me now to the latest and by far the most extensive, report on the local waterfront to date. I had the opportunity to attend the two local workshops that were held as part of the research for the report and following a thorough reading I am pleased to read that, generally, the majority of local residents hopes and aspirations for the waterfront have been recognized in the various components of the report.

- It was only a matter of time before the local enthusiasm toward renewed waterfront development strategies would lead to a more comprehensive study of the local waterfront potential for redevelopment. In keeping with the recommendations of previous reports, the City of Thunder Bay undertook a comprehensive Long Term Plan for the development of the Thunder Bay Waterfront for a mix of public and industrial land use.
- In summary, the main themes that were developed from this report were based on the development of distinct waterfront districts, a continuous waterfront drive and a healthy ecosystem. It was also recognized that Thunder Bay’s working port is a valuable addition to waterfront development as it sustains the local economy and provides an attraction for the waterfront.

The report follows similar directions of previous reports, in particular, the 1990 Moore George Report in stating that the waterfront need be developed lineally - along its entire length, as a system of public spaces with routes for hiking, biking and a scenic drive with supportive retail and commercial activity. This route would wind in amongst existing-active industry, creating live exhibits where feasible, with distinct waterfront districts, “*places where people can live, work, shop, eat, walk, cycle and play*”.

In keeping with the 1982 *Master Plan for Port Arthur*, the waterfront is divided into three distinct districts; NORTH PORT, CENTRAL PORT, and SOUTH PORT. The focus of my thesis will be on the area defined as the *North Port*.

The Next Wave Report defines the North Waterfront District as being an area along the harbor known historically as Port Arthur, extending from the Howe Street overpass to just south of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool 6 elevator. This district includes the existing Marina Park land and an extensive CN rail yard. Through their research, the consultants found that CN has been looking at rationalizing their rail yards and the North Yard was to be eliminated, freeing up extensive land for development. The plan was to develop this land as residential, to give residents a waterfront location to live and to bring the year-round activity to the waterfront. It is believed that the residential development would utilize and facilitate expansion of the Marina Park land. The existing Saskatchewan Wheat Pool 6 elevator and site would become a multi-use tourism attraction, offering a Science Centre Complex, scenic cruises and cruise-line docking, as well as hotel and conference facilities.





## ENDNOTES - APPENDIX

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<sup>1</sup> Gill Hale, The Practical Encyclopedia of Feng Shui. Anness Publishing, 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Christopher Alexander, A Pattern Language, Oxford University Press, 1977.

<sup>3</sup> Frances Halsbrand, The Inhabited Landscape, PLACES, Volume 4 No. 4. MIT Press, 1987.

<sup>4</sup> Mauro, Joseph M. A History of Thunder Bay. 1981. Quoting a speech made by Sir John A. MacDonald on a stop in Port Arthur, September 3, 1886.

<sup>5</sup> Rykwert, Joseph. "The Idea of a Town". MIT Press, 1995.

<sup>6</sup> Christian Norberg Schulz, Genius Loci: Towards A Phenomenology of Architecture, Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 1980.