I, Daniel Makela, hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of:

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in Community Planning

It is entitled:

Art and Culture: The Transformation of Louisville's East Market District

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Committee Chair: Francis Russell, MArch, BA

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Art and Culture:
The Transformation of Louisville’s East Market District

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Abstract

The transformation of Louisville’s East Market district is a nearby example of the positive impact art and culture can have on urban neighborhoods. Furthermore, it exemplifies the increasing popularity of art and cultural districts across the United States. This popularity has been caused in part by the glorification of neighborhoods such as New York City’s SoHo and Chicago’s Wicker Park.

This exploratory study seeks to find a better understanding of the role of art and culture on the transformation of urban neighborhoods in the 21st century city. The findings indicate that as cities have changed, both physically and economically, experts have been forced to alter theories of urban growth. The focus now lies on the increasing demand of consumption opportunities, urban amenities, and authentic places. With this knowledge, the study attempts to create a sufficient method of assessing art and cultural districts. The resulting evaluative criteria allow for the identification of success factors for individual districts. The criteria were utilized to evaluate Louisville’s East Market district and identify key success factors that led to its rapid transformation. This is important as local governmental agencies and policymakers begin to implement both formal initiatives and informal strategies to enhance and protect the authenticity of art and cultural districts.
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Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis seeks to find a better understanding of the role of art and culture on the transformation of urban neighborhoods. Furthermore, it will attempt to find a sufficient method of assessing art and cultural districts that will allow for the identification of success factors in these districts.

Purpose and Background

Traditional theories of urban growth were focused on the firm and jobs – attract the factory and the workers will follow. At this time, as a nation we were going through an era of urban devastation and unprecedented suburban sprawl. Experts thought that the reign of the city was over. Downtowns lost their employment base as companies and their employees chased newer and larger suburban locations. Urban cores lost residents, as there was a mass exodus from cramped urban quarters to the new, spacious, and abundant suburban homes. Theorists thought that with technological advances in communication, location was no longer important and the advantage downtowns had to offer was nullified. The outlook for urban neighborhoods was not good.

However, to the surprise of many, U.S. cities have experienced an urban resurgence in recent decades. The trends of suburbanization and urban disinvestment have slowed in major cities across the United States. These changes have forced experts to question their theories of urban growth (Landis 2009; Logan and Molotch 1987; Molotch 1996, 2002; Sassen 2001; Scott 2000). The focus has shifted from factories and jobs to human capital and innovation. A significant number of urban theorists have begun to focus on knowledge, amenities, and a
changing economic structure as important factors of urban growth and transformation. Some have further narrowed the scope by looking at cities as centers of consumption and not just production.

Through this theoretical shift, art and culture have been identified as a key amenity leading to urban and economic growth. Some theorists have proposed that highly skilled human capital seeks out environments to live in that are rich in art and culture (Brooks 2000; Clark 2002; Florida 2002; Lloyd 2002). Others have theorized that consumption opportunities are becoming a more important part of location decision-making as people become more educated and wealthier (Clark 2002; Glaeser 2006). In accordance with this notion, some theorists claim that this is due to the universal shift from an industrial economy to what is being called the new, knowledge-based, or postmodern economy. Lastly, other theorists have focused on the physical and social impact of art and culture on the urban neighborhood (Jacobs 1961; Lloyd 2002, 2006; Sorkin 1992; Zukin 1982, 2010). The subject of the art and cultural district has been popularized (and glamorized) by well-known neighborhoods such as New York’s SoHo and East Village or Chicago’s Wicker Park – subjects of debate for many urban theorists.

The physical manifestations of this shift in urban theory are the growing number of art and cultural districts around the U.S. and the increasing emphasis cities are putting on these neighborhoods. Some cities are even creating formal strategies and initiatives to improve, protect, and/or create from scratch art and cultural districts they can call their own. This has led to additional research on how cities should and should not promote art and culture and its corresponding districts (Carr et al. 2009; Currid 2007, 2009; Evans 2003; Jiven et al. 2003; Plaza 2006; Sorkin 1992). It has also led to a greater concern amongst theorists regarding one possible end result for many of these districts – trendy, urban destinations that have lost the authenticity
and sense of place that spurred the transformation to begin with (Currid 2009; Eeckhout 2001; Evans 2003; Lloyd 2002; Sorkin 1992; Zukin 2010).

Louisville’s East Market district is an example of the trends that have been introduced above. Part of the original urban core of the city, the neighborhood had been neglected during the age of postwar suburban sprawl and economic decentralization. However, the neighborhood has drastically changed as the nation’s cities have returned a focus to the city. As a result of this renewed era of urbanism, the East Market district has experienced a boom in investment and redevelopment. This transformation has been rapid, a majority of which has occurred in the past five to ten years. Furthermore, the district has become a bona fide art and cultural district. Much of the redevelopment has been centered on art and culture, with an array of studios and galleries cropping up. The neighborhood has also seen its share of small business startups and entertainment venues such as bars and restaurants. The district is now going through an internal branding process, giving itself a new name – NuLu (a combination of New and Louisville); and a new motto – “a relaxed artsy district with old buildings and new ideas” (The East Market District 2010).

The relevancy of art and culture in our nation’s urban neighborhoods is growing as the research suggests and the East Market district explicitly shows. Art and cultural districts can undergo a rapid and dramatic transformation within a short time frame. For these reasons, it is important to find ways to better understand these districts, which is the rationale for conducting this study. An understanding of the literature will help to create a method of evaluating art and cultural districts. This method will then be applied to the East Market district in order to comprehend the components of the district and define its key factors for success.
Research Questions

The research aims to answer three central questions. Each question builds on the findings from the previous one. The questions are:

1. Why is art and culture a growing component of urban neighborhood transformations?
2. With the increasing number of so-called art and cultural districts, how can these districts be measured?
3. Based on the answer to the prior question, what are the key success factors of Louisville’s East Market district?

Document Roadmap

This thesis is organized into six chapters. The first chapter introduces the subject area, providing background information on the topic, a synopsis of its purpose, and the research questions. The second chapter describes the research methodology. This chapter also explains in detail the evaluative criteria for art and cultural districts. Each criterion has a description and a rationale for choosing it. The third chapter is a review of the relevant literature. It is divided into two major sections (and multiple subsections). The first section is dedicated to urban growth theory. It discusses the resurgence of urban neighborhoods and the corresponding shift in urban growth theory over the past sixty years. The second major section is dedicated to art and culture. This section goes into more depth than the first discussing an array of subcomponents: consumption-based growth theory, the importance of urban amenities, the evolution of bohemia, the physical impact of art and culture on urban neighborhoods, the impact of culture on place-making, the different types of art and cultural districts in today’s U.S. cities, and how cities are formally and informally incorporating art and culture into new policy and
redevelopment strategies. The fourth chapter is an assessment of the four introductory framing cases – Covington, Main Street, Northside, and Oakley. Based on the knowledge gained from these initial assessments and the literature review, the evaluative criteria were established. The evaluative criteria were then utilized in the fifth chapter, for the assessment of the East Market district. This chapter also identifies the findings from the research, specifically the key success factors of the East Market district that were identified through the use of the evaluative criteria. The sixth chapter acts as a bookend to this introductory chapter by summarizing the thesis findings and providing conclusions. It also discusses the overall relevance of the thesis and how it can be applied to other art and cultural districts.
Chapter 2. METHODOLOGY

The primary components of the methodology that will be described in this chapter include the research questions, literature review, introductory framing cases, the evaluative criteria definitions, the East Market District evaluation, and its success factors.

Research Questions

The methodology is designed to provide an understanding of art and cultural districts. The research aims to answer three central questions. First, why is art and culture a growing component of urban neighborhood transformations? Second, with the increasing number of so-called art and cultural districts, how can these districts be measured? Third, based on the answer to the prior question, what are the key success factors of Louisville’s East Market district? The research questions build on one another, each acting as a steppingstone for the next question (as Figure 2.1 illustrates). Due to this dynamic subject matter, this thesis utilizes varied research methods.

| General Theory | • Why is art and culture a growing component of urban neighborhood transformations? |
| Pragmatic      | • How can these districts be measured? |
| Application    | • What are the key success factors of Louisville's East Market district? |

Figure 2.1 Research Question Diagram
The first research question will be answered primarily through an in depth review of substantial literature on the subject matter. This research is framed within the new theories of urban growth, which focus on the importance of human capital, amenities, consumption, and ultimately, art and culture. Therefore, the literature review is split into two major sections: (1) urban growth theory, and (2) art and culture. In the first section, I analyze the shift in urban growth theory over the past sixty years. Its role is to place the subject matter into a larger, historical context. The second section consists of more focused and in depth research. Its goal is to provide a better understanding of art and culture’s role in the new economy and the transformation of urban neighborhoods. I do this by first assessing the newfound interest in urban amenities and the corresponding theory of consumption-based growth. I then narrow the scope further, reviewing the literature on art and culture’s impact on redevelopment and place making, and how it is formally and informally being used as a redevelopment tool in various ways as art and cultural districts become more popular. The findings of the literature review establish first, amenities and consumption opportunities as key to urban growth in the 21st century; and second, art and culture as important components of urban redevelopment efforts today.

**Art and Cultural Districts Defined**

There is no clear-cut definition of the physical place this thesis is concerned with (this research has labeled the subject as the *art and cultural district*). Theorists have struggled with both the concepts of art and culture themselves and the physical locations that embody them. As a result they have come up with a variety of labels for these locations. Art and culture districts, as used in this thesis, overlaps or is synonymous with what others have labeled bohemia, neo-
bohemia, warehouse districts, cultural enclaves, places of destination culture, etc. This thesis uses *art and cultural district* to refer to these places because I believe it simplistically embodies what is at the core of these locations and their transformations.

The national organization, Americans for the Arts, defines cultural districts as “geographic areas of a city where there is a high concentration of cultural facilities, arts organizations, individual artists and arts-based businesses…that incorporate other facilities such as office complexes, restaurants, retail spaces, and occasionally residential areas” (Americans for the Arts 2009). However, this definition should be taken with a grain of salt since the organization promotes the formalization of these districts and their creation. This thesis looks also at art and cultural districts that have formed organically. For this reason I have identified my own definition of the art and cultural district that takes components from a range of literature to make an ambiguous concept as black-and-white as possible. Thus, an *art and cultural district* is an urban destination that derives a great amount of its social and economic value from the production and consumption of art and culture, and has often undergone some form of transformation, revitalization, or adaptive reuse aided by these components. Common characteristics include:

- A perception of authenticity and uniqueness;
- A blurring of the lines between production and consumption;
- An opportunity to consume the local (art and culture); and
- A clustering of mixed uses including studios, galleries, restaurants, bars, boutiques, museums, residences, and/or institutions.

The above definition may seem broad, but the reason for that is just. The literature confirms that not all art and cultural districts are the same. Based on the literature, there are a variety of art
and cultural districts with a range of characteristics and a definition was necessary that was more inclusive rather than exclusive.

**Introductory Framing Cases**

In order to complement the knowledge gathered from the literature review and answer the second research question, several Cincinnati area art and cultural districts were briefly analyzed. The methodology uses these *introductory framing cases* to better understand the components of art and cultural districts. It was necessary to understand these components (along with an understanding of the literature) in order to identify how these districts can be measured. The art and cultural districts that were used as introductory framing cases for this thesis are all in the Cincinnati metropolitan area. They include Covington, located in northern Kentucky, and Main Street, Northside, and Oakley, located in the City of Cincinnati.

The introductory framing cases were chosen for several reasons: (1) they fit the definition of the art and cultural district provided in the previous section; (2) they have different characteristics that make them unique from each other; and (3) they are located in the Cincinnati metropolitan area. The first reason serves as the primary determinant of qualification, while the second reason is mostly automatic. The final reason was included mainly for feasibility purposes (districts that could be traveled to and experienced first-hand are more beneficial to the thesis than those in distant locations), but also because Cincinnati is a similar market to Louisville (culturally and in size).

Expanding on the second reason above, the introductory framing cases were chosen not because they are similar, but because they are all different from each other. These districts have experienced various levels of success as art and cultural districts. They differ in demographics,
physical character and footprint, cultural offerings, and so on. By looking at an array of districts, it was easier to identify the characteristics that positively and negatively affect art and cultural district development. It also made it easier to frame the East Market District within the spectrum of art and cultural district types, hence the name.

One of the main obstacles of this thesis involved selecting the introductory framing cases. According to the literature, one would think art and cultural districts only exist in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and San Francisco. In reality this is not the case of course, but theorists rarely discuss the phenomenon of art and culture districts in medium and mid-large size cities such as Louisville and Cincinnati. Instead they gravitate towards the largest and most glamorous of art and cultural districts. For this reason, reviewing the literature gave me preconceived notions of what an art and cultural district was that had to be scaled-down and adjusted when I began to look at the focal cities’ districts. Simply put, Louisville and Cincinnati do not have art and cultural districts the magnitude of those in cities such as New York, nor can they be expected to. An adjustment of expectations was necessary before evaluating the introductory framing cases (and the East Market district, thereafter) for what they are, and not as comparisons to districts such as New York’s East Village.

Various analytical methods were used to evaluate the introductory framing cases. Most of all, personal on-site observation served as a tool for analysis. Multiple trips were made to each of the four districts. Notes and photographs were taken (along with a prior understanding of on-site neighborhood study) to make the best evaluation possible. Four categories were explicitly analyzed on site – district user demographics, physical characteristics, transportation characteristics, and the influence of art and culture – however, observation was also made beyond these categories.
The introductory framing cases were analyzed on different scales. Observation took place on a district scale, and a more inclusive, Census tract scale was also used. Census tracts were chosen because they are standardized across the nation. Also, a wide range of Census data can be collected for each individual tract. Tracts usually have between 2,500 and 8,000 people and are designated to be homogeneous with respect to population characteristics, economic status, and living conditions (US Census Bureau 2006). Also, Census tracts are defined with the intention of being consistent over a long period of time so that comparisons can be made from year to year. These criteria make the Census tract level a good boundary for the analysis of a larger geographical region surrounding each art and cultural district.

Census data was collected for the introductory framing cases on this scale. This provided a better understanding of various district characteristics such as population, income, housing type, and occupation. In addition, geographic information systems (GIS) data was collected at this scale. This results in maps that provide valuable visual information on each district. The data source of this information was CAGIS (Cincinnati Area Geographic Information System) – the government-supported organization that provides data through GIS for Cincinnati. Lastly, the press (i.e. newspapers) and Internet were used to provide an understanding of the publicity and media coverage each district has received up until now. The tone, frequency, and topic of the coverage were considered. Utilizing these varying analytical methods and scales, a well-rounded assessment of each introductory framing case was feasibly completed.

The knowledge gained from the literature review and introductory framing cases led to the creation of evaluative criteria for art and cultural districts – answering the second research question (see Table 2.1). The next section provides a detailed description of the criteria.
### Table 2.1 Art and Cultural District Evaluative Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Theorists</th>
<th>Framing Cases</th>
<th>Scale of Analysis</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
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<td><strong>District Demographics</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>District Residents</td>
<td>Jacobs, Lloyd, Zukin</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>District, Census Tract</td>
<td>US Census Bureau</td>
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<tr>
<td>Population</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median Age</td>
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<tr>
<td>Race</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
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<tr>
<td>% below poverty level</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Population</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median Age</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median Household income</td>
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<td>District Users</td>
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<td>District</td>
<td>Observation, Press/Internet</td>
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<td>residents v. &quot;tourists&quot;</td>
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<td>Age</td>
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<td><strong>Physical Characteristics</strong></td>
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<td>Lloyd, Scott, Zukin</td>
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<td>Metro</td>
<td>LOJIC</td>
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<td>Density (figure ground)</td>
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<td>Covington, Oakley</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>LOJIC, Observation</td>
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<td>Nature of commercial uses</td>
<td>Florida, Lloyd, Scott</td>
<td>Northside, Oakley</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Observation</td>
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<td>Covington</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>LOJIC, Press/Internet</td>
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<td>Specific land use plan or restrictions</td>
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<td>Press/Internet</td>
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<td>Press/Internet</td>
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<td>Character (new trends)</td>
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<td>Vacancy status</td>
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<td>Household sizes</td>
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<td><strong>Transportation Characteristics</strong></td>
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<td>Street network</td>
<td>Jacobs</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>LOJIC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connectivity</td>
<td>Jacobs</td>
<td>Main St, Northside, Oakley</td>
<td>District, Census Tract</td>
<td>LOJIC, Observation</td>
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<td>Alternative mode options</td>
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<td>LOJIC, Observation</td>
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<td>District</td>
<td>Press/Internet</td>
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<td>Northside</td>
<td>District, Neighborhood</td>
<td>Press/Internet</td>
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<td>Covington, Main St</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Observation, Press/Internet</td>
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<td>Underlying Theme or Trend</td>
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<td>Oakley</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Observation, Press/Internet</td>
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<td>Covington</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Press/Internet</td>
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<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Observation, Press/Internet</td>
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<td>Oakley</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Observation</td>
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<td>Consumption v. production</td>
<td>Carr, Currid, Lloyd, Oakley</td>
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<td>District</td>
<td>Observation, Press/Internet</td>
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<td>Normalized events</td>
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<td>District</td>
<td>Press/Internet</td>
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<td>Lloyd</td>
<td>Covington, Main St, Northside</td>
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<td>Increasing/Decreasing</td>
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<td>Identification and advertising</td>
<td>Lloyd, Zukin</td>
<td>Northside</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Observation, Press/Internet</td>
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</table>

### Evaluative Criteria Definitions

The second research question was: how can these districts be measured? In order to answer this, analytical criteria were established based on the five broad categories used for the
evaluation of the introductory framing cases. These categories were: (1) district demographics, (2) physical characteristics, (3) transportation characteristics, and (4) the influence of art and culture. Also, as utilized for the framing cases, (5) the press and media coverage made up the fifth category. Within each category, subcategories (or criterions) were established. These criterions were created to make art and cultural district assessments as complete and detailed as necessary as well as for self-organizational purposes. Table 2.1 shows a summary of the criteria.

Table 2.1 shows the criterions that make up each category. It also shows the scale of analysis, the data source, and the theorists (if any) and framing cases that were the source of the given criterion. As was the case with the introductory framing cases, personal on-site observation was used as the primary analytical tool. A multitude of trips were made to the East Market District, where extensive notes were taken and photographic documentation made. The criteria served as a foundation during on-site observation.

As the table shows, the district level was the most common scale used in this analysis. The Census tract scale (and its corresponding Census data) was primarily used to evaluate the district demographics. Also, GIS data was collected on both scales. The GIS data source of this information for the East Market District was LOJIC (Louisville/Jefferson County Information Consortium) – the government-supported agency that provides GIS data for the greater Louisville region. For the Influence of Art and Culture and Media/Publicity categories, the primary data source was the press and Internet. Formal (i.e. newspapers) and informal (i.e. blogs) publications were important for providing a better understanding of local sentiment towards the district.

The following is a more detailed description of the criteria than Table 2.1 provides. It is organized by category and explains each criterion individually. Most of all it provides an
argument for why each criterion should be included as part of the measurement process of art and cultural districts. Each description includes the scale the data were collected for, the purpose of the criterion, and the data source(s). It is designed to supplement the summary table.

**District Demographics**

- *District Residents (population, age, race, and income):* These data were collected for both the district and Census tract scale. The data for the district utilized Census blocks and block groups when available. These are all major components of a demographic study. Each statistic helps to provide a better understanding of the current state of the district and surrounding neighborhood. The US Census Bureau was the data source.

- *Market Area:* What is the overall market area of the district? These data were collected for the entire Louisville metropolitan area. Art and cultural districts tend to draw users from an entire metro area since they provide very specific consumption opportunities. Contrary to the focal points of literature on the subject, art and cultural districts exist outside of New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Chicago. What are the characteristics of Louisville that may help or hurt the development of the East Market District? It is important to know of any unique characteristics in the cities in which these districts are located. Statistics collected for this criterion included total population, median income, and so on. The Census was the data source.

- *District users:* Who uses the district’s amenities? These results will not necessarily be the same as the results from the first demographic criterion. The purpose was to capture the common characteristics of the people who are attracted to the district – what is their age and socioeconomic status? Is it a very unique demographic that is attracted to the
district or is it a more diverse crowd? Also, it is important to understand whether the
district serves primarily local residents or local “tourists,” or a blend of the two.
Observation, the press, and Internet were the data sources.

Physical Characteristics

- **Location**: These data were collected on a metropolitan scale. It is important to
  understand the larger context of the district and where it fits in the city geographically.
  This criterion also supplemented some of the following criterions. LOJIC was the data
  source.

- **Physical character (aesthetics)**: These data were collected specifically for the district.
  This criterion is subjective in its evaluation of the character – aesthetics and scale – of the
  buildings and district as a whole. Direct observation was the primary data source, with
  supplementation from LOJIC.

- **Land Uses**: These data were collected for the district and Census tract scale. Land use is
  a very important component of any urban environment. The mix of uses of the individual
  buildings can have a major impact on the character and function of the district – clearly
  the case for art and cultural districts. LOJIC was the primary data source.

- **Density**: These data were collected for the district and Census tract scale. The purpose is
  to understand the general scale and density of the district. The urban fabric and the scale
  of the individual buildings can have a major impact on the uses these buildings can
  accommodate. LOJIC was the primary data source.

- **Consumption footprint**: These data were collected for the district scale only.
  Consumption opportunities are a critical component of art and cultural districts. Where
are the commercial uses located? How connected is the retail? Is the district primarily linear – stretching along a corridor – or is it more spread out amongst a few blocks?

These are the types of questions that this criterion aims to answer. LOJIC and on-site observation were the data sources.

- **Nature of commercial uses**: These data were collected for the district scale as well, and supplement the criterion above. Just as the location of the commercial uses is important, so is the type of commercial uses. Ultimately, this determines the character of the district and who uses it. Observation was the data source.

- **Evolution of commercial uses**: These data were collected for the district scale only. Just as it’s important to understand the demographic change, it is also important to understand the commercial change over time. This helps to understand the maturity of the area as a true art and cultural district. It also helps in understanding how much more change can be expected in the future. LOJIC, observation, and the press and Internet were the data sources.

- **Specific land use plan or restrictions**: This information was collected for the district. Many art and cultural districts have certain land use restrictions, either as a part of a general city plan or their own individual restrictions that the city has put in place to aid the district’s development. These plans and restrictions have an impact on the character of the district. The press and Internet were the data sources.

- **Special zoning restrictions**: The scale, purpose, and source of this criterion are the same as the criterion above.

- **Housing**: These data were collected for the Census tract scale. Housing is a critical component of these districts, especially considering that the creation of many art and
cultural districts stems from the availability of attractive live/work situations. The vacancy status, tenure status, and household sizes were all evaluated. The Census was the source of these data. Also, the general character of new housing and new residential trends were evaluated. Observation was the data source.

**Transportation Characteristics**

- **Street network**: These data were collected for the district scale. The transportation network is an important component of the district, helping define its character. This was verified during the evaluation of the introductory framing cases. This criterion also helped understand why the district is located where it is within the greater metropolitan area. LOJIC and observation were the data sources.

- **Connectivity**: These data were collected for the district and Census tract scales. This criterion is interrelated to the street network criterion, and serves the same purpose. LOJIC and observation were the data sources.

- **Traffic levels**: This information was collected for the district scale. Traffic levels have a major impact on the safety and comfort of pedestrian use of the district. The more people feel comfortable walking in the district, the more successful the district can be. Direct observation was the source of data.

- **Alternative modes options**: This information was collected for the district and Census tract scale. Are there alternative modes of transportation serving the district, such as bikeways and bus routes? This plays an important role in determining who has access to the district. LOJIC was the principal data source, along with support from direct observation.
• **Parking**: This information was collected for the district scale. What is the nature of the parking, and are there certain efforts made to improve it, such as shared parking? This helps provide an understanding of how the different commercial and institutional destinations work together, as well as the overall commitment to the district. It also has a direct connection to the physical character, aesthetics, and footprint of the district. LOJIC was the principal data source, along with support from direct observation.

**Influence of Art and Culture**

- **Formalized district (business district)**: This information was collected for the district scale. Does the district have official boundaries? Does the district have an official business district? This helps provide insight into how the district has developed – either as an organic redevelopment process or a process fueled by government and economic developers. The press and Internet were the data sources.

- **Community council**: This information was collected for the district scale and the neighborhood. This helps to determine the organization of the district as a whole. It indicates any influences over the redevelopment process and the level of commitment to the district’s success. The press and Internet were the data sources.

- **Branding**: This information was collected for the district scale. Has the district been branded, and if so, by whom? This criterion helps understand the motives of the district or certain individuals who work or live there. Observation and the press and Internet were the data sources.

- **Underlying Theme or Trend**: This information was collected for the district. Many art and cultural districts have an underlying theme or trend amongst their consumption or
production opportunities. This could be a certain type of art that is commonly produced in the district, or a certain demographic that the retail caters to, or an ethical or philosophical mantra that the redevelopment has followed. Observation, the press and Internet were the data sources.

- **Residential/business incentives**: This information was collected for the district scale. This information provides insight into the commitment and organization of the district as an art and cultural destination. The press and Internet were the data sources.

- **External influences and threats**: This information was collected for the neighborhood. It is important to understand what is going on around the district and not just within it. Knowledge of this helps in understanding the future outlook for the district. Observation and the press and Internet were the data sources.

- **Keystone development or building**: This information was collected for the district scale. Certain districts may have a keystone building or project that either spurred the creation of the district or draws most of the attention. Understanding this keystone destination is important to understanding the district as a whole. Observation and the press and Internet were the data sources.

- **Consumption vs. production**: This information was collected for the district scale. The interrelationship between consumption and production is evident (but varied) in all art and cultural districts. The nature of this interrelationship is fundamental in order to sufficiently evaluate art and cultural districts. Observation and the press and Internet were the data sources.

- **Formalized events**: This information was collected for the district scale. Formalized events, such as weekend gallery walks, are popular in art and cultural districts. They
symbolize the unity, organization, and commitment of the district. It is important to understand the levels of cooperation amongst all the different actors in the district. The press and Internet were the data sources.

**Media/Publicity**

- *Nature of media coverage:* This information was collected for the district scale. The nature of media coverage is telling of the neighborhood and city’s feelings towards the district, and any possible negative sentiment towards the district. The press and Internet were the data sources.

- *Increasing or decreasing coverage:* This information was collected for the district scale. The amount of media coverage and publicity is indicative of the popularity of the district and whether it is still “on the way up.” The press and Internet were the data sources.

- *Media forms covering district:* This information was collected for the district scale. This criterion helps to understand who the district users are and who is attracted to the art and cultural amenities that the district offers. The press and Internet were the data sources.

- *Identification and Advertising:* This information was collected for the district scale. Does the district self-advertise? This helps to determine a district’s internal goals and the direction it is trying to move in. Advertizing and marketing can be telling of a district or neighborhood’s motives. Observation, the press and Internet were the data sources.

**The East Market District Evaluation**

A sufficient evaluation of the East Market District was completed as the next phase of the thesis methodology in order to answer the third research question. This was made possible
thanks to the in depth literature review, introductory framing cases, and creation of the evaluative criteria. With the establishment of this prior knowledge a more detailed assessment of this district was possible.

Based on the evaluation of the criteria described above, I was able to understand the various important characteristics of the East Market district, which in turn allowed me to answer the final research question: what are the key success factors of Louisville’s East Market district?

Success is a tricky term. It is important to note that this is not a black-and-white issue. There are innumerable factors that affect the outcome of art and cultural districts such as the East Market district. However, the role of the evaluative criteria was to bring to light the most important and influential factors. The criteria weren’t designed with the notion that each individual criterion is a factor of success or failure. On the contrary, they are designed to provide a holistic understanding of the district from which you can identify the most important factors. The factors chosen for the East Market district are ones that were explicitly or implicitly realized during the evaluation, and supplemented by introductory knowledge from the literature review. At this point, the thesis findings were established and the research questions answered. This climactic component of the thesis combines and makes use of the knowledge gained from all of the prior methods components.
Chapter 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Urban Growth Theory

In recent decades, US cities have experienced an urban resurgence as the trends of suburbanization and urban blight have slowed. These surprising changes have forced experts to alter their opinions of what leads to urban growth. Molotch’s influential “growth machine” theory has been questioned in recent years, as theorists focus on the significance of knowledge, amenities, a changing economic structure, and other factors important to the new economy.

Urban Devastation

Since the end of World War II, U.S. cities have been changing physically and economically. Sixty years ago, cities began to experience extensive suburban sprawl that has continued to this day. Glaeser and Gottlieb charge the automobile for this dramatic change in the urban landscape (E. L. Glaeser 2006). Also important were land use regulation and production technologies. The results were cities much less dense than before and the decline of many traditional cities and their urban neighborhoods. These new suburban neighborhoods were seen as more attractive places to live. They were safer, the homes and yards larger, and the resources such as schools and churches were better. With the automobile and the public expenditures on infrastructure expansion, the affluent could now move to these areas.

The result of this shift was a coinciding drain of population and industrial jobs from older urban cores. The advantage of spatial concentration of factories and blue-collar labor disappeared. In the 1970s U.S. cities hit rock bottom, terrorized by disinvestment and fiscal crisis. Many have theorized that improved technology and globalization undercut the place
boundedness of economic activity in cities. No longer was the dense, centralization in urban cores necessary. New information technologies have had a major impact on spatial organization of U.S. cities, representing the ability to conduct various economic transactions at a distance, and removing (or, at least, radically reducing) “the tyranny of distance and time” (Atkinson 1998). The result was a decline in the manufacturing jobs in the central city, and a “structural mismatch…between workers and jobs and between the built environment and new economic activities” (Clark 2002). Edge cities, extreme poverty, blight, deconcentration, and sprawl became popular descriptions of cities during this time.

A New Era of Urbanism

However, these theories of urban doom have been disconfirmed by a surprising resurgence since the 1980s. As a nation, we have entered a new era of urbanism. A growing number of urban theorists have analyzed this change, labeling the new period as postindustrial, postmodern, global, informational, and so on. Varied empirical evidence has shown that many cities have experienced a growth in the density of economic activity in their central business districts since the 1980s. Landis used U.S. Census Bureau data to show that core cities have grown from 1990 to 2007 after thirty years of population loss (Landis 2009). Sassen observed the renewed vitality of cities as postindustrial production sites and the relative “explosion in the number of firms locating in the downtowns of major cities” despite theories of economic dispersal (Sassen 2001).

There are various interrelated events that have influenced the way we’ve changed our thoughts about cities. There has been a rapid increase in connectedness amongst people globally through new modes of communication, including the Internet, fax, and digitalization of vast
amounts of information. Furthermore, these advances are now available to the broader public as costs rapidly decrease. Second, there has been a major expansion of education throughout most of the world, giving more people the ability to learn and form opinions on major issues. Third, there has been a drastic decline of agricultural and industrial work, and a corresponding increase in the proportion of jobs in the professional, service, and technology fields where computers and machines have taken over many rudimentary tasks (Clark 2002).

Glaeser and Gottlieb note two major explanations for the urban resurgence (E. L. Glaeser 2006). Over the past 25 years, there has been an increase in the importance of knowledge in this new economy, and larger and denser cities tend to have a comparative advantage in facilitating the flow of this knowledge. At the same time, there has been an increase in people’s desire to live in these types of cities in part because of rising incomes that have raised demand for high-end urban amenities.

*Shift in Urban Growth Theory*

Over the past few decades, theories of urban growth have been influenced by the work of Harvey Molotch. In his seminal work, Molotch identifies the city as a “growth machine.” Cities “become organized as enterprises devoted to the increase of aggregate rent levels through the intensification of land use” (Logan 1987). This machine, or “growth ethic” permeates all aspects of local life including politics, economic development, and culture. Molotch claims the desire for growth is universal amongst local elites, no matter their disagreement on other issues. Besides the obvious real estate professionals and landowners, the actors that make up this influential growth consensus range from politicians, local media, and utility companies to universities, museums and theaters, and professional sports organizations. It is easy to see how
these actors, when maintaining a consistent agenda, can have a powerful influence over an entire city’s fate.

Growth machine supporters have often portrayed growth as beneficial to all citizens of all cities, claiming that growth strengthens the tax base, creates jobs, helps solve social problems, and so on. However, Molotch is critical of many results of the growth machine and points out that in reality the advantages and disadvantages are unevenly distributed.

The growth machine model has influenced theory on urban change since it’s introduction in 1976. However, more recently theorists (including Molotch and Logan themselves) have begun to question the applicability of the theory as cities’ political and economic structures change. Molotch et al. chose a multicausal approach to explain urban growth that stresses amenities (Molotch, Place in Product 2002). Clark et al., who criticize the growth machine model as being weak, also identify amenities as “the key to understanding the deficiencies in establishing theories of urban growth” (Clark 2002).

The concept of growth at any given cost through land use intensification is not a sure bet as it may have been 30 years ago. Many cities have adopted smart growth strategies with strong civic support and successful results that contradict the notions of the growth machine. More common in the postmodern economy is a competition for skilled workers and a focus on urban amenities. Clark et al. use basic economic theory to explain – people maximize utility, not income, and utility equals income plus amenities (Clark 2002). Glaeser claims that non-market transactions such as amenities are now more important than traditional market transactions in explaining urban growth and decline (E. L. Glaeser 2000).

During this time there has been a steady shift from manufacturing to service employment. The new economy has bred new employment in finance, IT, media production, etc. Referred to
as *informational* or *symbolic analysts* by some theorists, these workers produce ideas rather than material goods. Other theorists have also emphasized ideas as the drivers of jobs and economic growth. In the new, informational economy, cities are an important scene of innovation.

Clark et al. attempt to link this postindustrial shift to a shift in entertainment and consumption patterns in cities, claiming the “informational city implies the city of leisure” (Clark 2002). To help explain these changes in urban dynamics, they hypothesize several factors of change:

- An increase in citizen income, education, and political empowerment, leading to a rise of the individual consumer, and translating into more individualization of tastes;
- A decline in the large bureaucratic decision-makers in the public and private sector, which are slower than small firms at adapting to the rapid change of tastes;
- A decline in the explanatory power of classical variables (i.e. distance, transportation cost, natural resource proximity) affecting the economy because of technological advances and globalization;
- A rise of leisure pursuits relative to work; and
- A rise in the concern of arts, aesthetics, and spatial dynamics in cities.

These new and unique tastes and concerns create a new set of citizen demands. The trends also show the important role of consumption and leisure in the postmodern city. More so, they serve as a good introduction to the expanding role of art and culture in postindustrial urban growth.

**Art and Culture**

As the prior sections show, the transformation of the urban economy (from physical manufacturing processes to sophisticated networks of ideas and knowledge transmission) has led
to disagreement over the variables and factors affecting economic growth in cities. Growth is now being explained by a city’s ability to attract human capital, and the evolution of urban growth theory is a reflection of this.

Within this theoretical shift towards human capital, the role of consumption patterns has grown. Furthermore, as consumption experiences become more important, art and culture become a key amenity for citizens and economic growth. There is increasing evidence that the growing amount of highly skilled human capital seeks out culturally and artistically rich environments in which to live, work, and consume (Brooks 2000; Clark 2002; Currid 2009; Florida 2002a, 2002b; Glaeser 2006; Glaeser et al. 2001).

**Amenities and Consumption-based Theory**

Art and culture act as an amenity in two ways: first, they have come to be seen as key signals of authenticity; and second, they offer the necessary scene and products that people seek out when making location choices (Currid 2009). A consequence of this position is that cultural and artistic industries offer products targeted to those with disposable income (another nod to consumption theory). For a neighborhood to thrive in the arts and culture, it must have a certain level of population with disposable income to support the industry. Cultural consumption is varied ranging from genuine art lovers who fill exhibits, to wealthy philanthropic art supporters, to the high-society supporters of ballets and operas. No matter who it is, consumption-based growth is now more relevant in the 21st century city than before.

Glaeser et al. (E. L. Glaeser 2006) have conducted extensive research that emphasizes the importance of consumption trends. Econometric studies support a consumption-based theory of urban renaissance. The shift cannot be explained by production because big cities have always
been more productive than towns and rural locations, something that hasn’t changed over time. What has changed is the desire of people to live in cities. But why has this desire changed?

Cities need to be viewed as centers of consumption, not just production, in order to understand this change. Cities have always offered a much richer social life than rural locations. In the old U.S., proximity to other people was the main draw along with other advantages in entertainment. Even with new technology and globalization, this remains the most obvious social advantage of cities. High densities also support today’s forms of consumption such as restaurants, bars, museums, and movie and concert theaters.

Through multiple-regression analysis, Glaeser et al. conclude that city residents support almost all social leisure activities, and have over time. Therefore, the urban renaissance cannot be explained by changes in the accessibility of these social amenities. Thus, it is deduced that “the value placed on urban amenities has risen over time, especially by people who are rich enough to pay for big city residence” (E. L. Glaeser 2006). Education and disposable income increases the tendency to use these amenities\(^1\); so these activities “have become more popular over time as people have become richer or more educated” (E. L. Glaeser 2006). This research led to the coining of the term, “consumer city” signaling that the future of cities depends on their ability to attract consumers, not just workers.

The shift from an industrial economy to a postindustrial, knowledge economy has led to a change in how people chose to interact with cities and the amenities they offer. Consumption-based urban growth theory is a reflection of this change as shown above. Citizens seek to consume amenities such as art and culture in cities more than ever as they become richer and more educated as trends have indicated. Urban and social theorists have often labeled the areas

\(^1\) Glaeser et al. also attribute a portion of the increased attractiveness of cities to declining crime rates during the period since 1980 (particularly during the 1990s), but maintain that it only explains a modest amount.
of cities that develop strong artistic and cultural products as “bohemia”. The following section explains the roots of bohemia, and how bohemian culture has changed as we have shifted to a new type of society.

Bohemia

Bohemia is defined as “a place where painters, writers, and other artists, live in an unconventional, carefree way” (World Book 2010). The literature on bohemia is extensive. Various theorists over time have studied the role of bohemia and its importance to society and cities. It is first important to compare alternative culture to mainstream culture (bohemian versus bourgeois). Grana first made a distinction between the two different cultures long ago (Grana 1964; 1980). Not long after, Bell noted that lifestyle rather than work is the primary source of satisfaction in society, as a result of the increase in disposable income (Bell 1976).

More recently, the literature has been focused not on the differences of the two cultures, but on their convergence into something unique and new, referred to by some as “Bobos” or “no-brows.” Brooks coined the term “bohemian-bourgeois” (Bobos) to describe this new social grouping and lifestyle combining characteristics of each culture (Brooks 2000). Seabrook discusses the rise of a “no-brow” culture – a merging of the existing low- and high-brow cultures (Seabrook 2000). Florida takes the idea of a new culture further, connecting it to the rise of the new, knowledge economy. “The increasing importance of creativity, innovation, and knowledge to the economy opens up the social space where more eccentric, alternative, or bohemian types of people can be integrated into core economic and social institutions” (Florida, Bohemia and Economic Geography 2002).
Related literature looks at the role of bohemia in the structure of cities and considers the relationship between cultural amenities and economic growth. Almost a century ago, Park realized that bohemia and other alternative cultures played a role in the structure of cities. The larger, more diverse cities had developed outlets for alternative cultures and lifestyles (Park 1915). Others have further developed Park’s theory establishing the important role of bohemia in society and cities in particular. Arguably the most well known urban theorist, Jane Jacobs, emphasized the role of diversity as an engine for urban growth. Looking at Manhattan neighborhoods in her classic text (Jacobs 1961), she highlights the role of eclecticism and inventiveness as vital elements of city life.

Impact on Urban Neighborhoods

Jacobs along with other urban theorists have looked at the impact of art, culture and bohemianism on the physical makeup and transformation of urban neighborhoods. Artists and other bohemians² for years have been considered a driving force of revitalization – often the first to enter old industrial neighborhoods, leading to their transformation into hip, urban enclaves. Often times the end result is a neighborhood popularized as a destination for the affluent that brings in even more redevelopment and investment. The very nature of the artistic and bohemian lifestyle lends itself to cheaper neighborhoods with low rents where residents have enough room to live and work in the same space. Artists and the like rely on these low rents, and are attracted to the old, often rundown and edgy, neighborhoods. Controversy arises when the transformation

² It should be noted that this class is different than Richard Florida’s popularized “creative class.” Artists or bohemians are a subsector of the much-larger creative class, which translates approximately to highly skilled and educated, and includes everyone from lawyers to software engineers.
and gentrification happens, and these residents are often the ones left out. There is a variety of literature on this issue that deserves elaboration.

There exists an academic fascination around neighborhoods such as New York City’s SoHo and East Village and San Francisco’s Mission District that have been transformed from blighted and seedy to lively, artistic and cultural urban centers. Zukin is one of the first to detail the evolution of these neighborhoods through an analysis of Lower Manhattan’s art and real estate markets. The text illustrates a progression where artists moved into 19th century factories and warehouses that were no longer in use, converting the spaces into attractive lofts\(^3\) and in turn transforming the neighborhood into a desirable place to live, only to be pushed out soon after as real estate developers took advantage of rising property values and converted their studios into chic homes for the wealthy (Zukin 1982). Currid notes the paradox of this situation – “density and cultural vitality support social milieu that makes cultural production possible, and yet the same attributes attract nonartists who bid up the cost of living” (Currid 2007) – the more successful the art and cultural professionals are, the more likely they are to be run out of the neighborhood.

Florida focuses less on the new residents and more on the types of businesses and industries that are attracted to these transforming neighborhoods. In his controversial research, Florida argues that the driving force behind urban prosperity is the ability of cities (and neighborhoods) to attract members of the “creative class” (Florida 2002b). Furthermore, he finds a strong correlation between the concentration of bohemians, human capital, and high technology firms:

\(^3\) According to Zukin, through the Oxford English Dictionary, *loft* refers to “the relatively large, generally open space on each floor in multi-story industrial buildings and warehouses in the United States” (Zukin 1982, 1).
The presence and concentration of bohemians in an area signals an environment or milieu that attracts other types of talented or high human capital individuals. The presence of such human capital concentrations in a region in turn attracts and generates innovative technology-based industries (Florida 2002, 56).

More recently, Lloyd observed a similar transformation in Chicago’s Wicker Park, a neighborhood that underwent drastic rehabilitation during the 1980s and 90s. An urban neighborhood that had been devastated by postindustrial decay, Wicker Park is now home to trendy restaurants, bars, boutiques, galleries, artists, students, and young professionals. It is also attracting a design intensive economic industry, primarily made up of media driven Internet enterprises, that benefit from the presence of creative individuals and the “local ambiance of innovation” (Lloyd, Neo-Bohemia: Art and Neighborhood Redevelopment in Chicago 2002). Lloyd coined Wicker Park as Chicago’s “neo-bohemia.” In neo-bohemia, “smaller scale cultural offerings and offbeat elements of street level culture are not only important amenities for particular urban consumers, but resources for cultural and new media enterprises” (Lloyd, Neo-Bohemia: Art and Neighborhood Redevelopment in Chicago 2002). Therefore, the new in neo-bohemia represents the interaction between bohemian social and spatial practices and the new postindustrial economy in which they thrive. Broadly, cities have an advantage over suburbs and exurbs for their concentration in diversity and culture. Neo-bohemia is evidence of this advantage and illustrates the importance of culture to neighborhood renewal, especially when compared to the cultural homogeneity of the suburbs.
The term *place* is one of the trickiest in the English language. It’s a word that elicits numerous concepts and definitions. The World Book has over twenty different definitions of *place* as a noun (World Book 2010). The formal definition of place relevant in this case is “a particular portion of space; or a location” or “a city, town, village, district…or the like” (World Book 2010). More specifically, the idea of place regarding its use in this research and the corresponding literature refers to “the personality of a location” (Carr 2009). In certain locations or environments, we may either have a strong positive or negative feeling that is unique to that *place*, or maybe a weak feeling or none at all. Certain locations have an “attraction which gives us a certain indefinable sense of well-being and which we want to return to, time and again” (Jackson 1994). The reason for this attraction is varied, as are the people that are attracted to certain places, but everyone associates with an array of places.

Place does not simply refer to the physicality of a location. Although this is an important component, place also is associated with the people who are located there and the constant interactions of the people amongst each other and with the place’s physicality. Gieryn identifies three features of place: 1) “A place is a unique spot in the universe,” 2) “Place has physicality,” and 3) “without naming, identification, or representation by ordinary people, a place is not a place” (Gieryn 2000). The first two features are non-exclusive. The third feature is exclusive – a subdivision in Middle America is not a place in the same sense that Miami Beach is. For this reason, the third feature is perhaps the most important. Places become what they are through the people who locate there and identify it as a place.

Carr et al. identify culture as an important enhancer of place. This notion is integrated with the third feature of place identified above. Carr et al. use the term *vernacular culture* to
illustrate the connection between people and place, or “to convey that the people who create the culture and the businesses must own the culture and be rooted in place” (Carr 2009). In this sense, value is placed on the various cultural layers that together define a local community’s character and culture. A place is constantly shifting its notion of culture and adding new layers of residents and business owners, and they all contribute to the place’s personality and authenticity. As Jiven et al. note, it’s the people that “integrate the features of topography, natural conditions, symbolic meanings and the built form through their value systems, to form a sense of place” (Jiven 2003).

This explanation of place shows that there is a strong association between culture and place. As this chapter has shown and will continue to show, art and culture are intertwined with particular locales. Art and cultural development “play off of place-specific cultural and artistic production” (Currid 2009). Furthermore, according to multiple experts including the aforementioned renowned Harvey Molotch, art and culture’s ability to brand a place allows for it to aid in a neighborhood’s economic redevelopment (Molotch 1996, 2002; Scott 2000).

Currid (2009) identifies four different ways in which this branding happens, or four ways in which place and cultural production are linked. First, “on a purely symbolic and intangible level, people like to be a part of a cultural milieu.” People can be attracted to New York’s art scene without wanting to become an artist or buy paintings. Therefore, this notion is less related to production and consumption processes and more to the intangibles that are difficult to identify and measure. Second, “cultural consumption is closely linked to cultural production…and thus the very places where art (or music or film) is being produced are often important sites for consuming these goods.” Simply, places become known for certain types of cultural production and for this reason people (residents and tourists) want to consume them. Third, “place
reputation can act as an attractor of even more of the same inputs that initially established its cultural identity and competitive advantage in the first place.” In other words, once a place reaches critical mass or a certain level of clustering, it begins to reinforces itself. Hollywood is successful partially because of the success of its place-based brand, which people involved with the industry are attracted to. Also evidence of this third point is the fact that particular places are key sites of innovation and capital accumulation for artistic and cultural production. Furthermore, art and culture operate in two different but mutually reinforcing capacities. Art and cultural industries act as industrial agglomerations on their own, generating growth just as other industries do; but they also use the reputation gained from the presence of art and culture as a local amenity that helps to attracts tourists, labor, and other users (see Figure 3.1). For example, tourists travel to New York to see the art galleries, but they don’t travel there to see the agglomeration of law firms. This is where art and culture are different. The fourth and final way in which place and culture are linked is through “artistic distinction” – in which the concentration of artists and cultural firms and professionals also works towards the development of the city’s uniqueness over places in other cities. Financial and professional services such as legal, medical, and banking practices are ubiquitous and indifferent from city to city, while the art and cultural presence is more selective and unique to its place. This gives each city or town its own cultural identity.

**Figure 3.1** The two-fold impact of the art and cultural industry (Currid 2009)
This section shows the strong association between place and culture. In many ways they are one-and-the-same, or as Currid keenly puts it, “Place as cultural product, product in cultural place” (Currid 2009). This section and the previous ones have discussed the characteristics of art and culture in the postmodern urban city. The following sections build on this by discussing the use of art and culture as a redevelopment tool and various strategies that theorists have proposed for cities to take advantage of the art and culture industry.

A Redevelopment Tool: Opposite Strategies

Because of the impact of art and culture on urban neighborhoods in the new economy and the national recognition of some of these bohemian enclaves such as SoHo and Wicker Park, many cities have begun to look into ways of incorporating art and culture into their development schemes. Strategies have generally stemmed from one of two split schools of thought on the issue (Currid 2009). On one side are multimillion-dollar projects such as Los Angeles’s Disney Concert Hall that aspire to have a “Bilbao effect” on a city – a reference to the development of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain which had a spillover impact on an entire region and its economy (Plaza 2006). On the other side are locally based arts initiatives that build on specific strengths of a place. Currid identifies this dichotomy of schemes as “constructed” versus “organic” culture (Currid 2009). This dichotomy is a result of the association between place and culture and the fact that art and culture operate in two distinct but mutually exclusive ways (as shown in Figure 3.1). The expansion of this concept is visually portrayed in Figure 3.2, showing the source of the dichotomy.
Many times the results of these strategies are entertainment mega-centers – the ultimate in “commodified cultural experience” (Evans 2003) including theatres, music halls, galleries and the accompanying restaurants, bars, and gift shops. Other times this results in convention centers, downtown sports stadiums, and museums. Often global corporations (i.e. Disney, Virgin) and out-of-town developers are brought in to culturally brand a place and provide financial backing. Ironically, these global brands are charged with creating uniqueness and authenticity for a specific city or neighborhood.

Critics of this form of redevelopment contend that mega-projects and global corporations detract from the uniqueness of a place. For this reason, these projects have been labeled as “theme parks” (Sorkin 1992) and the “Disneyfication” of urban places (Eeckhout 2001), where locals become like tourists, “surrendering to the authority of administered consumption” (Lloyd, Neo-Bohemia: Art and Neighborhood Redevelopment in Chicago 2002). The fact that cities are places to live and work is forgotten – the reason some critics refer to the hotel as a symbol for today’s city (Lloyd, Neo-Bohemia: Art and Neighborhood Redevelopment in Chicago 2002). Even the transformation of Times Square into a tourist and media center has been highly criticized for losing its unique identity (Currid 2009).

The small-scaled, organic use of art and culture to redevelop neighborhoods is a revolt against the varied mega-projects. This strategy is focused on attracting residents and small
enterprises rather than mass tourism. This method is much more culturally and historically sensitive to place-specificity, but also has its share of critics, much of which stems from the controversy of gentrification. As discussed in the previous section, these neighborhoods go through a rapid transformation from manufacturing districts to artistic and cultural enclaves to chic urban centers. The end result is what bothers many theorists.

Zukin was clearly bothered by the fact that artists were forced out of the neighborhoods they helped create (Zukin, Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change 1982). In her most recent text, she expands on this idea, purporting that the emphasis on neighborhood authenticity has grown and through this growth it has become a tool of elites to drive up real estate values and their own profits at the expense of the neighborhood natives (Zukin 2010). The result of a rise in the desire of authentic urban life is the death of neighborhoods that provide this experience. Lloyd points out that artists, musicians, and other creative locals are critical not because they are being pushed out, but because of the loss of street level diversity and seedy elements (Zukin’s authenticity) that existed when they moved in the neighborhood (Lloyd, Neo-Bohemia: Art and Neighborhood Redevelopment in Chicago 2002). The authentic urban experience is what attracted them in the first place. This authenticity is lost as these neighborhoods become a commodified good, just as the mega-projects are from the beginning. Residents and outsiders come to consume bohemia and the local culture, which can be seen in the small coffee shops, bars, gallery events, and farmers markets. As Currid notes, “The irony of attempting to preserve cultural place-based integrity is that it often aids in its gentrification. As such, cultural development can paradoxically price out the culture[.]” (Currid 2009). This irony and paradox noted by the above critical theorists, is what makes the transformation of neighborhoods through art and culture fascinating and controversial at once.
Policy Strategies for Art and Culture

The concern regarding the loss of authenticity and place, and the pricing out of art and culture has led theorists to identify policy strategies (both formal and informal) that cities can adopt and general suggestions for enhancing art and cultural districts. Carr et al. (2009) identified six applicable lessons to promote vernacular culture in art and cultural districts. The underlying common theme of the lessons is that strategies need to “bubble up from the grassroots” in order to maintain the vernacular culture and place-specificity (Carr et al. 2009). The lessons are the following:

- Involve residents by giving community members or community-based organizations genuine authority in their district’s redevelopment.
- Find unique assets and opportunities in the district as opposed to focusing solely on needs.
- Transfer lessons from other cities rather than trying to replicate what worked elsewhere. This is a direct response to the copycat school of economic development that has resulted in vast homogeneity in the urban landscape.
- Create opportunities for ownership, giving residents a true stake in the community. To accomplish this, tools must be developed to create opportunities for both home and business ownership.
- Promote stubbornness and creativity, or in other words, if it doesn’t exist then invent it (even if told it cannot be done).
- Create a balance of culture and commerce (and avoid over-gentrification) by anticipating gentrification pressures before it is too late to affect them.
Currid (2009) identifies several insights into art and culture that are relevant to economic development and policy prescriptions. As opposed to Carr et al. who provide direct lessons for art and cultural districts, Currid focuses on the characteristics of art and culture that need to be acknowledged before policy is initiated – “Planning and development directed toward art and culture must be sensitive to the dynamics by which the industry is structured” (Currid 2009).

First, since art and culture industries have an interconnected nature, policy should focus on the agglomeration of several related industries rather than targeting a single industry. For example, many of the most successful art and cultural districts rely on the integration of two industries such as film and music, or art and fashion. Policymakers should focus on attracting industries that are supported by existing industries and will support them at the same time.

Second, planning and policy must aim to preserve the social and informal ties that art and culture rely on. This can be accomplished by strengthening the places where these relationships occur. Studies have shown that artists are not tied to industries or firms but to a specific neighborhood (or district) instead (Markusen 2006). In other words, policymakers should focus on preserving artistic communities at the local level. Large-scale developments can be important for tourism, regional recognition, and branding. However, much of what is art and culture happen on a much smaller scale. Developers and policymakers’ goal should be to find a balance between gentrification and preservation of the art and cultural enclaves that helped revitalize blighted neighborhoods. This recommendation is very similar to Carr et al.’s final lesson mentioned earlier.

Third, despite art and culture having many unique characteristics, the needs for clustering, knowledge sharing, access to suppliers, etc. are similar to the needs of other more traditional postindustrial industry agglomerations (i.e. Silicon Valley). The art and cultural
industry relies on the competition and complementariness of tight networks as part of the innovation process. Therefore, policymakers should utilize policy initiatives directed towards other industries. For example, tax breaks and infrastructure incentives used in the finance industry or cross-fertilization associations used in Silicon Valley can be beneficial to art and culture.

Lastly, policy initiatives should focus on the artists themselves and not just the industry. Policies such as housing subsidies, art grants, and public art incentives are initiatives that are already being utilized to integrate the artists specifically. Additional efforts should be made as well, such as specific zoning for art and cultural districts or policy enabling artists to continue living and/or working in rapidly gentrifying neighborhoods.

Grodach identifies a variety of recommendations that together are designed to create an integrated arts planning framework (Grodach 2008). The first step is to create a comprehensive inventory and mapping of art- and cultural-based activity. This allows cities or districts to build on existing assets and characteristics rather than blindly follow strategies and initiatives that have been utilized elsewhere. This step is similar to the third lesson identified by Carr et al. as previously stated. The second step is to integrate art and culture into the comprehensive plan by creating a detailed but clear set of guidelines. This will help coordinate departmental action amongst different relevant departments (i.e. economic development, transportation, parks). This step will also increase the likelihood of uniting art and culture with other strategies. The third step is to establish regional art and cultural planning initiatives. There are a variety of strategies that Grodach recommends as initiatives. Cities could create a “watchdog” agency in charge of any departmental action regarding the arts and culture. Another strategy is to create opportunities for artists to work in the city center in order to reduce the downtown-periphery
dichotomy. For example, a city could build a downtown space (usually reserved for high culture and mainstream attractions) that would be dedicated to local, experimental, and community-specific art.

A common theme amongst the three theorists discussed in this section regards the importance of municipal leadership’s understanding of art and culture in today’s cities. It is vital that policymakers recognize the important contributions to community well-being and local economic development made by art and culture (Grodach 2008). Authentic urban neighborhoods have become endangered. These unique art and cultural neighborhoods that remain need local economic developers and policymakers to act as their “guardian” before they lose their authenticity and sense of place as other districts have (Carr 2009). Furthermore, developers and planners need to take an active role in creating and/or preserving places that attract human capital and provide unique outlets for consumption (Currid 2007, 2009). This will require a change in orientation for a majority of local planners and policymakers, because as Grodach notes, “to a large extent, [art and cultural district] successes have not come from public policy, but in spite of it, since supportive public policy is generally lacking” (Grodach 2008).

Summary

As a nation we have entered a new era of urbanism. There are various explanations for why cities have experienced a resurgence in recent decades and theorists have correspondingly shifted their thoughts on urban growth. Ideas, innovation and human capital are now the drivers of jobs and economic growth in cities. With this change the role of amenities and other consumption opportunities have taken center stage. Specifically, art and culture have become a key amenity for economic and urban growth; and there is growing evidence that highly skilled
human capital seek out neighborhoods rich in arts and culture in which to live, work and consume (Brooks 2000; Clark 2002; Florida 2002; Glaeser 2006; Lloyd 2002). Consumption-based urban growth has become more prevalent as citizens become richer and more educated.

For these reasons, art and cultural districts have been in high demand in the 21st century city. Compared to the homogeneity of the suburbs, these districts offer a unique set of consumption opportunities and art and cultural amenities. Furthermore, people begin to consume the place itself, as there is a strong association between culture and place that gives the corresponding districts a distinct personality and authenticity. The areas that become centers of art and culture have often been labeled as bohemia. Bohemianism has long been credited as a driving force of revitalization, transforming blighted, edgy neighborhoods to lively, cultural centers. This notion has been popularized by the drastic changes of neighborhoods such as New York’s SoHo and Chicago’s Wicker Park, and the corresponding literature and media coverage (Jacobs 1961; Lloyd 2002; Zukin 1982, 2010). The evolution of these art and cultural districts has been highly scrutinized.

Because of the popularity of these neighborhoods, the use of art and culture in the transformation of urban neighborhoods has become widespread. Two opposing strategies for utilizing art and culture in redevelopment have gained popularity. On one side is a focus on corporate mega-projects, and on the other is small-scale grassroots redevelopment (or simply, manufactured versus organic redevelopment). Neither redevelopment process is without critics. Some theorists have criticized these neighborhoods because of the fact that native residents – including the bohemians and other artists – are forced out of the neighborhood due to its newfound popularity and gentrification. The result is a neighborhood that loses the authenticity
and uniqueness that fueled its transformation to begin with (Currid 2009; Eeckhout 2001; Evans 2003; Lloyd 2002; Sorkin 1992; Zukin 2010).

With the growing number of art and cultural districts and the increasing concern over the loss of authenticity in urban neighborhoods, theorists have begun to identify formal policies and informal strategies with the goal of enhancing art and cultural districts. Common themes amongst the theorists’ claims include the importance of policymakers’ understanding of the dynamics of art and culture and its role in redevelopment; and the need for developers, planners, and other leaders to take an active role in the creation and preservation of these districts (Carr 2009; Currid 2007, 2009; Grodach 2008).
Chapter 4. INTRODUCTORY FRAMING CASES

The four Cincinnati districts were chosen for three reasons: (1) they are all located in the Cincinnati metropolitan area, which is a similar market to Louisville and is easily accessible for the purpose and scope of this thesis; (2) they all have certain components of art and cultural districts as reviewed in the literature; and (3) they have different characteristics that make them unique from each other. This third reason allows for different aspects and characteristics of the district to be applied to the East Market district assessment. The four introductory framing cases are Covington (located in northern Kentucky), and Main Street, Northside, and Oakley (located in the city of Cincinnati). Figure 4.1 shows the location of the four Cincinnati districts that will be discussed.
The Covington Arts District is a formal, publicly-supported creation of the City of Covington. The District was created by the Economic Development Department to enhance the city’s development through arts and culture. The vision of the District is to become a “destination widely recognized for its thriving arts community, cultural institutions, and historic preservation” (Covington Arts District 2007). The goals of the local arts initiative are to: (1) strengthen and support the City’s art and cultural organizations, artists, and artist-owned businesses (such as galleries); (2) create an environment that will attract artists and other creative professionals to Covington; and (3) increase local participation and audiences in the arts (Covington Arts District 2007).

The Covington Arts District is located adjacent to downtown Covington in northern Kentucky. Directly across the Ohio River from downtown Cincinnati, the area is rich is history and urban character (see Figures 4.3 through 4.6). While much of the development directly south of the river has been large-scale and modern in character, the neighborhood further inland has maintained the structure and urban form from when it was first built. Because of the

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**Table 4.1 Introductory Framing Cases Demographic Comparison**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District (Census tract scale)</th>
<th>Covington</th>
<th>Main Street</th>
<th>Northside</th>
<th>Oakley</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>3,773</td>
<td>1,357</td>
<td>5,380</td>
<td>9,827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>35.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>White 86%</td>
<td>Black 68%</td>
<td>White 56%</td>
<td>White 89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>$22,869</td>
<td>$14,539</td>
<td>$27,592</td>
<td>$39,864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% below poverty level (1999)</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Market Area* (CMSA scale)    |           |             |           |        |
| Population                   |           | 2,198,635   |           |        |
| Median Age                   | 37        |             |           |        |
| Median Household Income      |           |             |           | $53,910 |

* The market area is defined as the Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA). Therefore, these data are the same for all introductory framing cases.
maintenance of the original urban form, the urban fabric of the district is arguably as aesthetically appealing as any in the Cincinnati area. The district is entirely built out and has a dense urban form consisting of two to three story historic brick attached buildings. It also has a very traditional and tight street pattern grid. The streets are primarily one-way and parking is on-street (metered). There is also very little auto traffic, making walking comfortable in the district.

The above are the physical characteristics of the Covington Arts District. The formal location of the district runs along the West Pike Street corridor in northern Covington. It is attempting to overcome decades of disinvestment, vacant properties, and perceptions of lack of safety. The Covington Arts District is no doubt a response to the negative trends of this time. Interestingly much of the building stock within the formal district still contains vacant storefronts; however, many buildings are currently undergoing major renovations. The district is also home to an array of public art installations and statues that serve as implicit district signifiers – perhaps made even more significant because of the lack of district branding and advertising. In addition, there is a cluster of longstanding local bars and liquor stores in the core of the formal district that serve a different clientele than Covington Arts is hoping to. These are all signs that the district is still in the early stages of transformation.
Ironically, it is area directly surrounding the formal district that has seen the most redevelopment, and the influence of the arts and culture is most evident. West Pike Street east of Washington Street is made up of art galleries, bars, restaurants, clothing boutiques, and other specialty stores. On the other side of the district is the popular Mainstrasse where there is a range of restaurants and several galleries and stores. In many ways the Covington Arts District is the “missing link” between these other two popular areas.
Because of this unique, fragmented redevelopment pattern, the area also has an unusual demographic makeup. As a whole, it is socioeconomically diverse, but within the district the people aren’t as mixed as they seem at first sight. Blue-collar workers and local residents frequent the original bars and other consumption opportunities within the district proper, while higher-income “tourists” are the primary visitors of the aforementioned eastern and western edges of the district. There is very little mixing of the demographics, which might change as redevelopment continues.

Covington Arts has created several incentive programs to attract arts and other new business owners. The Covington Artist Residential District (CARD) is a homeowner loan program offering up to $6,000 for the purchase of residential or mixed-use buildings, or for down payment aid for condominiums within the designated CARD area along the West Pike corridor. The Covington Arts and Technology Zone (CATZ) is a loan program providing low interest loans to acquire equipment, inventory, and structural improvements in order to encourage the growth of arts, cultural, and technology related small businesses within the same West Pike corridor (Covington Arts District 2007). In addition to these incentives, the District is also in the process of creating an arts hub, The Artisan’s Enterprise Center (AEC), which will be used for the development and promotion of arts in the area. The hub offers free educational and gallery space, a conference room, and exhibitions throughout the year.

**Main Street District, Cincinnati**

The Main Street Entertainment District is a corridor along Main Street bounded by Central Parkway to the south and Liberty Street to the north. It sits just north of downtown Cincinnati in the Over-the-Rhine neighborhood. Over-the-Rhine is a historic neighborhood with
as much physical character and architectural diversity as any in Cincinnati. While Main Street has developed into an entertainment hub, the rest of Over-the-Rhine is one of the most distressed neighborhoods in the city. This creates a distinct dichotomy as art, culture, and urban entertainment sit next door to poverty, crime, and distress.

Regarding Main Street, the 19th century district is evolving into a destination for art and culture. Beyond this, it “wears many faces” (Knott 2007). It has a selection of chic clubs, restaurants, and bars. It’s a hobby area with antique, music, and specialty stores. Several Internet-based startups have located in the district. The area is also a historical landmark, containing a rich architectural history (see Figures 4.7 through 4.10).

Art and culture have a strong base on Main Street and in Over-the-Rhine as a whole. Main Street has become a destination for artists and young professionals, and as a result several galleries are now located in the district. There is a regular “Final Fridays” gallery walk, highlighting arts in the district. In Over-the-Rhine, arts and culture have been strong historically. Institutions such as the School for Creative and Performing Arts, the Art Academy of Cincinnati, Music Hall, Findlay Market, and so on, have created this environment that has allowed galleries to open in the area.
All hasn’t been positive though. There has been a range of hurdles the district has dealt with that have clearly impeded the further growth of the art and cultural district on Main Street. Some highly publicized crimes have led to a perception of danger and crime in the district. This has stalled redevelopment efforts in the past and can be blamed to some extent for preventing new businesses from locating in the district. There is also criticism from those opposed to gentrification, saying that the redevelopment is unwanted in certain cases and is forcing out
local, underrepresented residents. The ongoing struggles can be seen in the district first-hand. There is a range of vacant properties being advertised for rent. There is very little branding or district-recognition, and little sense of unity and cooperation amongst district residents and businesses (however, there is signage in the surrounding area directing drivers to the district).

The Main Street District’s residents are primarily black; however, the racial and socioeconomic mix seems to be increasing. Young adults and students are moving into the newly refurbished lofts and apartments in the district, likely attracted to the urban location and nearby amenities. The amenities have also attracted a large proportion of local “tourists” (although not to the extent of the adjacent Vine Street corridor).

The district has a high aesthetic and historic value. The urban fabric is similar to that of Covington’s art district. The buildings are dense, attached, two to four story brick buildings that provide a mix of uses. This urban form is similar to that portrayed (and romanticized) by many of the theorists discussed in the literature review (Jacobs 1961; Lloyd 2002, 2006; Zukin 1982, 2010). Virtually all of the original structures still exist (as this is now a historic district), many of which have been renovated and painted. Figures 4.7 and 4.8 show renovated buildings along the Main Street corridor.

Just as the demographics are varied, the nature of the retail and consumption opportunities is as well. Art galleries, up-scale bars and clubs, and creative businesses sit side-by-side with convenience stores, tax services, and tattoo parlors. Walking through the district, however, you get the sense that up-scale bars, restaurants, galleries, and so on, are becoming more common (again, perhaps a reflection of the changing demographics).
Northside

The Northside art and cultural corridor exists along Hamilton Avenue centrally located in the neighborhood of Northside. The district is bounded by Spring Grove Avenue to the south and Chase Avenue to the north. Hamilton Avenue is the primary arterial serving the neighborhood and its surrounding areas (see Figures 4.12 and 4.13). The aforementioned section serves as the unofficial “downtown” for Northside, a self-labeled “urban village” with a small-town feel within the City of Cincinnati (Northside.net 2010).

The district is centrally located in the greater Cincinnati area, four miles from downtown and adjacent to the intersection of two major interstates (74 and 75). The district has an eclectic array of businesses from traditional to eccentric. The neighborhood has a reputation of strong community activism and organization. The Northside Business Association has been the official voice of the district with the City of Cincinnati since 1907 (when it was initially founded as the Northside Business Club). The Cincinnati Northside Community Urban Redevelopment Corporation is a non-profit agency that has also promoted the community with the general purpose of revitalizing the community by “increasing homeownership, eliminating blight and supporting business development” (Cincinnati Northside Community Urban Redevelopment Corporation 2007).

When walking in the Hamilton Avenue cultural district, the thought of tolerance comes to mind. It is arguably Cincinnati’s most socioeconomically and racially mixed neighborhood. Along the Hamilton
Avenue corridor, hipsters and students share the street and sidewalks with the homeless and street dwellers. The fact that Northside is a prideful, well-established neighborhood leads to a number of regulars and their loyalty to the district. Compared to many art and cultural districts there is a high level of regular and local users as opposed to local “tourists” coming from other parts of the city, and the district seems content with this fact. A major reason they can afford to be content with this is because there is a high enough employment and residential base in the neighborhood to support the Hamilton Avenue art and cultural district.

Figure 4.12  Aerial photograph (looking north) of Northside district 1 (source: Bing)

Figure 4.13  Aerial photograph (looking east) of Northside district 2 (source: Bing)
Northside, once considered seedy and dangerous, has been transformed into one of Cincinnati’s hippest and most diverse neighborhoods, largely through community grassroots efforts. The business district has been both a cause and effect of this transformation – aiding in the neighborhood’s redevelopment and receiving a boost in popularity and economic activity as the neighborhood has improved.

Art has played a role in this transformation. Northside Arts was developed as an organization of artists, appreciators, and speculators of art who promote art in the neighborhood (Northside.net 2010). The organization runs four annual art sales in Northside – two indoor shows and two outdoor sidewalk art sales along Hamilton Avenue within the Northside art and cultural district. There are various organizations and businesses within the district that support arts in Northside, many of which serve as a gallery and showroom in addition to their primary purposes. Businesses of this type include: Avant Garage, Sidewinder Coffee and Tea, Northside Tavern, Cincinnati Artist’s Warehouse, and Bughouse Video; all of which are clustered along Hamilton Avenue. These businesses create a unifying theme and identity within a district that at first glance is very eclectic in physical nature and purpose (see Figures 4.14 and 4.15 illustrating the urban form along Hamilton Avenue).
Within the art and cultural district, well-established retail, such as specialty stores and restaurants, serve as anchors. The unique, local stores (i.e. Bughouse Video, Shake-it Records) contrast with some of the other offerings in the district. The district is not exclusively local (a KFC chain restaurant sits on Hamilton Avenue in the heart of the district), and there are many more practical offerings beyond the arts and culture (i.e. tax services, a plumbing store, multiple hair salons). This diverse consumption footprint reflects the diversity of the district’s users. It is likely one of the reasons Northside hasn’t gentrified at the same rate as other similar neighborhoods.

Consideration of transportation is important because it impacts the movement of the district’s users and the perception of safety. Hamilton Avenue contains one lane in each direction and on-street metered parking within the district. The on-street parking slows the thru-traffic and buffers the impact of automobiles from the sidewalk. Hamilton Avenue is an important connector within Cincinnati and carries high traffic volumes. For this reason, the single lanes and street parking are vital to maintaining a comfortable environment for pedestrians. The street parking, along with several small parking lots and ample side street parking, makes the district easily accessible by car. With the auto-dependency in a city such as Cincinnati this is important in order to draw district visitors from other neighborhoods.

In conclusion, the Northside arts and cultural district reflects the diversity of its neighborhood as a whole. The range of retail services echoes the range of users, and vice versa. The district utilizes the strong sense of community that exists there, and does not exist on an “island” lost in the greater metropolitan region. The branding street signs, wall art advertising for the neighborhood and local businesses, unorthodox signage, and event posting boards along Hamilton Avenue create a sense of authenticity and organization that benefits the district.
Oakley

The Oakley art and cultural district exists along the Madison Road corridor. The neighborhood of Oakley is a traditional residential neighborhood located in northeast Cincinnati, amongst the more affluent neighborhoods of the city such as Hyde Park and Mount Lookout. The neighborhood has gone through an urban renaissance in recent decades. Historically, Oakley was a working-class neighborhood where middle-income people raised families and worked nearby. Recently, the residential makeup of the neighborhood has diversified. A new mix of young people has been attracted to Oakley, fascinated by its surrounding amenities and lasting art and cultural district. There is minimal socioeconomic and racial diversity amongst the district users. The retail and consumption opportunities cater to a specific demographic, primarily Oakley residents and upper class, Cincinnati East-enders.

The art and cultural district, also referred to as the Oakley business district, is centered around Oakley Square where a small esplanade shapes a unique environment and slows automobile traffic on the busy, Madison Road thoroughfare. Small boutiques, art galleries, restaurants, and other businesses are clustered around Oakley Square. The district has also developed a niche catering to children’s products. There are small local businesses that sell children’s books, toys, games, and clothes, as well as a children-oriented café – all in one block. This clustered block is arguably the most complete and unique block of the district. Within the district, the 20th Century Theatre serves as the Square’s landmark and entertainment mainstay. It hosts local and touring musical artists on a regular basis and serves as a venue for other private functions. Oakley Square is also the location of Oakley After Hours, a seasonal program where businesses stay open later than usual and live bands play on the streets on the last Friday of each month during the summer (Oakley 2010).
The Oakley art and cultural district has a more suburban look and feel than the other introductory cases. After all, it has the most peripheral location of all four districts. This is more the case on the north end of the district than the south end where Oakley Square is located (see Figures 4.16 and 4.17 comparing the urban fabric from one end of Madison Road to the other). There is a multitude of parking lots both between and in front of buildings that fragments the district, detracting from its walkability and aesthetics (see Figure 4.17). There are also some
newer buildings within the district, some of which detract from the character of the area and others that attempt to fit appropriately within the district’s fabric. There are also several chains and car dealerships that detract from the authenticity of the district.

The scale of the buildings is not large enough relative to the scale, width, and associated traffic of Madison Road. This is especially the case in the north end of the district where four lanes of busy street traffic easily overwhelm the sidewalk users with no softening devices between them and the road. The street parking is not allowed until closer to Oakley Square, nor is it practically needed due to ample side street parking and the aforementioned parking lots. This changes further south around Oakley Square. The scale of the buildings increases (if only slightly) and the magnitude of pavement and traffic decreases substantially. There are less parking lots, more on-street parking, and slower thru-traffic. Perhaps most important is Oakley Square, where its impact is two-fold. It enhances the district aesthetically and softens the impact of auto traffic. Along with the 20th Century Theatre, it also serves as an event venue and an unofficial symbol of the art and cultural district.

In summary, the Oakley district can be characterized as a suburban art and cultural district of two distinct sections with a physical void between them. This discontinuity is
exacerbated by the fact that the character of the north end is very different than that of the south end. Cars, parking lots, and retail chains leading to a general lack of authenticity dominate the north end; while Oakley Square, the 20th Century Theatre, unique consumption opportunities, and a greater physical aesthetic make the south end the heart and soul of the district – an interesting dichotomy within one district. Since the district has minimal branding, it makes it difficult to tell where it begins and where it ends.

**Evaluative Criteria**

Evaluative criteria were identified based on the knowledge gained from these introductory framing cases as well as the literature review. The criteria were organized into the same five main categories that were initially used for the framing cases – district demographics, physical characteristics, transportation characteristics, influence of art and culture, and media/publicity.

Table 4.2 outlines each category and its criterions. For each criterion the table defines the influencing theorist(s), influencing framing case(s), the scale of the analysis, and the data source. First, it identifies the urban theorist(s) that either explicitly or implicitly introduced the given criterion as an important component of art and cultural districts. Second, along the same lines, it identifies the framing cases that influenced the creation of the criterion. Certain characteristics in one of the four districts might have brought to light an important component of art and cultural districts (and in other instances, the characteristic was noticed in multiple/all of the districts). In this case, the component was made an evaluative criterion. As the table shows, most of the criterions have both theorists and framing cases that influenced their identification. Third, the table shows the scale of analysis. There are four different scales – district, Census
tract, neighborhood, and metro (from most to least narrowed). Fourth, the table identifies the data source for the given criterion. For an in depth explanation of each criterion and its justification as well as details on the various data sources, see Chapter 2 (Methodology).

The establishment of this evaluative criteria answers the second of the three research questions: with the increasing number of so-called art and cultural districts, how can these districts be measured? An understanding of each component (or criterion) of art and cultural districts will provide for a detailed, but holistic measurement of the district. To illustrate this, the evaluative criteria were used to assess the East Market district, discussed in the upcoming chapter.
Table 4.2 Art and Cultural District Evaluative Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Theorists</th>
<th>Framing Cases</th>
<th>Scale of Analysis</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>District Demographics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Residents</td>
<td>Jacobs, Lloyd, Zukin</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>District, Census Tract</td>
<td>US Census Bureau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% below poverty level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Area</td>
<td>Brooks, Currid, Glaeser, Jain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Metro</td>
<td>US Census Bureau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Users</td>
<td>Glaeser, Jacobs, Lloyd, Zukin</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>District Observation, Press/Internet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residents vs. &quot;tourists&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socioeconomic status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Characteristics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Lloyd, Scott, Zukin</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Metro</td>
<td>LOJIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Character (Aesthetics)</td>
<td>Jacobs, Lloyd</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>LOJIC, Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Uses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Density (figure ground)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumption Footprint</td>
<td>Lloyd</td>
<td>Covington, Oakley</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>LOJIC, Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of commercial uses</td>
<td>Florida, Lloyd, Scott</td>
<td>Northside, Oakley</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evolution of commercial uses</td>
<td>Lloyd</td>
<td>Covington</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>LOJIC, Press/Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific land use plan or restrictions</td>
<td>Grodach</td>
<td>Covington, Northside</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Press/Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special zoning restrictions</td>
<td>Currid</td>
<td>Covington</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Press/Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Jacobs, Lloyd, Zukin</td>
<td>Covington, Main St</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character (new trends)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacancy status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household sizes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transportation Characteristics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street network</td>
<td>Jacobs</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>LOJIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connectivity</td>
<td>Jacobs</td>
<td>Main St, Northside, Oakley</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>LOJIC, Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic levels</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Oakley</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative mode options</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>District, Census Tract</td>
<td>LOJIC, Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>District, Census Tract</td>
<td>LOJIC, Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Influence of Art and Culture</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formalized district (business district)</td>
<td>Carr, Jacobs</td>
<td>Covington, Northside</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Press/Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Council</td>
<td>Carr</td>
<td>Northside</td>
<td>District, Neighborhood</td>
<td>Press/Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branding</td>
<td>Clark, Currid, Lloyd, Mokutch</td>
<td>Covington, Main St</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Observation, Press/Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underlying Theme or Trend</td>
<td>Currid, Lloyd</td>
<td>Oakley</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Observation, Press/Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential/business incentives</td>
<td>Carr, Grodach</td>
<td>Covington</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Press/Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External influences and threats</td>
<td>Lloyd</td>
<td>Main St, Oakley</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Observation, Press/Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keystone development or building</td>
<td>Carr, Lloyd, Plaza</td>
<td>Oakley</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumption vs. production</td>
<td>Carr, Currid, Florida, Lloyd</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Observation, Press/Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formalized events</td>
<td>Carr</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Press/Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Media/Publicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of media coverage</td>
<td>Lloyd</td>
<td>Covington, Main St, Northside</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Press/Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing/Decreasing</td>
<td>Lloyd</td>
<td></td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Press/Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media forms covering district</td>
<td>Lloyd</td>
<td></td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Press/Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification and advertising</td>
<td>Lloyd, Zukin</td>
<td>Northside</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Observation, Press/Internet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Chapter 5. EAST MARKET DISTRICT EVALUATION AND FINDINGS

Introduction

In 2008, the East Market District received a new name as part of a branding process sweeping the neighborhood – NuLu – short for New Louisville and clearly a play on the names of the well-known art and cultural neighborhoods such as New York’s SoHo. The neighborhood is the self-proclaimed art district of Louisville. It describes itself as “a relaxed artsy district with old buildings and new ideas” (The East Market District 2010). The first annual NuLu East Market Festival took place in September 2009. The area is also part of the First Friday Trolley Hop, which encompasses Main, Market, and Fourth Streets.

The East Market District’s (unofficial) boundaries are Main Street to the north, Jefferson Street to the south, Baxter Avenue to the east, and Floyd Street to the west. For the purpose of this study, I have altered the western boundary to what seems to be a more accurate and appropriate boundary for the art and cultural district. Rather than Floyd Street, Interstate 65 acts more so as a boundary for the district, both physically and psychologically as it sits ominously as an overpass above Market Street for half of a city block. Beyond this point the character of Market Street shifts as it enters the Central Business District. See Figure 5.1 for reference.

The East Market District is named after the historic Market Street, which runs directly through the center of the neighborhood. This street serves as the core of the district, specifically a three-block stretch from east to west between Campbell Street and Hancock Street. The district is officially made up of three different formal neighborhoods – Butchertown, Phoenix Hill, and the Central Business District. This has made it all the more interesting that the district has been creating its own identity.
A Brief History

Before detailing the criteria evaluation, I first provide a brief background of Market Street and the broader east downtown area. The East Market district is adjacent to the Louisville central business district, located in a broad area known as East Downtown. The history of Louisville as a whole and the Market Street area are inevitably intertwined. The very first documented map of Louisville shows the city’s original four streets running parallel to the Ohio River – Water, Main, Market, and Jefferson Streets (Kendall 2001) – three of which today serve as the primary corridors of the East Market district. In the early 19th century, as the city became an important western outpost and a center of commerce, these streets were the heart of the city’s commerce and home to livestock and supplies. Soon Main and Market Streets became the first paved roads in Louisville. The area was soon full of retail businesses and dry goods stores that served the river travelers and new settlers. As river traffic increased, Market Street increasingly became a drover’s lane. Livestock herds were constantly being moved up and down the street.
from the Bourbon Stock Yards on Story Avenue (on the eastern edge of what is now the East Market district) to the Ohio River (Kendall 2001). Because of this increase in livestock and wagon traffic, Market Street was widened to the width Louisvillians see today. This also led to the establishment of various market houses. By the mid-19th century the area was a haven for river goods, and as the city directory noted, “the entire extent of this [Market] street is given up to retail grocers, provisions dealers, and clothiers” (Kendall 2001).

The area continued to be a regional center of commerce through the mid-20th century. In 1960, Main and Market Streets were busy thoroughfares packed with a variety of shops and retailers, including 84 furniture stores, 53 bars, taverns, or saloons, 26 hardware and clothing stores, and 14 banking institutions (Kendall 2001). However, this activity didn’t last long in the area, as the 1960s were a decade of great change for the worse. Within several years, many of these shops that had been a mainstay of the area had either closed or moved to the new suburbs. A lesser number of antique and second-hand junk shops took their place.

The east downtown area saw great physical change during the 1960s. Besides these small-scale tenant changes, there was a much larger process taking place – urban renewal. During the federal urban renewal craze, Louisville designated four Urban Renewal Areas, one of which was the East Downtown Project. It was a 215-acre area containing a portion of what is today the East Market District (Urban Renewal and Development Agency 1968). The area saw many of its historic structures demolished and entire blocks wiped out. Much of it was to make way for large-scale residential high-rises and an expansion of the city’s largest medical campus immediately south of east downtown. Another part of the project was the creation of ample urban parking space. This resulted in parking garage structures and an array of surface lots. Interstate 65 cut directly through the east downtown area in a north-south direction. Main,
Market, and Jefferson Streets now all pass under the expansive viaduct. E. Main and E. Market Streets became one-way streets and part of U.S. 60 and U.S. 31 East and West. A result of this traffic change was higher speed limits, more thru-traffic, and less attention paid to the east downtown area.

The strategies of the 1960s were supposed to bring more activity and investment to the east downtown area, but instead the area became even more neglected and experienced greater disinvestment. Needless to say, many of the goals for the Urban Renewal Areas and the East Downtown Project specifically were not fulfilled. During the age of suburban sprawl, the area was simply a forgotten middle between Louisville’s affluent east end and downtown.

However, as the literature review explains, this trend of urban neglect and disinvestment has slowed and cities have refocused on their urban neighborhoods. Such has been the case in Louisville and the East Market District. The district (and greater east downtown area) began to see increased investment and new business development in the 1990s and has experienced a boom in investment and redevelopment over the course of the past decade, primarily in the past five years. Much of this redevelopment has been centered on the arts and small-scaled in nature, with studios and galleries cropping up, but the neighborhood has also seen its share of antique stores, new creative ventures, and entertainment venues such as bars and restaurants (see the list of businesses in the district).
Table 5.1 East Market District Evaluation Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Evaluation Summary</th>
<th>Supplemental Figure/Table</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>District Demographics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Residents (2000 data)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>5,071</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>65% Black</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>9,367</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% below poverty level (1999)</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Area (population)</td>
<td>1,379,739</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Age</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td>$48,465</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>District Users</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residents v. &quot;tourists&quot; High concentration of local &quot;tourists&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Mixed; concentrations of students, young adults, empty nesters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socioeconomic status Primarily white; medium-high income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Characteristics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>See Figure A.1 (in Appendix A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Urban and historic; located between downtown and the popular Highlands neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Character (aesthetics)</td>
<td>Highly mixed; historical Italianate to modern industrial</td>
<td>See Figure A.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Uses</td>
<td>Concentrated mix (neighborhood scale); primarily commercial and industrial (district scale)</td>
<td>See Figure A.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Density (Figure Ground)</td>
<td>Wide variety of density and scale of buildings - reflects the commercial-industrial dichotomy</td>
<td>See Figure A.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumption Footprint</td>
<td>High agglomeration along three blocks of East Market St. (identified as East Market commercial core)</td>
<td>See Figure A.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of commercial uses</td>
<td>(1) art galleries and antique dealers; (2) small businesses; and (3) restaurants/food and drink stores</td>
<td>See Table A.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evolution of commercial uses</td>
<td>Rapid redevelopment in past five years; art galleries and antique stores initiated redevelopment boom</td>
<td>See Figure 5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific land use plan or restrictions</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>See Figure A.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special zoning restrictions</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>See Figure A.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character (new trends)</td>
<td>Large-scale residential; primarily owner-occupied; lacking affordable/rental units</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacancy status</td>
<td>7% vacant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure status</td>
<td>90% renter occupied</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household sizes</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transportation Characteristics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street network</td>
<td>Traditional gridded network; varied street hierarchy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connectivity</td>
<td>disorderly one- and two-way system; pedestrian connectivity is varied</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic levels</td>
<td>High during rush hours; east-west streets serve as thoroughfares</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative mode options</td>
<td>Integrated TARC (bus) and on-street bike routes</td>
<td>See Figure A.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>Abundance of surface parking lots - decreases pedestrian mobility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Influence of Art and Culture</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formalized District (business district)</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>See Figure A.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Council</td>
<td>East Market District Association</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branding</td>
<td>Internally initiated, NuLu branding process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underlying Theme or Trend</td>
<td>Sustainability (in accordance with art and culture)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential/Business Incentives</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External influences and threats</td>
<td>Multiple; positive influences outweigh threats</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keystone development or building</td>
<td>The Green Building (mixed use building opened in 2008)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumption v. production</td>
<td>Consumption and production becoming increasingly integrated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formalized events</td>
<td>First Friday Trolley Hop; NuLu Festival</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Media/Publicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of media coverage</td>
<td>Majority positive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing/Decreasing</td>
<td>Increasing publicity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media forms covering district</td>
<td>Informal (blogs), Formal (newspapers, periodicals), and National recognition (NY Times, Boston Globe)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification and advertising</td>
<td>Actively self-advertising</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Criteria Evaluation

The following is an evaluation of the East Market District based on the evaluative criteria introduced earlier. The analysis is organized by criteria category, and each criterion is explicitly addressed. This evaluation is more detailed and comprehensive than those of the introductory framing cases, which are at times referenced for comparison. Maps, tables, photographs, and other graphics are used to supplement the text. Table 5.1 is a summary grid of the East Market district evaluation. It includes the each criterion, a summary of the findings, and any supporting figures or tables.

District Demographics

I collected data on the district residents at both the district scale and Census tract scale. According to Census data at the block level, the population of the East Market district in 2000 (within the aforementioned boundaries only) was 374; 53 percent of which was white and 42 percent was black. The median age in the district was between 35 and 39 years. The average household size was 2.1. Lastly, the housing was primarily renter-occupied (90 percent) compared to owner-occupied (10 percent) in 2000.

For the more encompassing scale – the Census tract level – the total population was 5,071. Sixty five percent of the area was black, while only 30 percent was white. The median age in the neighborhood was 30.4. The median household income was $9,367 and 58 percent of households had income below the poverty line.

The market area for the district is the Louisville Combined Statistical Area. This is the Census-defined division that was most appropriate for measuring the East Market district’s greater market area. People from all over the greater Louisville area (the CSA) use the district,
so it was not efficient to choose a more narrow market area. The CSA data also provides a good
comparison for the more specific neighborhood- and district-level data. The market area
population in 2008 was 1.38 million. The median age was 38, and the median household income
was $48,465.

Although these data provide a good initial understanding of the district, it is important not
to overvalue them. Because of the timing of the study, the most recent Census data that was
available on the Census tract and block levels was from 2000 – ten years ago. As I mentioned,
much of the district’s redevelopment has taken place over the last five years, which this data
does not account for. It would be valuable to update this section once the U.S. Census Bureau
releases the 2010 decennial data.

Nonetheless, it is important to assess the district residents and the district’s market area.
Within the district itself, the population was small illustrating that the use of the buildings was
primarily commercial and industrial. Also, the residents were racially diverse. Interestingly,
when you expand to look at the more encompassing scale, there was a higher proportion of black
residents and also a high proportion (58 percent) of residents living below the poverty level.
This is likely due to the presence of the Clarksdale housing project directly south of the district.
These numbers have likely changed somewhat as the housing project was torn down in the last
ten years, and a Hope VI housing project – Liberty Green – is currently being built in its place.
This mixed-income development has likely decreased the proportion of residents living below
the poverty line and has changed the attitudes within the neighborhood directed towards it.

The greater Louisville area (the market area) is a medium-sized city. It is much smaller
than the cities of art and cultural districts that are commonly addressed in the literature – New
York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. This makes it all the more important that the
East Market district fills a niche in Louisville. A city the size of Louisville cannot support multiple art and cultural districts the way New York can. Also, a comparison of the median age in the neighborhood (30) to that of the market area (38) shows that the district and neighborhood residents are substantially younger. This translates to more people living alone, less families, and as the literature has stated, a higher desire for local amenities and consumption opportunities.

The analysis of the market area leads to a discussion of the district users. As stated in the methodology, this is a subjective evaluation based primarily on observation. There is a high concentration of local “tourists” compared to residents using the district’s amenities. The users are mixed in age – a large number of students, young adults, and well-heeled empty nesters. Furthermore, the users are primarily white, many of which are in the medium to high income level. Compared to the neighborhood residents profiled above, this shows that it is primarily local “tourists” – visitors from other Louisville neighborhoods – that frequent the district.

The fact that the district is used mostly by “tourists” is related to the market area assessment as well. Art and cultural districts do not exist in a vacuum. It is important to be aware of the complex, urban network they are a part of. Louisville currently has no other district like East Market, which aids in its transformation. The Bardstown Road/Baxter Avenue corridor is a popular local “tourist” destination, but supports entertainment of all types and doesn’t fill an art and cultural niche as East Market does. The Frankfort Avenue district is primarily an upscale restaurant district with a few art and cultural amenities, but not at the level of East Market. This means the East Market district is a true metropolitan destination for “tourists” of the entire market area with little direct competition throughout the city. This is further enhanced by the district’s location, which is discussed in the next section.
Physical Characteristics

The East Market district’s location is integral to its redevelopment (see Figure A.1 in Appendix A). As mentioned multiple times in this study, art and cultural districts do not exist in a vacuum. First, the neighborhood is urban and historic. Widely noted by theorists (Brooks 2000; Clark 2002; Currid 2007; Jacobs 1961; Lloyd 2002, 2006; Zukin 1982, 2010), an urban location and the structures that go along with it are attractive and practical locations for artists, galleries, and other small ventures. Second, the East Market district is located directly between downtown and the popular, progressive Highlands neighborhood (and its main corridor – Bardstown Road). In addition, the Butchertown neighborhood has also been experiencing redevelopment over the past two decades. This puts the district in a prime location for potential reinvestment and redevelopment. In many ways it was only a matter of time before developers and business owners realized the missing link within the popular urban east end of Louisville.

As seen in the introductory framing cases, location is crucial to the redevelopment of art and cultural districts. Oakley relied heavily on its proximity to the well-known and affluent Hyde Park, especially as a suburban district. Northside had a prime location near two interstates and the Clifton neighborhood. Covington is attempting to steal momentum from some of the larger, new developments along Mainstrasse and its riverfront. Main Street, in ways, has had its reputation damaged and progress stalled because of reputations of safety problems in Over-the-Rhine and downtown. Furthermore, art and cultural district theorists such as Lloyd (2006), Scott (2000), and Zukin (1982) note the importance of location as well.

The land use in both the East Market district and greater neighborhood is extremely mixed (see Figure A.2 in Appendix A). The close proximity of a variety of uses is integral to the physical character of the area. A range of land uses is a critical component of the urban
landscape relative to the suburbs. As the map shows, the neighborhood is largely industrial, especially near the Ohio River and Interstates, as one would expect. The central and southern sections of the neighborhood are more diverse with an equal mix of single- and multi-family residential, industrial, commercial (including retail, entertainment, and office), and public (most of which represents the health sciences campus).

**Figure 5.2** East Market land use mix (source: Bing)

**Figure 5.3** East Market city block (source: Bing)
A closer look at the land uses in the district is significant. The majority of the district is commercial and industrial (see Figures 5.2 and 5.3). This shows the influence of the large industrial tradition just north of the district. The scale of the industrial uses in the district is smaller than the large industrial properties and buildings closer to the river (but large relative to the rest of the district). This allows for a greater mix of uses. The location of the commercial uses, or **consumption footprint**, is also significant. With only a few exceptions, the commercial uses are clustered along Market Street and spanning three city blocks (from Campbell to Hancock Street). This has been identified as the East Market district commercial core. This illustrates two important components. One, there is a continuity amongst the district’s consumption opportunities. This creates a physical and psychological unity amongst the district’s businesses. It allows the users to experience the district holistically. This differs from the experience in Oakley where there is a clear division between the north and south ends of the art and cultural district, detracting from its usability and sense of unity. Second, this is a physical representation of the agglomerating nature of art and cultural districts discussed throughout the literature review (Currid 2007, 2009; Florida 2002a; Jacobs 1961; Lloyd 2002, 2006; Molotch 1996). The businesses support each other more than they directly compete for business.

The **density** of the district also reflects this commercial-industrial dichotomy, and the concentrated location of the commercial footprint (see figure-ground maps in Figure A.3). Within the district there is a wide variety in the scale of the buildings and the density of the urban fabric. This is highlighted in the figure-ground map of the entire neighborhood. Within the East Market commercial core, the urban form is much different than the eastern edge of the district only a block away. The commercial core is made up of small, narrow historical structures usually from two to three stories tall. These buildings are individually modest in size,
but are very compact and often connected to each other. Most of these structures are Italianate in style, with cast iron facades. Also, many of these structures were historical industrial buildings in the mid-19th century. Figures 5.4 and 5.5 show two typical rows of buildings in the commercial core. The historical component and architectural diversity contribute aesthetically to the district. In addition, this urban form is conducive to the type of businesses that have located in the district. Small, compact, and aesthetically appealing, these buildings provide the flexibility that small art and cultural businesses need in order to create an engaging place to show artwork, display antiques, or sell food.

Figure 5.4 East Market Commercial Core 1 (source: author)

Figure 5.5 East Market Commercial Core 2 (source: author)

Figure 5.6 East Market Industrial Uses 1 (source: author)

Figure 5.7 East Market Industrial Uses 2 (source: author)
However, this unique and aesthetically pleasing, urban fabric is not universal throughout the district. As it was insinuated earlier, modern industrial uses have a major impact on the density and aesthetics of much of the district. For instance, wedged immediately in between the
two rows of historical buildings shown in Figures 5.4 and 5.5 is an industrial equipment storage yard. This is an example of the urban dichotomy that exists in the East Market district. The aerial photographs in Figures 5.2 and 5.3 portray this intense mix of uses, and the close proximity at which they exist. As these photos and Figures A.2 and A.3 illustrate, the scale of the structures increases drastically outside of the commercial core, and in certain cases buildings span entire city blocks. These industrial uses are more prevalent along the Main and Jefferson Street corridors than on Market Street. The structures discussed here are of a different industrial era than those that have been converted to commercial uses in the East Market core. These newer industrial buildings are designed solely for practical purposes. For the most part they detract from the neighborhood aesthetically and have no historical context (see Figures 5.6 and 5.7). Therefore, there is a very mixed physical character in the East Market district, with some pockets of great aesthetic value and others with none.

The nature of the commercial uses in the district is characteristic of that of art and cultural districts. Table A.1 is an index of commercial uses in the district. In is broadly divided into three categories – art galleries and antique dealers, professional firms, and restaurants/food and drink stores – and is listed in order of the year the businesses were established. There is an array of professional firms including architectural, advertising, media, film, beauty products, and green-related companies. As Figure A.2 illustrates and the addresses listed in the index confirms, a majority of these commercial uses are in the 600, 700, and 800 blocks of Market Street (the commercial core defined above). A segment of the commercial core is shown in Figure 5.8. In addition, Figure 5.9 shows the change in scale and density as you move outwards from the commercial core on East Market Street. This is additional evidence of the agglomeration of art and cultural businesses discussed earlier.
Furthermore, the variety of commercial programming creates a district that is active during a greater portion of any given day or week. A majority of the professional firms function on a typical workday schedule – open from approximately 8 am to 5 pm on weekdays. The art galleries are often open slightly later, as well as on the weekends. The restaurants are busiest during meal times, most of all in the evenings. However, there are some restaurants that are primarily breakfast or lunch destinations. This time component is important in order to make the East Market district a more holistic neighborhood that is frequented over the course of the day, especially when there is little residential use immediately within the district.

**Figure 5.10** Evolution of East Market District Commercial Uses

Figure 5.10 supplements Table A.1, and illustrates the *evolution of the commercial uses* in the East Market district. This chart (and the Appendix’s corresponding index) only includes businesses that remain open as of the completion of this thesis. The commercial uses are divided into the same three categories. Two important observations can be made from the chart. One, the graph shows the rapid redevelopment the district has undergone in the past five years (2006-
2010). During this time period, 29 new businesses opened in the district. This averages out to approximately six new businesses every year. Considering the modest size of the East Market district, these are large numbers. Two, the graph supports what various theorists (Florida 2002a, 2002b; Lloyd 2002, 2006; Zukin 1982, 2010) have postulated about art and cultural districts—that people follow the artists. I do not want to make any universal claims or generalizations from this trend, but in regards to this case, the art galleries and antique stores were clearly ahead of the curve. This is most pronounced between 2001 and 2005 when seven galleries and antique stores opened while only one business from the other two categories chose to locate in the district. Furthermore, there was only one professional firm in the district before 2006. In the case of the East Market district, the galleries and artists initiated the transformation and reinvestment.

Another component of art and cultural districts that the graph and index does not include is housing. As the land use map (Figure A.2) shows, there is little housing directly in the district although this is beginning to change. Within the greater neighborhood, there are pockets of both single- and multi-family housing. Table 5.1 shows some basic data from the 2000 decennial Census for the Census tract scale. Due to the rapidness of change in the area, these data are limited but nonetheless provide relevant information. The most telling of these statistics is tenure status, indicating that 90 percent of the district’s residencies were rental housing—a relatively high proportion. This data was likely heavily impacted by the former Clarksdale public housing complex. The housing project was home to 700 residents. However, it was torn down in 2004 after becoming widely known for crime and social strife. Currently replacing it is Liberty Green (see Figure 5.11), a $233 million HOPE VI residential development (City of Louisville 2010). This mixed-income housing development is the most significant residential project in the neighborhood. Although it is not within the East Market district boundaries (it is
located south of Jefferson Street), Liberty Green borders the district and will provide a larger residential base than any other project in the immediate area.

As the district has become more recognized, private residential development has increased. There are several trends worth noting. First, virtually all of the new residential development is large-scale multi-unit housing (although not as large as Liberty Green). Second, it is a majority owner-occupied housing. There are multiple condominium complexes that have recently been completed (such as that shown in Figure 5.12), are currently being built, or are in the planning stages. Many of these units are being sold at market value and lack affordable units, not to mention rental options. Even Liberty Green is a mix of owner and renter-occupied units. This trend is concerning considering that the neighborhood was 90 percent renter-occupied in 2000\(^4\). New residential options are trending towards exclusive housing rather than inclusionary diverse options.

There are no **specific land use plans** or **zoning restrictions** for the East Market district. With that said, it is still necessary to examine the zoning and land use plans that apply to the

\(^4\) Without recent Census data it is difficult to assess the scope of residential change that has taken place in the district. For this reason, the 2010 Census data is expected to be a valuable update.
district, albeit not specifically. In Louisville’s comprehensive plan, Cornerstone 2020, there are two distinct tiers of land use codes: (1) zoning regulations and (2) form districts. Traditional zoning regulates the appropriate uses for any given property. Form districts are concerned with both the design and character of new development in an effort to make sure it is compatible with the existing fabric (Louisville Metro Planning and Design Services 2007).

Figure A.4 shows the form districts and zoning in the East Market district and the surrounding area. As the map shows, the district is almost entirely zoned for commercial-industrial uses. There is an isolated parcel zoned residential and a few areas zoned industrial. Furthermore, the commercial-industrial zoning indicates that the area is designated an Enterprise Zone. This is a specialized district that allows commercial and industrial uses of similar scale in the same area. The form district map shows that much of the district is designated a traditional marketplace corridor (TMC)\(^5\). However, the western section of it is designated downtown\(^6\). This is puzzling considering that the East Market commercial core – an area earlier noted as having a consistent urban form and character – is made up of two different form districts.

Louisville also uses neighborhood planning in conjuncture with the comprehensive plan. The Phoenix Hill Neighborhood Plan was adopted in 2008, and includes the East Market district in its study area. The plan acknowledges a general consensus of a desire to promote new development in the neighborhood, while simultaneously retaining the area’s existing diversity and sense of social responsibility. The East Market district is central to this goal, as it has

\(^5\) The Traditional Marketplace Corridor form district’s primary purpose is “the identification and enhancement of the character along some of Louisville’s more prominent circulation corridors.” Objectives and guidelines include: encouraging alternative modes of travel, improved streetscapes, open space, high quality design standards, etc. ("Phoenix Hill Neighborhood Plan," Louisville Metro).

\(^6\) The Downtown form district was created to strengthen “the heart of the city and the economic center of the region.” Objectives include: ensuring a compact, walkable core, improved streetscapes, conservation of historical resources, and inclusion of public art and amenities ("Phoenix Hill Neighborhood Plan," Louisville Metro).
received as much redevelopment as any other area in Phoenix Hill. Additionally, the plan recognizes the same form district conflict mentioned in the previous paragraph. Specifically, one of its recommendations is to revise the form district boundaries along Market Street to better reflect the corridor’s unique historical resources by expanding the TMC district westward ("Phoenix Hill Neighborhood Plan," *Louisville Metro*).

*Transportation Characteristics*

Mobility is a key factor of art and cultural districts ultimately influencing the level of success they experience. Pedestrian and vehicular mobility, as well as the interaction of the two, are important to consider. All of the maps mentioned in previous sections illustrate the traditional gridded street network of the East Market district. Main and Market Streets are classified as major arterials due to the fact that they carry traffic through the neighborhood. These are heavily trafficked streets during rush hour, because they serve as primary east-west thoroughfares connecting the central business district to the urban east end. Most of the north-south streets in the district are local streets, linking the nearby residential areas to the high-traffic corridors such as Market Street. These classifications as well as on-site observation indicate that the scale of the streets and corresponding traffic levels in the district are important.

Main and Market Streets are five lanes wide (including a parking lane) at certain points (see Figure 5.13). In addition, Main and Jefferson Streets are one-way, while Market Street is an unbalanced two-way street (with three eastbound lanes and one westbound lane). In fact, considering the rigidity of the grid, the district as a whole has a disorderly one- and two-way street network. The results of this are two-fold. This causes confusion amongst motorists, which leads to both motorist and pedestrian safety concerns. Also, this affects connectivity in the
district and to the surrounding neighborhood. The disjointed nature of the streets and the resulting confusion increases traffic. For example, lack of connectivity results in large volumes of traffic (including semi-trucks) travelling along the small, north-south local streets that aren’t designed for this use (Phoenix Hill Neighborhood Plan,” Louisville Metro). In addition, the plan recommends a study assessing the feasibility of converting Main and Jefferson Streets and all north-south streets in the district to two-way traffic. This would have expected outcomes including slowing vehicular traffic, reducing thru-traffic, and improving local access to the district. The grid network aids pedestrian connectivity, but the wide one-way streets and high traffic volumes decrease the perceived safety of walkers in the district.

Parking and alternative modes of transportation are also important factors affecting connectivity. Figure A.5 shows the TARC (Louisville’s bus transit) and bike routes in the East Market district. As the map shows, the area is well connected by alternative modes of transportation. In large part this is due to the East Market district’s proximity to downtown. Various bus routes run the east-west corridors of Main, Market, and Jefferson Streets taking people from the residential areas to work downtown and vice versa. Also, this wide and gridded street network creates easier bike access throughout the area (and easier implementation of
designated bike lanes on the road). All in all, the district is well connected for bus and bike travelers.

However, parking in the district has differing affects on the connectivity. Figure A.5 also shows the surface parking lots in the area. In addition to these lots there is street parking throughout the district (see Figures 5.13 and 5.14). Positively, this abundance of parking lots allows for drivers outside of the district to easily access various locations within the district. However, it negatively affects pedestrian connectivity throughout the district once people have arrived. The multitude of street fronting lots creates gaps in the urban fabric that aren’t aesthetically pleasing and detract from the pedestrian’s sense of mobility.

The Phoenix Hill Neighborhood Plan contains several recommendations that relate to the criterions analyzed above. The plan notes that current off-street parking requirements in the East Market district have impeded redevelopment efforts in the area. It is recommended that the district’s stakeholders convene to implement feasible, agreed upon strategies to relieve parking requirements and conflicts, including shared parking lots, restricted times, and resident and business passes. Likewise, the plan recommends moving service and parking areas to the rear of the lots in order to improve the streetscapes and encourage pedestrian activity along sidewalks.

*Influence of Art and Culture*

The East Market district is not a **formalized district** and has no publicly recognized designation. Local business owners and developers created the boundaries and name unofficially. This is also an explanation as to why there is no specific land use plan for the district. In fact, the district is part of two different official Louisville neighborhoods –
Butchertown and Phoenix Hill\textsuperscript{7} – with each having its own individual, rich history. This is further evidence of the informality of the East Market district’s transformation into an art and cultural district. On a similar note, there has not been a formal \textbf{business district} or \textbf{community council} for the district specifically for much of the past decade, however this has changed in the past year. The East Downtown Business Association in the past has served as a council for the entire east downtown area. In March 2009, it adopted a new name, the East Market District Association (EMDA), as a response to “unprecedented construction and renovation activity, coupled with new business and residential developments” (Marzian 2009). Although there are no \textbf{residential or business incentives} in place at the time, the EMDA has begun to implement community-wide strategies and events. The City of Louisville has not yet recognized the East Market district as a formal area. This is the reason there are no financial incentives (which tend to come from government agencies and not community organizations).

One of the first initiatives the EMDA undertook was a \textbf{branding} process. This was not a typical art and cultural branding initiative led by external and/or citywide agencies. This was a much more organic branding process that took place from within. Along with prominent local developers, the EMDA came up with a new moniker, \textit{NuLu} (a portmanteau of “new” and “Louisville”), to signify the new “relaxed artsy neighborhood” of Louisville (The East Market District 2010). Now, \textit{NuLu} is used as much (if not more) as \textit{East}

\textsuperscript{7} Each of these neighborhoods has its own neighborhood plan completed within the past five years by Louisville Metro Planning and Design Services. The neighborhood plans have been officially adopted to Cornerstone 2020 – the city’s comprehensive plan – by Louisville Metro Council.
Market district as a name for the area. To spread the word of its new name, the EMDA has commissioned distinctive new street banners that have been designed in collaboration with some of the district’s artists. Each banner shows one of six unique designs and they are all displayed along East Market, Main, and Jefferson Streets within the district (Marzian 2009). The district is also establishing a voice within the greater Louisville area. In April 2010, the EMDA (along with a few other surrounding neighborhood associations) hosted an East Urban Neighborhood Mayoral Forum, which was free and well attended by the public (East urban groups to hold Louisville mayoral forum 2010). This is just one indication that the district is establishing its individuality and legitimacy.

The establishment as a bona fide district in and of itself is furthered by the development of formalized events taking place district-wide. First, the district is an integral part of the First Friday Trolley Hop. Although the East Market district did not create this event and is not the sole destination involved⁸, there is uniform participation in the district nonetheless. In fact, a majority of the participating galleries and businesses are in the East Market district. Second, the district had its first annual neighborhood festival – the NuLu Festival – in October 2009. Simply put, the modest one-day festival is a celebration of the district, with street tents selling local food, drinks, and art, and a stage set up for local musicians to perform. The name, NuLu Festival, is also no doubt another nod to the self-branding process the district has undergone. In short, the Trolley Hop and the NuLu Festival are the most attended events in the district by far, and are designed specifically to attract the local “tourist” to the district.

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⁸ The Trolley Hop was started in 2001 by a group of downtown artists and gallery owners. The original idea was to connect the growing number of downtown art venues then know as the “Art Zone,” using the city transit authority’s historic trolleys. The original Trolley Hops ferried people along Main and Market Streets from Clay to 9th Street. Now, the trolleys run from Campbell to 10th Street (First Friday Trolley Hop 2010).
The branding process, self-advertising, and formalized events are signs of a newfound local organization within the district. The East Market district has also established an informal website/blog focused specifically on the district. It primarily posts information on events taking place in the district, advertises for area artists and residents, provides news on new businesses and developments, and promotes the district in general (The East Market District 2010). A majority of the information above is evidence that the East Market district is creating momentum for itself through community organization. As mentioned above, it is also evidence that the district is marketing and showcasing itself to local “tourists”. It will be interesting to see if the city responds to these trends formally, as well as how the district’s owning neighborhoods of Butchertown and Phoenix Hill react.

The timing of this comprehensive branding process corresponds with the development of the Green Building. The Green Building has been identified as a **keystone development** and flagship destination in the East Market district. The building, which opened in late 2008 between Clay and Shelby Streets, is a 15,000 square foot mixed-use facility. The masonry building is over 100 years old and a former dry goods store, which were common long ago on Market Street as the prior historical section indicates. It was rundown and inhabitable when purchased, as several of the historic buildings in the district have been. Post-redevelopment, it is currently home to a popular restaurant (732 Social), an art gallery (The Green Building Gallery), various event spaces, an indoor-outdoor courtyard, a recording studio, an independent film production company, and a publishing company (The Green Building 2010). The timing and location of development efforts since this project was initiated clearly indicated that it is centerpiece of the district. The rate of redevelopment and investment has increased since 2008. Also, the intensity of redevelopment efforts is highest around the Green Building’s location.
Furthermore, publicity and regional recognition of the district has increased, as there is now a constant spotlight on the Green Building. Lastly, due in part to the developer’s success with this project, he had undertaken other projects in the area and spearheaded the branding process.

This example showcases the impact that a keystone development or building can have on the transformation of an art and cultural district. In the East Market district, the energy of the building has been contagious and the intensity of different uses within one building has served as a model, as other mixed-use projects have crept up in recent years. As the next paragraph shows, keystone projects can have other forms of value in art and cultural districts as well.

Beyond the activities that take place in the Green Building, the structure itself is LEED platinum certified – the first commercial building of that certification level in Louisville. This has led to an underlying theme and trend of sustainability throughout the district.

Besides art and culture, sustainability has been the most noticeable trend in the East Market district. Many of the restaurants (i.e. 732 Social, Wiltshire on Market) located in the district rely on local foods and farmers and promote sustainable practices. There are also other unique environmental ventures such as an environmental building supplies store and a sustainable business consultancy. Lastly, a permanent open-air public food market (Jefferson Market) is planned to open in the district in 2011, emphasizing organic and local choices. This is coupled with the current development of a large fresh foods grocery and wholesale company only a couple blocks from Jefferson Market.
within the district. In both cases, these are the first food suppliers of their kind in the greater downtown Louisville area.

This information on the East Market district’s Green Building and trend of sustainability illustrate the importance of a keystone development and underlying trends or themes. When analyzing the East Market district it is quite apparent that the Green Building brought an added energy to the area that it had not experienced during early redevelopments. Also, without any common theme or trend (even a loose one), redevelopment efforts are more likely to be incongruent. As Currid postulates (Currid 2009), there is an interconnected nature regarding cultural industries, and agglomeration policy should build on these interrelated industries; for example, film and music, fashion and art – and in this case, art and the environment.

As mentioned earlier, the East Market district does not exist in a vacuum. In the case of this district, it is particularly important to evaluate the external influences and threats facing the district. These external influences and challenges have the potential to greatly impact the future of the East Market District. The following is a synopsis of the primary external influences and threats (and their geographical locations):

- General development pressure from the central business district (west of the East Market district). Downtown Louisville is undergoing multiple large-scale, multimillion-dollar projects, including various urban residential projects (“condo-fever”). Likely nothing will have as large of an impact as the new University of Louisville downtown basketball arena, nearing completion on West Main Street. Only several blocks from the East Market district, its influence can already be seen spreading outward from the site, manifested through visible increased investment and an uptick in redevelopment projects.
- Influence from the north of the district where the waterfront has undergone a drastic revitalization. Once an industrial wasteland, Waterfront Park (a 20-year project) is in its third and final phase of development. The 85-acre park is a popular regional destination and popular location for local events. This will only increase once the Big 4 pedestrian bridge – a converted railroad bridge across the Ohio River – is completed as part of phase III. Two other influences within the Waterfront Park area are the minor league baseball park (Louisville Slugger Field, shown in Figure 5.1) and the Ohio River, which is an amenity in and of itself.

- Pressure from the region’s largest hospital and medical research campus to the south. The health science campus has continued to expand since its creation during the urban renewal initiative in the 1960s to its current scale of more than 15 square city blocks. This campus, only two blocks from the East Market district, will continue to grow and also has great political clout in Louisville.

- Liberty Green will possibly have the greatest direct impact on the East Market district as it borders it on the south. The Hope VI project is a $233 million mixed income residential development nearing the completion of construction. This will provide an immediate residential base for the district as the units continue to fill.

- The Interstate 65 realignment and expansion is a threat to the health of the district on its western edge. The Ohio River Bridges Project calls for major changes to the I-65 corridor near the river. Already a disruptive concrete viaduct, it has the potential to become ever larger. There are current question of whether the project with a $4 billion price tag will be completed, and grassroots groups have created alternative
visions. The outcome will have a major impact on the wellbeing of the East Market
district and its connection to the greater downtown area.

- Lastly, the Bardstown Road/Baxter Avenue corridor (east of the district) will continue
to influence the redevelopment of the East Market district. The eclectic entertainment
corridor is the quintessential local destination of East Louisville. East Market has
long been viewed as a missing link between the corridor and downtown – no doubt
one of the district’s initial selling points. Now, however, with the district developing
its own identity this view is changing. Nonetheless, the two areas will continue to
influence each other.

These are several of the primary influences and threats that I have identified in this
analysis. As it can be seen, they are encroaching the district from all directions. There are likely
others, but these are arguably the most influential and/or concerning. An art and cultural district
in an urban location, such as the East Market district, will always have an array of external
pressures. It is the composition of these influences as well as the district’s response that will
heavily impact its future. In this case, a combination of positive events (Waterfront Park,
Louisville Slugger Field, the arena, Liberty Green, and the Bardstown/Baxter corridor) has
played a part in the redevelopment of the East Market district, outweighing so far the threats
(Interstate 65 expansion and the health sciences campus expansion pressures).

The final criterion that was considered in this category was the dynamic of consumption
versus production within the East Market district. As the literature review points out,
consumption-based urban growth is more common in the 21st century city than ever before. The
importance and nature of production is not what it was during the Fordist economy and the
booming industrial years (Brooks 2000; Clark 2002, 2006; Florida 2002b; Glaeser 2000, 2006).
Production is more than just producing goods in today’s complex world – this is no longer a black-and-white issue. This makes art and cultural districts compelling because there is a strong integration of consumption and production opportunities.

In many ways, art and cultural districts are not only about the production of art and cultural goods directly, but more about the production of place and ideas – the creation of a cultural milieu. Furthermore, people then want to access this place because of the amenities and unique consumption opportunities they present. This is seen in the East Market district. It is becoming a regional destination for local “tourists” as mentioned before. It is also creating its own sense of place and a set of amenities that don’t exist in any other area of Louisville. Lastly, these art and cultural districts through the array of unique consumption amenities attract high human capital, which increases the overall productivity of the district through creativity and ideas (Glaeser et al. 2001) – the intertwining of consumption and production. In the East Market district consumption and production are becoming more integrated as the district transforms.

There are also direct examples of the integration of consumption and production of art and culture in the district. Some of the art galleries are self-owned (i.e. Mary Craik Gallery), displaying and selling pieces that are produced at the on-site studio only. The glass art studios (i.e. Flame Run) are the most explicit example of the convergence of consumption and production. These studios have attached hot glass workshops where the pieces are produced and then displayed in the gallery. The workshops intentionally open onto the street and are as much of an attraction as the gallery. People come to consume the captivating production of this unique form of art. Another example of this convergence is the art installations that galleries occasionally set up (i.e. a computer-generated 3D-image of a dog that interacts with people walking past it on the sidewalk). In this case, the consumption or use of the art is the production.
This integration is also taking place at cultural destinations in the district. For example, a new studio offers yoga and movement offerings as well as family music lessons. Again, the consumption is the production.

Media/Publicity

The nature of the media coverage has been positive as a whole. It has largely been about new developments in the East Market district, but also about the local restaurants, upcoming events, the green aspect of certain businesses, or a general acknowledgement of the rapid transformation of the district. Regarding this last point, many media outlets have highlighted the East Market district as a local example of an area that hasn’t been negatively affected by the recent economic downturn. As a whole, there is a positive local sentiment regarding the district. This positive publicity is highlighted by the fact that the Green Building’s developer (and the developer of several other project in the district) won the well known Louisville Magazine’s 2009 Person of the Year award, citing as the reason the developer’s ability to press forward with several socially conscious projects despite the poor economic climate (Moss 2009).

In addition, the East Market district is continuing to see increased publicity and media coverage. This is a sign that the district is still on its way up, as the media is not tired of covering the neighborhood, nor are people tired of reading about it. The fact that publicity is increasing and remains of a positive nature is telling as well. It likely indicates that the district will continue to see an increase in reinvestment and redevelopment. It also indicates that there will be a greater acknowledgement of the district in the greater Louisville area, and therefore, a potential increase in the district’s consumption base. On one level this can have a positive
impact. As the literature review indicated, art and cultural districts rely on a strong consumption base with disposable income to survive (Brooks 2000; Currid 2009; Glaeser 2001; Lloyd 2002, 2006; Plaza 2006). However, on another level this can have a negative impact. There is greater potential for developers and other actors to be attracted to the district that don’t have genuine interests in the local community and/or the preservation of the district’s authenticity.

There is also an array of **media forms** covering the East Market district, allowing the media and publicity to reach a greater audience. The media coverage is formal and informal, as well as local and national. Local blogs (informal) have been covering the district’s transition throughout the process. Although this is an informal medium, some blogs have a significant following and can develop a strong local clout.

Also, more formal mediums have covered the transformation of the district such as the Louisville Courier-Journal (the city’s primary newspaper), LEO Weekly (Louisville’s primary alternative newsweekly), Louisville Magazine, and Business First. The coverage in these publications has been steady and continuing. More recently, other media outlets nationwide have picked up on the East Market district, bringing the district’s popularity to an unprecedented level. *Money* (a service of CNN) chose the East Market district as the best neighborhood to retire in Louisville in 2007 (Bigda 2007). The article points to the new affordable housing and the proximity to a variety of amenities and cultural attractions as the reason the district was chosen. The New York Times published an article on the East Market district, highlighting the Green Building and the transformation of the district into a legitimate art and cultural area (Howard 2008). The Boston Globe also published an article on the district, praising the cuisine of the East Market district’s restaurants (Weisstuch 2010).
The East Market district is also actively advertising itself and promoting its identification as a whole. This can be seen through the entire branding process. The NuLu banners that have been strategically placed along the Main, Market, and Jefferson Street corridors are examples of self-identification. Also, the various formalized events in the district (i.e. the trolley hop and NuLu Festival) signify self-promotion as well, and act as an indirect form of advertisement. This signifies the desire that the district has for the increasing media publicity and attention. Furthermore, it shows that many of the actors in the district are excited but not content with the level of redevelopment seen so far, and are working to promote more reinvestment.

A Comparison to the Introductory Framing Cases

Although this thesis is not a comparative study, it is possible to provide a brief comparison between the East Market district and the introductory framing cases. The most striking similarities and differences will be touched on. Overall, the East Market district shares characteristics with each of the framing cases, but perhaps the differences are more informative.

First, on a macro-scale, the East Market district has certain advantages being in Louisville compared to the Cincinnati-area districts. There are few districts in Louisville that could be classified as arts and cultural. This is not the case in Cincinnati, where there are multiple art and cultural districts scattered throughout the city. Louisville has one large art and cultural corridor – Bardstown Road/Baxter Avenue – that has dominated the local scene for years. However, it is more a general entertainment district than anything. The metropolitan situation gives the East Market district an advantage over the Cincinnati districts. It is a more unique district within the greater region, and for this reason it has received a greater amount of
publicity and attention from the entire market area. This is even more crucial since the metropolitan market area is smaller in Louisville, and there are less art and cultural consumers to go around.

Furthermore, the East Market district has an advantage over its Cincinnati counterparts regarding its location within the greater region. The most comparable location of the framing cases is the Main Street district. However, negative press and a perceived lack of safety, which as mentioned has set the Main Street district back over the years, has not marred the East Market district. Also, East Market has an advantage for being wedged in between two of Louisville’s most popular neighborhoods – the Central Business District and the Highlands – and another of the city’s fastest redeveloping neighborhoods – Butchertown. Main Street does not share this luxury. This is vital because the East Market district doesn’t have as strong of a residential base as do districts like Northside and Oakley. On another note, both the East Market and Northside districts are benefitted by their close proximity to multiple interstates, making them easily accessible from near and far locations. However, the East Market district has a more urban location and also benefits from being within the greater downtown area.

Because of this downtown location, the East Market district shares a similar physical character with both Main Street and Covington. However, the urban scale is more in line with Covington or even Northside. As the previous chapters have shown, a historical and highly aesthetic urban form is conducive to the flexible type of uses that art and cultural districts promote.

As the prior section showed, the East Market district has a tight, unified consumption footprint. This is very different than that of Oakley, where the district is split into a north and
south end with a damaging void between. The East Market district has no doubt seen a greater level of success because of the art and cultural agglomeration that exists there.

The characteristics of the transformation have also differed. The East Market district redevelopment has been entirely organic and un-promoted up until today. This is different than the forced redevelopment of both Main Street and Covington that was initiated and promoted by their respective cities. Also, there have been no residential or business incentives implemented in East Market as there have in Covington. Furthermore, the East Market district has received virtually all positive media coverage and publicity, similar to that of Northside. It has also received a greater amount of coverage than districts like Covington, Main Street, and Oakley. Again, part of this may be because of the exclusivity of art and cultural districts in Louisville, where there are few other districts to “steal the show” or share the scene with.

All in all, the East Market district has seen a faster rate of transformation than the framing districts. There are likely innumerable reasons this has happened, but a few noticeable ones have been highlighted above. A full assessment of the Cincinnati districts with the evaluative criteria would likely bring more relevant comparisons to light – an indication of the value of the evaluative criteria.

**Key Factors of Success**

This section aims to answer the third central research question: based on the creation and utilization of the evaluative criteria, what are the key success factors of Louisville’s East Market district? In order to answer this question it is necessary to first define the term *success.* Success is a tricky word; one that few theorists explicitly discuss regarding the transformation of art and
cultural districts. It is a subjective concept. For this thesis the definition stems from the findings of the literature review. Success in this case is characterized by the following components:

- Make cultural and economic contributions to the city and broader social system without ever losing their distinctiveness within them (Lloyd 2006, 69);
- Maintain the local or “vernacular” culture that makes the district unique (Carr 2009; Currid 2007, 2009; Sorkin 1992);
- The creation of a vibrant, 24/7 district that is supportive of local residents and not just local “tourists” (Jacobs 1961; Zukin 1982, 2010; Lloyd 2002); and
- High levels of urban diversity, where people of different walks of life can come to live, work (produce), and/or play (consume) (Jacobs 1961; Currid 2009; Zukin 1982, 2010).

The key factors of success for the East Market district are based off the evaluation of criteria discussed in detail in the previous section. These success factors are key to becoming a successful art and cultural district as defined above. Each evaluative criterion is not included with expectation that it will heavily impact every individual art and cultural district. As mentioned many times before, there are a wide variety of art and cultural districts, and the criteria were designed to be as inclusive as possible. The value in the evaluative criteria is in its ability to highlight certain criterions that are more important than others in the specific case at hand. From this, it is feasible to draw conclusions regarding the key determinants of success (or failure). Since the East Market district has been evaluated in full, it is now possible to identify its key factors of success, which are the following (in no particular order):

1. The East Market district has a strategic location within the greater Louisville metropolitan area. Art and cultural districts do not exist in a vacuum, and are affected
positively or negatively by surrounding neighborhoods. The strong location has given the district a greater chance for success because of its close proximity to downtown (west), the well-established Highlands neighborhood (southeast), and the burgeoning neighborhood of Butchertown (northeast).

2. The East Market district has a keystone building or development (The Green Building) that acts as a landmark in the greater Louisville region. The project and its current tenants (primarily the street level restaurant) have given the district recognition throughout Louisville, enhancing the district’s market area. In addition, The Green Building has helped create an identity for the district. Although it didn’t initiate redevelopment efforts like some of the first art galleries and small shops did, the development has provided a central source of positive energy for the district as a whole that hasn’t been matched by other projects. It also spurred a corresponding theme in the district, as the seventh success factor discusses.

3. The East Market district maintains and takes advantage of a physical infrastructure and urban form of historical and aesthetic value. It is a unique urban fabric not found in other parts of Louisville. It has restored the historical, Italianate and cast-iron buildings from the 19th century, while also integrating contemporary infill projects. More so, these narrow and compact buildings are conducive to the flexible types of uses demanded in art and cultural districts.

4. The East Market district is organized and capable of providing regular events such as the First Friday Trolley Hop and the NuLu Festival. This highlights the art and cultural amenities that attract the greater public to the district. Furthermore, this shows a level of cooperation signifying that the district businesses and institutions are on the same page
regarding the district’s role in the city. The creation of the East Market District Association (EMDA) is evidence that this internal organization is improving.

5. The East Market district redevelopment has consisted largely of grassroots, small-scale redevelopment and revitalization efforts as opposed to manufactured mega-projects and non-local, corporate control. The redevelopment of this district has been natural and taken place from within. The local government and development agencies have not force-fed art and culture to the district. The result of this is an agglomeration of unique, locally owned stores, galleries, restaurants, etc. With cities increasingly made up of suburbs and homogenous, corporate development, the authenticity of the East Market district is uncommon and valued.

6. The East Market district has widely received positive publicity from the Louisville media outlets. In addition, the coverage has constantly been increasing (even reaching the national stage). Without a strong residential base, this has given the district needed recognition in order to attract “tourists” from other Louisville neighborhoods. If harnessed effectively, this energy can lead to continued transformation of the district.

7. The East Market district fills a niche within the Louisville metropolitan region due to unique, mutually reinforcing themes. Simply, there is no other neighborhood like it in its market area. Underlying themes can be critical to a common vision and creating a unique environment. In the case of East Market, the synergy between sustainability and the art and culture has been vital to its continued transformation. This has allowed the district to stand out from other similar districts such as the Bardstown Road/Baxter Avenue and Frankfort Avenue corridors.
There is little doubt that the transformation of the district has been positive so far. Prior to the redevelopment, vacant industrial buildings – old and new, large and small – characterized the area. The area had been ignored during the vast suburbanization of U.S. cities, left to care for itself with little help from the local government or development agencies. Ironically, eventually that is just what it did – take care of itself. The piecemeal redevelopment effort led to a holistic transformation into a bona fide art and cultural district, as this chapter has illustrated. As it receives much more attention than in the past, the East Market district will likely have many challenges to face in the future as external development pressures increase and new stakeholders enter the picture. During these times it will be important to remember the aforementioned key factors of success that led to its authenticity in the first place.
Chapter 6. CONCLUSION

This thesis set out to answer three central research questions. First, why is art and culture a growing component of urban neighborhood transformations? Second, with the increasing number of so-called art and cultural districts, how can these districts be measured? And third, based on the answer to the prior question, what are the key success factors of Louisville’s East Market district?

A “Rear-view” of the Document

This thesis was split into six chapters, each being a key component of the study. The first chapter introduced the thesis subject matter. Its goal was to provide the reader a basis for the following chapters. At this point, the research questions were first introduced. The second chapter looked at the research methodology. A major component of the methodology chapter was the explanation of the evaluative criteria for art and cultural districts. It broke down the criteria by category, and then by each individual criterion. The third chapter reviewed the pertinent literature on art and culture. There were two primary sections – urban growth theory & art and culture – that combined to answer the first research question in detail. The subject matter was put into a historical context in the first section. It provided background information on the resurgence of urban neighborhoods, and how theorists have explained this unexpected shift. The second section provided in depth detail on art and culture. Importantly, it looked at how art and culture is manifested in urban neighborhoods (as art and cultural districts). This was supplemented by explanations of multiple subcomponents related to these districts such as consumption-based growth theory, urban amenities, types of art and cultural districts, and formal
and informal policy strategies. The fourth chapter aided the previous one in answering the second research question. It assessed the four Cincinnati-area introductory framing cases, which were used to identify the evaluative criteria – a critical component of the thesis. Subsequently, these criteria were used to evaluate the East Market district in the fifth chapter. This chapter also identified the key success factors for the East Market district, answering the third and final research question. This sixth, concluding chapter bookends the first (just as this “rear-view” bookends the “roadmap” from the introduction) by summing up the thesis and providing concluding remarks on its relevance and applicability beyond this specific case.

**Concluding Remarks**

A number of urban theorists have studied the increasing influence of art and culture in urban neighborhoods. As a nation, we have shifted into a new era of urbanism. This urban resurgence has forced theorists to rethink the causes of urban growth. The former basic model focused on the factory, the firm, and the worker is now outdated. Theorists have now recognized the city as a center for consumption. For this reason, human capital, innovation, and urban amenities such as art and culture are key components of urban growth. Furthermore, there is increasing evidence that human capital is attracted to neighborhoods rich in art and culture. With this increase in highly skilled human capital and creativity, the likelihood of innovation also increases.

With the vast homogeneity of the suburbs, a sense of place and authenticity in our cities has become more difficult to find. Art and cultural districts offer unique amenities and consumption opportunities. The authenticity is such that eventually the place itself becomes an
object of consumption. The districts offer their own ethos, genuine scene, or cultural milieu that cannot be found elsewhere.

Until recently these districts have existed with little attention. However, glorified neighborhoods like SoHo in New York City have changed this. Art and cultural districts like this one have gained national notoriety for their rapid transformation and the controversy surrounding it. The evolution of an old, deteriorating warehouse neighborhood devastated by deindustrialization into a hip, cultural destination with an array of galleries, local restaurants, bars, and coffee shops is now a well-known urban transformation.

As a result of this growing popularity, the notion of using art and culture to improve underutilized urban neighborhoods has spread throughout our cities. An increasing number of local agencies are putting art and culture to work in the name of revitalization, resulting in a wide range of art and cultural districts. Also with the increasing exposure, theorists are now beginning to identify strategies and recommendations for cities and policymakers to enhance and/or preserve their art and cultural districts.

For these reasons, this has been both a relevant and timely study. The literature provides an explanation of why art and cultural districts have become more common in the urban environment. With cities formally and informally promoting art and culture, it is important to have an understanding of the phenomenon at hand. It would be beneficial to policymakers, developers, and other actors involved with these districts to first gain a strong understanding of the art and culture industry itself and the components of art and cultural districts.

The evaluative criteria were designed to improve the user’s understanding of the components of art and cultural districts. It is a tool for measurement of these dynamic places. The tool’s greatest value lies in its universal applicability. It was not designed with a specific art
and cultural district in mind, but instead with the knowledge gained from the literature review and introductory framing cases. Therefore, the evaluative criteria can and should be applied to various art and cultural districts.

With an increasingly diverse array of art and cultural districts, the evaluative criteria is even more important in order to gain a better understanding of the districts’ similarities and differences. Also, by utilizing the criteria, cities (and their policymakers) could have a better grasp of the districts that they are increasingly promoting and planning for.

The added understanding that the evaluative criteria can provide was illustrated through its application to Louisville’s East Market district. This thesis directly shows the benefit of this tool through the knowledge it provided on the East Market district. Furthermore, the evaluation identified the key factors of success for the district’s transformation to this point. The criteria were not chosen because each criterion is important to every district’s transformation. On the contrary, through a holistic evaluation, the key criterions can be extracted from the whole group. With the key criterions and success factors identified it is easier for policymakers and planners to implement strategies and initiatives to enhance or preserve the authenticity of art and cultural districts, such as the East Market district.

Lastly, this study has a great potential for continuation. The evaluative criteria have the potential to be expanded, primarily to include an additional empirical component of analysis. Also a comparative study could be conducted utilizing the criteria. This would lead to improvements of the evaluative criteria as well as the potential identification of universal success factors of art and cultural districts in general.
Works Cited


Figure A.1 Location Map and Aerial Image

Source: LOJIC
Figure A.2 Land Use Map (Neighborhood and District scale)

Source: LOJIC
Figure A.3 Figure-Ground Map (Neighborhood and District scale)

Source: LOJIC
Figure A.4 Form Districts and Zoning

Source: LOJIC
Figure A.5 District Parking and Alternative Modes of Transportation

Source: LOJIC
Table A.1  Index of East Market District art & cultural consumption opportunities

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<tr>
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