

Factors that determine Character.

Factors from the Authors.

The several authors cited in the readings herein have ideas on factors that contribute to the character of a town. They emphasize the emotional and experiential qualities of place rather than the physical presence of bricks and mortar. Excerpts follow that focus on the main ideas from each author. In sum, they all believe in the humanity of towns above all else. Words to plan by:

- **Love**...Kageyama
- **Fun**...Williams
- **Focus** development into livable settings...Calthorpe
- **Emotion**...cities are emotional experiences...Lynch
- **Memory**...Narratives and remembrances...Vale and Campanella
- **Build a story**...A civic story...The Fallows
- **Grandeur**...Make no ordinary plans...DeJean
- **Boldness**...Small plans do not stir the soul...Burham.

When examining character towns, look beyond the facades, find the people who are having fun.

For the Love of Cities, The Love Affair Between People and Their Places.

Peter Kageyama.

“ ‘The Soul of the Community’ is a three-year study, funded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation... and three key aspects of community consistently turned up as ‘magic ingredients’ to community satisfaction.” These were aesthetics, social offerings and openness. [p31] He goes on and on with thoughtful and applicable ideas for building cities that are creative, livable and successful places.

What I Found in a Thousand Towns, A Traveling Musician’s Guide to Rebuilding America’s Communities – One Coffee Shop, Dog Run, and Open-Mike at a Time.

Dar Williams.

"Some towns seem to be having more fun, seem to have their act together," singer-songwriter Dar Williams told CNBC's "On the Money" in an interview. "They have more dog walkers, more signs that say 'free coffee' instead of 'no bathroom'."

Peter Calthorpe’s 7 Principles:

- 1) Preserve – Natural, historic and agrarian resources;
- 2) Mix – uses, ages, incomes, everything;
- 3) Walk;
- 4) Bike ;
- 5) Connect ;
- 6) Ride;
- 7) Focus development into livable settings.

The Image of the City.

Kevin Lynch

In Chapter III, Mr. Lynch lists his elements of the city along with a concise definition of each:

- Paths,
- Edges,
- Districts,
- Nodes and Landmarks.

Professor Lynch goes on:

- First, Mr. Lynch presents the city as an emotional experience that exists in different weathers and lights, at different times of day and season and at different points in history. We can never see the entire city; we only see and experience pieces. The city always changes; one never finds the city the same from day to day.
- The second notion is his observation that “We are not simple observers of this spectacle, but are ourselves a part of it, on the stage with the other participants.”
- Thirdly, “There is no end state. The city goes on and on. “There is no final result, only a continuous succession of phases.”

The Resilient City, How Modern Cities Recover from Disaster.

Lawrence J. Vale and Thomas J. Campanella.

“Axioms of Resilience”

- “Narratives of Resilience are a Political Necessity,
- “Disasters Reveal the Resilience of Governments,
- “Narratives of Resilience are Always Contested,
- “Local Resilience is Linked to National Renewal,
- “Resilience is Underwritten by Outsiders,
- “Urban Rebuilding Symbolizes Human Resilience,
- “Remembrance Drives Resilience,
- “Resilience Benefits from the Inertia of Prior Investment,
- “Resilience Exploits the Power of Place,
- “Resilience Casts Opportunism as Opportunity,
- “Resilience, Like Disaster, is Site-Specific, and
- “Resilience Entails More than Rebuilding.”

How America is Putting Itself Back Together.

James Fallows with Deborah Fallows

“Eleven Signs a City will Succeed” offered by the article’s authors.

- Divisive national politics seems a distant concern.
- You can pick out the local patriots.
- “Public-private partnerships” are real.

- People know the civic story.
- They have a downtown.
- They are near a research university.
- They have, and care about, a community college.
- They have unusual schools.
- They make themselves open (as in receptive and welcoming to immigrants).
- They have big plans.
- They have craft breweries.

How Paris Became Paris, The Invention of the Modern City.

Joan DeJean.

The factors were:

- **Great architecture** such as distinctive architecture of private residences; residential architecture, uniform in design and gleaming in what was already seen as characteristic white stone, newly invented balconies, buildings laid out on generous parcels of land and facing wider and straighter streets...plus views of water, specifically the Seine.
- **Bridges** with views of the water rather than the conventional design of the times that includes housing and shops on both sides of the bridge. 'Pont Neuf was the first major city bridge built without houses lining both sides. Henry IV, unlike any of his predecessors, laid out social objectives for the bridge.
- **The place, or city square**, became an open, public space, surrounded by buildings. This modern city square "helped Paris become Paris". The social success of Place Royale was intentional. Place Royale had three basic goals: "1) to adorn Paris, 2) to provide a setting for public ceremonies, and 3) to give Parisians a recreational space".
- **Display** was a specific objective of the streets and parks. "Paris was invented as a place of 'grandeur,' a new kind of a 'wonder of the world,' famous for its streetlights and its boulevard and its romance with the Seine – and its fast-paced pedestrian life." Fashion, money and romance became an essential part of the story of Paris. New words that arose were: "financier, nouveaux riche, millionaire, fashion, coquette and gold digger.
- **Streets** were widening, first to promote improved traffic flow, but later justified as the new way to ornament his city of Paris to make Paris the most beautiful city in the world.
- **Boulevards and avenues** were created for pleasure walking and public display. The street became prominent with lighting, cobblestones, cleanliness, day and night shopping.
- **Sidewalks** were places for people to walk for pleasure and display the latest fashion, money and romance.
- **Urban infrastructure** like mail delivery, public transportation, street lights and street cleaning became common.