

Entertainment-Retail Centers in Hong Kong and Los Angeles: Trends and Lessons

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Abstract

This paper seeks to answer the question of why Entertainment Retail Centers (ERCs) develop as they do and what we can expect from these centers of consumption in the near future. Beginning with a “network” view of cities, where cities are nodes in an integrated economic system, the paper examines the evolution of and recent trends in the design of Entertainment Retail Centers (ERCs) in Los Angeles and Hong Kong. The analysis is organized along four related themes – land use, transportation, urban design and consumption pattern. The conclusion offers lessons that each city can learn from the other’s experience with ERCs.

Introduction

The newer versions of shopping malls whose programs combine entertainment options with more conventional retail ones are becoming known as entertainment-retail centers (ERCs) (Russell, 1997; Zukin, 1998; Davis, 1999; Beyard, 2001). ERCs aim to boost combined sales per square foot of leased floor area from both entertainment and retail markets by offering a convenient and diverse shopping “experience”. ERCs treat entertainment and retail uses as compatible services rather than separate land uses, and build on their complementary nature. They are a complex socio-economic phenomenon because of the issues of location, access, design, and consumption patterns associated with them. In the ‘network’ view of cities (Castells, 2000, 2005; Sassen, 1991, 2000; Taylor, 2003), ERCs play an important role as points of concentration of global capital and cultural production. As such, large-scale ERCs have become a frequent occurrence in top-tier “global cities” and are showing increasing incidence in cities around the world. In an ever more globalized world, ERCs are becoming emblematic of the ever greater turn in global cities for service-oriented economies and the growing relevance of consumptive- and leisure-oriented urban cultures (Fainstein and Stokes, 1998; Fainstein and Judd, 1999).

Hong Kong and Los Angeles represent avant-garde examples of these trends in their respective continents and the world at large (Beaverstock, et al., 2000); Smith and Timberlake, 2002). Through a comparative study of selected ERCs in these two global cities, we examine how imperatives of globalization, socio-cultural factors, and physical urban conditions are affecting and are affected by the creation and transformation of these spaces. Within the vastly different contexts of the two cities, we are interested in understanding processes of convergence and/or divergence of urban design and planning practices, their causal factors, and their implications. We also provide insight about the role played by local factors in mediating the influence of globalization. As many other cities around the world follow the development

paths of Hong Kong and/or Los Angeles, it is important to critically examine their trends to draw lessons that can orient both these global cities' trajectories and those of the cities that follow in their footsteps.

The research questions driving this work are: How does the development of entertainment-retail centers compare in these cities since the mid-twentieth century? What factors have caused a convergence or divergence of the planning and design of ERCs in these cities? What do we learn from them regarding the specificity of these cities and the ways in which their institutions and urban fabrics have mediated global economic and cultural forces? And what policy, planning, and design recommendations can be made regarding the future development of ERCs in both cities so that they maintain or enhance their economic attractiveness and best respond to urban and cultural determinants and needs? The analysis is driven by four major themes: land use, transportation, urban design, and consumption patterns.

There are two main lessons drawn from this comparative study. First, evidence suggests that globalization does not simply homogenize practices and values, as a large part of these cities morphological and cultural evolutions have been ultimately context-dependent. The second is that whereas Hong Kong was catching up with the American mall phenomenon in the 1960s, it is now leading Los Angeles in the design and development of ERCs when we account for the need to move toward more smart-growth practices such as planning for mixed use, encouraging public transit and pedestrian friendliness, and thinking strategically about the entire city. The study results in recommendations for future urban design, transportation, land use, and city image-making policies related to ERCs, and lessons for designers, planners, city officials, and developers in these two cities and beyond.

Methodology

Based on qualitative case study methodology, the project employs triangulation of five key research methods. They are literature review (including content-analysis of media), site analysis, participant observation, user surveys, and semi-structured interviews. The framework of analysis, which includes land use, transportation, architectural and urban design, and consumption patterns, was applied throughout the different research methods employed. Aside from scholarly literature review on space and identity in these two cities in general, and shopping centers, entertainment and retail uses in particular, marketing brochures and Internet sites also served as data for content analysis that contributed to our understanding of how ERCs reflect land use, transportation, design, consumption patterns, and market segmentation in each city and how they are used for image-making by these cities' promoters. Comparative site analyses of ERCs in HK and LA were performed to document and understand their current conditions related to land use, transportation, design, and consumption patterns. Additionally, the

physical interface with urbanized areas adjacent to the ERCs and the potential for design interventions were examined. We further studied one representative case study of the most recent typology of ERC development in each city: The Grove as Los Angeles's 'Millennial Generation ERC', and Pacific Place as Hong Kong's 'Transit-oriented ERC'. We used participant observation in both cities to experience and assess the ambience and urbanism of the ERCs, and respond to the following questions: Who visits ERCs (age, gender, ethnicity, class, etc.), for how long, what are the purposes of the visits, what retail and entertainment elements are more (or less) patronized, and how do the subvariables studied (related to land use, transportation, urban design, and consumer patterns) influence their experience of the ERCs. We collected more than 60 user opinion surveys administered online to people who have visited ERCs in *both* cities. The subjects were sought in students' associations at USC and UCLA and from among other acquaintances that have experienced ERCs in HK and LA. These subjects were in turn asked for referrals to other subjects, who were then selected using the snowball sampling technique. This survey was designed to assess the perceptions of visitors regarding their experience of using ERCs in both cities. The sample has a bias for college students. We have attempted to partially account for this bias by posing questions regarding the general use of malls in addition to individual experience. We drew on face-to-face and phone semi-structured interviews with several scholars who have done research and fieldwork in either Los Angeles or Hong Kong, or both. We also interviewed a dozen survey respondents using a semi-structured format for each interview, inquiring further about some of their survey responses and about our own interpretation of the factors and subvariables in each city. Surveys and interviews were used to validate information gathered with other research methods.

Hong Kong and Los Angeles: Vastly Different, Uniquely Similar

These seemingly disparate cities are both globally important centers of consumption, and nodes of high capital and information flows. In analysis presented by Beaverstock, et al. (2000), both cities are counted among the "alpha" (p. 127) cities of the world. The designation denotes the "level of service provision" by firms in "accountancy, advertising, banking/finance, and commercial law" (ibid). Only 10 out of 55 "world cities" have been classified as 'alpha' cities. With only 3 cities in the first tier—London, New York, and Tokyo—the authors also analyze linkages to London based on the services provided by London-based firms located in the other cities. Although Hong Kong is found to have a stronger link to London, Los Angeles is also in the second tier, based on this relationship. According to a study based on air travel data presented by Smith and Timberlake (2002), Los Angeles and Hong Kong hold ranks 7th and 8th respectively (in 1997). Here, the rank represents relative "power", defined as the "ability to dominate the whole system across spheres" (Burt and Schott, cited in Smith and Timberlake 2002, 123). This broad definition is loosely associated with air travel by the authors. Based on these and other various standards

based on capital, information, and human flows, both cities in question are amongst the most influential in the world and quite close to each other in global ranking.

Further, both cities are home to large multicultural populations. Significantly, the two cities are also centers of large entertainment industries, including film, television, and music. These industries are engines of cultural production with wide regional spheres of influence. The large populations in both cities interact with media flows to create an imagined (although somewhat asymmetrical) relationship between these two cities. In other words, the allusion to symbols (e.g., landmarks, place names, etc.) of California (and in particular of Los Angeles) is more frequent in Hong Kong, than vice versa. Some of the prominent signifiers in Hong Kong include 'Westwood', 'Bel Air', 'Hollywood', and 'California' itself. In terms of urban form, however, the two cities are poles apart. Whereas Hong Kong is characterized by high density and reliance on public transportation, Los Angeles represents sprawl and car-dependence. These remarkable differences notwithstanding, the two cities show several significant similarities in their approach to designing entertainment-retail spaces. The similarity, or convergence towards a similar style, is not typical of these two cities alone. It is the vast differences that separate these two cities, however, what make the similarities all the more significant and worthy of inquiry. The phenomenon points to the existence of a logic of markets, which transcends geographical boundaries. This internal logic is more apparent in the case of cities most integrated with networks of global capital.

Evolution of Shopping Centers in the Two Cities

Both Los Angeles and Hong Kong have inspired a vast body of work on all aspects of planning. This paper deals with only a specific part of these complex cities. We are looking at the historical evolution of entertainment-retail centers in the context of the variables of land use, transportation, and urban design, along with associated socio-economic and cultural trends related to consumption. Additionally, we are concerned with how these cities evolved as centers of consumption and entertainment, and how these functions, mediated by their entertainment-retail spaces came to be a major determinant of the very identity of these cities.

The conceptualization of the entertainment-retail center follows the observed trend, in recent years, of the increased cohabitation of entertainment (including spaces for social congregation and interaction) and retail activities in spaces of consumption (Goss, 1993; Shillingburg, 1994; Zukin, 1998; Beyard, 2001). This tendency to create an economy of scale in terms of clientele also has political implications. Most significantly, it brings certain activities that were traditionally part of the public sphere into the private realm. Additionally, the globalization of the economy has led to the creation of consumptive societies,

and the propinquity of entertainment and retail in fast growing metropolises has facilitated this process. The resulting hybrid urban programs and forms of ERCs are a product of the interaction of local place-based characteristics with less place-grounded spatial arrangements designed for a globalized economic agenda and cultural taste.

Our research is based on a framework of four variables – land use, transportation, urban design and consumption pattern. The findings, based on these variables, suggest that since the 1960s there was a convergence in retail center styles in the two cities studied, with Hong Kong following the trends observed in Los Angeles (and the United States in general). Large shopping centers, which had become common in the United States were replicated in Hong Kong capturing both the climate and the economies of scale. This, however, was followed by a divergence of styles in the late 20th century with each city developing in accordance with its own spatial, political, and market contexts. Whereas ERCs in Los Angeles followed its sprawl and decentralization, in Hong Kong ERCs tended to become a part of the city's contiguous fabric. At the turn of the new century, a degree of convergence has once again emerged with entertainment and retail increasingly coexisting in the same place and hybrids of earlier styles being created. This new convergence suggests that in postmodern global cities, certain urban processes are becoming increasingly context-free. In other words, these processes are being defined to a large extent by “agencies of globalization”—i.e. capital, information, people and culture (Pizarro et al., 2004)—and not solely by local characteristics. At the same time, practices of urban planning and design are far from homogenized between these two cities. At the beginning of this century, Hong Kong seems to be leading the innovation in the built environment, with special attention to what can be conceived in the U.S. as smart growth policies—compact, efficient, mixed-use, and pedestrian- and transit-oriented development models.

Although there had been shopping centers in the United States in the 1920s and 1930s, it was only in the post-War World II period of construction boom that shopping malls became really popular. Therefore, the phenomenon of malls shares a temporal correlation with suburbanization. The causes of suburbanization, including race relations and the rising automobile ownership and dependence, assisted the growth of malls (Hanchett, 1996; Longstreth, 1998). Hanchett particularly draws attention to the federal tax policies including “accelerated depreciation” on new construction (p. 1083), which in the mid-1950s made the construction of large structures a lucrative tax abatement strategy for developers. Data on the number of malls in the United States between 1947 and 1960 presented by Hanchett (1996) show that there was a

rapid proliferation of both “regional centers”¹ as well as shopping centers of all scales. In concurrence with Hanchett’s hypothesis, a large spurt occurred right after 1954 when the new Internal Revenue Code was passed into law.² The number of new large regional malls constructed annually rose from 5 in 1955 to 25 in 1956. In the same period the total number of malls constructed annually rose from 104 to 156.

Jackson (1996) summarizes the causes of rapid proliferation of centralized retail activities in the postwar era and through the 1960s. These include tax policies that allowed retail to precede residential development, availability of cheap developed land at the peripheries of cities, relatively weak land regulations, subsidized automobile travel, and the depreciation of land rent in the suburbs. Cohen (1996) also notes that consumption was glorified in the early postwar years. She also argues that suburbanization nurtured malls by providing cheap locations in the midst of wealthy residents. Her main point, however, is regarding the political effects of the shift of retail activity from town centers to shopping centers. Cohen argues that privatization of retail activity through shopping centers contributed to social segregation and exclusion. Significantly, she also points out that by the 1960s, malls had already become the “distinctive public space.... for a new kind of community life” (p. 1068).

The view that shopping centers have substantively compromised democratic public space is shared by other scholars (Jackson, 1996; Goss, 1993). Cohen cites court cases from past decades to illustrate the jostle between private property rights and constitutional First Amendment’s guarantees of free speech. Although courts have ruled both ways on the issue, the arguments from both sides leave no doubt about the mall having partially replaced city streets as “public” forums. As Cohen perceptively points out, the proponents for free speech operating in private shopping centers, are, by their very presence there, endorsing the very institutions that undermine their existence. The issue then is not solely about free speech, but more generally about a “transformation of the public sphere” (Habermas, 1989). Goss (1993), offering a Marxist critique, calls the modern mall a “pseudoplace” where developers disguise the “contemporary capitalist social order” with facades and activities that give the impression that “something else other than mere shopping is going on” (p. 19). This need for “something else” goes a long way in explaining the recent emergence of entertainment-retail complexes.

Thus, for the purpose of this study, we can identify two related strands in the literature on spaces of consumption and entertainment. The first deals with economic *reasons* for the development of these

¹ Defined as “[c]enters of over 300,000 square feet each” (Hanchett, 1996, p.1098).

² The law was passed under the Eisenhower administration when the Republican Party enjoyed a majority in the senate.

spaces, and the second with the social, cultural and political *implications* of the phenomenon. Therefore, at the risk of some reduction, malls have predominantly been studied as economic entities with socio-political implications. There are two limitations to this approach that this study would like to address. Firstly, there has been a lack of attention to processes of globalization and transnational flows of capital and culture in the analysis of shopping malls. Furthermore, a largely U.S.-centered approach has left out an understanding of the significance of the mall as a social product in other societies. Secondly, the literature lacks a sufficient appreciation of the particularities of urban planning and design associated with shopping centers. A body of work addresses the issues of the organization of space within the mall, and its architectonics (Chase, 1991; Goss, 1993; Sterne, 1997). This work is useful in understanding how design mediates the cognitive relationship between consumers and commodities. However, these mainly architectural studies are by definition limited to the building, and not oriented towards the urban setting. This paper seeks to address these gaps by moving towards an understanding of the relationship of shopping spaces to their urban and glocal contexts. It considers ERCs not only the construction of economics, but also of urban, social, and cultural forces, and simultaneously as agents for the mediation of these forces in the built environment of localized places. To this end, the study explores the historical trajectories of ERCs's typologies in Honk Kong and Los Angeles to show how different kinds of ERCs are the results of the interaction of a complex set of forces.

Entertainment-Retail Spaces in Hong Kong and Los Angeles

Los Angeles

The earlier entertainment-retail developments in the US occurred at the turn of the nineteenth century, between 1895 and 1920, when the downtown entertainment district and the multi-storied shopping emporium were created. The earliest forms recognized as shopping centers in the US date back to the 1920s and 1930s (Longstreth, 1998). With a fast industrialization process, the traditional organic street shops were reorganized into formal blocks under the street grid system. Shopping was developed in separated buildings with housing and offices above. This type of development was named the urban block model, or street shopping. Street shopping was usually designed as part of a new town center. Eventually it became a basic composition form of cities and spread on many “main streets”.

Suburban and urban regional centers: beginning in the 1950s

In the process of suburbanization during the 1930s and 1940s, a shopping mall type known as the ‘dumbbell mall’ was created as a fundamental element in the strategies of decentralization. Originally its basic form consisted of two large department store anchors connected by a series of outdoor pedestrian atrium spaces. It was utilized to reform the fragmented nature of development in both urban and suburban

areas (Crawford, 2002). In the 1950s, developers, planners, and architects endeavored to increase urban density and integrate commerce into community life. The pioneer mall designer Victor Gruen developed a new mall type—the enclosed mall, which grouped everyday retail under covered and climate-controlled central spaces. During the next few decades, the enclosed mall expanded to regional mega malls, suggesting new forms of civic realms. Designers and developers generated several distinctive mall types. Some basic configurations of regional malls in the LA region included: the enclosed mall with atrium built around a dominant centralized space, for example, the Westside Pavilion in Westwood and Santa Anita Fashion Park in Arcadia; the multi-storied, vertical centers, usually located in restricted sites or city centers, such as the Seventh Market Place in downtown LA; and the arcade and galleria centers that constitute linear features in suburban areas, such as Glendale Galleria in Glendale and the Galleria at South Bay, Redondo Beach (Barry, 1990).

The character of these entertainment-retail centers constituted standardized products with reproducible features that could be built on any site with adequate space. Most suburban malls are two to three story buildings with a retail space ranging from 80,000 to 125,000 square meters. Typically, suburban shopping centers in Los Angeles are essentially mono-functional (i.e., commercial uses only), are far from the central areas of the city, and difficult to access without a personal vehicle. The surrounding areas of the development are dominated by non-residential services, big surface parking, and vehicular roads. The shopping places are inward-oriented and have little connection with the surrounding communities because of their enclosed nature. The outside facades are blank and uninteresting (the centers look like “big boxes”), and the interior activities are invisible from the street.

Reinvented street: beginning in the 1980s

New styles of retail and entertainment centers emerged at the beginning of the 1980s. Many projects combined traditional retail with nightlife and dining options. Banerjee et al. (1996) formulate the concept of the “reinvented street” as a style of ERC. One example is Third Street Promenade in Santa Monica, California. In the 1960s, a section of Third Street was converted into a pedestrian mall, but had turned out to be an unsuccessful project. In the 1980s, the mall was successfully reinvented as the Third Street Promenade, involving a popular mix of activities devoted to movies, recreation, nightclubs, and restaurants. The reinvented street attempted to create a novel walking experience in the midst of a largely auto-dependent urban form. Drawing inspiration from European city centers, the reinvented street turned its very form into an attraction and selling point. However, unlike in Europe, most visitors still drive to this destination and park before walking in the reinvented street. The Promenade is thus surrounded by several parking structures. Another regional example, Old Town Pasadena underwent a similar

transformation in the 1980-90s. The ongoing Grand Avenue and Figueroa Corridor projects in downtown LA are now replicating the experience. This idea was so successful that it spurred a whole new generation of entertainment-retail design, which *entirely* manufactured street experiences. This format of ER design is discussed below.

Invented streets: beginning in the 1990s

Following Banerjee et al. (1996) and Banerjee (2001), we concur that there exists a “vernacular LA tradition” for the creation of entertainment-retail centers—that of “invented streets”. Through the 1990s, these newer ERCs transformed the old retail landscape by introducing themed entertainment, new media, and stage settings. CityWalk in MCA Universal Studios is a street set designed from scratch, and offers a mix of specialty stores, signature restaurants, and entertainment options (Bierman, 1994; Soja, 1989, 1996). Another prominent example of invented street is Two Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills, which is characterized by its European theme, and high-end retail brand names. The success of the reinvented and invented streets and increasing competition between retail destinations ushered a generation of entertainment-retail design based on providing a novel spatial experience through the theming of the built environment (Gottdiener, 1997).

Millennial generation: hybrid, themed complexes of the 2000s

Facing increasing competition, the programs of retail destinations were broadened to include compatible activities (such as restaurants and entertainment) with increasing intensity. Recent mixed-use ERCs such as Paseo Colorado in Pasadena, Hollywood & Highland in Hollywood, and The Grove in Los Angeles, represent new trends of adopting relatively higher density development patterns, creating special cultural nodes, and blending them into the urban fabric. We call this type of entertainment-retail centers the *Millennial Generation*. These centers build upon the typological features developed by the aforementioned predecessors, particularly the reuse and reconfiguration of existing commercial space, to cater to a better-defined market. To some extent (limited by exclusivity of brands and prices) the millennial generation also succeeded in bringing back a lost ‘publicness’ to the shopping center. We examine The Grove in greater detail below as an exemplar of the most recent typology of ERCs in Los Angeles.

Hong Kong

Hong Kong’s trajectory of retail development is closely related to its colonial history under the British government and to its relation to mainland China. From 1530 to 1840, foreign merchants gradually established offices in Macao and Hong Kong as well as in Canton, China. After the liberation of China

from the British in 1949, Hong Kong remained as a bastion of the British and was flooded with two million immigrants who brought capital and skills to help establish many manufacturing industries. Between 1949 and 1997, Hong Kong still operated under British rule and served as a gateway to China. In 1997 when Hong Kong was returned to the Chinese government, it had become a world-class commercial center with many modern skyscrapers, a strong urban infrastructure, and a population of over six million.

Multiuse buildings: beginning in the 1930s

In Hong Kong, shopping has been an integral part of the urban fabric from the very beginning. Liang (1973), in an analysis of land use in Hong Kong, developed a hierarchy of “business centres” (p. 111). Liang’s analysis reveals that apart from the areas of high-income residential uses, the ground level of almost all the urban land on the Kowloon peninsula is occupied by commercial uses. “This commercial stratum extends vertically in certain nucleations, like cones, to different heights and extents, depending on the accessibility and spatial distribution of purchasing power” (ibid).

Land use regulations in Hong Kong determined height and bulk for buildings to compensate for the paucity of usable land in the city. Understandably, this resulted in predominantly tall buildings that could multiply floor area ratios, since building horizontally was not an option in a constrained island geography. Hence, single-story ‘big-box’ stores were precluded from the start. In the tall buildings, the share of floor space for commercial use was determined by allocations based on demand of space for particular uses. In contrast, in Los Angeles, the availability of large amounts of undeveloped space created an incentive to sprawl. The market-based use of land in Los Angeles was predominantly horizontal, whereas it was vertical in Hong Kong. Therefore, the availability of land and the regulations in place to manage land were determinant in defining form in each city. However, the allocation of uses was determined by market principles in both cases. The period from 1930 to 1970 in Hong Kong has been described as an era of “transformation” (McDonogh and Wong, 2005, 61-88). This period featured the proliferation of 4-storey structures. The buildings had commercial use on the first level and residential use on upper floors. Citing the *1951 Hong Kong Report*, the authors highlight the high densities and poor living conditions afforded to the small apartments within these buildings.

The early malls: beginning in the 1960s

In Hong Kong, traditional street retail within mixed use zones has been the norm since the city began to grow under British occupation in the 19th century. It was only in the 1960s that shopping malls appeared in the city. Relative to Los Angeles, the phenomenon of the shopping mall came 15-20 years later to Hong Kong, but with a difference. In Hong Kong malls developed as a part of the urban fabric, not a

destination on the outskirts of the city. Malls in Hong Kong were within walking distance of residential quarters and public transport. In 1965, 100 twenty-storey buildings were planned in Kowloon, to be funded by Mobil Oil and to house 90,000 people. These buildings were planned to include malls, cinemas, public transport and other religious and educational public uses (McDonogh and Wong, 2005).

Compared to Los Angeles, Hong Kong's shopping developments are more mixed-use, directly linked with housing, entertainment, and transit. Most developments have only happened in the past 40 years. In the 1960s, Hong Kong was transforming from an industrial colony to a financial center in Asia. The Ocean Terminal shopping mall opened in 1966 marking the beginning of the first generation of Hong Kong's shopping centers and of the greater 'Hong Kong's malling' phenomenon (So, 2000; Lui, 2001). In the following years, the Ocean Terminal became a part of a larger complex, the Harbor City shopping mall. Lui (2001) calls Ocean Terminal "an icon of the new times" (p.33). At the time "shopping was still a chore, not the unofficial national sport it is today" (Lim as cited in Lui, 2001, 34). The early malls were exclusive by price and aimed at attracting tourists. Lui (2001) underlines the cultural and symbolic significance of the Ocean Terminal mall as the site for socialization into a consumer culture, a space to "explore the freedom of consuming" (ibid, 40), by observation of elite behavior and by discovering one's consumer identity by window shopping.

Stratified malls: beginning in the 1970s

As Hong Kong became an entrepot for Chinese manufacturing, a large number of shops and shopping centers opened in different parts of the city. A *hierarchy* of shopping centers emerged, defined by brands, status of merchandise on sale, and the social background of clients (Lui, 2001). "These shopping malls belong to a new generation and are well stratified according to the status of shops and spending power of their customers" (ibid, 39). Additionally, there was a general tendency of integrating shopping with business and housing, not only in the main urban areas but also in the new towns (Bristow, 1989). This requirement of planning for malls is still prevalent and extends to public housing projects as well (Lui, 2001). The government policy to mix housing with retail changed the socio-economic status and living conditions of public housing residents. After some of these projects were built, public housing residents were no longer seen as poor working class people, but rather as more affluent individuals who could afford high consumption (Liu, 2001).

Lui lists City Plaza and the Landmark shopping centers as prominent examples of malls in the topmost category of the new evolving hierarchy that had malls "penetrating almost every corner of Hong Kong" (2001, 40). Efforts were also made to link new developments to appropriate public transportation systems,

including bus routes and the metro. The Landmark, for example, is located above one of the busiest metro stations. The most significant impact of the stratified malls was to make shopping an everyday activity for everyone. Stratified malls transcended both class and geography by being included in public housing and in peripheral new towns. This period paved the way for the most contemporary style of development—entertainment-retail centers—which have become the hubs of consumption *and* social life, reflecting what Lui calls the “dominance of consumerism” (ibid, 40).

Transit oriented ERCs: beginning in the 1980s

Since the late 1980s, a new generation of entertainment-retail centers came into being and established new categories according to the status of shops and purchasing power of the new customers. More gigantic ERCs such as Pacific Place, Dragon Center, Times Square, Plaza Hollywood, and Festival Walk were built. Each of these shopping centers is composed of a group of high-rise towers with housing, offices, and hotels on a ER podium. A variety of venues such as retail, entertainment, commercial and sports clubs are included in such podium, which support an increasingly sophisticated urban life. Compactness draws the flows of people through an intensive network of multi-modal circulation. Many developments are prefabricated for cost-effective construction. According to Yeung (2002), the structures are repetitive, coded under planning restrictions and real estate market demand. Although this is true of the general layout of ERCs, it should also be mentioned that the designs, especially the interiors, aspire for a unique sense of place through the use of decoration, art installations, lighting, views, etc.

The malls in this category contribute to shape the current consumptive and entertainment culture of Hong Kong. Each of the examples mentioned above contain a significant entertainment component. Although, in most cases, these malls contain high-end retail opportunities, some relatively affordable names can also be found to attract diverse consumers from the steady stream of commuters passing through the malls. These malls, with their expensive furnishings, entertainment options and window-shopping opportunities, have become the preminent points of social rendezvous, especially for the youth. The most recent developments which reflect this style of development are LA Live and the Grand Avenue project. According to its developers (AEG) LA Live is a 4 million square foot mixed-use entertainment retail center that includes sports entertainment venues along with a club, hotel, offices, residential and commercial uses. The Grand Avenue project is located in downtown Los Angeles and aims to restore vibrancy to a site of 3.6 million square feet. Planned to complement and add value to the existing Walt Disney concert hall, the project will include a park, new housing units, a hotel and various entertainment and retail options. Both projects will cost in the excess of \$2 billion.

In the next section, we compare one case study from each city that represents its most recent ERC style to elucidate more explicitly the similarities and differences that exists between the typologies, as well as the implications for the future of ERCs development in both cities. We consider The Grove, which is a typical example of the millennial generation in Los Angeles, and compare it with Pacific Place, of Hong Kong's multiuse transit-oriented style.

Comparing Los Angeles's Millennial Generation with Hong Kong's Transit-Oriented ERCs

The comparison of a case from each city's contemporary style of ERC is made along the variables of land use, transportation, urban design and consumption patterns. We observe that in the two cities, which are very alike in their adherence to product marketing and sales management aspects of goods in the global economy, the styles of ERCs have evolved along different historical trajectories. We also see that the impact of globalization is not to completely homogenize urban form, and that despite the convergences, key aspects of previous ERC styles remain in both cities. We suggest that, whereas Hong Kong followed Los Angeles (and in general the United States) in the 1960s, it is now mainly Los Angeles that has lessons to draw from Hong Kong's ERC design.

LA's Millennial Generation: The Grove

Land Use

The Grove is a boutique outdoor ERC located across the street from the historic Los Angeles Farmers Market. It features a combination of small retail, large chain stores, a 14-screen cinema, and outdoor attractions such as a dancing fountain, a lawn, a free streetcar, and themed streetscape. It opened in 2002 and was designed by Caruso Affiliated to resemble "the great Los Angeles boulevards of the 1930's and 1940's" (Caruso Affiliated 2006, *sic*). Historical accuracy, however, was not the prime concern in recreating shop fronts of the 1930s at The Grove. The scheme of (false) façades and other effects at The Grove, including a trolley running quarter-mile circles around the site, does simulate an older period. In a region of scant architectural unity, even a faux attempt at harmony is an attractive departure, as proven by the 18 million people who visited in the first year alone (*ibid*). However, the horizontal mall with two to three-storey stories hardly does justice to the stated model of the boulevards of the 1930s and 1940s. Ironically, the mall gives its back to the real Los Angeles streets. It is designed around a central pedestrian core and leaves its parking facility and blank back façades of the stores facing the street.

The ratio of width of the inner pedestrian street to the height of the abutting buildings and the style of façades and streetscape demonstrate the attempt to create the ambience of a European central city. In keeping with typical images of European urbanism, some cafés are allowed to spill over into the

circulation area. The space often gets pretty crowded and a certain degree of random social interaction, as prescribed by Jane Jacobs (1961) in her review of successful urban places, is achieved. However the preeminence of consumerism over *flânerie* is a noticeable difference between The Grove and most European comparisons. Moreover, the bulk of the buildings, the use of false façades, the giant chain stores (e.g., Apple, Gap, Barnes and Noble, and Cheesecake Factory, to name a few in different product categories), and the lack of mixed uses (most notably the lack of housing) make European pretensions rather superficial.

Transportation

To its credit, The Grove is not completely cut off from public transportation. This is largely due to the fact that it was created well inside the thickly populated parts of Los Angeles and public bus lines were already in place. No new lines have been added by the Metropolitan Transit Authority on account of the development of The Grove. There are no studies of transit ridership of The Grove clientele. However, if the usually packed eight-level 3,500-space parking is any indication, the average \$126 shopping is rarely carried away in public buses. There is no metro station in the vicinity of The Grove, and there has been no attempt to run shuttles to the nearest metro station, or to install a taxi service specially for the shopping center's needs, or to have new bus lines (in collaboration with the existing Transit Authority or independently) service the primary catchment area of the ERC. Transportation connections exist but are used primarily by the lower-income workforce of The Grove. Clients are encouraged to use cars (3,500-space parking structure, free parking for two hours with validation, and only \$2.00, 3 hour-parking cost). The L-shaped block on the northern side of the site (Figure 1) is the parking structure. As can be seen from the image, the parking structure takes up nearly half of the site area. It is also the tallest structure on the site.

Design

As compared to the generations of shopping centers before, The Grove deserves credit for attempting to buck the trend and create a sense of 'place' (especially with the help of sophisticated stage-setting design and special events) rather than a merely functional mall space. Its popularity is evidence of its design success. From a marketing perspective, The Grove ranks highly for its innovations. In terms of its design, The Grove is a space of hybridity. There is hybridity between the typical American mall and the idyllic European city center. The ease of purchase, grouping of brands (across product types) specifically for a certain class of consumers, and a large garage for parking makes The Grove quintessentially American. This character is, however, dressed up in a design façade that attempts to replicate the outdoor walking and public space experiences such as those of a typical European city center. There is also hybridity

between various earlier generations of malls and shopping centers in Los Angeles. The Grove functions as a regional center in terms of reach and activity. At the same time, the place also has the themed affects of a typical Los Angeles “invented street”. Further, there is a hybrid character to the relationship between private and public at The Grove. Although it was conceptualized and executed by private interests, the project involved a well-publicized effort of public engagement. This was not a legally-mandated effort, but rather a calculated strategy of the developer to minimize discontent and maximize publicity. Finally, the use of architecture and design itself as a source of entertainment (in the same vein as Disneyland or Las Vegas’ Strip), is the next level of hybridity. This includes a musical fountain with an adjoining children’s play area, and pastel-colored buildings. The effect of this invented urbanism is completed with sidewalk cafés and an electric cable car, from where to appreciate the façade-deep architectural themes.

A significant feature of the design of The Grove is the preservation of the historic Farmers Market. The market enhances dimensions of history, authenticity and community while adding more than a 100 dining and shopping options to the site. The Farmers Market, which dates back to 1934 (Farmers Market, Los Angeles), had evolved into a veritable landmark in the Los Angeles landscape by 1941, when it was renovated. The market has itself been lent a new wave of popularity because of the large market attracted by The Grove, which abuts the property and is internally connected by the main pedestrian path and the cable car running along it. The architecture and uses of the Farmers Market have not been significantly modified and it is allowed to operate as a distinct yet complementary node. A similar degree of interaction was, however, not sought with the public park which is just across the street from The Grove, on the East (see Figure 1). The park remains cut off from the main circulation of The Grove.

Consumption Patterns

There is no question about the success of The Grove, with reported “sales per square foot that are 40% above the industry average” and with numbers of annual visitors surpassing those of Disneyland (Caruso Affiliated, 2006). There is also little doubt regarding the exclusive nature of this upscale retail space. According to the website of The Grove’s developers (Caruso Affiliated, 2006), the average local customer visits 34 times a year, and 92% of the times leaves with an average purchase of \$126. The local customer base for this impressive consumption is drawn from some of the upscale neighborhoods in Los Angeles, as evidenced by the residential zip code of customers.

Although it cannot avoid the charge of being somewhat exclusive and elitist (because of the price and type of commodities offered, where even the movie tickets are more expensive than elsewhere), its tremendous popularity suggests that the design has managed to create a new form of public space. It is

still privately owned (as shopping centers before it), but includes uses beyond simply shopping. As described above, it has taken the next steps towards evolving past mall design into an entertainment-retail destination. It has to be noted that the popularity of The Grove is also due to the general paucity of good quality public space in Los Angeles. The brilliance of the Grove is that it creates at least the illusion of vibrant civic space in a city that has hardly any to speak of.

The developer has consolidated the success of the model by creating new “lifestyle centers” in other location of the region. Most significantly the next generation of ERCs will include an increasing proportion of residential use. The next generation also promises to be larger and increasingly diverse, the Santa Anita Park in Arcadia, California, for example, will include a racetrack.

Hong Kong's Transit-Oriented ERCs: Pacific Place

Land Use

The Pacific Place mall is a massive mixed-use complex in Hong Kong's commercial center. The site includes three five-star hotels (Marriot, Shangri-La and Conrad), apartments, office space, conference center and shopping mall. The high-rise design has four buildings of 40 to 60 floors (Figure 2). The project was built in three phases beginning in the late 1980s with the first mall opening in 1988. The most recent building was completed in 2004 (Emporis Buildings, 2004). In Figure 2, the building on the North is One Pacific Place. Moving clockwise, on the East are the Atrium Apartments, followed by Two Pacific Place on the South and Three Pacific Place on the West.

The shopping center at Pacific Place has five floors with plenty of circulation space, relatively high-end shopping options and a four-screen cinema theatre. It is crowded around the clock thanks to the neighboring mixed uses and its location above the intersection of two subway lines, with an exit opening directly inside the mall. This is Hong Kong's model for paying for its metro stations—allowing malls to be built directly above them. The developers pay for the station and in turn receive a ceaseless flow of pedestrians walking through their mall. Another huge distinction is density. The Grove has 585,000 square feet of floor area on a site of 17.4 acres. In comparison, Pacific Place has 5,000,000 square feet of floor area on only 6.5 acres. This high density, also sustained in the surroundings of the ERC, ensures both viable public transport and economic vitality for the ERC.

Transportation

The integration with public transportation between the two malls is an obvious difference. On the website of The Grove, directions are offered for cars approaching from the various freeways. On the Pacific Place

website, directions are for access through subway, buses, and taxis. In fact, Pacific Place with all its mixed use and five million square feet of floor area has only 500 parking spots, conveniently located underground; whereas at The Grove, the above-ground parking structure is the bulkiest of the complex. The entire Pacific Place, like the rest of the city, is designed around public transit and pedestrian accessibility and comfort. In Hong Kong, the activity of *flanerie* has shifted to climate-controlled indoor environments. The air-conditioned subway system, malls, and walkways attract pedestrians for ‘hanging out’ as well as for commerce.

Hong Kong’s transit-oriented ERCs are a result of strategic planning and public-private partnerships. ERCs, as seen in Pacific Place and other similar centers (such as the International Financial Center or IFC Mall and Skywalk) are a way of life in Hong Kong because they are fully integrated into the functions of everyday life and the regular pathways of many pedestrians. Hong Kong’s strategy is not to make malls a destination, but rather to place them on the way to every destination. This is how this newest category of retail has evolved in the peculiar context of Hong Kong and has become a well-adjusted vernacular style.

Design

Pacific Place is located on the site of former British barracks. “The mall... is a podium for top hotels and is flanked by the Hong Kong Supreme Court and the British Council” (McDonogh and Wong, 2001, p.17). Pacific Place mall conforms to the design features of typical enclosed mall, including architectonics for maximum exposure to products and inducement to spend. There is a distinct modernist to both the façade of the three structures that comprise Pacific Place (hotel, offices, housing and ERC). This enclosed space should, however, be read in context. Relative to the shopping streets around the mall, the indoor space of the mall offers an experience of *flanerie* which, somewhat paradoxically, is not available in the otherwise eminently walkable city. This includes a controlled climate (temperature, humidity and odour), obstruction-free walking (i.e. fewer people and no construction-related artefacts), and the option of comfortable, leisurely window-shopping. In addition, “live piano performance and special music programs fill the mall with a relaxing ambience for shopping” (Swire Properties, 1999).

Pacific Place is comprised of three buildings, which contain a conference center, 270 residential units, office space and three hotels. One Pacific Place houses “860,000 sq. ft. of world-class office accommodation on 36 floors, each providing approximately 20,000 to 22,000 square feet (lettable)” (Swire Properties, 1999). In addition, Two Pacific Place includes “a total of 700,000 square feet of Grade A office space on 27 floors” (ibid). The newest addition, Three Pacific Place, is a dedicated 38-storey Grade A+ office tower with 620,000 square feet, located right above the Admiralty MTR station (ibid).

Consumption Patterns

Writing in 2001, Wong and Mc Donogh, report an interview with a maid who was resident of Hong Kong since 1993. Her only visit to the cinema had been at Pacific Place – an experience she had not sought again because the HK\$ 50 ticket had been too expensive, equivalent to “nearly 7% of her weekly salary”. There is little doubt that all sections of the Hong Kong population do not exercise the privilege of access to Pacific Place. Much like The Grove, this large, “upscale” ERC has a specific place in a hierarchical organization of such spaces. An indication of this differentiation, and the image and patrons sought by Pacific Plaza, can be had from the fact that at any time all but one or two screens of the six-screen theater at the AMC Pacific Place multiplex (formerly United Artists Pacific Place), are playing Hollywood (or other English-language) films (without dubbing, with Chinese subtitles).

The Pacific Place mall was among the first in Hong Kong to house premium international fashion labels such as Prada, Giorgio Armani, Gucci, Louis Vuitton and Chanel (to name a few) (McDonogh and Wong, 2001). According to the Retail Tenant Directory (Trade Dimensions International, 2006) published for the US real estate industry, each of the brands named above cater to a “high income” customer base and prefer “upscale” co-tenants. This is an indication of the exclusive character of these brands, not only in terms of the prices of their products, but also in terms of the spaces they choose to locate in.

There are, however, retail outlets of other brands in the Pacific Place mall, which are “lower” in the price hierarchy (and, ironically, located on the lower floors of the shopping mall). The mall is anchored by two major department stores - Seibu (Japan) and Lane Crawford (Hong Kong). These department stores carry a range of products from the most exclusive to relatively affordable names. Nonetheless, there is a huge difference in the prices one can expect to pay at the mall as compared to out in the shopping streets all over Hong Kong.

Of the nearly 200 retail stores contained in the Pacific Place mall, Kelly and Walsh is the only bookstore. The store directory lists books along with ‘music’ and ‘electronics’. This points to a culture of consumption fixated on fashion and consumer electronics, which are cornerstones of aspirational consumption.

Results from user surveys

Our direct analysis of ERCs in the two cities was supported by the results from the user surveys conducted online. This triangulation of results improves the validity of our research by confirming

findings from the literature review and field observations made in both cities. The survey was divided into the sections of Land Use, Transportation, Urban Design and Consumption Patterns. Respondents were sought from among a population of individuals who had been to and used entertainment-retail centers in both cities. The respondents were found by the ‘snowball sampling’ technique, beginning with the Hong Kong student associations at the researchers’ home university. The sample is biased towards students, who constitute about two-thirds of the respondents (40 of 60). The authors are, however, of the opinion that the bias does not adversely affect the validity of the findings as most of the questions posed were of a general nature, not focusing on the aspects that might vary with the socio-economic characteristics of the respondent. In particular instances where we found that the bias in sampling may have created a bias in results, this has been reported along with the data. Relevant statistics and valuable insights from users are presented in this subsection.

Land Use

96.6% of the respondents believed that most or all of the ERCs in Hong Kong do a good job of blending into the existing urban fabric. Only 45.8% felt the same about Los Angeles. Additionally, 76% said ERCs in Hong Kong fitted with the surrounding community better than those in Los Angeles. Representing the frequency of commercial centers on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being few, 5 being many), Hong Kong had an average score of 4.56, whereas Los Angeles had 3.17. One respondent summarized the difference as follows – “I find myself wandering into more stores in Hong Kong than Los Angeles”. The picture emerging from these responses is that Hong Kong has its commercial activity well integrated with not only the urban form but also the society (or community). In other words, shopping is designed to be a part of daily life and both residents and businesses gain from this approach. One of our respondents captures this design approach: “retail centers in HK are part of the community. You don't have to *plan* a trip there like in LA, but basically [shopping] it's a part of the urban fabric here.” Los Angeles’ contrasting style is aptly summarized by another respondent. “Many retail centers in Los Angeles do not seem to consider their surroundings. ... [and] do not weave exactly into the fabric of the surrounding community.”

Transportation

There are some significant differences between the two cities in terms of transportation, and the survey responses put them in the context of use of ERCs. Respondents were asked how often (on a three point scale: ‘almost never’, ‘sometimes’, ‘most of the time’) they utilized each mode of transportation—private automobiles, public transit, and walking—to visit ERCs. For Hong Kong’s public transit, 87% of the respondents reported using it ‘most of the time’. 91% claimed they walked at least sometimes. Additionally, 56% replied they almost never used a private automobile to visit an ERC in Hong Kong

(only 10% saying they do so ‘most of the time’). In the case of Los Angeles, on the contrary, 95% claimed to use a private automobile ‘most of the time’. Significantly, 79% and 77% ‘almost never’ walk or use public transit, respectively. In a related question, respondents were asked to rate the amount of pedestrian activity around the ERCs on a scale of 1 to 5 (little to heavy pedestrian activity). The average ratings were 4.8 for Hong Kong and 2.3 for Los Angeles.

Respondents were also asked the distance they would be willing to travel to visit an ERC. They were asked to select from among less than 5 miles, about 5 miles, about 10 miles, about 20 miles, and more than 20 miles. The willingness to travel about 10 miles or more was stronger in Los Angeles (92.7%); however, as many as 65% respondents expressed willingness to travel the same distance in Hong Kong as well. This is a bit unexpected, given what we had found before regarding the high frequency of ERCs in Hong Kong and their being built into the urban fabric. A follow up question inquired the reason for this opinion. We received the following responses: “It does not matter because the public transportation is convenient and fast.” “The public transportation system makes distance almost imperceptible in HK.” “No matter how far it is, HK's transportation makes us willing to travel to reach a retail center.” “Everything you need is at most 15 minutes away!” Based on these responses, we find that this willingness is the result of an efficient and trusted public transit system. Users feel comfortable and assured of reaching their destination on time. Overall, 87% of the respondents felt retail centers were more accessible in Hong Kong as compared to Los Angeles.

Urban design

Respondents equally felt that Hong Kong does and does not have themed ERCs (such as the Universal CityWalk in LA). This could be because of an insufficient description of what we meant by ‘themed’. The difference of opinion could also be on account of the seasonal themes that are characteristic of the marketing within ERCs in Hong Kong. One particularly insightful comment from among the respondents noted that, in Hong Kong, themes are divided by socioeconomic classes. In other words, the exclusivity of the ERC, based on socioeconomic class, *becomes* the theme of the Hong Kong ERC. 84% of respondents reported that the design of ERCs is changing in Hong Kong. Respondents were asked if open-air ERCs (such as the Third Street Promenade and The Grove in LA) are becoming popular in Hong Kong. 67% disagreed, citing unfavorable weather conditions and high rents as reasons why this was not feasible in Hong Kong. It should be mentioned that there are several open-air traditional street markets in Hong Kong, aimed at tourists and those looking for bargains. Although these cannot be compared to the contemporary ERCs discussed here, they are an important element of the Hong Kong urban fabric and

society, highlighting both the excellent accessibility within the city and the maintenance of traditions despite of rapid modernization.

Consumption Patterns

Respondents were asked why people visit retail centers in the two cities (to socialize, to shop, as a status symbol, or other reasons). The function of socializing was found to be more important in Hong Kong (87.8% indicated socializing was the most important function in Hong Kong against 65.3% for Los Angeles). A respondent reported that “people in HK enjoy spending time in shopping malls and they are great places for people to meet up as a social event. They can go there everyday, not for shopping but hanging out.” In other words visiting shopping centers is a personal or family event in LA, whereas it is more of a broader social function in Hong Kong, i.e. one performed with friends, colleagues, and business associates. In Hong Kong major ERCs act as meeting points for groups. Another difference is that business lunches are often held in ERCs in Hong Kong because a variety of good restaurants are usually located there that are very accessible from places of work. This is not as common in LA.

Respondents were asked which category best described the average shopper in the two cities—weekly, seasonal, event driven, or compulsive. Respondents were allowed to pick more than one response. The two highest responses for Hong Kong were ‘weekly’ and ‘compulsive’ (69.4% and 38.8% respectively). Los Angeles shoppers were reported as ‘event driven’ and ‘seasonal’ (65.3% and 49% respectively). In addition, one respondent expressed that, “going to retail centers in LA has one aim - *to buy*, otherwise LA people won’t be there.” This opinion suggests that in the use of ERCs in Los Angeles, the retail function is considered more significant in attracting customers, as compared to entertainment opportunities. Another way of interpreting this would be that in Los Angeles, the entertainment component of ERCs comes into play when potential patrons are selecting between comparable *shopping* centers. In Hong Kong, on the other hand, entertainment is interdigitated with the shopping experience.

Conclusions

There are two main lessons to be drawn from this comparative study. First, even within the very specific topic of retail-entertainment design, evidence suggests that globalization does not simply homogenize practices and values. Although there are pressures towards homogenization in terms of the marketing strategies and location criteria of multinational corporations, a large part of a city’s morphological and cultural evolution is ultimately context-dependent. Both our cases are cities that operate under market institutions, are highly consumerist, and are often classified as “postmodern” due to their post-industrial economies of flexible accumulation, and cultures influenced by the fashion and media industries. Even

though the financial and marketing logic of combining entertainment and retail has been realized in both cities, the styles of ERCs in the two cities have evolved along different trajectories. It is easy to point to land scarcity in Hong Kong as the impetus for its higher density and all other concomitant design features. However, geography alone does not explain why public transportation is not more popular in Los Angeles, or the city's uneasy acceptance of mixed use. We argue, instead, public and private development interests have chosen to collaborate closely in Hong Kong towards a clear vision for the city.

The second lesson we learn is that whereas Hong Kong was catching up with the American mall phenomenon in the 1960s, it is now in some ways leading Los Angeles in the design and development of ERCs, when we account for the need to move toward more sustainable urban practices and better urban design, i.e., greater reliance on public transportation and pedestrian accessibility, more design articulation with the rest of the urban fabric, contribution to urban life in the surroundings of the ERCs, mix of uses (particularly incorporating housing), greater density, more opportunities for socialization (by expanding the sense of place and 'publicness' by design), etc.

After the technical power of controlling indoor climate and the logic of mass production and consumption were harnessed by shopping malls, styles of ERCs showed convergence in the two cities, albeit temporally staggered (trends arriving later in Hong Kong). Then, local contexts took the retail activity in different directions, as discussed in the paper. It is only in recent years with the new logic of combining entertainment and retail in highly stylized and thematized environments that ERC design has shown a new point of convergence in these two cities. However, the mixed-use, transit-oriented ERCs of Hong Kong, which appeared in the late 1980s, are at the cutting edge of such development. At the turn of this century, Los Angeles ERC design has a lot to learn from their Hong Kong counterpart. The three most important principles recommended for Los Angeles based on the Hong Kong examples are planning for mixed use, encouraging public transit and pedestrian friendliness, and thinking strategically about the entire city. The last of these lessons refers to a need for sharing services and the positive externalities of development equitably among all parts of the city, so that pockets of poorly serviced areas are not left behind in the city. It can be argued that this is taken care of best by the market-led real estate development. As we have learned from Hong Kong, however, active planning choices can be made in favor of integrated urban form, public-private partnerships, and dispersal of facilities, so that development is relatively even. These are principles closely related to smart growth strategies.

Mixed use has long been accepted as an integral component of smart growth. The case of Hong Kong, and in particular the latest generation of ERCs, show how this can be done without compromising

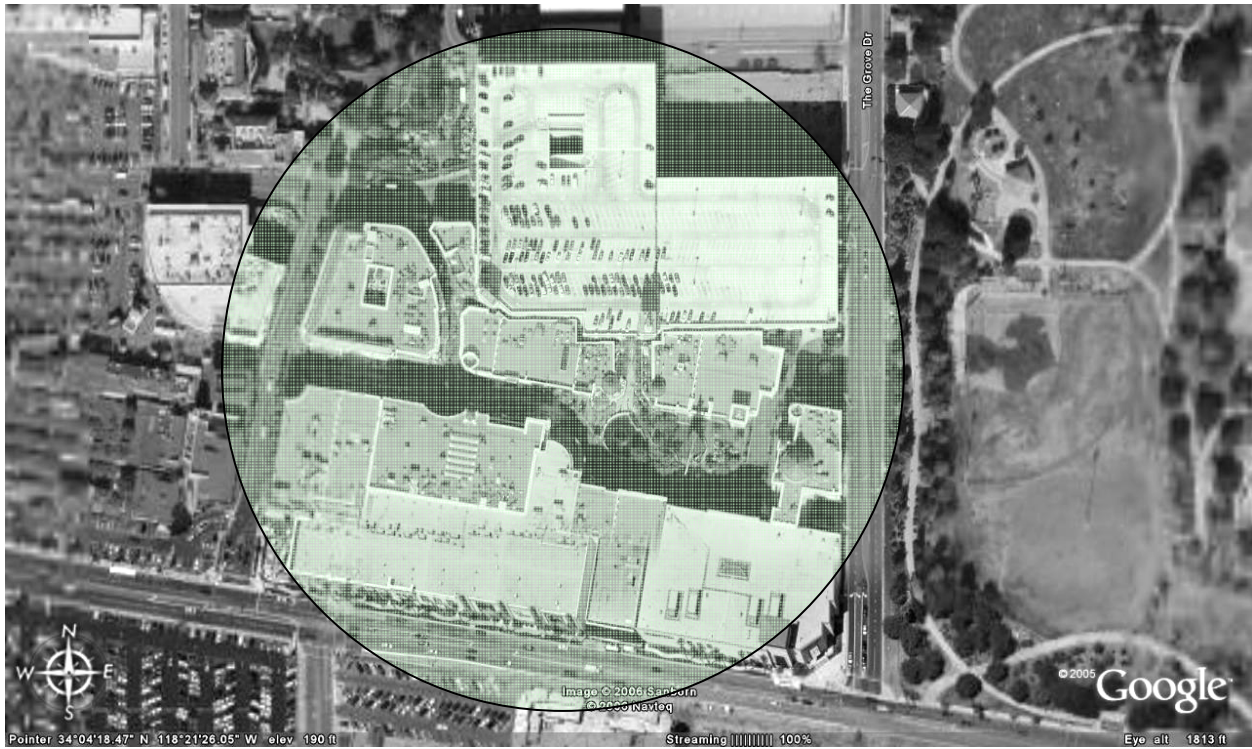
profitability and to the mutual benefit of all land uses. Public transit is a sector where Los Angeles is particularly deficient. The city needs to wake up to the negative externalities of its car-dependence and look for innovative practices such as market segmentation for public transit, shuttle services, and shared cars and taxis. It should also work with incentives and disincentives to encourage less use of private cars. Los Angeles lacks adequate comprehensive strategies and vision because of its decentralized planning culture and interest-group politics. In Hong Kong, planning has also existed within a capitalist framework and development has been largely led by the interests of the real estate industry. Nevertheless, Hong Kong's transit-oriented ERCs present a good example of public-private and cross-sectoral cooperation, which cannot simply be ascribed to geographical contingency.

We conclude by suggesting that the next generation of entertainment-retail centers will see the entertainment component grow significantly in both cities. Additionally, we are likely to see spaces designed so that retail *becomes* entertainment. This includes themed spaces to a greater extent than seen in The Grove. Based on recent trends one can also predict an increasing level of segregation of spaces as a means to create a premium on land rent.

As a result a certain degree of public resistance is to be expected. Hong Kong has done a good job of not being entirely exclusive by socio-economic class, whereas the case study in Los Angeles reflects an interest in minimizing local opposition. The authors hope that both cities will seek ways to combine the two models. We hope that Los Angeles will consider design guidelines that will not entirely exclude (less wealthy) sections of the community from the use of ERCs, and that the public character of such space will be respected by its developers. This goes back to the idea of "pseudoplace" which exists as a mask on a process that basically reproduces and reifies the social hierarchy. It is necessary to avoid letting ERCs become pseudoplaces, or "ambiguous spaces" (Cuthbert and McKinnell, 1997) in order to maintain and foster social cohesion and a real civic life.

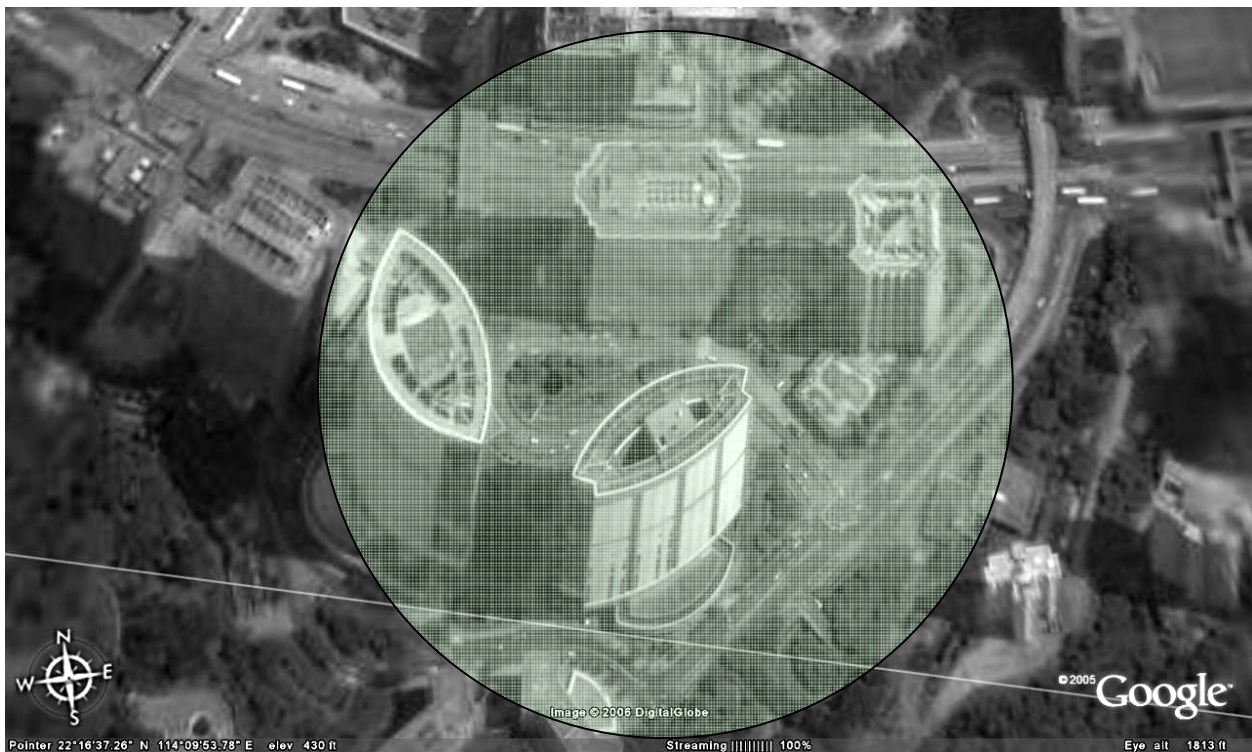
On the other hand, developers in Hong Kong can approach the community, particularly the hitherto less recognized sections – low income families, the elderly and immigrant communities – for their input regarding the overall development of the city. Identifying, acknowledging and consulting a diverse group of stakeholders will bring a greater degree of approval and legitimacy to Hong Kong planning institutions and development plans.

Figure 1: Aerial view of The Grove, Los Angeles



Source: Google Earth

Figure 2: Aerial view of Pacific Place, Hong Kong



Source: Google Earth

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CAPTIONS OF THE TWO IMAGES:

Figure 1: Aerial view of The Grove, Los Angeles

Figure 2: Aerial view of Pacific Place, Hong Kong