

A COMPARISON OF TWO OKLAHOMA MAIN  
STREET PROGRAM COMMUNITIES AND  
THEIR COMMITMENT TO HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION

By

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Small towns throughout the United States are struggling to maintain active downtowns. Oklahoma towns are no exception; communities are slowly losing the battle to keep their downtowns as their focal point. Many buildings in Oklahoma have been abandoned and boarded up. Those that are still occupied have been covered with fake store fronts or hidden behind modern facades. Many of these buildings are historically significant to the community or to Oklahoma.

The cause of the deteriorating downtown is not really known. According to a pamphlet distributed by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, shopping malls and strips have slowly caused a migration of business' from the downtown area (Clinard, 1990), but a study which was conducted in 1983 on the impact of shopping center development on downtowns of small metropolitan communities, concluded that there was no real affect on the downtown. The study did acknowledge that the shopping mall created a competition for local dollars (Chase & Pulver, 1983).

As a result of these fading downtowns, many communities are becoming increasingly interested in the Oklahoma Department of Commerce Main Street Program. The Oklahoma



Main Street Program (OMSP) seeks to revitalize small towns that have encountered a declining main street. It is targeted to towns with a population between 5,000 and 50,000. The Main Street revitalization program was initiated in 1977 through the National Main Street Center of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The program has been adopted by many states in the United States, as well as, Great Britain, Australia, and Canada (Clinard, 1990).

The Oklahoma Main Street Program began in 1985 and is housed in the Oklahoma Department of Commerce. The project works within the National Main Street Center's established four-point approach: organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring. The program does not offer the towns any financially backing, but does provide support in terms of technical assistance, training, resources, and program assessment. Since 1985, 17 Oklahoma towns have been selected for the project. These are Ada, Alva, Ardmore, Anadarko, Bethany, Duncan, El Reno, Eufaula, McAlester, Okmulgee, Pawhuska, Ponca City, Sapulpa, Shawnee, Stillwater, Tahlequah and Woodward. Fourteen of the 17 still remain in the project. Alva, Tahlequah and Pawhuska dropped out (Clinard, 1990). The OMSP is credited with creating new jobs, encouraging new business, recruiting existing business to the downtown area, and improving the overall morale of the community (Keister, 1990).

Historic preservation is one attempt to re-establish and rebuild Oklahoma downtowns and strengthen their economies, but is it desirable for all small communities? This study is modeled after a study done in 1982, by Hines and Napier. This study will test the relevance of a social exchange theoretical perspective for predicting involvement in local historic preservation programs.

#### Purpose

It is the purpose of this study to assess the differences between two communities, Okmulgee and Tahlequah, based on their participation in the Main Street Program. Okmulgee continues to participate in the Main Street Program after completion of their three year contract, while Tahlequah severed its ties to the program upon completion of its three year contract. The differences will be assessed in terms of commitment to local historic preservation, willingness to commit resources to the preservation efforts, attitude toward historic preservation and knowledge of local history. The results of this study will be available for other communities interested in becoming involved with the Main Street Program, so they can better understand the commitment that is involved with the Main Street Program and what it takes to be successful.

The objectives of this study are: 1) to make a comparison between willingness to commit to the preservation

efforts of historic preservation in an active Main Street community and a non-active community; 2) to assess the correlation between the individuals background and willingness to commit to local historic preservation of their community, and; 3) to assess the correlation between local knowledge of community history and willingness to commit to local historic preservation. The results of this study will show the commitment to local historic preservation within each community, in addition to providing information to other communities wishing to invest in the Main Street Program.

#### Assumptions and Limitations

The following assumptions will be made for the purpose of this study: Okmulgee is actively participating in the OMSP according to the guidelines. It is hypothesized that there is a strong commitment to local historic preservation in the two selected towns and that Okmulgee has a stronger commitment.

Limitations to this study include: 1) the selection of communities was limited to those communities that were first selected to begin the Main Street Program; 2) research conducted on the Main Street Program is minimal; 3) due to lack of research on the Main Street Program, the majority of literature reviewed for this study is based on community development.

## Definitions

1. Certified Local Government (CLG) - (State Historic Preservation Office brochure, 1990). Certified local governments enforce historic preservation zoning and may request certification and receive subgrant assistance to carry out the local preservation program. The local government has a direct role in the National Register nomination process as a part of the program.
2. Chain stores\* - One of a number of retail stores under the same ownership.
3. Community\* - A group of people living in the same locality and under the same government.
4. Community development - For the purpose of this study community development will be the renewing of declining downtowns in terms of bringing in more business, shoppers and money.
5. Downtown\* - The business center of a city or town.
6. Facades\* - The face of a building. The principal face.
7. Historical significance\* - Of, relating to, or of the character of history, quality.
8. Historic preservation - For the purpose of this study historic preservation will mean preserving and revitalizing historic structures that relate to the integrity of the community. ie. Integrity refers to the authentic link of a property to the community's past.

9. Local economy - For the purpose of this study, local economy will be the money within the community
  10. Main street\* - The principal street of an American small town or city.
  11. Revitalize\* - To impart new life or vigor to.
  12. Shopping malls\* - An urban shopping area limited to pedestrians.
  13. Social Exchange Theory - (Hines & Napier, 1982) People are viewed as reward-seeking and punishment-avoiding creatures who try to maximize their rewards and minimize their punishments (or "costs") to obtain the most "profit" they can from their social interactions.
  14. Storefront\* - The side of a store facing a street.
- \*Definitions obtained from the American Heritage Dictionary, 1985.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Community Development

Several studies have been conducted on main street business activity and community development throughout the years. These studies have focused on a variety of alternatives for community development. Most of the studies agree that the decline of the main street is due to shopping malls and strips, and discount stores. Since 1955, shopping centers experienced rapid growth in the metropolitan areas (Cohen, 1972; Chase & Pulver, 1983). The shopping center development occurred most frequently in communities with a population of 20,000 or less (Chase & Pulver, 1983). While many studies agree that shopping centers have caused a decline in downtown shopping, one study specifically designed to assess the impact of shopping centers on downtowns, concluded that, "adding the shopping center seems to have limited economic effects" (Chase & Pulver, 1983, p. 2). In the same article, researchers indicated that, "decentralized retail services signify not only an increased level of competition for retail dollars within the community, but often a declining share of the market for downtown merchants" (Chase & Pulver, 1983, pg. 2). While

the impact of shopping centers is not truly understood, one dilemma that is obvious, is that our downtowns are struggling and need assistance in becoming the strong focal point of the community once again.

Studies have found that the main street business activity contributes greatly to the local economy. One article explained that the, "Main street business activity is linked directly with the overall development of a community since a large portion of jobs and income result from the retail and service sector business" (Stark, 1985, pg. 5). Another article reveals that, "Community growth and vitality frequently depend on the local business and service sector" (Richards, 1984, pg. 10). Finally, Pulver (1979) writes that, "Expansion and strengthening of small businesses represent an important option in economic development activities" (cited in Fisher, Woods, 1987, pg. 69). With the focal economic center in a struggling battle to survive, communities are encountering the need for a community development program. In Oklahoma the increasing need for community development has lead several communities to consider the Main Street Program. As with any decision making process, before deciding to commit to a program, communities need to know what is involved with participating in the program and what elements are necessary for success. Information such as this will enable individuals to assess their communities for the Main Street Program.

Characteristics Necessary for  
Community Development

Lackey, Burke, and Peterson (1987), compiled characteristics deemed essential in community development from selected research. These characteristics provide communities with an understanding of what they need before encouraging a community development program. The characteristics compiled are: 1) from Kaufman's (1959) study, "local groups with well developed problem solving skills and a spirit of self-reliance; 2) from Warren's (1978) study, a broad distribution of power in decision-making, commitment to the community as a place to live, and broad participation in community affairs; 3) from Sander's (1953) study, leaders with community-wide vision and residents with a strong sense of community loyalty; 4) from Cottrell's (1983) study, effective collaboration in defining community needs and the ability to achieve a working consensus on goals and priorities; 5) from Iscoe's (1974) study, citizens with a broad repertoire of problem solving abilities who know how to acquire resources when faced with adversity; 6) from Glick's (1983) study, commitment to the community and a government that provides enabling support for the people; and 7) from Schoenberg and Rosenbaum's (1980) study, a formal or informal mechanism for exchange among conflicting groups" (cited in Lackey et al., 1987, pg. 3). Two items that continue to surface are community



participation and commitment to the community. Research has proven time and again that these two elements are necessary for community development. Daly & Kettner (1981) concluded that, "a clear and central theme throughout the literature on community development is that of broad community participation" (p. 2). In addition to the research that has determined the importance of community participation, the federal government has also regarded local participation as a vital tool to the success of community development. In fact, there are objectives in grants for community development that require local participation (Martin & Wilkinson, 1984). According to Martin & Wilkinson (1984), "a significant statistical interaction, however, indicates that communities with high levels of both activeness and need receive more community and economic development funds per capita than do other communities" (pg. 374). While arguing that local participation is a vital tool for community development, Martin & Wilkinson (1984) also recognize that local participation has a minor economic development impact.

As participation is deemed vital to community development, studies also show that proper training encourages participation. Two practitioners, Feldman & Howe (1985), contend that, "many people stay out of the public policy arena or withdraw because they do not believe they have sufficient knowledge and ability to be effective"

(cited in Rossing & Heasley, 1987, pg. 107). Rossing & Heasley (1987) maintain that, "intensive training improves the quantity and quality of participation of individuals who receive such training" (pg. 101). In conclusion, community participation, commitment to the community, and training are characteristics that are crucial to community development.

### Historic Preservation

Historic preservation of a community is more than restoring old buildings. It is a holistic approach that focuses on the entire downtown. The end results being a well harmonized downtown visually pleasing to the eye. "A community's downtown symbolizes its heritage and its people" (Wagner & Miller, 1988). Lu (1976) explains that, "buildings should be part of a well-thought-out urban design framework. Otherwise the result will be the construction of sculpture gardens rather than a cohesive design" (pg.42). Cavaglieri (1976) also writes, "The main benefit of restoration and reconstruction will always be the increase of real estate value obtained through the indefinable element of character" (pg. 57). Communities choosing historic preservation as a community development tool need to: 1) organize comprehensive planning and urban design programs; 2) encourage private investment, local preserva-

tion ordinances, and tax incentives; 3) gain public commitment; and 4) educate the public (Lu, 1976).

Research shows that public commitment is important to community development. With communities today choosing historic preservation as a tool to develop themselves, it is also important that they be equally committed to historic preservation. Lu (1976) writes,

The success of any municipal preservation program depends on the commitment and innovativeness of the particular municipality and also on the interest and support of the community and the sensitivity, leadership and professional competence of the local administrators and planners (pg. 35).

Research also shows that private investment is vital to community development. Several ways to encourage private investment in historic preservation are:

- 1) Survey land marks and educate the public to their value;
- 2) Initiate both local and state legislation to support preservation;
- 3) Fund capital improvements;
- 4) Establish nonprofit corporations or preservation foundations;
- 5) Lease or acquire landmarks, and in some cases participate in ventures with private developers;
- 6) Use incentive zoning and tax relief to promote preservation;
- 7) Develop design guidelines and preservation criteria;
- 8) Prepare comprehensive

preservation plans. All of these efforts can be done with volunteer help (Lu, 1976, pg. 35).

A study conducted by Hines and Napier (1982), addressed historic preservation as an option for small town development. They concluded that, "not all forms of development will be defined as desirable by all inhabitants" (pg. 22). They went on to say, that one alternative which is seldom considered but is acceptable to a wide variety of people is historic preservation. One advocate, Denman (cited in Hines & Napier, 1982), suggests that historic preservation lends itself well to the small town settings. Projects such as historic preservation rarely require large investments of capital, and therefore are very attractive to small towns (Hines & Napier, 1982).

Many communities have implemented small projects to encourage the awareness of historic preservation. Some of these projects are: antique fashion shows; oral history recordings; quilting bees; art fairs; and others. Projects such as these can help to maintain or increase commitment to long-term community goals. These activities also help promote community involvement and strengthen community unity, but seldom do these activities yield economic gains and expansion of local business. Local preservation projects need a variety of resources to be successful. Communities which choose not to devote such resources may not want to

consider historic preservation as an option (Hines & Napier, 1982).

The resources that must be committed to local historic preservation are: from Goodenough's study (cited in Hines & Napier, 1982), volunteering one's time to historic preservation; from America The Beautiful Fund (cited in Hines & Napier, 1982), financial commitments (donations or support of local tax levy), donation of materials, loan of equipment and tools, and to contribute local historical objects. Zoning controls may also be necessary to protect structures with historical significance (Hines & Napier, 1982).

Hines and Napier (1982) found that the majority of the respondents were in favor of local historic preservation programs and indicated willingness to commit to preservation efforts. Their findings also show that strategies for implementation of local historic preservation efforts need to consist of an educational program that explains the benefits that local people can realistically expect from such a development program. Another important finding is that people must be exposed to information acquired from other similar projects in other areas to show the likely benefits and costs of a program.

## Obstacles to Historic Preservation

One of the downfalls of historic preservation is that most of the historical areas are found in the low income part of town where the poor reside. This is known as gentrification. The question arises, should preservation be done if it is going to move the poor people out of their homes? This is an issue that some towns are facing, and must be dealt with on an individual basis. In an article written in Preservation News, the writer explains,

The lack of adequate and decent housing in cities for poor and low-income people is an indisputable fact. Those who have chosen to move into the city to preserve, restore or rehabilitate property in a blighted neighborhood are aware of that fact. They are enthusiastically encouraged by city officials because of their contribution to the depleted revenue; but deplored and verbally tarred and feathered because of the displacement of low-income residents by these new denizens of the urban scene (Crolius, 1978, pg. 12).

As poor neighborhoods begin to be restored the poor are slowly moved out to other areas. The cost of housing immediately goes up, as there are more families needing houses than there are homes available (Quayle, 1978). City officials would rather see old buildings be renovated than collapse. Revitalizing buildings requires bringing them up to code; this in turn will reduce fires due to bad

electrical wiring, allowing the fire department to be available for other calls (Knight, 1978). Other problems for preservation are lack of interest on the executive level, lack of legislation for preservation, and financial support (Latimer, 1976).

Even with these problems it is a piece of history that we are debating to restore or let go until it collapses. As Latimer (1976) writes, "When we lose an important landmark, we lose more than an old building. We lose the memory of what has been. We lose our sense of the past, the most visible evidence of our heritage" (pg. 101).

#### Main Street Program

The Main Street Program operates on a local level that is supported by a state office and also a National Main Street Center (NMSC). The NMSC operates under four key areas. These areas are: 1) organization, 2) promotion, 3) design, and 4) economic restructuring. The NMSC program assists small towns in building up public participation, improving economic structures, and recruiting new businesses ("Making Downtowns", 1978). The focus of the NMSC is historic preservation, but the end result is not to restore the main street exactly as it originated, but to revitalize the town and build on the original foundation to provide economic benefits.

The NMSC program provides no financial support, but does provide extensive training in downtown promotions, economic development and urban revitalization. The program is targeted towards communities with a population of 5,000 to 50,000.

The Main Street Program has adopted many of the tools that have been deemed necessary for community development. Such necessary components are: surveying landmarks; educating the public; encouraging the development of design guidelines and presentation criteria; and preparing comprehensive preservation plans (Lu, 1976). These are all part of the Main Street Program. The Main Street Program encourages the holistic approach to preservation, rather than focusing on individual buildings. The entire downtown is assessed for possible improvements, therefore, the result is a community that blends well together and is visually attractive to the eye. With these important components the Main Street Program has developed a theme of historic preservation, which is the foundation of their program. The Main Street Program provides support, non-economic resources, and ideas to the communities.



## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

This was a study of two communities, Tahlequah who has dropped out of the Main Street Program, and Okmulgee, who is actively involved with the program. The study was designed to compare the commitment to local historic preservation between the two communities. The social exchange theory has been used to help evaluate the commitment within the community. This was a descriptive study with a survey instrument. This study was designed to assess the attitudes of community leaders and business owners toward historic preservation. The results can be used to assist other communities interested in becoming part of the Main Street program.

#### Research Design

Selection of the two towns for this study was based on the fact that both towns began the Main Street Program in 1986, and that one town continues to participate in the Main Street Program, while the other has dropped out. The two towns selected for this study were Tahlequah and Okmulgee.

A survey instrument was used in this descriptive study. According to Babbie (1983), surveys may be used for descriptive, explanatory and exploratory purposes. They are chiefly used in studies that have individual people as the units of analysis (p. 309).

Babbie (1983) goes on to say, survey research is probably the best method available to the social scientist interested in collecting original data for describing a population too large to observe directly. Careful probability sampling provides a group of respondents whose characteristics may be taken to reflect those of the larger population (pg. 209).

### Community Profiles

#### Tahlequah

Tahlequah is a community with a population of 13,400 (Appendix A). The population consists of 72.4 percent white, 2.8 percent black, 28.6 percent Indian and 1.1 percent other. Tahlequah is 67 miles from Tulsa, it has seven motels, 42 churches, one radio and one television station. The town also has a daily and weekly newspaper.

The community supports 142 retail and 11 wholesale establishments, together employing 1,616 people. Tahlequah has three banks with total assets at \$177,019,300 and one

savings and loan with resources totaling \$683,000,000.

Major employers in Tahlequah include: Northeastern State University, which employs 900 people; Mid-Western Nursery, employing 400 people; and Greenleaf Nursery employing 400 people (ODOC, 1990).

Tahlequah is the capitol of the Cherokee Nation and the seat for Cherokee county. Tahlequah dropped out of the Main Street Project in 1989 after completing its three year contract (Clinard, 1990).

#### Okmulgee

The Okmulgee community has a population of 15,100 (Appendix A). The population consists of 67.8 percent white, 21.5 percent black, 9.5 percent Indian, and 1.1 percent other. Okmulgee is 38 miles from Tulsa, it has seven hotels and motels, 61 churches, two radio stations, and one daily newspaper. The community supports 112 retail, 16 wholesale establishments and 12 manufactures, together employing 1,906 people. Okmulgee has two banks with total assets of \$153,521,616 and two savings and loans with resources totaling \$197,000,000. Major employers in Okmulgee are Ball InCon employing 365 people; Oklahoma State University Technical Branch employing 340 people; Alliance Wall Corporation, employing 150 people (ODOC, 1990); and Kelco employing 150 people.

Okmulgee is the home of Oklahoma State University Technical Branch, which is one of the community's key industries. Okmulgee is surrounded by several interstate and federal highways. The airport has three runways and is considered to be a reliever airport for Tulsa International Airport. Okmulgee is a Certified Local Government, in addition to being an active member of the Main Street Program (Clinard, 1990).

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#### Sample

A random sample was selected from community leaders, chamber members and business owners in each of the communities. Seventy-five community leaders and chamber members were obtained through the respective Chamber of Commerce. Twenty-five business owners were obtained using the business section of the telephone directory. A mailed survey was sent to specific individuals selected. A total of 100 surveys were sent to each community.

The average respondent was 53.5 years of age with the average length an individual lived in the community being 25.5 years. The average income for respondents was \$30,001-\$40,000. The majority of respondents occupations were in sales. Thirty-nine percent of the respondents were female

and 60.2 percent were male. The majority of individuals reported an education level of High School diploma to a Masters degree. The majority of the respondents also reported to be of the European American descent (Appendix B).

### Instrument

The survey instrument consisted of a series of questions regarding local history, attitudes toward historic preservation, and sociodemographic questions. The dependent variable, "willingness to commit limited development resources to local historic preservation efforts" were measured with a Likert-type attitude scale (Edwards, 1957). Values for responses were one through five. Independent variables were operationalized as follows:

- Age was measured in years of age at last birthday.
- Length of residence was measured in terms of the years the respondent has lived in the community.
- Ancestral ties was by recording whether or not ancestors lived in the community.
- Economic class was measured by asking the respondent to select a category which best describes their perceived class level.
- Formal organization membership was measured in terms of the number of formal organizations in which the

respondent was actively involved at the time of the study.

- Gender was measured by recording the gender of the respondent.

- Familiarity with local history was measured by the number of correct responses to a series of questions about local history.

- Possession of local historic material was measured in terms of whether the respondents have historic material of local importance in their possession.

- Restoration site visitations was measured in terms of whether or not the respondent has made any site visits to historic preservation projects.

- Exposure to local historic education programs was measured by asking the respondents if they have seen a historic slide show and historic displays about the community (Hines & Napier, 1982, pg. 31).

Both towns were given similar surveys and then responses were compared between them.

#### Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted in Canyon, Texas. Twenty-five surveys were sent to local business owners and community leaders. Comments and corrections were taken into consideration for the final instrument and implementation of

the study. The final instrument and cover letter are in Appendix F,G, and H.

#### Final Instrument

The researcher chose a booklet format for the survey. The cover was yellow and displayed a familiar historic building for the respective town. The surveys were mailed out first class with a self-addressed, first class return envelope enclosed. The first class mailing guaranteed the return of any questionnaires that were unforwardable. The survey itself consisted of questions relating to historic preservation, local history and sociodemographics (Appendix G and H).

#### Data Collection

The data were collected with the aforementioned questionnaire. The mailing was initiated in January 1992. The questionnaire was sent to 100 randomly selected business owners and community leaders from each town. The first mailing yielded a return of 79. Thirty-five questionnaires were from Okmulgee, and 42 questionnaires were from Tahlequah. A follow-up mailing was initiated three weeks after the first mailing. The second mailing yielded a total of 93 questionnaires. The final sample for Okmulgee was 41, and the final sample for Tahlequah was 52. The final total sample of 93 made a return rate of 47%.

## Analysis

All data collected from the questionnaire were tabulated, coded, and statistically analyzed to meet the objectives of this study. These objectives were: 1) to make a comparison between willingness to commit to the preservation efforts of historic preservation in an active (Okmulgee) Main Street community and a non-active (Tahlequah) community, 2) to assess the correlation between the individuals background and willingness to commit to local historic preservation of their community, and 3) to assess the correlation between local knowledge of community and willingness to commit to local historic preservation.

A Pearson correlation was used to measure the linear relationship between the individuals' background and their willingness to commit to local historic preservation efforts. A Pearson correlation was also used to measure the linear relationship between local knowledge of the community and willingness to commit to local historic preservation. T-test analysis was used to compare willingness to commit to historic preservation efforts between Tahlequah and Okmulgee. Demographic data were calculated with frequencies and percentages. A Chi square test was used to assess the relationship between individual background and willingness to commit to historic preservation. The level of significance was determined at .05. Results of the study are presented in Chapter IV.



CHAPTER IV

A STUDY OF TWO OKLAHOMA MAIN STREET  
COMMUNITIES AND THEIR COMMITMENT  
TO HISTORIC PRESERVATION

MANUSCRIPT FOR PUBLICATION  
JOURNAL OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A STUDY OF TWO OKLAHOMA MAIN STREET COMMUNITIES AND  
THEIR COMMITMENT TO HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Abstract

This was a study of two communities who have been involved with the Oklahoma Main Street Program (OMSP). The research was designed to identify the differences between community leaders and business owners in the two communities, Okmulgee and Tahlequah, in reference to their commitment to historic preservation. Okmulgee is still in the program, while Tahlequah has severed its ties upon completion of a three year contract. The study was modeled after the Hines and Napier study conducted in 1982 on historic preservation as an option for small town development. A random sample of 100 community leaders and business owners were drawn from each community. The findings indicate that Tahlequah residents were much more willing to commit to local historic preservation efforts. The findings also indicate that income, having visited a historic restoration site, age, and knowledge of local history are also important factors in committing to historic preservation efforts.

## Introduction

Small towns throughout the United States are struggling to maintain active downtowns. Oklahoma towns are no exception; many communities are slowly losing the battle to keep their downtowns as the focal point of the community. The Oklahoma Main Street Program (OMSP) seeks to revitalize small towns that have encountered declining main streets. It is targeted towards towns with a population between 5,000 and 50,000. The Main Street revitalization program was initiated in 1977 through the National Main Street Center of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. As a result of these fading downtowns, many communities are becoming increasingly interested in the OMSP. This study was designed to identify the commitment to historic preservation between business owners and community leaders in the two communities in Oklahoma. One community, Okmulgee continues to be active in the OMSP, while Tahlequah severed its ties upon completion of its three year contract.

## Literature Review

Historic preservation of a community is more than restoring old buildings. It is a holistic approach focusing on the entire downtown. In the end the downtown buildings will compliment each other and be visually pleasing to the eye. Lu (1976) writes, "The main benefit of restoration and reconstruction will always be the increase of real estate

value obtained through the indefinable element of character" (pg. 57). Communities choosing historic preservation as a community development tool need to: 1) organize comprehensive planning and urban design programs; 2) encourage private investment, local preservation ordinances, and tax incentives; 3) gain public commitment; and 4) educate the public (Lu, 1976).

Research has shown that public commitment is important to community development. With communities today choosing historic preservation as a tool to develop communities, it is also important that they be committed to historic preservation. Lu (1976) explains, "The success of any municipal preservation program depends on the commitment and innovativeness of the particular municipality and also on the interest and support of the community and the sensitivity, leadership and professional competence of the local administrators and planners" (pg. 35). Research has also shown that private investment is vital to community development.

Many communities have implemented small projects to encourage the awareness of historic preservation. Projects such as these can help to maintain or increase commitment to long-term community goals. These activities also promote community involvement and strengthen community unity, but seldom do these activities yield economic gains and expansion of local business. Local preservation projects

need a variety of resources to be successful. Communities which chose not to devote these resources may not want to consider historic preservation as an option (Hines & Napier, 1982).

Resources that must be committed to local historic preservation are: from Goodenough's study (cited in Hines & Napier, 1982), volunteering ones time to historic preservation; from America The Beautiful Fund (cited in Hines & Napier, 1982), financial commitments (donations or support of local tax levy), donation of materials, loan of equipment and tools, and to contribute local historical objects. Zoning controls may also be necessary to protect structures with historical significance (Hines & Napier, 1982). The willingness of the community to become involved is one key to community development, however, the support of historic preservation within a community adds to the success of the Main Street program.

### Methodology

This was a descriptive study of community leaders and business owners in the two communities, Tahlequah which has dropped out of the Main Street program, and Okmulgee, which is actively involved with the program. Selection of the two towns for this study was based on the fact that both towns began the Main Street Program in 1986.

Tahlequah is a community with a population of 13,400 (Appendix A). The population consists of 72.4 percent white, 2.8 percent black, 28.6 percent Indian and 1.1 percent other. Tahlequah is 67 miles from Tulsa. The community supports 142 retail and 11 wholesale establishments, together employing 1,616 people (ODOC, 1990). Tahlequah is the capitol of the Cherokee Nation and the county seat. Tahlequah dropped out of the Main Street Program in 1989 after completing its three year contract (Clinard, 1990).

Okmulgee has a population of 15,100 (Appendix A). The population consists of 67.8 percent white, 21.5 percent black, 9.5 percent Indian, and 1.1 percent other. Okmulgee is 38 miles from Tulsa. The community supports 112 retail and 16 wholesale establishments and 12 manufactures, together employing 1,906 people (ODOC, 1990). Okmulgee is a Certified Local Government, in addition to being an active member of the Main Street Program (Clinard, 1990).

A random sample was selected from community leaders, chamber members and business owners. A mailed survey was sent to specific individuals selected off lists obtained by the respective Chamber of Commerce and telephone business directory. Every other name, up to 100 was selected. The total sample was 200.

The dependent variable, "willingness to commit to limited development resources to local historic preservation

efforts" was measured with a Likert-type attitude scale (Edwards, 1957). Values for the responses were one through five. Independent variables were operationalized as follows:

- Age was measured in years of age at last birthday.
- Length of residence was measured in terms of the years the respondent has lived in the community
- Ancestral ties was by recording whether or not ancestors lived in the community.
- Economic class was measured by asking the respondent to select a category which best describes their perceived class level.
- Formal organization membership was measured in terms of the number of formal organizations in which the respondent was actively involved at the time of the study.
- Gender was measured by recording the gender of the respondent.
- Familiarity with local history was measured by the number of correct responses to a series of questions about local history.
- Possession of local historic material was measured in terms of whether the respondents have historic material of local importance in their possession.

- Restoration site visitations was measured in terms of whether or not the respondent has made any site visits to historic preservation projects.

- Exposure to local historic education programs was measured by asking the respondents if they have seen a historic slide show and historic displays about the community (Hines & Napier, 1982, pg. 31).

Both towns were given similar surveys and responses were compared between the two towns.

#### Discussion and Findings

The findings indicate that both communities were committed to historic preservation and believe that historic preservation efforts are needed in their communities. Both communities also indicate support for historic preservation efforts.

For a comparison between Okmulgee and Tahlequah's commitment to historic preservation, the t-test analysis (Appendix D) indicate the non-active community, Tahlequah, was significantly more willing to support local zoning controls, loan equipment and tools for historic preservation efforts, and serve on committees for historic preservation. The analyses also indicate that Tahlequah residents feel stronger about the need for historic preservation efforts in the community. Tahlequah community leaders may have felt there was a commitment to historic preservation, regardless



of their involvement with the Mainstreet Program. In response to the commitment Tahlequah community leaders may have felt they no longer needed the support of the OMSP. Tahlequah may also have felt that the Main Street program did not address the cultural heritage enough, as it is the capitol of the Cherokee Nation and has a larger population of Indians.

The demographics of Tahlequah and Okmulgee differ in several ways. The ethnic breakdown of the sample shows there is twenty percent more Indians in Tahlequah than Okmulgee. This might suggest a strong cultural tie for residents in Tahlequah. As for the education level of the respondents, Tahlequah had fifty-three percent of their respondents with graduate level degrees, whereas thirty-eight percent of the Okmulgee sample represent individuals with graduate level degrees. This again supports the literature, in that education is important to historic preservation and community development. Thirty-two percent more females answered questionnaires in Tahlequah than Okmulgee. The Chi square test indicated that females in general are more optimistic about historic preservation efforts. This may have some affect on the stronger commitment reported by Tahlequah respondents (See Appendix B). As reported by the Department of Commerce, Tahlequah has more assets and resources per individual, \$64,000 as compared to \$23,000. The sample population from Tahlequah

indicates that 64% of the respondents earned \$30,001 and up, whereas Okmulgee had 79% of its respondents with \$30,001 and up. Therefore, income between the samples is not significantly different. Fifty-eight percent of the respondents from Tahlequah have lived in Tahlequah for more than thirteen years. Respondents from Okmulgee living in Okmulgee for more than thirteen years represent eighty-three percent of the respondents. This is a twenty-five percent difference. This might suggest that individuals in Okmulgee have grown accustomed to the way Okmulgee is, and do not see the need for change, or do not acknowledge the old buildings that are boarded up and abandoned.

To assess the correlation between individual background and willingness to commit to local historic preservation, a Pearson correlation was completed (Appendix C). Among the seven background characteristics correlated with commitment to local historic preservation questions, several significant correlations were found. According to the Pearson correlation, older individuals were more willing to donate money and historic material to historic preservation efforts. These individuals also felt that historic preservation is an important part of community development, and that historic preservation of older buildings usually cost less than constructing new ones. The longer business owners and community leaders lived in the community the more willing they were to donate money for historic preservation.

However, these persons do not believe that historic preservation made the community a better place to live. These individuals do not feel historic preservation is a worthy endeavor, or do they feel that the cost of saving local historic objects is justified. They do feel that it usually costs less to restore an old building than to build new buildings. These people believe historic preservation efforts will not succeed in their community. This could be attributed to the lack of understanding of the contribution the Main Street program has made. These findings may also suggest that older individuals possess more historic objects and are willing to donate them.

The number of organizations an individual belongs to and the number of historic site visits made were significantly correlated to supporting local zoning controls, donating fix-up material and volunteering time. Although both, number of historic sites visited and number of organizations one belongs to correlated with willingness to donate fix-up material, there was a negative correlation with the number of organizations. Individuals involved with more organizations were not willing to donate fix-up material. These individuals were also not willing to donate historic objects, which might suggest the individuals' donation of time in relation to organizations may compensate for donation of materials. These individuals felt that historic preservation efforts were not a waste of money.

Knowledge of the local history in the community significantly correlated with all commitment to historic preservation questions except for the following statements: historic preservation made the community a better place; historic preservation will benefit me or a family member; historic preservation efforts are needed; historic preservation efforts in the community will succeed; and historic preservation is a worthy endeavor. There was a negative correlation with the following statements: are you willing to serve on a committee for historic preservation and historic preservation efforts are a waste of money. This could be attributed to the experiences that these individuals have had with the existing committees already in place for historic preservation. All other questions were positively related to the individuals knowledge of local history. Those who knew more about their community history were more willing to: support local zoning controls; donate money, equipment, tools, historic material and fix-up materials; support tax levies; and volunteer time. These individuals felt that historic preservation is an important part of community development, and that the cost of saving local historic objects is justified. These individuals also felt that most communities would benefit from historic preservation, and that restoration of old buildings usually costs less than new ones.

Income was significantly related to supporting local zoning controls and donating historical material. Persons with higher incomes were more willing to support local zoning controls, however, they were not willing to donate historical material. These individuals felt that the cost of restoring old buildings is not cheaper than constructing new ones, but they did feel that historic preservation efforts would succeed. These individuals may not have historic objects to donate.

Individuals with higher educations were willing to volunteer their time for historic preservation efforts, but these persons did not feel that historic preservation made the community a better place to live. These individuals did feel that historic preservation would benefit them in some way, but felt that historic preservation efforts were not necessarily needed in the community. Persons reporting lower education levels felt that preserving older buildings did cost less than constructing new ones, and felt that historic preservation was a worthy endeavor. These findings suggest that individuals who are not as wealthy, see the potential of the older buildings, and are willing to fix them up as opposed to constructing new ones.

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Insert table three and four about here

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A chi square test (Appendix E) was utilized to determine the relation of the individuals' background to commitment to historic preservation. The findings indicate that individuals with higher educational levels were more willing to support tax levies and felt that historic preservation efforts were needed. Persons who had ancestors living in the community felt that the cost of saving local historic objects were justified, and females felt stronger about preserving older buildings as opposed to building new ones. Females also feel historic preservation efforts will succeed in their community.

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Insert table 5 about here

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The average age of all respondents was 53.5 years of age, and the average years lived in the community was 25.5 years. This may suggest strong ties in both communities since residence have lived in the community for some time. The majority of the respondents were in professional occupations with a salary of \$30,001 - \$40,000. These individuals may possess a commitment to improving their community through historic preservation because of the economic benefits they might receive as a result.

These findings support the literature, in that education is important to community development and historic preservation. The findings also indicate that females were

more optimistic about the success of historic preservation in their community. Individuals with ancestors in the community probably feel stronger about preserving the community because it is part of their family history.

Respondents who were housewives and retired were more willing to donate historic objects to historic preservation efforts, and felt that historic preservation efforts were needed and would benefit them or a family member. These individuals may feel that this is the best way they can support historic preservation. Due to the nature of the study it was hard to interpret the meaning of the results, therefore, the results were inconclusive.

#### Summary And Conclusions

The findings indicate that both communities were committed to historic preservation and believe that historic preservation efforts are needed in their communities. Both communities indicate support for historic preservation efforts, but the non-active Main Street community (Tahlequah) was more willing to support historic preservation in several ways. Tahlequah consistently responded more positively to the series of questions regarding willingness to commit limited development resources to local historic preservation efforts. Thus, the hypothesis that the active community is more committed to historic preservation efforts is rejected.

The findings show that income, age, and knowledge of local history correlate more frequently with willingness to commit to local historic preservation questions. Knowledge of local history had the most significant correlation with number of years one lived in the community following thereafter.

Local knowledge of the community significantly correlated with the majority of willingness to commit to local historic preservation statements. The more the individual knew about the community, the more receptive the person was to donating money, equipment, tools, and fix-up material. These individuals were also willing to support tax levies and local zoning controls. Most individuals answered 50% of the questions correctly.

It was evident from this study that both communities were very committed to historic preservation within their communities. It was felt strongly by respondents from both vicinities that other communities would benefit from historic preservation. Most every individual was willing to commit to historic preservation efforts in some way or another, and also felt that historic preservation was a worthy endeavor worth continuing. Some individuals may feel they can donate money easier than they can time or materials. Other individuals, such as retired persons and housewives, may feel that donation of their time is the most valuable asset they have to support historic preservation in



their community. As exemplified by these two communities, commitment is necessary to begin such a program. The inclusion of an educational component, exposure to information and historical restoration sites are necessary to expose and introduce a community to historic preservation. Towns can start historic preservation programs on their own, but with the Oklahoma Main Street Program already in place, communities can get support for their program. With the assistance of the Oklahoma Main Street Program, the community can focus on historic preservation and not the organization of the program itself.

Tahlequah became part of the Main Street Program and completed a three year contract that was initially signed. Upon completion of the three year contract the community chose to sever its ties. Tahlequah has such a strong commitment to historic preservation that it may no longer need the support and guidance of the Oklahoma Main Street Program. Communities wishing to become involved in the Main Street Program should visit one of the Main Street communities and speak with those who are involved with the program. A local survey regarding commitment to historic preservation such as this survey would also indicate interest among residents in the community.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAPHICS OF TAHLEQUAH AND OKMULGEE

	Tahlequah	Okmulgee
Population	13,400	15,100
Distance to Major City	67 miles (Tulsa)	38 miles (Tulsa)
Nearest Airport	2 miles	1 mile
Nearest Commuter Airport	75 miles (Tulsa)	38 miles (Tulsa)
Motels	7	6
Churches	42	61
Radio Stations	1	2
TV Stations	1	0
Hospitals	2	1
Medical Doctors	65	21
Banks / Assets	3 / \$177,019,300	2 / \$153,521,616
Savings & Loans / Resources	1 / \$683,000,000	2 / \$197,000,000
Retail Establishments	142	112
Wholesale Establishments	11	16
Manufactures	0	12

APPENDIX B

SOCIODEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS



		Tahlequah		Okmulgee	
		N	%	N	%
Race:	White	38	73	38	95
	Indian	12	23	1	3
	Other	2	4	1	3
Education:	HS Diploma	12	24	13	32
	Bachelors	12	24	12	30
	Masters	12	13	13	14
	Doctorate	2	4	12	30
Income:	\$10,000-20,000	5	10	2	5
	\$20,001-30,000	13	26	6	15
	\$30,001-40,000	11	22	11	28
	\$40,001-Up	21	42	20	51

TABLE II (Continued)

		Tahlequah		Okmulgee	
		N	%	N	%
Age:	57-89	15	29	15	37
	48-56	17	33	14	34
	28-47	20	38	12	29
Occupation:	Exec, Admin, Managerial	7	14	1	3
	Professional	17	34	19	49
	Technicians	0	0	2	5
	Sales	6	12	2	5
	Admin Support	3	6	0	0
	Service Occupations	5	1	8	21
	Farming, Forestry	2	4	5	13
	Retired	6	12	2	5
	Housewife	4	8	0	0
Gender:	Female	28	54	9	22
	Male	24	46	32	78
Yrs in Comm.	1-12	22	42	7	17
	13-27	18	35	13	32
	28-83	12	23	21	51

APPENDIX C

PEARSON CORRELATION BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL  
BACKGROUND AND WILLINGNESS  
TO COMMIT TO HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION EFFORTS

Question	Yrs lived	Yrs lived in community	No. of organizations	Historic site visits
1. Support local zoning controls	.084	-.172	.040*	.040*
2. Donate money	.039*	.011*	.067	.067
3. Support tax levy	.197	-.287	.099	.098
4. Loan equipment & tools	.119	-.120	.108	.107
5. Serve on a committee	.288	-.149	.241	.241
6. Donate fix-up material	.224	-.138	-.022*	.023*
7. Donate historic material	.037*	-.059	-.019*	-.019*
8. Volunteer time	.416	.299	.176	.176
9. Local preservation projects made the community better	.145	-.019*	.142	.142
10. Historic preservation is important to community development	.015*	-.076	.297	.297
11. Will historic preservation benefit the individual	.176	-.083	.173	.173
12. Are historic preservation efforts a waste of money	-.252	.083	-.021*	-.021*
13. Are historic preservation efforts needed	.086	-.109	.171	-.312
14. Can the cost of saving local historic objects be justified	.129	-.051*	.201	-.250
15. Would most communities benefit from historic preservation	.144	-.153	.120	.321
16. Does restoration of old buildings usually cost less than new ones	.032*	.018*	.106	-.229
17. Will historic preservation efforts in the community succeed	.122	-.005*	-.067	-.176
18. Is historic preservation a worthy endeavor	.100	-.039*	.167	-.362

TABLE III (Continued)

Question	Knowledge of local history	Income	Education
1. Support local zoning controls	.019*	.009*	.079
2. Donate money	.028*	.294	.253
3. Support tax levy	.016*	.292	.122
4. Loan equipment & tools	.041*	.187	.095
5. Serve on a committee	-.010*	.250	.182
6. Donate fix-up material	.028*	.183	.170
7. Donate historic material	.041*	-.041*	.061
8. Volunteer time	.014*	.061	.038*
9. Local preservation projects made the community better	.071	.148	-.031*
10. Historic preservation is important to community development	.034*	.239	-.090
11. Will historic preservation benefit the individual	.060	.175	.054*
12. Are historic preservation efforts a waste of money	-.037*	-.153	.061
13. Are historic preservation efforts needed in the community	.058	.296	-.013*
14. Can the cost of saving local historic objects from the communities past be justified	.049*	.174	-.050*
15. Would most communities benefit from historic preservation	.011*	.064	-.099
16. Does restoration of old buildings usually cost less than new ones	-.047*	-.043*	-.210
17. Will historic preservation efforts in the community succeed	.067	.014*	-.134
18. Is historic preservation a worthy endeavor	.078	.242	-.006*

\*significant at .05

APPENDIX D

T-TEST FOR WILLINGNESS TO COMMIT  
TO HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
EFFORTS

Question	Tahlequah	Okmulgee	t-test	P
	Mean			
1. Support local zoning controls	4.56	4.17	2.10	.04
2. Donate money	3.60	3.43	.83	.40
3. Support tax levy	3.19	2.88	1.20	.23
4. Loan equipment & tools	3.81	3.18	2.52	.01
5. Serve on a committee	3.65	3.15	1.96	.05
6. Donate fix-up material	3.46	3.13	1.50	.14
7. Donate historic material	3.96	3.97	-.07	.94
8. Volunteer time	3.63	3.23	1.70	.09
9. Local preservation projects made the community better	4.33	4.25	.40	.69
10. Historic preservation is important to community development	4.23	4.32	.56	.57
11. Will historic preservation benefit the individual	3.50	3.22	1.08	.28
12. Are historic preservation efforts a waste of money	1.39	1.54	-.98	.33
13. Are historic preservation efforts needed	4.46	4.07	2.08	.04
14. Can the cost of saving local historic objects be justified	4.13	3.98	.82	.42
15. Would most communities benefit from historic preservation	4.25	4.02	1.28	.20
16. Does restoration of old buildings usually cost less than new ones	3.35	3.26	.33	.74
17. Will historic preservation efforts in the community succeed	3.73	3.77	-2.80	.78
18. Is historic preservation a worthy endeavor	4.46	4.24	1.23	.22

APPENDIX E

CHI SQUARE FOR INDIVIDUAL BACKGROUND  
AND WILLINGNESS TO COMMIT TO  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION



Question	Ancestral ties		Occupation		Gender	
	$\chi^2$	p	$\chi^2$	p	$\chi^2$	p
1. Support local zoning controls	1.98	.372	19.59	.357	3.77	.152
2. Donate money	1.38	.501	17.92	.461	.71	.699
3. Support tax levy	.01	.993	22.16	.225	3.62	.164
4. Loan equipment & tools	2.42	.298	23.98	.155	2.86	.239
5. Serve on a committee	2.31	.315	20.21	.321	5.04	.080
6. Donate fix-up material	.44	.802	25.53	.111	3.34	.188
7. Donate historic material	2.27	.321	32.76	.018*	.76	.684
8. Volunteer time	.20	.905	18.49	.424	.88	.646
9. Local preservation projects made the community better	3.95	.139	25.18	.120	5.69	.058
10. Historic preservation is important to community development	7.19	.028*	15.29	.642	1.70	.427
11. Will historic preservation benefit the individual	.06	.970	15.75	.610	.00	.999
12. Are historic preservation efforts a waste of money	.23	.891	25.19	.120	3.40	.183
13. Are historic preservation efforts needed	.75	.689	36.06	.007*	1.06	.589
14. Can the cost of saving local historic objects be justified	.12	.939	12.41	.825	2.04	.361
15. Would most communities benefit from historic preservation	.36	.835	31.03	.029*	1.04	.593
16. Does restoration of old buildings usually cost less than new ones	1.66	.436	11.17	.89	6.82	.033*
17. Will historic preservation efforts in the community succeed	.17	.916	20.75	.292	6.36	.042*
18. Is historic preservation a worthy endeavor	.69	.707	17.27	.505	3.24	.198

TABLE V (Continued)

Question	Education Level		Generation		Ethnicity	
	$\chi^2$	p	$\chi^2$	p	$\chi^2$	p
1. Support local zoning controls	5.46	.487	2.34	.886	1.26	.868
2. Donate money	12.02	.062	2.32	.889	1.98	.739
3. Support tax levy	14.82	.022*	11.71	.069	2.06	.724
4. Loan equipment & tools	11.93	.064	11.48	.075	3.14	.535
5. Serve on a committee	7.45	.257	3.69	.719	2.33	.676
6. Donate fix-up material	11.09	.086	3.49	.746	3.03	.553
7. Donate historic material	10.19	.117	3.88	.694	2.75	.600
8. Volunteer time	8.30	.217	10.82	.121	2.47	.650
9. Local preservation projects made the community better	11.31	.079	6.54	.365	1.82	.769
10. Historic preservation is important to community development	8.11	.230	12.01	.062	4.75	.314
11. Will historic preservation benefit the individual	7.92	.244	1.86	.932	1.61	.808
12. Are historic preservation efforts a waste of money	11.59	.072	4.3	.636	1.04	.903
13. Are historic preservation efforts needed	18.03	.006*	4.76	.575	1.71	.789
14. Can the cost of saving local historic objects be justified	9.59	.143	7.39	.286	3.54	.472
15. Would most communities benefit from historic preservation	10.33	.112	11.08	.086	3.93	.416
16. Does restoration of old buildings usually cost less than new ones	9.23	.161	11.71	.069	5.86	.210
17. Will historic preservation efforts in the community succeed	5.82	.443	4.87	.560	2.53	.639
18. Is historic preservation a worthy endeavor	8.57	.200	6.66	.353	1.73	.786

\*Significant at .05

APPENDIX F

COVER LETTER

January 30, 1992

Dear Tahlequah resident:

A community's downtown symbolizes its heritage and its people. In recent years the downtowns have found it difficult to thrive. The Oklahoma Main Street Program (OMSP) is in place to assist communities in renewing their downtown by using historic preservation as a foundation. This study is designed to identify the local commitment to historic preservation in communities. The results will assist other communities in determining their likelihood of success in the OMSP.

You are one of a small number in which people are being asked to give their opinion on these matters. You were drawn in a random sample of the community leaders and residents. In order that the results will truly represent the thinking of the people of Tahlequah, it is important that each questionnaire be completed and returned.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. The questionnaire has an identification number for mailing purposes only. This is so that we may check your name off of the mailing list when your questionnaire is returned. Your name will never be placed on the questionnaire.

I would be most happy to answer any questions you might have. Please write or call. The telephone number is (806) 655-3397.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Tina Florence-Sturgess

Margaret J. Weber, Advisor

APPENDIX G  
OKMULGEE SURVEY

Section B: Directions: Please circle the number of your response.

1. Okmulgee is no longer participating in the Oklahoma Main Street Program.

1. TRUE            2. FALSE            3. I DON'T KNOW

2. In 1868 Okmulgee was originally founded as the capital of the Creek Indian Nation.

1. TRUE            2. FALSE            3. I DON'T KNOW

3. The Okmulgee Public Library was nominated for the National Register of Historic Places, but was rejected.

1. TRUE            2. FALSE            3. I DON'T KNOW

4. The Creek Council House, located in the center of downtown, is listed on the National Historic Landmark Inventory.

1. TRUE            2. FALSE            3. I DON'T KNOW

5. Have you seen a historic slide show or historic display about Okmulgee?

1. YES                            2. NO

6. Do you have historic material of local importance in your possession?

1. YES                            2. NO

7. Is the historic preservation in your community a fair representation of the culture?

1. YES                            2. NO

Section C: Directions: Please read each item carefully and respond appropriately.

1. What year were you born? \_\_\_\_\_

2. How many years have you lived in Okmulgee? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Did your ancestors live in Okmulgee? \_\_\_\_\_

4. How many local formal organizations are you involved in? (organizations may be: civic, social, religious or service) \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is your occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Have you visited any historic restoration sites in your community? \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Please circle the number of your response.

1. Please indicate your gender by circling one.

1. FEMALE                            2. MALE

2. Select the economic class that best describes you?

1. 10,000-20,000    2. 20,001-30,000  
3. 30,001-40,000    4. 40,001-UP

3. What is the highest level of education you have obtained?

1. H.S. DIPLOMA    2. BACHELORS    3. MASTERS    4. DOCTORATE

4. What generation first moved to Okmulgee?

1. PARENTS    2. GRANDPARENTS    3. GREAT GRANDPARENTS  
4. OTHER

5. What is your ethnic background?

1. ANGLO AMERICAN    2. AMERICAN INDIAN    3. BLACK  
4. HISPANIC    5. OTHER

APPENDIX G (continued)

We are conducting research on the Oklahoma Department of Commerce Main Street Program. Your response to the following questions will enable us to identify the commitment to local historic preservation within your community.

Section A: Directions: Read the statements below and circle the number that best represents your feelings.

Key: 1=Definitely not 2=Probably not 3=Maybe 4=Probably 5=Definitely

- 1. Would you support local zoning controls to protect historic sites and buildings? 1 2 3 4 5
- 2. Would you donate money for local historic preservation projects? 1 2 3 4 5
- 3. Would you support a tax levy to finance historic preservation projects? 1 2 3 4 5
- 4. If you have equipment and tools, would you loan them to help reconstruct a local historic site or building? 1 2 3 4 5
- 5. Would you serve on a committee to help local historic preservation efforts? 1 2 3 4 5
- 6. Would you donate fix-up material needed to restore a local historical building or objects? 1 2 3 4 5
- 7. Would you donate or loan historical material and objects for public display? 1 2 3 4 5

- 8. Would you volunteer time for physical work to help accomplish historical preservation projects. 1 2 3 4 5
- 9. Have local historic preservation projects made our community a better place in which to live? 1 2 3 4 5
- 10. Is local historic preservation an important part of community development? 1 2 3 4 5
- 11. Will historic preservation benefit me or some member of my family? 1 2 3 4 5
- 12. Are local historic preservation efforts a waste of money? 1 2 3 4 5
- 13. Are historic preservation efforts needed in our community? 1 2 3 4 5
- 14. Can the cost of saving local historical objects from our community's past be justified? 1 2 3 4 5
- 15. Would most communities benefit from historic preservation? 1 2 3 4 5
- 16. Does restoration of old buildings usually costs less than constructing a new one of comparable size? 1 2 3 4 5
- 17. Will historic preservation efforts in our community succeed? 1 2 3 4 5
- 18. Is historic preservation is a worthy endeavor? 1 2 3 4 5

APPENDIX H  
TAHLEQUAH SURVEY



Section B: Directions: Please circle the number of your response.

1. Tahlequah is participating in the Oklahoma Main Street Program.

1. TRUE      2. FALSE      3. I DON'T KNOW

2. Tahlequah was designated as the capital of the Cherokee Nation in 1839.

1. TRUE      2. FALSE      3. I DON'T KNOW

3. One translation for the meaning of Tahlequah is "three will provide".

1. TRUE      2. FALSE      3. I DON'T KNOW

4. Tahlequah is known for having the first institution of higher education west of the Mississippi.

1. TRUE      2. FALSE      3. I DON'T KNOW

5. Have you seen a historic slide show or historic display about Tahlequah?

1. YES      2. NO

6. Do you have historic material of local importance in your possession?

1. YES      2. NO

7. Is the historic preservation in your community a fair representation of the culture?

1. YES      2. NO

Section C: Directions: Please read each item carefully and respond appropriately.

1. What year were you born? \_\_\_\_\_

2. How many years have you lived in Tahlequah? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Did your ancestors live in Tahlequah? \_\_\_\_\_

4. How many local formal organizations are you involved in?  
(organizations may be: civic, social,  
religious, service) \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is your occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Have you visited any historic restoration sites in your community? \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Please circle the number of your response.

1. Please indicate your gender by circling one.

1. FEMALE      2. MALE

2. Select the economic class that best describes you.

1. 10,000-20,000    2. 20,001-30,000    3. 30,001-40,000    4. 40,001-50,000

3. What is the highest level of education that you have obtained?

1. H.S. DIPLOMA    2. BACHELORS    3. MASTERS    4. DOCTORATE

4. What generation first moved to Tahlequah?

1. PARENTS    2. GRANDPARENTS    3. GREAT GRANDPARENTS  
4. OTHER

5. What is your ethnic background?

1. ANGLO AMERICAN    2. AMERICAN INDIAN    3. BLACK  
4. HISPANIC    5. OTHER

APPENDIX H (continued)

We are conducting research on the Oklahoma Department of Commerce Main Street Program. Your response to the following questions will enable us to identify the commitment to local historic preservation within your community.

Section A: Directions: Read the statements below and circle the number that best represents your feelings.

Key: 1=Definitely not 2=Probably not 3=Maybe 4=Probably 5=Definitely

- 1. Would you support local zoning controls to protect historic sites and buildings? 1 2 3 4 5
- 2. Would you donate money for local historic preservation projects? 1 2 3 4 5
- 3. Would you support a tax levy to finance historic preservation projects? 1 2 3 4 5
- 4. If you have equipment and tools, would you loan them to help reconstruct a local historic site or building? 1 2 3 4 5
- 5. Would you serve on a committee to help local historic preservation efforts? 1 2 3 4 5
- 6. Would you donate fix-up material needed to restore a local historical building or objects? 1 2 3 4 5
- 7. Would you donate or loan historical material and objects for public display? 1 2 3 4 5

- 8. Would you volunteer time for physical work to help accomplish historical preservation projects. 1 2 3 4 5
- 9. Have local historic preservation projects made our community a better place in which to live? 1 2 3 4 5
- 10. Is local historic preservation an important part of community development? 1 2 3 4 5
- 11. Will historic preservation benefit me or some member of my family? 1 2 3 4 5
- 12. Are local historic preservation efforts a waste of money? 1 2 3 4 5
- 13. Are historic preservation efforts needed in our community? 1 2 3 4 5
- 14. Can the cost of saving local historical objects from our community's past be justified? 1 2 3 4 5
- 15. Would most communities benefit from historic preservation? 1 2 3 4 5
- 16. Does restoration of old buildings usually costs less than constructing a new one of comparable size? 1 2 3 4 5
- 17. Will historic preservation efforts in our community succeed? 1 2 3 4 5
- 18. Is historic preservation is a worthy endeavor? 1 2 3 4 5

VITA

Tina Florence-Sturgess  
Candidate for the Degree of  
Master of Science

Thesis: A COMPARISON OF TWO OKLAHOMA MAIN STREET PROGRAM  
COMMUNITIES AND THEIR COMMITMENT TO HISTORIC  
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