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COMMUNITY  
& REGIONAL  
PLANNING

PLACEMAKING, IDENTITY, & POWER:  
(RE)NEGOTIATING SPACE IN DOWNTOWN  
WOODBURN, OREGON



Mural by Hector Hernandez

Photo By Monique G. López

Indoor Mural at Chemeketa Community College in Downtown Woodburn

**Placemaking, Identity, & Power:  
(Re)Negotiating Space in Downtown Woodburn**

By

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TERMINAL PROJECT

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## Guide to Reading this Report

**Terms & Diversity:** While interviewing community members I heard them reference three different communities using the same terms. The Latino community was often referred to as the “Mexicans” by both Latinos and non-Latinos. The White population was often referred to as “Anglos” by both whites and non-whites. Additionally, the Russian community was often referred to as the “Russian Orthodox” community. Therefore, in this report I will refer to these communities as “Anglo,” “Mexican,” and “Russian Orthodox” unless I am referencing U.S. Census data, in which case I will use the terms Latino and White. Even though these terms will be used in this report, it is understood that there is great diversity within these groups. For example, the Anglo community has a large senior citizen population, working age population which commutes to Salem and Portland, and very in socio-economic status. Additionally, there is a diverse Mexican community speaking Spanish and seven different dialects of Oaxacan Indigenous languages. This community constitutes people who have recently arrived in the U.S. to those whose families have been in Woodburn for two, three, or four generations.

**Quotations & Images:** All those who have been directly quoted have given their permission to use their quotes in this report. However, the analysis and claims expressed in this report is the author’s and not those individuals interviewed. *All direct quotes are in purple italic font. All quotes from secondary sources, such as academic literature, are in grey italics.* All photographs and infographics are original works by the author unless otherwise specified.

## Abstract

Woodburn is Oregon's largest Mexican majority city and it has been culturally and politically the heart of the Mexican presence in Oregon. The space downtown continues to be (re)negotiated by:

- Mexican businesses that occupy once vacant storefronts,
- historic preservation efforts of the Main Street Program,
- development of a public plaza, and
- a proposal for murals downtown.

The theory of Relational Placemaking is applied to identify placemaking issues in downtown Woodburn, power structures that determine the built environment, and the connections and disconnections between key actors and institutions that determine space. Through interviews and observation, I was able to weave together a story of the place and read the "spatial text" of downtown Woodburn which told of the following placemaking issues:

- conflicting identities and nostalgia of the built environment,
- symbols in the built environment and their meaning for different communities, and
- cultural differences in the use of space and perspectives of space.

Additionally, due to a lack of connections between the Mexican and Anglo communities in Woodburn, cultural misunderstandings are further entrenched, there is a lack of shared vision for the downtown, and it inhibits the ability of those without formal institutional power (Mexican Community) to have a greater influence in the outcomes regarding the built environment. Hence, I propose strategies to promote community connections for the City of Woodburn and similar communities that can lead to greater cooperation and shared vision for placemaking in contested spaces.

## Chapter 1- Case Study Background

*"If we want to understand ourselves, we would do well to take a searching look at landscapes."*

-Peirce Lewis

Woodburn is Oregon's largest Mexican majority city and it has been culturally and politically the heart of the Mexican presence in Oregon. Even as the State has transitioned where there are many more Mexicans living in Portland overall than in Woodburn, it still has a symbolic presence because it is one of the few spaces where Mexicans are the majority. This presence emerged particularly in the 50s and 60s. According to the U.S. Census, in 1980 Woodburn was 17% Latino, 33% by 1990, just over 50% in 2000, and 60% by 2010. However, there have been profound contradictions politically in Woodburn primarily being that the power structure continues to be Anglo. Woodburn as a community and as an urban landscape has been the site of many struggles over space, race, and belonging in an era of globalization in Oregon.

The community and political debate regarding allowing or how to allow murals in the downtown is the most recent placemaking issue in the continuing saga of (re)negotiating space and identity in downtown Woodburn. Potentially, how the mural issue is decided will not only have a momentary impact on the community and the downtown, but can have a long term impact as well. One long term resident insightfully stated, *"The murals can be a deciding factor on which way it [downtown] can go. I believe that the people who are against the murals should they lose, are going to lose interest in revitalizing downtown. They are going to feel defeated. They are just going to just move on. And you know, money talks"* (Interviewee 1516 2012). However, if it does not pass there is a risk that a population that has chosen to be politically engaged in this issue, the Mexican community, will be further ignored.

The Mayor of Woodburn, Kathy Figley, sums up Woodburn's past and present in the statement, *"We are not like anywhere else. We are on a crossroads to so many places. We are here because we are a crossroads. If you just look at a map of us with the train lines and the highways and what not it is like all paths eventually cross here"* (Figley 2012). The City of Woodburn has been a crossroad, historically through the transportation lines, and culturally for the State of Oregon with its long history of Mexican migration. The City of Woodburn's downtown has gone through much transformation in its 100+ years of history and

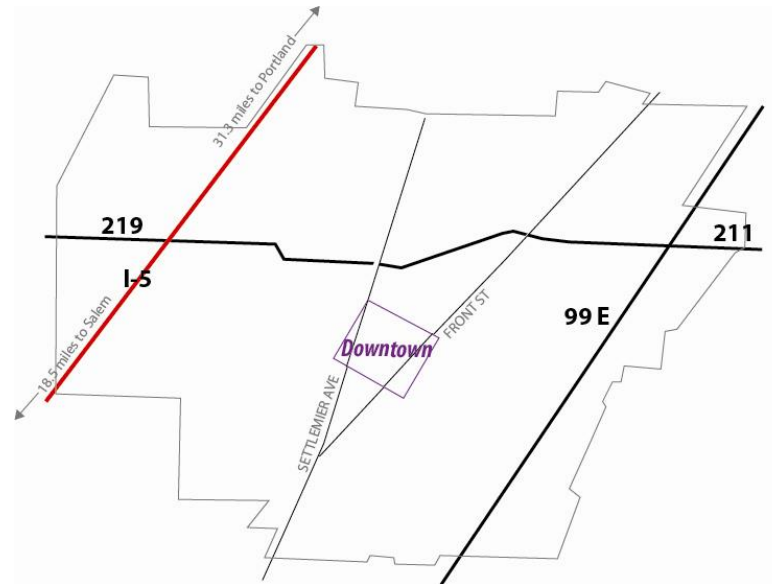


Figure 1. Woodburn is located 18.5 miles north of Salem and 31.3 miles south of Portland. The study site, downtown Woodburn is shown in the center of this map.

the space is continuing to be (re)negotiated by the changing demographics. With these changing demographics, the City of Woodburn finds itself at a crossroads in determining the future of the heart of the City, the downtown. Moreover, through the determination of the future of the downtown it is a reflection of the identity the City chooses to embrace, whether it is Anglo, Mexican, or a hybrid. The space continues to be (re)negotiated by Mexican businesses that occupy once vacant storefronts, the City's urban renewal efforts, construction and use of a plaza, and historic preservation efforts. Through the understanding of these placemaking issues in downtown Woodburn it provides understanding to placemaking issues that may emerge in similar communities (i.e., demographics, size, historic downtown, etc.) throughout Oregon and nationally. These placemaking issues include conflicting identities and nostalgia of the built environment, symbols in the built environment and their meaning for different communities, cultural differences in the use of space and perspectives of space, and the power structures that determine the built environment.

### Study Objective

Despite the great demographic change in the last 20 years, the power structure in Woodburn remains mostly Anglo due to the significant percentage of undocumented people and legalized residents who are unable to get involved as directly in formal



political processes (i.e., voting, running for office) and are much less inclined to participate due to barriers associated with their status. Thus, while Mexicans are an overwhelming percentage of the community they have a much less significant voice in the formal institutional networks that determine how the spaces of the community are planned and used. Despite these figures, Mexicans in Woodburn have been very vocal on the mural issue through submission of petitions, letters, and attending in large numbers city council meetings in support of allowing murals in the community. Currently, murals are not allowed under the signage ordinance in the land use code. Trudeau states, *“when the regulation of the landscape is rooted in the management of permits that attempt to create an environment of compatible uses, concerns about racial discrimination, tolerance of difference and cultural equity can be ignored and dismissed as irrelevant”* (Trudeau 2006, 438). Therefore, in this context this report will look at how deep the kind of changes (i.e. demographically and spatially through the approval and building of farmworker housing in city limits) that occurred in the 90s and early 2000s were as I trace out the continued struggles over place and identity in ways that are overtly and covertly racialized in (re) negotiating space in downtown Woodburn. My research will examine the networks of power and the politics that have and continue to shape the symbols in the space downtown Woodburn. Specifically, the key questions guiding this research are:

- What are the key issues and debates raised in the community regarding placemaking, race, heritage, and belonging being told on the landscape of downtown Woodburn?
- What are the power structures and networks that influences the development and what is allowed in the built environment?
- What are the tools that cities can use to have a built environment that reflects multiple communities?

All built environments have inherent meaning and values because it reflects the values and identity of those who have the power to shape it (Dovey 1999, 1). The identity a city chooses to embrace through placemaking efforts can potentially impact economics and create a space for people to connect and feel a part of a place. Issues regarding placemaking are important for planners and economic development coordinators to understand because it is tied to branding of the place which is concerned with representation of identity and its material effects are



**Figure 2. Business owner displaying merchandise in a store adjacent to Front Street in downtown Woodburn.**

intimately tied to economic development and restructuring (Cheng 2010, 460). In addition to a city’s economic health, placemaking can contribute to psychological wellbeing of immigrant communities. Recent immigrants in new growth cities express a profound sense of loss related to the separation from their physical homeland; hence, new comers’ desire to connect to the landscape is strong, even among people struggling to meet their basic needs (Lanfer and Taylor 2004, 10-11).

Even though an entire chapter of this report will be on the mural issue in Woodburn, it is important to understand that this issue is not an isolated placemaking incident, but fits into the larger context of issues closely related to claiming space in the downtown. Hence, placemaking issues and networks of power that are intertwined with the mural issue include the history and present day use of the plaza and historic preservation efforts in downtown. Therefore, the stories behind these issues will be highlighted in this report in order to better understand the context of the place and continued struggle to (re)negotiate claims to space in downtown Woodburn. The mural issue will be explored in more detail because it conveys the current and politically ripe story of (re)negotiating space in downtown Woodburn.

### ***Case Study Background***

Woodburn is an encapsulation of issues happening in other parts of Oregon and other parts of the U.S., but it is deeper here because the contradiction between the exclusion and yet majority is more profound than other locales. Nelson’s (2008) work on the struggle over farmworker housing both downtown and on the



Figure 3. This building use to house Woodburn City Hall and Fire Department in the early 1900s. The garage looking portion, which once was a garage for fire trucks, is now home to Latino restaurant business.

periphery of Woodburn suggested that by 2000 important battles regarding race and space had been won. Specifically, certain struggles over the presence of Mexicans as an active and legitimate part of the community were fought during this time of restructuring. Mexicans have undertaken some battles in the 90s around this in a way that shifted, at least on some levels, the cultural politics of place in Woodburn. For example, by 2005 the City built a plaza and somewhat embraced, on a commercial level, this identity as “Little Mexico.” This reflects a shift in the early 2000s where Mexican identity was being appropriated more than resisted (Nelson 2008). However, in analyzing the built environment and perceived environment of the downtown today reveals that Mexican identity continues to be resisted in downtown Woodburn.

As immigrants increasingly make their way to new destination states and as the Latino population begins to grow in communities with a long history of migration, such as Woodburn, conflict in (re)negotiating space between immigrant and non-immigrant communities is occurring in many places in rural America. Maldonado and Licona define new destination states, particularly in rural areas, as the places that are seeing a rapid growth of Mexican and Asian Immigrants. These places are not only significant because of the demographic shifts, but also are seeing significant changes in community identity and dynamics, and how “quality of life” is defined because these spaces have historically been defined by those of white European ethnicities (Maldonado and Licona 2007, 134).

Marrow (2005) offers an explanation of a few of the factors that are contributing to the shift of Mexican immigration away from its traditional base in the Southwest and the current geographic dispersion of Mexican's destinations such as Oregon. According to Marrow these include: "stricter border enforcement in the Southwest; increased anti-immigrant sentiment, especially in California; and the unintended effects of a blanket amnesty given to long-term undocumented residents and a special legalization program given to undocumented farmworkers" (Marrow 2005, 781).

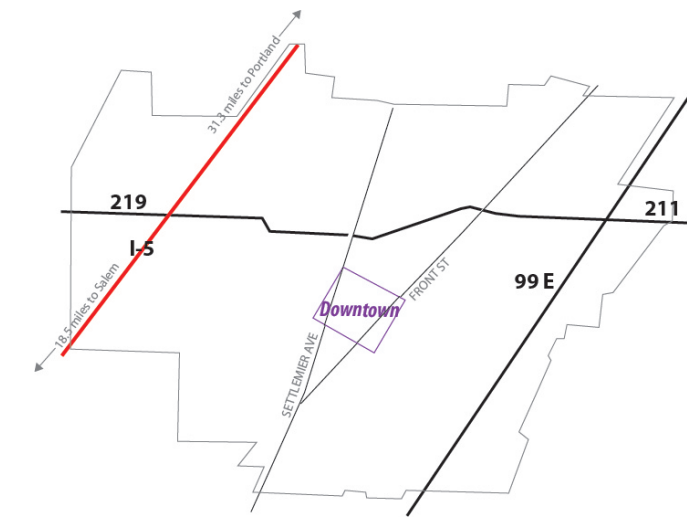
Oregon is included among the "new destination" states in which Mexican populations have roughly tripled in size (Marrow 2005, 782). Woodburn, Oregon, even though it has a long history of Mexican immigrants dating back to the 1940s and 50s during the Bracero Program, is in a new destination state and still exhibits racial tensions that are often found in "new destination" communities (Mendoza 2010). These conflicts are reflected in what is deemed to belong or not belong in space.

As cities in new destination and new growth states begin to become more diversified communities are beginning to grapple with past and present identities in a once Anglo homogenous place. Just as people have multiple identities, so do places. Multiple

identities can be the source of richness or conflict, or both (Massey 1994). Additionally, Yeoh and Kong (1996, 55) assert places have a depth that goes beyond the visual landscape because they contain layers of meaning that is gained from different histories. Looking to Agnew and Duncan (1989) Yeoh and Kong emphasize that place is the "*concrete settings from which cultures emanated to enmesh people in webs of activities and meanings and the physical expression of those cultures in the form of landscapes*" (Yeoh and Kong 1996, 52). Place is constructed by and intertwined with individual and collective biographies (Yeoh and Kong 1996, 55). The physical manifestation of these biographies in a single place illustrates whose is celebrated and whose is stifled. The manner in which diverse neighborhoods, and in this case downtowns, are planned and designed physically are based upon negotiations of culturally-based place attachment and meanings which are rooted in the ideological (Abramson, Manzo, Hou 2006, 344). Therefore, the manifestation of place in the physical is based upon negotiations of the unseen ideological dispositions of various members of the community. This report will peel back the layers of the landscape to uncover the different biographies and histories that give meaning to downtown Woodburn.



# (Re) Negotiating Space in Downtown Woodburn



70s

**Early to mid-70s-** There were a few of the traditional types of businesses found in the 1930s & 40s (i.e., pharmacy, jewelers, and clothing stores)

**Late 70s and 80s-** A lot of vacancies downtown

80s

**Late 80s-** Woodburn Police Chief went to Mexico and saw how plazas are culturally significant to Mexicans

**1987-** City of Woodburn hired a young local artist, to paint a mural downtown

90s

**Early- Mid 90s-** The downtown had vacancies, a lot of money wiring businesses, prostitution, and drugs

**1998-** The first urban renewal plan for Downtown Woodburn was developed

**1999-** The Farmworker Housing Development Corporation opened the doors of Esperanza Court downtown

00s

**Early to mid-2000s-** Downtown began to transition to include a wider variety of Latino businesses

**March 12, 2000-** Voters in Woodburn passed a referendum to development of a TIF District downtown

**August 13, 2001-** Woodburn City Council passes Ordinance 2298, that adopted the Woodburn Urban

**2005-** Plaza constructed by the community that donated labor and materials to the effort

**Mid-Late 2000s-** 90% of the Businesses Downtown are owned and operated by Latinos

**2008-** Gazebo at plaza installed

10s

**2010-** The 1998 Urban Renewal plan update starting in 2006 Growth Management Program and was completed

**Early 2010-** Anglo residents in the historic downtown neighborhood contact Sherri Stewart, from the Oregon Main Street Program, to conduct an informational meeting

**Mid 2011-** Latino business owners break away from the Main Street Program (UNIDOS) and Start the Woodburn Downtown Association

**November 2011-** City Council meeting regarding murals; council requested that staff come back with a recommendation

**March 2012-** Staff comes back to the City Council with two potential recommendations; Council requests staff to further the issue for 90 days





## Chapter 2- Methodology & Analytical Framework

Downtown Woodburn was chosen as a case study because its historical and current struggle (re)negotiating space provides a good place to explore issues of placemaking, identity, and power. As a result, it provides a place to critically test our existing planning research questions (Yin 2003).

This case study primarily uses information gathered from interviews. However, archival records (i.e., local newspaper articles, historic photos, video footage of city council meetings), public governmental documentation (i.e., urban renewal plan, emails sent to City Council regarding murals, minutes of city council meetings), and direct observation were also reviewed and analyzed.

A diverse group of sixteen stakeholders were interviewed for this case study. This list includes city staff, elected officials, and Mexican and non-Mexican community members that have been a part of the discourse regarding placemaking efforts in downtown Woodburn. I am a project manager of a Community Planning Workshop (CPW) project in Woodburn, Oregon that is researching the revitalization efforts and the needs of Mexican businesses located in downtown. A team of five graduate students conducted interviews with various stakeholders regarding the downtown. Therefore, some of the data that is analyzed in this report is derived from interviews that were conducted by the CPW team.

At each of the interviews themes regarding the interviewee's background, placemaking issues, community interactions, politics and civic engagement, and perspectives and vision of the downtown were discussed (See Appendix A for a list of interview questions). However, as the conversations progressed, follow up questions were asked in order to probe into these topics in more depth. The interview process took two-three months. After completing the interviews, I underwent a 2 month process of analyzing and synthesizing the data.

The participants' understanding of the procedures and their role in the project was acknowledged through their expressed interest in being interviewed through oral consent. They were asked as part of this consent if they could be directly quoted. All direct quotes have been reviewed and approved by the interviewee prior to being incorporated into the final

report. There are minor risks posed to the participants. However, these risks are not more so than they experience in everyday life. Risks have been minimized by keeping their comments confidential if asked to do so. There is no perceived direct benefit to the participants. Interviews were recorded for those interviewees that allow audio recording.

### ***Relational Placemaking***

The built and perceived environment of downtown Woodburn will be examined through the theoretical lens of relational placemaking in order to understand the ongoing struggles over space identity, and race in contemporary Woodburn that has undergone a dramatic demographic shift over the last 20 years.

The theory of relational placemaking is a relatively new concept formulated by geographers Joseph Pierce, Deborah G. Martin, James T. Murphy (2010) written about in *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* journal. They develop the theory of relational placemaking by weaving different strands of academic literature that draws upon "*place, politics and networks by explicitly recognizing the flexible, multi-scalar and always developing meanings of place: meanings that are produced via socially, politically and economically interconnected interactions among people, institutions and systems*" (Pierce, Martin, Murphy 2010, 59). Hence, they take a holistic approach to analyzing placemaking conflicts.

The authors do not offer a new analytical component to the literature, but rather develop a systematic approach for research that begins with a particular conflict over competing place-frames (Pierce, Martin, Murphy 2010, 60-61). They propose the following four steps at the core of investigating relational placemaking:

1. Identify and parameterize a conflict for examination;
2. Identify and explore key place-frames that partially manifest the bundles that shape perspectives that conflict;
3. Identify key actors and institutional who help to construct the competing place-frames including those who stand between, ore may shift among, frames within the conflict and;
4. Unpack and interrogate the place/bundles informing the positionalities of actors and institutions in the conflict" (Pierce, Martin, Murphy 2010, 61).

These four steps of relational placemaking will be applied to the placemaking issues in downtown Woodburn in order to uncover the impacts of the networked politics of place that are at work in the conflict of (re)negotiating space in downtown Woodburn. The remainder of this report will be organized by each of the steps of relational placemaking.



**Figure 4. A family enjoying lunch at the plaza in downtown Woodburn.**

## Chapter 3- Key Place-Frames that Shape Conflicting Perspectives

*"Culture is a site of struggle; conflict and negotiation occur when differing ideologies and experiences meet material conditions" (Moss 2010, 375).*

The story the plaza and historic preservation efforts will be discussed in this chapter in order to provide a better understanding of the historical, social, cultural, and political backdrop in which the mural issue is taking place. The stories regarding the placemaking efforts of the plaza downtown and the Main Street Program are part of a historical narrative regarding a symbol of what and who is deemed to "belong." (Groth 1997, 1; (Goss 1988, 393). Massey (2004, 2005) describes territories as place bundles of space-time trajectories that are drawn together by individuals (Peirce 2010, 58). Furthermore individuals bundle, in other words make places, by referencing and reconfiguring the many places that they participate in. Thus, place-bundles or placemaking for the individual are socially negotiated and always changing (Peirce 2010, 58). Peirce (2010, 60) argues that relational placemaking approach focuses on the place-bundles drawn on by actors in the placemaking process in order to identify points of contention and commonality. This chapter will analyze the place bundles of the downtown, which include the plaza and historic preservation efforts.

### ***Transformation of the Downtown***

Downtown Woodburn has undergone a transformation in the past 20-30 years. It has seen period of disinvestment during this time frame. However today it is being invested in by the City through the creation of an Urban Renewal district. Additionally, it is being invested in by Mexican entrepreneurs through establishing businesses in the once vacant historic buildings. Rural regeneration through investment is not the only transformation downtown. There is also a cultural transformation downtown that can be seen in the colors of the buildings, signage on the façades, and installation of a plaza. In light of this, the cultural transformation and the clashes that are rooted in diverse identity that occur as a result is the focus of this chapter.

### **Urban Renewal**

Key to understanding the transformation of downtown in the past 10 years is the history of the development of an urban renewal district in downtown Woodburn. The downtown is part of a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District and receives funds for 'Urban Renewal' projects. In 1998 the first urban



**Figure 5.** This business provides money wiring services to Mexico in downtown Woodburn.

renewal plan for Downtown Woodburn was developed. By August 13, 2001 the Woodburn City Council passed Ordinance 2298, that adopted the Woodburn Urban Renewal Plan. This matter was referred to the voters by referendum petition on March 12, 2000 and was passed by the voters. The 1998 Urban Renewal plan was updated starting in 2006 with help from a grant from the Oregon Transportation Growth Management Program. It was completed in 2010 (Laboissiere, Hendryx, and Geniesse 2010).

The updated urban renewal plan had a working group of 10-12 people that was made up of downtown business and property owners (which 1-2 were Mexican business owners), a planning commissioner, and city council member. The public outreach process included traditional methods such as sending out notices. The development of the urban renewal plan activated the downtown neighborhood association's involvement. The residents of the downtown neighborhood association thought that their input in the urban renewal plan would an



avenue for them to express the concerns they had about the downtown. As a result, there were heated discussions with planning commissioners and city council regarding the direction that the urban renewal plan should take and essentially the future of the downtown. The City ended up rewriting a lot of the plan to address the neighborhood residents' concerns.

## Revitalization & Community Perspectives of Downtown

Downtown Woodburn is currently being revitalized by both Mexican business owners and the City of Woodburn, even though it is still suffering from years of disinvestment. City Council Member Jim Cox acknowledges the transformation and contributions being made by Mexican Entrepreneurs in the downtown stating, *"If Latino business hadn't moved in, the downtown would be vacant"* (Cox 2012). Many downtowns in small towns across the U.S. have gone through a similar process as cities have allowed the big box stores and strip malls to spread to the outskirts of the city. As a result, the downtown core in many small towns is generally suffering from issues related to long term disinvestment. However, with the Mexican entrepreneur as an anchor for the revitalization of a disinvested downtown, the physical and perceived landscape is changing. As a result, not all in the community openly identify with or accept the changing space in the downtown.

In the mid-70s there were still a few of the same type of businesses that were present in the 1930s and 40s such as a pharmacy, jewelers, and clothing stores. In the late 70s and 80s the downtown then went through a period of having a lot of vacancies. There was an economic downturn in the 80s in which only the more established non-Latino businesses survived. This was during the time when the strip malls on highway 99 opened up. During this time non-Mexican business owners began to move their businesses to Highway 99 because they could occupy a newer building and did not have to deal with drugs and prostitution that were taking over downtown. In the early 90s little by little Mexican business started moving in to the downtown. Mexican business owners were willing move into those vacancies and work with their surroundings due to the more affordable rents.

In the 1990s some of the downtown's vacancies began to be occupied with a few of the businesses that provide money wiring services to Mexico. In 1993 an earthquake occurred that made many



Figure 6. The once vibrant PIX Theater, now sits empty in downtown Woodburn. It is located on First Street, across the street from the Plaza.

buildings downtown unsafe to inhabit, so once again those businesses that had the means to move elsewhere did so. Mexican businesses in the mid to late 90s started showing themselves pretty vibrantly downtown. One long term resident recalls what happened as a result of this shift, *"That kind of caused an undercurrent of resentment in the non-Hispanic community. Our little PIX Theater became a furniture store with placards all over the front. You know that is a piece of our little history. We want to go see movies. Well the theatre ran for a while but just Mexican movies. Then it closed down and became a furniture store [with a Hispanic business owner]. That in itself was kind of a focal point for a lot of non-Hispanics. It seemed like the PIX Theater was being stabbed economically and culturally"* (Interviewee 1516 2012). By the early to mid-2000s the City began to transition to include a wider variety of Mexican businesses, such as grocery stores, bakeries, clothing stores, and hair salons. Today approximately 90% of the businesses downtown is Mexican owned and operated.

Many of those who were interviewed expressed that many people from the Senior Estates are afraid to go downtown due to the presence of many Mexicans occupying the space and the perception of the lack of safety and cleanliness downtown. However, other non-Mexicans have expressed the opposite such as Mayor Kathy Figley, *"As the Mexican businesses have come in and become more established, I think it has really improved the safety, tone, and the livability of the surrounding neighborhood a lot because you are by and large dealing with a family trade, especially on the*





**Figure 7. Mothers with their children are frequently seen walking in downtown Woodburn.**

*weekends. I'm always startled that anyone would find it threatening or scary downtown. The crowds you have is so family oriented and there are people with little kids either shopping or going out for dinner. I think it adds a lot to the downtown and it is nice to have some of that vitality going on downtown"* (Figley 2012). One place can have differing perspectives. This is especially true in downtown Woodburn. A physical space can be multi-local meaning that it shapes and expresses multiple meanings of place for different users and that a single physical space can be experienced quite differently by different people (Rodman 1992, 647; Yeoh and Kong 1996, 52). Place consists of nesting of different but overlapping images and interpretations (Yeoh and Kong 1996, 53).

### ***Historic Preservation Efforts & Nostalgia***

In addition to the different perspectives of the downtown Woodburn, historical preservation efforts through the participation in the Main Street Program

have also resulted in different visions of the space. Local spaces are now, especially in these new growth communities such as Woodburn, are becoming global spaces due to what Massey terms "time-space compression" (i.e., the "movement and communication across space, to the geographical stretching-out of social relations"). (Massey 1994). In these global spaces there is a local struggle with identity and its roots in place. People who have lived in one area may, or in this case Anglo retirees that have moved into Woodburn, see that they are losing their heritage as new groups are represented in the space downtown. The loss that they are experiencing is due to what environmental psychologist term "place attachment" (Hayden 1997, 112). Hayden references sociological studies of the aftermath of urban renewal which convey the process of mourning for the loss of a neighborhood and uses attachment theory to explain the power of human connections to places that no longer exist physically (Hayden 1997, 112).



Figure 8. In this picture you can see the cultural balancing act in the built environment. To the left is a boot shop and women's clothing store owned by Latinos. To the right, the Downtown Woodburn Museum is housed.

The Oregon Main Street program works with communities to develop comprehensive revitalization strategies based on the community's assets, character, and heritage. In Woodburn, through the participation in the Main Street Program, there is currently a conflict in defining what cultural heritage to display in the character of the built environment. Abramson, Manzo, and Hou (2006, 344) affirm that urban spaces house "public pasts" of many different groups that have their roots in the community and therefore coming to a consensus in a diverse community about what is important to preserve can be a particular challenge. Sheri Stuart, Oregon Main Street Program Coordinator, expresses how difficult this challenge is by stating, *"We are trying to balance the wonderful historic character of downtown buildings with the vibrant Mexican culture that has and wants its own unique identity. So we are working to blend those two pieces to create something special*

*in Woodburn that is a point of pride for the community and a draw for visitors"* (Stewart 2012). This balance is important not only for preserving the heritage for Anglo residents or for "drawing visitors," but it is important for immigrant communities as well.

Laguerre reminds us of the importance of these spaces for immigrant communities by stating, *"these spaces are constructed not only to remind them of their home country or to maintain ongoing relations with the homeland but also to serve as markers of their new identities"* (Laguerre 1999, 79). Understanding the importance of the transformation of the space for immigrants brings a dimension to the issue of placemaking that is often left out of planning discussion but should also be taken into consideration when making placemaking decisions. Such spaces do not need to be designed solely for a particular population but can incorporate elements





**Figure 9. The picture to the left was taken in 1914 when it was a bank (Photo courtesy of the Woodburn Museum). Today (2012) the building now houses a Mexican bank, money wiring service, and staff helps Spanish speakers with their taxes.**

with special cultural resonance (Lanfer and Taylor 2004, 10-11). Taylor and Lanfer cite the example of the Chumleigh Gardens at Burgess Park in London which has helped immigrants connect with their homelands by making use of plants and landscapes that are culturally linked to particular groups of immigrants (Lanfer and Taylor 2004, 10-11).

Trying to balance the historic character and various cultures of a place is difficult to do because a sense of place is also a part of the experiences and aspirations of people (Yeoh and Kong 1996, 52). Yeoh and Kong state, *"If places are the amalgam of forms and meanings laid down in various historical eras, interpreting places involves understanding the human legacies of the past.... As history is constructed and reconstructed, as each generation emphasizes particular historical "truths" and subject others to the workings of amnesia, places also change in meaning"* (Yeoh and Kong 1996, 56). Place and time, just like place and identity, are interlocked. Yeoh and Kong (1996, 53) go on to explain that, *"Places are socially constructed positions and sites within the context of a particular period, that is, places have meaning only in relation to an individual's or group's goals and concerns."*

In the neighborhood surrounding the downtown there are many Anglo residents. There are some beautiful historic homes in the downtown neighborhood district that have attracted many people from outside of Woodburn to restore and

who reside in the downtown neighborhood district by contacting Sherri Stewart, the Oregon Main Street Program Director, to facilitate a meeting with some key stakeholders in early 2010. At this first meeting with the Oregon Main Street Director, stakeholders from the chamber, City, and downtown neighborhood association were all present. There was not Mexican business owner representation or representation from the Mexican community in general at the meeting. At this first meeting Jim Hendrix, City of Woodburn Economic Development Coordinator, stated that the City is in favor of the Main Street Program but could not support the Main Street Program efforts unless they get the Mexican business owners in support of the program and involved. Jim Hendrix further reiterates, *"The Historic Woodburn Neighborhood Association started the process of evaluating the Oregon Main Street Program and it's feasibility for Woodburn. I became aware of their interest and I voiced a concern that the only way that it would be successful is if the downtown businesses participate. It won't be successful if it is just Neighborhoods Association. It has to be a collaboration"* (Hendrix 2012). Therefore, at their next meeting Sherri Stewart brought Norma Mies who is with the National Main Street Center and is bilingual to do a bilingual presentation of Main Street. At this meeting there was a huge turnout of Mexican business owners and Anglo neighborhood residents. After this meeting, everyone agreed that they wanted to move forward with the Main Street Program in Woodburn.



**Figure 10. Downtown Woodburn in the late 1950s/early 1960s (Photo courtesy of the Woodburn Museum).**

The Main Street Program in Woodburn today is becoming more and more directed by the Anglo residents of the downtown neighborhood association. Mexican business owners are becoming less involved in the process because they would like to see more immediate results (i.e., coordinating events to bring more customers downtown to shop in their stores) instead of going through a process of developing a nonprofit to restore downtown to a previous “historic” look. As a result they have broken away from the Main Street Program and started their own downtown business organization. Sherri Stewart notes the differences of vision for the downtown and cultural perspectives as a point of disagreement between two groups,

*“By last fall, they were starting to experience some growing pains. There is a real desire for the diverse community members to work together, but I think it was becoming apparent that there are different visions of what the downtown can and should be. This is partly a natural evolution for any beginning Main Street effort but is particularly noticeable in Woodburn. The Anglos are very interested in seeing building improvements that are more preservation oriented than is currently happening. And they wanted to see a greater variety of businesses coming downtown. In addition, they don’t feel welcomed by many of the businesses. There have been these*

*manifestations of cultural clashes that we need to work on and address” (Stewart 2012).*

This clash has also infused itself in the goals of the different committees that are part of the Main Street Program. Nikki DeBuse, editor of the Woodburn Independent, states, *“the promotions committee wanted to create events and activities in the downtown, including cultural activities and holiday celebrations that are important to the Latino community. But these are some of the same activities that downtown residents have identified as a problem because they bring noise, and trash, and people. When they envision downtown it looks like 1950s America. Woodburn can’t go back in time. We have to celebrate the things that make us unique. That means we celebrate Latino culture and Latino holidays” (DeBuse 2012).*

Maldonado and Licona cite Massey in stating that these *“nostalgic articulations of space and time —rob others of their histories (their stories)” (Maldonado and Licona 2007, 134).* There is a constant struggle between “nostalgic articulations” of honoring the past and being able to reflect the current community. Furthermore, the objectification of heritage in concrete, visual form, such as through building codes and façade requirements to further reflect the 1950s heritage of the town will reify those values and



ideologies and can consequently exclude the values and ideologies of others (Yeoh and Kong 1996, 60).

A sense of nostalgia is a yearning to return to a lost period and place and according to Chase and Shaw (1989). Nostalgia requires some apprehension of the deficiency of the present and is likely when social change is rapid enough to be detectable in one lifetime. In conjunction with these conditions there needs to be available evidences of the past (i.e., artifacts, images and texts, etc.) to remind people of how things used to be (Yeoh and Kong 1996, 57). In Woodburn the conditions for nostalgia are present. There is rapid social change occurring in the past two decades with the increase of the Mexican population in the City and the transformation of the downtown to now include approximately 90% Mexican owned businesses. Additionally, there are beautiful historic buildings along Front Street that are “artifacts” that remind people of how the downtown use to be and serve as a symbol of a past before the Mexican community began to (re)negotiate the space in a very visible manner.

Digging deeper into this clash, DeBuse when asked about this conflict highlighted the placemaking struggle in the downtown is overtly and covertly racialized by stating,

*“There is an undercurrent of racism every time that you talk about downtown. It is hard to get over it. You’ve got people who envision a nice downtown and what they really mean is to see a ‘white’ downtown. Some of these people would rather see these buildings empty, but pretty. They don’t see that there is a successful Latino business in them. Woodburn Independent newspaper does not thrive on empty storefronts. A healthy downtown cannot be made up of empty buildings, no matter how attractive they are.”* (DeBuse 2012).

The preservation of historic buildings is one way people can mark their heritage because it holds public significance and enhances people’s sense of place (Smith 2002, 437). Non-Anglo communities as well personalize their landscape by emphasizing unique traits and elaborating their shared identity through the features in the landscape to share meaning and build community (Smith 2002, 437). As a result there are changes being made to the built environment in a way that may not connect to some community’s heritage. When people experience the built environment it is not only confined to the here and now, but also includes places of past experiences



Figure 11. A young girl plays in the fountain at the plaza on a warm spring afternoon.

(memory) (Yeoh and Kong 1996, 53). Even though Front Street right now is thriving with Mexican businesses and is bringing more activity to the downtown, it is not the “ideal” for some residents. The internalized history of a place, or what May calls nostalgic images, informs the vision of the present and therefore concludes that the place is in decline by the new changes that are manifested in space (May 1996, 199). Yeoh and Kong (1996, 58) summarize this point by stating, *“Nostalgia is hence a critique of the present time and place.”*

### **Plaza**

In the center of downtown there is a beautiful plaza with a gazebo, fountain, palm trees, and benches. This has been a sight for renegotiation because of the perception of the use of space and the symbols of identity in the space. The vision for the construction of the plaza grew from the paradigm shift experienced by the Woodburn Police Chief in the late 80s. Ken Wright, had gone to Mexico on vacation with his family and saw the beautiful plazas that were being used routinely by the community as a place to



Figure 12. To the left is the Plaza with a water fountain, gazebo, and palm trees. To the right is a picture of the Settlemier, founder of Woodburn, house.

socialize (Kleinman 2012, 14). As a result, he came back to Woodburn and changed the way the police patrolled the downtown. Prior to his leadership, the Woodburn Police had taken a hostile approach to patrolling the downtown towards those socializing because they were regarded as loitering which was deemed as acts that could lead to crime (Kleinman 2012, 14).

This experience led to the proposal to creating a space downtown to the one he saw in Mexico. From his vision the plaza idea was born. The traditional “Mexican-looking” plaza at the core of the downtown was constructed in 2005, with the gazebo installed in 2008, by the community which donated labor and materials to the effort. The Rotary Club was one of the coordinating partners in getting the public involved. Both Mexicans and Anglo volunteers were involved in fundraising and building the plaza. The plaza was built where there had previously been a parking lot for the original location of the Salud Medical Center, a free clinic catering to Mexican Farmworkers.

Despite the paradigm shift of one local leader in the

what should be there to help facilitate that use, there was a conflict in the community over the specific identity of what the plaza should reflect. An element that makes the plaza unique is the palm trees that line the center sidewalk. During the planning process for the plaza, palm trees were a point of community discussion. Some non-Mexican community members expressed that Woodburn’s heritage does not include palm trees. Instead they advocated for what some community members termed the “Settlemier house look,” which signifies the landscape that is present at the historical Victorian home of Woodburn’s founder. Instead, as one residence noted, *“They incorporated what the Hispanics value from their home, the plaza”* (Interviewee 1516 2012). Therefore, a community conflict regarding the type of trees was really about what culture and heritage is should be reflected in the space downtown. This reflects what Goss and Dovey states about the symbols that are part of the landscape. They state the built environment not only reflects culture, but is invested with ideology and a part of the reproduction of social relations (Goss 1988, 392; Dovey 1999, 45).



Prior to the plaza being built, the downtown had constant issues with crime such as public alcohol consumption, drugs use and sales, prostitution, and fights. However, after the plaza was built the police became more proactive in enforcement and reduced the criminal activity in the plaza. During that timeframe the police arrested people for selling drugs and false documents. Today, alcohol, drugs and homeless (primarily Mexican men) are still present, but the increased enforcement has greatly decreased their frequency in the plaza and visibility of the illegal activities.

Today the plaza is primarily used for events sponsored by the City, local schools, and various groups. Additionally, in the summer the plaza is used a lot by Mexican families and community members. The plaza occasionally contains one or two miqueros (individuals who sell documentation illegally). However, the space is mostly used by people sitting on the benches, usually men, socializing with one another or just sitting alone. There is a difference in the cultural perspectives by Mexicans and non-Mexicans on the usage of the plaza. Loukaitou-Sideris' (1995) research has found that Latinos used the parks frequently and in large social groups including children and adults in a family and as a group were most likely to prefer relaxing stationary activities. Lanfer and Taylor's (2004) research highlights the significance of public space and particularly plazas in Latin American countries. They state that *"in Latin America, urban squares, or "plazas", located in towns and cities are the centers of gravity of urban life. The plaza is a space for public debate, protest, and cultural expression, as well as a stage for playing out every-day life. In the U.S., the plaza is also a place where Latino immigrants can enjoy an easy connection with people who share the same language and elements of the same culture"*

(Lanfer and Taylor 2004, 6). This is definitely evident in the usage of the plaza by the Mexican community.

Usage of space that is deemed "normal" or traditional for one group may not be for the other. Mexicans culturally use the plaza as a space to socialize and gather, whereas the predominately Anglo downtown neighborhood which is adjacent to the downtown views this usage as loitering and are suspicious of illegal activity occurring. Thus, many of the non-Mexican individuals do not deem the space as a social space, but as an unsafe space. One Woodburn resident highlights this issue,

*"The people [Mexicans] that are here [plaza] come from a culture where the (Mexican) men 'hang out.' The other three of those populations [Seniors, Commuters, and Russian] that I mentioned, do not. So, they're uncomfortable with men who are sitting around or standing around on the street all day long."* (Interviewee 1506 2012).

Trudeau uses Lefebvre's category of abstract space, which states that *"landscapes offer a whole scene in which certain material and discursive boundaries are constructed and seem stable, by asserting that power hierarchies are unchallenged, and that values, aesthetics, and behavior are solidified as "normal"* (Trudeau 2006, 422). At this moment, the usage of what is deemed "normal" is being (re)negotiate in this landscape by Mexicans and non-Mexicans. As a result, the downtown neighborhood association has coordinated with the police to reclaim the streets through walks which specifically go through the plaza and the streets downtown to disband perceived loitering and illegal activity (this will be further discussed in chapter 7).



## Chapter 4- Identification & Parameterization of Conflict: Murals

*“Conceptions of race, space, and history work in tandem with state-structured processes to produce specific power relations that are sedimented and recodified in the landscape” (Cheng 2010, 478).*

Currently, Mexican identity seems as though it is being resisted more than appropriated in regards to the mural issue. The City of Woodburn’s signage ordinance, which is part of the land use code, does not allow for murals.

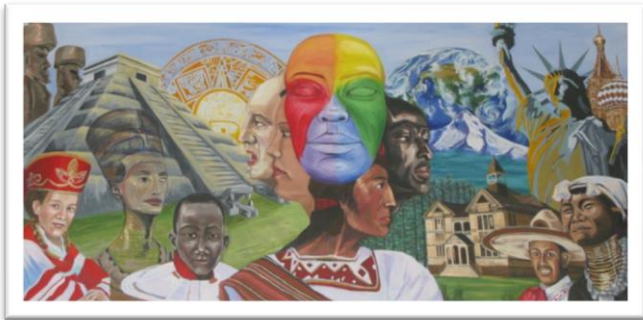
There is a square footage restriction on wall coverings which prohibits this type of public art (Woodburn Ordinance 3.110 Signs). The planning dynamic for mitigating conflict arising from race and space in rural communities is different than in an urban city because rural communities undergo racial and ethnic change in a short period of time and in the absence or lack the time or resources of professional planning’s mediatory practices. As a result, “citizen planners” emerge through community-based activities in schools, libraries, churches, and community activists that perform the functions of communicaty planners facilitating social learning and social transformation (Miraftab and Mcconnell 2008). This is currently happening in Woodburn regarding the mural issue. A local community based organization, Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste’s (PCUN), is taking a “citizen planner” lead for the Mexican community. This issue was made politically ripe when PCUN started constructing a new building on its property downtown and requested permission from the City to have a mural painted on the outer wall of the new building. Chemeketa Community College and the Woodburn Independent (local newspaper) office, both located downtown, also voiced their support for murals and have made public comments regarding wanting murals on the exterior of their buildings as well.

In the history of downtown Woodburn there was a time when murals were present. In 1987 the City of Woodburn hired a young local artist, Jose Castro who now owns his own printing and graphics shop in Woodburn, to paint a mural which was about 6 feet tall and 12 feet wide on a building’s blank wall. Jose



Figure 13. PCUN headquarters is housed in an old church in downtown Woodburn. The newer building in the left of the photo is the CAPACES building. PCUN hopes to put a mural on the flat panels located in front of that building.

Castro recalls that, *“The mural theme was one of a Native American.”* He remembers that when he was painting the mural a person stated, *“oh, I don’t like the Aztec head.”* And he replied, *“that it is not an Aztec head it is an American Indian..”* And then individual opposed said, *‘it’s ok then’* after he found out it was not an Aztec head. Castro reflects upon this and states, *“You can read between the lines on anything. Was it the word itself or the image? It’s how you look at it”* (Castro 2012). Years later the mural was painted over by the person who bought the building. Additionally, it is not the first time that the community conversation regarding the mural issue has emerged in Woodburn. Nikki DeBuse, Editor for the Woodburn Independent, confirms that the mural issue has come up numerous times over the years . Additionally, the City of Woodburn’s Urban Renewal plan has a public art component, although not well defined.



**Figure 14.** Both of these murals were created and painted by Hector Hernandez, an Oregon Latino muralist. They are both located inside of Woodburn High School.

In addition to murals being a part of Woodburn’s past, today throughout the City there are hidden tapestries inside buildings that explode with social and political expression. According to Goss, interiors tend to define more ideological space that are reaffirmed by use; whereas exteriors define or reflect political space, in that it is constantly negotiated by both the user and those that can dictate what is allowed (Goss 1988, 399). The ideologies of those that occupy the buildings in which the murals are in the interior are definitely reflected. For example, the mural inside of PCUN’s main building depicts the history of farmworker protest, has icons in the struggle for farmworker rights, and also depicts hope for future generations. The mural inside Chemeketa Community College shows the past and present diverse history of Woodburn with a helix depicting knowledge coming out of the Chemeketa building. Goss further states that *“exteriors become symbolic in the “space of power,” and interiors become political in the “space of control”* (Goss 1988, 399). Thus, what is in the exterior of buildings or is allowed to be on the exterior buildings indicates who has power and who does not, or who those in power listen to and who they do not.

Even though there is a history of murals in downtown Woodburn, interior murals, and advocates for the allowance of murals in the downtown, the community is not united in support for murals. There are those who publicly oppose allowing murals. This conflict is about more than just aesthetics, it is a battle for the identity of the heart of the City. The Woodburn Independent, a local newspaper, highlights the tensions in the community by acknowledging that, “there will be a segment of the community that will oppose this because they are afraid it will become ‘too Mexican’” (Editorial Woodburn Independent 2011). Land-use zoning ordinances, and ordinances in general, are a “normative prescription” about how space can be used, by whom, and what it will look like (Trudeau

2006, 422-423). Historically, and even today, land-use zoning has been used by local governments to *“enforce racial homogeneity at the neighborhood level.”* (Trudeau 2006, 422-423). Thus, the allowance or disallowance of murals in the signage ordinance, as Trudeau implies, is a reflection of the enforcement of prescription for racial homogeneity.

The mural issue is particularly significant to the story of (re)negotiating space in downtown Woodburn, because murals are overt exhibits of symbols closely tied to identity, ideology, heritage, and culture. It is an overt voice and image that illustrates those that have power over the space and traditionally has illustrated the oppression of those who inhabit the space (Moss 2010, 376). The images depicted on a mural can reveal implicit values, ideologies, and identities and especially expose relationships of privilege and oppression (Moss 2010, 376). Hence, a mural may be more appealing to some folks than others because of its deep connection with identity, values, and ideologies.

Murals are much more than just painted pictures on a wall. They serve a very vital function in placemaking, publically engages people who use the space, and it assists in urban regeneration (Moss 2010, 378). Murals serve as a method to enhance community identity, which is an important socializing function in Mexican American communities because history in the Mexican culture has primarily been an oral tradition (Arreola 1984, 414; Smith 2002, 438). Hence, Mexican-American murals serve as a vehicle to supplement the oral tradition by becoming embodiments of historical identity by recreating images of religious, patriotic personalities, or local historic events (Arreola 1984, 414). The murals inside of Woodburn High School are examples of enhancing identity and as a socializing function.

In addition to the role they serve as enhancing identity and as a socializing function, mural images

offer a new tactic of resistance in disenfranchised communities (Moss 2010, 374). This resistance is a powerful tool in breaking down stereotypes because murals can influence the “negotiation of cultural identifications in diverse communities” (Moss 2010, 374). In understanding the value and role of murals, one can better understand what is at the core of the mural issue in Woodburn. The issue over content is really a battle over allowing resistance and political and social expression to occur in the space downtown.

Despite the potential that murals can serve to break down the barriers of stereotypes, some feel threatened by this resistance or completely disagree with potential political and social stories that will be told on the blank walls downtown. In an email sent to the City Council by one Anglo resident they advocate for the “entire community” to have a say on what the content will be and go on to state,

*“The views of PCUN leadership and the Hispanic community are their own private affair and I don’t want them imposed upon me under the guise of ‘art.’ I believe any mural that PCUN would propose would in effect be a political statement, a visual representation of its mission. Its mural certainly would represent a celebration of the success of Mexican immigration to Woodburn and the growing Mexican community here. I oppose any such political point of view being posted within a few feet of a main thoroughfare in Woodburn.”*

## Planning & Legal Issues

The content of murals is protected as free speech under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Therefore, a city cannot discriminate what type of content is allowed. However, a city does have the legal jurisdiction to not allow them in their entirety or to restrict their placement and size in certain zones. As a result, this has left some in the community feeling uneasy about supporting murals because they know that the City is not able to legally control content. Comments in the community reflecting disapproval for not being able to control content includes:

- fear that the downtown would be plastered in advertisements;
- fear that there may be a mural that one does not like or degrade the aesthetics of the downtown; and
- fear that there will be images that do not depict their own culture or political views.

In the City of Woodburn murals are regulated under the signage ordinance, which is part of the land use code. Therefore, any change to the signage code provides some bureaucratic hurdles and sets in motion a long review process. To adopt or amend a land use code, a city would have to:

1. Mail out a Measure 56 notice to all potentially adversely affected property owners and interested parties;
2. Submit the proposed change to the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) for their approval as to conformity with the City’s comprehensive plan and statewide land use goals;
3. Publish a notice of public hearing before the Planning Commission;
4. Have the Planning Commission conduct a public hearing and recommends approval, approval with conditions, or denial the change (with detailed findings);
5. Publish another notice of public hearing before the City Council;
6. Have the City Council conduct a second public hearing and deliberates on the planning commission recommendation; and
7. Have the City Council adopt, adopt with conditions, or rejects the ordinance implementing the change in a regular meeting.

This process can take many months and a final decision is then subject to land use courts (LUBA). The mural issue being tied to land use code presents a bureaucratic bind which prevents significant and immediate action on a culturally and racially sensitive placemaking issues. City Council Member Jim Cox expresses this frustration, *“Murals for instance--we are kind of feeling our way and we want to see what works. Maybe what we do the first time won’t be exactly the right answer and then if we want to change then we have to go back through the whole darn process again. It is just crazy. If we are going to do it, we have to do it and pretty much hope that we did it right the first time. That’s why it has taken as long as it has to get an answer for these people, and I can appreciate their frustration. All I can say is, ‘Yeah I feel for you but I can’t do anything about it.’ Every local government in the state understands how bad this state-mandated process is.”* (Cox 2012).

Hence, due to the extensive land use process, it makes it even more difficult for cities to tackle placemaking issues in an environment that is



changing demographically and culturally and can potentially be racialized. Additionally, approving an amendment to a highly debated issue in the community can result in litigation that the City simply is not willing or able to prioritize as an issue to defend in the courts. Mayor Kathy Figley expresses this sentiment,

*"I think as a group they[City Council] are aware that some things may be worth going to court over. ....we don't want to waste public resources litigating it. We can stay status quo or look at the two models that seem to fly, the Portland style or Salem style"* (Figley 2012).

### **Symbols of Representation & Conflicting Visions of Downtown**

The control of the content of murals is the main point of contention regarding this issue. Jim Hendrix, City of Woodburn Economic Development Coordinator, highlights that the fundamental concerns revolve around personal preference; stating that *"The issue that is facing Woodburn, with its diverse population, is what is a mural, what should it look like? Is it a Norman Rockwell image of Americana or is it something else? Some members of the community might say well my image of a mural is a historic mural, similar to those in Silverton. For someone else it may be to me a mural is personal expression"* (Hendrix 2012).

The expressed racialized (overtly and covertly) opposition, which only a small number of people have expressed publically, is based upon what is perceived would potentially occupy the majority of murals in the downtown. It is thought by some people in the community that if content is not controlled, murals will be rooted in symbols that depict Mexican history and imagery which some in the opposition do not identify with and thus will potentially feel excluded from the space. In this issue and the other placemaking issues highlighted in this report, both communities, Mexican and Non-Mexican, are seeking to claim a space to create an environment in which they can "belong to" and represents their identity. The conflict around identity regarding murals revolves around imagery that depicts culture. One resident expressed how murals raise issues in the community regarding the expression and display of cultural identity in the statement,

*"They[Non-Mexicans who oppose murals] are afraid that they are going to be forced to see more of that [Mexican]culture that's kind of a slap in the face to*



**Figure 15. This mural is located indoors at Nuevo Amanecer Community Center in Woodburn.**

*their own culture. Anything to make the city more beautiful is fine with me, but we don't want to insult either culture or I am afraid that the long time Woodburn residents are going to feel insulted if not done appropriately"* (Interviewee 1516 2012).

At the core of this statement, reflects what Abramson, Manzo, and Hou emphasize. They state a person's interaction with a particular place also creates a person's own identity and the values in which they hold (Abramson, Manzo, Hou 2006,344). Culture and ethnic identities influence how people feel and interact with the community in a certain space (Abramson, Manzo, Hou 2006,344).

In addition to the great dislike for all murals in general on buildings, another community went on to state, *"I don't want to see fieldworkers on a mural because that doesn't represent the diversity of the community"* (Interviewee 1506 2012).

This illuminates that even in a community where the "minority" population is the majority and the City is deemed as a place that embraces multiculturalism,

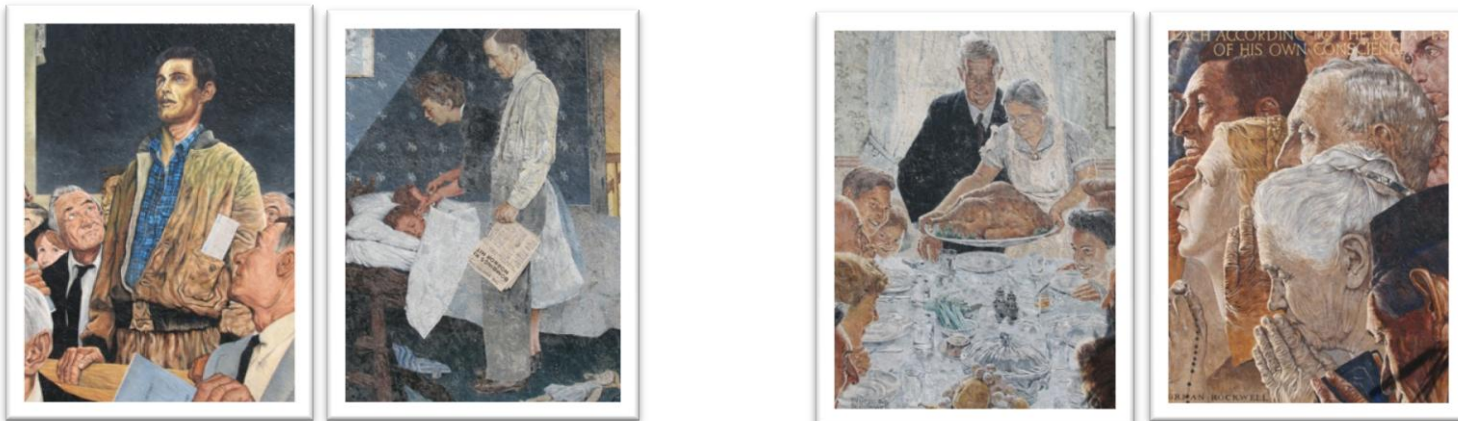


Figure 16. These Norman Rockwell images depicting the “Four Freedoms” are murals located in historic downtown Silverton, Oregon.

tensions that are racialized still exist and are manifested in space through codes which determine what “belongs”, where it “belongs,” which is ultimately a reference to who “belongs.” Nelson and Hiemstra (2008) cite Trudeau (2006) in stating that *“the concept of belonging is intimately tied to place, as any understanding of community and affinity with specific landscapes—placemaking— simultaneously constructs a sense of socially recognized membership.”* Furthermore, *“landscapes become spatially bounded scenes that visually communicate what belongs and what does not”* (Trudeau 2006, 421). Belonging is important to understanding the social control of space which is often tied to membership to a polity. Polities are associated with distinct territories, whether imagined, symbolic or physical, belonging is ultimately exhibited spatially (Trudeau 2006, 423).

There seems to be an agreement with multiple people on council that murals would be an enhancement to the City of Woodburn. Mayor Figley shows her cautioned support for murals by stating, *“I don’t want the decision to be our taste or our politics. I want to have some real art here and speak to artistic merits and we can decide on whether this is something that is so provocative or something that is so out of touch with our values that we don’t want to be associated with it”* (Figley 2012). Mayor Figley goes on to say that *“Silverton is an example where most people like them even though that is not the kind of art you have on your wall at home. But it is pleasant and they like it and they feel it is an enhancement”* (Figley 2012). However, she acknowledges that if the City is to be *“sincere about the mural program in Woodburn it is not going to look like Silverton....I’d like to see some things that are edgier and more creative and more diverse and reflect more of what Woodburn is”* (Figley 2012). But, she also acknowledges that if the murals were going to look like the ones where she

grew up in Detroit, which she notes are wonderful murals that are world-class, if they were on PCUN’s building *“there would be some people tied up in knots because there is definitely some political point of view being expressed”* (Figley 2012). A resident who submitted an email to the City Council in opposition to murals further emphasizes the “Silverton style” versus what they think will be placed in Woodburn due to the large Mexican population, *“Instead of a memorable history of Woodburn’s heritage, like Silverton, it will only add more ‘stuff’ on the walls and facades of the buildings”* (Interviewee 1506 2012). Another community member echoes a similar sentiment, *“The murals are very successful in Silverton because it depicts their heritage. People here are afraid of what the murals are going to depict. They don’t want Aztec Indians on the murals put on a historical building.”* (Interviewee 1516 2012).

Despite the sentiments regarding the mural issue as expressed by a few City Council Members, not all perceive that what they expressed is the entire truth of the hesitance towards readily approving murals. Nikki DeBuse, Editor for the Woodburn Independent, expresses a different view of the root of the council member’s concerns. She states,

*“No one is going to come out and say this, but I think the worry is that they are going to end up with a mural depicting Cesar Chavez or some other image that is important to the Latino community but that some Anglos honestly find offensive. I think members of City Council would be offended by a mural of Cesar Chavez. Just like our community leaders were against plans to name First Street or one of our schools for Cesar Chavez. I’d like to see murals on the Woodburn Independent building. I don’t expect that we’d have Cesar Chavez on our building, but maybe something depicting local historical figures or the newspaper itself. Our other wall faces the food bank. Maybe that*



*wall could have a mural depicting the harvest.”* (DeBuse 2012). She goes on to infer that the fear in the community and City Council revolves around cultural content on murals in the statement, *“Every mural would be different. And yes, I expect that there would be many murals depicting Latino history and culture. I hope we’ll have murals depicting Russian culture, too. If the people of this town think that Cesar Chavez is role model and want to depict him in a mural, the rest of the community is going to have to learn to respect that”* (DeBuse 2012). Not wanting to see political and social expressions of the Mexican community in Woodburn, for some, is at the core of not being able to control content. Exterior murals, especially in Mexican American communities, is not only an artifact that adorn the landscape, but it is also a vehicle for political and social expressions, place identification, a mirror of social conditions, and group consciousness (Arreola 1984, 409, 424). The struggle is one of not wanting to allow political and social expressions.

Council Member Peter McCullum has stated that the City Council is moving forward with the mural idea by allowing for more time for further study. Some are worried that the City Council will study the mural idea “to death.” Nikki DeBuse states, *“I think some members of the City Council are looking for excuses to keep from having murals in our downtown. They don’t want murals because the city won’t have any control over the content. I think some City Council members have paid the mural issue lip service because so many people have come to council meetings in support of the murals. You have to say something when that many people come to a council meeting. But none of them are wild about the idea. Even though the council states publicly that the murals are a nice idea, but sends it off to the City attorney to get studies where a lot of times it is where ideas die a slow and quiet death.”* (DeBuse 2012).

There is an acknowledgement even by mural supporters that there is a possibility of risk that someone would paint a mural that you wish was not in their town. However, some people in the community are confused as to why the City is spending staff time and resources (money) to investigate a mural proposal, such as a City Arts Commission, that the City knows that it can pay for. Larry Klienmen, Co-Found and Secretary of PCUN, further reiterates, *“If you say ‘no’ what is that really saying? What’s really paramount? Is it community participation? Is it greater economic development? Is it positive paths for youth? Or is it that*

*someone might paint a mural that you might not like, one that might embarrass you or might even get you in trouble with voters. The message is pretty loud and clear so far. That last one seems to outweigh all the other ones combined”* (Klienman 2012).

This community discussion raises the question, what is deemed good art and by whom? Moss (2010, 373) states, *“Many public art programs assume that universal notions of what makes “good art” will promote consensus among audiences (Blandy & Congdon, 1987) and encourage harmony among those with different cultural identifications. Critics agree that “great” art has some kind of universal appeal to ideas and emotions shared by humanity, but historically the dominant culture assumed and promoted an elite Anglo version of what was considered good art”* (Stankiewicz, 1987).

### **Media Coverage**

There has been some disagreement regarding the local media’s, Woodburn Independent Newspaper, characterization of the mural issue. An editorial by the Woodburn Independent, on March 07, 2012, has upset some council members because they disagree with the characterization of their actions regarding the mural issue. The article states, *“The two council meetings in which murals were discussed garnered more people in attendance than any meeting in the past several years. Both had over 50 people attend to voice their support. But still, this council takes no action. It begs the hard questions: If this were an issue that brought over 50 Anglo residents to a council meeting, would the councilors continuously be putting off the topic? We hardly think so. Because the people attending are mostly Hispanic, council members hardly have to be kept accountable for their actions because, they assume, most in attendance aren’t registered voters. That would be a poor way to conduct business, especially in a year where three council positions, along with the mayor’s position, are up for re-election. It also may be the push needed to get more interested people in Woodburn registered to vote. Imagine what Hispanics could do in Woodburn if they exercised their voting potential, or if there was a voter registration push. Things would look vastly different in Woodburn.”*

Mayor Kathy Figley and Council Member Peter McCullum wrote a joint letter to the editor published the following week in the Woodburn Independent in which they replied (Summarized here),

“Criticizing the Woodburn City Council for our position on murals- or anything else- is your editorial



right. Writing fiction about our motives or our legitimate concerns demands a response.....If we were truly ignoring the people who came to the council meeting, and the previous one last fall, we should have said that we liked the status quo and gone on to the next topic. Instead we are trying to provide the opportunity for business owners to display this type of art to the public.....We do not favor any specific scheme or style. In fact, we believe a mixture of artists would be most reflective of the community Woodburn is....We are not ignoring our community members- we are trying to be sure that we all have an end produce we can be proud of."

In an interview with Mayor Figley she further refutes the claims being made by the newspaper editorial, *"I have no idea if you are voter or not and this is a community where a lot of people cannot vote and a third of them are under 18 so regardless of where they were born. But the point is I represent 25,000 people period"* (Figley 2012).

Council Member Jim Cox in an interview also expressed great discontentment regarding the statements in the newspaper editorial, *"I really resent Burkhardt's implication that if all the folks showing up wanting murals had white skin it would have been done by now. That is such crap. I resent the racist implications of that. They simply aren't true. He really had to reach to come to that."* (Cox 2012). He went on to state, *"I have had zero comments from people in my ward about this. I am in a ward that is primarily what they call Senior Estates, the retired community. And if you are going to find anybody in the town likely to be a little racially prejudiced, you know 'send them all back to Mexico'... you know that mentality, 'build a big wall,' that sort of thing, you would find them, more of those, in my ward than in others because of the age difference. However, despite that, I have heard nothing on the issue, pro or con. I got a few emails from people outside of my ward. And I have heard a couple or three say that they just don't like the idea of murals period. One email had some underlying anti-Hispanic sentiment. Other than that I have seen no evidence that it is an Anglo-Hispanic thing at all."* (Cox 2012).

Additionally, council member Peter McCullum disagrees with the Woodburn Independent's headline, 'council tables murals again,' describing the council's decision in March. He states that the council did not table the issue, but is instead moving forward with it by asking for more study. Furthermore, he expressed the nature of the process, with planning commission approval and city council public hearing

approval, being one that "takes time." In an interview he expressed his fear of what will happen due to this heightened tension, *"The thing that I am afraid of is that this issue becomes too emotional and it will drive people to say not to do anything. I don't want that and I don't think the council wants that. They want to move forward with it, but they want to make sure there are some controls"* (Peter McCullum).

Despite the controversy and differing opinions regarding the media coverage of the mural issue, the matter of political power and the barriers for the Mexican community to become engaged in formal planning processes still remains a reality.

## Chapter 5- Key Actors & Institutions & the Construction of Competing Place-frames

*"Spatial forms and process are formed by the dynamics of the overall social structure"* (Castells 2000, 441).

If place is in fact a reflection of the ideologies and identities of those that have power (Hayden 1997; Lefebvre; Cheng 2010; Goss 1998; Rodman 1992, Yeoh and Kong 1996), then why has the downtown been able to transition to reflect a more "Mexican" identity through the physical changes Mexican business are making and through the development of the plaza? Mexican businesses started moving into the downtown during a period of disinvestment. It was largely was not a financial and resources priority for the City in the past. Hence rents were low and freedom for Mexican entrepreneurs to claim the space could occur without much political barriers to that change. The City made the downtown a priority again starting in 1999 with the start of the downtown redevelopment plan and in the early 2000s through the creation of the TIF district.

The plaza, which some argue does reflect Mexican identity, was built in the mid-2000s when the City had already began the process of making the downtown a priority. How was Mexican identity able to persist in the design? As discussed in chapter three, the vision behind the plaza was based upon an experience by one community leader (Police Chief), who was well connected in the formal institution that makes decisions about the built environment. He was able to within their networks present a case for why a certain "look" should be perused (This will be further discussed in the later part of this chapter). Additionally, at that time there was one Latina council member which advocated as well for the plaza's presence.

In regards to the mural issue today, now that the downtown is a space in which the City has made a priority, the individuals and groups of people that influence local power and political decisions have the ability to control the space. These groups and individuals, who will be shown in this chapter, are traditionally those who are able to vote and navigate the political environment more easily than populations who do not have citizenship. When the space was in a period of disinvestment, placemaking occurred more generatively and political decisions,

which are guided by city council members and the electorate, did not act to change the space. However, now that the space is being invested in the City, there is now an effort to control the identity of the place through political decisions which lead to policies that impact the built environment.

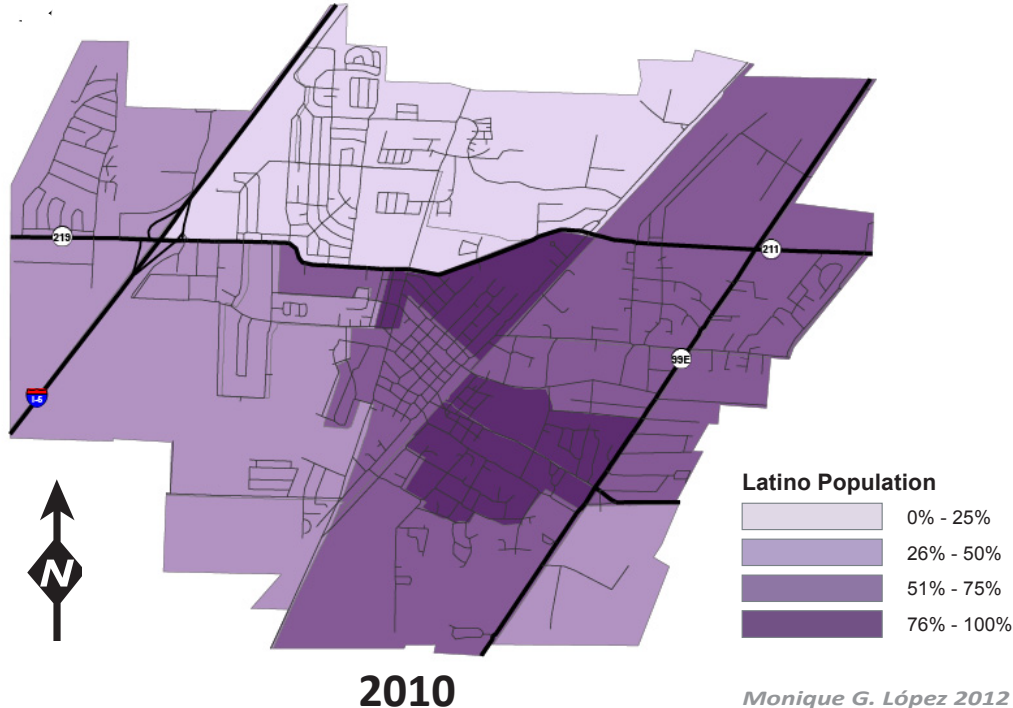
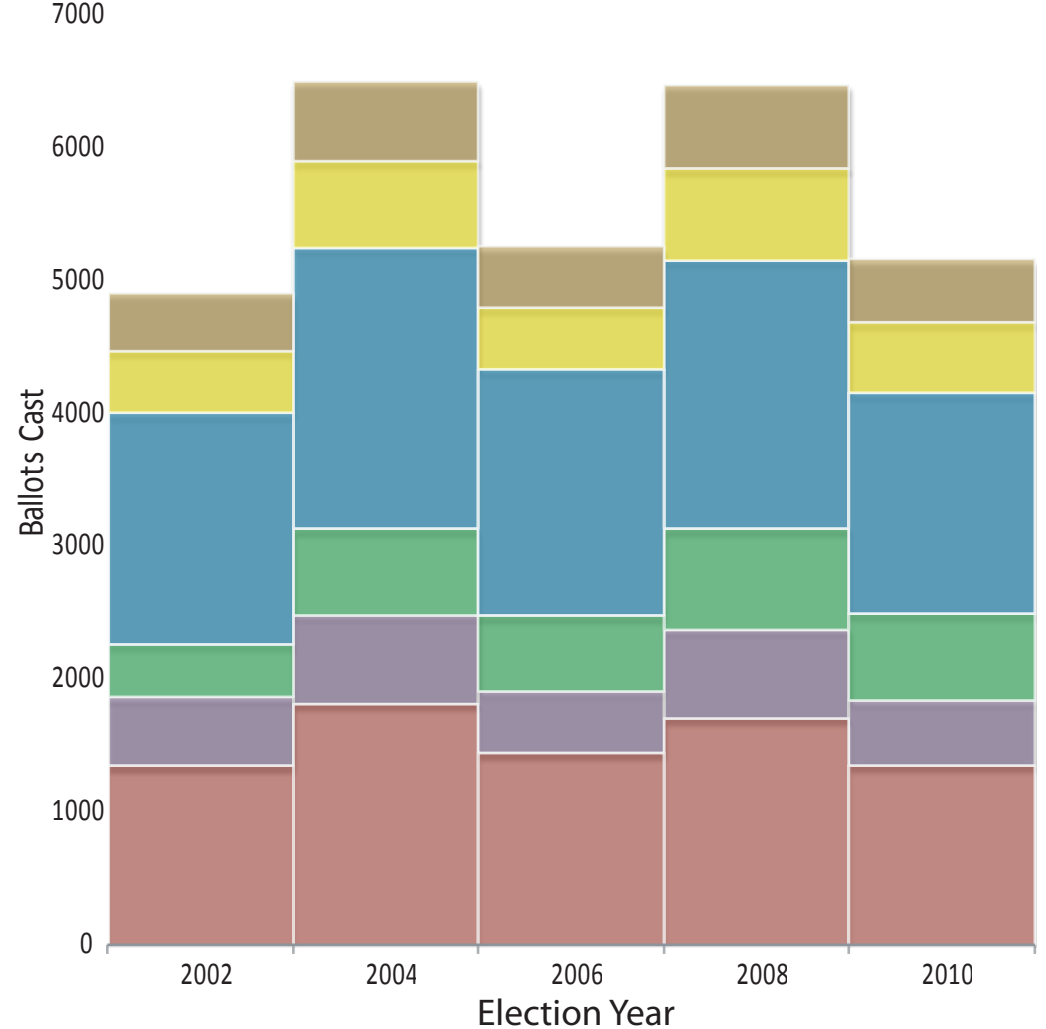
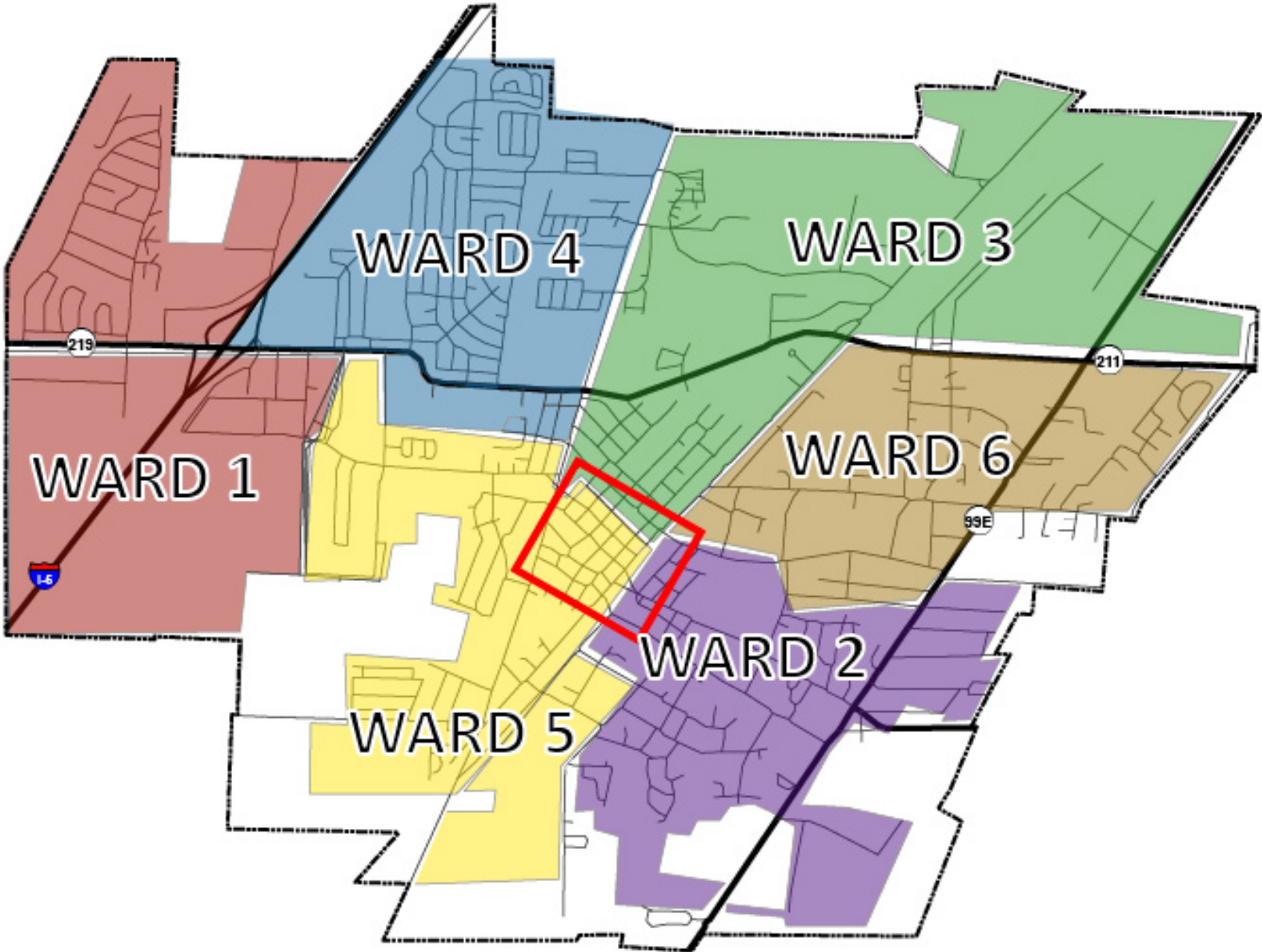
A traditional analysis of power is often done through examining the level of public participation, voting, and political representation. Additionally, power can be explored through individuals' and groups' connections or lack of connections to institutions that have the ability to make changes in the built environment. These networks are highly complex, but can reveal links to those in institutional power and communities that may be disconnected from that power. As exhibited in the analysis of placemaking issues in downtown Woodburn, space is a reflection of hegemonic histories being told on the landscape. This chapter will explore both the traditional approach to analyzing power and the networked approach and use the placemaking issue of murals downtown to frame the story.

Places are socially constructed products of a group's interest imposed by those in power (i.e., city council members, planners, architects, administrators, politicians, property owners, developers, etc.) whose intent is on advancing state policies and goals, consumer capitalism or other established ideology (Rodman 1992, 644; Yeoh and Kong 1996, 52). Additionally, the built environment does not only reflect culture, but is also engaged in reproducing social relationships and is invested in ideology (Goss 1988, 392).

### ***Traditional Analysis of Power***

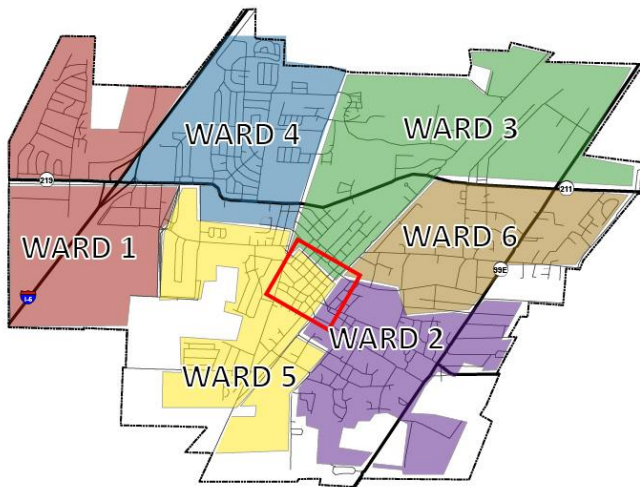
A traditional approach to analyzing power is by examining levels of public participation, strength of a voting bloc, documenting representation, and a political economist analysis of power. This section will analyze power in the City of Woodburn through this traditional lens.

# Ballots Cast by Ward (2002-2010)

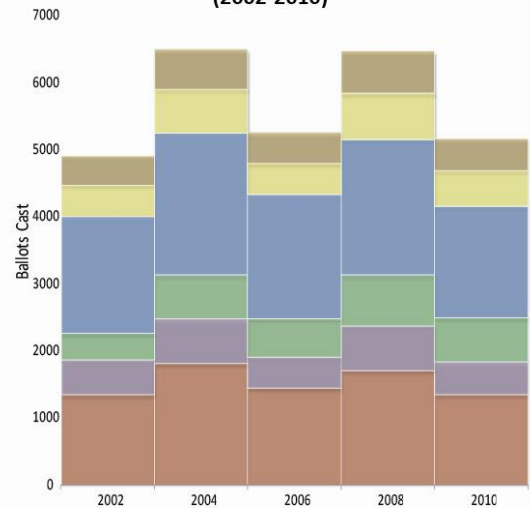


Sources:  
**Ballots Cast by Ward**- Official Canvas Report, Marion County, Oregon 2002-2010  
**Maps**- Both maps use Coordinate System NAD 1983 Oregon Statewide Lambert Feet Intl. Map above modified from City of Woodburn's Ward map. Ward boundaries are not exact.





**Ballots Cast by Ward in Woodburn, Oregon (2002-2010)**



**Figure 17.** This map and graph shows the voting wards by color. As seen in the graph, Wards 1 and 4 has the highest voter turnout. These two wards also have a high non-Latino senior population. The project site is located within the red square.

### Public Participation

The community conflict regarding murals is definitely ripe for a public planning discussion as the other placemaking issues discussed (i.e., plaza and Main Street Program) are not as politically pressing publically as the mural issue in terms of drawing large crowds to public meetings to either advocate for or against (mostly in favor). Larry Kleinman, PCUN Secretary-Treasurer, highlights this point in the statement, *“The mural issue and campaign is a great example of what moves and what arrests participation”* (Klienman 2012). This directly reflects what James (1998, 236) claims, *“Art is . . . a special form of social consciousness that can potentially awaken an urge in those affected by it to creatively transform their oppressive environments”* (Moss 2010, 389).

Mayor Kathy Figley at the November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2011 meeting of the Woodburn City Council acknowledged the need to have a public policy discussion regarding this issue (Burkhardt 2011). At this meeting there were about 50 people in attendance, and most of them were there because of their interest in murals (Burkhardt 2011). The Woodburn Independent reports that the mural issue is one of great community importance and controversy. In an editorial in favor of the murals they stated, *“As evidenced by the turnout at the November 14<sup>th</sup> city council meeting, there are a lot of people who care about this issue. About 50 people showed up in support of allowing murals. That’s more than ever showed up amid all the controversy surrounding Fifth Street’s opening. That’s more that every showed up during the*

*restructuring of the Woodburn Aquatic Center. That’s more than has showed up at any city council meeting in a number of years”* (Editorial by Woodburn Independent 2011). In March 2012 when the issue came before City Council again with two potential options, there were approximately 30-40 community members in the audience again.

Kleinman, emphasized the importance of the turnout in a statement he made before City Council. *“You have a room full of Latinos that I hear some of you [city council] complain that they never get involved in City government. Well here they are and if your answer is ‘go away’ or ‘no si puede,’ what kind of message are you [City council] sending to them? There are risks in how you handle this issue. If you say ‘no’, you might well alienate a segment of the community that you say you want to draw in to your process. You might cause Woodburn to lose out on a business opportunity for greater tourism that murals may spawn. Woodburn would also lose out on an opportunity for greater youth involvement in a positive and constructive way. On the other hand, if you say ‘yes’ to murals, there is a risk that someone is going to paint a mural that you hate. I think it is a no-brainer which one of those carries more weight”* (Klienman 2012).

There is an overall lack of public participation in city government in general depending upon the issue. Public participation of the magnitude that the mural issue has seen at City council meetings is not a typical occurrence. Larry Kleinman, Secretary-Treasurer of PCUN states, *“It’s my perception that, for the most*

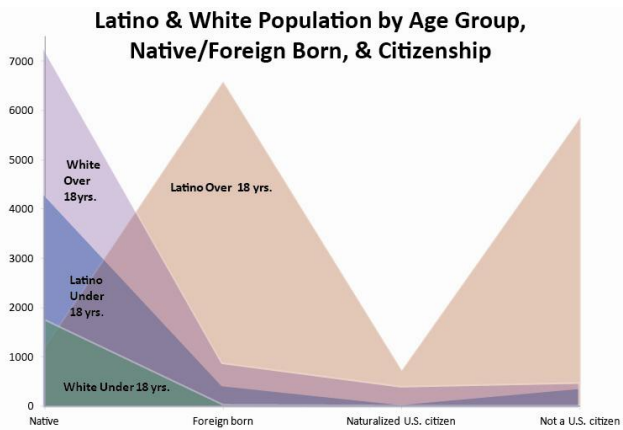


Figure 19. The majority of the Latino population over 18 are foreign born and not a U.S. citizen. Whereas, the majority of White individuals over the age of 18 are native and therefore U.S. Citizens. Latinos under the age of 18 outnumber whites.

part, Latinos are not involved in City government except as consumers. Paying their water bill, traffic fines, and maybe planning permits” (Klienman 2012). In a community where public participation is scarce, emerges an issues in which inspires many in the Mexican community to become engaged. This type and level of participation is antithetical to most issues in which the City Council puts on the agenda.

Murals can spur pride in communities that have been historically disenfranchised and through the community’s participation in mural production it can inspire other forms of self-governance and public participation (Moss 2010, 389). Especially in impoverished areas, the literature has shown that mural programs can offer a mobilization point for community members who have few avenues for civic engagement (i.e., due to limited English abilities, lack of citizenship, etc.) (Moss 2010, 389). This is perhaps one reason for the upsurge of public participation on the mural issue. One example of this avenue for public participation is the experience of a woman in Philadelphia who got involved in helping put up a mural in her neighborhood. Moss (2010, 389) states *“choice to beautify a struggling area is a political statement. Rather than accepting the subject-position of consumer (marketed and advertised to), she chose to take action in her neighborhood, impacting public discourse. Public artwork is central to public discourse because it communicates information, ideas, and feelings.*

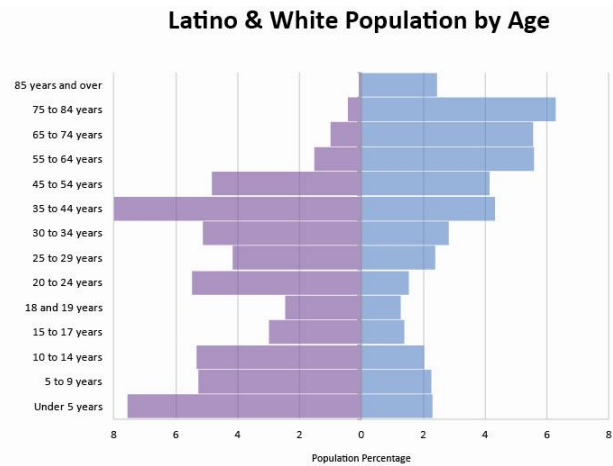


Figure 18. This graph shows that the majority of Latino population is primarily younger with one third under the age of 18. It also shows the majority of white population to be 35 years and older with the largest percentage for those 75-84 years of age.

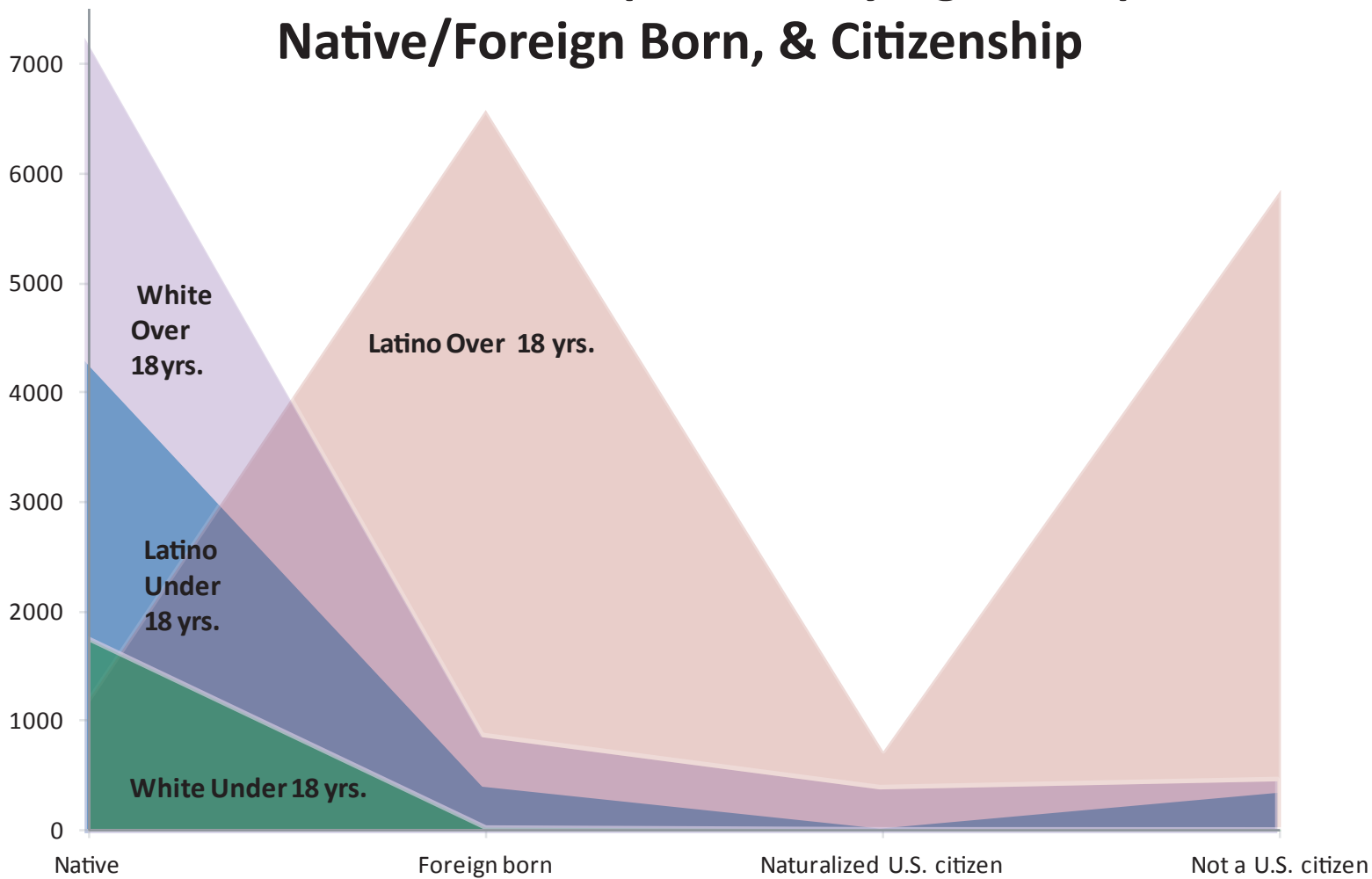
### Voting

Despite the large turnout of people in support of murals, this has not been enough to overwhelming compel Council Members to support allowing murals downtown with little or no reservations. Some point to the size of the Mexican voting bloc in comparison to other voting blocs in Woodburn. When DeBuse was asked specifically who is in opposition to murals she emphasized that even though some neighborhood folks around the downtown have expressed some concern about murals, the primary opposition to murals is coming from City Hall and states that she doesn’t think that some Council Members have any accountability to the individuals who are advocating for murals because they perceive the support to be a *“whole bunch of people from PCUN”* (DeBuse 2012). She further elaborates this point by stating that some council members believe that they are not accountable to Latinos living in their council wards because so many Latinos are not registered voters. *“They [city council] take their cues from registered voters, who in this town are predominantly older and white. When you think like that, it’s easy to ignore a lot of people who live in your ward but who can’t vote because they’re not U.S. citizens. It’s feels like no one cares what they think.”* (DeBuse 2012).

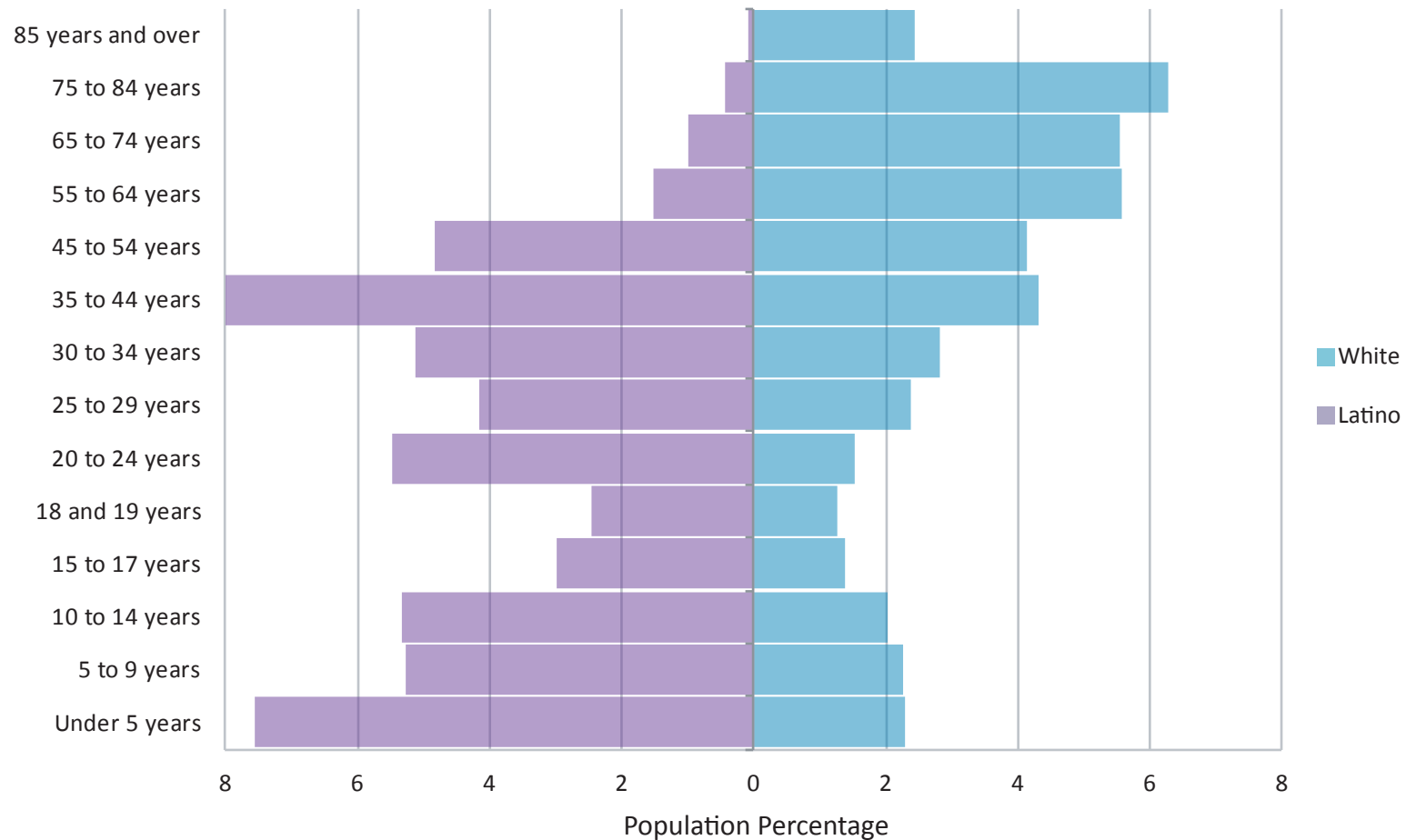
# Latino Populaton Shift in Woodburn, Oregon



## Latino & White Population by Age Group, Native/Foreign Born, & Citizenship



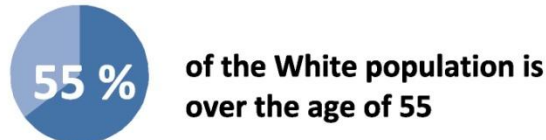
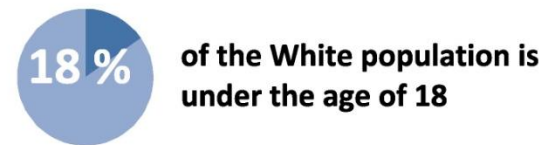
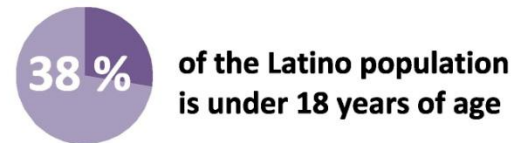
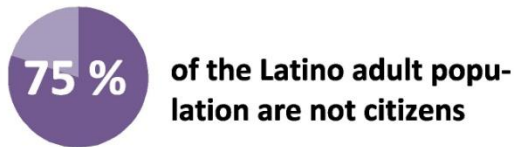
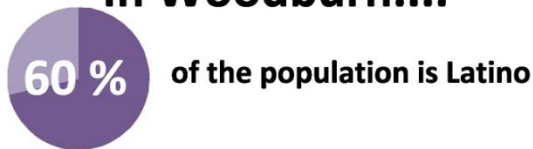
## Latino & White Population by Age



Sources:  
 Latino and & Population by Age- ACS 2010 5 Year- B01001H: AGE (WHITE ALONE, NOT HISPANIC OR Latino); ACS 2010 5 Year-B01001I: AGE (HISPANIC OR LATINO)  
 Latino & White Population Citizenship- ACS 2010 5 Year- B05003I: SEX BY AGE BY CITIZENSHIP STATUS; ACS 2010 5 Year- B05003H: SEX BY AGE BY CITIZENSHIP STATUS  
 Maps- Maps use Coordinate System NAD 1983 Oregon Statewide Lambert Feet Intl.



## In Woodburn....



Even though Latinos constitute the majority of the population in Woodburn according to the 2010 U.S. Census at approximately **60%**, there are barriers which prohibit a large segment of this population from voting. In Woodburn **75% (5850 out of 7765 adult Latinos)** of the Latino adult population are not citizens and therefore cannot vote. Furthermore, **38% (4758 out of 12523 Latinos)** of the Latino population in Woodburn is under 18 years of age. However, approximately **91%** of the Latinos under the age of 18 are U.S. citizens. The City of Woodburn has a large senior population at Senior Estates and at near the golf course. The White population under the age of 18, only constitute **18%** of the white population. Senior Estates was built about 50 years ago and for the past 50 years and has had a steady flow of 4,000 old Anglo individuals. The 2010 U.S. Census shows that there are **4,458** White people, or **55%** of the White adult population, over the age of 55 living in Woodburn. This is a structural reality of Woodburn; therefore, it will be difficult for Mexican voters to catch up to this voting bloc. Larry Kleinman reiterates this point, *"The "Senior Estates" start out as the presumptive establishment. There is a high percentage of voters and a very high turnout making them a voting bloc approximately four times more powerful than others. That said, it's true that they do not necessarily have a unified agenda"* (Klienman 2012). Sifuentez, who served on the Woodburn City

Council for 26 years agrees with this assessment as well. She states, *"The Senior Estates carry the vote here. If you want anything done, you go to the Senior Estates. All the politicians that run go door to door at the Senior Estates because they vote. It is really hard to get the Mexican community vote even though we have come a long way"* (Elida Sifuentez).

Despite the lack of voter participation by the Mexican community, much in part due to the amount of ineligible Mexican voters, there is a history of political mobilization of the Mexican community in Woodburn and surrounding communities. Voz Hispana Causa Chavista, a sister organization of PCUN, began small group meetings in 1998 for voter education on ballot initiatives and saw that it was an effective program with those who participated (Kleinman 2012, 4). By 2005, Voz Hispana's voter base included around 2,500 Mexican voters in Marion County with most of them in the cities of Woodburn, Gervais, and Salem (Kleinman 2012, 4). PCUN estimates that in 2005, Mexicans made up about **12%** of registered voters while they constituted well over **50%** of Woodburn's population (Kleinman 2012, 4). It is difficult to get data on the number of Mexican registered voters in Woodburn because the County and State do not keep records on demographics on registered voters. However, according to Larry Kleinmen, based upon the work that PCUN and Voz Hispana Causa Chavista has done in the community regarding voter registration and mobilization, they estimate that today there are about 1,500 Latino registered voters in Woodburn.

Even though voter registration and the ability to vote among Latinos is low, this does not mean that Mexicans are not engaged in the community, but that they are finding other places to plug into the larger community such as church, schools, or community groups. Additionally, conflict in the community regarding symbols that reflect Mexican identity and the influence of one voter bloc over another have not only been fought downtown. This battle has been fought in other locations in the City as well. For example in 1997, the School District invited a community-wide participation process to select the name of two new schools. Many Mexicans became engaged in the brainstorming process and overwhelmingly supported the name "César E. Chávez" (Kleinman 2012, 3). However, a handful of Anglo participants strongly opposed that name. Larry Kleinman recalls that, *"the School Board chair feared that "César E. Chávez Middle School", would spark a political backlash against the District from residents of*

the “Senior Estates” section of Woodburn, an all-Anglo section built in the 1960’s and ‘70’s explicitly for retirees.” Even though this population does not have children in Woodburn schools, they are a very influential voting bloc. At that time, it is estimated that the Senior Estates residents comprised about **15%** of Woodburn’s population, but nearly **50%** of its active electorate (Kleinman 2012, 3). The school board consequently voted 4-1 to name the schools “Heritage Elementary School” and “Valor Middle School”. Kleinman goes on to emphasize the great disappointment of the Mexican community who was actively engaged in the process, “*Mexicans who had participated in the selection process felt betrayed and disrespected. After all, nothing in Woodburn—not one public building nor even one of the sixty streets named for people—bore the name of a Mexican*” (Kleinman 2012, 3).

## Representation

In Woodburn’s history there have only been two Mexicans on the City Council. One individual was on the council for 26 years and the other only served part of a term. In reference to this history Nikki DeBuse states, “*A significant number of parents are not registered to vote and are not qualified to vote. It makes it very easy for City Counselors to say that they are doing what their constituents want because so many of the people who live in their neighborhood are not considered constituents because they can’t vote. How can we be inclusive? We recently editorialized about how the city needs to be inclusive and we need to help develop more leaders in our Latino community and encourage Latinos become active in city government. One of the councilors responded by pointing out that Elida Sifuentez had served on the council for many years. He felt that was being inclusive. But Elida is only one person, and she was voted out of office several years ago. No Latinos have served on the council or even run for office since. That’s not inclusive*” (Nikki DeBuse).

The lack of elected Mexican representation in both city and school district positions has contributed to tokenism and added responsibility for those few Mexicans in those positions that Anglo people in the same position often do not encounter. Kleinman expands upon this and states, “*Anglo people, even in Woodburn where Anglo people are now officially the minority, rarely notice that almost no one ever comes up to them in the store or asks them in meetings “what do Anglo people think about [insert topic]?”. As the few who have occupied the position of “sole” Mexican on the Woodburn School Board or City Council can amply*



**Figure 20. Two women socializing on a bench in downtown Woodburn on a sunny spring afternoon.**

*attest, Anglo people ask this type of question frequently to Mexicans in positions of authority”* (Kleinman 2012, 10-11).

The key point to understand is that not one Mexican representative necessarily reflects the diversity within the Mexican community because no one person can represent an entire ethnic population. Additionally, there are added pressures from their political base of support which is primarily non-Mexican to represent their interest in order to continually gain support. Former City Council member Elida Sifuentez recalls the effort and support it took to get her elected and reelected over the years,

*“All the years that I ran I had very few Hispanics come to me and say ‘Elida do you want me to help you with your campaign?’ They don’t come forward and ask for support or give you support. You have to do it on your own. Each time I ran, my Anglo friends are the ones that supported me. They were there with me to the last minute. There weren’t very many Hispanics, even though I know they supported me. They are just not into politics”* (Sifuentez 2012).

Mexicans have not by and large gotten involved in positions of formal institutional power (i.e., City Council) because there are a myriad of barriers that prevent this from occurring. The Mexican community is primarily a younger generation and therefore the traditional barriers to public participation persist such as jobs, relationships, family, and time. However, the unique obstacles that many Mexicans face in Woodburn include having the ability to become a registered voter (must be citizen) and the level of language acquisition, education, and financial

security. Even though there are many barriers to civic engagement in the Mexican Community, there is evidence that Mexican parents are coaching and participating in the schools

Despite the many barriers to Mexican civic participation, the future looks brighter. Just over one third (**38%**) of the Mexican population is under 18 years of age in Woodburn. Many acknowledge that within in the next 10-15 years there will probably be a Mexican majority on the City Council If the current young Latino population ages in place. PCUN is well aware of the potential Mexican leadership in the near future and are preparing leaders today for tomorrow through the start of the CAPACES (Collaborative Assisting Personnel to Advance our Capacity, Engagement and Solidarity) program. The objective of this program is to *“increase the capacity of individual leaders and strengthens the interconnection and collaboration of leaders across organization lines”*(Kleinman 2011, 3-4).

## Political Economy

Logan and Molotch (2007) in the book *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place* explain the concept of urban “growth coalitions” and the results of having growth oriented politics in American cities. They state that *“by working through a local government the efforts of the elite gain the appearance of a civic campaign waged on the behalf of a legal entity and its citizens”* (Logan and Molotch 2007, 36). They illustrate that those who own the land are those that have the power to control local political decisions. Hence, through this framework control of capital is analyzed to identify who has power in determining the space. Through the application of this framework in the space downtown the following has been identified:

- **14 of the 39** properties identified have landowners that live outside of Woodburn (36%);
- **15 of the 39** properties identified have a Non-Latino landowner (38%);
- **7 of the 15** Non-Latino landowners, from the 39 properties identified, reside outside of Woodburn (47%);
- **17 of the 39** properties identified have a Latino landowner (44%); and
- **7 of the 17** Latino landowners, from the 39 properties identified, reside outside of Woodburn (41%).

Most strikingly **6 of the 39** properties identified are owned by the City of Woodburn (15%), making it the largest single owner of property in downtown Woodburn. Through this framework, the City of Woodburn would be seen as the entity in greatest control of the space downtown. There are a few landowners that own more than one property downtown as well.

Additionally, a little more than one-third of the landowners do not reside in Woodburn. It is unknown as to how active these particular landowners and those that reside in Woodburn are involved in local political decisions. However, during the 2008 election cycle a group of Woodburn business and land owners, who had a business or land outside of the downtown, poured approximately \$40,000 in a campaign to replace four city council members primarily motivated by not agreeing with system development charges and other decisions that the council members had made. As a result, the only Latina, who served on the city council for 26 years, was voted out of office. Their large investment in a small local political campaign changed the political landscape of Woodburn by having four of their candidates voted into office.

Pierce, Martin, and Murphy (2010), authors of the relational placemaking framework, argue that a purely political economist framework is *“too often deployed as shorthand to explain the structural and external forces that shape a place, without a full exploration of the multi-locational and agentic relations that help produce, maintain and enable the elites that form urban growth coalitions.”* They go on to state that they do not deny that the forces of urban capital are powerful; however, they argue that we must also examine the connections through which these forces are *“applied if they are to empirically expose the mechanics of urban place politics.”* Hence, a networked analysis of power will also be explored.

## Networked Analysis of Power

One person in opposition to the murals states in an email to City Council members, *“I would suggest it would be wiser, less political, and more democratic to place the issue on the next election ballot and allow the residents of Woodburn to make that decision.”* However, with the eligibility barriers that the Mexican community faces, this will most definitely end in a result in which the built environment will not reflect their voice and identity. Therefore, understanding avenues for resistance that are outside of the elements of power that are



# DOWNTOWN WOODBURN LANDOWNERS

LATINO RESIDING IN WOODBURN
LATINO OUT OF TOWN
NON-LATINO RESIDING IN WOODBURN
NON-LATINO OUT OF TOWN
CITY OF WOODBURN
DATA UNAVAILABLE



**7 of the 15** Non-Latino landowners, from the 39 properties identified, reside outside of Woodburn (47%)

**17 of the 39** properties identified have a Latino landowner (44%)

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**6 of the 39** properties identified are owned by the City of Woodburn (15%), making it the largest single owner of property in downtown Woodburn

Sources:  
Marion County, Oregon Assessor's Office  
Determining Latino and Non-Latino property owners is based upon last names. The owners were not contacted to confirm their ethnic and cultural identity.



Figure 21. Mother and son enjoying an ice cream outside of an ice cream shop in downtown Woodburn.

traditionally analyzed and focused upon may provide an avenue for one's voice to be inserted in policies that impact the built environment. There are other elements that contribute to the access to power (ability to make a decision about the built environment in this case) that disenfranchised communities can tap into, besides the ability to vote. Networked power can provide a space for this resistance or acceptance of a community to be reflected in the built environment.

Hence, there is an alternative manner to investigate power through networks of individuals or groups' connection to decision making bodies, such as a city council. Networked social relations are embedded in space, built environment. Lefebvre states, "*Space is permeated with social relations; it is not only supported by social relations but it is also producing and produced by social relations*" (Hayden 1997, 132.) Castells echoes Lefebvre and states, "*space is a material product, in relationship to other material*

*products- including people- who engage in [historically] determined social relationships that provide space with a form, a function, and a social meaning*" (Castells 2000, 441). People and place are integrated and locked into power relations because place is both the repository of power and the site of individual and collective struggle and resistance (Yeoh and Kong 1996, 54). Furthermore, those in power are able to remake place into its own image (Yeoh and Kong 1996, 54). However, Yeoh and Kong point out that "*place' is neither fully defined by those who hold power nor completely appropriated by ordinary people; instead, "place as process" implies a politics of place where social relations dependent on particular combinations of social, cultural, economic and political factors are mediated in different ways*" (Yeoh and Kong 1996, 54).

Castells' view of a city is one of a network or "space of flows" which counters the traditional view of a city as a mosaic of bounded territories (Abramson, Manzo,





Figure 22. A man sitting alone enjoying an ice cream on a warm afternoon.

Hou 2006, 343). The same is true for spaces such as downtown Woodburn. It is not bounded by the ward zones that the City has imposed upon it; however, it is tied to a network of actors both connected and not connected to institutional power (City Hall). Yeoh and Kong (1996, 52) referencing Walter and Ley and Duncan further confirm the idea that place is tied, dependent, and is a reflection of these networks. They state, *“For the everyday users of a particular place, it is an environment of opportunity and constraint. From this perspective, place is an active setting inextricably linked to the lives, movements and activities of individuals and, as such, a location of collective experiences which “evokes and organizes memories, images, feelings, sentiments, meanings and the works of the imagination” (Walter, 1988:21). Putting both perspectives together, place is: a synthesis of charisma and context, a text which may be read to reveal the force of dominant ideas and prevailing*

*practices, as well as the idiosyncrasies of a particular author (Ley & Duncan, 1993:329) (Yeoh 1996, 52).*

Pierce, Martin, Murphy (2010, 61) identify through the relational placemaking framework the network relationships of stakeholders and through this exposes the particular focus and impact of two types of actors; those who successfully produce and reproduce place-frames (i.e., control what is in the built environment or not), and those whose positionality allows them particular power to choose or blend multiple frames (i.e., perception, ideology, culture) that are available in a community. The institution in Woodburn that directly or indirectly produces and reproduces place-frames are the City of Woodburn, Main Street Program, Woodburn Downtown Association, local newspaper (Woodburn Independent), Chamber of Commerce, Non-profit Organizations (FHDC, PCUN, Woodburn Downtown Historical Society). Those whose positionality that



give them the power to choose to blend the frames are those individuals who work or are associated with the institutions that can produce and reproduce place-frames. However, only those that are directly linked and have a relationship to an individual or group that has a different perception, ideology, culture, or ethnicity will be more prone to or better able to blend multiple frames.

Those that have the power to blend multiple place-frames, which are individuals with ties across lines of conflict (i.e., a white senior citizen who is a friend of a Latino business owner), may be situated as mediators (Pierce, Martin, Murphy 2010, 61). The exploitation of political power, what Peirce calls privileged positionality, is an important contributing factor the failure or success of place-framing and it shapes a community's shared space discourse by enabling or disabling particular socio-spatial outcomes or manifestation in the built environment (Peirce 2010, 60).

Pierce, Martin, Murphy (2010, 61) state that the individuals that have the power to blend *"may or may not be the most vocal or visible participants or those who have significant influence within any one place-framing coalition; furthermore, their decision making ability may well be highly constrained."* For example, the City's Community Liaison is well connected to the Mexican community through her outreach efforts with Mexican business owners' downtown. Therefore, serves as a great mediator between both communities (much of the leadership at city hall that makes planning recommendations and decisions are non-Mexican). However, due to her position at the city and priorities given to her by the City Manager's Office, she can be limited to how much she can push to blend place-frames.

The main premise of what the academic literature regarding network theory, in the context of place-frames and actors, is that those that are better connected with the City and the individuals that make planning decisions (i.e., City Council Members) have a greater influence in the outcomes regarding the built environment. There are individual actors part of the formal institutions (i.e., City, Newspaper, Chamber of Commerce) that are connected or networked to auxiliary players (i.e., WDS, Main Street, Catholic Church, PCUN, FHDC). If these individual actors are connected or networked to auxiliary players that represent a different point of view, ethnicity, or cultural perspective than themselves, they are able to better understand those

individuals. Therefore, these actors are influenced by the differing auxiliary players or actors and thus their own perspective on an issue can be altered. If these actors whose perspective has been influenced due to the network of people they interact with are well connected to formal institutions that make decisions of the built environment, these actors are more open to including and advocating for others that differ from themselves in order to influence formal institutions.

The connections between actor to actor and actor to institution or auxiliary player are either strong or weak connections. The stronger the connection an actor has to a formal institution, the more ability they have to influence those institutions. For example, a police chief is an actor that has a strong connection to a formal institution because he is an employee of the City and his voice is deemed legitimate by those who hold institutional power.

Additionally, the stronger the connections are between actors to auxiliary players or other actors that differ in ethnicity, culture, etc. the more capable that particular actor is able to understand, appreciate, and advocate for others perspectives, and thus blend place-frames. For example, the news paper editor has made an extraordinary effort to be connected to both the Main Street Program (most of the active members are Anglo) and the Woodburn Downtown Association (members are all Mexican business owners). As a result she has a better understanding of the issues the Mexican business owner's face, the challenges they encounter, and their cultural perspectives. As the editor of the newspaper using the institution of the media she has the power to blend place-frames by advocating for certain things in the built environment, which is evident in the case of murals, through the editorial positions that the newspaper publically takes. Through this institution, this actor is able to persuade their network (i.e., readers of the newspaper) to alter their own place-frame (what they would accept or not accept in the built environment).

There are also connections between actors and formal institutions, auxiliary players and other actors that are weakened because they are broken. For example, Latino business owners use to participate more prevalently in the Main Street program. However, due to differences in wanting to do more events and promotion than other non-Latino neighborhood participants wanted; they broke off and started their own group, Woodburn Downtown Association. Therefore, their relationship to the Main

Street program, an auxiliary player well connected with the City, is currently broken or not well connected.

## Chapter 6- Place-frames Informing the Positionalities of Actors/ Institutions

One issue that became evident when interviewing community members from Woodburn is that amongst the different communities in Woodburn there are little to no connections between them. Exploring the connections and disconnections between the City and different groups in the community is necessary to analyzing networks. Goss states that place is a “*multi-coded space*” which is constantly being used and interpreted by everyday people who may be “reading or writing different languages in the built environment” (Goss 1988, 398; Yeoh and Kong 1996, 52). People decode the space, or in other words, interpret the space based upon their own experiences or lack of experiences with each other or an element in the built environment. Therefore, understanding these networks is important because it begins to bring understanding to what influences people’s opinions and perceptions about the built environment and each other.

The spatial, temporal, and social segregation further entrenches cultural misunderstandings for both Anglo and Mexican residents.. Elida Sifuentez’s imagery of the result of this separation is profound. *She states, “I often think about the African American kid with a hoodie, Trayvon Martin, who got shot. If something like that were to happen, it would happen here in Woodburn, because they [older Anglo people] are afraid. I cannot lie to you and say that we don’t have gang members in the community because we do. However, the seniors think that all Mexican kids are like that. But there are kids out there doing good for seniors too”* (Sifuentez 2012).

### Separate Spaces

Reviewing the fight for farmworker housing in Woodburn the early to mid 90s, Nelson (2008) argues that spaces of exclusion are also spaces where invisibility is allowed or defended to persist. She explicitly states that “for many (mostly Anglo) city leaders and residents, the construction of urban farmworker housing represented a racialized and spatial transgression that undermined the normalized geography of farmworker invisibility – the labor camp” (Nelson 2008). “Invisibility” of the Mexican community in Woodburn is becoming more and more difficult due to the growing numbers of Mexicans who live within the City. However, invisibility still persists today as a result of purposeful lack of shared spaces spatially,

temporally, and socially in downtown Woodburn and in the City at large.

Woodburn is a City that is made up four different groups (and within these groups there is great diversity) which include the senior population, Russian community, commuters, and Mexican community. First, the senior population who primarily live at the Senior Estates (fifty-five and older) constitute **3-4,000 people**. They are very well organized, not necessarily politically even though their demographic is a strong voting bloc. But they are organized socially in the sense that they know one another and they interact with one another constantly. Second, there is also a substantial Russian Orthodox population. The Russian community is a closed society that marry within their own community, go to church within their own society, and socialize within their own community. Third, there is a commuting population who work in Salem or Portland that are primarily Anglo. One person interviewed stated that they do not have much of a connection to Woodburn because they spend much of their time where they work, read the paper from those cities, and are better socially plugged into those cities. Fourth, there is a diverse Mexican community speaking Spanish and different dialects of Oaxacan Indigenous languages. This constitutes people who have recently arrived to those whose families have been in Woodburn for two, three, or four generations.

### Spatial

In speaking about the general interactions between the diverse group of community members in Woodburn Larry Klienman states, “*Over the years the relationship has been characterized more by points of disconnection than connection*” (Klienman 2012). Essentially, the general relationship between Mexicans and non-Mexicans in Woodburn is indifference because “*we have our own little worlds*” as one community member put it (Judson 2012). It must be emphasized that the Mexican community is diverse. There are different generations of Mexicans, some indigenous whose first language is their indigenous language. Based upon community conversations there seems to be more interaction and communication between Mexicans and non-Mexicans by those Mexicans who have raised their families there for generations. However, the interaction between Mexican and non-Mexican not as strong with newly arrived immigrants. The second



and third generation of Mexicans are noted to “work together” with those outside of their group (Judson 2012).

Some interviewed expressed that the City of Woodburn faces a dilemma having such a large and politically active retired community because school bonds are not supported and some City initiatives are not supported because it is perceived that they do not have an interest community issues that do not directly impact them because did not grow up in the community or have children in the community.

*“There is a large retirement population- 3-4,000 adults who have no children or grandchildren living in their homes. They tend not to have much of a connection to the rest of Woodburn and there may be little expectation of having a connection”* (Klienman 2012). Despite those who reside in senior estates, who are primarily the elderly Anglo community, and Tukwila, which housing is more expensive and is primarily occupied by Anglos, spatially there is not much racial segregation in the town.

Downtown, especially on Friday evenings and the weekends is bustling with Mexicans. You rarely see Anglos walking the streets downtown. The place downtown that you consistently see a mix of Mexicans and non-Mexicans is at Luis’ Restaurant. This restaurant has a bilingual staff, every item on the menu has a picture, and is a local place of pride because President Obama visited this restaurant in 2008 while campaigning for the presidency. Additionally, there are certain events, such as music in the park in the summer, which does draw a few from the Senior Estates community and Anglos who reside in the downtown neighborhood. It has been expressed that the retired community does not feel welcomed downtown and that they especially avoid downtown on weekends. However, older Anglos who expressed the opposite, that they do feel welcome, was because they had a relationship with a Mexican business owner or Mexicans in general and were sort of familiar with the culture and products sold downtown.

### Temporal

Despite Luis’ Restaurant in being a draw to bring non-Mexicans downtown, there is overall a lack of Mexicans walking the streets downtown and frequenting the Mexican businesses downtown. Some barriers to this that have been mentioned by numerous community members include businesses not having signage in English (so they don’t know what the products are in the store), lack of bilingual

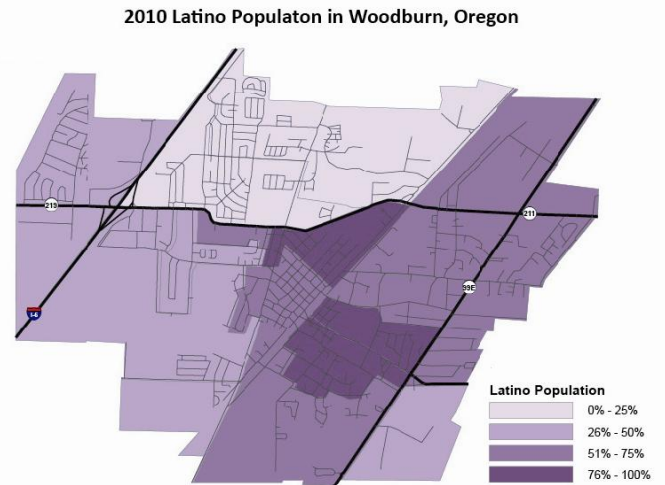


Figure 23. The majority of the Latino community is clustered north and east of the downtown. The block groups where Senior Estates and Tukwila golf course are located have a much lower percentage of Latinos.

staff, and the perception of lack of safety downtown. However, even in places where these barriers do not exist there is an effort to keep the various communities separate from one another both spatially and temporally. The downtown is not the only space in the community that is not being shared or occupied by the different groups of people in Woodburn. One person interviewed who has many friends in the senior citizen community stated that there is a reluctance for senior citizens to shop at Safeway, Megafoods, and Walmart especially on the weekends and in the evenings in order to avoid when Mexicans frequent the grocery stores.

### Social

In addition to spatial and temporal segregation, there is social segregation. One interviewee mentioned there is little interaction between the Mexican and non-Mexican community because there are few Mexican members that are a part of traditionally Anglo institutions such as the Elks Lodge and Rotary Club. Additionally, one interviewee expressed their perception that *“they do not invite any of the non-language, non-culture people to join their organizations either”* (Interviewee 1506 2012). Even though this may not be completely true, there is a persistent perception among some in the community (both Mexican and non-Mexican) about not feeling welcomed in certain spaces and social circles. Furthermore, even in places where the diverse communities occupy one space at the same time there is still a visible divide. One person interviewed stated that even in places where Russian, Mexican, and Anglo kids are playing together at a basketball

game, it is apparent that parents from different ethnic and racial backgrounds chose to sit separately on the bleachers.

## Chapter 7- Bridging the Divide in Local Placemaking Efforts

*"Places tell us stories; we read them as spatial text" (Dovey 1999, 1).*

By listening to local residents speak and through observation, I was able to weave together a story of the place and read the "spatial text" of downtown Woodburn. The spatial text told of placemaking issues that include: conflicting identities and nostalgia of the built environment; symbols in the built environment and their meaning for different communities; and cultural differences in the use of space and perspectives of space. The subtext of the space told of the power structures that determine the built environment. I found that power and community connections to each other and to those in power is the thread in the narrative which weaves each of these placemaking issues into a single narrative, the story of (re)negotiating space in downtown Woodburn.

In the subtext regarding power I found that the connections between Mexicans and Non-Mexicans are weak. As a result, there are separate spaces, an unshared identity downtown, and are ultimately limiting the blending of place-frames. The landscape, of what is there, perceived, and what is allowed shows the lack of connection. Looking at the landscape helps planners understand a community, as geographer Peirce Lewis reminds us, "If we want to understand ourselves, we would do well to take a searching look at landscapes" (Groth 1997, 4).

How can connection occur so that those who have not had connections to the established networks of institutional power be better connected in order to be able to influence those in power to control the built environment? There are traditional and untraditional strategies to start bridging the divide between local placemaking efforts that the City of Woodburn and other cities in Oregon with similar challenges regarding placemaking, identity, and power can consider.

### ***Traditional Approaches: Planning and Political Engagement***

Traditional approaches to bridging the divide in local placemaking efforts include strategies to remove bureaucratic hindrances in the planning process and strategies to increase political participation and representation.

First, an approach cities in Oregon can do is removing certain ordinances, such as murals in the signage

ordinance, from land use codes in order to have the flexibility (i.e., not have to go through the entire land use ordinance approval process) to alter periodically an ordinance that may be an issue that is linked to identity in a diverse community. For example, the City of Portland, Oregon exempts all public art, including public art murals, from the Sign Code (and from other land use reviews). As described in chapter 4, often times a city council finds itself in a difficult position to make definitive decisions that ultimately can lead to the changing of the built environment which reflects identity, in a multicultural community where not all members of a community agree or are open to such changes. As expressed by one council member, they have to "make sure they get it right the first time" because they want to prevent going through the arduous process of making a land use ordinance change if the ordinance needs to be altered. Identity based placemaking issues requires the allowance for an iterative approach; however, the land use process limits this ability, especially for small rural communities with limited resources, to make such alterations as frequent as may be needed in order to make steps towards a decision in which multiple communities can be included and represented.

Second, cities can increase political representation through the facilitation and sponsoring of citizenship programs. Through citizenship programs more community members will be eligible to vote. Additionally, a policy change that can provide the most immediate impact on the local politics of Woodburn, and other cities like it in Oregon, would be for the City to adopt a voting structure that allows all adult residents to vote regardless of their citizenship. This is not unprecedented; places like Tacoma Park Maryland adopted this policy in the early 1990s. However, this policy change in Woodburn, and in other cities in Oregon where Anglo community members lack a connection and solidarity with immigrant groups, may be highly unlikely; because the existing electorate would need to show support for it to prompt those in political power to adopt it or put it in the ballot.

### ***Untraditional Approaches: Two-way Integration between Actors in a Network***

Traditional approaches to bridging the divide in local placemaking issues only address issues of power as



viewed through its traditional analysis which focuses upon public participation, voting, and representation(see chapter 5). Hence, a traditional approach does not address other forces that influence the decisions of those in power, such as the importance of networks and actors within those networks that can blend place-frames. Traditional approaches to bridging the divides to local placemaking efforts do not address strengthening the linkages between individuals and communities to existing power structures. Therefore, untraditional approaches to bridging the divide in local placemaking efforts are also needed. These include strategies to share stories and experiences to overcome segregated spaces and cultural misunderstandings. Abramson, Manzo, and Hou (2006, 354) support this approach in their statement,

*“One next step to overcome the fears and prejudices that conventionally hamper communication between different cultural groups in the planning process is a greater understanding of the various place meanings and socially constructed identities of all parties.”*

Some individuals that are strongly linked to formal institutions that have the power to make decisions about the built environment may have strong relational ties to multiple communities that shape their competing place-frames simultaneously (Peirce 2010, 60). How can cities provide avenues to strengthen these relational ties? Understanding the various identity-based place meanings can help planners and community members better understand different reactions to the space, plans for the space, and motivations behind community participation in such efforts (Abramson, Manzo, Hou 2006,344).

### **Local Examples of Connecting Communities**

Cross cultural story sharing can be one avenue in which identity-based place meaning can be better understood. A local example of the power of a shared story in providing connectivity is the Woodburn’s Relay for Life event, which is a cancer fundraising event. Don Judson, Executive Director of the Woodburn Chamber of Commerce, states, *“Probably the one event in town that draws everybody [both Latino and Non-Latino] is relay for life, because everybody gets cancer. When you go to that you see everybody”* (Judson 2012). Why is this even different than other events, like Fiesta Latina held in downtown Woodburn and music in the park that does not seem to get as many diverse groups

interacting? The main difference is that the people who attend the Relay for Life event, regardless of age or ethnicity, share a common story.

Another local example of having a common story that overcomes separation of communities is when former Police Chief Ken Wright took a trip to Mexico in the late 1980s and noticed that people in many small towns would socialize in the downtown plaza. What had been identified in Woodburn by police as loitering breeding a criminal environment and possible gang activity was just a social custom for the most part. Seeing firsthand the culture of people in Mexico changed his perception of what was going on in Woodburn and therefore changed the police practices in the City of Woodburn to be less confrontational to those using the space to socialize or sit alone downtown. The experience he had in Mexico allowed him to be in an actor that can blend place-frames.

However, there are also some local examples in Woodburn in which establishing a stronger connection in the social network that had mixed feelings and results. In the spring of 2012 the Downtown Neighborhood Association coordinated with the Woodburn City Police a walk in the downtown commercial business district. The Neighborhood Association initiated this effort as a way to express their presence downtown. Even though the neighborhood downtown association had several meetings with the police about this walk and it was announced throughout the area, only about 15-17 people (mostly Anglo) participated. The community group walked downtown with police officers and entered some of the stores. Some of the business owners were surprised that the walkers were from Woodburn because they rarely see Anglos go to their stores unless they are tourists from elsewhere. There are differing perspectives of the purpose and the “success “of the walk.

The purpose of the walk was viewed differently by those who participated in it. Detective Rick Puente, with the Woodburn Police Department, states that he *“hopes that the walking events serve to bridge the divide and invite the Anglo community to accept the downtown and participate in its' events and activities”* (Puente 2012). The purpose as described by Detective Puente was to take a step toward two-way integration. When a downtown neighborhood resident was asked about the purpose of these walk, they said that they were trying to state their presence downtown and send a message to downtown that

“they” [people “loitering” in the plaza] were being watched. This individual mentioned that when they walked through the plaza, some people scattered from the plaza and they were pleased. Clearly the purpose as seen by this individual was to reclaim the space.

Like the differing perspectives of the purpose for the walk, there are also differing perspectives on the “success” of the walk. Nikki DeBuse, highlights that there is a lot of cultural misunderstanding and as a result it leads to insulting the Mexican community downtown. She states, *“The Historic Downtown Neighborhood Association identified problems downtown and held meeting with police to plan a walk downtown that was supposed to fight crime by creating more awareness and creating more of a presence downtown. But they didn’t invite the business owners. Why is that? From the outside it looks like it is a whole bunch of white people who have decided that they are going to stand around downtown and fix everything. It upset a lot of the business owners. I know they meant well, but when they walked into downtown businesses with a uniformed police officer and asked business owners to point out who the drug dealers were, it was offensive”* (DeBuse 2012). However, others who participated in the walk like City Councilmember Peter McCullum thought the walk was very successful because it was a step for individuals to change their perspective of the downtown and an opportunity for business owners to welcome a non-Mexican clientele. He further states that *“it was successful because it got people downtown. These walks need to continue and it doesn’t need to happen with police presence.”*(McCullum 2012).

As learned from the walk that took place in Woodburn, it is important that when cities are trying to build stronger connections between people in the community network, that each group in that network be a part of the planning for how that connection is to occur. If this is not done, it can lead to greater disconnection, misunderstanding, and further establish the power of one dominant group over another.

## **National Examples of Connecting Communities**

Connecting communities not only allows for actors to blend place-frames and thus brings about understanding and acceptance of differing identities, but it also strengthens cultural vitality and preserves heritage. An indicator of a healthy community is its ability to preserve and embrace the present culture

by inventing a new culture that reflects the present time (Jackson, Hodgson, and Beavers 2011, 1). The concept of preservation is often interpreted as freezing a moment of time, instead of being a basis for innovation and advancement (Jackson, Hodgson, and Beavers 2011, 1). Furthermore, in places that are diverse and complex, such as Woodburn, the histories are often layered and contested.

## **Community Partnership Programs**

The City of Littleton, Colorado was recently recognized by the National League of Cities as one of the top 20 city programs for promoting social cohesion within the community. Additionally, Littleton is one of the first municipalities in the U.S. to commit local taxes to help immigrants. One key element of Littleton’s “Immigrant Integration Program” is to provide opportunities for cross cultural relationship building and encourage two-way integration by connecting people with each other.

The Language Partners program encourages integration by connecting people with each other for one-on-one English language and Citizenship test tutoring, friendship, and cultural exchange. This program most definitely connects people with others they would not normally speak to. Deborah Flom, the Language Partners Volunteer Coordinator states, *“The non-immigrant usually learns more than what they expect to learn. They see that they are coming in to teach others how to speak English, but what they end up learning is how difficult it is to be an immigrant and how difficult it is to be undocumented. They learn a lot about the different cultures.”*

The staff are trained and authorized by the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) to do help with document preparation for U.S. citizenship and immigration services and serves as a referral agency for immigrants needing a variety of social services (health, domestic violence, etc.). Approximately, 71 people last year became citizens directly through this program.

There are two key elements that have made this program successful. First, the City Council, Mayoral, and staff leadership is behind this program and actually takes an active role in advocating for it and seeking funding. Second, the leadership of this program takes the initiative to communicate and engage with diverse community based organizations such as churches and nonprofits that provide programs and services to various communities. The

City has developed a “risk intervention network program” in which the leaders and a few key community members that get together every month to discuss community needs, visions, goals, and opportunities for collaboration.

### **Community History & Storytelling**

Storytelling is a great tool for planners to incorporate into their toolbox because it can be used to develop an understanding of a community’s values, needs, and history (Jackson, Hodgson, and Beavers 2011, 3). Additionally, it can also serve as a method to bridge disconnected communities. Compiling and documenting the history and heritage of the place can be contentious and political because diversity in communities sometimes causes difficulties due to racism, fear of change, and competition for resources (Jackson, Hodgson, and Beavers 2011, 3). However, there are actions that planners can take to establish healthy relationships, foster tolerance and celebration of identity, and strengthen connections between diverse groups of people.

The City of Austin, Texas is one example of the city using storytelling to both inform planners and connect communities. They teamed up with the University of Texas Humanities Institute and used a combination of writing, photography, and video to capture the diversity of the residents in the City, which contributed to an understanding and celebration of diversity (Jackson, Hodgson, and Beavers 2011, 3). This was an important first step to community visioning and goal setting. The students gathered stories from community members in their native language on six topics: “1) my family’s history in Austin, 2) where I live, 3) the best day of my life, 4) what I really need, 5) my family’s most treasured possession, and 6) what I see when I look at Austin” (Jackson, Hodgson, and Beavers 2011, 2). The final audio and video stories are shared on the television, radio, in doctor waiting rooms, community events, and online.

Another Neighborhood Storytelling Project (NSP) in partnership with a university is in New Orleans. The Seventh Ward Speaks oral-history project in partnership with the University of New Orleans involves neighbors sharing the stories of their lives with one another and interview content is used on posters that are displayed throughout the neighborhood. This program has been noted to help bring neighbors together and provide a greater sense of community identity (Jackson, Hodgson, and

Beavers 2011, 3). The NSP turns the collection of histories into a book.

In other cities, nonprofits are team up with local art or history societies to coordinate their efforts for community history/storytelling projects. For example, in New York City, City Lore (<http://citylore.org/>) and the Municipal Art Society of New York developed a project called Place Matters (<http://placematters.net/>) to “identify, celebrate, interpret and protect places that tell the history and anchor the traditions of New York’s many communities” (Jackson, Hodgson, and Beavers 2011, 4). They conduct a public nomination and survey process of places throughout the city, public forums and workshops, produce maps (website of interactive map <http://www.cityofmemory.org/map/index.php>), and publications in order to identify and understand the historical and cultural significance of specific places in the community. In addition to this, they organize tours to educate people about the history, culture, and memories of the places throughout the entire city.

### **Public Arts Programs**

Hodgson and Beavers state that arts and culture provide an avenue to:

- “preserve, celebrate, challenge, and invent community identity;
- engage participation in civic life;
- inform, educate, and learn from diverse audiences; and
- communicate across demographic and socioeconomic lines” (Hodgson and Beavers 2011, 4).

Murals serve as a unique circumstance because their allowance or disallowance in the built environment is not only a reflection of power, but its content has the ability to make connections. Therefore, its allowance is not only determined by the networked conditions, but it can serve as an instrument to connect different communities by blending place-frames. The literature shows that murals have the potential to break stereotypes and form connections by giving the community another image as a point of reference. Murals can provide a positive cultural projection in place by having images that community members can identify with, provide images that counter negative depictions in the mainstream media, or can fill gaps in public education that either distort or exclude non-dominant groups (Moss 2010, 390).



The Philadelphia mural program serves as an example that murals can further connect disconnected communities. Moss explains this phenomenon,

*“Philadelphia native Victoria Adams’s statement provides the best illustration of cultural identity negotiation: She developed a sense of kinship with people from different gendered and cultural backgrounds through her appreciation of the murals. In many cases, the murals offer voices to those from groups who have traditionally been muted. But for her, a European American woman in a diverse neighborhood community, the murals allow her to hear the voices of unfamiliar “others” and feel a greater sense of connection to them. This connection is strong enough that she carries pictures of the murals with her when she travels as symbols of her background and cultural identifications”* (Moss 2010, 390).

Not all in Woodburn would agree with what the literature states regarding murals serving as a force for connection. One resident in an email to the City Council expressed their concern of the display of this imagery by justifying that it would only lead to a further segregated community in the statement, *“As the primary supporters of murals appear to be Mexican, it can be assumed that the content of most murals will celebrate another country’s history, culture and politics. This will add to the already fragmented relationship between Mexican and Anglo residents; not promote a more integrated community.”* However, this does not necessarily have to be the case. Research shows that murals can also bridge the divide. When murals reach a diverse audience through their imagery it strengthens their presence as a site of resistance to dominant modes of representation because it serves as inspiration to cultural insiders, but also serves as important examples of individuals who represent different ethnic, age, and gender groups to outsiders (Moss 2010, 387).

Therefore, a mural that builds bridges, but still illustrates the stories of a community or multiple communities can serve as a means of not only (re)negotiating the power within the space it inhabits but also the psychological space of individuals who have a certain perspective of individuals who inhabit the space. Moss makes this point in the statement, *“murals encourage a sense of pride and inspiration, community empowerment and resistance, and*

*negotiation of multiple identifications in diverse communities”* (Moss 2010, 389). A contributing factor to the Philadelphia’s Mural Arts Program’s ([www.muralarts.org](http://www.muralarts.org)) success is because it develops partnerships with schools, grassroots organizations, city agencies, and philanthropies to create murals for community engagement (Beavers and Hodgson 2011, 3).

## **Implementation of Community Connections & Visioning Projects**

Due to the disconnections in the community and lack of a shared vision for downtown, it is recommended that the City implement a community connections and visioning campaign for the downtown. This will need to involve all sectors of the community and should move beyond just those that are involved in the Main Street Program. Even though the City of Woodburn is a relatively small community (approximately 24,000 people) they have a strong infrastructure in place to execute such a program. Some of the assets within the community include:

- Woodburn Arts and Communications Academy;
- Woodburn Academy of Art, Science, & Technology;
- Chemeketa Community College;
- Pacific University;
- Woodburn downtown museum;
- Woodburn Regional Oral History Project ;
- Woodburn Community Access TV (WCAT -channel 5);
- Local video and audio production (a couple of business owners in town that do this);
- KPCUN Radio Station;
- Woodburn Independent Newspaper; and
- Community based organizations (i.e., PCUN, FHDC, Catholic Church, Russian Orthodox Church, Senior Estates, etc.)

Therefore, taking into consideration the community assets, the following phases are suggested. In addition to these suggested phases, small achievable milestones for the community to work on together should be interspersed throughout each phase. These achievable milestones should be developed and coordinated by a broad range of stakeholders in the community based upon their shared interests, values, needs, and goals. These achievable actions can include planning a community event together, coordinating a community clean up day, planning a public art project, etc. In addition to contributing to community building, these small achievable and actionable milestones can help build momentum for

# Bridging the Placemaking Divide



## Implementation of Community Connections & Visioning Program



buy-in and participation of the longer term projects and goals.

## **Phase 1 (6 months- 1 Year)**

**1.Foster support for a community connections program by both elected officials and City staff:** It is imperative that the both elected and city staff publically support a multi-faceted program to build bridges between different groups in the community.

The following are recommended actions to be taken in order to build the foundation for a community connections program:

- Adopt a Resolution that establishes the goals and objectives of a community connections program.
- Commit 10 hours per week of staff time to coordinate phase one of the community connections program.
- Create a position for an unpaid internship (preferably a local community member from Woodburn High School or Chemeketa Community College) to assist staff.

**2.Build relationships & partnerships with community based organizations:** The involvement of trusted community-based organizations such as churches, schools, ethnic associations, community social service agencies and other formal and informal groups people gather is important to developing a successful community connections program (Jackson, Hodgson, and Beavers 2011, 5).

The following are recommended actions to be taken to build relationships and partnerships with community based organizations:

- Develop an inventory of all community based organizations in Woodburn and outside of Woodburn that provide services to residents of Woodburn.
- Identify community leaders across ethnicities and socio-economic statuses that may not be associated with a community based organization, but have well established networks in the community.
- Have a city community liaison with each of these groups and individuals and share with them the goals of the community. During these meetings garner support and identify what assets each organization and individual can bring to the table to make the program successful.
- Seek funding for phases two and three of the community connections program.

## **3.Develop and inventory of community**

**characteristics:** Essential to developing a sense of place and a voice for a community's narrative is to understand a community's historic, cultural, economic, and social context (Soule, Hodgson, and Kelly Ann Beavers 2011, 2). Community characteristics that help develop this context include: population, demographic, and linguistic characteristics; physical and natural resources; cultural history; climate; customs; landscape features; design and architectural elements; local educational institutions; and temporary artistic and cultural exhibits, events, and spaces. Developing an inventory can start the process of collaboration between diverse groups of stakeholders, reveal the assets of the community, help some to see the community in a new way, and can be the first step in a visioning exercise that can engage a diverse group of residents (Soule, Hodgson, and Kelly Ann Beavers 2011, 2).

The following are recommended actions to be taken to develop an inventory:

- Identify and assess community characteristics.
- Map and visually display information gathered.
- Share the information with the community in a variety of ways which include: multi-lingual posters in the library, lobby's of community based organizations, grocery stores downtown, doctor's offices; on the city's website; at community events; etc.

## **4.Develop and adopt a public art master plan:**

A public art plan can provide an opportunity to establish a shared vision for a community's shared space and bring in a diverse group of stakeholders to share cultural perspectives and start the visioning process for the community to shape the space in the heart of the City, downtown (Soule, Hodgson, and Kelly Ann Beavers 2011, 5). Developing a public art master plan can demonstrate a long term commitment to the central importance of public art and the creation of public space (Soule, Hodgson, and Kelly Ann Beavers 2011, 5). It is also important that this art master plan allows for community groups and businesses to use the wall space that they own to express themselves as well as have the City sponsor community murals on some of the walls downtown to bring people to work together.

The following are recommended actions to be taken to develop and adopt a public art master plan:



- Remove public art, such as murals, from land use codes in order to streamline the process.
- Research and talk to other cities in the state and nation that have developed a public arts master plan in a diverse community in order to gather best practices for outreach, meeting facilitation, and specifics about the plan.
- Coordinate with a diverse group of community based organizations, business owners, and residents to hold community meetings to gather input for a plan.
- Develop the plan that reflects community input with an advisory committee that reflects the diverse ethnicities, organizations, and interests.

## Phase 2 (1 year to year 3)

### 1. Establish a community volunteer corps to assist in the coordination of the community connections program:

It is important that this volunteer corps reflect the diversity of the community (age, ethnicity, socio-economic status). It will also be a great opportunity to get middle-school, high school, and community college students involved in the committee.

The following are recommended actions to be taken to establish a community connections volunteer corps:

- Work with the schools, churches, and community based organizations to publicize and identify potential committee members.
- Conduct an orientation for the community volunteers informing them of the project, the procedures and protocols they are to follow, the importance of their work, and their responsibilities.

### 2. Hire (if possible) an outside mediator to gather and synthesize community histories and stories:

It is recommended to bring in an outsider's perspective when doing historical and contemporary stories in the community. Even though "insiders," people from the community, have the information, it often takes outsiders to catalyze the information that some residents may take for granted and also can serve as a mediator between differing groups (Jackson, Hodgson, and Beavers 2011, 5). This option may not be feasible for Woodburn; however, creative partnerships with nearby universities can be forged in order to execute some of the activities an outsider mediator would do.

### 3. Compile community histories and stories:

Compiling the history and heritage of a place will require time, resources, and commitment (Jackson, Hodgson, and Beavers 2011, 5). It is expected that there may be conflicts among differing community narratives and as a result these may take time to resolve (Jackson, Hodgson, and Beavers 2011, 5).

The following are recommended actions to be taken to compile community histories and stories:

- Develop a cataloguing process for the stories, images, video, audio to be organized.
- Partner with the Woodburn Regional Oral History Project (WROHP) to identify all the local stories that have already been collected that can be used for this community connections project.
- Coordinate with the community committee, community based organizations such as the Woodburn Downtown Museum, PCUN, Senior Estates, Neighborhood Associations, Woodburn Regional Oral History Project (WROHP), and Churches to gather histories and current community stories from a diverse group of residents.
- Work with the library, churches, and other community gathering spots to have open house events with people telling their story live to the community.

### 4. Coordinate Community Visioning Sessions:

This is different than the collection of community history and stories. Stories and histories is the essence of what the city was and is. This is collecting information regarding what people would like the city to become in the future. During these visioning sessions the community's ideas about possible futures can be determined by asking what values and needs the community has for the community connections project and design of the downtown (Soule, Hodgson, and Kelly Ann Beavers 2011, 5).

The following are recommended actions to be taken to conduct community visioning sessions:

- Identify and hold community visioning sessions where people already meet (i.e., churches, Senior Estates Community Room, PCUN, etc.).
- Research and develop tools and procedures to have visioning sessions that allow for people to be creative and unencumbered. Concepts of values and needs can be illustrated by art, digital imagery, modeling and the use of physical objects, such as

wooden blocks that represent buildings, infrastructure, and other aspects of the built environment (Soule, Hodgson, and Kelly Ann Beavers 2011, 5). The City can invite artists to facilitate workshops or have community members lead their own processes (Soule, Hodgson, and Kelly Ann Beavers 2011, 5).

- Coordinate a community visioning session to bring diverse groups together to begin having these types of conversations and do activities together. This can be done outside at the plaza and be made a community event with diverse foods, music, and community art.

### Phase 3 (Year 3 to year 5)

**1. Share stories using a multi-faceted and multi-media approach:** Sharing art, cultural expressions, and personal stories can be an effective way to integrate history and heritage into everyday lived experiences, shifts in perceptions, and value shaping.

There is a precedent in Woodburn for collecting community stories. The Woodburn Regional Oral History Project (WROHP), started in 2001, is a partnership project of the Woodburn Historical Museum and the Woodburn Chemeketa Community College Campus. The purpose of the project is to document the heritage of the region's diverse population. They did this by tape-recording interviews with local residents and copies are kept at the Woodburn Museum, public library, and high school to borrow for research. However, there is not a public wide campaign to make these stories more accessible to the community.

The following are recommended actions to be taken to share community histories and stories:

- Ensure that information collected and stories are accessible and interactive. Develop exhibits that can be placed in community gathering spaces and develop an interactive multi-lingual website for the project that the community can learn about the project and about their neighbors and be able to interface with the website to add their own content (stories- written, audio, video; images- photos or original artwork).
- Use informal and formal exhibits to capture multiple audiences' by sharing the stories (in a multi-media approach using story boards, audio, visual, images, etc.) in both traditional and nontraditional locations such as museums, parks, plazas, and streets—or lobbies, malls, nursing

homes, and retail windows (Beavers and Hodgson 2011, 4).

- Develop a partnership with the local newspaper (Woodburn Independent) and other local publications (Spanish and Russian) to run a weekly community story.

**2. Implement a City Arts program:** Based on the public arts plan that the City develops with community members, implement a city arts program that engages residents in the development of art that reflect history and culture.

The following are recommended actions to be taken to implement a City arts program:

- Work with the high school's art department and Chemeketa Community College (they have mural painting classes taught by muralist Hector Hernandez) to identify and provide paid apprenticeships to talented young artists.
- Have the artist connect with neighborhood leaders, civic groups, and residents to generate ideas for images to include in the artwork (Soule, Hodgson, and Kelly Ann Beavers 2011, 8).
- Collaborate with business owners and building owners downtown to sponsor blank walls for community driven mural projects to pay tribute to the history, present, and future of Woodburn.

**3. Develop and implement a community partners program:** This will be a challenging yet rewarding step toward connecting communities. It will be important to house this program in an institution or organization in which cross-cultural groups feel comfortable using the space. The library downtown can serve as a great space to connect people because it is already used by multiple communities. Additionally, reaching out to other organizations and cities throughout the nation for advice can help craft a program for Woodburn that is successful.

The following are recommended actions to be taken to implement a community partners program:

- Seek funding or in kind donations and partnerships to hire a part-time volunteer coordinator that can be housed at the City library.
- Develop partnerships in the community with organizations (i.e., PCUN, FHDC, etc.) and schools (Chemeketa Community College, High School) that are already offering English and Citizenship classes as a way to recruit potential students and

supplement the education that they are already receiving.

- Recruit a diverse group of community volunteers from all sectors of the community to be peer mentors.
- Match volunteers with students.

#### **4. Continue gathering community history and stories and conducting community visioning sessions:**

This should be a continual process because the city is always evolving and as a result develops new cultures and visions for the future and has new needs. Additionally, visioning sessions in this phase as well can be used to gauge progress of the community connections project and determine what changes need to be made to it in order to make it a more inclusive and effective project.

### ***Two-way Integration Manifested in the Built Environment***

As the City begins taking steps towards two-way integration, as outlined in the implementation phases, they will become better equipped in making placemaking decisions that empower all members of the community and reflect the identity and culture of all members in the community. Because after all, as Park, Burgess, and McKenzine (1925) state, *“The city is not merely a physical mechanism and an artificial construction. It is involved in vital processes of the people who compose it; it is a product of nature, and particularly human nature.”*

Placemaking conflicts manifest themselves in the built environment and the space is transformed by those that have networks of power that are directly connected to formal institutions that have the authority to make decisions on how the space is transformed and used. Keeping this in mind, the City of Woodburn essentially has the option of three routes to take in order to (re)negotiate space in the downtown.

The first option is that they can move forward through traditional assimilation efforts of the built environment by transforming the downtown to a “1950s Norman Rockwell” downtown. However, this can result in either pushing out Mexican businesses or forcing them to change in the name of “assimilation.”

In the second option the City can move towards the other side of the spectrum and exoticize the space by transforming the downtown to a “Little Mexico”, a kitsch cultural tourism location. Laguerre calls these

types of places “spectacle sites” and cautions this approach. Additionally, he states the name “little” can belittle or minoritize a community (Laguerre 1999, 102, 81). In a spectacle site, “minoritized” space is a show and an attraction for tourist which is often commodified through guidebooks and vacation packages to attract visitors (Laguerre 1999, 102). Additionally, the images that are chosen to represent the space may not correspond to actual representation of what residents of Woodburn consider the main feature of downtown, but is just put on display for outsiders. This approach is advantageous for cities to pursue because it can bring in money from the outside which can impact the entire local economy. However, in the long run this can be detrimental to immigrant communities because the economic health of a city can depend upon a place remaining the same and not going through natural change over time (Laguerre 1999, 102). Laguerre states that this disempowers a community by making a neighborhood a stage in which residents and merchants become merely an actors in a spectacle for tourist instead of the space in a place for empowerment and expression of identity which is linked to culture and the diversity within the community (Laguerre 1999, 102).

The third option the City can choose a third way, two-way integration or a hybrid approach. Cheng (2010, 466) reminds us that *“Main Street was never neutral territory, a blank slate upon which a harmonious future can be drawn.”* Maldonado and Licona (2007) offer unique insight that departs from the traditional debates regarding assimilation and pluralism that are particularly important to understand in the Woodburn case. They state that that cultural cloning is a product of the assimilationist model of integration which positions immigrants as outsiders, and requires them to change to reflect and reproduce “sameness” in social structures and cultural identities (Maldonado and Licona 2007, 130). They use the term “cultural cloning” in order to describe the reproduction of sameness. They further define cultural cloning *“as a set of practices that pursue and perpetuate the reproduction of sameness, turn difference into inequality;”* and therefore *“preclude the engagement of, and benefit from, immigrant knowledges and capitals”* (Maldonado and Licona 2007, 130). Therefore, if the community chooses to go this route they will greatly miss out on the immigrants’ rich cultural knowledge and capital which is a great asset to both Mexicans and non-Mexicans in Woodburn.



Trabalzi and Sandoval argue that the multicultural theories of assimilation and cultural pluralism need to be revised (Trabalzi and Sandoval 2010, 77). The exoticism of the “other” is ultimately detrimental because, as Trabalzi and Sandoval assert, *“Assimilation through exoticization of the immigrant is a policy that is not conducive of equal treatment and leads to further marginalization of the immigrants”* (Trabalzi and Sandoval 2010, 76). If the community of Woodburn were to choose to completely intentionally or unintentionally exoticize the downtown, it would not lead to the empowerment of Mexicans and celebration of Mexican heritage, but further marginalize the community.

Maldonado and Licona (2007, 131) argue that integration is not a one way process but a two-way process that involves change for both immigrants and members of the receiving community . Therefore, the notion of assimilation (or what they termed cultural cloning) and cultural pluralism are models that should not be pursued as previously debated in the

discourse of immigrant integration. A two-way process of integration is necessary because if it is not pursued then one group’s story and identity is denied in public space. The type of integration (one-way or two-way) is manifested in the built environment and the built environment is a reflection of whose story is being told and listened to by institutional leaders who have the power to shape what “belongs” in the built environment. Hope is not lost. Places are more than a reflection of power or controlled by those who have power. Places are continually engaged in a process of change in which everyday people can influence. Places are recorders of the passage of history of social and cultural change, a “collective memory.” The manner in which people respond to these collective memories becomes a part of the local culture and ideology; thus *“cultures develop in places and are passed on in places”* (Yeoh 1996, 56).

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# Appendix A

## Interview Questions

### Background:

- How long have you lived in Woodburn?
- What projects are you currently working on?

### Placemaking:

- What are your thoughts on the mural issue?
- In regard to the mural issue, what have communities expressed in support and opposition?
- What is the perception of the aesthetic character of downtown?
- What is your ideal vision for downtown?
- What do you feel the impact of Latino businesses have been on downtown? (Storefronts, signage, types of people and businesses currently downtown, the atmosphere)
- What is the history of the funding, design and construction of the plaza/street improvements?
- What was the public process/input for the design?
- How is it being used today? (farmer's market, fiesta, miqueros etc.) Is it successful? Challenges? How has the public responded to them?
- What plans are in the works for the area (re: DT Dev. Plan Revision)?
- What do you feel the impact of Latino businesses have been on downtown? (Storefronts, signage, types of people and businesses currently downtown, the atmosphere)
- When did the downtown really emerge as a Latino center?
- How has the character of the Latino presence downtown changed in recent decades?
- How has the Latino demographic changed in Woodburn?
- How has the Urban Renewal project affected downtown business activity?
- What would you consider major turning points in Woodburn's history?
- Where is Woodburn now in participating in the Main Street program? What are the next steps going forward?

### Community Interaction:

- How would you describe the general interactions and relationship between the Mexican and non-Mexican communities in Woodburn?

### Politics & Civic Engagement:

- How have Mexicans played a role in city politics? (Elected members, etc.)
- Are Mexicans civically engaged? How are Mexicans involved civically?
- What are the main barriers to this involvement?
- Who has the political power in Woodburn?

### Closing:

- Is there anything else you would like to talk about that we haven't yet discussed?