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BUILDING TYPES STUDY 496: THE HOME TOWNS

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79 HOW ARCHITECTS ARE HELPING REBUILD A WAY OF LIVING IN OUR SMALLER CITIES AND TOWNS

Small cities and towns across the land are being returned to and rehabilitated at a rapidly accelerating pace, and their popularity rests on a most pragmatic base: these renovations are politically visible assets for town executives who are successfully trying to keep industry from moving away to what seem like more viable environments. Architects are joining forces with mayors, bankers, business people, and concerned citizens to rescue their decaying home towns.

This issue consists of eight case studies of places where this is happening—plus an essay on where the money comes from.

82 AURORA

Centered on an island in the middle of a river—similar in potential to Paris's *Ile de la Cité*—this Illinois town had long ago turned its back on its riverfront assets, and had thus virtually forgotten itself. Today, a program of vigorous public reawakening—led by planner Ben-Ami Friedman—has created a wave of public interest that is being combined with the city's aggressive new financing techniques to make Aurora a special place once again.

88 GRANBURY

Community pride in this Texas hamlet has stimulated its facelifting and the renovation of many of its major structures, all with private money.

90 BRIDGEPORT

In this Connecticut town, a program of replanning, recycling of worthwhile buildings, and construction of new ones is gaining momentum. This program, initiated by architect Victor Christ-Janer, is being spearheaded by the architect and by the city's largest bank and one of its major manufacturers.

Phase one of the program has so far included rehabilitation of an industrial area into an office, recreation, and shopping center that attracts crowds into this once-rundown district. A smaller but significant aspect of phase one is the rehabilitation of a number of housing districts.

Phase two includes plans to recycle an abandoned railroad station, refurbish a rundown waterfront district, and develop a transportation, office building, and pedestrian mall complex in the "bombed-out" core.



Damora

100 SAVANNAH

This Georgia town is no stranger to historic preservation—but here is a new twist: on the fringes of a designated historic district, dilapidated Victorian houses are being remodeled, not only to sustain the architectural fabric of an area, but to maintain and create much-needed low-income housing.

COME BACK

102 CORNING

Skillfully coordinated dollars, planning, and design are turning this New York State factory town into a meat-and-potatoes mixture of fine new buildings, fixed-up old ones, fun public spaces, and dusted off heirloom streets.

110 GRAND HAVEN

How a "citizen architect" managed to raise the curtain on the Main Street of this small Michigan town—with the World's Largest Musical Fountain.

112 GANANDA

This New York State new town is on the move again after more than its share of troubles, and at the center of its first parts is a building that pays as much attention to asking the right architectural questions as answering them. Urban Design Associates discovered that planning a new neighborhood center can be a game, and they used the game technique to discover what people who would be affected most by the new town liked and disliked. The design for the new neighborhood center, organized along a pedestrian way, evolved directly from the large volume of material produced by the games.



Joseph W. Moittor

120 DAYTON

The Ohio architectural firm of Lorenz Williams Lively Likens and Partners began their work in Dayton with a series of commercial buildings built to standard concepts—but they applied to these buildings as well some more comprehensive goals which are now beginning to pay off in the form of a unified urban center—and in the form of enthusiastic public support.



124 THE EFFECT OF CURRENT METHODS OF FINANCING DOWNTOWN RENEWAL

Significant private investment in renewing the urban centers of our smaller cities and towns usually begins after skilled architects/planners have successfully played the game of "grantsmanship." An important part of the architect/planner's role today is finding funds for preliminary studies and the preparation of plans, as well as procuring construction money to renew the downtowns of U.S. cities. Today's best physical planners know how to put together development proposals that take advantage of monies made available by Federal, state and local programs.

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NEXT MONTH IN RECORD

Building Types Study: Record Interiors of 1977

In this annual feature, RECORD's editors present ten of the most compelling architect-designed interiors in a 28-page section that covers a wide range of building types.