

Orengo Station and Fairview Village

format	4.9/5	basic info	5/5
writing	9.9/10	methods	10/10
citations	5/5	supplemental	10/10
paper process	10/10	QL	15/15
		interp only	30/30

100%
exemplary job!

100% $\frac{150}{150}$

Martha J. Bianco

UNST 220: Understanding Communities

23 March 2006

Team Members: Jonathan Gray, Tiffany Pou, Erica Wayt, and Andrew Williams

Neighborhoods Studied: Orenco Station and Fairview Village

Field Research: Andy and I conducted our field study of Orenco Station on February 28, 2006, from 3 to 4⁵pm. We explored the area of the neighborhood around and to the north of the town center. We alternated between a bench at the intersection of Orenco Station Parkway and Brighton Street and an outside table at the intersection of Orenco Station Parkway and Cornell Road. These vantage points allowed us to observe what we believed would be the social center of Orenco Station. We used notebooks and pictures to record our observations.

I also frequently use the Orenco Station MAX station, giving me a look at the length of Orenco Station Parkway every Tuesday and Thursday at around 6:45⁵am and 3⁵pm. While I do not manually take notes during this time, I have been able to notice trends in the area simply due to using the MAX station twice a week at the same times for the past ten weeks.

I conducted a telephone interview with an Orenco Station resident named Albert Vaughn, who lives near the town center. During the interview, I asked Mr. Vaughn questions pertaining to how much he uses the paths and green spaces at Orenco Station and the relationships he has developed at Orenco Station.

Erica and Tiffany observed Fairview Village. They observed social activity at the coffee shop, parks, and around the neighborhood. They used pictures and notes to record their observations. In addition, they interviewed two real^{cd noun} estate brokers, Billy Hartner and Marcus Fullard-Leo.

We all used similar methodologies in our studies and observed similar phenomena. The major difference was that Erica and Tiffany observed more people using a playground than Andy and I observed while studying Orenco Station. The primary reason for this difference is

probably ~~due~~ to the fact that Andy and I studied Orenco Station during a weekday and Erica and Tiffany studied Fairview Village on a weekend.

Ethical Concerns: I did not feel as though I was breaking any ethical rules by observing the residents of Orenco Station. Nobody seemed to notice Andy or me while we sat on the bench and recorded our observations. The only time I felt out of place was while walking through the neighborhood to get a feel of it. Here, a man in a car slowed down and clearly recognized Andy and me to be outsiders. He probably was suspicious because we were wandering through the neighborhood taking pictures of the houses. In the future, more discretion should be taken when taking pictures, for the sake of the residents.

Research Focus: Orenco Station and Fairview Village are both examples of traditional neighborhood developments. Traditional neighborhood developments are a response to the wastefulness of modern suburban life, primarily the reliance on the automobile. Traditional neighborhood developments consist of neighborhoods with defined edges that contain a mix of housing, shopping, employment, and recreation. The goal is that the neighborhood will become a pedestrian-friendly environment which creates social interaction among the residents (“Welcome to the New Urbanism”).

We looked at how Orenco Station and Fairview Village fit within the goals of traditional neighborhood developments. We specifically wanted to look at the pedestrian friendliness of these two neighborhoods by relating them to the concept of the walking city. I also looked at whether or not the design of the neighborhoods helped create relationships among their residents.

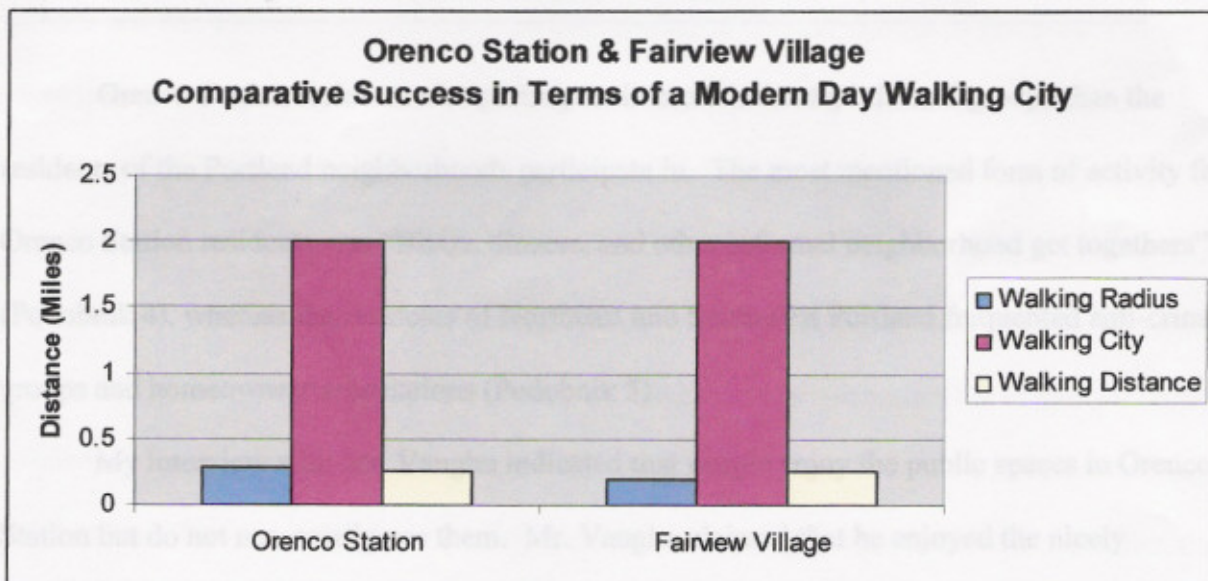
In order to answer these questions, I consulted the US government’s census website to gain an understanding of the demographics of the area. I also looked at the websites for the developers of Orenco Station and Fairview Village in order to further understand each

neighborhood's history and the reasons behind building them. I searched websites dedicated to New Urbanism and traditional neighborhood developments to get a better understanding of the ideals behind traditional neighborhood developments. Importantly for Orenco Station, I found an article by Dr. Bruce Podobnik from Lewis and Clark College detailing the attitudes concerning community among Orenco Station residents.

Findings: A walking city has about a two mile radius which allows people to traverse it in about thirty minutes (Phillips 97). More recent studies show that a quarter-mile is the ideal walking distance for most people (Kiesling and Rood). Figure One shows the results of comparing Orenco Station and Fairview Village to the concepts of the walking city and the quarter-mile walking distance. Walking radius refers to the radius for both Orenco Station and Fairview Village. Walking city shows the two-mile walking distance and walking distance shows the quarter-mile walking distance. Both Orenco Station and Fairview Village are well within the two mile walking distance but only Fairview Village falls within the quarter-mile radius.

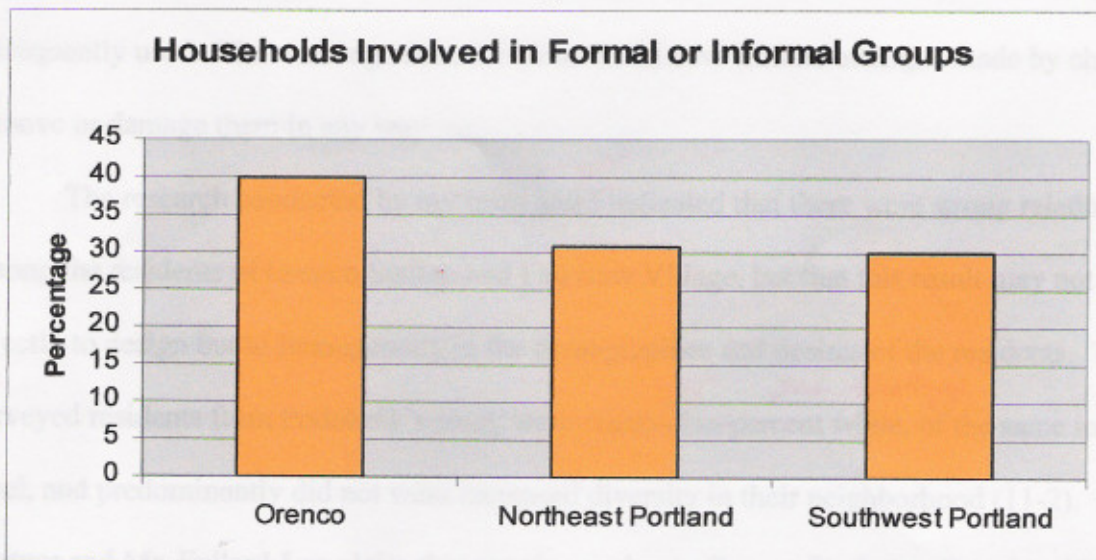
This is definition of the urban historians use. However, in terms of transportation analysis 1/4 mi. is considered the max. that people will walk - so in order to have a neighborhood "adequate" for everyone needs to live within 1/4 mi of a transit stop.

Figure One



I turned to Dr. Podobnik's research to look at community in Orenco Station. Dr. Podobnik's study compares the attitudes of Orenco Station residents with the attitudes of residents in Northeast and Southwest Portland. One series of questions involved group participation. Respondents from Orenco Station claimed to participate more in formal or informal groups than respondents from either Portland neighborhoods as shown in Figure Two below (Podobnik 4).

Figure Two



Orenco Station residents also participate in more intimate, informal groups than the residents of the Portland neighborhoods participate in. The most mentioned form of activity for Orenco Station residents was "BBQs, dinners, and other informal neighborhood get togethers" (Podobnik 4), whereas the residents of Northeast and Southwest Portland frequented anti-crime groups and homeowners associations (Podobnik 5).

My interview with Mr. Vaughn indicated that people enjoy the public spaces in Orenco Station but do not necessarily use them. Mr. Vaughn claimed that he enjoyed the nicely designed pathways and public green spaces at Orenco Station but admitted that neither he nor his

wife frequently used them. He said he did feel a sense of friendliness here and that he interacted with other residents while walking his dog. He did develop some close relationships, relationships where each party could be counted on for favors, but this was through simply living near these people.

These observations mirror our own observations of Orenco Station. People did sparingly walk the paths, but there was no social interaction on the street. If anything, interaction was avoided. The area had a play-structure in a small park, but the structure looked as though it was infrequently used. The warning stickers looked brand new with no attempts made by children to remove or damage them in any way.

The research conducted by my team and ^{me} I indicated that there were strong relationships among the residents of Orenco Station and Fairview Village, but that this result may not be tied directly to design but to homogeneity in the demographics and desires of the residents. The surveyed residents from Podobnik's study were ⁹⁵ ~~ninety-five~~ percent white, of the same income level, and predominantly did not want increased diversity in their neighborhood (11-2). Mr. Hartner and Mr. Fullard-Leo claim that people moving to Orenco Station or Fairview Village move there wanting the specific lifestyle that the neighborhoods provide. They want the convenience of a pedestrian-friendly environment and a tight-knit community atmosphere.

Conclusion: Overall, this project showed me that even the best designs for neighborhoods do not guarantee that relationships between people will develop or that people will even use the benefits that the design has to offer. People, such as Mr. Vaughn, enjoy the possibility of using a pedestrian-friendly environment but do not always actually use it. Ultimately, it is the desires and motivations of the individuals who choose to live in a neighborhood that will determine the effectiveness of the neighborhood's design.

good observation; indeed, the situation is one of self-selection.

very good - conclusions that the planning literature supports.

pv

Works Cited

Fullard-Leo, Marcus. Interview with Tiffany Pou and Erica Wayt. 25 Feb. 2006.

Hartner, Billy. Interview with Tiffany Pou and Erica Wayt. 25 Feb. 2006.

Kiesling, Michael and Timothy Rood. "Ped Sheds." *The Congress for the New Urbanism*. N.d.
22 Mar. 2006 <http://www.cnu.org/cnu_reports/CNU_Ped_sheds.pdf>.

not nec.
in
web
page

Phillips, E. Barbara. *City Lights: Urban-Suburban Life in the Global Society*. 2nd ed. New York:
Oxford University Press, 1996.

Podobnik, Bruce. "The Social and Environmental Achievements of New Urbanism: Evidence
from Orenco Station." ~~Lewis and Clark College, 2002~~. 6 Mar. 2006
<<http://www.lclark.edu/~podobnik/orenc02.pdf>>.

Vaughn, Albert. Telephone interview. 11 Mar. 2006.

"Welcome to the New Urbanism." *The Town Paper*. N.d., 22 Mar. 2006
<http://www.tndtownpaper.com/welcome_to_nu.htm>.

Media 1. Blaine

UNIT 2.2: Understanding Communities

23 March 2006