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Native Women, the Built Environment and Community Well-Being: A Comparative Study of Two James Bay Cree Communities

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A Thesis

in

the Department

of

Geography

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Masters of Arts in Public Policy and Public Administration at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

April 2002

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ABSTRACT

Native Women, the Built Environment and Community Well-Being: A Comparative Study of Two James Bay Cree Communities

Eleni Panagiotaraku

This study examines the relationship between the built environment and native women. The research is a comparative study of two Eastern James Bay Cree communities, Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou, located in Northern Quebec. The emphasis is placed on the behaviour and lifestyles of native women as they are affected by the built environment and how in turn they adapt, modify and utilize the built environment. This research also attempts to provide insight to the relationship of the built environment and community well-being as perceived by native women. The study concludes with women's suggestions for improvements to the built environment that would aid in their own, as well as their community's well-being.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special acknowledgements and thanks go foremost to my advisor, Dr. Monica Mulrennan, for the endless hours spend on editing and guidance which made this thesis a reality. *Thank you Monica.*

I am grateful to all the faculty and staff of the Geography Department for making my undergraduate and graduate studies at Concordia such a rewarding and enjoyable experience. Special thanks go to Dr. Alan Nash for his courteous help, to Dr. David and Dr. Pauline Frost for their hospitality and help that enabled me to attend two NESTVAL Conferences, to Pr. Catherine Moore for her contagious enthusiasm, to Dr. David Greene, to Dr. Robert Aiken, to Dr. John Zacharias and to Matina Skalkogiannis for her encouragement and reassurance.

I am also grateful to Eastmain Chief, Edward Gilpin, for his permission to conduct research in his village, to Norman Cheezo, to Christine Moses and Denis Cheezo for their hospitality and to Bella Moses for her translation services. In Oujé Bougoumou special thanks go to Chief, Sam Bosum, to Director of Operations, Louise Shapiro, to Brian Topler for his many insights, to Cathy for her delightful company and to Niko Paradisis (*se euxaristo gia olla*).

Special thanks go to all the Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou women for their sharings and cooperation in completing the questionnaires, and to architect Douglas Cardinal for his unreserved cooperation. I would also like to thank the Northern Scientific Training Program for their funding that enabled me to conduct the fieldwork component of this research.

Last, but not least, my deepest appreciation and thanks to my family, to my grandmothers, parents and sisters, who are always with me even though they live in another continent, to Panagioti, to my son, Yianni-Nikita and to my daughter Demetra-Amalia, *sas agapo poli.*

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

While the relationship between humans and the built environment has received much attention within the discipline of geography, a limited number of researchers have focused on the impact of the built environment on aboriginal communities, and very few of these have examined such impacts with respect to Native women. This thesis seeks to contribute to the literature on Native community planning by presenting an account of the impact of planning decisions and outcomes on Native women, as assessed, embraced, resisted or transformed by the women I have interviewed.

My decision to focus on this particular subject arose out of a curiosity about the quality of life in Northern Native communities, particularly as it relates to Native women. As a undergraduate student, I lived in an apartment complex in which the Kativik School Board had leased the majority of apartments[1]. As a result many of my neighbours and friends were Native women from northern communities who had come to Montreal for their post-secondary education. By listening to these women and getting to know them I became intrigued by the combination of anticipation and apprehension they expressed at the prospect of returning to their villages. Overcrowded housing conditions, expensive stores with limited selection, and a general lack of 'things to do' were usually listed on the negative side of the ledger. Yet the strength of their community ties and the connection to place were deeply rooted. I wanted to learn more about their world.

My search through the academic literature of geography and urban planning quickly revealed that the consideration of gender perspectives in community planning has received little attention. Van Vliet (1988) suggests that because community planning

[1] Kativik School Board serves the Inuit of Nunavik situated in Northern Quebec. It was created by the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) in 1975 (Kativik School Board 2002).

tends to take place in a male-dominated environment it usually fails to adequately address gender-specific issues. These include among others, liveability issues (i.e. presence of safe playgrounds and recreational facilities for children), safety issues (i.e. well-lit streets, presence of sidewalks, pedestrian-friendly roads), and socio-cultural issues (accessibility to basic social/health community facilities and adequate space to conduct culturally-specific activities). My intent was to contribute in some way to addressing this imbalance as related to these gender specific issues.

1.2 Policy Context

Any assessment of present conditions within Northern Native villages requires an understanding of the policy context within which they have evolved. Beginning with the Indian Act of 1868-1869 and the creation of the reserve system, the Federal Government has maintained a paternalistic attitude towards Native peoples (McDowell 1989). This act or policy involved discouraging what was viewed as "uncivilized" nomadic lifestyles of Native peoples. An active policy was established to encourage and coerce them into more sedentary lifestyles (Francis 1992). In the case of the Eastern James Bay Cree, trading posts were established by the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company; these increasingly attracted the summer encampments of Cree people that eventually evolved into more permanent settlements (Salisbury 1986). These early settlements took the form of trade-posts around which *michuaps* (Cree word for teepees) and/or cabins were constructed. No infrastructure was provided in these settlements, and rivers, lakes and coastal waters served as highways, communication channels and resource-rich corridors.

The permanency of these early settlements was facilitated over time by Federal Government policy decisions, such as the provision of food rations and clothing allowances in the 1940's and the creation of mission schools (Shaw 1982). The latter was hailed as a turning point in the "civilization" and assimilation of Natives. In the words of Ontario Indian Agent, John McIntyre (1885): "the Indian would be gradually and permanently advanced to the scale of civil society; his migratory habits, and fondness for roaming, would be cured, and an interesting class of our fellow men rescued from degradation" (as cited in McDowell 1989).

Table 1 provides a chronology for the evolution of policies relating to housing and community planning in northern communities over the past 50 years[2]. The objectives and criticisms of each policy or program is provided together with a brief description of the prevailing political climate.

[2] This table was developed from a variety of sources; the primary source for each entry is acknowledged within the table.

Table 1. Historical Timetable of Housing and Community Planning in Native Villages

Year	Type of Programs	Objectives	Criticisms	Political climate
1950-1969	Pre-fabricated, low-cost row-house units. Infrastructure in the way of roads, electricity, indoor plumbing, sewage disposal (McDowell 1989).	Eradicate poverty in Native communities.	Houses ill suited for cold northern climate (Reich 1985). Overcrowding, culturally insensitive planning (Dawson 1995). Non-consultation with Natives (Mc Dowell 1989). Planning was project specific and were developed in isolation from service-providing agencies such as Health and Welfare (Wolfe 1989).	Expansion of Indian Affairs Branch in the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Howlett 1994). Increasing political activism by Indian groups demanding greater levels of participation in decision-making (McDowell 1989).
1969-1981	CMHC awards contracts to private developers. Housing/community planning based on "suburban design." Houses cluster in cyclical arrangement around areas of green space or a community building.	To improve existing housing stock and to create housing and community planning that was culturally and socially sensitive.	Failure to stimulate local economy by the creation of local jobs. Inadequate consultation with Band Councils and residents (Mc Dowell 1989).	Failure of DIAND to eradicate poverty in Native villages (Wolfe 1984). Continuing growth of Native organizations with a sophisticated range of political activities (Howlett 1994).
1981-1986	Comprehensive community planning. DIAND funds training courses on community planning for Indian students, supports community planning workshops for Chiefs, project development administrators (Wolfe 1989).	Facilitate Indian Band control over the planning process.	Low levels of funding to the program; lack of Native planners; inadequate preparation of non-Indian planners; lack of preparedness of communities themselves (Wolfe 1989). Failure to provide adequate space for culturally specific activities. (McDowell 1989).	Calls for Band Councils to take control of community planning process. Calls for aboriginal self-government. Signing of JBNQA in 1974.
1986-1996	Comprehensive community planning is cancelled. Planning is devolved to the Band or Tribal Councils. First Nations given responsibility for developing community policies. Bands hire their own planners directly (Wolfe 1989). Training and hiring of local workforce in community projects. Home-ownership incentives.	To encourage self-sufficiency at individual and community level.	Inadequate government funding to ensure supply of houses to meet high demand. Aboriginal governments constrained by the administrative criteria and process set out by DIAND and CMHC (Royal Commission 1996).	Constitutional amendments of 1982[3]. Oka crisis. Advent of aboriginal self-government.
1996-present	First Nations develop own policies and programs designed to respond to local needs and opportunities (INAC 1996).	Community control and decision-making. Capacity development/self-sufficiency; shared responsibility; improve access to investment (INAC 1996).	Inadequate funding to meet growing demand (Gree Regional Authority 1998).	Publication of Royal Commission Report in 1996.

[3] In 1982, Aboriginal and treaty rights were entrenched in the Constitution for the first time in Canadian history. This recognition of existing Aboriginal and treaty rights, as stated in Sections 25, 35 and 37, galvanized legal, governmental and public attention on the rights of Natives (Morse 1999).

During the 1960s community planning was centered on the so-called "sectoral approach" (Wolfe 1989). This essentially meant that decisions relating to the location or design of a community were made on the basis of least-cost-criteria, rather than on sound engineering or what was most appropriated in terms of community needs (Wolfe 1989). Subsequent decades saw a more holistic approach to community planning, one that was more responsive to community development needs. This was the result of continuing political struggles, with First Nation groups demanding ever-greater degrees of self-determination (Wolfe 1989).

For the Eastern James Bay Cree, the announcement in 1971 of the James Bay hydroelectric "Project of the Century" proved to be a pivotal point in their history and in subsequent relations between them and Federal and Provincial government entities (McGregor 1989). The subsequent signing of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) in 1974 provided the basis for enhanced levels of self-government and funding to Cree communities. Included were increased powers for Cree Band Councils over the community planning process and community development (section 3.1.1 provides an in-depth description of the JBNQA and its significance for the Cree people). The JBNQA meant that the Eastern James Bay Cree communities enjoyed greater levels of self-government and subsequent control over community development and planning than other Native Canadian communities--a reality that persists to this day.

1. 3 Thesis Objectives

The purpose of my research is to examine the connection between the built environment and Native women. In particular, I focus on the question of how the

behaviour and lifestyle of Native women is affected by the built environment and how in turn women adapt, modify and utilize the built environment. This research also attempts to gain insight into the relationship between the built environment and community well-being, as perceived by Native women.

The thesis corresponds to the following two main sets of questions:

1. In what ways are Native women affected by the built environment of their village community? In what ways, if any, do they respond to the constraints or opportunities imposed? This question is addressed with respect to the following: a) social interaction patterns; b) levels of accessibility to community buildings; and c) levels of participation in community activities and events.
2. Do Native women perceive the built environment to play a significant role in their community's well-being? What suggestions do they have with respect to the built environment that would enhance their own quality of life and/or the well-being of their community?

1.4 Research Design

The research involved a comparative study between the Eastern James Bay Cree communities of Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou, Northern Quebec. These communities were selected on the basis of their comparative population sizes but divergent planning histories and village layouts. Both communities have approximately 500 to 600 residents, the majority of which are Cree. The community planning experience and housing situation of Eastmain in comparison to Oujé Bougoumou involved lower levels of

participation by users and more financial and infrastructural constraints[4]. Oujé Bougoumou, which was constructed in 1989, had high user-participation rates, involving extensive consultation between the Band Council, and the architectural and planning firms (Reid-Acland and Stevens 1999). According to Chicoine (1990) and Reid-Acland and Stevens (1999), this experience marked a sharp departure from community planning in the past. This view has been echoed by the wider national and international community and reflected in the designation of Oujé Bougoumou as a model for "future aboriginal town-planning" (Travers 1999).

1.5 Methodology

My fieldwork was an essential and integral part of this study. My field research was conducted in July 2000, supported in part by funding from the Northern Studies Training Program (NSTP), and it involved almost three weeks of intensive study divided equally between Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou. The research design included questionnaires, interviews, direct mapping and on-site photography. Other components of my research conducted over subsequent months in 2000, involved archival and library research in Montreal, an interview with architect Douglas Cardinal in his Ottawa office,

[4] Eastmain is allocated a yearly, pre-determined amount of money based on its population. Existing infrastructure (i.e. electricity, water, sewage, roads) and the surrounding physical environment (Eastmain River, airport, marsh) play an important role in determining the location of future houses and community buildings (see section 3.2.4).
Oujé Bougoumou received a total of $75 million between 1990-1992 by the federal government (see section 3.3.1.) The village of Oujé Bougoumou is located on what was previously uninhibited forestland.

as well as interviews with Band Officials in Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou in their respective villages as well as telephone interviews..

1.1.1 Questionnaires

A questionnaire survey was developed comprising 39 questions that corresponded to seven themes: 1) social interaction patterns; 2) lifestyle activities; 3) participation in community events; 4) accessibility and visitation of community buildings; 5) levels of satisfaction with village infrastructure (housing, quality of services, buildings, activities); 6) suggestions for improvements to village layout, services or activities; and 7) population characteristics. (see Appendix A).

At the time of my field research there were a total of 294 women in Eastmain and 338 in Oujé Bougoumou. Due to the relatively short timeframe of my fieldwork, a limitation imposed by a combination of my financial constraints and a shortage of accommodation in both communities, a total of 44 questionnaires were administered; 22 in Eastmain and 22 in Oujé Bougoumou. Eighteen of the questionnaires were fully completed in Eastmain and included in the research. The results of all questionnaires administered in Oujé Bougoumou are included.

Approval of my research by the respective Band Councils was obtained several months in advance before my visit in accordance with the ethical requirements of the NSTP and Concordia University. A radio announcement made in both communities through the local Cree radio station, informed the people of my research and my upcoming visits.

The distribution of questionnaire surveys involved going from house-to-house based on a random sample. In situations where a woman was either working full-time outside the home or was too busy to fill in the questionnaire at home, arrangements were made to meet at an alternative venue, usually their place of work but also the restaurant.

1.1.2 Interviews

Interviews were held in both villages with various Band Officials and with women-elders. The interviews with the Band Officials were conducted in the Band Office or at their corresponding place of work. All interviews were conducted in English, and all Band Officials, with the exception of one person in Eastmain, declined to have their conversations recorded. The interviews were on average 30 to 45 minutes long. Topics depended on the official being interviewed, but generally included community planning, economic policy, and provision of health, policing and social services, especially as these pertained to women.

A total of 11 interviews, four in Eastmain and six in Oujé Bougoumou, were conducted with women-elders to gain a thorough understanding of their views and perceptions with respect to the built environment as well their role in community life. In Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou all interviews were conducted in the homes of the elders. With the exception of two elders, one in Eastmain and one in Oujé Bougoumou, the rest of these women spoke in Cree only. A Cree translator was hired in both communities and nine out of the 11 interviews were recorded. In this thesis the terms "woman-elder" or "women-elders" is used in preference to "elderly" or "old" for any woman above 60 years of age, as a mark of respect and in recognition of their position in the community.

1.1.3 Direct Mapping and On-site photography

Direct mapping was used in collaboration with the questionnaires to document modifications to the built or physical environment. This included a mapping survey of all visible, vernacular pathways in the village upon my arrival in each community. Women were asked in the questionnaires whether or not they used shortcuts to arrive at their destinations. If their answer was a positive one, they were shown a map of their village and were asked to draw the route(s) taken. Those routes were then verified against my initial survey.

On-site photography was also used as supplementary evidence. For example, I have included, with permission, photographs of particular phenomenon, such as the presence of benches and chairs in front of elders' houses.

1.6 Thesis Structure

Chapter two provides an overview of the pertinent literature on human behaviour and the built environment. Within this framework the experiences of Native people and their built environments is explored, especially in relation to their experiences with top-down community planning programs, Chapter three provides a general background of the history and culture of the Eastern James Bay Cree people in addition to a detailed description of the communities of Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou, with respect to their respective planning histories, population characteristics, economy and the role of women in their communities. Chapter four provides an analysis and discussion arising from my

research findings while chapter five presents my conclusion and recommendations for possible future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Framework

Studies within the discipline of geography dealing with humans and the built environment are generally approached from one of two perspectives: the "empirical structuralist approach" or the "humanistic approach" (Gold 1980). The empirical structuralist approach places the focus on aggregate patterns of behaviour, such as the interaction of groups of individuals, and not on individuals *per se*. This approach is seen in a variety of spatial interaction models, such as the so-called "gravity models" that investigate how the flows of humans and of human artifacts (e.g. phone calls) between places diminish as the distance between places increases. The empirical approach also focuses on the relationship between socio-spatial structures on the one hand and individual behaviour and levels of well-being on the other, such as the possible link between social milieu and social health (Walmsley and Lewis 1993).

The humanistic approach on the other hand focuses mostly on individuals. It places a greater emphasis on "human values, attitudes, beliefs, environmental meanings, cultural patrimony, the aesthetics of landscape, and the emotional significance of place in human identity" (Walmsley and Lewis 1993:28).

Both structuralist and humanistic approaches to the study of people-environment interaction are said to be underlined by the following three considerations: 1) how to relate behaviour to structure; 2) how to demonstrate that structure, and in particular the spatial organisation of society, is both the creation of human beings and a constraint on their activity and behaviour; and 3) how to describe people-environment interactions in such a way as to be useful to planners and policy-makers without losing sight of the rich variety of human behaviour (Walmsley and Lewis 1993:27).

The following literature review and the thesis in general, draws upon the empirical structuralist approach and to a lesser degree on the humanistic approach. In the section that follows (Section 2.2) the focus is on theoretical aspects as they relate to space, place and identity. Section 2.3 examines the literature relating to behaviour and the built environment, while Section 2.4 explores the literature on the built environment of Native people and the experiences of some Canadian Native communities with community planning.

2.2 Concepts of Space and Place

According to Entrikin (1990) the concept of space, serves a multiplicity of functions such as a context for action, a source of identity and a focus of environmental meaning. Other authors, argue that profound psychological and emotional links develop between people and the place they live and experience (Tuan 1977). Tuan (1977) refers to this emotional attachment as "topophilia," meaning love of place. For Yi-Fu Tuan, space is 'place filled with meaning'. Or to put it in another way, places are spaces that are valued. The distinction is rather like that between a 'house' and a 'home'; a house might keep out the wind and the rain, but a home is where we live (Tuan 1975). Places have social meaning. The meanings which places carry are social meanings; they are rooted in the practices and understandings of communities. They develop over time as practices emerge and are transformed within the groups. For Tuan (1977) this has two consequences. The first is that different groups will have different understandings of similar places and similar concepts, and these will change over time. The second is that

places have to be created, through practice and appropriation, to fit into the culture of the group.

Agnew (1989) has suggested that the concept of place has until recently been devalued in social science, while the concepts of community and class (as exemplified by Marxist interpretations) were promoted. According to Ley (1989), efforts to redefine place must be viewed as part of the wider struggle taking place in the social sciences in the context of post-modernity. In terms of the built environment, he argues that modernity saw the de-symbolization of place arising out of the sharp distinction that was drawn between reason and myth. As an outcome of this emphasis on rationality and "emotional neutrality," the built environment of urban areas became dehumanized, "a blueprint for placelessness," and anonymous, impersonal spaces. In the post-modern era, architects and planners moved towards greater integration of symbolism into the built environment (Ley 1989:52).

2.2.1 Identity and the Built Environment

For Hummon (1989), identity and the built environment are closely related: "like identity, dwellings can be conceptualized as meaningful social and cultural objects that are used to demarcate space, to express feelings, ways of thinking, and social processes, and to provide arenas for culturally defined activity as well as to provide for physical shelter" (Hummon 1989:209). For Australian architect-turned-anthropologist, Amos Rapoport, likewise, the built environment can be seen as a form of non-verbal communication that is able to "give clues about the behaviour and identity of its inhabitants" (Rapoport 1982:30). He asserts that at the most theoretical level, and at the

highest level of abstraction, environments can communicate identity because they are linked by the fact that both stress differences and distinction (Rapoport 1982). The communication of identity is held to occur at two levels *internally* (i.e. to members of the same group) and *externally* (i.e. to outsiders) (Rapoport 1982). In an example specific to a Aboriginal People, Rapoport (1982) argues that in Australia, "Aborigines are returning to traditional life-styles, ancestral areas, settlements and dwellings in a deliberate effort to enhance their self-identity at the individual and group level" (Rapoport 1982:14).

2.2.2 Contemporary Native Architecture and Self-Identity

Contemporary Native architecture is a relatively new phenomenon that has taken place across Native communities over the last three decades (Krinsky 1996). This phenomenon is part of a wider cultural and political regeneration among Native people across North America and it is said to arise from the desire of Native communities to communicate and assert their identity (Theoharis 1983). The level of integration of symbolism tends to vary considerably; for example, at the level of individual buildings, some have minimal, ornamental Native symbols in their design while others are structurally designed to reflect a chosen symbol (Krinsky 1996).

American architect Carole Krinsky (1996) argues that Native architecture can serve a therapeutic role for the enhancement of cultural identity and pride. Jane Middelton-Moz (1999), a Native psychologist, is also convinced that strong cultural identity and pride, in turn, is essential to the healing of the "cumulative generational traumas" that are found in the majority of North American Native people. In addition to being a communal therapeutic tool, Native architecture can also be instrumental in

promoting sustainable economic development in the form of cultural tourism. In recent years there has been an increasing demand for the so-called "Indian experience," which includes a mixture of ecotourism and cultural tourism (Gardon 1998).

One obstacle to the integration of Native symbolism in a community arises from financial constraints. Krinsky (1996), working in the context of Amerindian reservations in the United States, found that many communities simply do not have the financial resources to hire reputable, but often expensive, architects.

2.3 Behaviour and the Built Environment

2.3.1 Impacts of a Culturally Insensitive Built Environment

The term "culturally insensitive environment" is used in the literature to indicate a built environment that is incompatible with the culture of the people inhabiting it (Gutman 1976; Simon et al. 1984; Dawson 1995). The same concept was referred to as "alien environment" by Carl Sauer (1964) in relation to the introduction of a culturally "different" (and thus alien) built environment.[5]

In the literature there is general agreement that when an "alien environment" is introduced the first reaction by inhabitants is to try and modify that environment to suit their needs and lifestyles (Rapoport, 1969, 1976; Gutman 1976; Reich 1985; Afshari-Mirak 1995; Dawson 1995). According to Hillier and Hanson (1984), the desire of and attempt by inhabitants to modify their new environment stems mainly from their wish to preserve the patterns of interpersonal relationships that were best served under their own spatial organization of space. For Gutman (1976), locals that find their new built environment unaccommodating will seek to modify it at all levels. That is to say, at the housing level, inhabitants will rearrange furniture and if possible physically alter the design of the house. Similarly at the village level certain features might be ignored; for example, children might use a local sandlot as their play area rather than the park provided by the urban designer. Furthermore, it is argued that a new technology may be rejected (despite the 'perceived benefits' it might offer) if it interferes with a group's social interaction (Rapoport 1969). As a case in point, Rapoport offers the example of French colonial North Africa where piped water was installed in a number of villages.

[5] For the purpose of this thesis the terms 'alien environment' and 'culturally insensitive environment' are used interchangeably.

This development caused widespread dissatisfaction among local women because their daily trips for water were used as a socializing event – a welcome occasion to "leave the house" – and it was only after the wells were restored and the taps eliminated that the "dissatisfaction ended" (Rapoport 1969:25). Inhabitants who modify their built environment in such a way that it is transformed from its original form, or is utilized in such a manner that it "defeats the designers' original goals," are referred to by architects as "unsympathetic users" (Gutman 1976:38).

2.3.2 Density and Crowding

In relating behaviour to structure, the issue of population density and crowding appears to be the most contentious in the literature. Early research in animal studies revealed that high densities of crowding produced severe stress, aggressiveness and withdrawal (Homenuck 1973). Research by the Building and Social Housing Foundation (1996) in high-density areas such as Hong-Kong and Singapore found that while density might be an important condition of the experience of crowding it was not essential. According to their findings, despite levels of high density one can successfully create a congenial built environment using the following: (1) a spatial design that encourages social interaction; (2) active and meaningful tenant involvement; (3) provision for families with special needs such as elderly and single households; (4) long-term economic sustainability by integrating community development with housing; and (5) a sense of community and identity by using distinct colours, interesting forms and cultural symbols in the buildings (Building and Social Housing Foundation 1996).

The seemingly contradictory evidence between density and crowding are partly reconciled by such authors as Baum (1987) and Merry (1989), who differentiate

between density and crowding. For Baum (1987), density refers to physical conditions associated with numbers of people in given amounts of space. Crowding, on the other hand, is an outcome of appraisal of "physical conditions, situational variables" and "personal characteristics" (Baum 1987:46). However, Merry (1989) regards the concept of "crowding" as dependent on cultural and social factors; that is, different cultures respond differently to the same levels of density. Finally, research by Preiser and Varady (1998) found that housing satisfaction is linked negatively to overcrowding and quality of housing, while tenant satisfaction is linked positively to higher rates of neighbourhood social interaction.

2.3.3 Opportunities and Constraints of the Built Environment

Another important concern expressed in the literature on behaviour and the built environment is that of the perceived inhibition and/or enhancement of certain activities and behaviour. Rapoport (1969, 1976) holds that the built environment can be seen as a behaviour setting for human activities. That is, once the built environment is erected it can affect behaviour by inhibiting or encouraging the spatial ordering of activities:

> Behaviour settings may be neutral, inhibiting, or facilitating; and a behaviour setting may be facilitating to the extent of acting as a catalyst or releasing latent behaviour, but cannot, however, determine or GENERATE activities.... Similarly, inhibiting environments will generally make certain behaviours more difficult but will not usually block them completely, although it is easier to block behaviour than to generate it. Moreover, while it is generally accepted that the built environment has important although not determining affects, the inhibiting affects may under conditions of reduced competence or environmental docility, as with the elderly, the ill, and children become much more acute and may, in fact, become critical (Rapoport 1976:9 emphasis in the original).

Likewise, Chapman (1996) argues that the location of facilities and the design of community buildings, if not properly situated or designed can in fact discriminate against certain groups of people, such as the elderly and disabled (Chapman 1996). The location of recreational and community buildings that house health and social services falls into this category of facilities that need careful consideration (CMHC 1994), as is the location of recreational facilities such as gymnasiums, arenas and community centres. In the case of Native communities, recreational facilities are an important outlet among a growing population of young people (Black 1999).

2.4 Native Communities and their Built Environments

Rapoport (1969), McDowell (1989), and anthropologist Riviére (1995) claim that Aboriginal people have an intimate knowledge of what is the most suitable size, form and building materials for their dwellings and the best location for their settlements. With regard to community spatial design and dwelling form, it is argued that traditional forms of the built environment are the creation of the whole community and not the work of any one individual (Rapoport 1989a). Riviére suggests that religion plays a major role in the creation of the built environment of indigenous people, "especially in relation to their designation of profane and sacred spaces and the taboos associated with them" (1995:195). Other authors argue that although religion is an important factor, together with climatic, technological, and economic factors in addition to material availability, culture is by far the greatest determining factor (Rapoport 1969; Al-Hathloul 1989).

Other authors, such as Chambers (1989) and Robinson (1989), argue that Aboriginal societies, like other societies, are dynamic and constantly undergoing change

to varying degrees over time, regardless of whether an external cause, such as colonization, is present. For human geographer, Duncan (1989), however, the fact that Aboriginal cultures have been overwhelmed by the penetration of Western culture in a relatively short timeframe is a significant distinction. Thus, when Western academics examine an Aboriginal society in relation to their built environment rather than ask: "What are the attitudes toward housing in this nation or tribe? (treated as a self-contained, cultural entity), the question must be, "how are attitudes in this group changing in response to the impact of a foreign culture?" (Duncan 1989:230).

With respect to the role of Native women, it is recognized that women traditionally played an important role in the selection, orientation, and construction of the built environment (Ackerman 1990). Keeping in mind the cultural variation in different Aboriginal groups, Oosten (1986) states that in Inuit society the house was considered to be the domain of the female, with women responsible for the spatial layout of the home interior. Studies of the contemporary relationship of Native women to their homes indicate that the role of women is diminishing in relation to the orientation and spatial organization of their homes (Dawson 1995). In particular the integration of the kitchen with other spaces has had the effect of "undermining" the authority of women in the home (Dawson 1995:78).

Architect Maïti Chagny's (1999) research in the coastal Cree community of Chisasibi, revealed low levels of post-occupancy satisfaction by women. The greatest complaint was a lack of storage room and adequate kitchen space, in particular the fact that the kitchens could not accommodate the cooking of large game such as caribou.

Chagny argues that these shortcomings could have been avoided if women had been given a more active role in the design of their homes.

2.4.1 Settlement Patterns of Native Communities

According to Kennedy and Simonsen (1967) four settlement patterns can be recognised in Canadian Native communities. These are: 1) the compact settlement; 2) the cluster type settlement; 3) the split or scattered settlement; and 4) the linear settlement (Figure 1).

Anderson et al. (1981) claim that the scattered settlement pattern is the most common settlement pattern among James Bay Cree communities. These authors base their claims on aerial photographs of the Fort George community taken twenty years after its initial planning, and they depict the addition of vernacular pedestrian paths, new *michuaps* and storage shacks in an evidently scattered order. On the other hand, research by Shaw (1982), in the village of Chisasibi, reported that the residents and the Band Council preferred the cluster settlement for the planning of their new village[6]. Choicoine (1990) also found that the compact settlement was overwhelmingly favoured in the village of Oujé Bougoumou.

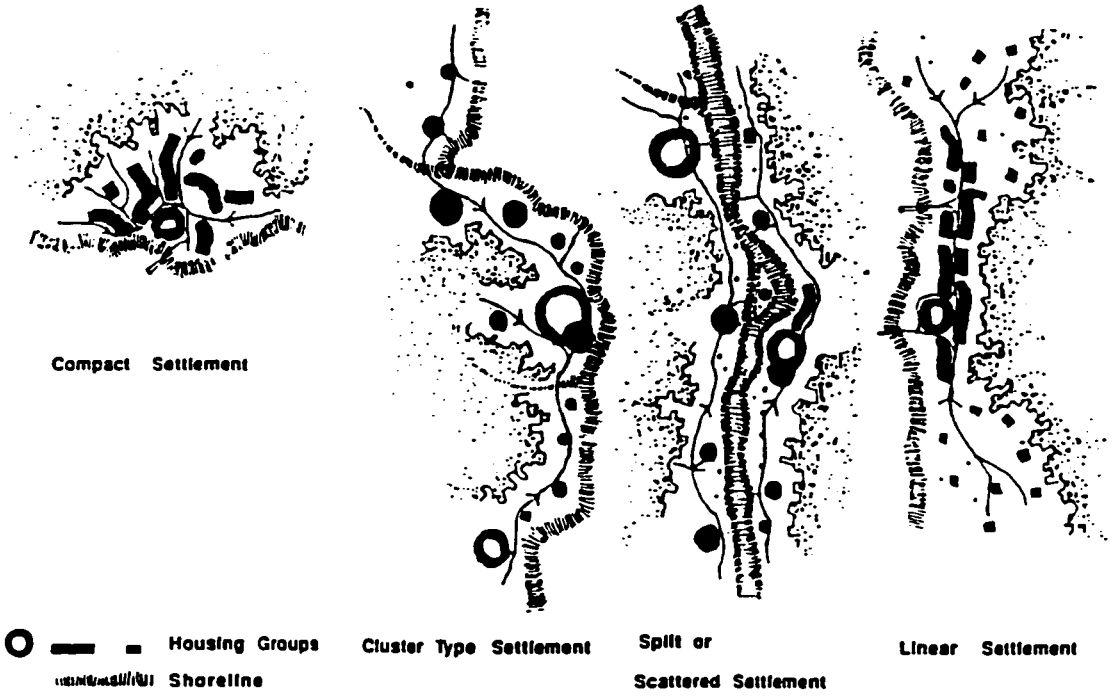

Figure 1. Traditional settlement patterns of Canadian Native communities (Source: Kennedy and Simonsen 1967:20).

2.4.2 Community Planning in Native Communities and Community Well-Being

Zube and Sell (1986) and Huttman and van Vliet (1987) argue that the study of place and behaviour gained a practical urgency among planners and designers following the realization that the built environment is inextricably tied to behavioural and social processes. In the specific case of Northern Canada, such concerns gained increasing

[6] Chisasibi, meaning "Big River," was created after the people of Fort George were relocated in 1980 as a result of the James Bay Hydroelectric project (Anderson et al. 1981).

urgency as study after study revealed disturbing findings (Simon et al 1984; McDowell 1989); these included serious flaws in architectural designs, the improper and inappropriate use of certain building materials, deficiencies in construction practices, and culturally-insensitive community layouts (McDowell 1985; Reich 1985; Strub 1997).

In the specific case of housing, Reich's (1985) study of Inuit housing recounts poorly placed entrances, which were frequently blocked in winter by drifting snow, windows perpetually icing up, and drafts through floorboards, door frames, and walls. In addition, he recorded instances of inhabitants butchering and storing seal meat in bathtubs and repairing snowmobiles in kitchens due to lack of space (Reich 1985).

In the case of government-sponsored community planning there is general agreement that related problems and inadequacies have had a negative effect on the community (Simon et al. 1984; Shkilnyk 1985; Strub 1996). Strub (1997) emphasizes the fact that the arrangement of houses in northern communities is often based on factors such as terrain, the provision of utilities, and fire prevention. This according to Strub (1997) has tended to disrupt traditional patterns of co-existence through the segmentation of the extended family; for example elders may occupy houses at opposite ends of the community from those of their children, nieces, nephews, and grandchildren, thus hindering the sharing of food, labour, and information. For other authors the combination of culturally-insensitive community layouts combined with unwanted relocations is directly associated with increased levels of social pathology. For example, Shkilnyk's (1985) study of an Ojibwa reservation in Ontario links a substantial increase in substance abuse, family violence, and suicides to the relocation of the community to a culturally

insensitive settlement[7]. A lack of communal space, houses placed too closely to one another, randomly mixed occupancy in contrast to traditional clan and family arrangements, and unequal access to the waterfront produced increased friction and tension among the inhabitants and a general decline in community well-being (Shkilnyk's 1985).

Research among Eastern James Bay Cree communities revealed similar findings. For example, shortly after the relocation of Fort George to the new village of Chisasibi, residents began voicing dissatisfaction with the lack of space for *michuap* (the Cree word for *michuap*) and children's playgrounds, overcrowding of houses, and clusters of homes that did not house the expressed choices of neighbours, usually members of their extended families (Afshari-Mirak 1995). Similarly, in the Cree community of Mistissini, elders complained of loneliness after their residences were placed by the riverfront, which although peaceful, was also more isolated from the rest of the village (Jacobs 1994).

2.4.3 Constraints and Challenges for the Creation of a Friendly Built Environment

A variety of constraints on the creation of a built environment that is congenial in physical, social, cultural and psychological terms is identified in the literature. The first of these are financial constraints which are said to arise from a multiplicity of factors, such as: 1) inadequate governmental funding (McDowell 1989); 2) high transportation costs (Strub 1997); 3) lack of a trained local labour force which translates into economic leakage for the community (CMHC 1994); 4) inaccessibility by roads that renders certain

[7] The Band in question is the Ojibwa Grassy Narrows Reserve. They were relocated following the pollution of their river by a pulp and paper plant (Shkilnyk 1985).

projects unfeasible (Black 1999); 5) high unemployment rates and poverty in Native villages; and 6) lack of user participation (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1996).

For Rowe (1989), user participation is essential to the successful integration of traditional symbolism with modern elements. He argues that when architects attempt to decorate modern buildings with traditional symbols the result is usually superficiality, and when they try to incorporate modern technology in a traditional building the result is non-functionality. Therefore, he argues, the alternative should be "user participation where the people themselves decide what they want" (Rowe 1989:29). Lang (1989) makes a similar argument, claiming that the chances of misinterpretation increase in cross-cultural situations. He refers to this phenomenon as "cultural distance" and argues that it becomes especially apparent when architects work in cultures that are different from their own, or even when they design for people from a different socio-economic background (Lang 1989).

Strub (1997) suggests that there are two main factors that have traditionally hindered communication between architects, planners and Northern aboriginal people. The first is the linguistic and cultural gap that often results in misunderstandings as to what constitutes an appropriate design for a dwelling. The second, Strub writes, is that architects tend to be a "transient presence" in many northern communities and thus develop only an incomplete understanding of Native reality. As a result, he argues, there has been a tendency for architects and planners to structure Northern Aboriginal house designs and community layouts on the basis of what they are most familiar with themselves (i.e. the southern Canadian suburb) (Strub 1997). For Wolfe and Lindley

(1983) likewise, "few if any professionals have any understanding of life on reserves, or the intricacies of Indian culture and social relationships. The relationships identified by the professional can only be those which fall within his or her own realm of experience, learning and understanding" (Wolfe and Lindley 1983:8).

There is little agreement in the literature on how to overcome these obstacles. For Wolfe and Lindley (1983) the solution lies in: 1) the training of Indian planners and planning assistants; 2) the training of non-Indian planners to fill the gap until such time as Indian planners become available to do the job; and 3) the development of appropriate methods for drawing the community into the planning process. Simon et al. (1984) disagree with this suggestion claiming that the training of Indians would be in the prevailing Euro-Canadian planning educational system, thus defeating the original purpose. A better solution they suggest would be a greater understanding on the part of non-Native architects and planners of the Indian social, psychological and spiritual concepts of community (Simon et al. 1984). Other authors, while acknowledging the lack of expertise among Natives, argue that aboriginal community members are best suited for the job because: "when a Native American architect designs for his (rarely her) own people, he brings to the process an intimate familiarity normally denied even to the most studious outsider" (Krinsky 1996:43). Literature in third world countries takes a more holistic approach to the question of community planning and design. It holds that planners and architects must first gain a thorough understanding of the cultural, economic, social and political background of the country in question in addition to rethinking and adapting their own expertise to suit local circumstances (Bor 1982). Furthermore, a variety of fieldwork techniques are suggested to improve communication

among participants. These include: 1) structured interviews; 2) open-ended in-depth interviews; 3) group discussion; 4) walk-about descriptions; 5) simulation and projective techniques; and 5) participant observation (Lobo 1982; Hardie 1983).

2.5 SUMMARY

The literature points to the growing importance of people-environment interactions as an important source of information for architects, planners and policy makers following a recognition of the mutually interactive relationship that exists between the environment and human behaviour. Within the discipline of human geography, the structuralist and humanistic approaches offer complementary perspectives in the study of people-environment interactions. Cultural geography recognises the complexity of culture and emphasises the roles of space and place between cultures and their environments and provides unique insights to how place and space shape culture and conversely, how culture shapes place and space (Tuan 1977). People ascribe meaning to landscapes and places in many ways and thus also derive meanings from the places and landscapes they experience. Similarly different cultural groups are said to experience place and space differently. Literature relating to the experience of Native communities with architectural form emphasises the fact that the integration of cultural symbolism in the built environment is an effective and powerful medium for the assertion of cultural self-identity and pride. The probability of misinterpreting cultural symbols is said to increase if designers have limited knowledge of their clients' culture.

The built environment by the spatial ordering of buildings and infrastructure can act as a behaviour setting by encouraging or inhibiting the spatial ordering of activities

through the level of their accessibility. Incidents of alteration and modification to the built environment by people are said to be an indication of an unaccommodating, "alien environment". Literature relating to the planning of Native communities from the 1950s to the 1970s documents the imposition of culturally insensitive environments and their adverse affects, both behaviourally and socially for Native communities. Greater levels of active and meaningful user participation in the design and planning of the built environment is now widely regarded as necessary for the creation of culturally congenial and user-friendly communities.

CHAPTER 3: EASTMAIN AND OUJE BOUGOUMOU: A BACKGROUND

3.1 James Bay Cree

The Eastern James Bay Cree have occupied the James Bay and Hudson Bay territory for more than 5,000 years. Their territory is situated in the north-western part of Quebec and it comprises 240,000 square kilometers in land area. The James Bay Cree refer to themselves as *Eeyou Istchee* or *Astchee Istchee*, depending on what part of the Cree territory the speaker is from, which means "People's Land"[8]. The James Bay Cree take their name from the "James Bay" body of water, after the Englishman, Thomas James, who in 1631 visited the area (Francis and Morantz 1983).

Until recent decades, the James Bay Cree lead a semi-nomadic way of life based on hunting, fishing and trapping. They currently live in nine settlements (Figure 2) and have a total regional population of 11,261 (GCC 2001). Of the nine settlements, five lie along the eastern shore of James Bay/Hudson Bay: Eastmain, Chisasibi, Waskaganish, Wemindji and Whapmagoostui. The other four are situated further inland in the southern part of the territory: Nemaska, Oujé Bougoumou, Mistissini and Waswanipi (Cree-Naskapi Commission 1984). Table 2 indicates their respective populations.

[8] In the academic literature and media the term "James Bay Cree" is used, while the term *Eeyou Istchee* is relatively rare. While I acknowledge and respect the term *Eeyou Istchee* and the inherent right of the *Eeyou Istchee* to refer to themselves by this name, for the purpose of this paper the term "James Bay Cree" will be used for the sake of clarity. It should also be noted that the name *Eeyou Istchee* is a very recent development and it is gaining increasing acknowledgement in the media and academic literature.

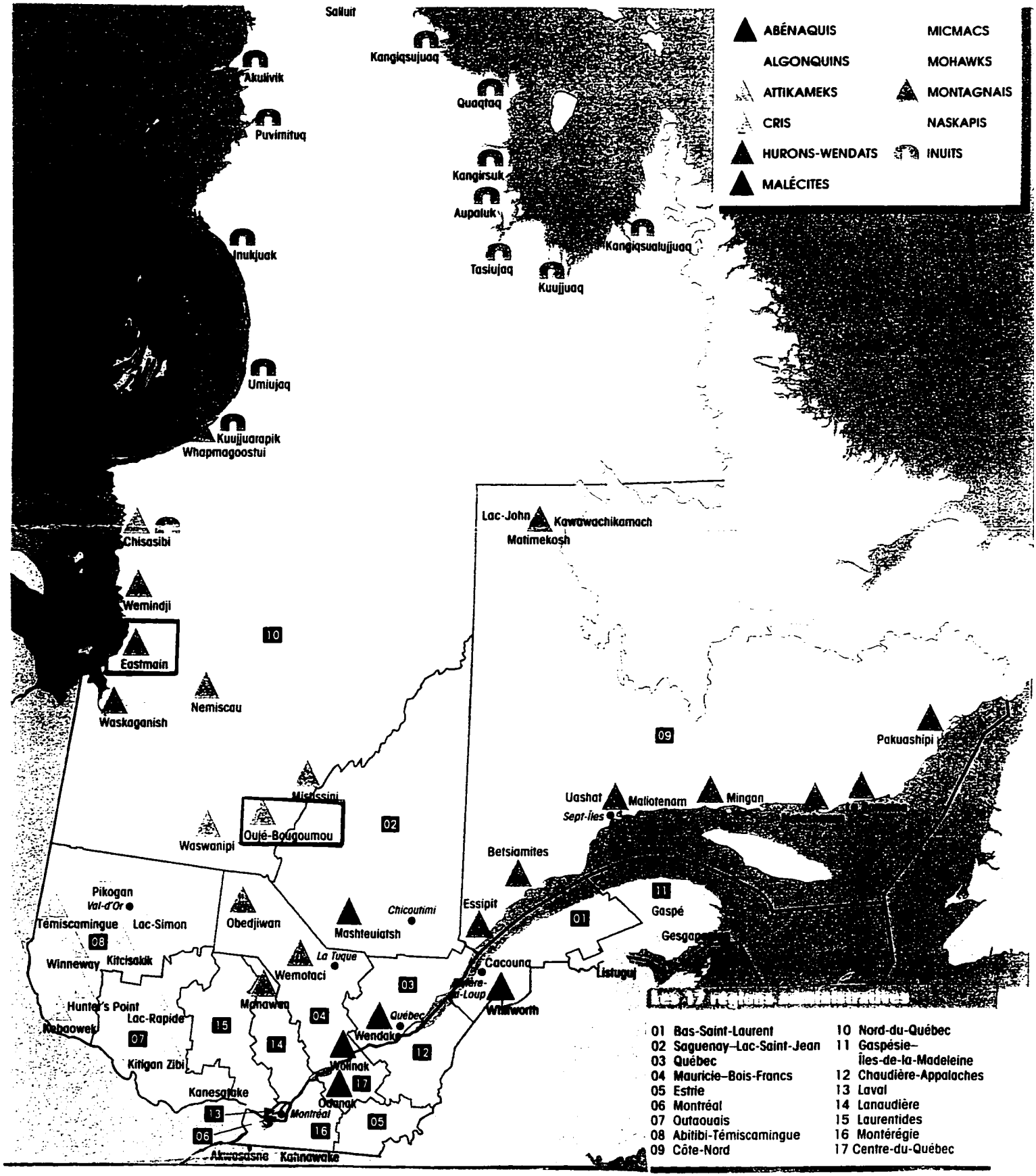

Figure 2. Map of Quebec's First Nations by administrative region. The James Bay Cree are in region ten, encircled are Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou (Source: Gouverment du Québec 1998).

Table 2: Population data for James Bay Cree Communities[9]

Community	Population
Chisasibi	2,715
Eastmain	526
Mistissini	2,445
Nemaska	306
Oujé Bougoumou	559
Waskaganish	1,832
Waswanipi	1,249
Wemindji	1,048
Whapmagoostui	581

There are two main dialects of the Cree language, one coastal and one inland (or north and south). In addition most communities have developed their own distinct dialects (Cree-Naskapi Commission Inquiry 1991).

3.1.1 The James Bay Northern Quebec Agreement

The JBNQA is a negotiated settlement concerning ownership and use of the land in the James Bay territory in Northern Quebec. The JBNQA was signed on November 11, 1975 and there were four parties to the agreement: 1) James Bay Cree; 2) Inuit; 3) Government of Canada; and 4) the Government of Quebec (which also included as signatories the James Bay Development Corporation, the James Bay Energy Corporation and Hydro-Québec (Cree-Naskapi Commission Inquiry 1991).

The JBNQA was a direct outcome of the Quebec Government's plan to utilize vast territories in the north for hydro-electric development. The James Bay Hydro-Electric Development Project was initiated by Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa in 1971 as part of his economic development plan for Quebec (Richardson 1975). These plans involved the damming and subsequent flooding of vast tracks of land, and were

[9] Data information derived from the GCC (2001) and reflects population numbers as of April 2001.

announced unilaterally by the Government of Quebec. Construction began without environmental assessment and without consultation with Cree or Inuit people. The Cree and Inuit contested the project on the basis of their unextinguished Aboriginal title. In May 1972 they filed an injunction with the Quebec Superior Court to stop further construction and in November 1973, Justice Albert Malouf ruled in their favour[10]. This decision was reversed by the Quebec Court of appeal in 1974, leaving Cree and Inuit leaders little choice but to negotiate an agreement.

Under the terms of the JBNQA agreement the Cree relinquished Native territorial claims in return for $155 million along with certain rights over specified lands and the promise of substantial self-government, program money and other benefits provided for in the act (Cree-Naskapi Commission Inquiry 1991). As part of the JBNQA agreement three different categories of land were designated with each providing different rights and responsibilities. Category I lands, approximately 5,400 square miles, are those occupied by the nine Cree villages. Within this category, there are two sub-categories: Category IA lands (1,274 square miles) which according to the JBNQA are subject to federal jurisdiction; and Category IB lands (884 square miles) which are under provincial jurisdiction. Category II lands comprise some 25,000 square miles in which Cree have exclusive hunting, fishing and trapping rights, contiguous with each of the villages. Category III lands (346, 092 square miles) make up the remaining territory. Authority over Category I lands rests with the Cree Regional Authority (CRA) that was established

[10] One of Judge Malouf's principal argument was that Quebec had not fulfilled its obligation under the 1912 Act. In 1898 the boundaries of Quebec were extended north to the 52nd parallel. In 1912 these boundaries were once more extended to Hudson Strait in the North and to Labrador in the east. The 1912 Quebec Boundaries Extension Act carried the obligation under federal statute that the Quebec Government was to reach an agreement on land-related issues with the inhabitant of this region which were the Cree, Inuit and Naskapi. The Government of Quebec never attempted any negotiations until 1973, the year of Judge Malouf's injunction (Cree-Inuit-Naskapi 1998).

in 1978 as the chief administrative body co-ordinating and administering all programs in Cree villages. Cree villages and Category I lands are established as municipalities and their band councils as corporations (GCC 2000).

The GCC (2000) argues that the negotiations leading to the JBNQA were conducted under "duress" and that the agreement itself was "highly inequitable." This viewpoint is certainly echoed by others (Warner 1999) but at the same time the JBNQA for all its weakness is regarded as more than just a land claim settlement; it is a modern-day treaty that is protected under Section 35 (3) of the 1982 Constitution Act (Cree-Naskapi Commission 1991).

In addition to the above, the James Bay hydroelectric project is also widely attributed with having caused detrimental effects on wildlife and the Cree subsistence way-of-life (Salisbury 1986; Feit 1995; Warner 1995; Mulrennan 1997). On the political front however, the James Bay hydroelectric project and the subsequent legal struggles, resulted in the creation of the Grand Council of the Crees. What was before a loosely-tied assembly of Cree villages became, under the umbrella of GCC, a closely-tied, effective political organization for the governance of the Cree people (McGregor 1989).

3.2 Eastmain

3.2.1 Geography and History of Eastmain

Eastmain is a coastal community located at 52^0 15′ North latitude and 78^0 10′ West longitude (Figure 3). Eastmain is accessible by air through daily flights by Air Creebec and by an access road from the Matagami-Chisasibi highway. The territory of

Eastmain, comprising 490 square kilometers, is designated Category I land under the JBNQA.

Eastmain was established as a trading post for the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) in early 18th century. The name "Eastmain" refers to the fact that by the 1730s Eastmain was the headquarters of all trade activity for the east coast of James Bay and Hudson Bay. Located initially on the north shore of the Eastmain River, in 1762 for unknown reasons, the community was relocated as a summer post to its current position on the south shore (Cree Nation of Eastmain 2000).

3.2.2 Economy of Eastmain

Traditionally the main economic activities in Eastmain were a mixture of subsistence living and market economies in the form of hunting, fishing and fur trading. Fishing in lakes and rivers not far inland dominated the summer months. Trout, whitefish, turbot and pike were the most important fish caught; some were consumed during the summer, some were traded at Eastmain House and, later, at Rupert House for tobacco and brandy, and the remainder were dried for use during the winter (Cree Nation of Eastmain 2000).

Figure 3. An aerial photograph of the Eastmain community taken in 1997. View is from the airport, visible in the background is the Eastmain River (Source: Eastmain Nation 2000).

Hunting in this coastal community was, and continues to be, centered on migrating Canada goose populations. The fur trade, according to Francis and Morantz (1983), focussed initially on beaver, the most valuable fur-bearing animal, followed by fox and marten and in the 19th century by lynx, otter, muskrat, mink, hare, skunk and loon skins. The 1980s saw the emergence of the anti-fur movements and the resulting decline in fur prices. This led to economic hardships for many Northern Aboriginal communities (Wenzel 1991), and Eastmain was no exception as reflected in the closure of local fox and lynx farms (Ettenger 1995).

Presently, the people of Eastmain rely on a mix of subsistence living, wage employment and external governmental assistance from the provincial and federal governments (Ettenger 1995). Hunting remains a viable subsistence and culturally significant activity, particularly during the spring and fall goose hunts when entire families spend time in the bush. This activity lasts for 2 weeks to 4 weeks during which period the whole village is "deserted", with the school, Band Office and businesses closed. The men hunt while women process the birds. The geese are then shared and eaten or stored in home-freezers for consumption later in the year.

Fishing provided a viable subsistence living for Eastmain in the past, however, this is no longer the case. According to an Eastmain woman-elder[11], similar to the geese hunt, entire families would leave the village in the summer and go to their respective fishing camps along the Eastmain River. The river would be transformed into a buzz of activity with boats and canoes lining the riverbanks. This activity according to the same

[11] As part of the interviews for my research.

elder is now almost non-existent as many species of fish that were once abundant in the Eastmain River are now gone.

The decline of fishing on the Eastmain River is tied directly to the construction of the James Bay hydroelectric dam. The construction of the dam and the ensuing water diversion led to a 90% reduction in the discharge of the river (Warner 1999). Locals blame the reduced river-flow for salt intrusion into the river. Fears of high levels of mercury in fish, another consequences of the dam, have also contributed to the decline of fishing at Eastmain.

With respect to government assistance, an important source of monetary income is the Income Security Program (ISP). The ISP was established as part of the JBNQA to ensure that hunting, fishing and trapping constitute a viable way of life for the Cree people, who select to pursue such a way of life (INAC 2002). Under this program any person who spends more then 120 days a year in the "bush" is compensated by a formula that includes a per diem amount with wives and husbands receiving separate payments (Scott 1984; Warner 1999). Additional forms of monetary income include other government transfer payments, such as social security and unemployment benefits and wage employment in the form of seasonal construction work and municipal employment (Ettenger 1995).

Anthropologist Ettenger (1995) argues that the economic dependency of Eastmain on external sources of support such as federal and provincial governments is politically and economically "undesirable." Indeed, recent developments illustrate the accuracy of his position. According to Ted Moses, Grand Chief of the GCC, the Quebec government has deliberately withheld pre-approved funding to Eastmain in an effort to coerce the

GCC into dropping a court case against them for clear-cutting practices on Cree territories (Travers 1999). Although the money was eventually released following successful negotiations, the reality remains that Eastmain, like other Cree communities, is often reduced to a political pawn in the complex maneuverings of intergovernmental relations.

The unpaved roads within Eastmain are a further example of this. Eastmain had to suspend the pavement of their roads due to lack of governmental funding as a result of the above mentioned negotiations between the GCC and the Quebec government over clear-cut logging practices in Northern Quebec (Travers 2000). According to some reports, the roads should have been paved in 1996 (Travers 1999), yet they were still unpaved at the time of my research in the summer of 2000. Several women complained that these unpaved roads were generating significant amounts of dust, which in addition to being a nuisance for housecleaning, posed a health risk to children and to elders who suffer from respiratory ailments.

3.2.3 Women's Role in Eastmain's Economy

Women of all ages and family status play an important role in the economy of Eastmain. Their contributions are seen and felt at every level of community life. In terms of subsistence living they accompany their families to the "bush" and although they don't usually hunt, they perform a number of essential related tasks; setting up tents, gathering spruce boughs, plucking, cleaning and smoking geese, cleaning and scraping animal hides, collecting berries, herbs, and wood or cooking. Simply put, women are an integral part of life in the "bush"[12].

[12] For a detailed exposition of women's roles in the bush please see Tanner (1979) and for the spiritual aspects of women's life in the bush (i.e. women's responsibilities in keeping their camp-sites clean to

Back in the village their roles vary according to age and family situation. Women-elders spend significant parts of their days sewing and knitting. Depending on the state of their health some women-elders may contribute monetarily to their families by making traditional Cree crafts. These are sold to the arts and crafts store in Val D'or. Even those women who do not sell their products contribute directly to the family; boots, slippers, mitts and other pieces of clothing made from animal hides are given to family members, while handmade baskets and other crafts are given as presents (e.g. weddings) thus avoiding the need to buy these items.

Young mothers usually stay at home raising their children, although some work part-time. Single or older mothers tend to work full-time. Their main places of employment by order of importance are the Band Office, school, daycare, restaurant, Northern Store and grocery store. Women are absent from the workforce at the fire station, construction company, arena and police station[13].

3.2.4 Eastmain Community Layout and Planning History

The community layout of present-day Eastmain is an elongated, rectangular shape. The majority of houses are located on the south side of the community while community buildings are located, for the most part (with the exception of the grocery store), on the north side. This layout is a product of the surrounding physical environment

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ensure that animals do not 'shun' their household, or the taboos associated with eating certain parts of animals please see Adelson (2000).

[13] It is interesting to note that an Eastmain police constable complained of the lack of female police officers in the village, and perhaps more importantly, what he described as the 'total unwillingness' of young women to even contemplate applying for such a position. One of the reasons cited by this police officer for this 'unwillingness' is that young women appear to be 'intimated' at the prospect of spending time outside their own communities in a perceived 'harsh' and 'intimidating' police training. Another reason mentioned is that in small communities like Eastmain there is a strong possibility that a police officer might receive a

in addition to administrative and infrastructure constraints. On the east and northside of the community lies the Eastmain River, on the west side the airport, and on the south a marsh, which is presently is the process of being drained. On the northeastern side of the community is the access road linking Eastmain to the highway. According to the Eastmain Deputy Chief, Norman Cheezo, prior to the draining of the marsh, expansion plans were limited to the northeast side of the community. However, the draining of the marsh combined with appropriate construction procedures will make it possible to expand in a southerly direction. As part of a community expansion project, a plan is underway to construct a road that would link Shibish Meskino (located on the south of the community) to Mewaben Meskino (located in the east side of the community) and eventually build houses in the southern part of the village, ultimately giving the community a circular layout[14].

Eastmain is also associated with unfavourable site characteristics related to the underlying saturated clays, which render building foundations unstable, in addition to sand deposits and underlying bedrock[15]. As a result some of the community buildings in Eastmain appear to have been built in what Wolfe (1989) classifies as "sectoral projects", that is, they were build in isolation from a comprehensive community plan and their location was made on the basis of engineering least-cost criteria rather than what is most desirable in terms of community needs. One such example is the Eastmain arena, which in addition to being built in a remote area is also built on top of an old burial site.

'call' from their own home. The potential of such a 'conflict,' according to the same police officer, is another reason why young women do not apply for the position of a police officer.

[14] "Meskino" is the Cree word for "road" or "street".

[15] As a result of the underlying saturated clay every time a heavy machinery like a bulldozer passes through the streets of Eastmain the whole house or community building vibrates in the same manner of an earthquake (personal interview).

Although the arena could have been built closer to the village, away from the burial site, this alternative was rejected because it would have been more expensive.[16] The decision to build the arena in it's present position was taken by a non-native planner, who according to one Band Official, "never bothered to consult the people" about his plans. At the same time the previous Band Council simply "went along with the plans because he [the planner] was the 'expert'. This planner, according to the same source, will not be hired for any future community projects (Anon. Band Official, pers. comm. 2000).

3.3 Oujé Bougoumou

3.3.1 Geography and History of the Oujé Bougoumou Community

Oujé Bougoumou is an inland community located at 49^0 55′ N latitude and 74^0 49′ W longitude (Figure 4). The village is spread over a hillside overlooking Opemiska Lake. Oujé Bougoumou is located on top of sandy soil, the remnants of glacial sedimentation[17]. Oujé Bougoumou is accessible by road and by air transportation. Air Creebec and Air Alma, offer daily flights, with the exception of Saturdays, to Chibougamou, a nearby logging town. By road, Oujé Bougoumou is 745 kilometres north of Montreal and about

[16] The alternative site that was closer to the middle of the community lies on top of the marsh that is in the process of being drained. The present day project manager however, commented that the arena could still have been built in this area although it would have to be put on piles (personal correspondence).

[17] As a result there is soil movement, especially in the springtime following the melting of show and the subsequent saturation of the soil, that renders the underlying soil unstable. Consequently, the foundations of the majority of houses in Oujé Bougoumou have been slightly damaged.

50 kilometres north of Chibougamou. The name Oujé Bougoumou comes from the Cree word meaning "the place where people gather" (Oujé Bougoumou Nation 2000).

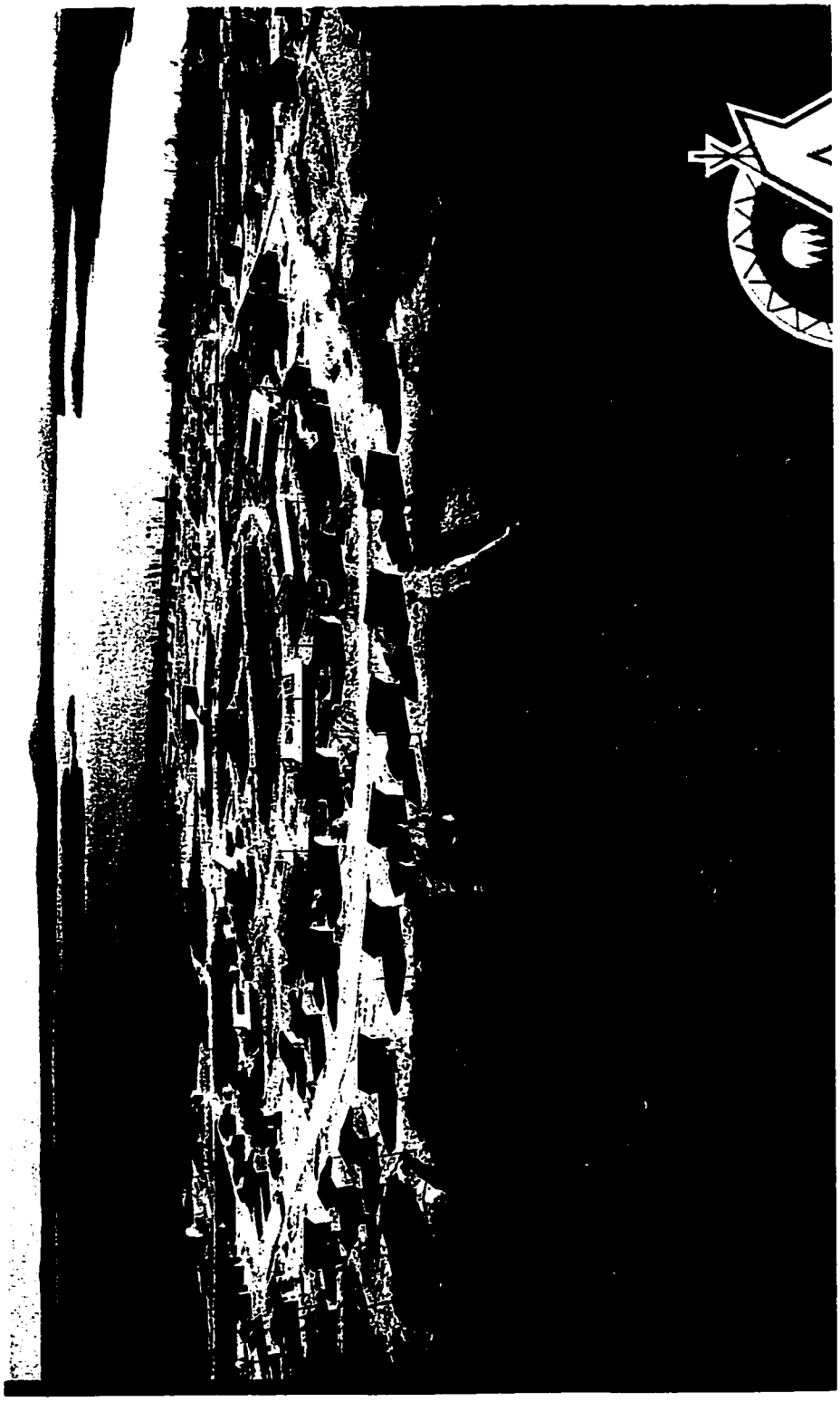

Figure 4. An aerial photograph of the Oujé Bougoumou community taken in 1992. Visible in the background is the Opemiska Lake (Source: Oujé Bougoumou Nation 2000).

The history of the Oujé Bougoumou people has been one of land dispossession by various mining and logging companies and it has involved nine relocations of the community (Frenette 1985). The first relocation took place in the 1920s after valuable mineral deposits were discovered on their hunting territories. In the beginning, reaction to the incoming prospectors was mixed. Goddard (1994) writes that many hunters welcomed the wages that were earned by guiding and giving provisions to newcomers, especially since traditional bush life was hard and full of uncertainties. As the mining extended however, the Cree were increasingly pushed aside (Goddard 1994). Table 3 summarises the chronology and location of their many relocations.

Table 3. Relocations of the Oujé Bougoumou Cree

Settlement Location	Years of relocation
1. Hudson Bay Post	1914-1929
2. Chibougamou Post	1929-1942
3. Cedar Bay	1943-1951
4. Campbell Point	1943-1951
5. Hamel Island	1952-1957
6. Swampy Point	1952-1962
7. Dore Lake	1962-1974
8. Six Camp Location	1974-1989
9. Lac Opémiska	1989-present

(Source: Goddard 1994:44)

As a result of these relocations the Oujé Bougoumou people became dispersed into six family camps. These camps were for the most part shacks built along logging roads (Frenette 1985). Their plight as landless squatters on their own land living in deplorable housing conditions has been widely cited among the worst cases of indigenous rights abuses in the world (Gray 1998).

A long-overdue recognition of the Oujé Bougoumou people as a distinct band was given in 1990 by the Quebec government, overturning the previously mistaken

classification by the Department of Indian Affairs of the Oujé Bougoumou people as part of the Mistissini Band. This recognition together with a grant of $25 million from the provincial government, paved the way for the eventual construction of Oujé Bougoumou village under the leadership of Chief Abel Bosum. In 1992 an additional $50 million was allocated to the Band by the federal government (Goddard 1994), securing the establishment of a permanent village (Gray 1998; Lalonde 1993).

3.3.2 Oujé Bougoumou Economy

The Oujé Bougoumou economy is similar to that of Eastmain; that is, a mixture of subsistence living in the form of hunting and fishing, governmental transfer payments in the form of social security, unemployment benefits and ISP benefits, and wage employment in the form of seasonal construction work and municipal employment.

Tourism, however, in contrast to Eastmain, is an important part of the Oujé Bougoumou economy. Since 1994 a combination of eco-tourism and cultural tourism has been actively promoted. Between 1997 and 1999 alone, Oujé Bougoumou was visited by 18,000 visitors, generating $1 million dollars in revenue (Travers 1999). As part of the eco-tourism experience, tourists spend from 2 to 6 weeks in the "bush", hunting and fishing. The cultural tourism experience includes tours of the community, followed by a choice of staying either at the "Cultural Village" – an enclosed "mini-village" encompassing a variety of traditional Cree dwellings – or at the Cappisit Lodge in modern, luxurious accommodation. Tourists dine at the Cappisit Lodge, which serves traditional Cree dishes such as smoked goose, rabbit stew and boiled whitefish. Tourists can also shop at the local arts and crafts store, which sells handmade souvenirs from local

women, or attend a "walking-out" ceremony if one is scheduled[18] (Oujé Bougoumou Nation 2000).

Similar to the situation at Eastmain, women play an important part in the village economy. In addition to their roles as wives and mothers, many work in full or part-time positions. The Band Office, daycare, school, restaurant and lodge, are the main employers for Oujé Bougoumou women, followed by the local tourist office. The arts and crafts store provides monetary income for a number of stay-home women through the sale of hand-made articles. Similar to Eastmain, no women are employed at the Fire Hall or the Peacekeepers' Station. [19]

3.3.3 Oujé Bougoumou Comunity Layout and Planning History

The planning of the community, according to one Band Official, was a combination of direct democracy, financial considerations, architectural creativity and an attempt to provide a community environment that would apply, to the extent possible, the traditional concepts of community living. The consultation committee for the design of the community included representation from the Youth Council, the Elders, former Chief Abel Bosum, Legal Council, an advisor (anthropologist Paul Wertman) and the Church[20].

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[18] A "walking-out" is a traditional Cree ceremony. When toddlers are old enough to walk they are dressed in traditional Cree outfits. They are given toy versions of tools (knives, bows and guns for boys, and scraping instruments for girls). The toddlers are placed in a ceremonial tent with the community's elders, they emerge with the help of a relative, and walk around the tent pulling behind them decorated animals which have been hunted (i.e. geese, beaver or other small game). After this ceremony the toddlers are regarded as "productive members" of their community. The "walking-out" ceremony takes place in the morning and is followed by a communal feast (Oujé Bougoumou Nation 2000).

[19] The absence of women in the Peacekeepers Station was of concern to a number of Oujé Bougoumou women interviewed. The feeling was that in sexual assault cases or in cases involving the overnight detention of females, a female Peacekeeper may be more appropriate than a male Peacekeeper (personal communication 2000).

[20] Christian Fundamental Pentecostal

Input into the community design was solicited from other Cree communities primarily Nemaska, which has a comparable population to Oujé Bougoumou.

According to the testimony of one Band Official, at the time of the consultations the Federal Government was strongly suggesting that the proposed settlement of Oujé Bougoumou be located on the site of an abandoned army base on the outskirts of Chibougamou. The Committee rejected this suggestion countering that they were searching for a place with congenial features for the future sustainable development of the community. The present location of Oujé Bougoumou on the shores of Lake Opemiska was arrived on the basis of proximity to traditional trapping lines, proximity to Chibougamou, and an unpolluted and scenic environment, which was seen as a prerequisite for the launch of tourism.[21]

The Montreal-based Surba Conseil conducted the community's initial planning exercise which involved the distribution of a number of questionnaires and the organisation of workshops to determine local housing and community needs (Chicoine 1990). For undisclosed reasons, Surba Conseil was relieved of its duties by resolution of the Boards of Directors and Chief and Council. The committee then turned to Dick Boivin, for advice on the technical aspects of the community plan and infrastructure. Mr. Boivin is an internationally recognized expert of major projects including the Churchill Fall Power Project and the relocation of Fort George. For advice on the design of public buildings and community housing the committee turned to Douglas J. Cardinal Ltd.. Douglas Cardinal is the Canadian Metis architect, who designed the Museum of Civilization in Ottawa and is well-known for incorporating Native symbolism into his architectural creations. Cardinal conducted further workshops, questionnaires and

interviews with elders and others to determine their preferences (Cardinal, personal communication, April 12, 2000).

The architectural design of the community buildings undoubtedly bears the artistic signature of Cardinal. However, the village layout and the position of some key community buildings do not. Rather they reflect the explicit wishes and instructions of the Oujé Bougoumou people and in the case of the elders' residences and apartments, of Oujé Bougoumou elders (Cardinal, personal communication April 12, 2000). The insistence of the community on "cyclical" patterns, particularly with respect to the location of community buildings, is reflected in the architectural designs of both Surba Conseil and in Cardinal's work (Figures 5 and 6), and reflects the extent of community input at the planning stages.

The unique architectural design of Oujé Bougoumou, which is imbued with Cree Native symbolism and noted for its environmentally friendly features, including a biomass heating system.[22] This has earned the community numerous awards including: The Canada Mortgage and Housing Award in 1994; the Global Citizen Award in 1995;

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[21] Further details provided in section 3.5.

[22] Beneath the surface, the town has installed a Swedish "biomass" heating system that runs on sawdust that is discarded from nearby logging plants. This system in addition to being "environmentally-friendly", by using materials that would otherwise end-up in a landfill, is also more economical than conventional hydroelectric power. This heading system cuts heating bills by two-thirds (Travers 1999; Oujé Bougoumou Nation 2000).

the United Nations "We the Peoples Award" in 1995; and Habitat II: Best Practices Award in 1996[23].

[23] The Awards were part of a programme in honour of the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations undertaken by the Friends of the United Nations, a non-governmental organization. A total of 50 communities worldwide were selected and judged on ten categories of activity important to the United Nations (We the Peoples: 50 Communities Awards 1995).

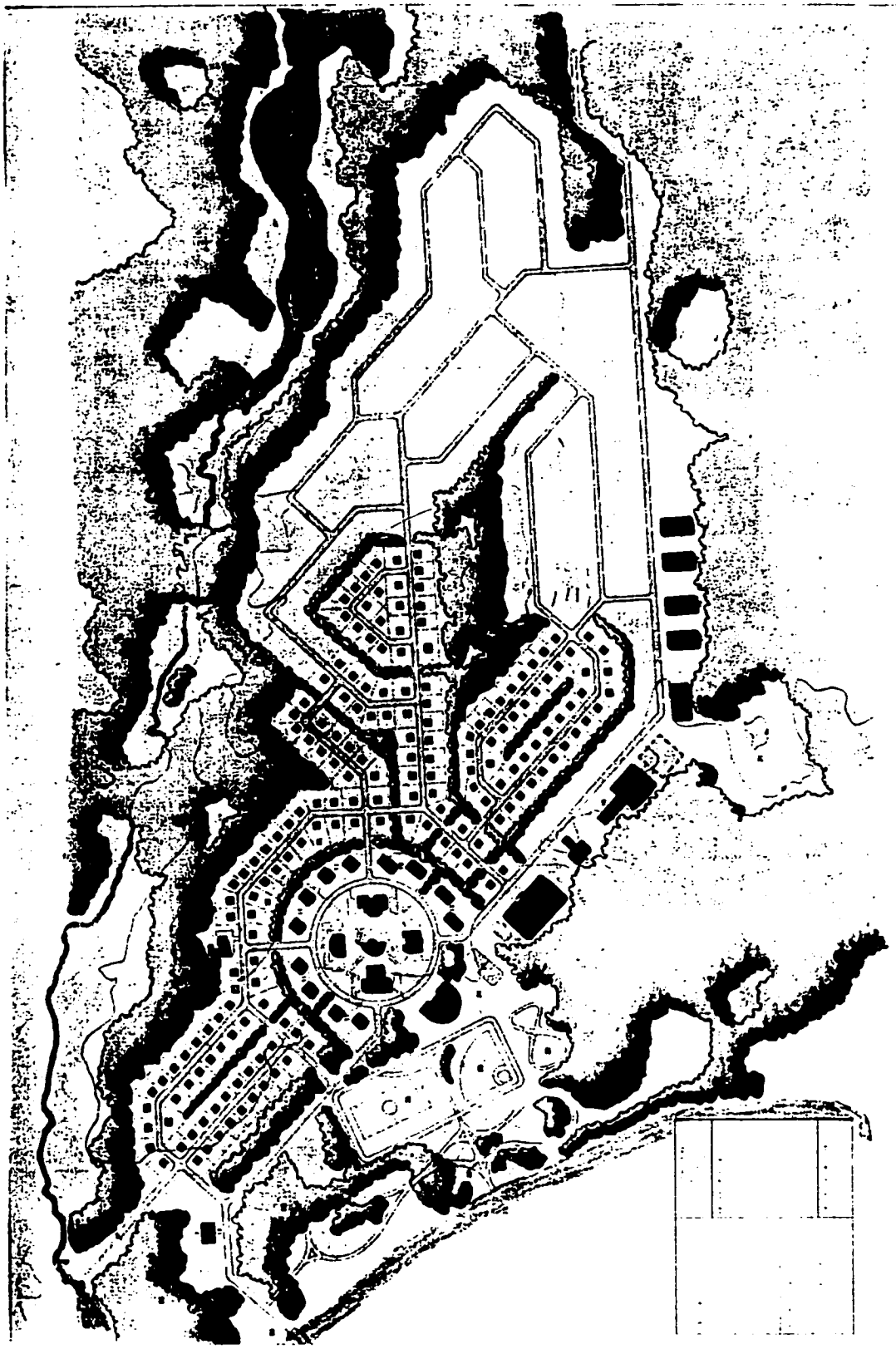

Figure 5. Architectural design concept of Oujé Bougoumou by Surba Conseil, March 21, 1990 (Source: Chicoine 1990).

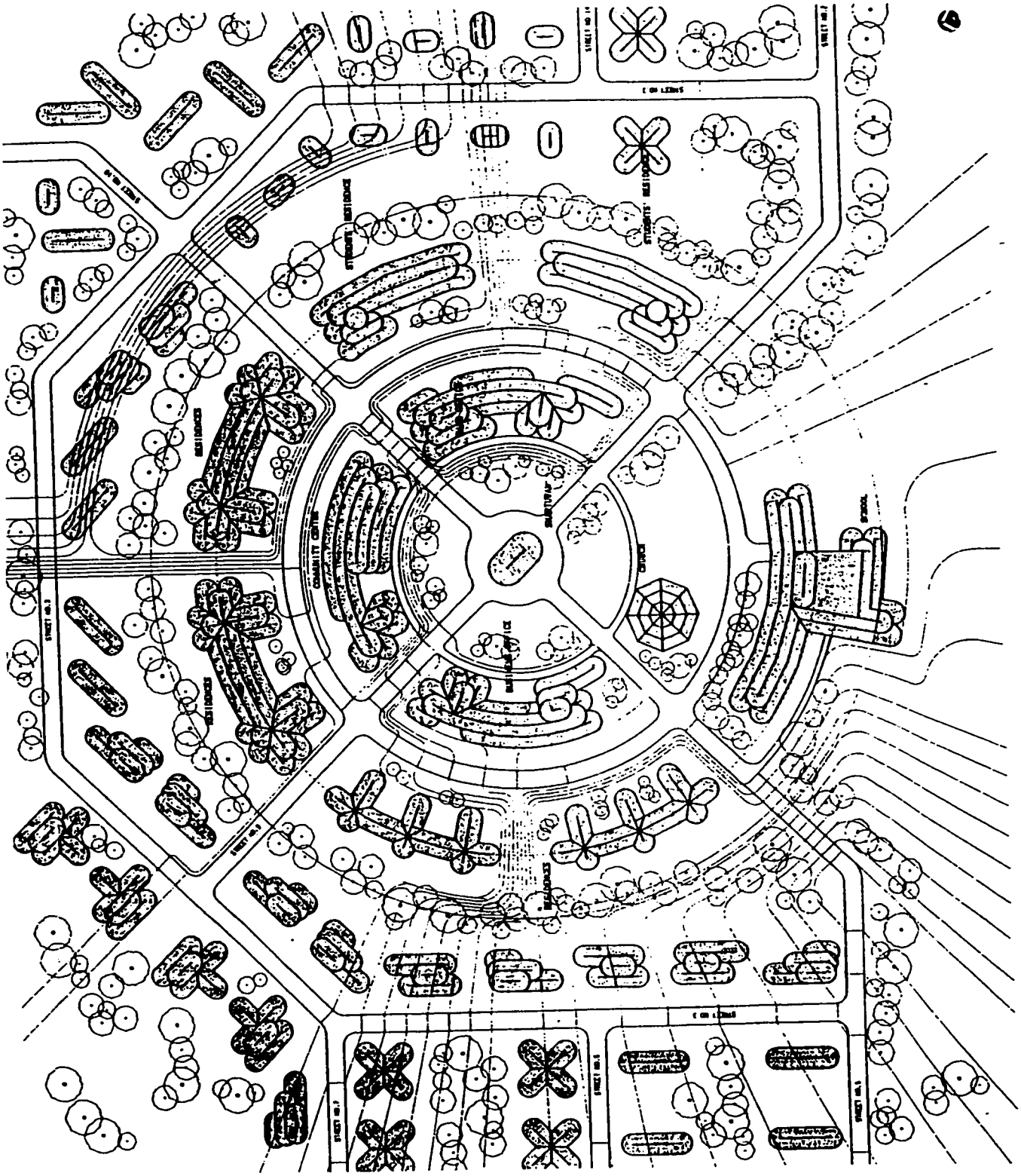

Figure 6. Architectural concept of Oujé Bougoumou by Douglas Cardinal, October 1991 (Source: Douglas J. Cardinal Ltd., 1991).

3.4 Community and Commercial Buildings in Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou

The table below lists the community and commercial buildings present in Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou. Some buildings, and the services associated with them, are known by different names in the two communities. For example, the Health Clinic in Eastmain is comparable in function to the Healing Center at Oujé Bougoumou. The notation N/A ("Not Applicable") indicates that that a particular facility is not available in the community.

Table 4. Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou community and recreational buildings

Eastmain	Oujé Bougoumou
Arena/ Gymnasium/ Elders Lounge/ Arcade/ restaurant/ Radio Station	No arena/Youth Center /Radio Station/Arcade
N/A	Arts & Crafts Store
Band Office	Nation Headquarters
Bank	N/A
N/A	BMX track
Church	Church
Clinic & Wellness Center	Healing Center
Cultural Village	Cultural Village
Daycare	Daycare
N/A	Elders' Apartments
N/A	Elders' Residences
Fire Station	Fire Hall
Hotel/restaurant	Lodge/ Restaurant
School/park (1)	School/park (3)
Grocery store	Convenience store/ Post office
Northern store	N/A
N/A	Pavilion (outdoor gathering place; similar to a gazebo)
Police Station	Peacekeepers Station
Post office	(included with convenience store)
N/A	Tourist Office
N/A	Tennis Court

3.5 Population Characteristics of Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou

According to the latest population figures available from the Eastmain Band Office, there are 607 residents in Eastmain, 65 of which live outside the community. Of these, 313 are males and 294 are females[24]. There are 150 children between the ages of 5-12 enrolled in the Eastmain elementary school.[25]

Oujé Bougoumou has a total population of 688, of which 350 are males and 338 are females. Of particular interest is the high number of children, 281 are below the age of 15, which translates roughly to 40% of the total population (Oujé Bougoumou Band Office 2000). In the specific case of women, the break-down by age group is 156 women between the ages of 0-19, 179 between the ages 20-59, and 17 women aged 60 and above. There are more women-elders than men-elders in Oujé Bougoumou (17 women as opposed to 10 men). This is also the case in Eastmain where, according to one Band Official, males have higher mortality rates than women as a result of "bush" accidents.[26] These findings are also consistent with national statistics that indicate that women have a longer life expectancy.[27]

In summary, the Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou communities are part of the Eastern James Bay Cree. Eastmain is a coastal community that was established as a trade post in the 18th century. A combination of subsistence living and wage employment make up its economy with women playing a fundamental role in every aspect of the community

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[24] The population numbers derived from the GCC (Table 2) and those derived from the Band Offices of Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou differ. The reason being that there is a time lapse before the official census records from each village reach the GCC. Therefore, the figures obtained directly from the Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou Band Offices are more accurate.

[25] Despite my efforts, I was unable to obtain more detailed population characteristics for Eastmain.

[26] From 1977 to 2000, of the total 51 reported deaths in Eastmain, 20 were females and 31 males. Examples of 'bush' accidents involve drownings and accidental shootings.

[27] In 1996 life expectancy in Canada for males was 75.7 years while for women it was 81.3 years (Statistics Canada 2002).

life whether in the 'bush' or the village. In relation to the present-day village layout, it was influenced by a variety of physical, financial and infrastructure constraints. Eastmain's rectangular village layout with it's scattered layout of community buildings and row-houses is similar to the so-called 'culturally-insensitive' governmental planning programs that have been critiqued in the literature.

Oujé Bougoumou is an inland community that was established in 1993 by six family groups that make up the Oujé Bougoumou people and have a history of several forcible relocations from their traditional lands. The economy of Oujé Bougoumou and the roles of the women, are similar to those of Eastmain with the exception of a growing cultural tourism industry. The planning history of Oujé Bougoumou was one of high user participation and comprehensive planning that incorporated environment-friendly features and a distinct circular, centralized village layout. Oujé Bougoumou, in comparison to Eastmain, has better infrastructure and a more pedestrian-friendly environment, however it lacks many basic community services (i.e. Northern Store, bank, arena). Both community have similar populations and share similar population characteristics, such as a large youth population and more women-elders than male-elders.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings of my field research in the James Bay Cree communities of Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou and is based primarily on questionnaire surveys of a sub-population of Cree women, interviews with women-elders and Band Officials, on-site photography and direct mapping (as previously described in Chapter 1.5). A brief profile of the informant groups in both communities is provided at the outset (Section 4.1). This is followed by a description of contemporary Native architecture in each of the two communities, based on the findings of my survey (Section 4.2).

The findings of my research are then organized into two parts. The first section deals with the relationship between women and the built environment with respect to physical or structural adjustments (Section 4.3), which will be examined using an 'empirical structuralist approach.' The findings where possible are expressed in quantitative terms. The second part focuses on the psychological/behavioural relationships between the community and the built environment as perceived by my informants (Section 4.4). These relationships will be analyzed using a 'humanistic approach' is employed and the findings are more qualitative in nature with an emphasis on women' s values and attitudes. A brief profile of the sample population involved in my research is provided first.

4.1 Profile of Informant Group in Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou

4.1.1 Eastmain Informants

The respondents were categorized in four age groups: 15-24, 25-39, 40-59 and those 60 and over (Table 5). These age groups were also categorized according to their

marital status as well as number the of children, employment status and access to a vehicle (Tables 6 and 7). One trend that becomes apparent from Table 6 is the relatively higher number of children born to single mothers than married or common-law couples, as well as the higher rate of unemployed amongst these single mothers. In relation to the age of those singles mothers these were divided in an almost equal number between the 15-24 age group (3 women) and the 25-39 age group (4 women). In terms of access to a vehicle, elders as a group have the lowest rates of access, followed by women in the 15-24 group.

Table 5. Eastmain informants by age group and marital status

	15-24	25-39	40-59	60+
Single	3	4	0	0
Married/ Common law	0	2	4	3
Separated	0	1	0	0
Widowed	0	0	0	1

Table 6. Eastmain informants by age group and other characteristics

	15-24	25-39	40-59	60+
Children under 16	5	11	3	0
Employed (full-time)	1	5	3	0
Employed (part-time)	0	0	0	0
Unemployed	2	2	1	0
Access to car	2	2	3	0
Access to skidoo	2	4	4	0

Table 7. Eastmain informants by marital status and other characteristics

	Single	Married/ Common law	Separated	Widowed
Children under 16	10	3	0	0
Employed (full-time)	3	4	1	0
Employed (part-time)	1	0	0	0
Unemployed	3	1	0	0

Access to car	3	4	0	0
Access to skidoo	5	6	0	0

4.1.2 Oujé Bougoumou Informants

Respondents at Oujé Bougoumou, similar to Eastmain women, were categorized in four age groups' 15-24, 25-39, 40-59 and those 60 and over (Table 8). These age groups were also categorized according to their marital status, as well as number of children, employment status and access to a vehicle (Tables 9 and 10). Similar to Eastmain, elders had the lowest rates of access to a vehicle (Table 9). A similar total number of children was reported for the two communities. However, the distribution of children amongst the different age groups of mothers differs. In Oujé Bougoumou women in the 15-24 and 25-39 age group reported similar numbers of children, while in Eastmain the distribution was relatively even among these age groups with the highest percentage belonging to the 25-39 age group. The 15-24 and the 25-39 age groups with children had higher rates of unemployment and lower rates of access to transportation in comparison to the 40-59 age group. Married, common law and separated women in Oujé Bougoumou had similar full-time employment status, but there was a noticeable disparity in terms of access to transportation, with married/common law women having greater access to transportation than their single or separated counterparts.

Table 8. Oujé-Bougoumou informants by age group and marital status

	15-24	25-39	40-59	60+
Single	1	0	0	0
Married/ Common law	3	2	5	0
Separated	1	2	2	0
Widowed	0	0	1	0

Table 9. Oujé-Bougoumou informants by age group and other characteristics

	15-24	25-39	40-59	60+
Children under 16	9	9	0	0
Employed (full-time)	3	3	7	0
Employed (part-time)	0	0	1	0
Unemployed	2	1	0	0
Access to car	1	2	6	1
Access to skidoo	3	1	6	0

Table 10. Oujé-Bougoumou informants by marital status and other characteristics

	Single	Married/ Common law	Separated	Widowed
Children under 16	2	11	5	0
Employed (full-time)	0	7	4	1
Employed (part-time)	1	1	0	0
Unemployed	0	2	1	0
Access to car	0	6	2	1
Access to skidoo	1	7	0	1

4.2 Contemporary Native Architecture in Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou

A survey of public buildings revealed the presence of contemporary Native architecture in both communities. Buildings were categorized according to the type and level of Native symbolism integrated into their design. Two broad categories were identified: 1) those buildings that had no Native symbolism at all, and 2) those that had Native symbolism. These were further categorized in terms of their level of integration based on: a) structural design, used here to refer to the design of a building at the structural level; or b) ornamental design, which refers to the decoration of a building by the addition of an image or pattern of a Native symbol to what would otherwise be considered an "ordinary" building. Inspiration for Native symbolism was drawn from

traditional Cree structures, such as the *michuap* and the saptuan[28], as well as zoomorphic symbols, such as the Canada Goose (a major staple of Cree diet). Tables 11 and 12 provide a list of public buildings in each community based on the classification system described above. The year of construction is also provided for each building.

Table 11. Native architecture and public buildings in Eastmain

	Integration of Native symbolism	Structural design	Ornamental design	Year of construction
Arena complex	NO	N/A	N/A	1998
Band Office	YES	YES		1989
Church	NO	N/A	N/A	1970
Clinic	YES	YES		1984
Daycare	YES		YES	1999
Grocery Store	YES	YES		1988
Hotel/restaurant	YES	YES	YES	1994
Northern store	NO	N/A		1976
Police/Fire Station	NO	N/A		1999
Post Office	NO	N/A		1978
School	YES		YES	1984

Table 12. Native architecture and public buildings in Oujé Bougoumou

	Integration of Native symbolism	Structural design	Ornamental design	Year of construction
Arts/Crafts store	YES	YES		1993
Church	YES	YES		1993
Healing Center	YES	YES		1993
Daycare	YES	YES		1993
Elders' Apartments	YES	YES		1993
Elders' residences	YES	YES		1993
Fire station	YES	YES		1993
Grocery Store	YES	YES		1993
Lodge/ Restaurant	YES	YES		1993
Nation Headquarters	YES	YES		1993
Territorial Peacekeepers	YES	YES		1993
Tourism/Business Office	YES	YES		1993
Youth Center/ Radio station/	YES	YES		1993

[28] A saptuan is an oblong traditional dwelling structure.

arcade				

By comparing the two tables it is evident that Oujé Bougoumou has higher levels of Native symbolism integrated at the structural level into the architecture of their community buildings. In the literature it is suggested that contemporary Native architecture represents the physical manifestation of the general phenomenon of political activism amongst indigenous groups in the last decades (Theoharis 1983; Krinsky 1996). This appears to be true for the Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou communities (see also section 1.2). In Eastmain, none of the buildings constructed before 1980 have any form of Native architecture in their designs. Buildings erected after 1980 have either a limited degree of Native architecture, usually at the ornamental level, or none at all such as the police/fire station and arena despite being built as recently as 1999. This situation in large part reflects financial and infrastructural constraints. For example, the Eastmain Band Office had to compromise their initial plans for greater integration of Native symbolism due to infrastructural constraints.[29] These findings also correspond to the literature that suggests the lack of Native architecture or its limited display (i.e. ornamental design) stems from "budgetary constraints that dictate limited solutions" and not from lack of creativity on the part of tribal councils (Krinsky 1996:59).

In Oujé Bougoumou all public buildings have Native architecture integrated at their structural level. However, even here, the integration of Native symbolism was scaled back considerably due to financial constraints. According to the testimony of one Band Official, the original designs of Douglas Cardinal had far greater levels of Native

[29] The original construction plans for the Band Office building involved the erection of two giant wooden poles over the building in diagonal position, mimicking the structure of a *michuap*. These plans were abandoned because the machinery needed to lift these wooden poles could not be transported to Eastmain.

symbolism than the present-day buildings, but "while the Committee appreciated the aesthetics and artistic value of the designs, they needed to consider the costs associated with these buildings." In the end, the only buildings in the community that were designed by Cardinal were the Oujé Bougoumou Nation Headquarters (there is a sensitivity to calling it a "Band Office"), the Business Center, and the Church. However, even the design of these buildings, according to the same source, had to be scaled back considerably; the costs savings from the scale-back were used to pave the roads and construct sidewalks. The original community housing designs developed by Cardinal were also imbued with Cree Native symbolism, but these were "outside the financial constraints facing the community". Most homes in that initial phase of construction were built by Billinkoff Management of Winnipeg at an average cost of $110,000 per unit. Presently, new housing construction is put to tender on an annual basis, with 8 new houses planned for the year 2002.

The high levels of Cree architectural symbolism present in Oujé Bougoumou is a reflection of a conscious effort made by Douglas Cardinal and the Oujé Bougoumou Band to integrate only Cree symbols in their village.[30] This emphasis on Cree symbolism correlates with the literature review that stresses Natives groups will not embrace architectural elements (even though they might be Native) if they are not perceived to be part of their own cultural heritage (Landecker 1993; Krinsky 1996).

In Oujé Bougoumou, the integration of Cree architectural elements in the community is also seen as central to the development of cultural tourism. In turn, cultural

[30]According to Mr. Cardinal while he is the sole creator of many of his designs (i.e. Museum of Civilization) in the case of the Oujé Bougoumou it was the elders and the Oujé Bougoumou people who were the designers, or as he put it: " it's their baby [Oujé Bougoumou] not mine, I just helped with the 'delivery' " (interview April 12, 2000)

tourism is perceived as a viable form of sustainable development, one that is "potentially environmentally benign, potentially comparable with our way of life, and potentially beneficially financially" (Oujé Bougoumou Nation 2000).

The Eastmain Band Council likewise, is in the process of exploring cultural tourism and ecotourism as a viable source of economic development. The Eastmain Cultural Village, which was in the process of being completed in 2000, and includes numerous *michuaps* is part of these efforts (Figures 7).

In summary, Native architecture was present in both Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou. My research found that only Cree symbols were incorporated in the architectural design of public buildings in both communities. The type and degree of Native symbolism was markedly lower in Eastmain than in Oujé Bougoumou, mostly as a result of financial and infrastructural constraints and also because Oujé Bougoumou is a relatively newer (more recent development) community. In both communities Native architecture was perceived as serving the dual purpose of reinforcing cultural identity as well as attracting cultural tourism.

Figure 7. Eastmain Cultural Village. Visible are three *michuaps* in the process of construction (Source: picture taken by author on July 2000).

4.3 Native Women and the Built Environment

Part I is organized into four sections that examine the levels of accessibility to community buildings, modifications to the built environment, patterns of social interactions, and patterns of recreational activities.

4.3.1 Levels of Accessibility to Community Buildings

Levels of accessibility to community buildings is generally greater in Oujé Bougoumou than in Eastmain. Table 13 shows the travel time in minutes needed to reach a particular community building from the respondents' homes.

Table 13. Travel time to community buildings from the homes of respondents

Eastmain

Minutes	Band Office	Clinic	School	Church	Grocery Store	Northern Store	Arena/ Elders Lounge
1-5	4	6	3		5	0	1
5-10	4	5	4	4	3	0	5
10-15	1	0	0	1	1	1	0
15-20	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
20-25	0	0	0	0	0	2	0

Oujé Bougoumou

Minutes	Band Office	Healing Centre	School	Church	Convenience Store	Restaurant	Youth Center/Arcade
1-5	13	12	13	13	13	7	13
5-10	3	3	3	3	3	8	3
10-15	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
15-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20-25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

In Eastmain accessibility to community buildings varied greatly; some buildings being close to the homes of respondents while others were quite distant. The Northern

Store and the arena complex are the most distant. Eight respondents reported that it takes them more than 20 minutes to walk there. The remote community buildings (and the resultant longer traveling times) in Eastmain are a product of the present communities layout, which is a legacy of the early settlement pattern dictated by the Hudson Bay Company (see section 3.2.4). This reflects a common pattern among Native communities. According to Wolfe (1989), because their location was determined by historic trading patterns rather than a vision for future settlement growth, severe physical barriers to expansion or improvement of existing community facilities and infrastructure were often present.

In Oujé Bougoumou, a one-five minute walking time was reported for travel times to the majority of community buildings. With one exception, the remaining community buildings can be reached by foot within 5-10 minutes. The restaurant is the most distant building requiring a 10-15 minute walk. This reflects the centralized location of community buildings in Oujé Bougoumou, at the heart of the communities. Furthermore, the concentric arrangement of houses around these community buildings ensures that households are more or less equidistant from the buildings.

Level of accessibility to community buildings vary significantly on a seasonal basis at Eastmain. In springtime many of the unpaved gravel roads and streets are flooded. According to one Band Official: "right now we have all kinds of flooding, the roads get flooded. It's a mess! In the springtime everywhere you go you have to walk on puddles". Compounding the problem is the lack of sidewalks and culverts, the relatively flat terrain, and the underlying soil that inhibits drainage. According to the same Band Official, plans are, however, underway to improve that situation, especially for the sake

of the elders, which are the most adversely affected by these conditions (Band Official, personal communication 2001).[31] These plans also include snow removal.

> What they been doing [Eastmain Public Works] all the time is just pile it [the snow] on either side of the road and everything gets jammed up and the elders see that and they say, "we are not going out there". To facilitate the elders as of this year [winter 2001], we will be hauling away snow. We feel that the elders will start to participate more. They will look outside and say, "well there is not that much snow outside, I can go out"

In Oujé Bougoumou seasonal accessibility is less of an issue because of paved roads, culverts, sidewalks and hillside streets that prevent the accumulation of water and snow.

The issue of levels of accessibility to a vehicle (either a car, truck or skidoo) produced some interesting results. In the case of the elders, only one of the nine elders interviewed has a car. However, this disadvantage is largely overcome through the generosity of relatives and other members of the community, who willingly provide assistance to elders. This includes picking up groceries from the local store, medications from the clinic, and running other small errands. In many cases these services are provided by younger women who, when interviewed about this practice, responded that their motivation was not a sense of obligation or necessity (i.e. the health or social services are inadequate) but rather the satisfaction they gained from helping elders.

Contrary to focusing on the disadvantages of not having a vehicle, many respondents spoke of the opportunities presented by walking. For example, reference was made on several occasions to the personal enjoyment and social function some Eastmain elders gained from or applied to their long walks to the Northern Store:

> ...when I used to be able to walk there [Northern Store] it used to give me a chance to meet the other children and I would say, "help me with my groceries", and I would walk home with them, with the groceries. And it

[31] See section 3.2.2 for more details surrounding the conditions of roads in Eastmain.

> would also give a chance to the younger generation to help out and make some pocket money at the same time. It taught them the value of money. In my time I used to teach, not only my own children, but other children as well, to help out somebody.

Elders and disabled people in Eastmain have access to a mini-bus that is owned and operated by the Band Office. While this service has increased the accessibility of many buildings (in particular the Northern Store) and services for elders and people with disabilities, some respondents mentioned that this was not a perfect solution. In the words of one elder:

> Now I can call the Elders' vehicle to go to the store, I can go there faster and come back faster ... [But] going to the store is not the same [as enjoyable] as before.

In summary, accessibility to community buildings as measured in terms of walking distances and seasonal accessibility, was greater in Oujé Bougoumou than Eastmain. The longer walking distances in Eastmain reflect the dispersed village layout, which was dictated by various environmental and financial constraints. In Oujé Bougoumou women enjoy greater levels of access, reflected in shorter walking distances, to community buildings and services. The comparative disadvantage that women experience in relation to accessibility in Eastmain is compounded by heavy snow accumulation in the winter, and the subsequent flooding of roads in the springtime.

4.3.2 Vernacular Paths

The extent and use of vernacular paths is greater in Eastmain than Oujé Bougoumou. In Eastmain a total of 13 vernacular paths were documented by informants to be in regular use. In Figure 8, the shortcuts are highlighted in yellow, while community buildings are highlighted in red colour. Two significant networks of shortcuts are evident;

the first network originates in Shabow (the main street) and Mewaben Streets, converge and then descend to the arena complex, one of the most distant and inaccessible buildings in the community. The second network originates in Shibish street (a dead-end street) and leads to Shabow Street. These paths compensate for the absence of a connecting street between Shibish and Shabow, which would otherwise require walking the entire length of Shibish, Opinica and then Shabow Street to access the majority of community buildings (Band Office, Arena Complex, Clinic, Motel/Restaurant, Post Office, Church), which are located on the north-eastern side of the communities. The only other primary vernacular path connects to the Northern Store which is not visible in this community map since it lies outside the community boundaries. Two relatively smaller paths were also documented, one leading to the grocery store and another between Shabow and Nimao streets.

In Oujé Bougoumou a total of seven vernacular pathways were documented and are shown in Figure 9. The shortcuts themselves are traced in yellow, while all the community buildings are highlighted in red. These shortcuts are isolated from each other, and four have as their destination the community buildings in the center of the communities. Paradoxically, these same buildings were listed among the most accessible buildings in relation to walking distance. When asked why these shortcuts are taken in preference to the designated streets, the majority of women responded that it was simply "faster." This suggests that even over relatively "short" distances, people are likely to take shortcuts if the alternative route is perceived to be quicker. Interestingly, the introduction of regulatory measures in the form of a community by-law that prohibits walking on grass appears to have done little to discourage the use of vernacular

pathways.[32] According to one Band Council official, despite the fact that residents are made aware of this by-law, most choose to ignore it.

[32] The motivation for this by-law was aesthetic reasons relating to the tourism industry but also to halt further soil erosion in the village, where problems already occur as a result of the local topology.

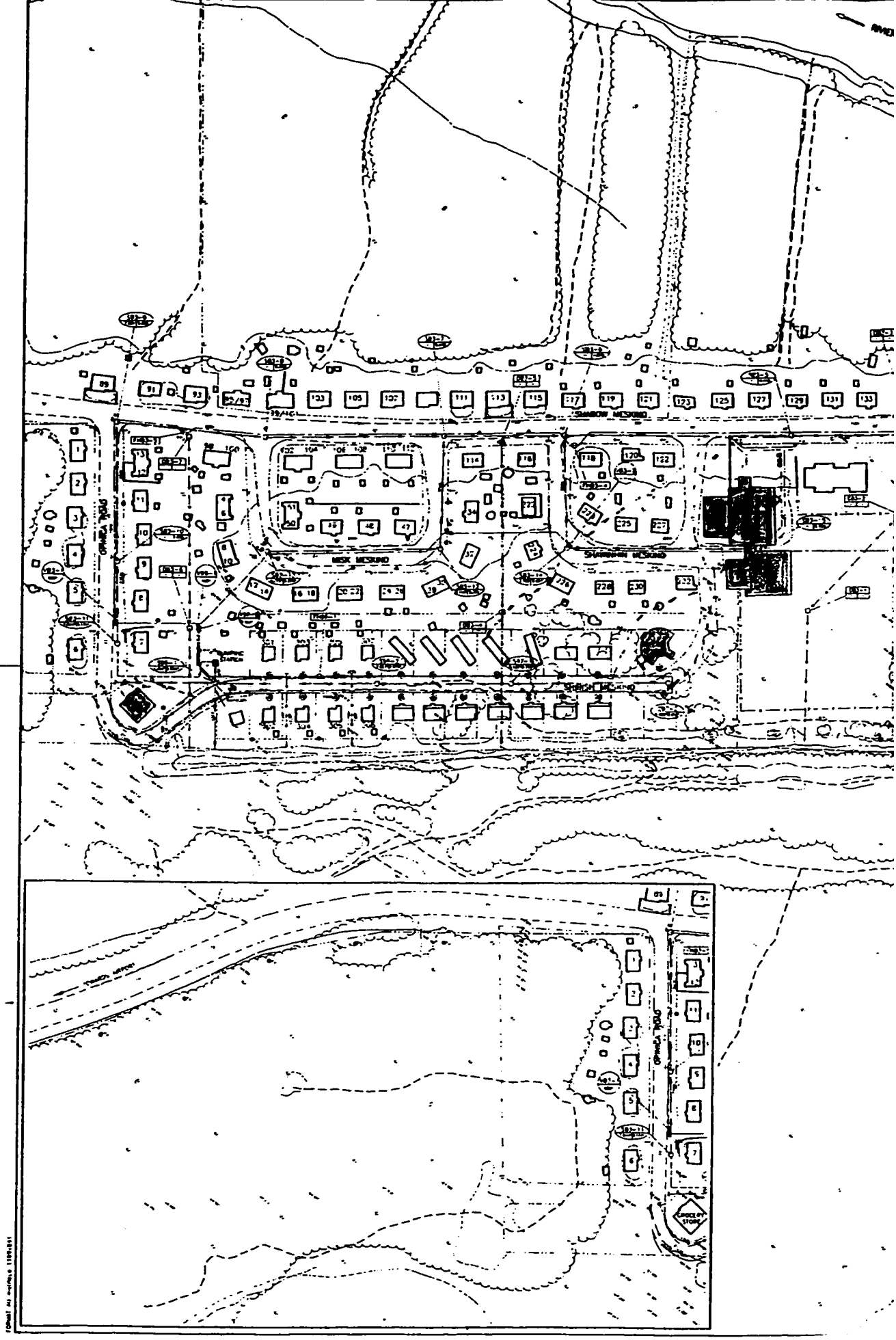
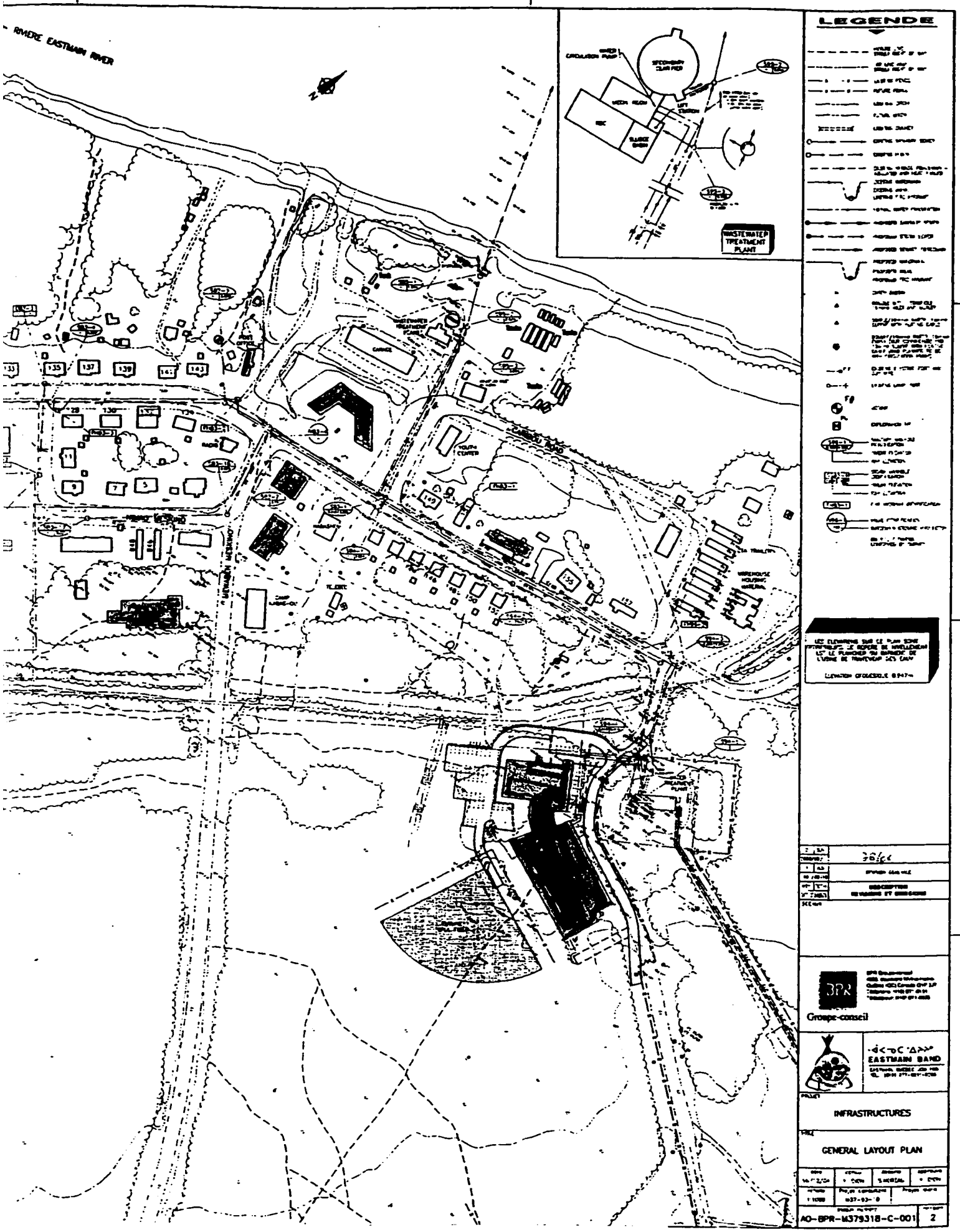


Figure 8. Village plan of Eastmain. Superimposed by hand-drawing is the shortc



buildings in yellow color--- Community buildings are highlighted in [redacted] (Scale 1:1000)

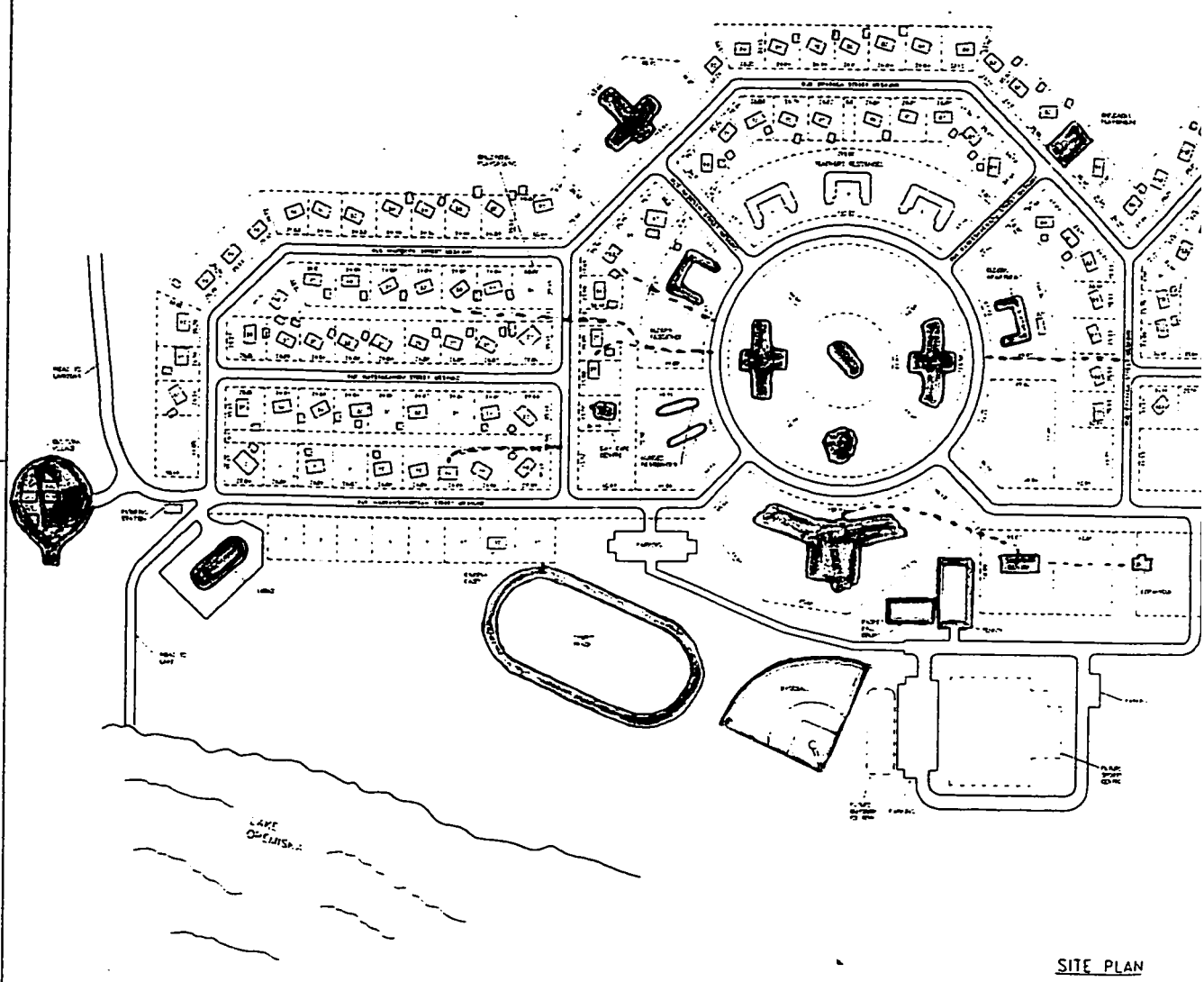
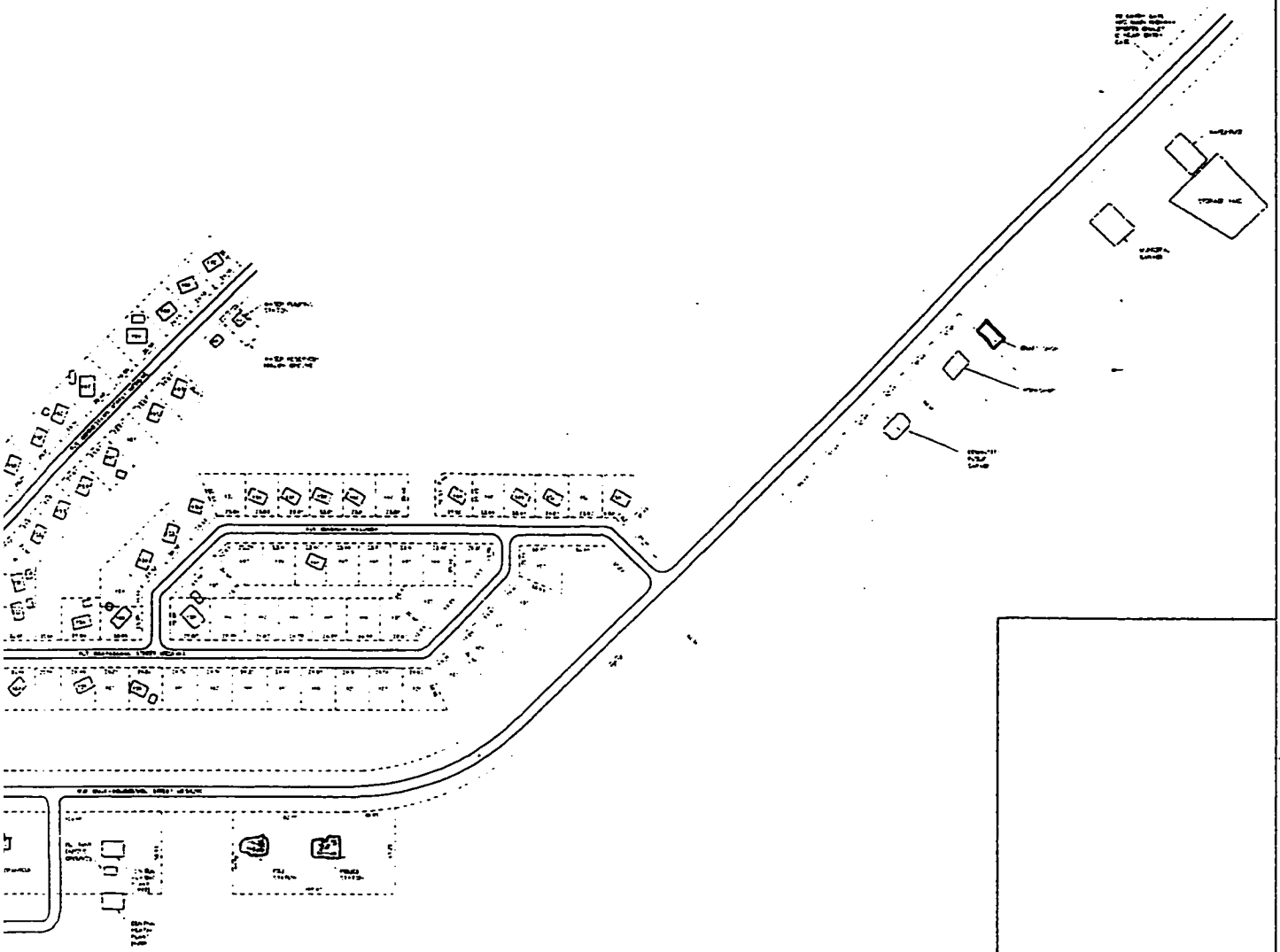


Figure 9. Village plan of Oujé Bougoumou. Superimposed by hand-drawing is the shortcut



NORTH

DUNCAN VAREY

TELEPHONE / FAX (416) 690-1325

Ouje Bougoumou
First Nation

QUEBEC CANADA

SITE PLAN OF VILLAGE

AS SHOWN	AUGUST 1995
I.F	1
D.V	
D.V.	SP-1.DWG

hortcuts in yellow color---Community buildings are highlighted in [redacted] (Scale: 1:200)

The results presented above may be interpreted in relation to the findings of other researchers who suggest that the presence of shortcuts and vernacular paths can be indicative of an unfriendly or unaccommodating built environment (Gutman 1976; Rapoport 1976). Their creation is viewed as an attempt by locals to modify that built environment to better suit their needs (Gutman 1976; Chapman 1996). According to this analysis, vernacular pathways are indicative of long distances and represent a form of adaptation to long distances by locals. In the context of my study, women and children are identified as the two groups responsible for the creation of vernacular paths and are thus the primary modifiers and adaptors of this aspect of the built environment.

The behaviour of elders in relation to shortcuts represents a significant departure from the trend identified above. Despite their limited access to vehicles, none of the elders claimed to avail of the shortcuts. Several explanations for this were put forward. One Eastmain woman complained that the shortcuts leading to the Northern Store and the arena pass through the woods where users are subjected to the ravages of bugs. Another commented that she felt less safe on shortcut routes because of their intensive use by reckless children on their bicycles. One Oujé Bougoumou elder responded by saying that: "if I take a shortcut then I will miss my opportunity to hitchhike, someone always stops to pick-me up."

In summary, vernacular pathways are evident in both communities. These shortcuts are created mainly by women and their children to shorten walking distances. Eastmain has almost twice as many vernacular pathways as Oujé Bougoumou. This may be interpreted as a reflection of a less accommodating built environment with a poorly planned road system and lower levels of access to community buildings and services. On

the other hand shortcuts were also evident in Oujé Bougoumou despite greater levels of accessibility and the presence of regulatory measures to discourage their development. The elders were an exception to the general findings, in that their concerns about safety and comfort as well as the potential for a ride from others discouraged their use of alternative routes.

4.3.3 Attendance of Community Events and Activities

Informants were asked if any factors prohibited them from attending community events. Table 14 lists those prohibiting factors. With the exception of the elders who reported lack of transportation (due to their disability) as a prohibiting factor, the responses given suggest that distance to or the location of a particular building in which an activity or event was held, had less influence on decisions to attend than many other factors.

Table 14. Factors prohibiting attendance of community events and activities

	Eastmain	Oujé Bougoumou
High admission fees	3	0
Conflict with working hours	1	5
Last minute notice	2	1
Lack of assistance	1	2
Lack of babysitting	1	1
Lack of transportation	4 (elders)	2 (elders)

Two categories of events and activities are recognized. The first include events organised by the wider community and include such activities as dancing and sports competitions, summer camp meetings, religious gatherings, and cultural festivals, as well as the Santa Parade in Eastmain. The second category includes family celebrations, such as "walking-out" ceremonies and marriages.

In relation to community events, unemployed women reported high admission fees as the primary deterrent to their regular attendance. Unemployed single mothers reported a lack of babysitting as a primary obstacle in addition to high admission fees, while full-time working women reported conflicts with working hours, in addition to feeling too "overworked and too tired" to attend.

Similarly, in relation to attendance of family celebrations, the built environment was found not to exert a major influence. Women in both communities stated that they only attend such events if invited. However, this was not always the practice. According to several elders, in the past no invitation was required for community or family events[33]. Financial constraints appear to be the primary reason for this change of custom. Informants reported that high costs and logistical challenges make it increasingly difficult for the host family to provide an open invitation to the rapidly growing local population. Similarly, the expense of providing a gift in addition to the "burn-out" involved in attending so many events were cited as the major factors influencing an individual's decision to attend or miss a particular celebration.

Elders in both Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou reported lower levels of participation in community activities and events than younger women. Among elders, two categories of women can be identified in relation to their ability to participate. The first comprises elders who are physically able, while the second includes those who have constraints on their ability to participate. The latter include disabled women, who may be confined to a wheel chair, in addition to those elders, who despite being physically active

[33] For greater insight to the changing social relations and interactions in Eastmain following the development of the James Bay hydroelectric project please see Colin Scott and Kreg Ettenger (1994) Vol. 2, Part A, sections 9.23.166 - 9.23.175.

have to care for a disabled spouse. The built environment presented very different obstacles to these two categories of elder women.

In the literature it is suggested that under reduced competence the built environment becomes critical in its inhibiting effects for elderly or ill people (Rapoport 1976, Chapman 1996). Research in Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou, however, indicated that under levels of "severe incompetence," as was the case with disabled elders, the built environment, particularly in relation to distance or location, became irrelevant. Instead transportation services and levels of care were the determining factors as to whether a disabled woman remained housebound or not.

A lack of transportation and assistance was listed as the number one reason for the low attendance of assembly meetings and local elections in Oujé Bougoumou.[34] Four of six elders said they no longer participate in local elections because they have no means of getting to the Band Council Office; the remaining two said they have been able to participate only because the ballots are brought to them at their residences. But even in Eastmain where elders have access to an elder's vehicle, individuals with disabilities felt constrained and concerned that they would be a burden to others. In the words of one elder: "the Elders' vehicle would be enough [to go to the general meetings] but I cannot move, so I would be imposing on others to get me from one point to the other, from the car to the arena." The same predicament was evident for elders who had an ailing spouse in their care. As one elder reported, despite being in good health she could not go out as often as she would like because there was nobody to care her husband:

> Before I had to take care of my husband I loved going to all kinds of activities, now is very limited, I go occasionally. I cannot enjoy as much

[34] In Eastmain these meetings are referred to as "general meetings" while in Oujé Bougoumou they are called "assembly meetings".

> as I used to, even if I go.. I will be worrying if the old man is ok when he is alone.

As a result of these constraints, two of the four elders interviewed in Eastmain claimed that they can no longer participate in local elections. These elders expressed much regret about this situation because in their younger days they were heavily involved in community affairs. As one woman stated:

> When I was younger I was very active in my community, I would attend meetings. Now that I'm getting old I do not have that anymore.. I would like to have the Council sometimes ask me what I think, my advice.. I would like that.

Another elder expressed similar sentiments:

> Because I depend totally on others for transportation, I do not go out that often to those events [community events]. My favourite in my younger days was going to meetings. I was even a representative, so I miss that a lot. I still can do it but would need people to get there [to the Band Office].

In summary, the built environment has an insignificant influence on attendance levels of community activities and events. Other factors, such as the availability of babysitting services, conflicts with employment hours, and financial factors were found to be a greater determinant of attendance levels. A lack of supporting services for disabled elders was blamed for their reduced attendance of community events as well as their lower participation in community affairs. In the case of Oujé Bougoumou elders, the advantages presented by their centralized location in the middle of the community is offset by the lack of support services available.

4.3.4 The Creation of Place from Space

This section reports on two different phenomenon which represent efforts on the part of women to overcome the limitations imposed by their built environment. The first relates to the seasonal ritual by women-elders of sitting outdoors to mitigate their reduced mobility and involvement in community life. The second involves the erection of *michuaps* in backyards. They are included because they provide tangible evidence of innovation and adaptation within the context of a particular built environment.

In Eastmain the presence of chairs and/or benches outside the entrance to many homes is almost ubiquitous (Figure 10). It became apparent during my field research that this phenomenon was almost invariably, though not exclusively, associated with the presence of an elder in a particular home. This was confirmed by my Cree translator, who told me that as soon as the weather warms up, elders will spend most of their days sitting outside, returning indoors only to eat and sleep. Closer examination, based on personal observation and communication, revealed some interesting aspects of this phenomenon.

For example, the average number of benches was two, but it was not uncommon to see up to five chairs and/or benches. Benches are used for a variety of purposes. In the words of one informant, they serve as "observation posts", from which elders can see who is coming or going; they enable elders to supervise and interact with local children; and they provide a more neutral space and forum for elders to chat with neighbours and passers-by.

Figure 10. An elder's home in Eastmain with a total of five benches in the front of the house (Source: picture taken by author on July 2000).

A similar phenomenon was observed in Oujé Bougoumou, although here the chairs were limited to the space outside the elders' apartments. A total of 5 chairs were present and heavily utilised during my field visit; elders were observed on numerous occasions relaxing and chatting between themselves or with passers-by. With the exception of these apartments however, no chairs or benches were observed outside the homes of other elders, including both the elders' residence and individual houses.

As outlined in the literature review, it has been suggested that when people are presented with an alien environment they will either modify the new built environment or adapt their behaviour (Rapoport 1976). In doing so it is argued they attempt to retain the patterns of interpersonal relationships that were best served under their own spatial

organization of space (Hillier and Hanson 1984). The behaviour of these Eastmain elders could be interpreted in these terms; that is, as an adaptation to an "alien environment" as represented by contemporary housing lay-outs and design (Figure 11). This type of layout was typical for Northern Native communities from the 1950s to 1970s (McDowell 1989), and has been widely criticized in the literature for being "culturally-insensitive" (Simon et al., 1984; Shkilnyk 1985; McDowell 1989; Afshari-Mirak 1995).

Figure 11. Consecutive row housing in Eastmain conforming to the typical linear layout (Source: picture taken by author on July 2000).

However, I do not wish to elaborate further on this argument. Given that the same pattern of social interaction pattern was observed at Oujé Bougoumou, where the housing layout is radically different from that at Eastmain, this type of interaction cannot be attributed *entirely* to the built environment. In this instance it is more likely that the

reduced mobility brought on by advancing age is the primary control over how Native women utilize and adapt the built environment.

Within a cultural/traditional framework this phenomenon of sitting outside the entrance of the house could be interpreted as an attempt by these women to re-create life in the 'bush', whereby women-elders sit outside the *michuap* waiting for the hunters' return (Tanner 1979). Whether or not this interpretation is accurate, one thing is certain, and that is that these women-elders by their behaviour have transformed *space* into *place.* A spatial layout, that others have referred to as an 'alien environment' (Sauer 1964; Dawson 195) and/or 'culturally-insensitive community planning' (McDowell 1989; Afshari-Mirak 1995) has been transformed by these women-elders into a place filled with meaning (Tuan 1975). Through appropriation women-elders have accommodated this space within their culture thus giving it social meaning (Tuan 1977). Women-elders in Oujé Bougoumou, likewise, are engaged in the creation of place. Because, or perhaps despite the fact that, the community of Oujé Bougoumou is less than a decade old whereas the community of Eastmain is over two centuries old, the transformation of space into place may be less complete. However the fact that the Oujé Bougoumou people chose the site of their community and played a central role in its design is a significant factor in facilitating this transformation. The behaviour exhibited here confirms Tuan's (1975) assessment that *space* can only be made a *place* by its occupants.

Whatever the motivation for this phenomenon of sitting on benches the implications are significant; firstly, the type of social interaction pattern facilitated by this phenomenon is said to provide elders with an opportunity to speak with community officials and leaders. These conversations, according to some informants, range from a

simple exchange of greetings, to inquiries about health and needs issues. They also provide some opportunity for elders to contribute their knowledge and advice on community affairs. Elders commented that these opportunities are becoming less frequent, in part because the Chief and other community leaders spend more time away from the village.[35] The rapid growth of these populations and a trend toward electing younger Chiefs has also led to the marginalization of elders.

In summary, this section provides one illustration of a strategic adaptation by elders of their built environment, which has altered their patterns of social interactions within the community and in turn, mitigated their diminished levels of participation in community affairs. While the significance of this phenomenon, despite its seasonal nature, to the general well-being of elders cannot be overstated, many elders regard the opportunity it provides in relation to community involvement a poor substitute for regular attendance of general meetings, assemblies and community events.

Another illustration of a strategic adaptation by women to the limitations of the built environment relates to the use of *michuaps* within the village. While a survey of the Oujé Bougoumou village found only one *michuap* located inside the Cultural Village, a total of 16 *michuaps* were observed at Eastmain, where *michuaps* are widely used partly to overcome the limitations of the small contemporary kitchen within the home but also because the women prefer a more communal approach to food preparation and because game cooked on an open fire is regarded as much tastier. The reasons for the lower

[35] The increased absence of Chiefs away from their home-villages has not gone unnoticed in the academic literature nor has its implication for direct democracy at the community level. Geographer, Jackie Wolfe, writes: "its not uncommon for community leaders to spend more time away from the community than in it, and to play significant roles at the national level far beyond those played by elected local government representatives of non-Native communities...In Native Canadian political decision-making, most matters should be referred back to the community for expression of its will. (Wolfe 1989:70).

number of *michuaps* at Oujé Bougoumou is not clear. Despite reports of by-laws prohibiting the erection of *michuaps* in backyards at Oujé Bougoumou, I found no confirmation of such any official restriction on their use. Director of Operations, Louise Shapiro did, however, say that while people are free to build a *michuap* in their backyards if they wish to, the Band Council does not encourage this for aesthetic reasons relating to the tourist industry. Meaning, that it would negatively impact the tourist industry. The feeling was that *michuaps*, (alongside with the accumulation of firewood and other items associated with them) would create an impression of "untidiness".

Other informants suggested the reason is related to the food preparation habits of women in the community. Most said that because food preparations, such as drying and smoking are done in the "bush", they don't need *michuaps* outside their homes. This, however, would be equally true for Eastmain women and the answer to this striking difference in *michuap* use remains an anomaly.

4.3.5 The Built Environment and Types of Recreational Activities

A direct correlation was found between the built environment, as manifest in particular in the road network and community layout, and the type of sports activities practiced by women and their children. Hockey and skating are common to both communities and they are the most popular activities amongst children and teenagers. In comparison to Eastmain, however, Oujé Bougoumou reported lower frequencies of attendance of both hockey and skating activities. This can be explained by the presence of a newly constructed, state-of-the-art arena in Eastmain. In contrast, Oujé Bougoumou

has no arena and skating is confined to an outdoor rink. For hockey practices, lessons and competitions parents must take their children to Chibougamou.

Biking and rollerblading are more popular in Oujé Bougoumou than in Eastmain; a pattern which reflects the condition of the unpaved roads in the latter and the excellent condition of the roads in the former. Swimming is also a popular activity in Oujé Bougoumou, with the sandy shores of the shallow lake listed by mothers as a favourite "hang-out" place for their children in summertime (Figure 12). Eastmain, despite its location at the mouth of the Eastmain River and adjacent to the James Bay coast, is regarded as unsafe for swimming because of pollution and strong currents. Local police officers patrol the riverfront, as part of their duties, to keep children from playing or "hanging out" there. The relationship between built environment and its ability to act as a behaviour setting is well documented in the literature. Rapoport (1976) describes the ability of the built environment to either encourage or inhibit activities by the spatial layout of dwellings or roads. In this interpretation people will adjust the built environment to their behaviour (i.e. the presence of vernacular paths), however, in other cases where that is not possible, people will adjust their behaviour in accord with the new built environment (as is the case with the different patterns and frequency of recreational activities between the two communities) (Rapoport 1976).

Another interesting phenomenon recorded in both communities was the creation of semi-private *places* by mostly teenagers. These places, one in Eastmain and one in Oujé Bougoumou, were located within a 10 minute drive from their respective communities by way of a one-lane dirt road. These places shared similar characteristics; both were secluded spots (hidden even from the dirt road by heavy vegetation), scenic

(with a view of the river and lake, respectively), and solitary places. For example, the place at Eastmain was a sandy beach, adjacent to slow-moving, clear water as opposed to the more typical rocky shore, fast-moving, murky waters of the Eastmain River found on the shores of the village. These places were located near enough to their respective communities to be regularly accessible, and yet far enough that one could neither see, nor hear anything but the sounds of wildlife.

These places were utilized in a similar manner in both communities. Teenagers would go to these places during the summer months (usually the weekends) to gather with their friends, swim, chat, and watch the Northern Lights by the fire. While I did not attend any of these gatherings, the many logs placed in a circular formation around the ashes of a bonfire indicated frequent gatherings.

It is interesting to note that I only became aware of these two places during the last day of my stay in both communities when my friends (or perhaps more appropriately 'acquaintances' considering my short stay in both communities) decided to take me 'out' as a farewell gesture. In the case of Oujé Bougoumou it was explained to me that this place is neither advertised to the tourists, nor is it connected to or accessible by the tourist's hiking path.

Again, similar to the case of elders (section 4.3.4) one could argue that these teenagers are engaging in the transformation of *space* to *place*. This appears to be especially true for the Oujé Bougoumou teenagers who are living in what only nine years ago was uninhabited forestland. Furthermore, their unwillingness to 'disclose' this place to 'outsiders', reveals that already an emotional (and perhaps spiritual) attachment is in the process of forming for this place, a *topophilia* (Tuan 1977).

In summary, differences in the physical and built environments of Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou facilitate different types of recreational activities and patterns. It is anticipated, however, that the paving of roads in Eastmain in 2001 and the proposed construction of an arena at Oujé Bougoumou will be reflected in different recreational activities or a shift in the pattern and frequency of the present activities.

Figure 12. Lakeshore of Lake Opemiska, in Oujé Bougoumou, with children swimming and playing (Source: picture taken by author on July 2000).

4.4 The Built Environment and Community Well-Being

This section examines the relationship between the built environment and community well-being, focusing on social pathological indicators, perceptions of cause and effect, and levels of satisfaction with and suggestions for improvements to the built environment. The term "built environment" is used to encompass housing, infrastructure (roads, water), community layout, and buildings, while the term community "well-being" includes such considerations as social health, employment opportunities, and levels of satisfaction.

4.4.1 The Built Environment and Social Health

A strong relationship between the built environment and social pathology is recognised in the literature (Homenuck 1973, Baum 1987, Marcus 1988, Carter 1989, Merry 1989, Preiser and Varady 1998). In the particular case of Native communities it is suggested that culturally insensitive community planning, overcrowding, poor infrastructure, lack of housing and inadequate housing lead to elevated levels of social pathology and dissatisfaction (Simon et al. 1984; Reich 1985; Shkilnyk 1985; Chagny 1999). As a logical extension of this, it is suggested that enhancing community consultation and participation, promoting self-sufficiency in economic development (e.g. job training programs in the construction sector), and providing adequate and affordable housing, improved infrastructure and culturally sensitive design can help promote the social well-being of the community.

Based on this literature one might anticipate that the more positive experience and enlightened approach taken in the planning and design of Oujé Bougoumou, relative to Eastmain (see section 3.3.3), would have produced a situation where Oujé Bougoumou enjoyed: a) higher levels of social health; and b) higher levels of satisfaction with the built environment, than Eastmain. However, as Table 15 demonstrates social health indicators for Oujé Bougoumou are slightly lower (i.e. greater levels of social unrest and dysfunction) than for Eastmain. In particular, the number of attempted suicides, despite the inherent complexity/unreliability of this measure, is an order of magnitude lower in Oujé Bougoumou than in Eastmain.

Table 15. Social Health indicators for Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou

	Eastmain[36]	Oujé Bougoumou[37]
Attempted suicides per year[38]	1	10
Vandalism incidents (broken windows, graffiti) per year	15-20	17-25
Number of arrests per year	40-45	43-50
Number of alcohol related arrests as a percentage of total arrests	90-95%	90-95%

The above findings were reinforced by the perception of women in Oujé Bougoumou of the social problems within their community. When asked how they would rate social problems in their community from a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 indicative of higher levels of social problems optimism and 5 indicative of lower levels of social problems, Oujé Bougoumou women scored their village lower than their Eastmain counterparts (Table 16).

Table 16. Women's perceptions of social problems in their villages (1=high 5=low)

	1	2	3	4	5
Eastmain	1	2	1	1	7
Oujé Bougoumou	1	0	0	5	11

These findings suggest that the direct correlation between social health and the built environment presented in the literature may be overly simplistic and it gives inadequate consideration to many complex social and psychological conditions inherited from prior circumstances and conditions. As Native psychologist, Jane Middleton-Moz

[36] Statistics obtained from the Eastmain Police Station.
[37] Statistics obtained from the Oujé Bougoumou, Peacekeepers.
[38] According to the Eastmain police most of the so-called "attempted suicides" involve verbal threats of taking one's own life while under the influence. According to an Oujé Bougoumou Peace-Keeper, approximately half of the "attempted suicides" involve the actual use of a gun or knife.

(1983, 1999) argues, many Native communities have suffered, and are suffering, from various degrees of trauma related to loss of land, economic and political alienation, the experience of residential schools and forced relocations. According to Middleton-Moz, these traumas, if they are not 'healed', can accumulate and be transmitted to the next generation where they are referred to as 'cumulative generational traumas.'[39] Some adverse affects at the level of the individual include: substance abuse, suicide, sexual abuse and domestic abuse. At the community level, cumulative generational traumas are manifested as 'lateral violence'. That is, violence within the community such as hurtful gossip, political in-fighting, mistrust of local authority, or religious fanaticism.

Following Middleton-Moz's thesis, the fact that the Oujé Bougoumou people were forcibly relocated seven times in the last 70 years (See section 3.3.1.) has inevitably produced a legacy of distrust and dislocation. Indeed during and following the completion of their village one of the main themes for the Oujé Bougoumou people was that of "healing," and of embarking on a "healing journey" (Oujé Bougoumou Nation 2001). More recent reports indicate that incidents of substance abuse and other crimes have decreased since the construction of the community (Travers 1999). These reports, suggest that while social health indicators for Oujé Bougoumou continue to reflect some disturbing social conditions they also represent an improvement on previous levels of abuse, crime and unrest.

Thus despite continuing problems with arrests, vandalism, substance abuse, and attempted suicides in Oujé Bougoumou, documented improvements in these problems in recent years can be interpreted as evidence of the positive contribution the recently

[39] By 'healed' I am relating to a variety of methods ranging from psychological counselling, community interventions, and community workshops among others.

constructed built environment of Oujé Bougoumou has had on social health (interpreted here in the wider sense of 'community well-being'). Another indication that the built environment is contributing to the 'well-being' of the community is reflected in Table 17. These findings suggest that Oujé Bougoumou women perceive their village in much more favourable terms than women in Eastmain perceive theirs.

Table 17. Women's perceptions of their villages' visual attractiveness (1=high 5=low)

	1	2	3	4	5
Eastmain	2	2	5	2	1
Oujé Bougoumou	17	0	0	0	0

Interestingly, when confronted with this question of how significant a role the built environment has played in community well-being, the response from informants was quite varied. The difference of opinion is most marked between the views of elders and younger women. Elders tend to see the built environment as playing a minor role in community well-being in comparison to other factors. In identifying causative factors for social health Eastmain elders placed more emphasis on a deteriorating natural environment (related in large part to hydro developments in the region), followed by the related loss of subsistence living, easier access to alcohol, and the negative experience of residential schools. In the words of one elder speaking about the diversion of the Eastmain River as part of the James Bay Project:

> The people used to get a lot out of the river. I used to camp nearby. After they dam the river ... we can't drink from the river, a lot of fishing spots are no longer there. The inactivity and the unemployment [by the loss of fishing] is a factor in the alcohol problem.

Easier access to alcohol is the key factor that elders believe contributed to their social problems. The construction of the access road, linking Eastmain to the highway, is in turn regarded as a negative development in that it is this road that provides young people with regular access to alcohol.[40] The road is also blamed for the closing of the Arts and Crafts store in Eastmain.[41]

Younger Eastmain women do not share these views, however. They perceive the all-season paved road as a positive development for Eastmain, providing access to cheaper products and a greater selection, as well as greater access to other Cree communities. The majority of these women also referred to the economic advantage of being able to drive to larger centres such as Val d' Or and Montreal now in contrast to having to fly, the only option available prior to the construction of the road.

Many elders spoke about unrealistic expectations within the wider community that the built environment, in particular the construction of the arena, could provide the solution to the growing problem of delinquent behaviour. But as one elder commented, the arena has become part of the problem as much as part of the solution:

> Before the arena was built everybody thought that all the problems would stop, but now after the arena was built there is other worries. Now I worry because I think to myself, "what are all the young kids doing staying up late at the arena?" And there is the machines [arcade] kids want money so they can play them.

In the arcade there are nine game machines, two pool tables, and eight Video Lottery Terminals (VLT's) machines in a semi-enclosed area for adults (Figure 13). The cost for the arcade machines is 25 cents per game. In relation to the VLT's, one single mother remarked that she was concerned about their potential 'addictivenes.

[40] Eastmain is a "dry town," meaning that the sale and possession of alcohol is prohibited.

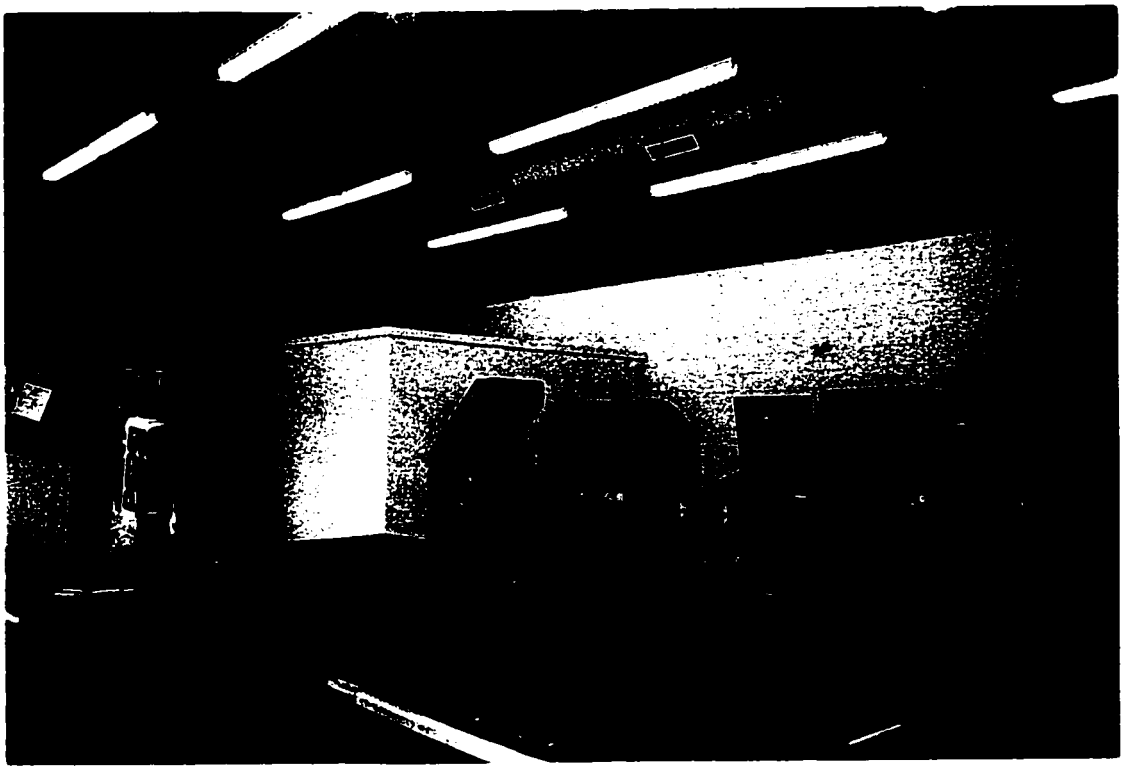


Figure 13. Eastmain, arcade room inside the arena complex (Source: picture taken by author on July 2000).

Similar to Eastmain, Oujé Bougoumou elders did not regard the built environment as having a central role in community well-being. Instead, at the family level they identified alcohol abuse, usually leading to adultery, and marriage break-ups as the primary issue. At the community level, they identified nepotism and political in-fighting as the main factors undermining community well-being.

[41] The Arts and Crafts store closed shortly after the opening of the access road because it could not compete with the cheaper products sold in Val d' Or.

In contrast, younger women, in both communities, placed more emphasis on the importance of built environment. They suggested that drinking, especially amongst the youth, stems from boredom resulting from a lack of intellectual and physical stimulation. It was suggested that rates of vandalism, regarded as the direct effect of drinking, would decrease significantly if young people were busy working or had access to recreational activities. These sentiments were validated by one Oujé Bougoumou Peacekeeper, who reported a noticeable reduction in incidences of vandalism since the Youth Centre (Figure 14) extended its closing hours.[42] The issue of whether this strategy of extended operating hours would have a similar impact in relation to the arcade at Eastmain was raised during my discussions. Given the location of the Arena Complex, which houses the arcade, on top of an old, abandoned burial site, it was felt that people would be reluctant to be there after midnight due to rumours of 'ghost sightings.'[43]

In summary, there are differing opinions between elder women and younger women regarding the causes of social health in their communities and in particular the role of the built environment in the development or amelioration of social health. This reflects the different social realities of these two groups within Northern communities.

[42] Before June 2000 the hours of the Youth Centre were: Monday to Friday 8:30 am till 10:00 pm, Saturday and Sunday from 8:30 a.m until 11:00 p.m. Presently the hours are: Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m till 1:00 am Saturday and Sunday 2:00 pm till 3:00 am. The Youth Centre has 2 pool tables and 3 video games, it also houses the local radio and TV cable, both of which are operated by the Youth Council.
[43] Personal correspondence with Eastmain anthropologist Kreg Ettenger, July 2001.

Figure 14. Interior of the Youth Centre in Oujé Bougoumou (Source: picture taken by author on July 2000).

4.4.2 Levels of Satisfaction with the Built Environment

The findings of this study reveal that Oujé Bougoumou women have much higher levels of satisfaction in relation to: infrastructure (i.e. quality of drinking water, roads) (Table 18), and the condition of community buildings (Table 19) than their counterparts in Eastmain. The findings also reveal that both communities had somewhat similar levels of dissatisfaction with housing (Table 20).

Table 18. Perceptions with respect to provision of infrastructure (1=highest and 5=lowest)

	1	2	3	4	5
Eastmain	1	0	4	3	4
Oujé Bougoumou	12	5	0	0	0

Table 19. Perceptions with respect to quality of community buildings (1=highest and 5=lowest)

	1	2	3	4	5
Eastmain	2	4	6	0	0
Oujé Bougoumou	14	2	0	1	0

Table 20. Perceptions with respect to quality of community housing (1=highest and 5=lowest)

	1	2	3	4	5
Eastmain	2	2	5	3	0
Oujé Bougoumou	1	4	7	4	0

In Eastmain, dissatisfaction with infrastructure stemmed from a lack of paved roads and poor quality drinking water (see also section 3.2.2). The lower rates of satisfaction with the community buildings arose as a result of the deteriorated condition of certain public buildings, such as the church, the Northern Store and the school playground equipment. Lower levels of dissatisfaction with housing relate to overcrowding and the deteriorated condition of many houses.

In Oujé Bougoumou, high levels of satisfaction with infrastructure reflect the excellent condition of roads and sidewalks, and the provision of water, garbage and sewage disposal. The high level of satisfaction with the community buildings was linked to the new, modern, aesthetically beautiful buildings, which are also rich in Native architectural symbolism. Lower levels of satisfaction in relation to housing stemmed from damage to the foundation of houses, which is caused by the underlying unstable soil.

4.4.3 Suggestions for Improvements to the Built Environment

This section explores some of the recommendations put forward by my informants with respect to altering the built environment as a means to improve the quality of their

own lives as well as those of the wider community. The recommendations are organized into two categories:

1. Additions to the built environment
2. Modifications and improvements to the built environment

The first category includes suggestions for the construction or development of a variety of community and commercial service/facilities. Table 21 lists these suggestions; where a particular service or facility is already present, the notation 'N/A' (not applicable) is indicated. The second group of suggestions, those of "modifications and improvements" are summarised in Table 22.

Table 21. Suggested additions to the built environment

	Eastmain	Oujé Bougoumou
Arena	N/A	8
Bank	N/A	11
Bowling Alley	0	1
Bicycle trail	3	0
Gazebo	1	0
Golf course	0	2
Grocery store	N/A	3
Hardware Store	0	1
Houses (bachelors/single mothers)	5	0
Indoor Pool	2	1
Mini-mall	0	7
Park	1	0
Pedestrian Paths	2	0
Roller blading trail	1	1
Ski Hill	0	1
Women's Shelter	0	2

Table 22. Suggested modifications and improvements to the built environment

	Eastmain	Oujé Bougoumou
Access to clean water	4	0
More lawn-grass	4	0
New playground	2	0
Change location of key buildings	5	2
Repaint houses	0	1
Greater access to lake	0	1
Enlarge restaurant	0	1
Widen road	0	1
Enlarge daycare	0	2
Enlarge convenience store	0	1
Enlarge backyard sheds	3	0
Pave roads	4	0
Place houses further apart	5	1
Move village to a different location	2	2

From the above tables, it is apparent that the focus of suggestions for Oujé Bougoumou is on the addition of community facilities and commercial buildings/services. Women in Oujé Bougoumou expressed dissatisfaction with provision of certain basic services and amenities. For example, Oujé Bougoumou does not have a bank, an arena, a northern store, or a grocery store (although it does have a small, expensive convenience store). This means that people must travel to the neighbouring towns of Chapais and Chibougamou for their banking, grocery and general shopping needs. Although there is a convenience store in Oujé Bougoumou, that sells a limited variety of grocery items, their products are very expensive and so, many women find it cheaper to travel to Chibougamou or Chapais. In terms of driving time, Chapais is approximately 20-30 minutes away, while Chibougamou is about 35-40 minutes. This is thus an inconvenient and expensive option, especially so for individuals who have no access to a car and must rely on taxi services.[44]

[44] At the time of my research the cost of a taxi ride from Oujé Bougoumou to Chibougamou was $50.

At Eastmain suggestions target alterations or improvements to existing facilities. In most cases these suggestions relate to the deterioration of existing facilities, such as the old school playground (see Figure 15).

Figure 15. Eastmain school playground with visible broken down equipment in the foreground (Source: picture taken by author on July 2000).

Suggestions from Oujé Bougoumou women include the construction of a bank, arena and a mini-shopping mall. According to many women these developments would also assist in the economic development by creating both short term (i.e. in the construction of those buildings) and long term jobs (i.e. in their operation).

Due to the differing opinions between elders and younger women, their proposed suggestions varied. Elders in Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou advocated greater inter-personal relationships and increased levels of communication (especially between older

and younger people), and a return to a more "traditional" way-of-life (spending more time in the bush learning traditional subsistence skills). In addition, Oujé Bougoumou elders also recommended greater participation in the church, which they viewed as a beneficial influence in their community's healing process. This viewpoint was also shared by many women in the 40-59 age group, who advocated more religious services as opposed to professional counselling or other types of self-help groups. "We have tried everything and we can't seem to solve it; people go to AA but then have 'slips'. Pray. We need more camp-meetings. There are healing workshops but there is low participation".

Housing conditions are a contentious issue in both communities. In Eastmain dissatisfaction was voiced in relation to a lack of housing, the deteriorating condition of existing houses, the close proximity of adjacent houses, and the structural instability and poor quality of houses. Women expressed particularly strong sentiments about the need for more houses; overcrowding was identified as a major issue. In one particular case a single woman commented that she was postponing marriage plans due to lack of housing. Other women confirmed that young people postponing their plans for marriage because of the housing situation is a general trend at Eastmain. With respect to structural problems with existing houses, one woman commented that the underlying soil never posed problems for *michuaps* and earlier lightweight houses, but provides an unstable foundation and major problem for present-day houses.

In Oujé Bougoumou dissatisfaction arose mainly because of structural damage to houses as a result of the underlying sandy, shifting soil. In the literature it is suggested that high levels of user-participation is the best method of ensuring tenant satisfaction (Rowe 1989; Chagny 1999). Although Oujé Bougoumou had higher rates of participation

and consultation in the community planning process housing is a contentious issue because fundamental considerations about building foundations and construction standards were poorly addressed. These findings highlight the complexity of the Native housing question; a multitude of conditions must be met to ensure tenant satisfaction (i.e. user-participation, adequate financing, technical expertise, comprehensive community planning, etc.).

In summary, suggestions for improvement to the built environment fell into two categories, those involving the construction or development of new facilities and services and those requiring modification and improvement to the existing built environment. Younger women are more optimistic of the built environment's role in community well-being, while elders remain skeptical. In both communities, the addition of recreational facilities and commercial buildings/services along with improvements to existing infrastructure were put forward by the women to address several purposes and objectives. For example, the construction of recreational facilities was seen as providing a short-term economic stimulant to the community, while also addressing problems related to delinquency and dissatisfaction amongst young people. Housing remained an elusive problem in both villages. In Eastmain, the most pressing concern was lack of housing and overcrowding; these issues have been well documented in the literature and are regarded as a major source of tenant dissatisfaction and tension (Marcus et al., 1988; Preiser and Varady 1998). In Oujé Bougoumou, the underlying cause of housing dissatisfaction is structural damage.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The primary objective of this thesis was to examine the relationship between Native women and the built environment. More specifically, the intention was to explore the nature and extent of the control exerted by the built environment on the behaviour and perception of women. It involved examining the way Native women adapt, modify and utilize the built environment to better suit their needs. In the same spirit this thesis sought to gain insight to the connection between the built environment and community well-being, as perceived by Native women.

Two Eastern James Bay Cree communities - Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou – were selected for this comparative study on the basis of their similar population sizes, but different planning histories and village layouts. The research design consisted of questionnaire-surveys of Native women and interviews with women-elders and Band Officials. Direct on-site mapping and photography was also conducted. In measuring accessibility to community buildings, level and type of native architecture, and other tangible quantitative elements of the research, I utilized an 'empirical structuralist approach.' In terms of the women's perceptions, levels of satisfaction and other more abstract, qualitative elements I utilized the 'humanistic approach.' Both approaches were used in collaboration with each other, and each approach complemented the other.

Eastmain had a rectangular-shaped layout with community buildings widely scattered throughout the village. A number of community buildings, such as the Northern Store and arena complex, are located on the outskirts of the village. In contrast, the layout of Oujé Bougoumou conforms to a circular shape with community buildings concentrated in the middle of the village. These different layouts imposed different challenges and

opportunities on their respective community members. For example, community-life for women in Oujé Bougoumou involves better access to community buildings and shorter walking times, a reality reflected in the creation of a less elaborate network of vernacular pathways and shortcuts than is found in Eastmain. The initiation and maintenance of this more complex network in Eastmain represents a form of adaptation by residents to the relative inaccessibility of its buildings and poorly planned streets. Having said that, the same network of vernacular pathways is a testament to womens' ability to transform an unaccommodating built environment to satisfy their needs. Women-elders were no exception. In the case of Eastmain, women-elders actually transformed the apparent disadvantage of long distance to the Northern Store to an advantage by using the long walks as an occasion to transmit Cree values to young kids. Women-elders in both communities also took full advantage of their esteemed positions in their communities by accepting free rides offered by fellow community members, ameliorating some of the inconvenience of long distances.

The popularity of certain recreational activities correlates directly with the built and physical environment of these two communities. Skating, broomball and hockey are more prevalent in Eastmain than in Oujé Bougoumou due to the presence of a newly-built arena. However, biking and roller-blading are more popular in Oujé Bougoumou because of the excellent condition of their paved roads. The lake adjacent to Oujé Bougoumou also affords excellent opportunities for swimming, in contrast to the dangerous and unhealthy waterfront at Eastmain.

Adaptations in both communities to the limitations and constraints imposed by the built environment on elders are in part overcome or compensated for by close family ties,

extended families and the respect elders are shown by the wider community. In particular the availability of family and community members to perform errands and services for elders is critically important in this regard and is equally true in Eastmain and in Oujé Bougoumou. Another important, though seasonally constrained adaptation used by elders, is the practice of sitting on benches and chairs outside their homes. This, not only enhances their visibility within the community, but allows them to contribute to the community through child care responsibilities, and the sharing of their knowledge and perspectives on community affairs that traditionally were the role of elders in Cree culture. The same phenomenon I would argue is an attempt by women-elders to convert *space* into *place*; that is, women-elders take an impersonal space (and indeed one that in the literature is refer to as 'culturally-insensitive community layout') and through its utilization and adaptation over time, give meaning to it and transform it into a meaningful place.

The erection of *michuaps* in the backyards of many Eastmain homes represents a similar attempt to overcome the limitations imposed by the built environment; in this case, the constraints of a small contemporary kitchen. At the same time, the women by erecting and using the traditional *michuap* structure create and give rise to a unique cultural built environment. That uniqueness extends beyond the visual to the olfactory senses as well, as the aroma of herbs and firewood used in the smoking/drying/cooking of wild game fills the air. In Oujé Bougoumou the absence of *michuaps* might or might not be related to Band Council concerns that the presence of *michuaps* would have a negative impact on the tourist industry by making the community appear 'untidy'. If, the absence of *michuaps* in Oujé Bougoumou is indeed tied to non-official prohibitions from the Oujé

Bougoumou Band Council, then one could argue that such measures interfere with the natural tendency of people to create place out of space. For, if indeed Yi-Fu Tuan is correct, insofar that places have to be created, through practice and appropriation, to fit into the culture of the group, then placeness can be designed *for*, but it can't be designed *in* (1977). In this interpretation Eastmain, despite its low levels of Cree symbolism, might carry higher levels of cultural meaning of *place* for local residents than Oujé Bougoumou. The reason for this may be that Eastmain people are unrestricted in modifying, personalizing and utilizing the built environment to reflect their needs and wants.

Beyond the physical constraints and opportunities imposed by the built environment, are the arguably more important socio-psychological connections between the built environment and community well-being. The exploration of these linkages found slightly higher rates of social health in Oujé Bougoumou than in Eastmain. This runs contrary to the expectation, expressed in much of the literature, that the superior design and planning of a built environment, such as Oujé Bougoumou should be reflected in lower rates of social health. However, the fact that these rates represent a significant decline since the early 1990s in overall levels of social health may be interpreted as a suggestion of *limited* established correlations between the built environment and community well-being. I emphasize the word *limited* because obviously there are other more powerful factors that influence the social health of a community. In the case of Oujé Bougoumou people, a long history of land dispossessions, political and economic struggles have left their mark, a mark reflected in their current low levels of social health. As far as the planning policy implications of the above is concerned, the primary

emerging theme is that each Native community is unique in its geography, history and experience. As a result, in relation to community planning, each community must be approached case-by-case, rather than as a 'one-fits-all planning model' for Northern Native communities.

In regards to Eastmain and Oujé Bougoumou womens' perceptions of the link between social health and the built environment, opinions differed. Elders in both communities believe that the built environment plays a lesser role in community well-being than do younger women. Elders place greater emphasis on maintenance of inter-personal interactions and close family ties, and a return to a more traditional lifestyle rather than the contribution of the built environment. Younger women in contrast perceive the built environment as a potential panacea, which can contribute in varied, positive ways to community well-being. One way of reconciling the above would be to argue that it would be misleading, if not deterministic, to suggest that the built environment is capable by itself of healing all the social ills of a community. Rather, a more balanced view would be one that holds that the built environment is just one of *many* tools that can be used to improve a community's well-being.

Drawing and bringing together in a synthesis some of the more important findings of this study, such as: the evidence of vernacular paths; presence and/or absence of *michuaps*; the social interaction phenomenon of elders sitting in front of the houses; and the creation of semi-privates places by teenagers-----all of the above highlight the propensity, resilience and ability of Native women (and teenagers) to adapt to any given built or physical environment. Given this natural ability to adapt to even 'culturally-insensitive' environments by using and giving meaning to impersonal spaces one must

question the policy implications of erecting obstacles to such behaviours. Perhaps, rather than erecting obstacles, a better solution would be to either lift all prohibitive by-laws, or if concerns relating to public safety prevent this, then greater co-operation and consultation in community decision-making to ensure a more satisfactory outcome for all.

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APPENDIX A- QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

QUESTIONNAIRE

Hello, my name is Eleni Panagiotaraku and I am a student at Concordia University, in Montreal. The following questionnaire is part of the fieldwork I am conducting for my Master's Thesis. This study is concerned with the built environment of the village as it impacts upon women and upon the community at large. Your cooperation in this questionnaire would be greatly appreciated. **All information is confidential and you are free to end your involvement at any time if you wish.**

SOCIAL INTERACTION PATTERNS

1. **Do you have a *michuap* in your backyard?**
   - Yes, and it is used only by my family [ ]
   - Yes, and I shared with my neighbors [ ]
   - No, but I use my neighbors/relative's *michuap* [ ]
   - No, I do not need one [ ]

2. **How many times per month do you visit your relatives or friends?**
   - None [ ]
   - 1-2 times [ ]
   - 2-4 times [ ]
   - Daily [ ]

3. **How many times per month do you have visitors?**
   - None [ ]
   - 1-2 times [ ]
   - 2-4 times [ ]
   - Daily [ ]

LIFESTYLE ACTIVITIES

4. **How many hours per week do you or your family spend on the following?**
   - Watching television [ ]
   - Playing video games [ ]
   - Computer games [ ]
   - Internet [ ]
   - Talking on the phone [ ]

5. **What activities do you do at your house (e.g. crafts) ?**

_____

6. **How many weeks per year do you or your family, spend outside the village in the "bush" ?**

None [ ]
One [ ]
Two [ ]
Three [ ]
Four [ ]
Five + [ ]

7. **What kind of sport activities do the children in your family attend or do? (1=the highest frequency, and 5 being =the lowest frequency)**

Skating [ ]
Playing hockey [ ]
Swimming [ ]
Baseball [ ]
Other (specify)_____

8. **Which of the places listed below are most frequented by your kids for playing? (1=highest and 5=lowest)**

Inside my house [ ]
Outside my house, but within my property [ ]
In the street [ ]
In the designated playground [ ]
At school [ ]
At the waterfront [ ]
At their friends houses [ ]
At the community's recreational facilities [ ]
Other places _____

9. **What kind of recreational activities do you enjoy doing?**

Name of activity	Number of hours per week spend on each activity

10. Do you do any volunteer work in the community?

No [ ]
Yes [ ]
If yes, how many hours per month and what kind? _____

11. Do you ever find yourself doing errands for a neighbor, relative, friend or elder?

No [ ]
Yes [ ]

12. If you answered yes, to the above question, is it because they:

Don't have transportation [ ]
Live too far [ ]
Are sick or too old [ ]
The community health or social services are inadequate
Other

13. Is babysitting or daycare easily available to you, should you need it?

Yes [ ]
No [ ]
Additional comments

14. Do you find public services, adequate for the community's needs?

Police [ ]
Health Services [ ]
Social services [ ]
Other

PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY EVENTS

15. Could you list in what community events do you participate (e.g. pow-wow, communal feasts, competitive games, etc)?

Name of event	Popularity (e.g. in relation to other events how would you rate this one in terms of satisfaction? 1=high levels and 5=low levels)

16. **What (if any) factors prohibit you from attending anyone of the community events?**

_____

_____

17. **Do you or other members of your family attend any activities/ events outside your village (e.g. other Cree villages, Val d' Or, Chibougamou, etc).**

Yes [ ]
No [ ]

18. **If you answered yes to the above, what kind of activities and how many times per year?**

_____

19. **In which of the following community events do you participate?**

Band council meetings [ ]
School meetings [ ]
Local elections [ ]
Other (please indicate) [ ]

ACCESSIBILITY AND ATTENDANCE OF COMMUNITY BUILDINGS

20. **Among the different commercial and recreational buildings, listed below how many times a week do you visit each?**

Church [ ]
Band Council [ ]
Gas station [ ]
Restaurant [ ]
Bank [ ]
Grocery store [ ]
Clinic [ ]
School [ ]
Arena [ ]
Amusement Center [ ]
Elders lounge [ ]
Gymnasium [ ]
Community center [ ]

21. What kind of transportation do you use in order to access the community buildings? (Please place the letter *W* to indicate Walking, and *C* to indicate Car transportation.)

Church	[ ]
Band Council	[ ]
Gas station	[ ]
Restaurant	[ ]
Bank	[ ]
Grocery store	[ ]
Clinic	[ ]
Scholl	[ ]
Arena	[ ]
Amusement Center	[ ]
Elders lounge	[ ]
Gymnasium	[ ]
Community center	[ ]

22. How many minutes does it take you to reach the community facilities by walking ?

Church	[ ]
Band Council	[ ]
Gas station	[ ]
Restaurant	[ ]
Bank	[ ]
Grocery store	[ ]
Clinic	[ ]
Scholl	[ ]
Arena	[ ]
Amusement Center	[ ]
Elders lounge	[ ]
Gymnasium	[ ]
Community center	[ ]

23. When you walk to any of the places listed below do you use the designated road or do you take any shortcuts through "unmarked" paths? (Place *Y* for Yes, and *N* for No.)

Church	[ ]
Band Council	[ ]
Gas station	[ ]
Restaurant	[ ]
Bank	[ ]
Grocery store	[ ]
Clinic	[ ]

School [ ]
Arena [ ]
Amusement Center [ ]
Elders lounge [ ]
Gymnasium [ ]
Community center [ ]

24. Are all of the above mentioned community buildings equally accessible to you year-round?

Yes [ ]
No [ ]
Which one's are not? _____

25. In which of the following places are you most likely to socialize? (1=most likely and 5= most unlikely)

Church [ ]
Band Council [ ]
Gas station [ ]
Restaurant [ ]
Bank [ ]
Grocery store [ ]
Clinic [ ]
Scholl [ ]
Arena [ ]
Amusement Center [ ]
Elders lounge [ ]
Gymnasium [ ]
Community center [ ]

26. Are you concerned about your safety at night when walking in your village? (i.e. speeding cars, low lighting, violence, etc.)

No [ ]
Yes [ ]
Additional comments _____

27. How do you stay informed about community events?

Radio station [ ]
Local paper [ ]
Notice board [ ]
Family members [ ]
Mail [ ]
Telephone [ ]

Word-of-mouth [ ]

LEVELS OF SATISFACTION

28. Which of the following statements best describes your view in regards to the location of your house in relation to community buildings/services or other houses?

I believe my house is too isolated [ ]
I believe my house is in an ideal position [ ]
I believe my house is too close [ ]
Additional comments

29. How would you rate your village (1=highest and 5=lowest) on the following:

Visual attractiveness [ ]
Provision of infrastructure [ ]
Overall quality of community housing [ ]
Overall quality of community buildings [ ]
Social problems [ ]
Economic problems [ ]
Provision of community services [ ]
Accessibility of community buildings [ ]
Friendliness [ ]
Community cohesiveness [ ]
Additional comments

30. Were you consulted in any way for the following, (place *Y* for yes, *N* for No and *N/A* for non-applicable (e.g. you were too young, etc.)

Community buildings [ ]
Community Infrastructure [ ]
Community services [ ]
Community activities [ ]
Community planning [ ]
Community events [ ]

VILLAGE LAYOUT

31. What changes to the layout of your village, do you believe would improve the quality of your life, or the community's life as a whole?

32. What do you think is the greatest problem, (if any) within the community (infrastructure, social, economic, etc)?

_____

33. What do you believe would be helpful in ameliorating these problems?

_____

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Please place a check mark (✓) in the corresponding boxes.

34. Which of the following groups corresponds to your age:

15-20 [ ]
21-30 [ ]
31-40 [ ]
41-50 [ ]
51-60 [ ]
61+ [ ]
71+ [ ]
81+ [ ]
91+ [ ]

35. How many people other than yourself live in this household?

Adults [ ]
Children [ ]

36. What is your marital status?

Single [ ]
Married [ ]
Separated [ ]
Widowed [ ]

37. Are you currently employed?

No [ ]
Yes [ ]

38. If you answered yes, to you work:

Full-time [ ]

Part-time [ ]
Seasonal work [ ]

39. Which of the following do you, or your family own?

Truck or car [ ]
Skidoo [ ]
All-terrain vehicle [ ]
Bicycle [ ]
Boat or canoe [ ]

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING THE TIME TO FILL OUT THIS QUESTIONNAIRE!