TRAVELING WITH A PURPOSE

Nina Rossman
Western Michigan University

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TRAVELING WITH A PURPOSE

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

NINA ROSSMAN
2022 - 2023
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (BS) IN INTERIOR DESIGN
WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Communities are not going to be spectators to their own future, communities are going to become extremely engaged, so shaping the future of tourism is a big component of that.

JOHN DE FRIES, CEO OF HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY

THESIS STATEMENT

The current model of tourism is blinded by the focus on tourists and is lacking respect for the local communities and natural environment. The sustainability of a vacation destination should be based around four main areas: human factors, social responsibility, economic stability, and environmental stewardship. By focusing design efforts on these four indicators, the tourism industry will become more sustainable and create a stronger balance between communities.
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The act of traveling is often seen as exciting for many travelers looking for adventure or to experience something different than their everyday routines. However, many current tourism trends force negative burdens onto local communities and environments. For instance, when development increases consumption in an area where natural resources are scarce to begin with, it can put pressure on these resources. There is a certain level of visitor use that an environment can manage; negative impacts occur when the changes in visitor use exceed this limit.² While tourist destinations experience negative impacts from the tourism industry, tourism also supports the livelihood of the community. It can provide the opportunity to enhance cultural preservation, if done correctly. Cross-cultural interactions; understanding, maintaining, and strengthening local culture, values and traditions; and empowering host communities are a few common cultural ideals that have a positive impact on tourism.³ When the economy prioritizes the experience of travelers over the lives of local residents, an uneven social and cultural divide is created that can cause dangerous and/or oppressive side effects from tourism - the very industry that also economically supports communities. In an effort to alleviate the various divides that result from tourism, this research explores four indicators of sustainability and how they contribute towards or within the tourism industry. These indicators of sustainability include human factors, social responsibility, economic stability, and environmental stewardship. Each indicator is compared against various case studies to better understand the role of the built environment in sustainable tourism.

In the context of travelling and vacation destinations, the tourism industry is largely based on the built environment, or human-made and curated experiences, to enhance the destination. Numerous leading hotel chains have established definitions of sustainability initiative actions with underlying intentions of competitive advantage and efficiency. Fundamental concerns of sustainability and enhancement of the natural environment must be the main focus and sincere intent of these hotels.² The role of the built environment is to be the vehicle for incorporating these sustainability initiatives into the destination to improve the future growth of the tourism industry.

Tourism is an important industry for the United States economy. The industry supported 15.7 million jobs for Americans in 2021 and generates about $170.9 billion annually. This industry includes lodging, food services, transportation, recreation, and sightseeing. The yearly United States travel and tourism expenditure is $1.5 trillion. This revenue was broken up into categories. The most popular category was food services with lodging not too far behind.

The yearly United States travel and tourism expenditure in billions. This revenue was broken up into categories. The most popular category was food services with lodging not too far behind.

There are various factors that have the potential to influence successful tourism in a destination. Punctual aging is one that is affecting the future of tourism. Punctual aging is a demographic in which the number of travelers aged 50 or older is greater than the number of travelers aged 19 or younger. The number of travelers aged 50 or older in the United States is projected to increase from 75 million in 2010 to 89 million in 2020. This trend continues to increase. This is broken up into two classifications: direct and indirect. Direct jobs are supported by the tourism industry and include jobs such as tour guides, hotel staff, and restaurant workers. Indirect jobs are created where the worker is creating goods and services and encompasses the remaining 66 million jobs in the United States. There is also a large opportunity for development in career paths in the tourism industry.

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A study was done comparing New York City hotels among the five main travel user groups. The goal of this study was to provide a comprehensive framework to understand the differences in hotel selection needs, preferences and decision-making results with respect to five types of travelers. Considering, there was high hope that tourism websites would have the opportunity to provide accurate information to travelers for the different types of travelers and allow hotel management to better provide services that cater to these specific needs and preferences. As a result, there were six key factors that were important to the travelers. Of the six, only three were shared among all of the user groups. Represented in Figure 1.1 is a comparison of the importance of these key factors. From these facts, they were then simplified down into six criterion. Figure 6 represents a graph of the comparison of these criteria across all of the types of travelers.

An analysis of the graph in Figure 6 is indicative of the most valued hotel criterion among the five traveler types, as well as the weight of each criterion with respect to the user groups. Looking at each criterion overall there is a clear ranking with rooms being first among all of the user groups. Rooms was most valued by the business and solo travelers for the value criterion and the most important criterion with respect to the user groups, as well as the weight of each criterion. The reason is that these two group values for the room criteria were nearly equal and greater than the other groups. The weights of the business and solo travelers for the value criterion are equal and greater than the other groups. It highlights the importance of this factor and how it is equally important to all guests, making it a significantly greater weight in the sleep and service criteria.
The United Nations defines sustainable tourism as, “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.”

Sustainable tourism allows them to analyze them through the economic, social, and environmental impacts. Contributing to the destinations in which they operate will forge new potential for the hotels to build a stronger relationship with the community. As tourists and agreement with continued community-based tourism development.

The UNWTO has been tracking the tourism industry recovery process. This gave tourism a chance to embrace a new tactic to improve sustainability efforts. Understanding the facility’s impact on the industry and was the average in 2019. The graph (Figure 1.1) shows the decline in hotel bookings in 2022 compared to the same period in 2019.

Tourism would not exist without the local communities, but their representation in this industry is severely lacking. These people choose to be given responsibility to define their own needs and values around sustainability in travel. The key takeaways that they found were categorized into clarity, authenticity, and value. Most hotels have the potential to be major contributors in the growth of sustainable tourism. Contributing to the destinations in which they operate will forge new potential for the hotels to build a stronger relationship with the community. As tourists and agreement with continued community-based tourism development.

Expedia Group Media Solutions partnered with Wakefield Research to conduct a study of 1,100 consumers among 11 different global markets to understand past and future attitudes, behaviors, and potential for the hotels to build a stronger relationship with the community.

The Relationship Between the City, Community, and Environment

The city, community, and natural environment are inseparable. The failure to acknowledge this is the root for many of the problems that must be faced. “Our impact on the natural environment is dependent on the type of development and urban technologies which we choose. The way we build inherently affects the viability of the city of a city.” In the last few decades, there has been a trend in Modern architecture of progressive, revolutionary, and should be the underlying structure of the city.

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Human sustainability refers to the act of maintaining and improving human capital within society. It is focused on the private good of an individual rather than between people in society. Ensuring all humans have access to health and education systems, services, nutrition, skills, leadership are all examples.

Economic sustainability ensures the capital of a destination stays intact. Economics are involved in many different areas, but it values all in terms of money. There is a potential for economic sustainability to improve the standard of living if its goals align with social sustainability goals.

Social sustainability works to preserve social capital within the framework of society. This is done by creating services to accommodate a larger view in relation to communities, culture, and globalization. A large emphasis is put on the preservation of future generations and the impact that the current state will have on others. Connectedness between groups of people, tolerance, compassion, patience, discipline and ethics are all encompassed in social sustainability.

Environmental sustainability improves human welfare by aiming to protect natural capital. Natural capital refers to animate and inanimate resources, water, minerals, ecosystem services, etc. Much of which is converted to economic capital through manufacturing. Ensuring the needs of the population are met through initiatives and programs without compromising the future generations will promote healthy environmental sustainability.

Human 
- Ensure indigenous communities are properly respected
- Conserve the cultural heritage and traditional values of locals

Social 
- Promote positive connection between local and tourist communities
- Immerses tourists in the culture to enhance the travel experience

Economic 
- Maintain viable, long-term economic growth
- Allow for stable employment and opportunities to indigenous communities

Environment 
- Conserve the natural ecology and promote biodiversity
- Optimize the use of environmental resources

FOUR INDICATORS OF SUSTAINABILITY

HUMAN
SOCIAL
ECONOMIC
ENVIRONMENT

KEY PROJECT OBJECTIVES

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The Phi Phi Islands have been faced with death by beauty.19 Concerns revolve around pollution and garbage accumulation created due to the number of tourists in the area. In fact, there was a popular film about the islands, called “The Beach,” which syrupily portrayed paradise.20 After the movie was released, tourism in the area increased,21 and by 2018, tourists had increased from over 300 per day to 1,800 per day.22 Although the increase in visitors was short term, the environmental impact was long term and the isle’s paradise began to change into something else.23 Daniel Fountain notes that Phi Phi Island Village Resort is committed to sustainability,24 and in a case study for the International Journal of Sustainable Development, Manuel San Martin discusses the changing tides of sustainability on Maya Beach.25 Erik Cohen’s article, “The Beach of ‘The Beach’ - The Politics of Environmental Damage in Thailand,” was published in the Journal of Environment and Development.26

**RULES & REGULATIONS AT MAYA BAY**

- Do not remove coral, shells, or driftwood from the area.26
- Do not use sunscreen that is harmful to corals.26
- Do not use motorized or speedboats on the coral reefs.26
- Do not feed fish.26
- No anchoring on coral reefs.26
- Do not litter.26
- Do not swim in the marine park.26
- No vessels are allowed beyond the outer reef.26
- No snorkeling is allowed at night.26

**CASE STUDY: SAii PHI PHI ISLAND VILLAGE RESORT**

MAYA BAY, THAILAND

**BEFORE**

The only way to get to the Phi Phi Islands is by ferry. Flights and boats are not an option for the majority of people since the towns are on a peninsula.27 The boat traffic on the coral reefs creates a lot of damage to the natural environment.28 The Phi Phi Islands are considered a National Park29 and are still developing rules and regulations to protect the area. One of the more strict rules is that no anchoring is allowed on the coral reefs28 and visitors are required to use a park and ride system to explore the beaches.28

The Phi Phi Islands are now closed to tourists as the island’s ecosystem was damaged by the large influx of people.30 The beach and coral reefs were destroyed,30 and the island is now closed to tourists for the foreseeable future.30

**AFTER**

A soccer game scene required the sandy area to be bulldozed and expanded.31 The Royal Forestry Department allowed the Phi Phi Islands to have a soccer field in the Phi Phi Island Village Resort.32 This was the beginning of the local residents speaking up about the lack of respect for their community; Thais came to a tipping point from the impacts of pollution and human activity.33

**HUMAN**

Not only are the guest experiences to be enjoyed, the local residents and staff are able to be involved in the programs that are being developed.34 The Marine Discovery Center is a great opportunity for the local community and visitors to come together and collaborate.

**SOCIAL**

The Marine Discovery Center offers many different opportunities to help to achieve community and social responsibility.35 There are specific programs aimed specifically to families and younger guests. The Phi Phi Islands have been ‘loved to death by beauty’. Careless tourism and uncontrollable growth led to over-tourism. Prior to its closure, the beaches were finally closed by Thai authorities due to the damages caused by over tourism.36

**ENVIRONMENT**

After the closing of the beaches, revenue and the economy was down.37 With the new programs in place, the destination should see an increase in tourism and wealth in the coming years.

**ECONOMIC**

The conditions progressed to an even worse state. It was not until 2018 until the authorities decided to enforce the closure.38 The Phi Phi Islands received around 5,000 tourists/200 days pre-closure39 and since then, it has dropped to around 1,000 tourists/200 days. These new rules have not had a negative impact on the environment.40

**Marine Discovery Center**

The Phi Phi Island Village Resort has partnered with Phi Phi Marine Discovery Center, an innovative facility that promotes the resort’s environmental ethos and conservation efforts. The Marine Discovery Center was developed in 2018 and was constructed in an ecologically sustainable fashion, including involving and training staff. The Marine Discovery Center offers many different programs, including breeding and release programs for marine life. The Marine Discovery Center is a great opportunity for the local community and visitors to achieve positive contributions towards the natural environment.
Situated along the landscape of the Li River, the Yun House Boutique Eco-Resort is nestled within a village in Yangshuo. This resort is about 32,200 square feet and construction was completed in 2015. The whole site consists of nine renovated old farm houses and new addition which functions as an all day dining restaurant for the hotel guests. With the villages still living nearby, there was a sensitive consideration to the culture during the planning and landscape. The design seamlessly blends into the existing village structure without creating new boundaries for the villagers.\(^{27}\)

The Yun House Boutique Eco-Resort is settled within a village in Guilin, China. This resort stimulates the tourism industry typically promotes the wealth within the city. This resort stimulates the tourism industry typically promotes the wealth within the city. This resort stimulates the tourism industry typically promotes the wealth within the city. This resort stimulates the tourism industry typically promotes the wealth within the city. This resort stimulates the tourism industry typically promotes the wealth within the city. This resort stimulates the tourism industry typically promotes the wealth within the city.

**CASE STUDY: YUN HOUSE BOUTIQUE ECO-RESORT
GUILIN, CHINA**

Guilin is a globally famous destination in South China being established as the first historic and cultural site in China. The unique karst landscape is the primary attraction. This city has been open to tourist since 1973, so it is a great example of increasing tourism growth, while also being one of the key tourism cities of China. Both inbound and domestic tourism numbers are on the rise. Tourism is a key component to the local development, subsequently the economy has been strongly impacted.\(^{20}\)

There has been a recent attraction to the Chinese countryside by China’s middle class. This has positively impacted the economy and the rural tourism industry. The cash flow from the wealthy coast is being redirected into the underserved areas. The attraction unfortunately lead to a skew of insensitive building projects. In hopes to revert that, there was an eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement. The was to offer eco-tourism movement.
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The show highlights the immersion of tourists from the local culture when they visit. The lack of respect for Hawaiian culture from visitors is a major contributor to the defiance of local residents on Hawaii. "The White Lotus" is a horror TV show that has presented the history of Hawaii while the resort was shutdown. HBO’s new TV show “The White Lotus” was recently released in 2021, so the impact (if any) of the show has not be fully investigated and analyzed yet. There is a major contributor to the defiance of local residents on Hawaii But It Looks Very Different As New Challenges Surface,” (Skift, June 2021), https://skift.com/2021/06/09/tourism-roars-back-in-hawaii-but-it-looks-very-different-as-new-challenges-surface/.

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“The White Lotus” Poster - MARK WHITE, WRITER AND DIRECTOR

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“Your business Health and Benefits is committed to building upon our Company’s strong history of supporting our communities and the environment. Through our Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) program, we seek to promote and express the cultural traditions of Hawaiian communities and teach about natural resource conservation. More visitors are able to get involved in the local community. This sustainable and eco-friendly initiative is supported by the Four Seasons Resort, which is committed to preserving and regenerating the beautiful place where they operate, and leave a positive, enduring impact on our communities.”

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HUMAN
Residential areas being overlooked by the strong emphasis on visitors
Allowing residents to provide rentals like AirBNB will provide economic and cultural benefits at the individual level.

SOCIAL
- Transit: Los Angeles attractions are empowering the culture of the destination.
Infusing tourists into local neighborhoods will allow for an increase in cultural representation.

ECONOMIC
- Increase in short-term rentals reduces opportunity for affordable housing.
- Implementing a strategy for creating a balance will allow for more conference-type business and tourism.

ENVIRONMENT
- Hotels and similar accommodations are heavy populated near urban areas.
- Short-term rentals will spread tourists throughout the community, helping the weight of overtourism.

CASE STUDY: AIRBNB
LOS ANGELES, CA

Los Angeles Population: 3.9 million

Figure 26

Figure 27

Figure 28

Figure 29

CASE STUDY: AMWAY GRAND PLAZA HOTEL
GRAND RAPIDS, MI

The Amway Grand Plaza Hilton Hotel has implemented a hotel-wide Stay Green program that includes energy-efficient lighting and multiple recycling programs. Promoting this initiative helps to attract the rising population of green-conscious travelers.

Social
- The Amway Grand Plaza is connected to the DeVos Convention Center as well as other hotels in this area via skywalk, ideal for business travelers who need to attend multiple meetings or seminars in a day.

Economic
- The Grand Rapids Skywalk is a great way for your attendees to get from one place to another without having to walk outside. It’s noted on this map as the white line leading from DeVos Place to VanAndel Arena.

Environment
- The Amway Grand Plaza Hilton Hotel has implemented a hotel-wide Stay Green program that includes energy-efficient lighting and multiple recycling programs. Promoting this initiative helps to attract the rising population of green-conscious travelers.

HUMAN
In recent years, there has been an increase in green-conscious travelers.
The Stay Green program can be promoting to attract these tourists that may need that extra reason.

SOCIAL
- Tourism is a sector of the economy that has room to grow.
The attraction of business travelers opens up an opportunity for more conference-type business and tourism.

ECONOMIC
- Current trends of urban tourism require a large carbon footprint.
The Skywalk reduces travel emissions and the restaurants are locally sourced food.

ENVIRONMENT
- Promoting programs such as donating excess food to local food banks promotes a connection.
Infusing tourists into local neighborhoods will allow for an increase in cultural representation.
Economic Stability
- **GULIN**
  - The tourism industry typically promotes the wealth within the city. This resort stimulates the eco-tourism movement by bringing the tourist industry out of the city and into the rural countryside and less developed areas.

- **MAYA BAY**
  - With the new programs in place, the destination should see an increase in tourism and wealth in the coming years.

- **LOS ANGELES**
  - The tourism industry typically promotes the wealth within the city. This resort stimulates the eco-tourism movement by bringing the tourist industry out of the city and into the rural countryside and less developed areas.

Environmental Stewardship
- **GULIN**
  - The design of resort incorporates local materials in the renovation of existing buildings. The perimeter of the site is open and sensitively conscious of the local village and their heritage.

- **MAYA BAY**
  - Maya Bay officials have implement new practices and strict rules to prevent the deterioration of the environment.

- **LOS ANGELES**
  - The tourism industry typically promotes the wealth within the city. This resort stimulates the eco-tourism movement by bringing the tourist industry out of the city and into the rural countryside and less developed areas.
CULTURAL ANALYSIS
Los Angeles county is made up of eight different regions and each of them is unique in its own way. Central Los Angeles where downtown LA is located. This is where the wealth of the tourism economy comes from.56 Empowering and growing each region by celebrating neighborhood experiences drives significant value for residents and visitors, focusing on helping communities and neighborhoods develop and promote their assets. The geographic spread of these communities throughout the county of Los Angeles also helps to disperse visitor traffic and spending, and share the wealth.57

CULTURAL REGION MAKEUP

San Fernando Valley
Home to a lot of major motion picture studios and the nation’s largest municipal park, Griffith Park.

San Gabriel Valley
Asian cultural immersion adds to an ethnically diverse community with a mix of suburban areas including quaint bungalows to rustic cabins to trendy townhouses.

San Fernando Valley
A blend of small town charm and urban sophistication with rugged canyon scenery.

Antelope Valley
Lively theater scene and sports facilities add to the family-oriented, low cost of living county.

Santa Clarita Valley
A blend of small town charm and urban sophistication.

Westside
Home to upscale communities and high-end shopping, while also being the hub for innovative startups, miles of beaches, and elite entertainment.

Central Los Angeles
The wealth of the economic activity included among museums, music venues, cultural attractions, and trendy bars and shops.

South Bay
A beachfront and harbor community providing cleaner air, warmer winters, beautiful surfing beaches, and scenic coastline.

Gateways Cities
Offers a myriad of lifestyles, from modest apartments to luxurious waterfront properties with an abundance of parks and a magnet for innovation and research.

Gateway Cities
Empowering and growing each region by celebrating neighborhood experiences delivers significant value for residents and visitors, focusing on helping communities and neighborhoods develop and promote their assets. The geographic spread of these communities throughout the county of Los Angeles also helps to disperse visitor traffic and spending, and share the wealth.

Central Los Angeles
The wealth of the economic activity included among museums, music venues, cultural attractions, and trendy bars and shops.

South Bay
A beachfront and harbor community providing cleaner air, warmer winters, beautiful surfing beaches, and scenic coastline.

Los Angeles is one of the most culturally expansive destinations with citizens from 140 countries and speak 224 different languages. This thesis celebrates the cultural diversity by emphasizing the importance of incorporating it into the tourism industry. Tourists are able to immerse themselves into the unique perspectives and diverse experiences when visiting.

CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF LOS ANGELES

Tourism is an essential source of job creation and business activity across our region—and it helps make Los Angeles a global city and a center of economic growth and prosperity.

—ERIC GARCETTI, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES

The city of Los Angeles greets upwards of 50 million visitors a year, who are spending more than $18 billion on the economy each year. A vast majority of these tourists visit the heart of Central Los Angeles leading to overtourism issues. The goal is to allow these visitors to still gain the enriching experiences that they are seeking, but in a way that takes into consideration the needs of the city and its local communities as well. A few problems that need to be addressed from overtourism are alienated local residents, overloaded infrastructure, damage to nature, and threats to culture and heritage.

CULTURAL MAKEUP

Los Angeles county is made up of eight different regions and each of them is unique in its own way. Central Los Angeles where downtown LA is located. This is where the wealth of the tourism economy comes from. Empowering and growing each region by celebrating neighborhood experiences drives significant value for residents and visitors, focusing on helping communities and neighborhoods develop and promote their assets. The geographic spread of these communities throughout the county of Los Angeles also helps to disperse visitor traffic and spending, and share the wealth.
Tourists and the local community have very different agendas day-to-day; however, the activities they are participating in have potential to overlap with one another. This diagram shows that there is an opportunity for an interaction between these two communities in this location.

**Figure 34**
Tourist and Local Day in the Life

**LOCAL**
- Wake Up
- Relax By the Pool
- Attend Fitness Class
- Prepare for Dinner Service
- Clean Up Dinner Service
- Go to Sleep

**TOURIST**
- Wake Up
- Walk to Downtown LA
- Shop at Marketplace
- Attend Fitness Class
- Prepare for Dinner Service
- Clean Up Dinner Service
- Go Home

Each space is organized in relation to its important adjacencies. Height is distributed based on hierarchy of communal use. Size of each space is allocated based on estimated square footage.

The main objective for this thesis is to promote the connectivity between the local community and the tourist; this diagram demonstrates the important spaces that will allow for this healthy engagement.
In 2013, Mayor Eric Garcetti and the Department of Convention and Tourism Development set the goal of reaching 8,000 hotel rooms within walking distance of the Los Angeles Convention Center (LACC) by 2020. The additional hotel inventory is integral to keeping the City competitive with convention destinations such as Anaheim, San Diego and San Francisco. Currently, there are 4,637 rooms open within walking distance and 714 additional hotel rooms under construction. While the City is potentially within reach of its goal, it is crucial that the new inventory be as close as possible to the LACC, with significant new meeting room space to attract additional business.

The Los Angeles Department of Convention and Tourism Development set a goal to reach 8,000 hotel rooms within walking distance of the Los Angeles Convention Center. At the time of the study, there were 4,637 open rooms and 714 under construction. The map to the left outlines the current hotels, upcoming projects, and proposed opportunity sites within the walking radius of the convention center. The site that was chosen for this thesis is located in one of the proposed locations determined by this LA department.

There are numerous apartment buildings located within the surrounding blocks of the determind site. While living in a downtown location, it can be inferred that these local residents will be walking to various locations occasionally. As for tourists, the site location is ideal for people coming to visit the LA Convention Center, Crypto Stadium, or the Grammy Museum, all of which are within walking distance. This diagram analyzes potential walking paths of both user groups. It can be seen that there are many opportunities for the two groups to interact in this location and around the determined site.
SITE ZONING CONSIDERATIONS

The Downtown Los Angeles Community Zoning Plan was created to provide a sustainable, equitable, and inclusive future for Downtown LA that will promote a dynamic and healthy city core to connect well and support the larger City of Los Angeles and the region.

This Plan seeks to accommodate anticipated growth through 2040 while creating a livable and healthy community for workers, residents, and visitors. The goals and policies described in this Plan focus on continuing Downtown's remarkable renaissance and promoting it as a center of innovation in the public and private realms. This Plan also seeks to address many of the challenges facing Downtown and the larger region, such as climate change, housing demand and affordability, and a shifting economy, through strategies that guide thoughtful growth. These strategies promote the physical development of Downtown; improve access to jobs, open space, services, and cultural resources; and provide housing for all income levels.

Figure 41

Figure 42
CLIMATE ANALYSIS OF LOS ANGELES

The climate of Southern California is a great host for travellers. The average temperature of every month of the year typically falls somewhere within the comfort zone. During the summer months, the sun and heat can become harsh. Important design considerations include proper shading in exterior locations and energy efficiency with cooling systems.

PROGRAMMING AND CODE ANALYSIS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPACE</th>
<th>OCCUPANCY CLASSIFICATION</th>
<th>ESTIMATED SQUARE FOOTAGE</th>
<th>QUANTITY</th>
<th>REQUIRED SEPARATION OF OCCUPANCIES (302.1)</th>
<th>ALLOWABLE OCCUPANT LOAD FACTOR</th>
<th>OCCUPANT LOAD FLOOR AREA</th>
<th>MAXIMUM COMMON PATH OF EGRESS TRAVEL DISTANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lobby</td>
<td>Business (B)</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>R-A, B, M, 1 hour</td>
<td>190 gross</td>
<td>200 sq. ft.</td>
<td>100 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guest Rooms</td>
<td>Residential (R-1)</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>A-B, 1 hour</td>
<td>190 gross</td>
<td>200 sq. ft.</td>
<td>100 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant</td>
<td>Business (B)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>A-B, 1 hour</td>
<td>190 gross</td>
<td>200 sq. ft.</td>
<td>100 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen</td>
<td>Mercantile (M)</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>A-M, B, 1 hour, M-N/A</td>
<td>90 gross</td>
<td>200 sq. ft.</td>
<td>100 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage Area</td>
<td>Assembly (A-3)</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>A-B, 1 hour</td>
<td>90 gross</td>
<td>200 sq. ft.</td>
<td>100 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pool Deck</td>
<td>Outside</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>A-B, 1 hour</td>
<td>90 gross</td>
<td>200 sq. ft.</td>
<td>100 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spa</td>
<td>Business (B)</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>A-B, 1 hour, B-M, N/A</td>
<td>90 gross</td>
<td>200 sq. ft.</td>
<td>100 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrooms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Estimated Sq. Ft.: 49,850 sq. ft.**

Plus Circulation @20% 9,970 sq. ft.

**Total Estimated: 59,820 sq. ft.**
**RESTAURANT**

Occupancy Classification: Assembly (A)
Estimated Square Footage: 500 sq. ft.
Quantity: 1
Occupant Load Factor: 60 gross
Maximum Occupant Load of Space: 49
Maximum Common Path of Egress Travel Distance: 75 ft
Plumbing Fixture Ratios:
- Water Closets: 1 per 500
- Lavatories: 1 per 750

**MARKETPLACE**

Occupancy Classification: Mercantile (M)
Estimated Square Footage: 500 sq. ft.
Quantity: 1
Occupant Load Factor: 60 gross
Maximum Occupant Load of Space: 49
Maximum Common Path of Egress Travel Distance: 75 ft
Plumbing Fixture Ratios:
- Water Closets: 1 per 500
- Lavatories: 1 per 750

**EVENT SPACE**

Occupancy Classification: Assembly (A-2)
Estimated Square Footage: 1200 sq. ft.
Quantity: 1
Occupant Load Factor: 15 net
Maximum Occupant Load of Space: 49
Maximum Common Path of Egress Travel Distance: 75 ft
Plumbing Fixture Ratios:
- Water Closets: 1 per 75
- Lavatories: 1 per 200

**POOL DECK**

Occupancy Classification: -
Estimated Square Footage: 800 sq. ft.
Quantity: 1
Occupant Load Factor: 15 gross
Occupant Load: 49
Plumbing Fixture Ratios:
- Water Closets: Location not specified
- Lavatories: Location not specified

---

**SPACE TYPOLOGIES AND CLASSIFICATIONS**

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  - Lavatories: 1 per 200

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- **Plumbing Fixture Ratios**:
  - Water Closets: Location not specified
  - Lavatories: Location not specified
SPACE TYPOLOGIES AND CLASSIFICATIONS

SPA
Occupancy Classification: Residential (R-1)
Estimated Square Footage: 325-500 sq. ft.
Quantity: 125
Occupant Load Factor: 200 gross
Maximum Occupant Load of Space: 10
Maximum Common Path of Egress Travel Distance: 75 ft
Plumbing Fixture Ratio:
Water Closets: 1 per sleeping unit
Lavatories: 1 per sleeping unit

GUEST ROOMS
Occupancy Classification: Residential (R-1)
Estimated Square Footage: 325-500 sq. ft.
Quantity: 125
Occupant Load Factor: 200 gross
Maximum Occupant Load of Space: 10
Maximum Common Path of Egress Travel Distance: 75 ft
Plumbing Fixture Ratio:
Water Closets: 1 per sleeping unit
Lavatories: 1 per sleeping unit

GUEST ROOM CONSIDERATIONS

The lower end of the range of rooms per hotel near The Los Angeles Convention Center is around 67 to 151 rooms. This is the general target for this proposed project. The target number of rooms will be 125.
The tourism industry is a major contribution to the success of a destination. However, the current tourism trends force negative burdens onto local communities and environments. There is an opportunity for tourism to positively impact the destination, if done correctly. The current priority is focused on the experience of the travelers, creating an uneven social and cultural divide. Thus, resulting in oppressive consequences. One way to address this issue is by manipulating the urban design of the destination.

WHY:

WHAT:

HOW:

A sustainably conscious hotel experience enhancing the tourist destination by fostering a strong connection between the two user groups: the local residents and the tourists.

With emphasis on three community-driven spaces: the lobby, marketplace, and restaurant; the design of each poses specific goals to add to the overall success of the hotel.

LOBBY:
A place for both local residents and tourists to meet, relax, observe, interact.

MARKETPLACE:
A unique shopping experience unlike a typical bland supermarket; offering locally sourced products and culturally representative items. Extending ultimate convenience being located less than three blocks from numerous apartment building with one other competitor within a mile radius.

RESTAURANT:
A place for both local residents and tourists to meet, relax, observe, interact.

By implementing all of these attributes, this hotel will become a complex of several community facilities to create an opportunity for both user groups to interact with one another. The physical space will create a personal, yet social experience allowing for a feeling of comfort in the interaction between groups.

DESIGN EVALUATION

1. Positively utilizing both the indoor and outdoor space.
2. Using the architecture to create a connection between the spaces.
3. Establishing a united design among the site while giving each space its own identity.
4. Extending design into public walkway to interact with local traffic.
5. Implementing wayfinding and signage to create an inviting façade.

FRAMEWORK

The tourism industry is a major contribution to the success of a destination. However, the current tourism trends force negative burdens onto local communities and environments. There is an opportunity for tourism to positively impact the destination, if done correctly. The current priority is focused on the experience of the travelers, creating an uneven social and cultural divide. Thus, resulting in oppressive consequences. One way to address this issue is by manipulating the urban design of the destination.
Use of landscaping adds an element of the natural environment.

A contrast in facade architecture creates a welcoming visual identity for each space.

Use of large storefront creates a transparency between the interior and exterior.

Large garage doors allow for an inviting entrance for pedestrians.

Bringing elements of the market into the sidewalk to interact with walking pedestrians.
DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

SHADE INCORPORATION
With its warm and sunny climate, Los Angeles can experience high temperatures throughout the year, which can cause discomfort to users. Incorporating shade is an essential consideration to block direct sunlight, avoiding this potential discomfort.

ARTISTIC ELEMENTS
To better represent the cultural and artistic identity of Los Angeles, the use of graffiti murals and sculptures throughout the site gives local artists a platform to showcase their work. Not only will this celebrate these artists, but it will also preserve the cultural heritage of the community.

FLEXIBLE SEATING
By offering a range of seating arrangements, the site provides a welcoming and comfortable environment for all users. This creates a positive impact on social sustainability by promoting inclusivity and facilitates social interactions.

NATIVE PLANTS
The landscaping on the site is made up of plants that are native to Los Angeles. These plants are adapted to the local climate and soil conditions and are more resilient to drought. This allows for less water usage, thus leading to a potential economic benefit.
FLEXIBLE COURTYARD ITERATIONS

STANDARD PARK
The standard park setting will be the set up for the flexible area when there are no events happening. It provides various seating arrangements for all users with the use of dining seating, lounge areas, and shaded picnic tables.

FARMER’S MARKET
The farmer’s market is an important event that allows local residents to bring their produce and share it with the community. Not only will this improve the local economy, but will also increase human sustainability among the vendors.

CONCERT
The concert setting is a potential idea for a unique use of the space. Local musicians will have the opportunity to perform. All residents and tourists can attend, which will facilitate social interactions and promote social sustainability.

PERSPECTIVES
WEST COURTYARD ENTRANCE
The West entrance incorporates murals into a large archway to help attract attention and welcome pedestrians into the courtyard. The curve of the arch is mimicked in the flooring change to reiterate the inviting sense. Lighting is also used in a unique way through linear lights as well as integrated into the archway.
As pedestrians are walking down the street, they will be welcomed by this area. The hotel above provides a unique opportunity to create an interesting entrance. The use of graffiti murals on the walls combined with a wood slat ceiling creates an intriguing entrance, inviting individuals into the courtyard.

The restaurant provides a large outdoor seating area to help connect its customers to the courtyard. The pergola adds the ideal amount of shade to help combat the harsh California sun. The materials chosen align with some of the design choices seen throughout, while also giving the restaurant its own identity.
PERSPECTIVES
SCULPTURE GARDEN

The sculpture garden is a great opportunity for local artists to display their work. The garden has stone tile pathways to help guide users through the space. There are also various platforms with lounge seating to help foster connections. These areas also cover with sun shades for added comfort.

Figure 61
Sculpture Garden Day

Figure 62
Sculpture Garden Night

PERSPECTIVES
COURTYARD WALKING PATH

The courtyard has various walking paths to guide the local residents and tourists throughout the space. There are lamp posts and linear floor lights to provide added wayfinding. There is also integrated bench seating and flower beds to create visual interest.

Figure 63
Courtyard Walking Path Day

Figure 64
Courtyard Walking Path Night
Each hotel guest has access to their own private balcony. They are able to see the liveliness of the courtyard below to help avoid any disconnect to the community. The balconies provide a great view of the courtyard as a whole.

The hotel is only four stories high to ensure that guests do not lose their relationship to the community surrounding them. As pedestrians are walking by, they are exposed to a flooring change and overhang that mirror each other. Design elements from this entrance are similar to the West entrance to create a strong balance.
CONCLUSION

The issues in the tourism industry are not as well-known as they should be. Awareness of these issues is one of the main goals this thesis is trying to accomplish. The cultural representation of the local communities is a crucial part of tourism that is lacking attention. Through the design of the built environment, there are ways for this culture to be showcased.

Throughout the process of working through this thesis, the direction changed quite a bit. Understanding the structure and constraints of the project from the beginning would have provided a better direction to have the opportunity to further develop the end product. In the beginning, the scope was very large. There is so much that is involved in sustainable tourism that it was difficult to understand what area was going to be the most impactful. As work progressed, the direction became more clear, but finding this sooner would have allowed for stronger development of the final design.

The thesis focused on Los Angeles for the final design response. However, this is just one tourist destination out of thousands. Further developing this project would allow for more research into other locations. This would allow for a deeper understanding of the specific needs each culture needs to have the best chance of representing their communities adequately.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge Kim Buchholz and Dustin Autschal for their guidance as my studio professors. I would also like to acknowledge Philip Repp for providing his expertise as my honors college thesis chair to help advance this thesis. I would also like to thank all of the interior design 2023 senior class for being there to support me.
APPENDIX

EXPLORATION PROCESS

ABANDONED HOTELS

• Why have hotels/resorts been abandoned?
• Are the structures still viable for renovation?
• Is there a need to restore the culture that once thrived in the hotel/resort? If so, how would that be done?
• How can a community of this sort give residents a sense of security and safety?

CULTURE AND TOURISM RELATIONSHIP

• What is culture?
• How does culture affect a community?
• What is the importance of restoring culture in a community?
• How does hospitality and tourism affect the culture of a community?
• Would restoring hotels help restore culture?
• Understanding the relationship between culture and tourism.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

• How is tourism affecting the environment?
• Why is there a need to restore the natural environment?
• How is the culture of a city related to sustainability?
• Understanding the positives and negatives of tourism.
• How hotels play an important role in sustainable tourism.
Located in Santa Clarita Valley region
• 25259 The Old Rd, Santa Clarita, CA 91381
• Resort style lodging experience
• Near Six Flags Amusement Park, Vista Valencia Golf Course, and Towsley Canyon Park
• Right off of I-5, the Golden State Freeway, that runs directly into Downtown Los Angeles

TRANSPORTATION OPPORTUNITY
This map highlights all of the major freeways that lead to the heart of downtown from every region. Uber is one of the most common and efficient means of transportation for tourists in this destination.

ADJACENCY DIAGRAM
Each space in relation to its important adjacencies.

COMMUNAL HIERARCHY
Height is distributed based on hierarchy of communal use.
RENDERING STYLES

ITERATION A
- REVIT HIDDEN LINE
- REVIT SHADED

ITERATION B
- SKETCHUP
- ENSCAPE
DESIGN PROTOTYPING

ITERATION A

ELEVATION

ISOMETRIC VIEW

DESIGN PROTOTYPING

ITERATION B

ELEVATION

ISOMETRIC VIEW
WORKING FIRST FLOOR PLAN

RESTAURANT

HOTEL LOBBY

COURTYARD

WORKING SECOND FLOOR PLAN

GUEST ROOMS

OPEN TO BELOW
WORKING ELEVATION VIEWS

FRONT FACADE ELEVATION

COURTYARD ELEVATION