



In cities and small towns throughout America, we find telling characteristics unique to each region and gain insight into its history, art and daily life. The dwellings, civic parks, architecture and design speak directly of the people who influenced and added charm to the province. The most recent Civitas writing introduced the deep seeded notion of community. From this springboard of ideas, we ask *what brings people together and creates community?* What do citizens need to sustain themselves personally, professionally, intellectually and emotionally? Numerous research points to community – people gathering together to share mutual interests fostering a sense of togetherness, shared ideas and meaningful connections.

Many traditional neighborhoods and historic urban cores provide a desirable public realm that the public at large is proud to connect to and care deeply for into the next generation. In many neighborhoods, families and friends gather in parks for play dates, form community gardens to nourish and feed themselves and simply pass time watching daily life go by. These places are significant to their inhabitants who seek to experience and preserve their beauty while providing the daily dose of meaningful connections to nature and the outdoors.

Communities which have been planned with the pedestrian in mind provide a safe habitat for children and give many their first opportunity to experience personal freedom, physical boundaries and responsibility. The holiday town of Seaside located in northwest Florida offers a shining example of a community where thousands of children have navigated its narrow streets stretching southward to the Gulf. They are enchanted by the sandy, pedestrian footpaths that weave throughout the town.

Community is also shared through the daily rituals, special events and festivals that bring people

Fostering Civic Life

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