

It is not the architecture of the buildings that is the attraction, but what the building's uses attract because of what they offer in terms of services to the area around them. The Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao may be an exception. It was, however, also part of a larger strategy. Museums attract visitors who spend money. Schools fall into a different category. They are parts of the infrastructure of everyday life. Good schools are essential in attracting middle-income families to live nearby. The catalytic effect is social, economic and physical. Middle-income families care for more than just surviving on a day-to-day basis: high-quality education for their children is highly prized.

Major references

- Attoe, Wayne and Donn Logan (1989). *American Urban Architecture: Catalysts in the Design of Cities*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Vossman, Laura (2002). How many artists does it take to make a downtown? *Planning* 68 (6): 20–3.

A NOTE

Chattanooga, Tennessee, USA: schools as a catalyst for precinct revitalization (2000–2)

Many civic authorities and politicians in the cities of the United States (and elsewhere) now recognize the importance of the quality of the built environment in attracting private investment and middle-class residents. Chattanooga is a city that has relatively recently come to this realization (Naylor, 2003). Much is being invested in the capital web to encourage private investment. The whole riverfront is being rejuvenated. \$US120 million will have been invested in its redevelopment by 2005 (the Tennessee Aquarium was completed in 1992). The streets and streetscape are being improved both in response to and as a catalyst for the upgrading of older buildings and the development of new residential units. Private financial resources are being put into public facilities both as philanthropic gestures and

as a catalyst for the further creation of private investment opportunities. Using schools as a catalyst for urban upgrading may be unusual but it is not unique.

Public schools are usually built and abandoned in response to population demands represented by the number of school age children in a precinct, or district. As downtown residential populations dwindled in number and/or became restricted to single people and empty nesters, so schools were closed down. A number of U.S. cities, recognizing that good schools attract families to live in their districts, have recently taken a different approach. They have built schools in downtown areas to attract middle-class families back to the city as part of a public policy to create more diverse populations. In Chattanooga, Tennessee two elementary