



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

**Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Arts**

of

STEVEN BEASLEY

BA (Vancouver Island University, 2009)

**“Alternatives to Sprawl: Promoting infill development and brownfield
redevelopment in Nanaimo, British Columbia”**

Department of Geography

Friday, October 2, 2015
12:00PM
David Turpin Building
Room B307

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Pamela Shaw, Department of Geography, University of Victoria (Co-Supervisor)
Dr. Larry McCann, Department of Geography, UVic (Co-Supervisor)

External Examiner:

Dr. David Witty, Office of the Provost, Vancouver Island University

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Mauricio Garcia-Barrera, Department of Psychology, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Abstract

Much has been written about both brownfield redevelopment and infill development as methods of improving the urban landscape. Barriers to these forms of urban and suburban development are all too often just superficially noted, and seldom subjected to critical analysis. Large metropolitan centres receive most mention; in fact, small, former industrial cities are rarely contemplated in the existing literature. To address shortcomings of critical analysis and the lack of attention on smaller cities, this study focuses on Nanaimo, British Columbia, a former coal mining and lumber processing community turned regional distribution and educational centre. The research is contextualized by a comprehensive review of the existing literature. Then, applying a qualitative research strategy, it was found through both a review of planning policies and in-depth interviews that Nanaimo was impacted differently than large metropolitan centres, and specifically in terms of the barriers that affect infill and brownfield redevelopment. As a result, Nanaimo suffers from additional economic challenges that render commonly-accepted strategies for encouraging infill and brownfield redevelopment less effective. Further, an examination of British Columbia's program that was designed to support increased levels of brownfield redevelopment revealed that the program is essentially ineffective. Provincial funding models designed to induce redevelopment passively prioritized sites with little or no contamination, offering little financial aid to remediate seriously contaminated brownfield sites.