ABSTRACT

An analysis of urban morphology was conducted in the San Francisco Bay Area using Local Indicators of Spatial Association ("LISA") to quantify clusters of different types of Urban Amenities (Anselin 1995). Concentrations of different types of Urban Amenities were given a centrality score, which was then used to delimit the Social Center or Centers of the Bay Area.

This thesis project used Samuel Krueger's (2012) methodology, employing multiple regular hexagonal arrays of different size to aggregate indicator amenity points. The aggregated clusters of amenities were calculated, assigned cluster scores, and ultimately ranked by centrality and finally shared as a cartographic visualization.

Previous methods for delimiting urban structure focused on employment centers, commuting patterns, and the Central Business District ("CBD"). This research seeks to expand on Samuel Krueger's method measuring clusters of Urban Amenities that describe the experience of place to delimit an ambiguously bounded but internally consistent central place known as the postmodern urban center (Krueger 2012; Dear & Flusty 1998). The objective was to determine whether San Francisco represents the center of the San Francisco Bay Area, or if the nickname the "Bay Area" better fits the region today.

This study reveals both polycentrism and strong centers with two dominant urban centers: San Francisco and Oakland-Berkeley; and an unexpected suburban center focused on the Silicon Valley, capturing Santa Clara and Sunnyvale, but mostly excluding San Jose.