ABSTRACT

An analysis of urban morphology in the Los Angeles metropolitan area was conducted. Specifically, Local Indicators of Spatial Association (LISA) were used to identify clusters of different types of urban amenities. A centrality score was calculated for every location based on the number of spatially coincident clusters, which was used to delimit the central place. The methodology, which was validated in the Chicago and New York metropolitan areas, employed multiple regular hexagonal arrays into which amenity location points were aggregated. These arrays, whose results were combined for a final analysis output, mitigated against the Modifiable Areal Unit Problem (MAUP) and revealed urban structures operating at multiple scales. Prevailing methods for delimiting urban centrality tend to reduce urban place to a monetary space by focusing on employment centers, commuting patterns, or 'central' land uses in order to identify a downtown or a Central Business District (CBD). This study elevates the experience of place within urban structure to identify an ambiguously bounded and internally inconsistent central place: a postmodern urban center. The study reveals both polycentrism and a strong core center in Los Angeles. The core center, called the *Wilshire/Santa Monica Corridor,* is delimited in detail.