This paper explores how newcomers to an urban environment begin to “learn” the city. The study uses Kevin Lynch’s methodology set forth in his foundational work, The Image of the City, to explore this question. Participants completed two sets of mental maps, which were analyzed for temporal changes in density and extent of the aggregated “public image”, the frequency of Lynchian elements noted, and the frequency of elements categorized by function noted. It was found that participants focused first on a basic path structure, which was then filled in with more detailed, individualized landmarks. Elements with the most distinct environmental images gained this status through a combination of factors: visual distinction, geographical prominence, and their useful navigational function or other function for the participant.