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urban voids:

re-inventing marginalized spaces

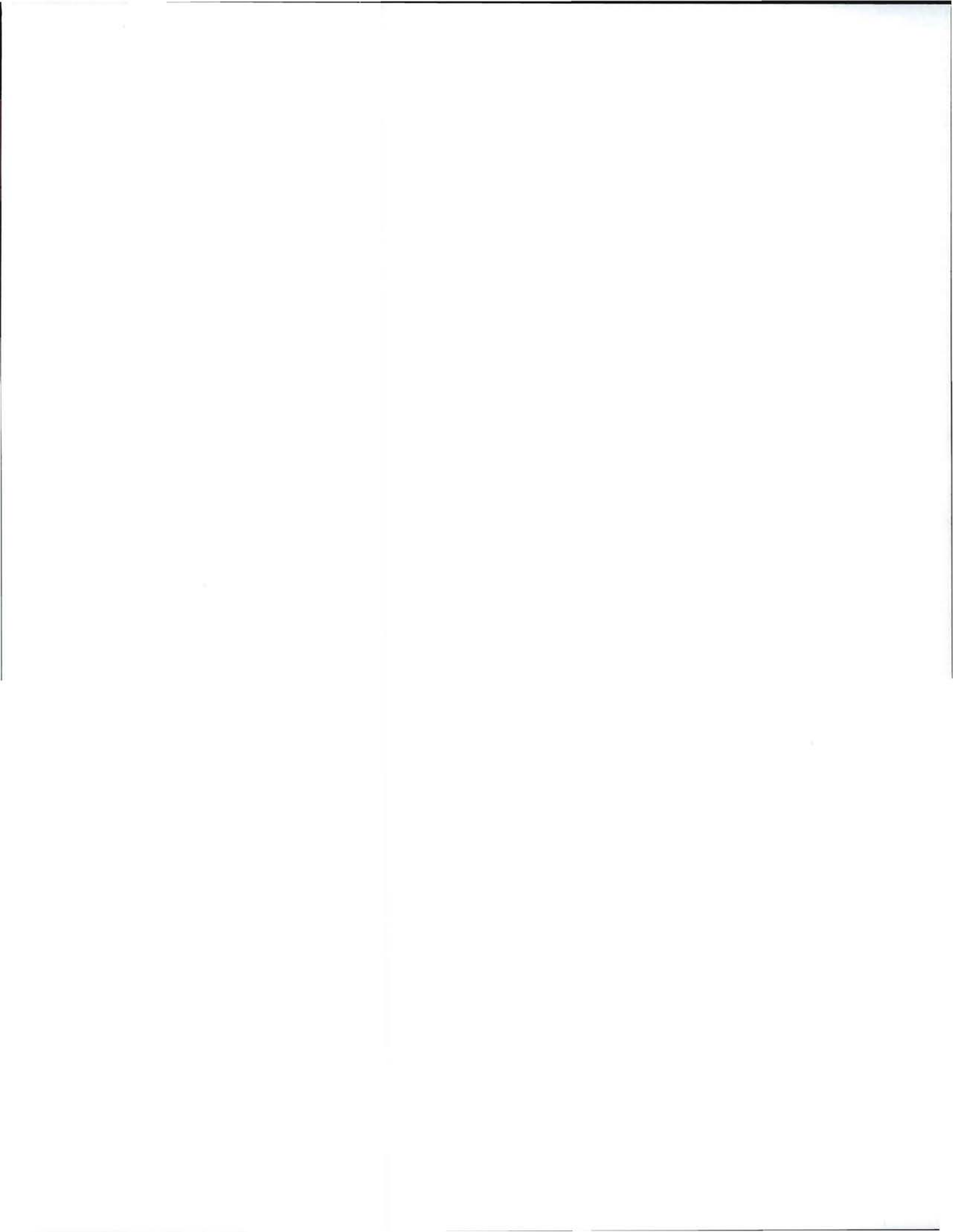
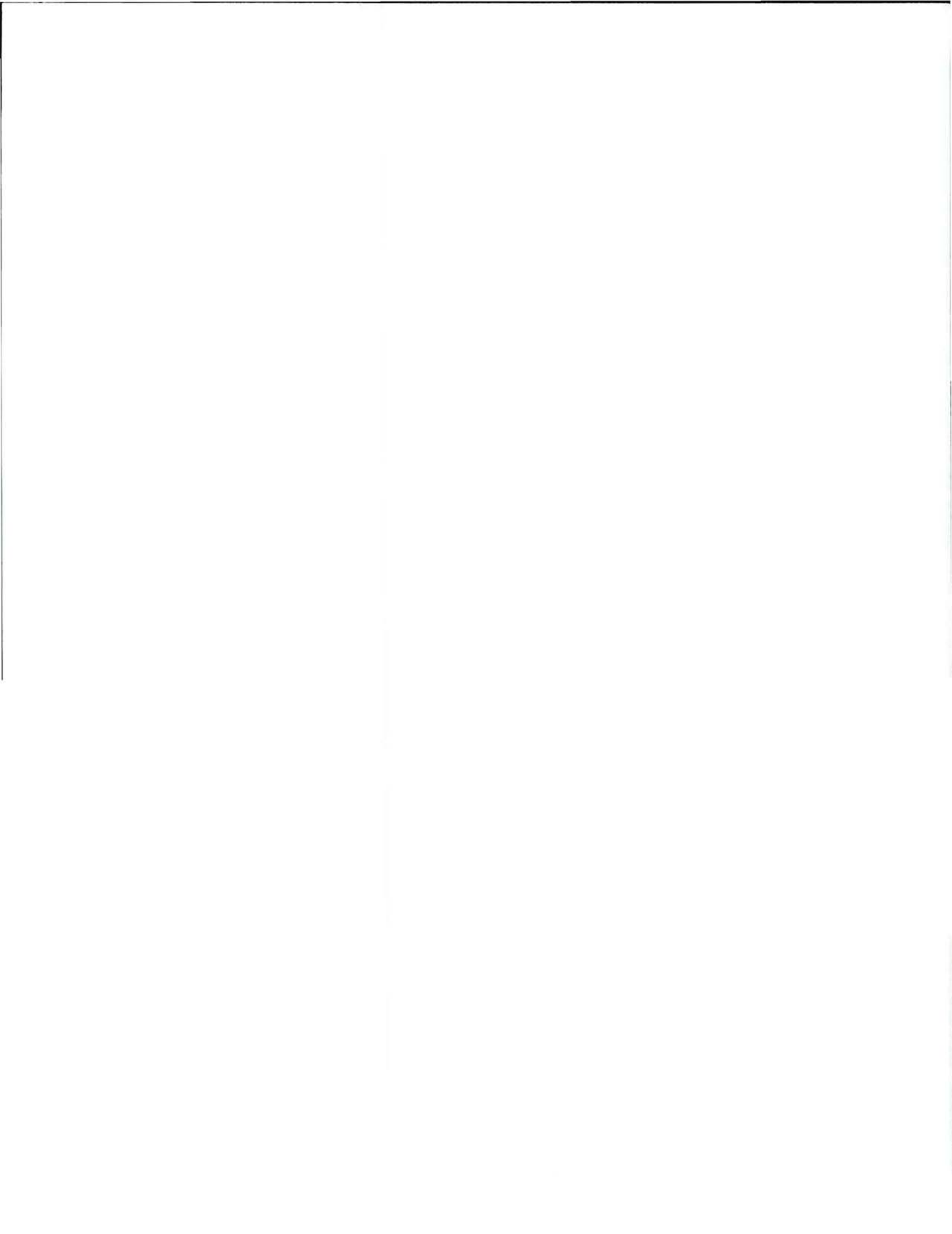


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abstract

The depopulation of American cities has led to the deterioration and fracturing of the urban form. Population has shifted to the outer peripheries of the city center making conditions likely for voids and vacancy in the urban landscape. One term used to describe such spaces is *Terrain Vague*¹, a French term that defines the present vacancy of a space while also looking towards its potential possibilities.

The thesis focuses on the *Terrain Vague* of Detroit, and attempts to utilize these spaces by exploring unconventional programs and architectural interventions that are outside the mainstream commodification of property. Various conditions of vacancy and marginalized spaces will be explored with different architectural interventions that respond to each site. This re-calibration of marginalized spaces would help better serve the public as spaces of inhabitation, which could play a significant role in the reconstruction of the city fabric.



project summary

As a result of decentralization and urban sprawl, many traditional American cities have experienced significant waves of depopulation. At the same time, the typical city of the present has expanded in all directions from the city center to form rings of populated areas at its periphery. City inhabitants have moved into the outer periphery changing the dynamics of social, political, cultural, and economic structures. The core of the city has become weaker and fractured, while the outer regions gain power. A consequence of this fracturing, this tearing of the urban fabric, is the emergence of what might be called the *Terrain Vague*¹. This term, which can mean *vacant, empty, or unoccupied*, refers to voids in the urban fabric that are torn and disconnected. However, the term also carries with it a second meaning—*free, available, unengaged, and fluid*. The basis of this thesis is an exploration of these unique marginalized and unclaimed spaces of the urban environment.

The City of Detroit is a prime example of this condition. Once a thriving and vibrant city of two million residents some fifty years ago, it has less than 900,000 residents today. This decline in population is also reflected by the deterioration of the physical city, leaving widespread examples of *Terrain Vague*. The dual nature of *Terrain Vague* connotes a dichotomy that critiques the present while at the same time looking ahead to the future. While the first meaning suggests a lack of activity, the second meaning assumes an unused resource within the city and the infinite

possibilities this represents. It also suggests change and transformation—an openness to new landscape and forms. The many voids and gaps of the urban fabric in the city of Detroit have the potential to serve diverse and useful functions for the public. Presently, the voids stand silent, waiting to be utilized.

The thesis attempts to utilize these spaces by exploring how these spaces could be re-programmed. These new programs attempt to transform these sites by making them more productive, but they also hope to maintain a character that remains outside the conventional commodification of property that is in the mainstream. How can marginalized and unclaimed spaces be adapted, redefined, or recalibrated to play a more important and visible role in the fabric of the city? How does adapting or redefining these spaces affect surrounding neighborhoods and communities? What influences can these transformations have on the conventional thinking of how spaces should be programmed and utilized? And ultimately, what impact might the sum of these re-calibrated spaces have on our understanding of the unclaimed potential of the urban fabric.



thesis

INTRODUCTION

American cities are shrinking. The depopulation of major urban cores has been caused by many factors. Mobility and communication advancements have led to a decentralized business structure. Federal policies in response to national security concerns have also conspired to encourage decentralization of the core city. Racial tension and economic dis-investment have also intensified the movement of people outside the city. These factors, which have all contributed to urban sprawl, have caused the central city to become weaker, while the outer surrounding areas have gained power changing the dynamics of social, political, cultural, and economic structures. This decline of the central city is obviously manifested in the deterioration of the physical city. The decrease of population negates the need for buildings and dwellings. Inhabited buildings become vacant, and are left to decay. Often times, these buildings are considered an eyesore and unsafe. The results are spaces that are neglected and excluded from the physical and economic landscape of the city. Architect Ignasi de Solà-Morales Rubió referred to these spaces with the French phrase, *Terrain Vague*.¹ In one sense, he describes the spaces as *vacant, empty, or unoccupied*, but in another sense, he also perceives the spaces as *free, available, unengaged, and fluid* with new possibilities.

The condition of the city of Detroit is a prime example of a declining city.

Once the fourth most populated city in the United States, it has dropped to the eleventh in less than 60 years.² The depopulation of the city has increased the occurrence of vacant and neglected spaces. These spaces often become marginalized and forgotten because they have no direct use or benefit to the city or its people. However, these '*terrain vague*' spaces are sites with great potential to be transformed and utilized.

The project will explore marginalized, unclaimed spaces by re-imagining how these spaces could be programmed. These interventions will operate within the margins of society, and will challenge conventional understanding of how spaces should be programmed and utilized. The programs will attempt to transform these sites in a more productive way by re-inventing the margins of the urban fabric.

DEFINING TERRAIN VAGUE

The depopulation of the city of Detroit has resulted in the decline of its physical makeup. These conditions have opened the door for the emergence of *Terrain Vague*. The complexity of the term comes from the duality of meanings that it embodies. In order to fully understand what this phrase means, it is necessary to consider the two terms independently.

Solá-Morales Rubió states that the French term, *terrain*, expresses a more urban characteristic than the English word *land*, which has more of an agricultural and rural connotation. He adds:

Terrain is an extension of the precisely limited ground fit for construction, for a city. . . The French word also refers to greater and perhaps less precisely defined territories, connected with the physical idea of a portion of land in its potentially exploitable state but already possessing some definition to which we are external.³

Solá-Morales Rubió sees *terrain* not only as part of the city, but as the city itself. In a holistic perspective, *terrain* is the city by the combination

of each of its independent parts. It is the space fit for the potential of a built structure. It is fitting then that "terrain" is used to denote the urban landscape.

The second word in the expression, *vague*, derives from Latin and German. The Germanic origin refers to a sea swell suggesting "movement, oscillation, instability, and fluctuation."⁴ The Latin roots *vaccus* (essentially translating into "empty and occupied," but also "free, available, unengaged") and *vagus* (meaning "indeterminate, imprecise, blurred, uncertain") are superimposed to get the term "vague."⁵ The relationships between the meanings seem to contradict each other, but it is in this anomaly that Solá-Morales Rubió joins them together.

Solá-Morales Rubió views the relationship between the "absence of use or activity" and the "sense of freedom" as the key to understanding the potential of these spaces: "Void, absence, yet also promise, the space of the possible, of expectation."⁶ The fusion of the term *terrain* with the tri-meaning of the term *vague*—"wave," "vacant," "vague"—is the essential component in characterizing the "empty, abandoned" spaces in cities.

These void or abandoned spaces in the city are often perceived as dangerous and unattractive. People become strangers to these spaces because the voids, which are "not dominated by architecture"⁷, bring out our fears and insecurities. In a sense, they become dismissed and forgotten by a city that has no use for them. They become uninhabited, lifeless, and neglected. They are erased from our consciousness. As forgotten spaces "they exist outside the city's effective circuits and productive structures."⁸ The voids become the city's negative image.

Emergence of Terrain Vague in Detroit

The dual nature of *Terrain Vague* connotes a dichotomy that looks at the present while at the same time looking ahead to the future. It also suggests change and transformation—an openness to new landscape and forms. Before we can devise strategies for capitalizing on this potential, it is important to consider how these spaces emerged in the

city, and what conditions accommodated their accumulation. Detroit's physical makeup has not always been an abundance of neglected, vacant space. It was not long ago that Detroit claimed the title of fourth largest city and one of the densest urban areas in the nation. The following will touch on the history of the city, and some of the factors that contributed to the deterioration of the urban fabric.

Detroit's rise to one of the most populated cities in the nation was fairly quick. In 1900, Detroit's population was only 285,704 ranking the city in 13th place.⁹ With the automobile industry beginning to boom, many African American southerners and European immigrants arrived in Detroit, in hoping to find work. By 1920, the population had skyrocketed to 993,078 residents, making the city fourth place in most populated urban areas.¹⁰ Detroit would continue to grow, and by 1950 it would peak in population at 1,849,568 residents.¹¹ Detroit by this time was consumed by the automobile, and devoted itself to this single industry. These factors set the stage for the decline of the city.

In *Stalking Detroit*, Dan Hoffman characterizes the city as "The Capital of the Twentieth Century" not because of the city itself, but because of its singular dedication to one industry that reshaped the landscape of the modern American city."¹² Detroit and the automobile industry were so tightly fused together that each mirrored both the growth and decline of one another. The structure of the industry configures the form of the city. Patrik Schumaker's and Christian Rogner's *After Ford* essay parallels the city with the three phases of the Fordist Revolution.¹³ In the first phase, Detroit started as a compact city. In the same way, production was contained in a single building that utilized an efficient spatial organization to augment the assembly line. Phase 2 identifies the horizontal spreading out of the physical city. Here, the automobile and the increasing population of the city dispersed the people and buildings further out from the center. In the same way, the factory became one component of an entire complex. Automobile production was separated into buildings specializing in different tasks. Le Corbusier saw this design as the "city as machine" referencing how the "flow of materials and sub-components determined the overall 'urban' layout as an integrated machine."¹⁴

In the last phase, production becomes decentralized on regional and national levels, then ultimately on a global scale, demoting the city into a less significant role. The city expanded outward and decompressed the urban core. Critic, Grahame Shane, of *Harvard Design Magazine*, charges decentralization as the final blow to the city: "the effects of Fordism and the 'city machine' model of organization dissolved the city of Detroit itself into the landscape" by dispersing "production patterns," which "created a more open, decentralized, self organizing, and postmodern 'matrix' pattern."¹⁵ The idea of the city as a structure for industry is also stated by architect Andrew Zago:

Here, the city became a factory, its workers brought in and housed like parts for the automobiles they assembled. Then, like a factory, it became obsolete and was discarded in the perpetual and illusory search for an unsullied land and an unsullied work force.¹⁶

The shrinking of Detroit was not caused by one singular thing, but the combination of a rapidly transforming industry and the socio-economic division of its citizens. Mobility was transforming the dynamics of the city. No longer were people bound to stay close to the core of Detroit because the automobile made it possible to live at the city's edges. People who had the money got in their cars and looked for the wide open spaces of suburbia. The landscape became lined with wider roads and superhighways that essentially led out of the city. As a result, the product that made the city become a thriving and populated urban area also became one of the catalysts that allowed people to move out of the city.

Racial tensions among blacks and whites contributed to the exodus. The Race riots of 1967 were a culmination of "political, economic, and social factors including police abuse, lack of affordable housing, urban renewal projects, economic inequality, black militancy, and rapid demographic change."¹⁷ The city lost many of its upper and middle class residents, who were predominately white and who could afford to leave, to the suburbs.

The domino effect resulted. Merchants and businesses either moved out or closed due to the lack of sales. Thriving communities and neighborhoods lost population and buildings became abandoned and neglected. Depopulated neighborhoods took on the perception of being dangerous and uninhabitable. Most of the vacant downtown buildings would be torn down and converted into surface parking lots or empty space.

On a national level, many American cities were following suit with decentralization. After World War II the threat of nuclear attacks on densely populated urban areas was highly debated by the American Institute of Planners (AIP) and the National Security Resources Board (NSRB). Their mission was to disperse high density urban centers into the outlying surrounding areas. The concept of defensive dispersal embodied the idea "that major cities were such obvious targets for nuclear weapons that they would need to be built at far lower population densities and contain much smaller industrial concentrations than before¹⁸". They argued that this would lessen the casualty count if a nuclear attack were ever to occur. At this time President Truman's Industrial Dispersal Policy aiming to disperse new defensive oriented industrial construction to areas outside the central city was in place. The defensive dispersal initiative developed strategies for redesigning postwar cities including satellite cities and ring cities that were outside the urban core. The implementation of this concept of low density suburban development was integrated in different parts. The Housing Act of 1954 gave federal aid to residential buildings which provided a minimum of 5,000 square feet of lot area per family decreasing the congestion of population. The Housing Act also introduced a strategy of "urban renewal." In the 60s, 20 percent of black residents lost their homes to urban renewal compared to 10 percent of white residents. The Interstate Highway system was also planned in part to aid decentralization. In 1956 The Federal Aid Highway Act was passed and the highways were officially called "Interstate and Defense Highways."

It made sense for the city of Detroit, nick-named the "Arsenal of Democracy" at this time due to its production of war time materials, to



1915



1950



1960



1994

Downtown Detroit figure ground comparisons; Stalking Detroit, p 32



Downtown Detroit figure ground, 2006

decentralize. Looking at urban decline in this perspective, it is easy to see the inter-related factors that caused Detroit's downfall. Michael Quinn Dudley of the *Journal of Planning and Education* suggests the impacts of the automobile, urban renewal, segregated economics, and racial conflict as linking back to the chronology of defensive dispersal.

Ever since the peak of the city population in 1950 of 1.8 million, the population has decreased every decade. Presently the city has a population of 863,748 residents,¹⁹ a drop of 985,820 people in less than 60 years. The population in the suburban areas outside the city is just over 4 million people compared

to the one million people the suburbs had in 1950.²⁰ The stats show growth in the opposite direction between Detroit and its suburbs. The car still dominates everything in the Region. Cars are driven everywhere because there is no cooperative and reliable mass transit system in the region. Racial disharmony still plays a significant role in this, the most segregated city in the nation, although as Stephen Vogel points out, race is "the unspoken 'elephant' that dominates everything in Detroit. The growing proportion of 'minorities' in the city is directly proportional to the avoidance of the city by suburbanites."²¹ Detroit's African American population is 82% of the total population, while the suburban percentage of whites is 88%.²²

The decline of Detroit was caused by many inter-related factors throughout its history, and this decline has provided the conditions for *terrain vague* to occur. Vacant, unclaimed, and marginalized spaces have accumulated throughout the city's landscape taking the form of empty lots, surface parking, unused corridors, transitional spaces, in-between structures, etc. In the downtown area, they seem to appear in the most peculiar circumstances. Understanding the initial reasons of why these spaces exist is the first component in developing strategies for these conditions.

SPECIFIC VOIDS IN THE CITY

The initial study of the site was a first hand analysis of the study area. The study area covers the general area of downtown bordered by the Lodge Freeway to the west; Interstate-75 to the north; Interstate-375 to the east; and the Detroit River to the south. The initial hope was to find, observe, and document void spaces in the city that could potentially be transformed to something usable by the general public.

The specific sites chosen all had their own unique characteristics. The plan was to select a variety of different types of void spaces within the downtown area. Initially 12 prospective sites were chosen and analyzed. If two or more sites had similar characteristics, then some would be edited out. The actual chosen void spaces are covered more in-depth in the Site section of the study.

To better clarify and understand the spaces, they needed to be categorized. Within the urban fabric of the city, two kinds of voids exist: There are **transitory spaces**—places that people only move through—and **unclaimed spaces**—places where the sense of place is vague or clearly vacant. Too often, transitory spaces cut the urban fabric rather than mend the tapestry. These spaces include sidewalks or walking areas in front of buildings that are often overlooked resources of space. They are also service corridors such as alleyways that are also often overlooked because it is assumed that they only have one function. The second type of void space refers to the vacant and neglected areas of the city that are underutilized or unclaimed. They are the vacant lots or the space left over after a building is demolished. They also include the edges or underpasses of freeways that are not really used. It is in these vacant spaces that the city has the means to transform its landscape to something new.

Responding to Site

The method taken to attempt to propose programs or interventions for the spaces was to let the site inform the design and program. The

development of the thesis once again led to breaking up the sites into two discrete groups. Proposing programs for each individual space created similarities in the intent of the programs. Thinking of the city as a whole, some programs can be seen as potentially relevant to the entire city. These spaces are categorized as **Infrastructure sites** meaning the interventions proposed could be implemented throughout the city. In the other category, program had to do with the site itself; therefore, they are labeled **Unique sites**. These interventions have to do more with site and context of the area.

One of *terrain vague* meanings suggests an unused resource and the infinite possibilities it represents. As stated earlier, the method for developing each site was to let the site inform the program. The possibilities of the void spaces were viewed as more than the reclamation of a forgotten space. The idea that these spaces had been marginalized and forgotten by the mainstream is important to understand in attempting to develop a strategy of design. Solá-Morales Rubió poses the question of what to do with these void spaces, and how should we precede in the designing of spaces that have imprecise limits and vague definition? He recommends to "preserve these alternative, strange spaces."²³ He also suggests that people "seek refuge in the margins of the city precisely when the city offers them an abusive identity, a crushing homogeneity, a freedom under control."²⁴ Solá-Morales Rubió goes on to say that the architect in this situation would likely impose an order, a limit, and a form in order to make the space recognizable. In other words, he views the role of architecture as wanting to bring order to things that exist outside mainstream ideas. Therefore, his recommendation for the design of these vague landscapes is not to bring into them a "violent transformation" that loses the sense of what the space is—a strange uniqueness that exists outside the order of the city.

Solá-Morales Rubió recommendation essentially means to design and program these void spaces in such a way that preserves the uniqueness of the space by challenging the set standards found in traditional and typical practices of architecture. It responds to site and place rather than responding to the commodification of property. If the design follows

this recommendation, the intervention still operates within the margins because it does not conform to the commodified landscape of the city.

Other proposals that have responded to these types of spaces seem to mirror Solá-Morales Rubió's recommendation. One idea by Alison Smithson is to make the "holes" appearing in cities "landscaped as 'holding operations' for future development" and transforming rail road right-of-ways as connective greenways to regions beyond.²⁵ This idea looks to utilize these void spaces as place holders and provide a flexible framework that considers the changing environment and growth. Also, Smithson views these void spaces as landscape that "would encourage the acceptance of wildness . . . without negative allusions to abandonment. Another related proposal is titled "Finding Public Space in the Margins" by UrbanRock Design Studio. They proposed a series of interventions that addressed a Los Angeles neighborhood's lack of available open space.²⁶ Each intervention has its own unique program to enliven the streetscape. The spirit of the concept is the challenge of improving an area by using the residual unclaimed space with subtle, but powerful designs that could be utilized by anyone passing by. Through these interventions Urban Rock hopes to foster chances of meeting, discovery, and exploration. Lastly, the proposal titled Park(ing) initiated by Rebar reclaims conventional 2 hour metered parking into green space on the streets of San Francisco.²⁷ This intervention expands the public realm of habitation in spaces that conventionally are not designated for the sole use of people. The connection with all these proposals is that they do not follow the rules of conventional design. They offer inspiration and vision to similar spaces in the urban environment. The projects do not really give an organization or specific structure to these spaces, which is something that Solá-Morales Rubió would agree with. Instead they provide flexible strategies for these spaces that could be modified and changed with the ever-changing landscape of the urban environment. If anything, they inspire designers to question the conventional and the mundane programs of public space.



UrbanRock Design: "Finding Public Space in the Margins"



Rebar: Park[ing]

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, the goal of the thesis is to provide an alternate view on how marginalized spaces in the city could be utilized efficiently to better serve the public. In all, the proposed interventions in these spaces serve as a form of urban activism that attempts to change the perception of the spaces as unsafe and unusable in a way that does not follow the usual commodification of property and space. The project also hopes to serve as a vision that highlights the potential of forgotten land resources in the urban environment. The *terrain vague* of the city of Detroit can not be ignored. It is part of the city just like any other urban condition. The potential for a void space is practically limitless.

Detroit's unique condition of *terrain vague* and changing urban form make it an ideal space for exploring and experimenting with new strategies for void and marginalized spaces. Any design strategies that are proposed need to be respectful of how the strategy capitalizes on the potential of the space and its surroundings. These marginalized spaces provide an opportunity for designers to create new programs that provide viable and unique spaces in the urban environment. These spaces can become part of the visible urban fabric of the city.



Precedent Analysis

- 23 Finding Public Spaces in the Margins
Urban Rock Design Studio
- 29 Body Movies
Rafael Lozano-Hammer
- 31 PARK[jing]
Rebar





2003

YUCCA CORRIDOR: HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA

URBANROCK DESIGN: JEANINE CENTUORI, RUSSELL ROCK

Summary

UrbanRock Design is a Los Angeles-based multidisciplinary firm that weaves the practices of art, architecture, and urban design. The project entitled "Finding Public Space in the Margins" proposes numerous public interventions initiated by Jeanine Centuori and Russell Rock. Its main purpose is to redefine unused space in the Yucca Corridor, a depressed area in Hollywood, California. Through analysis and investigation, UrbanRock developed a strategy that addressed the area's lack of available open space. They looked at marginal spaces—sidewalks, parking lots, alleys, fences, etc—as opportunities to create a public realm.

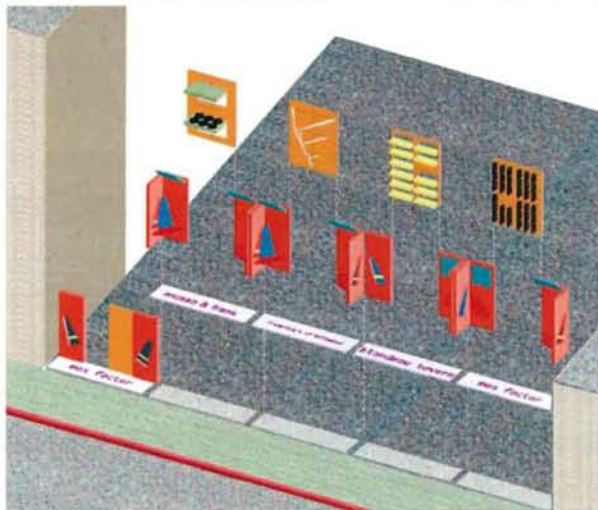
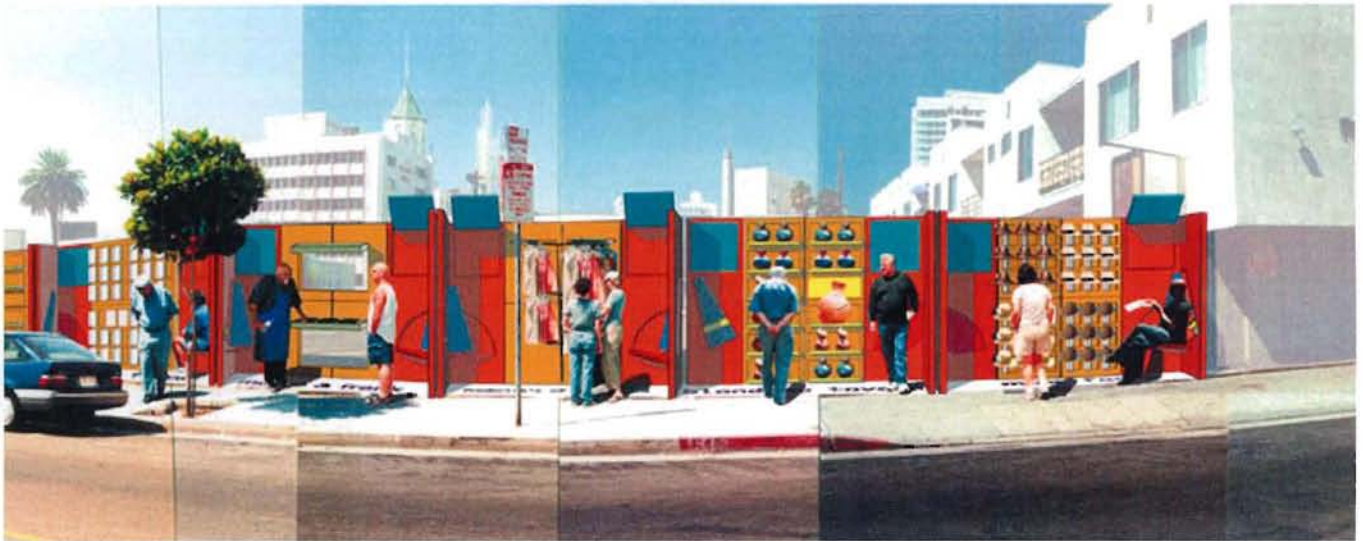
The project includes eight distinct interventions in these small unclaimed spaces. "Ped Stop" is a collapsible kiosk that holds payphones, newspaper dispensers, community announcements, and maps. In "Fence Concert", modular bleachers, canopies, tables, and chairs attach to existing fences to accommodate live performances while transforming the street into a lively event space. "Slim Store"s addresses the unused edges of parking lots with foldable wall panels that function as mini-stores for local businesses. "Give and Take" utilizes chain link fences by slipping rubber tubes in the openings that can be pushed or pulled to create furniture or textural imagery. The parking lot is utilized in "Park or Play" by transforming

it into a water park. Excess runoff is directed to vegetation along blank building walls. "Water Bar" uses blank walls along sidewalks for single-unit public water amenities. "Lean-to" enlivens underutilized corridors with pivoting panels that attach to building walls that can function as shelves or display boards. "Site Portals" connects to parking meters, light poles, and tree guards to focus the pedestrian on a particular moment or landmark in the neighborhood.

Significance

"Finding Public Space in the Margins" reclaims spaces or moments in the urban fabric that have been under-utilized or forgotten. This underlying concept is an essential idea relating to the thesis investigation. Not only does the project address the marginal spaces of the Yucca Corridor, it also engages the pedestrian to become a participant and an occupant of the created spaces rather than a passerby. This idea is a major part of my proposed interventions. Although the thesis looks more at the voids and vacancy of both the vacant lot and the *margins* rather than just the *margins*, the idea of utilizing unused space in an urban context directly parallels the concept of the thesis.





Slim Stores

Summary:

Like many urban areas in the United States, the Yucca Corridor is dotted with many surface parking lots. These spaces form a void along the streets' viewing corridors and street walls. *UrbanRock Design* studied the edges of parking lots and noticed that these edges could serve as a viable space for the community. They devised a strategy named *Slim Stores*. *UrbanRock* proposed book-like foldable walls to be inserted at the edges to create seating and accommodate spaces for cooking, selling, and displaying art work. The seating component of the panels serves as the structural support for the entire system while the folding walls help define the space of the different functions. The

idea behind this intervention is to create a façade for the void while at the same time generate an active business strip. Local businesses would have an opportunity to gain recognition by participating in a "*Slim Store*." This insertion looks to enliven the edges with engaging activities that encourage pedestrians to stop and interact.

Significance:

This particular project has the intent to create a space for interaction and congregation. It aids local businesses as well as citizens in the community. It not only creates a sense of community, but also enlivens a void and unused space. The thesis focuses on this kind of relationship between the users and the built environment.

Lean-To

Summary:

The "Lean-To" project addresses the unused spaces beside buildings or service spaces. *Lean-To* can connect to the walls of buildings allowing for different configurations that denote different functions within the space. The modular panels can be folded or positioned in various spatial arrangements that can accommodate two or three dimensional art installations. The new space then can act as an interactive art fair. When collapsed, the *Lean-To* hangs snug to building surfaces to allow for service access to the buildings.

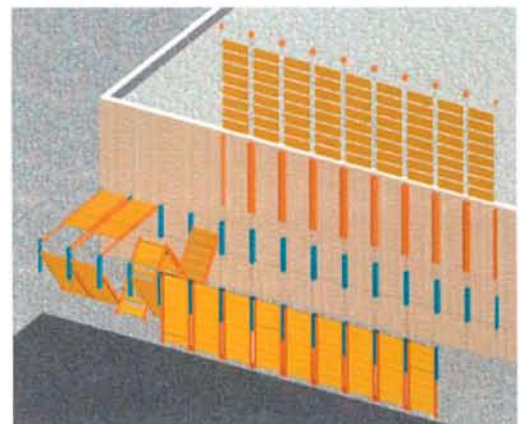
Significance:

This particular project's importance for the investigation is that it inhabits forgotten spaces. The project adds to the built environment, altering it and redefining the spaces' function. It can accommodate various kinds of activities that focus on the interaction of its users. This project will look at these site conditions and attempt to use the process of redefining and re-imagining to develop a strategy that engages the pedestrian to participate in the space.

Analysis:

The concept of "Finding Public Space in the Margins" is one that looks to counteract the lack of public space in an urban area. The Yucca Corridor is a densely packed neighborhood of Hollywood California comprised of a large commercial strip, multi-family homes, and few open spaces. The community attracts a variety of pedestrians from citizens to tourists, however, tourists generally stay within the neighborhood's periphery along its commercial strip on Hollywood Blvd. While *UrbanRock*'s analysis of the area calls for the creation of these unique creative spaces, there has been no mention of the project being actually implemented.

The strength of the project lies in its concept; identifying under-utilized spaces in neighborhoods that lack public open space, and redefining them for more creative uses. In an interview with ID



magazine, Jeanine Centuori and Russell Rock mention that the citizens and pedestrians themselves have already adapted various unused spaces for their own purposes¹. Creating a public realm that combines different activities That may attract people that otherwise may not be there is an important aspect of community and the attractiveness of an area.

"*Slim Stores*" and "*Lean-To*" are the two projects that seem to be the most practical to be implemented. First, they both can be built easily and with readily-available materials. Secondly, they can be easily inserted in the voids or edges that they are meant to occupy. Thirdly, once set up, they easily urge gathering and interaction.

In the *Scenarios* map (pg.2) indicating the location of projects within the Yucca Corridor, the proposal of site locations creates a randomness of rhythm only organized by the site specific criteria. *Slim Stores* are located along all parking lots and *Lean-To* nestles up on service corridors. This pattern of randomness results in an un-zoning of services making it likely that each project will adapt to its surroundings to define its own character. This will allow more people to utilize the different interventions around the community.

While the concept and idea are justified, it is hard to tell whether it is successful because it has not been implemented. In my opinion, the concept is very successful, but without really having real-world impact, it loses some of its strength. If this was a way to counteract voids and under-utilized space, then why aren't there any realized applications? It could just be that the public is scared of implementing these unorthodox projects. In relation to the thesis project, a lot of parallels can be drawn. The idea of utilizing spaces and connecting them in a way that engages the pedestrian is closely related with the basis of the thesis. The difference of site criteria in the Yucca Corridor in relationship to Detroit is exactly opposite. Where *UrbanRock* observed the lack of open space in the neighborhood, in Detroit there is an abundance of open space that is unused. Although the Yucca Corridor in Los Angeles greatly differs from the sites that have been investigated in Detroit, the spirit of utilizing unused space is common to both projects.



2001
SCHOUWBURGPLEIN SQUARE, ROTTERDAM
RAFAEL LOZANO-HEMMER

For about one month in Rotterdam, the Schouwburgplein Square was transformed into the largest interactive installation ever created in a public space. Over one thousand portraits of random pedestrians were taken on the streets of various cities and were projected on the façade of the Pathe Cinema building. However, powerful ground-level lights washed out the portraits and could only be seen if people walked onto the square in front of the lights. When people did this, their shadows became the parts where the portraits were revealed. By moving around, pedestrians could scale themselves with the portraits or scale themselves to others that projected their shadows.

This project is an excellent example of pedestrian participation in a space. The projections not only allowed the user to interact with the buildings, but also other users in the space. This level of integration and interaction is the concept that the thesis project should have.

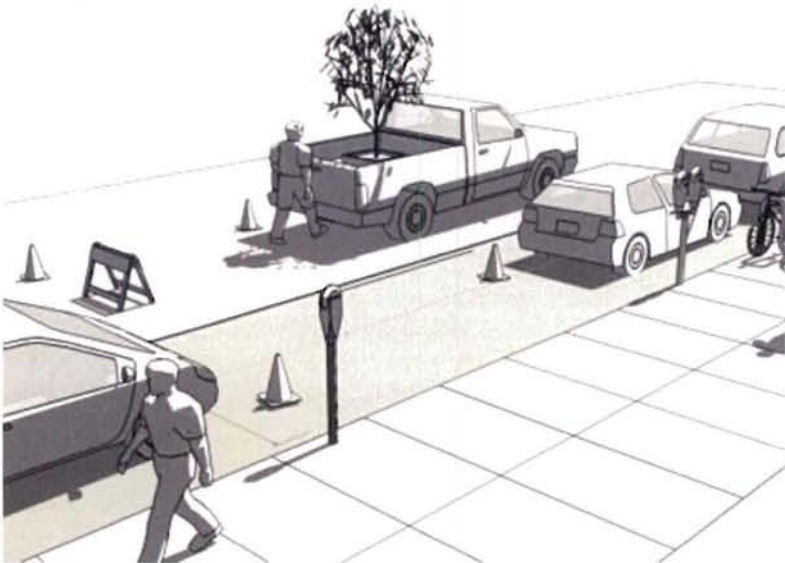
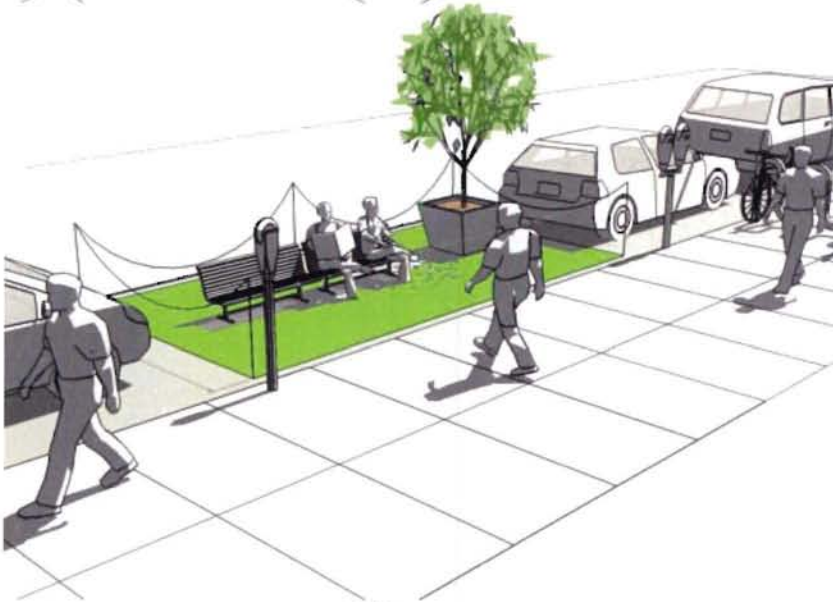
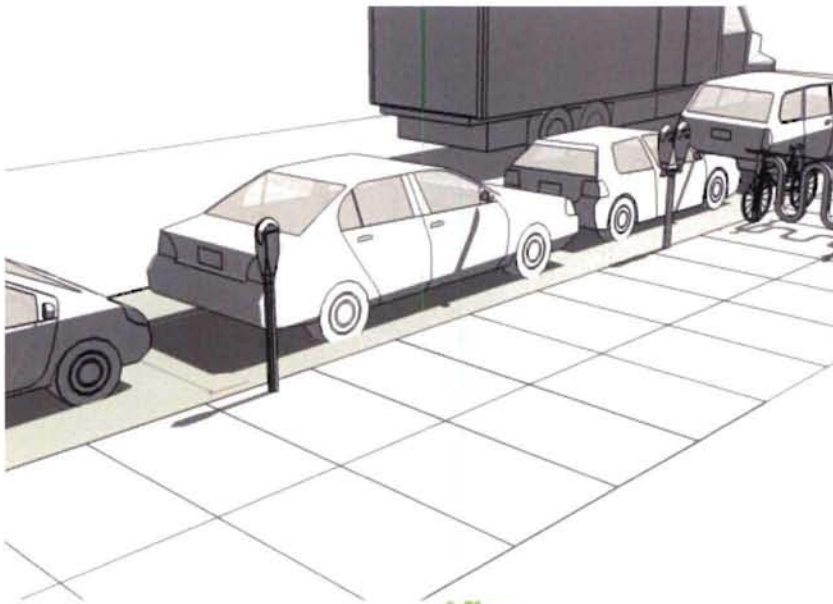




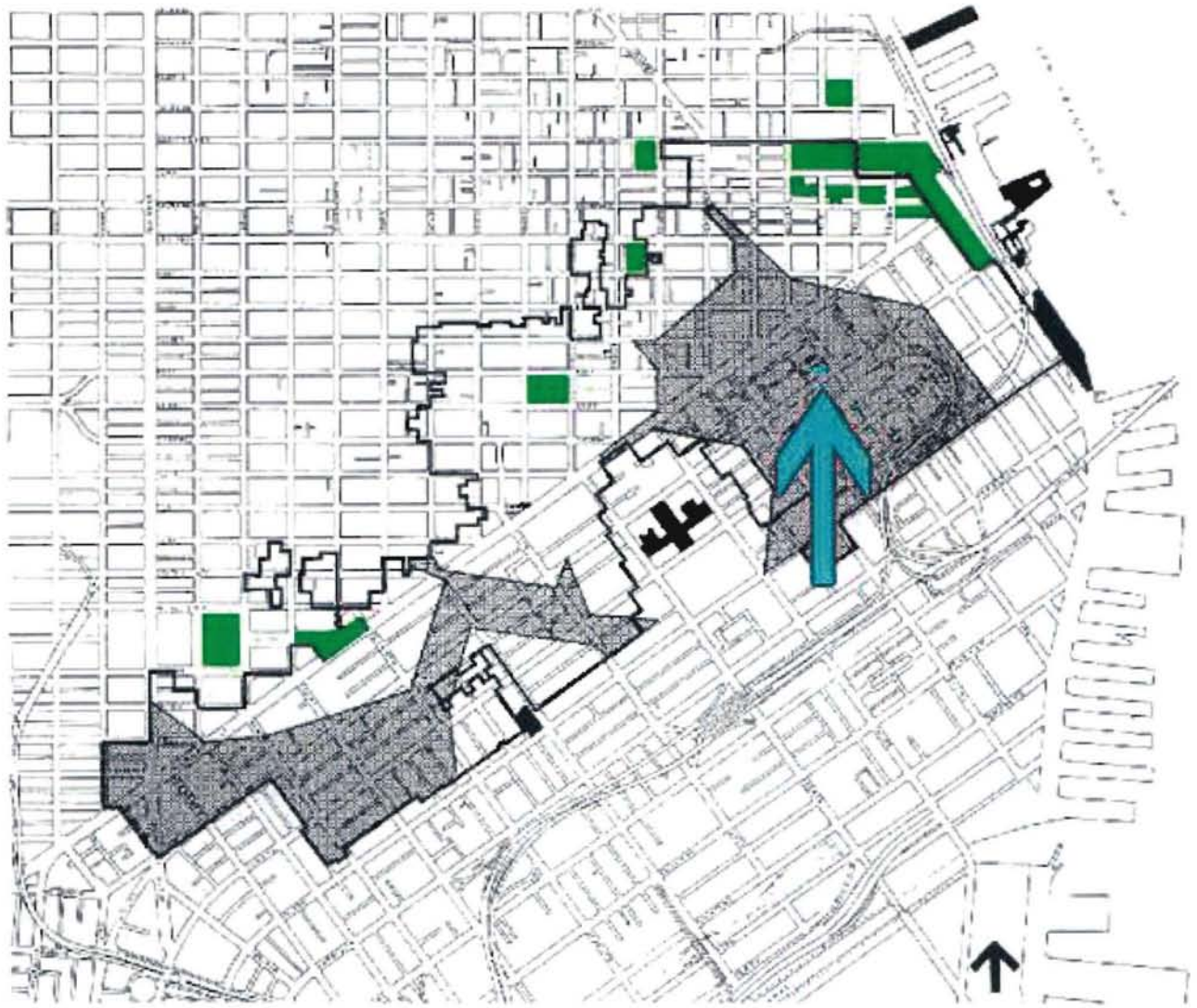
**2005
SAN FRANCISCO, CA
REBAR**

Park[ing] is an urban intervention which initially started in San Francisco, CA that expands the idea of open green space in a dense urban environment. The intervention reclaims a 2 hour metered parking space and transforms it into a mini park. Sod is laid on the space along with a tree and benches. Rebar's goal is to temporarily alter the parking spot and expand the public realm to improve the quality of urban human habitat. They also hope to bring into attention the lack of habitable green space in cities, and hope to open up a greater discourse regarding public space in urban contexts.

This concept of re-inventing green space in a parking area is a good example of how these residual spaces in the urban context can serve different functions. The park[ing] idea is a creative temporary solution that provides people a space to relax, rest, and interact.



Financial District - San Francisco, CA



Major Open Spaces

-  Existing Open Space
-  Open Space in Planning Stage
-  Area Deficient In Open Space
(Not Served By Existing Open Space
Or Open Space In The Planning Stage)
-  PARK(ing) - 11.16.05
-  Proposed C-3 District Boundary

0 400FT

Map 3



Site Analysis

- 37 site criteria
- 39 site possibilities
- 69 site studies

site criteria

- _spaces with voids or vacancy in the urban context
- _spaces that have the potential to connect or link other occupied spaces
- _spaces that have the potential for varied activities
- _spaces that have the potential to be walkable
- _spaces that are overlooked or forgotten among the built environment
- _spaces that have the ability to accommodate a large number of people
- _void or vacant space in a walkable area
- _spaces that are traveled or passed by, but not utilized
- _spaces near or adjacent to residential areas



site possibilities: macro study

The initial study consists of first-hand analysis of the study area. The area includes all of Downtown Detroit bordered to the west by the John C. Lodge Freeway; to the north by Interstate 75; the east by Interstate 375; to the south by the Detroit River. The analysis is intended to focus on void spaces in the Downtown area that have the potential to become usable, functional spaces. The analysis includes the documentation of these various sites and its surrounding context with the goal to better understand the study area and the specific sites. The next pages will include the initial photographs and diagrams of the study area.





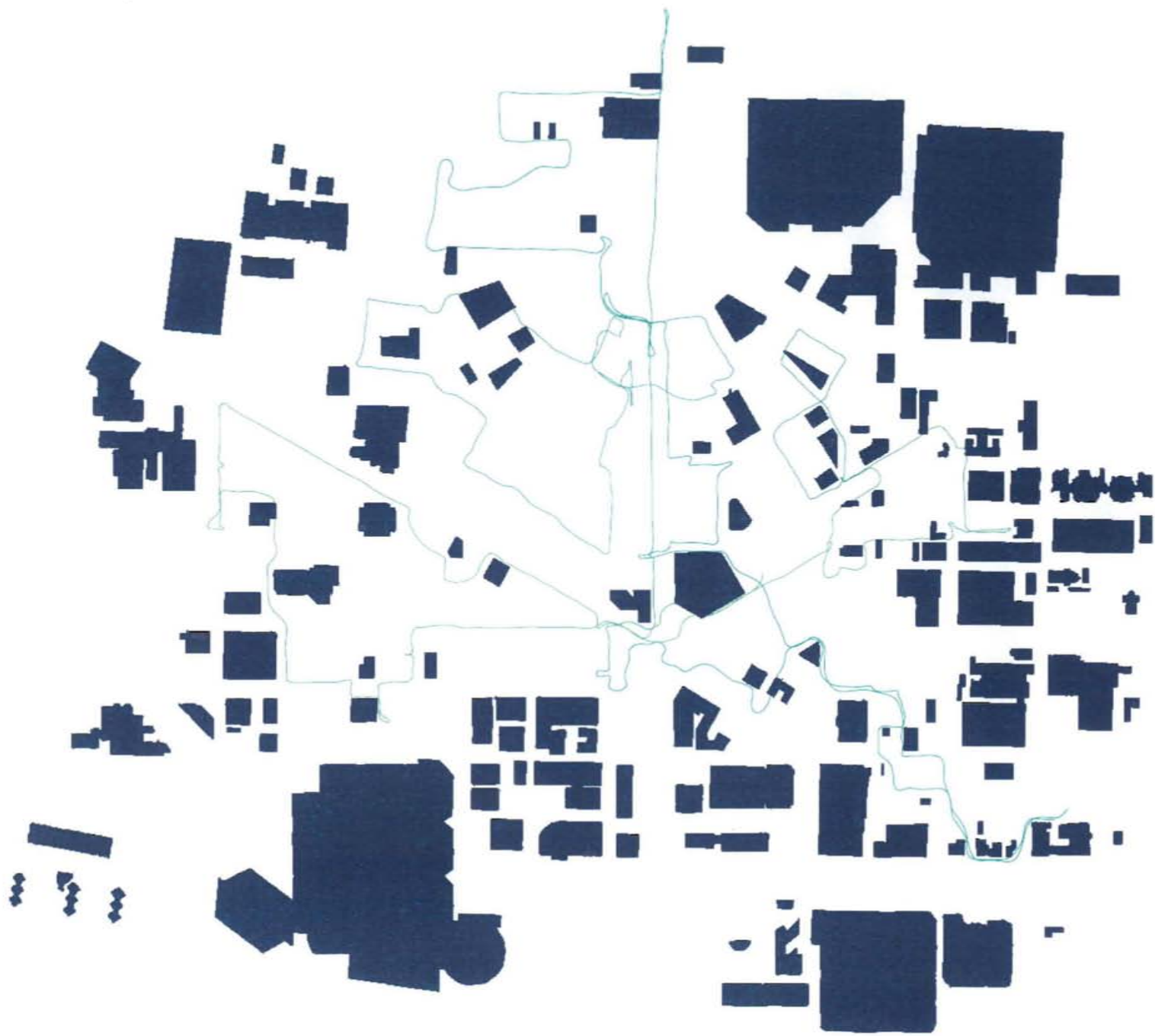


— path of travel

building occupancy

■ occupied

— path of travel



building occupancy

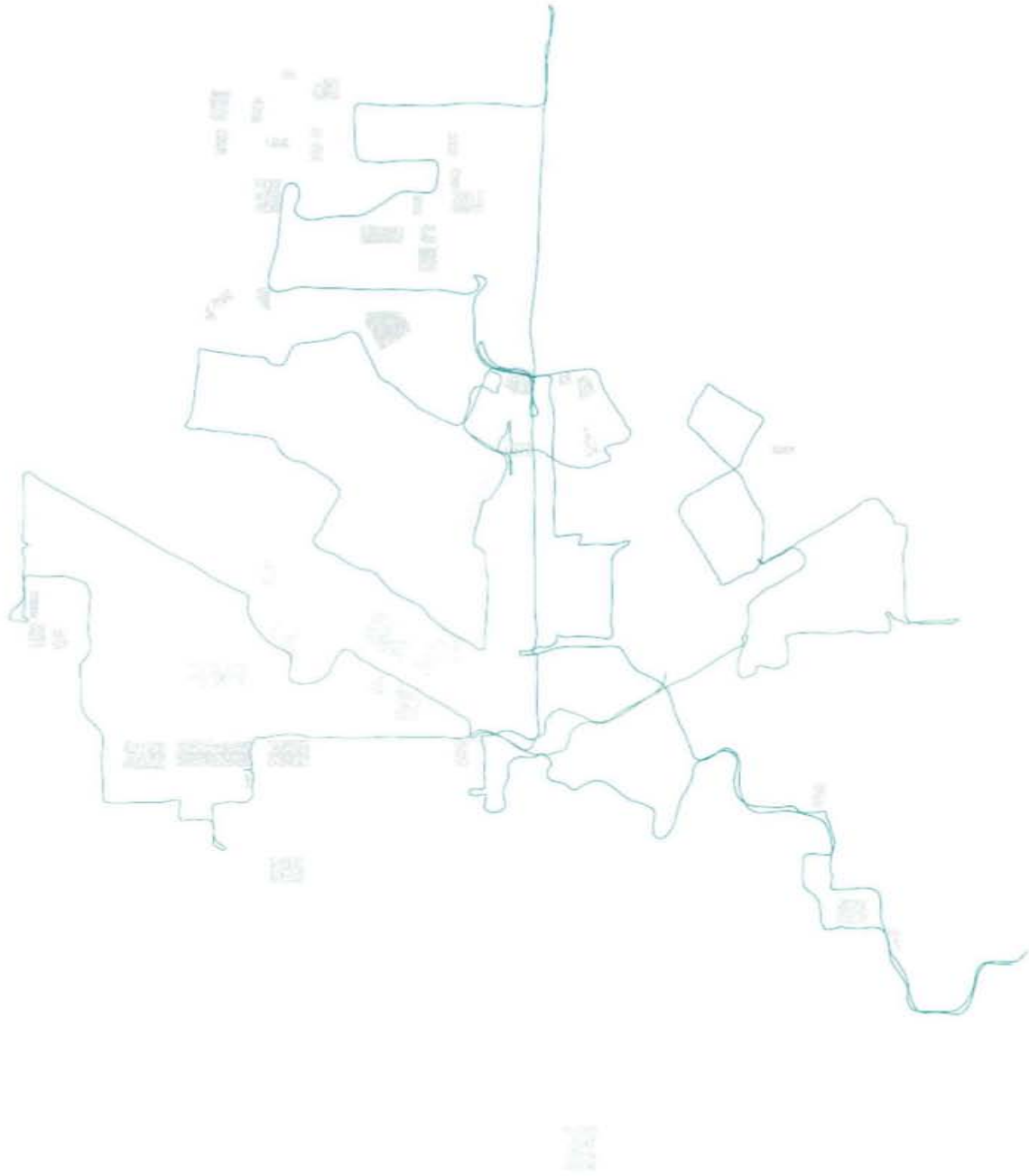
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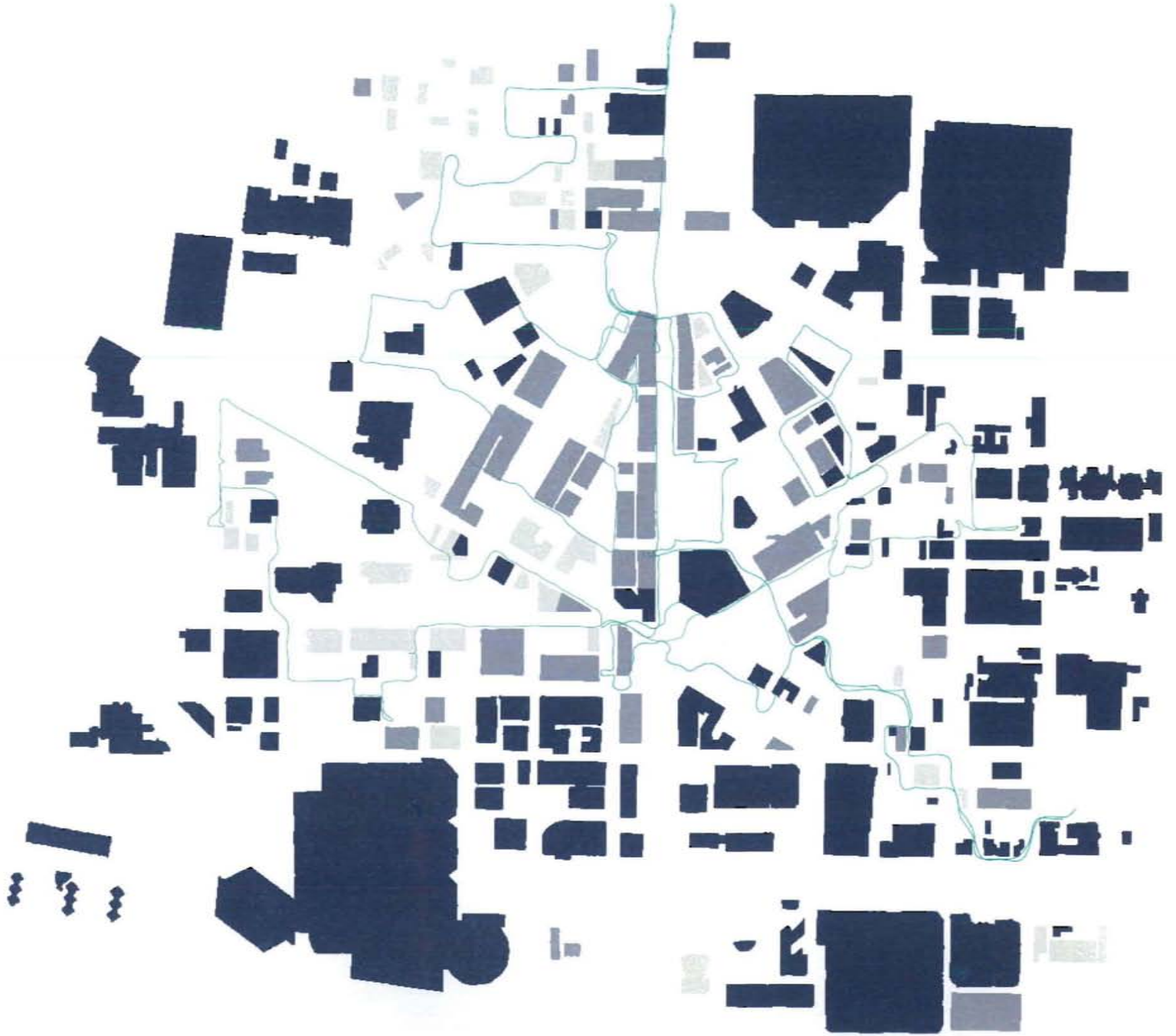
building occupancy

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building occupancy

- occupied
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- path of travel



building occupancy

■ occupied

■ half occupied

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■ areas of potential



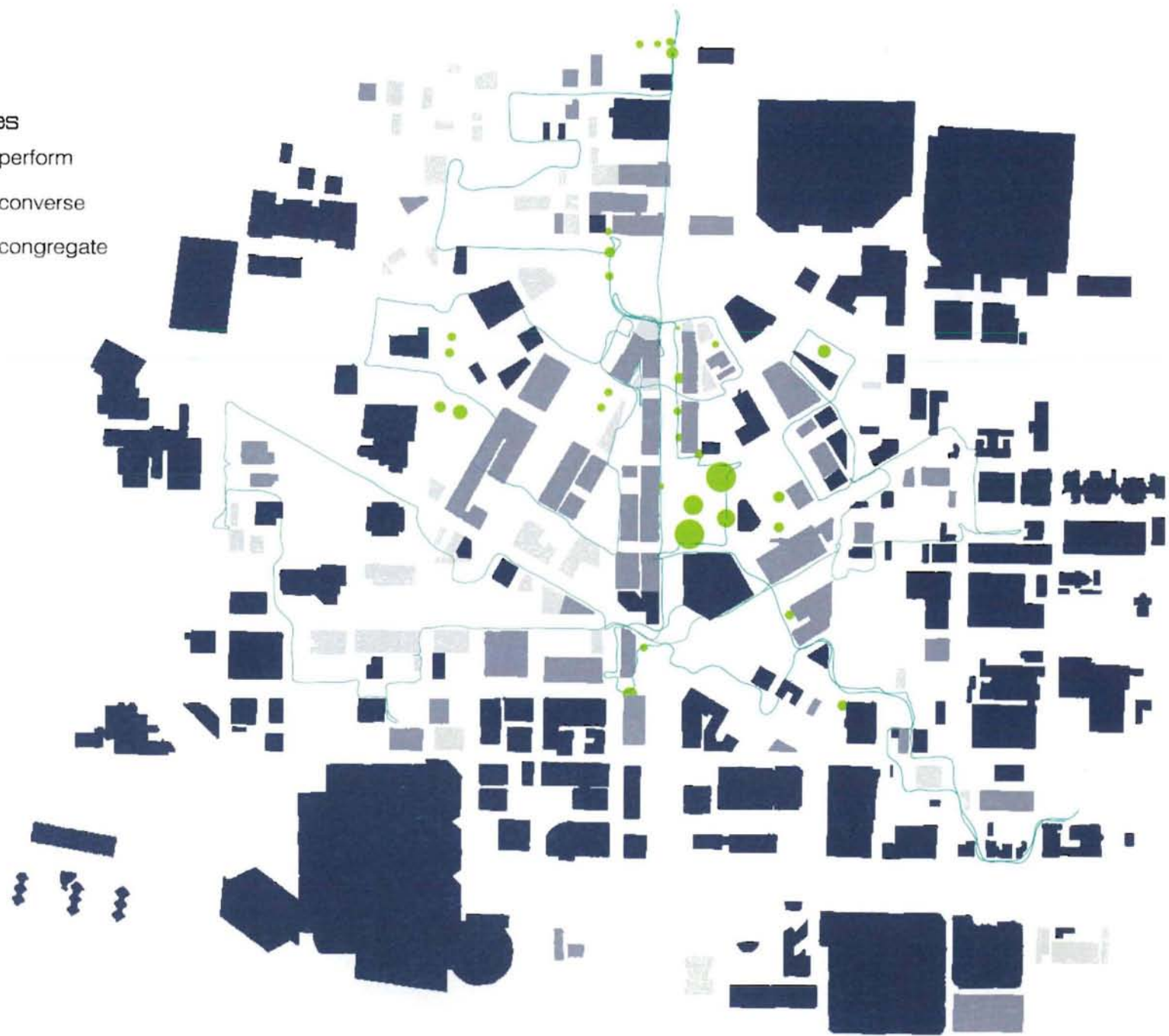
building occupancy

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— path of travel

potential activities

- play
- perform
- relax
- converse
- interact
- congregate



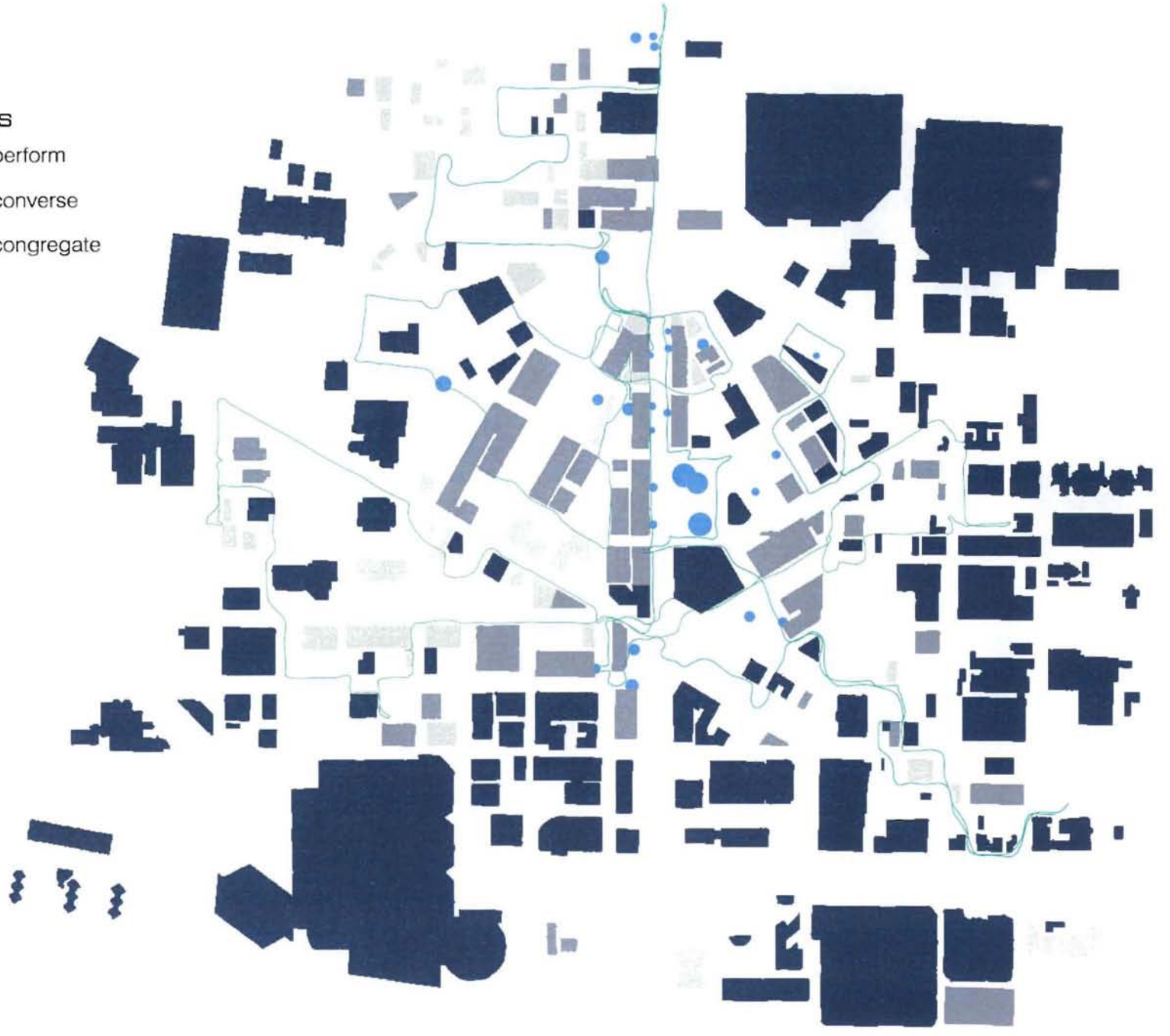
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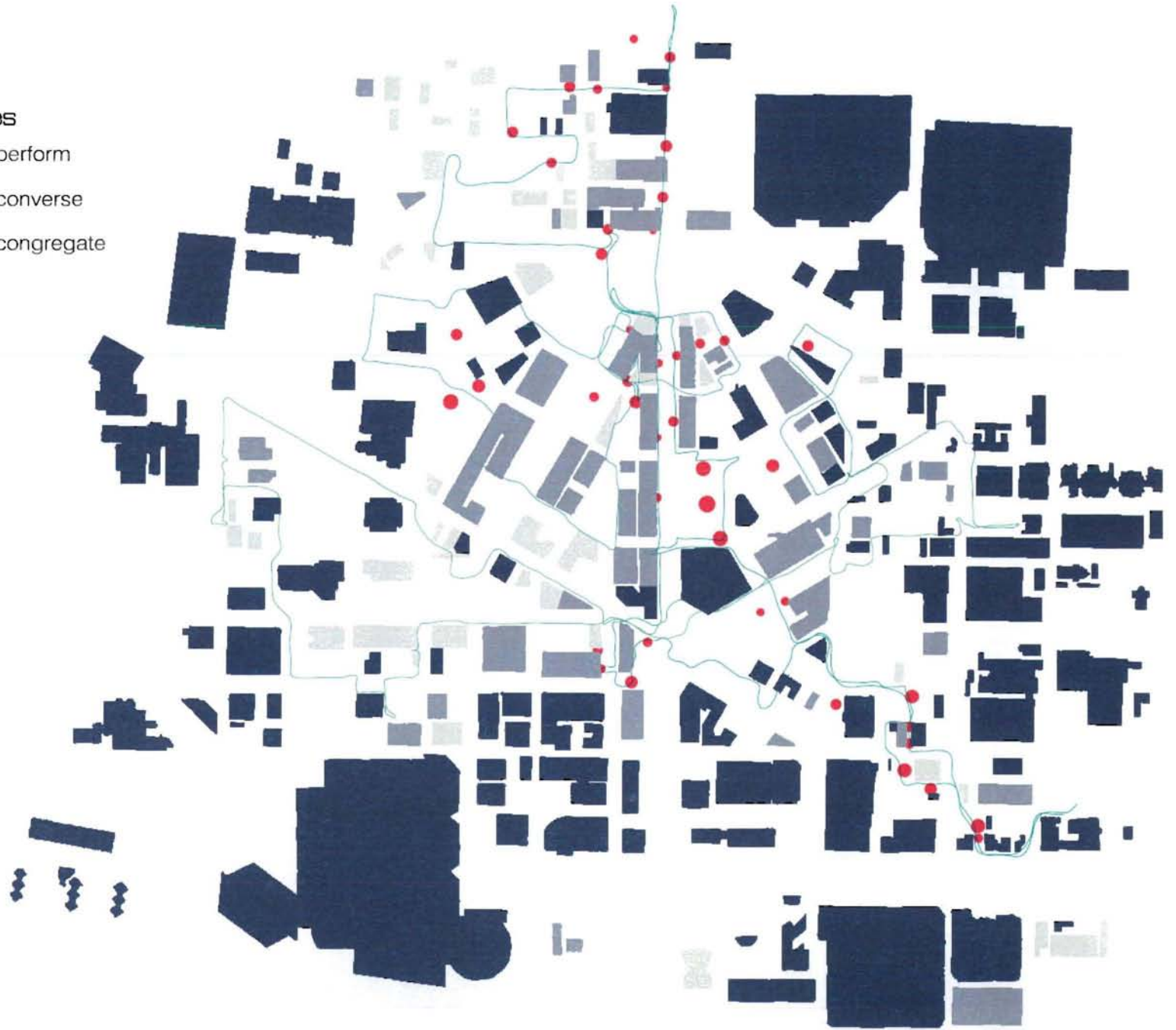
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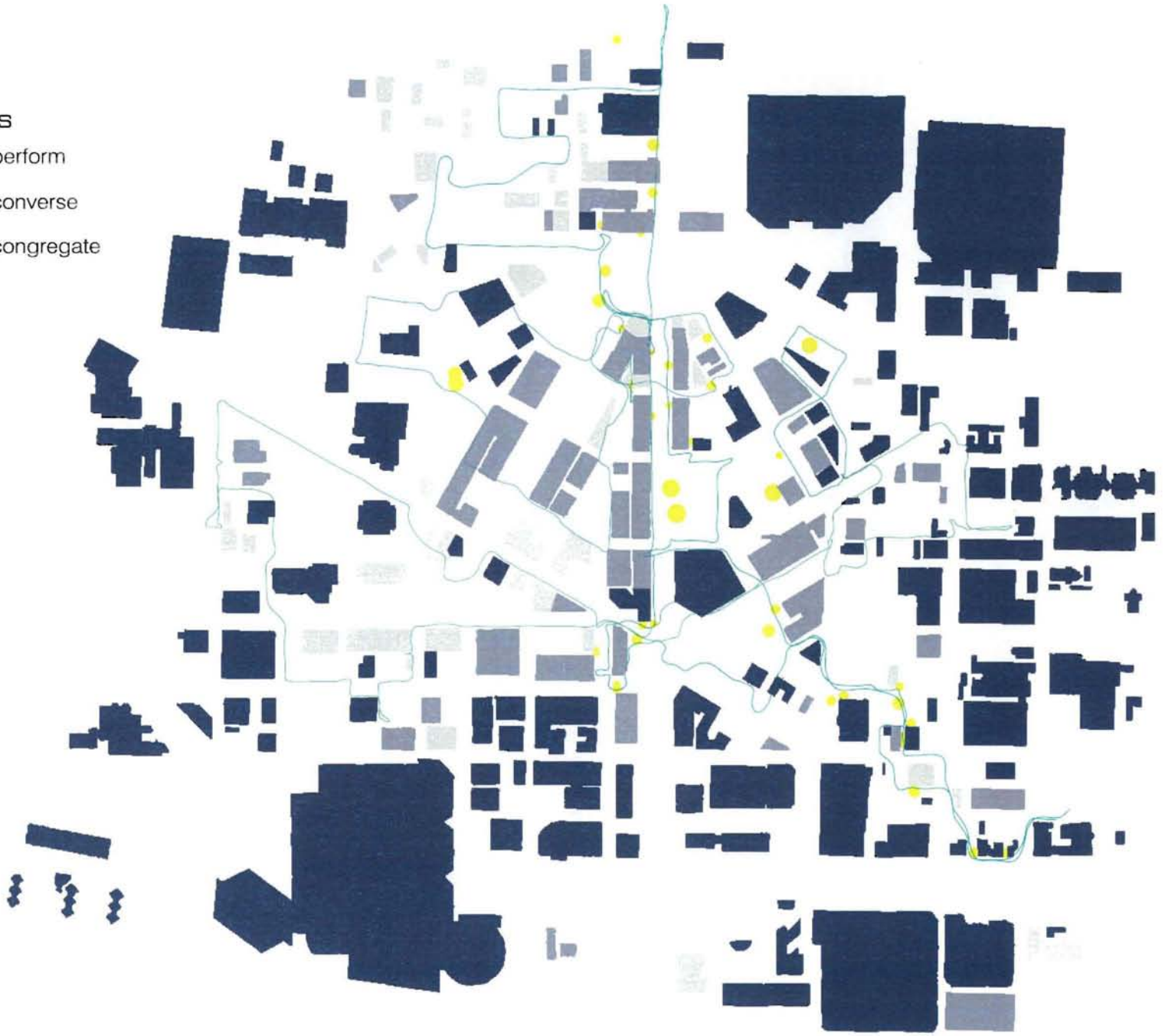
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— path of travel

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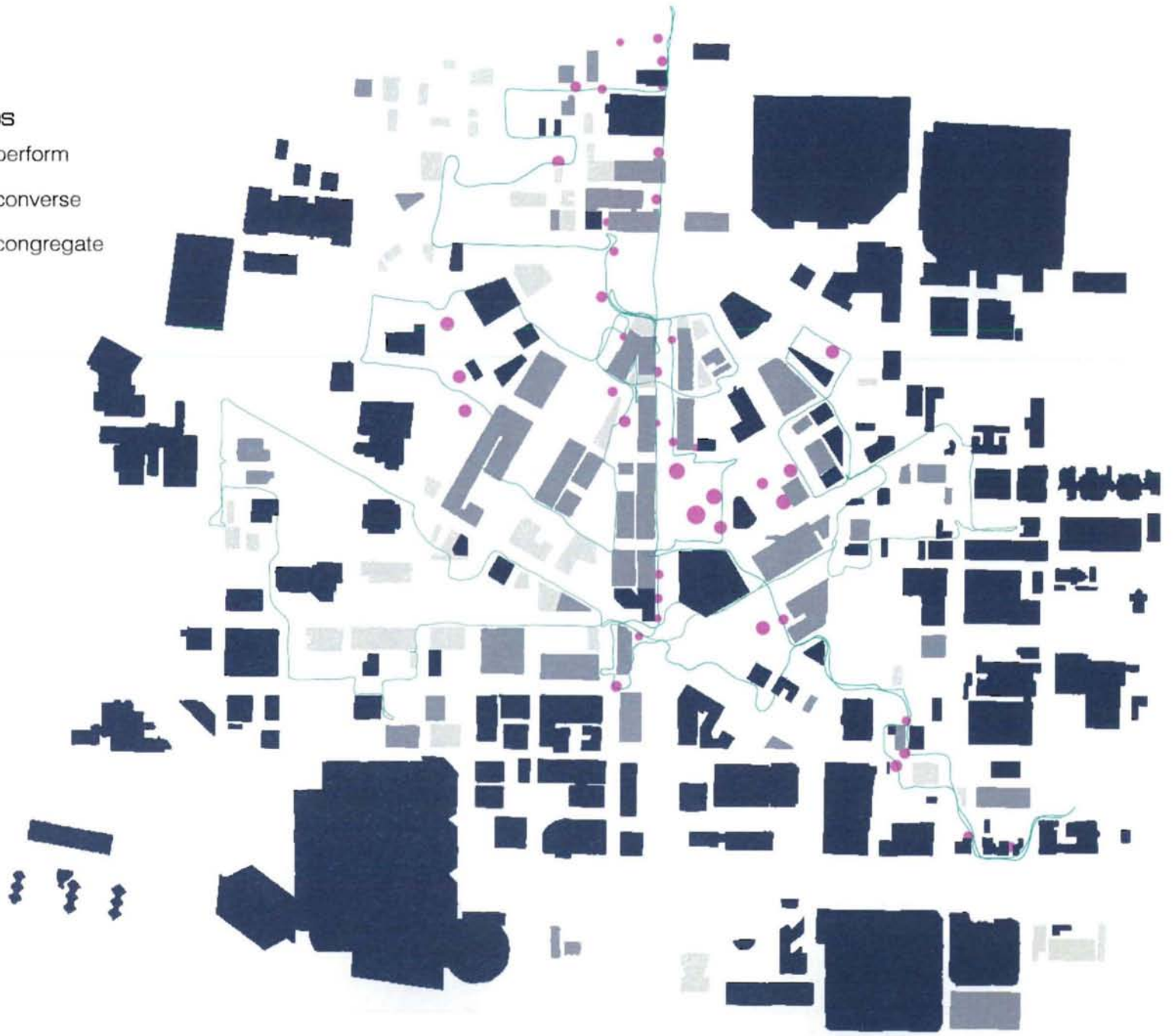
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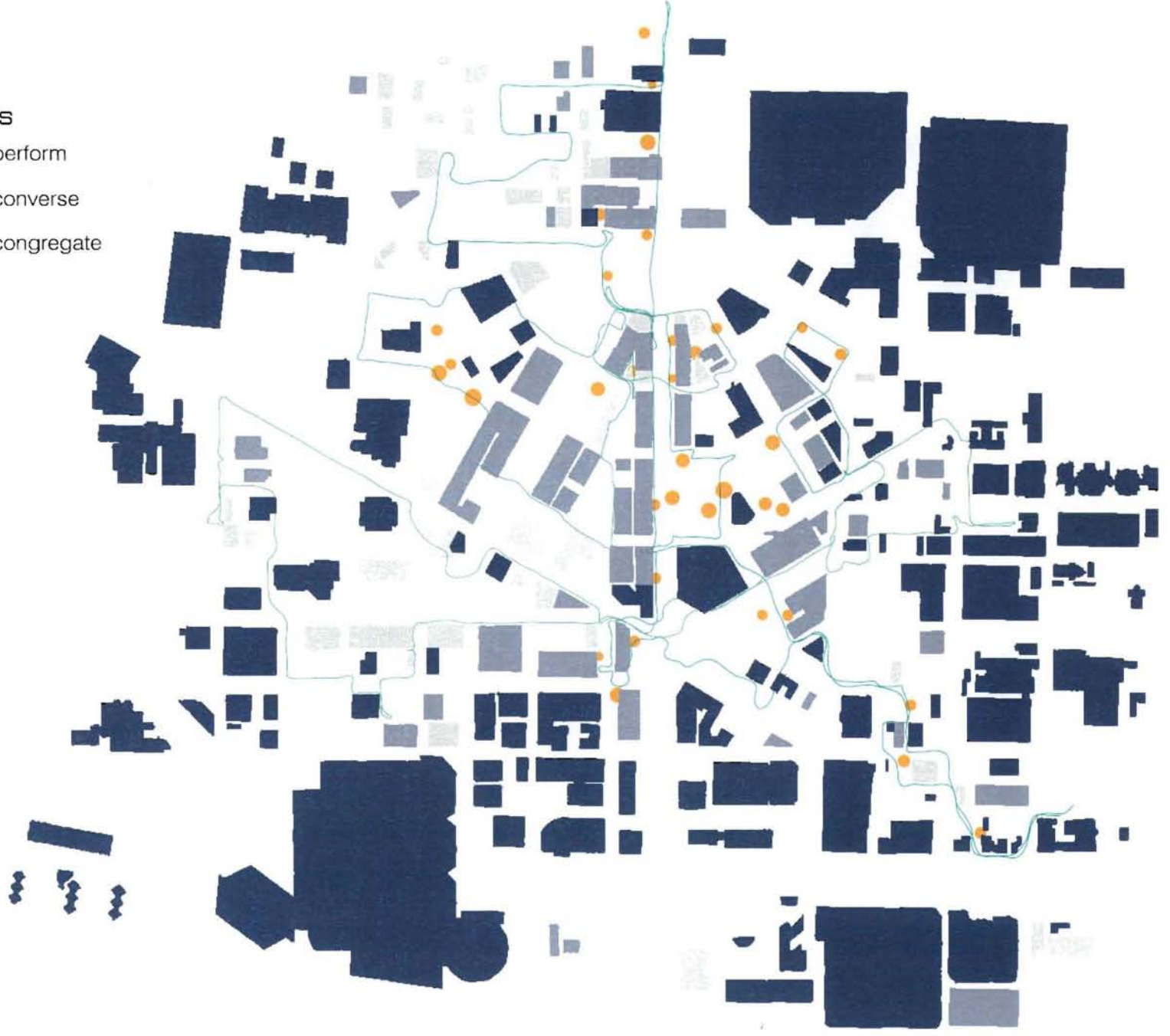
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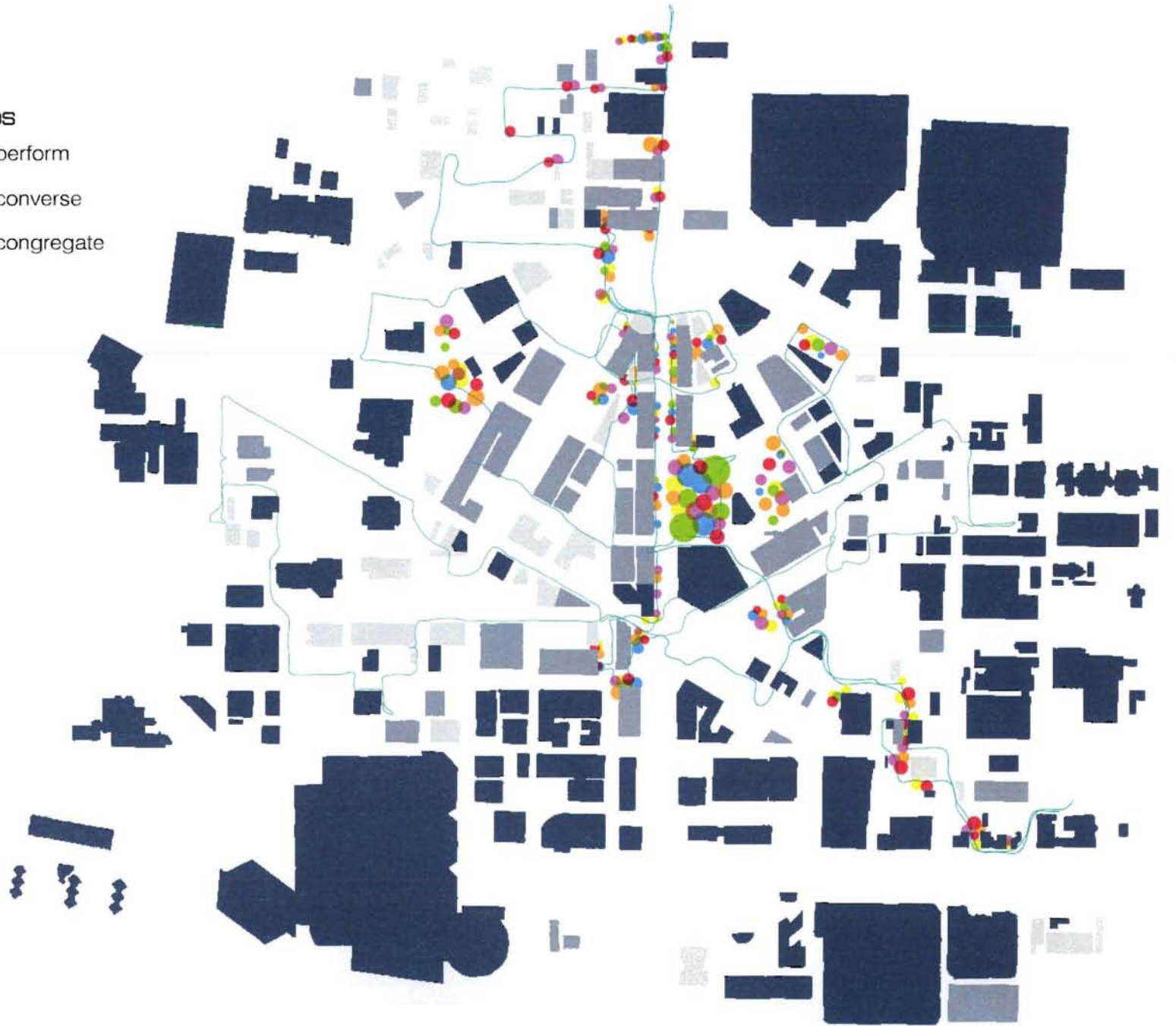
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building occupancy

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- unoccupied

— path of travel

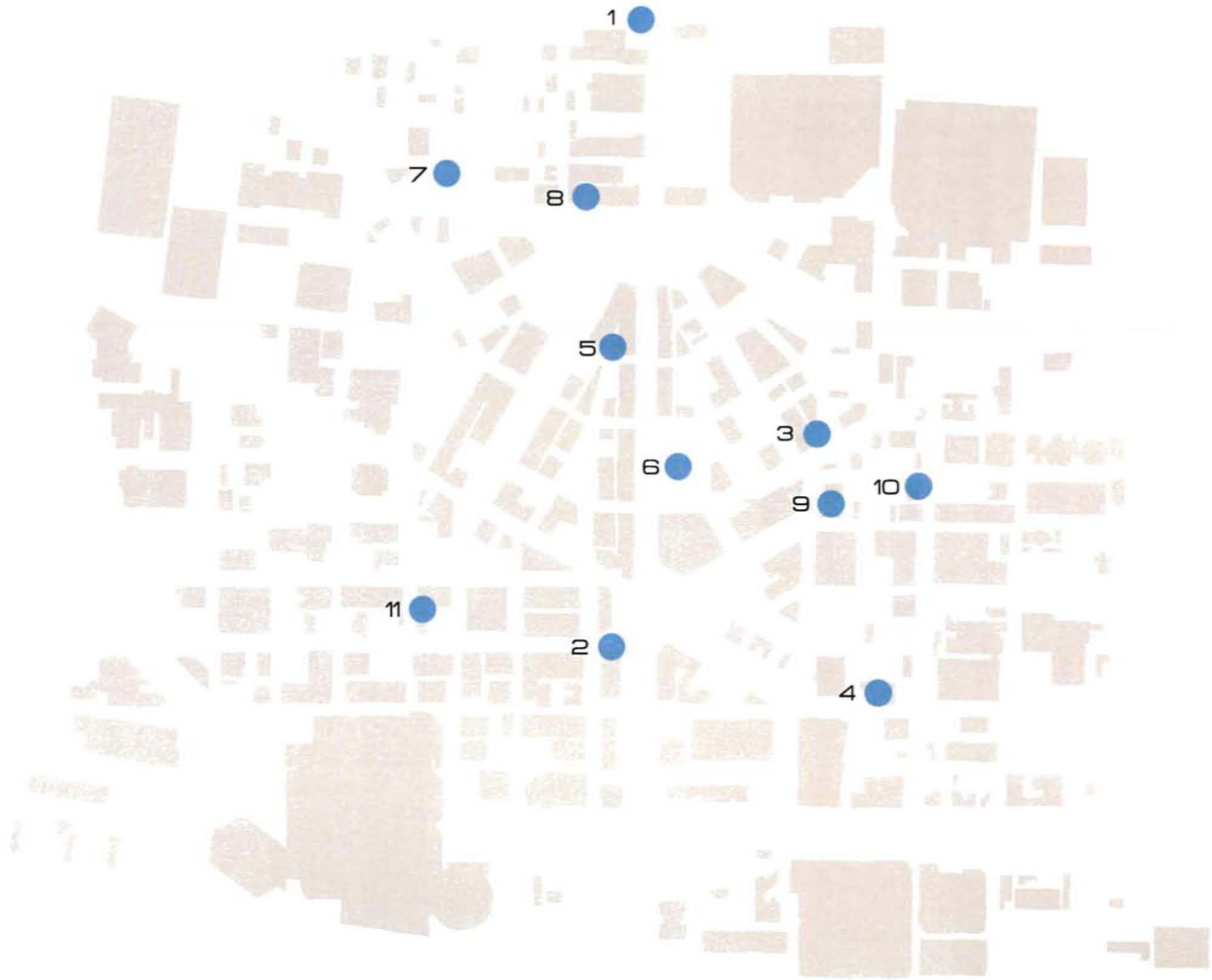
potential activities

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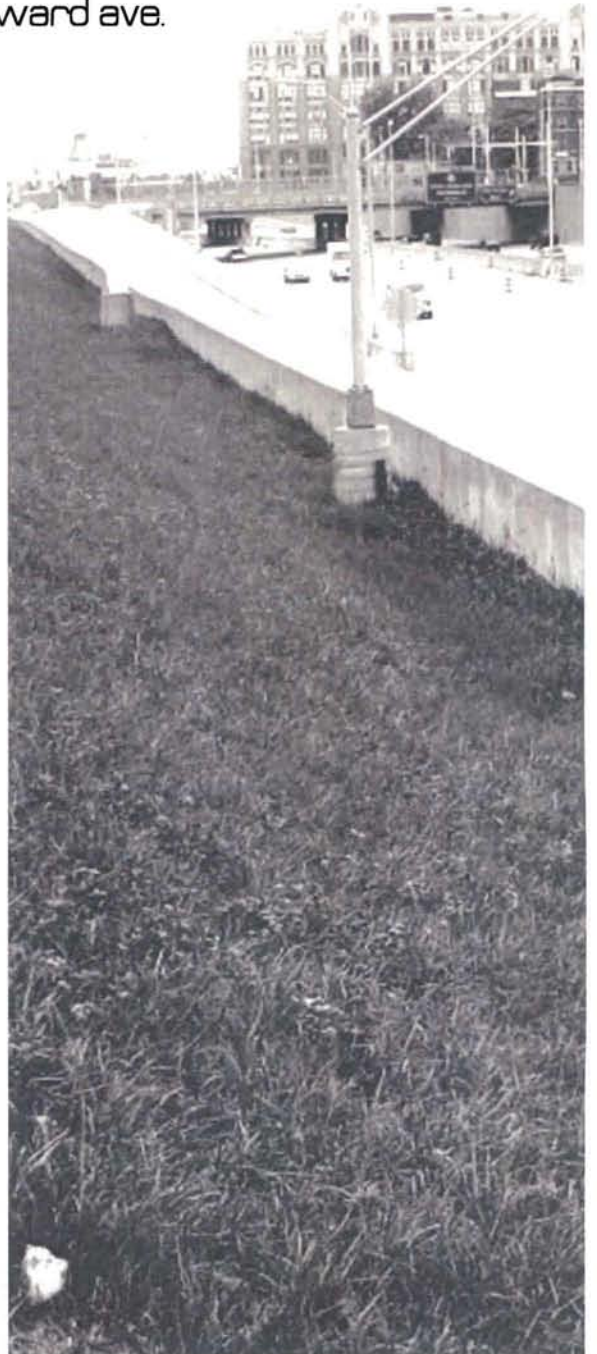


sites

● site potentials



site one: interstate 75 / woodward ave.

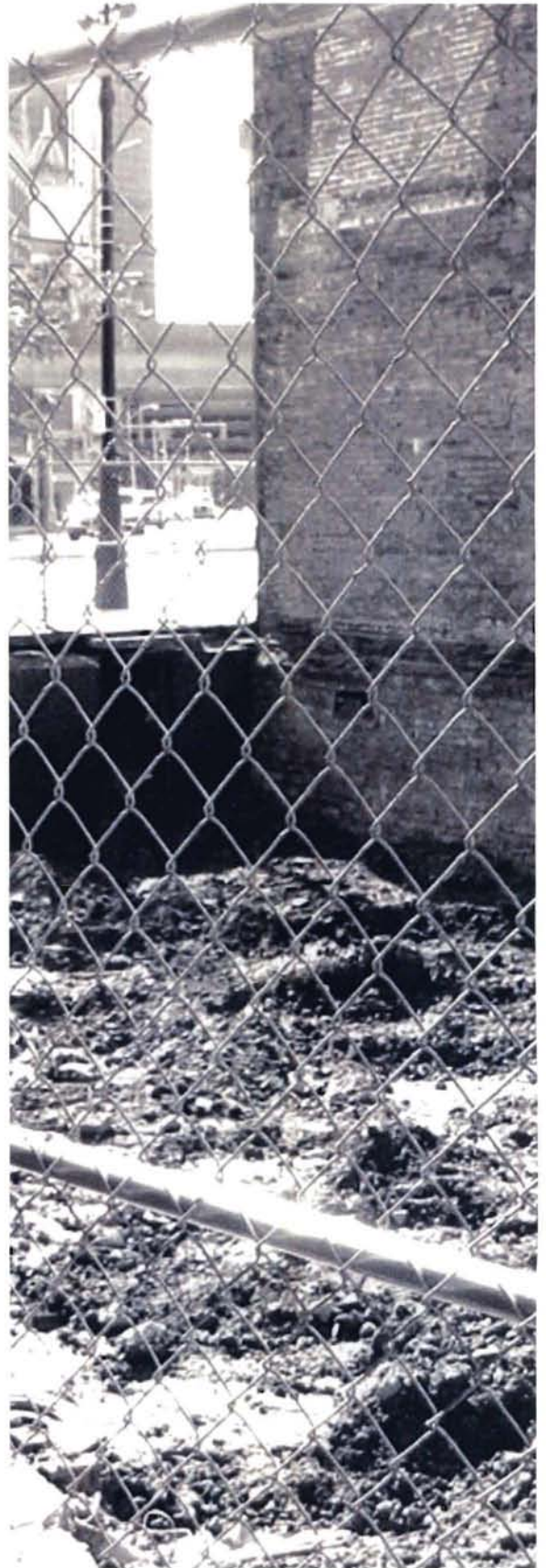




site two: woodward ave. / fort st.



site three: gratiot | randolph

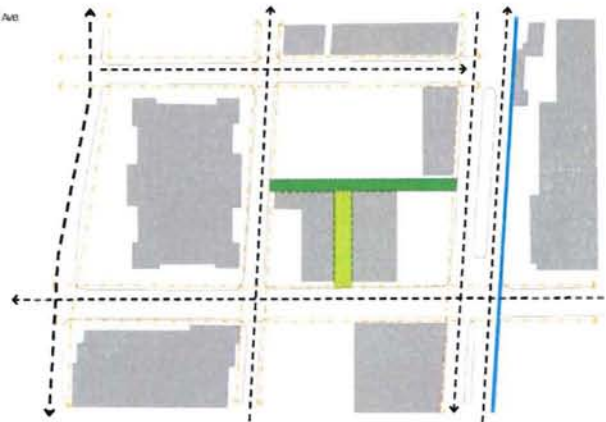




site four: brush st. / congress st.

Site TWO / 75 / Woodward Ave

- Unclaimed Space
- Temporary Space
- Vertical Unclaimed Space
- Vehicle Circulation
- Pedestrian Circulation
- Buildings
- People Move



land use

- retail / entertainment
- residential
- commercial
- institutional
- industrial
- open space / park
- vacant
- parking

potential activities

- play
- perform
- relax
- converse
- interact
- congregate



site five: 30 clifford





site six: hudsons block

site seven: cass ave. / adams ave.





site eight: park ave. / adams ave.

site nine: cass ave. / adams ave.

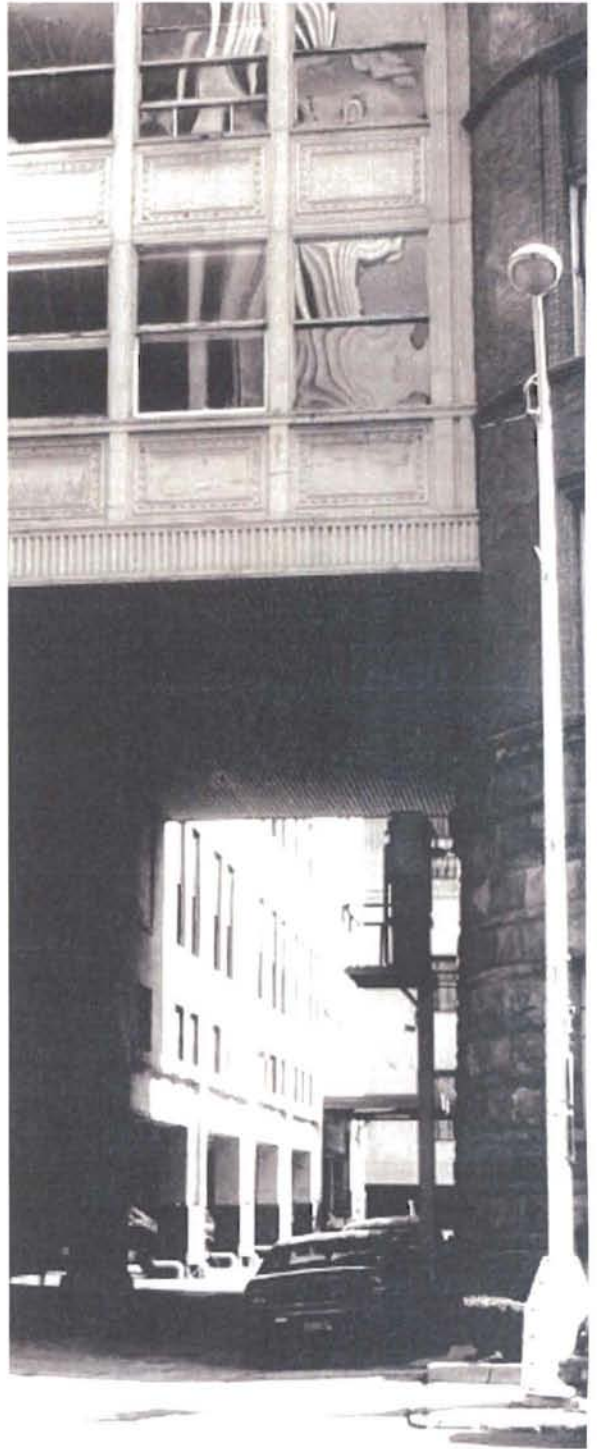




site ten: beaubien | macomb



site eleven: cass ave. / fort st.

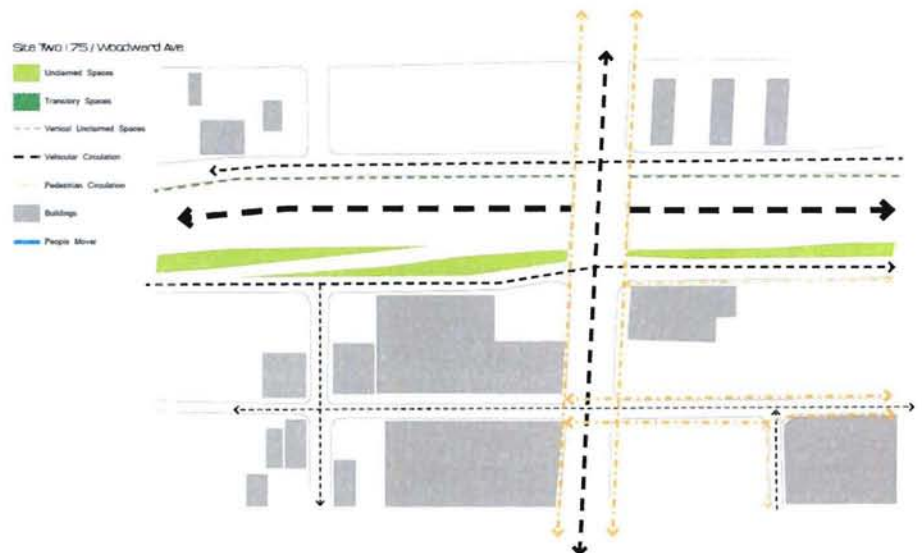


site studies: micro study

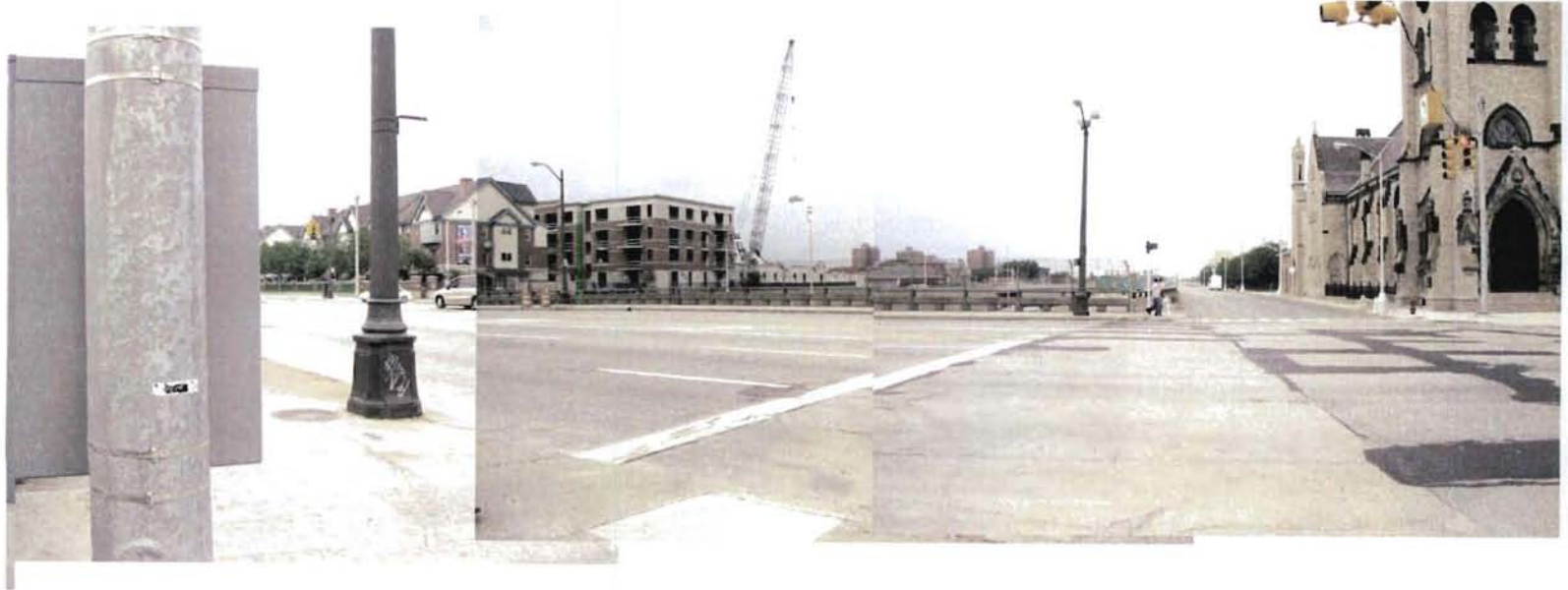
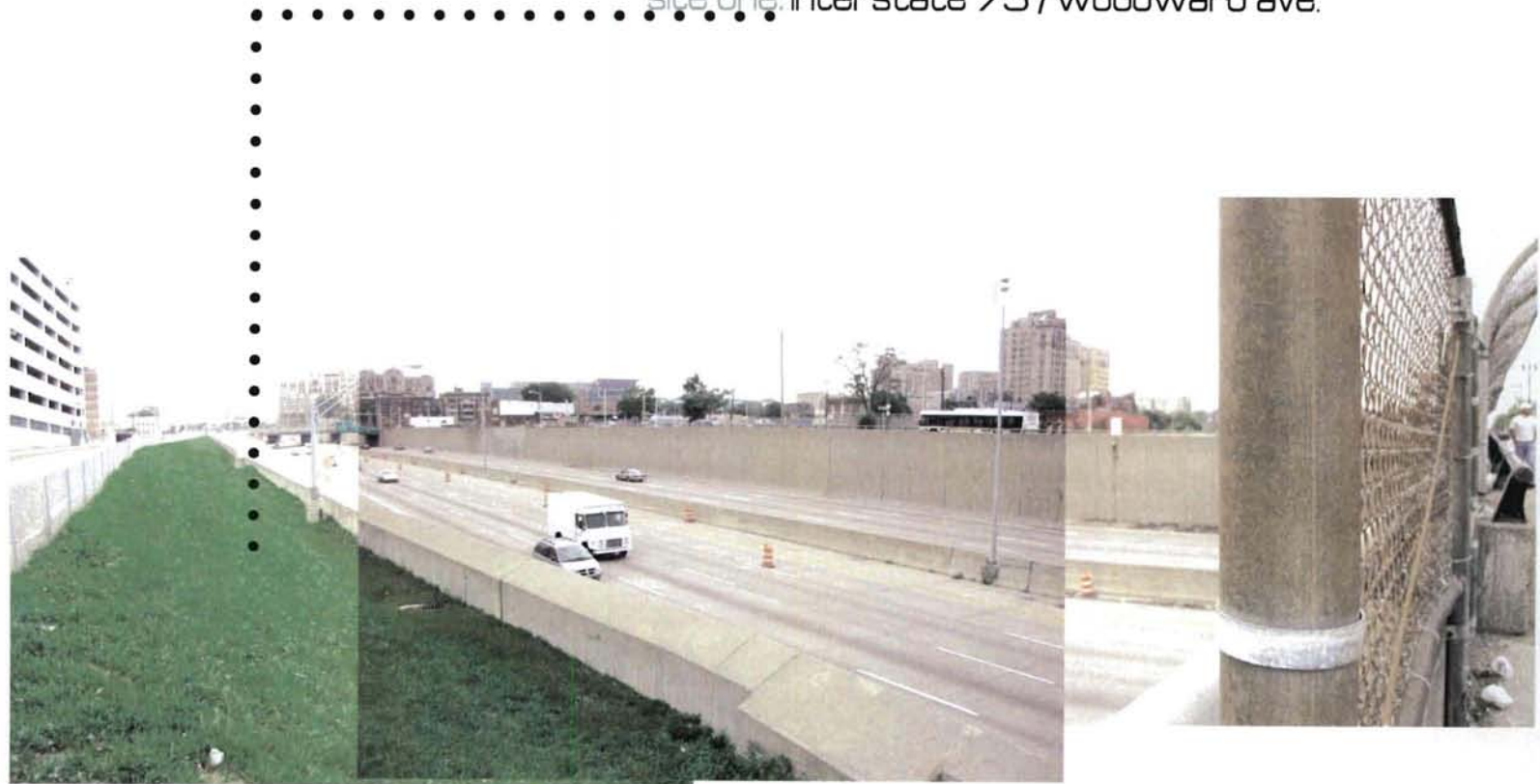
The initial study of site looked at a zoomed out level of the study area. The micro studies look more closely at three specific sites: Interstate 75 / Woodward Ave.; 30 Clifford; and the Hudson's block site. The study now concentrates on surrounding buildings and uses as well as potential activities at each site. The next pages will included photographs and diagrams of the three sites.

site one: interstate 75 / woodward ave.

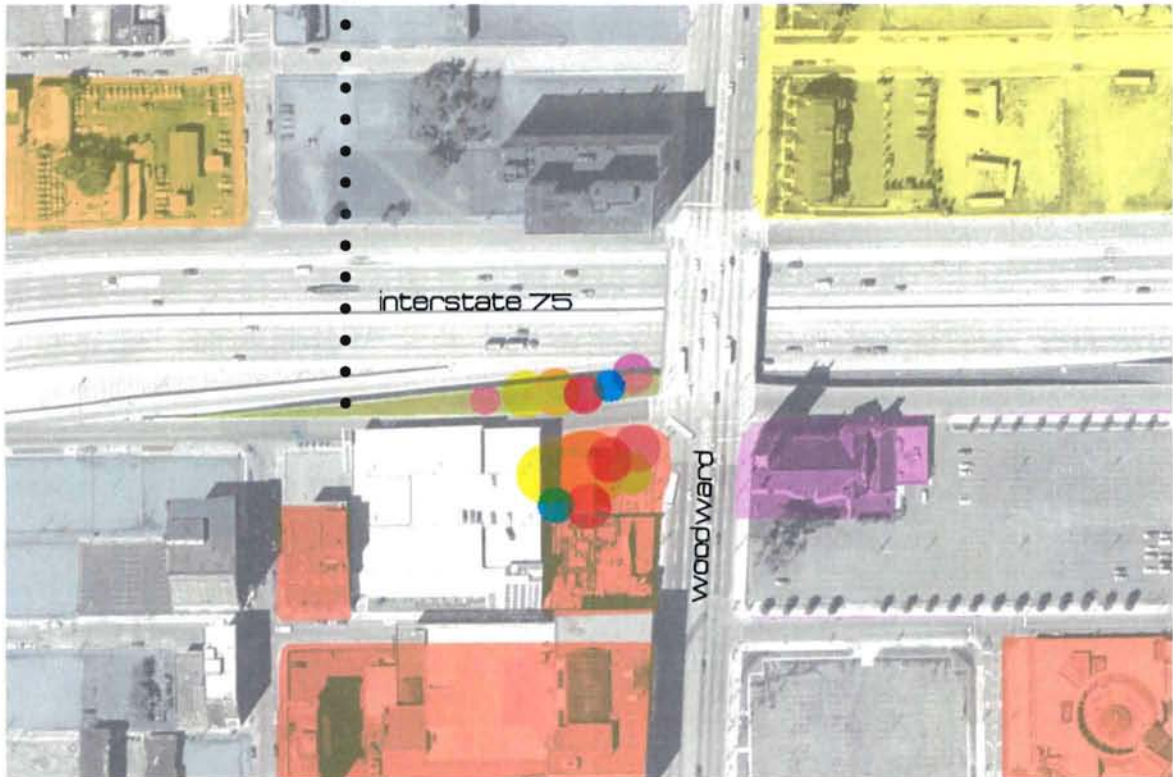
This site lies on the border of the study area. It is a unique site in that it is not a lot or a building, rather it is the unclaimed space on the edge of Interstate 75. There are two contrasting conditions to the north of the site. On one side, there are blocks of vacant lots. To the other side are new residential condominiums called the Cross Winds and historic Brush Park. To the south of the site lies Foxtown, part of the entertainment, and commercial district. Comerica Park, and Ford Field are also just south of it. Many people pass this site everyday since it is a main north and south thoroughfare. The number of people who pass the site on a gameday double, and it becomes a high density area.



site one: interstate 75 / woodward ave.



site one: interstate 75 / woodward ave.



land use

- retail / entertainment
- residential
- commercial
- institutional
- industrial
- open space / park
- vacant
- parking

potential activities

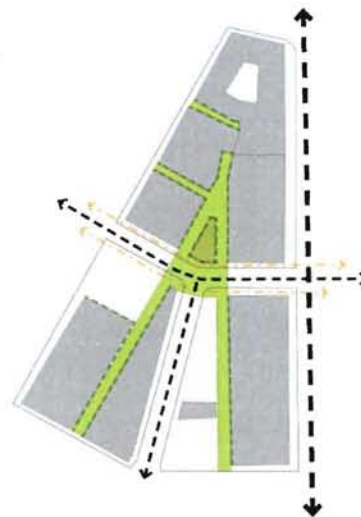
- play
- perform
- relax
- converse
- interact
- congregate

site five: 30 clifford

This site sits inside two converging alleys. Within the lot lies a small vacant building. There are two surface lots and the Detroit Synagogue to the south. To the west are residential apartments with small retail on the bottom floors. Directly to the east is the Angel Child Care and Parent Institute. The area itself is going through a major transformation. Washington Blvd. has new streetscaping, and on the Woodward side, planned residential units and retail are starting to spring up.

Site Two: 30 Clifford

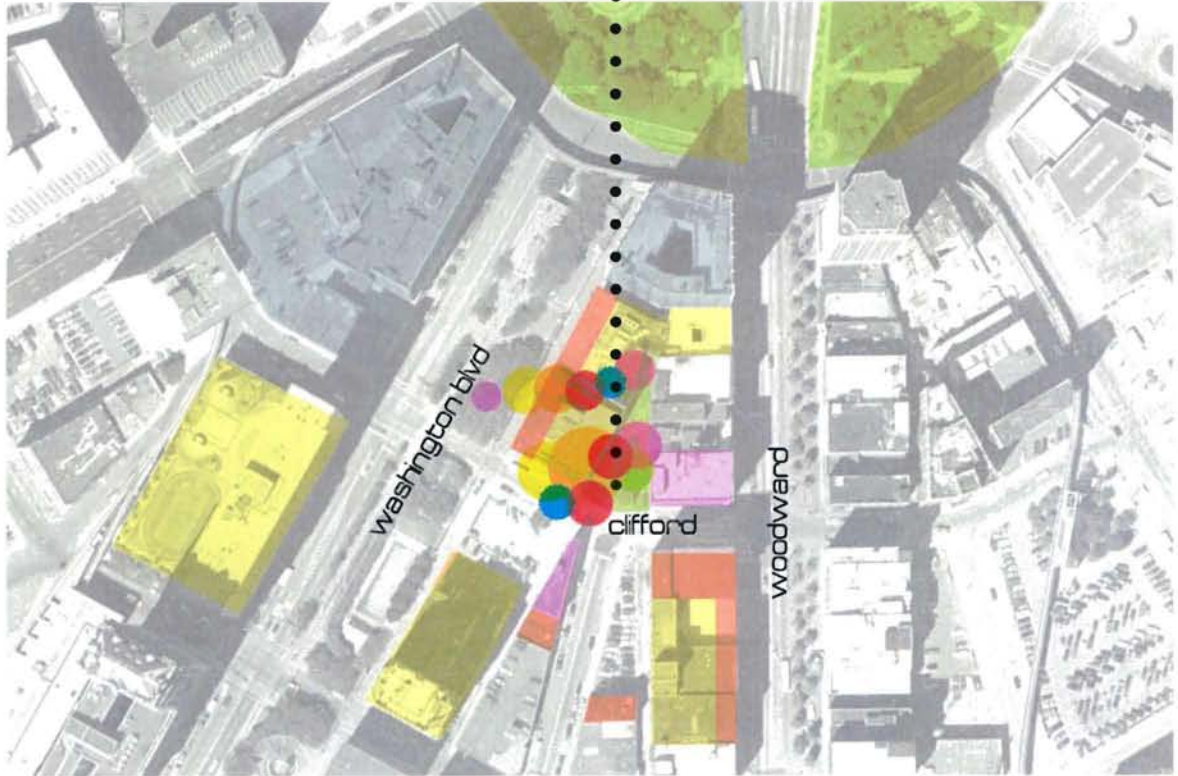
- Unclaimed Space
- Vertical Unclaimed Space
- Vehicular Circulation
- Pedestrian Circulation
- Buildings



site five: 30 clifford



site five: 30 clifford



land use

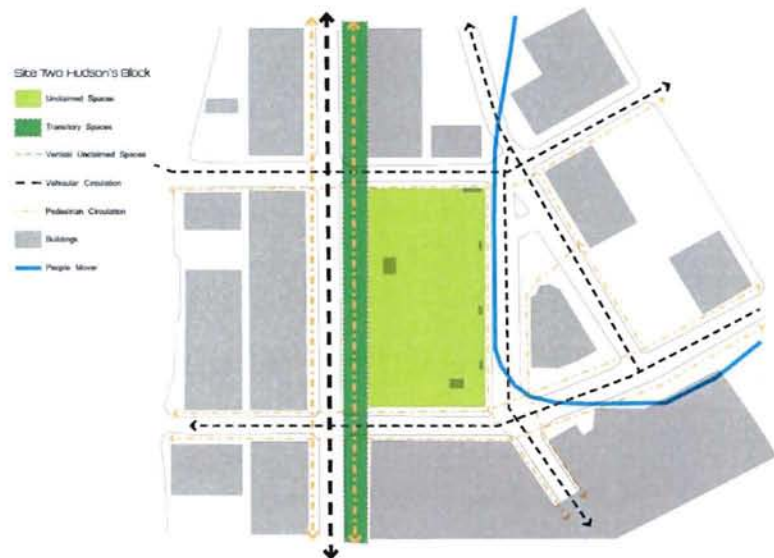
- retail / entertainment
- residential
- commercial
- institutional
- industrial
- open space / park
- vacant parking

potential activities

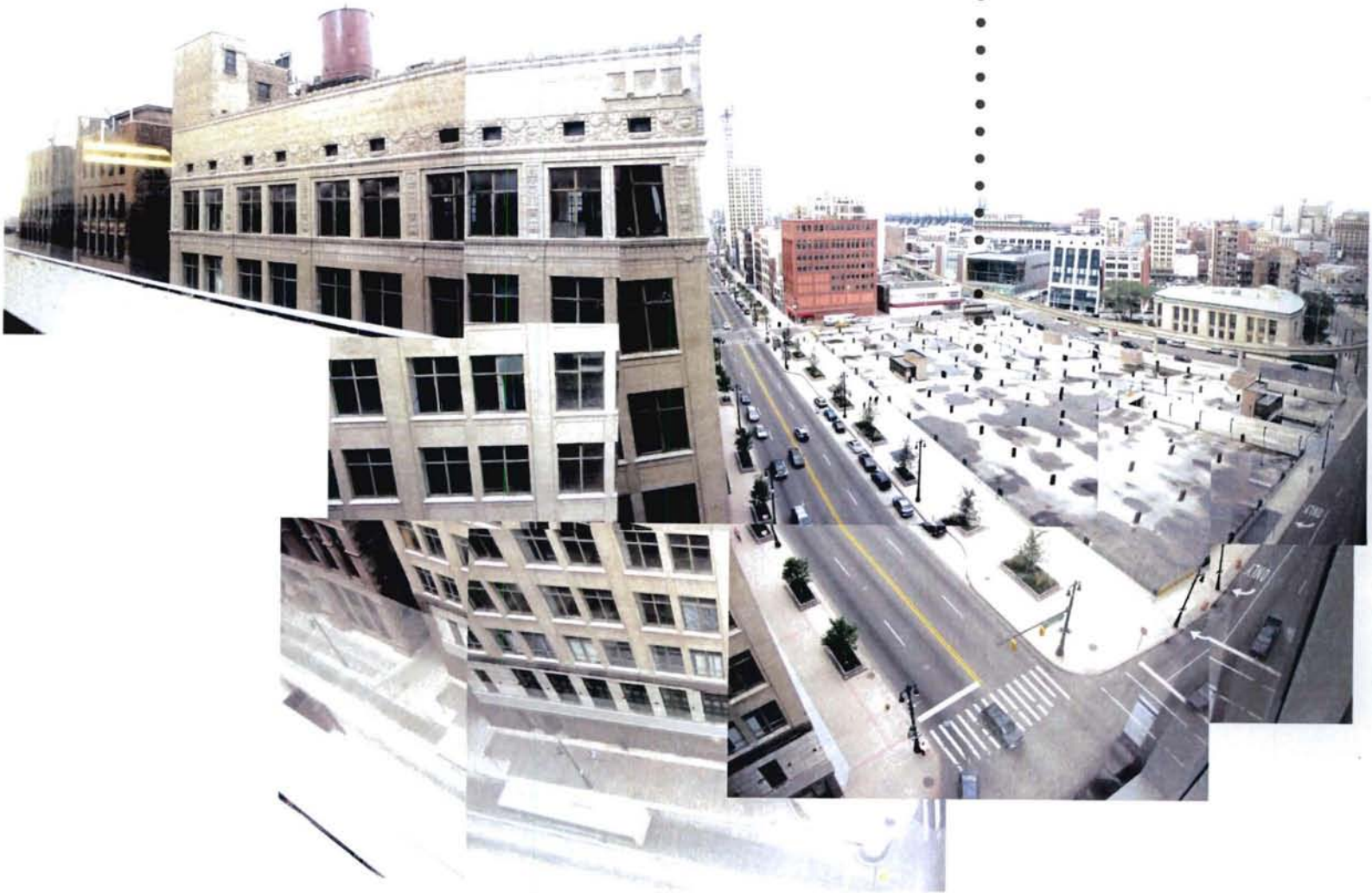
- play
- relax
- interact
- perform
- converse
- congregate

site six: hudson's block

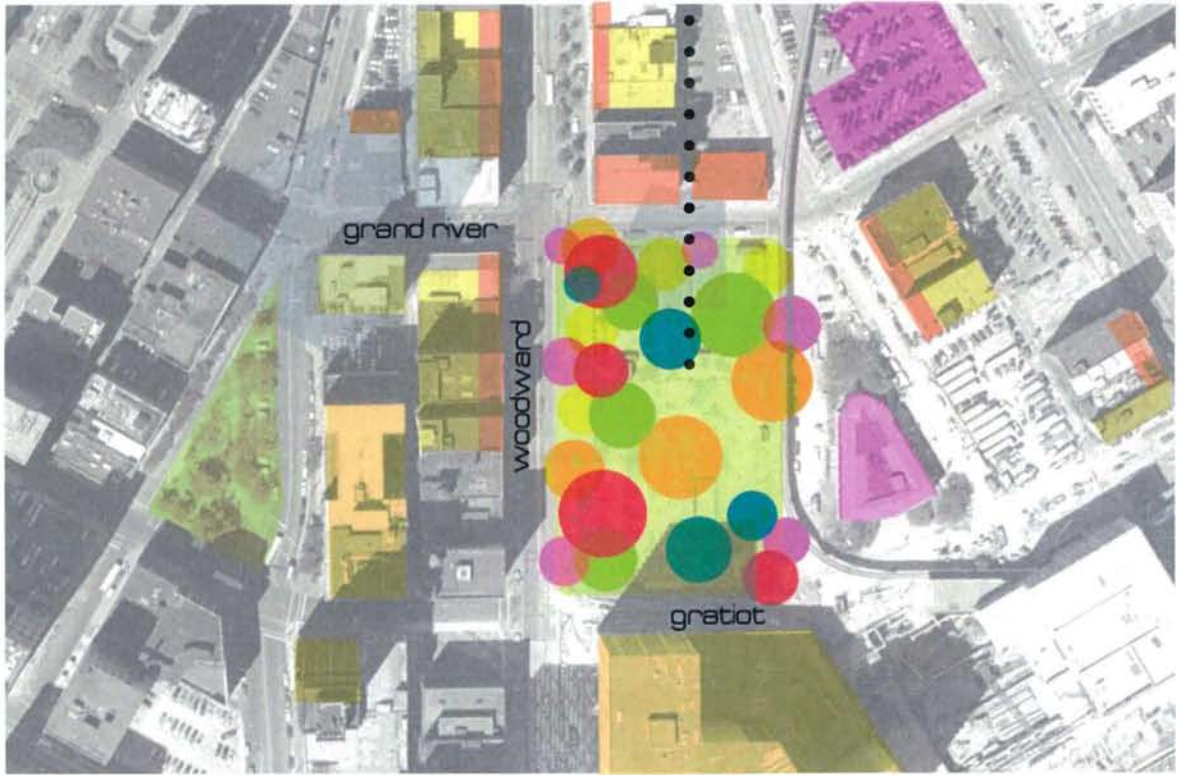
This site carries with it a lot of history. It was the former J.L. Hudson department store site. Presently it is used as an underground garage. At the surface stick out columns that seem to commemorate the old department store yet at the same time they wait to be built on. From the sky it looks like a giant plaza in the middle of the city, however gates prevent any inhabitants from entering the space. Pedestrian flow is heavy on the site's perimeter especially during the business hours. The area is seeing a revival of residential units and retail. To the south lies Compuware, Campus Martius, and the central business district. To the west and north lie newly renovated lofts and retail. To the east is a branch of the Detroit Public Library, a people mover station, and the newly constructed YMCA building.



site six: hudson's block



site six: hudson's block



land use

- retail / entertainment
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project program

The programs proposed attempt to utilize marginalized, unclaimed spaces. These interventions operate within the margins of society and challenge the usual thinking of how spaces should be programmed and utilized. The programs will attempt to transform these sites to become more productive threads in the urban fabric. There are two categories of sites; unique sites and infrastructure sites.

INFRASTRUCTURE SITES

These sites gave the inspiration of a proposed program, but at the same time, the programs have the potential to be applied to other sites across the city.

Site One: Interstate 75 / Woodward Ave. Urban Agriculture

The spaces on the edges of freeways are often green spaces, but are forgotten. This particular site is adjacent to Woodward Ave., a main north/south thoroughfare. Pedestrians and motorists pass the site everyday. The program proposed on the site is an urban farm. It will feature a vegetable garden that can be used by everyone. This concept can be implemented along many area freeways. In the larger context these farms will weave throughout the city and encourage alternative ways of utilizing freeway edges . Overall the program challenges people to look at the spaces in a different way.

Urban Farm: In order for vegetation to grow the quality and amount of light is very important. Water is another consideration that is necessary for this program. These two factors would have to be assessed on a site by site basis.

Actions:

- _ **Planting** crops that are easily managed and easily harvested
- _ **Harvesting**, getting people involved and engaged through community harvesting
- _ **Interacting**, people have the chance to interact in a productive cause
- _ **Learning**, the farm gives people the opportunity to get educated about the idea of farming in the urban environment.

Site Two: Woodward and Fort, Information Kiosk

This space is the intersection of many people often of different professions. The site is kept up, but there is a vagueness of claim. The program will introduce a hub for information. It will be a kiosk to access the internet, watch the news on TV panels, access newspapers, and post events. The kiosk will also offer free wireless access and power-jacks to plug in electronic equipment. The actual kiosks will rotate giving the opportunity to serve as a filter for pedestrian flow as well as allow for the interaction of people. This kiosk will be the main center to satellite kiosks across the downtown area.

Actions:

- _ **Sitting**, pedestrians can sit and relax on the seats of the kiosk
- _ **Interacting**, people have the chance to interact in a productive cause

Site Three: Gratiot and Randolph, Floating Vegetation

On this site once stood a vacant building, but is now torn down. The site is next to a popular jazz club and Harmonie Park. The proposal is to create the illusion of a vertical floating garden that faces Gratiot as you come downtown. It takes the form of a trellis, but in this case the structure

is translucent. The trellis will link to a green roof on top of the Harmonie Centre building. The green roof will be a catalyst for other roofs in the city to be transformed into an inhabited, utilized space. These spaces can foster the growth of vegetation as well as interaction. It will play a role as the symbol and vision to make people environmentally conscious citizens.

Actions:

_ **Relaxing**, people have the opportunity to relax on the green roof

_ **Interacting**, people have the chance to interact in a productive cause

_ **Observing**, people can observe the city from the 3 levels and the green roof

Site Four: Brush and Congress, *Elevated Inhabitation*

This program attempts to claim the air rights between buildings. This site in particular lies on an empty lot converted into parking. On its eastside is St. Andrew's Hall, a popular music hangout. Elevated Inhabitation are pods that would become spaces for artists and musicians. They would attach to the sides of buildings on tracks and hangers and could be elevated or lowered depending on the empty lot's use. More Pods could be added to the tracks. This insertion has the potential to be added to different sites throughout the city, and as a unit could act as more permanent architectural intervention.

Actions:

_ **Dwelling**, As mentioned before, the pods are intended to be spaces to sleep, work, and hang out.

_ **Teaching**, One plan for occupancy involves a co-op where each occupant would have to donate their time to teach their craft to children as well as adults. In return the occupant will benefit by either getting a discount on rental fees for the space or getting the space for free.

_ **Expressing**, As the graffiti on the sides of the site suggest, the pods will also be a form of expression. The occupant has the opportunity to change the color and signage of the pods by exchanging the exterior panels.

UNIQUE SITES

The programs proposed for these sites were initiated from observations of the site. These programs are derived directly from site and context and have the potential to become a significant and permanent architectural space.

Site Five: 30 Clifford, Performance Theater

The Clifford site has a unique condition of converging alleys. The perceptions of alleys are that they are dark and dangerous. The program proposed here is an open theater where the alleys become the entrance. This is a re-imagined function of the theater. It contrasts the traditional theater dynamics. The red carpet is transformed into the alleyway in which you progress through a graffiti gallery. The vacant building on the site will be renovated into dressing rooms and house equipment. The stage will be nestled at the meeting point of the two alleys forcing the people to experience the alley.

Actions:

- _ **Performing**, the theater can host a variety of performances and plays
- _ **Painting**, artists will have opportunities to create art on the movable displays
- _ **Interacting**, people have the chance to interact in a productive cause
- _ **Watching**, people can watch and observe during performances or while artists work on the display walls

Site Six: Hudson's Block, Public Gathering Space

The Hudson's Block carries with it significant historic baggage. It was once home to the famous J.L. Hudson department store. The building was torn down and is presently used as underground parking. The columns that protrude through the surface act as symbols that look toward future development. However, the surface level cannot be accessed because of a fence that is around its perimeter. The proposal for this site is to tear down the fence and make the surface an active public gathering space. The site can be seen as a space for temporary events and changing functions. As the most distinct feature on the site, the columns will be

utilized as designated meeting places. The columns will become the centerpiece of each space and will be amplified by lighting.

The proposal will include three levels:

Level 1:

Art Installations: The site will accommodate the creative arts. There will be both temporary and permanent installations. A permanent one will be the use of vertical lighting elements that attempts to give the site a sense of enclosure and presence. Other installations will require participation and interaction.

Actions:

_Observing, People will have the opportunity to view and interpret public art installations by local artists and designers. There will be events when artists are invited to display their work and the space will function as an art gallery. The installations are intended to start conversation and foster a vibrant space for people to gather.

_Participating, Some installations will require some form of participation by the audience members. This will foster conversation among the audience.

Rentable Stores: The site will have designated places for street vendors. The city owns these spaces, but will agree to rent them for free to vendors. In return the vendors will have to agree to keep up the appearance of the space. Each week a different vendor will get a chance to sell products.

Actions:

_Selling, Vendors have the opportunity to sell products in designated spaces or rooms.

_Shopping, People will have the opportunity to buy from the various vendors in the space.

Level 2: Provides "opportunities of use". Not really one single program. Could be utilized for moving watching, concerts, and gathering.

Level 3: Utilized for green space similar to a green roof where people can inhabit and relax.

Actions:

_Interacting, People can interact with each other in a more desirable, dynamic space. Meeting and greeting fosters conversation. Conversation could be about the visually appealing space, about the art installations in the space, or could just be about the happenings of daily affairs.

_Relaxing, People will have the opportunity to sit and relax and take in the sights and sounds of the space. Also the opportunity to just sit there and watch other people passing by is another activity.

Site Seven: Cass and Adams, Recreation Park

This site encompasses a wide area of vacant lots. They are overflow parking for downtown events. On a normal day they function as wasted space. This area hardly sees any pedestrian traffic and feels like an urban desert. The proposal here is a public Recreation Park that enlivens the area. It will function in the same manner as a public park — no membership fees — and can be accessed by all people of all ages. It will be an undulating landscape that designates different kinds of activities. The proposal includes various components that utilizes the site more efficiently.

Hills and Depressions: The varying topography provides spaces for opportunities of use.

Actions:

_Playing, The space will have opportunities to do various activities including basketball, football, baseball, exercising, skateboarding, swimming, relaxing etc.

_Sitting, The topography provides green spaces to sit and relax. There are also spaces to sit and watch a performance or movie.

_Interacting, The activities above give people the option to converse and interact. Interaction is the key to the program and fosters friendship among people.

Park[ing]

Parking areas on the site can accommodate both people and cars. It will function both parking lot and congregation space. The structure of the space will be composed of two layers. At the bottom will be the vegetation, which could have varying degrees of topography. On top of these are metal grating pavers that allow the grass to grow through and at the same time let water pass into the soil. This structure is strong enough to still keep this space as parking, but at the same time, the cars will not disturb or damage the vegetation underneath. The program of parking and green space would work at times simultaneously, having parking at designated areas and accommodating people in a different area. Another way would be to designate different times where the space is just parking or just green space. Potentially this concept could spread across many surface lots in the downtown area. The effect would be a mixture of the built and natural environments and would showcase the spaces as a flexible place that can accommodate parking and the activities of people.

Actions:

_Parking, Since the site is still a parking area, cars are still permitted to park in the space. The visual appeal of the site with varying vegetation will be an upgrade from the static concrete surface.

_Sitting, The Site will have places to sit and relax. It will be a space to enjoy and can accommodate picnics and other activities.

Foundation Reclamation:

The existing foundations of demolished buildings will be reclaimed and transformed into usable space. These spaces could accommodate many recreational activities including, rock climbing, skateboarding, basketball, etc.

Adaptive Re-use building

Many buildings on the site are underutilized and could be re-programmed into something else. One building in particular on Elizabeth and Clifford stands a seven storey parking garage. The proposal is to turn the building into a recreational center utilizing each floor with a different activity. The center will be transformed into an atrium with a six storey rock climbing wall.



space detail summaries

SITE ONE: Interstate 75 and Woodward: Urban Agriculture

A. Quantities Required

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|-------|
| 1. | Unit capacity: | 30 |
| 2. | Number of Units: | |
| 3. | Net Sq. Feet/unit: | |
| 4. | Total Net Area: | 10756 |

B. Purposes/Functions

Utilize the edges of freeways as place for urban agriculture

C. Activities

Planting, interact, harvesting

D. Spatial Relationships

Being on the edges of freeways, it will help to bring awareness to these kinds of interventions.

E. Special Considerations

Letting in plenty of natural lighting is essential for plant life to grow

F. Equipment Furnishings

G. Behavioral Considerations

The idea for this intervention is to get people to stop and slow down

H. Structural Systems

I. Mechanical / Electrical Systems

Watering systems in combination with the ideas of zeriscaping and water collection are a necessity to keep plants alive.

J. Site / Exterior Environmental Considerations

Also being on the edges of freeways, the plant life could be exposed by harmful toxins given off by passing automobiles. There would have to be systems in place that filter the air.

SITE TWO: Woodward and Fort: Information Kiosk

A. Quantities Required

1.	Unit capacity:	30
2.	Number of Units:	14
3.	Net Sq. Feet/unit:	8
4.	Total Net Area:	
	units:	112
	ground area:	1226

B. Purposes/Functions

A hub to access information

C. Activities

sit, stop, learn, observe, relax, surf

D. Spatial Relationships

On unclaimed sidewalks adjacent to various buildings

E. Special Considerations

F. Equipment Furnishings

Built in seating

G. Behavioral Considerations

The idea for this intervention is to get people to stop and slow down

H. Structural Systems

The main pole structure will also be able to swivel from the ground

I. Mechanical / Electrical Systems

J. Site / Exterior Environmental Considerations

It is important that these kiosk be place in transition spaces where people would walk on a day-to-day basis.

SITE THREE: Gratiot and Randolph: Floating Vegetation

A. Quantities Required

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|------|
| 1. | Unit capacity: | N/A |
| 2. | Number of levels: | 4 |
| 3. | Net Sq. Feet/Levels: | 700 |
| 4. | Total Net Area: | 5800 |
| | (w/roof) | |

B. Purposes/Functions

The intervention is intended to transform roofs in the city to green roofs and make them habitable spaces. The ground level will also become landscaped and habitable

C. Activities

Sitting, talking, planting, learning, creating, thinking, laughing

D. Spatial Relationships

E. Special Considerations

The roofs would need sufficient natural light and water in order for the plants to grow

F. Equipment Furnishings

Seating equipment, tables, trellis system

G. Behavioral Considerations

The levels of the structure should feel safe and inviting.

H. Structural Systems

Trellis would have to be constructed using structural steel that could handle changing loads.

I. Mechanical / Electrical Systems

J. Site / Exterior Environmental Considerations

SITE FOUR: Brush And Congress: Elevated Inhabitation-Co-op Dwelling

A. Quantities Required

1.	Unit capacity:	1-2
2.	Number of Units:	12
3.	Net Sq. Feet/unit:	70
4.	Total Net Area:	840

B. Purposes/Functions

These units are intended to be dwelling spaces for artists and musicians who participate in a cooperative to teach others their craft.

C. Activities

Sitting, resting, sleeping, reading, creating, thinking, living

D. Spatial Relationships

E. Special Considerations

The units would need sufficient natural light and ventilation. Temperature would have to be comfortable during winter and summer for occupants to be able to live there. A heater in the winter would be needed.

F. Equipment Furnishings

Some collapsible furniture such as a bed, seating, and table will be built in.

G. Behavioral Considerations

H. Structural Systems

The structure would likely need a steel structural frame that can handle varying levels of loads. Materials for each unit would have to be durable, but also lightweight.

I. Mechanical / Electrical Systems

Again, the space will need to be ventilated. Electrical outlets will be provided for each unit. Plumbing pipes will be concealed in the steel framework

J. Site / Exterior Environmental Considerations

Access to Catwalk

**SITE FIVE: 30 Clifford: Performance Theater/Graffiti Gallery
Performance Theater**

A. Quantities Required

1.	Unit capacity:	186
2.	Number of Units:	N/A
3.	Net Sq. Feet/unit:	
	Stage:	1,158
	Seating:	2,038
4.	Total Net Area:	3,196

B. Purposes/Functions

The theater space is for various performance acts including plays and musical performances.

C. Activities

Gather, enjoy, laugh, sit

D. Spatial Relationships

It is the terminus of two alleyways which serve as entryways to the stage

E. Special Considerations

Lighting the space is a necessity to keep the place feel safe and comfortable.

F. Equipment Furnishings

The stage itself is collapsible keeping the alley as a service corridor when needed.

G. Behavioral Considerations

H. Structural Systems

Variety of structural systems will be used depending on use and function. The cover for the stage roof will be supported by a steel truss system.

I. Mechanical / Electrical Systems

The Electrical system is necessary component that provides lighting and electricity to any equipment used during a performance.

J. Site / Exterior Environmental Considerations

Sounds and views of the performance theater should spill out into the street making people aware that it is there.

**SITE FIVE: 30 Clifford: Performance Theater/Graffiti Gallery
Graffiti Gallery**

A. Quantities Required

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|-------|
| 1. | Unit capacity: | 15 |
| 2. | Number of Units: | 2 |
| 3. | Net Sq. Feet/unit: | 1,655 |
| 4. | Total Net Area: | 3,330 |

B. Purposes/Functions

The alleyways provide the entrance to the performance theater. At the same time they function as a graffiti gallery.

C. Activities

Gather, enjoy, observe, walk, sit

D. Spatial Relationships

Provides access to the performance theater

E. Special Considerations

Lighting the space is a necessity to keep the place feel safe and comfortable

F. Equipment Furnishings

The alleys will have translucent panels that allow for the display of graffiti

G. Behavioral Considerations

The space is intended for everyone, so it is important for people to feel safe.

H. Structural Systems

The panels will be hung from the walls using gravity pivoting hinges.

I. Mechanical / Electrical Systems

J. Site / Exterior Environmental Considerations

Since the alleys are hidden between buildings, the panels can serve as the visual image that brings people into the space.

**SITE SIX: Hudson's Block: Public Gathering / Market
Overall**

A. Quantities Required

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. | Unit capacity: | 500+ |
| 2. | Number of Units: | N/A |
| 3. | Net Sq. Feet/unit: | N/A |
| 4. | Total Net Area: | 122,259 (including platforms) |

B. Purposes/Functions

This space is intended to be a public gathering space that utilizes an area that seems to be unclaimed. Rentable stores will be used by merchants to sell products. Also there will be designated spaces to showcase the creative arts.

C. Activities

Gather, relax, shop, talk, buy, purchase, sit, walk,

D. Spatial Relationships

The site is surrounded on all sides with different types of uses. Boundaries of project need to have some relationship to adjacencies.

E. Special Considerations

Lighting and seating areas to feel invited. Lighting and seating elements could be part of architectural design.

F. Equipment Furnishings

Seating, lighting, rentable store furnishings

G. Behavioral Considerations

H. Structural Systems

Variety of structural systems will be used depending on use and function

I. Mechanical / Electrical Systems

Electrical system is a key component to this site since most of the time, the columns are illuminated.

J. Site / Exterior Environmental Considerations

The façade facing Woodward has to feel welcome and permeable in order to bring people to the inside of the space.

**SITE SIX: Hudson's Block: Public Gathering / Market
Pods (rentable stores/seating)**

A. Quantities Required

1. Unit capacity:
 - as store: 3
 - as seating: 16
2. Number of Units: 20
3. Net Sq. Feet/unit: 16
4. Total Net Area: 320

B. Purposes/Functions

The pods are foldable modular spaces that can become store to rent for local merchants. They can also transform to seating areas whenever the pods are not configured to being a store.

C. Activities

Gather, relax, shop, talk, buy, purchase, sit, walk,

D. Spatial Relationships

The pods are arranged to foster interaction of people and merchants. They frame mini gathering spaces within the bigger site.

E. Special Considerations

F. Equipment Furnishings

Pods configure into seating, tables, counters, or storage

G. Behavioral Considerations

H. Structural Systems

Variety of structural systems will be used depending on use and function

I. Mechanical / Electrical Systems

Electrical system is a key component to the pods since the light from the columns is utilized to light the inside of the pods.

J. Site / Exterior Environmental Considerations

SITE SEVEN: Cass and Adams: Park[ing] Lot

A. Quantities Required

1.	Unit capacity:	500+
2.	Number of Units:	N/A
3.	Net Sq. Feet/unit:	N/A
4.	Total Net Area:	259,076

B. Purposes/Functions

Vacant/surface parking that converts into a park/parking lot. Efficiently utilizes these spaces by having two functions accommodating the car and people.

C. Activities

Parking, walking, playing, gathering, relaxing, talking, performing, skateboarding, rock climbing, etc.

D. Spatial Relationships

The areas surrounding the site have many vacant buildings. Some buildings can play an important role with various activities that occur in the site such as projections of video and images

E. Special Considerations

Natural light and sufficient water would be needed to maintain plant life.

F. Equipment Furnishings

Benches, lighting

G. Behavioral Considerations

The space is occupied by the general public, but also must accommodate vehicles. The areas will have designated areas for both activities, but at times these can blend together

H. Structural Systems

Structural grating would to be able to accommodate various heavy weights

I. Mechanical / Electrical Systems

Electricity for lighting in and around the Park(ing) lot

J. Site / Exterior Environmental Considerations

Access from the street is very important. Has to look inviting and safe. Water runoff is to be filtered and collected as means to water the grass

quantitative summaries

ALL AREA IN
SQ. FT.

SITE 1: Interstate 75 and Woodward: Urban Agriculture

Freeway edge		10750
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SITE 2: Woodward and Fort: Information Kiosk

Kiosk	14@8	112
Ground		1226

SITE 3: Gratiot and Randolph: Floating Vegetation

Levels	4@700	280
Green Roof		3000
Total		3280

SITE 4: Brush and Congress: Elevated Inhabitation-Co-op Dwellings

Pods	12@70	840
Circulation		756
Total		1596

**SITE 5: 30 Clifford: Performance Theater/Graffiti
Gallery**

Stage		1150
Seating Area		2000
Alleyways	2@1655	3310
Total		6460

SITE 6: Hudson's Block: Public Gathering / Market

First Level		92100
Second Level(1)		11500
Second Level(2)		7750
Third Level (1)		4000
Third Level (2)		5800
Total		121150
Pods	21@16	336

SITE 7: Cass Adams: Park[ing] Lot

Block 1		59000
Block 2		51500
Block 3		22500
Block 4		60600
Block 5		72200
Total		265800

Design Process

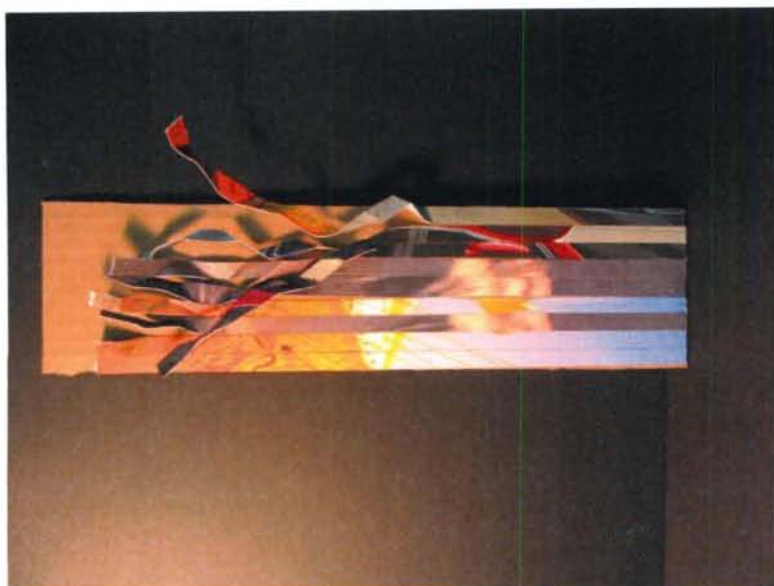
The development of the project involved many phases that helped engage the questions and ideas raised by the thesis investigation. The first section of the Design Process includes the Springboard/Schematic design phase. During these stages, the project evolves from ideas and concepts to architectural interventions. The next section covers the Building Design Phase, where the interventions are developed into detailed architectural designs.



springboard: schematic design

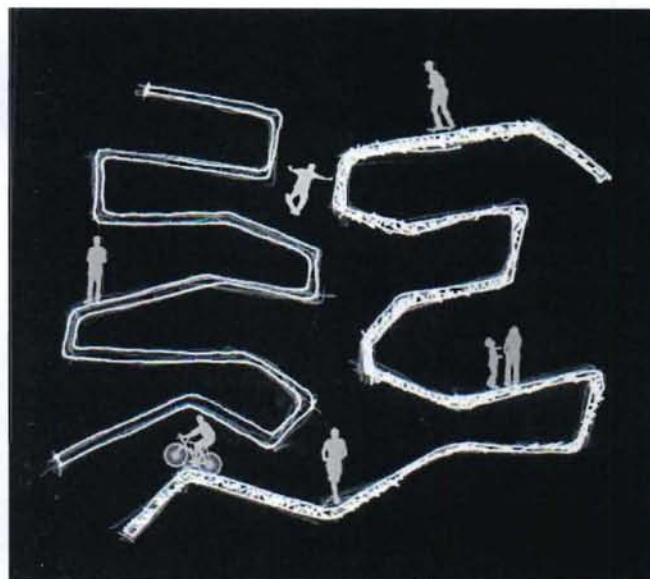
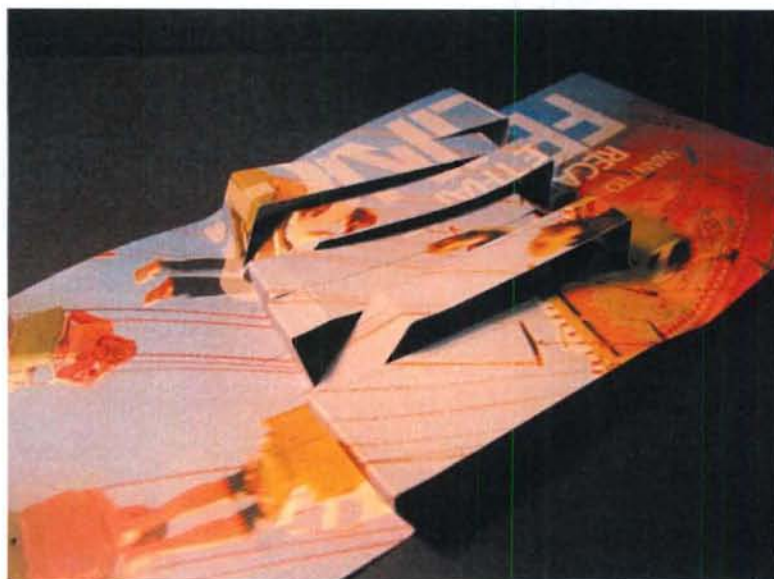
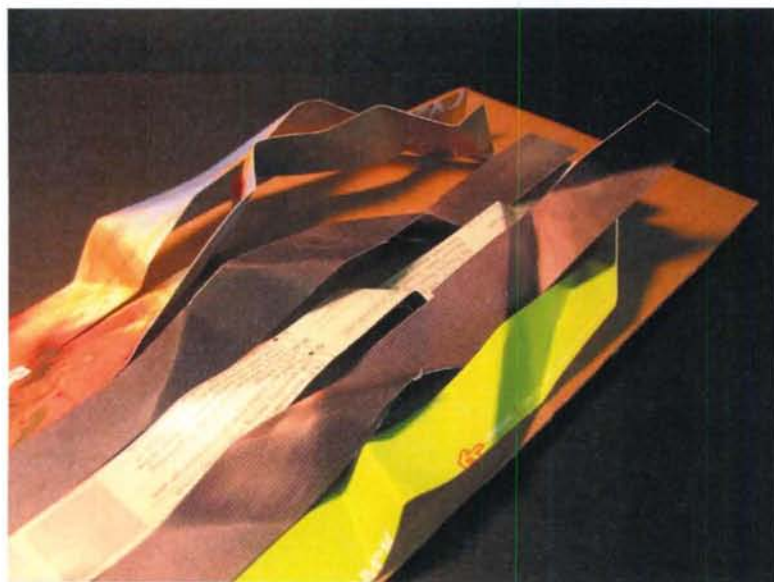
The design process initially started with the exploration of each site independently and then involved developing concepts and ideas from the site analysis. After this initial phase, the process included working back and forth between sites. Since the sites all have their own character, which in turn calls for its own specific program, some ideas and decisions from one site could be borrowed to aid in the development of another site.

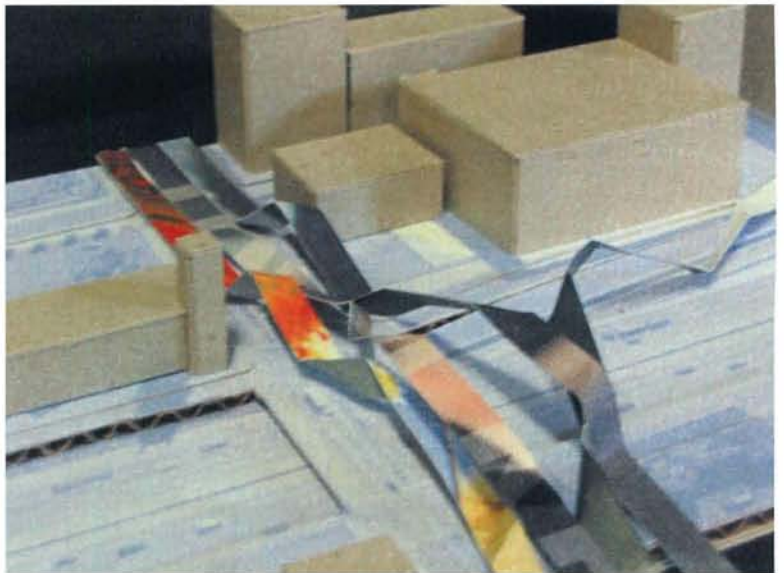
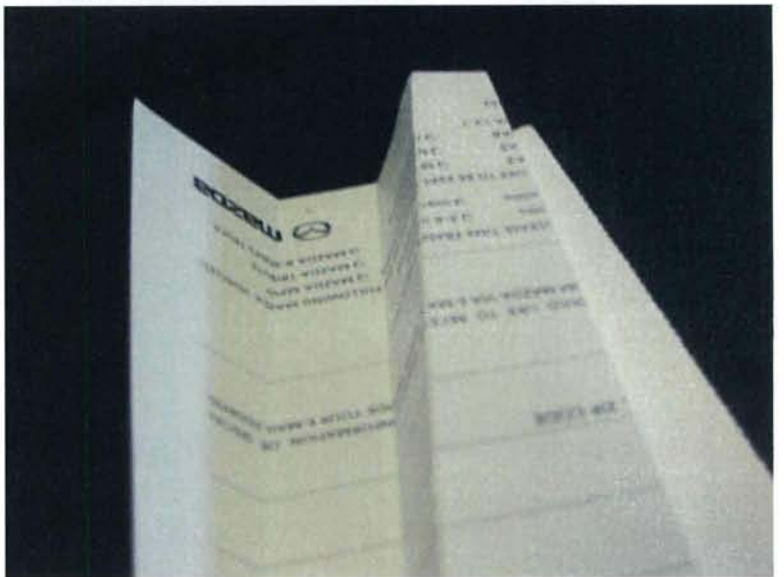
The initial concept was reinterpreting the linear path in terms of progression through space, which grew out of one interpretation of the "terrain vague" (transitory spaces). However, over time using this method seemed to be arbitrary because the concept came from one site. Since I had more than one site, one concept could not possibly relate to them all. At this point I started looking at each site individually again and asking myself what concepts each might generate. I let the site inform the design and program. The ideas and decisions became less abstract and more about thoughtful considerations for the site and how the interventions could thoughtfully respond to each site and context.



Site 1: I-75 and Woodward:

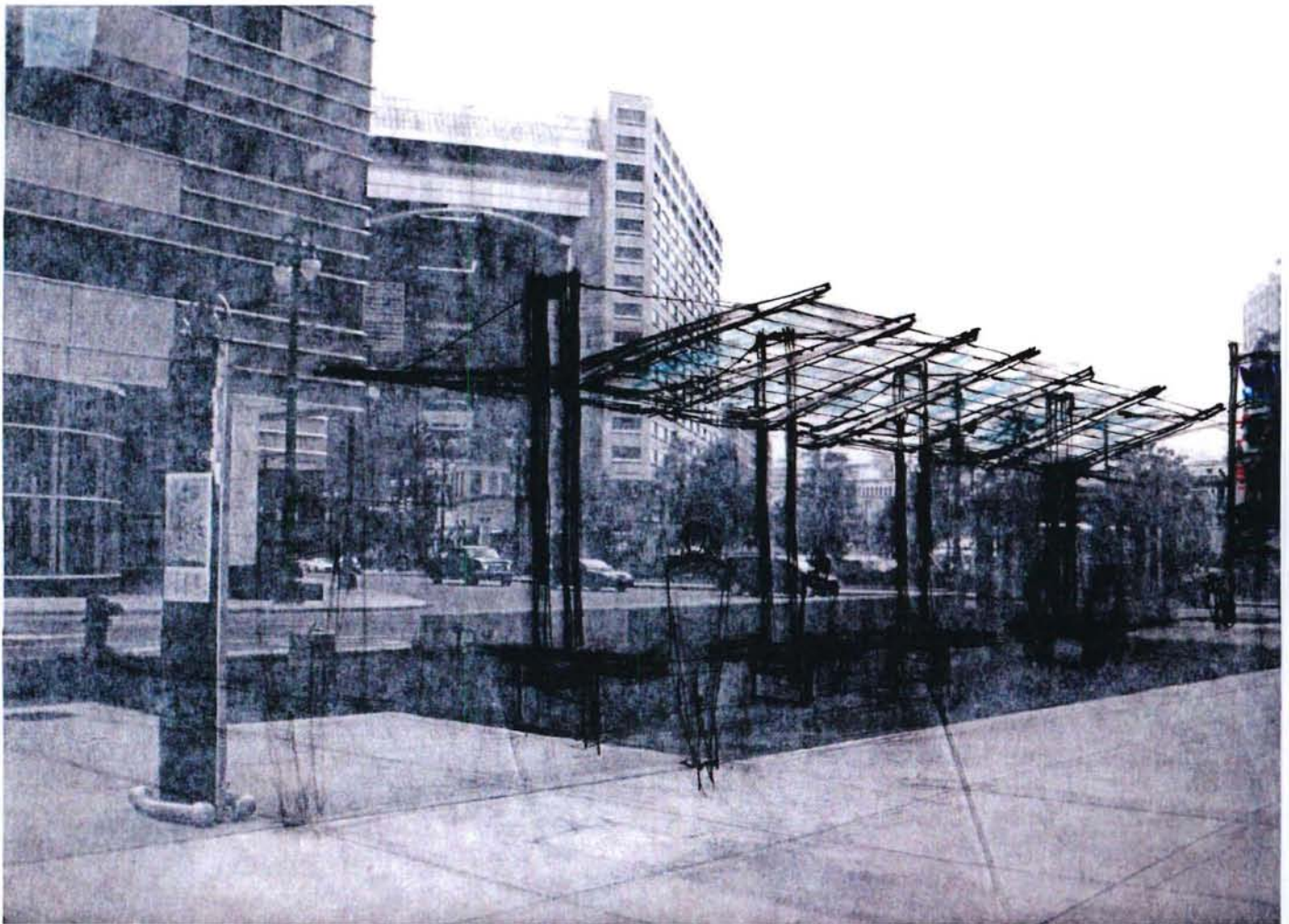
The progression of space through the fold. These were the first conceptual models produced out of all the sites. The uniqueness of the site are the flow of vehicles and pedestrians over a busy freeway. The exploration focuses on the interaction of the path and the user.





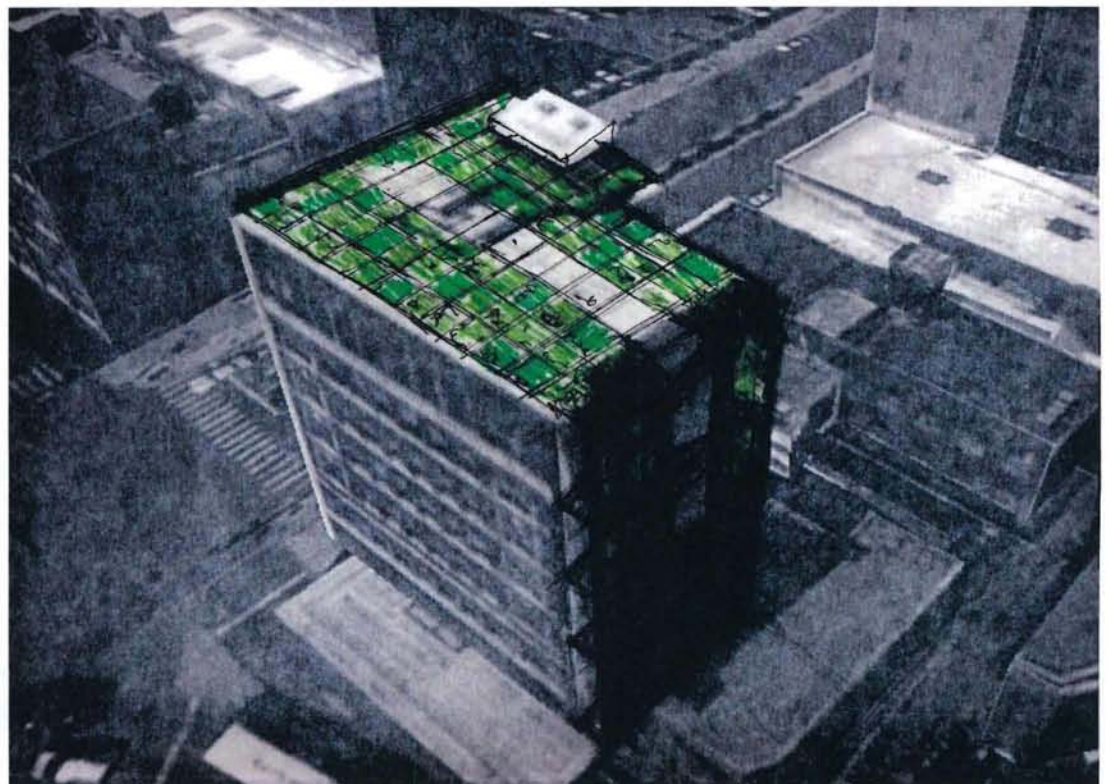
Site 2: Woodward and Fort

Information kiosk: The space is the intersection of many people. The program will introduce an information kiosk where anyone can access the internet, news, and other media.



Site 3: Gratiot and Randolph

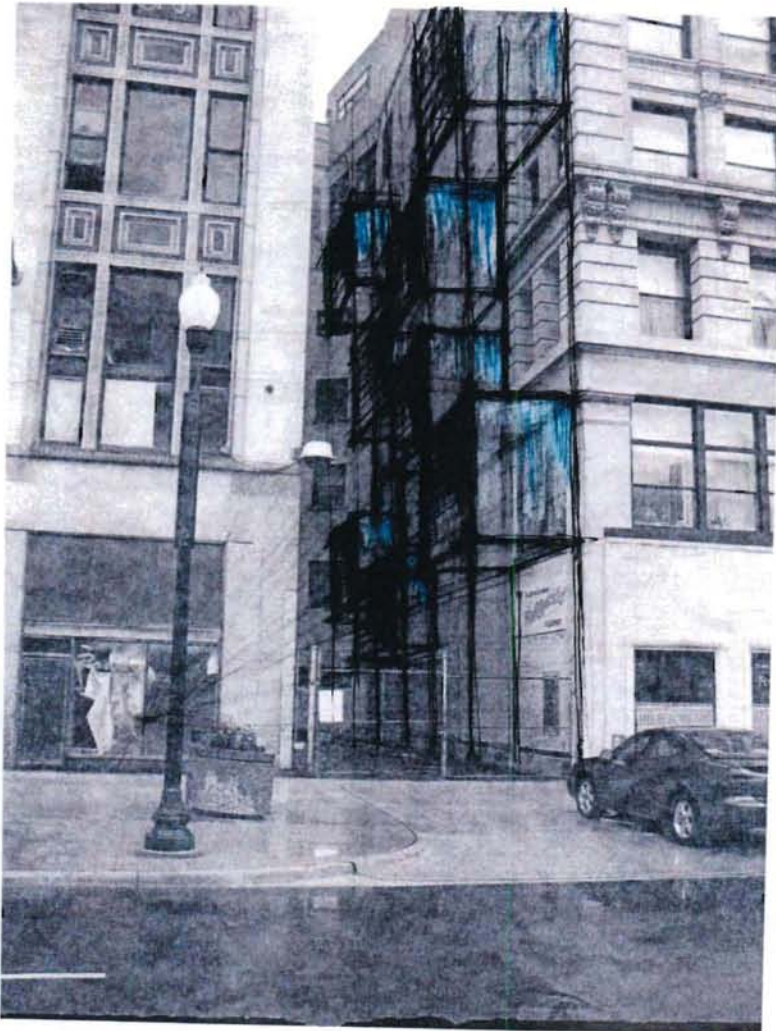
Floating Vegetation: A two story building stood on this site before it was demolished. The proposal is to create a vertical floating garden that links to a new green roof on the Harmonie Center Building. It will play as the catalyst for other roofs in the city to be transformed into a utilized green space.





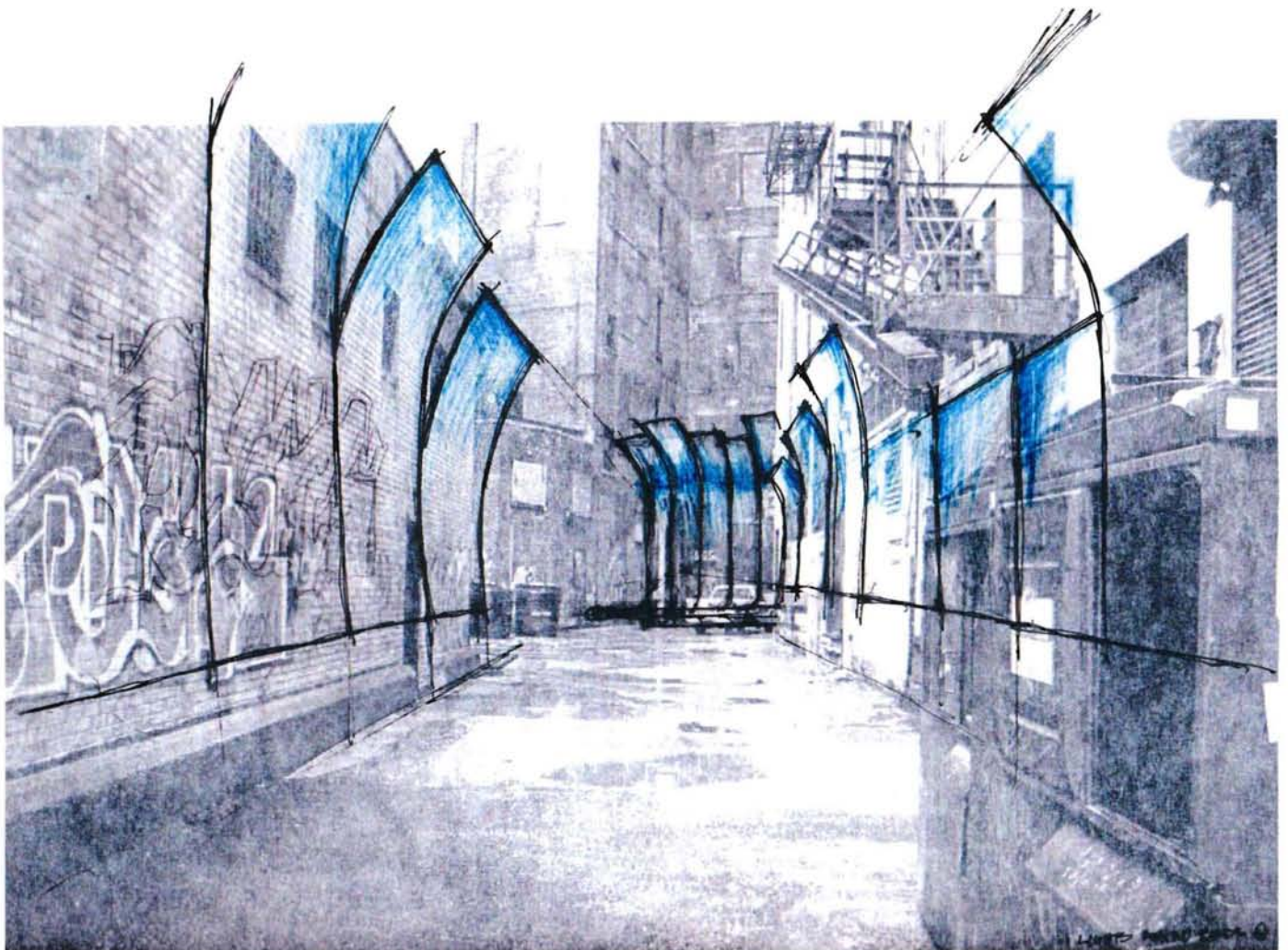
Site 4: Brush and Congress

Elevated Inhabitation: An opportunity arises between two buildings. The site is an empty lot converted into parking. The proposed program attempts to claim the air rights between these buildings with pods that attach to the buildings' sides. They are set on frames and could be moved to allow for more pods to be attached.



Site 5: 30 Clifford

Performance Theater: This site has a unique condition of converging alleys. The program proposed here is a re-imagined public theater. The alleyway becomes the entrance, and the user progresses through a graffiti gallery. The stage will be nestled at the alley's meeting point.



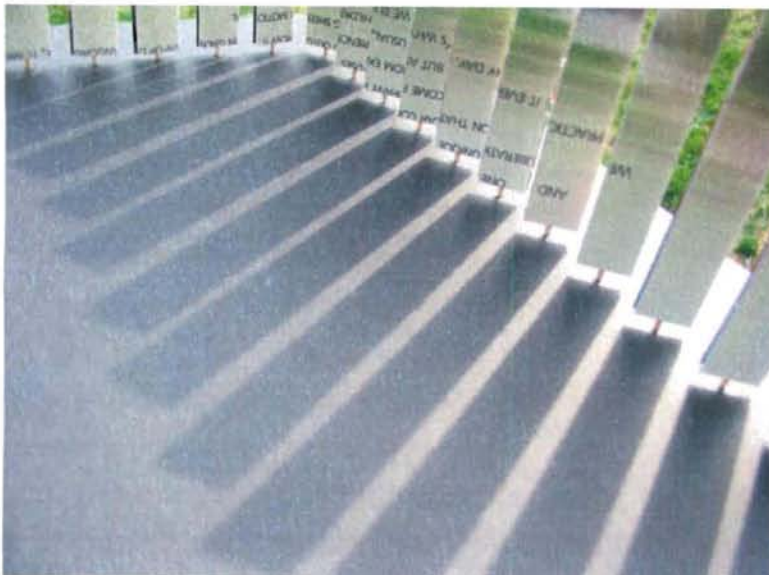
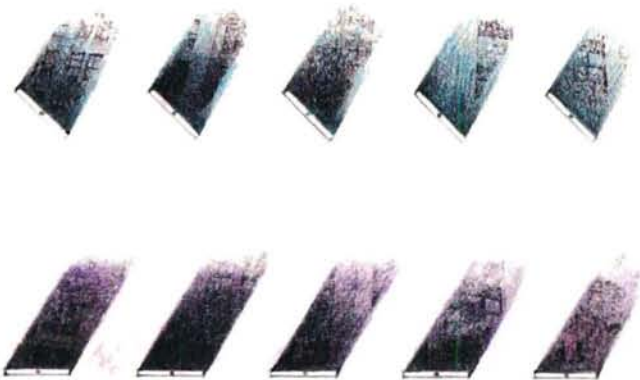
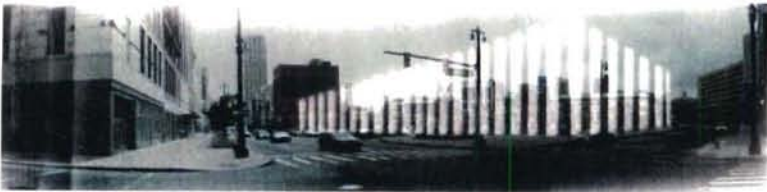


Site 6: Hudson's Block

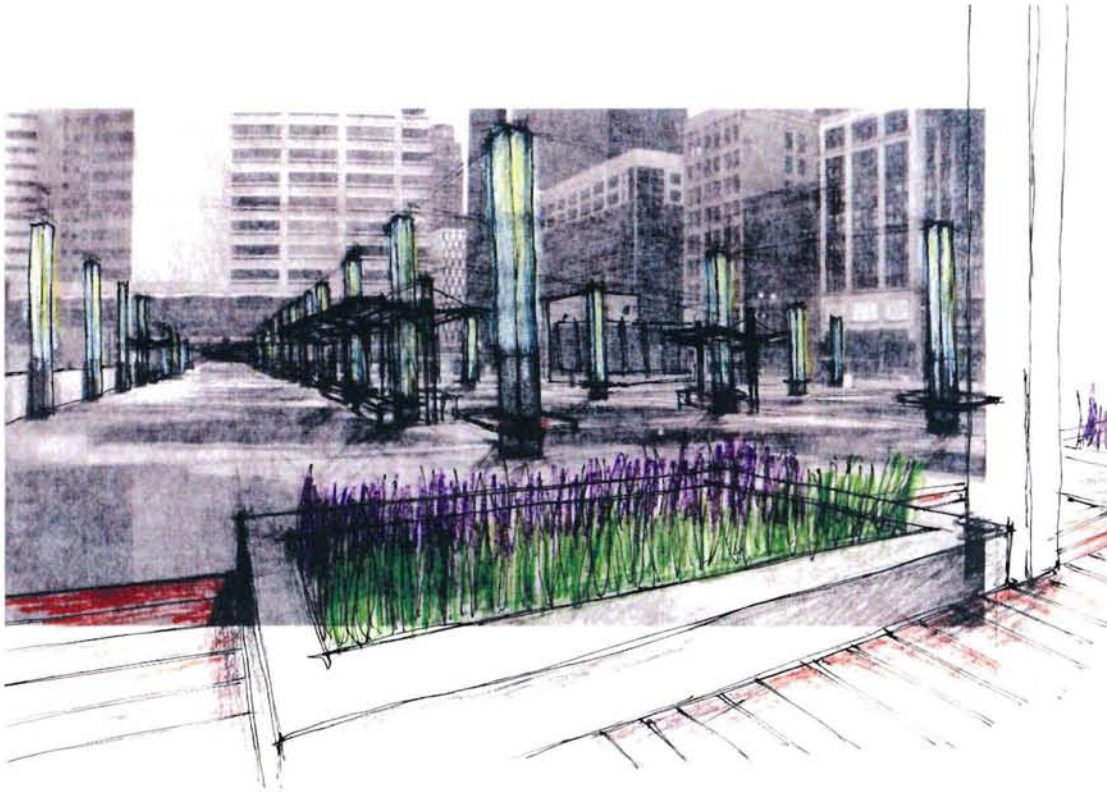
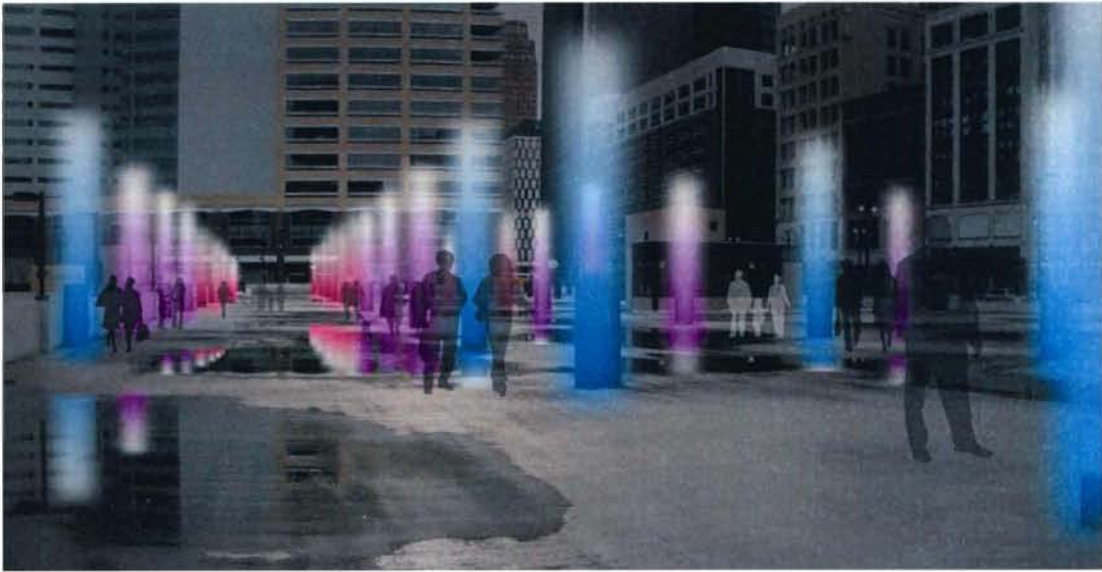
Public Gathering: The columns that protrude the surface act as symbols that look toward future development. The proposal for this site is to transform the columns to the centerpieces of a public gathering space. It will be a space for temporary events and changing functions such as rentable store spaces, and art installations. The space will utilize an important and historical site of the city.



My first initial response to the site was illuminating the facade with lighted columns. This would give the site a sense of presence and volume.



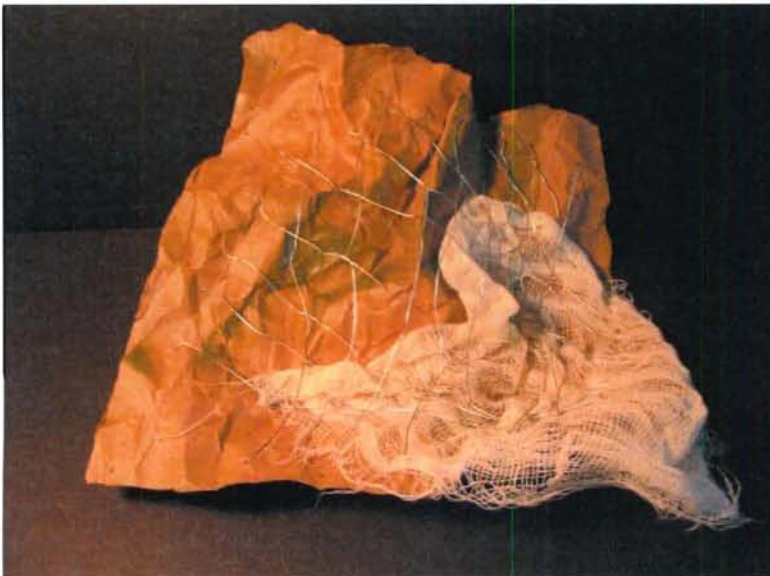
These conceptual views explore the columns being illuminated using LED lights. The idea was to make them an icon for meeting and give the space a sense of volume and mass.



Site 7: Randolph and Monroe:

Green Pavers: Addresses the many surface lots in the city to transform them into a dual program of parking lot / Park area. Since parking downtown is only needed at certain times of the work week, this intervention utilizes the space whenever parking is not needed. The green space is an invitation for activity and congregation.

These studies explore the integration of the organic form into a structured environment.

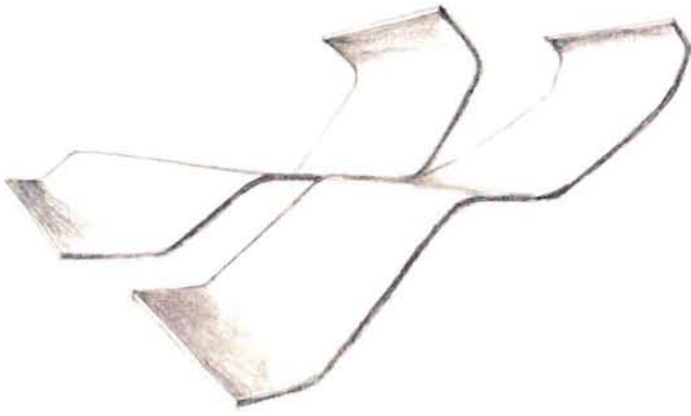


Structurally, it will work with a system of steel grates supported by columns. The grates will have the ability to support cars and at the same time allow vegetation to grow through.

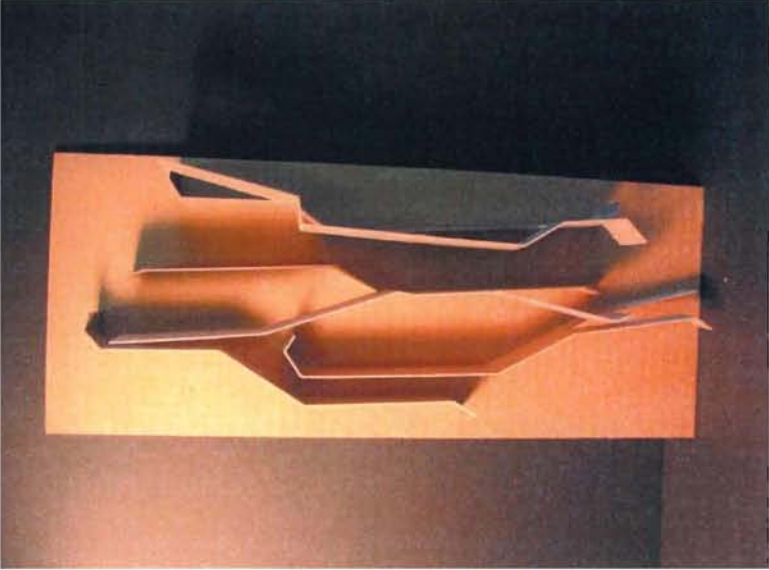
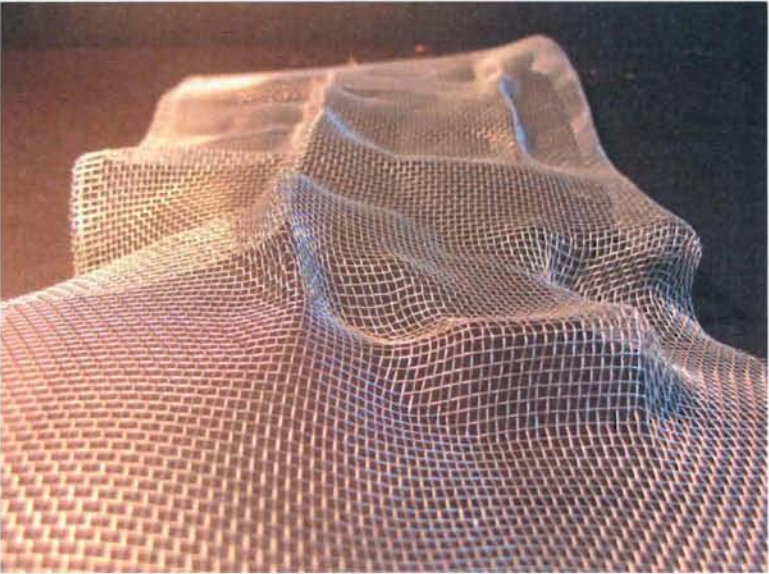


Site 7: Cass and Adams

Park(ing) Lot: public Recreation Park that enlivens the area. It will be an undulating landscape that designates different kinds of activities.

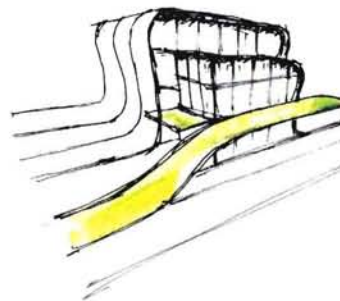
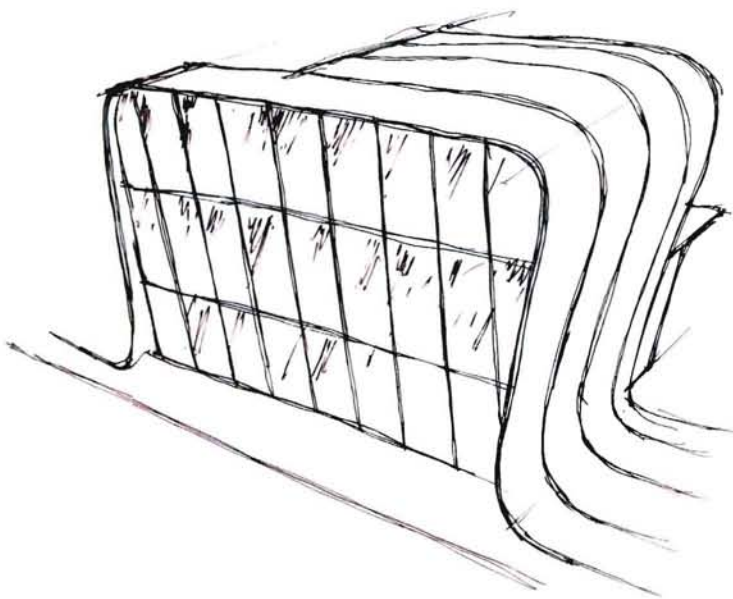
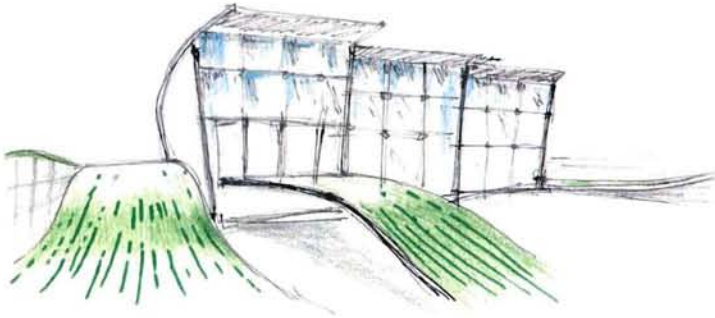
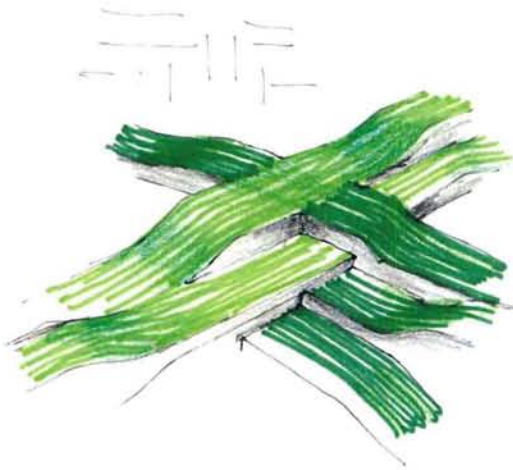


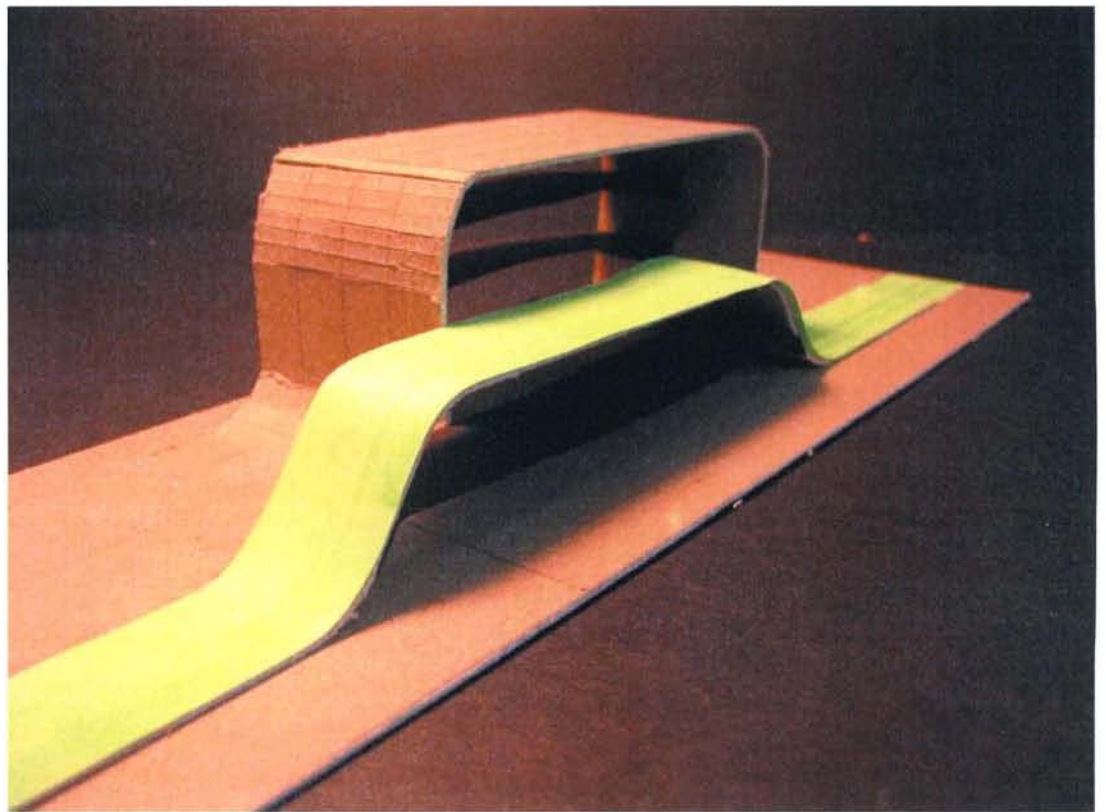
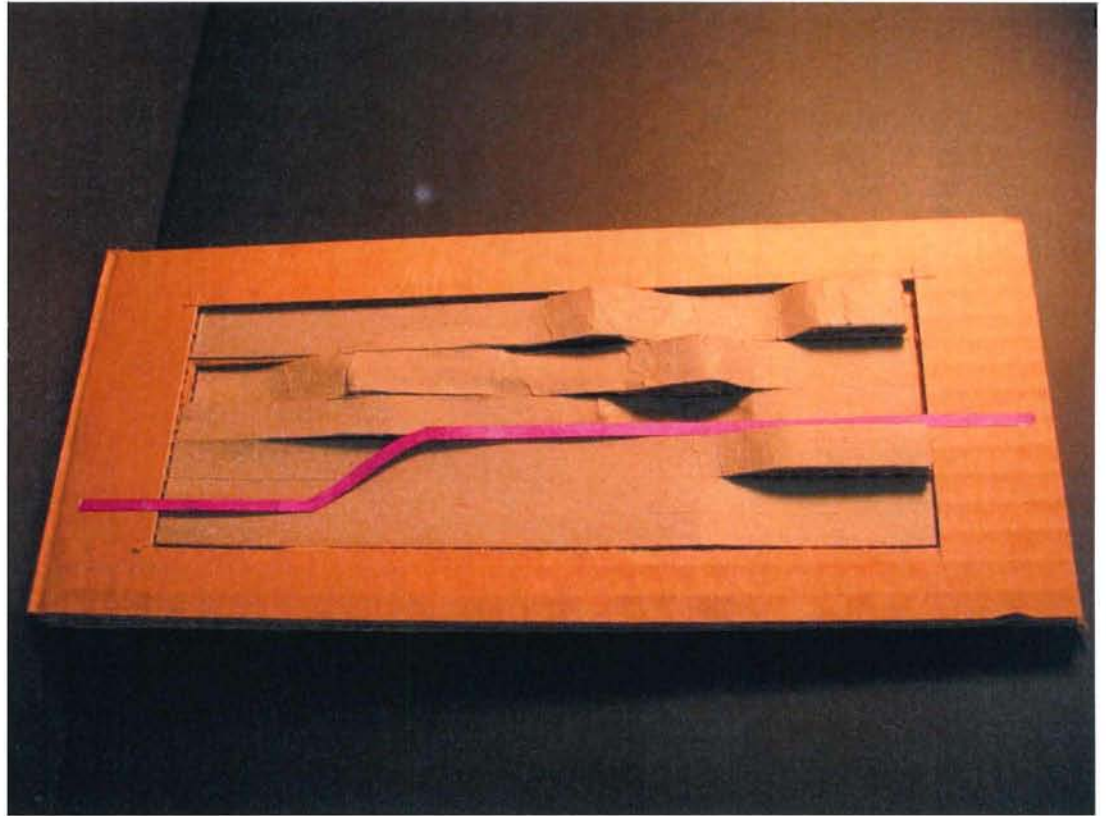
These objects explored an undulating landscape and the relationship of levels.



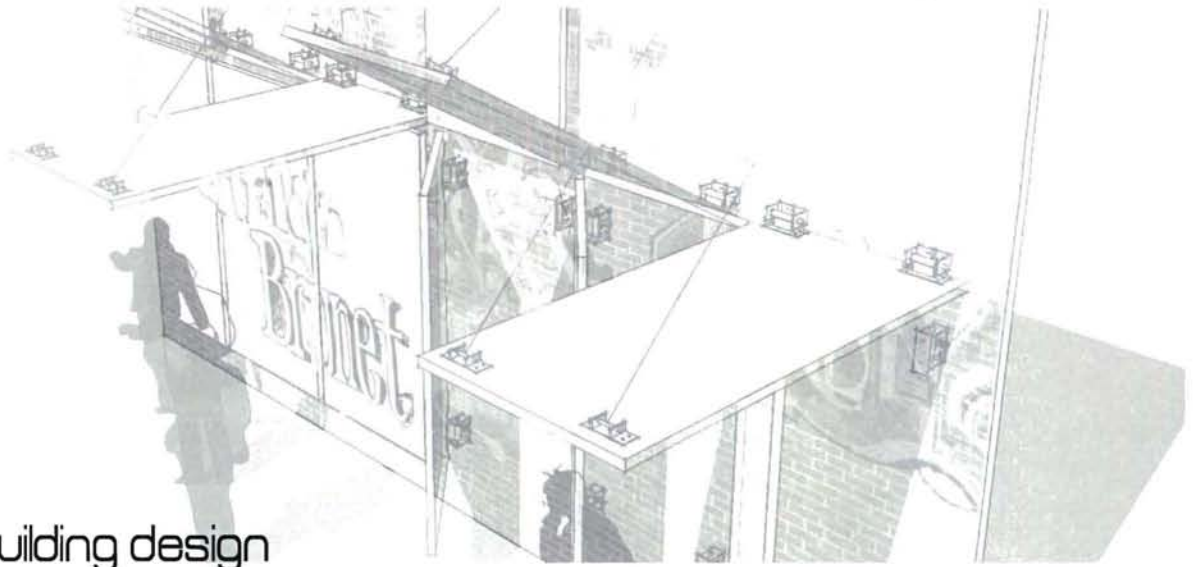
Cass/Adams cont.

The form studies led to sketches on architectural form. The undulating landscape informs the design of buildings and becomes intertwined with the building and the buildings' programmatic scheme









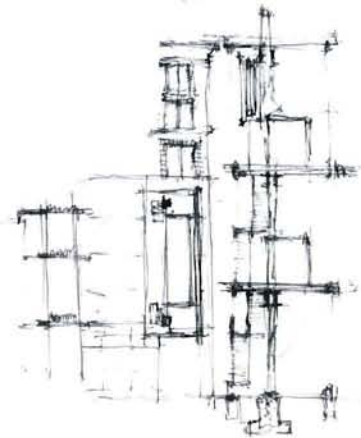
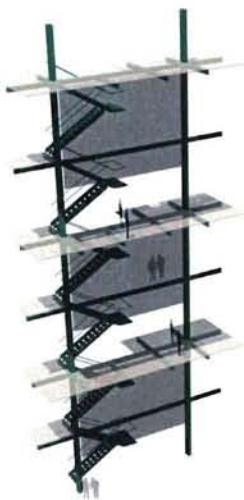
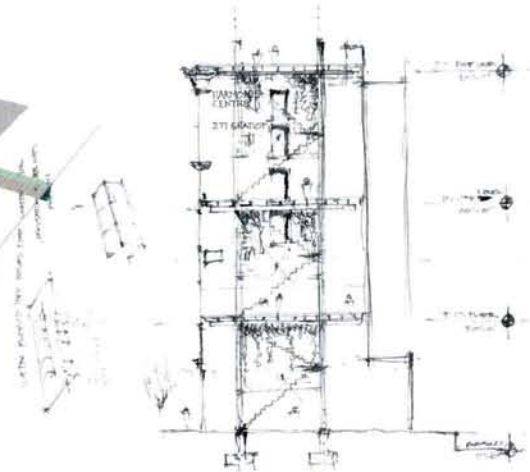
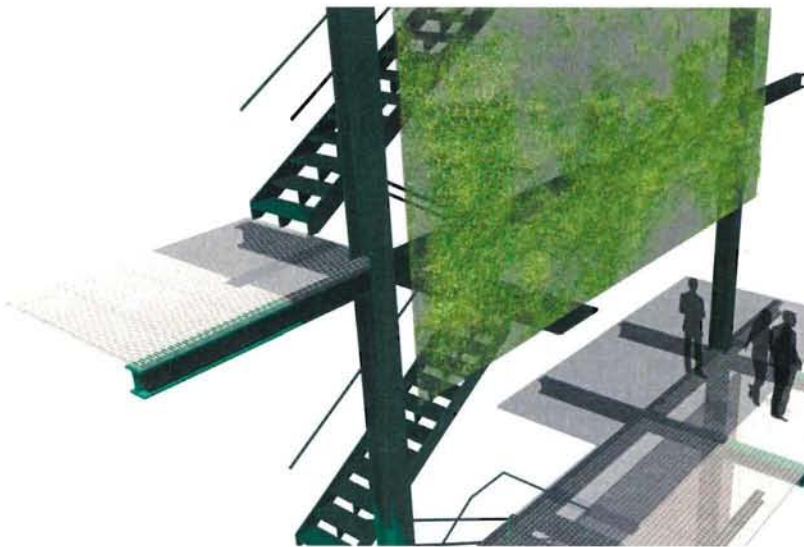
building design

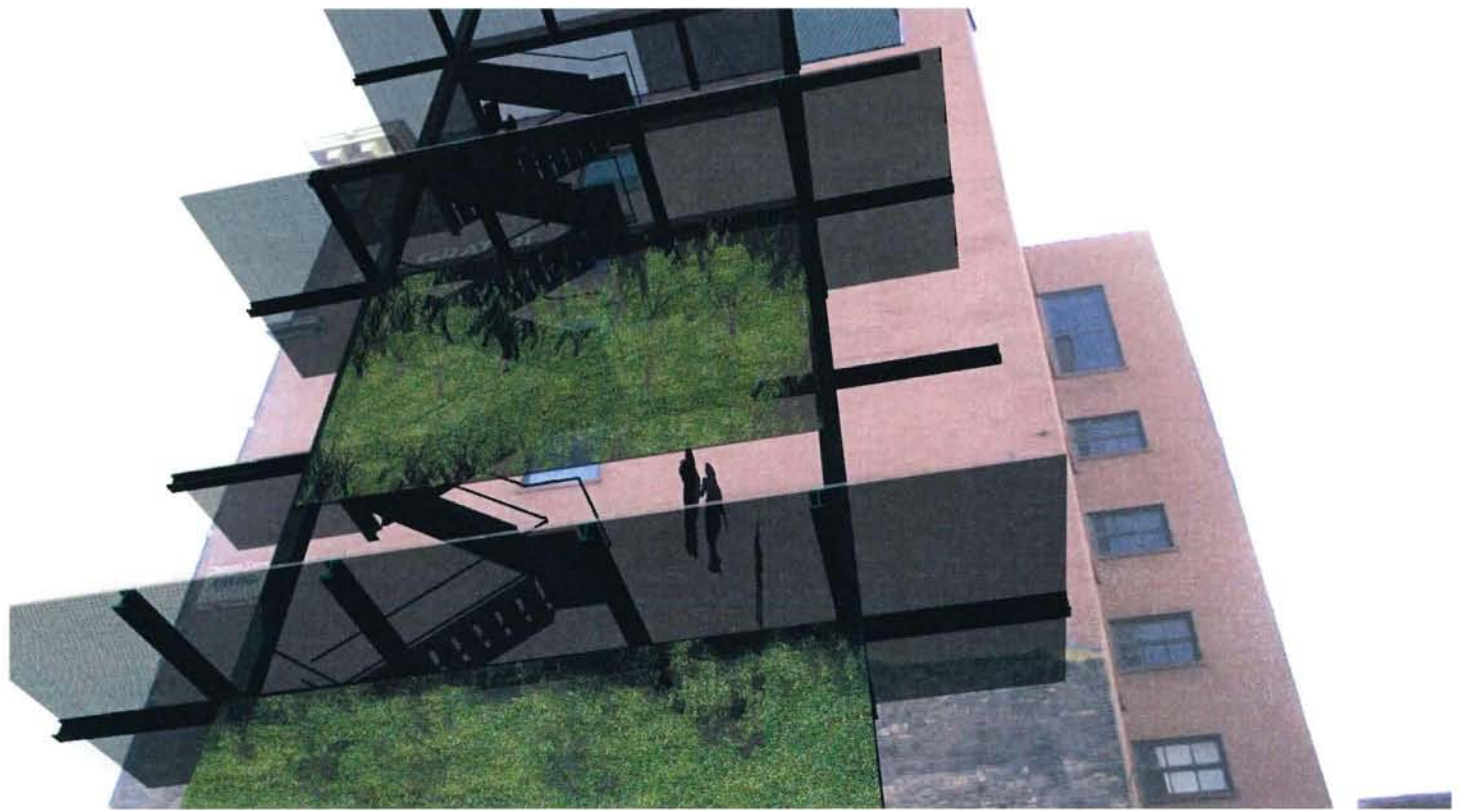
The focus of this phase of the design process is the development of a complete and detailed project proposal. At this point, I edited out sites that had similar characteristics making the total number of sites to five. (temporarily omitting site 1: I-75 and Woodward, and site 2: Woodward and Fort). I had a general understanding for the programs of each site; therefore, the main objective was to develop the details of each intervention. Each site has its own unique situation which I had to respond to. The important thing to keep in mind about each site was the idea of these spaces being re-programmed and re-invented. The project attempts to maintain a character that is outside the conventional mainstream; therefore, the interventions also attempt to challenge the usual design of buildings and structures in the city. I made sure that the sight informed my decisions and design of the space.

I took each site and developed them individually. Since each intervention has a different program and a different site, I could not really rely on one site that would guide me through the whole design process. Therefore, as I moved to a new site, I would have to start from step one, the concept, and develop it into a detailed proposal.

Site 3: Gratiot and Randolph

Floating Vegetation: The idea of the intervention is to keep the structure light and translucent giving more emphasis on the vegetation. The three levels give spaces for rest, and gives views to the surrounding city. These levels use a metal mesh grating for the floor structure adding to the light feel. They are suspended and held in place by cables that tie back to the steel frame. A trellis type system will be suspended at the interior giving opportunity for vegetation to grow.

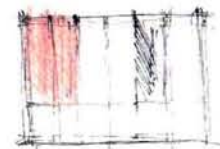
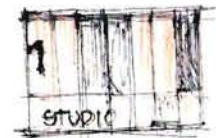
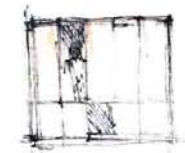




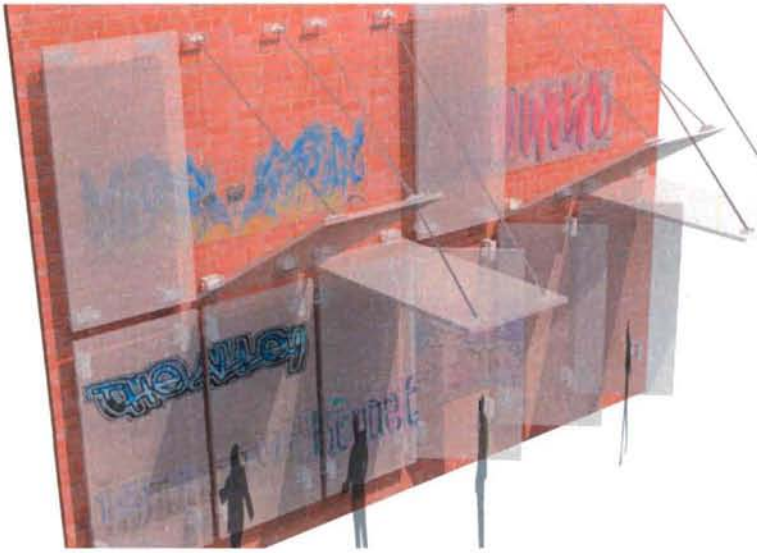


Site 4: Brush and Congress

Elevated Inhabitation: From the springboard development, the idea for these pods were that they were suppose to be movable in the vertical direction. However, understanding that this idea was not really central to the program, I decided to keep the pods stationary above the space, still claiming the air rights. This would still keep the ground space available for another program such as parking or other activities by the adjacent buildings. The modularity of the pod is meant to keep the pod simple in construction, and also make it easy to modify. The panels that make up the facade can be moved or placed onto another bay, changing the facade and giving the user a sense of individuality

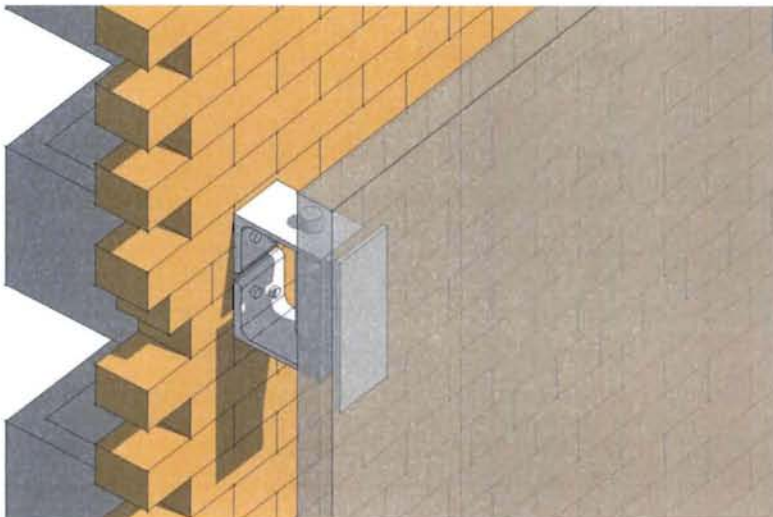




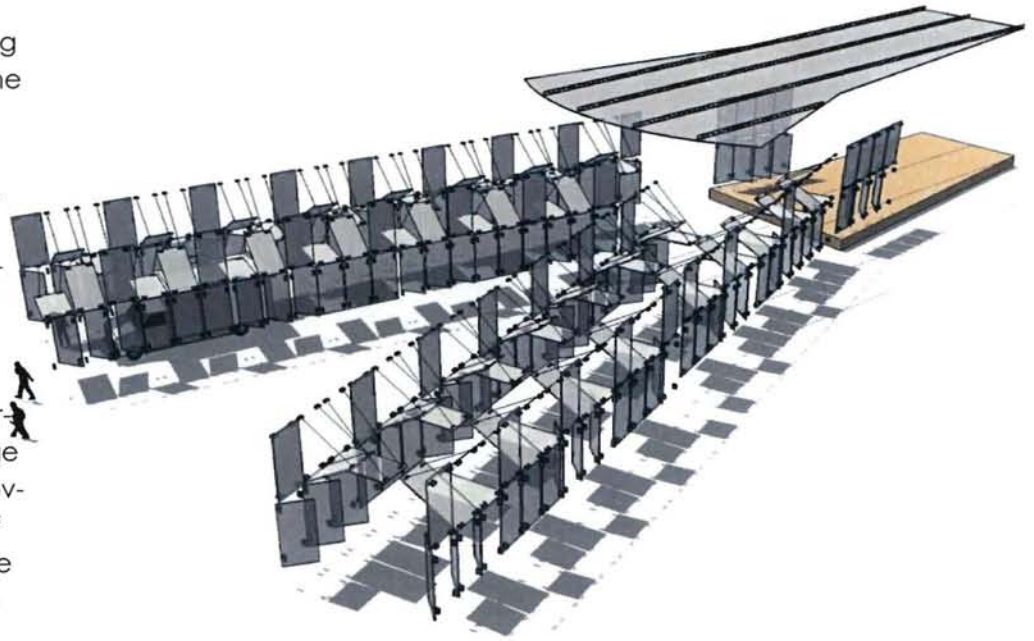


Site 5: 30 Clifford

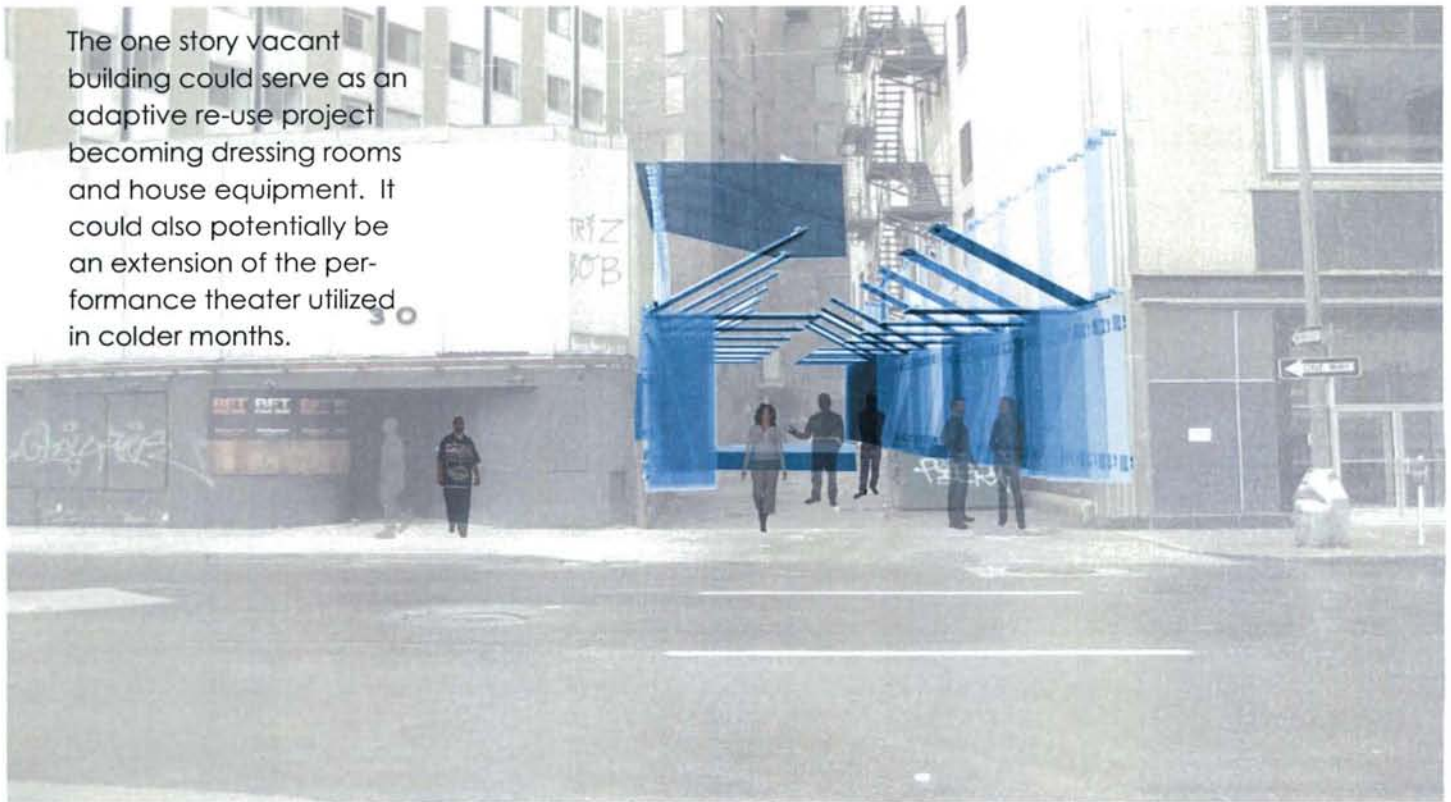
Performance Theater: Having many things at the site to respond to, the development of this space produced many layers. The site is essentially two converging alleys nestled tightly between medium height buildings from 10-30 storeys. Between the two alleys is also a small one story vacant building. Both alleys have graffiti that covers the side of the adjacent buildings. One idea is to make the alleys a graffiti gallery that leads into the performance theater where the alleys converge. Movable panels of translucent plexiglass cover all sides of the wall, creating canvasses for graffiti artists. These panels can also pivot on hinges that define different spaces as one progress through the alleys. Also, as each panel pivots, it gives the illusion of merging and interlocking forms of graffiti, a form of graffiti called "wild style".



The performance theater lies at the end of the two graffiti galleries. The space is covered with a translucent roof providing shelter, but also giving the ability to still feel outside and look up at the surrounding taller buildings. The space holds 186 chairs for a sit-down performance. Various performances can be held at the theater including plays and musical performances. When the stage area is not in use the movable plexiglass panels of the graffiti gallery can be moved in place like curtains to cover the stage.



The one story vacant building could serve as an adaptive re-use project becoming dressing rooms and house equipment. It could also potentially be an extension of the performance theater utilized in colder months.

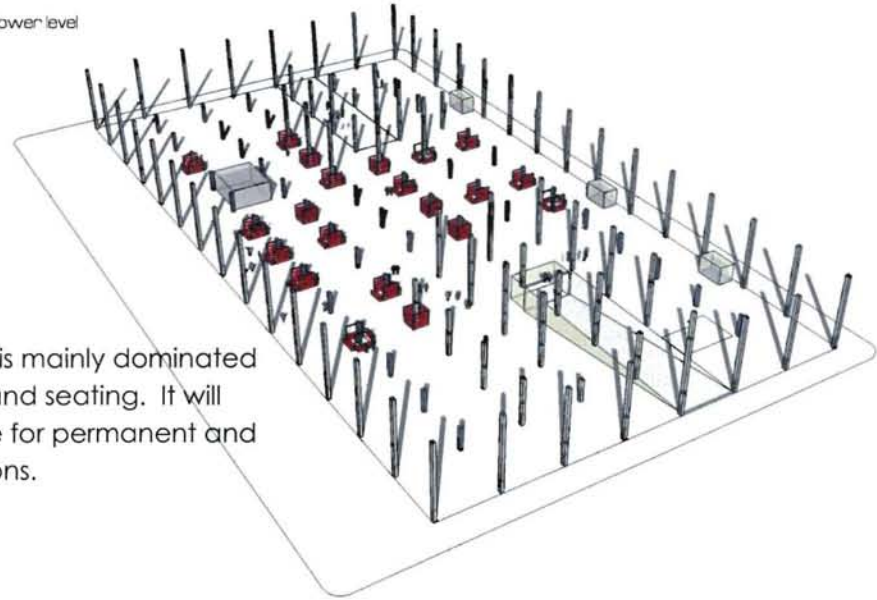


Site 6: Hudson's Block

Public Gathering: From the springboard phase, the lighted columns held the design from the macro scale for the Hudson's site. These studies look at the different possibilities of how the exterior columns could integrate different installations giving the "ghost building" more presence and permanence. On the interior, the space is broken up into different functions like a building. The rentable stores are dotted in the space strategically to invite pedestrians inside of the site and enhance interaction between them. The addition of upper levels in the space provides other functions such as spaces for performance, movie projection, and spaces for vegetation areas.

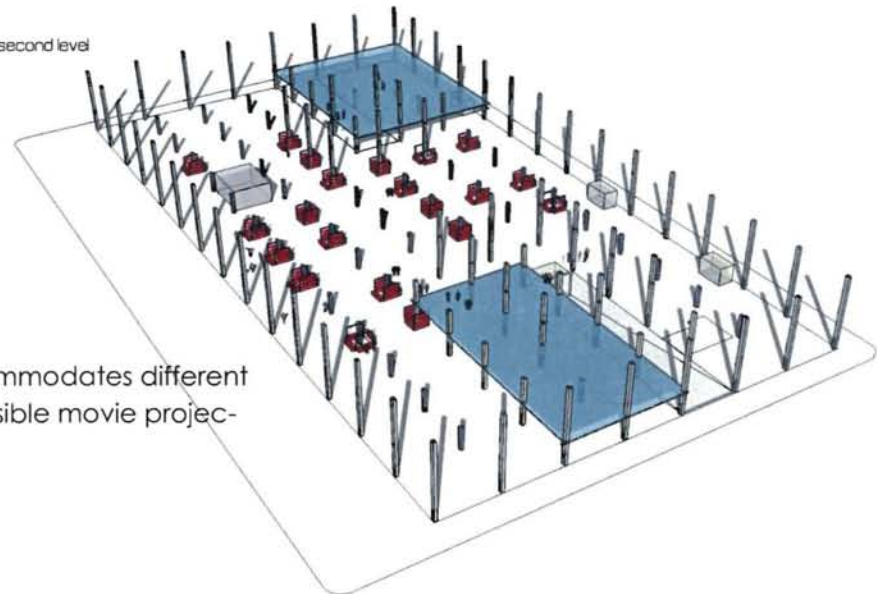


lower level



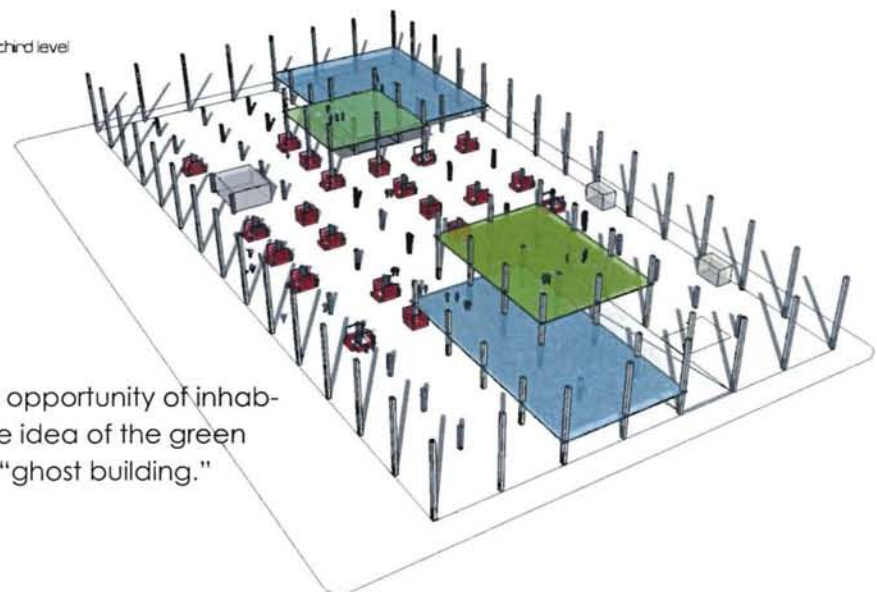
The first level of the site is mainly dominated by the rentable stores and seating. It will also be the main space for permanent and temporary art installations.

second level



The second level accommodates different performances and possible movie projections.

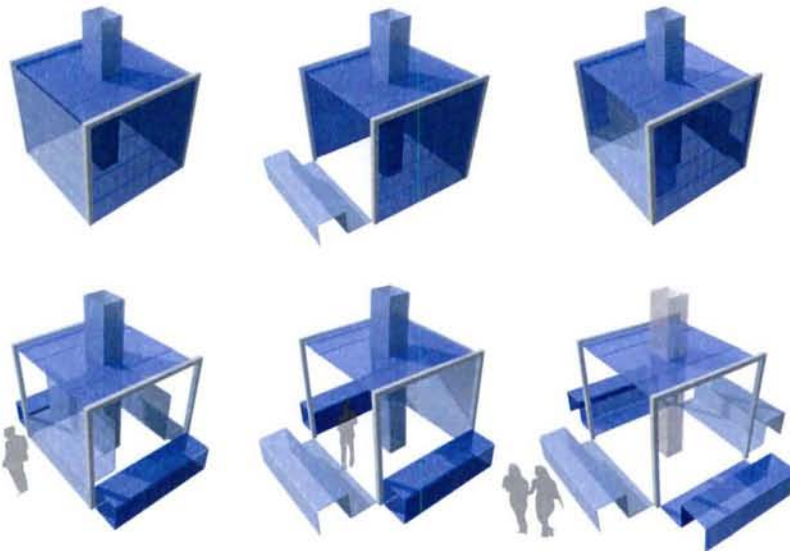
third level



The third level gives the opportunity of inhabitable green space. The idea of the green roof is merged into the "ghost building."

Site 6: Hudson's Block [cont.]

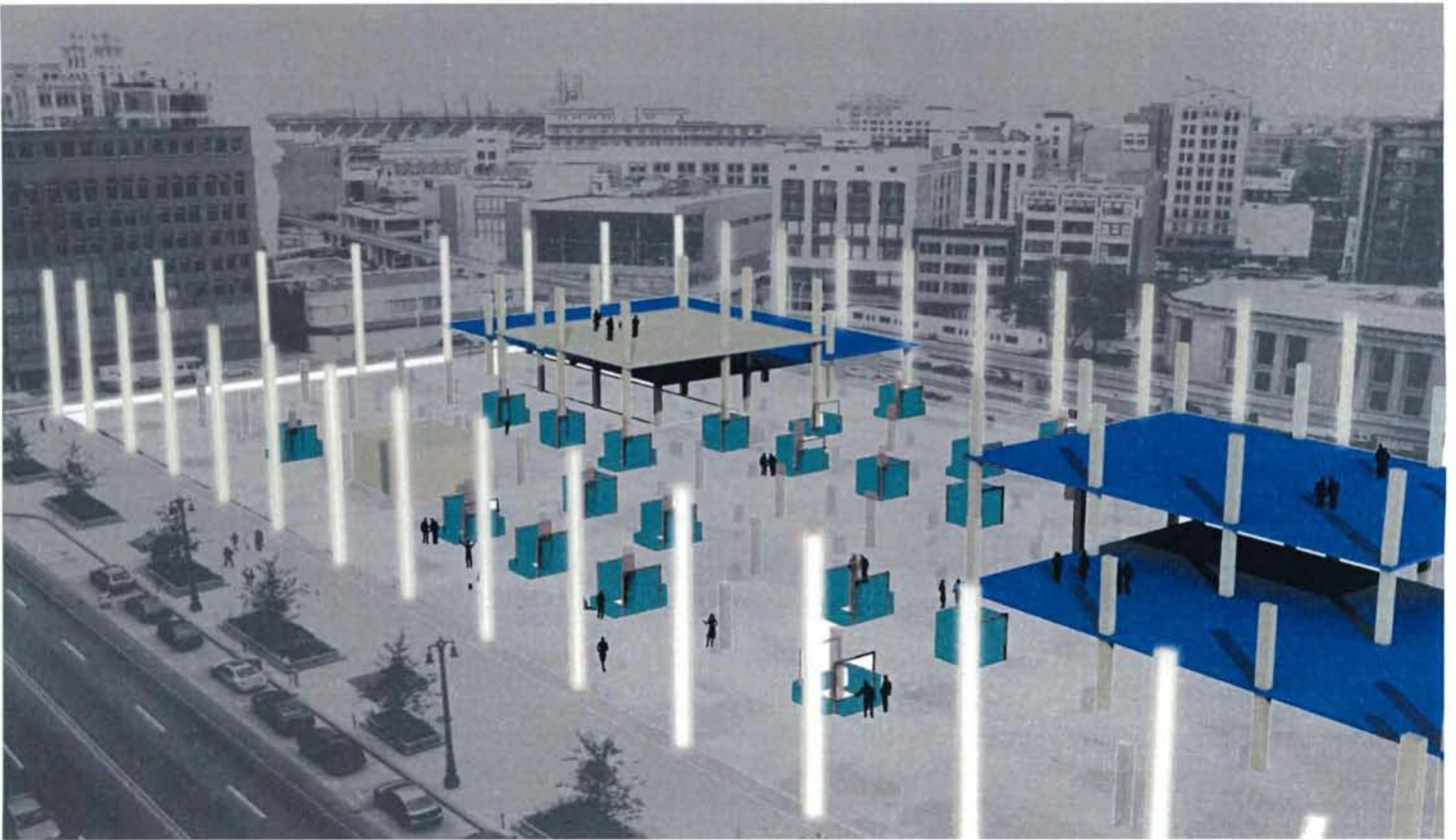
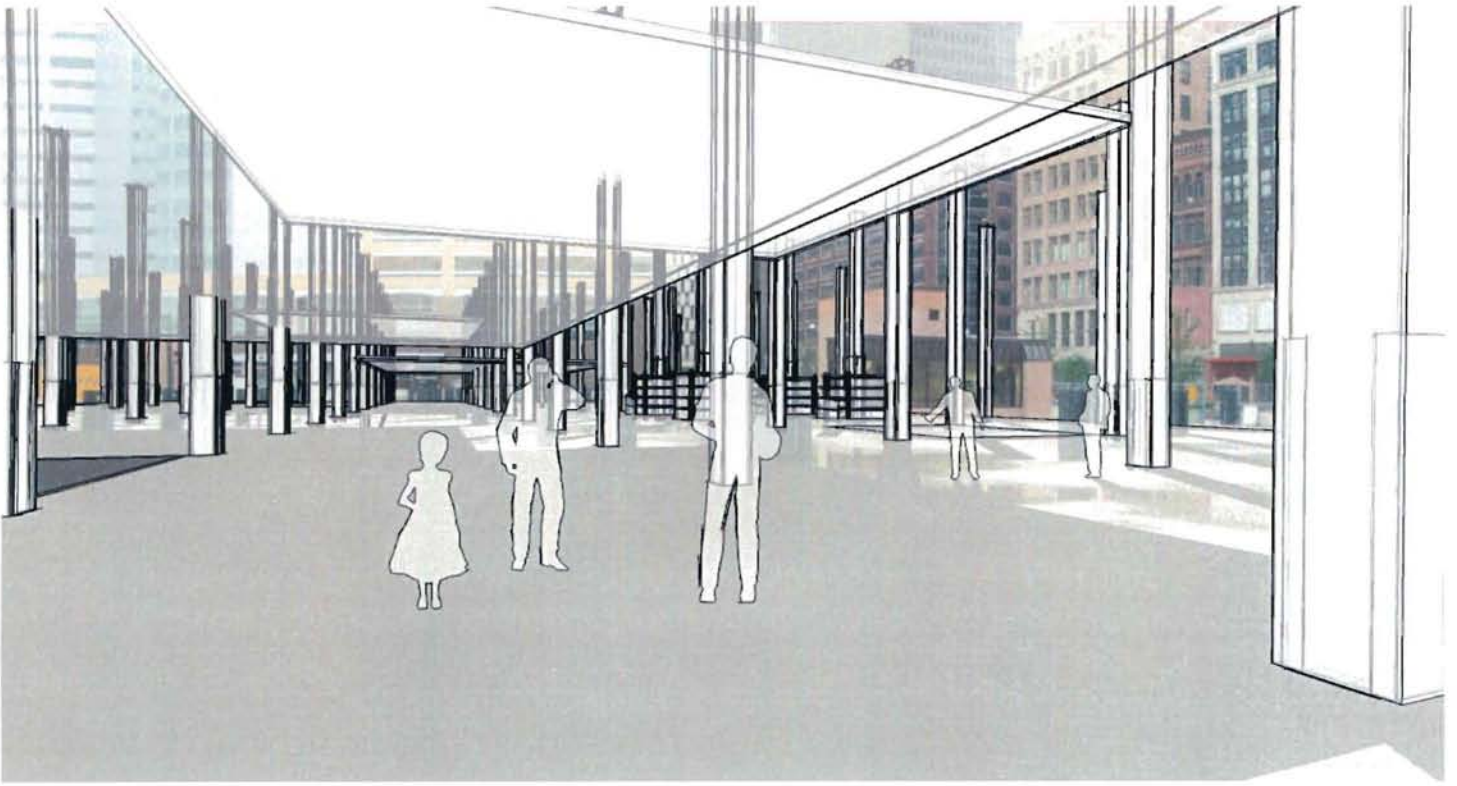
Rentable Stores: Essentially, the rentable stores are pods that when unfolded can become utilized as functional stores or a seating area. There are many ways that the store can be unfolded making it flexible to respond to the user. It could be opened up only on one side or all four. If not in used as a store, the pod will be folded into a functional seating area.

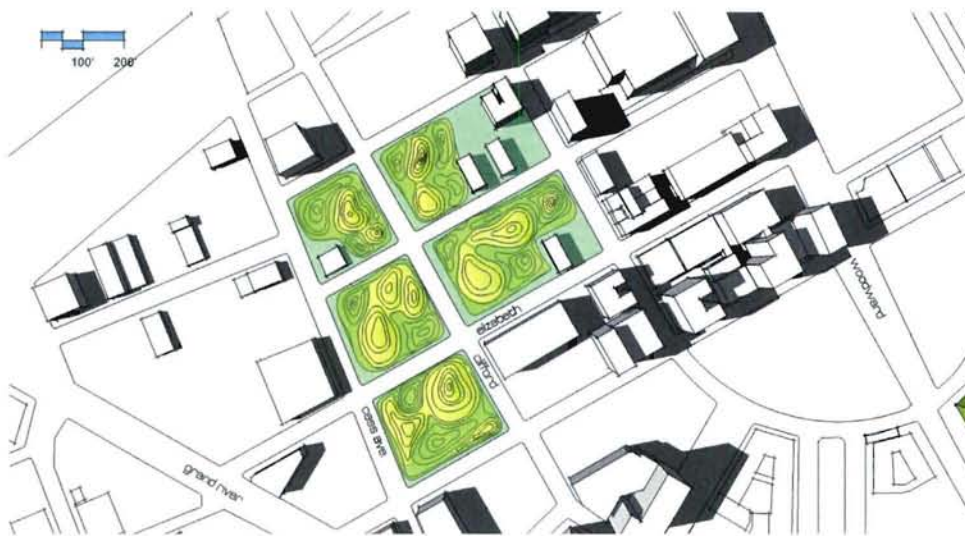


Pod guidelines:

- _storage
- _seating
- _signage
- _booth
- _interior space
- _translucent
- _compact
- _durable
- _range of types







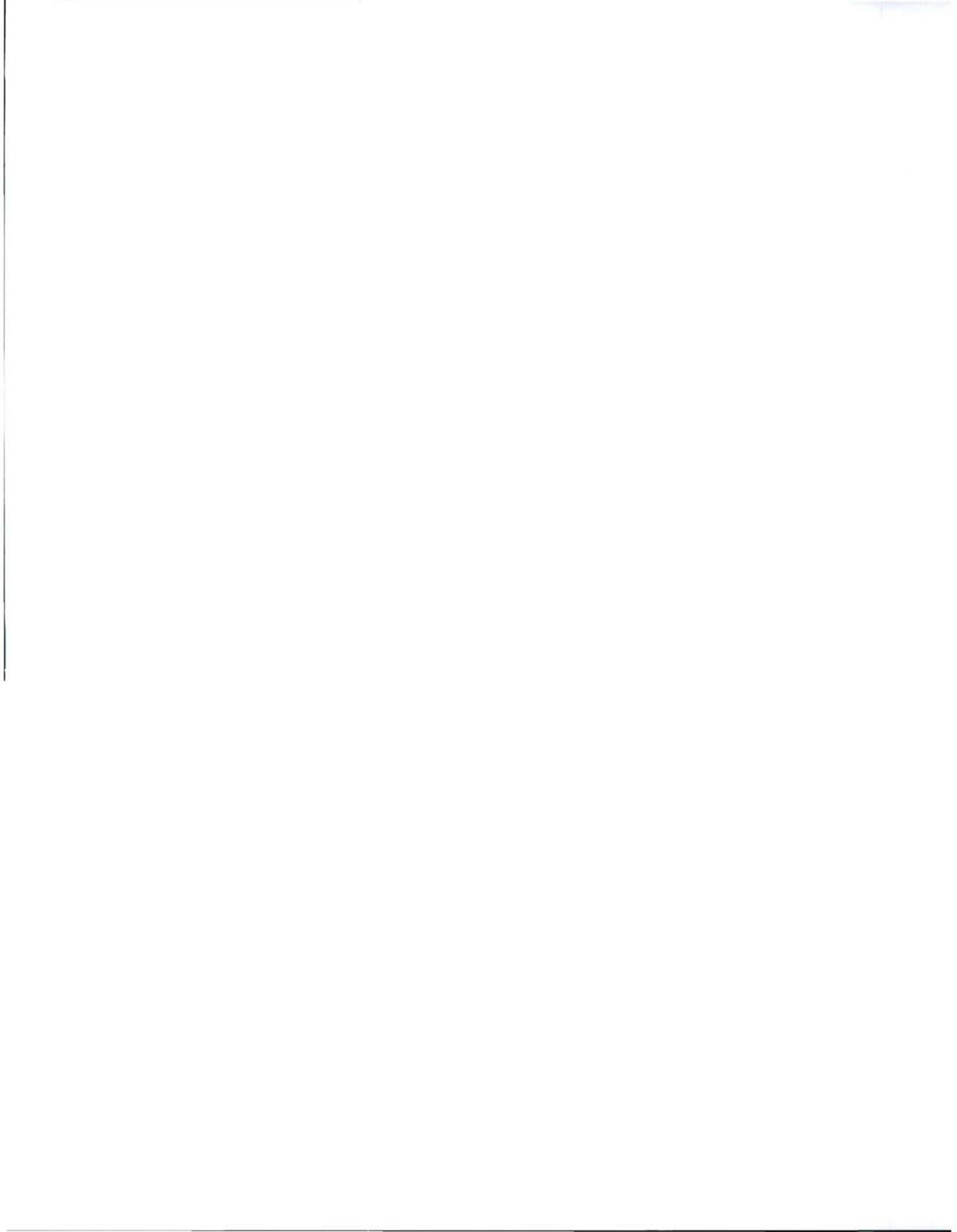
Site 7: Cass and Adams

Park(ing) Lot: The public recreation park during the spring-board phase seemed to be an aggressive reaction to the site conditions. While most of the concepts and ideas about program remain, the Park(ing) Lot idea has been combined with the "green pavers" idea at Randolph and Monroe.



This design still gives the area an undulating landscape that enlivens the area. However, the program of parking a car is fully integrated with the landscape where people can enjoy a public park environment. The rolling topography works with the structural grating system to support cars and people that would be on the site.



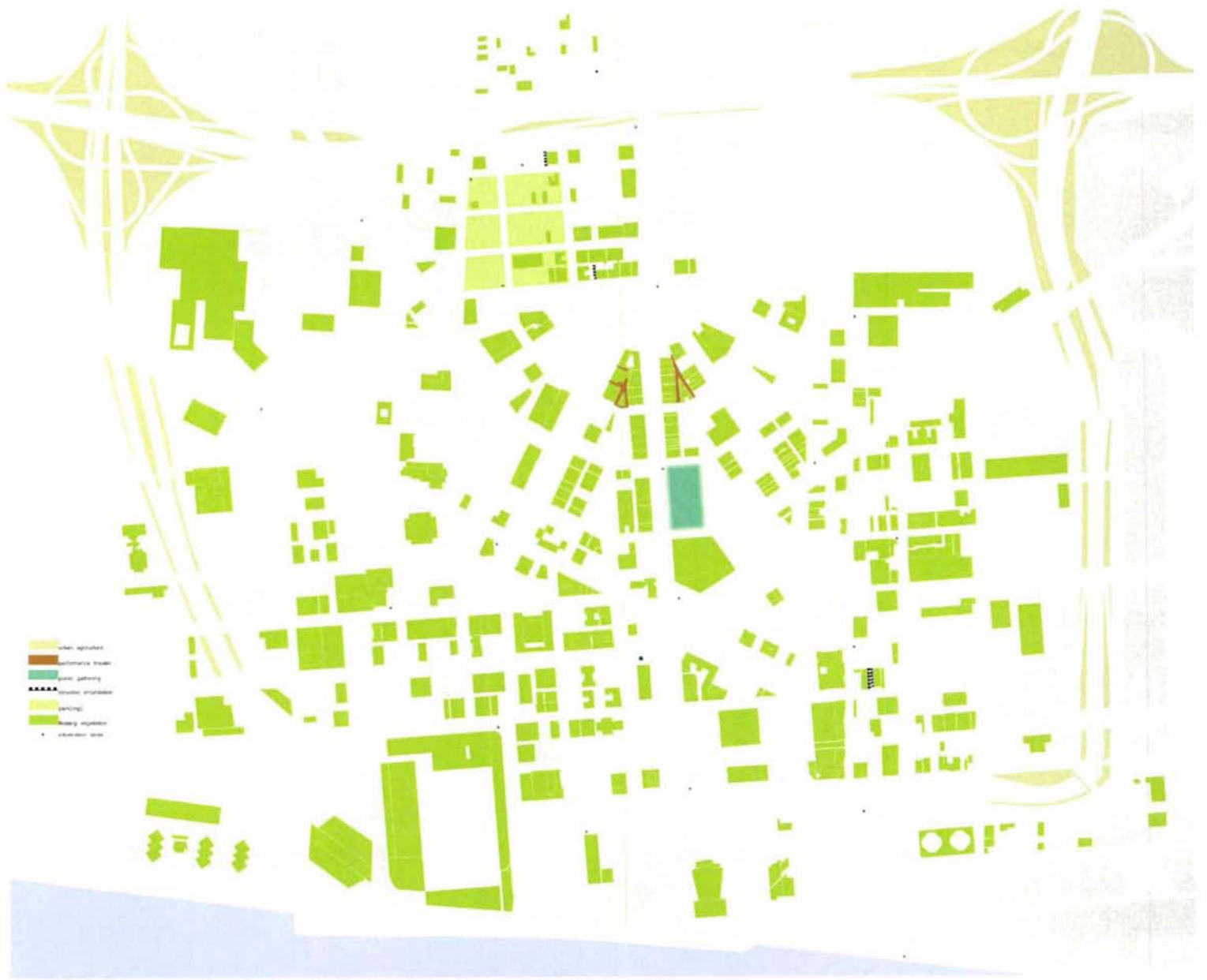


Final Project

The final proposal includes the development of seven chosen sites. The two sites that were omitted in the “building design” phase were developed and detailed. Since the “Building Design” phase the main task was to refine and tweak each site and intervention, and keep in mind the spirit of the thesis—re-inventing marginalized spaces to better serve the public in such a way that goes against the usual commodification of property. Like in the other phases, each intervention would have to be detailed and developed individually in order to thoughtfully consider each site.

Two different site typologies began to emerge. Proposing programs for each individual space created similarities in the intent of some of the programs. Thinking of the city as a whole, some programs can be seen as potentially relevant to the entire city. These spaces are categorized as **Infrastructure sites** meaning the interventions proposed could be implemented throughout the city on other similar sites. In the other category, program had to do with the specific unique site; therefore, they are labeled **Unique sites**. These interventions are even more specific to context than those that might be repeated.

PROJECT INTERVENTIONS

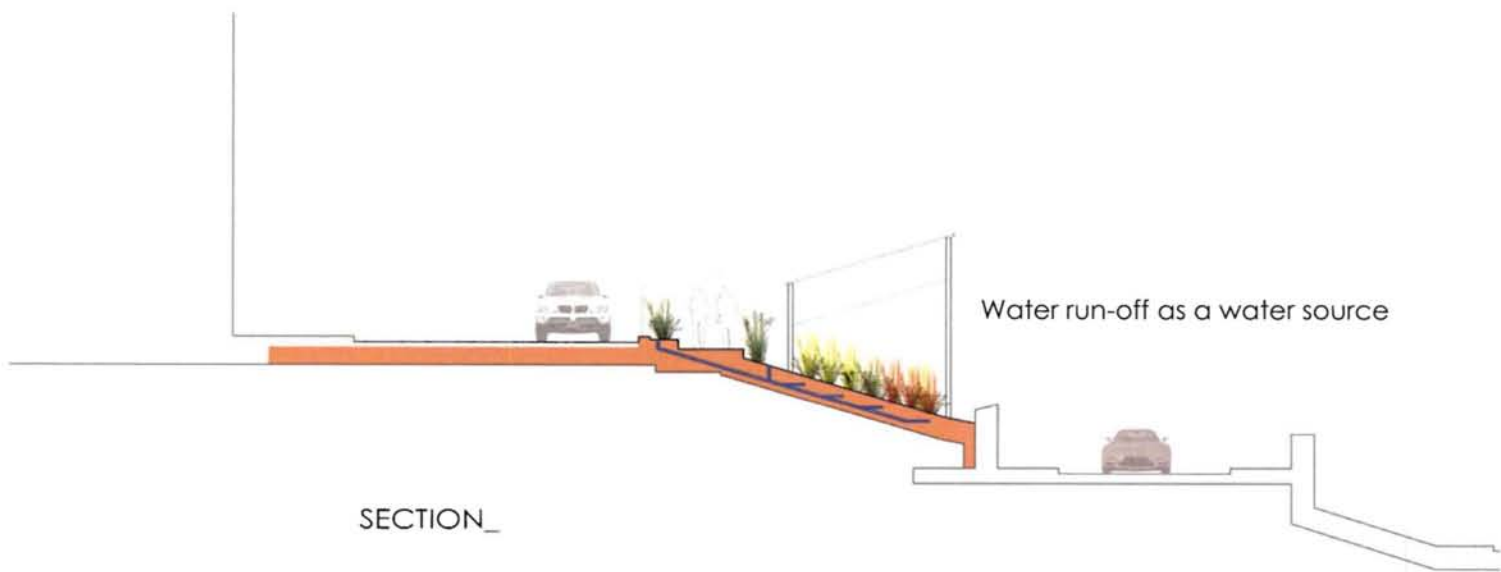


**Site 1: I-75 and Woodward
Infrastructure site**

Urban Agriculture: Freeway edges and mixing bowls are often forgotten spaces. The proposed intervention is to transform these spaces into usable vegetation areas in the form of urban agriculture and community gardens. The vegetables grown can help support the surrounding communities that line the freeways.



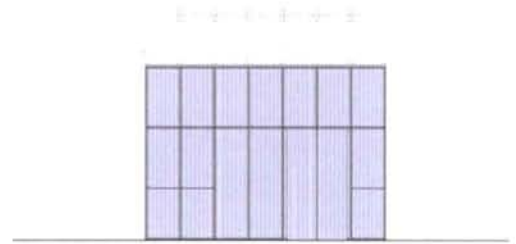
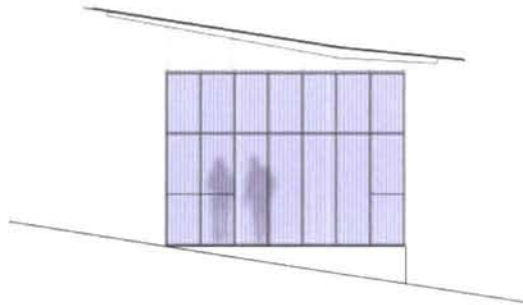
VARIATIONS OF GROWTH



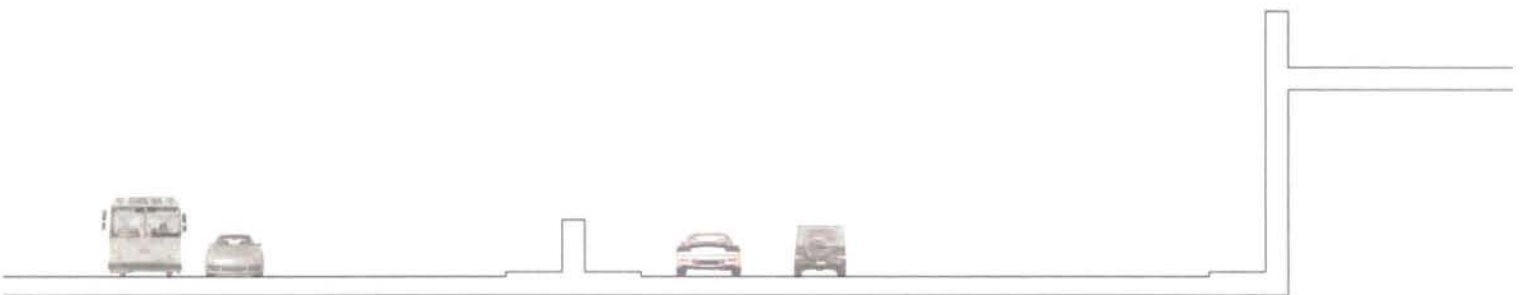


3

The design of the garden can take on many forms: 1. traditional 2, 3 . greenhouse



SHED ELEVATION_



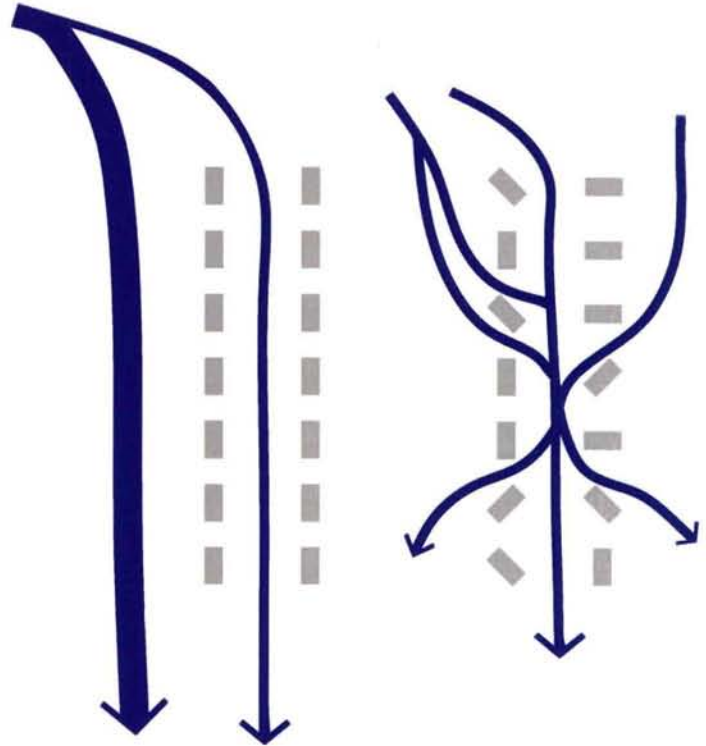
FREEWAY AGRICULTURE



Graphic illustrating urban agriculture on freeway edges in the city. Crops and plants could support adjacent communities.

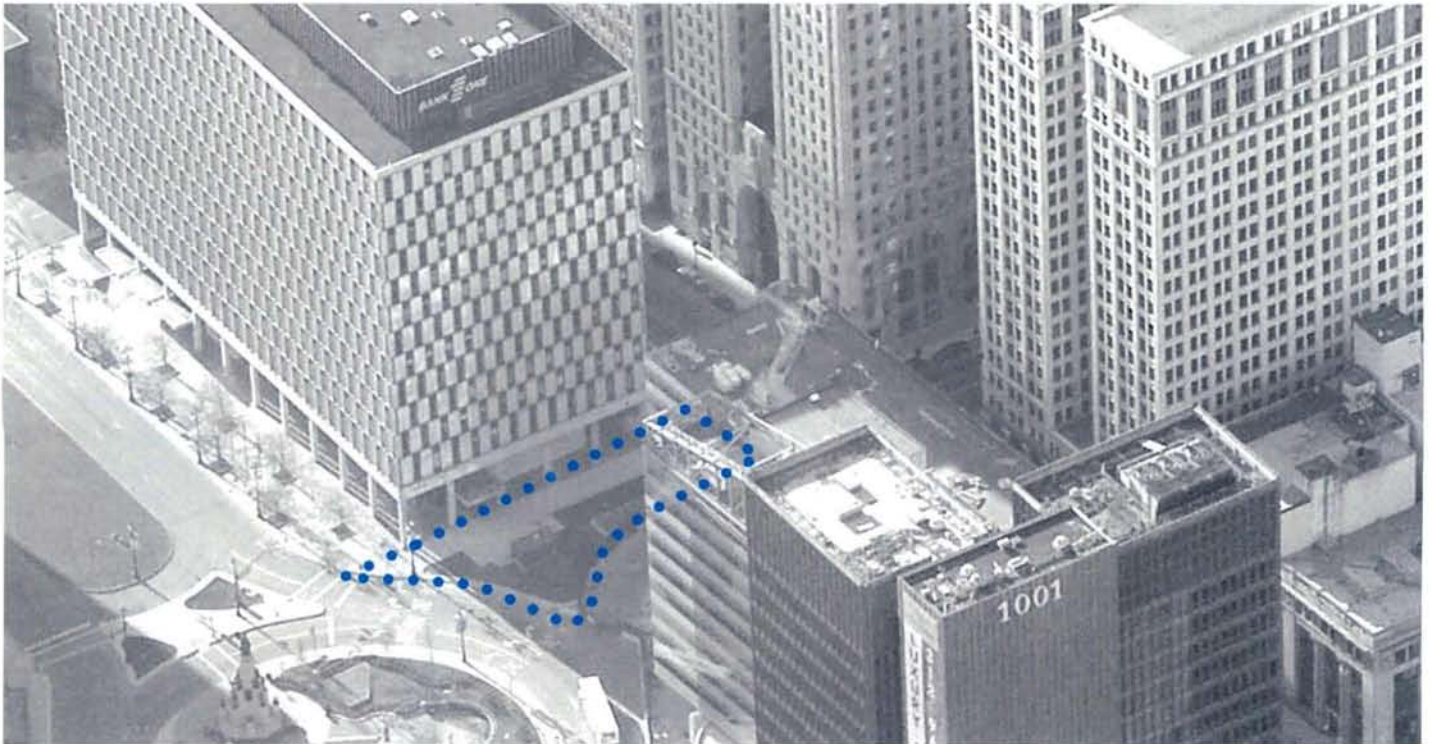
**Site 2: Woodward and Fort
Infrastructure site**

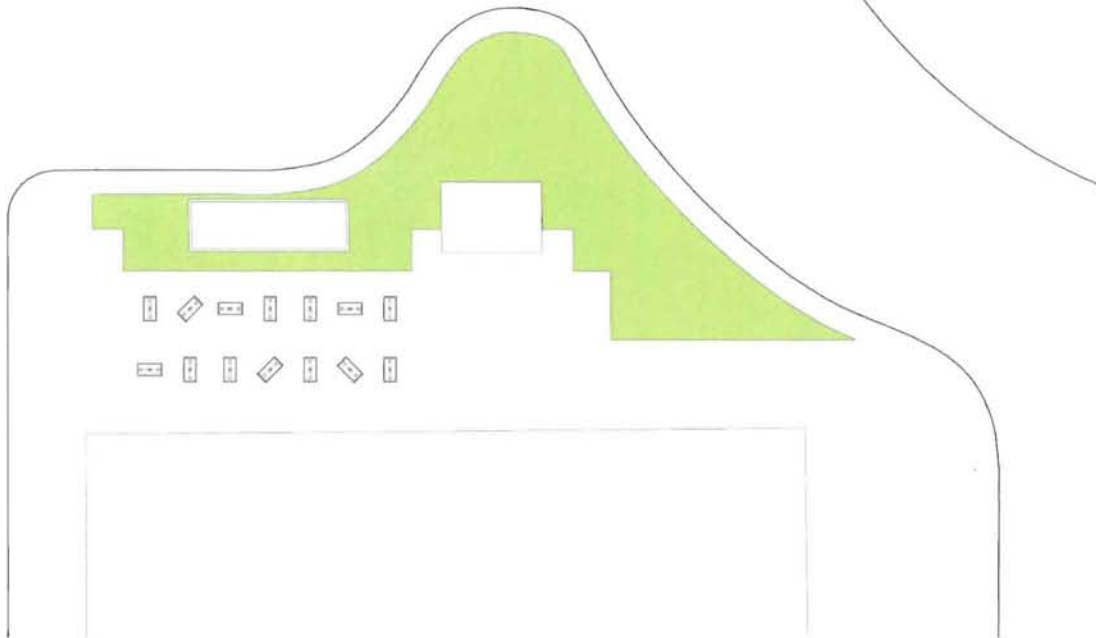
Information kiosk: The space is the intersection of many people. The program will introduce an information kiosk where anyone can access the internet, news, and other media. It is also a place for interaction with other people. The 14 pods can swivel to face other pods creating a space for conversation.



scenario 1:
kiosks forms hallways
of travel

scenario 2:
kiosks allow for the
interaction of traffic

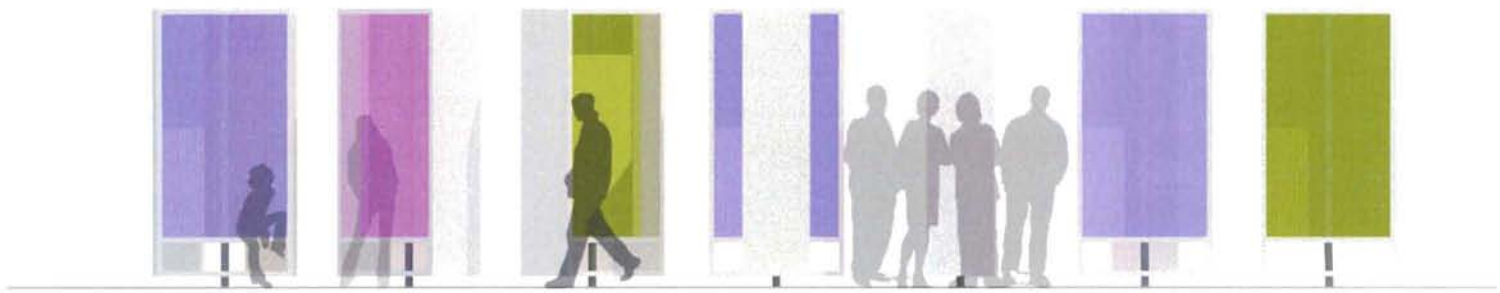




PLAN



SECTION

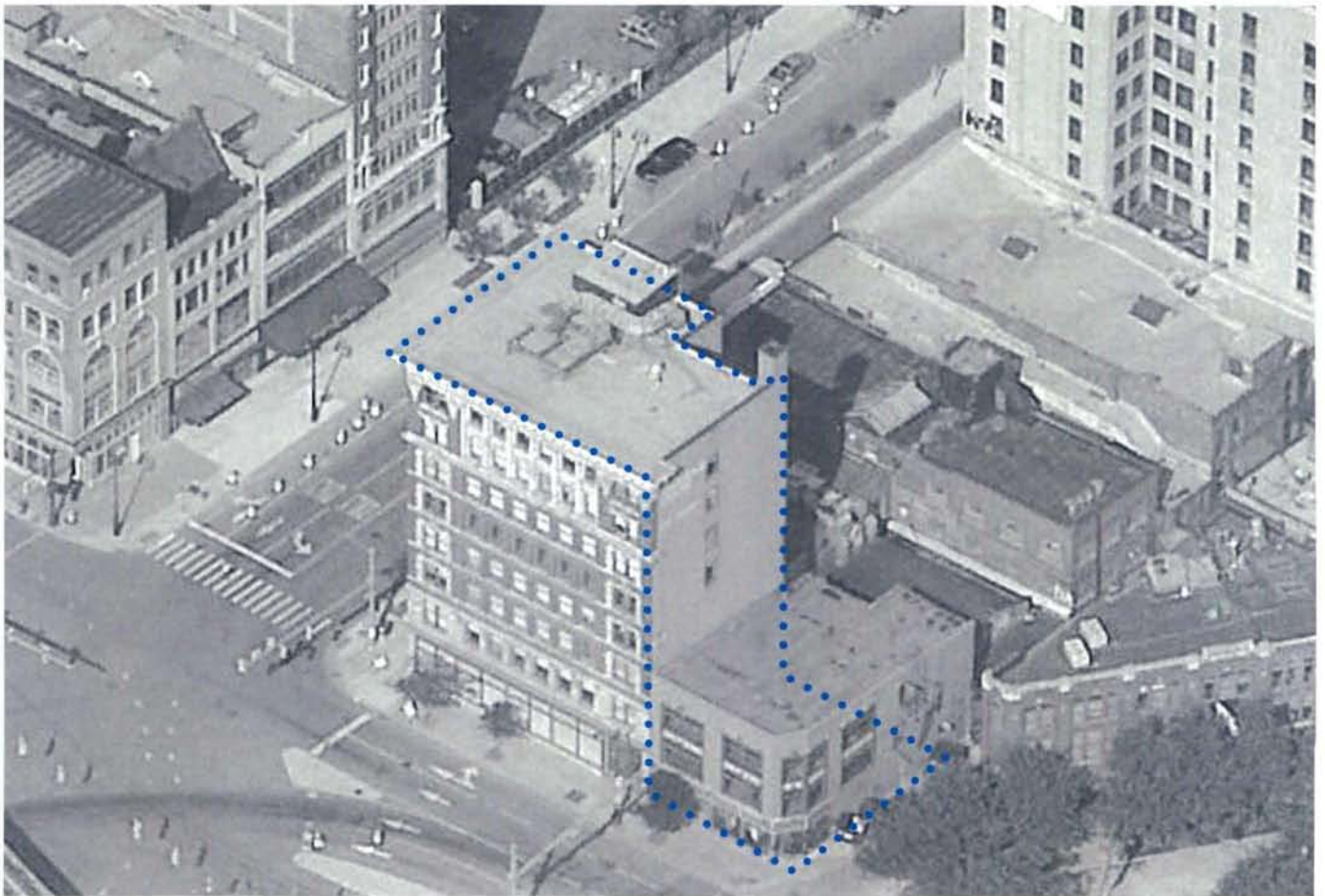


ELEVATION



Site 3: Gratiot and Randolph Infrastructure site

Floating Vegetation: The idea of the intervention is to keep the structure light and translucent giving emphasis more on the vegetation. The three levels give spaces for rest, and gives views to the surrounding city. These levels use a metal mesh grating for the floor structure adding to the light feel. An organic trellis type system will be suspended at the exterior giving opportunity for vegetation to grow. The organic form sprouts from the ground to the green roof.





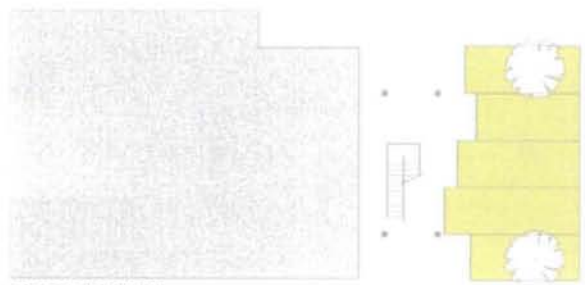
ROOF TOP LEVEL



THIRD LEVEL

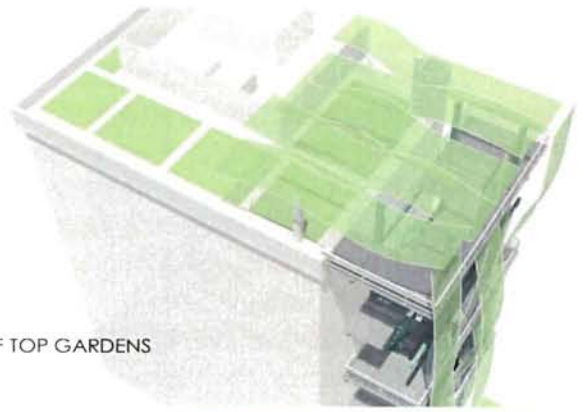


SECOND LEVEL

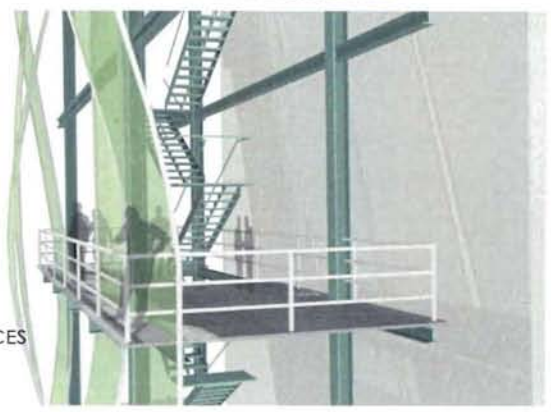


GROUND LEVEL

PLAN



ROOF TOP GARDENS



SPATIAL INSTANCES

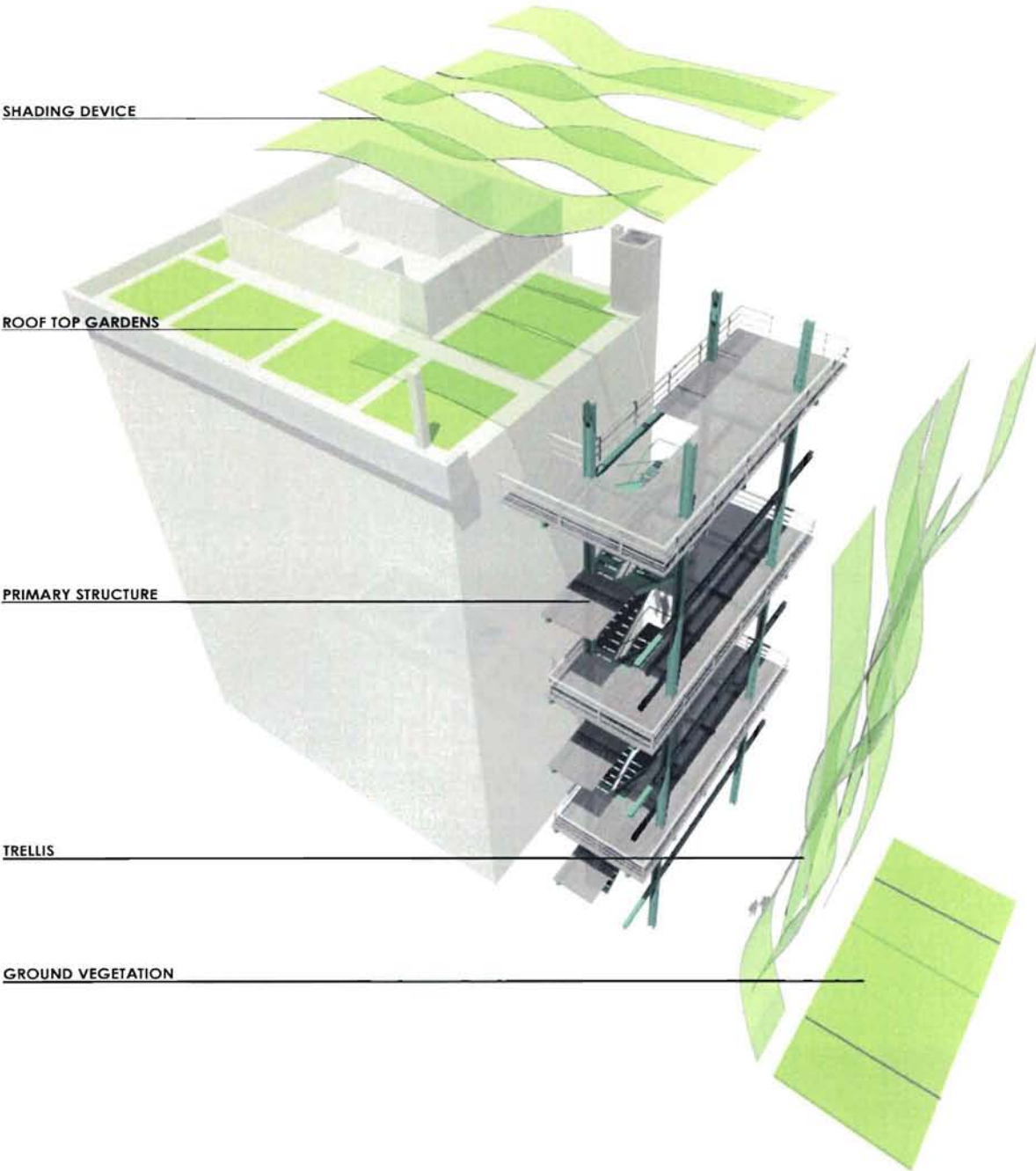


VEGETATION GROWTH

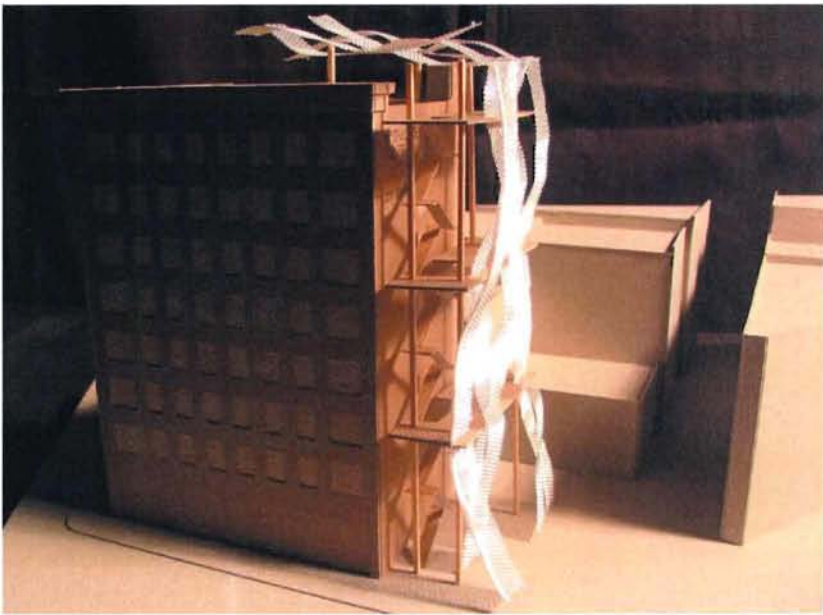
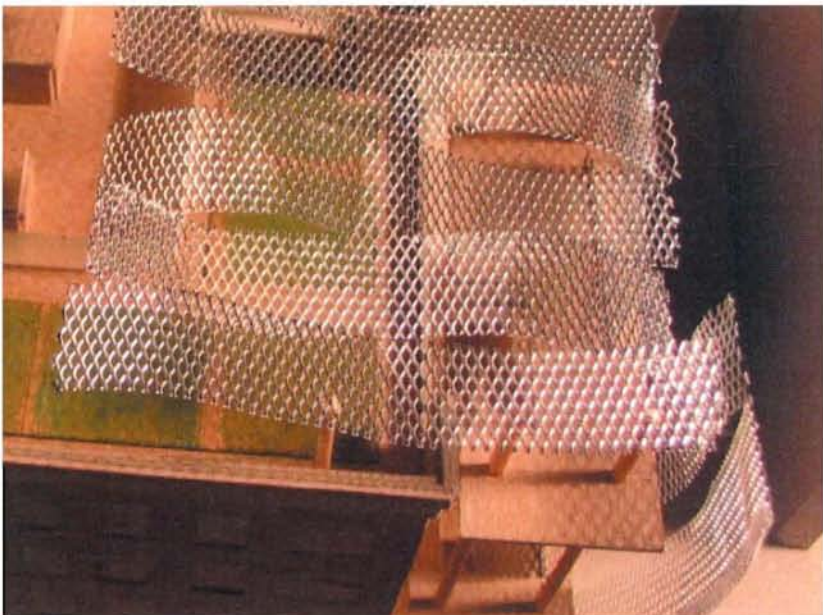
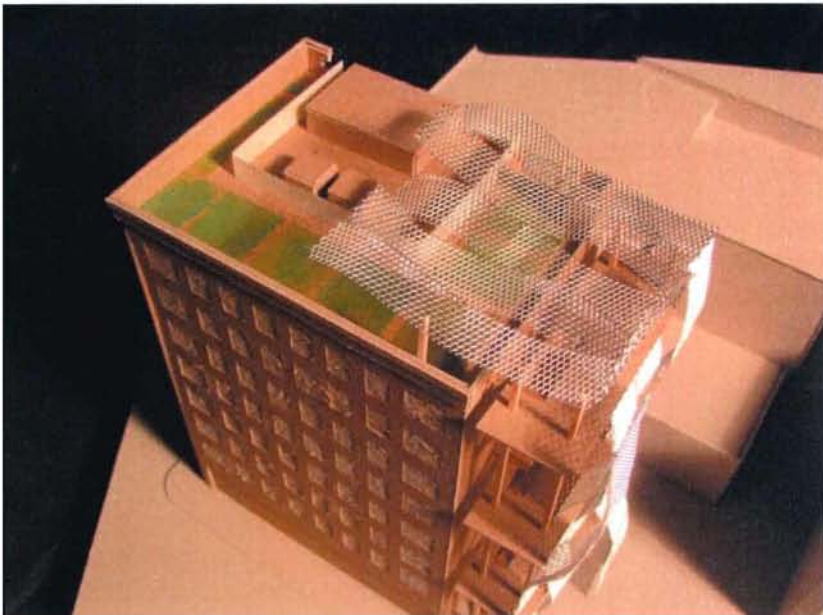


GROUND PLANE VEGETATION

COMPONENTS







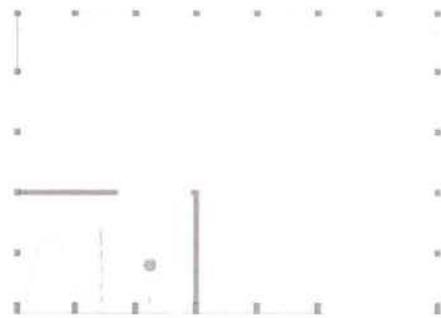
Site 4: Brush and Congress Infrastructure site

Elevated Inhabitation: An opportunity arises here between two buildings. The site is an empty lot converted into parking. The proposed program attempts to claim the air rights between these buildings with pods that attach to the buildings' sides. This intervention can become usable space for artists and musicians. One plan for occupancy involves a co-op where each occupant would have to donate their time to teach their craft to children and adults in return for discounts on rent. This would also create a unique collection of talented people around the city willing to foster children through the arts.

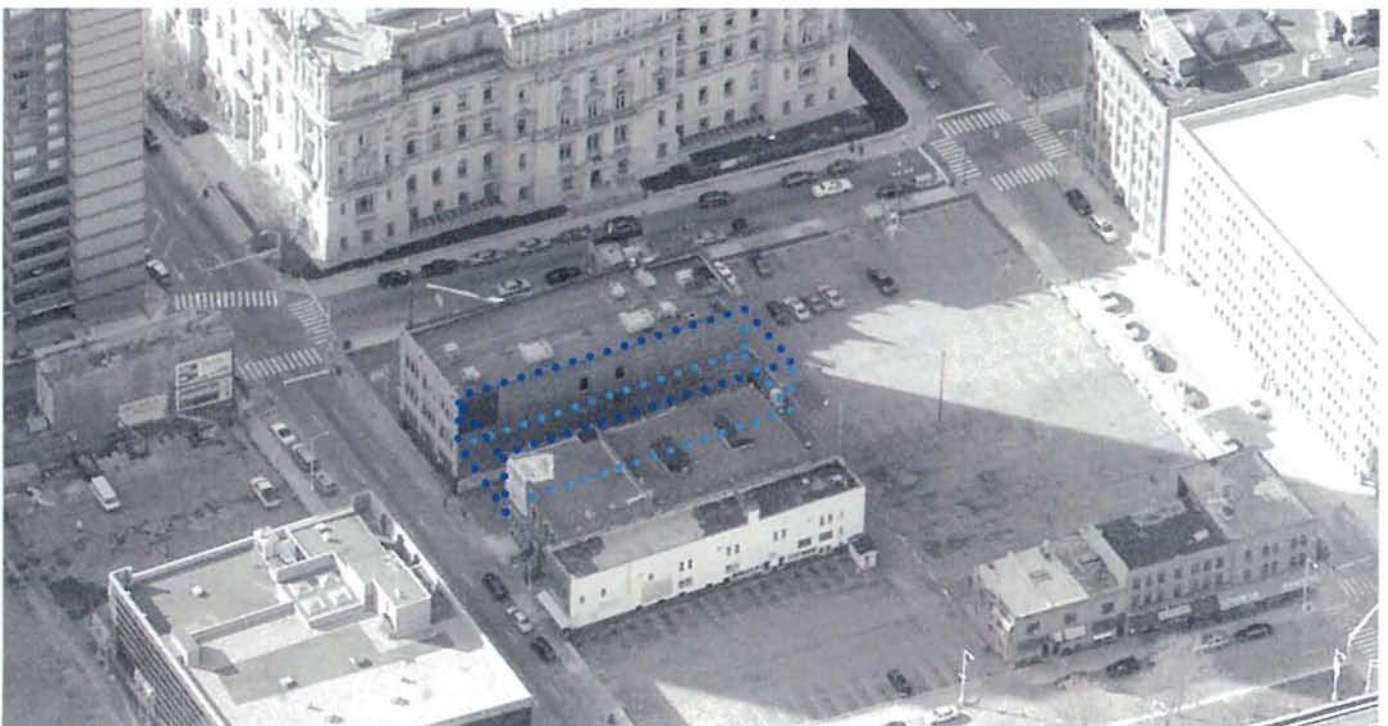
Although in this case there may not be that many sites that are identical to this one with blank party walls so close to each other, but there are certainly other similar conditions where air rights could be occupied.



PLAN



POD PLAN

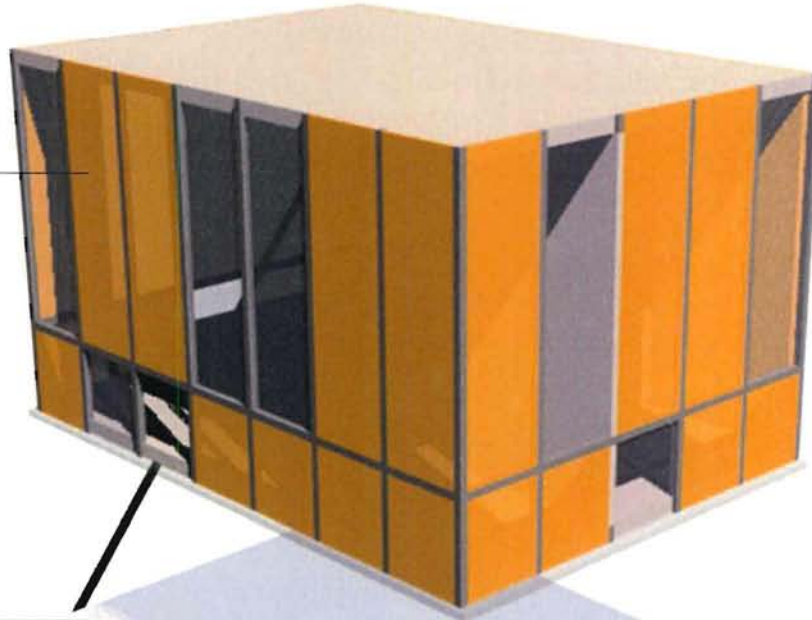


COMPONENTS

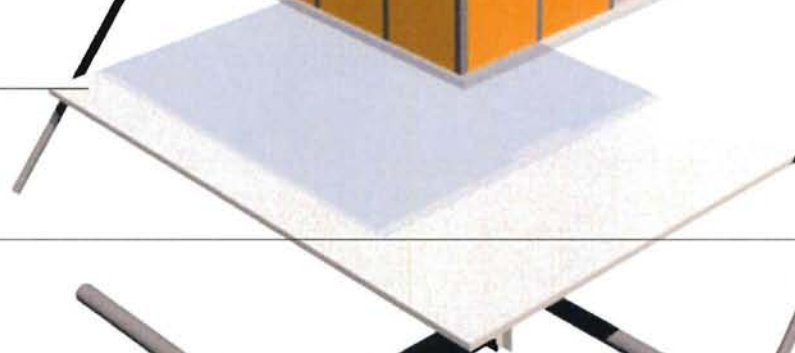
BUILDING CONNECTOR



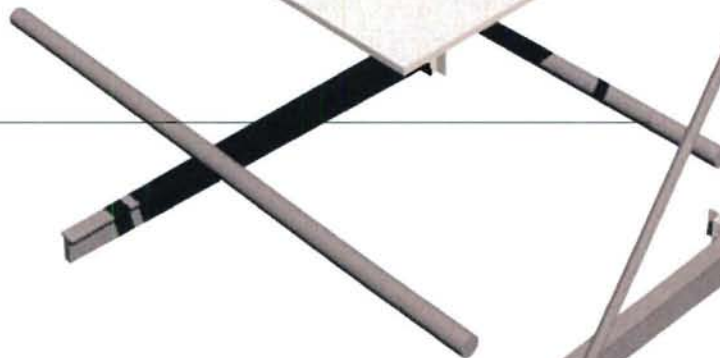
POD



POD PLATFORM



TENSION CABLES

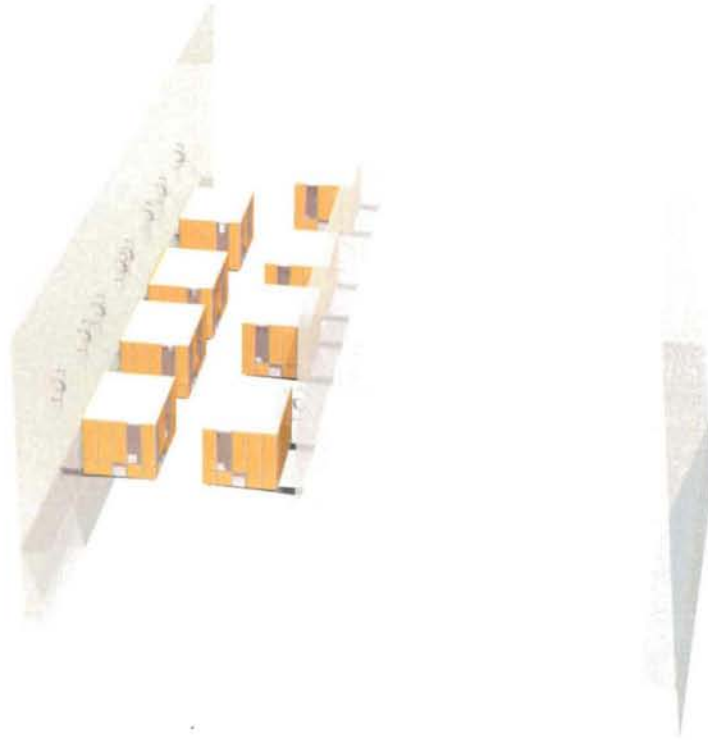


SUPPORT ROD

SUPPORT HANGER



SURROUNDING BUILDINGS

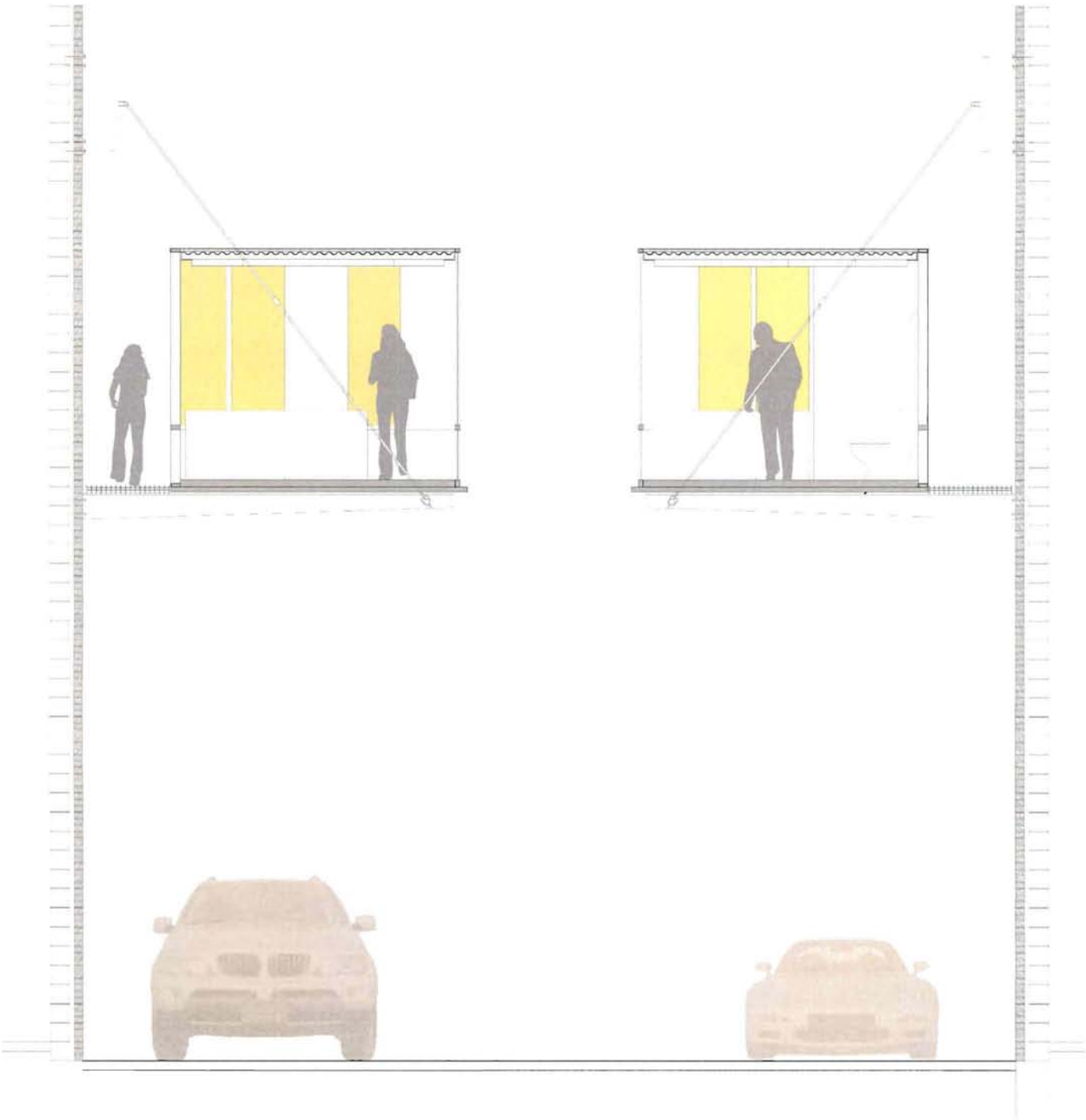


POD VARIATIONS

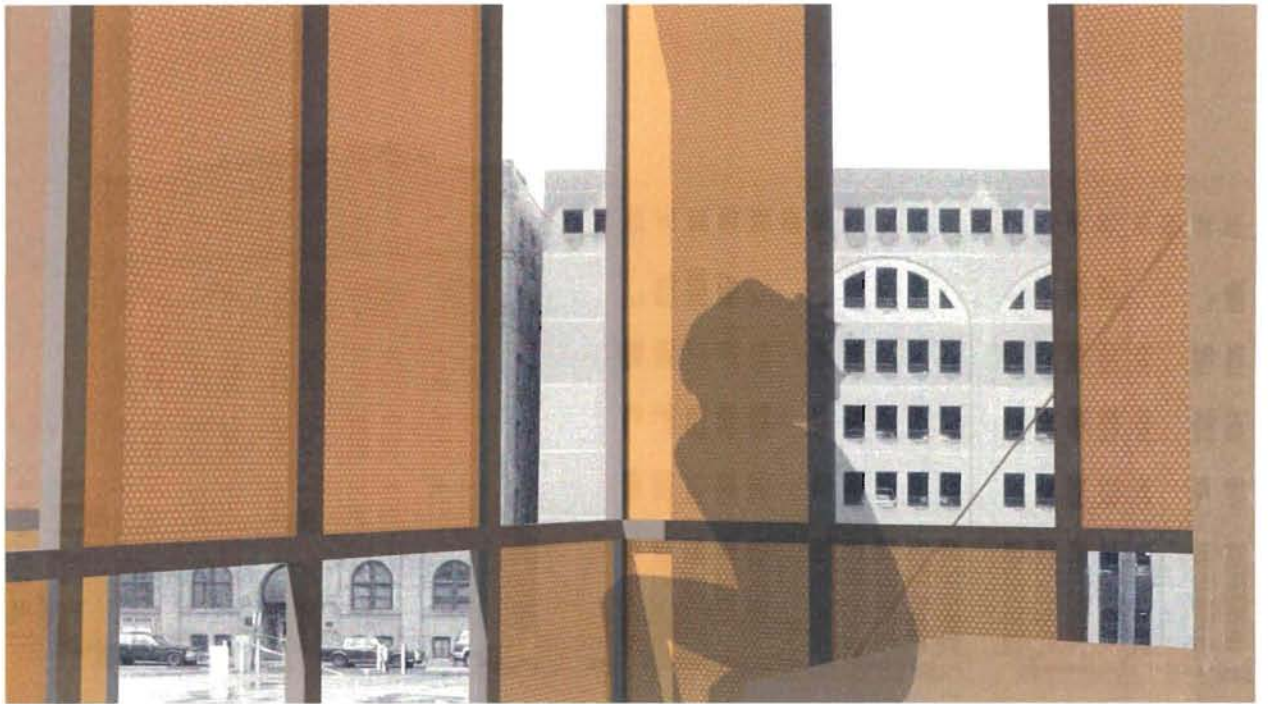
The modularity of the pod is meant to keep the pod simple in construction, and also make it easy to modify. The panels that make up the facade can be moved or placed onto another bay, changing the facade and giving the user a sense of individuality

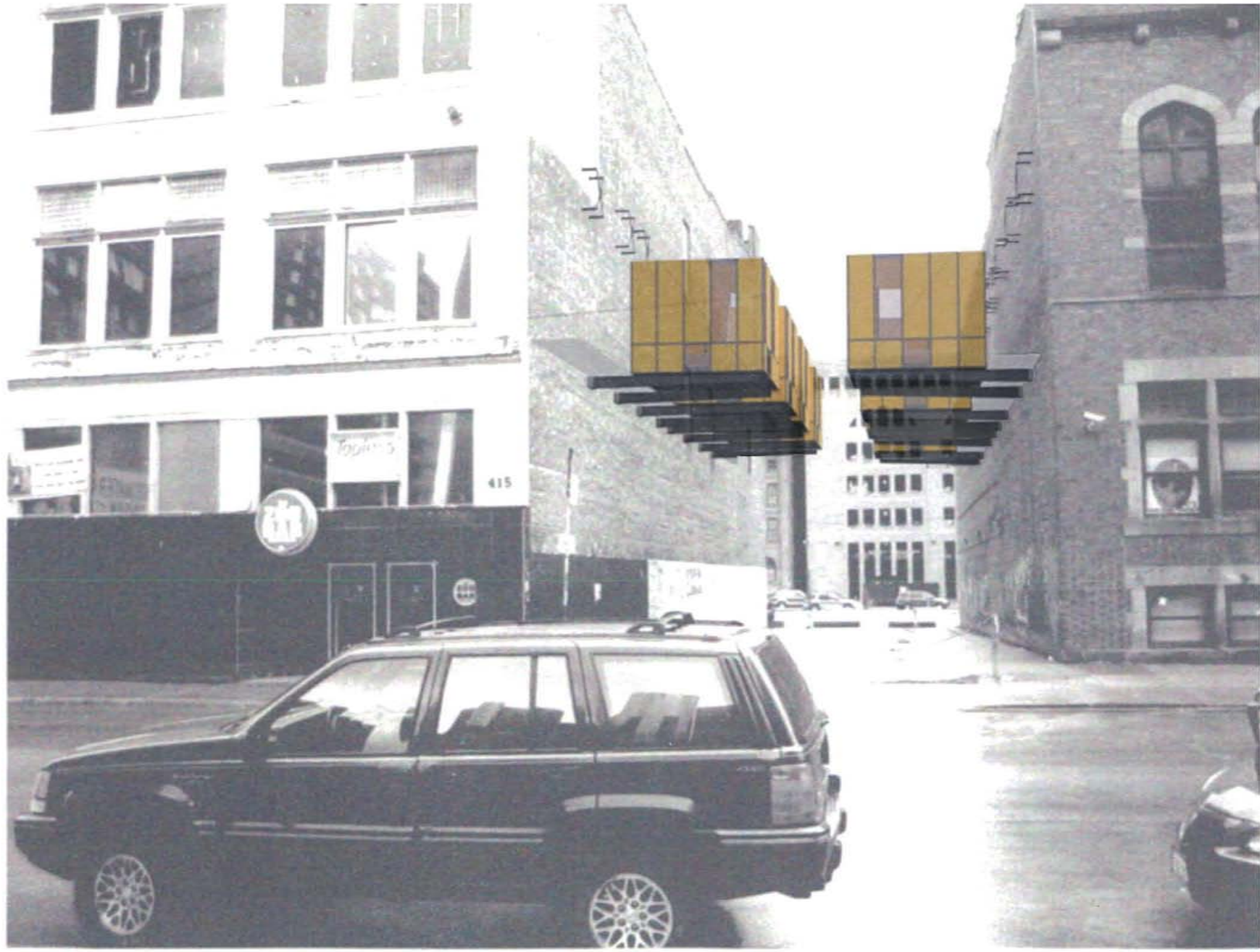


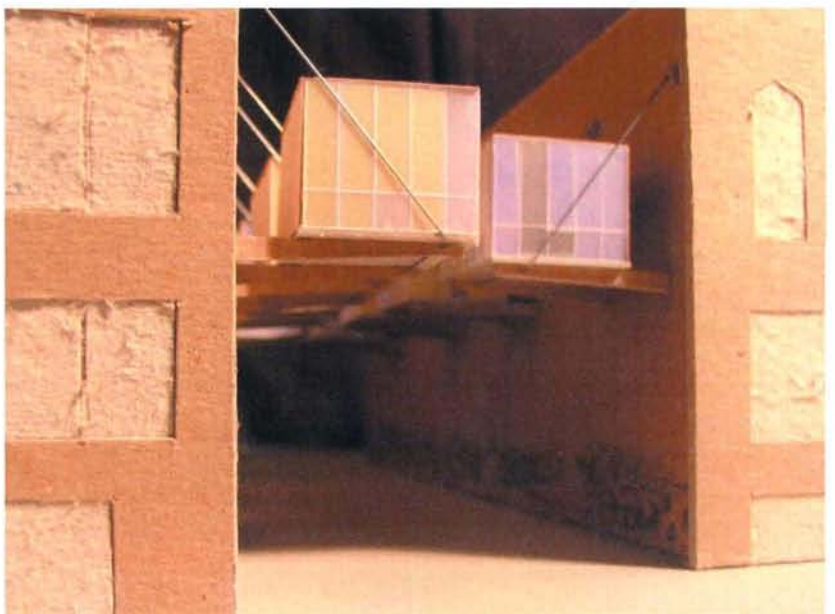
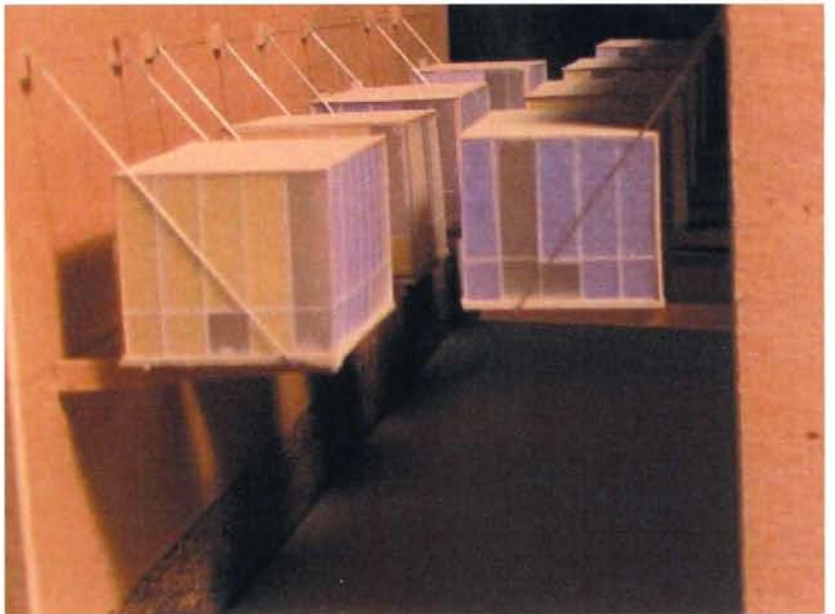
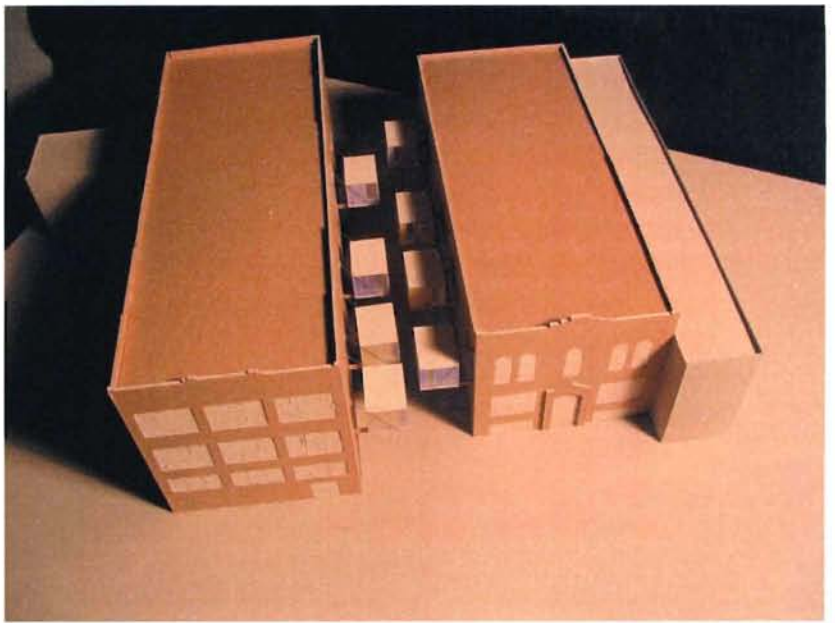
By positioning the dwellings above, the current public use of the space can continue.



SECTION



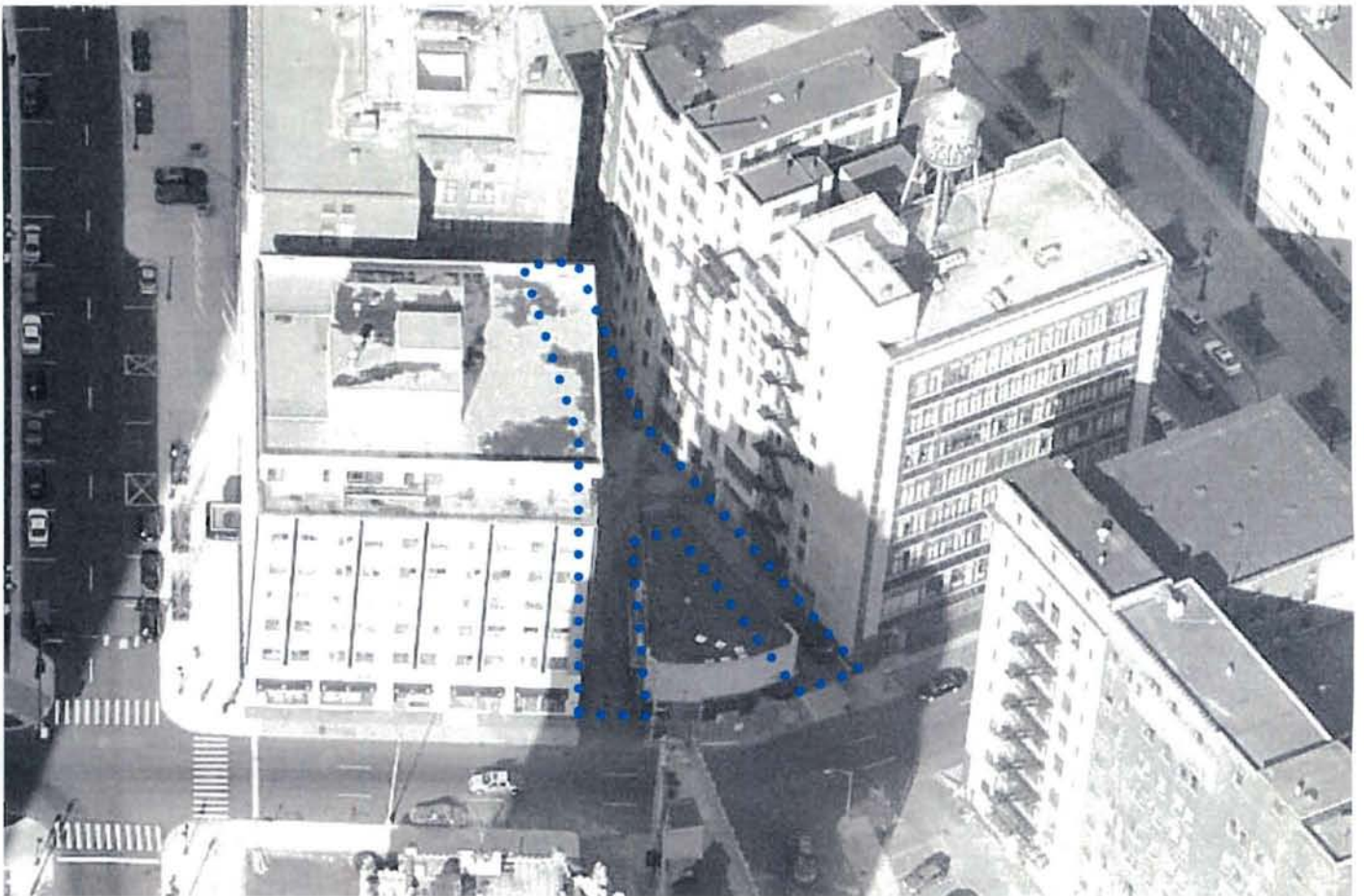






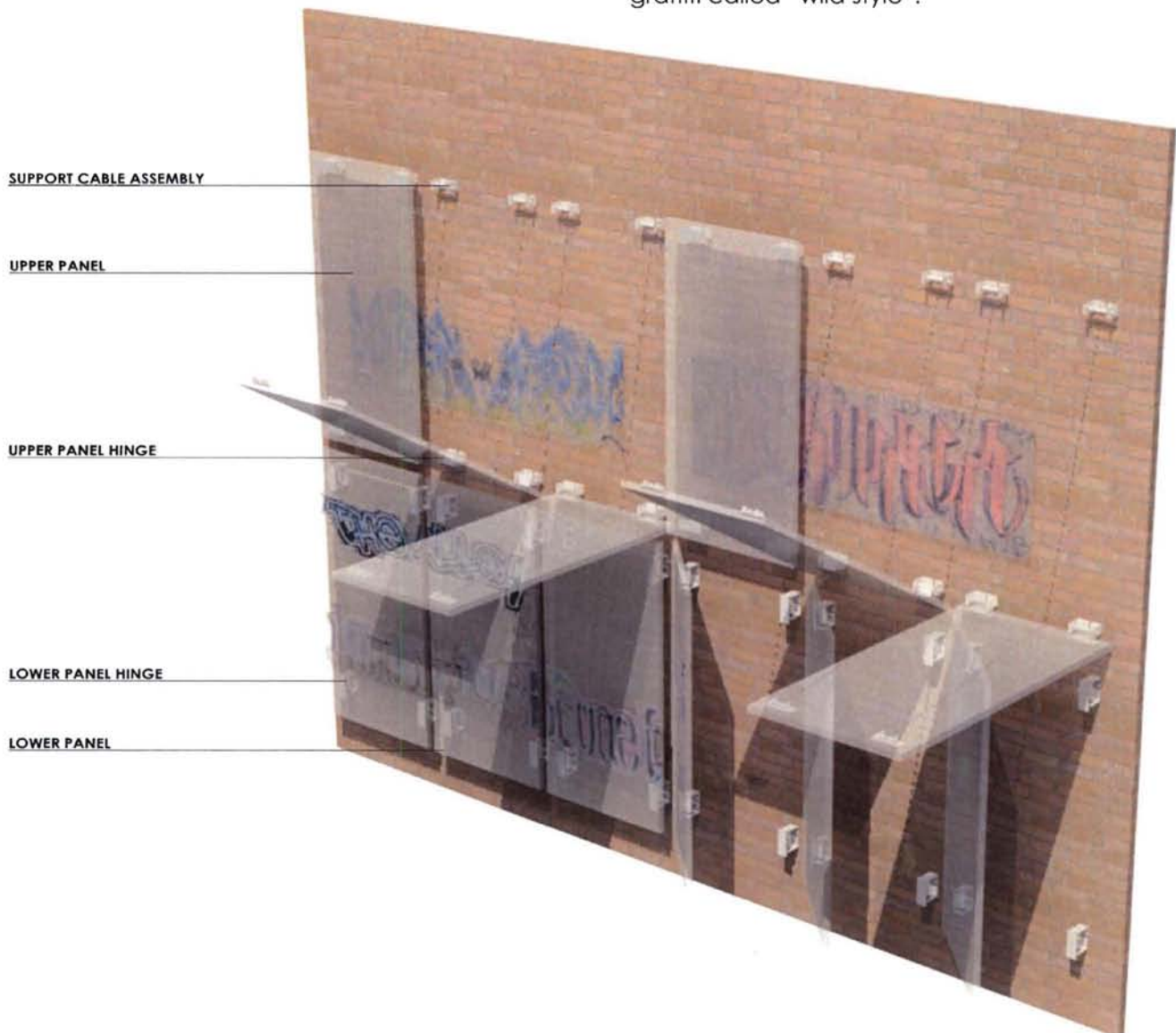
Site 5: 30 Clifford
Unique site

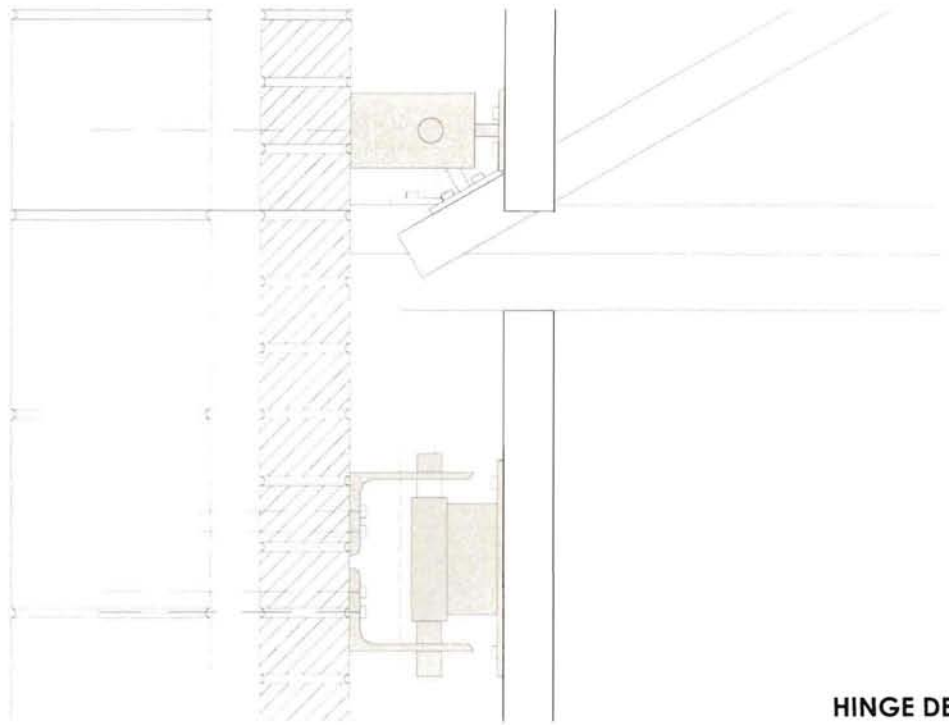
Urban Theater: The Clifford site has a unique condition of converging alleys. The perceptions of alleys are that they are dark and dangerous. The program proposed here is an open theater where the alleys become the entrance. This is a re-imagined function of the theater. It contrasts the traditional theater dynamics. The red carpet is transformed into the alleyway in which you progress through a graffiti gallery. The vacant building on the site will be renovated into dressing rooms and house equipment. The stage will be nestled at the two alleys meeting point forcing the people to experience the alley.



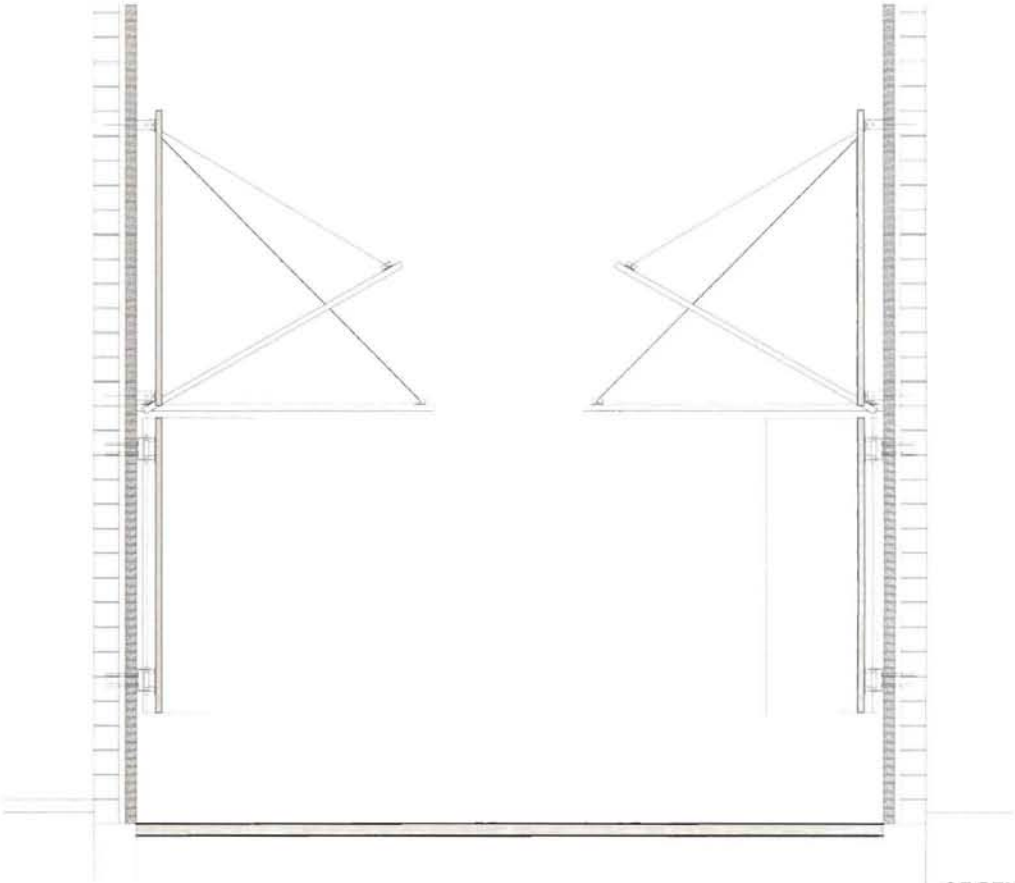
PANEL COMPONENTS

Movable panels of translucent plexiglass cover each sides of the wall creating canvasses for graffiti artists. These panels can also pivot on hinges that define different spaces as one progress through the alleys. Also, as each panel pivots, it gives the illusion of merging and interlocking forms of graffiti, a form of graffiti called "wild style".





HINGE DETAIL



SECTION



GRAFFITI GALLERY ENTRANCE



VIEW FROM STAGE



ARTISTS WORKING ON PANELS

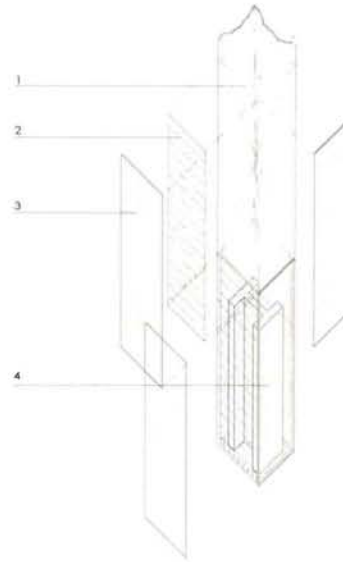


BREAK DANCING ON STAGE



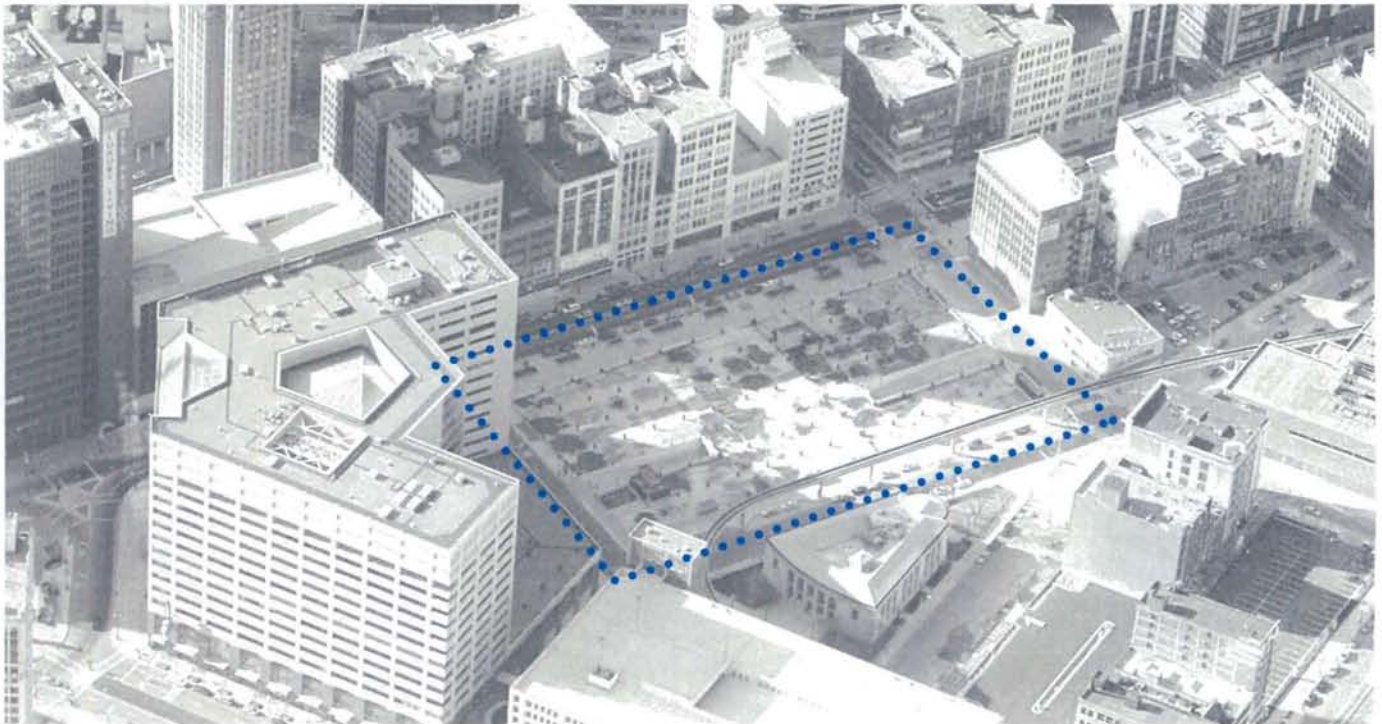
Site 6: 30 Hudsons Block
Unique site

Public Gathering: The Hudson's Block carries with it significant historic baggage. It was once home to the famous J.L. Hudson department store. The building was torn down and the site is presently used as underground parking. The columns that protrude from the surface act as symbols that look toward future development. However, the surface level cannot be accessed because of a fence that is around its perimeter. The proposal for this site is to tear down the fence and make the surface an active public gathering place. The illuminated perimeter columns will stand at 35' tall giving the "ghost building" more presence and permanence.



- 1 LIGHT COVER FRAME
- 2 L.E.D. PANELS
- 3 LIGHT DIFFUSER
- 4 EXISTING COLUMN

COLUMN AXON



These studies look at the different possibilities of how the exterior columns could integrate different art installations.



THIRD

GREEN SPACES

The third level gives the opportunity of inhabitable green space. The idea of the green roof is merged into the "ghost building."

SECOND

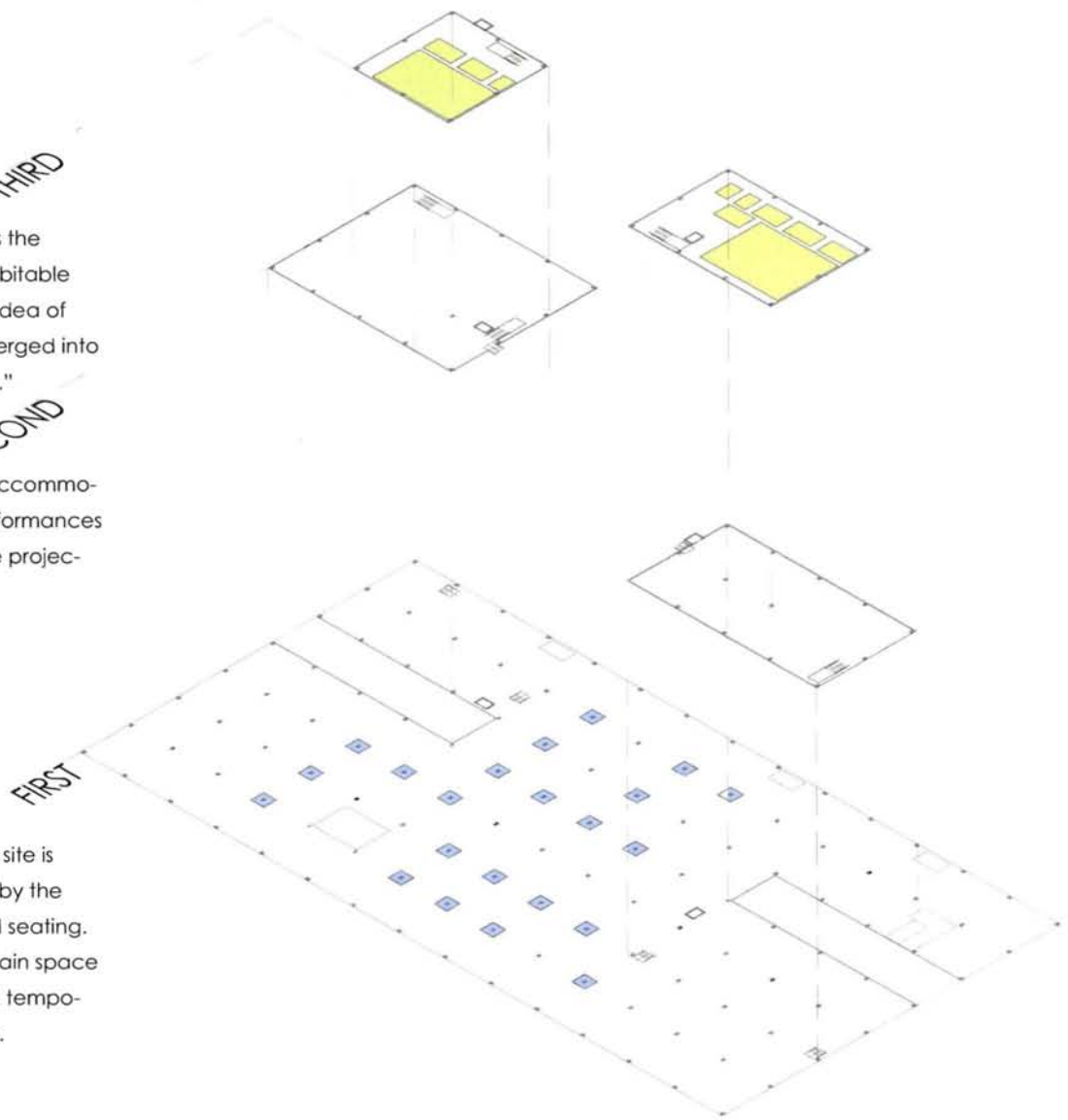
ACTIVITES SPACE

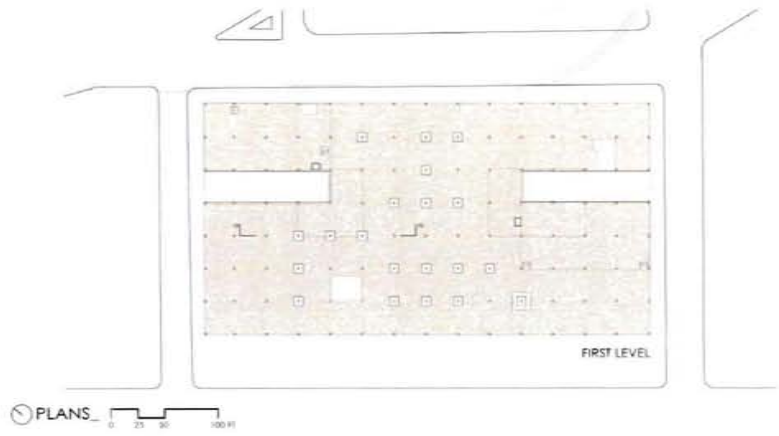
The second level accommodates different performances and possible movie projections.

FIRST

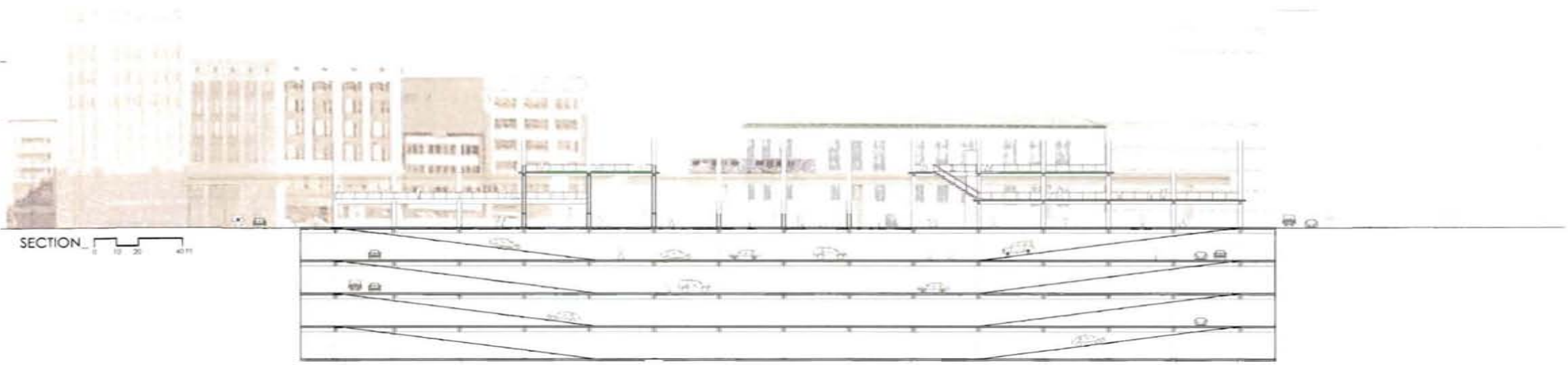
RENTABLE STORES

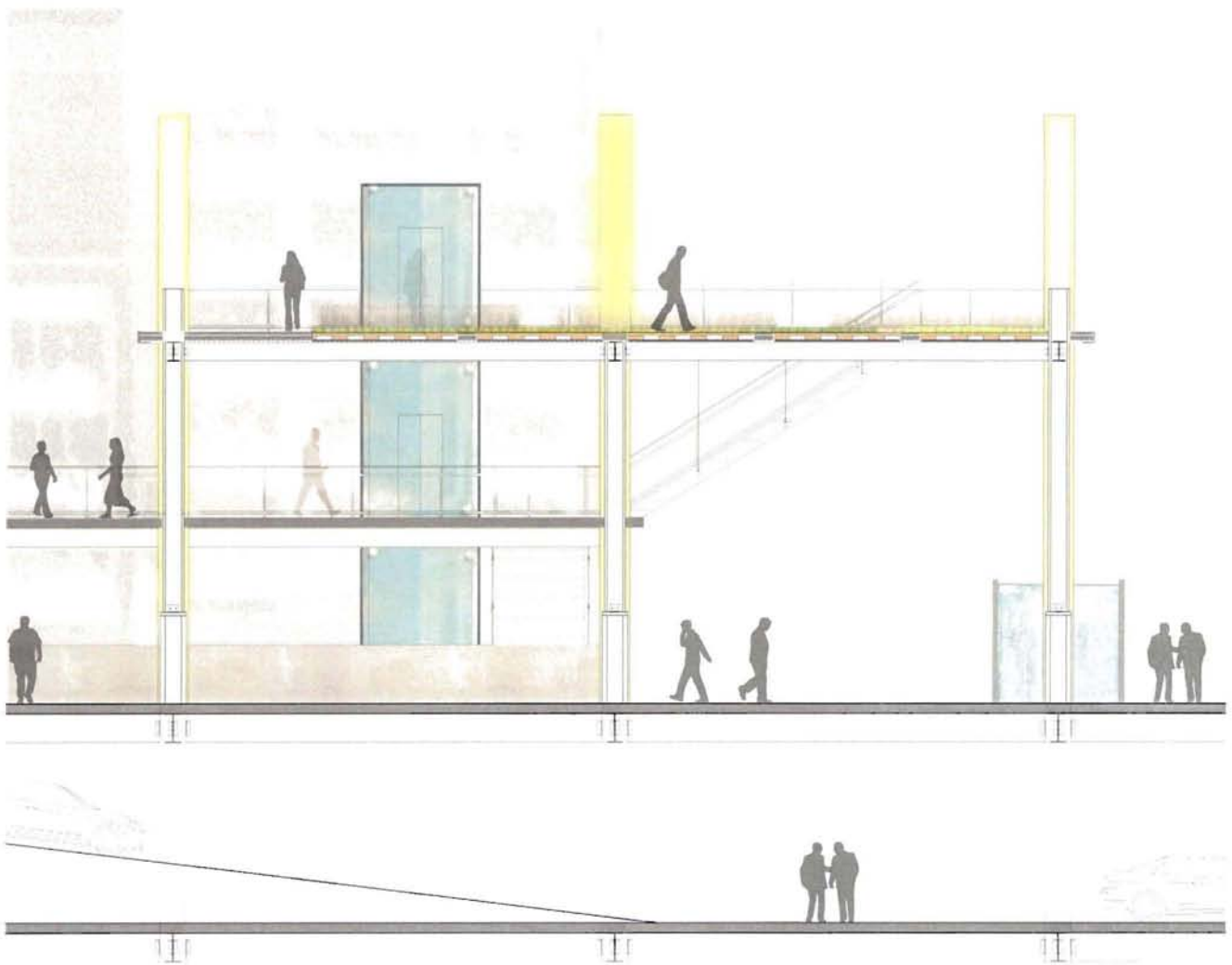
The first level of the site is mainly dominated by the rentable stores and seating. It will also be the main space for permanent and temporary art installations.



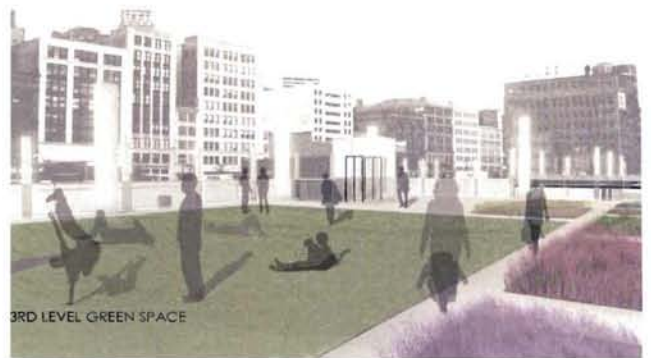
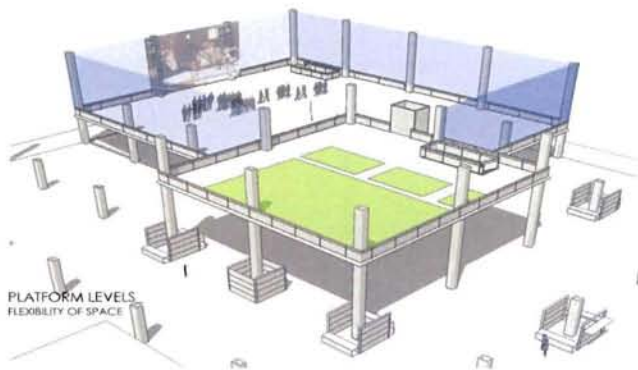


PLANS 0 25 50 100 FT





SECTION CLOSEUP_ 0 1 2 4 8 16 FT

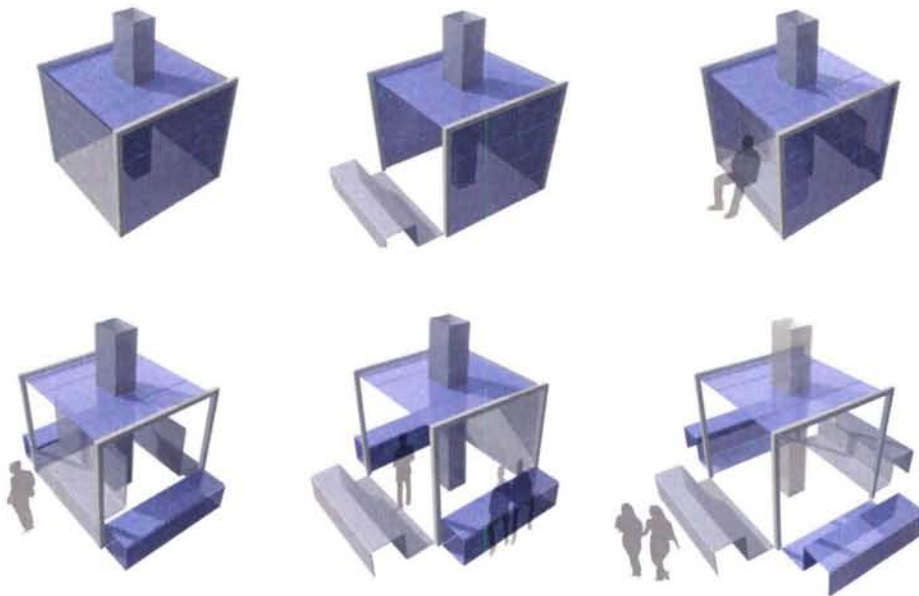


The interior space is broken up into different functions like a building. The addition of upper levels in the space provides other functions such as spaces for performance, movie projection, and spaces for vegetation areas.



Rentable Stores: Essentially, the rentable stores are pods that when unfolded can become utilized as functional stores or a seating area. There are many ways that the store can be unfolded making it flexible to respond to the user. It could be opened up only on one side or all four. If not in use as a store, the pod will be folded into a functional seating area. The rentable stores are dotted in the space strategically to invite pedestrians inside of the site and enhance interaction between them.

VARIATIONS OF FOLD



Store Guidelines:

- _storage space
- _seating areas
- _signage
- _booth
- _interior space
- _translucency
- _compact
- _durable
- _flexible

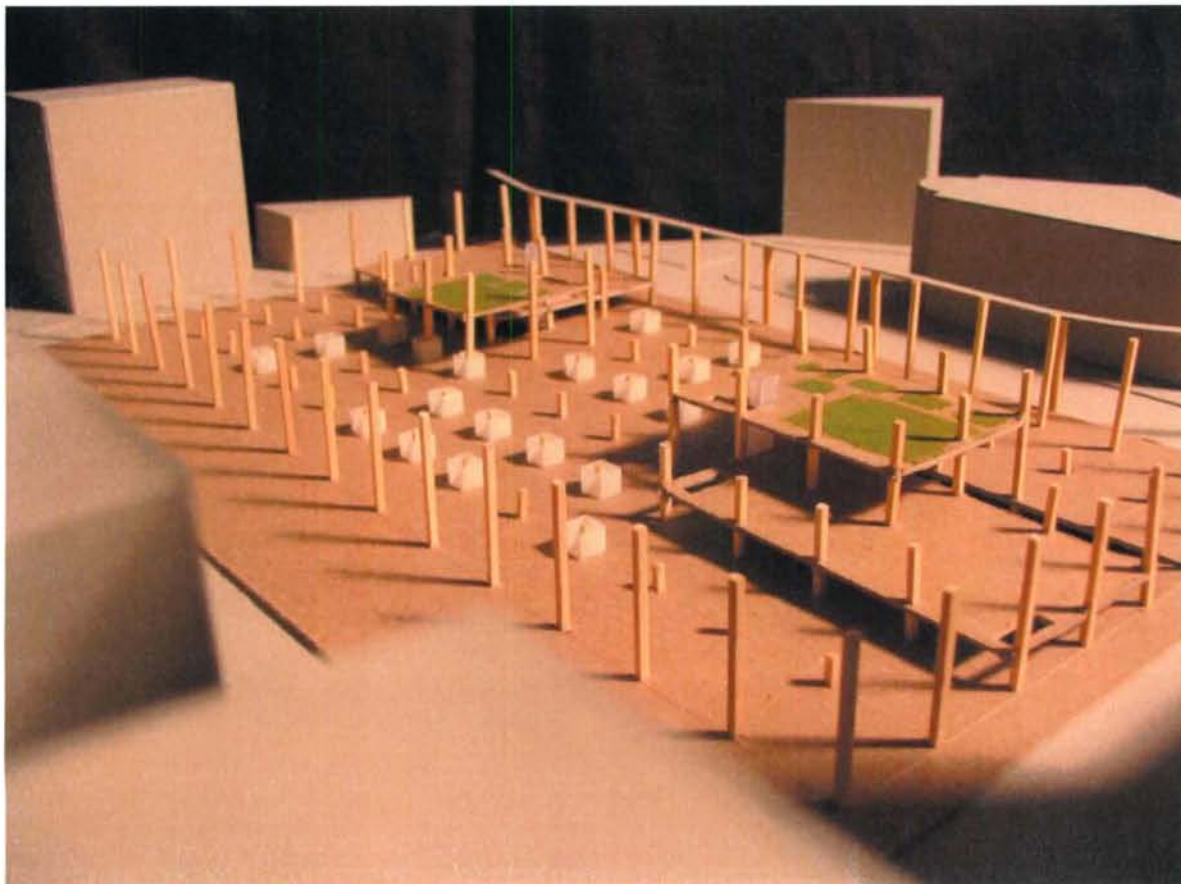
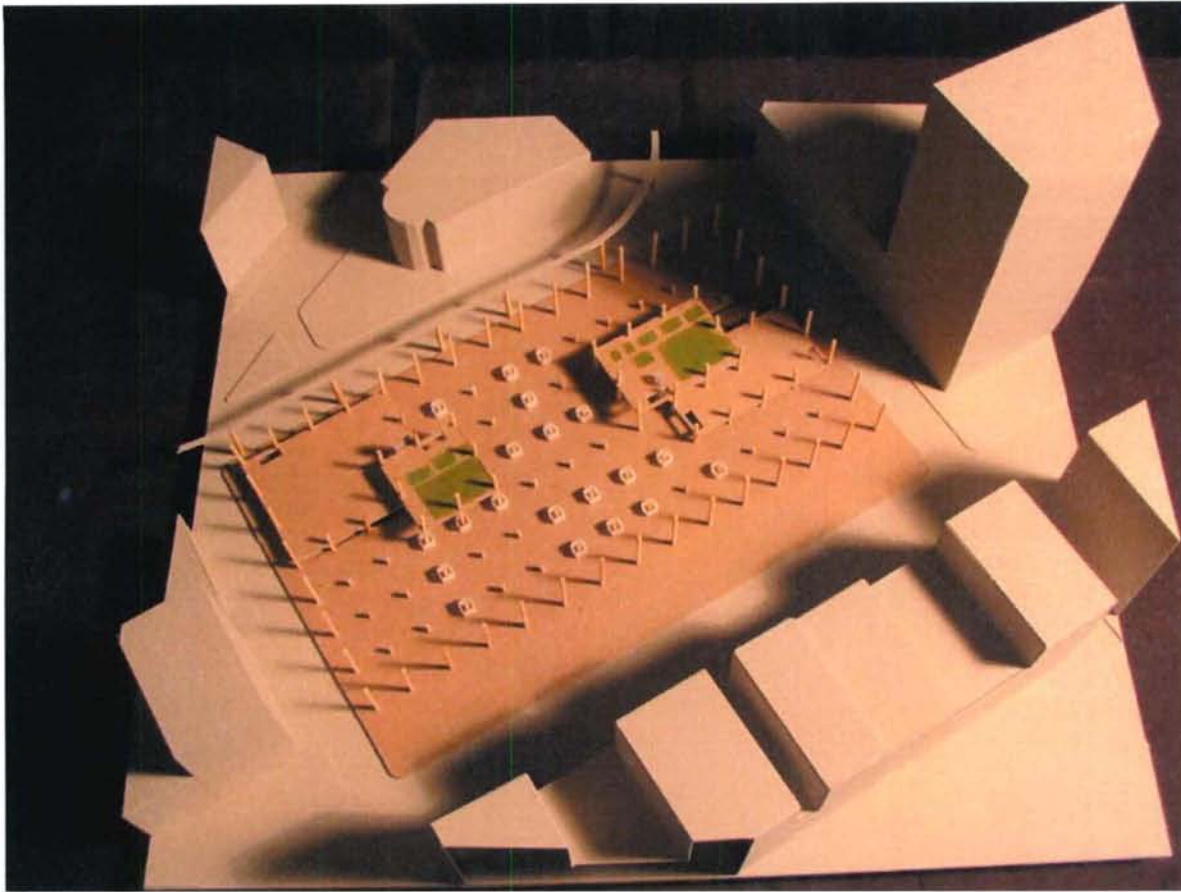


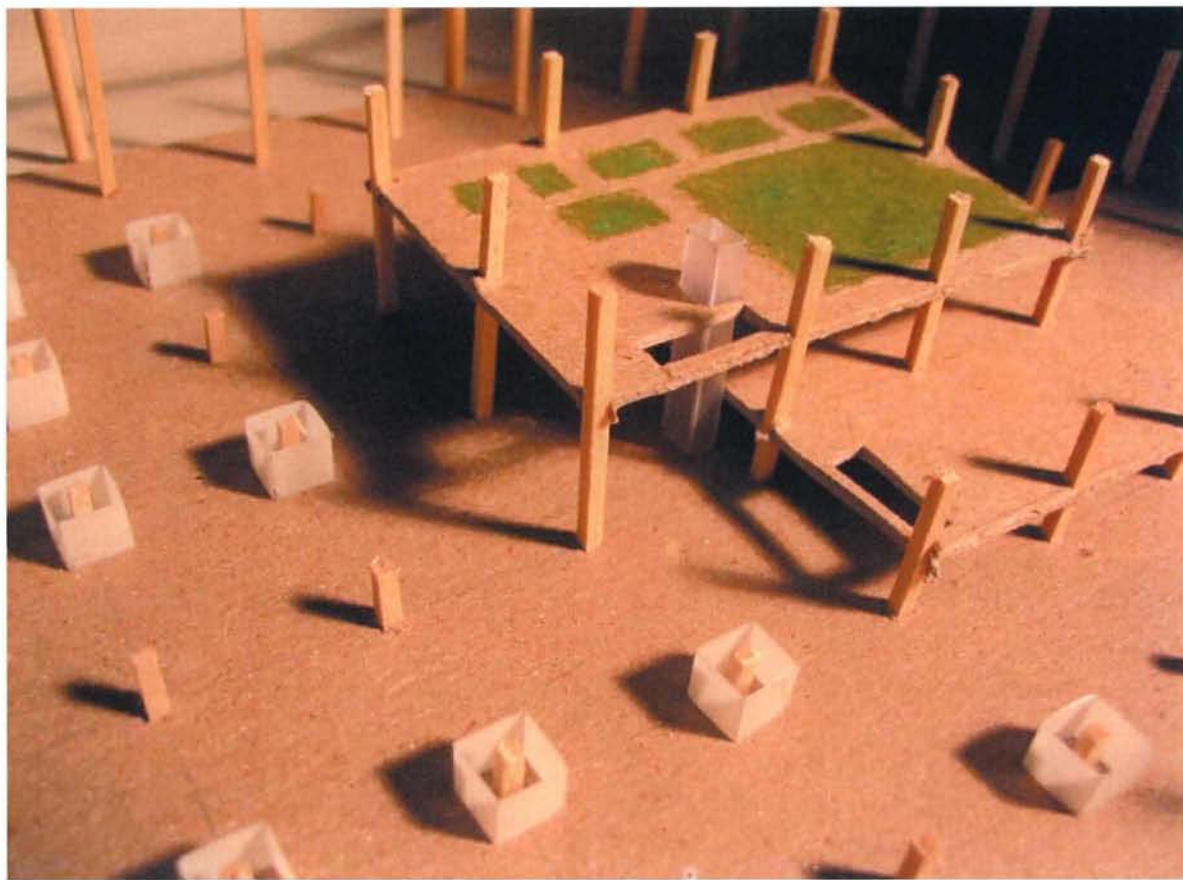
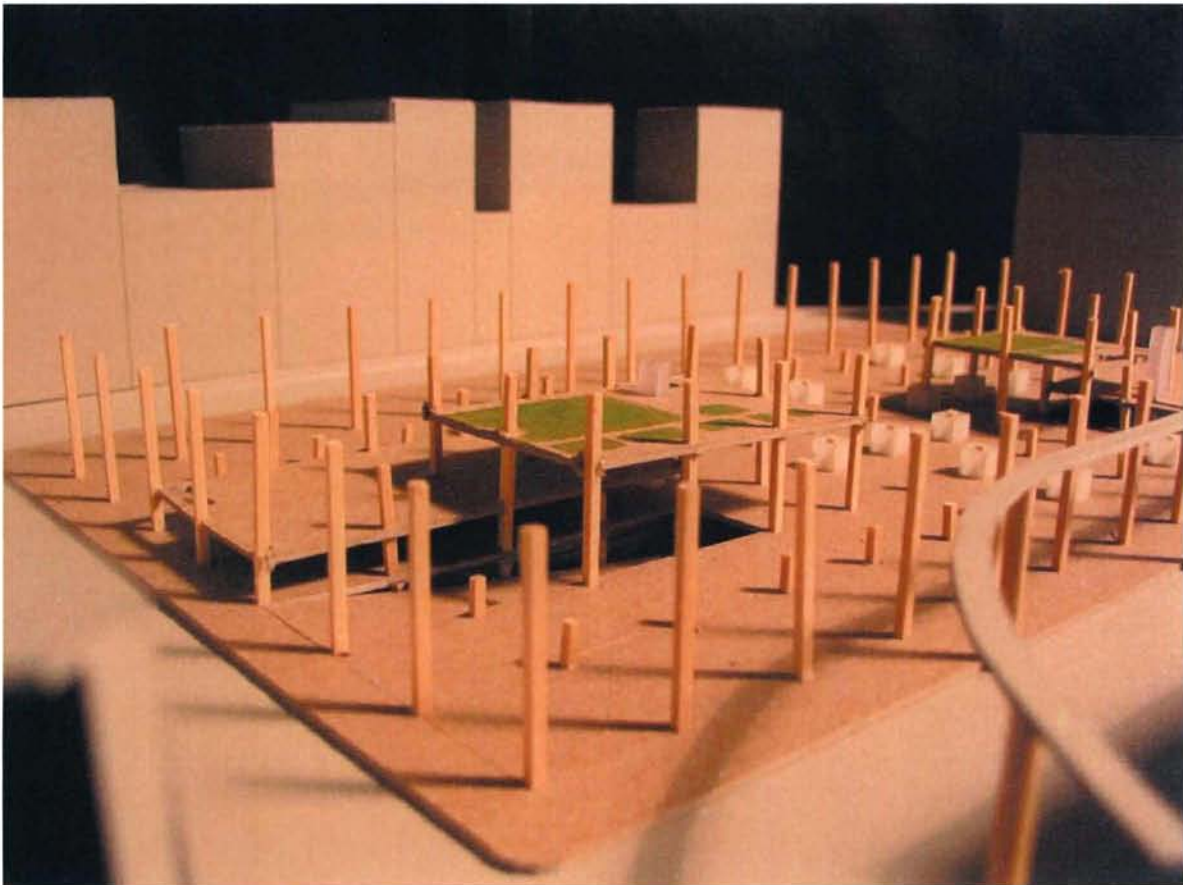


RENTABLE STORES



FIRST LEVEL GATHERING
RENTABLE STORE USED AS SEATING

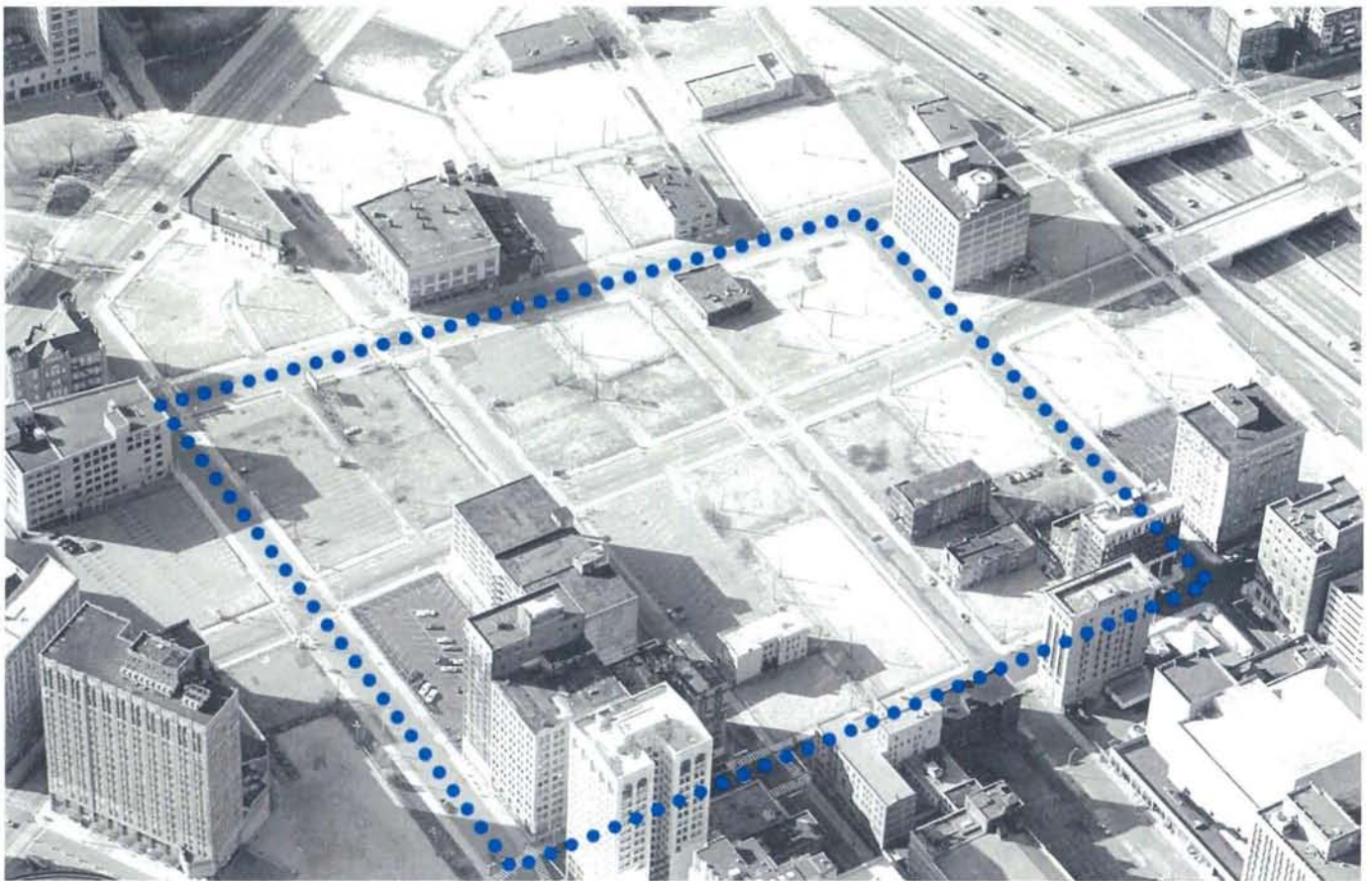




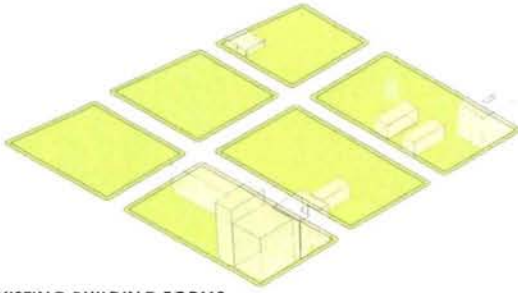


Site 7: Cass and Adams
Unique site

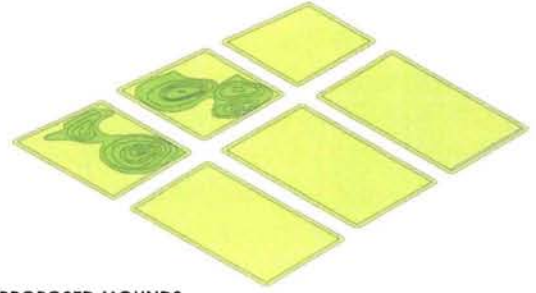
Park[ing]: This site encompasses a wide area of vacant lots. They are generally only used as overflow parking for downtown events. On a normal day they are wasted space. This area hardly sees any pedestrian traffic and feels like an urban desert. The proposal here is a public Recreation Park that enlivens the area. It will function in the same manner as a public park — no membership fees — and can be accessed by all people of all ages. It will be an undulating landscape that designates different kinds of activities. The program of park[ing] a car is fully integrated with the landscape where people can enjoy a park environment.



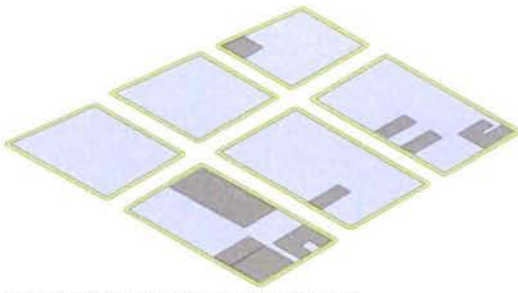
SITE COMPONENTS



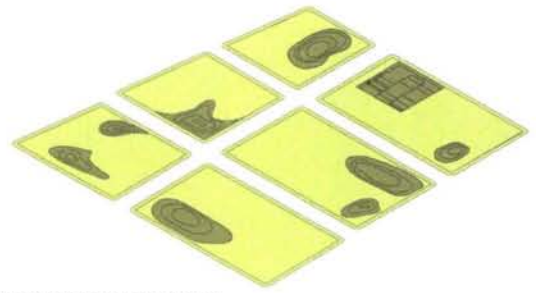
EXISTING BUILDING FORMS



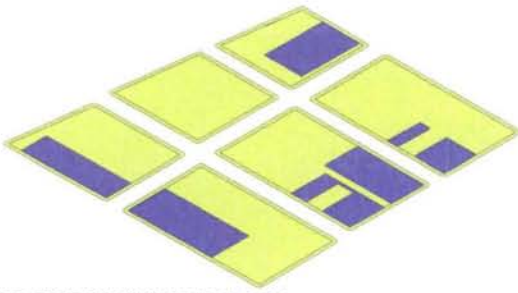
PROPOSED MOUNDS



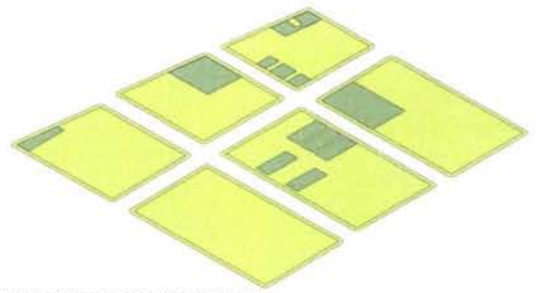
EXISTING FIGURE GROUND AND PARKING



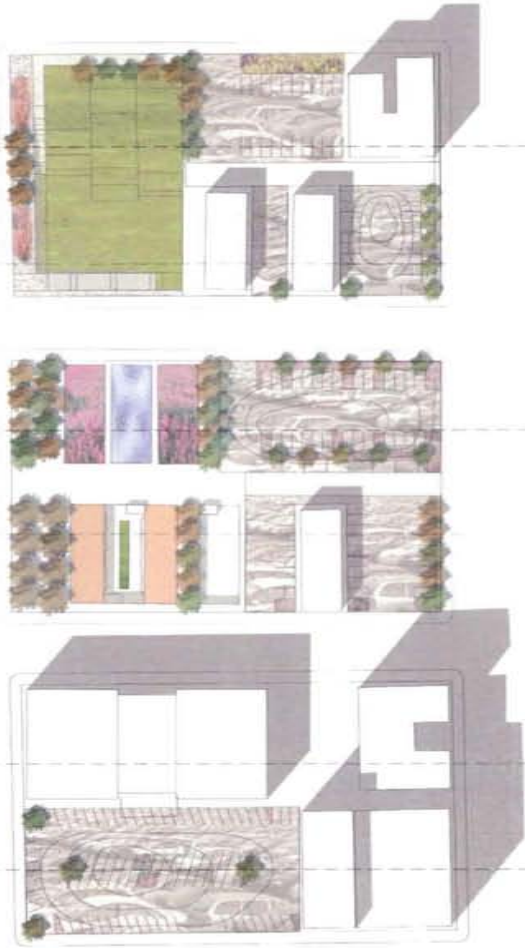
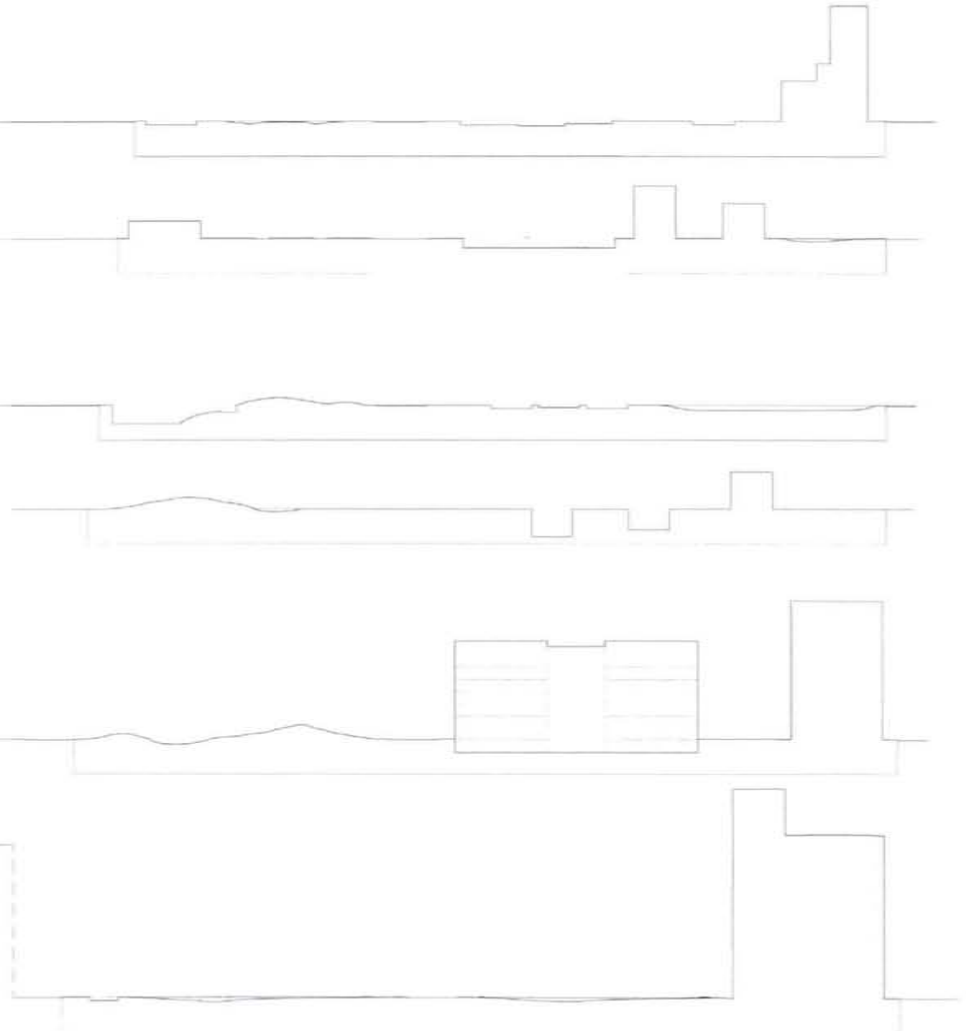
PROPOSED DEPRESSIONS



PROPOSED PARKING_268 SPACES



FOUNDATION RECLAMATION

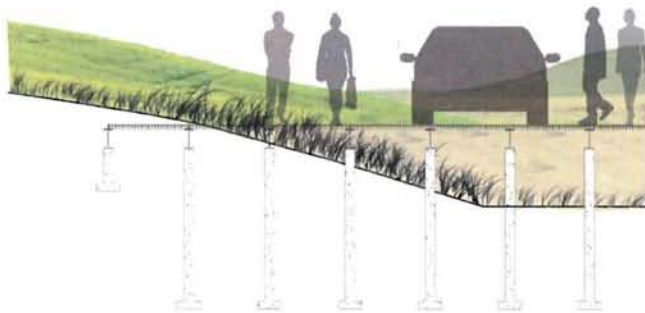


PLAN 0 50 100 200 FT



SECTION_ 0 1 2 4 8 FT

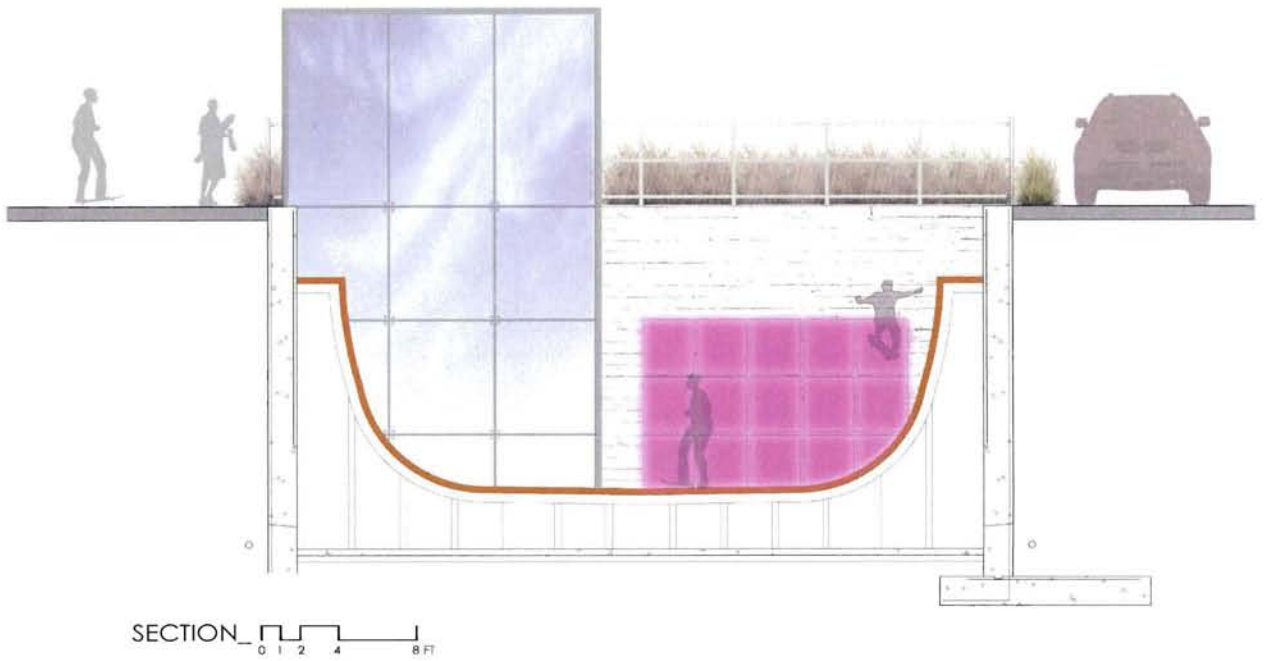
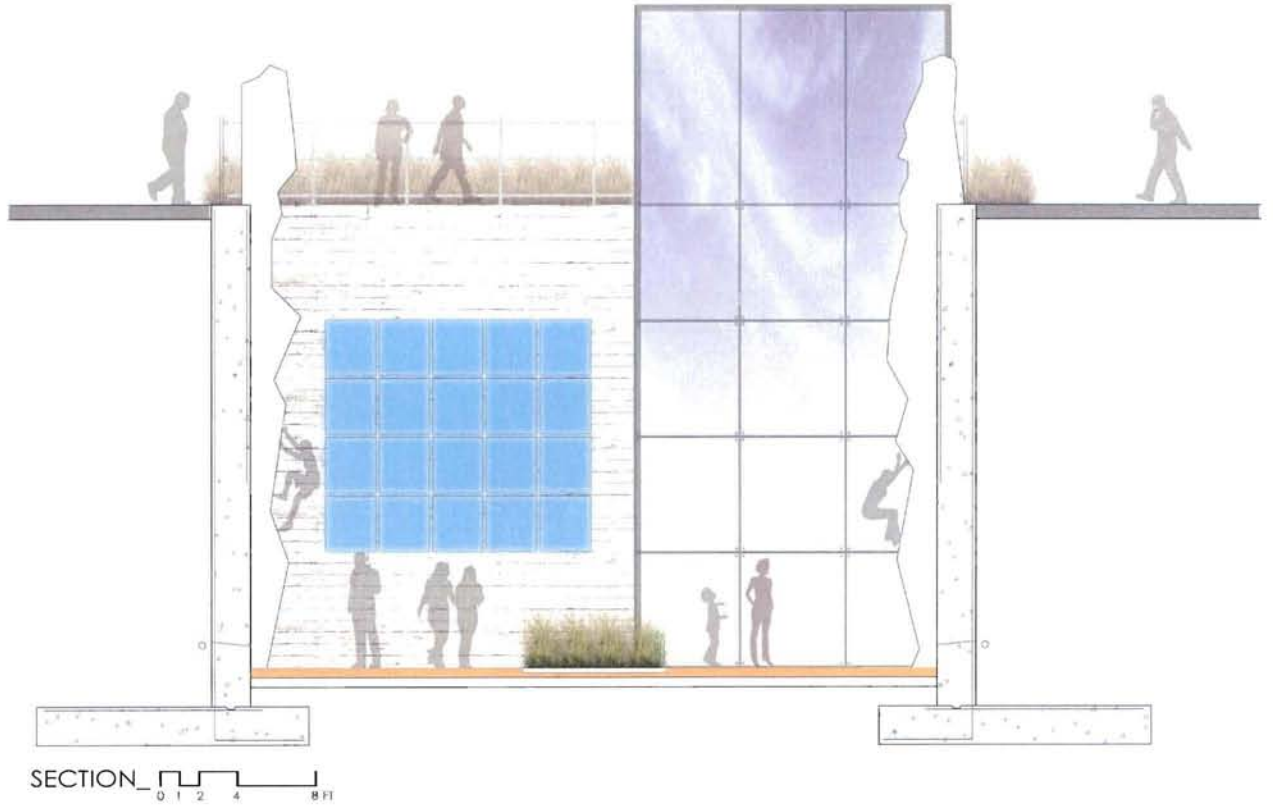
The rolling topography works with the structural grating system to support cars and people that would be on the site.



SECTION_ 0 1 2 4 8 FT



SECTION_ 0 3 FT



FOUNDATION RECLAMATION

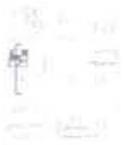
The existing foundations of demolished buildings will be reclaimed and made into usable space. These spaces can accommodate many recreational activities including, rock climbing, skateboarding, basketball, performance space, etc.



1. ROCK CLIMBING WALL



2. SKATE RAMPS



SECTION_01A-B 1:50



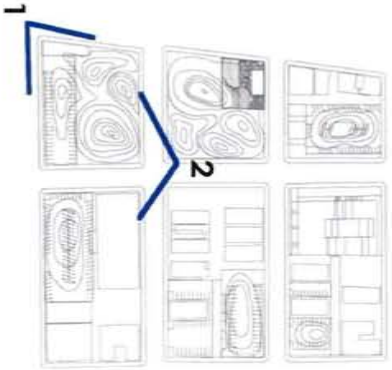
SECTION_01A-B 1:50



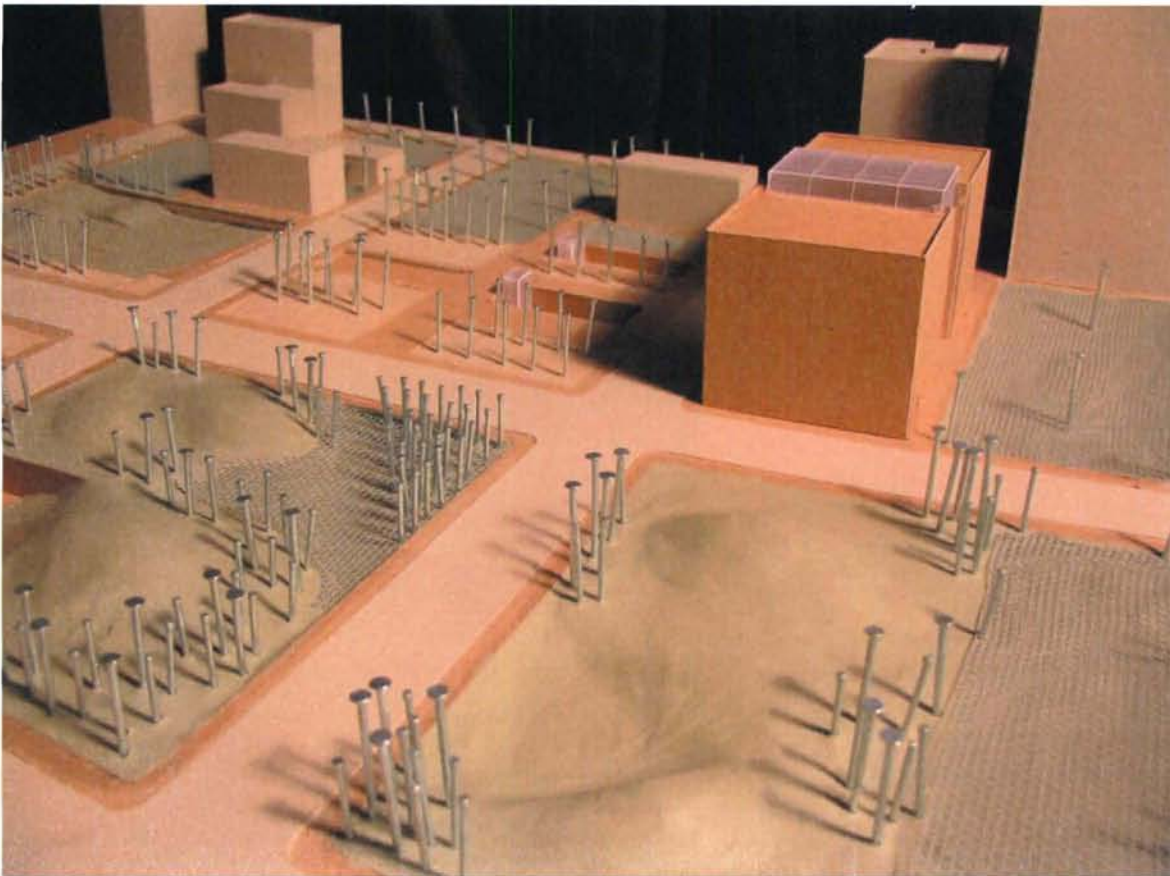
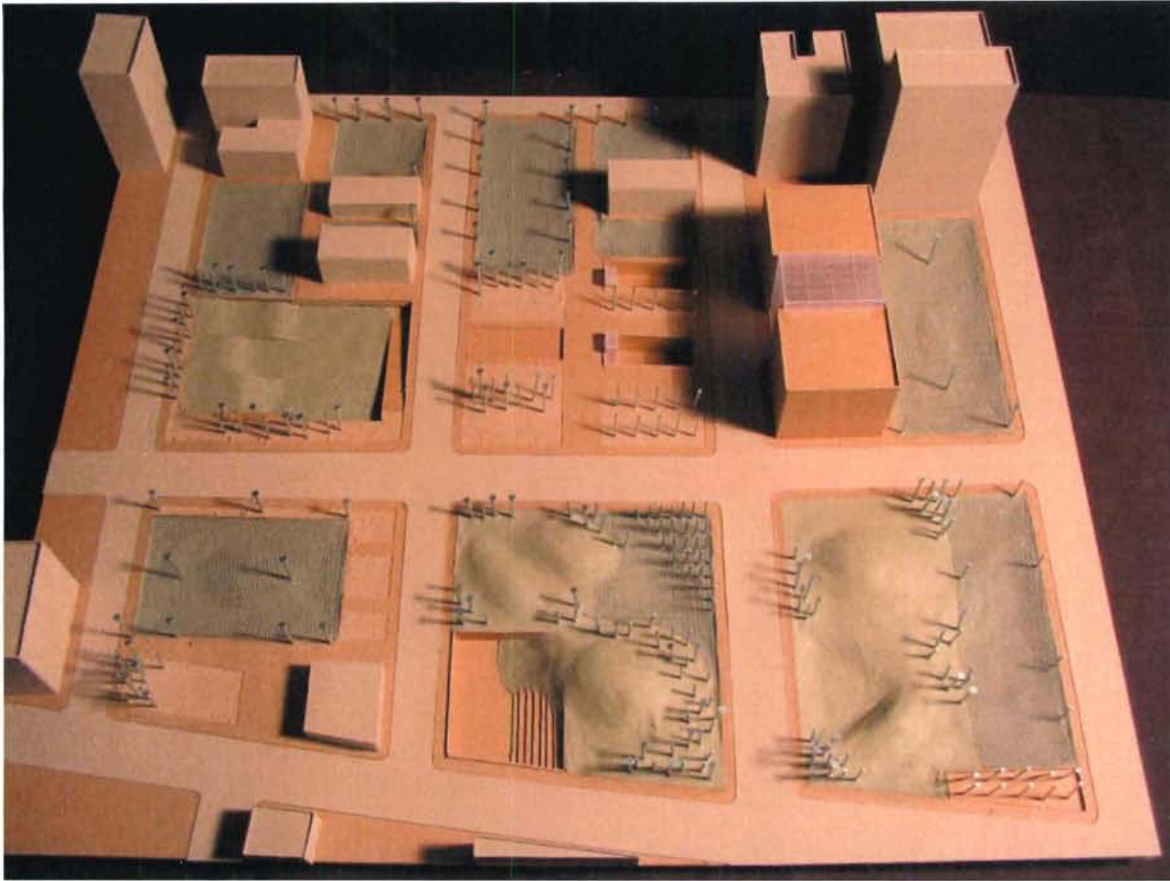
1. CASS AND ADAMS_ TREE GARDEN

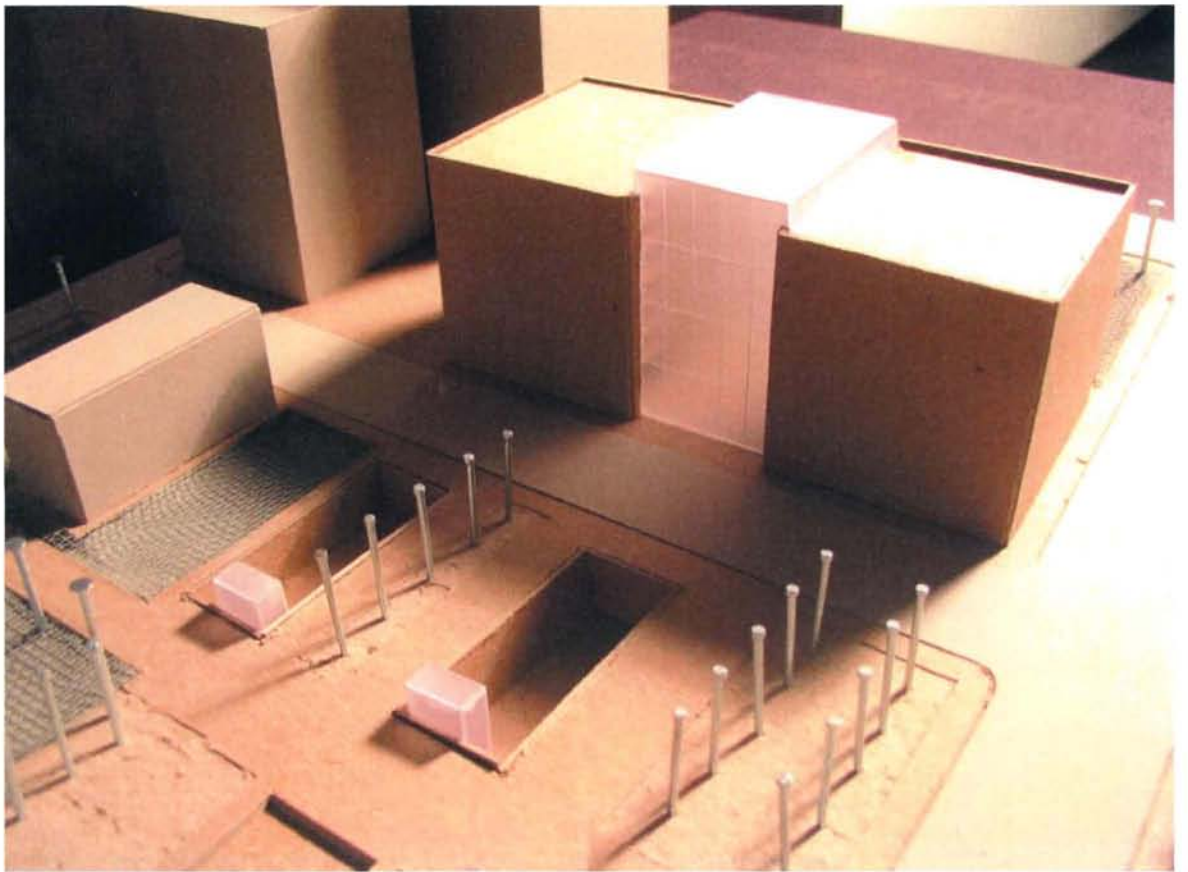
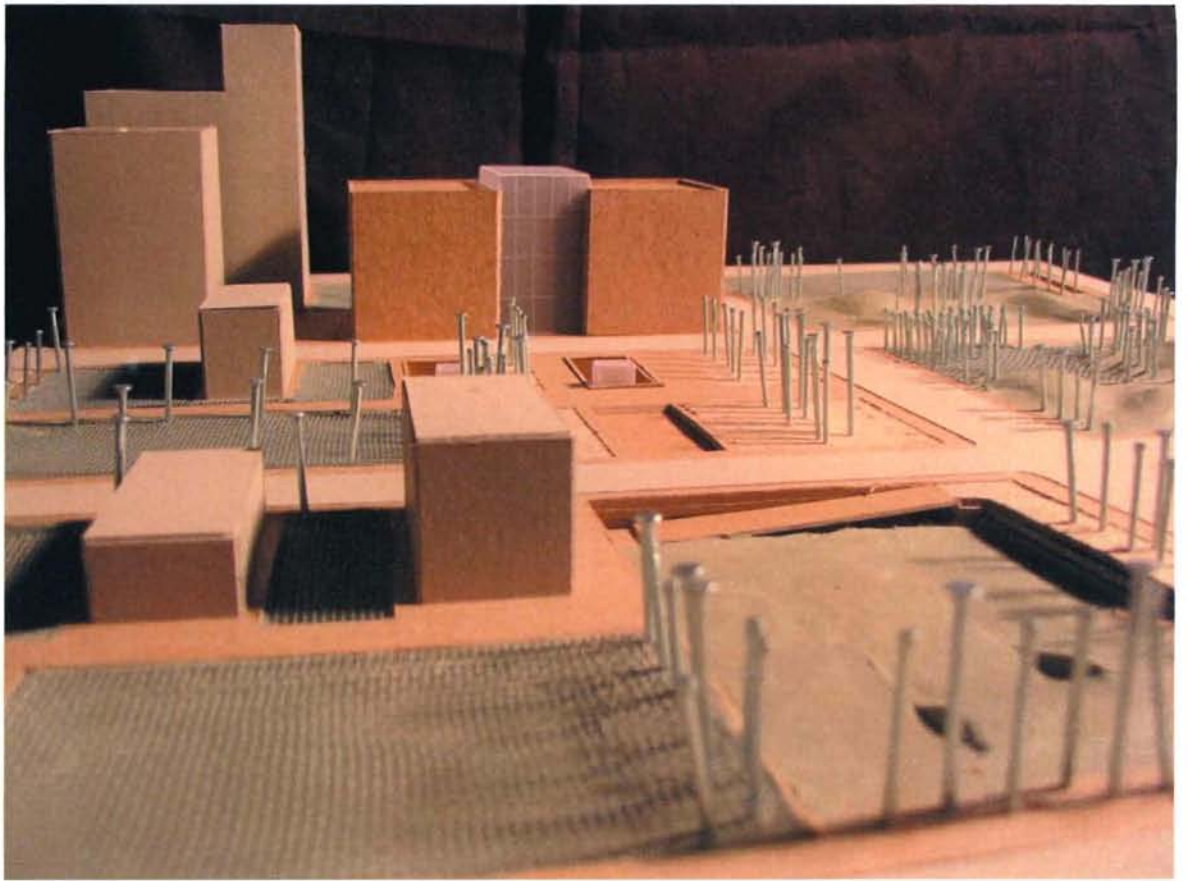


1. CASS AND ADAMS_ MOVIE PROJECTION



2. CLIFFORD AND ELIZABETH_ MOVIE MOUND





conclusion

The shrinking of American cities continues, which leads to the deterioration of the urban form. Detroit's situation is unique in that it has lost the majority of its population in the last 50 years making way for "terrain vague." The thesis explores these conditions and attempts to develop new strategies and ideas that can better serve the public.

The overall process involved many phases of refining and re-designing. Initially the thesis grew out from studying and observing thirteen vacant conditions in the downtown area. The conflict throughout the process was whether to develop one site or more. As the investigation lead to the final design, sites which had similar characteristics to others were omitted, and at the end seven sites of different characteristics were chosen. This was the main criteria whether to omit or keep a site. Vacant and marginalized spaces all have their own unique condition. This is the reason developing more than one kind of vacant condition made sense.

Detroit's forgotten land resources have the potential to be developed. The interventions proposed challenges the usual thinking of developing vacant, marginalized spaces. The interventions attempt to utilize these spaces by attempting to be part of the overall community. The programs have similar themes that deal with, art, music, recreation, interaction, vegetation, performance, inhabitation, teaching, and empowerment. All of these deal with engaging people. Responding to the site was the most important aspect of design. It was very important to consider each

site and what it gave to the design. The programs and the final design were informed by the site and context. Utilizing what was existing on the site (for example existing building foundations into spaces for recreation) made for a more interesting and thoughtful design. Four out of the seven interventions could possibly be implemented throughout the city in similar site conditions. The other 3 interventions are unique to its respective sites, but still hold concepts that could also be implemented on a broader scale.

The interventions proposed are not intended to cure the "terrain vague" of Detroit. There is not one project that can solve vacancy. The thesis explores how vacant spaces can be developed in such a manner that is outside of the usual commodification of property. It also hopes to serve as a vision that highlights the potential of forgotten land resources in the urban environment. The proposed interventions are just one type of strategy to utilize vacant conditions. They could have impact on other developments and strategies that combine together to mend the urban fabric.

The project has some shortcomings and weaknesses. One weakness is not being able to develop each intervention more in-depth. Some sites are developed more, while others still feel a bit conceptual. As mentioned earlier, vacancy comes in many different forms. Going forward and analyzing and exploring more vacant and marginalized spaces around the city and its neighborhoods would enrich the overall goal of the project. Creating a way to document and categorize vacancy on a larger scale could be the next step. Doing this would also call on designing and developing interventions for these sites, and could lead to creating design typologies for various vacant spaces. Ultimately the thesis could take on a life of its own, but hopefully it keeps the spirit of the project, which is to provide alternative ways of utilizing vacant and marginalized spaces, and keep challenging and questioning our thinking of these forgotten spaces.

endnotes

Abstract

¹ Sola-Morales Rubio, Ignasi de. "Terrain Vague." *Anyplace* (1995): 118-23.

Project summary

¹ Sola-Morales Rubio, Ignasi de. "Terrain Vague." *Anyplace* (1995): 118-23.

Thesis

¹ *Anyplace*, p 119; Solá-Morales Rubió

² US Census Bureau

³ *Anyplace*, p 119; Solá-Morales Rubió

⁴ *Anyplace*, p 119; Solá-Morales Rubió

⁵ *Anyplace*, p 120; Solá-Morales Rubió

⁶ *Anyplace*, p 120; Solá-Morales Rubió

⁷ *Anyplace*, p 121; Solá-Morales Rubió

⁸ *Anyplace*, p 120; Solá-Morales Rubió

⁹ US Census Bureau 1900_ <http://www.census.gov/population/documentation/twps0027/tab13.txt>

¹⁰ US Census Bureau 1920_ <http://www.census.gov/population/documentation/twps0027/tab15.txt>

¹¹ US Census Bureau 1950_ <http://www.census.gov/population/documentation/twps0027/tab18.txt>

¹² *Stalking Detroit*, p 42; Hoffman

¹³ *Stalking Detroit*, p 49-53; Shumacher, Rogner

¹⁴ *Stalking Detroit*, p 49; Shumacher, Rogner

- ¹⁵ The Emergence of “Landscape Urbanism”, p 2
- ¹⁶ Urban Ecology, p 20; Zago
- ¹⁷ Detroit Riots – 1967 _ http://www.67riots.rutgers.edu/d_index.htm
- ¹⁸ Sprawl As Strategy, p 52; Dudley
- ¹⁹ SEMCOG Data Estimates Jan. 2007 _ <http://www.semcog.org/>
- ²⁰ <http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/CED/publications/milwecon/chap1.html>
- ²¹ Urban Ecology, p 19; Vogel
- ²² US Census Bureau _ <http://www.census.gov/>
- ²³ Anyplace, p 122; Solá-Morales Rubió
- ²⁴ Anyplace, p 122; Solá-Morales Rubió
- ²⁵ The Art of Architecture/The Science of Architecture, p 515; M’Closkey
- ²⁶ <http://www.urbanrockdesign.com/projects.html>
- ²⁷ <http://www.rebargroup.org/projects/parking>

Precedent Analysis

Finding Public Spaces in the Margins

- ¹ “2004 / Best of Category / Finding Public Space in the Margins.” IDonline. 2006. I.D. Magazine. 25 Sep 2006 <http://www.idonline.com/adr04/boc_concepts.asp>.

annotated bibliography

"2004 / Best of Category / Finding Public Space in the Margins." ID online. 2006. I.D. Magazine. 25 Sep 2006 <http://www.idonline.com/adr04/boc_concepts.asp>.

Article that gave information on the UrbanRock Design team that created "*Finding Public Space in the Margins*."

Brouwer, Joke, Arjen Mulder, and Laura Martz. *Transurbanism*. Rotterdam: V2_Publishing/NAI Publishers, 2002.

A collection of essays and projects that deal with technology and the changing global world. Includes the project "Body Movies," the second precedent in the thesis project

Daskalakis, Georgia, Charles Waldheim, and Jason Young. *Stalking Detroit*. Barcelona: Actar, 2001.

A collection of essays and proposed projects about the city of Detroit. Gives background about the city and its present condition.

"Detroit Riots of 1967." 10 Jan 2007 <http://www.67riots.rutgers.edu/d_index.htm>.

Information of the Detroit Race Riots of 1967

M'Closkey, Karen. "Without End: Mats, Holes and the Promise of Landscape Urbanism." *The Art of Architecture / The Science of Architecture*. 2005.

A collection of essays. Specifically looking at essays that deal with voids and vacancy and strategies for the future

Park, Kyong. *Urban Ecology: Detroit and Beyond*. Hong Kong: Map Book Publishers, 2005.

A collection of essays that have to do with urban decay

"Population Trends." 10 Jan 2007 <<http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/CED/publications/milwecon/chap1.html>>.

Population Analysis including Detroit

Sola-Morales Rubio, Ignasi de. "Terrain Vague." Anyplace (1995): 118-23.

Anyplace is a collection of theoretical essays that includes the essay "*Terrain Vague*," The phrase that is essentially the foundation of my thesis project

Shane, Grahame. "The Emergence of "Landscape Urbanism" . Harvard Design Magazine 2003: 1-8.

An article that analyzed the book "*Stalking Detroit*." Specifically interested in the idea of landscape in the urban environment

Sorkin, Michael. Michael Sorkin Studio: Wiggle. New York: Monacelli Press, Inc, 1998.

A collection of theoretical projects. Interested in the projects that deal with vacant spaces.

"South East Michigan Council of Governments." 2006. 10 Jan 2007 <<http://www.semcog.org/index.htm>>.

Data for population in the Detroit Metropolitan Area

Urban Rock Design Studio. 2003. 15 Sep 2006 <<http://www.urbanrockdesign.com/>>.

Firm that proposed an intervention entitled "*Finding Public Space in the Margins*."
It is the first precedent in the thesis investigation.

"U.S. Census Bureau." 10 Jan 2007 <<http://www.census.gov/>>.

Historical and current population statistics