


COMMUNITY DEFRAG



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Community Defrag
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Concept + Research

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In America, society has become fragmented. For the average person, the typical week may consist of dropping the kids off at day care, going to work, the store, and perhaps church on Sunday. Each of these locations becomes an isolated destination with no relationship to the other destinations. This has an effect not only on how we view spaces, but also on how we view the people we encounter within those spaces. People begin to be associated with certain places, which, in turn, begins to fragment social life. Coworkers, service providers, and exercising partners are some of the labels that begin to define one's relationships, limiting those relationships to the places in which those people are encountered. Those who do not visit any of the destinations that others go to are quite likely never to meet them. What effect, then, does the fragmenting of social life have on community space? The typical and cliché places deemed "community spaces," such as coffee houses, galleries, and community centers, become nothing more than another destination -- another fragment.

It is imperative that we rethink the way we create community and, consequently, community spaces. Community should become pervasive, rather than be just another fragment of life. This means that community should become an integral part of all the existing fragments within society, and ideally, become an adhesive that holds them together. An architectural response can provide the opportunity for the development of this concept of community through rethinking the arrangement of programs and the design of spaces. Architecture can provide the framework for new social interactions to occur by allowing people to engage new groups of people (bringing disassociated fragments together) and allowing already familiar individuals to engage each other in new ways (creating stronger ties between fragments). Innovative programming and a thoughtful, nontraditional arrangement of spaces will be vital components for the success of the thesis.

The exploration of this thesis depends heavily upon the selected site, which is Detroit. There are three criteria that the site meets: proximity, density, and diversity. These three elements allow for a thorough understanding and analysis of the site, the opportunity for a wide range of programs, and increased amount of interaction. In addition, the implementation will introduce programs that are radical in their combination, but that, individually, would not impose something artificial upon the potential users.

An exploration of program possibilities will be crucial, as will the experimentation with arrangement and relationship between them. Creating programs, or incentives, that allow for mixing groups will need to be developed through experimentation as well as precedent study and research. Since program will be a central focus of this thesis, at no point during the process should the project reject any new programmatic ideas without investigation into the potential impact of their integration. Arrangement of spaces will be key in instigating interaction between different people groups. Visual, physical, and programmatic proximity and connections between spaces will need to be thoughtfully designed so as to achieve the desired goals.

CONCEPT + RESEARCH

THESIS PAPER

“Finally, the design process itself needs to be an example of the future we are intending to create.” (Block p.151)

With the prevalence of the car, single-use zoning, suburban sprawl, and unimaginative programming, there seems to be fewer opportunities for meaningful interaction within the American society. This society seems to be fragmenting. People tend to associate themselves with different groups of people who on a day-to-day basis, never come into contact with one another. This is due, in part, to the fact that peoples’ day-to-day lives have become fragmented. Individuals typically will only visit a limited number of places in their weekly routine. These places become individual destinations that have virtually no relationship with one another. As a result, the people that visit each of these destinations will never meet the people who do not go to the same places. Fragmentation is a result of many causes, involving a complex mixture of conditions that permeate our culture and requires a response that is equally as pervasive. This thesis seeks to prove that architecture, through the rethinking of programming and the design of spaces can provide the framework for new, meaningful social interactions to occur.

Before the investigation of “community” can begin, the term must be defined. For this thesis the idea of community will combine Merriam-Webster’s definition, “an interaction population of various kinds of individuals in a common location,”¹ with the “experience of belonging”² discussed by Peter Block in his book *Community: The Structure of Belonging*. The key ideas of this definition of community rest in the concepts of interaction, diversity, location, and belonging. Interaction is essential since without it there can be no meaningful relationships. While interaction cannot be ensured, as it is based on others’ decisions, it can be encouraged and celebrated through design. There must also be diversity of individuals, otherwise it would

be more of a club or clique than a community. Common location may seem like a given, but due to social networks such as Facebook and Myspace, common location assures a physical community rather than a digital one. A sense of belonging ensures that the community will be inclusive and when added to diverse group of individuals, assures that it will be inviting to everyone.

As an example of how the built environment has contributed to this social dynamic, the physical conditions brought about by the suburbanization of America have aided in the fragmentation of society. The suburbs aim to simultaneously provide all the luxuries of the city, such as nearby amenities and services, with all the perks of the country, such as fresh air and vegetation. This has created a unique condition that is unlike either city or country. Since lots are typically smaller than an acre, homes fall short of country living but are also far less dense than in urban settings. This condition puts suburban houses just far enough apart that social interaction must be actively pursued, if it is to be achieved. This is further intensified in the condition where there are no sidewalks since the only method a travel designed for is the car. Furthermore, the only people that typically interact within a particular suburb are those that can afford to live in that suburb. Most people of low income cannot afford to live in the suburbs, (or at least not past the first ring suburbs). This causes a stratification of income levels which is very apparent in most, if not all, metropolitan areas around the country. More often than not, this is accompanied by racial stratification as well. An attempt to defragment society must take this into account if it is to be successful. The density and diversity remaining in the city is also why an urban setting is a favorable place to begin defragmenting society. However, it must attract both city dwellers and suburbanites alike to achieve its potential.

In addition, the car itself has contributed a great deal to fragmentation. Using a car allows individuals to go from one place to another without interaction with anyone along the

way. This minimizes the opportunity for chance encounters to occur when compared to those using mass transit or even walking or biking. The car trip tends to create the perception that our experiences are a series of separate places connected by the solitary automobile. The car was the reason that the suburbs were able to expand to the extent that they did. In this way these two conditions exacerbate each other.

It cannot be ignored that one of the reasons for such a high dependency on the car was, to a degree, planned out by General Motors along with some other automobile related companies that joined their scheme. In the 1920's, mass transit was the preferred mode of transportation for 90% of the U.S. population. GM, seeing this as a hindrance to their profits, funded National City Lines through Greyhound and Yellow Coach, two companies owned by GM. Over the course of a few decades, National City Lines bought more than 100 lines in 45 states and, through marketing and direct intervention, converted the efficient, clean electric streetcar systems that the public loved into diesel bus systems that were slower due to being subjected to the same traffic conditions as car transit. Because of the inefficiency and decreased comfort of the bus systems, more people all over the United States bought cars³. Because of increased car usage, cities began to be shaped by and for the car instead of the person. This reshaping began to create fragmentation everywhere, even dense areas to varying degrees. Since the car is so ingrained into how many things in our country work, it must be accommodated for in some way in almost any architectural intervention today. An attempt to bring different parts of society together must go beyond merely accommodating the car by exploring how it could be used advantageously.

Single use zoning is another physical condition that contributed to the fragmentation of society, and is still doing so today. The mix of uses is inherently restricted by the selection of a narrow range of uses for specific areas of the city. Innovative programming is not fully

possible with this type of program allocation. Since neighborhoods are typically zoned to allow for a limited range of uses, it is hard to effectively integrate different groups of people into spaces close enough for interaction, let alone utilize programming to bring them into the same space. Single use zoning is present in most cities, and is exaggerated when seen in the suburbs. A low density of single use buildings, typical of nearly all suburbs, almost inevitably leads to fragmentation. An architecture of defragmentation must challenge this type of zoning and become an example of why zoning for mixed uses creates a more desirable social dynamic.

The connection between fragments must and will create something new. Innovation and a questioning of traditional design principles and processes will be crucial in determining how a society that has become so fragmented can reconnect in new ways. Looking at the past has revealed what issues have caused fragmentation to be so prevalent in our culture today, but addressing those issues does not mean returning to a state before they ever happened. Rather, by thoughtfully responding to these issues and seeing them as opportunities as opposed to problems, the issue itself could be harnessed and used as an advantage rather than something to be minimized. It is this type of thinking that could bring about the possibility of a future of reconnection and new relationships.

There have been many attempts to address the issue of fragmentation. For instance, multi-use buildings have attempted to address this issue by mixing several uses into a single structure. In some cases, there has been success in defragmentation, but only on the scale of the individual. The effects of the multi-use approach on societal fragmentation, however, are just the opposite. By keeping similar individuals in the same area by accommodating several of their needs and not providing for other groups of people in that space, societal fragmentation is only solidified. In addition to the use of typical programs, the spatial relationships of the

programs are also very predictable and far from challenging the ordinary. Social integration, not isolation, is essential for this thesis's success. Because of this, the conventional multi-use approach must be avoided and the programs included must challenge the typical.

In the publication, *Pamphlet Architecture: Hybrid Buildings*, several inventively programmed buildings are dissected and explained. The hybrids are categorized into three types: fabric hybrids, which combine programs on each floor but are expressed nearly the same on the exterior, graft hybrids, which articulate the program on the exterior, and monolith hybrids, which are usually visually monumental, homogeneous buildings with the programs stacked vertically, but undifferentiated on the exterior⁴. A good example of a graft hybrid, which seems to mix a diverse range of functions, is the Braddock Carnegie Library, designed by William Halsey Ward and located in Braddock, Pennsylvania. The programs included in this three floor building are a library, opera house, swimming pool, gymnasium, boxing room, band room, billiards room, community room, public baths, and a barber shop. This building was designed and built to be a model for "the rejuvenation of small town centers and the countering of suburban dispersion."⁵ Although the uses don't seem to encompass the full spectrum of people and the spatial relationships are quite rigid, this building begins to hint at the idea of bringing diverse members of the community together. The wide range of uses is an idea that can be taken from this example.

Mixed income developments attempt to mix people of different socioeconomic status and are usually implemented as a form of community development. However, these fall short of their goal as well. For instance, many mixed-income developments focus solely on housing, which, like the single use zoning example cited earlier, does not allow for innovative programming. The arrangement of spaces is often quite conventional as well. An example of a typical mixed income development focused on housing is HOPE VI, which was a series

of governmental attempts at mixing people of high and low incomes. Despite the range of socioeconomic backgrounds of the people who lived there, the projects have had very limited success. The limited success can also be attributed to the strong dependency on economic subsidies for the idea to work. It is the goal of this thesis is to promote defragmentation by the use of programming and design rather than a continuous flow of money from the government. The use of economic subsidies is a flaw that must be avoided due to the fact that it does not guarantee successful integration of different groups of people and is the embodiment of exactly what sustainability is not.

Another mixed income development is found in Detroit Shoreway, just outside of Cleveland, Ohio. The community was experiencing economic difficulties so the Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization (DSCDO) suggested that they try to attract the artistic, upper-middle class in order to develop a stronger tax base. The community agreed, funding was gathered, and construction commenced. This endeavor was successful in the sense that they were able to attract wealthier people while avoiding displacing the existing population. Ironically, their solution to avoiding displacement created housing that is quite segregated, which inhibits interaction between the socioeconomic groups. There seems to be some degree of racial tension as well; nevertheless, the DSCDO is still active and the area is improving economically. However, the way that happens is a group of people bring an issue to the DSCDO and then it gets voted on by everyone. Direct communication between the groups seems nonexistent; therefore, there is a social fragmentation present in the community despite its economic progress. This example illustrates the importance of proximity to social interaction. This would suggest that the physical relationship of programs is crucial.

Mixed use, mixed income developments, a combination of the two previous concepts, are also becoming more prevalent in an attempt to create a sense of community. However, in places

where this has been implemented, the full range of economic groups is not always included. For example, in Denver's new Transit Oriented Development plan, emphasis is placed on creating a variety of housing options, but merely for preference, not necessarily for attracting residents from a wide range of income levels. In addition, the development is attempting to recreate or, perhaps, create for the first time, a downtown area at some of the nodes along the existing and proposed transit lines⁶. However, the resulting spatial relationships are nothing new and are far from innovative. Something more intentional and beyond mixed use and mixed income development is needed to reconnect a fragmented society.

Another example of an attempt to address the social disconnectedness caused by fragmentation is through the implementation of trendy "community spaces." The term has become nebulous but usually brings to mind romanticized versions of places such as coffee shops, bars, and "community centers." However, these places also tend to attract a very specific group of people and fail to foster much meaningful social interaction, let alone a sense of community. Fragmentation is even further ignored.

One such "community space," coffee shops, has historically been a third place in several European countries. The idea of a third place is somewhere different from the home and from work where one can escape the stress and troubles of either in an environment with familiar people. This is why coffee houses seem like natural places for interaction to occur. While this might have been true in the past, the culture and technology of today have altered the way the space is used. Laptop computers have taken the place of many a conversation and the commercialization of these places has changed how the space is viewed by most customers. In addition, the coffee shops that functioned as community spaces usually included a regular crowd that knew each other, as described by Ray Oldenburg in his book, *The Great Good Place*. The social dynamic present in the coffee shops he labels as third places is completely

absent in nearly all coffee shops in the United States⁷.

“Community center” is a term that is equally as vague as the term “community space”. Community centers are typically some sort of recreation center with well defined, staff directed programming. This discourages imaginative uses. Overly prescriptive activities and spaces inhibit the natural development of community and places more emphasis on the activity than interaction and human relationships. Community centers may provide something for the community but most struggle to foster meaningful interactions.

Part of the reason that attempts in the past have not lived up to their full potential is because the solutions were one-liners, not addressing the full breadth of issues and complexities, or traditional solutions, looking at what has worked in the past to solve a current problem. While sometimes these approaches work for certain issues, reconnecting a fragmented society requires solutions that react to the intricate combination of issues that caused the situation and new, innovative responses that grow out of a critical analysis of our current culture rather than a hopeful implementation of something that has worked the past.

As a counterpoint to the unsuccessful examples explained earlier, the work of the landscape architect, Walter Hood embodies a genuine sense of community in most of his work and especially in the project reviewed in his book *Urban Diaries*. His design process for this project was first to observe the existing users of the site, Durant park, and then to design programs for each identified user group. As Hood programmed the park space for each group, he created an intricate overlapping system of programs rather than creating separate places for each group’s activities to occur. The overlapping was thoughtfully planned, giving careful consideration to the relationships between each of the programs. This kind of design is very conducive to new social interactions between the existing user groups of the site and fosters a sense of belonging because each groups’ activities are accommodated for

in the programmatically complex arrangement of spaces. Everyone is included. This is best exemplified with the beer garden. Even beer drinkers have a space in which they can drink and watch the activities going on in the park, as opposed to drinking on the fringes of the park and being seen as outcasts.⁸

Another part of Hood's process and design is his critical thinking and avoidance of traditional design solutions and prescriptive fixtures. For instance, when he adds the children's "playground" to his design of Durant Park, he designs the existing spaces in such a way that children can use them as play spaces. The previously mentioned beer garden is included in the informal playground. His observations informed this decision since he noticed that the children never used the formal playground equipment and made up their own games. This also allowed the playground to encompass the whole site as opposed to being limited to a small designated area⁹. Although the spaces he designed were park spaces, the ideas of designing for each user group and overlapping the programs can be applied to the built and interior environments as well. An intensive use of this way of thinking is essential in an attempt to defragment society. Defragmenting society will require programming and designing for specific user groups, rather than just implementing generic programs and/or generic forms. The physical form will also need to be flexible to accommodate for future changes to the program as the user groups or their preferences change.

Another architect whose theory lends itself to this investigation of defragmentation is Bernard Tschumi. In his book *Architecture and Disjunction*, he addresses programming in a very provocative way. He believes that "Architecture becomes the discourse of events as much as the discourse of spaces."¹⁰ With this in mind he offers three typologies for radical and aggressive relationships between programs. The first he labels "crossprogramming" which involves programming a spatial configuration with a program not intended for them. His

favorite example of this is using a church sanctuary for pole vaulting. The second typology is “transprogramming” which is “combining two programs, regardless of their incompatibilities, together with their given spatial configurations.” An example of this could be having a dance club in the double height space of a library. Both programs are able to exist without compromising the spatial configuration of each other. The third typology, “disprogramming” involves “combining two programs, whereby a required spatial configuration of program A contaminates program B’s and B’s possible configuration.”¹¹ This could be compared to chalk artists and tailgaters using the same space. The tailgaters would have to park and set up differently depending on where the chalk art was taking place. A fourth programming typology was added for this thesis, entitled “coprogramming.” This is defined as combining two frequently occurring, temporary programs such that at times their spatial configurations contaminate one another and at other times they take place without contamination. This would more adequately describe the tailgating and chalk drawing relationship, but the nature of these typologies allows them to overlap. These types of combinations begin to explore some of the possibilities for unconventional programming that could foster unexpected forms of interaction. This type of critical investigation is necessary in order to create something that can repair a society that has become quite fragmented.

However, the distinction must be made between the way Tschumi used these principles and the potential these ideas have to enrich society by assisting in its defragmentation. In Parc de la Villette, Tschumi is attempting to create architecture that is free from any meaning that could be imposed on it based on historical styles or aesthetic cues. He argues that a bank should not look like a bank, a museum should not look like a museum, and so on. He emphasizes programming because he is trying to redefine the expression of it. In this thesis, however, more attention will be paid to the social effects of combining programs, rather than

the effects the combinations have on blurring the stylistic distinctions.

Both Tschumi and Hood's concepts and ideas are the results of critical thinking and are very provocative, and yet they are still compatible with each other. Innovative programming and questioning of traditional design processes and solutions are at the root of what both architects explore in their theoretical writings and practices. These issues, which are critical to defragmenting society, are what this thesis intends to explore in its architectural exploration and implementation.

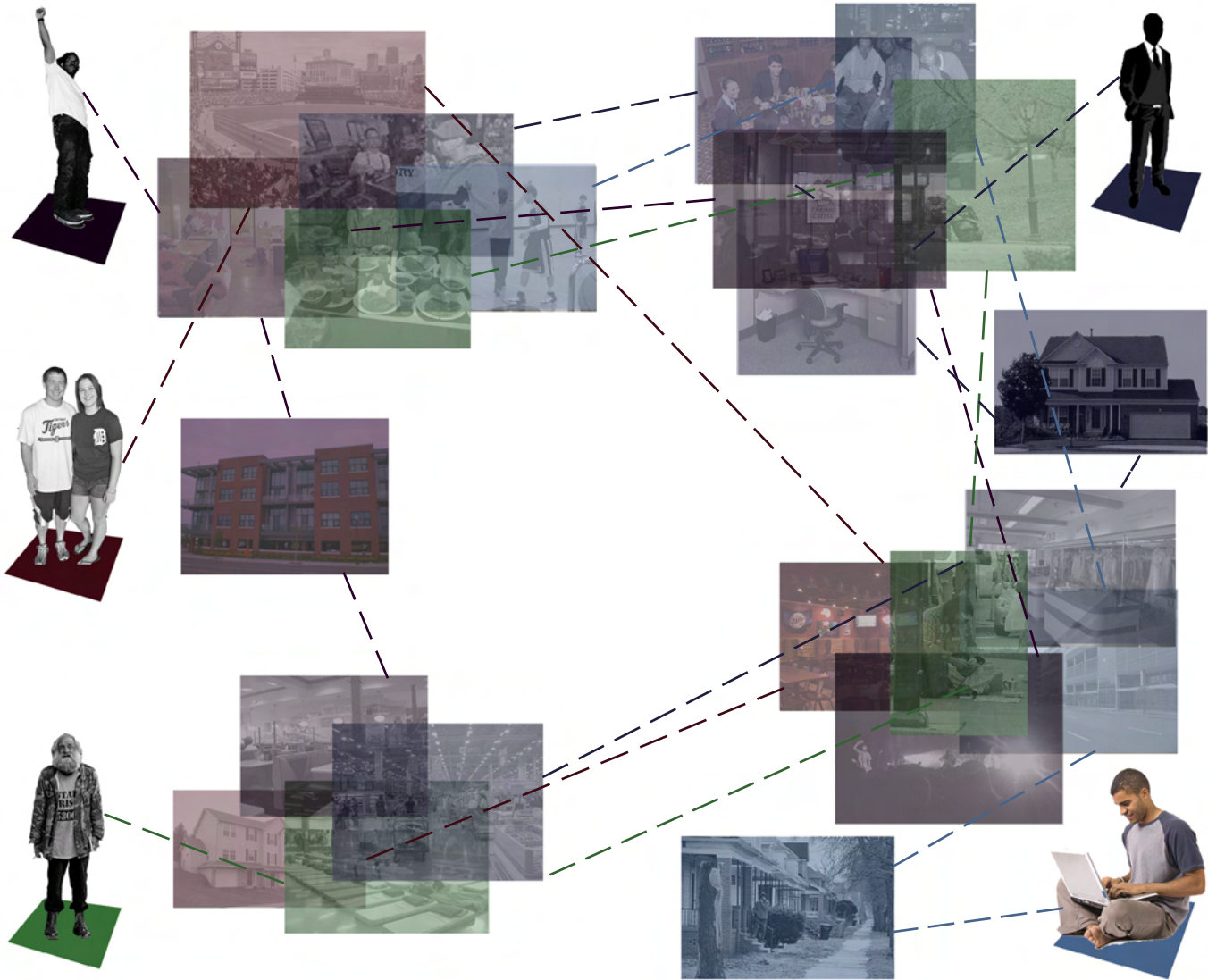
The approaches of these two architects, when combined, complement each other very well. Hood's observation technique can help define user groups and his use of non-prescriptive elements can be taken into account while designing. Tschumi's concepts can be applied when choosing what programs to include in the combination. Likewise, his innovative methods of programming can be used to mix the programs identified by Hood's concept of observation along with non-prescriptive physical expressions, which are employed in both architects work.

Through an aggressive rethinking of programming and a thoughtful design of spaces, architecture can provide the framework for new social interaction to occur. The issues causing fragmentation are complex, which is why the reaction must also embrace complexity. However, addressing these concerns has the potential to bring new possibilities for the future of communities and society as a whole.

CONCEPT + RESEARCH

ILLUSTRATED NARRATIVES

The following diagrams illustrate the core concept this thesis seeks to explore. Each square scene represents a typical part of the weekly routine for each group. The first diagram represents the typical fragmentation that occurs quite naturally in society. This is largely due to the reliance on and preference for the car, single use zoning, suburbanization, and a stratification of income levels that is present in nearly all major United States metropolitan areas. The second diagram shows the type of connections that this thesis seeks to explore and create. The details of the programmatic relationships will be critical, as will the physical layout, built structures, landscaping, and relationships with the surrounding context.



ILLUSTRATED NARRATIVES
DEFRAGMENTATION

CONCEPT + RESEARCH

RESEARCH

COMMUNITY: THE STRUCTURE OF BELONGING BY PETER BLOCK

DEFINITION OF COMMUNITY

THE GREAT GOOD PLACE: CAFES, COFFEE SHOPS, BOOKSTORES,
BARS, HAIR SALONS, AND OTHER HANGOUTS AT THE HEART OF A
COMMUNITY BY RAY OLDENBURG

The book Community: The Structure of Belonging by Peter Block was instrumental in defining what the word community means and how to create and change communities. Block's idea of community hinges on the idea of belonging. He describes belonging as being related to and a part of something as well as having a sense of ownership.¹² Being related and a part of something encourages individuals to be involved and interact, while having a sense of ownership causes the individuals to care for their community. The ideas are far from being concrete, but the theoretical nature of the book is good for understanding the principles of community and community development without preconceived ideas of what it is supposed to look like. The examples the book explores are from various disciplines and illustrate how the ideas work outside of a cliché use of the term. The quotes below convey some of the most influential ideas that helped shape the foundation of this thesis.

"Social fabric is created one room at a time. It is formed from small steps that ask 'Who do we want in the room?' and 'What is the new conversation that we want to occur?'"¹³

"The real challenge is to discover and create the means for engaging citizens that brings a new possibility into being."¹⁴

"Finally, the design process itself needs to be an example of the future we are intending to create."¹⁵

"The essence of creating an alternative future comes from citizen-to-citizen engagement that focuses at each step on the well-being of the whole."¹⁶

For this thesis, the specific concept of community that is attempting to be fostered combines Block's idea of **belonging** with one of the definitions given by Merriam-Webster's dictionary, "an **interacting** population of **various kinds** of individuals in a **common location**."¹⁷ The key ideas of the definition being used for this thesis rest in the concepts of belonging, diversity, common location, and interaction. The idea of belonging and diversity rules out clubs and organizations as the type of community being strived for since they typically include only similar people and require fees. The idea of a common location rules out social networks such as Facebook and Myspace, which fail in their attempt to mimic the type of community that this thesis aims to stimulate. Interaction is also key since a community that doesn't interact, or interacts very little is not much more than a group of strangers. In addition to these qualities, the community does not require any formal events as these can tend to force the interaction that should happen naturally. These qualities make the type of community referred to in this thesis much more pervasive and genuine than the typical preconceptions associated with the word.

In the book The Great Good Place, Ray Oldenburg describes the character of “third places” and the type of interactions and community that they can create. His description of third places is very intriguing and provocative. His acknowledgement of third places is ambiguous since he begins by classifying many places as third places but immediately whittles the possibilities down when he describes the attributes that make a third place a third place. These attributes have a direct relationship to this thesis. For instance, he describes third places as levelers, a place where everyone is equal. “A place that is a leveler is, by nature, an inclusive place.”¹⁸ The idea of creating a place that includes everyone is one of the goals of this thesis. The concept of having a group of regulars is very interesting because many commercialized places, such as Starbucks, lack this loyal patronage. The inclusive nature of this group of regulars, once trust is gained through relatively frequent appearances, is essential. Another key attribute to the group of regulars, is that they are willing to accept people that are different from themselves. These are places where the “membership takes as much delight in admitting unlikely members as exclusive places do in making certain that newcomers meet proper and narrow qualifications.”¹⁹ The same loose requirements must be present in the spaces designed to test this thesis. Accessibility, another important attribute of third places, is facilitated in this thesis by the identification of and design for all the nearby groups of people. This ensures that accessibility remains quite easy.

CONCEPT + RESEARCH
PRECEDENT

ARCHITECTURE AND DISJUNCTION BY BERNARD TSCHUMI

PARC DE LA VILLETTE BY BERNARD TSCHUMI

URBAN DIARIES BY WALTER HOOD

EXAMPLES FROM PAMPHLET ARCHITECTURE 11: HYBRID BUILDINGS
BY JOSEPH FENTON

Bernard Tschumi, in his book, *Architecture and Disjunction*, deals with the idea of programming and the events that occur within spaces. He questions traditional uses versus possible uses, such as pole vaulting in the cathedral. He goes even further to question the meaning embedded in the aesthetics of architecture. In a sense, he is trying to overcome the typical boundaries that have been foisted upon both architecture and program in his attempt to create a more pure architecture. Program almost becomes as important as its architectural expression, since the built structure is so neutral and disassociated with traditional aesthetic connotations.

“Architecture becomes the discourse of events as much as the discourse of spaces.”²⁰

“The process has gone full circle: it started by deconstructing the city, today it explores new codes of assemblage.”²¹

“It could be said that there must be no identification between architecture and program: a bank must not look like a bank, nor an opera house like an opera house. nor a park like a park.”²²

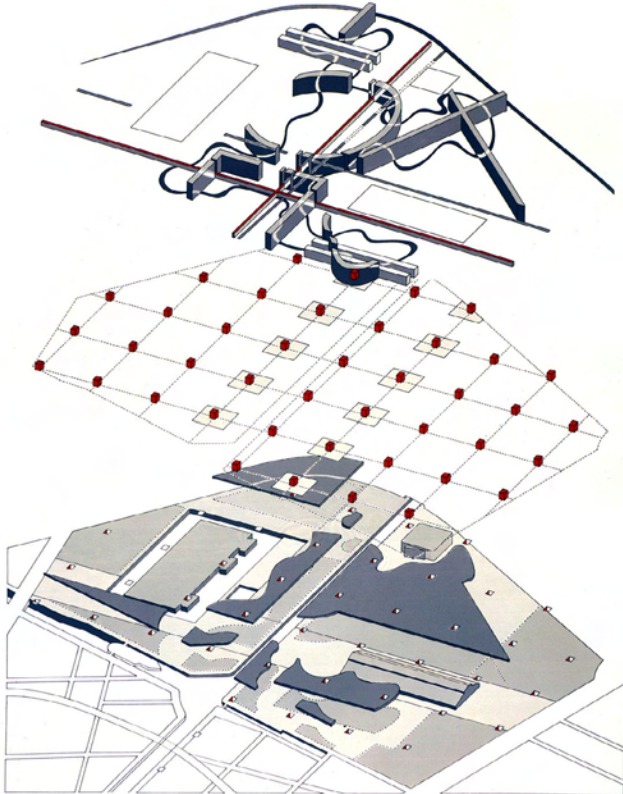
Tschumi outlines three innovative methods of programming:

- Crossprogramming: “Using a given spatial configuration for a program not intended for it... using a church building for bowling.”²³
- Transprogramming: “Combining two programs, regardless of their incompatibilities, together with their respective spatial configurations.”²⁴
- Disprogramming: “Combining two programs, whereby a required spatial configuration of program A contaminates program B and B’s possible configuration. The new program B may be extracted from the inherent contradictions contained in program A, and B’s required spatial configuration may be applied to A.”²⁵

A fourth category of programming has been created for this thesis:

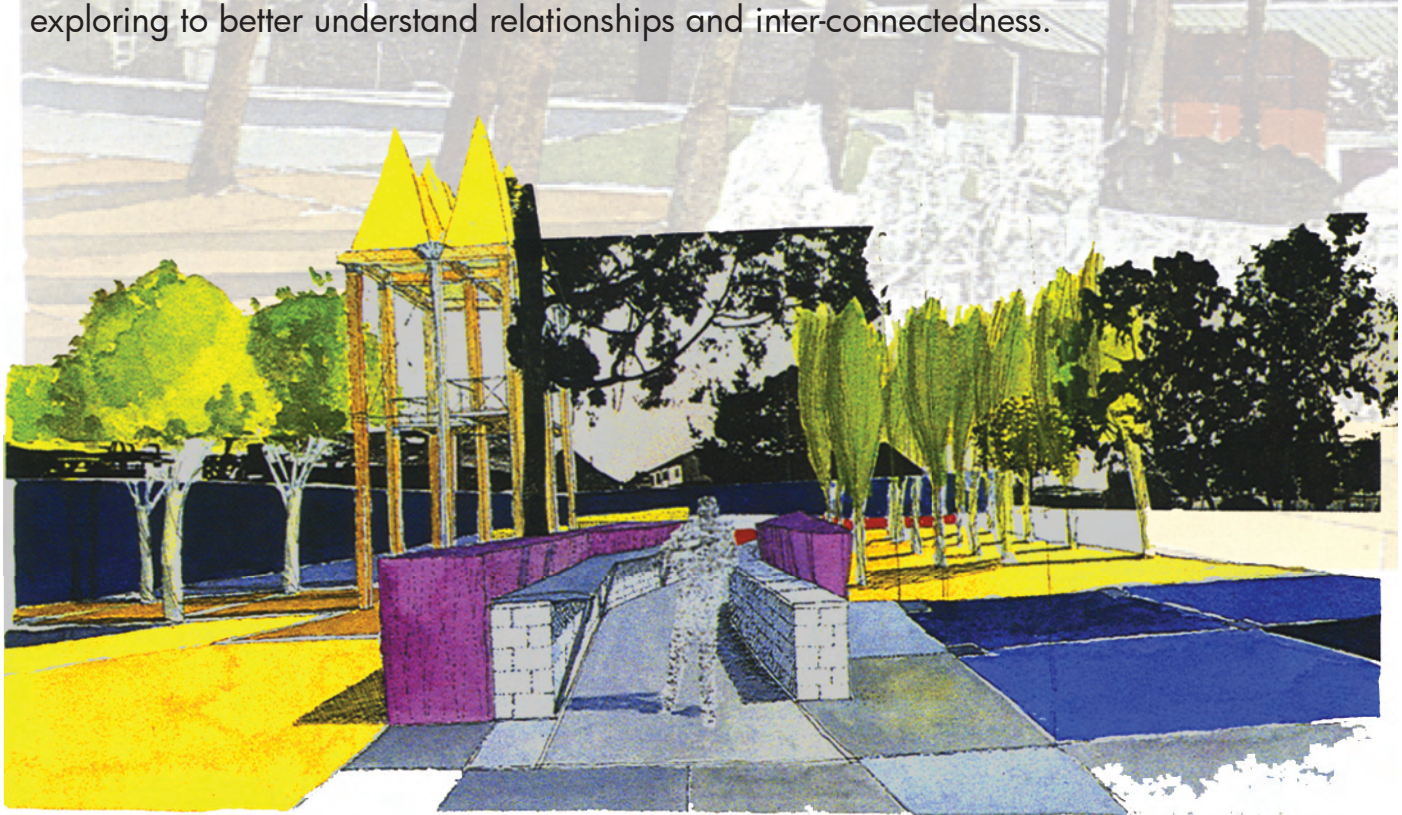
- Coprogramming: combining two frequently occurring, temporary programs such that at times their spatial configurations contaminate one another and at other times each program can take place uncontaminated

In Parc de la Villette, Tschumi's programmatic ideas are used to create an architecture without meaning. The premise is that if the architecture carries no meaning, then all its meaning is derived from the individual's experience of the space, rather than a preconceived meaning originating in cues from historical styles or traditional associations.²⁶ To do this, Tschumi overlaid a grid system onto the park to objectively determine the location of his red follies. The follies were designed to be built spaces that had no relationship to traditional aesthetics. To achieve the goals of this thesis, a similar breaking from traditional ideals is imperative. Ergo, it is only logical that its physical expression would, likewise, follow a similar, aggressive pattern of breaking free of conventional aesthetics. However, the programmatic considerations will be of greater importance than this formal concern due to the emphasis placed on the concept of community.

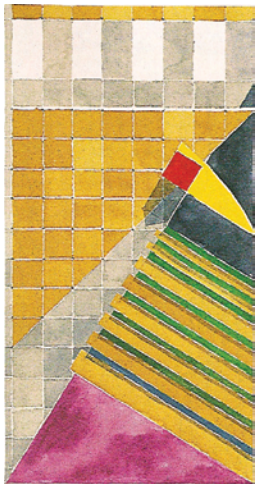


PROGRAMMATIC PRECEDENT
PARC DE LA VILLETTE BY BERNARD TSCHUMI

The work of Walter Hood embodies many issues that are quite prevalent in this thesis. When designing and problem solving, Hood challenges traditional thinking and conventional solutions by rejecting preconceptions and developing a unique perspective. This way of thinking is imperative in order for defragmentation to occur successfully. Observation and thoughtful integration of seemingly unrelated programs are critical elements of his projects that foster the unforced, yet provocative atmosphere his projects exude. Urban Diaries is a project that captures these ideas at relatively small scales which are ideal for dissecting and exploring to better understand relationships and inter-connectedness.



These plans of Durant Park in California show the progression and integration of programs as layers are added to the design. The space is completely redesigned for the addition of each user group, rather than simply forcing another program into the already designed space. Observations are a key aspect of the project. For instance, Hood observes that the children never use the standard playground equipment but, rather, make up their own games. To respond to this Hood adds spatial nuances and allows the whole space to be used as the children's playground in whatever way they choose. For example, he envisions the children using the gardening shed as a playhouse.²⁷ Hood also includes people that are typically seen as outcasts, such as the beer drinkers who sit on the fringes of the park. A "beer garden" (second from left) is created to accommodate them and allow them to drink their beer and enjoy spectating while kids play, gardeners cultivate, and lovers spend time together.²⁸ Each of the programs has a relationship with each of the others in some way. The end result is a park that is responsive to each group of existing users.



The Garden



The Playhouse



The Perch



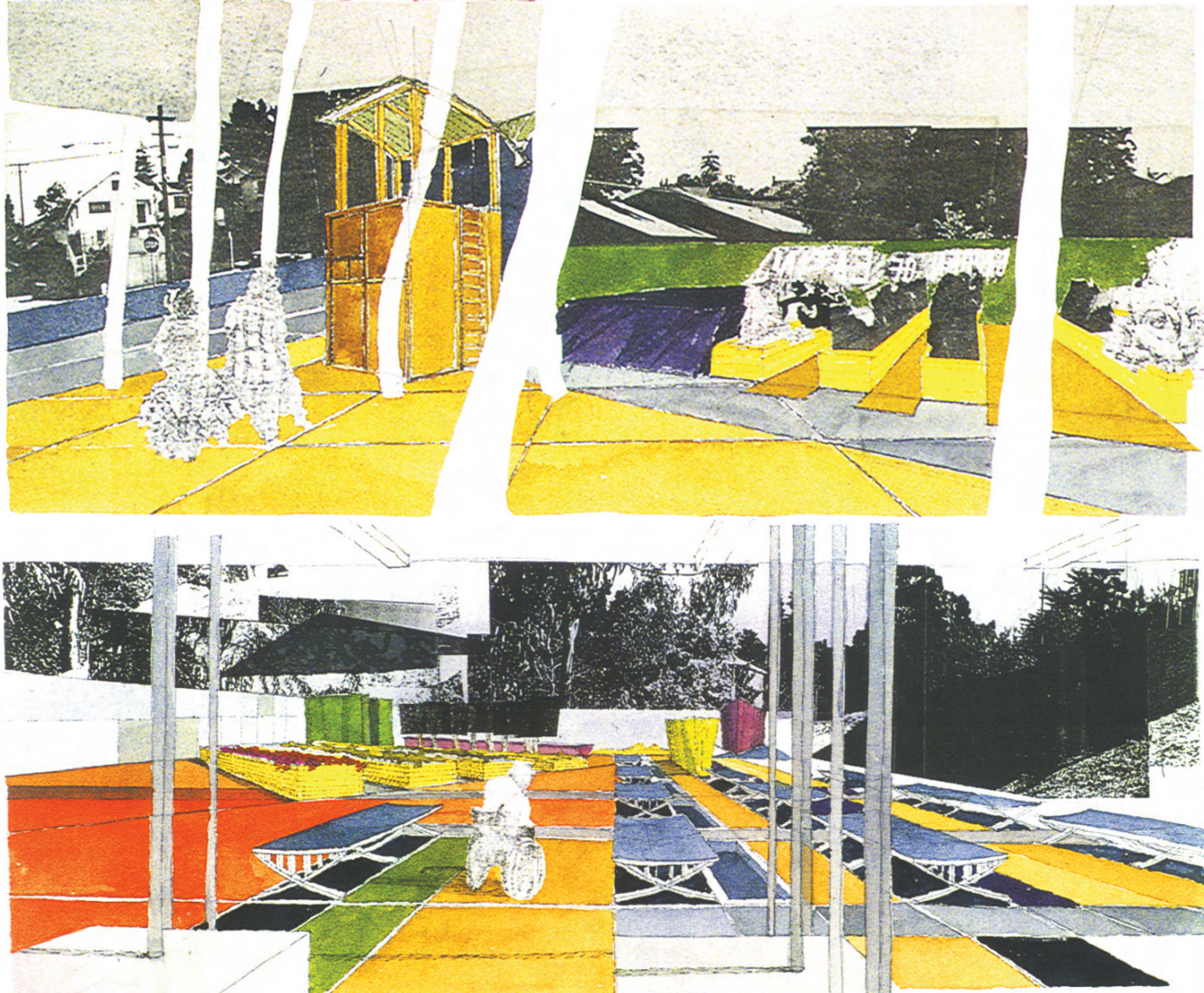
The Beer Garden



Recycling Bins

PRECEDENT

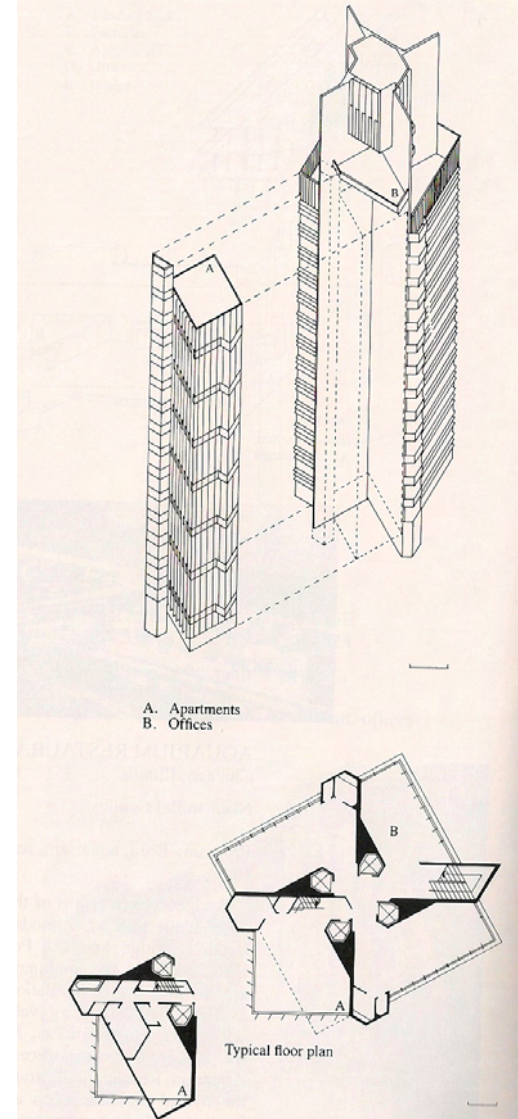
URBAN DIARIES BY WALTER HOOD



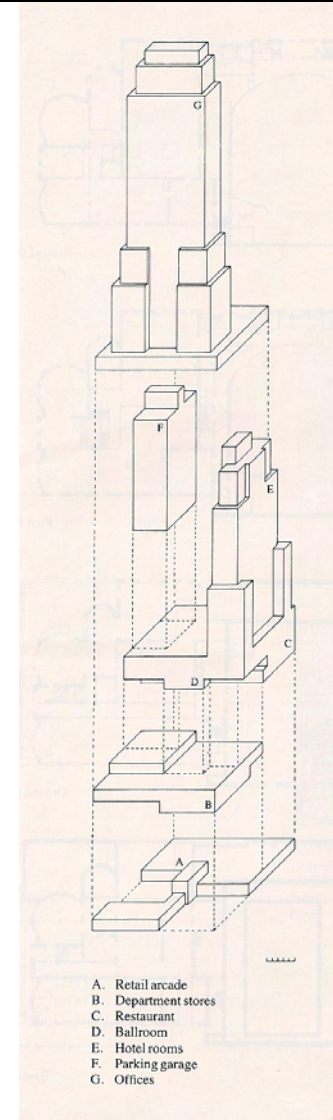
Hood's method of representation matches the way he views design. Flexibility is one of the key ideas he emphasizes in the design of any space. Because the users change over time, or at least the way in which they use the space changes, the space must be able to accommodate these changes. He uses non prescriptive elements in order to allow for change or improvisation by the users. The vignettes on the left show visually what Hood describes in words without being too explicit about the design. The elements he describes can be seen, as can the relationships between the programs. The concepts are clearly conveyed, while the concrete design of the space is still, more or less, ambiguous.



The Price Building by Frank Lloyd Wright combines both residential and commercial functions on the same floors. The interaction and arrangement of the spaces is intriguing. As is seen in the layouts, there is a doorway between the two sections, but the circulation is separated. Although this is done for practical purposes, one still must wonder what would happen if the two programs were forced to use the same circulation.



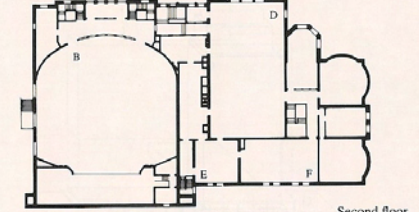
The Carew Towers, by Walter Ahlschlager, combines several functions in a very atypical way. Pamphlet Architecture describes this hybrid building as being a graft hybrid, meaning that the different functions are grafted onto one another.²⁹ This type of relationship between spaces is quite thought provoking and offers almost infinite potential for program types and arrangements. This building was originally supposed to house only department stores and a hotel, but was expanded to include a ballroom, parking garage, offices, and a retail arcade. The arrangement is more significant to the development of the thesis than the actual programs.



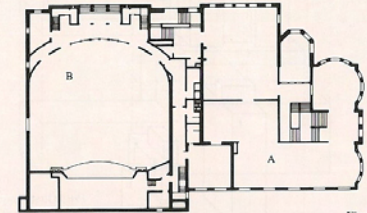
PRECEDENT

HYBRID BUILDINGS - CAREW TOWERS

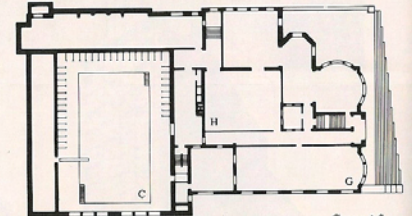
The Braddock Carnegie Library, by William Halsey Ward, houses an interesting mix of uses, including a library, opera house, swimming pool, gymnasium, boxing room, band room, billiard room, community room, public baths, and a barber shop. In addition, all these uses are mixed on three floors and a basement. In this project, both the range of spaces and the arrangement of spaces are useful precedents for the development of this thesis.



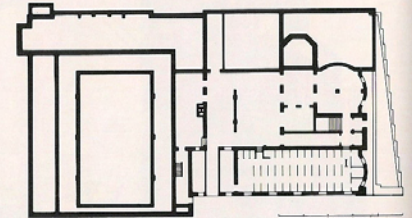
Second floor



First floor



Ground floor



Basement

SITE + INITIAL DESIGN

SITE

DETROIT - ADAMS, COLUMBIA, CLIFFORD, AND PARK

Site selection was based on three criteria - density, diversity, and proximity. The importance of diversity was obvious since bringing several different groups of people together was part of the overarching goal. Density was important since this would allow for a greater number of users with proximity to the site. Proximity to the university would allow frequent site visits for the author and more accurate observations. This criteria sparked interest in three sites - Cleveland, Detroit, and Toronto. Based on proximity, however, Toronto was quickly eliminated. There were several areas in Cleveland that were being revitalized successfully including The Historic Warehouse District, which, as its name suggests, featured warehouses that were converted into lofts covering a wide economic range, grocery stores, and retail spaces. Integration was more apparent in Cleveland than in Detroit. Fragmentation, while still very prevalent in Cleveland, was much more evident in Detroit due not only to socioeconomic segregation, but also physical segregation resulting from large nodes of vacancy. Detroit was finally chosen as the ideal site to test this thesis.

DETROIT - ADAMS, COLUMBIA, CLIFFORD, AND PARK



The specific site is centrally located in relationship to a diverse group of potential users. Comerica Park and Ford Field attract sports fans, which includes many suburbanites. The Fox and Fillmore theatres attract concert and play attendees. Cass Tech High School is located just north of I-75, which brings students within walking distance of the site. There are also many local residents who live near the site, both downtown and north of I-75. The central business district is to the south and the MGM Grand Casino is just to the west. The area is very accessible, with a people mover stop less than five minutes away and the Rosa Parks transit center just down the street. Although I-75 cuts through the city just north of the site, there are several crossing points within a short distance of the site.



Above: View of site from the southeast looking north.





Below: 360 view from Adams and Columbia

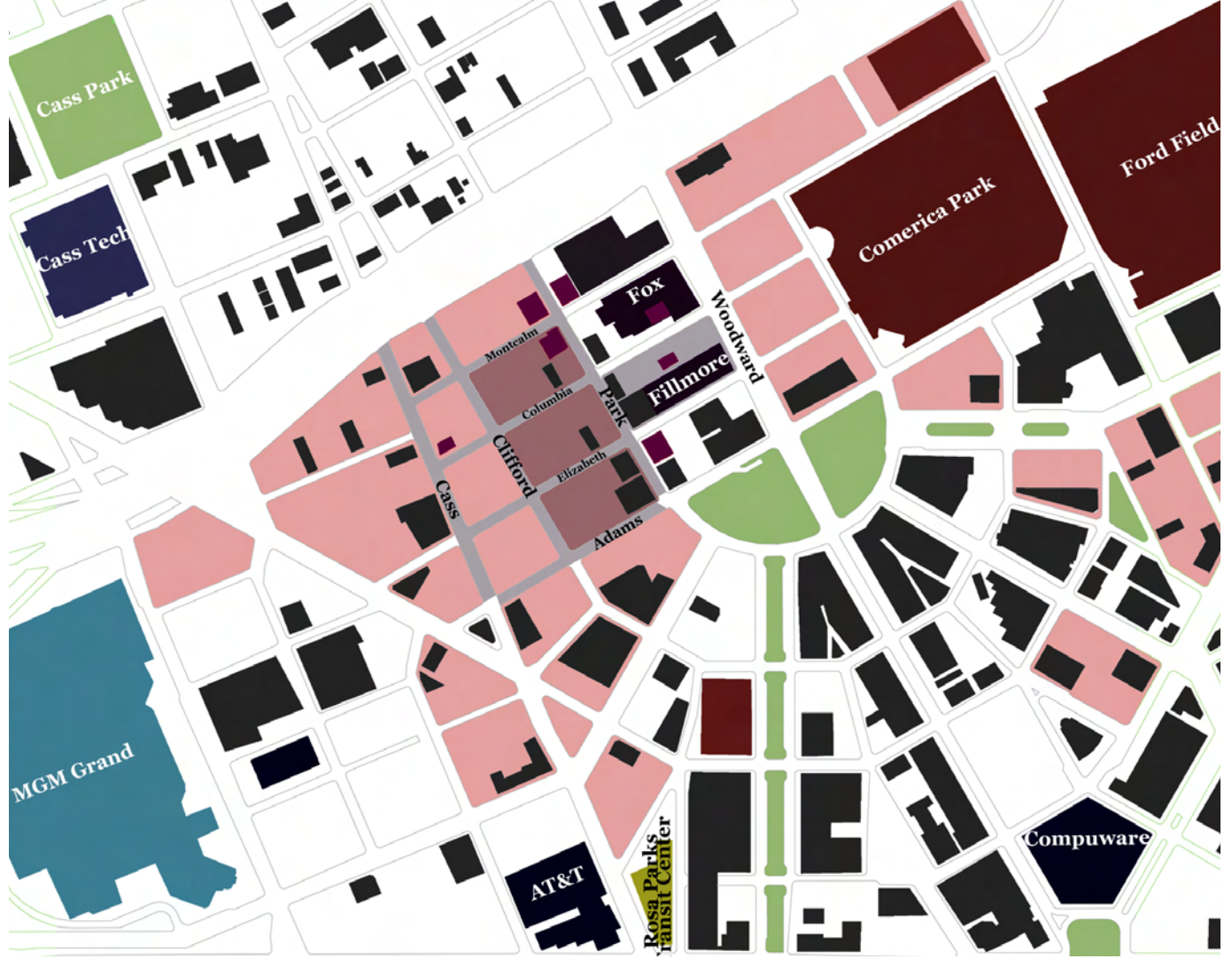


PICTURES AND PANORAMAS

SITE

SITE ANALYSIS

NEARBY ASSETS



The site, as well as a good deal of the surrounding area, is predominately used for game day parking. Some of the parking is also used for concert parking, but that is the extent of the current use of the site. This makes the area very inefficient and creates a tangible void in the urban fabric. Clifford street, just south of I-75, where the site is located, is the area where this void is the most expansive.

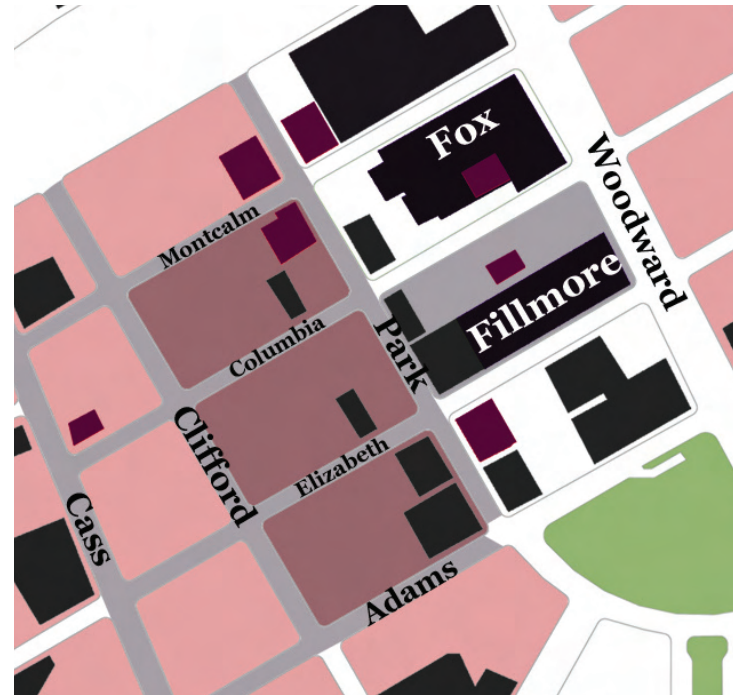
There are several nearby places that border the void that have a strong connection to the site due to their proximity and clientèle. However, these places tend to cater predominately to the game and concert crowd and only for a very limited time around concert or game time. It will be important to take these places into account when programming and designing an intervention on this site since they are a part of the existing context. Cliff Bell's Jazz Club, The Centaur, Bucharest Grille, the Town Pump Tavern, Proof Martini Lounge, and Bookies Bar & Grill are some of the closest bars and clubs. Another interesting nearby program is a daycare center in the Fox Theatre building with an outdoor playground, literally, in the middle of the parking lot next to the Fillmore Theatre.

SITE ANALYSIS

NEARBY ASSETS



The Centaur to the left and the Town Pump Tavern on the right.





Bookies Bar & Grill



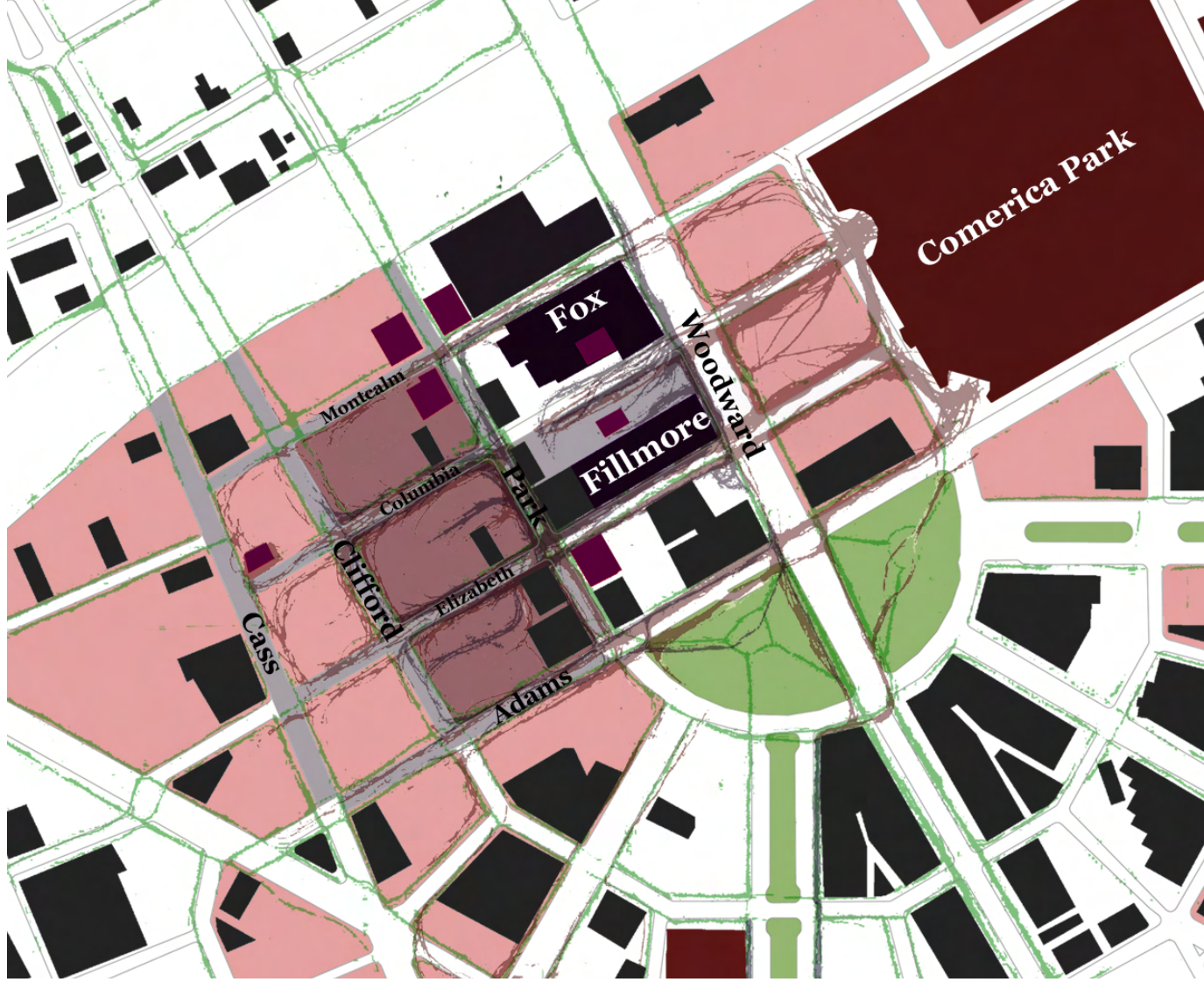
Bucharest

Cliff Bells



SITE ANALYSIS

CIRCULATION AND PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC



Despite the lack of program or functionality of the site, there is a good deal of pedestrian traffic through the area. Although Woodward is the main means of crossing I-75, the bridge along Park is frequently used by many pedestrians. However, although there are pedestrians, few, if any, linger nearby the site. The unmetered streets; Columbia, Elizabeth and Clifford, are frequently used as free parking for concerts or other downtown activities. Due to the sole use of the parking lots that compose the site and a majority of the surrounding area, there is also a very large spike in pedestrian traffic on game days. Despite the proximity to the business district, however, there is no regular traffic of business people through the area. This is due to a combination of a lack of activity and identity. Park Avenue is associated with the theatre district, but the void to the west, for the sheer fact of its vacancy, has no identity. If both activity and identity were present, perhaps it would attract the business crowd for lunch or even a drink with some coworkers after a long days work. There are currently places for this to occur, but the activity is sparse.

SITE + INITIAL DESIGN

SKETCH PROBLEM

GARDENING / ICE SKATING / SLEDDING / VENDING

Explanation:

In order to test out ideas early on, a sketch problem was undertaken in which one portion of the program was designed. One week was allotted for the full design of the space. The design was not intended to be translated into the final design but, rather, to explore a possibility of a part of the project on its own and receive feedback as a form of research to learn from. The programs included in the design were gardening, to provide a productive park that is maintained by residents, vending, to capitalize on the existing traffic and stimulate more traffic, and sledding and ice skating, to foster activity year-round.

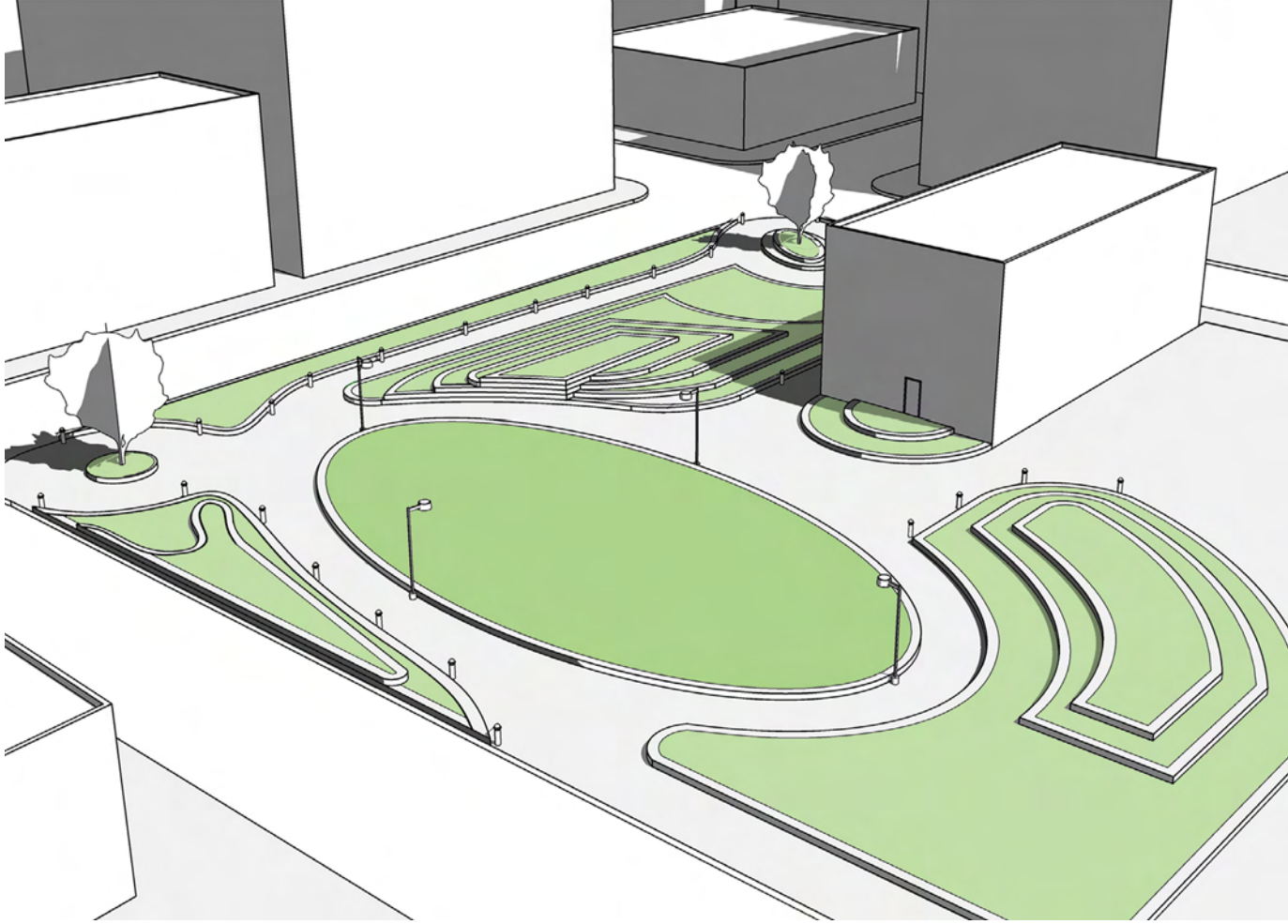
Description:

A non-prescriptive seating area on the edge of planting terraces is filled in in the winter to create the sledding hill. A flat elliptical gardening area is covered by an ice skating rink in the winter. This works well since the ice skating rink and the gardening do not compromise each other. The vending and activity of the gardeners stimulates more activity and attracts business people before work, during lunch, and after work to shop, eat, and relax. The space also attracts more local residents because of the increased activity on any given day and the personal interest in their own garden or garden of someone they know.

SKETCH PROBLEM

GARDENING / ICE SKATING / SLEDDING / VENDING





SKETCH PROBLEM

GARDENING / ICE SKATING / SLEDDING / VENDING

SITE + INITIAL DESIGN

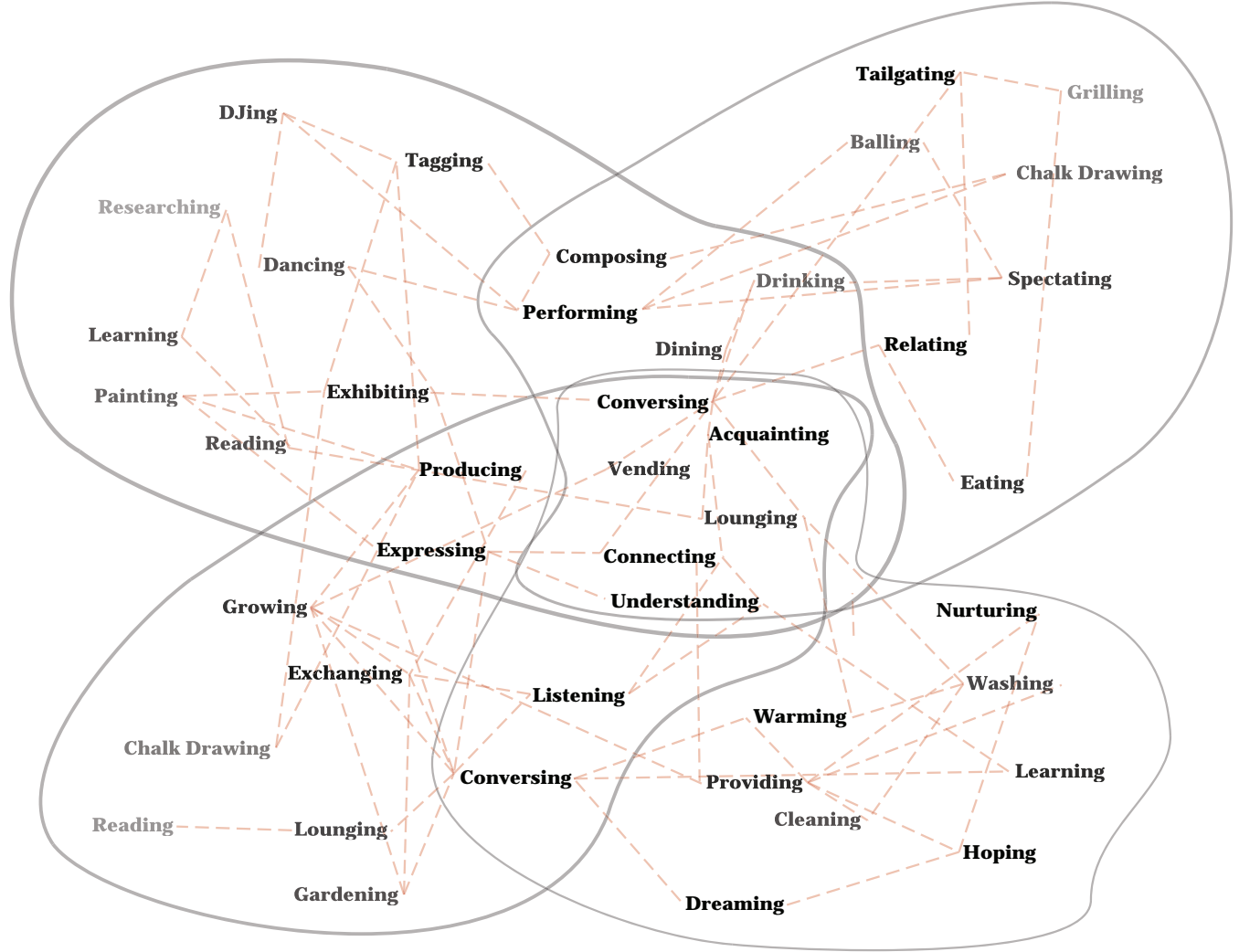
PROGRAMMATIC COLLAGES

PLAN COLLAGE

SECTION COLLAGE

In order to explore the relationships between programs and to show the interaction they have with one another, a series of collages were created. As the project progressed, new collages replaced the old ones to reflect new insights into the scale and understanding of the project. A program diagram using verbs instead of pictures was created after the first set of collages, which helped inform the second set of collages. Both a plan and a section collage were created to reflect the three dimensional quality of the site and programmatic relationships. The scale of the project increased from two blocks to four blocks largely due to these explorations. It eventually shrank back to two blocks. The collages revealed that a more aggressive and innovative building layout and design was necessary in order to achieve the ambitions of the thesis.

PROGRAMMATIC COLLAGES
VERB PROGRAM DIAGRAM

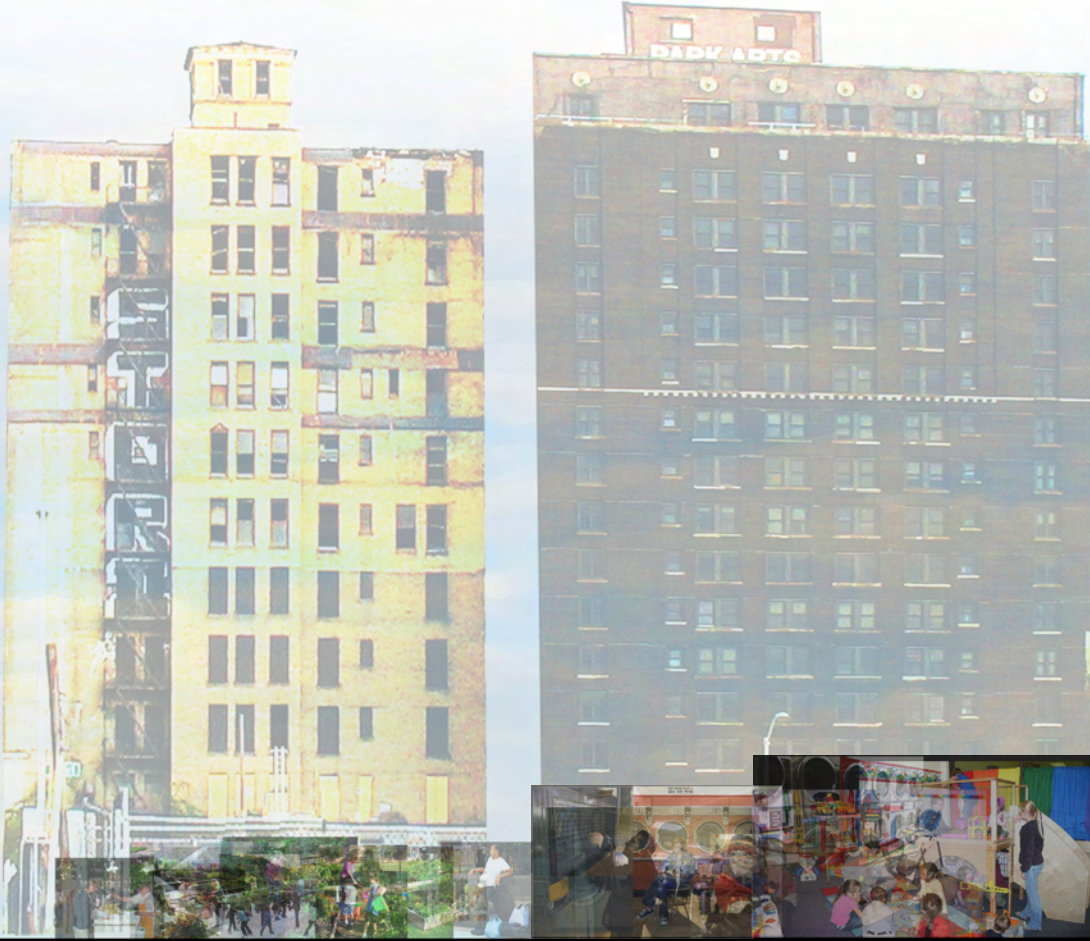




PROGRAMMATIC COLLAGES
SITE COLLAGE

PROGRAMMATIC COLLAGES
SECTION COLLAGE





PROGRAMMATIC COLLAGES
SECTION COLLAGE

SITE + INITIAL DESIGN
NARRATIVE AND EARLY VIGNETTES

WRITTEN NARRATIVE

VISUAL NARRATIVE

VIGNETTE OF LIBRARY / DANCE CLUB / ART GALLERY

VIGNETTE OF TAILGATING / CHALK DRAWING / VENDING SPACE

VIGNETTE OF GARDENING / ICE SKATING / CHALK DRAWING
/ SLEDDING / VENDING / SPECTATING SPACE

A vision for the project was established through the writing of a narrative. The narrative expresses the desired interactions that would be possible in the project, once designed. The narrative was translated into a visual series after the written inspiration.

The concert starts in two and a half hours. Someone from the concert crowd has brought a baseball, so there are a few people throwing it around to pass the time – a couple concert attendee and a few Cass tech students that were walking by at the right time. A woman, walking her dog, is hesitant to cross the path of the ball until one of the guys stops the throwing for a second and motions for her to pass. A well groomed, fresh smelling homeless man, nearby, is talking to a couple of the concert goers, periodically motioning to different parts of the city and greeting every person that walks by. As the daycare children walk to the library for their art project, scaffolding is lowering two artists to the tenth story windows of a nearby abandoned and boarded up building. The scene shifts from mid summer to a cold wintery day. The aroma of hot chocolate and coffee permeate the air along with the sounds of children sledding as a couple who live nearby are entering the ice rink. A little boy passing the site with his brother is hit, unintentionally, by a stray snowball – this is the beginning of a snowball fight. The snow transitions from white to green and brown as the hot chocolate vendors are replaced by vegetable and garden supply vendors. Inside the library, a couple of high schoolers are spray painting a wall. The lights dim as the graffiti, now finished, is illuminated by neon flashing lights. A local DJ mixes as a crowd begins to filter into the club, lined by bookshelves. The view pans sideways to reveal a lounge area where a man in a business suit is talking to his colleague about a recent deal he has made. The afternoon sun coming through the window casts the shadow of a man walking along the side of the building across the waitress bringing their food. The man is heading to the library as he waits for his clothes to dry, but the parking lot is filled with grills and Tigers jerseys. The only gaps in the crowd are near the chalk artists, who are painting baseball themed murals on their concrete canvas.





NARRATIVE

VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF WRITTEN NARRATIVE

A series of vignettes was created during the development of both the narrative and collages. This allowed for a more detailed exploration of how the programs interacted and a better understanding of the overall layout. In addition, parts of the narrative became parts of the vignettes while the vignettes inspired parts of the narrative. During this process, the four general areas, as explored in the program diagram, started to become more tangible without becoming too explicit. The vignettes that resulted were the library / art gallery / dance club space without the lounge / restaurant area included, the tailgating / chalk art / game playing / spectating / outdoor eating space, and the gardening park / ice skating / sledding / vending / spectating space with the insertion of the fourth area, the daycare / laundromat / homeless drop-in / vending space.



This vignette illustrates the relationship between the library / dance club / art gallery program combination. The dance club occurs at certain times in the double height space of the library, which is where a good portion of the art is displayed. The walls become a canvas for graffiti art which fuzes the art gallery physically with the building. The type of art is strongly associated with hip hop music, which is one of the genres that the club would play and would help to reconcile the club with the library and gallery. There would be quiet rooms in the library for studying, but the atmosphere in the main areas of the library would be different than a typical library.



This vignette illustrates the relationship between the tailgating / chalk drawing / outdoor eating / playing/ spectating programs that occur in the same space. When the tailgating and chalk art programs occur at the same time, there is a type of compromise that occurs. If the chalk art begins first, the tailgating must adjust to allow for the chalk artists to continue their artwork. If the tailgating begins first, the chalk artists must chose a space that is not being used, or less heavily used, by the tailgaters. The tailgating would attract both suburban game attendees as well as local residents, since the space that it occurs in is run in such a way that

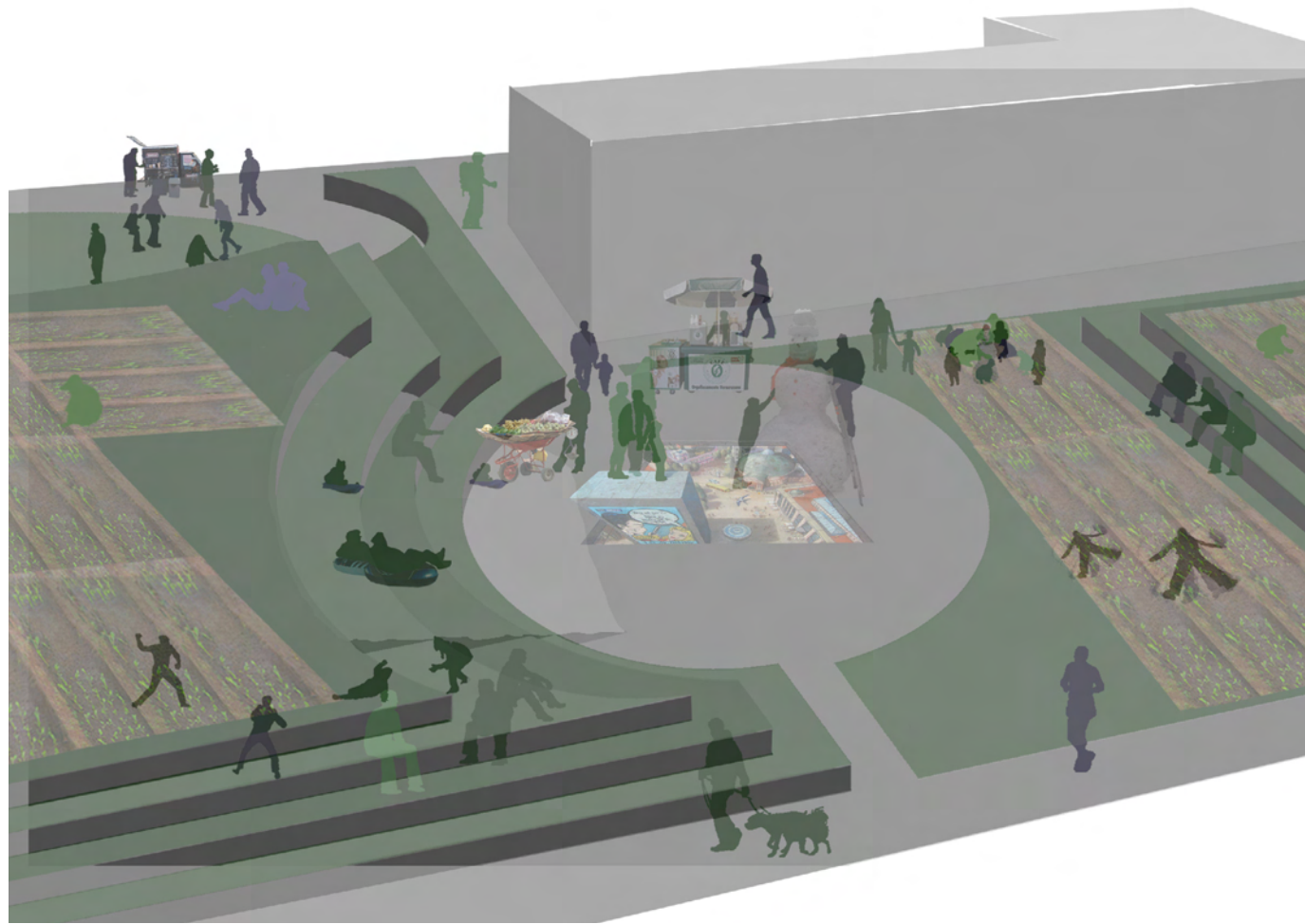


is operates like a civic space. Despite the fact that it is a game day, some local students and local residents are playing a game of basketball on the seasonal basketball court, since they are less concerned with a game that they do not have tickets for. Their game during a time of increased pedestrian traffic attracts some spectators who arrived early and have some time to spare before the professional game starts. The vitality and diversity of events occurring before the game, which attract a very diverse crowd, begin to rival, perhaps even overshadow, the event of the actual game itself.

EARLY VIGNETTE

TAILGATING / CHALK DRAWING / PLAYING

The vignette on the opposite page is an overlay of both the summer and winter activities and events of the gardening/ice skating/sledding/outdoor daycare/vending area. Viewing both sets of activities at the same time allows for the understanding of the multiple uses of some of the features and areas. The design of this space took into consideration some of the features from the sketch problem, such as the terraced gardening and seating areas that convert into a sledding hill in the winter. The different activities that occur in the summer and winter allow for diversity and create a more lively area. Since this area is a park, it is open to anyone in the city and aims to be inviting. The building that borders the area houses a daycare/homeless drop-in center/laundromat area. This helps to bring a variety of people into the area who will, most likely, become some of the users of the outdoor area.



EARLY VIGNETTE

GARDENING / ICE SKATING / SPECTATING / VENDING

DEVELOPMENT + REFINED DESIGN

FORMAL STUDY MODELS

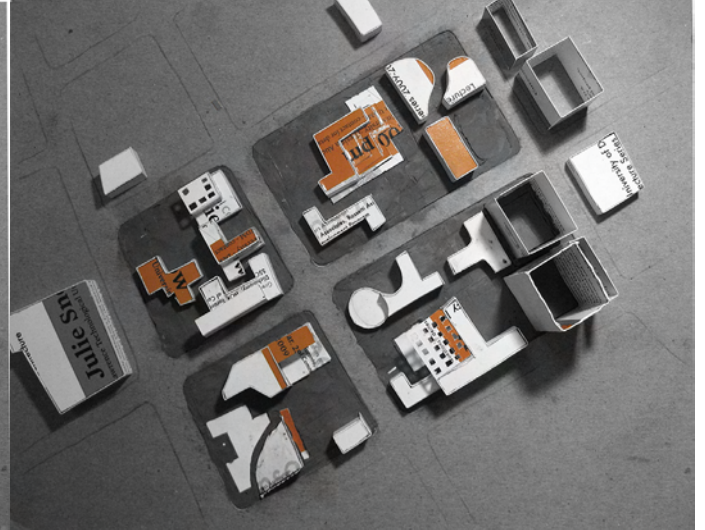
EXPLANATION

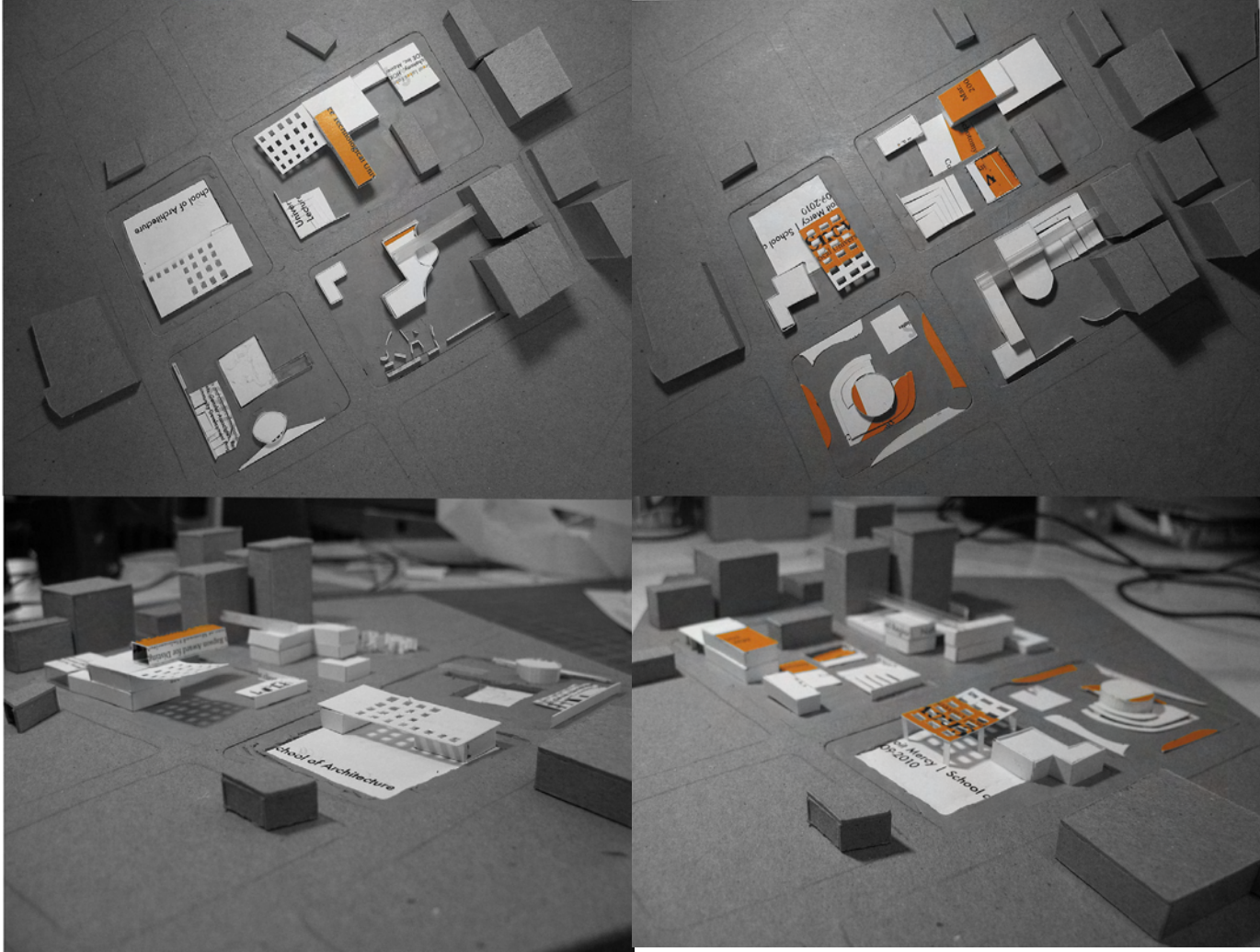
SERIES ONE - PURELY FORMAL

SERIES TWO - INFORMED FORMAL

Two series of formal study models were created in order to explore inherent relationships between buildings with other buildings with the surrounding landscape with regards to shape and mass. The first study was purely formal, with random program-less buildings. There were 11 models in this study. The second series was more intentional, with programs being designated to each building place on the site. Four models were constructed in this series. The studies were beneficial in discovering layouts that worked well with the site and had spatial relationships that were just as complex as the programs they housed.

FORMAL STUDY MODELS
SERIES ONE - PURELY FORMAL





FORMAL STUDY MODELS
SERIES TWO - INFORMED FORMAL

DEVELOPMENT + REFINED DESIGN

PLANS AND SECTIONS

EXPLANATION

SUMMER GAME DAY PLAN

WINTER TYPICAL DAY PLAN

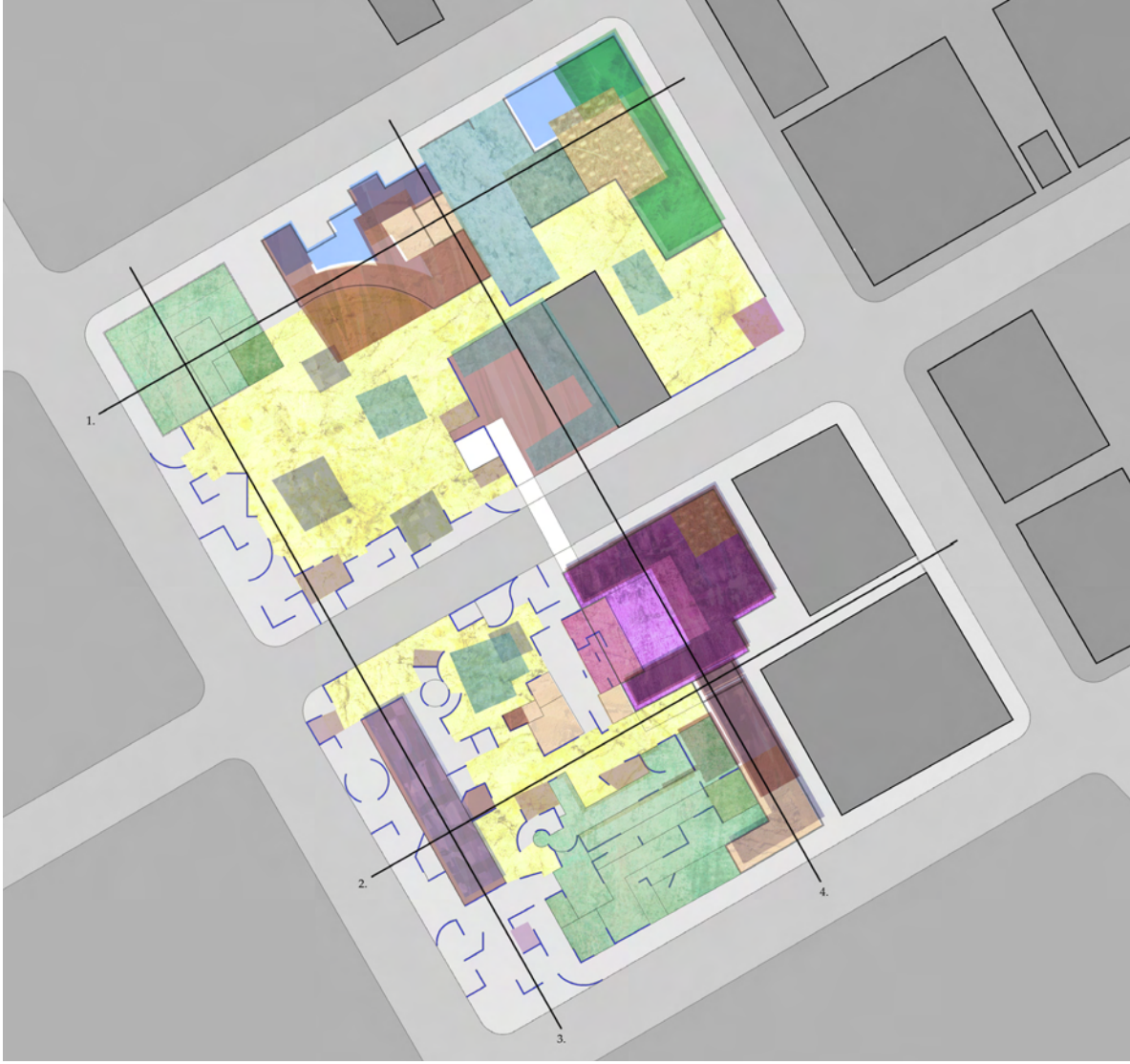
NORTHEAST-SOUTHWEST SECTIONS

NORTHWEST-SOUTHEAST SECTIONS

From the second series of the formal study models, a plan was created using the best features from each model. The plans were overlaid with colors and textures to differentiate between programs, since they occur at different places throughout the site. In order to explore the scale of the project, silhouettes were overlaid on a series of sections with some context collaged in. These were meant to show what activities occur in each area of the project as well as illustrate the scale of the buildings to the human.

PLANS

SUMMER GAME DAY

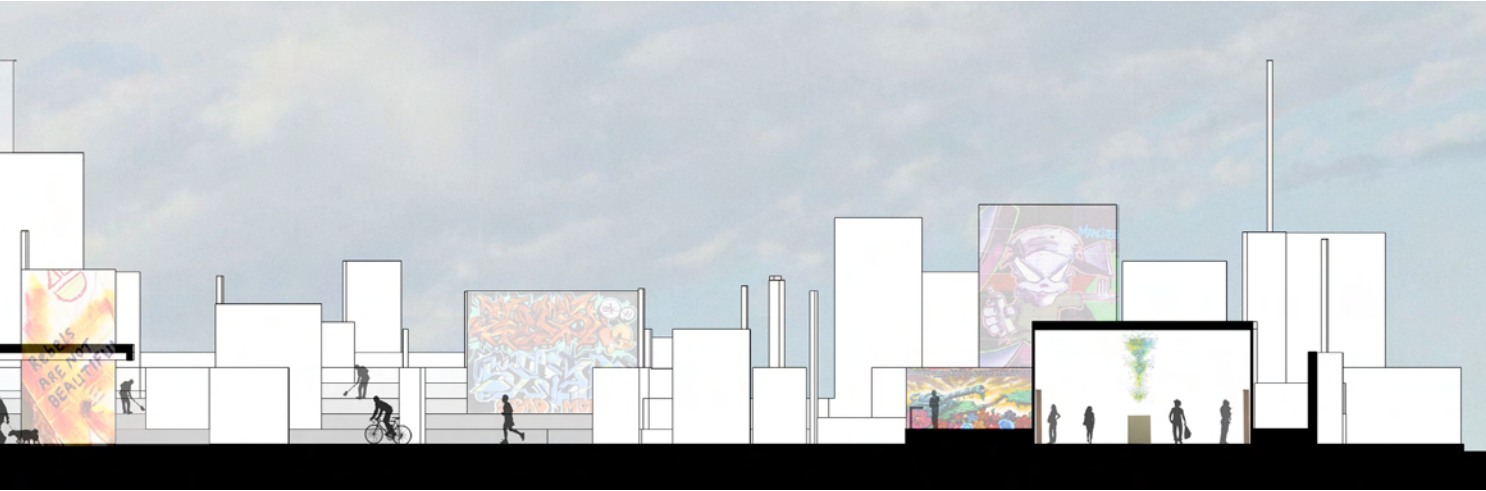




SECTIONS

NORTHWEST - SOUTHEAST

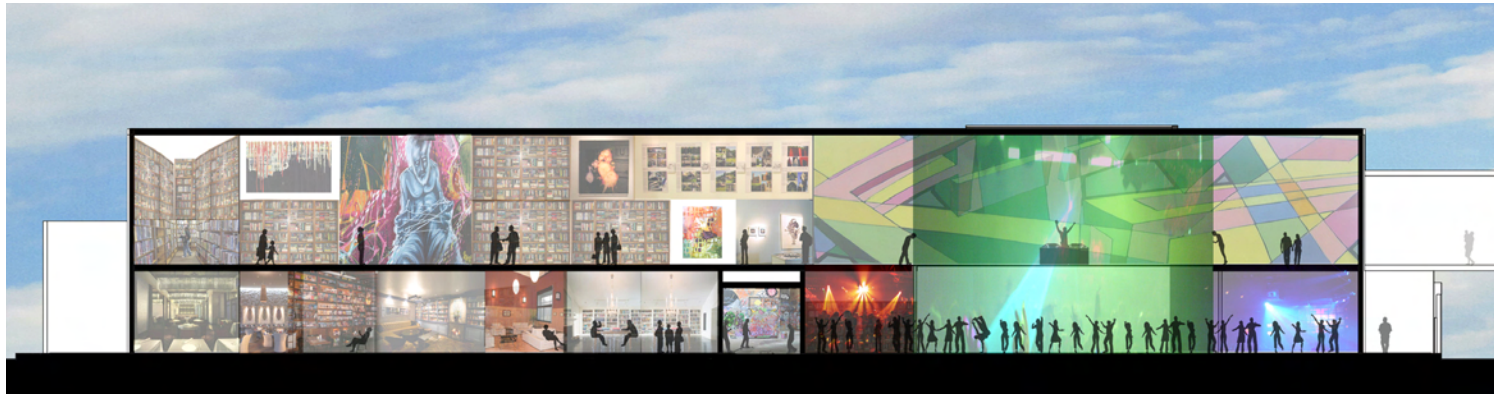


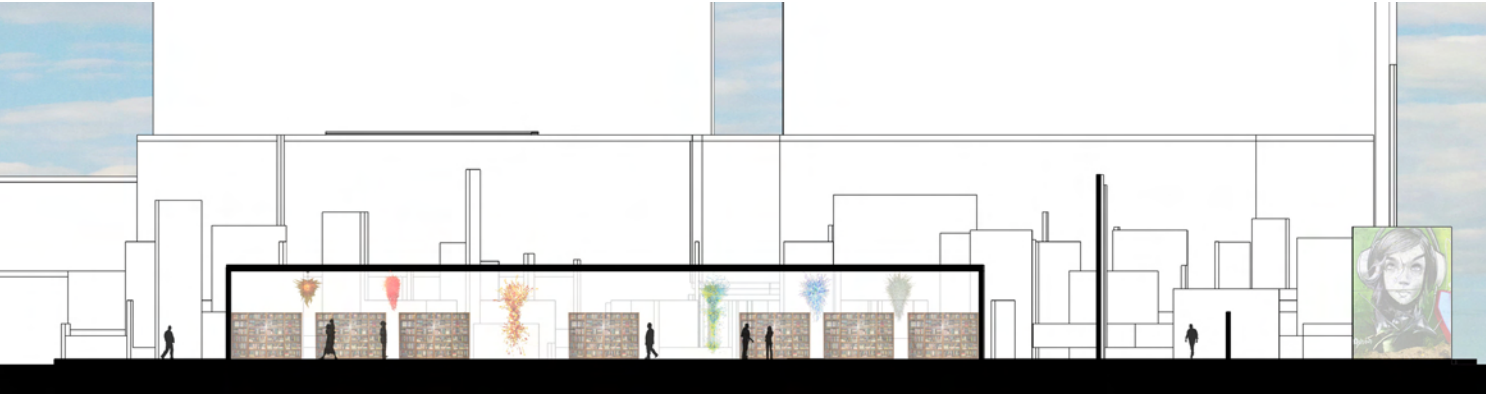


SECTIONS
NORTHWEST - SOUTHEAST

SECTIONS

NORTHEAST - SOUTHWEST





SECTIONS
NORTHEAST - SOUTHWEST

DEVELOPMENT + REFINED DESIGN

VIGNETTES

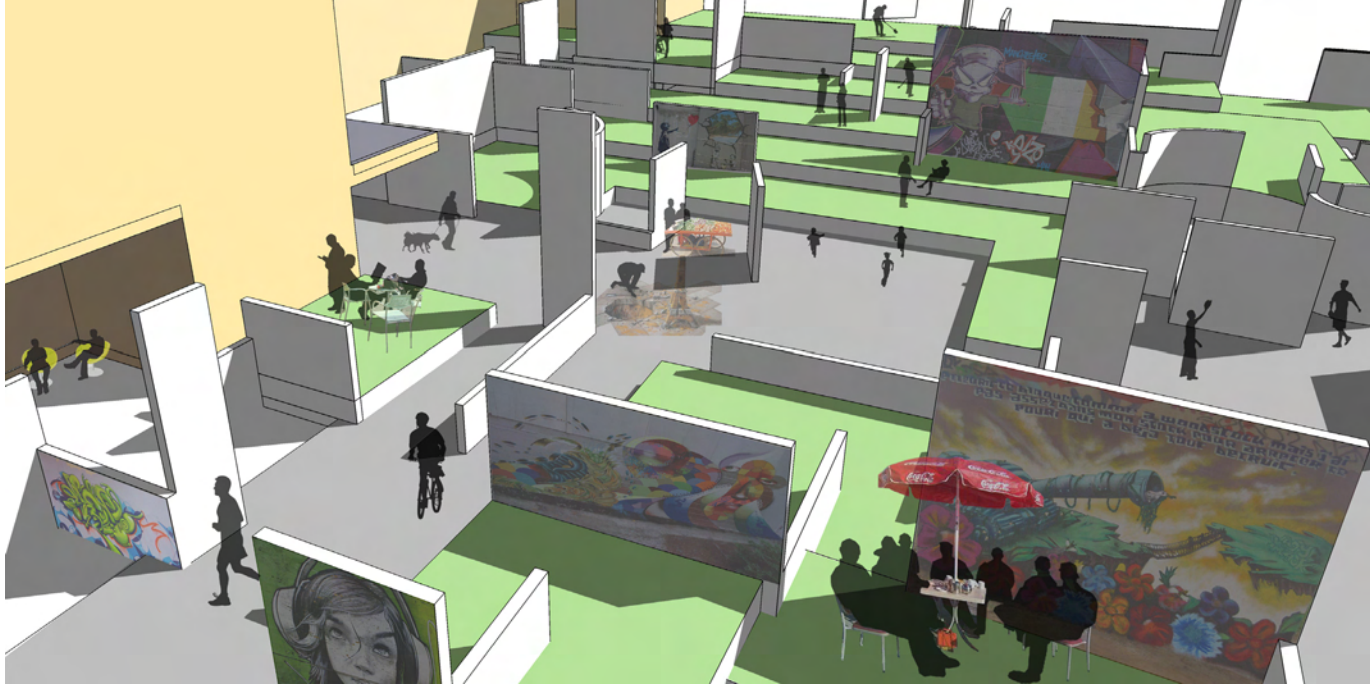
GRAFFITI GALLERY / GARDEN / VENDING / EATING / CHALK ART

LIBRARY / DANCE CLUB / ART GALLERY

LAUNDROMAT / CAFÉ / LIBRARY / DRY CLEANERS

NATURAL LANDSCAPE / READING / PLAYING AREA

SLEDDING / ICE SCULPTING / ICE SKATING / SNOW ACTIVITIES



The functions from the art gallery/restaurant/club/library extend out past the implied boundaries of the buildings walls. Eating areas for the restaurant are interspersed in the graffiti landscape, which functions as an outdoor, constantly changing art gallery. The edges of the terraced gardening areas function as seating areas for those who have brought their own food, are reading a book, or who just enjoy watching the people stroll by and the children of the gardeners run around playing made up games. Gardening usually involves more than twice as much time talking as actually cultivating. Vending happens in strategic locations throughout the park, with merchants selling good ranging from fruits and vegetables to light up keychains and knock off brands of sunglasses.



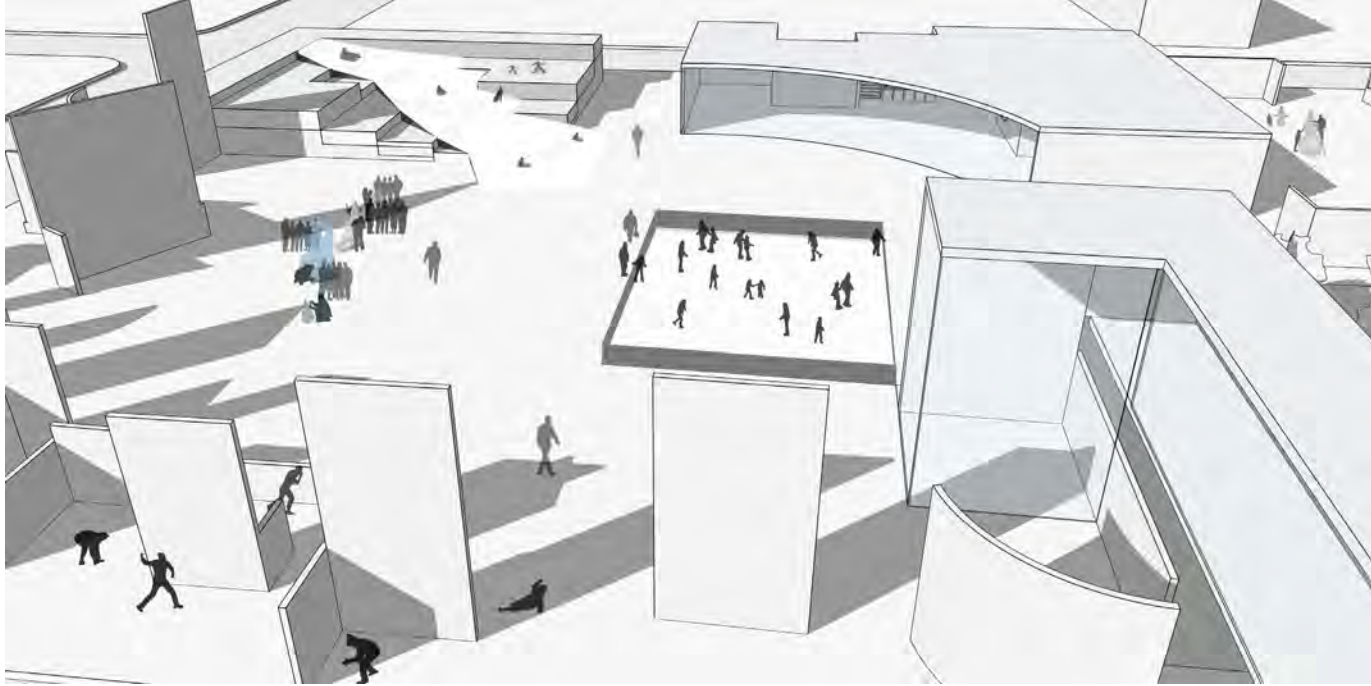
The club opens as the sky gets darker. The art gallery/library space fills with sound. There is a quieter study and reading area integrated into the restaurant that is downstairs on the other side of the space, but in order to find books, the library users must pass through the space that is permeated by the music from the club, which is mixed by local DJ's and contains a large selection of locally created music. The art gallery is illuminated with lights similar to those of the dance club. The art displayed is eclectic, containing classical paintings, graffiti panels, abstract pieces, and sculpture among other styles. The lounge section of the club is compacted during the club hours, but expands to fill part of the dance floor during the day. Both restaurants in this building share the same kitchen and some of the same outdoor eating areas.



The laundromat is combined with a library and a cafe. In a partnership with the homeless resource center, the homeless can wash their clothes free of charge. This portion of the library is book swap system. If someone brings in a book they have read, they can exchange it for another. Because of the waiting times inherent in the laundromat, the books can also be reserved to stay in the library, or “checked in,” so that someone can continue reading it next time they wash their clothes or visit the cafe. The people that visit this place are the local residents, businessmen and women, the homeless, and those waiting for a concert or tailgating. This allows an interaction of any and all of these groups of people either in line, around a coffee table, or just walking through the area.



This portion of the area is more naturalistic, with trees and grass. This place can be used for outdoor reading, napping, or simply lingering. Since the cafe seating areas are designed more for conversation, this area provides an area of more passive interaction. This space may also be used for activities, such as juggling a soccer ball as shown above, that would be better suited in the grass. It is also a path through the site, so there would be some foot traffic through it as well.



In the winter, when this space is not being used for tailgating, a ice skating rink is set up in the middle. Infill pieces covered in snow turn the gardening space into a sledding hill. As a program sponsored by the art gallery, live ice sculpting attracts spectators. At various times random activities such as snowball fights, snow angels, and snowmen occur throughout. The walls of the graffiti gallery provide good cover from snowballs.

DEVELOPMENT + REFINED DESIGN

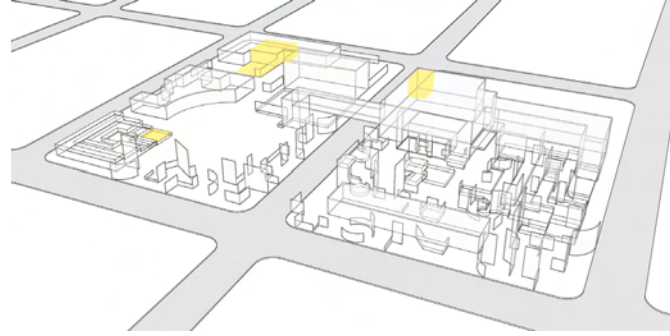
NARRATIVE AXONOMETRICS

EXPLANATION AND DAYCARE CHILD

CONCERT ATTENDEE AND HOMELESS MAN

HIGH SCHOOLER AND TAILGATER

LOCAL RESIDENT AND COMPOSITE

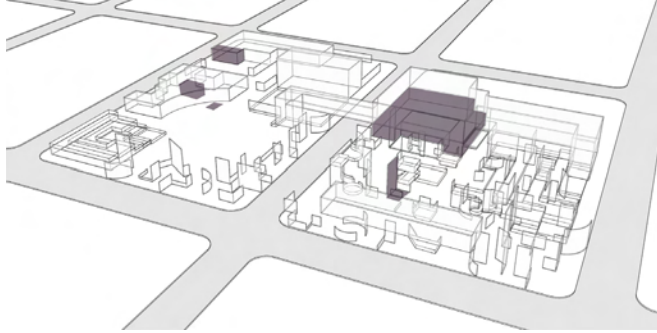


Explanation

To bring the project back to the narrative level that it started at with the fragmentation diagrams, a series of narrative axonometrics was created. Each image shows the stopping points of a sample person from each group. At certain points overlaps occur between the people described or with other people on the site not described.

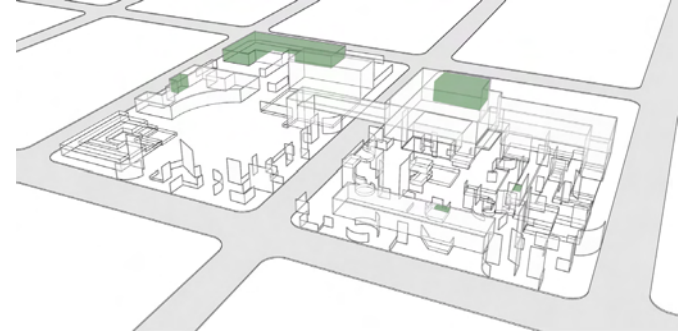
Daycare Child

Early in the morning children are being dropped off at the main daycare center. There is a new boy today. He cries when his father leaves, but that doesn't last long as he sees the toys on the other side of the room. After playing and listening to a story in the morning, one of the daycare worker takes them over to the patch of garden that the daycare uses. The new boy likes planting seeds, but mostly just playing in the dirt. After they are done, they go back to the daycare center to clean up. After snack and nap time, a group is taken over to the art center to an area set up for children to create art projects. When they are done creating their masterpieces, their work is displayed on a wall so they can show their parents when they are picked up. A little while before they are picked up, a little girl joins them outside. Her mother is nearby watering her patch of the garden. The adults at the daycare know and keep an eye on her daughter while she gardens.



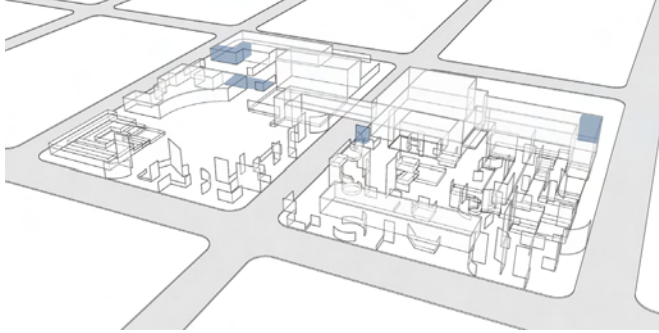
Concert Attendee

Showing up a couple hours early to get tickets to the City and Colour concert, the group of college students has a couple of hours to kill. After stopping quickly by the community bathrooms, they grab a cup of coffee at the cafe within the laundromat and library. Since its a nice day, they decide to sit at a table outside. A man sits down at the table next to them with a book. He is homeless although the concert students wouldn't have guessed from his appearance. He asks them for the time. After fumbling for their phones, one answers with the time and they realize its about time to head into the theater. After the concert they decide to dance at the club for a couple hours. A couple of them, wanting a break from the loudness, wander through the illuminated outdoor graffiti gallery.



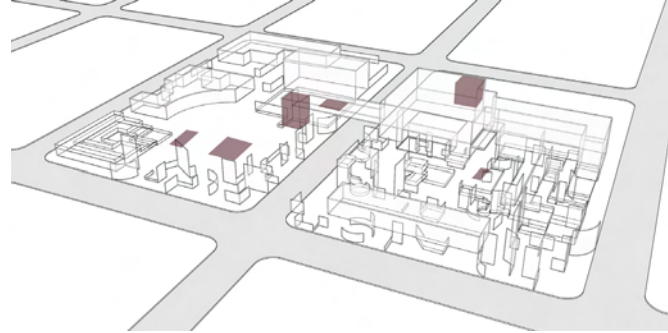
Homeless Man

After spending the night in the shelter portion of the homeless resource center, the homeless man grabs some nice, but worn, dress clothes out of his locker and showers in the public facilities attached to the center. He smiles as he sees the daycare children playing. Today is a good day. After all, this is the first day that some of his artwork will be on display in the art center. After his shower, he heads to the art center to see peoples' reactions to his work. He talks to some of the admirers of his paintings. In the afternoon he goes down to the graffiti garden to get something to eat from one of the vendors he knows who gives him a little discount. As evening draws closer, he goes to the laundromat to wash some clothes. He picks up a book he has started to read earlier in the week. When he realizes it has been about a half hour, time to change his laundry, he asks some college students at the table next to him what time it is since he can't see the clock inside.



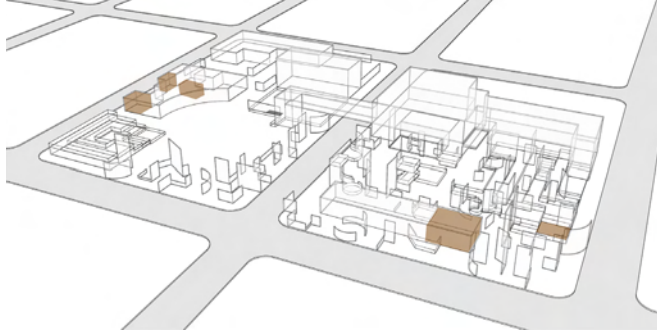
High School Student

After school, a student from Cass Tech High School joins a group of his friends in a basketball game. He showers at the public facilities after a close game. He has brought a change of clothes, since he and his friends were planning on tagging one of the walls in the graffiti gallery later that evening. In the mean time he grabs a bit to eat at the restaurant in the library and picks up a couple books for a report that is due Monday. He knows he should be working on it, but its Friday, he has the whole weekend to work on it.



Tailgater

Its not a big game, but that doesn't seem to affect the tailgating party. Its still a few hours until kickoff, but the crowd has been here all day. One tailgater, after meeting a few people who were lucky enough to park in the tailgating section, wonders where the bathrooms are. He takes the bridge across the road to see if he can find some. He is a bit puzzled when he enters the art gallery / library / dance club space. There is no dancing at the club, but there is a lounge arranged on the dance floor with a DJ playing some music to set the atmosphere. He is fascinated by a particular piece of artwork and mentions it to someone else standing by. The person thanks him and introduces himself as the artist. After a brief conversation, the tailgater begins searching for the bathrooms again and finds some by the restaurant. After leaving the building, he buys a chili dog from a vendor set up in the graffiti garden, where there is another section of tailgating.



Local Resident

Its the weekend and the laundromat is full. A local resident buys a coffee and takes out the book she has just got done reading. She exchanges it for another book using the book swap program and begins the book as she waits for a washing machine to open up. She gets into a brief conversation with another lady who has read the book she picked out and mentioned that she really liked it. Once her laundry is in the dryer, she heads over to her patch of garden on the other end of the site. She is planning on planting some new vegetables next year, so she stops by the gardening section of the library to get some ideas of what to plant this year. One of her neighbors that she shares gardening tools with is nearby, so they chat as they cultivate their plants. She picks up her laundry after she's done gardening and heads back home with some tomatoes from her garden.



Composite

This diagram shows all of the lingering points of each individual at the same time. Although the exact spots may not correspond, some of the proximities are close enough for interaction to occur. While not all of the narratives overlapped directly, these were just one sample person from each group. With hundreds more of each, some complex interactions and relationships would be very possible and probable.

NARRATIVE AXONOMETRICS

FINAL DESIGN

PLANS

COLLAGE PLAN

EXPLANATION OF MASTERPLAN

LAYOUT PLAN

EXPLANATION OF PLAN

PLANS

COLLAGE PLAN



This collage plan of the site and adjacent blocks illustrates with overlaying images the programs of each space and the relationships between them. This is a continuation of the series that began with the exploration of programming early on. The surroundings are also overlaid with images to illustrate what activities happen and how they relate to the proposal. It is vital that even the smaller surrounding buildings and activities are taken into account so that the proposal not only responds to the major activities, but the surroundings as a whole. In addition, the renovation of the Hotel Charleviox, located on the east side of the site, would provide housing, a restaurant, and space for the offices and storage of the library/art gallery. This building would be directly connected on the third floor to the library/art gallery/dance club space. The three buildings on the blocks just to the north and west of the main site are proposed additional housing to complement the site both programmatically and proportionally. Programmatically, they add housing to the mix of programs on the site. Proportionally, they help to fill the void caused by the vast expanse of parking lots and close in the proposed smaller scale buildings.

PLANS

LAYOUT PLAN



1. Playing
Dropping off children
Lingering
Tagging
Strolling
2. Conversing
Drinking Coffee
Reading
Exchanging books
Washing Clothes
Watching
3. Ice Skating
Sledding
Ice Sculpting
Building Snowmen
Strolling
Snowball Fighting
4. Reading
Playing
Strolling
Lingering
Eating
Vending
5. Tailgating
Vending
Eating
Drinking
Drawing
Playing
6. Calling
Checking email
Job Searching
Showering
Conversing
7. Dancing
DJ-ing
Reading
Enjoying Artwork
Searching for Books
Drinking
Tagging
Spectating
8. Vending
Strolling
Eating
Gardening
9. Tagging
Enjoying Artwork
Vending
Eating
Gardening
Eating
Studying
10. Reading
Researching
Drinking Coffee
Conversing

On this plan, the programs are listed as verbs since each of the programs will not be easily identified in each space. For instance, when the DJ starts playing music in the library, people may not start dancing right away, so it wouldn't fit the norm of a club, even though elements of a club are present in this very unlikely context. Other program combinations include area 6, a 211 center, which helps homeless people find jobs by providing them identification, mailboxes, voicemail, and internet access, a daycare center, and public rest rooms with showers. Area 2 houses a laundromat, café, dry cleaners, and book exchange library in which books that someone has already read can be exchanged for different ones. This place works in conjunction with the 211 center to provide free clothes washing for the homeless. The environment is also very inclusive since there is no expectation of purchasing something to stay. Areas 7 and 10 are connected on the second floor and combine elements of a library, art gallery, dance club, restaurant, and study area into a single space which is the example described earlier. The programs also extend outdoors. For instance, areas 3 and 4 combine tailgating, chalk art, vending, ice sculpting, ice skating, eating, gardening, outdoor reading, and general recreation, such as kicking a soccer ball around while waiting for a concert. Activities such as gardening, which occurs on the terraced areas, encourages a constant level of activity on the site. The dark orthogonal lines are graffiti walls. The graffiti walls create an outdoor gallery area, which is an extension of the art center and also define smaller spaces within the outdoor space. The panels are precast concrete and can be changed if, for instance, the gallery would like to put one on a more permanent display indoors. The programs of each space transition based on time of day, activities in the surrounding areas, and the four seasons. In addition, the users of the site can add their own programs, such as yoga in the park-like area, rap battles in the area behind the club, etc. This would foster the idea of belonging mentioned earlier by allowing the users of the site to feel a sense of co-ownership based on their contributions to the way the site is used.

FINAL DESIGN

SECTIONS

BASE PLAN WITH SECTION CUTS

SECTION A

SECTION B

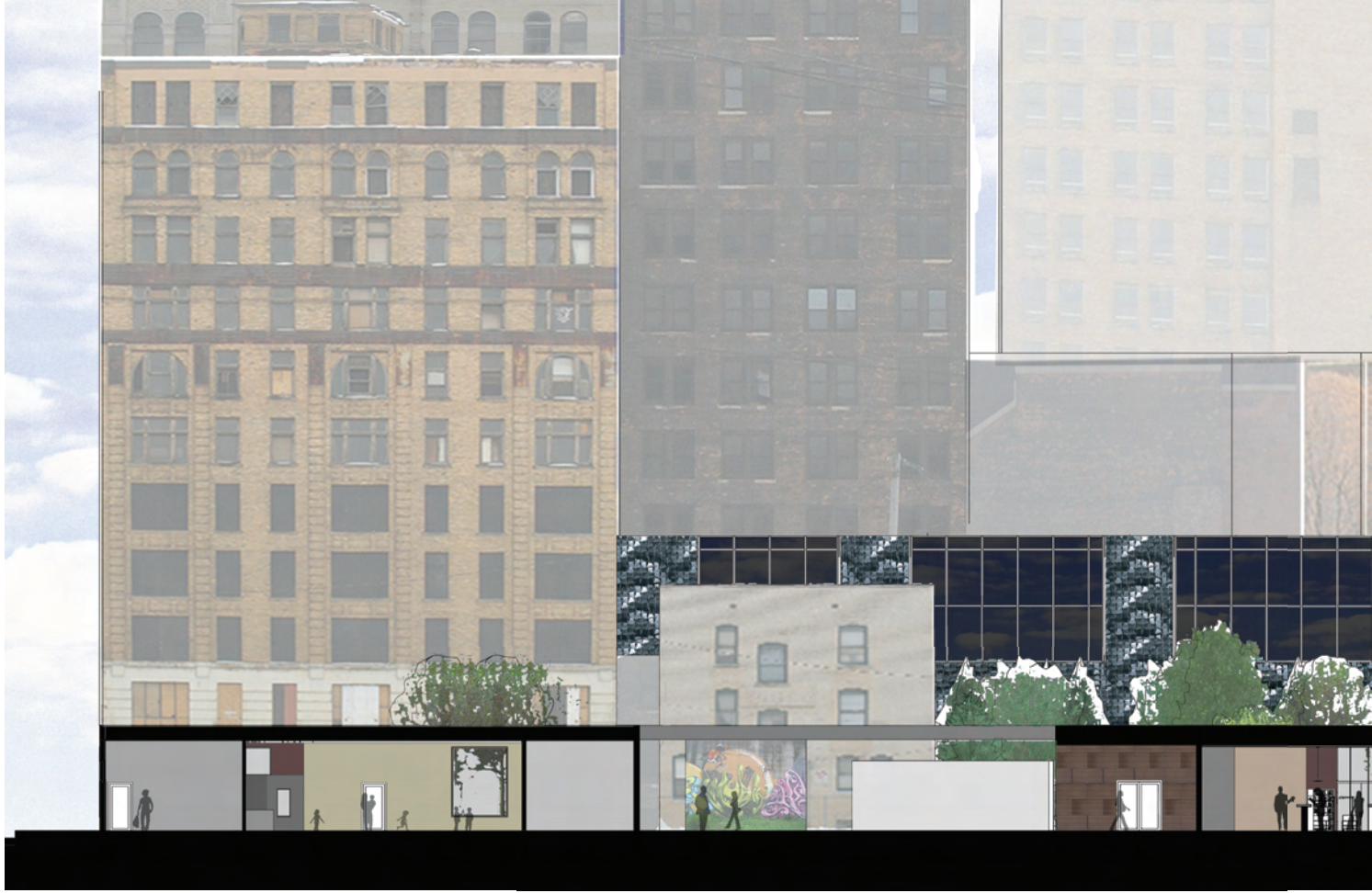


SECTIONS

BASE PLAN WITH SECTION CUTS

SECTIONS

SECTION A



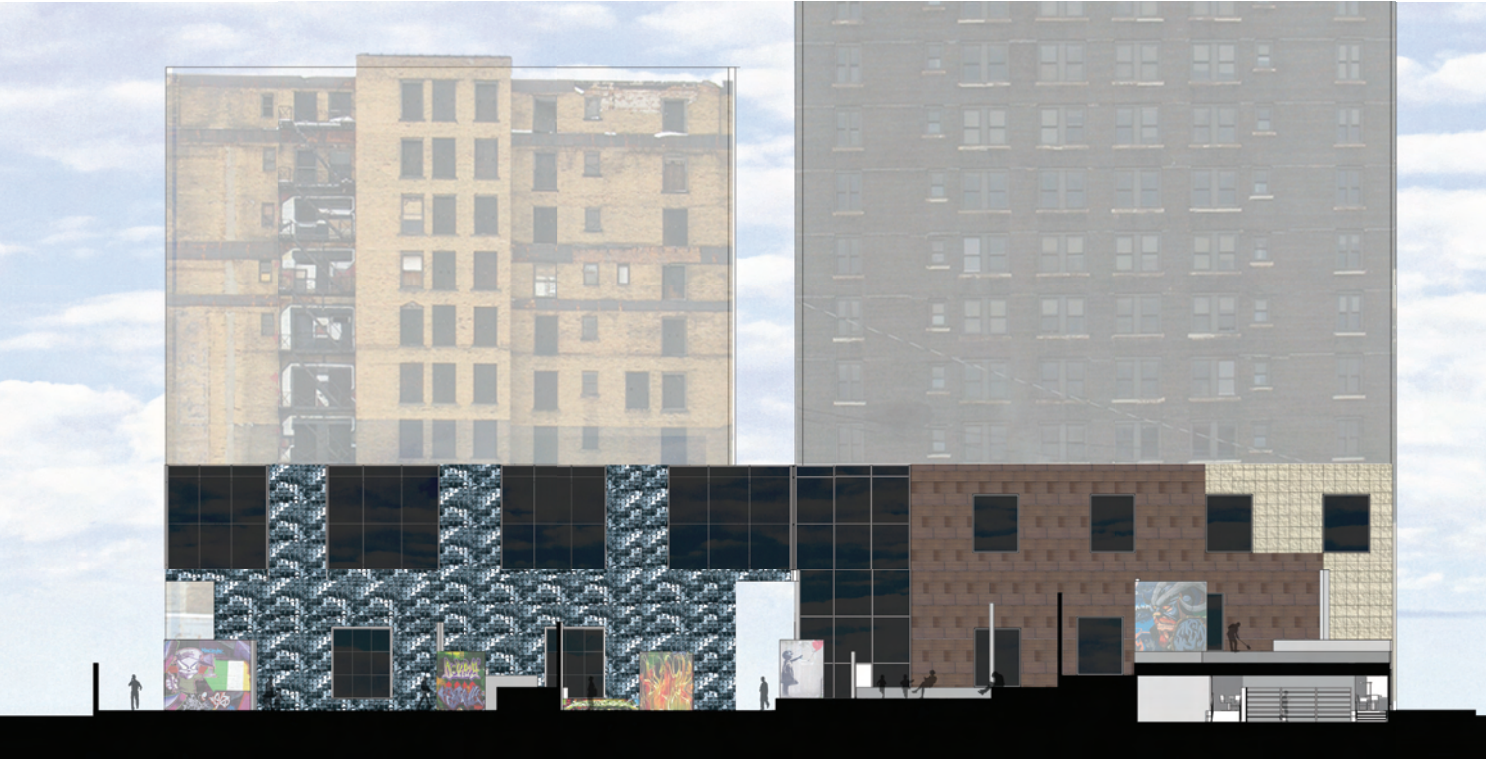


SECTIONS
SECTION A

SECTIONS

SECTION B



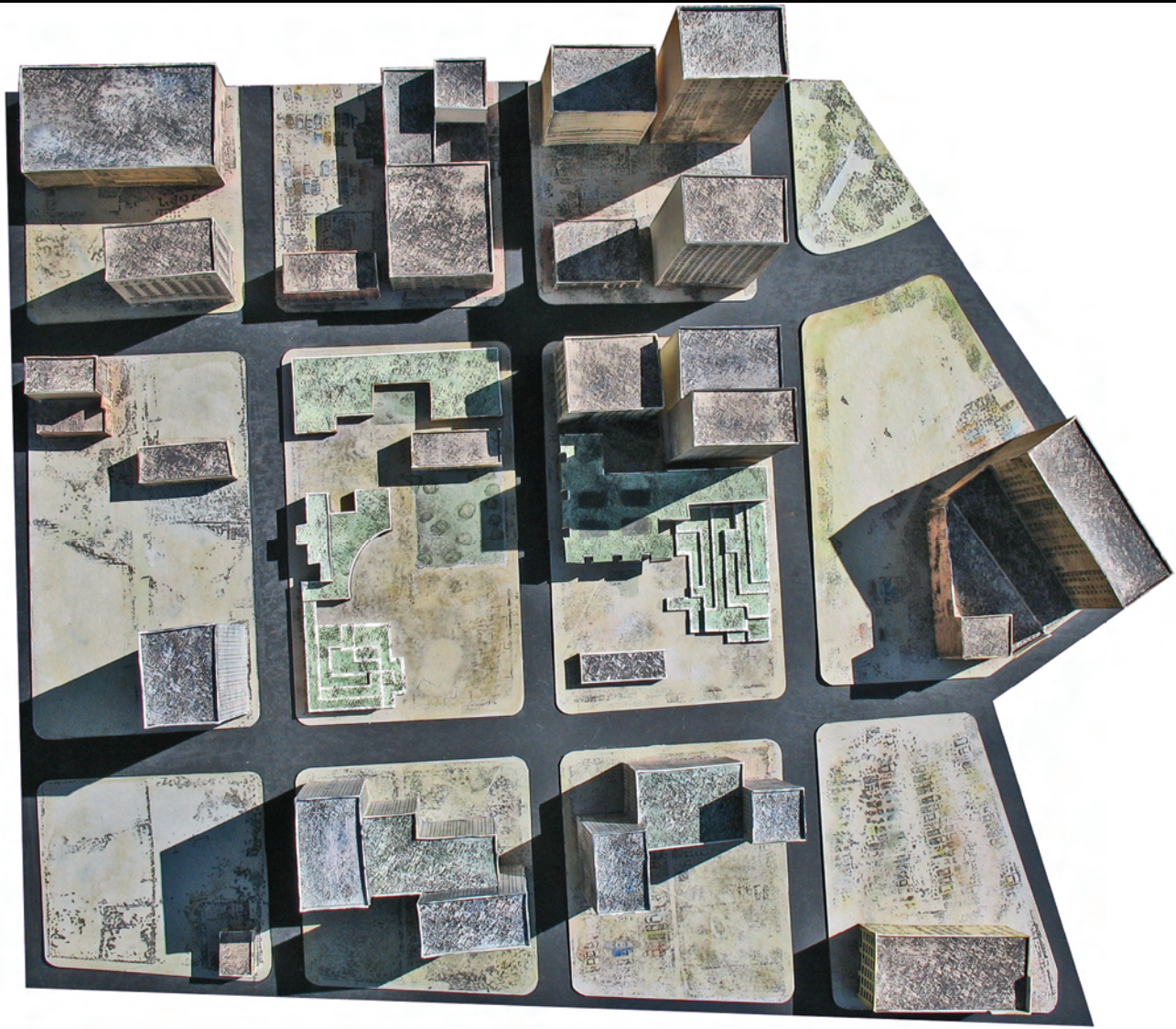


SECTIONS
SECTION B

FINAL DESIGN

MODEL

PICTURES OF PHYSICAL MODEL

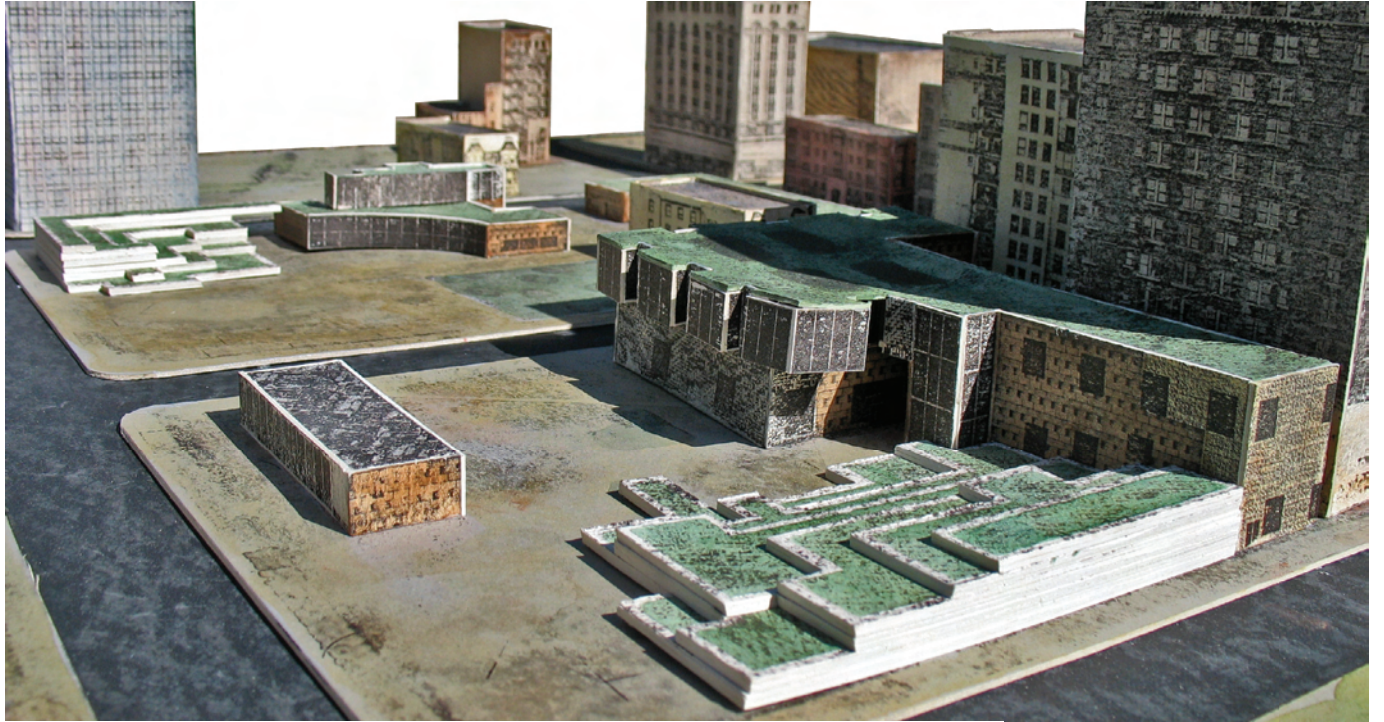


MODEL

PICTURE OF MODEL

MODEL

PICTURE OF MODEL





MODEL

PICTURE OF MODEL

FINAL DESIGN

NARRATIVE VIGNETTES

EXPLANATION

CAST OF CHARACTERS

VIGNETTE PATH

FULL SIZE VIGNETTES

To better understand the complex programming, number of buildings on the site, and urban scale of the project, a narrative was written. This narrative helps to describe, at the human scale, the interactions and activities taking place. Each character in the narrative represents a group of people. The vignettes help to illustrate the story line as well as give a glimpse into various parts of the site to help foster a better understanding of how the spaces both look and function. In the following pages, the narrative will be expressed through site mapping, a time of day matrix, and full page vignettes.

NARRATIVE VIGNETTES

EXPLANATION OF NARRATIVE AND VIGNETTES

NARRATIVE VIGNETTES

CAST OF CHARACTERS AND PATHS THROUGH SITE

Robin, Local Resident



Larry, Game Attendee



Ethan, Concert Attendee



Reggie, Homeless Person



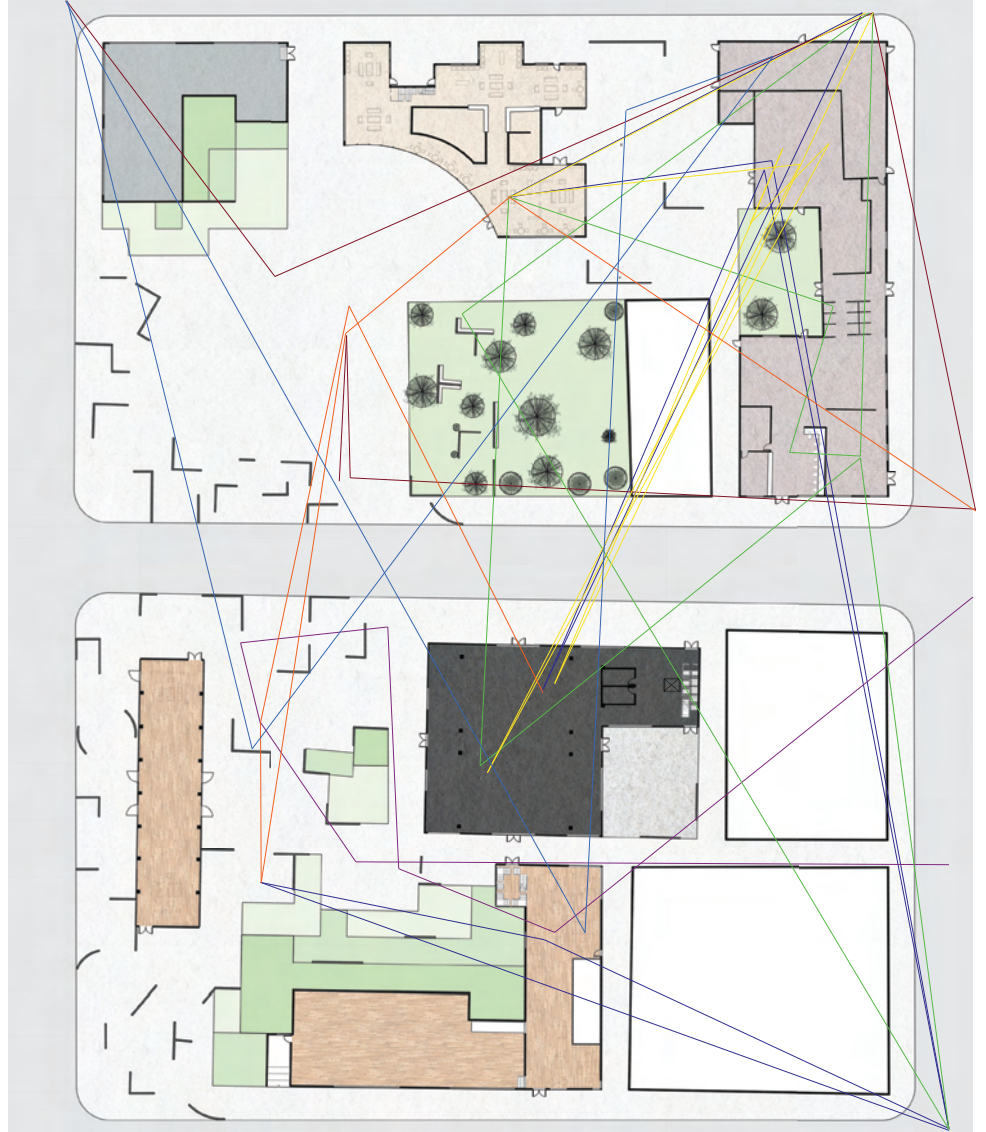
Nikki, Daycare Child



Rachel, Professional



Terrance, High Schooler



On this brisk spring morning, Reggie is walking from a homeless shelter where he has stayed the night to the 211 center at Park and Elizabeth street. He goes through his routine of checking his voicemail, mailbox, and email. He finds a couple more job postings before heading over to the laundromat library café next door. On the way over, he sees a little girl named Nikki who is in the daycare art program that he helps out with as a part time job at the library. Six hours a week helps buy a little food, but that's about it. She introduces him to her mother, Rachel, who is dropping her off at daycare, and they talk briefly since she is in a hurry to get to work. After putting his clothes in a washing machine, Reggie picks up the book he has been reading and sits down. Robin, a nearby local resident, mentions that it is a good book. Reggie agrees and they get into a conversation about their favorite authors.

Robin heads over to the main tailgating space to sell some Tiger's paraphernalia. Larry, the first customer, buys a hat and stays to talk a little bit, which is partially due to the three beers he has had already. She packs up once the sports crowd leaves for the game. Robin begins tending her garden, with a sign up listing the vegetables and prices. Rachel, returning from the new restaurant on her lunch break comes up and inquires about the prices, since they are quite low. Robin explains that she is just trying to sell all the vegetables she won't be able to use. Rachel buys a bag and heads back to work.

A couple hours later, some students from Cass Tech begin to study in the library art gallery restaurant. At a nearby table there is a group of young adults that will be attending the concert later that evening. A group of the Cass Tech students leave to play a game of basketball.

At five thirty, a little late to account for her unexpected conversation at the vegetable stand during her lunch break, Rachel picks up Nikki from daycare. Nikki tells her about the picture she drew of their family, which is hanging in the art gallery. They pass an intense game of basketball on their way over to see the masterpiece.

After the game, the Cass Tech students shower at the public facility next to the basketball court and head over to the other side of the site. On their way, they pass Reggie, who is eating a \$5 footlong from the Subway on Park. He doesn't go there often but it's a little treat compared to soup kitchen food. The crisp fall air is calm this early evening, which is perfect for tagging. The sun is starting to go down, but that's fine since the walls are lit. Terrance brought some Krylon paint to tag a wall that had been tagged by some "amateurs." When they start tagging a small crowd gathers. The crowd stays about the same in size, with people stopping by for a few minutes at a time to watch the image develop.

Ethan, who has just finished eating, stops to watch while he is walking around the graffiti walls to kill time before the concert. During this time he meets Robin, who is watching as well. The weather gets colder and a light snow fills the sky. Terrance joins a girl he is interested in who is ice skating at the rink, which is filled with high schoolers, local residents, and sports fans alike. Larry and his wife get there late since they stopped by the Town Pump Tavern for some dinner after the game. It is likely to fill up even more after the concert is over.

Later in the night, as some people begin to leave the rink, a group heads over to the library, where a DJ has begun playing some music by local Detroiters. Robin heads over and walks through the gallery before she makes her way to the dance floor. The concert has just gotten out and those still hyped up have filled the club to almost maximum capacity. Robin recognizes Ethan who she talked to earlier at the graffiti performance. They continue the conversation they had earlier that was cut short by the concert time and dance together later on in the night.

NARRATIVE VIGNETTES

VIGNETTE PATH AND RELATIONSHIPS

Terrance

Rachel

Nikki

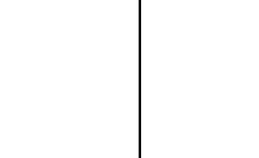
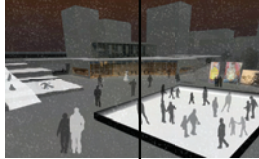
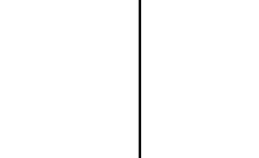
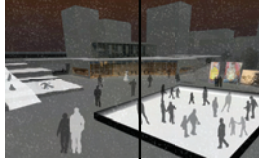
Reggie

Ethan

Larry

Robin





NARRATIVE VIGNETTES
VIGNETTE PATH AND RELATIONSHIPS

NARRATIVE VIGNETTES

FULL SIZE VIGNETTES



On this brisk spring morning, Reggie is walking from a homeless shelter where he has stayed the night to the 211 center at Park and Elizabeth street. He goes through his routine of checking his voicemail, mailbox, and email. He finds a couple more job postings before heading over to the laundromat library café next door.

- Calling
- Job Searching
- Showering
- Storing
- Lingering
- Conversing
- Checking Email





Previous



Next

On the way over, he sees a little girl named Nikki who is in the daycare art program that he helps out with as a part time job at the library. Six hours a week helps buy a little food, but that's about it. She introduces him to her mother, Rachel, who is dropping her off at daycare, and they talk briefly since she is in a hurry to get to work.

- Playing
- Dropping off and picking up children
- Lingering
- Tagging
- Strolling
- Jogging



NARRATIVE VIGNETTES
 FULL SIZE VIGNETTES

NARRATIVE VIGNETTES

FULL SIZE VIGNETTES



After putting his clothes in a washing machine, Reggie picks up the book he has been reading and sits down. Robin, a nearby local resident, mentions that it is a good book. Reggie agrees and they get into a conversation about their favorite authors.

- Conversing
- Drinking Coffee
- Reading
- Exchanging Books
- Watching
- Washing Clothes
- Enjoying Artwork
- Eating





Previous



Next

Robin heads over to the main tailgating space to sell some Tiger's paraphernalia. Larry, the first customer, buys a hat and stays to talk a little bit, which partially due to the three beers he has had already. She packs up once the sports crowd leaves for the game.

- Tailgating
- Conversing
- Vending
- Eating
- Drinking
- Drawing
- Playing



NARRATIVE VIGNETTES
 FULL SIZE VIGNETTES

NARRATIVE VIGNETTES

FULL SIZE VIGNETTES



A couple hours later, some students from Cass Tech begin to study in the library art gallery restaurant. At a nearby table there is a group of young adults that will be attending the concert later that evening. A group of the Cass Tech students leave to play a game of basketball.

- Eating
- Studying
- Reading
- Researching
- Conversing
- Drinking Coffee
- Enjoying Artwork





Previous



Next

Robin begins tending her garden, with a sign up listing the vegetables and prices. Rachel, returning from the new restaurant on her lunch break comes up and inquires about the prices, since they are quite low. Robin explains that she is just trying to sell all the vegetables she won't be able to use. Rachel buys a bag and heads back to work.

- Tagging
- Spectating
- Vending
- Strolling
- Conversing
- Eating
- Enjoying Artwork
- Gardening



NARRATIVE VIGNETTES
FULL SIZE VIGNETTES

NARRATIVE VIGNETTES

FULL SIZE VIGNETTES



At five thirty, a little late to account for her unexpected conversation at the vegetable stand during her lunch break, she picks up Nikki from daycare. Nikki tells her about the picture she drew of their family, which is hanging in the art gallery. They pass an intense game of basketball on their way over to see the masterpiece.

- Playing
- Dropping off and picking up children
- Lingering
- Tagging
- Strolling
- Jogging



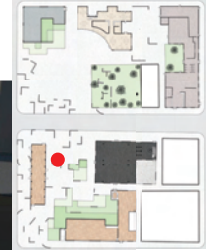
After the game, the Cass Tech students shower at the public facility next to the basketball court and head over to the other side of the site. On their way, they pass Reggie, who is eating a \$5 footlong from the Subway on Park. He doesn't go there often but it's a little treat compared to soup kitchen food.

- Reading
- Playing
- Strolling
- Lingering
- Eating
- Vending

NARRATIVE VIGNETTES
FULL SIZE VIGNETTES

NARRATIVE VIGNETTES

FULL SIZE VIGNETTES



The crisp fall air is calm this early evening, which is perfect for tagging. Terrance brought some Krylon paint to tag a wall that had been tagged by some "amateurs." When they start tagging a small crowd gathers as people pause while passing by. During this time, Ethan meets Robin who is watching as well.

- Tagging
- Spectating
- Vending
- Strolling
- Conversing
- Eating
- Enjoying Artwork
- Gardening



Previous



Next

The weather gets colder and a light snow fills the sky. Terrance joins a girl he is interested in who is ice skating at the rink, which is filled with high schoolers, local residents, and sports fans alike. Larry and his wife get there late since they stopped by the Town Pump Tavern for some dinner after the game.

- Ice Skating
- Sledding
- Spectating
- Building Snowmen
- Creating Snow Angels
- Strolling
- Snowball Fighting
- Ice Sculpting

NARRATIVE VIGNETTES
FULL SIZE VIGNETES

NARRATIVE VIGNETTES

FULL SIZE VIGNETTES



Robin heads over to the club and walks through the gallery before making her way to the dance floor. The concert has gotten out and club is filled to maximum capacity. Robin recognizes Ethan who she talked to earlier at the graffiti performance. They continue the conversation they had earlier and dance together later on in the night.

- Dancing
- DJ-ing
- Reading
- Enjoying Artwork
- Searching for Books
- Spectating
- Drinking

NARRATIVE VIGNETTES
FULL SIZE VIGNETTES

FINAL DESIGN

CONCLUSION

The implementation of this project in reality may differ from the anticipated results due to the nature of the uncertainties inherent in transition from the academic realm into reality. However, with the research, analysis, and rigorous response to several critiques and challenges that this thesis has undergone, the end result can be seen as a compelling argument supporting the idea that architecture, through innovative programming and thoughtful, nontraditional arrangement of spaces, can provide the framework for new social interactions to occur.

This project also relates to the issue of the future of urbanism in Detroit. With the current condition of Detroit, a city with half the population of its prime, a different approach to design must be taken to maintain viability. The small scale of this project is a response to the current population of Detroit, while its urban qualities support its relevance to its surrounding context. In this respect, it could be seen as a possible approach for design in Detroit's future.

The subtle, yet pervasive, idea of social justice was a result of both conscious decisions and natural outcomes. For instance, the inclusive nature of the spaces, arising from the idea of fostering new socioeconomic interactions, necessitated equal access to and acceptance of everyone, regardless of appearances or economic status. The decision to offer showers and clothes washing to the homeless was a deliberate choice to offer them a greater sense of dignity and to promote their acceptance in a culture that often views them as less than human.

These diverse aspects of the project enforce both its relevance as well as its response to complex conditions. It is with a realistic optimism that this thesis envisions the transformative possibilities that physical design and innovative programming can achieve.

1. Merriam-Webster, Incorporated. "Community - Definition and More." Dictionary and The saurus - Merriam-Webster Online. Merriam-Webster. Web. 30 Apr. 2010. <<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/community>>.
2. Peter Block, *Community: The Structure of Belonging*, (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2008) p.xii
3. Klein, Jim, dir. "Taken for a Ride." Independent Television Service (ITVS). Detroit, Michigan, 6 Aug. 1996. Google.com, Google. Web. 16 Dec. 2009. <<http://video.google.com/vidеоoplay?docid=-2486235784907931000#>>.
4. Fenton, Joseph. Pamphlet Architecture 11: Hybrid Buildings. (San Francisco: Princeton Architectural, 1985.) p.8
5. Fenton, Joseph. Pamphlet Architecture 11: Hybrid Buildings. (San Francisco: Princeton Architectural, 1985.) p.30
6. "Transit Oriented Development." DenverGov Home. City and County of Denver. Web. <<http://www.denvergov.org/TOD>>.
7. Ray Oldenburg, *The Great Good Place: Cafes, Coffee shops, Bookstores, Bars, Hair Salons, and Other Hangouts at the Heart of a Community*, (New York: Paragon House, 1989.) p. 20-42
8. Walter Hood, *Walter Hood Urban Diaries (The Land Marks Series , No 2)*, (Spacemaker Press, 1997.) p.18

9. Walter Hood, *Walter Hood Urban Diaries (The Land Marks Series , No 2)*, (Spacemaker Press, 1997.) p.16
10. Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, (Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1994) p.49
11. Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, (Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1994) p.205
12. Peter Block, *Community: The Structure of Belonging*, (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2008) p.xii
13. Peter Block, *Community: The Structure of Belonging*, (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2008) p.11
14. Peter Block, *Community: The Structure of Belonging*, (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2008) p.79
15. Peter Block, *Community: The Structure of Belonging*, (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2008) p.151
16. Peter Block, *Community: The Structure of Belonging*, (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2008) p.11
17. Merriam-Webster, Incorporated. "Community - Definition and More." Dictionary and

Thesaurus - Merriam-Webster Online. Merriam-Webster. Web. 30 Apr. 2010. <<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/community>>.

18. Ray Oldenburg, *The Great Good Place: Cafes, Coffee shops, Bookstores, Bars, Hair Salons, and Other Hangouts at the Heart of a Community*, (New York: Paragon House, 1989.) p. 24

19. Ray Oldenburg, *The Great Good Place: Cafes, Coffee shops, Bookstores, Bars, Hair Salons, and Other Hangouts at the Heart of a Community*, (New York: Paragon House, 1989.) p. 36

20. Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, (Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1994) p.49

21. Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, (Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1994) p.49

22. Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, (Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1994) p.204

23. Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, (Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1994) p.205

24. Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, (Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1994) p.205

25. Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, (Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1994) p.205
26. Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, (Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1994) p.203
27. Walter Hood, *Walter Hood Urban Diaries (The Land Marks Series , No 2)*, (Spacemaker Press, 1997.) p.16
28. Walter Hood, *Walter Hood Urban Diaries (The Land Marks Series , No 2)*, (Spacemaker Press, 1997.) p.18
29. Fenton, Joseph. Pamphlet Architecture 11: Hybrid Buildings. (San Francisco: Princeton Architectural, 1985.) p.8

Block, Peter. *Community the structure of belonging*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 2008. Print.

This book helped with the foundational ideas of what a community is and how one can, generally, be created. The book is somewhat vague in its descriptions which was ideal for the beginning stages of this thesis.

Fenton, Joseph. *Pamphlet Architecture 11: Hybrid Buildings*. San Francisco: Princeton Architectural, 1985. Print.

This pamphlet, as a survey of hybrid buildings, or buildings with multiple uses, assisted in the exploration of precedents.

Hood, Walter. *Walter Hood Urban Diaries (The Land Marks Series , No 2)*. Spacemaker Pr, 1997. Print.

This book describes a series of projects dealing with the issues of program and integration of uses. These two ideas are directly related to the thesis.

Jacobs, Jane. *Death and life of great American cities*. New York: Modern Library, 1993. Print.

This book was helpful in understanding the everyday relationships that occur, or fail to occur, within communities. It is essential that this thesis be undertaken with a knowledge of how sidewalk relationships work and how they happen.

Klein, Jim, dir. "Taken for a Ride." Independent Television Service (ITVS). Detroit, Michigan, 6
 Aug. 1996. Google.com, Google. Web. 16 Dec. 2009. <[http://video.google.com/
 vi deoplay?docid=-2486235784907931000#](http://video.google.com/deoplay?docid=-2486235784907931000#)>.

This video explains the decline of mass transit in several cities, including Detroit, which has implications that are explained in the thesis paper.

Oldenburg, Ray. *The Great Good Place: Cafes, Coffee shops, Bookstores, Bars, Hair Salons, and Other Hangouts at the Heart of a Community*. New York: Paragon House, 1989. Print.

This book defines and analyzes third places, which have a startling similarity to what this thesis is attempting to create.

"Transit Oriented Development." DenverGov Home. City and County of Denver. Web. 16 Dec. 2009. <<http://www.denvergov.org/TOD>>.

This website describes what transit oriented development is and, specifically, how Denver is implementing it. TOD is similar, in some regards, to this thesis.

Tschumi, Bernard. *Architecture and disjunction*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT, 1994. Print.

This book deals with a number of issues associated with programming. The relationship of architecture and programming is also explored, along with the importance of each. Parc de la Villette is also explained in detail.