

**Identity and Placemaking: Understanding feelings of gentrification and discouraging displacement
along Prospect Avenue in Kansas City, Missouri**

by

Regan L. Tokos

A REPORT

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College of Architecture Planning and Design

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Approved by:

Major Professor
Lee R. Skabelund, MLA

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ABSTRACT

As Kansas City, Missouri continues to grow and reinvest in the downtown many residents on the periphery of the Central Business District are feeling threatened by displacement and “gentrification.” This report begins to address how the design of the urban landscape can be used to increase a sense of place and identity and to lessen the effects and threats of displacement. By using art, greenspace, and other additions to the physical environment, we can allow residents to express their identity and claim their community spaces as new people start to move in. Through this report I argue that expressing the history, culture, and identity of the chosen site will allow residents to feel more at home and more in control of their future even as it changes, develops, and even gentrifies. Change and growth are inevitable but taking current residents into account is vital to maintaining a successful community, especially on Kansas City’s East Side where residents have historically been an afterthought or deliberately disenfranchised. Building on the ideas of local residents, and exploring how design can meaningfully respond to resident needs and concerns, this report seeks to demonstrate a variety of functional and artistic ways to support the local community and maintain the unique identity of the northern section of Prospect Avenue Corridor.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures	vi
I. Title Page	1
II. Introduction	2
III. Project Background	4
A. Understanding Key Initiatives	
B. Corridor History	
C. KCDC Project Scope	
IV. Place Attachment and Gentrification	22
A. Civic and community engagement	
B. Place attachment and social capital	
C. Gentrification, community displacement, and sense of place	
D. Gentrification and identity	
E. Conclusions	
V. North Prospect	26
VI. Key Issues and Existing Conditions	28
VII. Precedents and Recent Local Development	32
VIII. Mapping and Analysis of Prospect North	44
A. Overall Studio Concept Overview	
B Prospect North Urban Concept	
C. Prospect North Urban Strategy	
IX. Community Engagement	54
X. Design Proposal	62
XI. Key Takeaways	78
XII. References	82

LIST OF FIGURES

III. Project Background	4
Figure 3.1 Full Plan (Rankin, Tokos & All, 2019)	7
Figure 3.2 Race 2015 (US Census Bureau, 2015)	12
Figure 3.3 Race 1940 (University of Minnesota, n.d)	13
Figure 3.4 Race 1960 (University of Minnesota, n.d)	
Figure 3.5 Race 1980 (University of Minnesota, n.d)	
Figure 3.6 Race 2000 (University of Minnesota, n.d)	
Figure 3.7 Original Redlining Map (Nelson, Winling, Marciano, & Connolly, 2018)	14
Figure 3.8 Redlining (Rankin, Tokos, & All, 2019)	15
Figure 3.9 Prospect Avenue 2019 (Rankin, Tokos, & All, 2019)	16
Figure 3.10 Prospect Avenue 2019 (Rankin, Tokos, & All, 2019)	
Figure 3.11 Redlining + Vacancy	
Figure 3.12 Prospect Avenue 2019 (Rankin, Tokos, & All, 2019)	17
Figure 3.13 Prospect Avenue 2019 (Rankin, Tokos, & All, 2019)	
Figure 3.14 Redlining + Median Income	
Figure 3.15 Redlining + Housing Value	
Figure 3.16 Redlining + Rent vs. Own	
Figure 3.17 Protests near City Hall (Missouri Valley Special Collections)	18
Figure 3.18 Tear gas being thrown (Missouri Valley Special Collections)	
Figure 3.19 Marching to City Hall (Missouri Valley Special Collections)	
Figure 3.20 Police Line near City Hall (Missouri Valley Special Collections)	
Figure 3.21 March Map (Rankin, Tokos, & All, 2019)	19
Figure 3.22 Vacancy for Highway-71 in 1990 (Google Earth, 1990)	20
Figure 3.23 Highway-71 in 2018 (Google Earth 2018)	
Figure 3.24 Buildings Removed for Highway 71 (Rankin, Tokos, & All, 2019)	21
 V. North Prospect	 26
Figure 5.1 Prospect North Context Map	
Figure 5.2 Prospect North Study Area	27

VI. Key Issues and Existing Conditions	28
Figure 6.1 Key Issues Combined	28
Figure 6.2 Infrastructural Barriers	29
Figure 6.3 Lack of Continuity	
Figure 6.4 Inconsistent Street Edge	
Figure 6.5 Lack of Functional Greenspace	
 VII. Precedents and Recent Local Development	 32
Figure 7.1 Five Points Plan (Denver Office of Community Planning & Development, 2016)	32
Figure 7.2 Five Points Plaza (Photos: Denver’s 2019 Five Points Jazz Festival, 2019)	
Figure 7.3 Five Points Jazz Festival (Photos: Denver’s 2019 Five Points Jazz Festival, 2019)	
Figure 7.4 Five Points District (Photos: Denver’s 2019 Five Points Jazz Festival, 2019)	
Figure 7.5 18th and Vine (Historic Kansas City, 2017)	33
Figure 7.6 18th and Vine 1940s (Introduction: Kansas City Jazz, n.d.)	34
Figure 7.7 18th and Vine Redevelopment (Historic Kansas City, 2017)	
Figure 7.8 Worcester Arts Plan (Community Partners Consultants, Inc., 2003)	
Figure 7.9 Worcester Arts Before (Community Partners Consultants, Inc., 2003)	
Figure 7.10 Worcester Arts After (Community Partners Consultants, Inc., 2003)	
Figure 7.11 Witness Walls by Walter Hood (Mortice, 2017)	35
Figure 7.12 Color Carlisle Public Art Initiative (Color Carlisle Public Art Initiative, n.d.)	
Figure 7.13 31st & Troost Mural by Alexander Austin (Austin)	
Figure 7.14 Parking Day San Francisco (Yasmine, 2013)	
Figure 7.15 Landmark for Peace Memorial (Huber, 2018)	
Figure 7.16 Opa Locka Community Development (Bond, n.d.)	
Figure 7.17 Looking west down Truman Road from Prospect Avenue	37
Figure 7.18 Buildings on Truman Road	
Figure 7.19 Looking north down Prospect Avenue from Truman Road	

Figure 7.20 The renovated Gem Theater at 18th and Vine	38
Figure 7.21 Kansas City Jazz Museum and Negro Leagues Baseball Museum at 18th and Vine	39
Figure 7.22 Gates Plaza	
Figure 7.23 Gates Barbecue	
Figure 7.24 Mural on Troost	40
Figure 7.25 Ruby Jean's on Troost	41
Figure 7.26 Proposed Mixed-Use Development on 30th and Troost	
Figure 7.27 Beacon Hill New Development and Redevelopment	42
Figure 7.28 New Development in Beacon Hill	

VIII. Mapping and Analysis 44

Figure 8.1 Sanborn Historic Map (Sanborn Map Company, 2018)	44
Figure 8.2 Current Figure Ground (City of Kansas City, n.d.)	
Figure 8.3 Current Figure Ground to Sanborn Comparison Map	45
Figure 8.4 Similarities and Differences	
Figure 8.5 12th Street and The Paseo (Jones, 2019)	47
Figure 8.6 Diagrammatic Representation of the Urban Concept	48
Figure 8.7 Diagrammatic Representation of the Urban Concept	49
Figure 8.8 Overall Studio Concept	50
Figure 8.9 Connection Strategy	51
Figure 8.10 Green Infrastructure	
Figure 8.11 Development Strategy	
Figure 8.12 Compression Concept	52
Figure 8.13 Combined Urban Strategy	53

IX. Community Engagement 54

Figure 9.1 Public Meeting Board 1	55
Figure 9.2 Public Meeting Board 2	56
Figure 9.3 Public Meeting Board 3	58
Figure 9.4 Meeting I	60
Figure 9.5 Meeting II	
Figure 9.6 Meeting III	

X. Design Proposal	62
Figure 10.1 Overall Development Strategy (Rankin, Tokos, & All, 2019)	63
Figure 10.2 Streetscape Concept	64
Figure 10.3 Intersection Plan - 12th and Prospect Ave.	65
Figure 10.4 Section A - Streetscape on 12th Street	
Figure 10.5 Section B - Mixed-Use Oriented Streetscape on Prospect Avenue	
Figure 10.6 Standard Operation Infill	66
Figure 10.7 Example Section	
Figure 10.8 Color Study	67
Figure 10.9 Programming for the 12th Street Landmark Building	68
Figure 10.10 Landmark Facade Development	69
Figure 10.11 12th and Prospect Landmark Building	
Figure 10.12 Section through Highway-70	70
Figure 10.13 Landmark Buildings and Bridge Plan	
Figure 10.14 North I-70 Landmark Building on Prospect and I-70 Looking Northwest	71
Figure 10.15 South I-70 Landmark Building on Prospect and I-70 looking Southeast	
Figure 10.16 Before	72
Figure 10.17 After	
Figure 10.18 Phasing Plan I: Revitalize and Infill	73
Figure 10.19 Before	74
Figure 10.20 After	
Figure 10.21 Before	
Figure 10.22 After	
Figure 10.23 Phase II Plan: Replace Suburban Typologies	75
Figure 10.24 Before	76
Figure 10.25 After	
Figure 10.26 Before	
Figure 10.27 After	
Figure 10.28 Phase III Plan: Densify	77
Figure 10.29 Full Final Plan	79

Identity and Placemaking:

Understanding Feelings of Gentrification and Discouraging Displacement along Prospect Avenue in Kansas City, Missouri

Regan Tokos, Master of Regional and Community Planning
Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional & Community Planning
College of Architecture Planning and Design, Kansas City Design Center
Committee: Major Professor Lee Skabelund, LARCP
Professor Vladimir Kristic, Architecture
Professor Stephanie Rolley, LARCP

INTRODUCTION

As a part of the Prospect Avenue Nodal Study prepared in the 2018-2019 school year, the Kansas City Design Center developed a study of Prospect Avenue that provided extensive research and established designs for Prospect Avenue's future. In conjunction with these designs and the research done by the studio, specific research was done by a variety of students to address the distinct challenges and opportunities on The Corridor.

This report addresses how identity development can be used to combat feelings of displacement and gentrification on Kansas City's East Side. We are at a tipping point in Kansas City. The downtown is growing rapidly, and the city is providing more funding and support for development. One initiative that was recently negotiated in City Hall is Ordinance 170962, which would provide a variety of funds to the East Side of Kansas City to encourage development (refer to: <http://kcmo.gov/news/2018/public-input-sought-on-east-side-revitalization/>). Written into the ordinance is the phrase "directing the City Manager to develop a plan for combating gentrification." After attending a public meeting for the Planning, Zoning, and Economic Development Committee on October 10, 2018, when the ordinance was still being discussed, it was easy to see the fear the community has that more investment will mean they get pushed out of the East Side. They want to see money from the city invested in their community, but they have anxieties about not being able to stay or not having a say in what their community becomes.

This report makes a case for the community on the East Side of Kansas City, specifically a case for developing art and identity with the community to encourage affordable and inclusive "placemaking" and thus discourage development that leads to gentrification. My hope (and hypothesis) is that by incorporating elements that increase the sense of place and identity in affordable and inclusive ways will help combat gentrification. I believe that after years of institutional racism on the part of society and the city, we owe the community, especially black community members living in this area, the right to continue to live there and to be a key voice in decision making moving forward.

During community meetings hosted by the Kansas City Design Center (KCDC), our team has talked to community members and stakeholders about their lives on the East Side, how they perceive this place today, and what they want the East Side to look like in the future. Residents' responses have helped to inform and shape this report by providing a better understanding of the desires and perceptions of those living on the East Side of Kansas City. More than a promise to redevelop without gentrification, Kansas City owes community members on the East Side an absolute commitment that as new people and new money moves into their communities, it will still be a place for them for as long as they desire to live there.

This report focuses on understanding gentrification in Kansas City and cultural identity development through the design of the public realm as a way to maintain or create a sense of place, thus discouraging feelings of disenfranchisement and displacement by local residents as new people move in and become a part of their evolving East Side community.

Research and supporting questions:

How can cultural identity development and placemaking, using art and the design arts, be employed to effectively combat gentrification?

What do residents think about Kansas City's East Side – as it currently exists, and in its desired (envisioned) future?

How can we avoid gentrifying Kansas City's East Side while still developing it?

What precedents help us understand how to bring art and placemaking to a community in ways that embrace existing residents and keep the community affordable and inclusive?

Keys project ideas & goals include:

Understanding how integrating art, history, culture, and identity along the Prospect Avenue Corridor could help combat feelings of displacement.

Developing a plan for North Prospect to develop into a resilient community with resident-focused revitalization in support of livelihoods and enjoyment.

Urban redevelopment for place-making, economic development, safety, and socio-ecological renewal.



PROJECT BACKGROUND

Kansas City Design Center (KCDC) Project Description:

Prospect Avenue is a significant and defining element of Kansas City's urban structure. The ongoing transit-oriented development initiatives (generated by the City and the planning community), growing investment in public transportation, and community interest in quality of life improvements make Prospect Avenue one of the more dynamically changing parts of Kansas City. With all the potential and anticipated change, there is an escalating need for a comprehensive urban design perspective that looks at the entire length of Prospect Avenue (from Independence Avenue on the North to the 75th Street on the south) and attempts to create an integrated vision for the area.

KCDC collaborated with the City of Kansas City, Missouri Planning Department to generate a visioning study for the Prospect Corridor. This study focused on defining potential urban nodes along Prospect Avenue, proposing design strategies and investigations for their development that utilize catalytic elements which encourage urban change and improvement. This process took place in the following three phases over the 2018-2019 academic year:

1. Verification of an operational urban design concept for Prospect Avenue
2. A strategic segmented study and urban visioning design
3. Focused urban design nodal studies

In developing the project, the KCDC urban design studio has interacted and collaborated with project stakeholders and community members through project reviews and public presentations seeking and incorporating their input. Additionally, the KCDC has taken into consideration all related City planning documents and ongoing initiatives. The project has also drawn on related KCDC projects such as the recently completed 2017-2018 Neighborhood Prospects: Sustainable Communities by Design study, the 2016-2017 Scarritt Renaissance Neighborhood Urban Vision Study and 2012-2013 Reintegrating Independence Avenue Urban Vision study.

The vision, mission, and goals of the 2018-2019 KCDC studio are as follows:

Vision - The studio vision is for a community-focused planning and design approach that establishes a cohesive urban concept for the future of Prospect Avenue, leveraging The Corridor as a uniquely desirable and healthy community within Kansas City's urban fabric.

Mission - KCDC's mission is to create a conceptual framework through the identification, evaluation, and exploration of the current conditions which define the Prospect Corridor. The intent of the framework is to encourage social connections and economic growth through strategic design intervention and development policies. Catalytic nodes are selected for strategic prototyping using the developed conceptual framework.

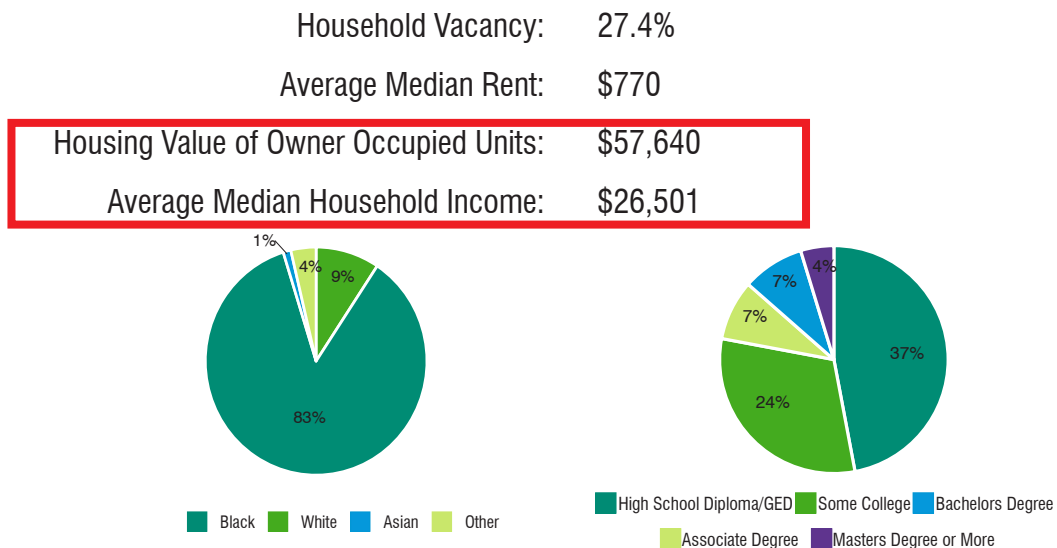
Goals - Our goals are to test and propose a design document for Cultural Identity Development, Safety and Security, Diverse, Affordable and Quality Housing, Economic Opportunity, Environmental Quality, Alternative TOD Strategies, and Reintegration into the Greater KC Area.

This report is focused on concepts that could be applied to the northern most segment of the Prospect Corridor as it was determined in the KCDC fall 2018 studio semester. It aims to build on the research and understanding developed through the studio project and devise specific solutions to real life problems in The Corridor.

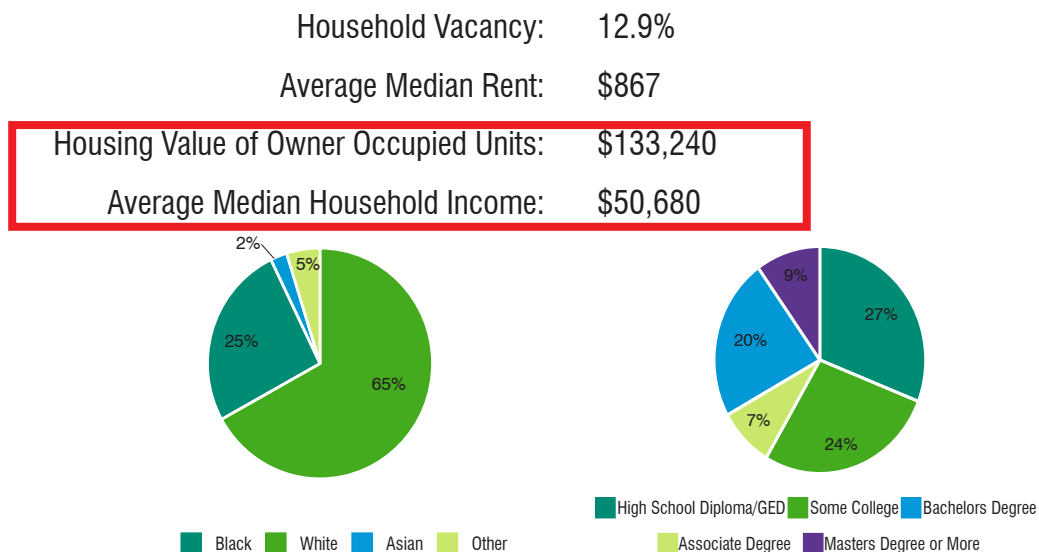
Background Demographic Data:

The full Prospect Avenue Corridor is an 8-mile road running north to south from Independence Avenue to 75th Street in Kansas City, Missouri. Prospect Avenue once had a diverse cultural heritage and was called the Boulevard of Churches after all the religious institutions lining the street. It is now a street in decline with a large number of vacancies, multiple financial disadvantages compared to the rest of Kansas City, and failing schools. The median housing value is only about half the median housing value of Kansas City and the average median income is also about half that of Kansas City. Education levels are also low, especially the percentage of people with bachelor's degrees which drops from 20% in Kansas City down to only 7% in the Prospect Corridor Study Area. Below are the basic demographic numbers for Kansas City, Missouri and for the Prospect Study area based on 2015 census data.

Prospect Corridor Demographics:



Kansas City, Missouri Demographics:



KCDC Project Scope:

The Kansas City Design Center Prospect Avenue Nodal Study study area ranges from Independence Avenue to 75th Street, including the Prospect Avenue Corridor and the adjacent neighborhoods. Figure 3.1 on the following page shows the full study area with areas highlighted in orange calling out the specific nodes the studio developed further. A node in this case can be defined as a prime area for development - an area that if developed further will have a catalytic effect on surrounding areas.

The four focus areas for the study were determined based on a semester of studying context, urban form, and development. Each area highlighted on the adjacent map has a specific form, function, and character that led this studio to understand them as key to the nodal development of Prospect Avenue.

This project report focuses on infill, development, and cultural identity in the northern most section from Independence Avenue to 18th Street.

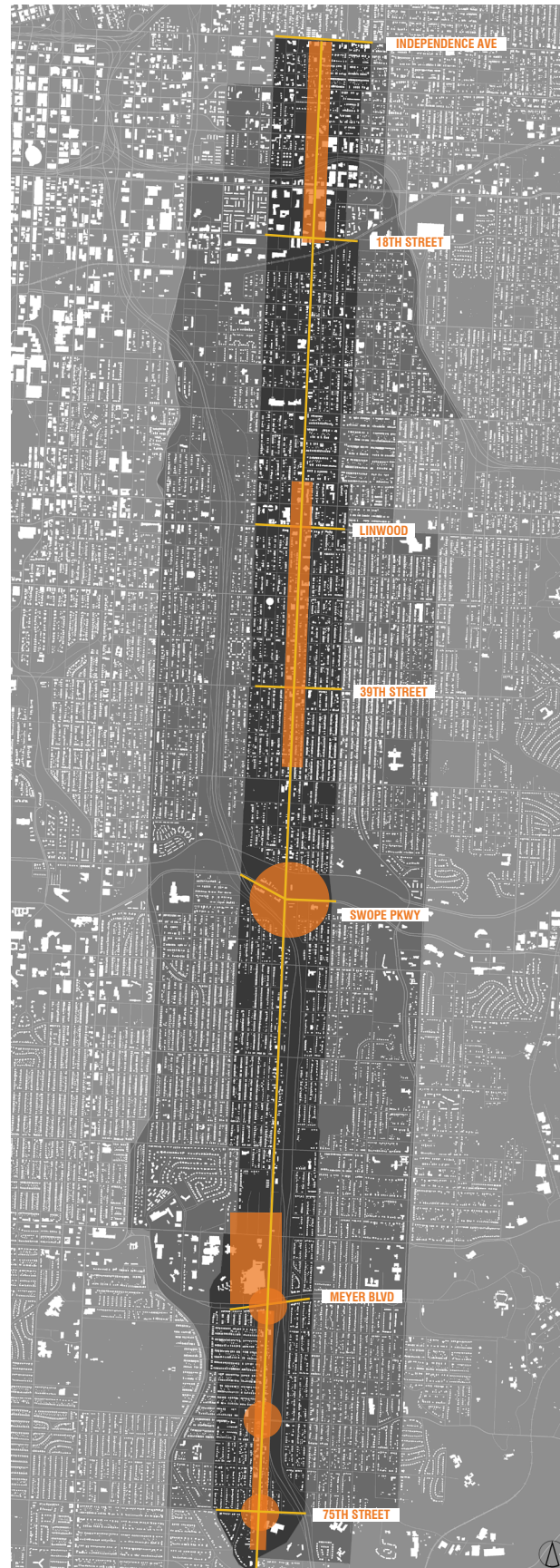


Figure 3.1 Full Plan

Understanding of Key Initiatives:

Before diving into the project, an understanding of important local initiatives is essential. A review was done of the City's Transit Oriented Development (TOD) policy, FOCUS Kansas City, the 1947 Kansas City Master Plan, the Prospect Corridor Development Implementation Strategy, KC Catalytic Urban Redevelopment Strategy, Central Cities Sales Tax, The Prospect Corridor Initiative, Prosperity Play Book Blueprint KC, Key Coalition Urban Renewal Plan, and Heart of the City Area Plan. In addition, the Bike KC Master Plan, Ordinance No. 170962, and Ordinance No. 170949 were also reviewed and included.

The Kansas City **Transit Oriented Development Policy** had significant influence on our studio work and on the development of this report. It was adopted in 2017 and contains guidelines for development to encourage connectivity, density, and diversity. The document lays out specific design direction for public spaces, streets and sidewalks, development, transit facilities, green infrastructure, and parking. This document has helped the studio promote walkable areas and expressing the density outlined in the TOD document.

The **FOCUS Kansas City** plan is the most recent comprehensive plan of Kansas City, Missouri, adopted in 1997. The plan establishes goals for the future of the city and strategies that guide decisions and help to achieve these goals. The plan envisions Kansas City as a thriving, people-centered community and a successful reference for other American cities. FOCUS Kansas City lists a series of building blocks followed by 14 Principles for Policy that provide the framework for the plan's success and implementation. These principles range from reaffirming and revitalizing the urban core to advancing education and respecting diversity. The comprehensive plan itself is made up of seven different component plans inter-woven and developed in detail. A large part of the FOCUS Kansas City plan is neighborhood self-assessments in which local communities were encouraged to self-identify their neighborhoods and develop strategies to help improve not only their own communities, but the city as a whole. Examples of strategies that could help revitalize the Prospect Corridor and connect it with the rest of the city.

The **Kansas City Master Plan** was adopted by the city in 1947. This plan has historic significance as the first comprehensive master plan of Kansas City, but it should not be followed in any way. The plan has clear racist and classist undertones that expressed the idea that neighborhoods should have boundaries according to socio-economic status. The plan provides historic context, but should not be used as a guiding document.

The City of Kansas City contracted Blue Hills Community Services (BHCS) to organize a database of current and proposed housing development and commercial properties along the Prospect Corridor in the **Prospect Corridor Development Implementation Strategy**. BHCS also prepared a detailed approach and implementation strategy that focuses on 3 catalytic projects along The Prospect Corridor. The first half of the document studied The Prospect Corridor Cultural District, A Prospect Corridor Community Benefits Agreement, A Prospect Corridor Community Improvement District (CID)/Merchants Association, Study for Prospect Streetscape Master Plan, and New Funding Source: 1/8 cent Sales Tax Revenues. The second half of the document provides 3 implementation strategies which list actions, project types, primary participants, and potential funding. The Prospect Corridor Development Implementation Strategy compiles a variety of proposals that are relevant and similar to the Prospect Corridor study.

The **KC Catalytic Urban Redevelopment (CUR) Strategy** was founded in 2015 and aims to help build local organizational and human capacity to support and execute investment activity, start a ripple effect that creates a functioning market with a market-basis for investments, and establish locations with clear return on investment (ROI) potential for development activity. The KC CUR focuses on four major strategies: Coordinating investments geographically, setting the stage for comprehensive revitalization, focusing on the people and place, and leveraging implementation tools. The ultimate goal for this plan is to create a path for areas east of Troost to follow to create a quality of life that is standard in the surrounding areas. The KC Catalytic Urban Redevelopment Strategy's guiding principles and strategies will serve as a foundation to create a better environment for the Prospect Corridor.

The 1/8th Cents Sales Tax (**Central City Sales Tax**) was approved by Kansas City voters in April 2017. It was proposed for solely economic development within a defined boundary that includes part of Prospect. The boundary is Ninth Street to the north, Gregory Boulevard to the south, The Paseo to the west, and Indiana Avenue to the east. The tax will sunset in 10-years and is estimated to raise 8.6 million dollars each year for a total of 86 million over the 10-year period. The plan focuses on commercial/industrial, and residential development. It does not give a specific criterion for how projects will qualify for funding. The tax plan is broad and straightforward. The tax will help make new projects feasible. It is mainly about encouraging redevelopment along Prospect, which is directly centered within the boundary. The 1/8th cent sales tax contributed to the determined study boundary.

Prospect Corridor Initiative (PCI), a strategic plan developed in 2002, was a neighborhood section of the Comprehensive FOCUS Kansas City Plan. It was the result of a 10-month community-based planning process that looked at issues within four blocks of Prospect Avenue (18th Street to Emanuel Cleaver II Boulevard) and a ten-year plan to build Prospect into a “fertile economy, a livable and desirable community, an arts and cultural oasis, and a national inner-city collaborative model” (p. 7). Considering Prospect Corridor's history, land use, reduction in population, general age of population, income of the surrounding households, rate of unemployment, education attainment, and current housing stock, the community developed an action plan to support the FOCUS Kansas City Plan. The public process found five themes through a series of six community workshops and developed three alternative concepts focusing on physical, social, and economic elements of The Corridor. The five themes (Quality Services, Housing, Economic Development, Healthy Community, Lifelong Learning) and three alternatives formed into one concept that focused on where and how to develop mixed-use centers, great streets, commercial development, and quality places in the area. To implement their plan the community workshops developed a ten-year plan and founded a team to realize their goals. With the community, the Prospect Corridor Initiative adopts a holistic approach to reweave the social fiber and create a livable and desirable community. Prospect Corridor Initiative is a valuable plan as it relates directly to the region – presenting the desire of the community to improve the area and focus development where it is most needed. The community was engaged and hoped for a better place to live, work, and play, however, it appears that there has not been a reevaluation of these goals and the Prospect Corridor Initiative was never fully realized. Key ideas from this plan can be reinstated through the KCDC studio project.

Prosperity Play Book Blueprint KC (2017) is a collaborative document between the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the American Planning Association, and five different partner cities, including Kansas City. The Playbook aims to be a platform document to foster inclusive growth and prosperity across the United States while focusing in on the separation between strong economic growth and remaining exclusion and poverty. Within Kansas City, the focus is on East Side of Kansas City, specifically, Troost Avenue and its history and enduring existence as a racial and socioeconomic divide in the city. Prosperity Playbook Blueprint KC engaged the community through public meetings, website/social media, and newspaper and radio advertisements as well as found partnerships with local community organizations to address the needs of East Kansas City. Ultimately three priorities emerged for East Kansas City – Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH), Prospect MAX, and HUD Conversions. From the three priorities, three goals emerged. First, development should correspond with the City’s Assessment of Fair Housing report and the AFFH rule. Second, efforts should be coordinated to provide enhanced bus service along the Prospect Avenue Corridor through the Prospect MAX (Metro Area Express). Third, promote and create ideas associated with funding and financing for residential and associated services along The Corridor to develop affordable housing and provide capital for development.

The goal of the 2015 **Key Coalition Urban Renewal Plan** is to encourage investment in the commercial and residential areas within the Key Coalition neighborhood. The Key Coalition Plan looks at making land use proposals, a blight study, as well as setting up a criteria for a design review process. This Urban Renewal Plan studies the existing conditions of the site as well as the definitions and regulations of land use, blight classification, and the design process to propose a new alternative. This plan was reviewed with the whole studio and is key for projects at the southern end of Prospect Avenue.

The **Heart of the City Area Plan** was adopted in 2011. The intent of the plan is to create a policy framework and action plan that will help the area recover from past and current issues such as segregation and disinvestment. The City Planning and Development Department combined research, analyses, and community input to create four primary goals that would achieve the overall vision. The vision is stated as, “We must build on the area’s extensive assets to become a model urban community and reaffirm the central city as the rightful and vibrant Heart of the City” (p. 9). The four primary goals are: people first, create jobs, promote sustainability, and re-population. The area plan seeks to improve physical and social aspects of the communities within the boundary. Its proposed development combines both design and policy development but is focused on policy. Prospect Avenue is a focal street in this plan.

The **Bike KC Master Plan** draft was reviewed for this study. There are no proposed bike infrastructure improvements on the Prospect Avenue Corridor, but there are several cross streets where bike improvements are suggested, several of which will be noted later in the document. This plan outlines the importance of having a variety of modes of transportation available to Kansas City citizens. The goal of the plan is to expand the pool of regular bicycle riders in Kansas City, improve the relationship of biking to other city policies, and to establish the goals of creating a plan that is action oriented, integrated, equitable, safe and supported, and enticing.

Ordinance No. 170962: Revive the East Side establishes a series of policies to encourage development on the East Side of Kansas City. The boundary of “the East Side” is an area generally enclosed by 4th Street on the north, 95th Street on the south; Troost Avenue on the west; and the City’s corporate boundaries on the east; and those areas included within the Ruskin neighborhoods of south Kansas City. The goal of the initiative is to encourage and incentivize development on the East Side of Kansas City.

Ordinance No. 170949: Complete Streets states that the City shall develop a “safe, reliable, efficient, integrated, and connected multimodal transportation system that will promote access, mobility, and health for all users and will ensure that the safety and convenience of all users of the transportation system are accommodated, including pedestrians, wheelchair users, bicyclists, public transportation users, motorists, and people of all ages and abilities.” This ordinance led to the development of Bike KC Master Plan and has encouraged the development of a new walkability plan, trails, and major street plan.

Key Takeaways:

The variety of plans and initiatives reviewed provided a basis for understanding the Prospect Corridor. Several plans helped lay a basis for the importance of this study and provided specific planning and design guidance. The TOD policy provided key recommendations for the study moving forward. The 1/8th cents sales tax was a necessary addition to developing the project boundary. Other plans helped provide a basis for understanding and attitudes in the area while also providing an overview of previous goals. The review of previous documentation established context for the study and allowed an early understanding of key ideas that were already approved and being worked on.

Reviewing key documents allows this study to define its relevance outside of those plans. Previous initiatives looked at a variety of areas, but this study of the Prospect Corridor works to link them all together and establish Prospect Avenue as one cohesive urban element with strong community support.

Corridor History:

The Prospect Avenue Corridor has a rich, complex history. In its original, fully built out state, The Corridor was home to an amusement park, hotels, dance halls, and theaters and was considered a lively entertainment District. As time went on The Corridor began to decline. In the 1940s, redlining began and made investing in The Corridor extremely difficult due to the challenge of securing loans within the area. In 1968 there were riots after student protesters marched from their schools to City Hall in protest of not being let out of school to observe the funeral of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. In the 1990s a physical divide was added; Highway 71 was built adjacent to and crossing Prospect Avenue and took out 10,000 homes increasing the rate of vacancies adjacent to the highway and the Prospect Corridor. This recent history of neglect and deliberate destruction has left The Corridor with several vacant properties and dilapidated buildings.

The racial makeup of the Prospect Corridor has changed drastically over the years. Figure 3.2 shows the racial make up of the area as of the 2015 census, with historic racial make-up shown in chronological order in figures 3.3-6. In the early 1900s, the populated parts of The Corridor were predominantly a part of a white suburb. Through the 1940s, the northern part of Prospect became home to some African Americans. Over time, the East Side became predominantly black and then, the area saw a loss in population. Often neighborhoods on Kansas City's East Side were victims of blockbusting, a practice where real estate agents would persuade white homeowners to sell their property cheaply by creating fear that racial minorities would move into the neighborhood. The white flight combined with redlining and an exit of the black middle class to create the blighted neighborhoods we see in the area today.

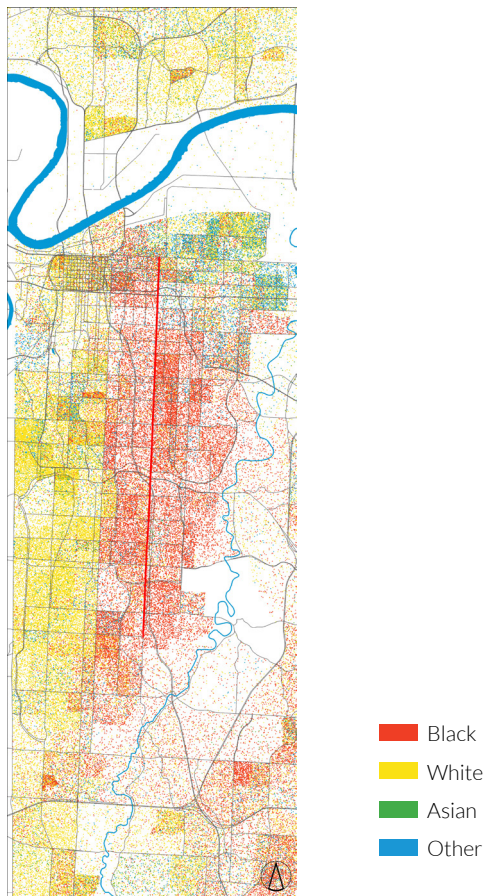


Figure 3.2 Race 2015 (US Census Bureau, 2015)

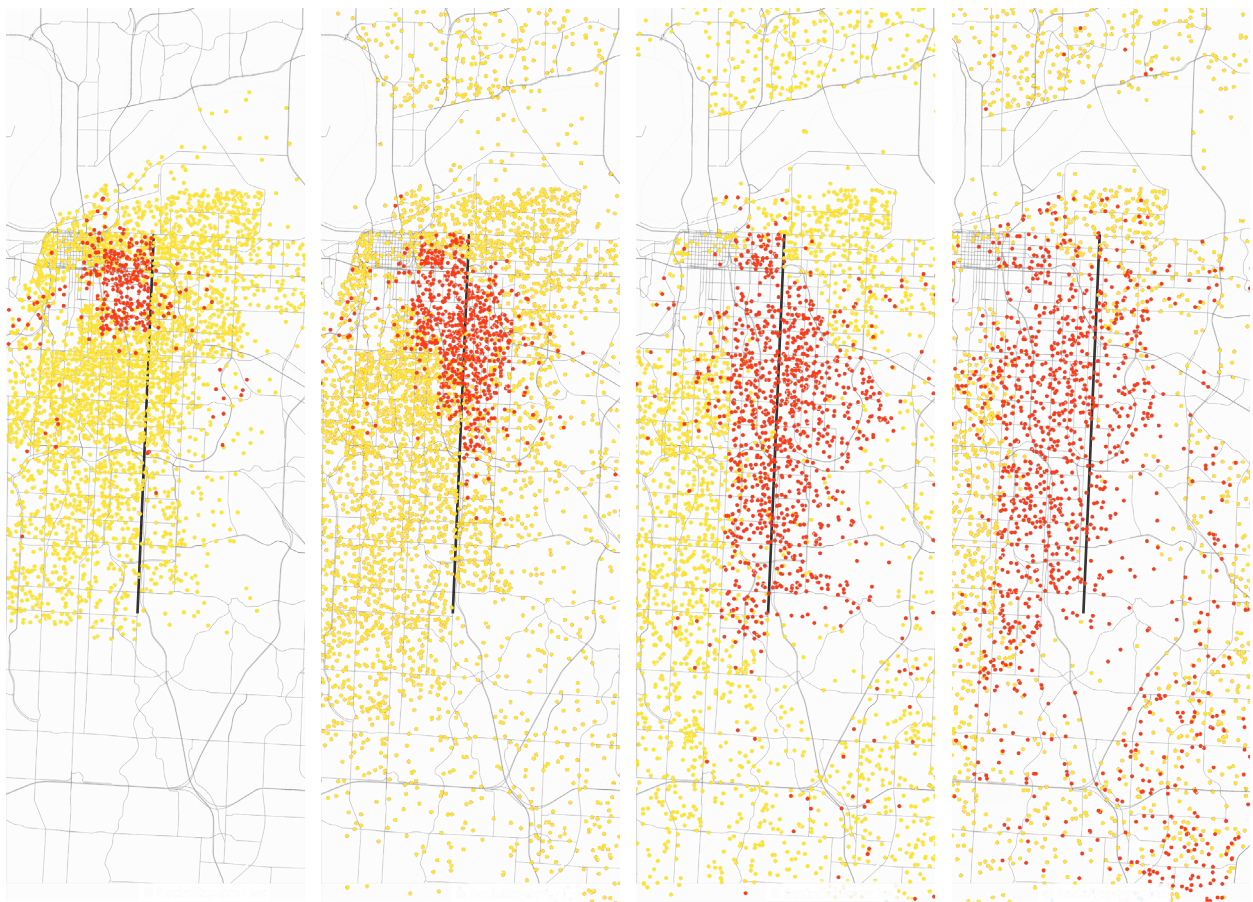
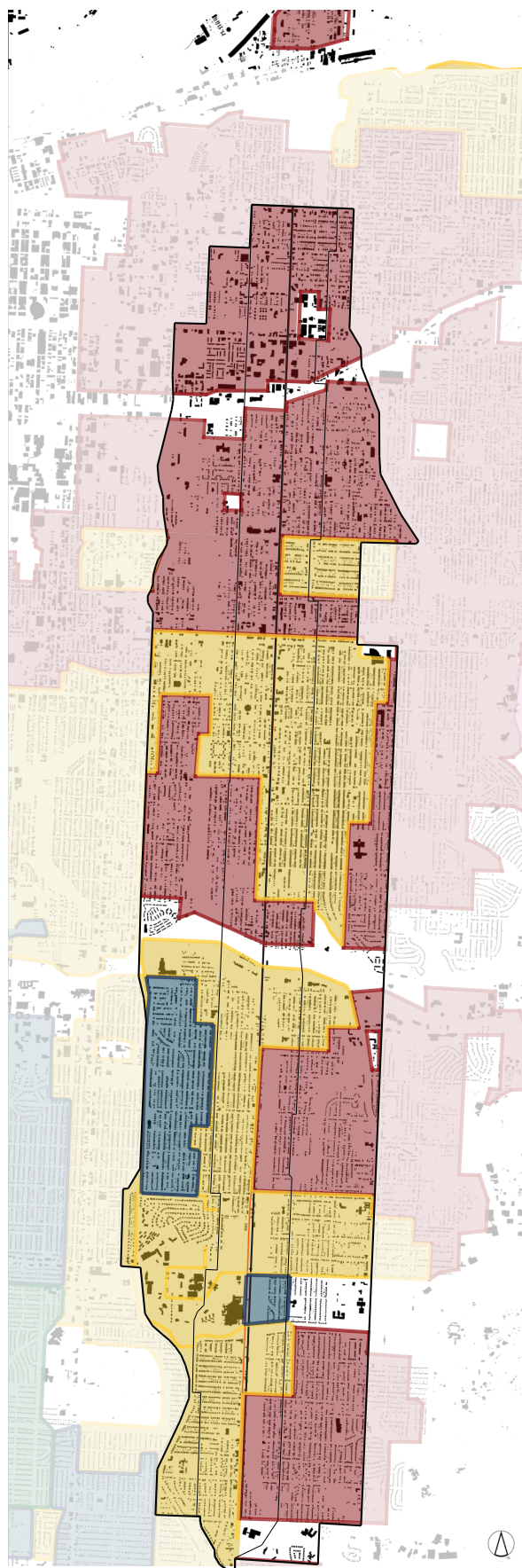


Figure 3.3-3.6 Race 1940, 1960, 1980, 2000 (University of Minnesota, n.d)

Figure 3.7 Original Redlining Map (Nelson, Winling, Marciano, & Connolly, 2018)



Loan Areas

- "Best"
- "Still Desirable"
- "Definitely Declining"
- "Hazardous"

Figure 3.8 Redlining (Rankin, Tokos, & All, 2019)

The Effect of Redlining: The effects of redlining on Prospect Avenue can still be seen today. The decline of the housing stock is one effect that can be observed on The Corridor (shown in figures 3.9-3.10 and 3.12-3.13), but the social impact of redlining is even more complex and apparent. As shown in figures 3.11 and 3.14-3.16, homes are nearly worthless, residents are more likely to be renters than owners of their homes compared to other parts of the city, there is more vacancy, and the incomes near The Corridor in previously redlined areas is lower. Even though the Fair Housing Act of 1968 made it unlawful to discriminate, the practice of redlining had multi-generational impacts.



Figure 3.9 Prospect Avenue 2019 (Rankin, Tokos, & All, 2019)



Figure 3.10 Prospect Avenue 2019 (Rankin, Tokos, & All, 2019)

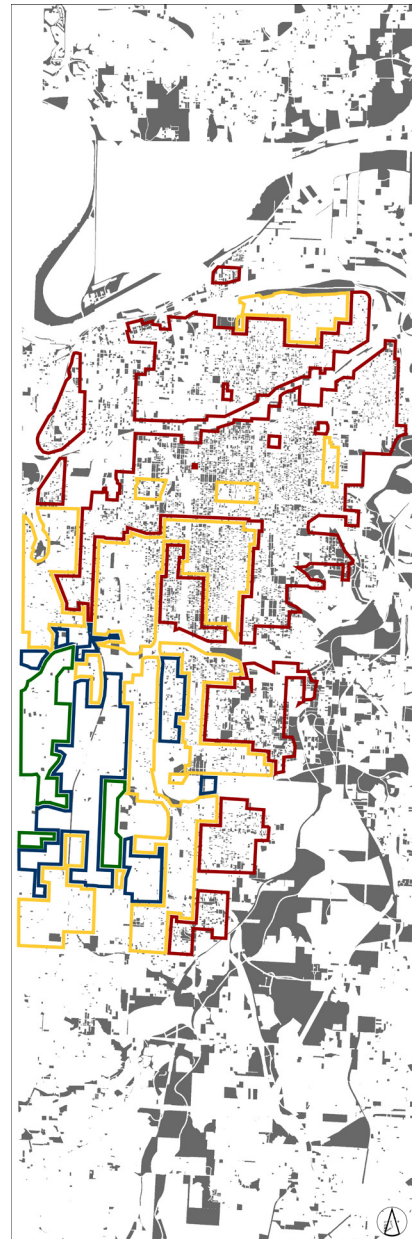


Figure 3.11 Redlining + Vacancy



Figure 3.12 Prospect Avenue 2019
(Rankin, Tokos, & All, 2019)



Figure 3.13 Prospect Avenue 2019
(Rankin, Tokos, & All, 2019)

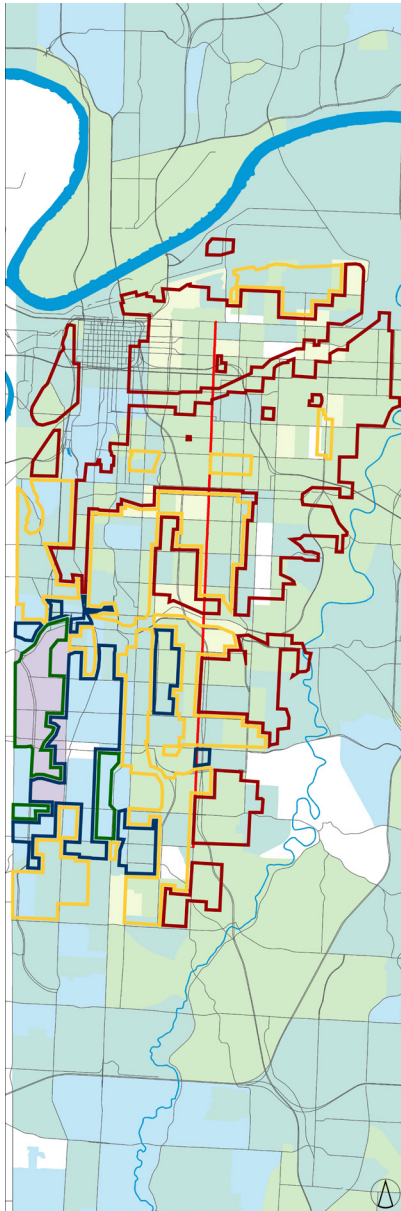


Figure 3.14 Redlining + Median Income

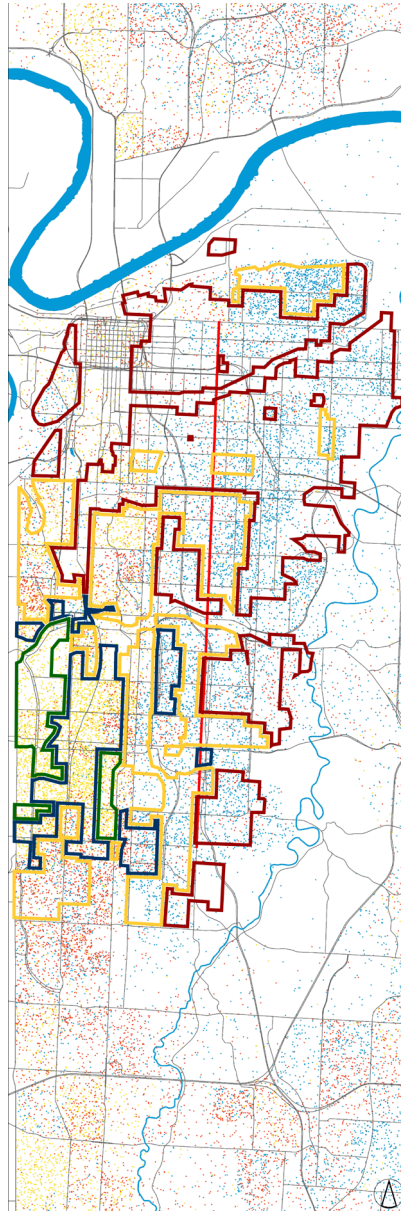


Figure 3.15 Redlining + Housing Value

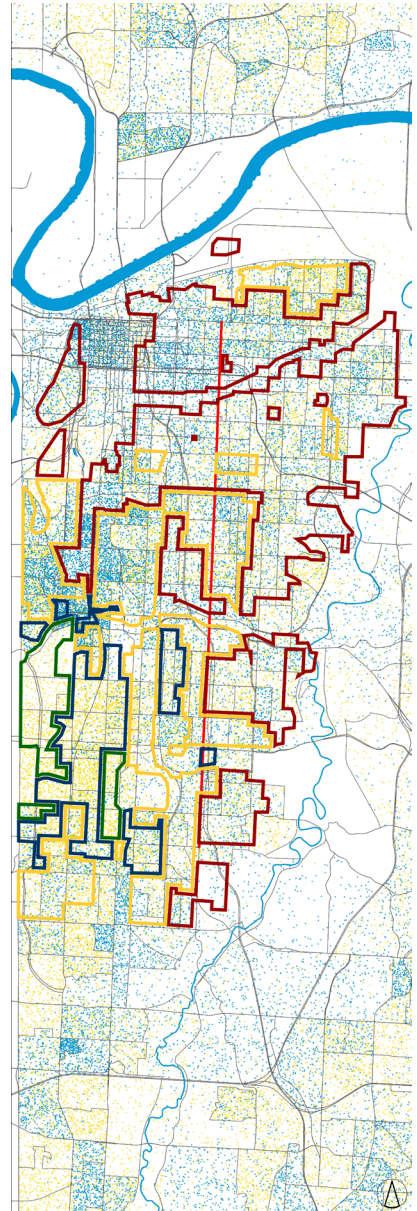


Figure 3.16 Redlining + Rent vs. Own

Protest, March, and Riots: The morning of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s funeral in April of 1968, there was a peaceful protest on Kansas City's East Side that led students to City Hall. Students were upset that classes had not been canceled for the funeral and in response staged peaceful walkouts from their schools. Groups of students met in Parade Park to begin their protest. The mayor came to these protests and made a speech to the students, allowing them to move their protests to the lawn of City Hall in Downtown Kansas City. On the way to City Hall, students marched through the main streets and on Highway-70 and Highway-71. Once they made it to City Hall, during the peaceful protests, a bottle was thrown close to the police line. This led to tear gas being released and students fleeing the area. Figures 3.17-3.20 depict some of the scenes at City Hall that day.

Later in the day, a dance was planned in order to try to keep the peace where tensions were high, but an anonymous phone call to the police told them there were riots in the church where the dance was being held. Police blindly threw tear gas into the church's basement which sparked days of looting, arson, and violence. Once the initial violence was done the damage totaled 6 deaths, 44 people injured, four million dollars in damages, and the loss of 20 businesses. Many of the businesses never came back and the condition of vacancy can still be seen in the area today. Figure 3.21 shows the path of the march.



Figure 3.17 Protests near City Hall
(Missouri Valley Special Collections)



Figure 3.18 Tear gas being thrown
(Missouri Valley Special Collections)



Figure 3.19 Marching to City Hall
(Missouri Valley Special Collections)



Figure 3.20 Police Line near City Hall
(Missouri Valley Special Collections)

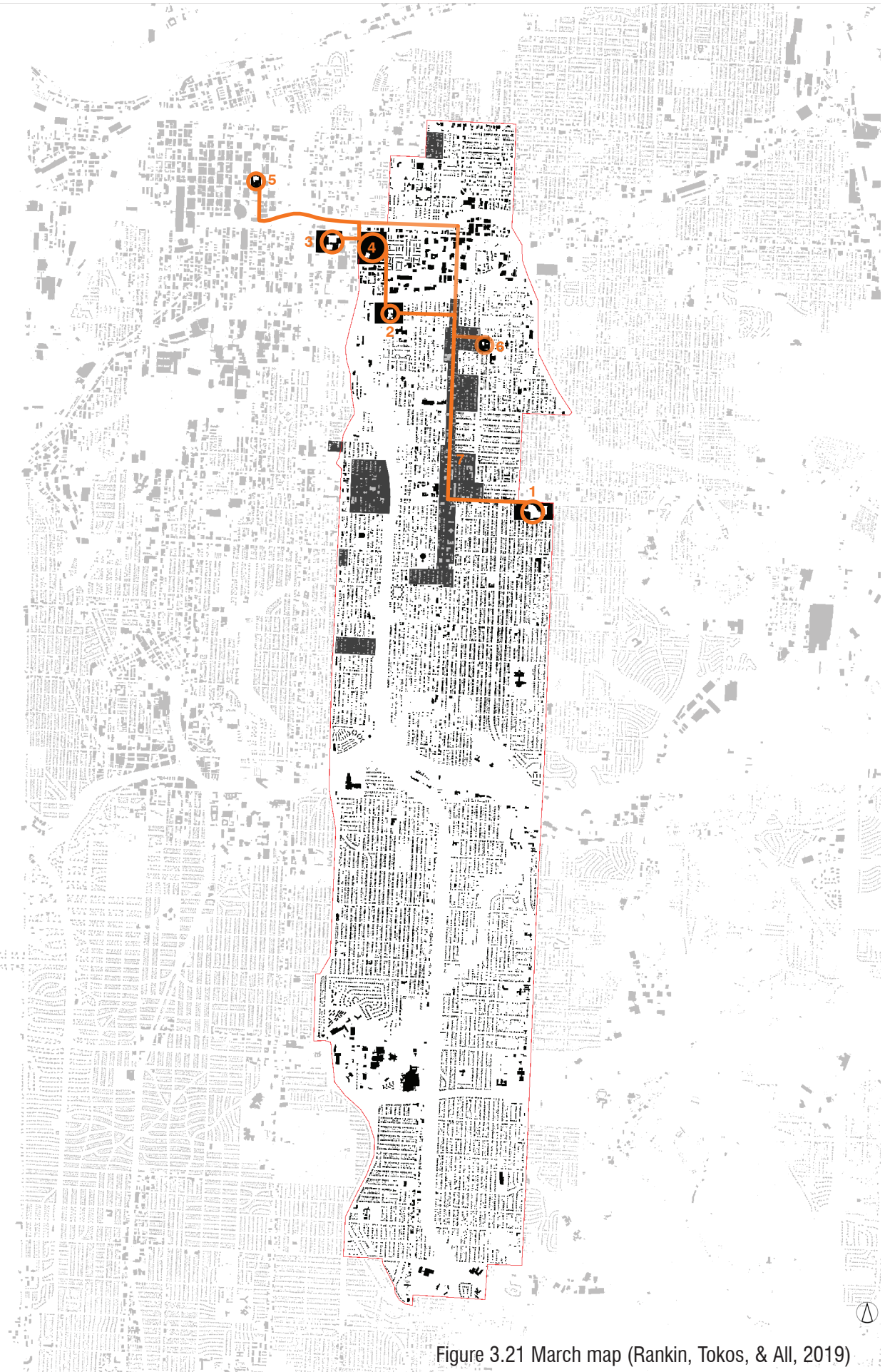


Figure 3.21 March map (Rankin, Tokos, & All, 2019)

Removal: Highway-71 has been controversial in Kansas City since its conception in 1951. In 1951 the city began buying houses and businesses along its stretch without much mention of what was happening. This led to an increase in crime and disinvestment in vacated areas. The community's concern with the highway began with the fact that the highway would divide an already segregated part of the City. The highway was redesigned with bridges on more prominent cross streets to have more of a Parkway style, but this redesign didn't do much to improve the connection of the East Side to the rest of the city. Figures 3.22-3.23 below show the area near Prospect Avenue where Highway-71 would soon exist in 1990, and the same area is shown again as of 2018. Both images have prominent vacancy where the actual highway was developed and in many adjacent lots. In total, at least 10,000 people lost their homes to make space for the highway. This mass demolition can be seen in figure 3.24.



Figure 3.22 Vacancy for Highway-71 in 1990 (Google Earth, 1990)

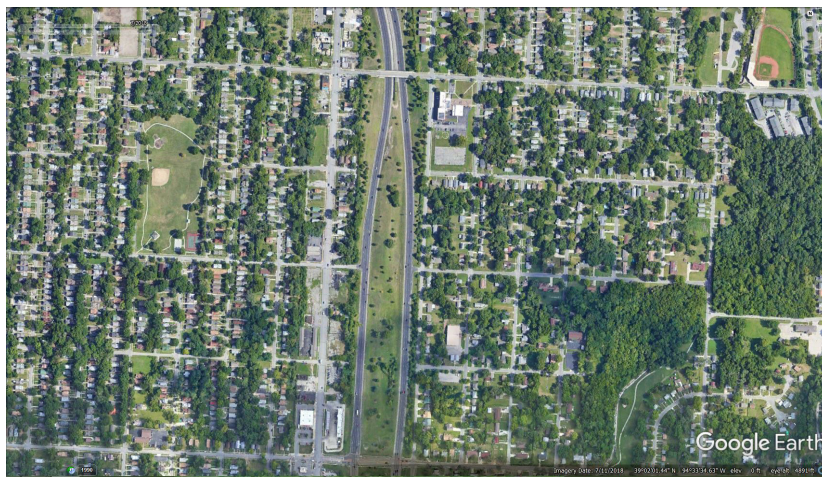


Figure 3.23 Highway-71 in 2018 (Google Earth 2018)

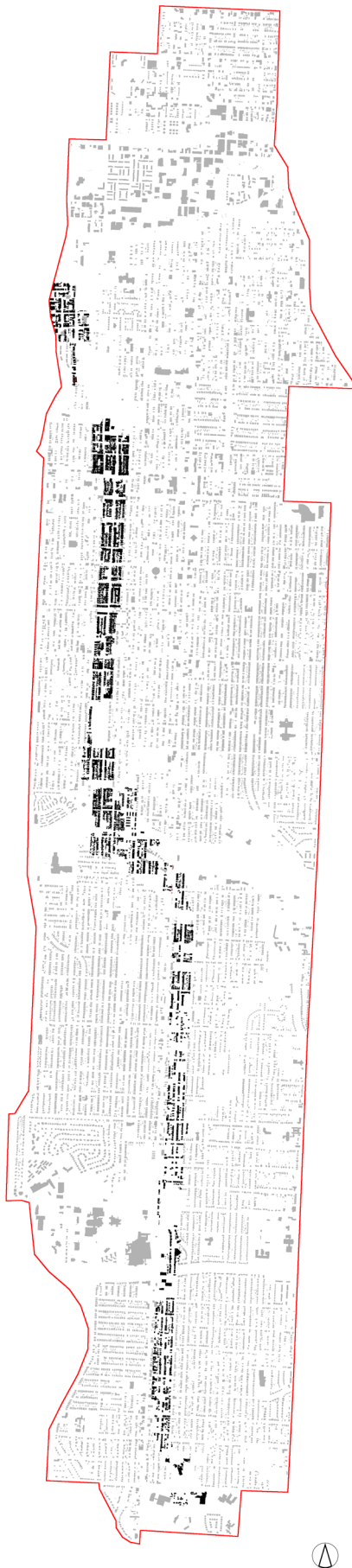


Figure 3.24 Buildings Removed for Highway 71 (Rankin, Tokos, & All, 2019)

As the project on the Prospect Avenue Corridor continued to take shape, literature was reviewed to provide a framework of understanding for urban development. I selected a variety of titles that have shaped my project, perspective, and thinking as I moved into design and development of community engagement sessions and designs for the northern section of The Corridor. This literature review provides evidence for design choices and why designing with art, identity, history, and culture will be some of our greatest strengths in providing the community with a sense of place and helping to combat feelings of displacement that often accompany change. This literature review addresses civic and community engagement, place attachment and capital, gentrification as it relates to displacement and community, and finally gentrification and identity based solutions.

1. Civic and Community Engagement

A healthy community is characterized by a healthy relationship between civic organizations and citizens and active community engagement. A variety of research has been done in the past to help planners, designers, civil servants, and community members understand best practices for developing relationships between organizations and citizens. One of the fundamental pieces of literature on citizen engagement is Arnstein's Ladder of citizen participation. In the article a ladder is developed to provide a scale that ranges from citizen participation at the top to manipulation at the bottom with the top few rungs describing engagement that gives power back to citizens and the bottom few rungs describing non-participation scenarios that fake a sense of control for the public (Arnstein, 1996). In a more recent article, Jaurez & Brown discuss approaches community engagement from international development. Their article stresses the importance of focusing on "participatory rural appraisal" as an effective way to integrate weak and marginalized groups into an engagement process and also follows up with comments about SWOT analysis mentioning that interviews were more successful and more detailed than doing a SWOT analysis with community groups which tended to be more large scale and big picture rather than site specific (Jaurez & Brown, 2008).

Along with setting up an active system for citizen participation that provides citizens with empowerment and access to leadership, citizen engagement can also be fostered through design. Hassen and Kaufman present specific street design features that facilitate community engagement based on their review of design-based community engagement literature. Their findings suggest that greater street connectivity, access to services, and a more pedestrian oriented environment are all related to higher levels of community engagement (Hassen & Kaufman, 2016). Urban green space provides a communal social space and walkable, dense, mixed-use neighborhoods with both residential and commercial development encourage both social capital and community engagement, and street art was shown to help promote a shared experience in the community (Hassen & Kaufman, 2016).

2. Place Attachment and Capital

Place attachment contributes a great deal to developing social capital, using cultural capital, and increasing citizen participation. People are more likely to engage with their community and work to make it better through their networks if they have an attachment to place. Local attachment is important to people and people understand their belonging to place at multiple different levels (Tomaney 2015). The idea of place attachment can be taken further to address community planning and social progress. The more relationships people have in their community, the more likely they are to spend time and money making it better (Manzo & Perkins 2006). Creating place attachment is key to increasing social capital and inspiring citizen participation.

Social capital can be pivotal in maintaining attachment to place. In areas of high turnover, policies to sustain social networks and encourage community development can help generate place attachment and inevitably create better places (Livingston 2008). This social aspect of place is vital to keeping people in an area, whether it is declining currently or has the potential to decline in the future.

Place attachment can also foster feelings of safety and encourage the development of social capital (Manzo & DeVine-Wright 2014). Citizen-led community participation, mobilization, and collective action is more prominently displayed in communities with strong social capital. The key to using place attachment for revitalization is transforming it into social capital and then action at the community level (Manzo & DeVine-Wright 2014). This use of social capital is vital to community revitalization.

3. Gentrification, Displacement, and Community

Gentrification is a term that takes on a variety of meanings, but fundamentally refers to people being displaced from their homes as new development moves into a once declining or stagnant area. Michael Lewyn defines gentrification as “the social advancement of an inner urban area by the arrival of affluent middle-class residents,” and “a process that displaces low-income residents and systematically remakes the class composition and character of a neighborhood” (Lewyn, 2017, p. 449). Through my research I have come to find that gentrification is more than the loss of a home, it is often more importantly, the loss of a community. When places change, even those who can afford to stay are lost in a neighborhood that has evolved beyond their imaginations losing what made it feel like it was their place to begin with. Even if residents remain in place, they still lose their place identity. Gentrification effects seniors by making them feel like they have lost influence in neighborhood planning and provides a feeling of social disconnectedness that makes them isolated from the community (Hassen & Kaufman). Attention needs to be given to local shops, meeting places, and the nature of social structures and governance in order to make residents threatened by gentrification feel like and know that they still have a voice and a place in their own communities (Shaw & Hagemans, 2015). The social aspect of gentrification is the hardest to measure, the hardest to see, and the hardest to resolve.

With the presence of middle-class residents in areas that were previously home to low-income individuals, housing stock as a whole becomes more exclusive and reduces affordable housing options for those with low-income (Shaw & Hagemans, 2015). “When one household vacates a unit voluntarily and that unit is then gentrified... so that another similar household is prevented from moving in, the number of units available to the second household in that housing market is reduced. The second household, therefore, is excluded from living where it would otherwise have lived” (Marcuse, 1985, p. 1264).

Gentrification is not necessarily a direct displacement where people are being pushed out of their homes. In almost all cases, the rate of people leaving a gentrifying neighborhood is not much different than any other neighborhood (Freeman, 2015). The big difference comes in who is moving in, not who is moving out. In a gentrifying area, the in-movers are of a higher socioeconomic class than the out movers, meaning that an area that used to cater to low-income residents is no longer available to them as a place to move to after gentrification has occurred (Freeman, 2015). “There are instances when the displacement of preexisting residents might aptly describe the dynamics of change in a gentrifying neighborhood. But when this process is viewed more broadly, it seems that the more typical engine

of neighborhood change is the altering of the characteristics of in-movers and the lower rates of intra-neighborhood mobility in gentrifying neighborhoods” (Freeman, 2015, p. 488). One potential solution is to allow for up-zoning. Up-zoning is a good way to lower rents and as Michael Lewyn shows in his article, in most cases, cities with more housing units have lower housing costs (Lewyn, 2017).

While gentrification is typically labeled a bad thing, there are benefits to new money coming into a once disregarded area. As Freeman puts it, “gentrification brings with it increased investment and middle-class households to formerly forlorn neighborhoods. This could potentially enhance the tax base of many central cities and perhaps increase socioeconomic integration as well. After decades of disinvestment and middle-class flight, these benefits from gentrification should not be overlooked” (Freeman, 2015, p. 490). Gentrifying neighborhoods often have higher tax yields, meaning they are often supported by local political leaders (Zukin, 1987).

The idea of creating a more socioeconomically diverse landscape seems positive, but creating a true community of mixed-income is easier said than done. The mix of people created by gentrification may make for a more diverse space but it is not likely to create a more socioeconomically diverse community. Leonie Sandercock addresses this issue of social mixing by explaining that creating a diverse community is more than putting people in close proximity to one another (Sandercock, 2009). She explains that the interactions need to be deliberate, rather than casual, and that this distinction is key in creating diverse communities. The problem of social mixing comes when places are not deliberately planned. Loretta Lee’s addresses some of the problems that come with “social mixing” as a policy. She points out that most research on social mixing points to it creating tension rather than creating social capital, cohesion, and community (Lees, 2008). While it would be ideal for socioeconomically diverse spaces to be the norm, Sandercock expresses that it isn’t that easy – we can’t just create spaces where people live in proximity, there has to be a deliberate design of spaces that encourage people to interact with one another and understand social differences.

Often “social mixing” is not increased through gentrification. Although it is often assumed as a benefit, in many cases social mixing declines along with ethnic diversity and immigrant concentrations (Lees, 2008). “Contrary to the assumptions linking gentrification to social mix, these results suggest that if allowed to run its course, gentrification is likely to reduce neighborhood levels of social mix and ethnic diversity...the lesson for policy-makers is that if they want to intervene to ensure proportionate levels of social mix and retain a more balanced social structure, they should be aiming to limit, rather than promote, gentrification” (Walks & Maaranen, 2008, p. 298). This quote exemplifies one of the issues that comes with the ideas and misconceptions around gentrification. On the surface it seems like a new way to bring about social-mix but social networks rarely cross social, class, or racial lines in gentrifying neighborhoods (Lees, 2008).

John Btancur recounts in his study that in a gentrified neighborhood in Chicago “many small churches have closed; public school enrollment has decreased and most gentrified sections, and higher-income children are taking over local private schools” (2002, p. 792). This nod to a decrease in enrollment in public schools points to an understanding that while spatially people of different incomes may be living in proximity, they are not necessarily mixing on a social or institutional level. In many cases they are still self-segregating by class.

4. Gentrification and Identity-based Solutions

As a solution to combat decline while addressing threats of gentrification, identity development and placemaking start to strike a middle ground that provides a space for culture, history, and art to develop in the physical realm. “The image of a city or region becomes based both on physical assets, and a series of experiences built around those assets, generally extending to the living culture and atmosphere of places” (D’Auria, 2009, p. 280). Urban heritage is the combination of the history and the current residents of an area. It combines the historic attributes of the built fabric and the life of contemporary residents. Intangible cultural heritage links current inhabitants to past, present, and future generations and contains the spread of community values. Cultural capital exists both tangibly through buildings, sites and artwork, and then intangibly through ideas, practices, beliefs, and values. In order to avoid gentrification, tapping into the history of the Prospect Corridor provides an outlet that relies on the current residents to provide a sense of place based on their own lives and history. “Placemaking revitalizes the community, increases social capital and networks, and promotes well-being” (Hassen & Kaufman, 2016, p. 129).

One aspect of cultural development involves “the conscious and deliberate reconstruction and representation of Black history,” which uses place-based marketing to establish black people as essential to the neighborhood’s past and future development (Moore, 2005, p. 441). A 2010 study presented evidence that areas with more cultural assets were four times more likely to see population increase and poverty rates decrease than areas with fewer assets (Seigert & Stern, 2010). The public sector can provide the foundation for cultural clusters simply by providing security, clean and safe streets, usable public spaces, and convenient transit. Cities should provide areas with distinctive streetscapes, lighting, and park facilities for greater returns. The key successes of the strategy of cultural clusters is the potential they have for generating social benefits beyond purely commercial success and their strategic importance to the health of a city’s creative economy (Seigert & Stern, 2010). Zukin presents a new idea of what gentrification means for an area by stating that “in this new perspective [a gentrified area] is not so much a literal place as a cultural oscillation between the prosaic reality of the contemporary inner city and an imaginative reconstruction of the area’s past” (Zukin, 1987, p. 135).

Key Takeaways:

The problem of gentrification can be seen through the lens of social justice, social capital, physical quality, or economic health. It is not a problem that can be resolved through the implementation of a single policy or design as it effects both socioeconomic elements and the physical realm.

Key solutions to the negative effects of gentrification come with planning, design, and policy amendments. Gentrification is likely inevitable along The Prospect Corridor, but mitigating the effects is possible. Ideal solutions would include guidelines from cities that require a percentage of affordable housing implemented in new developments, providing funding for rehabilitation of existing buildings in low-income areas, and providing neighborhood standards that encourage inclusive design, community spaces, and density. This report focuses on the design aspect and encouraging understanding attitudes in Kansas City of community development pros and cons and the mitigation of gentrification, emphasizing that a fully successful effort will combine design, policy, planning, outreach, and wise implementation.

PROSPECT NORTH

Study Area:

My project study area is the KCDC Prospect North section from Independence in the north to the railroad south of 18th Street. It incorporates the five-minute walk boundary which is roughly two blocks to the east and to the west of Prospect Avenue.

Based on an analysis of the area, key issues include infrastructural barriers, lack of continuity, inconsistent street edge, and lack of functional green space. The north section of Prospect Avenue is intersected by two large infrastructural barriers: Interstate 70 and the railroad. Both conditions go under Prospect Avenue and interrupt the street edge to further disconnect The Corridor. Prospect Avenue is also characterized by variety. The building uses vary greatly through out the northern section of the Corridor with retail and residential properties as well as industrial complexes all contained in this relatively small urban area. The character of the buildings is sporadic and inconsistent. Setbacks change from lot to lot, building types change, and vacancy is a regular condition disrupting the urban form. The parks along Prospect Avenue have potential but in many cases have fallen in disrepair. They are disconnected from the street and lack defining elements to bring them to life.

Figures 5.1 and 5.2 provide city context and an overview of the study area.



Figure 5.1 Prospect North Context Map

STUDY AREA MAP

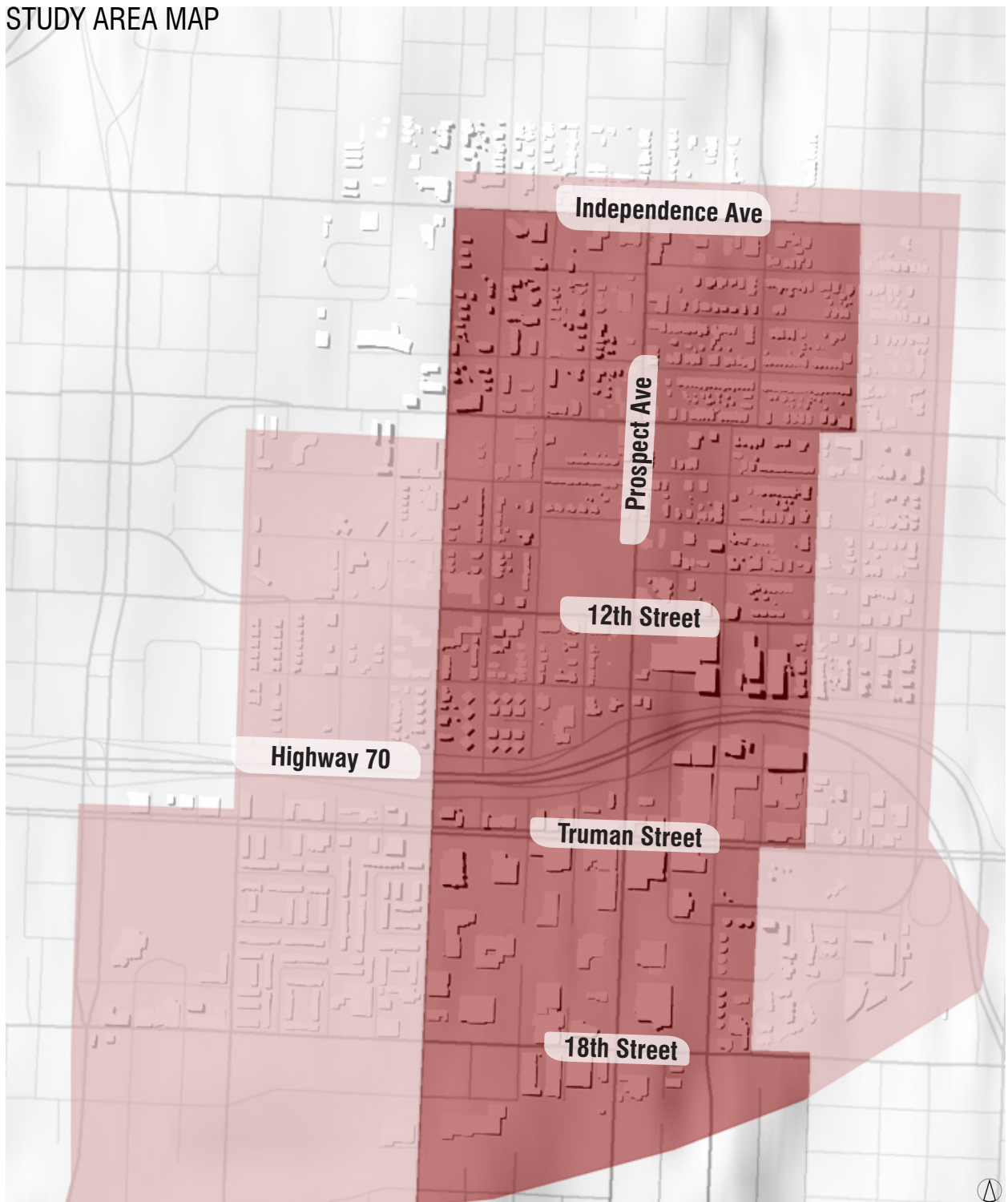


Figure 5.2 Prospect North Study Area

KEY ISSUES AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

There are four key physical issues in North Prospect: infrastructural barriers, lack of continuity and identity, inconsistent street edge, and lack of functional greenspace (figure 6.1). These issues create a disconnected character that leaves The District lacking a clear urban form, hierarchy, and structure.

Infrastructural Barriers:

The north section of Prospect Avenue is intersected by two large infrastructural barriers: Interstate 70 and the railroad. Both conditions go under Prospect Avenue and interrupt the street edge to further disconnect The Corridor (figure 6.2).

Lack of Continuity and Identity:

Prospect Avenue is characterized by variety. The building uses vary greatly throughout the northern section of The Corridor with retail and residential properties as well as industrial complexes all in the same area. The character of the buildings is sporadic and inconsistent (figure 6.3).

Inconsistent Street Edge, Streetscape, and Character:

The buildings approaching Prospect Avenue are inconsistent. Setbacks change from lot to lot, building types change, and vacancy is a regular condition disrupting the urban form (figure 6.4).

Lack of Functional Greenspace:

The parks along Prospect Avenue have potential but, in many cases, have fallen in disrepair. They are disconnected from the street and lacking defining elements to bring them to life. The greenspace in this area could also be more productive by being designed to manage stormwater or becoming a productive, food producing landscape (figure 6.5).



Figure 6.1 Key Issues Combined

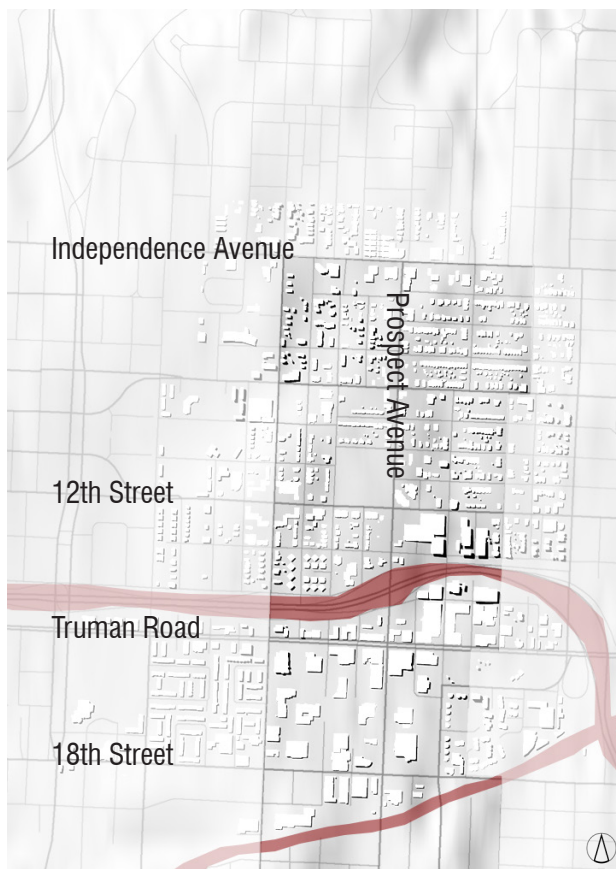


Figure 6.2 Infrastructural Barriers

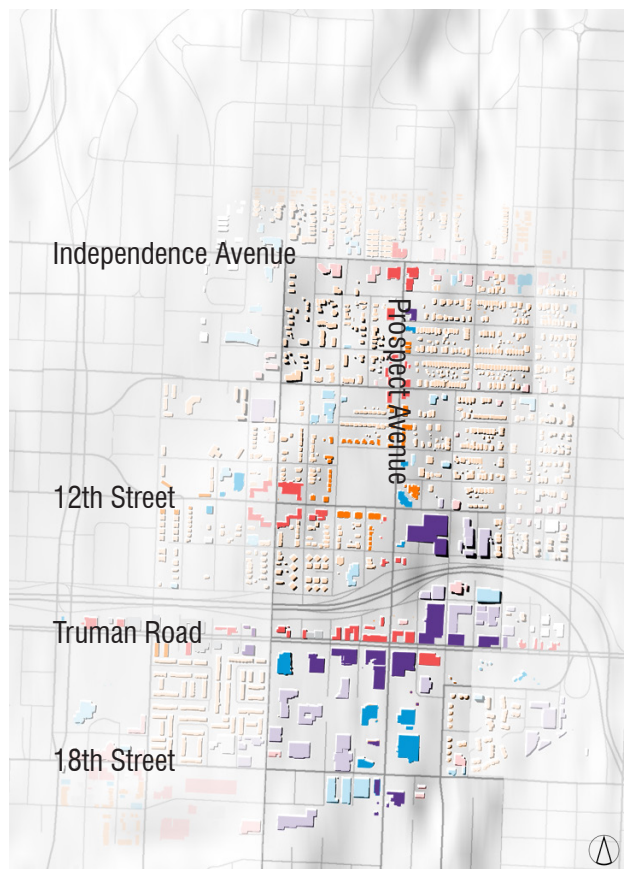


Figure 6.3 Lack of Continuity



Figure 6.4 Inconsistent Street Edge

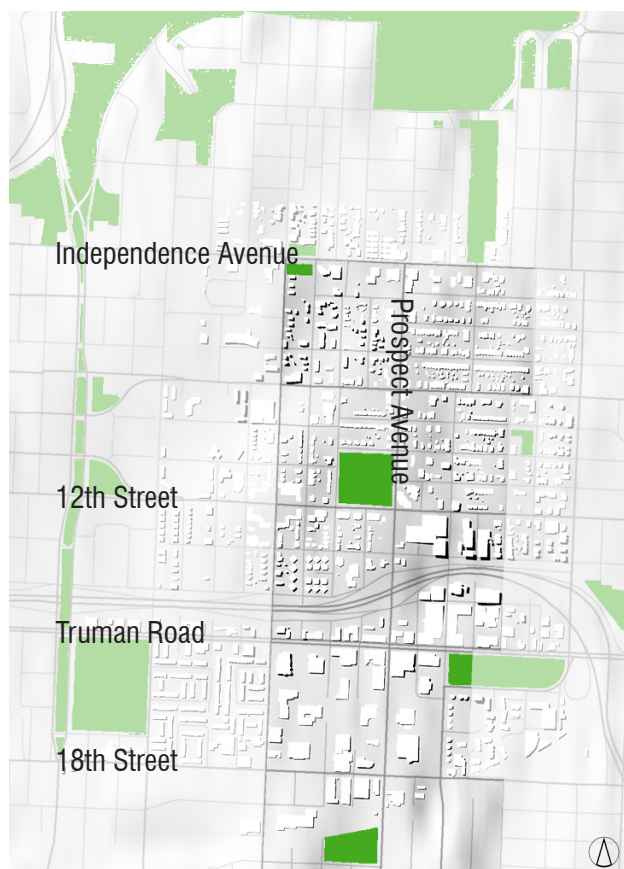


Figure 6.5 Lack of Functional Greenspace

Understanding the need: The Seattle, Washington 2035 Growth and Equity Plan establishes a framework for understanding when areas are at risk of gentrifying. This displacement risk assessment highlights several numbers that can help us understand if residents of a certain area are at risk of being displaced. Their index looks at several indicators including percent of people of color, linguistic isolation, educational attainment, housing tenancy, housing cost burdened households, household income, proximity to transit, proximity to core civic and business infrastructure, proximity to job center, development capacity, and median rent (Seattle Office of Planning & Community Development, 2016).

For the Prospect North study area page 37 shows the percent of people who are of a minority population, renters, people who have bachelor's degrees, families in poverty, and housing cost burdened either as renters or home owners, the median household income, and median home rent.

These numbers show there is a clear threat of displacement in Prospect North. As compared to the City of Kansas City, each statistic shows the residents of Prospect North having a number that indicates a higher likelihood to gentrify. The high minority population in this area, high percent of renters, low percent of bachelor's degrees, high rate of poverty, high percentage of cost burdened homeowners and renters, and low median income all point to the area being high risk.

As North Prospect develops it is necessary to address the underlying socioeconomic issues that come with the development of an area that has long been neglected by the city. The threat of displacement indicates the need to develop housing that is affordable and inclusive in ways that reflect the history and culture while also addressing the physical urban challenges of the area.

The data for this analysis was gathered from the American Community Survey 2013-2017 5-year Data Release.

Prospect
North

84%
KC, MO 45%

Minority Population

76%
46%

Renter Occupied

12%
25%

Bachelor's Degrees

32%
13%

Families Below Poverty

25%
21%

Excessive Housing Cost over
30% of Income, Homeowner

54%
44%

Excessive Housing Cost over
30% of Income, Renter

\$25,854
\$50,236

Median Household Income

\$715
\$862

Median Home Rent

Precedents:

A key part of understanding and developing this part of Prospect Avenue was looking at precedents that guide cultural identity development. The case studies reviewed provide a framework for understanding development in a historic area and offer guidance for urban planning/design and development. The case studies reviewed here are the Five Points Historic Cultural District Plan from Downtown Denver, Colorado, Kansas City's 18th and Vine Infill and Redevelopment Design Guidelines, and the Master Plan for the Worcester, Massachusetts Arts District.

Five Points Historic Cultural District (2016): Much like Kansas City's 18th and Vine District, the Five Points Historic Cultural District is a neighborhood in northeast Denver where African Americans migrated after the Civil War seeking opportunity. At one point the area was known as the "Harlem of the West" as it became the center of African American activity in Denver. Today the area is a historic District with clear design principles, design standards, and goals articulated for developing the area as a historic cultural district with a distinct identity (figure 7.2-7.4).

The guiding principles of the Five Points District include:

1. Protection - Preserve existing buildings, existing character, and other elements that give the district a sense of place.



Figure 7.1 Five Points Plan



Figure 7.2 Five Points Plaza



Figure 7.3 Five Points Jazz Festival



Figure 7.4 Five Points District

2. Rehabilitation - Rehabilitate existing buildings that contribute to the character of the area.
3. Cultural Identity - Promote community identity, strengthen the connection between current residents and cultural heritage.
4. Vitality - Create a pedestrian friendly environment.
5. Sustainability - Promote environmental sustainability.

The development goals of the area aim to create a vibrant, mixed-use district, encourage main street character, have a mixture of preservation, reuse and new construction, create a delicate balance between old and new, maintain historical patterns of development, and respect the history and culture of the area.

Five Points Historic Cultural District focuses on providing standards for what should be redeveloped and how. Specifically the plan establishes what should be revitalized to reflect historic character, what existing elements should be retained, what new elements should be added, and what new development could look like. A successful rehabilitation keeps the current character of important buildings and maintains

historic character. The document points out that even with the loss of a significant amount of historic buildings, if infill is done appropriately, the Five Points Historic District can maintain a distinct sense of place.

Relevance of this Project: This plan's relevance is mainly in the way they deal with infill and addressing "unimportant" historic building facades. Through this design report I suggest revitalizing several buildings, but none of the buildings on this part of Prospect Avenue hold enough significance to be revitalized without additions. This document provides standards and precedents for building off to the side and even in some cases above existing buildings to maintain existing character but to densify and allow the space to do more. Originally Five Points had some challenges getting started, but with a recent desire from young people to move to Denver's downtown the area has grown in recent years. This trend is similar to the trends at 18th and Vine. It got off to a slow start, but now it has hit its stride, something that will likely also happen at Prospect North.

18th and Vine Infill and Redevelopment Guidelines (2017): The 18th and Vine Infill and Redevelopment Guidelines document was one of the guiding documents for the development of infill and development strategies from the beginning of this project. The document provides several key insights that focus on developing in a historic area, expanding the public realm, redeveloping existing building stock, new infill development, parking, and signage. The goals of the document include promoting and preserving the historic character of the area, providing guidance on ways to protect historic building patterns, ensuring visual quality, and to encourage new quality design construction in The District.

Some key development guidelines suggest the public realm should preserve and promote noteworthy views and maintain a continuous experience through out the 18th and Vine district.

New buildings should not leave older buildings or existing buildings looking out of place.

Materials should be integrated into a cohesive facade design. New infill should appear similar in scale, color and texture to nearby historic buildings.

Vehicle access points should be designed to minimize impact on pedestrians and parking should not be a dominant site characteristic. Parking should also be designed with semi-pervious paving and have a plant buffer between pedestrians and the lot.

Utilities should be hidden from public view and when possible mechanical equipment should be located on the roof or to the rear or side of the building.

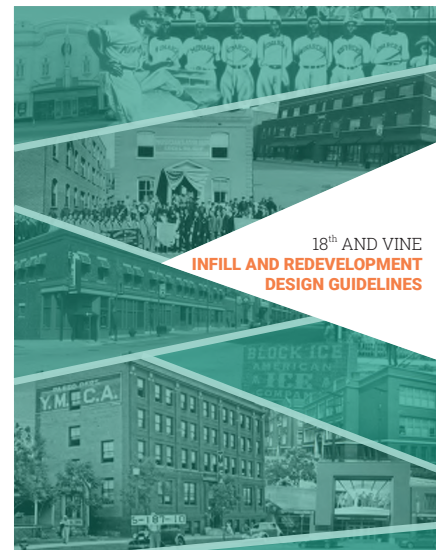


Figure 7.5 18th and Vine



Figure 7.6 18th and Vine Redevelopment

Relevance of this Project: Because of the proximity to the North Prospect study area, the design standards in the 18th and Vine guidelines are highly relevant to Prospect North and were used to inspire an infill strategy along Prospect Avenue.



Figure 7.7 18th and Vine 1940s

Master Plan for the Worcester Arts District: The Worcester Arts District Plan focuses on the development of the arts in a part of Worcester, Massachusetts. The plan's focus is on creating opportunities for public art, creating areas of interest, and building reuse. It proposes affordable housing for artists and other residents and zoning to suit artist-related needs, allows for live-work spaces, puts existing vacant properties back on the market, and creates a strong image for artists and others in the area to identify with.

Relevance to this Project: This plan is focused on the arts component of a cultural district. The idea of tying in art and making spaces that are good for arts and culture available to people of different incomes are important ideas to maintain in this project.



Figure 7.8 Worcester Arts Plan

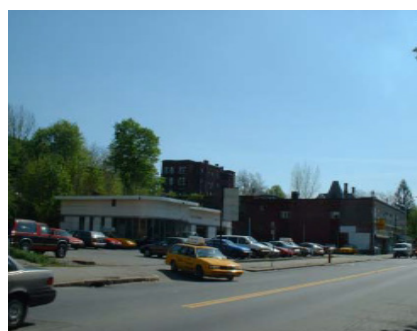


Figure 7.9 Worcester Arts Before



Figure 7.10 Worcester Arts After

Along with the district wide plans that set a precedent for development and design in this project, several site specific art and design pieces also provided guidance and inspiration to what art could mean for Prospect Avenue. Below are several precedents (figure 7.11-16) that express the character and potential of developing art on Prospect Avenue. From the temporary art of the Opa Locka Community Development Corporation (figure 7.16) and Parking Day (figure 7.14) to subtle additions of art to the urban fabric like Color Carlisle Public Art Initiative (figure 7.12) to the extraordinary Witness Walls monument by Walter Hood (figure 7.11), the idea of public art has a wide range, but on Prospect, like in each of these precedents, art should focus on the public realm and community experience.



Figure 7.11 Witness Walls by Walter Hood



Figure 7.12 Color Carlisle Public Art Initiative



Figure 7.13 31st & Troost Mural by Alexander Austin

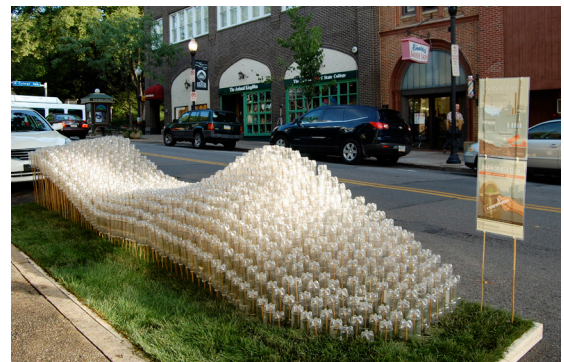


Figure 7.14 Parking Day San Francisco

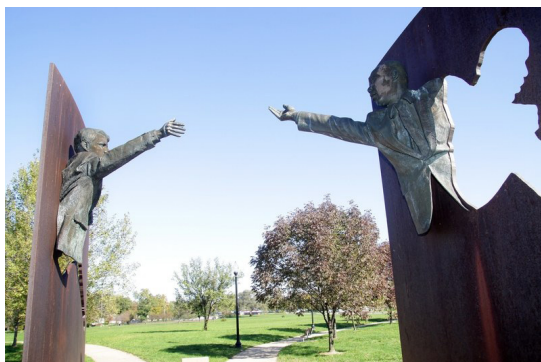


Figure 7.15 Landmark for Peace Memorial



Figure 7.16 Opa Locka Community Development

Key Takeaways:

Developing Prospect North into an arts district is one step in policy that will allow the history of the area to shine through.

Art in the area should pay respect to the lively Jazz and entertainment district that was once thriving there as well as the historic piece of the civil rights era. Marches (and riots) took place across the country on the day of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s funeral and although it was not the only one, the March on through North Prospect should be memorialized through art in the public realm.

Much of the life that 12th Street held and the activity of the area was lost over time. The art that develops in North Prospect should draw people into The Prospect Corridor and it should celebrate the history and life that was once there. Paying respect, honoring, and reinvigorating the elements lost in time through art and redevelopment of the space as an arts and cultural district will allow the memories of a thriving community live again in North Prospect.

These precedents suggest art making as policy. Supporting organizations to foster artistic development is important. Creating a "Cultural Arts District" and developing community standards that are in-line with the needs of community members and that reflect historic elements the district will highlight are key to the successful development of Prospect North. Art is more than simply an object or application. It is a community process that should be developed to express community themes. It should not be a cover for gentrification or blight, but a celebration of history and culture that inspires future development that is equitable and community focused.



Figure 7.17 Looking west down Truman Road from Prospect Avenue



Figure 7.18 Buildings on Truman Road



Figure 7.19 Looking north down Prospect Avenue from Truman Road

Recent Local Development:

Kansas City has had quite a bit of development and investment take place in the downtown over the past 20 years. The focus has been in the core and most development has not made its way over to the East Side yet. This section will provide a brief synopsis of key developments that have taken place in recent years that have provided a framework for how Kansas City sees the East Side developing. This section is important because these precedents are the development residents of the East Side see when they think of development in their neighborhood. This review of recent development includes a synopsis of the 18th and Vine District, 12th Street, Troost, and Beacon Hill. These summaries are meant to capture the spirit of recent and potential development on Kansas City's East Side.



Figure 7.20 The renovated Gem Theater at 18th and Vine

18th and Vine: The 18th and Vine District is known as one of the birth places of Jazz music and culture. In the past it was home to several venues where people could see famous Jazz musicians such as Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong (figure 7.20). It was in its peak from 1920-1940. When segregation was no longer allowed by law, Kansas City started to integrate and the Jazz District lost its step as people moved out of The District. In the 1970s and 80s The District was filled with vacant storefronts.

The redevelopment of 18th and Vine has been in progress for years. It gained real traction in 1989 when then Councilman Cleaver took the idea of redevelopment under his wing and passed a sales tax revenue package. Although The District started with a lot of political traction, enthusiasm faded quickly as the city offered incentives to businesses from outside of Kansas City rather than focusing on the black businesses based in Kansas City that wanted to move in (Serda, 2003).



Figure 7.21 Kansas City Jazz Museum and Negro Leagues Baseball Museum at 18th and Vine

It has been a constant struggle to try to get 18th and Vine back to its original character and for it to achieve the goals originally set when redevelopment started. Gaylord Rogers a local resident says, “This today is nice, but it’s false. The legend of Vine isn’t about special events. It’s about daily life. I don’t know if we can ever get that magic back” (Serda, 2003, p. 33).

Recently the redevelopment has done better. In 2017 the City published an “18th & Vine District Improvements Plan Update” which highlights the changes the city has made and the achievements of stakeholders in The District over recent years, including this plan highlights the positive trajectory The District is on now. It took a while for the political will and for the organization to catch up, but the redevelopment is finally coming together.

12th Street: Much like the 18th and Vine District, 12th Street used to be the center of black culture in Kansas City. Although it has not made a return as a historic cultural District, some recent development has taken place that fits quietly into the neighborhood.

The history of 12th Street in Kansas City is similar to that of 18th and Vine, but historically 12th Street was the center of poorer black businesses and community. The film “I Remember 12th Street” provides key insights to what 12th Street was like before the 50s. In the film, several people who grew up near 12th Street were interviewed about life on 12th Street and they described it as a lively district where the community gathered day and night. Places like the TB Watkins Project and the Castle



Figure 7.22 Gates Plaza



Figure 7.23 Gates Barbecue

Theater at 12th and Paseo were key community anchors in the past when 12th Street was a center of activity and community (Thompson & McClendon, 2015). In the film, 12th Street is described as being even more culturally important and significant than 18th Street.

Recent development on 12th Street is the development created by Ollie Gates, owner of Gates Barbecue (figure 7.23). This development is not a cultural district. The history of 12th and Vine has been lost and currently only a washed out informational display can be seen on the formerly famous intersection.

Ollie Gate's development is not a grand plan to bring the area back to what it once was, it is a suburban-style development that provides essential services for the people who live there now. The development at 12th Street and Brooklyn (figure 7.22) offers places to eat, including a Gates Barbecue, beauty schools, nail salons, a hardware store, and a self-service laundry. This development serves the current community in the area and as it brings business to an often neglected part of the city, however, historical connections can also be made in this area.



Figure 7.24 Mural on Troost

Troost: For decades, Troost Avenue (figure 7.24) has been the dividing line between white and black in Kansas City. It still is that dividing line, but the division is blurring. Troost Avenue is rapidly developing on both the west and east sides of this roadway corridor. Development in this part of the city is a good thing, but it is also controversial. Many of the reactions to development on Troost Avenue are predictive of reactions to future developments on Prospect. Through the Prospect Avenue community engagement process I uncovered a desire for development on the Prospect Corridor with less concern for gentrification than previously hypothesized, but an understanding of Troost and the reactions to development is important. While gentrification may not be a fear for many residents who want to see their community grow and develop, it often becomes a problem after development happens.

A popular article circulated in November of 2018 called “Stop the Denverization of Kansas City; Troost doesn’t need to be hipster-friendly.” This article pointed to the way development has been happening on Troost and noted that developers are getting incentives to build there but the city is not requiring low income housing to be developed (The Kansas City Star Editorial Board, 2018). New development is coming in, but there is no place for the people who lived there previously as they cannot afford to live in the market-rate apartments being built in the area.

The development along Troost is not inherently a bad thing. The East Side is in desperate need of more economic development, but the lack of affordable housing has not sat well with current residents who feel the neighborhood is changing drastically and isn’t providing space for them (Turque, 2018). The controversy mainly seems to be in the way the city has handled incentives. By giving incentives to large scale developers and not requiring affordable housing, the city seems to have created this problem. It is slowly making change through the development of a housing policy, but it is a slow process that has left some people uncomfortable with the way development happens on Troost.

Recent development on Troost, like the proposed development in figure 7.26, has not come without controversy, but encouraging small businesses and cultural identity development could start to ease some of the fear and pain that has arisen. The development of the corridor could find more ways to express the history and culture of the area. By expressing the values of the people living in the corridor currently, residents could start to see development in a more positive light.

There is a shift in identity happening on Troost Avenue that can be seen as threatening to longtime residents. The City of Kansas City has the opportunity to get redevelopment right by working with the community to understand their needs, promoting more affordable housing, encouraging local businesses in the area, and developing a sense of identity that reflects all resident needs and concerns.



Figure 7.25 Ruby Jean's on Troost



Figure 7.26 Proposed Mixed-Use Development on 30th and Troost



Figure 7.27 Beacon Hill New Development and Redevelopment

Beacon Hill: Beacon Hill has been described as a “life-sized portfolio” (Adler, 2017). The development in Beacon Hill has taken a historically black neighborhood and redeveloped it into a highly designed space. One architect started the development of luxury home construction in the Beacon Hill neighborhood. The development began when the architect started buying lots in the neighborhood and redeveloping them for himself and his family in 2008. The problem came when homes east of Troost started selling for \$300,000 - \$750,000 and existing neighbors started to feel there was a clear divide in lifestyle between “us and them” (Adler, 2017).



Figure 7.28 New Development in Beacon Hill

There is a clear anxiety in the Beacon Hill neighborhood that the history of black lawyers, Monarchs baseball players, and black clergy will be forgotten in favor of a new aesthetic (Adler, 2017). This anxiety is from the current residents, but those who are moving in insist they are doing nothing wrong. As shown in figures 7.27 and 7.28, they are developing on land that was vacant or redoing old historic homes. The development is gentrification. It is creating spaces for a wealthier class of people moving in than those who were currently in the neighborhood. Beacon Hill is a complicated space where old and new residents are combining and new development is coming into a blighted area. It is easy to look at Beacon Hill and see the future of Prospect Avenue. While the change might not be as drastic, if you work in the community, you could imagine something similar. This development shows that gentrification can happen in Kansas City and is happening on and near the East Side.

Key Takeaways:

The City of Kansas City is pushing to redevelop the East Side of the city. The developments discussed here show that there is motivation and money being directed towards this area, but they also prove an anxiety in the East Side. There is money, hope, and potential for redevelopment but the push comes with clear caution now that the East Side has had some redevelopment success. The city needs to start being a bit less liberal with their tax credits and needs to be stronger with their push for affordable housing. Building density and requiring affordable housing can start to alleviate some issues, but maintaining current homes and existing residents is also a prominent challenge that will need to be addressed.

Kansas City used to be desperate for development on the East Side, but now that development has started the financial incentives may need to be reevaluated. Existing communities (including residents and historic structures) need to play a bigger part in future development efforts and developers need to make sure they are not overlooking the history of the area.

The City has the opportunity right now to redefine what development means on the East Side. The precedents of development in Kansas City show the potential and prove that people are willing to invest in the East Side, now it's time to start defining the rules, and working towards a shared community vision of what a redeveloped should look like. The redevelopment of the East Side, like the 18th and Vine area, should have a clear vision and understanding of what it wants to look like and expectations put in place for how it respects and expresses history. Buildings that are historic and in reasonable shape should be marked for redevelopment, rather than demolition, and local artists should be encouraged to find ways to express and celebrate the rich history of the Jazz and entertainment that once defined the corridor.

MAPPING AND ANALYSIS OF PROSPECT NORTH

The northern section is critical because of the historic significance it holds in the city. Below is a series of maps depicting the Sanborn maps from the 1940s and 50s (figure 8.1) in comparison with the current figure ground (figure 8.2). Today the area is lacking hierarchy. In the past, there was a clear urban hierarchy presented in the figure ground. Two commercial nodes – one to the north on Independence Avenue, the second on Truman Road to the south – were supported by a neighborhood between them.

Urban hierarchy provides a sense of comfort and familiarity to urban spaces. With a clear human scale in urban space, people are provided a sense of safety and comfort when they walk down the street. Reestablishing a sense of hierarchy helps people inherently understand the space they are in and to feel comfortable. An area that is designed well and provides a level of social comfort by being affordable and inclusive is a space that is more enjoyable for everyone.

When the combined Sanborn Map from the 40s and 50s is overlain on the current figure ground (figure 8.3), clear similarities and differences begin to appear (figure 8.4). Sections on and just to the south of Independence Avenue still have a similar node to neighborhood character that they had in the past, but as you move to the south the character starts to change. The highway was and remains a major disruption to the consistent urban form of the past. There is also an industrial area at the southern end of the study area which changes the hierarchy of building footprints drastically. Rather than maintaining a hierarchy in urban form, the grid of the street and the pattern of buildings is disrupted in today's figure ground. It is unclear how the pieces fit together in today's urban system as the hierarchy of building size and orientation no-longer expresses the underlying urban system of the past.

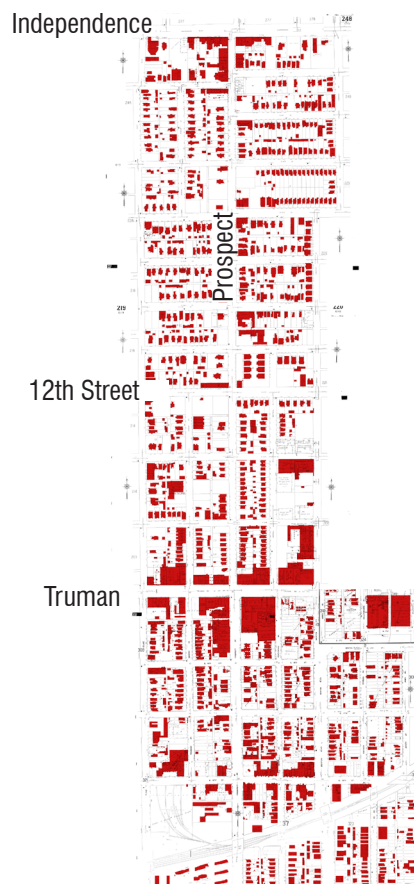


Figure 8.1 Sanborn Historic Map



Figure 8.2 Current Figure Ground

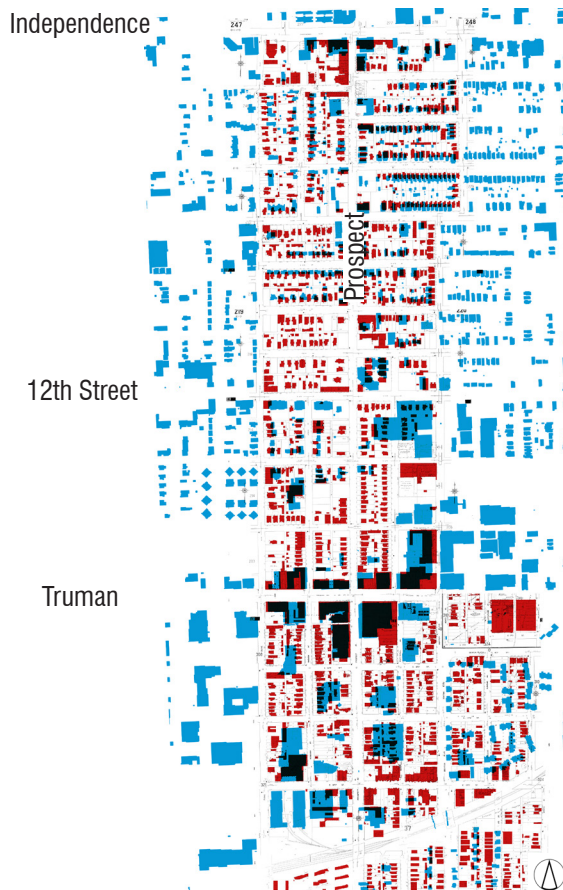


Figure 8.3 Current Figure Ground to Sanborn Comparison Map

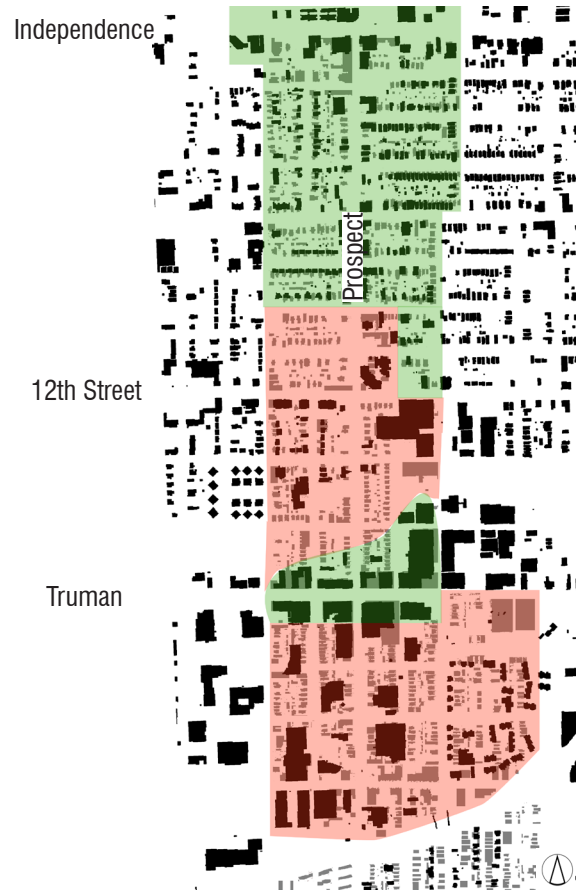


Figure 8.4 Similarities and Differences

Along with a clear physical hierarchy in the historic urban form, this area is also directly adjacent to the historic 18th and Vine District and historic 12th Street. Both these areas were hubs of African American life in the early to mid 20th century. As discussed in the previous section, places like the TB Watkins Project and the Castle Theater at 12th and Paseo were key community anchors in the past when 12th Street was a center of activity and community (Thompson & McClendon, 2015). There once was civil rights organizations headquartered on 12th Street and a lot of energy on the street. It was described “like a parade at night” where “people were regular people” (Thomson & McClenon, 2015). Twelfth Street was a community anchor for the everyday laborer where everyone was out walking around (Thompson & McClendon, 2015). The 18th and Vine District and 12th Street were home to famous jazz clubs that created swing and bebop. The “I Remember 12th Street” film provides a valuable insight into what the culture and community was like at its peak. In the film, the street was described as being “like a menagerie of businesses, people, social settings, and music and it was almost impossible not to see people standing on the street, on the corner. Sometimes you would think they were modeling, but they really [were not]. They were just well-dressed people and they would walk up and down 12th Street” (Thomson & McClendon, 2015).

There was an intense feeling of pride and community, which is what this project intends to strengthen in the neighborhood again. While we cannot fabricate culture, the history is a key driver in developing this neighborhood district focused on arts and culture rooted in elements of the past.

"12th Street was lit up like Las Vegas, neon signs everywhere. Yes, sir. Oh, man, it was a memorable place. Just always something going on that was funny. People joking and laughing, and partying. You couldn't walk down 12th Street hardly on a Friday or Saturday night. You almost had to walk in the streets because the sidewalks would be that loaded with people. I mean man you could see nothing but heads and shoulders. That's the way 12th Street was."

- "I Remember 12th Street" Film

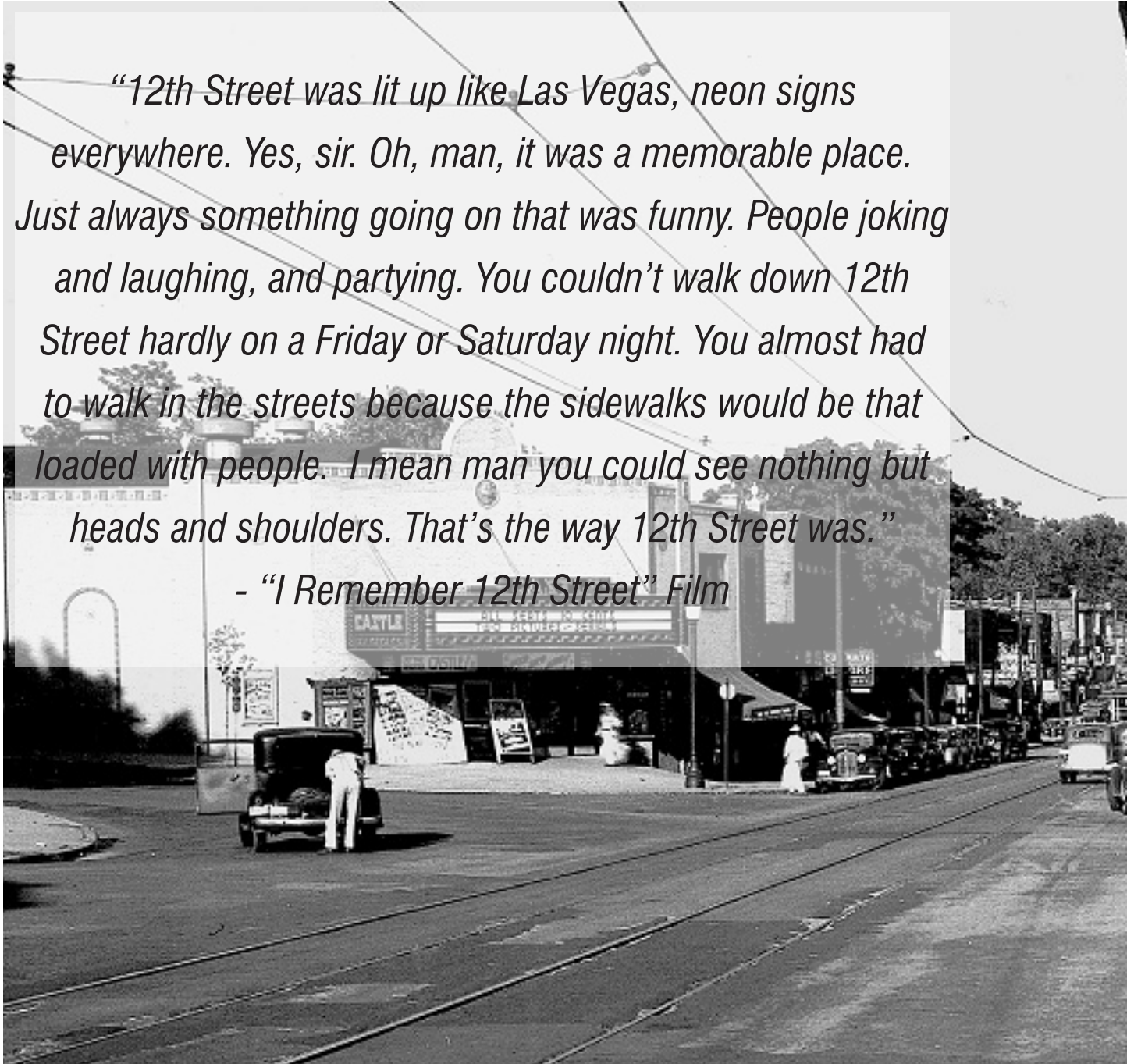




Figure 8.5 12th Street and The Paseo

Urban Concept:

The Urban Concept for Prospect North is founded on a rich history and culture and an urban form that was clear and connected. The goal moving forward is to create an urban space that feels like a neighborhood, a community, and a cohesive urban element.

Three distinct areas of focus have been identified. In the north there is a neighborhood condition where spaces redeveloped should have a clear community focus. In the middle is a connector that has a clear relationship to the highway and the rest of Kansas City as both a regional transportation connection and a transitional area along North Prospect. The southern section is to transform into a mixed-use district and has the potential to connect to the historic 18th and Vine District to the west of the study boundary. The building stock in this area has potential to be repurposed from an industrial district into more community friendly spaces. As a whole concept, the focus is on re-centering around Prospect Avenue through three distinct urban strategies that re-connect this part of The Prospect Corridor and create a complete urban identity.

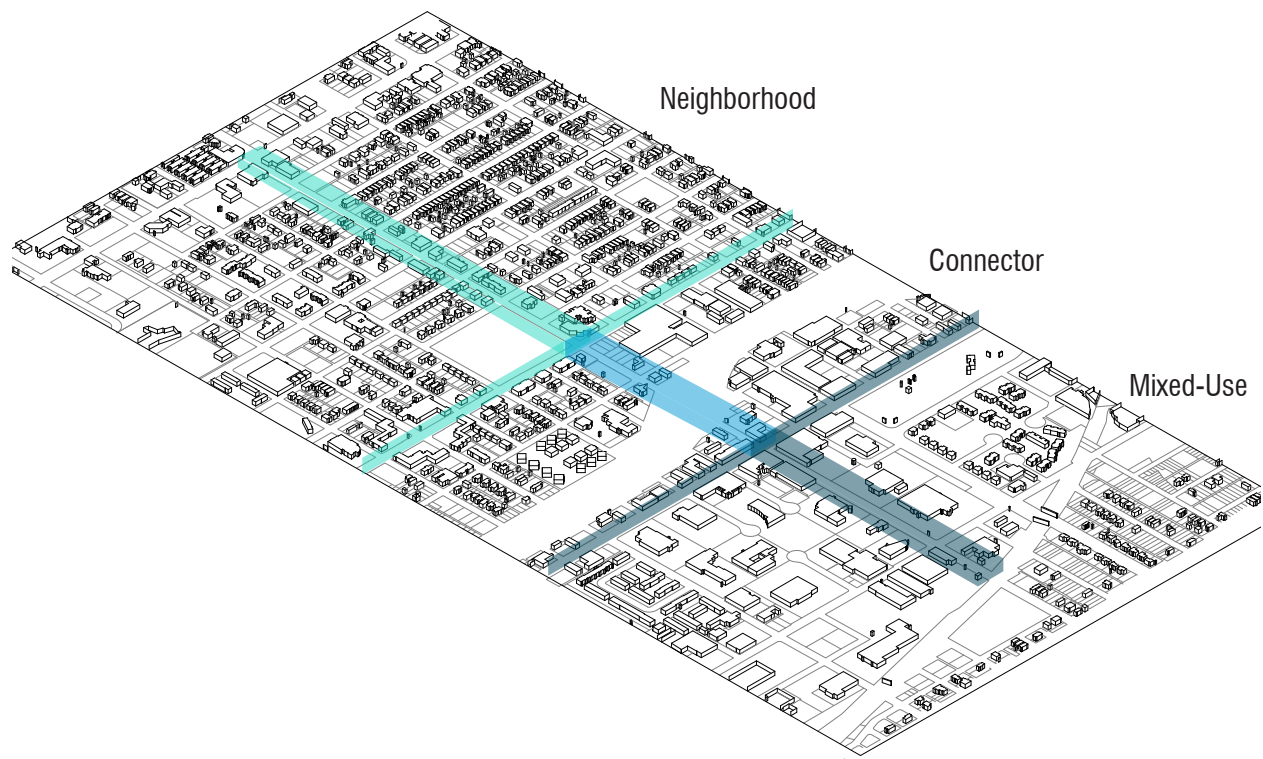


Figure 8.6 Diagrammatic Representation of the Urban Concept

Independence Avenue

NEIGHBORHOOD

12th Street

CONNECTOR

Truman Road

MIXED-USE

18th Street

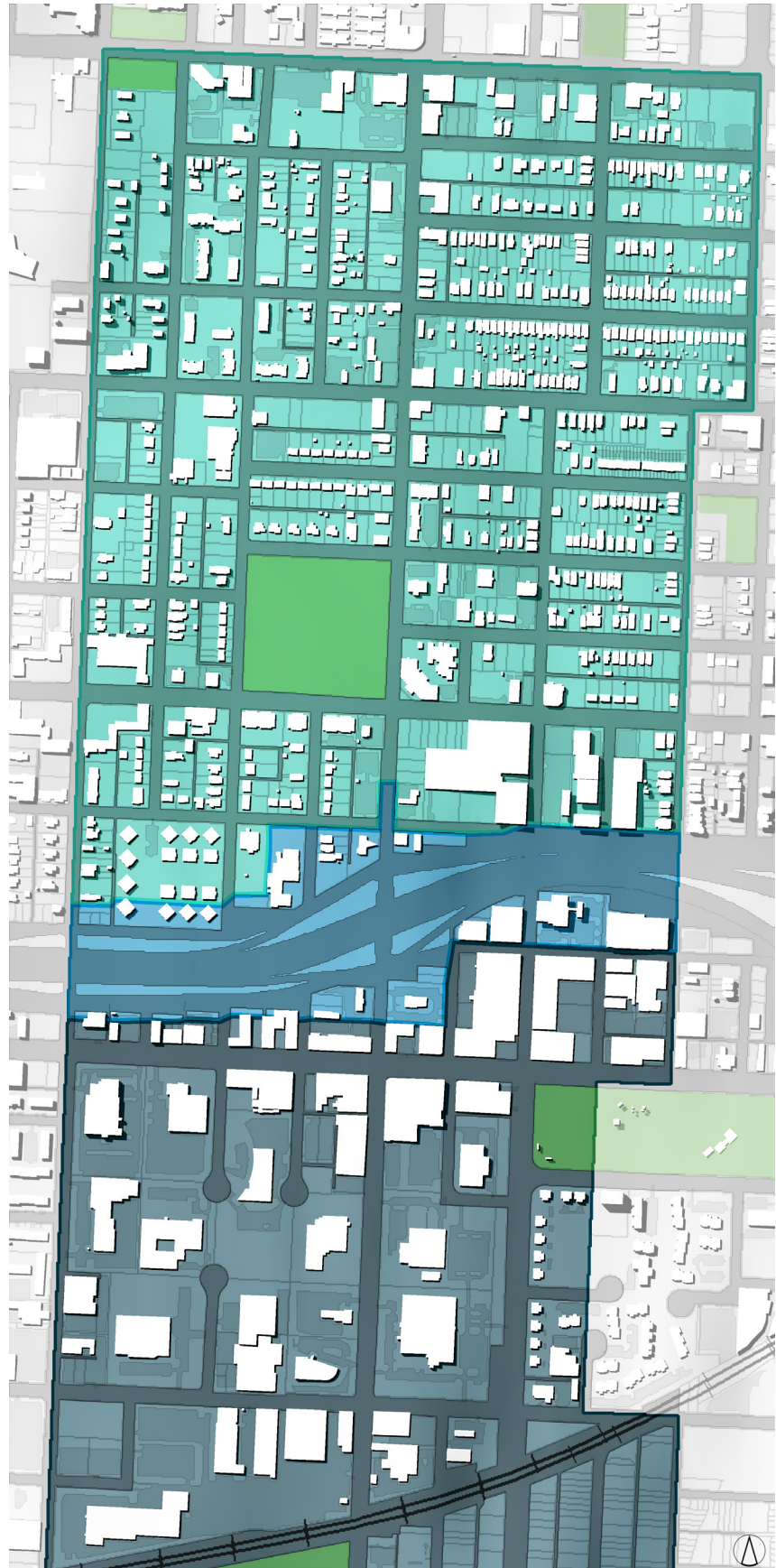


Figure 8.7 Diagrammatic Representation of the Urban Concept

Urban Concept:

Taking a step back – the overall urban concept for the development of Prospect Avenue is focused on re-centering The Prospect Corridor and creating a unique urban element. This includes specific strategies of connecting, applying green infrastructure, and specific development strategies including repurposing and reinforcing the street edge. Repurposing focuses on using old building stock for future mixed-use development. Reinforcing focuses on building up the street edge, adding trees and other elements to enclose the street and make it feel like a cohesive piece of the urban fabric.

Re-centering Prospect means drawing connections between urban elements outside of the Prospect Corridor and reestablishing the corridor as a cohesive main street for Kansas City's East Side.

The Prospect North Urban Concept combines compression, green infill, visual gateways, an increase in density, and experiential space to create more cohesive urban environment. The intent of this concept is to connect residential space, walkable streets and neighborhoods, and the industrial and commercial businesses through dynamic, socially-appropriate mixed-use urban design that emphasizes culture and identity and compresses the street to create a complete urban space.



Figure 8.8 Overall Studio Concept

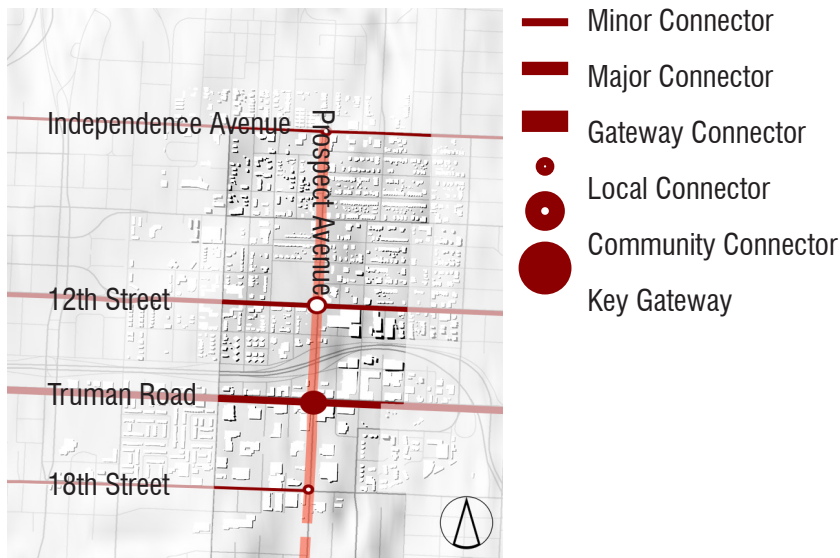


Figure 8.9 Connection Strategy

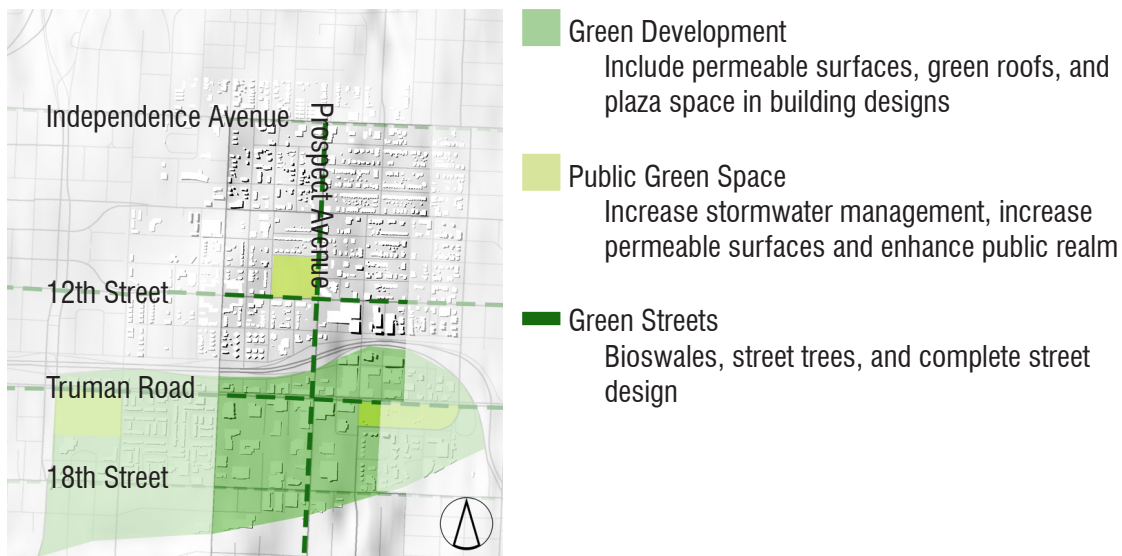


Figure 8.10 Green Infrastructure

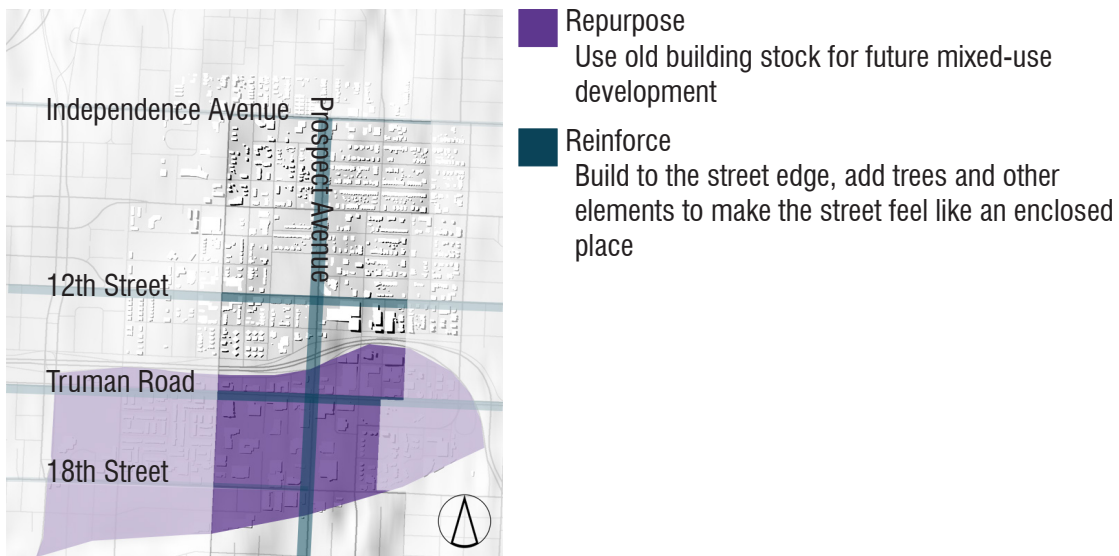


Figure 8.11 Development Strategy

Compression Urban Concept Strategy:

Key to creating a cohesive urban element in the North Prospect area is compressing the street edge strategically in the north and on Truman Road. Figure 8.12 shows an axon diagram of compression.

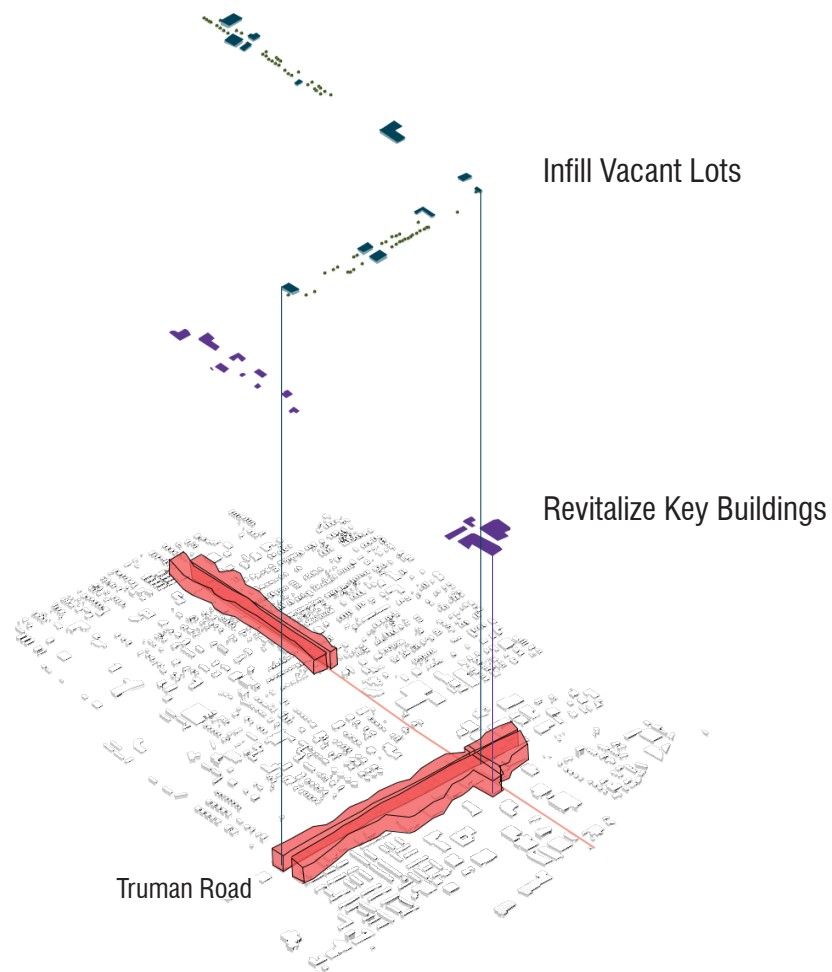


Figure 8.12 Compression Concept

Combined Urban Strategy:

The axon in figure 8.13 shows a combined strategy for the North Prospect area with three segments of the corridor identified: **neighborhood**, **connector**, and **mixed-use**.

In the **neighborhood** section, the goal of the space is for it to primarily function as a residential neighborhood. Some mixed-use should be on Prospect Avenue in this area but the lots should be predominantly housing. The **mixed-use** area includes Truman Road and the surrounding area that is currently light industrial. This area's historic building stock and proximity to the 18th and Vine District provide evidence that mixed-use with a focus on retail should be established here. The **connector** between the two is the space currently dominated by Interstate-70. This area is essential to the future of this district, but is also the most challenging. Establishing a connection of the urban space, rather than the existing disruption in form is key to bringing this area together.

The axon also highlights the streetscape strategy, an overall plan to unify the street through a consistent streetscape form. Visually and experientially this will improve the lives of residents and it will provide consistency to the urban space.

Compression is another strategy shown in the axon below. Compression is highlighted in areas where the street should be built up with little to no set back on buildings. The “compressed” urban form will provide a more comfortable urban environment for pedestrians, make a more pleasant urban space, and slow traffic moving through the area. These areas are essential to the catalytic development of the area.

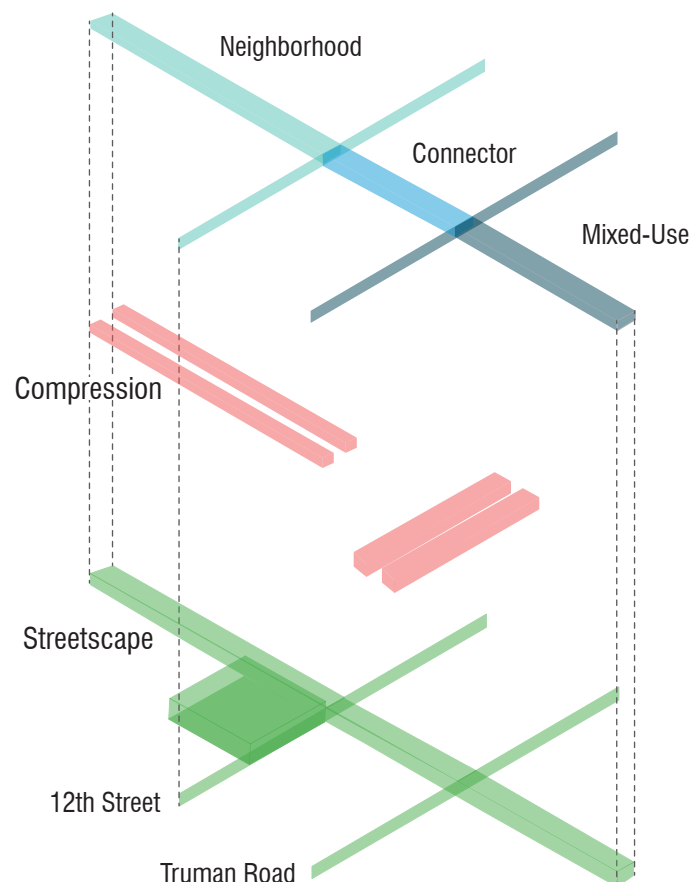


Figure 8.13 Combined Urban Strategy

Community Meeting I:

Through the development of Prospect North's visioning studies, the team was aware of the importance of gaining community insight. On Wednesday March 6, 2019 the whole studio had a community engagement meeting with four attendees at the East Patrol Police Campus at 26th and Prospect. This meeting was structured with a presentation at the beginning then a gallery style open house with maps and models at stations around the room where the public could ask students questions about specific aspects of their project. Below are categorized notes from the North Prospect group.

Future Development:

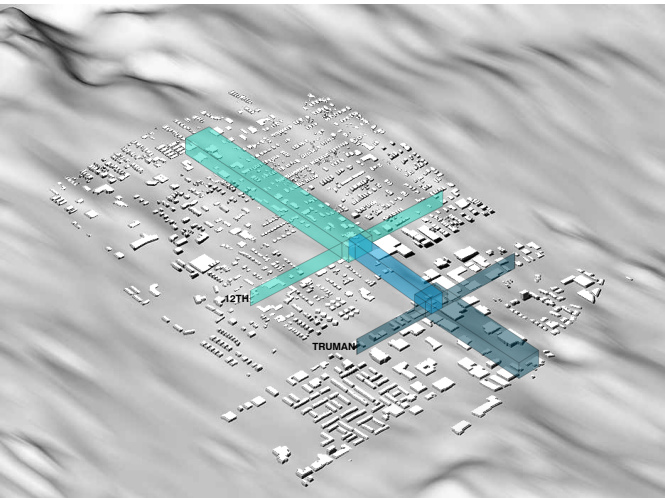
- co-op style of land ownership to combat gentrification – concern for gentrification
- really liked the idea of mixed-use with retail and residential at a medium density
- more green spaces, equal access / public access to green space

Concept:

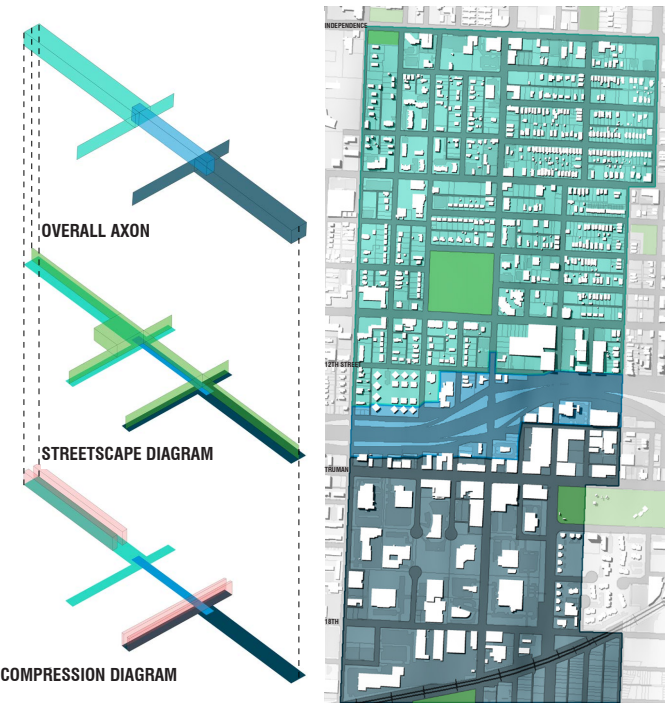
- positive responses to 18th and Vine Street connecting to our study area
- responded positively to the idea of capitalizing on the slope of the land – Prospect Avenue being the high point as a way to further develop it as a center point [a central element, like a new main street for the East Side of Kansas City] and encouraged the idea of landmark creation
- generally, people were supportive of our concept and ideas

At this first community meeting, community members were responding to elements of the concept and design, specifically the images shown in figure 9.1 and 9.2. A sticker board (shown in figure 9.3 on page 58) was also available at the meeting.

PROSPECT NORTH



CONCEPT DIAGRAM



STREETSCAPE: TREELINE, CURB CUTS, PAVEMENT, FIXTURES (LIGHTING, SEATING, LITTER BINS, BOLLARDS, FENCING, BIKE RACKS)

COMPRESSION: INFILL (VACANT LOTS AND TREES), REPURPOSE (INCONSISTENT BUILDINGS)

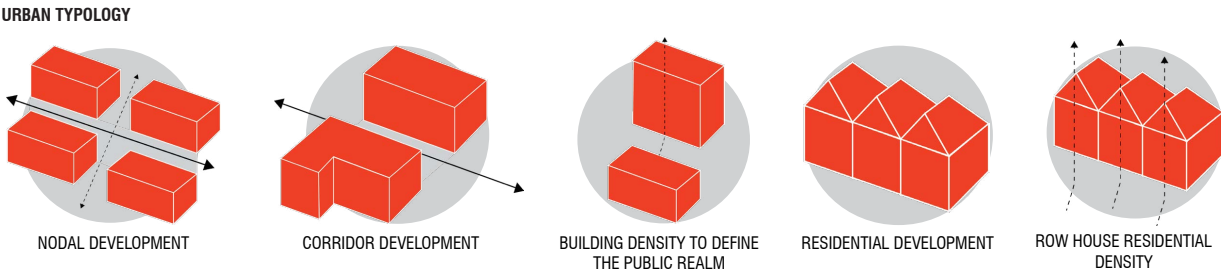


Figure 9.1 Public Meeting Board 1



Figure 9.2 Public Meeting Board 2

Community Meeting II:

North Prospect had a second community meeting on Wednesday March 27, 2019 at Gregg/Klice Community Center at 17th and Vine. This meeting was meant to have the same structure as the first community meeting but with a more in depth focus on the studies of the north group. Only two people showed up for the actual meeting, so the group improvised. We took our site model and boards (figures 9.1-9.3) from the first meeting to the foyer of the community center and started intercepting people for brief comments about the concept and visioning. We also gave the full presentation to the two women who showed up for the meeting. The presentation described the research we had done in the community and took a deeper look at the concept.

Overall, the second meeting's success was from our team's adaptability. As a group we were able to get key community input and stakeholder comments through the two separate formats that we made available to the public. Below is a set of notes from the public participants who stopped by and the two women who participated in an in-depth presentation of the full project.

Full Presentation Participant Notes:

The two women who participated in the full presentation gave valuable insights into the community just to the north of Independence Avenue on Prospect Avenue. Both women are active in their neighborhood associations and community and were very aware of developments in the north east, specifically at the intersection of Prospect Avenue and Independence Avenue. They talked about their focus on encouraging development at a human scale when they were working with the city to develop the Independence Avenue Overlay District. They mentioned that the CVS (on the south west corner of Independence and Prospect) does not have a good human scale because there is not a lot of transparency. They also mentioned they would like to see higher density buildings on the intersection of Prospect and Independence and asked how to get the old-style buildings back that would promote walkability. They emphasized the fact that people in their neighborhood want walkability, specifically the ability to walk to Independence Avenue for shops and restaurants that cater to their needs.

Other comments from the two women from Pendleton Heights:

- At the NE corner of Prospect and Independence a developer wanted to put in a single-story strip mall, but community members want more. The development has since been stalled and there currently is no further plan for development.
- They (the Pendleton Heights Neighborhood Community) looked into amending the Independence Avenue overlay because they want a multi-story mixed-use development.
- They really appreciate the 1/8 cent sales tax and what it will do for their community.
- They go to Kessler Park a lot but not Prospect Plaza Park because it has had a lot of troubles [prostitution in the vicinity, drug use] but suggested adding pickle ball courts to Prospect Plaza Park.
- People around here are looking for small cafes, coffee shops, sit down restaurants – somewhere they can go with their families after they get off work in the evenings.

“How Do You Envision Prospect?” Community Comments: (approx. 15 respondents)

- Basketball Courts
- Keep Church's it's a landmark [they were referring to the Church's Chicken on 12th and Prospect and mainly joking]
- Lighted basketball court (for accessibility)
- Nice slide
- Custom, stand out park
- Jungle town, landmark sculpture, landmark playground, glow in the dark
- Trees, green sidewalks re-cemented, gardens
- Better, not run down
- Affordable housing
- Independence mixed-use is nice, but too high priced

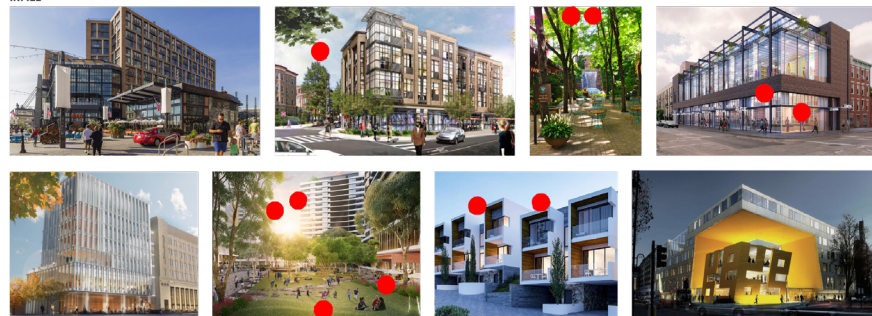
Envisioning Prospect PROSPECT PLAZA PARK



STREET



INFILL



**Red dots were placed by community members to indicate qualities they would like to see on Prospect Avenue.*

Figure 9.3 Public Meeting Board 3

Key Takeaways from Sticker Exercise:

The goal of this exercise was to see what people who live on The Corridor responded to visually. The result was that most respondents were interested in human scale places, vegetation, street life, and activated spaces. Our attempt was to understand which characteristics people were the most interested in while our design was in early development. Many residents responded to the basketball courts and the activated “concert” space in the top left of the poster. They also responded to images where trees were more clearly visible. We noted the importance of green space and made sure to program in pocket parks as part of the infill development strategy.

Community Meeting III:

The third community meeting was a meeting with all four of the Prospect Avenue studio groups. The key ideas being discussed were studio design iterations. We presented several ideas and asked for reactions and suggestions as we moved forward. Below is a series of notes taken that express desires related to future development of the Prospect North study area.

- Truman and Prospect Avenue are too busy, the streets are too wide, build a pedestrian bridge across Truman
- The biggest issue is walkability - Truman and Prospect Avenue are too focused on the vehicle
- Cap the highway – we need more green in this area
- Truman not good for residential right now
- Walkability is important – the streets are too narrow, not bikeable, killing the residential development because people drive way too fast – widen the streets and sidewalk and implement things to slowdown the traffic
- Vehicular is very connected over the highway but walking is not comfortable
- South east corner of Truman and Prospect could use a façade incentive, the guy who works there hires local residents and has been there 60 years
- The area currently is not pet friendly and should be
- Supportive of expanding 18th and Vine to Truman – use the same design and look for the area
- Attract affluent young professionals into the area
- Just do something on the opposite corner of the CVS – make sure it involves a memorial and more density
- Think innovation and technology, a school for tech, coding, robots, pushing people into the future, a community incubator
- Make a place where people can come to learn how to run or fix an automated truck then get their first jobs down the street

Comments from the Prospect Business Association (PBA):

On April 15, 2019, two representatives from the PBA came to the Kansas City Design Center to follow up on what had been discussed at the public meeting the following week. They gave a variety of insights about the corridor, including an overview of history in the area and comments on their goals for development of the corridor.

Their definition of the Prospect Corridor is Prospect Avenue from 18th to 39th Street. The PBA was a primary driver in the implementation of the 1/8th-cents “Central City Sales Tax” in the area.

They highlighted a variety of projects that are currently being developed in the corridor including a new strip mall development across from the Linwood Shopping Center, and a mixed-use development on the block around the Bluford Library (Prospect Avenue and 31st Street). They noted that the corridor has come a long way already. At one point the State of Missouri wanted to put a prison where the Linwood Shopping Center is now.

They commented on how there is currently no office space on Prospect Avenue and people are looking for it. They encouraged the idea of high density right off Prospect Avenue and think Prospect Avenue should become a commercial corridor. They emphasized that they want development but it needs to be driven by the people in the community and the PBA, the early investors. They noted that the PBA's involvement and the involvement of Church communities helped to make some key early changes to development, including making sure the new police campus was more community oriented by making it a crime lab, a station, and a community center rather than a typical police station. They also noted that development on the corridor needs financial incentives to happen because in most cases developers need to be able to provide 40-50% equity on projects in the area.

“We want jobs, we want opportunity, and we want to be in charge of our own community.”



Figure 9.4 Meeting I



Figure 9.5 Meeting II



Figure 9.6 Meeting III

Community Engagement Process Notes and Key Takeaways:

A variety of insights were provided by the community at our first two meetings, but most importantly we realized that the community is not likely to make time to come to us – we need to go to them. By simplifying the presentation of the project we made our ideas more digestible and provided the community with the opportunity to give comments on easily understandable elements of our process. By setting up a “booth” at the Gregg/Klice Community Center we were able to reach out to a more diverse audience and we had the opportunity to reach out to people who are not regularly engaged.

Based on a limited number of discussions the following observations were made:

The community as a whole seems to be very aware of the blight along Prospect Avenue. In every conversation we had, members of the community were excited to see that the city is taking an interest in their neighborhoods. They are worried about gentrification, but generally they are more interested in seeing development than they are worried. They want it to be affordable, but from what we have seen so far people don't seem to be threatened by potential development. The community wants to see development and in Pendleton Heights specifically, neighbors are interested in seeing more density on the intersection of Independence Avenue and Prospect Avenue (this is based on both the input from a community meeting and evidence of community push back on an original proposal for a building on the northeast corner of Independence and Prospect that has been brought up by both community members and our advisory committee).

The feedback gathered from the community helped inform the conceptual designs of landmark buildings and the park.

Following the third and final community engagement effort and the meeting with Don and Albert, it became clear that the main concern the community has is being left out of decision making. They know the history of their neighborhoods and they want to see development come in, but they want to be a player in development as it happens. They want to know that the development happening in their community is for them and they want a say in changes that happen in the area.

Community members want to live in a more walkable neighborhood and want to see their community develop. They want to see new amenities move into the area that help push their community forward. They currently are interested in seeing redevelopment and for the most part are focused on revitalizing.

When the issue of gentrification was brought up to community members, most were unphased. The attitude of community members in most respects is that development in the area is necessary and wanted, with the caveat that they want to be involved in decision making in their community. Although most members of the community did not comment on the potential for gentrification, some stakeholders who had more experience working in development or with disenfranchised residents did raise concerns. At the last community meeting a woman who worked with people who had code violations raised some concerns about displacement of existing residents. A planner at The City mentioned that The City is putting measures in place to require affordable housing, specifically they are requiring 10% of all units that use incentive money from The City to be affordable.

There is clearly a desire for redevelopment along the northern part of Prospect Avenue.

Design Team Members: Regan Tokos, Stasha Thomas, Elana Carter, Charlie Vue

The design phase of Prospect North's development focuses on creating a cohesive urban space oriented to Prospect Avenue that reconnects three distinct pieces of urban space into a corridor that is united through concept, program, and design. The goal of our team's design and programming is to reconnect the corridor spatially while making places for everyone. The designed spaces allow for community gathering and provide spaces that encourage activity and engagement. The overall urban concept aims to bring the corridor back to what it was historically, a center for culture, art, and urban life, through a reconnected urban fabric.

The Prospect North project was developed alongside projects from four other groups working on different parts of The Corridor. Once the studio determined the areas most suitable for nodal development, groups branched off for more in-depth analysis and design. Each project was unified under a concept for the whole Prospect Corridor defined around re-centering Prospect Avenue, but beyond the key concept and general strategies, each of the four areas were developed to reflect and integrate into the existing fabric of each area.

Prospect North's strategy includes the development of a unified streetscape plan, landmark buildings, infill, and a redesign of Prospect Plaza Park. The goal is to bring an identity to this section of Prospect Avenue and to make it a central element of the urban landscape. By developing the design of the park, streetscape, and landmark buildings along with selecting key sites for density development, the hope is that a sense of place can develop and that the history and identity of the place can start to be expressed through the design.

Three primary strategies have been employed in a variety of phases that go along with a likely scenario of catalytic development.

The first strategy implemented is a revived streetscape. Ideally, by revitalizing the streetscape of the area, the space becomes more walkable, community oriented, and more desirable for residents and users of the soon to be implemented Prospect MAX.

The next strategy includes infilling vacant land. The Corridor has plenty of space and the need for more housing and mixed-use development. Our proposal suggests several areas where new housing units could be developed and encourages development of mixed-use housing in some places. This strategy will help to define the street edge, increase housing availability, and diversify housing types.

The third strategy is creating landmark buildings that help to create a sense of place on Prospect Avenue at the key intersections of 12th Street and Prospect Avenue where the Prospect Max has one of its first stops and at the intersection of Interstate-70 and Prospect Avenue.

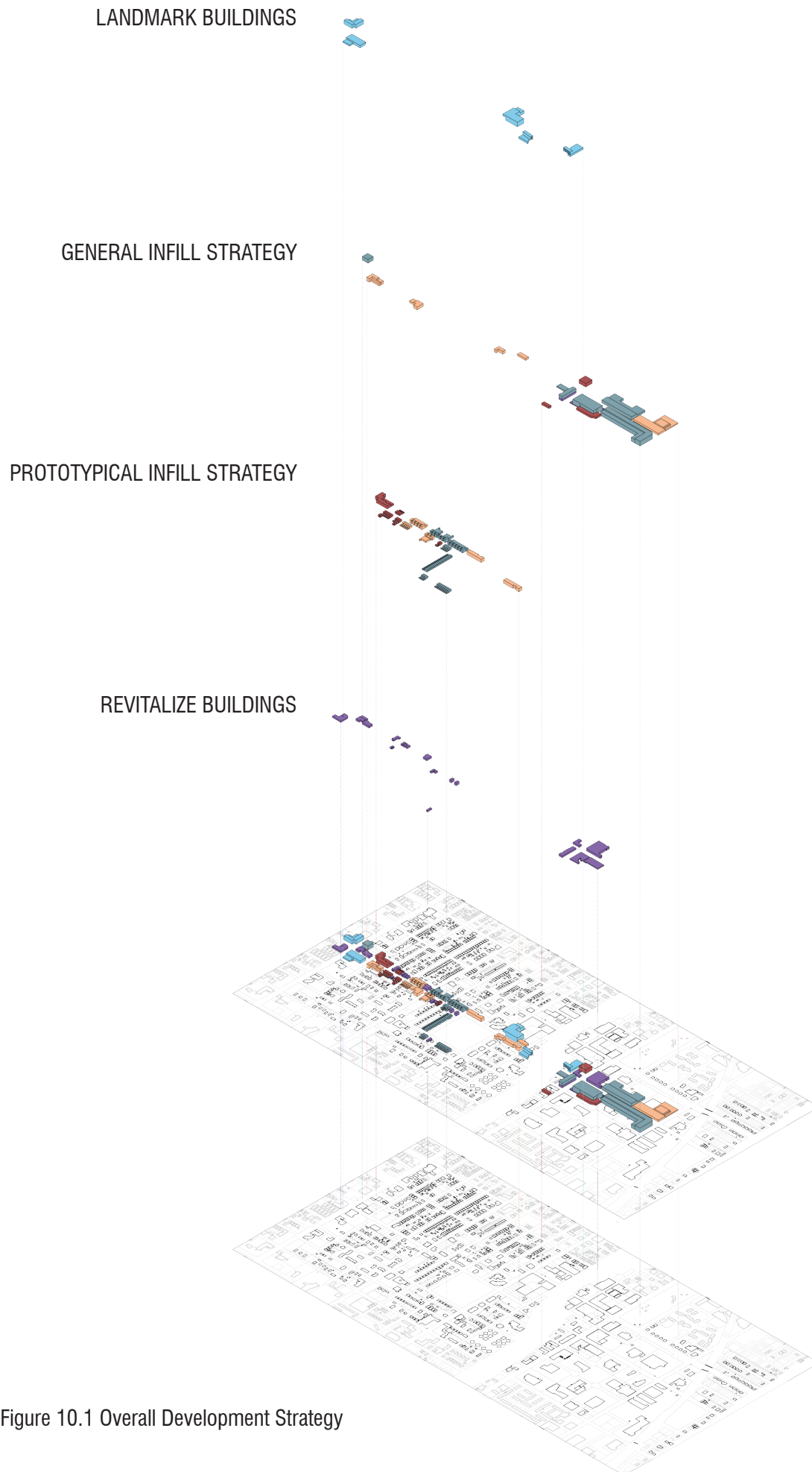


Figure 10.1 Overall Development Strategy

Streetscape:

The first development strategy is revitalizing the streetscape. The streetscape strategy of North Prospect is focused on connecting, maintaining, and slowing. These three ideas build the foundation of what the street should look like and what it should do for people. **Connecting** focuses on providing intersections that are more walkable and pedestrian oriented by using the intersection as a canvas for community art. **Maintaining** means maintaining the street edge and eliminating curb cuts along Prospect Avenue (where this is possible) and moving parking to back-of-house rather than along the main streets. **Slowing** is a general strategy that expresses the idea that by adding certain elements, in this case street trees and on-street parking, cars will be signaled to slow by the way they understand their surroundings. All three strategies together create a new streetscape plan that provides a safer, more comfortable urban environment.

The goal of the connecting strategy is to provide a space that is clearly multi-modal and favor for pedestrians. The simple idea of providing a space that is both visually different and more dynamic creates a clear indicator for both cars and people that the intersection is meant as a place for pedestrians to safely cross the street while also appreciating the urban setting. Intersections provide expansive views and act as a meeting space for pedestrians.

The maintaining strategy helps to provide a uniform space along Prospect Avenue. Fewer curb cuts provides a more comfortable pedestrian experience and creates a better space for pedestrian activity. Lessening the space for cars coming into the plane of the sidewalk helps make sidewalks feel more pedestrian oriented and creates less chance that cars will come near pedestrians.

The slowing strategy provides vehicles with visual cues to slow down. Trees provide a sense of scale and street parking narrows the street and provides a seemingly tighter driving experience. Providing a turn lane also creates fewer drive lanes and tighter driving lanes while allowing enough space for turning and maintaining the flow of traffic. Trees, narrowed streets, and other visual cues encourage drivers to slow down and provide a more pleasant multi-modal condition.

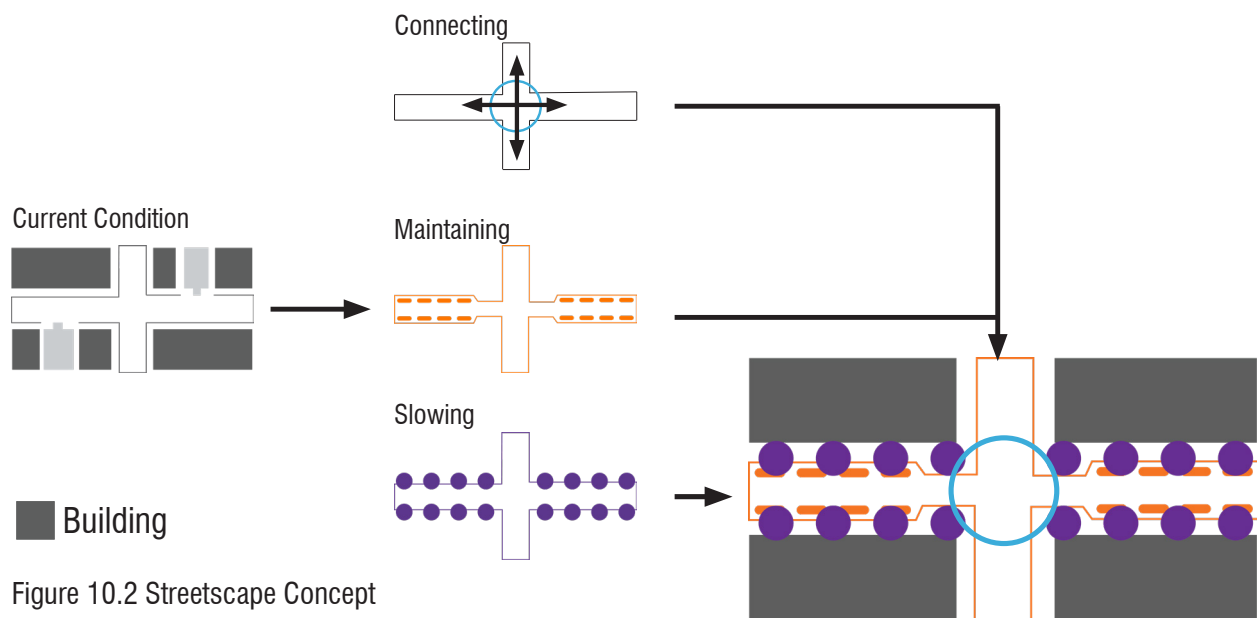


Figure 10.2 Streetscape Concept

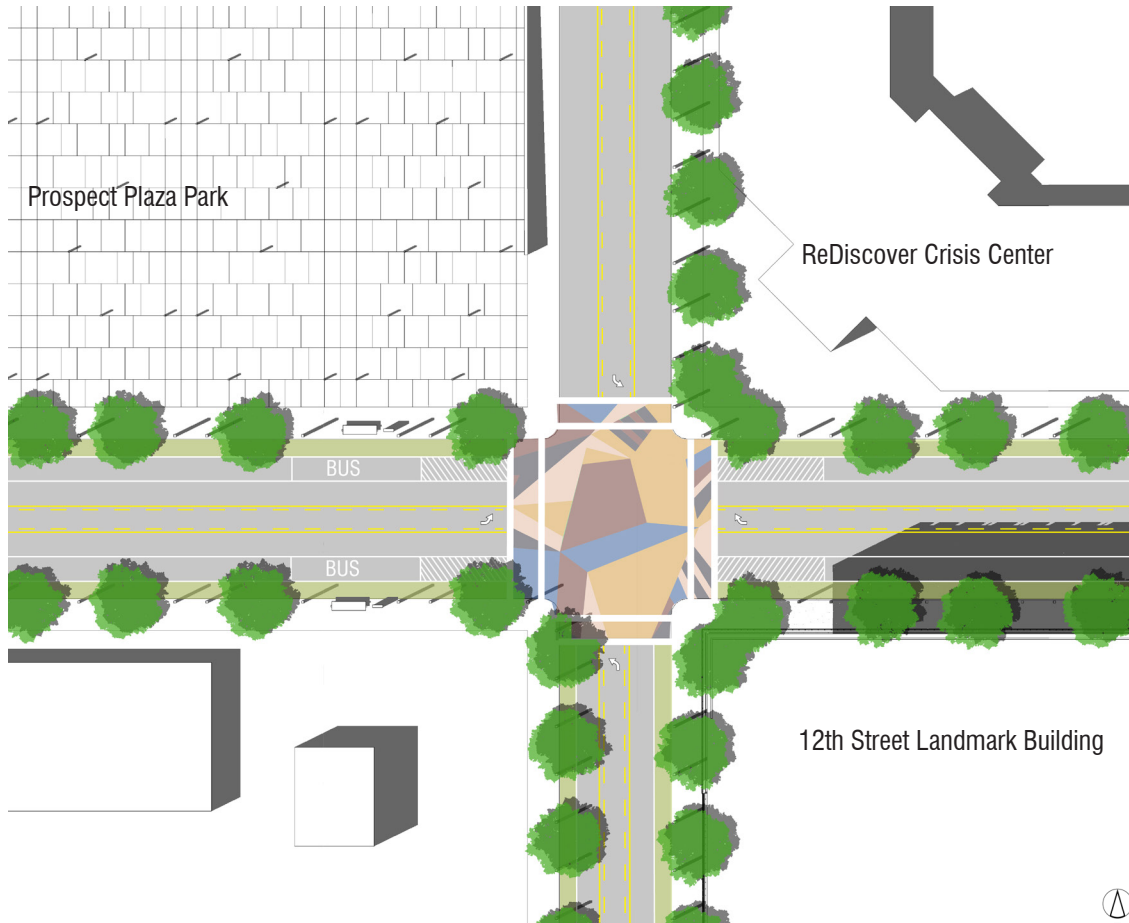


Figure 10.3 Intersection Plan - 12th and Prospect Ave.

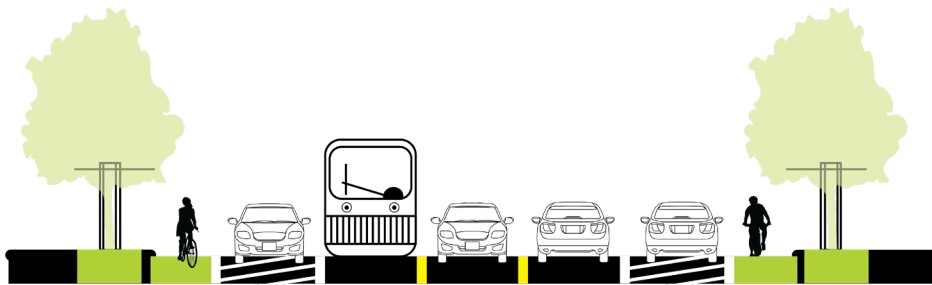


Figure 10.4 Section A - Streetscape on 12th Street

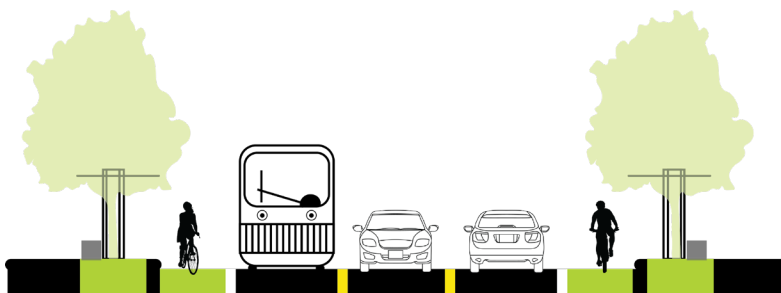


Figure 10.5 Section B - Mixed-Use Oriented Streetscape on Prospect Avenue

Infill:

The second development strategy is infilling vacant lots. There are a variety of vacant lots along Prospect Avenue. The first strategy for nodal development includes infilling at a height that responds to context buildings and then building up higher along Prospect Avenue. This allows the buildings to address the street prominently but also keeps new buildings in context with the existing buildings. The idea for infill is to maintain character and form with current building stock by using similar colors and character to what can be found on Prospect Avenue currently.

Infill begins with assembling vacant lots, building the massing to context height, creating public space, and then increasing density along Prospect Avenue. This allows for high density development that responds to context and allows for more uses and affordability through density. By responding to context and height, the surrounding neighborhood is not confronted with a jarring change in the visual landscape, rather their neighborhoods fit comfortably with the urban nodes created nearby.

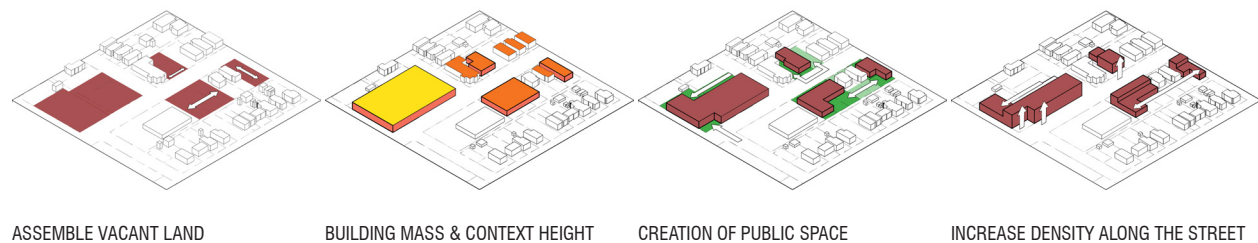


Figure 10.6 Standard Operation Infill

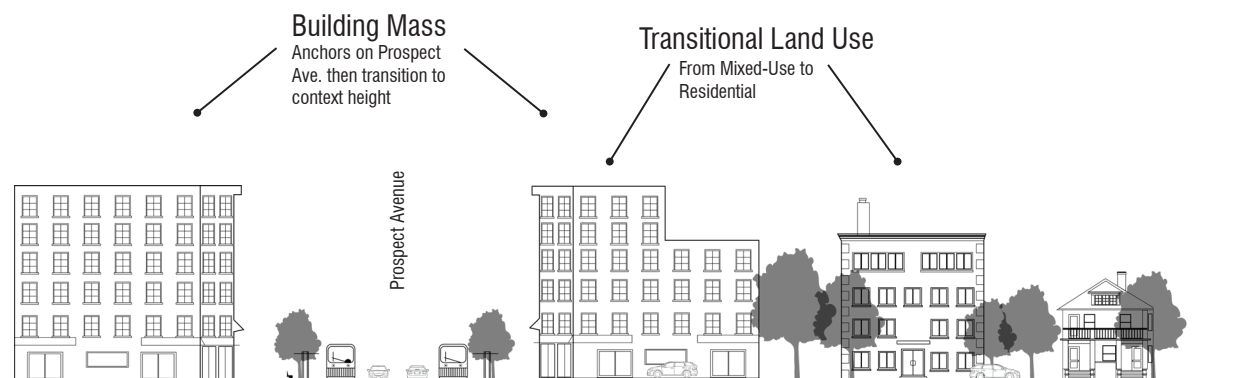


Figure 10.7 Example Section

Prospect Color Study

As a part of the design development phase of the project, our group looked into the colors that currently exist on Prospect Avenue. This study was done to understand the visual context of the area more clearly and to help establish a color palette for reference during design of features along The Corridor.

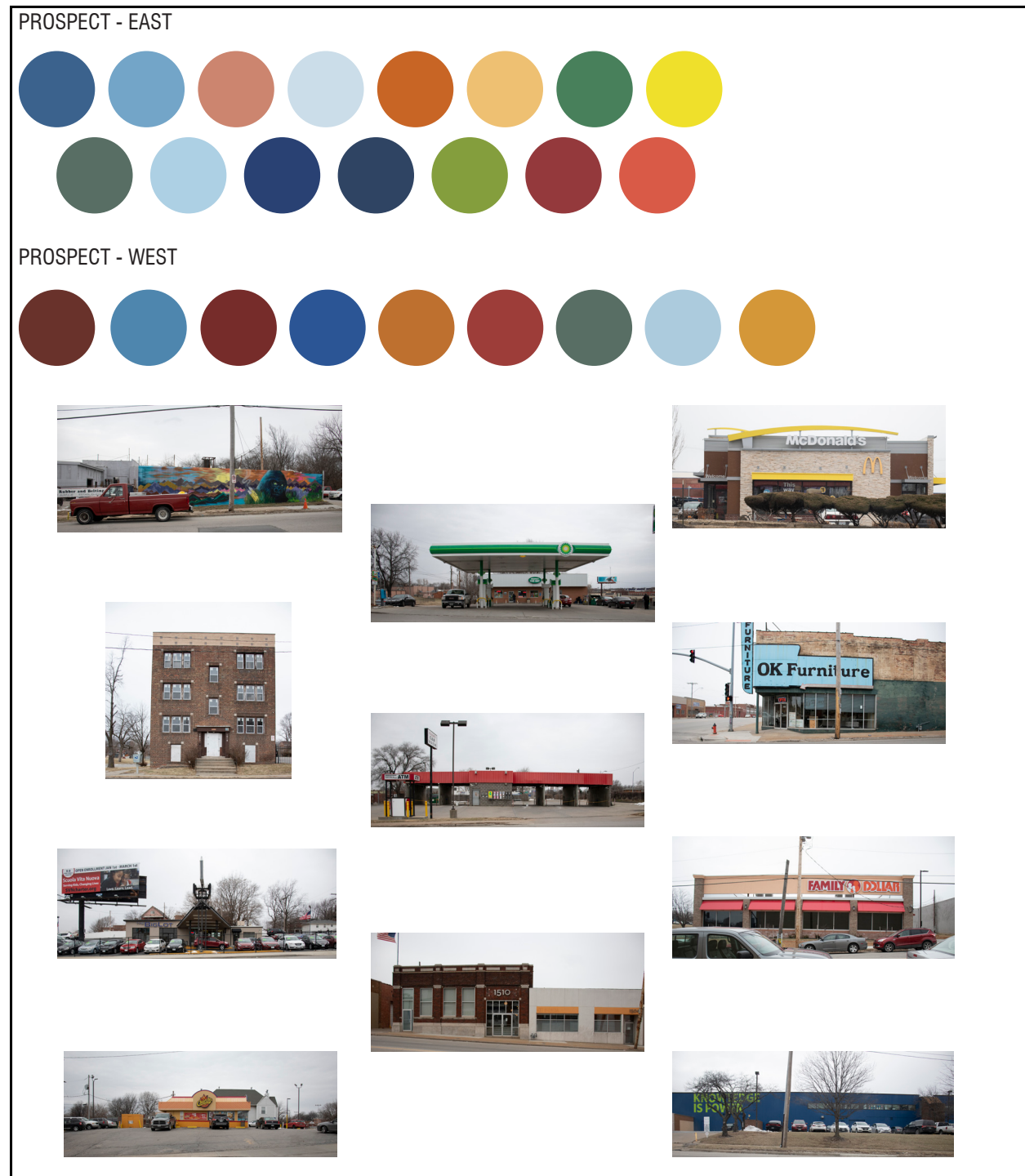


Figure 10.8 Color Study

Landmark Buildings:

The third strategy for development is implementing landmark buildings. These buildings are made to enhance the public realm and to celebrate the history and culture of this section of Prospect Avenue while also breaking away from normative development styles. Gentrification and development are not things that can be halted solely through design or policy. It takes a combination of efforts that respond to context and put in protection for those who are there now. The landmark strategy tries to emphasize the public realm, especially through the development of the 12th Street building.

12th Street Landmark: This site responds to context and history and provides a public and private space that will become a supporter of the community and a gathering place. The 12th Street building is proposed as part of the first phase of development so it can draw people in to experience the history and culture of the area. This building is proposed as a part of the first phase so it can become a part of the community fabric before other development changes occur.

The facade of the building was developed based on a prototypical pattern of buildings on Prospect Avenue. Facades are made to respond to context and to provide a human scale to the building facade. The design and development of this building is created to enhance the public realm and create a community space while celebrating history and culture while breaking in style from more typical building types. The structure is meant as a landmark to draw people in from the east and the west to gather on Prospect Avenue.

Programming Plan Diagram

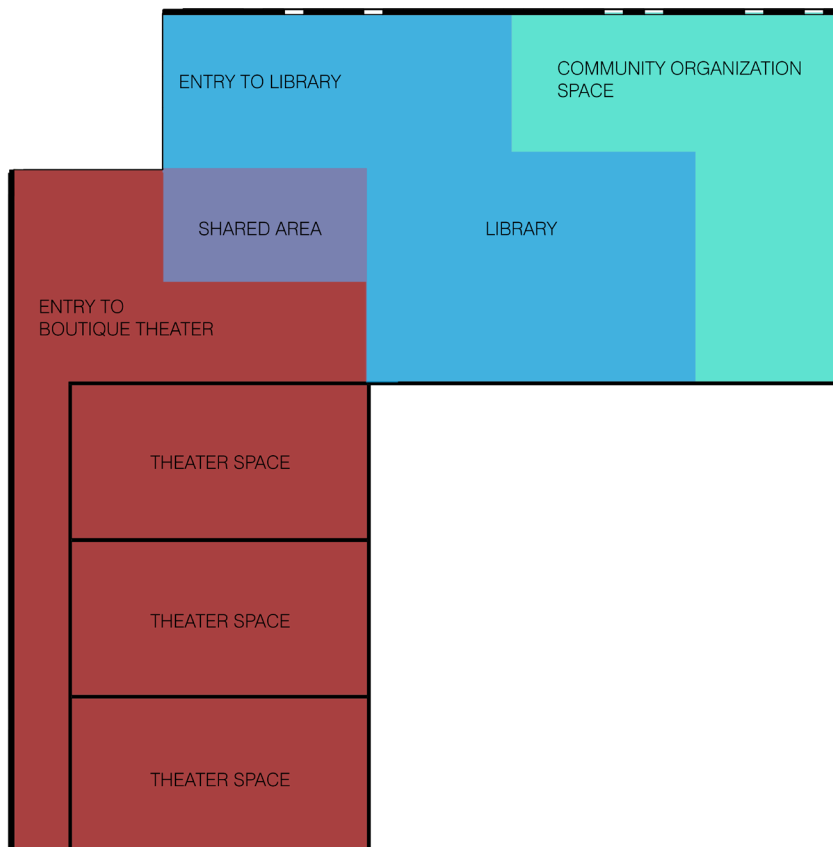


Figure 10.9 Programming for the 12th Street Landmark Building



Figure 10.10 Landmark Facade Development



Figure 10.11 12th and Prospect Landmark Building

I-70 Landmark Buildings: Two additional landmark buildings have been developed near I-70 with a clear relationship to each other and their surroundings, including the highway that once divided them. The goal of the landmark buildings and the redesign of the I-70 bridge is to create a clear visual connection to those passing by Prospect Avenue. The updated bridge includes art that creates a clear identity and sense of place when passing through the area. From the perspective of a pedestrian, the view to downtown and an art connection is celebrated. From the vantage point of someone in a vehicle the image of buildings and art provides an experience and understanding of the place one is driving past. The buildings create a clear icon for the corridor through their billboard-like design. The design of the buildings allows for those passing by a glimpse into The Corridor. The billboard buildings provide an indication of the culture, art, and activity that is being developed. The top parts of the buildings are oriented towards the highway with glass that allows those passing by to catch a glimpse or two inside the building. It takes the concept of the billboard to a more conceptual level – rather than selling a product – it provides a view and understanding of a place. It tells the story of where you are by allowing you one glimpse into the place.

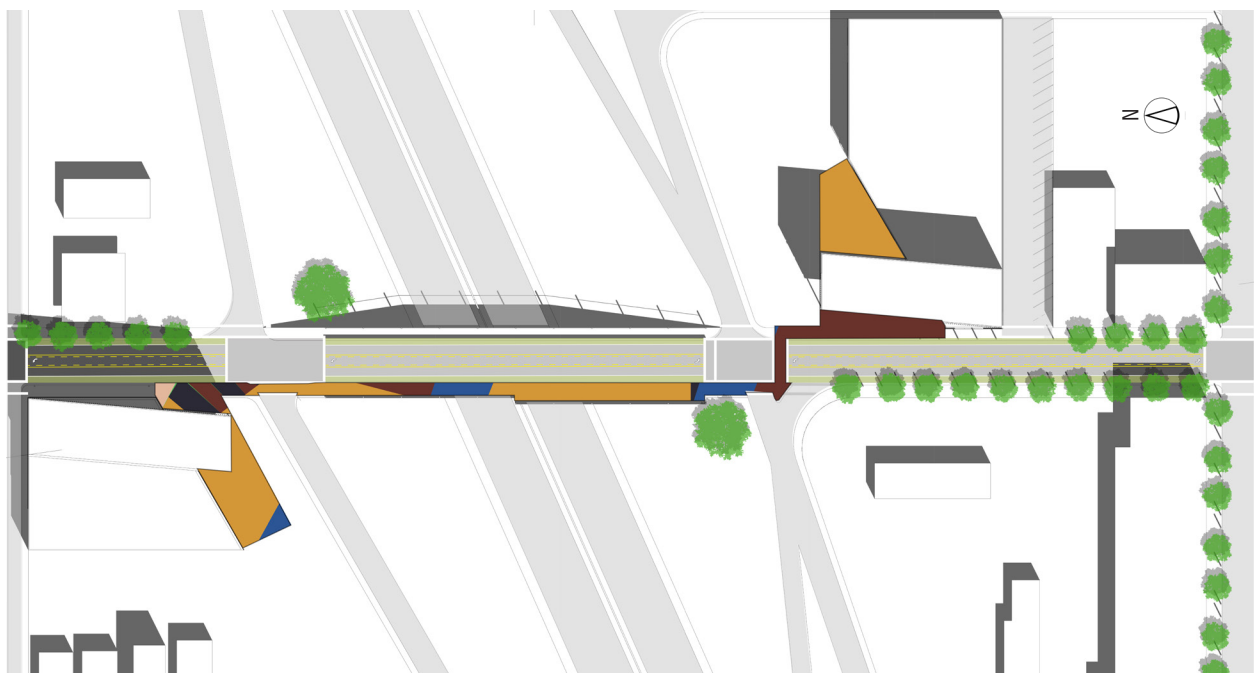
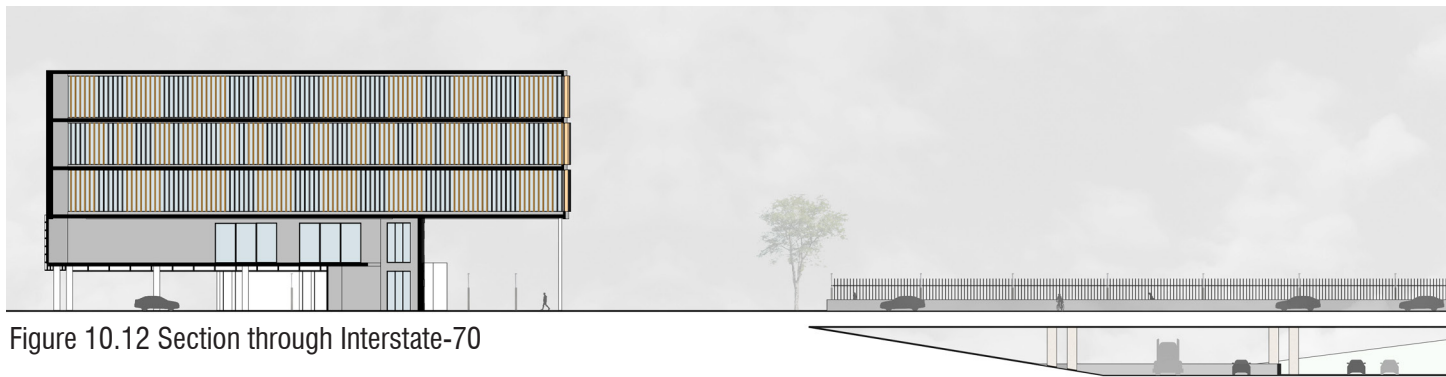




Figure 10.14 North I-70 Landmark Building on Prospect and I-70 Looking Northwest

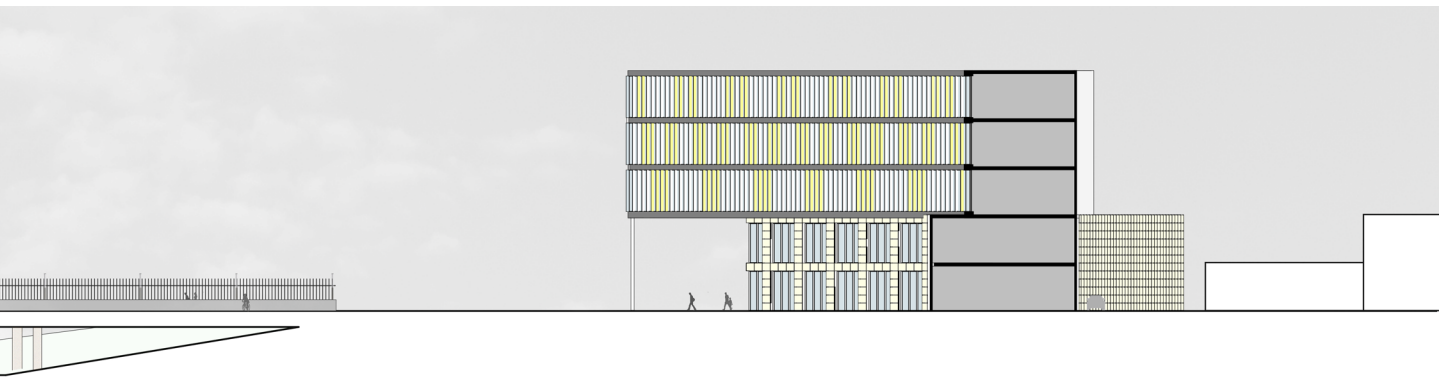


Figure 10.15 South I-70 Landmark Building on Prospect and I-70 looking Southeast

Design Development Phasing:

Buildings could be developed in three phases in accordance with how this area will most likely develop in the future. The first phase will focus on redevelopment and restoration of current building stock. Ideally this development is implemented as protections are put in place for developing more accessible housing.

Currently the city is working on developing protections for affordable housing and is focused on understanding the importance of affordable and vibrant housing. This includes creating or preserving at least 5,000 single and multifamily housing units by December 2023, creating a \$75 million catalytic housing development (trust) fund to create and preserve units; supporting non-profit and private developers with resources, less burdensome regulations and appropriate incentives; recognizing the importance of housing for a strong and vibrant neighborhood; and creating tenant/landlord university to model best practices between tenants and landlords (City Planning and Development Department, 2018).

The **first phase**, Prospect Plaza Park will be redeveloped and a building on the southeast corner adjacent to it will be developed into a multifaceted space that is programmed to include a boutique theater on one side and a modern library that contains a variety of community gathering space on the other. This 12th Street Landmark Building space will help to both bring Prospect Avenue back to its roots as a gathering place for arts and culture, and provide a much needed space for community members to meet and organize for free or at a very low cost.

This space will provide a cultural and community resource that anchors the beginning of the Prospect corridor to the past while also pushing it into the future. It will connect to the park locally, but it will also become a gateway to The Corridor with the first Prospect MAX stop on Prospect Avenue at the 12th Street and Prospect Avenue intersection. The redevelopment of Prospect Plaza Park will also create a new iconic community space for play, gathering, and culture. This park will have elements oriented towards the local community as well as elements that make this a regional square.

The first phase will also begin the creation or revitalization of other key buildings in the corridor. There are multiple buildings that have historic or cultural value that we propose implementing a grant for façade improvement along the corridor.

Independence Avenue + Prospect Avenue (A)



Figure 10.16 Before



Figure 10.17 After



Figure 10.18 Phasing Plan I: Revitalize and Infill

The proposed **second phase** includes densifying, continuing revitalizing, and removing some of the suburban patterns. Several buildings throughout the northern part of the corridor have historic or aesthetic value and should be revitalized through façade updates. Other parcels are prime areas for higher density (4-6 story) development that could include either building up current buildings or removing current building stock in favor buildings with higher density that also respond to the street.

The second phase will also develop the landmark building on the southwest corner of Independence Avenue and Prospect Avenue, replacing the current CVS building with a mixed-use building. Ideally CVS will stay in this new building. The main goal of this phase of development is to increase density along the proposed Prospect Avenue and Independence Avenue Ride KC MAX lines. One of the goal of densifying is to provide a variety of housing types and affordable housing options.

Along with the development density, phase two is centered around changing the suburban typology. Several buildings along Prospect Avenue have large setbacks that make the street feel wide open and provide an unpleasant pedestrian experience. After new streetscape has been implemented, the next goal for the street is to define the edge and remove buildings that are suburban in favor of more urban buildings that respond to the street and provide more of a feeling of enclosure on the street.

Independence + Prospect (A)



Figure 10.19 Before



Figure 10.20 After

Truman + Prospect (B)



Figure 10.21 Before



Figure 10.22 After



Figure 10.23 Phase II Plan: Replace Suburban Typology with Urban Building Types

The proposed **third phase** of development focuses on landmark buildings that redefine the bridge over I-70. This bridge currently creates a barrier between two segments of the corridor. The street edge is not defined and there is not a strong connection between the north and south in program, design, or function. It is not a pleasant space for multi-modal transportation, and it is especially uncomfortable for pedestrians trying to navigate the bridge. This proposal encourages a re-imagining of this area as a connecting piece rather than a division.

The overall goal of this project is to recreate a connection in the urban form that used to exist, as seen in the Sanborn maps previously analyzed. The design of this part of the corridor allows for nodal development and the discovery of a new type of spatial and visual connection in the area. It takes three different areas and connects them through concept and design into a new place oriented towards a strong community rooted in arts and culture.

Figure 10.25 and 10.27 below show some of the infill development in the area.

Independence + Prospect (A)



Figure 10.24 Before



Figure 10.25 After

Truman + Prospect (B)



Figure 10.26 Before



Figure 10.27 After



Figure 10.28 Phase III Plan: Densify

KEY TAKEAWAYS

North Prospect is a uniquely historic piece of Kansas City faced with several design and social challenges. From the vibrant community of the early 20th Century, this area has faced decline through disinvestment, segregation, white flight, and population declines. The City is currently prepared to reinvest through both infrastructure and financial incentives but with a historically neglected space, imagining what future development will look like can be a difficult task.

This study focused on the redevelopment of Prospect North through design development oriented towards a cultural understanding and based on the recognition that this area will likely be labeled as gentrifying in the near future. One of the key goals of this project is to embrace the history and culture of Prospect Avenue and to plan for a more equitable future by designing community oriented spaces, places for gathering and art, and increasing density to encourage affordability.

Change is inevitable on the East Side of Kansas City but that change can be planned for. This design looks at how developing key nodes can both catalyze development and create spaces that connect and celebrate the community and history of the area. A primary challenge will be to develop in ways that bring more life (people, plants, and engaging activities and services) while making the area more affordable for existing residents who do not have much financial capital.

This project presents the precedents around Kansas City that can start to lay the framework for understanding how development happens and how it effects communities on Kansas City's East Side. The goal of this project was a spatial unification and an understanding of gentrification concerns in the community. This project encourages density to redefine the street edge and create a more walkable and enjoyable urban environment and it specifically designs several developments that encourage a physical and emotional connection to the street and the history and culture of the area. Ideally as this place develops it is inclusive and takes into account the rich history of the area through a sensitivity to the current residents' needs and wants.

The process of identity development encourages using art as expression. In order for true community identity to come though, the art spaces of the area need to be flexible. Public space should have canvases for community groups to design and develop. In some instances art has been used as a cover for gentrifying neighborhoods; with the right interventions this will not be the case. Encouraging local artist and shops will help create a place that reflects the life and ingenuity found on Kansas City's East Side.

This study provides an understanding of Kansas City's East Side as a location where the hypothesis is that increasing sense of place and encouraging identity development in affordable and inclusive ways can help combat feelings of displacement. With the future potential to redevelop, it would be valuable to establish a sense of identity, develop art, and explore the needs of the community to employ and test the hypothesis that identity development in the public realm will discourage a sense of displacement.

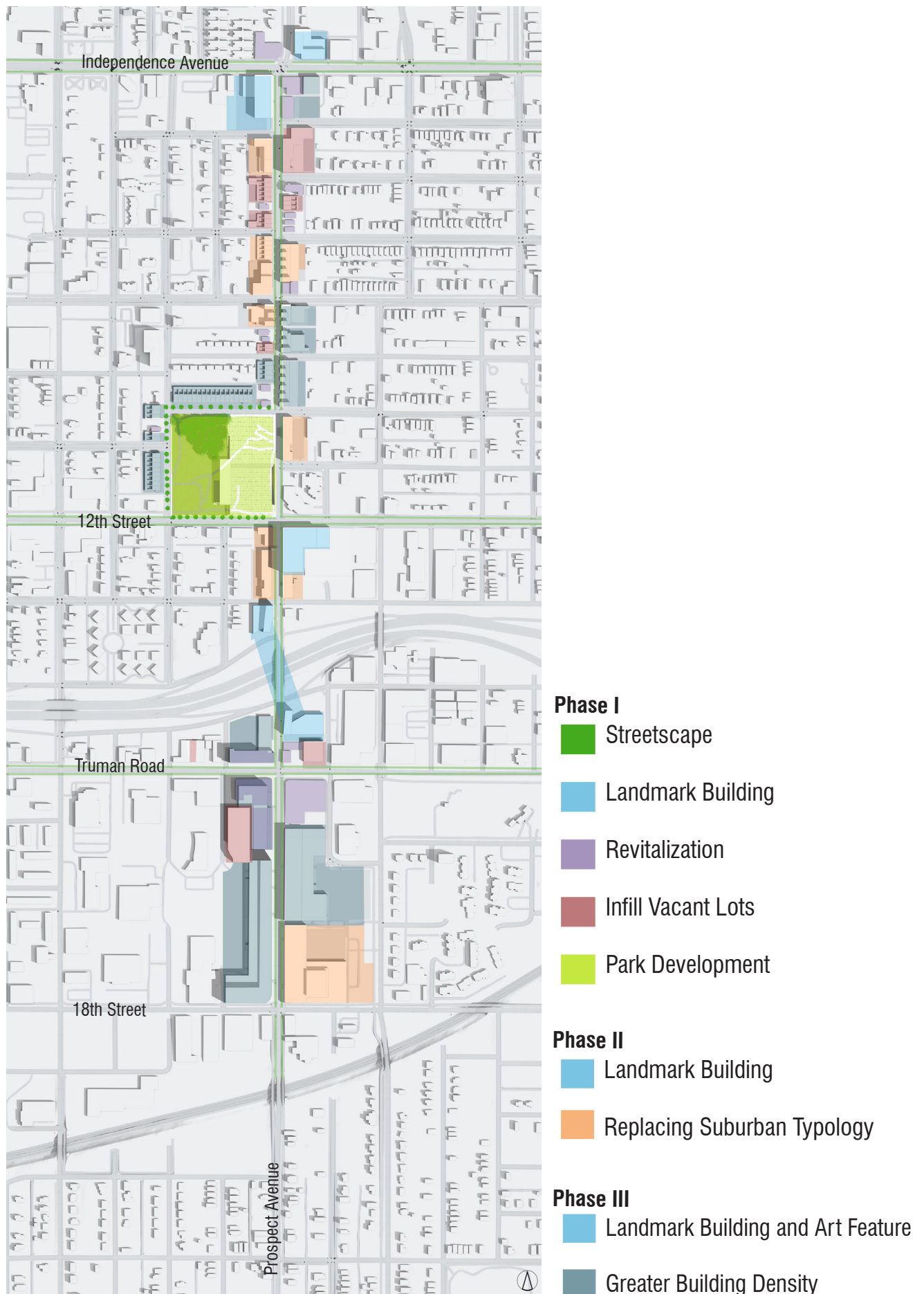


Figure 10.29 Full Final Plan

Research and Supporting Questions Answered:

How can cultural identity development and placemaking, using art and the design arts, be employed to effectively combat gentrification?

In this development proposal, art is employed to establish a sense of place and identity. Each of the precedent plans reviewed pointed out that one of the reasons to develop with their suggestions in mind was to create a cohesive sense of place. I am proposing the same here. The art is created in the actual building styles, an activation of space for art, and by making a statement art piece out of the bridge in order to create a sense of place for both users on the bridge and those passing under. This sense of place and identity can come with aesthetic changes, but it also should come with a cultural shift of understanding that Prospect Avenue will be more than another art district, it will be community oriented and it will have extensive affordable housing.

What do residents think about Kansas City's East Side – as it currently exists, and in its desired (envisioned) future?

Residents of the East Side are ready to see redevelopment, but some are cautious. Most people who came to the public meetings were excited to see a project looking at Prospect Avenue and had no concerns for gentrification. However, based on precedents in Kansas City, specifically the development on Troost Avenue, development sounds better to communities in theory than in proposal. Residents on and around Troost have become fearful of gentrification and are starting to understand the implications of what it means to live in a gentrifying neighborhood.

How can we avoid gentrifying Kansas City's East Side while still developing it?

Avoiding gentrifying while developing means combining policy and design solutions, revitalizing buildings that are available to be revitalized, creating a sense of place, and establishing an inclusive culture in North Prospect. It also means working with the residents of the area to establish their wants and needs as redevelopment occurs. The first step in avoiding gentrification is being realistic about it being a possibility, which is something Kansas City has already done by creating the Revive the East Side Initiative. The next step is continually involving residents as steps are made for new development. This may include creating a community land trust and establishing new forms of ownership over community developments, or it may mean creating more affordable housing or capping property taxes until sale.

When development happens it should be development that embraces and celebrates the history and culture on Prospect Avenue. Prospect Avenue cannot shy away from its challenges, but through a community effort and cohesive community oriented design, The Corridor can grow into something that works for everyone.

Limitations:

The limitations of this study include the academic foundation — it is not a study backed up by funding and therefore implementation is limited. Limitations also include the time restraints of an academic year and the conjunction with the full studio project. The scope was also focused on design implementation when, in retrospect, it should have contained interviews with the public for a more robust analysis of what art should truly look like in the area. It should have also taken in more elements of policy as it relates to art. This report only scratches the surface of what it means to be a cultural arts district. A future study should engage the community in an even deeper way. It could also develop prototypical art pieces to accompany the built environment developed in this report, or critique those art pieces that may be created and implemented in the near future along Prospect Avenue.

A follow up for this study would look more into current residents feelings and understanding around gentrification by employing **interviews**. It could also dive deeper into specific **policy** related strategies for combating gentrification in historically under-served communities.

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Special Thanks To:

Committee Members:

Vladimir Krstic
Stephanie Rolley
Lee Skabelund

Advisory Council:

Angela Eley
Jeffrey Williams
Kate Bender
Beth Edson
Brien Starner
Daniel Serda
Kyle Elliott

Design Team:

Elana Carter
Stasha Thomas
Charlie Vue

My Parents:

Amy and Tom Tokos