

# Envisioning Better Blocks for St. Joe

Design proposals by Kansas State University landscape architecture students,  
in collaboration with the City of St. Joseph, Missouri and Mo-Kan Regional Council

Edited by  
Alpa Nawre & Blake Belanger



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THE COLLEGE of  
ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING & DESIGN // K-STATE

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Book Design and Organization by Elizabeth Decker  
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Belanger, Blake. 2014.



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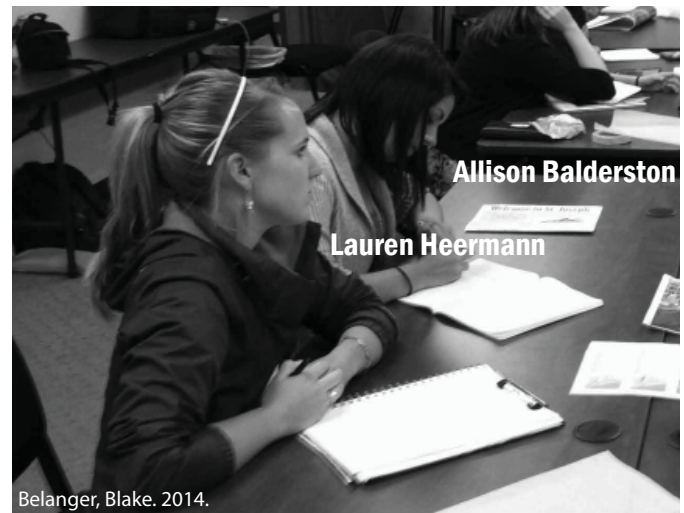
Belanger, Blake. 2014.



Taylor Lininger

Erin Wilson

Belanger, Blake. 2014.

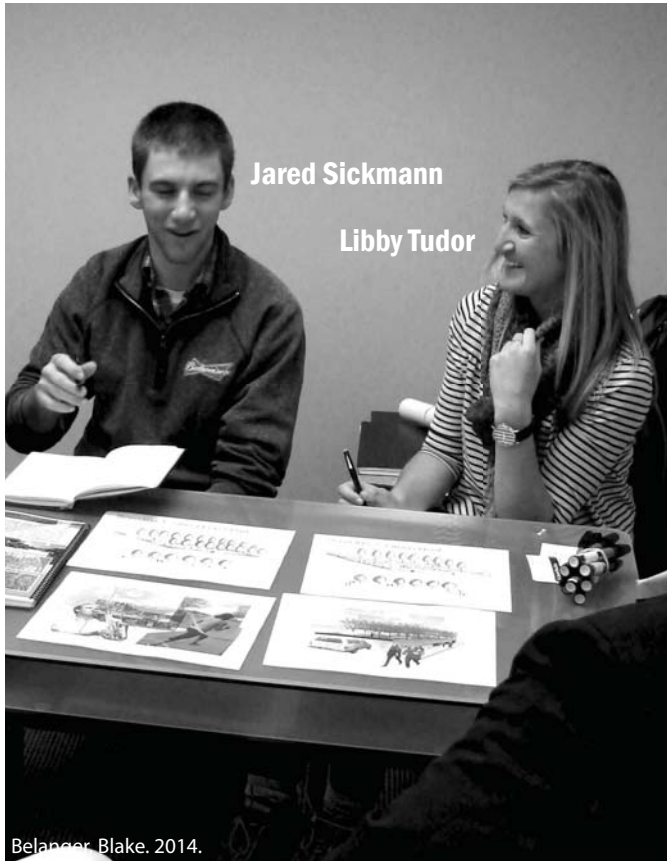


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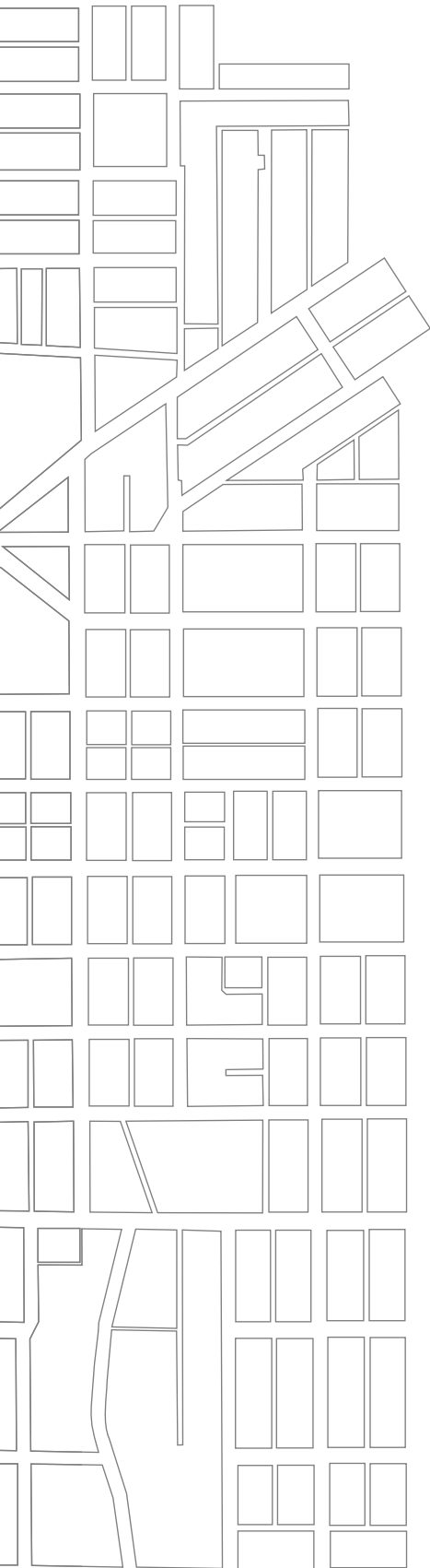
Belanger, Blake. 2014.







**Full Study Area Site Map** (Decker, Elizabeth. 2014. Reference Map. Source data: Mo-Kan, St. Joseph, MO, Kansas State University LAR422 Data Set dated January 30, 2014.)



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	Amanda Kline & Andrew Rostek	





# **Introduction**

**Professors Alpa Nawre & Blake Belanger**

# Introduction

## Background

This compilation presents the landscape architecture studio works of 14 mid-level students in the Master's of Landscape Architecture program at the Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional & Community Planning at Kansas State University. The studio was taught by Professors Blake Belanger and Alpa Nawre in the spring of 2014 and focused on issues of contemporary site planning and landscape architecture in the context of urban infill development in St. Joseph, Missouri. Although students studied the entire downtown and its context, the focus of design proposals is on specific sites within a smaller study area defined by the Downtown Precise Plan.

St. Joseph is the county seat of Buchanan County in Missouri, with a population of 76,197 [1]. Situated on the Missouri river, St. Joseph was incorporated in 1843 and was the last frontier supply town for pioneers headed onto the Wild-West and also the beginning of the Pony Express mail delivery for land then unconnected by rail. From being the bustling last out-post to "the center of an active business Midwestern business region, just minutes from the Kansas City, Mo., metropolitan area and Topeka, KS" [1], St. Joseph is re-creating its identity. At this moment, downtown St Joe is on the threshold of change. The energy and enthusiasm of the people of this community is reflected in the many urban initiatives and projects that the city has commissioned in the past few years. The design studio builds on this energy to craft visions for the revitalization of several sites in Downtown St. Joseph.

The design studio was funded by the City of St. Joseph and also supported in-kind by the Mo-Kan Regional Council. Key members of the City of St. Joseph, Mo-Kan Regional Council, and St. Joseph community, especially City Manager J. Bruce Woody, City Planner Dustin Smith, Mo-Kan Executive Director Tom Bliss, Mo-Kan Loan Officer Roni Mauer and

Olin Cox supported the studio with funding, professional expertise, and logistical coordination during the many activities of the studio.

## Course Sequence

### Phase One: Design Research

Students began the semester by researching the community through mapping exercises intended to draw out salient issues and identify opportunities. Mapping provides a means to explore characteristics of existing conditions and is fodder for developing new design ideas. The design research project provided a means to investigate a site-related research inquiry of the students' choosing. Finding a good research question required an iterative process of posing a question, discovering new information through mapping, posing a new or refined question, finding more information through mapping, and so forth until students were able to reach a clear and significant conclusion.

Students drew conclusions on a range of research questions such as 'How does St. Joseph's population density change over a 20 year period within the city limits?', 'What are some environmental factors that contribute to high obesity rates in St. Joseph?', 'What is the current streetscape quality of Downtown St. Joseph?', 'Where are the hot-spots for outdoor events in St. Joseph?' and so on.

### Phase Two: Site Proposal

In this phase of project work, students, in teams of two, identified a focus site within the St. Joseph downtown Precise Plan boundary [2], articulated their site-selection rationale, developed site-specific research and analysis, identified project goals and objectives, identified their conceptual framework, developed a site program,

prepared multiple conceptual site design alternatives, and assembled an organized and clear proposal document. This work builds on the previous research phase and required students to clearly articulate their intentions for developing particular urban sites in Downtown St. Joseph. Students also developed three conceptual design ideas for their respective sites.

Key community stakeholders and project partners from Mo-Kan and the City of St. Joseph critiqued these early student proposals in March 2014. The proposals were subsequently refined and presented to city officials, community stakeholders and local design professionals in St. Joseph through several community engagement sessions during a four day visit to St. Joseph, Mo in April. During this time the studio group also toured historic St. Joseph and embarked on a series of on-site mapping exercises.

### **Phase Three: Design Proposal**

The aim of this phase was to develop the project proposal from Phase Two to well-formulated site specific design proposals. A fundamental responsibility of landscape architects is making places. Although related to the organization of space and physical materials of landscape, place is more complex and nuanced. Places are "... constructed in our memories and affections through repeated encounters and complex associations. Place experiences are necessarily time-deepened and memory qualified." [3] Landscape philosopher John Dixon Hunt defines landscape architecture simply as "exterior place-making" [4]. Students were asked to create 'places' out of their chosen urban sites in Downtown St. Joseph.

The final studio projects were presented to the community at Better Block St. Joe on May 2-3. The two-day event celebrated ideas for improving downtown St. Joseph. Throughout the event, students exhibited their final project posters, short videos and talked with community members about their ideas. Prior to Better Block St. Joe, students also delivered formal presentations to St. Joseph City Council members and other Project Partners.

### **Student Design Proposals**

In the following seven projects, you will see ideas for inspiring dialogue about how downtown St Joseph might change. All of the projects focus on bringing new vitality to the downtown through civic space. Two projects re- envision the potential for Felix St Square and nearby parcels as a downtown civic amenity and iconic event space. Three projects propose new buildings and civic spaces aimed at providing urban opportunities for current residents and attracting new people to downtown. Two projects explore ways to better connect downtown to the Missouri River, and

imagine the riverfront as a local and regional destination. All the projects are visionary in nature, and plant seeds for potential future realities.

### **Felix Street Square Expansion**

The first project re-imagines Downtown's core civic space, Felix Street Square. The primary design strategy is to expand Felix Street Square to the east by removing a structurally unsound parking garage and replacing it with new outdoor civic space. Highlighted by a large recreational lawn, a splash park, a community garden, and shaded boardwalk seating, the expansion provides opportunities for large events, informal sports, children's play, and outdoor leisure. The project also proposes renovating Felix Street Square to include an amphitheater, new shade structure, and outdoor art installations.

### **The Link**

Leveraging the popularity of the historic Missouri Theater, *The Link* proposes a new civic space, a new mixed-use building, a pedestrian alley, and redesign of Felix Street Square. The proposal recommends replacing surface parking lots on the 700 block of Edmunds Street with an outdoor gallery and a garden to serve Missouri Theater patrons. A green pedestrian alley connects the proposed civic spaces to Felix Street Square, and serves as the project's framing strategy.

### **Establishing a Connection**

*Establishing a Connection* identifies the US Bank parking lot in the 500 block of Jules Street as an opportunity for urban infill. The design proposes to transform the block through a new mixed use building and a sequence of civic spaces. One of the primary site design challenges was to overcome a significant elevation change between the sidewalk and the parking lot surface, currently accommodated by a tall retaining wall. The plan recommends raising the ground surface to sidewalk elevation with a plaza adjacent to Jules Street, and addresses the grade change through a grassy tree-covered slope suited for outdoor seating. A second plaza on Francis street and sidewalk system create a diagonal pedestrian connection through the block.

### **The Common Ground**

Located within downtown's highest concentration of vacancies, *The Common Ground* proposes infill to catalyze downtown investment. Two new mixed-use buildings with partially enclosed plazas anchor a pedestrian alleyway featuring local artwork, seating, plantings, lighting, and a cafe. The plazas are envisioned to be gathering places for events and include a terraced amphitheater.

## Connect | Live | Grow

With a focus on community and healthy living, *Connect | Live | Grow* aims to provide healthy eating opportunities while supporting the local economy. The plan proposes a local microbrewery, local food cafe, and a downtown community garden. In addition, the plan recommends civic spaces that would help foster meaningful connections between diverse downtown residents.

## Crossing Boundaries

Operating at two scales, *Crossing Boundaries* recommends connecting St Joe's existing trail system to downtown and proposes a riverfront park for all ages. By introducing three new urban trails, downtown becomes a hub for St Joseph's heavily used pedestrian and bicycle system. The park design is inspired by the visual prominence of the I-229 viaduct, views to the river, and the site's significant role in the Pony Express, and offers diverse recreation opportunities including a skate-park, boat launch, playgrounds, trails, and scenic vantage points.

## Threads

*Threads* ambitiously re-imagines the downtown riverfront through large-scale infrastructure changes and a highly-programmed urban park. The proposal recommends vacating the I-229 viaduct and repurposing the structure to house new buildings and an elevated trail system offering sublime views to downtown and the Missouri River. The park provides opportunities to approach the river's edge and includes pedestrian bridges spanning the railroad tracks.

## Summary

These proposals certainly don't provide all the answers for shaping the future of Downtown Saint Joseph, but we believe as a set of ideas they can provide momentum for opening imaginations, prioritizing decisions and directing change. We hope that the residents, stakeholders, and decision-makers of Saint Joseph will consider the possibilities presented here, and continue envisioning better blocks for Saint Joe.

## References

- [1] St. Joseph Metro Chamber. 2013. <http://choosesaintjoseph.com/data/demographics/> accessed 24 May, 2014
- [2] City of St. Joseph. 2012. "The City of St. Joseph Downtown Precise Plan: Preserving the Past, Enriching the Future". City of St. Joseph. <http://www.stjoemo.info/DocumentCenter/View/162>.
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# Felix Street Square Expansion

Jared Sickmann & Libby Tudor

# 1



# Felix Street Square Expansion

## Enhancing Downtown's Social Hub

Felix Street Square Expansion re-establishes the once lively character of downtown St. Joseph by creating a variety of activities and event opportunities for year-round use.

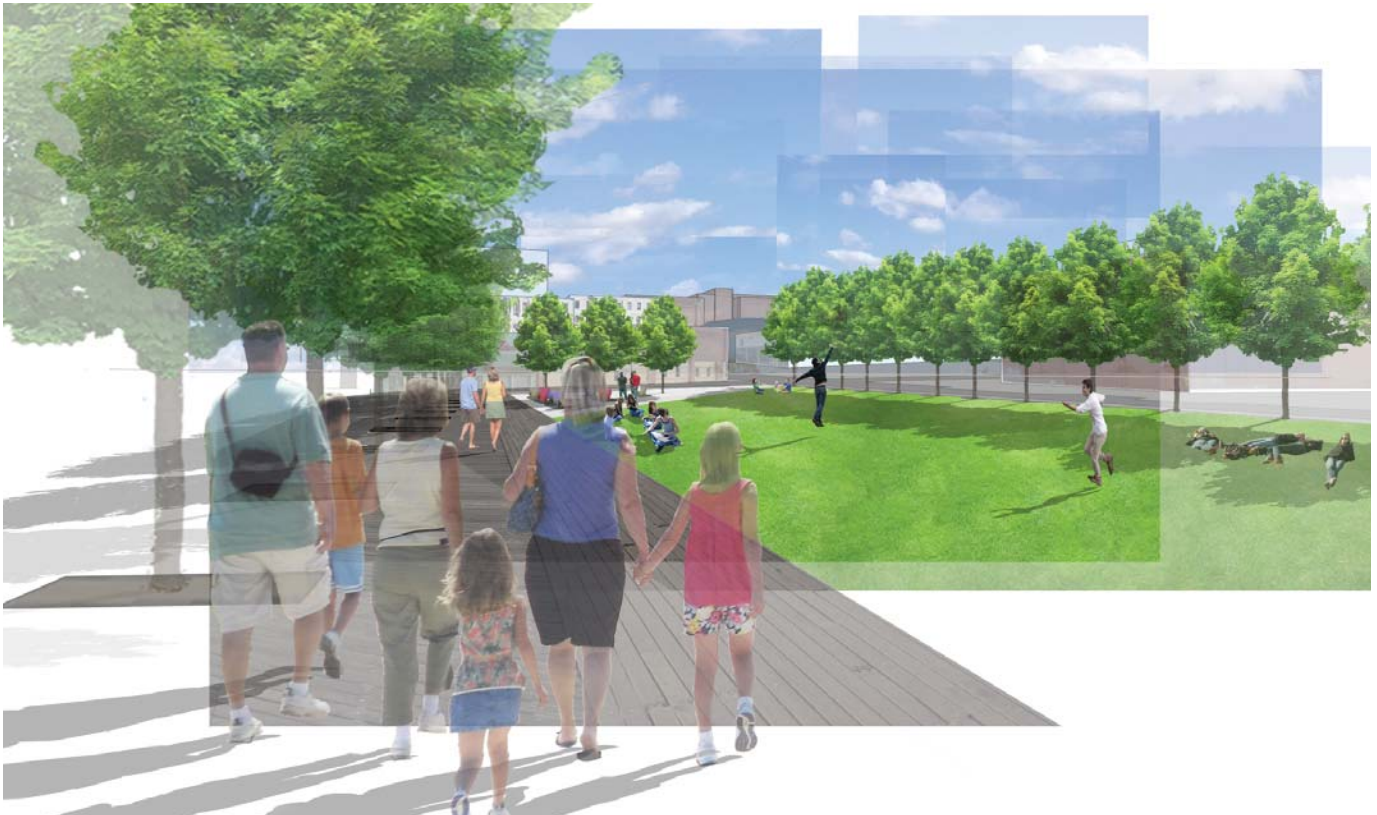
### Background

A great amount of focus has been aimed toward revitalizing downtown St. Joseph in hope of making it a prime destination within the city. The focus area for this design consists of Felix Street Square located at the corner of Felix and 7th Street, and the parking garage to the east, which sits at the corner of Felix and 8th Street. These two blocks serve as a vital urban space located at the east entrance into the downtown. Felix Street Square currently hosts many events throughout the year, but the site cannot accommodate the amount of residents that wish to attend

these large events. The city has recently condemned the second story of a parking garage because of its structural instability. This has caused the second story to become an under-utilized lot, creating a poor aesthetic and physical barrier that blocks pedestrian access into downtown. Due to these conditions, these two blocks have high potential for redevelopment.



**Figure 1.1: Existing Conditions** (Sickmann 2014)



**Figure 1.2: Entering The Lawn** (Sickmann 2014)

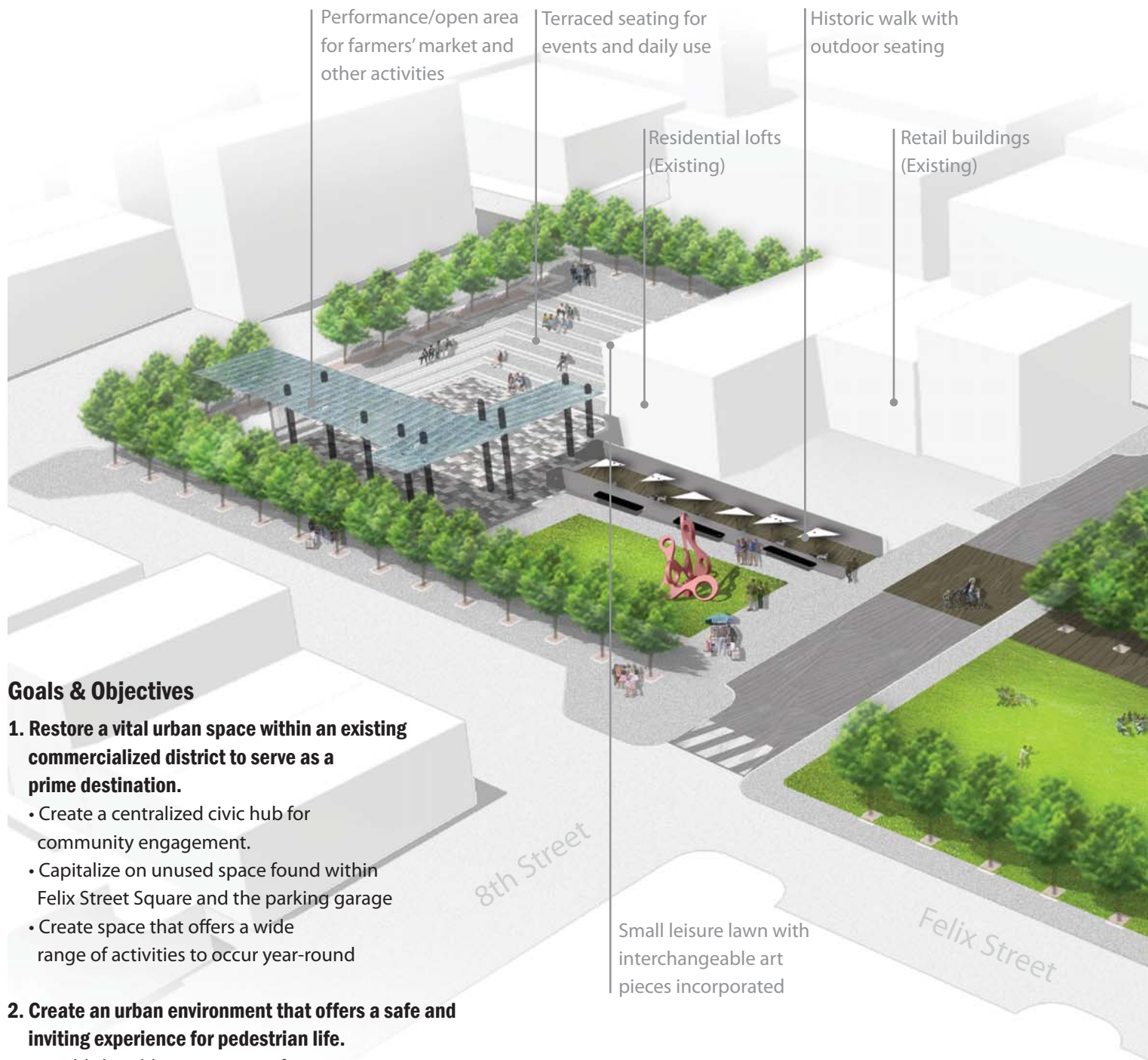
### Design Concept

The purpose of “Felix Street Square Expansion” is to restore the downtown civic space and incorporate further recreational, civic, and restful opportunities for residents of St. Joseph. An overflow space to the east of Felix Street Square can be used to accommodate larger crowds for future events taking place in these two blocks. By initiating further use within the site, this area, in turn, serves as a year-round destination within the downtown. Ultimately, these two urban blocks will serve as a catalyst for future

redevelopment of run down or vacant parcels in the surrounding commercialized district.



**Figure 1.3: Eidetic Photomontage** (Sickmann & Tudor 2014)



Performance/open area for farmers' market and other activities

Terraced seating for events and daily use

Historic walk with outdoor seating

Residential lofts (Existing)

Retail buildings (Existing)

8th Street

Felix Street

Small leisure lawn with interchangeable art pieces incorporated

**Goals & Objectives**

**1. Restore a vital urban space within an existing commercialized district to serve as a prime destination.**

- Create a centralized civic hub for community engagement.
- Capitalize on unused space found within Felix Street Square and the parking garage
- Create space that offers a wide range of activities to occur year-round

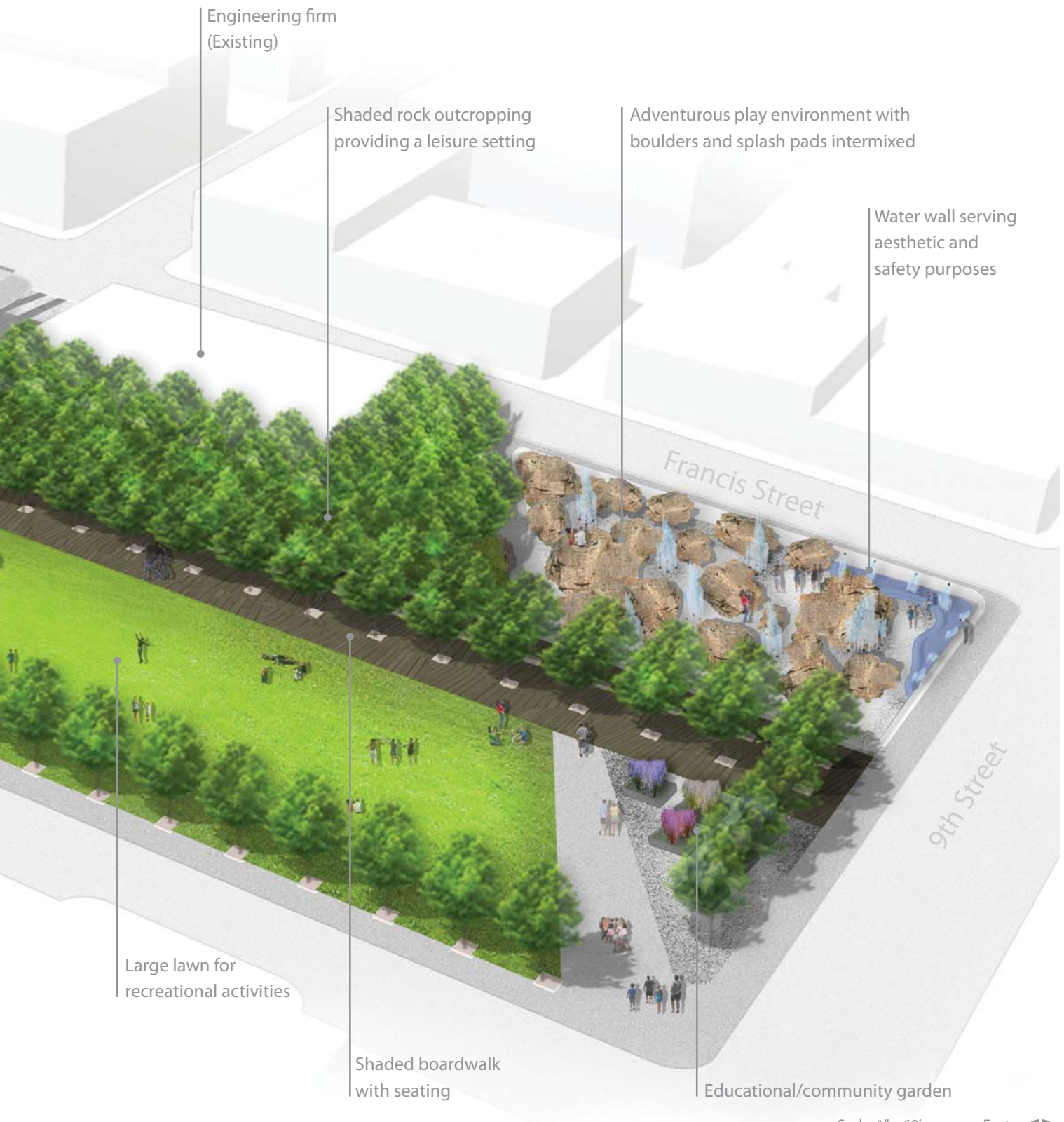
**2. Create an urban environment that offers a safe and inviting experience for pedestrian life.**

- Establish public green space for community activities
- Provide space for recreational purposes
- Improve space for entertainment opportunities

**3. Increase ecological benefits to create a healthy environment.**

- Increase vegetation density throughout the site
- Reduce urban heat island effect

**Figure 1.4: Felix Street Square Vision** (Sickmann 2014)



Engineering firm  
(Existing)

Shaded rock outcropping  
providing a leisure setting

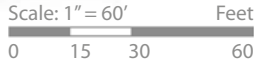
Adventurous play environment with  
boulders and splash pads intermixed

Water wall serving  
aesthetic and  
safety purposes

Large lawn for  
recreational activities

Shaded boardwalk  
with seating

Educational/community garden





**Figure 1.5: Design Sequence** (Sickmann 2014)



Farmers' Markets



Concerts



Cultural Events



Life on 8th Street

**Figure 1.6: Programmatic Opportunities** (Tudor 2014)



## Opportunities Created Due to Parking Relocation

The second story of the parking garage, located at the corner of Felix and 8th Street, had been declared structurally unstable. This vacant lot serves as an unpleasant aesthetic, as well as a physical barrier that blocks pedestrian flow into the downtown. A recent study done by St. Joseph's Downtown Parking Committee addressed this issue, stating that the removal of the parking garage "would allow better vision and pedestrian access to the heart of the downtown" (Park Management Plan 2011, 16).

In "Felix Street Square Expansion," the parking garage is relocated to the southeast block, adjacent to 9th Street in between Felix and Edmond Street, as seen in Figure 1.5. Currently, this lot contains surface level public parking, on the backside of the Joyce Raye Patterson Senior Citizens Center. By relocating the parking garage to this block, visitors to the downtown district are offered more parking opportunities in a structurally stable parking garage. The removal of the original garage creates opportunities to provide additional activities for public use which extend from those provided within Felix Street Square.

## Daily and Special Events

With further opportunities being provided, these two blocks are more appealing to a diverse audience by offering activities for all ages throughout the day. As seen in Figure 1.8, a series of dot maps represent what spaces are in use throughout different times of the day, as well as during large events. The section diagram shown in Figure 1.6 exhibits the variety of spaces which provide different incentives for the public to visit the downtown.



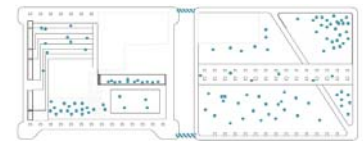
Figure 1.7: Entering Downtown at Night (Sickmann 2014)

## Entrance to Downtown From Frederick

As visitors are entering the downtown district from Frederick Street, they will experience an exciting new view. Greenscape creates a more aesthetically pleasing element while improved signage informs the public they are entering the newly redeveloped downtown St. Joseph.

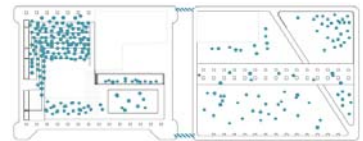
Daily Life

• Person



Evening Life

• Person



Large Events

• Person



Figure 1.8: Daily and Special Events (Tudor 2014)



Recreational Lawn



Shaded Rest Area



Adventurous Play Environment with Splash Pads

## New Felix Street Square

The new design of Felix Street Square uses the natural topography to create amphitheater style seating for pedestrians during events. The audience's view is directed downwards towards the event stage, which sits underneath an overhead structure as Figure 1.10 illustrates. This civic plaza can also serve daily use by providing a relaxing urban setting to take a break during the day.

## Adventurous Play Environment

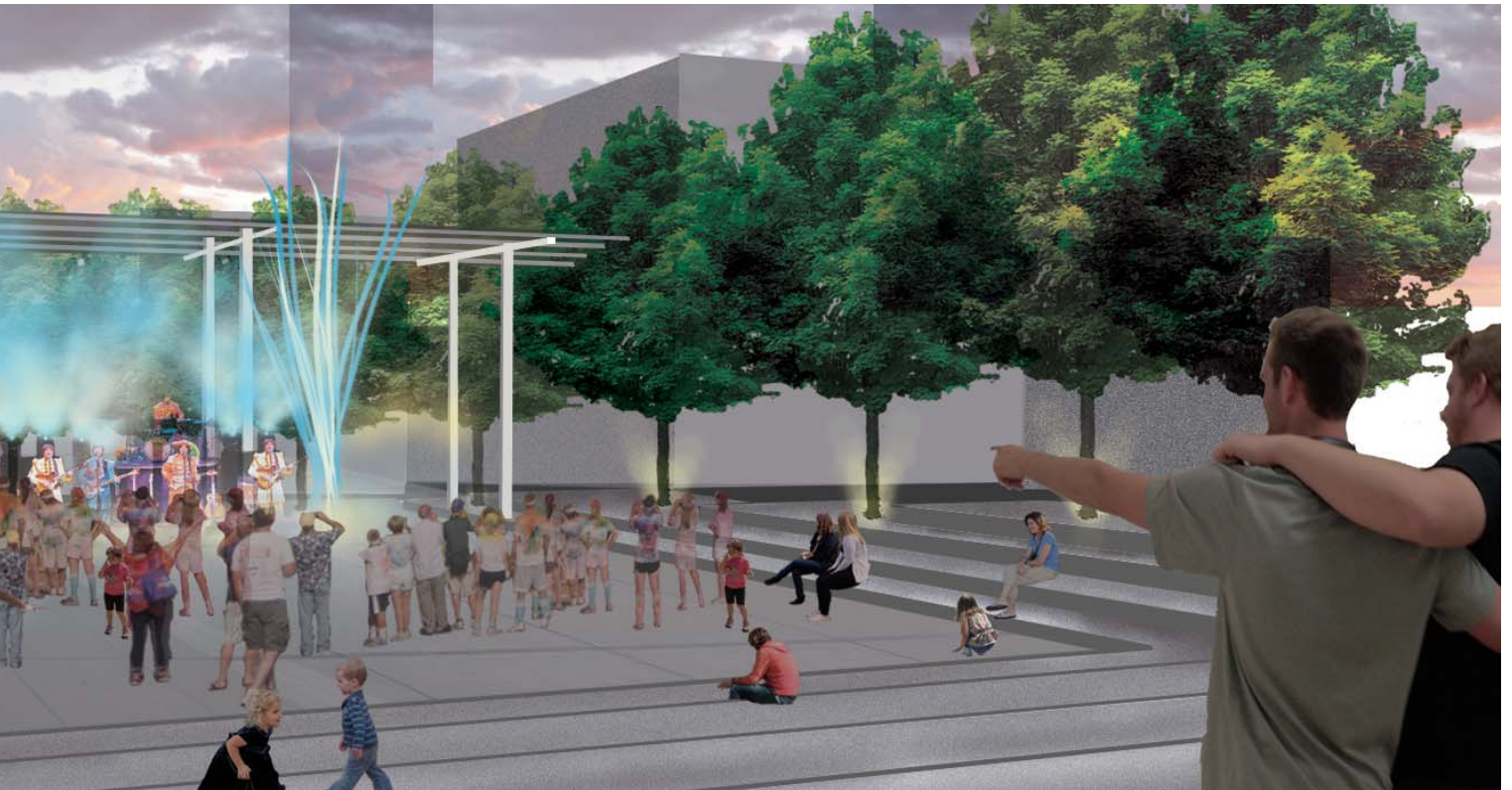
As seen in Figure 1.9, a rock outcropping provides an adventurous setting for recreational purposes. Splash pads incorporated throughout the play area offer a fun and exciting activity for young individuals during the summer days. A water wall serves not only aesthetic purposes, but offers seating and acts as a safety barrier between the play area and the street.



**Figure 1.10: Evening Entertainment in Felix Street Square** (Tudor 2014)



**Figure 1.9: Adventurous Play Environment** (Sickmann 2014)



**Figure 1.11: Farmers Market** (Tudor 2014)

### **Farmers' Market**

A performance stage within the new civic space turns into an open plaza where a farmer's market can be held during the weekends. An overhead structure within the open plaza provides shade throughout the day, but sits high enough for food trucks and vendors to set up during events.



**Figure 1.12: Historic Walk** (Tudor 2014)

### **Historic Walk**

A historic walk provides an additional attraction within the newly designed civic space. The compelling history of the city of St. Joseph is engraved on a wall that blocks visual access to the private parking lot. By incorporating an educational element within the civic space, the public will have an additional incentive for visiting the downtown.

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### Figure 1.1

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### Figure 1.2

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#### Figure 1.4

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# The Link

Taylor Lininger & Erin Wilson

# 2



# The Link

## Merging Art & Business in Downtown St. Joseph

The Link envisions two civic spaces - Felix Street Square and Edmond Street Square - that showcase art, entertainment, and small business in downtown St. Joseph.

### Three Blocks. Two Destinations.

The site location for The Link resides between Francis and Charles Streets as well as 7th and 8th Streets. These three blocks contain two major destinations of downtown. Within the Felix Street business corridor, Felix Street Square caters to summer concerts and festivals in the downtown. Along Edmond Street, the beloved Missouri Theater serves as an iconic, treasured landmark for the downtown and city of St. Joseph. The majority of the southern block includes a privately-owned parking lot that has the potential to enhance the cultural arts hub of the Missouri Theater and Allied Arts Council.

### The Big Idea

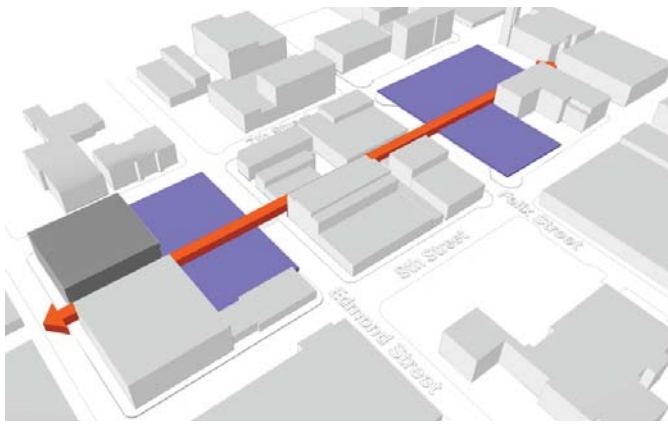
The Link revitalizes a three block space to incorporate and showcase art and small business to residents and visitors of St. Joseph. The Link strives to enable a stronger relationship between the art hub of the Missouri Theater and the business corridor along Felix Street Square. The alleyway between Felix Street and Edmond Street serves as a strong linear axis connecting Felix Street Square with the Missouri Theater. A renewed Felix Street Square and a new community entity - Edmond Street Square - become connected by this pedestrian corridor.



Figure 2.1: Aerial Image of Existing Site (Google 2014)



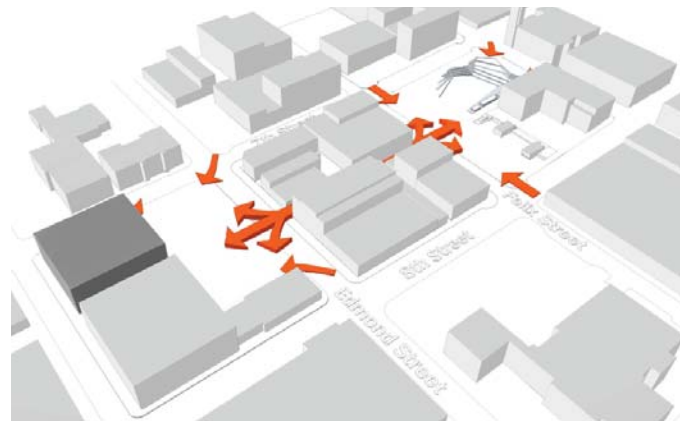
Figure 2.2: Photograph of the Alleyway (Wilson 2014)



**Conceptual Framework**

- Public Civic Space
- The Link: Connection Through Alleyway

**Figure 2.3: Conceptual Framework** (Wilson 2014)



**Entrances into the Site**

- Entrance Direction

**Figure 2.4: Entrances into the Site** (Wilson 2014)



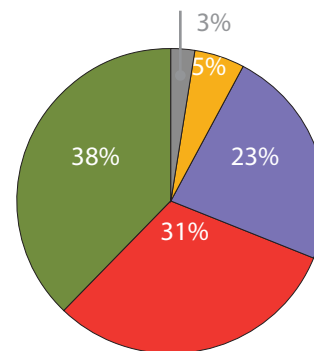
**Programmed Spaces**

- Art Installation Space: 13,000 sq. ft.
- Sidewalk Cafe Space: 2,898 sq. ft.
- Entertainment Venue Space: 17,146 sq. ft.
- Flexible Gathering Spaces: 20,941 sq. ft.
- Proposed Building (Ground Floor): 14,445 sq. ft.
- Total Square Feet of Site: 85,513 sq. ft.

**Figure 2.5: Programmed Spaces Diagram** (Wilson 2014)

**Program**

A terraced amphitheater re-energizes the entertainment aspect of Felix Street Square, providing a more defined venue for the Summer Concert Series and Jazz Festival, as well as other events. Residents can visit the Market Plaza weekly to interact with local vendors and a farmer’s market. The Link through the well-lit alleyway incorporates a vertical garden installation while maintaining service to the adjacent buildings. Patrons of the Missouri Theater and art enthusiasts will enjoy the shaded courtyard and visually engaging gardens across from the theater, which will be well defined by a multi-purpose residential and commercial building grounded by an art gallery.



**Figure 2.6: Ratio of Programmed Space** (Wilson 2014)



**Figure 2.7: A Vision for Felix Street Square & Edmond Street Square** (Lininger & Wilson 2014)



Felix Street Square

### Goals

- Link two major destinations of downtown: Felix Street Square and Missouri Theater
- Revitalize Felix Street Square
- Activate Edmond Street
- Implement complementary programming in civic spaces
- Program indoor and outdoor spaces to be compatible with each other and other existing uses

### Objectives

- Define Felix Street Square as a space for large events and small business interaction
- Enhance the dining and retail experience on Felix Street
- Enhance the cultural experience of Missouri Theater patrons before and after performances
- Propose a civic space across from the Missouri Theater that focuses on cultural and fine arts
- Propose a mixed-use building on Edmond Street that correlates with the adjacent proposed civic space
- Design for nighttime and daytime use in each civic space



**Figure 2.8: A Lively Night at “The Hawk”** (Lininger & Wilson 2014)

### Felix Street Square

The revitalization of Felix Street Square preserves the civic space’s relevance in St. Joseph while providing a more accommodating and lively environment for local entertainers and small businesses to shine.

### The Hawk

Named after Coleman Hawkins, The Hawk Amphitheater serves as Felix Street Square’s entertainment venue by hosting events such as the Summer Concert Series and Jazz Festival. The Hawk can also be used during the day as a place to take a break from the office.

### Recreational Lawn

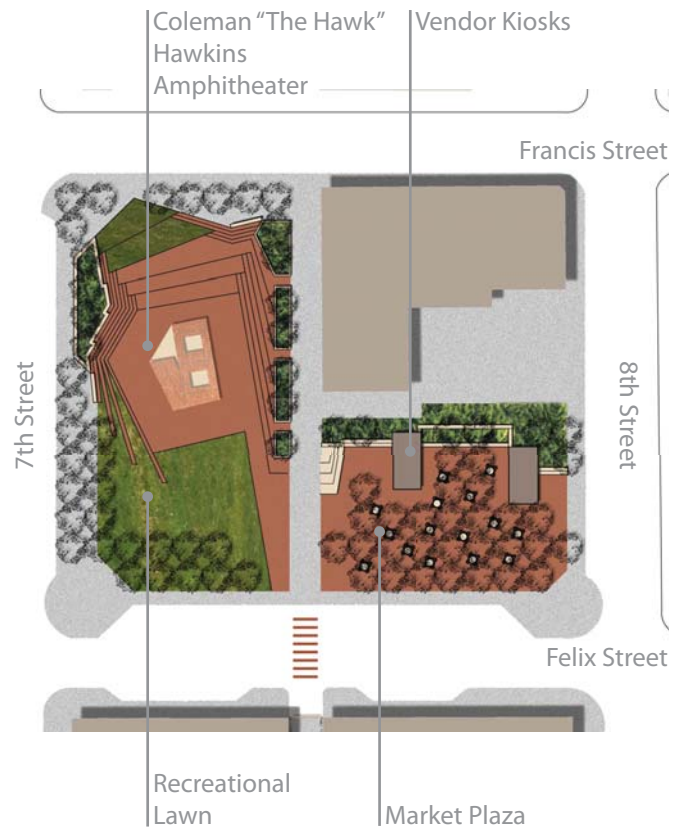
The Recreational Lawn provides open space for recreation as well as a place to sit for a picnic.

### Market Plaza

Market Plaza facilitates a flexible gathering space for farmer’s market events, food carts, cafe tables and chairs, as well as vendor kiosks.

### Vendor Kiosks

Two permanent vendor kiosks reside in the Market Plaza for small businesses trying to make the transition between a vendor booth/tent and a storefront.



**Figure 2.9: Felix Street Square Plan** (Lininger & Wilson 2014)

Not to Scale





**Figure 2.10: Mid-Day at the Market Plaza** (Linger & Wilson 2014)



**Figure 2.11: Vendor Kiosks in the Market Plaza** (Linger & Wilson 2014)

## The Link

The alleyway between Felix and Edmond Street connects the two civic squares and serves as the main pedestrian corridor. The Link provides a canvas for various artwork such as murals and light displays as well as an opportunity for vertical gardens. These elements provide an inviting transition between the two squares as well as attract more visitors to the downtown.



**Figure 2.12: The Link & Edmond Street Square Plan** (Lininger & Wilson 2014)

Not to Scale



## Edmond Street Square

Adjacent to the beloved Missouri Theater, Edmond Street Square provides an opportunity for St. Joseph residents and visitors to become more involved with the arts.

### Outdoor Gallery

The Outdoor Gallery serves as an extension of the indoor gallery in the proposed building. Art by local artists, Missouri Western students, and St. Joseph schools can be showcased within planting beds. An overhead structure, made of wood and glass, provides shade on a hot day and displays artistic shadow patterns on surfaces below.

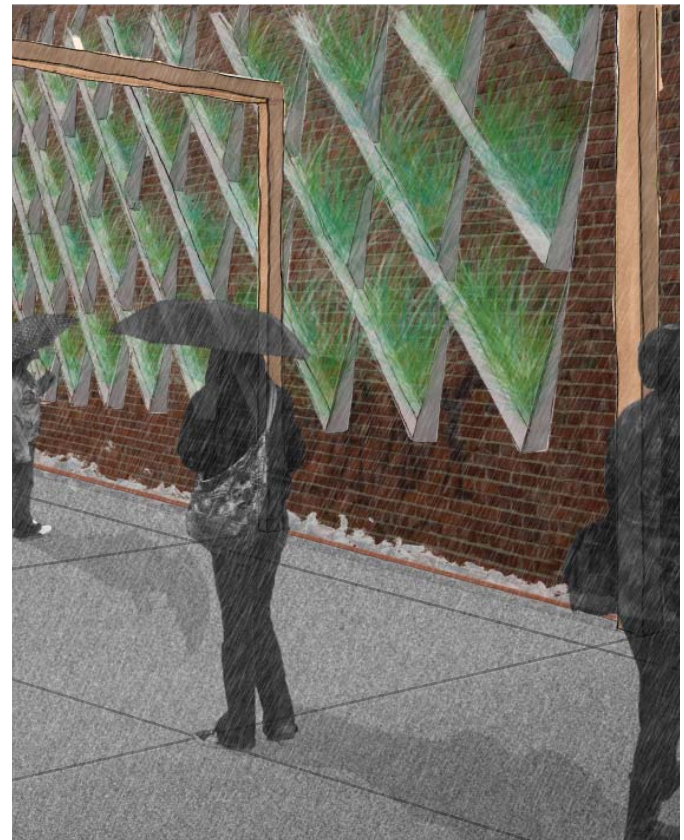
**24,150 sq. ft. of Residential & Office Space**



**12,075 sq. ft. of Parking Space**

**12,075 sq. ft. of Commercial Space**

**Figure 2.13: A New Mixed -Use Building** (Lininger 2014)



**Figure 2.14: Green in the Alley** (Lininger & Wilson 2014)





**Figure 2.15: An Afternoon at the Outdoor Gallery** (Lininger & Wilson 2014)

**Missouri Theater Garden**

Directly across from the Missouri Theater, the Missouri Theater Garden serves as a beer/wine garden for patrons of the theater before and after shows. The Allied Arts Council can use the garden as an art demonstration area as well as host art community events during the day and evening.

**Proposed Mixed-Use Building**

The proposed building incorporates a gallery and bistro, parking, retail storefronts, and residential units. This building serves as a catalyst for further development in downtown.



**Figure 2.16: The Missouri Theater Garden**  
(Lininger & Wilson 2014)

## Citations

### Figure 2.1

Lininger, Taylor. 2014. Aerial Image of Existing Site. Source Map: Google Earth. St. Joseph, MO. 39d45'57.48"N 94d51'03.53"W. Accessed 13 May 2014. Data edited in Adobe InDesign.

### Figure 2.2

Wilson, Erin. 2014. Photograph of Alleyway. Digital Photograph.

### Figure 2.3

Wilson, Erin. 2014. Conceptual Framework Diagram. Source data: Mo-Kan, St. Joseph, MO, Kansas State University LAR442 Data Set dated January 30, 2014. File name(s): "Building\_Footprints," "Parcels\_w\_Attributes". Data edited in Civil 3D and Google Sketchup.

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### Figure 2.5

Wilson, Erin. 2014. Programmed Spaces Diagram. Source data: Mo-Kan, St. Joseph, MO, Kansas State University LAR442 Data Set dated January 30, 2014. File name(s): "Building\_Footprints," "Parcels\_w\_Attributes". Data edited in Civil 3D and Google Sketchup.

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Wilson, Erin. 2014. Ratio of Programmed Space. Source data: Mo-Kan, St. Joseph, MO, Kansas State University LAR442 Data Set dated January 30, 2014. File name(s): "Building\_Footprints," "Parcels\_w\_Attributes". Data edited in Adobe Illustrator.

### Figure 2.7

Lininger, Taylor and Erin Wilson. 2014. Vision of Felix Street Square & Edmond Street Square. Source data: Mo-Kan, St. Joseph, MO, Kansas State University LAR442 Data Set dated January 30, 2014. File name(s): "Building\_Footprints," "Parcels\_w\_Attributes". Data edited in Civil 3D, Google Sketchup, and Adobe Photoshop.

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Lininger, Taylor and Erin Wilson. 2014. Felix Street Square Plan. Source data: Mo-Kan, St. Joseph, MO, Kansas State University LAR442 Data Set dated January 30, 2014. File name(s): "Building\_Footprints," "Parcels\_w\_Attributes". Data edited in Civil 3D, Google Sketchup, and Adobe Photoshop.

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### Figure 2.10

Lininger, Taylor and Erin Wilson. 2014. Mid-Day at the Market Plaza. Source data: Mo-Kan, St. Joseph, MO, Kansas State University LAR442 Data Set dated January 30, 2014. File name(s): "Building\_Footprints," "Parcels\_w\_Attributes". Data edited in Civil 3D, Google Sketchup, and Adobe Photoshop.

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Lininger, Taylor and Erin Wilson. 2014. Vendor Kiosks in the Market Plaza. Source data: Mo-Kan, St. Joseph, MO, Kansas State University LAR442 Data Set dated January 30, 2014. File name(s): "Building\_Footprints," "Parcels\_w\_Attributes". Data edited in Civil 3D, Google Sketchup, and Adobe Photoshop.

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**Figure 2.12**

Lininger, Taylor and Erin Wilson. 2014. The Link & Edmond Street Square Plan. Source data: Mo-Kan, St. Joseph, MO, Kansas State University LAR442 Data Set dated January 30, 2014. File name(s): "Building\_Footprints," "Parcels\_w\_Attributes". Data edited in Civil 3D, Google Sketchup, and Adobe Photoshop.

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- Lininger, Taylor. 2014. Corten. Digital Photograph.

**Figure 2.13**

Lininger, Taylor. 2014. A New Mixed-Use Building. Adobe Illustrator.

**Figure 2.14**

Lininger, Taylor and Erin Wilson. 2014. Green in the Alley. Source data: Mo-Kan, St. Joseph, MO, Kansas State University LAR442 Data Set dated January 30, 2014. File name(s): "Building\_Footprints," "Parcels\_w\_Attributes". Data edited in Civil 3D, Google Sketchup, and Adobe Photoshop.

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**Figure 2.15**

Lininger, Taylor and Erin Wilson. 2014. An Afternoon in the Outdoor Gallery. Source data: Mo-Kan, St. Joseph, MO, Kansas State University LAR442 Data Set dated January 30, 2014. File name(s): "Building\_Footprints," "Parcels\_w\_Attributes". Data edited in Civil 3D, Google Sketchup, and Adobe Photoshop.

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**Figure 2.16**

Lininger, Taylor and Erin Wilson. The Missouri Theater Garden. Source data: Mo-Kan, St. Joseph, MO, Kansas State University LAR442 Data Set dated January 30, 2014. File name(s): "Building\_Footprints," "Parcels\_w\_Attributes". Data edited in Civil 3D, Google Sketchup, and Adobe Photoshop.

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# Establishing a Connection

Andrew Holzum & Parker Ruskamp

# 3



# Establishing a Connection

## Unifying the Urban Setting

By utilizing new development to connect St. Joseph's existing commercial and retail districts, this block of St. Joseph's downtown can act as a catalyst for future developments throughout the greater downtown area.

### Mitigating Disconnect

The concept behind this design proposal was to address existing issues in the area outlined in the City of St. Joseph's Downtown Precise Plan. Starting from this point, we looked at how this site affects the greater downtown context, in particular, the disconnect created between the densely populated public and private office buildings to the northwest and the traditional downtown mixed-use setting to the southeast. By addressing this issue, we intended the design to act as a catalyst for future development, as well as foster a strong continuity within the downtown setting.

### New Services

In addition to connecting the greater downtown context, we also looked at the benefits of providing otherwise absent services and amenities to the downtown community, as well as addressing existing issues on the site. These proposed services include public green spaces, new mixed-use development, and flexible open spaces. The primary existing condition on site that we addressed with the design was minimizing the amount of stormwater running off the site by promoting infiltration and retention on site.



**Figure 3.1: An Urban Haven** (Ruskamp 2014)

## Goals & Objectives

### 1. Create a catalyst for future development.

- Create a destination
- Attract and retain sources of vitality
- Introduce currently absent services

### 2. Establish a connection between the existing commercial and retail districts.

- Promote walkable environments
- Flexibly programmable spaces
- Offer variety of mixed-use alternatives

### 3. Integrate ecologically sound principles into the existing urban fabric.

- Minimize on-site stormwater runoff
- Create urban habitat for native flora & fauna



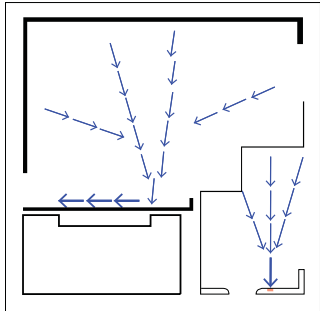
Figure 3.2: Connecting the Urban Fabric (Ruskamp 2014)



Figure 3.3: Capturing Vitality (Ruskamp 2014)

## Parking Allocation

The existing site is broken down into three sections: the existing Donnell Court building, and two privately-owned surface lots owned by adjacent businesses: US Bank and Montee Law Offices. Our initial thought was to develop a public-private partnership between the two business and the City of St. Joseph, in which the businesses exchange ownership of the parcels for an allotted number of parking spaces in the city owned garages that directly to the northeast and southwest that would be paid for with money previously allotted to property taxes



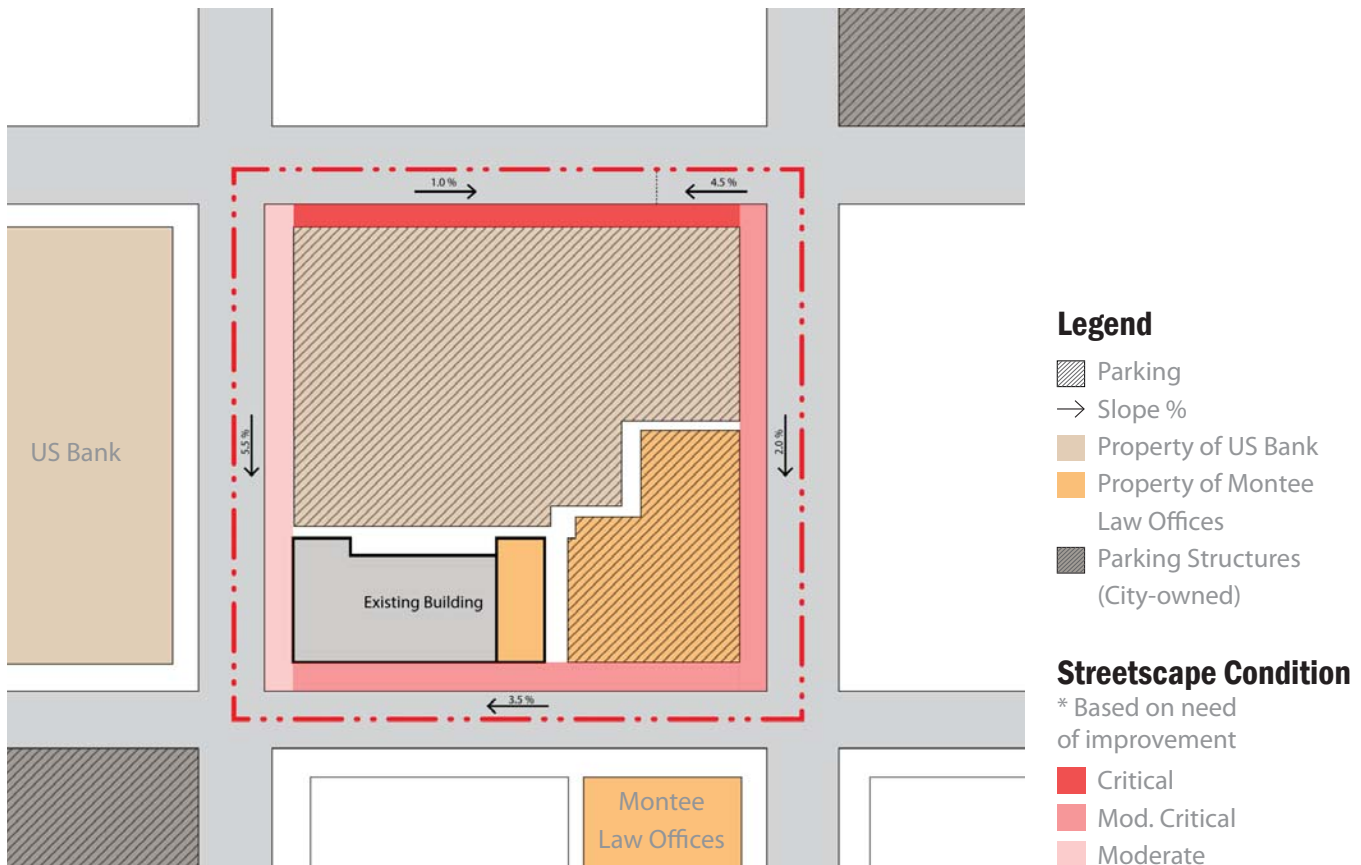
**Figure 3.4: Stormwater Flows**  
(Holzum 2014)

## Grade Change

A substantial grade change from the northwest to the southeastern corner of the site is amplified by a massive retaining wall that supports parts of both Jules and 5th St. The wall contributes to the disconnect between the predominantly office and mixed-use districts.

## Stormwater Management

Currently, stormwater that falls on site moves towards an existing wall to the north of the Donnell Court building before it is led out into the street, untreated, and picked up by the city's stormwater infrastructure. Conversely, if it falls in the Montee Law Offices lot, it either makes its way to an existing drain inlet or it flows into the street, untreated, into the city's combined sewer and stormwater infrastructure.



**Figure 3.5: Existing Conditions** (Ruskamp 2014)

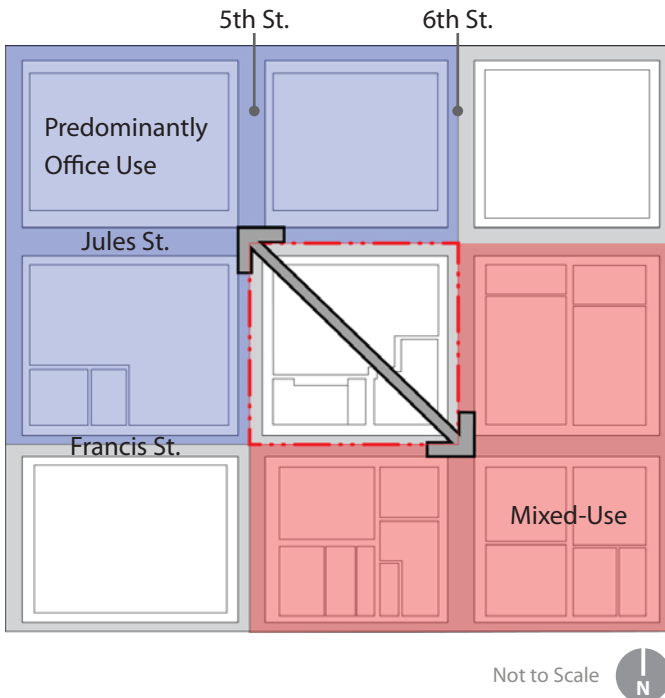




**Figure 3.6: Existing Wall Looking Northwest** (Prudenti 2014)



**Figure 3.7: View to Southeast from Top of Existing Wall** (Ruskamp 2014)



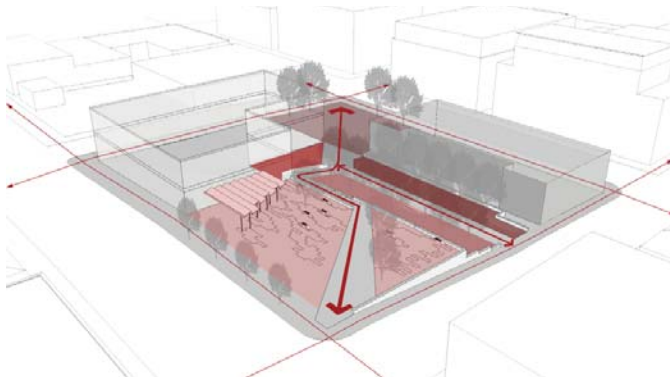
### Site Selection

The site is bound by 5th and 6th St. respectively to the west and east, Jules St. to the north and Francis St. to the south. Currently, this site is a vacant parcel abutting Francis St., an otherwise visually appealing street rich with historic context and the desired aesthetic specified in the city's Downtown Precise Plan. The existing site lies on a diagonal axis of three blocks dedicated primarily to parking, making it feasible for redevelopment. This axis of parking disrupts the continuity of the downtown by separating some of the most densely populated office buildings from the traditional mixed-use downtown setting. Mitigating this fragmentation offers the potential of retaining some of the inherent vitality the downtown needs.

**Figure 3.8: Mitigating Disconnect** (Ruskamp 2014)



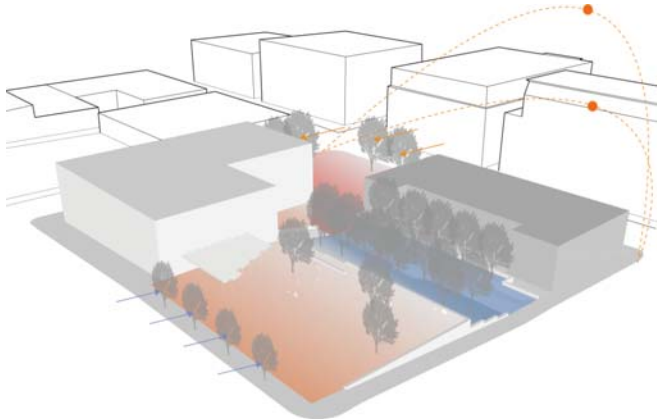
**Figure 3.9: A Welcoming View from the Intersection of Jules and 5th St.** (Ruskamp 2014)



**Figure 3.10: Connectivity** (Ruskamp 2014)

**Connection**

The design creates a direct connection between the densely populated commercial buildings and the traditional mixed-use setting. A proposed building on site acts as a catalyst, adding to the downtown’s vitality by incorporating new mixed-use functions to the existing urban fabric.



**Figure 3.11: Microclimates** (Ruskamp 2014)

**Microclimate**

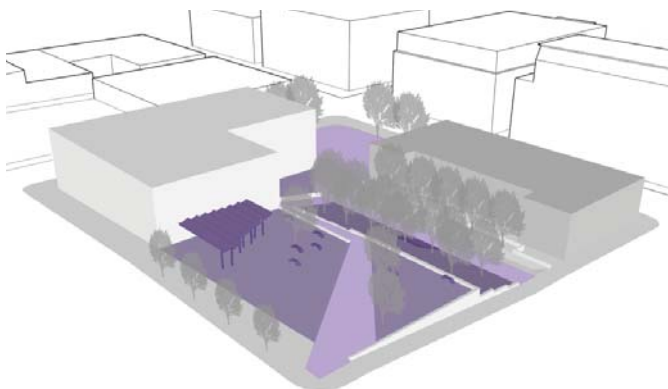
This design is broken down into three tiers, distinguished by enclosure and the subsequent microclimates created. The event space is very open and exposed to the most sunlight, the slope is highly enclosed and shaded, and the civic space offers access to both shade and direct sunlight.

- Warmest
- Tepid
- Coolest



## Overview of Spatial Variety

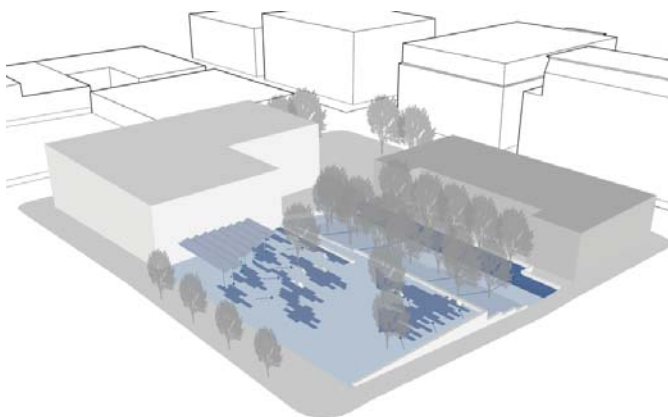
Each tier of the design offers distinct experiential qualities. The northernmost space welcomes pedestrians on Jules Street and offers formal civic space with areas of both motion and repose, as well as varying shade and sun conditions. The site also offers direct pedestrian access off 5th Street and opens up into a space that focuses on stormwater infiltration and relaxation. The southeastern corner of the site is an open event space that allows for flexibility of programming and interaction with the proposed mixed-use building.



**Figure 3.12: Passive and Active** (Ruskamp 2014)

## Passive & Active

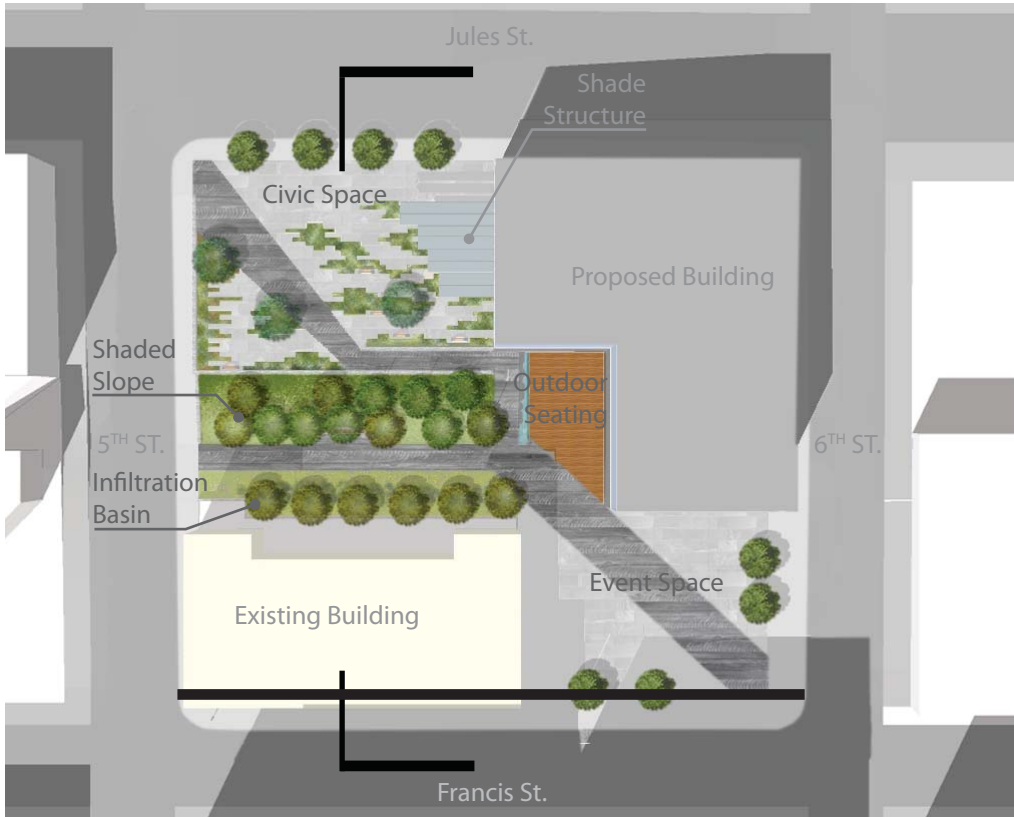
Each space also has passive and active characteristics. The event space is open and active, the shaded slope is passive but has an active pathway running through it, and the civic space offers both passive spaces for seating and congregation areas as well as areas for activity and circulation.



**Figure 3.13: Stormwater Management** (Ruskamp 2014)

## Stormwater Management

The site also incorporates elements of green stormwater infrastructure. Pockets of native grasses in the civic space capture and infiltrate stormwater, while the shaded slope directs water into an on-site retention basin.



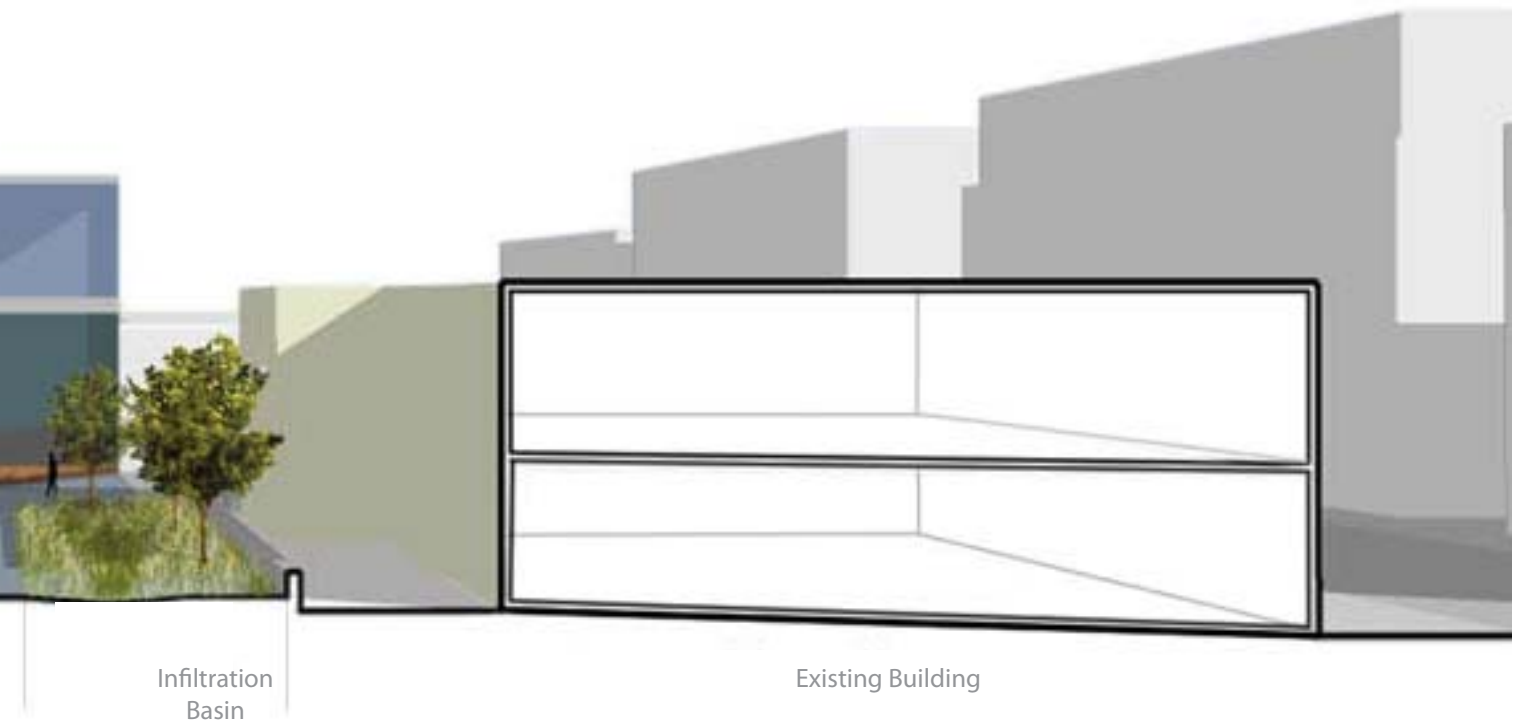
**Figure 3.14: Site Plan** (Holzum 2014)



**Figure 3.15: A Catalyst for St. Joseph's Future** (Holzum 2014)



Figure 3.16: A Shaded Slope (Holzum 2014)



## Citations

### Figure 3.1

Ruskamp, Parker. 2014. An Urban Haven. Source data: Google Earth. St. Joseph, Missouri. 39d46'02.84"N 94d51'14.65"W. Accessed 30 March 2014. Source data 3D Modeled in Google Sketchup. Model rendered in Adobe Photoshop. All digital photographs of people and vegetation by Parker Ruskamp.

### Figure 3.2

Ruskamp, Parker. 2014. "Connecting the Urban Fabric." Source data: LA Entourage Folder, Wikimedia Commons. File name(s): "balderston\_building\_02", "Craig\_people\_02", "Fagan\_tree\_03", "hoetmer\_tree\_02", "Parker\_building\_02", "Thomas\_tree\_03", "tree\_015", "Williamson\_building\_01", "Williamson\_building\_02"; "Chicago Skyline at Sunset 7", "Pavement with arbour - compressed", "Tyranno2". Data rendered in Adobe Photoshop.

- "balderston\_building\_02." Digital Photograph by Allison Balderston. Courtesy of Kansas State University LA Entourage Folder. Accessed 6 March 2014. Reproduced from "balderston\_building\_02.tiff."
- "Craig\_people\_02." Digital Photograph by Unknown Author. Courtesy of Kansas State University LA Entourage Folder. Accessed 6 March 2014. Reproduced from "Craig\_people\_02.tiff."
- "Fagan\_tree\_03." Digital Photograph by Elise Fagan. Courtesy of Kansas State University LA Entourage Folder. Accessed 6 March 2014. Reproduced from "Fagan\_tree\_03.tiff."
- "hoetmer\_tree\_02." Digital Photograph by Derek Hoetmer. Courtesy of Kansas State University LA Entourage Folder. Accessed 6 March 2014. Reproduced from "hoetmer\_tree\_02.tiff."
- "Parker\_building\_02." Digital Photograph by Parker Ruskamp. Courtesy of Kansas State University LA Entourage Folder. Accessed 6 March 2014. Reproduced from "Parker\_building\_02.tiff."
- "Thomas\_tree\_03." Digital Photograph by Unknown Author. Courtesy of Kansas State University LA Entourage Folder. Accessed 6 March 2014. Reproduced from "Thomas\_tree\_03.tiff."
- "tree\_015." Digital Photograph by Unknown Author. Courtesy of Kansas State University LA Entourage Folder. Accessed 6 March 2014. Reproduced from "tree\_015.tiff."
- "Williamson\_building\_01." Digital Photograph by Benjamin Williamson. Courtesy of Kansas State University LA Entourage Folder. Accessed 6 March 2014. Reproduced from "Williamson\_building\_01.tiff."
- "Williamson\_building\_02." Digital Photograph by Benjamin Williamson. Courtesy of Kansas State University LA Entourage Folder. Accessed 6 March 2014. Reproduced from "Williamson\_building\_01.tiff."
- "Chicago Skyline at Sunset 7." Digital Photograph by AllyUnion. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons. Accessed 6 March 2014. Reproduced from "Chicago Skyline at Sunset 7.jpg," [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chicago\\_Skyline\\_at\\_Sunset\\_7.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chicago_Skyline_at_Sunset_7.jpg).

- "Pavement with arbour - compressed." Digital Photograph by Chamaeleon. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons. Accessed 6 March 2014. Reproduced from "Pavement with arbour - compressed.jpg," [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pavement\\_with\\_arbour\\_-\\_compressed.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pavement_with_arbour_-_compressed.jpg).
- "Tyranno2." Digital Photograph by Rachmaninoff. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons. Accessed 13 March 2014. Reproduced from "Tyranno2.jpg," <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tyranno2.jpg>.

### Figure 3.3

Ruskamp, Parker. 2014. "Capturing Vitality." Source data: LA Entourage Folder, Wikimedia Commons. File name(s): "lewald\_people\_02", "Parker\_building\_01", "whitford\_people\_01", "Tudor\_building\_01"; "Food Truck (7743624444)", "Guero Food Cart". Data rendered in Adobe Photoshop.

- "lewald\_people\_02." Digital Photograph by Lauren Ewald. Courtesy of Kansas State University LA Entourage Folder. Accessed 4 May 2014. Reproduced from "lewald\_people\_02.tiff."
- "Parker\_building\_02." Digital Photograph by Parker Ruskamp. Courtesy of Kansas State University LA Entourage Folder. Accessed 4 May 2014. Reproduced from "Parker\_building\_02.tiff."
- "whitford\_people\_01." Digital Photograph by Unknown Author. Courtesy of Kansas State University LA Entourage Folder. Accessed 4 May 2014. Reproduced from "whitford\_people\_01.tiff."
- "Tudor\_building\_01." Digital Photograph by Libby Tudor. Courtesy of Kansas State University LA Entourage Folder. Accessed 4 May 2014. Reproduced from "Tudor\_building\_01.tiff."
- "Food Truck (7743624444)." Digital Photograph by russavia. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons. Accessed 4 May 2014. Reproduced from "Food Truck (7743624444).jpg," [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Food\\_Truck\\_\(7743624444\).jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Food_Truck_(7743624444).jpg).
- "Guero Food Cart." Digital Photograph by Visitor7. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons. Accessed 4 May 2014. Reproduced from "Guero Food Cart.jpg," [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Guero\\_Food\\_Cart.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Guero_Food_Cart.jpg).

### Figure 3.4

Holzum, Andrew. 2014. "Stormwater Flows." Source data: Mo-Kan, St. Joseph, MO, Kansas State University LAR442 Data Set dated 30 January 2014. File name(s): "Building\_Footprints," "Contours," "Parcel\_w\_Attributes". Data edited in ArcGIS, Civil 3D, and Adobe Illustrator.

### Figure 3.5

Ruskamp, Parker. 2014. "Existing Conditions." Source data: Design Research Projects 2014, Mo-Kan, St. Joseph, MO, Kansas State University LAR 442 Data Set dated January 30, 2014. File name(s):

"Sickmann\_Jared\_LAR 442\_2014 -Mapping\_StreetscapeQuality\_Final.pdf"; "Building\_Footprints," "Parcels\_w\_Attributes". Data edited in ArcGIS, Civil 3D, and Adobe Illustrator.

**Figure 3.6**

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**Figure 3.7**

Ruskamp, Parker. 2014. View to Southeast from Top of Existing Wall. Digital Photograph.

**Figure 3.8**

Ruskamp, Parker. 2014. "Mitigating Disconnect." Source data: Mo-Kan, St. Joseph, MO, Kansas State University LAR442 Data Set dated 30 January 2014. File name: "Building\_Footprints," "Parcel\_w\_Attributes". Data edited in ArcGIS, Civil 3D, and Adobe Illustrator.

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**Figure 3.13**

Ruskamp, Parker. 2014. Stormwater Management. Source data: Google Earth. St. Joseph, Missouri. 39d46'02.84"N 94d51'14.65"W. Accessed 30 March 2014. Source data 3D Modeled in Google Sketchup. Model rendered in Adobe Photoshop.

**Figure 3.14**

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**Figure 3.15**

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**Figure 3.16**

Holzum, Andrew. 2014. A Shaded Slope. Source data: Google Earth. St. Joseph, Missouri. 39d46'02.84"N 94d51'14.65"W. Accessed 30 March 2014. Source data 3D Modeled in Google Sketchup. Model rendered in Adobe Photoshop. All digital photographs of people and vegetation by Parker Ruskamp.

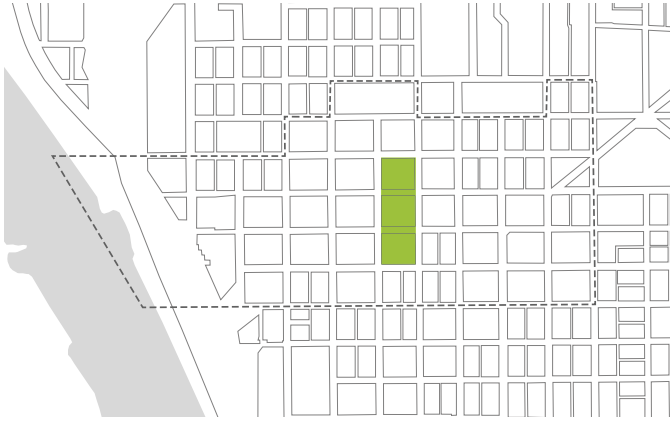




# The Common Ground

Ryan Albracht & Richard Prudenti

4



# The Common Ground

## Setting a Stage for Community Interaction and Economic Vitality

Need for engaging outdoor programming, residential housing, and greater economic activity in Downtown St. Joseph is a primary factor in developing The Common Ground proposal with new multi-use buildings shaping two urban plazas that are connected by an active pedestrian alleyway.

Collaboration with local officials and residents helped determine the uses and architectural styles of The Common Ground. This plan envisions Downtown St. Joseph as an exciting destination for retail, recreation and residential use. The transformation of alleyways into a unified and useful pedestrian pathway within a three-block area of central downtown makes urban revitalization possible.



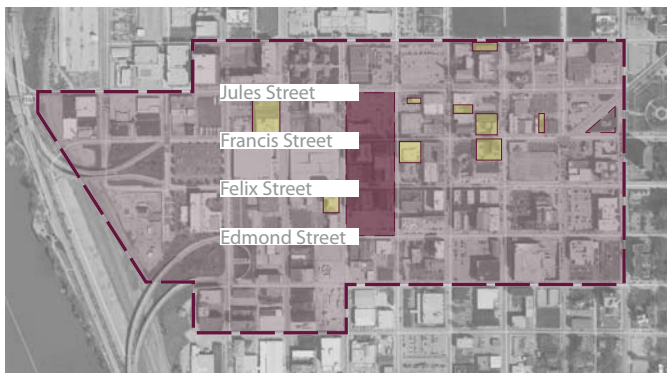
Figure 4.1: Engaging Civic Space (Albracht 2014)

## St. Joseph Today

Downtown St. Joseph is on the verge of rediscovery and can once again become a vital core of the city. Stitching back what has made the downtown become fragmented is an important step to successful revitalization. Currently the downtown has abundant parking, many building vacancies, and relatively few residential units. The Common Ground focuses on accenting the center of downtown.

The site selected for redevelopment is nestled between 5th and 6th streets (west-east) and Jules and Edmond streets (north-south). This three-block area consists of the highest concentration of vacant buildings in the downtown. The site also is surrounded by two parking garages, several parking lots, and plenty of on-street parking. The north and south parking lots are certainly suitable for redevelopment.

## Limited Residential Opportunities



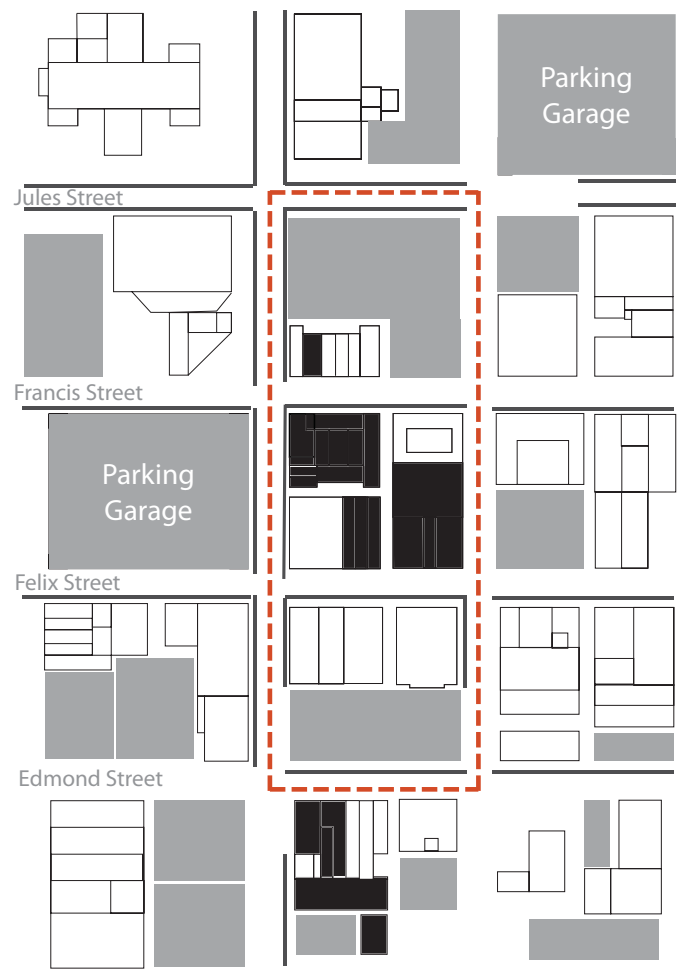
### Legend

- Project Site
- Residential
- Downtown

Not to Scale



## Abundant Parking & Vacant Buildings



### Legend

- Parking
- Street Parking
- Project Site
- Vacant Buildings
- Existing Buildings

Scale: 1" = 275'

0 69 137 275 Feet



Figure 4.2: Site Location (Prudenti 2014)

Figure 4.3: Existing Conditions (Prudenti 2014)



Figure 4.4: Stagnant Core (Albracht 2014)



Figure 4.5: A Vibrant Community (Prudenti 2014)

## Vision for the Future

The Common Ground creates a central focal point for initial redevelopment so Downtown St. Joseph becomes an active, economically thriving, and aesthetically pleasing destination. Keys to creating a sense of place and spurring economic development include: creation of civic space in relation to private businesses; renovating building facades; retrofitting existing vacant buildings; and maximizing mixed use buildings. The plan envisions development of green corridors in alleyways and between proposed buildings, installation of street trees, a variety of shopping and dining, and passive forms of recreation.

Given the existing uses and potential for redevelopment, The Common Ground sees the centrally located project site as a becoming the main hub of activity that sparks additional investment. Expansion of redevelopment includes building construction, renovation and retrofitting, and street upgrades to the north, south, east and west of the project site.

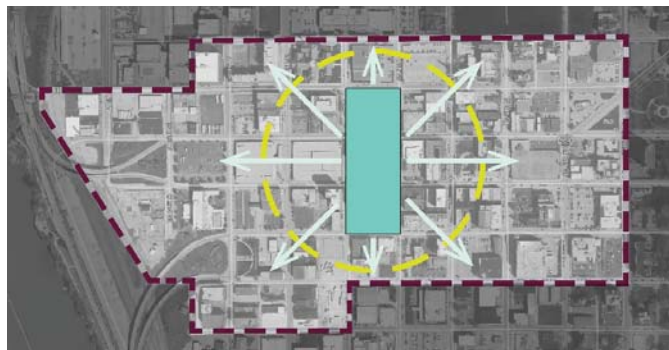


Figure 4.6: Catalyst for Redevelopment (Albracht 2014)

## Goals & Objectives

### 1. Improve economic health through development of an active urban core

- Define urban edge
- Create amenities for use throughout the day and evening
- Increase mixed-use residential

### 2. Create a new sense of place to serve as a catalyst for downtown redevelopment

- Create identifiable “anchors” that define the central core
- Make use of existing infrastructure for redevelopment
- Enhance aesthetics

### 3. Improve ecological performance

- Use ecologically friendly materials
- Create stormwater management

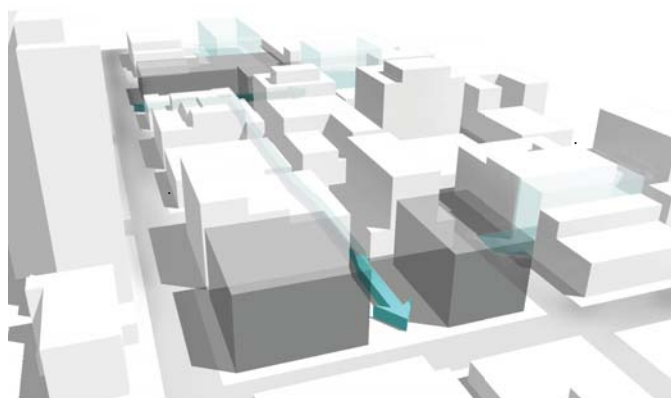


Figure 4.7: Alleyway Connection (Albracht 2014)

## Economic Opportunity

A mix of residential, retail, office, and restaurants occupying existing and proposed buildings would create a much-improved economic environment. The abundance of vacant units means opportunity for selective recruitment of businesses to neighbor existing restaurants and bars in the immediate area. The highest concentration of vacant buildings is on this selected site.

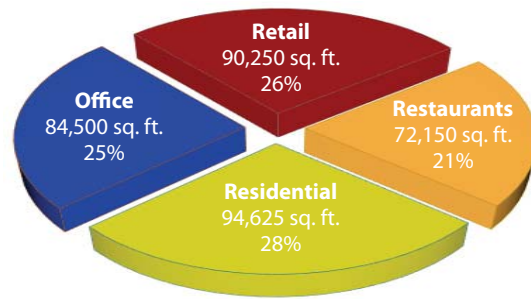
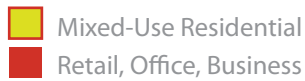


Figure 4.8: Balance of Use (Prudenti 2014)

## Retrofitting Units

Vacant buildings and portions of buildings are converted to residential or business space to resolve fragmentation in the downtown.



## Pedestrian Circulation

The retrofitted alleyway connects activities and foot traffic between the north and south civic spaces.



## Vegetation

Street trees along every block would allow for a cohesive sense of place as well as ecological benefits.



## Proposed Buildings & Civic Space

Mixed-use buildings on the north and south blocks define civic space. Additional buildings for later phases requires demolition of a building to the northeast.

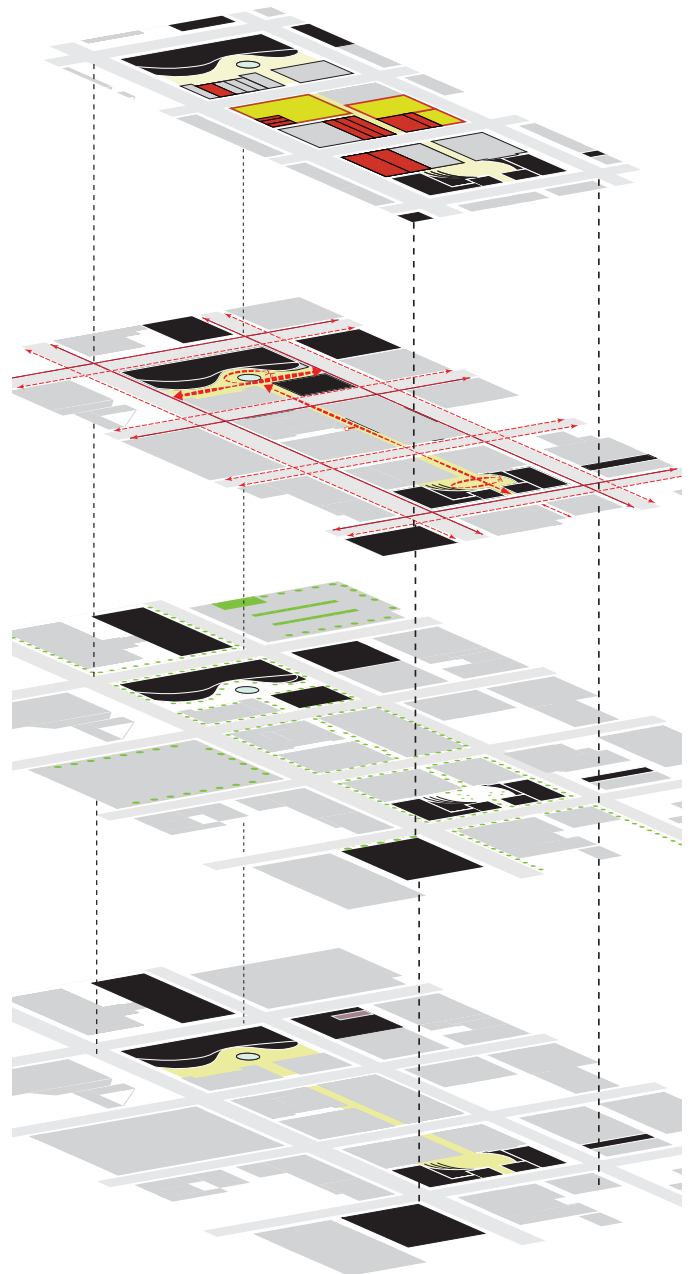


Figure 4.9: Design Elements (Prudenti 2014)

## Design Proposal

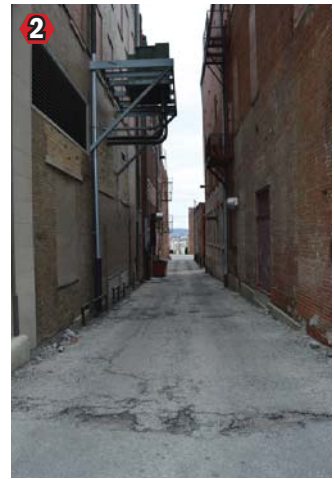


**Figure 4.10: Site Plan** (Albracht 2014)

## Existing Conditions



**Figure 4.11: North End of Alleyway** (Prudenti 2014)



**Figure 4.12: Central Alleyway** (Prudenti 2014)



**Figure 4.13: Midpoint Cafe** (Prudenti 2014)

## A Path to Bolster Community Pride

### North End of Alleyway

An existing vehicular path would transform into an engaging pedestrian alleyway. The proposed building on the left side in Figure 4.14 would allow for outdoor seating and create an inviting entrance into the alleyway. This rendering shows a view of the pedestrian alleyway looking south toward Francis Street and continues farther south from Francis Street.



Figure 4.14: North End of Alleyway (Albracht 2014)

### Central Alleyway

The central pedestrian pathway between Francis and Felix streets features artistic and functional uses reflective of St. Joseph's history. A tiled mosaic of the city's riverfront is lit by traditional stage lights on the wall of the former opera house that is now the Pioneer Building. The elevated surface represents a balcony of a theater.



Figure 4.15: Central Alleyway (Albracht 2014)

### Midpoint Cafe

At the midpoint of the alleyway is an outdoor cafe. This node of activity is made possible by the adjacent alleyway. A gate system separates the two alleyways, allowing for waste management services to access dumpsters that otherwise are out of sight of those using the main path.



Figure 4.16: Midpoint Cafe (Albracht 2014)



**Figure 4.17: The Plaza** This gathering area on the project's south side serves as a major destination point (Albracht 2014).

Today, a large parking lot and buildings occupy the north and south blocks of the project site. The design proposal calls for redevelopment of these areas and connecting them with a pedestrian alleyway. These civic spaces would provide lounging for private businesses and the public. Activities include sitting, contemplation, special events, games, and people watching. To provide an aesthetically pleasing space for activities, waste management bins would be screened off by walls in two west alleyways on site. In other parts of the design the waste would be placed within the street side of buildings.

The southern civic space would be surrounded by five-story buildings with retail and restaurants on the first two floors, and residential and office space above. These buildings would have terraced green roofs and allow sunlight to activate the central plaza. This design gives pedestrians the opportunity to access the first and second story levels from the proposed civic space and the street. With the right mix of restaurants, retail, residential units and civic programming, downtown St. Joseph can develop an active urban core. This in turn would allow for increased sales and property tax revenue.





## Citations

### Figure 4.1

Albracht, Ryan. 2014. Engaging Civic Space. Created in Adobe Photoshop.

- Albracht, Ryan, and Richard Dean Prudenti. 2014. Digital Photography.

### Figure 4.2

Richard Dean Prudenti. 2014. Site Location. Created with Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator.

- Source map: Google Earth. "St. Joseph, Missouri. 39d36'02.70"N 94d54'11.98"W. Accessed: Feb. 14, 2014.
- Source data: City of St. Joseph. April 2010. "Dream Initiative Downtown. City of St. Joseph, Missouri, pg. 50." Accessed Feb. 4, 2011. <http://www.stjoemo.info/DocumentCenter/View/335>.

### Figure 4.3

Prudenti, Richard. 2014. Existing Conditions. Created in Adobe Illustrator.

- Source map: Google Earth. "St. Joseph, Missouri. 39d36'02.70"N 94d54'11.98"W. Accessed: Feb. 14, 2014.
- Source data: Albracht, Ryan, and Richard Dean Prudenti. 2014. Site Visit.

### Figure 4.4

Albracht, Ryan. 2014. Stagnant Core. Digital Photograph.

### Figure 4.5

Richard Dean Prudenti. 2014. A Vibrant Community. Wordle Image. Source: Wordle.net.

- Text source: Albracht, Ryan, and Richard Dean Prudenti. 2014. "The Common Ground: Setting a Stage for Community Interaction and Economic Vitality."

### Figure 4.6

Albracht, Ryan. 2014. Catalyst For Redevelopment. Created with Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator.

- Source map: Google Earth. "St. Joseph, Missouri. 39d36'02.70"N 94d54'11.98"W. Accessed: Feb. 14, 2014.
- Source data: City of St. Joseph. April 2010. "Dream Initiative Downtown. City of St. Joseph, Missouri, pg. 50." Accessed Feb. 4, 2011. <http://www.stjoemo.info/DocumentCenter/View/335>.

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Richard Dean Prudenti. 2014. Balance of Use. Created with Microsoft Excel and Adobe Illustrator.

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- Albracht, Ryan. 2014. Digital Photographs.

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### Figure 4.12

Richard Dean Prudenti. 2014. Central Alleyway. Digital Photograph.

### Figure 4.13

Richard Dean Prudenti. 2014. Midpoint Cafe. Digital Photograph.

### Figure 4.14

Albracht, Ryan. 2014. North End of Alleyway. Created with Google Sketchup and manipulated with Adobe Photoshop.

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- Albracht, Ryan. 2014. Digital Photography.

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- Albracht, Ryan. 2014. Digital Photography.

### Figure 4.16

Albracht, Ryan. 2014. Midpoint Cafe. Created with Google Sketchup and Adobe Photoshop.

- Source map: Google Earth. "St. Joseph, Missouri. 39d36'02.70"N 94d54'11.98"W. Accessed: Feb. 14, 2014.
- Albracht, Ryan. 2014. Digital Photography.

### Figure 4.17

Albracht, Ryan. 2014. The Plaza. Created with Google Sketchup and Adobe Photoshop.

- Source map: Google Earth. "St. Joseph, Missouri. 39d36'02.70"N 94d54'11.98"W. Accessed: Feb. 14, 2014.
- Source data: Albracht, Ryan, and Richard Dean Prudenti 2014. Digital Photographs.
- Richard Dean Prudenti. 2014. Digital Photograph. Source: Original photograph by Will C Photography, St. Joseph, MO. Original artwork by Sam Welty, Hampton roads, Va.





# Connect | Live | Grow

Beth Krehbiel & Wesley Moore

# 5



# Connect | Live | Grow

## Three Unified Visions for Better Living in Downtown St. Joe

This design proposal for Downtown St. Joseph envisions how three blocks of currently underutilized open space might be transformed into an environment which fosters community interaction, healthy living, and growth.

Public space is sometimes considered to be a waste of public funds and a missed opportunity for commercial and residential space; however, as successful cities of the world have exhibited, healthy public space is necessary for a downtown's overall vitality as population densities of a downtown increase. This design then aims to create public space which increases the productivity and livability of the downtown. The three blocks chosen for this design are primarily vacant lots used for semi-truck parking. Neglected as this space is, a vision for how living can begin to occur here becomes increasingly relevant due to the minimal

displacement of existing buildings. St. Joseph currently has Felix St. Square which provides a venue space for weekend concerts in the summer, but this activity primarily occurs in the evening when shops are no longer open. Successful public space, on the other hand, provides a comfortable environment in which the activities of business and park feed into each other and form a symbiotic relationship. In addition to pursuing such a relationship between building and outdoor space, this design views public space as an opportunity to make a downtown more of a place people call home than a place of commerce and entertainment.

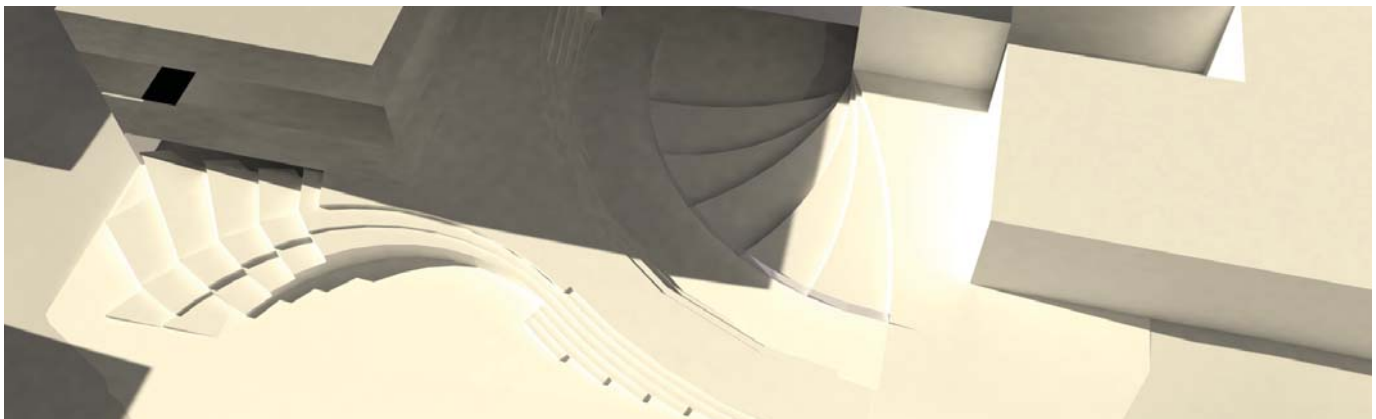


Figure 5.1: View from atop Corby Place (Moore 2014)

## Existing Context & Proposed Programs

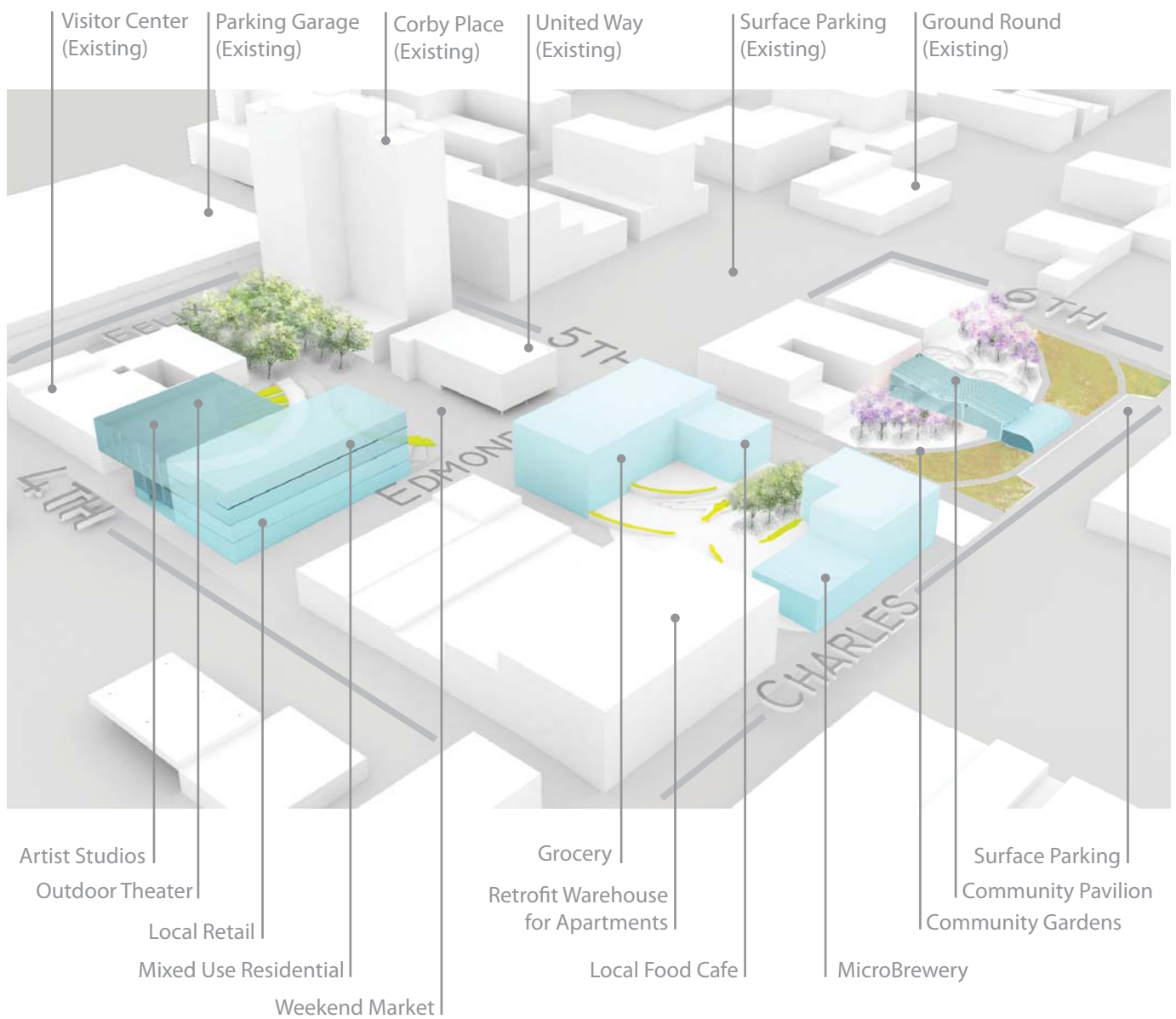


Figure 5.2: Programmatic Aerial (Moore 2014)

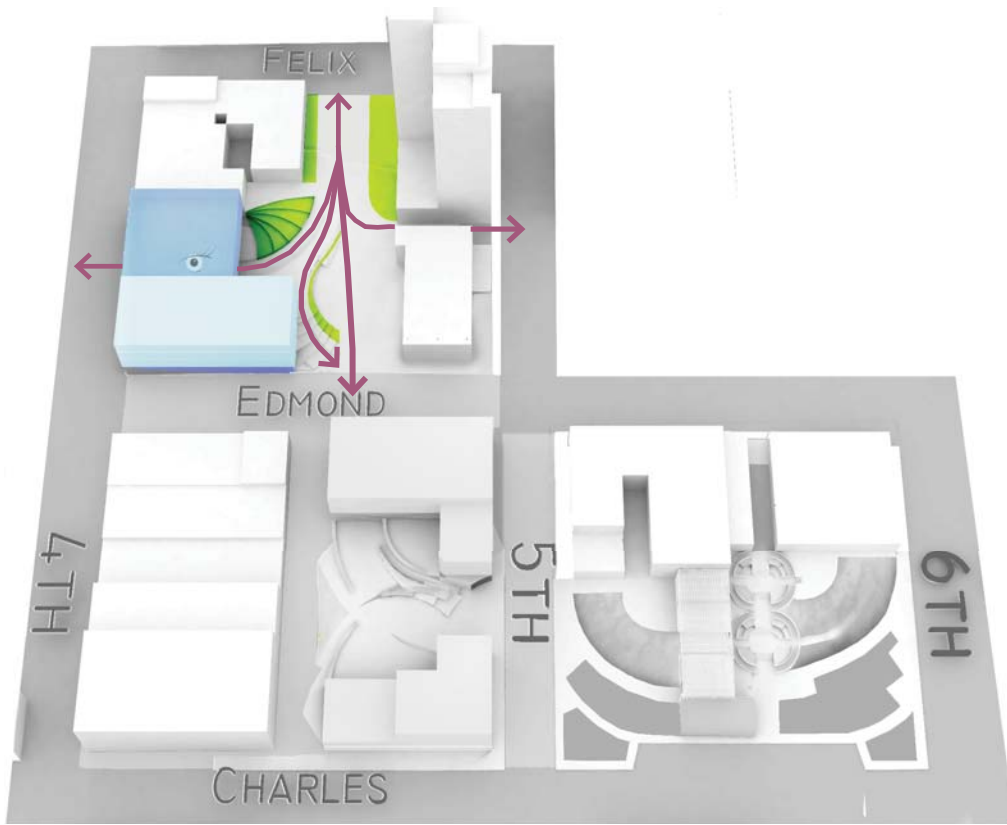


Figure 5.3: Plan Context I (Moore 2014)



Figure 5.4: Community Film Screening at the Outdoor Theater (Moore 2014)



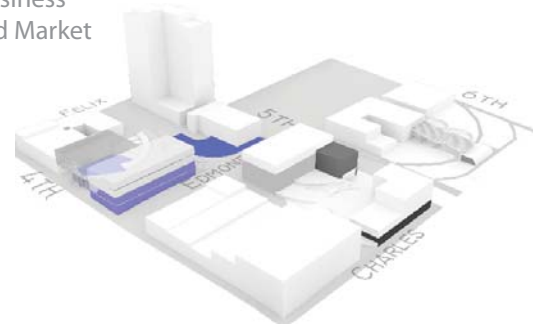
## Connect

St. Joseph's recent investment in the streetscape quality along Felix Street creates a more active pedestrian environment. Our design proposal extends this growing activity and south to Edmond Street. An allée of trees between Corby Place and the Genealogical Library establishes a pedestrian corridor to Edmond. Adjacent to this corridor is a sheltered open space for relaxation, shopping, and interaction. The architecture which forms this outdoor space provides indoor space for local businesses and artists to connect their work to the community. A performance space, which can be utilized at night for films, is framed by terraced plantings.

Lovely spring evening  
 movie with friends new and old  
 laughter fills the air

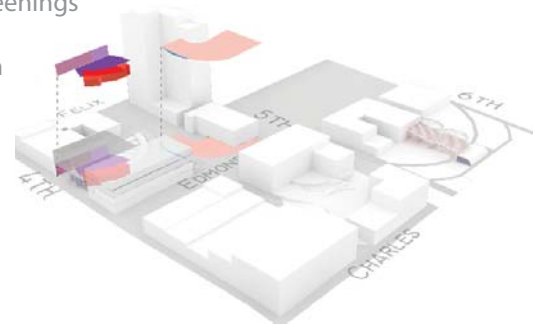
## Commercial

- Skateboarding
- Small Business
- Weekend Market



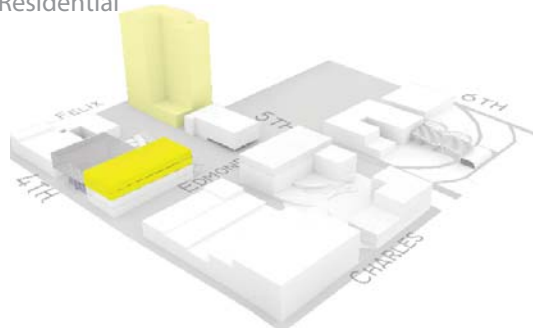
## Interaction

- Performance Space
- Film Screenings
- Studios
- Fountain
- Art Wall



## Residential

- Proposed Residential
- Existing Residential



## Natural

- Trees
- Ornaments

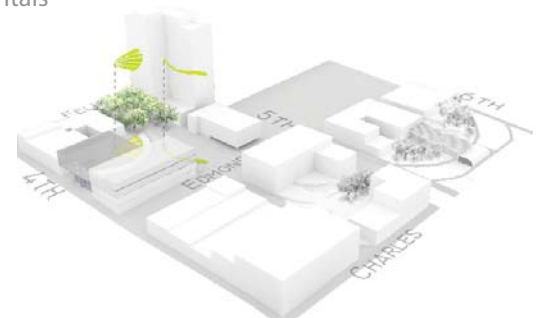


Figure 5.5: Programmatic Diagram I (Moore 2014)

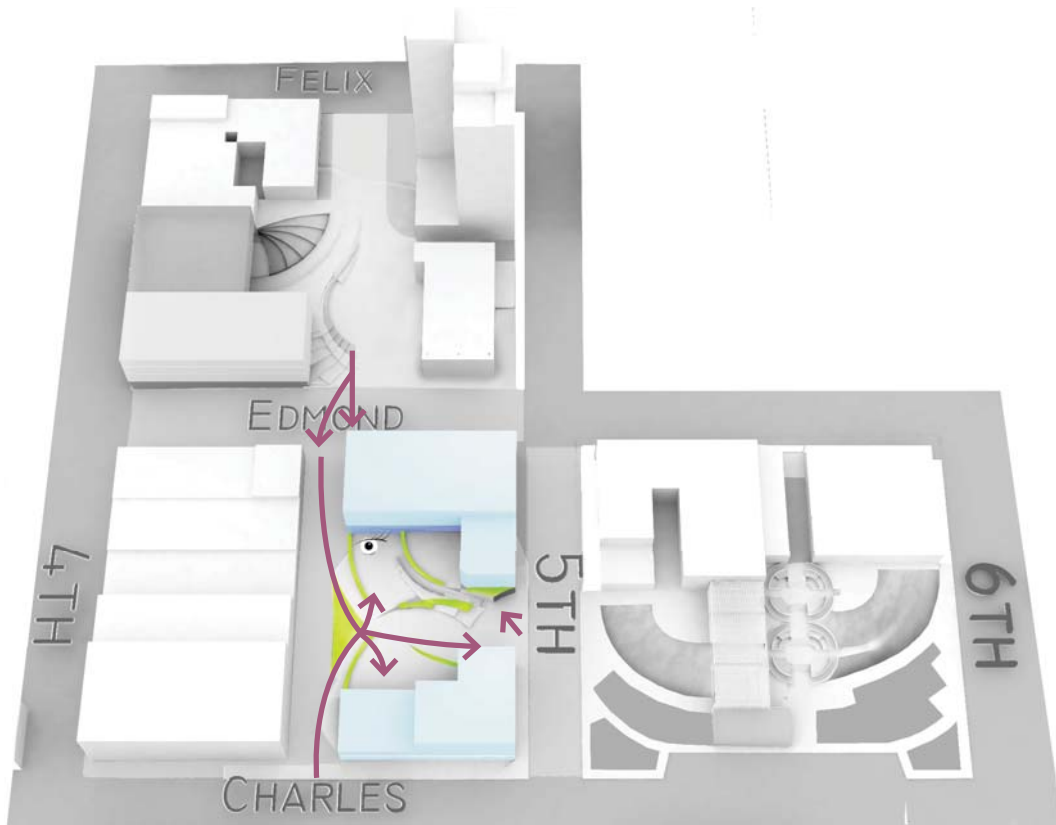


Figure 5.6: Aerial Context II (Moore 2014)



Figure 5.7: Outdoor Dining at the Micro-Brewery (Moore 2014)

## Live

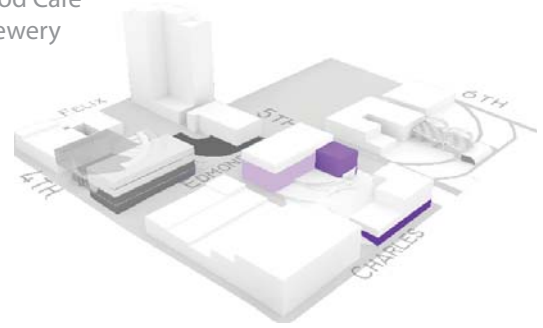
Envisioning a more active downtown St. Joseph Missouri demands that not only more businesses come downtown but that more people begin to live downtown. As the population grows there is an increasing market for stores which meet daily provisions, such as a grocery store. However, grocery stores require a certain amount of promised activity to justify opening a new store; therefore, a Microbrewery is also proposed for this block, to attract a wider customer base to this block. The increased activity brought by the Microbrewery provides the customer base needed to maintain a grocery, which in association with the design of open space and moveable seating an attractive place for living downtown is created.

Golden autumn light  
glistens on rippling grass  
and rustling leaves



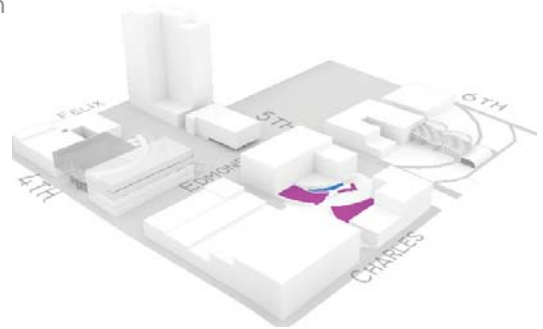
## Commercial

- Grocery
- Local Food Cafe
- MicroBrewery



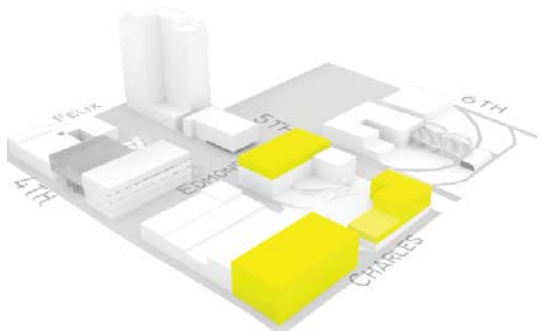
## Interaction

- Outdoor Seating
- Fountain



## Residential

- Proposed Residential



## Natural

- Trees
- Ornamentals

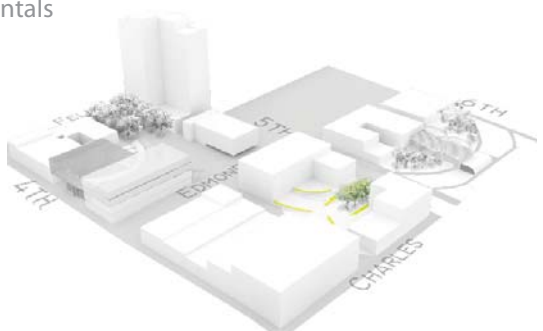


Figure 5.8: Programmatic Diagram II (Moore 2014)

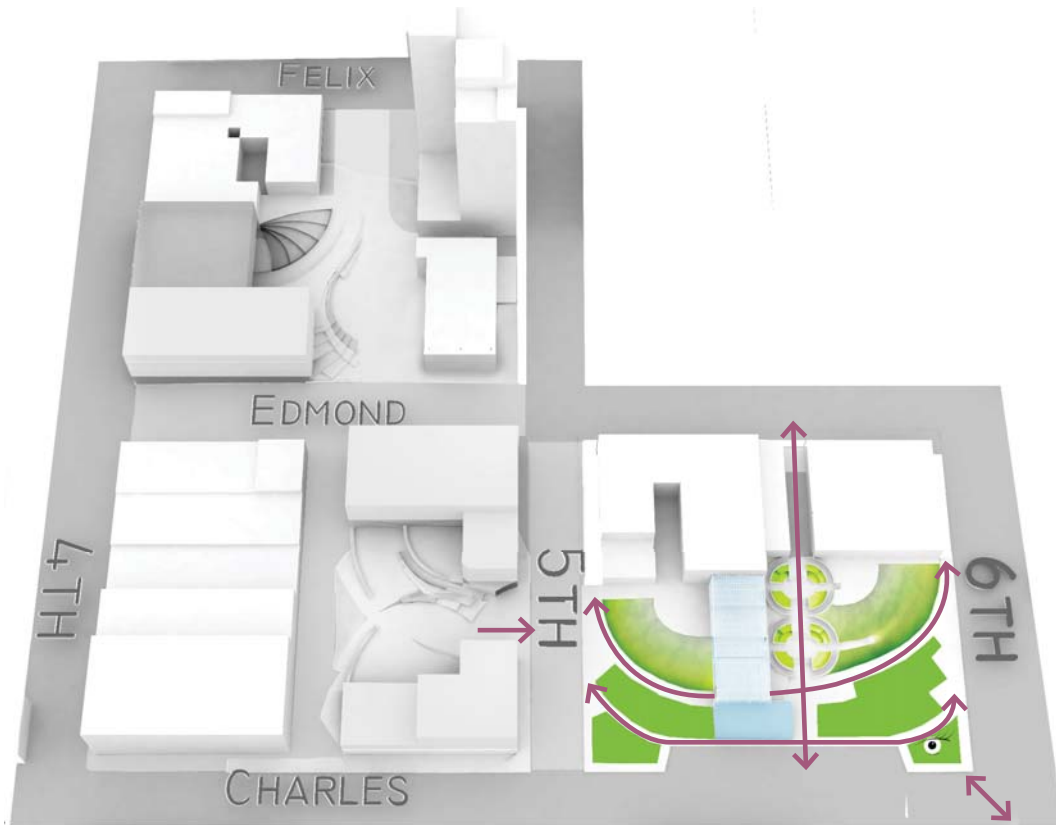


Figure 5.9: Context Aerial III (Moore 2014)



Figure 5.10: Harvesting Produce at the Community Gardens (Moore 2014)

## Grow

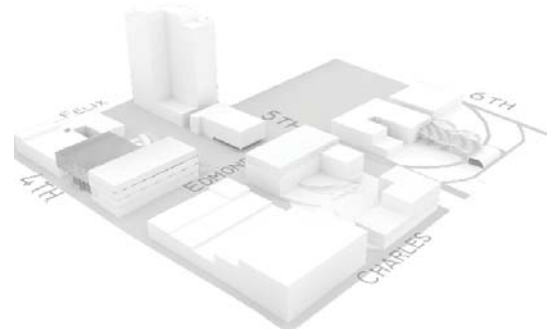
Currently the parking lot for Hiland Dairy Trucks, to the south of the storefronts along Edmond, between 5th and 6th has full sun exposure throughout the day. This currently underutilized space also is at the current edge between commercial and industrial zoning. These two factors, and the desire to develop outdoor community space with minimal building costs led to the utilization of this space for community garden plots, a community orchard, education pavilion, and greenhouse. The slope of the site is focused in the orchard space to provide level garden plots and gradual slopes. To further prevent erosion, the storm-water from the orchard is collected and directed to the greenhouse to be reused for watering.

Flowers, vegetables  
grown in the sweltering sun  
shared in cool evenings



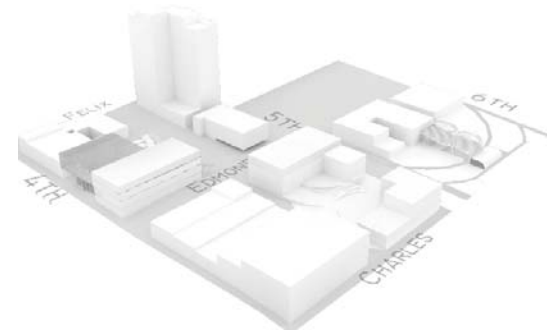
## Commercial

Commercial Adjacent



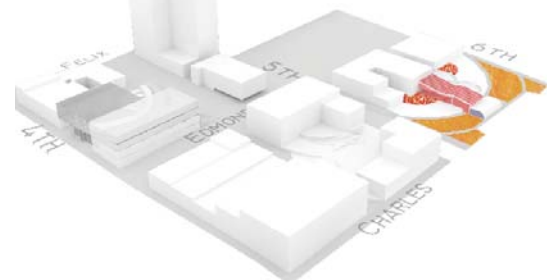
## Residential

Residential Adjacent



## Interaction

- Sculptural Installations
- Community Dinners
- Education Pavilion



## Natural

- Trees
- Ornaments

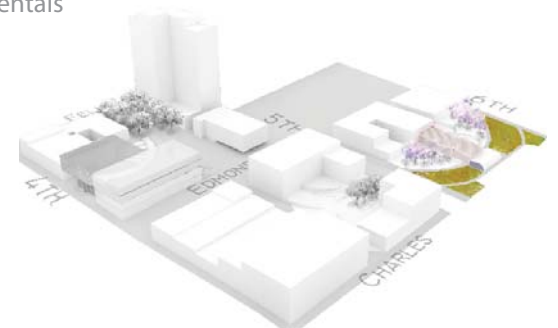


Figure 5.11: Programmatic Diagram III (Moore 2014)

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### Figure 5.1

"View from atop Corby Place." Wesley Moore. 2014. Source Data: Aerial View of St. Joseph, Missouri. Source map: Google Earth. St. Joseph, Missouri. 39d45'26.33"N 94d50'14.77"W. Accessed 4 March 2014. "Site Plan" Moore, Wesley. 2014. Google SketchUp and Rhinoceros 4.0.

### Figure 5.2

"Programmatic Aerial." Moore, Wesley and Beth Krehbiel. 2014. Source Data: Aerial View of St. Joseph, Missouri. Source map: Google Earth. St. Joseph, Missouri. 39d45'26.33"N 94d50'14.77"W. Accessed 4 March 2014. "Site Plan" Moore, Wesley. 2014. Google SketchUp and Rhinoceros 4.0. Data edited with Adobe Photoshop and Adobe InDesign.

### Figure 5.3

"Plan Context I." Moore, Wesley and Beth Krehbiel. 2014. "Aerial Perspective Site Plan." Source Data: Aerial View of St. Joseph, Missouri. Source map: Google Earth. St. Joseph, Missouri. 39d45'26.33"N 94d50'14.77"W. Accessed 4 March 2014. Data edited with Google SketchUp, Rhinoceros 4.0, Adobe Photoshop and Adobe InDesign.

### Figure 5.4:

"Community Film Screening at the Outdoor Theater." Moore, Wesley. 2014. Source Data:

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- "Fagan\_tree\_03.psd" From Kansas State University landscape Architecture Entourage: Fagan. 10/30/2013. *Fagan\_tree\_03.psd*.
- "Us\_Portland." 2014. Photograph by Beth Krehbiel. Date edited with Adobe Photoshop.

### Figure 5.5

"Programmatic Diagram I." Moore, Wesley and Beth Krehbiel. 2014. "Aerial Perspective Site Plan." Source Data: Aerial View of St. Joseph, Missouri. Source map: Google Earth. St. Joseph, Missouri. 39d45'26.33"N 94d50'14.77"W. Accessed 4 March 2014. Data edited with Google SketchUp, Rhinoceros 4.0, Adobe Photoshop and Adobe InDesign.

### Figure 5.6:

"Aerial Context II." Moore, Wesley and Beth Krehbiel. 2014. "Aerial Perspective Site Plan." Source Data: Aerial View of St. Joseph, Missouri. Source map: Google Earth. St. Joseph, Missouri. 39d45'26.33"N 94d50'14.77"W. Accessed 4 March 2014. Data edited with Google SketchUp, Rhinoceros 4.0, Adobe Photoshop and Adobe InDesign.

### Figure 5.7

"Outdoor Dining at the Micro-Brewery." Moore, Wesley. 2014. Source Data:

- "Site Plan" Moore, Wesley. 2014. Google SketchUp and Rhinoceros 4.0.
- Krehbiel, Beth. 2014. *Live Block*. Pen on Trace Paper.
- Moore, Wesley. 2014. *Live Block\_Figure*. Pen on Trace Paper.
- "Discovery Center Fountains." 2013. Photograph by Beth Krehbiel.
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- "Marlatt Switchgrass." 2013. Photograph by Beth Krehbiel.
- "Seattle Harbor Steps\_Seating." 2014. Photograph by Beth Krehbiel.

- "Seattle Suspension Trellis." 2014. Photograph by Beth Krehbiel.

Data edited with Adobe Photoshop

**Figure 5.8**

"Programmatic Diagram II." Moore, Wesley and Beth Krehbiel. 2014. "Aerial Perspective Site Plan." Source Data: Aerial View of St. Joseph, Missouri. Source map: Google Earth. St. Joseph, Missouri. 39d45'26.33"N 94d50'14.77"W. Accessed 4 March 2014. Data edited with Google SketchUp, Rhinoceros 4.0, Adobe Photoshop and Adobe InDesign.

**Figure 5.9**

"Context Aerial III." Moore, Wesley and Beth Krehbiel. 2014. "Aerial Perspective Site Plan." Source Data: Aerial View of St. Joseph, Missouri. Source map: Google Earth. St. Joseph, Missouri. 39d45'26.33"N 94d50'14.77"W. Accessed 4 March 2014. Data edited with Google SketchUp, Rhinoceros 4.0, Adobe Photoshop and Adobe InDesign.

**Figure 5.10**

"Harvesting Produce at the Community Gardens." Moore, Wesley. 2014. Source Data:

- "Site Plan" Moore, Wesley. 2014. Google SketchUp and Rhinoceros 4.0.
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- "German Gardens." 2009. Photograph by Beth Krehbiel.

Data edited with Adobe Photoshop.

**Figure 5.11**

"Programmatic Diagram III." Moore, Wesley and Beth Krehbiel. 2014. "Aerial Perspective Site Plan." Source Data: Aerial View of St. Joseph, Missouri. Source map: Google Earth. St. Joseph, Missouri. 39d45'26.33"N 94d50'14.77"W. Accessed 4 March 2014. Data edited with Google SketchUp, Rhinoceros 4.0, Adobe Photoshop and Adobe InDesign.





# Crossing Boundaries

Allison Balderston & Lauren Heermann

6



# Crossing Boundaries

## Creatively Connecting St. Joseph's People and Places

Crossing Boundaries operates at two scales: the new plan for Riverfront Park and the fully-connected city trail. The trail proposes a linkage to all people and places across town, while the park creates an interactive atmosphere for year-round recreation.

### Connecting People through Recreation and Nature

The new plan for Riverfront Park can create a place for all people at all times of the year. This revitalized park socially connects people with a trail, which runs through several activity spaces. The park also spatially connects people across town through a fully-connected trail network.



**Figure 6.1: Connecting People through Recreation and Nature** (Balderston & Heermann 2014)

## Historical Significance

The Pony Express took place at Riverfront Park, giving the park historical significance that is important to the people of St. Joseph. It also creates an opportunity to draw travelers from all over.

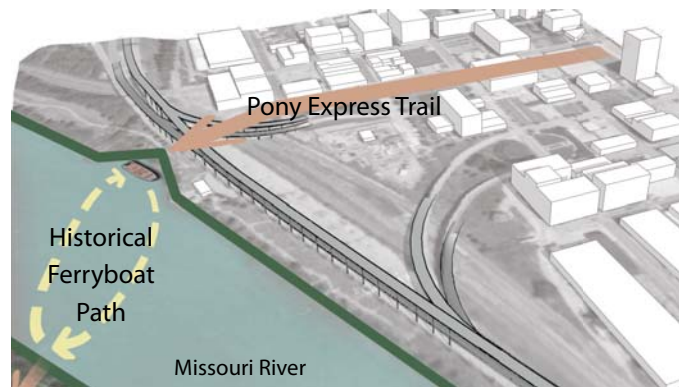


Figure 6.2: Historical Significance (Heermann, 2014)

## Existing Structure

I-229, a double decker interstate, runs through the park. The interstate creates an opportunity to utilize a unique structure that can provide enclosure, aesthetics, and a sense of place within the park.



Figure 6.3: Existing Structure (Balderston 2014)

## Existing Circulation

Overlapping modes of transportation makes access to Riverfront Park difficult and unsafe. Riverfront trail also ends on the site's southern end, creating a break in the current trail network.

### Legend

- Vehicular
- Rail Road
- Pedestrian
- Service

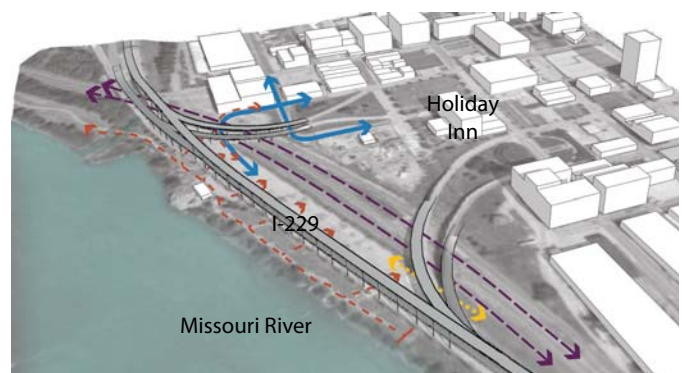


Figure 6.4: Existing Circulation (Balderston 2014)

## Existing Views

The Missouri river and historical view of St. Joseph's skyline are existing, aesthetically pleasing views on-site. However the railroads, interstate, substation, and interstate columns obscure potential views.

### Legend

- Rail Road
- Substation
- Columns

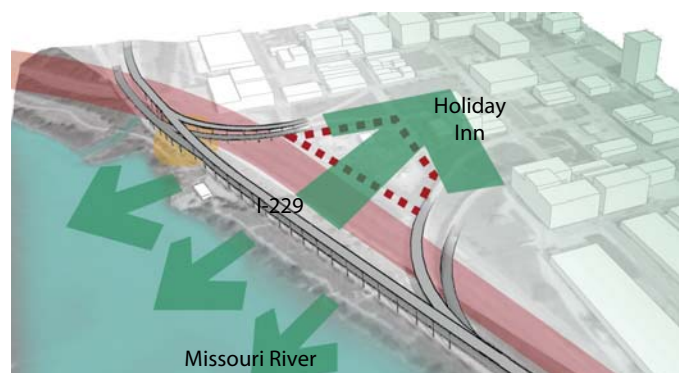


Figure 6.5: Existing Views (Balderston 2014)

Before



After



**Figure 6.6: Riverfront Park**  
(Balderston 2014)



Before



After



**Figure 6.7: Felix Street**  
(Balderston 2014)



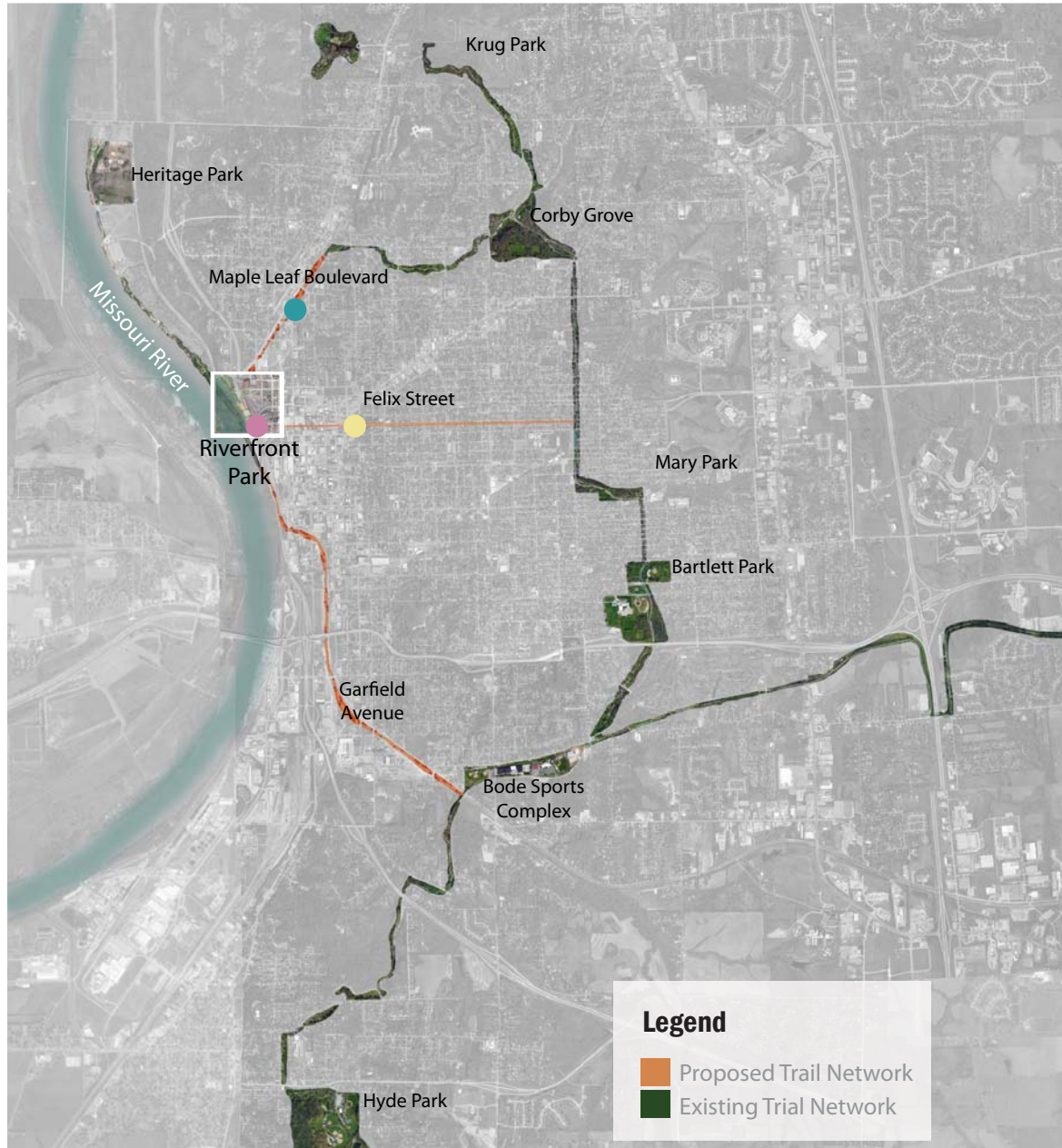
Before



After



**Figure 6.9: Maple Leaf Boulevard**  
(Balderston 2014)



**Figure 6.8: Urban Trail Connections** (Balderston 2014)

### Urban Trail Connection to Riverfront Park

When an urban trail is made accessible to everyone, a stronger community thrives. A safer, fully-connected, pedestrian trail looping St. Joseph's neighborhoods and highlighting its downtown links people of all backgrounds. Whether visitors enter the downtown by bike, foot, or vehicle, they are welcomed by an appealing park setting.

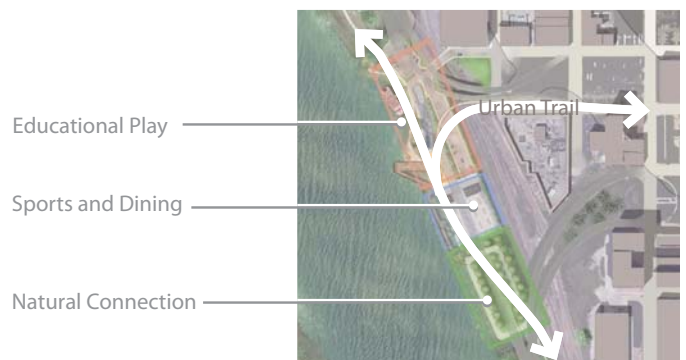


**Figure 6.10: Park Amenities** (Heermann 2014)



### Sequential Spaces

Within the sequential spaces of Riverfront Park, visitors are able to see exciting play spaces set against a backdrop of vegetated swales, trees, and scenic river vantage points. Also incorporated within Riverfront Park are interactive spaces for physical recreation, dining, history, and community events. Whether trail users decide to enter each area or not, they can be engaged in every activity space through which they pass.

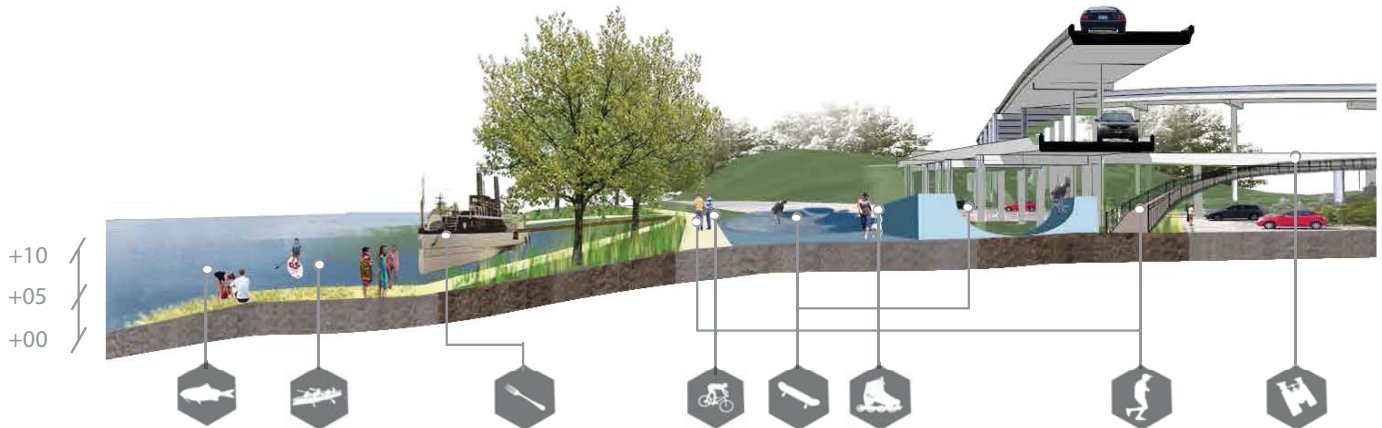


**Figure 6.11: Transitional Connections** (Heermann 2014)

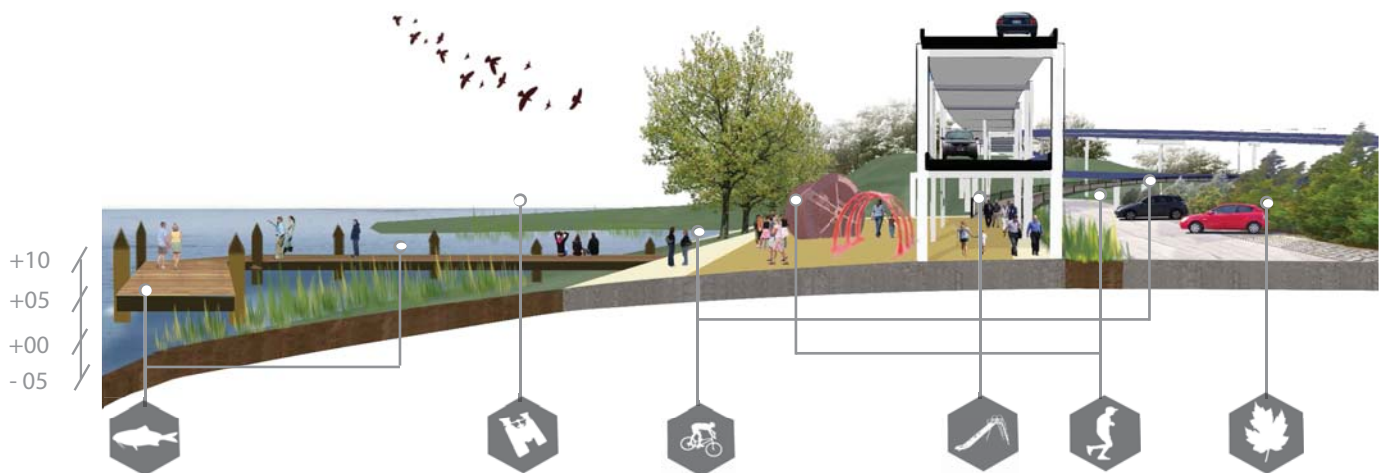


### Legend

- |          |                 |               |
|----------|-----------------|---------------|
| Biking   | Fishing         | Skating       |
| Boating  | Nature Learning | Skateboarding |
| Dining   | Playing         | Sightseeing   |
| Drinking | Running         | Volleyball    |



**Figure 6.12: Educational Play Zone** A boaters beach and riverboat restaurant offer ecological and historical education. The boaters beach, along with an ice rink and skate park keep youth active in an adjacent setting (Heermann 2014).



**Figure 6.13: Transition from Educational Play Zone** A playground and parking lot incorporate historical railroad and brick paving materials. A vegetated swale and fishing pier educate visitors about native river plants (Heermann 2014).

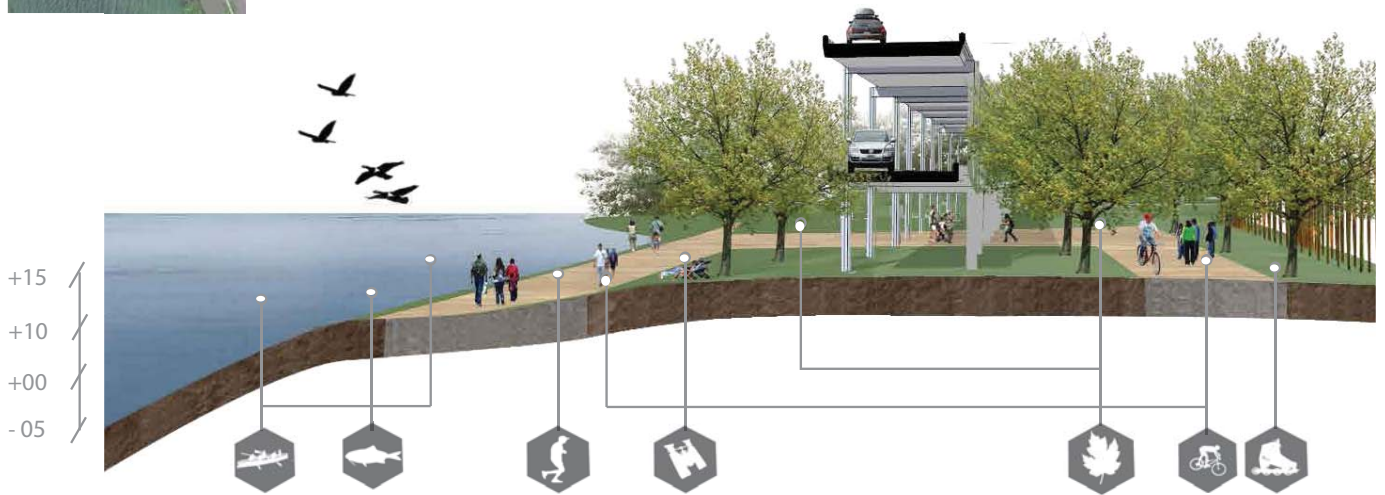


### Legend

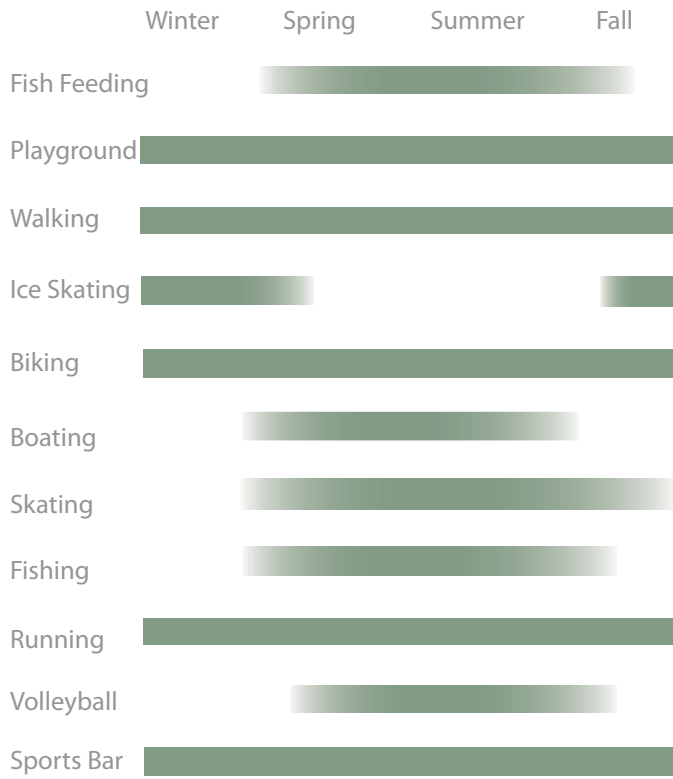
- |          |                 |               |
|----------|-----------------|---------------|
| Biking   | Fishing         | Skating       |
| Boating  | Nature Learning | Skateboarding |
| Dining   | Playing         | Sightseeing   |
| Drinking | Running         | Volleyball    |



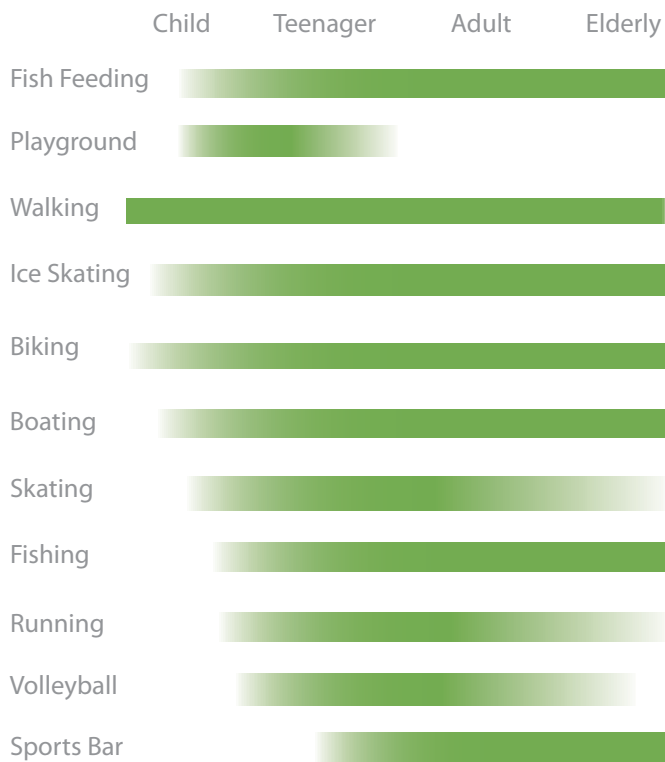
**Figure 6.14: Sports and Dining Zone** The fishing pier continues into a river boardwalk for walking, running, and biking. A local sports bar facilitates summer sand volleyball leagues as a place for dining and social interaction (Heermann 2014).



**Figure 6.15: Natural Connection Zone** To the south, an urban tree nursery offers a shaded area for repose and connection point for the trail network. The city can save expenses by growing street trees to later be transplanted (Heermann, 2014).



**Figure 6.16: A Place for All Seasons** (Balderston 2014)

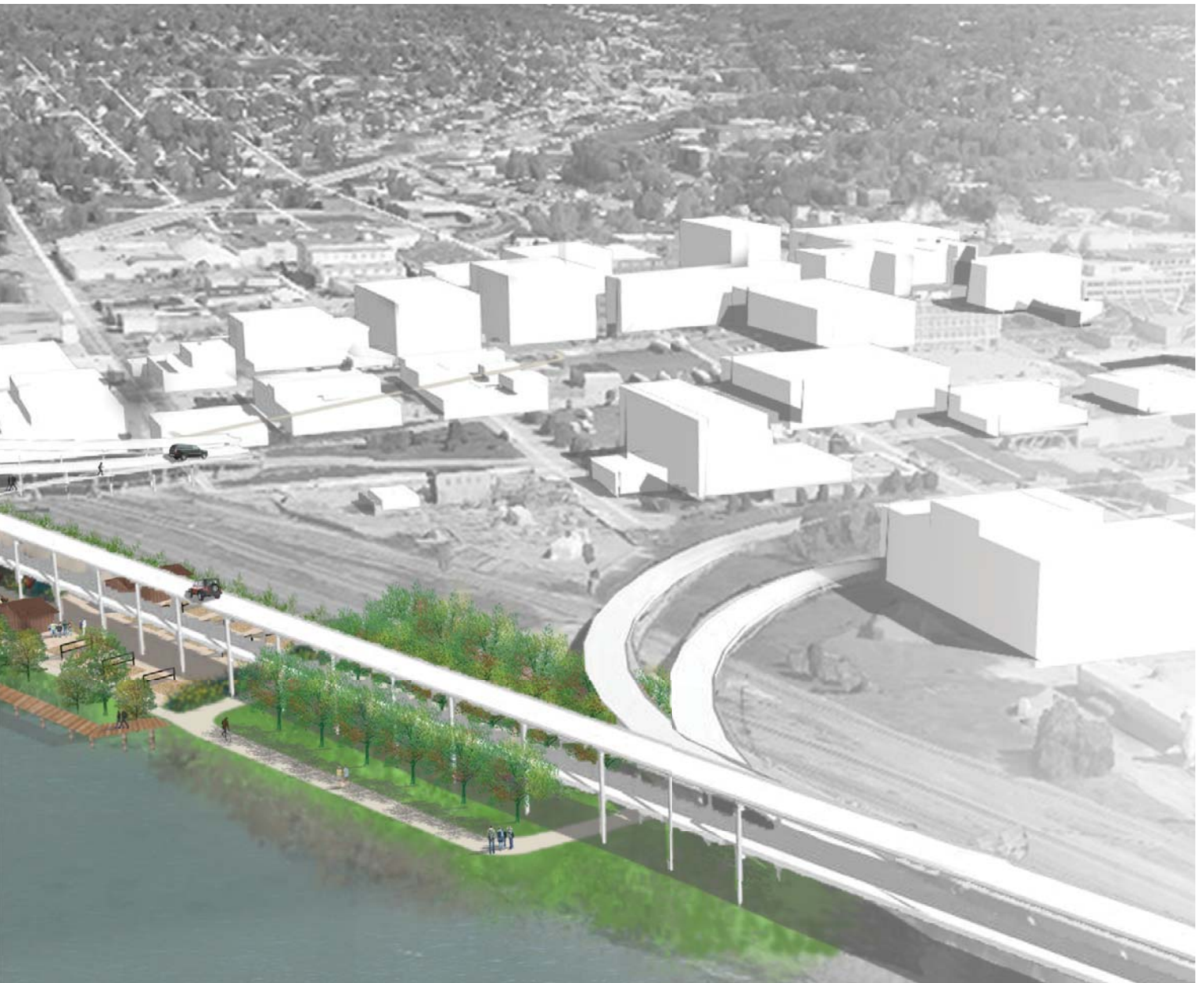


**Figure 6.17: A Place for All Ages** (Balderston 2014)



**Figure 6.18: Downtown Connection to River** (Balderston 2014)





### **A Year-Round Place for All People**

No matter the season or age group, the new plan for Riverfront Park crosses boundaries and connects people across town. While parents may be participating in sand volleyball leagues, children can explore the adjacent playground or skate park. Parents can teach children about river ecosystems through a riverwalk pier or urban tree nursery. In winter months, people of all ages can enjoy ice skating. After driving to the site to eat at the sports bar or historical riverboat restaurant, tourists may decide to cross the pedestrian overpass to shop downtown.

### **Conclusion**

To accentuate the spatial and historical connections between St. Joseph's Downtown and Missouri River, Crossing Boundaries, creates an interactive atmosphere for year-round recreation, learning, and civic engagement. This new design crosses boundaries of St. Joseph by bringing all people of the community together in an interactive, safe, and fun environment.

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- "Saint Joseph Overpass." 2014. Photograph by Libby Tudor.
- "Small Group." 2013. Photograph by Benji Williamson
- "Szymon." 2007. Photograph by Joymaster. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons. Accessed March 6, 2014. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Szymon\\_002.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Szymon_002.JPG)
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### Figure 6.2

Heermann, Lauren. 2014. Historical Significance. Source map: Google Earth. St. Joseph, Missouri. 39d46'02.36"N 94d51'16.61"W. Accessed 23 April 2014. Edited in Adobe Photoshop.

### Figure 6.3

Balderston, Allison. 2014. Existing Structural Elements. Source Map: Google Earth. St. Joseph, Missouri. 39d46'02.36"N 94d51'16.61"W. Accessed 23 April 2014. Google Sketchup model created by Allison Balderston. Edited in Adobe Photoshop.

### Figure 6.4

Balderston, Allison. 2014. Existing Circulation. Source Map: Google Earth. St. Joseph, Missouri. 39d46'02.36"N 94d51'16.61"W. Accessed 23 April 2014. Google Sketchup model created by Allison Balderston. Edited in Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator.

### Figure 6.5

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**Figure 6.17**

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# Threads

Amanda Kline & Andrew Rostek

7



# Threads

## Stitching Lives Across the Rails

Threads envisions an extended urban fabric and activated riverfront through a re-purposed interstate and solutions for other infrastructure issues as well as visual and physical connections to the riverfront, which all address the dilemmas that have created an underutilized space within the downtown.

### Connecting & Re-purposing

In its current configuration, a large substation, multiple rail lines, and Interstate 229 divide a space used primarily for parking, ignoring the human qualities of successful public spaces. The design focuses on extending the urban fabric with the introduction of new buildings and visual corridors. Analysis and discussion has shown potential for rerouting Interstate 229, which allows for a re-purposed structure with buildings and pedestrian pathways creating a unique identity and destination for St. Joseph, Missouri. Addressing human needs, pedestrian bridges improve the accessibility of the site's amenities and river. These connections link the downtown to the city's existing riverfront trails. Moreover,

focusing on public space and specific multi-purpose programming, users are able to engage with the riverfront. The conceptual site design envisions stitching St. Joseph's downtown to the riverfront, while forming a new city identity centered around a social riverfront hub.



Figure 7.1: Inspirational Photomontage (Rostek 2014)



## Visionary Moves

Through large scale moves, Threads re-imagines potential for downtown's riverfront acting as a catalyst for economic growth and create a new St. Joseph destination.

### Interstate North Reroute

4th Street becomes the main route through downtown and the north ramps remain.

### Substation Relocation

Proposed site in the south industrial district houses the new substation as indicated by the arrow.

### Re-purposed Interstate

Interstate lanes become elevated trails for pedestrian and bikes.

### Railroad Tracks

Active tracks remain, but unused tracks are re-purposed into a historical walking path.

## Legend

- I-229 Reroute
- Existing I-229 to Remain
- Existing I-229 to be Re-purposed
- ▭ Existing Substation Location
- ▭ Substation Relocation
- Existing Railroad Lines to Remain

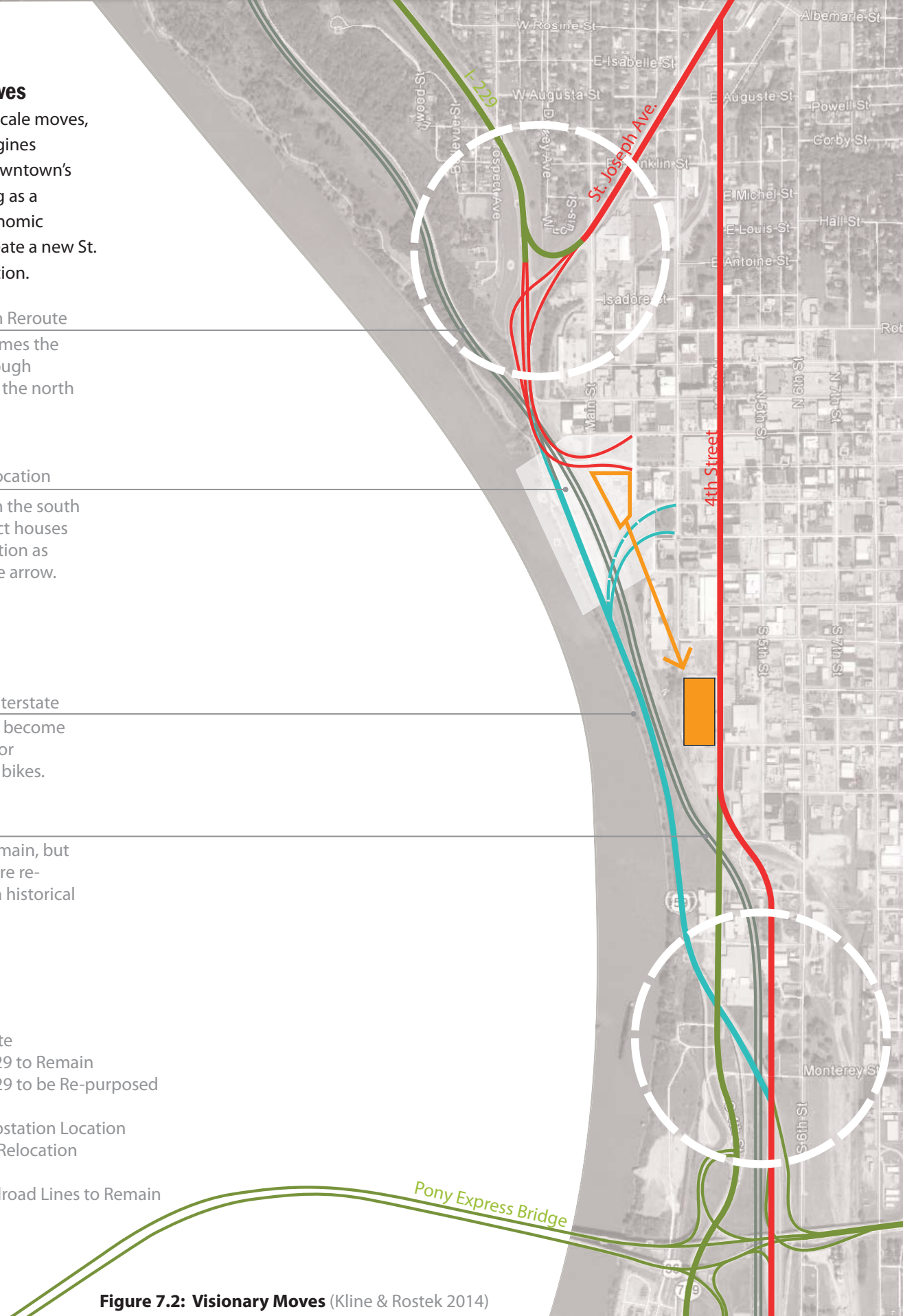


Figure 7.2: Visionary Moves (Kline & Rostek 2014)

## Stitching a Community Together

### Precedent & Economics

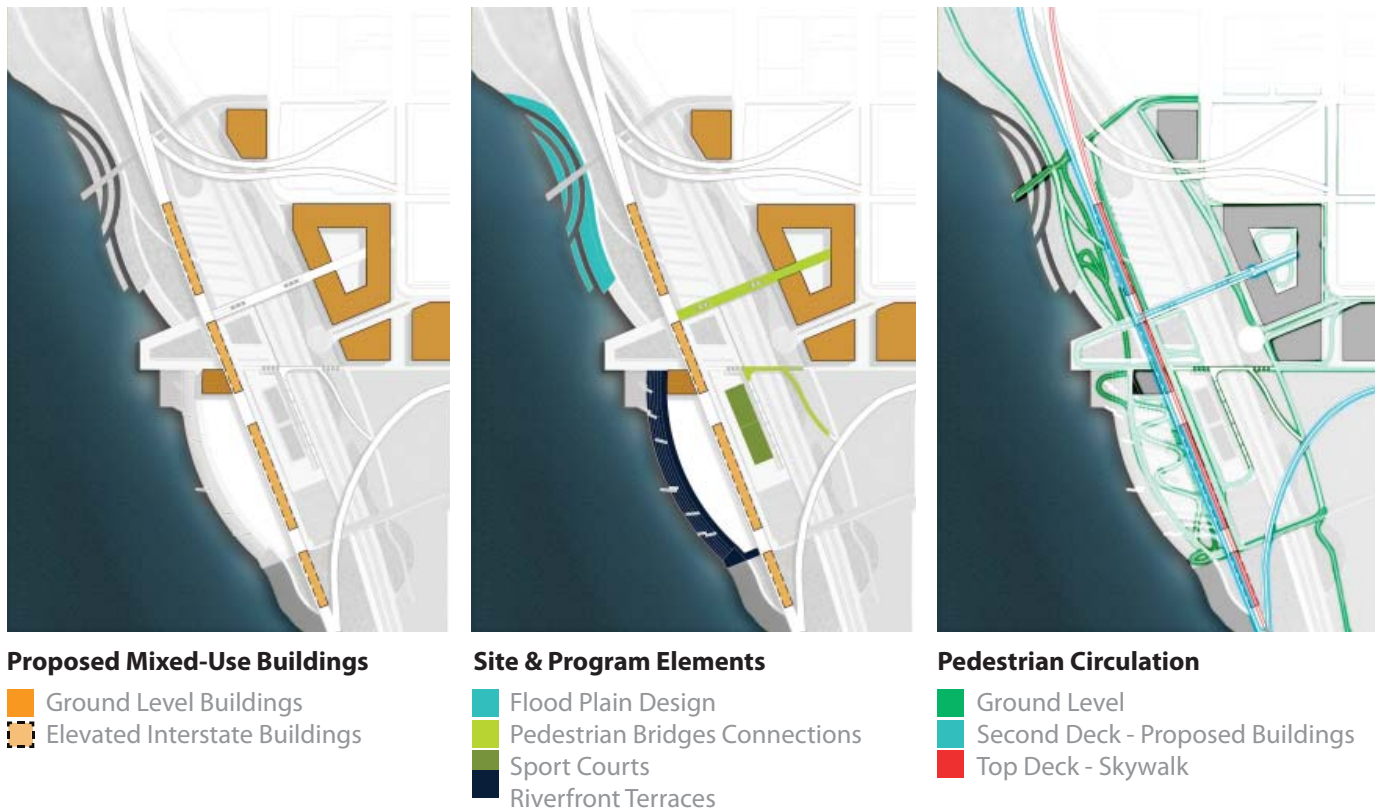
In choosing a site to develop in the downtown, many considerations were taken as to what could reshape the face of St. Joseph, MO for the long term. Looking at other cities as a precedent for this project, a consistent theme of redeveloping lost riverfront property and recapturing underutilized space has proven to generate economic growth in cities like Denver, St. Louis, Portland and Toronto. Projects like the Houston Buffalo Bayou (See Fig. 7.3), although on a large scale, initially representing a large investment of capital, have proven to generate a significant increase in tax and business revenue, and Denver's Millennium Bridge District is now some of the highest valued property in the state. Through the Threads project, the city would be able to reincorporate their underutilized spaces and riverfront that had been forgotten about with the 1960s ideas of interstate construction and automobile transportation. By the creation of a more walkable and livable district, the city would be investing in a future that is marketable to the business and a young workforce making the downtown a vibrant place for people to come and enjoy for its history and culture.



**Figure 7.3: Precedent** Houston Buffalo Bayou (SWA Group 2012)

### Places for People

Creating a variety of spaces within the design framework and infrastructure of the site, the Threads proposal envisions a space that services the various demographics of the St. Joseph community. By providing adult recreation, play areas for children, cafes and market events along with other exterior activities, the design would create a place that the residents will be able to claim as their own (See Fig. 7.4 & 7.5). This pride would reflect through this regional icon that would work to attract and grow the community.



**Figure 7.4: Site Diagrams** The diagrams above depict aspects of the conceptual design (Kline & Rostek 2014).

# Site Design

Connect to Existing Trail

Wetland Edge

Historical Crossing Pier

Flexible Event Plaza

Second Deck -  
Proposed Buildings

Beach & Boat Launch

Overlook Pier

Community Clubhouse

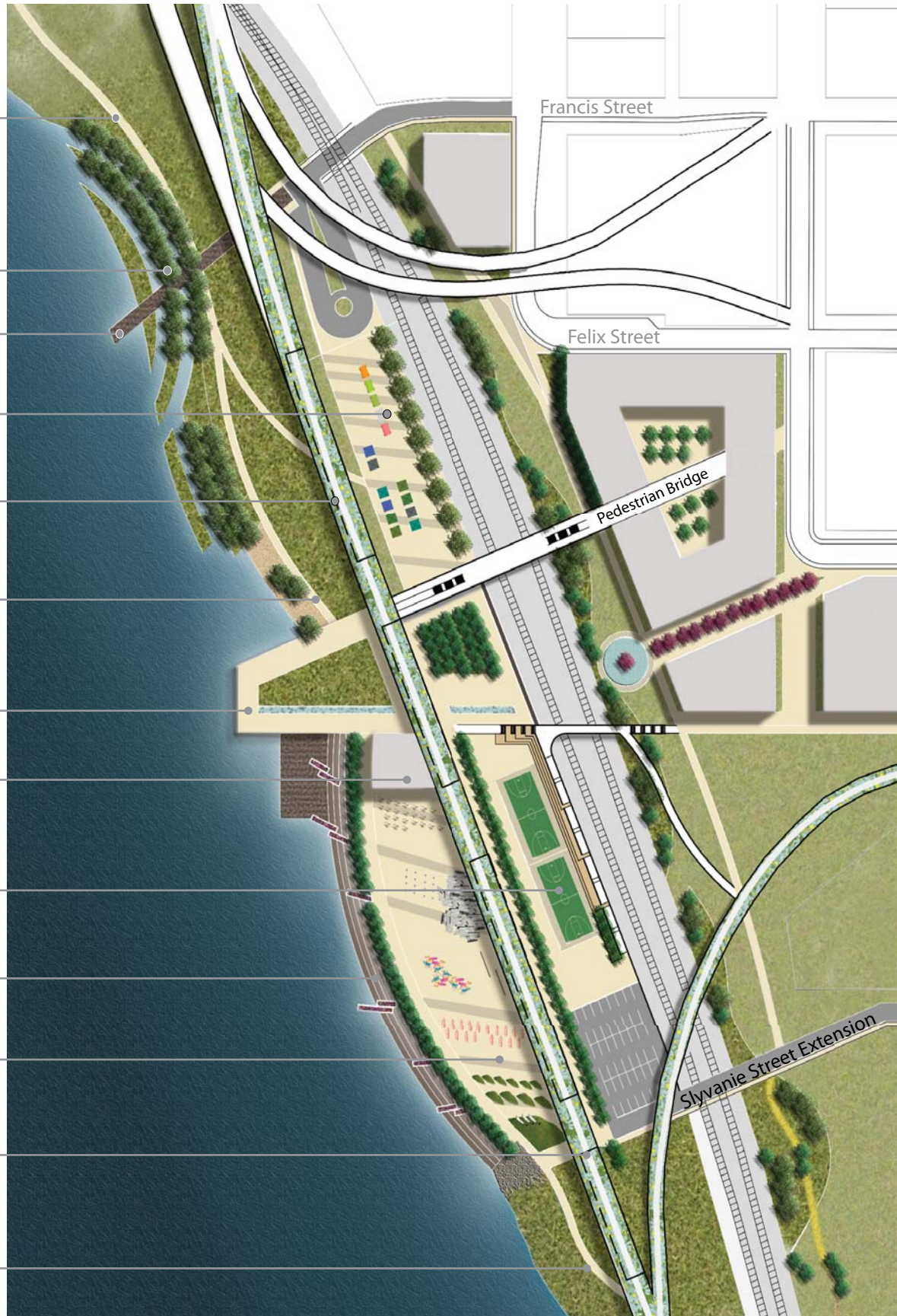
Sport Courts

Riverfront Terraces

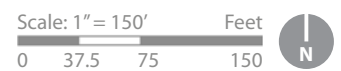
Family Plaza & Playground

Top Deck - Skywalk

Future Trail Extension



**Figure 7.5: Site Plan** (Kline & Rostek 2014)



### Skywalk

- Trails
- Patios
- Green Roofs

### Viaduct Market

- Restaurants
- Cafes
- Plazas
- Studios



Overlook Pier

Wetland Edge & Boat Launch

Riverfront Trail & Open Lawn

**Figure 7.6: Varied Experiences by the River** (Kline & Rostek 2014)

### Riverfront

Threads creates an appealing riverfront with a wetland edge that contains a historical crossing pier emphasizing where wagons use to line up as they waited to cross. An overlook pier extends out into the river helping to slow the current for the beach and boat launch area and also allowing visitors to see beautiful views. By keeping a naturalized wetland edge and a set of terraces, Threads does not place anything within the floodplain that could be damaged.

### Trail System Connections

The riverfront trail connects with the existing trail to the Remington Nature Center. By starting riverfront development in this prime location, future extensions of the trail system to the south could possibly develop as more riverfront does. Threads's riverfront design creates a trail destination to start at, end at, or any stop in between during people's adventures along the river.



Double Decker Destination

Flexible Event Plaza  
(Weekend Market)

### Double Decker Destination

Innovative reuse of the interstate infrastructure creates a regional icon in St. Joseph, MO, that draws people in from the surrounding communities. Creating a space that houses local small businesses, the re-purposed interstate structure becomes a destination for people to gather and shop, enjoying views of the city and riverfront. On the top tier, trails provide a space for running and biking, complementing city's extensive trail networks.

### Bridging Districts & Event Space

The proposed bridges lift pedestrians over the obstructing rail lines, which represent a key component of the city's history and economy. This not only provides a platform to carry citizens safely east to west into and out of downtown, as well as provide a place to view trains. By leaving part of the designed space as an open plaza paved with permeable paving, the city has a flexible space to handle various events throughout the year and a great location for seasonal farmers' markets where people are able to interact directly with the farmers who grow their food.



**Figure 7.7: Riverfront Social Hub** A terrace riverfront creates a community that can engage with the river (Kline & Rostek 2014).

### **Riverfront Terraces**

South of the overlook pier, a series of terraces and raised planters create spaces for people to gather and engage with the water. The terracing gives visitors access to the river even when the water levels fluctuate (See Fig. 7.7).

### **Sport Courts and Seating**

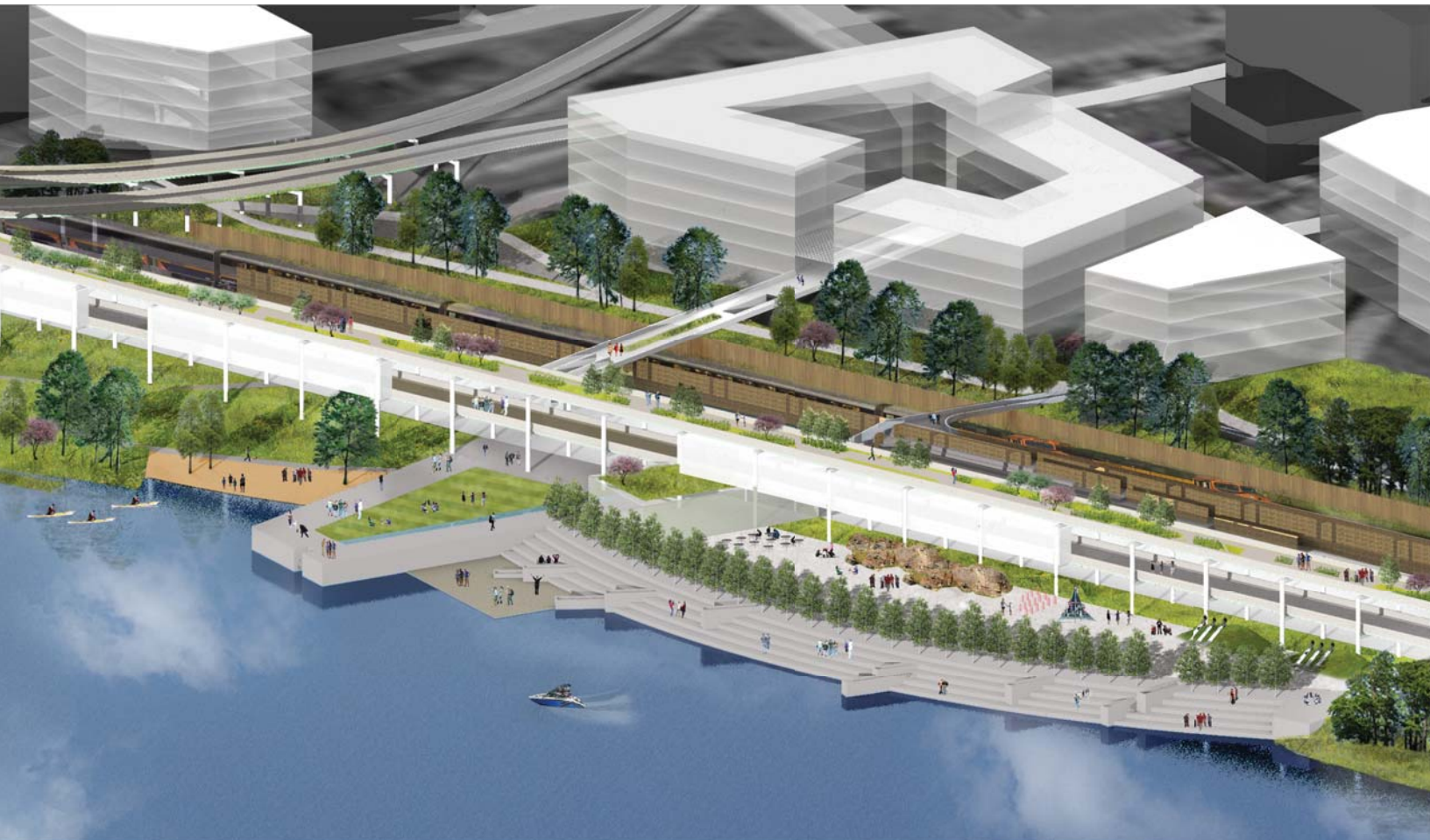
A series of sport courts are programmed to allow for small or large sporting events near the riverfront. Extending off the south pedestrian bridge, an amphitheater type seating allows for permanent seating. With the interstate businesses and sporting events, the riverfront becomes highly active day or night (See Fig. 7.8).

### **Regional Destination and New Identity**

Threads creates a regional destination for St. Joseph by activating the riverfront with the repurposed interstate infrastructure that houses new businesses and an elevated trail. These unique aspects take the current underutilized space and makes it a safe public environment that provides an economic catalyst for the rest of downtown. Pedestrian bridges allow for more site permeability and access across the railroad. Visitors are able to engage with the river once again through the multi-purpose programmed spaces allowing for recreation and leisure. Overall, Threads stitches St. Joseph's downtown and riverfront together, creating a social riverfront hub and a new city identity.



**Figure 7.8: A Lively Night Out** Threads creates riverfront night life with sport areas and interstate dining (Kline & Rostek 2014).



**Figure 7.9: Engaging the Riverfront & Extending Downtown** Proposed mixed-use buildings with connecting pedestrian bridges over the railroad allow for direct access to an activated riverfront and re-purposed interstate (Kline & Rostek2014).

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# St. Joseph News-Press



Sait Serkan Gurbuz | St. Joseph News-Press

Kansas State University students of a site planning class with an emphasis on urban design at the College of Architecture, Planning and Design take a walking tour of St. Joseph with the guidance of Wickie Utley, a homeowner and member of the Harris-Kemper Historic District Neighborhood Association, and Olin Cox, the owner of Whiskey Mansion Bed and Breakfast, on Saturday.

## Out-of-state perspective

### Kansas architecture students draft Downtown dreams

By CLINTON THOMAS  
St. Joseph News-Press

Sometimes the best visions for change come from an outside set of eyes.

Architecture students from Kansas State University visited Downtown St. Joseph on Saturday as part of a semester-long project to develop fresh ideas to revitalize parts of the city's core. The group met with stakeholders at the Mo-Kan Regional Council office following a walking tour of the neighborhood.

Blake Belanger, associate professor of landscape architecture at Kansas State, said students had worked since January in teams of two to come up with ideas for specific parts of Downtown.

For example, the student team of Taylor Lininger and Erin Wilson focused on Felix Street Square. One of their ideas was to improve the alley that connects the south side of Felix Street Square to Edmond Street, which

“It helps to see things in person so you know how much work would need to be done.”

— ERIN WILSON, student

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## Students draft Downtown dreams

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could increase foot traffic between retail spaces on Felix Street and cultural spots like Missouri Theater on Edmond Street.

The groups developed their plans from afar using demographic information and Google's street-view maps, among other tools. A tour of Downtown provided additional insight Saturday morning.

“When I walked that alley, I didn't feel comfortable,” Ms. Wilson said. “It helps to see things in person so you know how much work would need to be done.”

Andrew Rostek's team used aerial maps of the riverfront to create a visual representation of the feedback he heard from stakeholders. When someone suggested extending the walking trail farther south, he ripped off a piece of colored paper and applied it to the map. Moments later, an idea to use existing infrastructure near the old riverboat dock as a small entertainment venue resulted in another piece of paper going on the map.

Mr. Rostek's group brought bigger ideas of their own, such as the eventual removal of the Interstate 229 bridge and the relocation of a nearby electric substation to remove barriers that inhibit riverfront development.

“The great thing is, we're students, so we can get away with saying things like that, that a politician or maybe a government employee couldn't say,” Mr. Rostek said.

The students will review the information they gained this weekend before returning in May to present their suggestions to the City Council and to visitors at Better Block St. Joe.

Roni Mauer, a loan officer for Mo-Kan, said plans already are in motion to extend the relationship with K-State to other parts of the city.

“Next semester they're looking at the South Side, so we hope this could become a permanent relationship,” Ms. Mauer said.

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By Clinton Thomas

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# K-State students eye Downtown vision

City Council reviews landscape architecture college projects

By KIM NORVELL  
St. Joseph News-Press

Sometimes a fresh set of eyes is what's needed to effect change. For St. Joseph it may be 14.

A group of Kansas State landscape architecture students presented their ideas for a revitalized Downtown to the St. Joseph City Council on Thursday. The students will also present their semester-long projects to the public during Better Block St. Joe this weekend.

Each group of two students was asked to create a site plan using a specific



Blake Belanger, right, Kansas State associate professor of landscape architecture, speaks to city of St. Joseph officials before his students' presentations on Thursday at City Hall.

area or focus of Downtown. Three pairs chose to enhance livability, two chose to improve Felix Street Square and two envisioned

a developed riverfront.

"We really hope to nurture an ongoing dialogue

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# Kansas State student present Downtown vision

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about how we can make St. Joe better," said Blake Belanger, associate professor of landscape architecture.

"... We certainly don't think we have all the answers, but we believe these visionary proposals will provide momentum."

City Council members were extremely receptive to the designs, and said they believe at least portions of each project could easily be implemented to the area. City staff had not given students any limitations, including financially, and some ideas reflected grandeur.

One project, conducted by Libby Tudor, called for Felix Street Square to be redesigned into an amphitheater, which during the day could be used for a farmer's market, and at night a stage for local musicians.

The K-State student and St. Joseph native also suggested razing the parking garage at Eighth and Felix streets. She said the space could be turned into a park with a historic walk and playground, which would create better sight lines into Downtown from the east.

Along the riverfront, Lauren Heermann proposed a plan that could be used by all ages year-round. It included a restaurant on a stationary riverboat, volleyball courts, an ice rink and a fishing pier. She also suggested an urban tree nursery.

Ms. Heermann included a plan to connect the existing hike/bike trails to Riverfront Park north from Maple Leaf Boulevard, east from Felix Street and south from Garfield Avenue. She also added a pedestrian bridge over the railroad tracks and into Downtown.

Kent O'Dell, council member, said he was impressed with every student's design (and proposed A's for everybody), but said he was especially interested in those that used existing "dead spaces" Downtown to enhance the area. One student suggested improving alleyways to promote pedestrian traffic.

"It gives you something to do with open spaces that can be a black eye," Mr. O'Dell said.

Mayor Bill Falkner agreed, adding he believes these fresh ideas can help address a major concern of the council: retaining and attracting the younger population.

"I'm impressed," he said. "Looking at it through your eyes, I think opens up us older folks."

The students' designs will be on display this weekend during Better Block St. Joe. They will be posted at 111 S. Seventh St. from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. today and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday.

A book of their ideas will be given to the city next month.

Kim Norvell can be reached at kim.norvell@newspressnow.com. Follow her on Twitter: @SJNPNorvell.

By Kim Norvell

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B. NEWBURGER  
LADIES HATS





Belanger, Blake. 2014.



**Establishing**  
Building the Urban Future

Architectural drawings and text on an exhibition board.



Plans for St. Joe

**Felix Street Square Expansion**  
Enhancing Downtown's Social Hub

Architectural drawings, photos, and text on an exhibition board.



Belanger, Blake. 2014.

# Envisioning Better Blocks for St. Joe

Design proposals by Kansas State University  
landscape architecture students,  
in collaboration with the City of St. Joseph and  
Mid-Kan Regional Council

Kansas State University  
2014-2015



