

Narrative and Design: Commemorating the Civil Rights Movement Through an Inclusive
Design for Chester I. Lewis Park in Wichita, Kansas

by

Skylar Brown

A REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional & Community Planning
College of Architecture, Planning and Design

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

2018

Approved by:

Major Professor
Mary Catherine (Katie Kingery)-Page

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Abstract

Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park is an urban park located on Douglas Avenue within the downtown area of Wichita, Kansas. The Chester I. Lewis Park is a site the city is interested in improving, but no current plans or budget are available. The park has faced issues including a stigma regarding use by the homeless population, vandalism, lack of use by the broader public, and deterioration.

Chester I. Lewis was a civil rights lawyer in Wichita, Kansas. One of his cases dealt with the Dockum Drugstore Sit-in, the first successful sit-in of the civil rights movement, which will soon have a new sculpture memorial dedicated a block away from the park. The overall project goal for the downtown park commemorating Lewis's legacy is to develop a site that will address the current issues with the park and create a connection with the newly developed memorial, all while strengthening the expression of Lewis's significance as a civil rights leader who championed social integration. The project should develop a sense of place within the community and connect visitors to Wichita's legacy in the civil rights movement.

Methods used by the researcher to build a framework for design consist of archival research into the history of civil rights in Wichita, precedent studies focused on memorials and designing for the homeless, participant observation, a public exhibit with community feedback, and lastly interviews with advocates for the homeless, and living members of the Sit-In. The proposed design for Chester I. Lewis Park demonstrates that it is possible to provide a variety of uses within the park that benefit everyone, including unhoused people who use the park. This site can provide a new outlook for designing inclusively and seeking to remove the stigma that faces the homeless population in Wichita and provide a replicable example of how cities should plan for the homeless in park design.

NARRATIVE AND DESIGN

Commemorating the Civil Rights Movement Through an Inclusive Design for Chester I. Lewis Park in Wichita, Kansas

*“The civil rights movement didn’t begin in Montgomery and it didn’t end in the 1960s. It continues on to this very minute.”
- Julian Bond -*

Source: The Words of Julian Bond from The Global Citizen by Brandon Blackburn-Dwyer, 2015



Skylar Brown | Spring 2018



Chester I. Lewis Giving a Speech - Lido Hotel [Image from Chester I. Lewis Archives]

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Chester I. Lewis Park facing Douglas Avenue. - Wichita [Image by Skylar Brown 2017]

Abstract

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Rights Progress In Wichita Slow, Negroes Believe

(Continued from Page 1)

Some of these are illiterate, irresponsible or criminal. Unorganized and unconcerned about their people or their community, many are oblivious to social changes.

Between Poles

The majority of Wichita's Negro population lives between the poles of "Uncle Tomism" and violence, between the methods of discussion and demonstration.

Most are neither ne'er do wells nor political activists. Like their white counterparts, they work hard, plan, hope. They read, see and hear reports of racial turmoil across America, and they compare their situation to that of Negroes elsewhere.

Their primary concerns are not national issues. First, they must make a living, get along in their community, raise their children, make the best life they can.

Yet, there is always that difference—the color of his skin.

schools, they say, and they are watching how transfer policies and boundary changes are working for their children.

The Negro's main concern is for his children, and his greatest hope is "my kids will have it better than I do."

A Negro father says, "I tell my son, 'When you grow up, boy, you'll be able to do everything you want to.' What else can I tell him?"

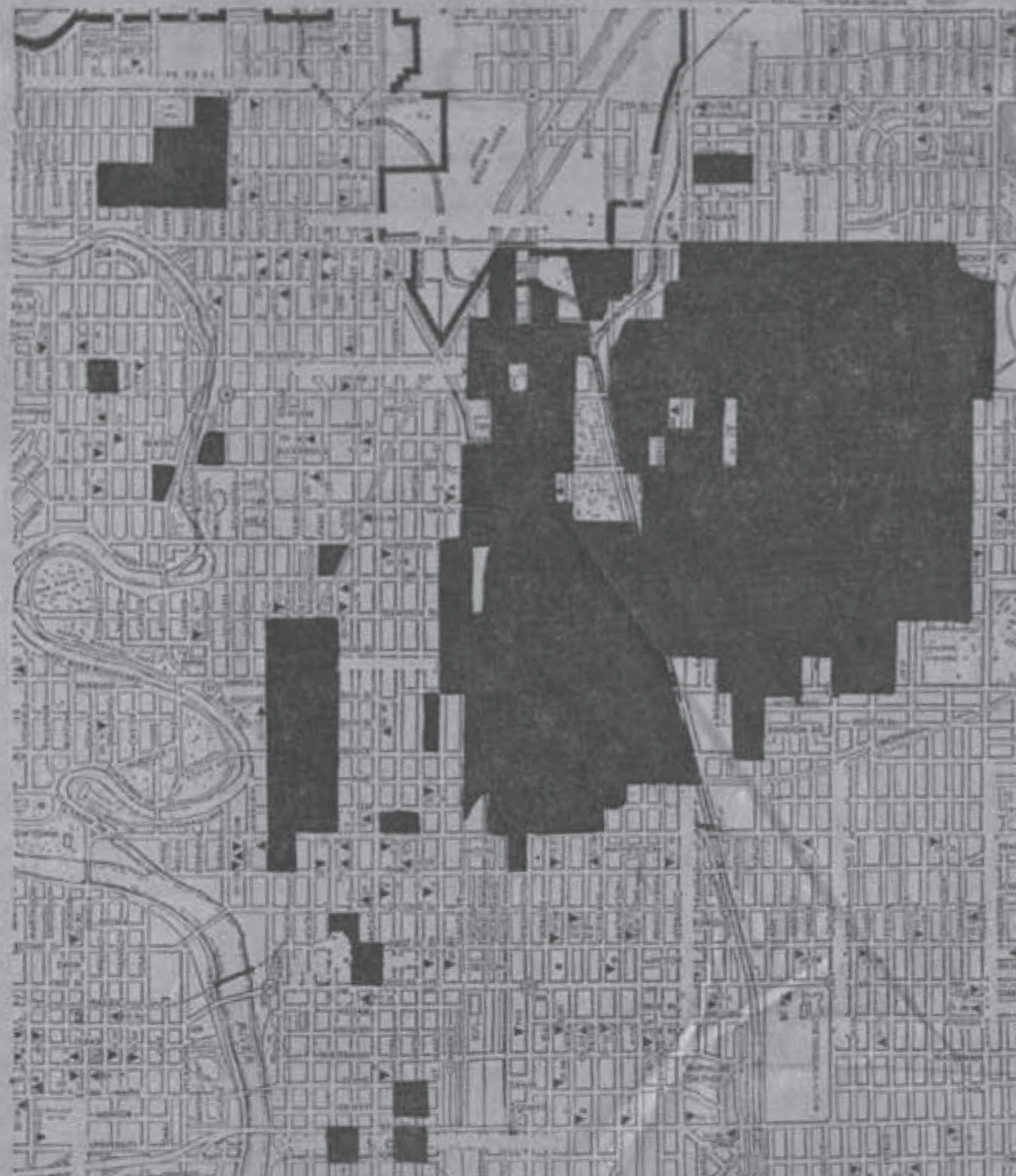
"Can I explain to him why he might not be able to go to the school he wants, or be in a fraternity, or live in whatever neighborhood he chooses? Can I explain stuff like that to a kid?"

"If he presses me for answers, I end up saying, 'Boy, your daddy is going to do everything he can to give you whatever you want.' And he believes me."

City More Tolerant

All agree their children will grow up in a more tolerant Wichita.

A Negro fireman reports he is quite happy with his situation.



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Acknowledgements

I am grateful for the guidance and support of my Master’s Report Committee and fellow members within the Cultural Inquiry Group. I would like to especially thank my major professor, Associate Professor Katie Kingery-Page for her unending support of this project and her dedication and drive pushing me as far as this project can go. Her feedback always pushed me past difficulties and onward to a greater project. I must also thank Associate Professor LaBarbara James Wigfall (Landscape Architecture/Regional Community Planning) and Dr. Jessica Falcone (Anthropology) for their expertise, which was valuable in reviewing my work. All three were highly supportive and I could not have done this without them.

In Wichita I would like to thank the stakeholders of this project: The Wichita Branch of the NAACP, Wichita Department of Parks and Recreation, Downtown Wichita, City Council Members, Fisch Haus, and The Kansas African American Museum. A special thanks also goes to the Lord’s Diner, the various shelters in Wichita, and The Homeless Outreach Team. A special thank you also goes to Chester I. Lewis, the participants of the Dockum Sit-In, Galyn Vesey, and Malaika Bell.

Thank you also extends to the Spencer Research Library at Kansas University, the work of Gretchen Eick, and the people whose lives are touched by public spaces in downtown Wichita, Kansas.

I am also thankful to the Department of Landscape Architecture/Regional and Community Planning at Kansas State University. Every class has shaped this project therefore I cannot forget to thank all of the professors that have had an effect on my education.

Lastly, I want to thank my friends and family for always being able to talk about this project and providing better ideas of how this project can become a reality.

Dedication

This is dedicated to Chester I. Lewis and the members of the Dockum Sit-In because without their efforts who knows how much longer it would have taken to move forward in the civil rights movement.

To my family for supporting me throughout my endeavors, and especially my grandfather for sharing his stories of Wichita during the civil rights movement.



1 - Introduction and Background



Figure 1.1. Chester I. Lewis Park Sitting at Sculpture - Wichita [Image by Skylar Brown 2017]

Introduction

This research focused on commemorative design and the incorporation of the homeless population in Wichita, Kansas. The focus of the design was the Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square park located within downtown Wichita and the streetscape connection between it and the Ambassador Hotel. The connection between the park and the Ambassador Hotel is significant because it can link the current memorial and ideals at the park to the proposed memorial located outside of the Ambassador Hotel. Currently the park is faced with a multitude of issues including lack of dedication to who Chester I. Lewis was, lack of information on him and the Dockum Sit-In, vandalism, a poor stigma towards the homeless, and degradation of site elements. The overall project goal is to develop a site that addresses the current issues with the park and create a connection with the newly developed memorial, all while strengthening the expression of Lewis's significance as a civil rights leader. The project should develop a sense of place within the community and connect visitors to Wichita's legacy of pioneering in the civil rights movement.

Cultural Context

The driving force behind this master's report is how to narrate the story of Chester I. Lewis and the Dockum Drugstore Sit-In, while also developing ways to better incorporate the homeless population. The stigma towards the homeless population is very similar to the marginalization that occurred during the

civil rights movement. Before the civil rights movement African Americans were not treated equally, which is an issue that members of the homeless and still African Americans struggle with today. Incorporation of all social groups is important in creating equal affordances for all.

Conditions and Dilemma

The Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park is located on East Douglas Avenue in between South Market Street and South Broadway Street in Wichita, Kansas. The park is dedicated in memory of Chester I. Lewis, a leader within the black community who focused on the pursuit of desegregation during the 50s and 60s. The City of Wichita is focused on renovating areas in downtown Wichita. Currently a new memorial for the Dockum Drugstore Sit-In is being proposed and will be located at the Ambassador Hotel, a block away from the park. Currently the site does not have any recognition or statement discussing the story of Chester I. Lewis or the Dockum Drugstore Sit-In. The site faces issues regarding a stigma towards the homeless population, degradation, vandalism, and decreased use by local residents. A major site feature, a large fountain, is damaged and needs repaired, and the other main feature on site, the bronze lunch counter sculpture was recently vandalized. See (fig. 1.1) for lunch counter sculpture. The goal of the project was to develop the site in a way that tells the narrative of Lewis, his pursuits, and also addressing current park concerns.

Boundaries and Parameters

The project will be located within the Chester I. Lewis Park and the streetscape in front of the park. Refer to (fig. 1.2 and 1.3). These parameters provide a canvas for the streetscape, giving the opportunity to tell the story of Wichita and its importance to the civil rights movement. One issue that may occur is the cultural boundaries that will affect the project. The site is culturally significant to the African American community, and is an important feature to the homeless community within downtown Wichita. Other people this will affect include the residents and workers in the area. An attempt has been made to tell the story of the civil rights movement in Wichita, Kansas while also incorporating social groups through varying methods. These methods include working with stakeholders, performing archival research, observing and analyzing the site, interviewing multiple groups, and doing participatory observation at the Lord's Diner.

Relevance to Landscape Architecture

The relevance to landscape architecture and community planning focuses on the interaction between the community in the surrounding area and the streetscape/site design. This is important to both disciplines because it focuses on how a designer can influence the area and create sense of place for the user of a site. This project can illustrate how to better design for culturally significant sites, how to develop a story that engages



Figure 1.2. Site Boundary - Wichita [Diagram by Skylar Brown 2017]

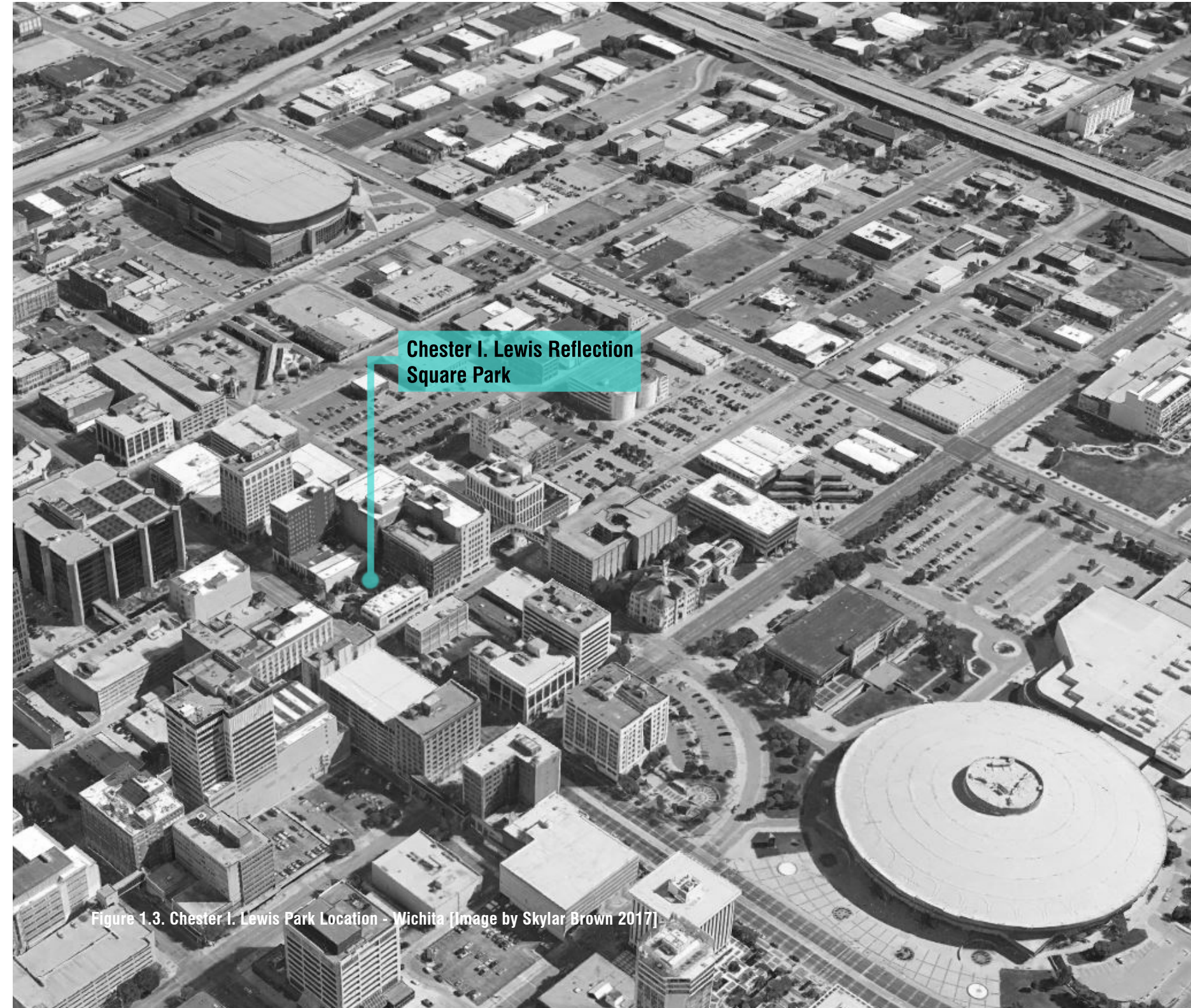


Figure 1.3. Chester I. Lewis Park Location - Wichita [Image by Skylar Brown 2017]

the public, and how to better incorporate the homeless population in design. By developing a connection between the user and the site, people will be more inclined to protect the site from vandalism and degradation.

Methods

The methodology of the project utilized archival research focused on the Dockum Drugstore Sit-In, civil rights in Wichita, Kansas, and Chester I. Lewis to better understand the historical importance. A preliminary stakeholder meeting, which focused on issues and possible resolutions for the site. Then site inventory and analysis created a better understanding of the site. Next, participatory observation developed an empathetic understanding of the homeless population (who frequently use the park) and the issues they face. After this, I conducted interviews which focused directly on the site and how improvements can be made. The target audience was advocates for the homeless, and living members from the Dockum Drugstore Sit-In. Questions focused on what can make the site more inclusive, preferred amenities, and the participants' comments about the Sit-In and its commemoration. Lastly, a public exhibition of work focused on community engagement gave direct feedback on what the community is interested in having within the park. See work schedule (fig. 1.4).

Intent

The design proposals tell the story of the Dockum Drugstore Sit-In and how influential Chester I. Lewis was in the civil rights movement. The designs include a streetscape design element along Douglas Avenue connecting the site with the new memorial at the Ambassador Hotel. The streetscape design element educates individuals and provides an opportunity for reflection about the civil rights movement. The proposed site design strives to be inclusive for all individuals and promotes activation of the space at all times.

Relationship with Stakeholders

The relationship with stakeholders consists of multiple connections. The NAACP is focused on developing a site telling the story of the Sit-In as well as Chester I. Lewis. City Council members show the interest of residents in the area as well as interest in the history of the site. With the park currently being underutilized they are interested in bringing the public to the park. The Executive Director of The Kansas African America Museum is highly interested in developing a site that tells the history of Lewis and the Sit-In. The city planner is interested in a redesign of the park that brings public interest. A civic art leader has shown interest in the development as well. Lastly, Downtown Wichita is interested in the redesign to focus on activating the space

and providing a place for people to gather. All together the stakeholders and myself are interested in redeveloping the site to complete multiple goals.

Value Statement

Inclusion of all social groups is important within landscape architecture and with this project focusing on the civil rights movement. In redesigning the park it is not possible to ignore the exclusion of the homeless population, a marginalized group who does not receive equal opportunity, much like the African American population in history and some may say today.

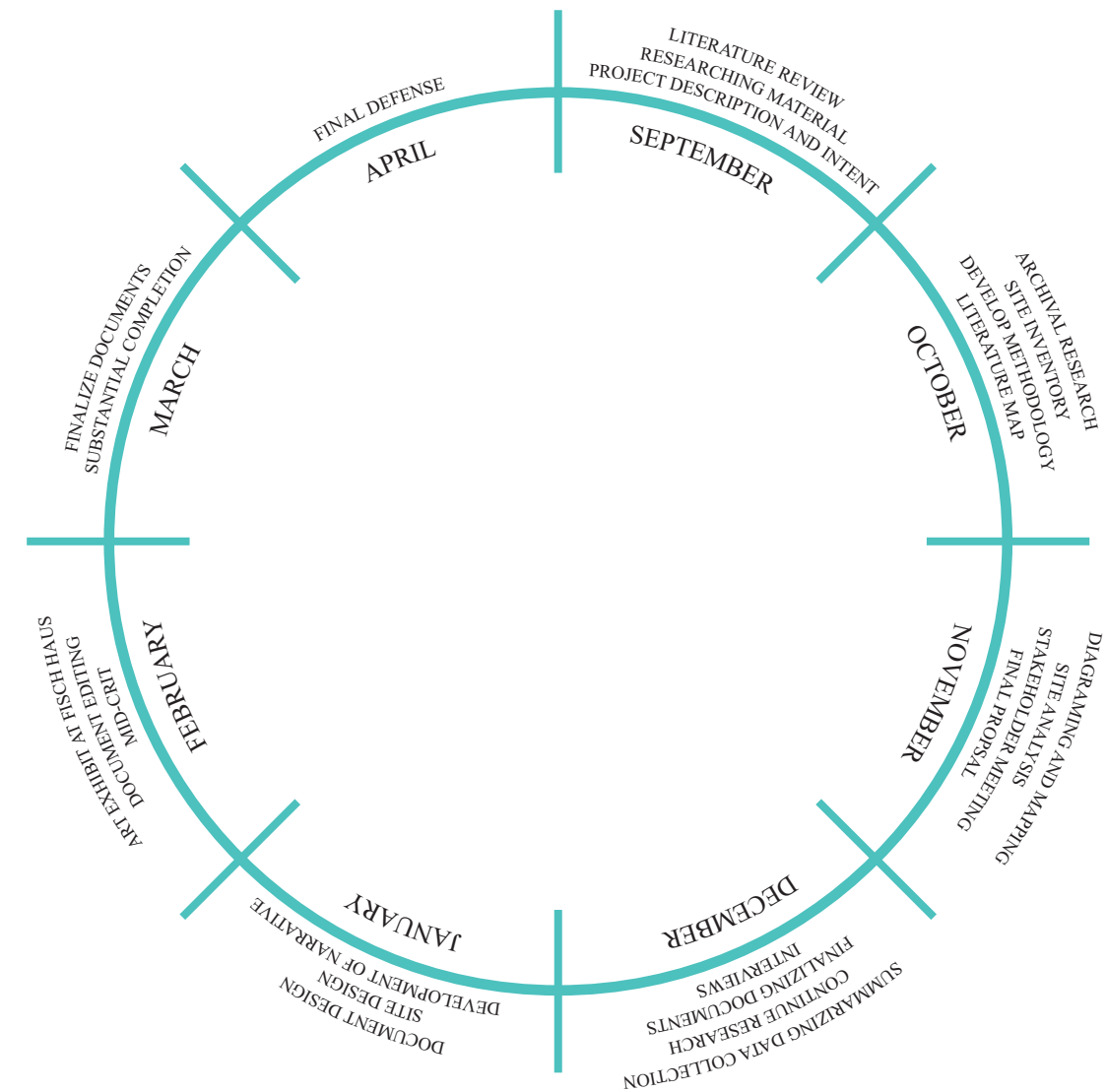


Figure 1.4. Work Schedule [Diagram by Skylar Brown 2017]

Introduction of Background

The civil rights movement in the United States was a major movement that has inspired many people in the world to achieve their dreams. Without learning about influential leaders during the civil rights movement, it would be difficult to learn from this history. This project focused on how to tell the story through design and offer an opportunity to reflect on our past. Homelessness in America has been a major issue in the United States for centuries. In urban design and landscape architecture people have focused on ways to exclude the homeless through design, but what should be happening is finding ways to be more inclusive. As designers we are capable of solving the issue of inclusion by providing specific site elements.

Members of the Cultural Inquiry Team have been focusing on different issues for the Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park in Wichita, Kansas. Andrea Lemken focused on researching cultural backgrounds through design, Wei Sun focused on restorative landscapes, and I have focused on commemorative design and inclusivity of the homeless. The Cultural Inquiry master's project team co-authored the following overview of the Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park project context.

Overview of Project Context

In 1958, Wichita was a city of segregated public places, including variety stores and drug stores located throughout downtown, such as Dockum Drugstore. Dockum, the largest drugstore chain in Kansas during this time, was one of the most popular places to stop for a Coke and a quick snack. African Americans were not allowed to sit in the store; they could only order in the back, and food and beverages had to be consumed outside. On July 19, 1958, twelve African American teenagers walked into the Dockum drugstore on Douglas Avenue, sat down at the lunch counter and remained there until the store closed for the day. This began the Dockum Sit-In of 1958, the first successful sit-in of the civil rights movement. The protest was made successful by student participants from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) with the support of Chester I. Lewis, president of the Wichita branch of the NAACP in 1958. For over three weeks, the students protested Wichita downtown chain stores and their refusal to allow blacks to eat at the lunch counter. The students, with the support of their family members, set out to discredit the claim “that’s the way things are in Wichita” and to address the discriminatory act of segregation in the United States (Eick 2001 5). Although the success of this Civil Rights sit-in was not widely known—and still is not widely known today—many more subsequent sit-ins were organized in other cities after the protest was discussed at an NAACP meeting.

Following the Dockum Sit-In

The Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park (Lewis Park) is a pocket park on Douglas Avenue of Downtown Wichita, Kansas. Dedicated in 2000, this reflection park commemorates the life of Chester Lewis, a prominent lawyer and part of the “young turks” era of the NAACP. Chester I. Lewis was a significant leader for the modern civil rights movement (Chester I. Lewis n.d.). Lewis’s childhood was influenced heavily by his father, Chester I. Lewis Sr., who owned and operated the Hutchinson Blade in Hutchinson, Kansas. The Hutchinson Blade was a local newspaper which focused heavily on the issues of social and racial segregation. Lewis served in the military during World War II, and after completion of his service, attended the University of Kansas where he earned his undergraduate degree (1951) and law degree (1953). Following graduation, Lewis began serving as a lawyer in Sedgwick County, Kansas. Lewis was also an active member within the Wichita chapter of the NAACP, and became president of the chapter in 1956. Lewis focused on developing change through non-violent protests and his knowledge of the law. After a lifetime of fighting racial discrimination, Lewis died in 1990. Some of his notable achievements throughout his lifetime include obtaining an injunction in Federal District Court against the city of Wichita for swimming pool discrimination, abolishing discriminatory hiring practices

at Boeing, Cessna, and the Coleman Lamp Company, and the hiring of the first two African American bus drivers on the Wichita Transportation system. Lewis was one of the largest influencers in our current civil rights laws (Chester I. Lewis n.d.).

Lewis Park focuses on a famous part of Lewis’ legacy, the Dockum Drugstore Sit-In of 1958. Today, the park consists of an interactive fountain for children and adults to play in, various sculptures, picnic tables, shade trees, and a decorative fountain. One of the more prominent sculptures of the reflection park is a life-size lunch counter with open seats and a waitress behind the counter. The sculpture is a reference to the teenagers who participated in the Dockum Sit-In, and open seats at the counter invite visitors to sit down and be a part of the work of art.

There are currently initiatives to make changes to the underutilized park to improve the current condition and overall design, but no funding dedicated to wholly redesigning and rebuilding the park. The Cultural Inquiry master’s project team addresses the future potential of Lewis Park through three individual lenses: cultural inclusiveness, healing gardens, and inclusivity for all that also focuses on telling the story of Chester I. Lewis and the Dockum Sit-In.



Lunch Counter Sculpture - Wichita [Image by Skylar Brown 2017]

2 - Literature Review and Precedents



Busker Sculpture - Wichita [Image by Skylar Brown 2017]

Literature Review

The literature focuses on a variety of topics dealing in streetscapes, commemoration, narratives, homeless issues.

Sense of Place

Sense of Place is the theory or concept of how an area can develop its own identity which relates back to the users of the site by using art, history, culture, context, and providing amenities that interact with the physical, social and psychological environments (Steele 1981). Streetscapes that have a sense of place in mind enhance the chances for users to develop memories within the space and have better experiences. In downtowns, it is important to encourage business owners to interact with the streetscapes and get them involved with creating a sense of place (Dow 2009). By doing so the business owners will be attracting more people to the area, which would be beneficial for everyone. This can be accomplished by them interacting with their store fronts, providing seating, and decorating their store displays during important parts of the year. By doing this it can increase the traffic to the area, especially during holidays.

Many suburban areas struggle in creating a sense of place and so they have begun developing town centers within their urban villages. The streetscapes within the downtown areas offer a setting for memories to occur and offer the chance for the area to develop its own sense of place (Bohl 2002).

Art, history, culture, and context are important features to think about when designing the streetscape, because they can have a major role in developing a sense of place within the area (Soule 2016). Art and culture are important in revealing the identity of an area and developing social and physical forms of the community. By integrating artwork into the streetscape, designers can create more social interactions between pedestrians, create opportunities for deeper thought, and develop an identity to the area. People are more likely to remember a space if they find something unique within it, and artwork is a way of accomplishing this (Soule 2016). History and context are also important aspects to the streetscape and it can show how the area has changed within the years. By paying attention to the history of the area and understanding the context, it is easier to understand the identity of an area and make connections with the people and the space. Ybor City in Tampa Bay, Florida is a good example that illustrates sense of place and has become a destination for many people (Soule 2016). Ybor City was a district that was primarily industrial and focused on cigar production. In the 90s the city of Tampa Bay focused on redeveloping the area and it has become an identifiable entertainment district for the city. This site show relevance on how a site focused on historical elements can be successful.

A major issue when designing for a sense of place within the urban streetscape is many areas have begun to look too similar. Identity and unification are important, but it is not good for the entire area to be unified because that causes a loss of identity (Gibbons 1992). Important features that can provide identity are unique or historical lighting elements, street trees that offer an interesting bloom or color change, unique seating elements, and signage for the area (Gibbons 1992). Another important feature is developing these areas to be accessible by everyone. There needs to be new policies implemented to develop incentives and create more opportunities within the area (McCann 2010).

Streets as Physical, Social, and Psychological Environments

The characteristics of streetscapes are very important to our lives, because of how they can affect the way we act and interact with people. Streetscapes influence three different connections, which are the physical environment, social environment, and psychological environment of our lives (Steele 1981). The physical environment directly focuses on the characteristics of the streets. These characteristics are formed by paving materials and patterns, trees, seating, plantings, lighting, and building frontage (Gibbons 1992). Within those characteristics

of the streetscape they also influence the social interactions that people will have on the street. For example, a coffee shop or café with outdoor seating offers chances for interaction between people using the seating and people passing by. Crosswalks and places that offer shopping along the streetscape create more possibilities for social interaction while waiting or walking along the sidewalk (Steele 1981). Street lighting and signage are features that effect the psychological environment for individuals using the sidewalks (Steele 1981). Not having street lights along the roadway is a potential danger for drivers and pedestrians, so adding street lights makes the experience safer because people are able to observe their surroundings more effectively (Schellinger 2006). The next step in creating a safer environment for pedestrians would be adding pedestrian lighting as well. By doing this the pathways are well lit and create better sight lines. People are more comfortable in these surroundings because they are more aware of what is happening around them.

Street Types and Case Studies

There are many varieties of street types that have been used throughout the world, and these streets are very important for the framework of the development around them. For children in urban environments, a majority of their interaction with the green spaces can

come from the streetscape (Mehta 2013). By applying trees to the area children can have a closer interaction with nature. Another important aspect of streets are how they need to be engaged by surrounding buildings and how they need to work holistically to create more opportunities of interaction and engagement with the public (Mantho 2015). With the variety of street types, there is a wide range of possibilities on how as designers we can shape the lives of people. With proper design, an industrial roadway can be transformed to have a more memorable experience. Currently, cities are moving towards developing complete streets and designing for sustainability (Zavestoski 2015). Along with these changes, new policies need to be implemented and new ideas need to be considered for raising funds for the changes required. Many cities already implement congestion pricing to cover the costs for the implementation of complete streets and other infrastructure, and there are plans for New York City to implement it as well (Zavestoski 2015).

In the city of Gelsenkirchen-Erie, Germany there is an area called Market Place (Uffelen 2013). This is a developed area that has turned its streetscape essentially into an urban plaza that focuses on pedestrians and cyclists. With it focusing more heavily on the pedestrian, it has bollards as protection and delineation for the vehicle access. It also has a high amount of bicycle parking available

for the citizens of the city. Other important features are the street trees, the unique paving pattern, ornate lighting elements, café seating, and the benches available on site (Uffelen 2013). Although this area does not offer any greenspace besides the trees, it does offer play space and has open programming for festivals and other types of activities, which can increase the chances of having a memorable experience.

Small towns and cities need to have their own identity in order to separate themselves from one another. The city of Winchester in Kentucky has developed a strong downtown center with its streetscape and the context of the area. The street wall of the buildings is consistent and has display windows focused on engaging the pedestrians (Crankshaw 2009). The site also has street trees providing shade as well as creating an overhead plane that gives the pedestrian a stronger sense of scale. Another site amenity is the use of historical street lights for the town which adds to the sense of place. The overall goal for this town was to redevelop their downtown area and turn it into a shopping destination for the citizens and visitors the area, and the town succeeded (Crankshaw 2009).

Memories and Streets

The streets of our cities have a strong connection with our memories (Barnett 2010). Although buildings may change on the streets, the streets are less likely to change in quick succession. Streets may change in design but typically they have the same path and goal. People have connections to the streets, be it by shopping districts, public spaces, or residential neighborhoods. Streets have become a place of so many different events. People have protested the government and have had fairs and parades along roadways. These events create a variety of memories for people and can mold how they grow up (Hou 2010). Humans are also an adaptable species, and when the setting does not work in the way they wish then it will be transformed into it. Immigrants turn areas into their own landscapes, homes have been transformed into community spaces, and industrial sites have been transformed into new uses for local communities (Hou 2010). They do this because it is what they remember from their lives before being there. This creates a sense of security as well as culture in their new area.

People who are Homeless and Urban Design

When people are homeless they spend their time living on the streets of cities. Because of this they are constantly within the public eye which has developed stigmas against them. These stigmas have led to people avoiding spaces where the homeless are located, and to design spaces to not incorporate them. Currently designers create benches that discourage lengthened periods of resting and adding spikes to areas (Rosenberger 2014). Over the years cities have paid for bus tickets to remove the homeless from their city. This does not fix the problem, it only extends it and pushes issues on other cities and the homeless. As designers, we need to find a way to integrate the homeless and provide space/accommodations for them.

According to Wendy Gilmartin, from discussions with the homeless in L.A., they have come to a consensus on items they wish to see implemented into design. Safety is a top priority to the homeless and one change they want to see are speed bumps and curbs utilized to slow traffic and create a more attentive driver (Gilmartin 2016). The incorporation of safety zones, a safe space that individuals feel protected would also be ideal for women as well as members of the LGBTQ members in the homeless community. Another important feature would be the utilization of urban gardens. Many members would be willing to work on the spaces in exchange for food grown in the garden. The

members of the community also discussed the implementation of drinking fountains, charging stations, and storage units. These are items that would not only benefit the homeless community but also the public (Gilmartin 2016). These items would be improvements to public space and establish amenities for everyone.

Theory of Affordances

The theory of affordances focuses directly on what the environment provides for animals and humans. These provisions include what is beneficial or disadvantageous for the users. Some affordances offered by the environment includes “features of the terrain, shelters, water, fire, objects, tools, other animals, and human displays” (Gibson 1986). There are many affordances available within cities in the United States. Designers have been creating affordances throughout cities for years. This includes providing benches, planters, and areas for dining and relaxing (Myrick 2015). These affordances are available for all humans, but there is a stigma towards the homeless when utilizing affordances. Unfortunately designers are also designing items like areas with spikes and benches with partitions that remove affordances for the homeless. The homeless are in need of assistance, and this shows the necessity for more available affordances. Some of these affordances that need to be regularly available are easy access to counseling services and

welfare (Neale 1997). Chester I. Lewis park currently offers tables and chairs for the homeless that are an affordance which allows relaxation, a place to eat, and a place to work on their bicycles.

Landscape Narratives

When thinking of stories and narratives typically our thoughts move to the plots or the characters within the tales, but what sets the foundation for these stories are the setting. The landscape creates its own sets of emotion within it. If you think back to the stories you were told in the past you can connect the setting to how it made you feel and you will begin seeing a link between these connections. We have taken this idea of setting in stories and have adjusted it into design. “We found designers encoding a compendium of narratives from local history to archetypal myths using strategies such as inscribing text in sidewalks, plotting sequences, revealing forgotten histories, writing their own fictions, preserving landscapes associated with stories, retelling tradition in new forms, and inviting people to add their own stories to places” (Potteiger and Purinton 1998). Narratives are capable of being told in a variety of ways that are beneficial in design. Memorial sites and commemorative sites are all focused on a story and these landscapes tell parts of those stories.



Figure 2.1. Homeless People Sleeping in Pershing Square - Los Angeles [Image by Levi Clancy 2013]

Precedents

The author researched precedents to better understand different types of landscapes that answer in part how designs have included the homeless and also how to better commemorate history in site design.

Pershing Square

Pershing Square in the downtown area of Los Angeles has gone through many changes over the years. It has been reviewed in positive and negative ways mainly focused on its issues with the homeless population (Shannon 2016). The square has recently begun a redesign and with this the design firm Agence Ter will be focusing on bringing the square back to the street level, bringing back shade, nature, and flexible open space. L.A. Times architecture critic Cristopher Hawthorne states, “the winning design is very much a reaction to, if not outright apology for, the visual clutter of contemporary Pershing Square.” (Wick 2016). This design is focused on bringing back nature and developing resilience within the urban footprint.

At its current state Pershing Square has become a home to many of the homeless population in Los Angeles. See homeless using the park (fig. 2.1). The majority of residents see this as an issue and prefer to not use the park in order to avoid the homeless (Wick, 2016). Instead the redesign needs to be addressing the homeless issues (Shannon 2016). The redesign does not need to remove

the homeless. The solution is not as simple as moving the homeless to another city, but needs to address the issues at hand. With the new design incorporating flexible spaces and kiosks, it could develop spaces the homeless could utilize. One idea consists of using kiosks for the homeless to provide facilities being sponsored by non-profit organizations (Shannon 2016).



Figure 2.2. Eddie Maestas Park Community Gardens - Denver [Image by Skylar Brown 2018]

Eddie Maestas Park

Eddie Maestas Park is located within downtown Denver, Colorado. This small triangular park is located along the intersection of North Broadway Street, Lawrence Street, and West Park Avenue. See park (fig. 2.2). This park has become home to many homeless individuals because of its proximity to the Denver Rescue Mission, The Samaritan House, and the St. Francis Center (Jost 2009). These three organizations work towards providing a place for people to eat, sleep, socialize, seek counseling, employment help, and provides access to healthcare. The site was redesigned with the homeless in mind because of its constant use by the population, but has also faced scrutiny by the general public living nearby. The general public has concerns with the local inhabitants because of drug use and loitering, but for the most part it is not the homeless dealing drugs (Jost 2009).

By redesigning the park, it was important to pay attention to what they need while also developing a space that can handle the constant use. Material selection was an important task during the design process. It was important to not use wooded material like mulch because individuals could start fires (Jost 2009). Another important element was to not use material that could be used as a weapon. Underground irrigation was also an important element to be used. The underground irrigation avoided potential damage caused by the homeless population

and accomplished its objective. Plant material selection played a key role in design because the individuals needed shaded areas, but it was also important to not use vegetation that could harm the population. To better handle concerns by the homeless and the general public, closed circuit television was installed in the park (Jost 2009). This, plus signs making it unlawful for vehicles to park next to the site, has deterred drug dealing on site.

Overall, the site became more usable and comfortable for the homeless population. Although it still faces scrutiny from the general public, the site has resolved their concerns. Recently the park has been redesigned again to integrate a community garden usable by the local residents and the homeless (Arvidson 2015). This provides opportunities for joint efforts and has created an olive branch between the two groups.



Figure 2.3. Bud Clark Commons Gate Opening - Portland [Image by Bruce Forster 2018]

Oppenheimer Park

Oppenheimer Park is located within Vancouver, British Columbia. This park is located within one of the poorest districts in the city. Major issues with the site include drug use and the fact that individuals do not feel safe within the park and area (Arvidson 2015). The design team, Space2Place wanted to focus on the historical aspects of the park while also embracing the marginalized and homeless. The design team started by creating a very open design allowing observation by everyone. By allowing external observation, people are more likely to report issues and they generally feel safer in the area. Other design features include only using curved elements. By doing this, the park does not have any harsh corners, and this causes individuals to feel safer (Arvidson 2015). Because no one felt safe in the park before, the team wanted to create a space where everyone was welcome. This included the installation of a playground, that has become very popular with local families. Overall, "Oppenheimer park is an excellent example of a community's ability to help its most vulnerable make and sustain space for themselves in the city." This site has become a strong example of sites that provide for the homeless rather than focusing on isolating them from the area.

Bud Clark Commons

The Bud Clark Commons, located within Portland, Oregon is attached to the Transitions Projects Incorporated (TPI) a homeless shelter and community center for the homeless population in Portland. The design team, Mayer-Reed first focused on understanding the homeless population (Jost 2014). They began by serving food to the population and started conversation focused on what would make them feel safe and comfortable. Entering the design phase, the team wanted to create a safe environment using vibrant and neutral colors to enhance mood. They utilized art and text to provide inspiration to the homeless population, while also utilizing vegetation to create a soft and calming environment. See inspirational text gate (fig. 2.3). The team also provided a resourceful amenity for everyone which is a bike repair station (Jost 2014). There are a few complaints however about the park, and this is mainly focused on a need for more awning space to provide shelter from the rain and an increase in available electrical outlet space outdoors.

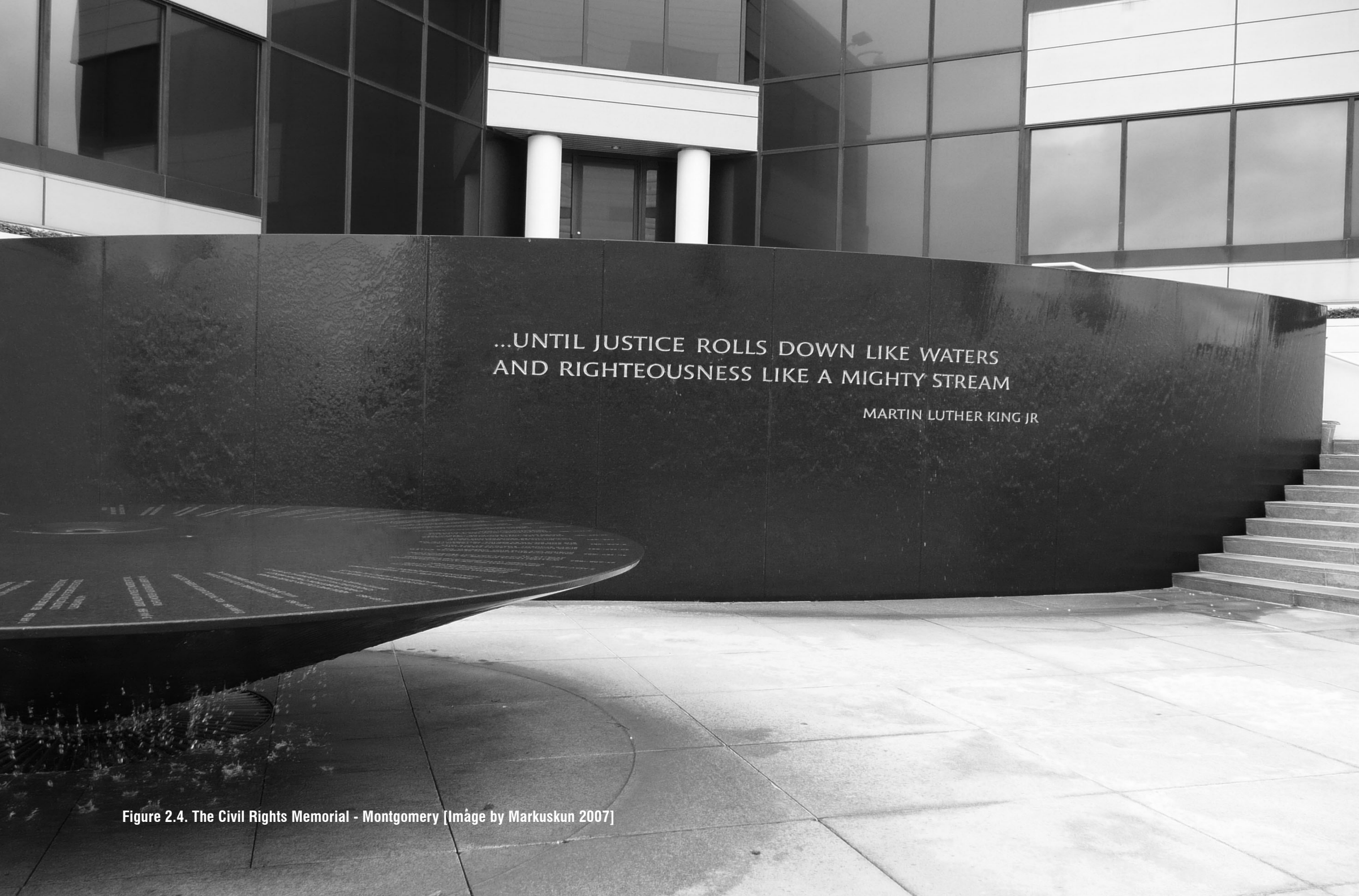


Figure 2.4. The Civil Rights Memorial - Montgomery [Image by Markusun 2007]

Civil Rights Memorial - Montgomery, Alabama

The Civil Rights Memorial designed by Maya Lin, is located in Montgomery, Alabama. See memorial (fig. 2.4). The concept of the memorial focuses on the history of the movement and documents the names of individuals associated with the movement (Civil Rights Memorial 2017). It documents this in a radial pattern similar to a clock. Maya Lin envisioned the memorial audience focusing on reflection of the movement and the progress our nation has made. The site is located near many historical areas during the civil rights movement. These areas include the ending of a voting rights march as well as a church that Dr. King was a pastor of. Another important element is with the memorial being open twenty-four hours a day, it represents an equal chance for everyone to see it and reflect on our past (Civil Rights Memorial 2017).

Freedom Riders National Monument - Aniston, Alabama

On Mother's Day, May 14, 1961, the freedom riders were riding on a Greyhound bus and were attacked by a mob of people (Freedom Riders National Monument 2017). The bus was set on fire and the freedom riders were physically attacked when trying to escape. This attack caused new laws and policies to be created which ended segregated interstate travel. This peaceful protest turned violent

by aggressors serves as an example of how something terrible can turn beneficial towards ending unjust laws. The greyhound station and the site of the attack have now been conserved as national monuments telling the story of the attack and movement. A welcome center has been provided in the greyhound station and a mural of the freedom riders has been created (Freedom Riders National Monument 2017). These sites provide an example of how two sites can be connected by an experience to tell the story of a historical event.

International Civil Rights Walk of Fame - Atlanta, Georgia

The International Civil Rights Walk of Fame commemorates the civil servants who pushed onward to abolish segregation and lead a life of equality (International Civil Rights 2017). They document these people by placing their names and information along a promenade in Atlanta, where people can reflect on how these influential people changed the history of the United States. This site offers a chance for people to walk among the footsteps of those who pushed forward and provides inspiration for others to continue the movement of equality. Since 2004 the walk has accumulated 117 people in its walk of fame and continues to grow yearly (International Civil Rights 2017).



View Across Douglas Avenue Looking Towards Chester I. Lewis Park - Wichita [Image by Skylar Brown 2017]



Figure 3.1. Preliminary Stakeholder Meeting Group Discussion - Wichita [Image by La Barbara James Wigfall 2017]

Introduction

The focus of this study was on developing a new design for Chester I. Lewis Park and its adjacent streetscape in a way to interlink the newly planned Dockum Drugstore Sit-In memorial being installed at the Ambassador Hotel in downtown Wichita, and other cultural sites relevant to Wichita's Civil Rights History. This study also focused on the stigma of the homeless located in the area and how to better design the space to be more inclusive for all individuals. The study focused directly on the users in the area and how to better tell the story of Chester I. Lewis and the Dockum Drugstore Sit-In. Storytelling is an important aspect to the project and it requires qualitative and quantitative research utilized simultaneously. The qualitative and quantitative research was influenced through interviews. The interviews influenced qualitative research through the experiences of the interviewees, and they influenced quantitative research through the identification of themes and what the individual said related to those themes.

Procedure

Preliminary research was conducted by having a stakeholder meeting with public officials, agency representatives, individuals with development interest, the NAACP, and members of historic and cultural organizations in the area. See discussion at meeting (fig. 3.1). Archival research was then conducted to better understand the Dockum Drugstore Sit-In, civil rights in

Wichita, Kansas, and Chester I. Lewis. Site inventory and site analysis is utilized to better understand the current setting and includes on site observation of pedestrian behavior. Participatory observation at the Lord's Diner was utilized to gain an empathetic understanding of the homeless situation and how they live their lives. This will also include conversations with homeless individuals. Interviews will be a portion of the project focused directly on the site and how improvements can be made. The target audiences are advocates for the homeless and living members from the Dockum Drugstore Sit-In. Questions are focused on what can make the site more inclusive, preferred amenities, and the participants' comments about the Sit-In and its commemoration. Lastly, a public exhibition of work with community feedback acted as a learning environment for the public and provided the opportunity for their interests in design elements.

Archival research was used to establish a strong background on civil rights in Wichita, Kansas as well as a better understanding of Chester I. Lewis and the Dockum Drugstore Sit-In. The research consists of knowledge gained from resources available at the Kenneth Spencer Research Library at Kansas University as well as resources available online. The research available at the research library consists of articles documenting Chester I. Lewis's life, civil

cases, and interviews over the Dockum Drugstore Sit-in. This research was beneficial in establishing the narrative told on the streetscape.

The next step focused on site analysis of Lewis Park and the streetscape of Douglas Avenue. Site analysis and inventory focused on the users as well as the amenities available on site. It also focused on the weather, circulation, and other aspects. This information influenced design by identifying current issues and how they can be resolved. Along with observing the streetscape and the specific site of the Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park, I observed how individuals and groups interact with the ICT Pop-Up Park located nearby. By observing both spaces I learned how the sites differentiate and how their current amenities influence use.

Following site analysis, I completed participatory observation at the Lord's Diner. I volunteered at the Diner to develop an empathetic understanding of the homeless population. While there I observed people's conversations taking note of important details. Following this I walked from the park to the Lord's Diner to better understand the journey taken by many members of the homeless population in downtown Wichita.

Lastly, I conducted interviews with two different groups. These groups include advocates for the homeless and living members of the Sit-In. These interviews last roughly thirty to forty-five minutes and are intended to be half interview half conversation. This in turn developed a more productive understanding of what needs to be done to the site. Questions were focused on how the homeless interact with the site, the thoughts and issues with the homeless stigma, and the thoughts of the current memorial and park.

In conclusion, these methods provided the necessary information required to answer the research questions. Archival research provided the information required to produce the narrative story being told to the site users. It developed a sense of place and cultural connection to the area. Beyond this, the observational research provided a way to better understand the users of the site and how it can be better designed for them. Once observation was complete, interviews took place and they covered information over the site. This research identified what design elements will be provided in the design of the park and streetscape.

Preliminary Stakeholder Meeting

This method focused on learning the views of the stakeholders and how they interpret the site in an individual sense as well as the local context of the area.

Goal

The goals of this method focused on how a selected group of stakeholders (civic and arts leaders) within the community view the park today in its status, and what vision they have for the future development of the site.

Participants

There were eight civic leaders associated with the Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park stakeholder group. The leaders consisted of a leader within the downtown art community, two members from the Downtown Wichita team, a landscape architect associated with the City Parks & Recreation agency of Wichita, Kansas, one current and one incoming member of the City council, and two people from the NAACP including the president of the Wichita branch.

Recruitment of Participants

The initial meeting was a combination of a convenience sample and a snowball sample. Three members are contacts who actively contacted Professor Kingery-Page to engage students in studying the park; the other five were named by the initial sampling.

Approach

The meeting was an open-ended, focus group interview focused on the park. The interview utilized verbal and visual prompts for demonstration and conversation.

Verbal Prompts

The Cultural Inquiry team conducted the focus group meeting together, and focus questions directly on 1) the mission of the park, 2) the existing conditions and use of the park, 3) future dreams, goals, wishes, and aspirations for the park.

Visual Prompts

The Cultural Inquiry team produced graphics focused on the existing site to better discuss the current conditions and uses of the park.

Verbal-Visual Prompts

The Cultural Inquiry team presented a brief analysis of the constraints and opportunities of the current site and local context following the group reflection on conditions, and preceded the group discussion of aspirations for the Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park.

Documentation

The team recorded the focus group interview in audio format for reflection and reference. During the interview a scribe took notes over the discussion focusing on key points and general discussion. Both audio and text were reviewed at a later date after the meeting.

Analysis

The author analyzed the audio file for contextual themes utilizing a grounded theory approach. A noting method was used within the grounded theory approach. The notes taken by the scribe were used as an initial point. Then, the author analyzed the audio file to note what each member discussed during the conversation. With every listen the author highlighted important areas to have a better understanding of the conversations during the meeting. If a topic was discussed multiple times by a member or by multiple members, the author highlighted the specific content. Once analysis was complete, the researcher compiled a list of specific themes associated with the discussion. After themes were chosen the researcher listened one to two times more in order to quantify the amount of times a theme was discussed by a stakeholder. Eventually, this method yielded results focused on a summary of essential content desired by the focus group.

Application

Once the author completed and organized the analysis, the information was used to influence the future design of Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park. Themes discussed during the focus group provided a series of questions, problems, and objectives for the park. These topics were addressed through the redesign of the park.

Archival Research

This primary research method focused on learning about Civil Rights within the Wichita area as well as learning about Chester I. Lewis, a major leader of the movement. This method also focused directly on the Dockum Drugstore Sit-In.

Goal

The goals of this method focused on identifying information about the history of Wichita and Chester I. Lewis. The archival research then influences the design of the park and streetscape on site.

Approach

The author researched topics through online resources, hard copy resources, and archived information available at the Spencer Research Library at the University of Kansas.

Documentation

During the archive visit, the author copied archived information digitally and in analogue form. These files were reviewed and noted upon to provide a summary of information available. Photographs will be digitally copied.

Analysis

The archival research was analyzed by the researcher for information regarding Civil Rights in Wichita, Kansas as well as information regarding Chester I. Lewis. A noting method was used to identify key information within the research. These key points were then used to investigate further research available on those

topics. The archived interview tapes were analyzed using a notational method. The author analyzed five of the nine interviews available at the Spencer Research Library. With every listen the researcher noted important topics of discussion and highlighted key points. If a specific topic is discussed multiple times by different interviewees, the researcher noted it and documented where the occurrence occurs. Once analysis was complete the researcher developed a list of specific themes and key points discussed during the interviews. Listening to the tapes again, the researcher quantified how many times the specific theme is discussed. This yielded results focusing on summarizing the archival research.

Application

Once the author completed and organized analysis, the information was used to influence the future design of the site. This information directly affected the design of the commemorative features being applied into the proposal. This research also provided ways to better influence the cultural landscape and develop a sense of place within the site context for the user experience.

Site Observation

This research method focused on observing the site while also completing inventory and analysis of the Chester I. Lewis Park and the streetscape of Douglas Avenue. The site analysis focused directly on the user experience as well as the amenities available for the users.

Goal

The goals of this method focused on identifying key information about the site. This provided information regarding site amenities, site context, sun shade analysis, and other topics within the site analysis observational method.

Approach

Traveling to the site was required in order to conduct site inventory and analysis. Inventory started with observing the site and noting key amenities available. Once amenities are collected, observations will be required to note paving, tree (types, size, and maturity), and identifiable features. Once inventory was complete, the author conducted site analysis. Site analysis was focused on the user experience within the site, drainage conditions, shade studies, and other factors important to the design. The author then completed site observations to understand how users utilize the site.

Visual Prompts

Site maps at different scales were created for notation.

Documentation

The author documented through notation in a sketchbook as well as on maps printed for the analysis. Other documentation included diagramming of the site conditions.

Analysis

The author conducted site analysis through site observations and diagramming on and off site. Notations were taken during time at the site focusing on the opportunities and constraints present with the current design. These measures influenced the overall site design to better incorporate the needs of the users and the site.

Application

After analysis, the author completed diagrams at a higher level of graphic skill. This provided information in a visual prompt for viewers. This illustrated the factors influencing the design of the site, as well as explained the current conditions of the site. The current conditions influence the future design and will give factual evidence directly focusing on why decisions have been made.

Participatory Observation

This research method focused on participatory observation at the Lord's Diner. The Lord's Diner is a dining facility dedicated to providing free service for the less fortunate of Wichita. The author chose this location because it is within four and a half blocks of the park. The author then volunteered two times in order to better understand the needs of the homeless and learn what could benefit them. On the third day in Wichita the author walked from the site to the Lord's Diner to better understand the experience the homeless have walking the streets of Wichita. the researchers goal was to learn about the experience the homeless have in the area and to better understand from an empathetic approach. This research method worked well with the one-on-one interviews conducted with advocates for the homeless because it snowballed into people to contact for interviews.

Goal

The goals of this method focused on identifying key information about the homeless population of Wichita. This provided information regarding necessities, locations they frequent, and context about the population.

Participants

The author is the participant making observations through volunteering and having interactions with advocates and the homeless.

Approach

The author contacted the Lord's Diner in order to find multiple times to be able to volunteer with them. The author then conducted observations while serving food and providing other services for the users of the diner. The first meeting primarily functioned as a preliminary approach that focused directly on learning about how the system works. After this the researcher was able to know who to talk to and proceeded to talk to them on the second visit.

Documentation

The author conducted documentation through writing in a journal.

Analysis

The author analyzed the information to better understand what the users need. The personal interactions better influenced the design process.

Application

The understanding gained by the author was applied to the design of the site and gave a better understanding of the homeless population in Wichita. Site amenities and other programming were heavily influenced by this interaction.

One-On-One Interviews

This research method focused on interviewing advocates of the homeless, a living member from the Dockum Drugstore Sit-In, and a living relative of Chester I. Lewis. The interviews with the homeless advocates provided information regarding their thoughts on the homeless population and how they interact with them. The interviews with living members of the Sit-In will provide information on their thoughts of the current and proposed memorial, and how they would be interested in seeing this park's future evolve. Interviews lasted from thirty to forty-five minutes in length depending on discussion. The interview process was more of a conversation rather than a structured interview.

Goal

The goals of this method focused on identifying key information about the needs and preferences of stakeholders. This provided information regarding site utilization, amenities, civil rights history, and the current homeless situation in Wichita.

Participants

Homeless advocates, a living member of the Dockum Drugstore Sit-In, and a living relative of Chester I. Lewis.

Recruitment of Participants

People were contacted through phone calls, email, and personal meetings.

Approach

The researcher completed interviews either in person or over the phone. An audio recording device was utilized to capture data.

Verbal Prompts

Verbal prompts were used to guide the one-on-one conversations with advocates of the homeless, a member of the Sit-In, and a living relative of Chester I. Lewis.

Documentation

The interviews were audio recorded.

Analysis

The author analyzed the recordings for the collection of important aspects of the interview pinpointing specific information with advocates regarding how they became interested in helping the homeless, what they are doing to help them, what can the park do to improve the quality of life for the homeless, and with living member and relative of Chester I. Lewis focusing on their thoughts on the park at its current status, what they think of the current memorial, and in their eyes, what would be the perfect Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park. The information was categorized into an excel document explaining the participation from the interviews. This was then coded to better identify key points and ideas. Once done, themes were identified to influence the design of the site.

Application

These interviews were essential in learning how the site can be better designed not only to honor Chester I. Lewis and the Dockum Sit-In members but also for the homeless population within downtown Wichita. Desired elements were identified and then used within the design.

Public Exhibition of Work and Community Feedback

This method focused on presenting work collected from the other methods utilized. The exhibition work consisted of participatory observation notes, a video on the Dockum Sit-In, quotes from living members, a timeline, site photos, a feedback wall, and wall asking for people's comments on civil rights for yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

Goal

The goal of this method was to inform the public, collect desired programming elements, and get feedback from the public.

Participants

Participants were visitors to Fisch Haus for the Final Friday Showings on February 23rd and March 30th of 2018. The audience was diverse in race and age.

Recruitment of Participants

People were recruited through advertisement for the show online as well as word of mouth. Final Friday is a popular event in Wichita that collects many visitors during the night.

Approach

The show lasted three hours each evening on February 23rd and March 30th and was an open gallery format. People were also able to attend through appointment. Participants were recommended to participate in discussion and give feedback for design elements.

Verbal-Visual Prompts

Text prompts were on walls and a banner that encourage individuals to participate in giving feedback on design and thoughts on civil rights. I was on the floor discussing the exhibit with people and getting their opinions on the park and its future.

Documentation

Photographs of the feedback wall and banner are used to document and create programming diagrams.

Analysis

The author documented the feedback in an excel sheet and added to the programming sheet for elements to be in the design of the project.

Application

The feedback by participants gives desired needs in the community. The information was used for programming in the site design.



4 - Research Findings

People Using the Sculpture at Back of Site - Wichita [Image by Skylar Brown 2017]



Walking to Chester I. Lewis Park - Wichita [Image by Skylar Brown 2017]

Overview

Many themes and ideas were found after completing these methods:

- A Preliminary Stakeholder Meeting
- Archival Research
- Site Inventory, Analysis and Observation
- Interviews of Advocates for the Homeless
- An Interview of a Living Member
- An Interview of a Relative to Chester I. Lewis
- Participatory Observation
- Public Exhibition of Work Leading to Community Feedback

It was important to understand the issues the city of Wichita is facing in regards to the homeless population as well as to understand the issues with the site and how it can be better designed to be inclusive of everyone. By having an open dialogue about the park and the downtown urban issues, it was possible to begin identifying specific elements needed to improve the site.

The preliminary stakeholder meeting revealed information regarding the issues with the park, programming elements people would be interested in, and identified key people further conduct research with. There were conflicting ideas within the possible programming elements to used in the park, but all ideas were helpful. The site currently does not have many visitors during the day, some did not there was a park located there, and others have used the park as an educational tool.

Archival research led to a better understanding of the Dockum Sit-In and Chester I. Lewis's life. This research conceptualized the driving narrative to the design while also leading to creating the public art exhibition. The Sit-In was against segregation, otherwise known as a way of excluding groups of people. This is how the focus on inclusivity began. The archival research also led to programming elements in the design and how to show those elements.

Site inventory and analysis further illustrated the lack of use which was discussed in the preliminary stakeholder meeting. Very few people utilized the site and the materials are gradually degrading. The site lacks in its ability to provide information regarding the importance of civil rights in Wichita, Kansas.

Interviews with a living member of the Dockum Sit-In and a relative of Chester I. Lewis provided information regarding their thoughts on the current design of the park and what would improve it. These interviews revealed similar information that was previously stated in the stakeholder meeting and the site inventory and analysis.

Interviews regarding the homeless revealed a large support system of resources available for the homeless but further proved that there is a stigma for the disenfranchised of Wichita. The Homeless Outreach Team (H.O.T.) works to find the best place for individuals to gain the help they need to move past being homeless.

When talking to other advocates I learned about the issues people are facing in Wichita. Other discussions led to programming ideas for design and how to provide resources for these marginalized Wichitans.

Participatory observations led to a better understanding and empathy for the issues that the homeless of Wichita face. By volunteering with the Lord's Diner, I learned about what issues individuals are specifically facing and how they handle themselves. I was able to observe individual's interactive and gained insight into the day to day life of these individuals.

The community dialogue at the public exhibition of work served to inform the public about what the potential of what the park could be. The exhibit allowed the visitors to give their thoughts about programming elements and their thoughts about the civil rights movement.

Preliminary Stakeholder Meeting

Introduction

The preliminary stakeholder meeting took place at the Downtown Wichita building. This meeting included public officials, agency representatives, individuals with development interests, the NAACP, and member of historic and cultural organizations within Wichita. The individuals are made up of leaders within the downtown art community, members of Downtown Wichita not for profit development corporation, director of the City Parks & Recreation agency of Wichita, one current and one incoming member of the City Council, and 2 people from the NAACP including the current president of the Wichita branch. The meeting lasted roughly an hour and half and focused on three specific questions. What are the current issues faced with Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park? How do you envision the future of Chester I. Lewis Park? What elements would you or the citizens of Wichita be interested in having within Chester I. Lewis Park?

Issues Discussed

Through discussions with the stakeholders we were able to identify multiple issues the park is facing, while also identify successes that a nearby park has been having. Chester I. Lewis Park currently has issues with lack of usage by the citizens of Wichita, the fountain is in decline and has become costly to repair, pavers are deteriorating, the Sit-In statue has

been vandalized in the past, the site does not give adequate information regarding Mr. Lewis or the Dockum Sit-In, it is heavily influenced by the shade and is dwarfed by the surrounding buildings, and is neglected by the parks maintenance department. Within downtown the ICT Pop-Up Park is a park a block away from the Chester I. Lewis Park and it has become highly successful. This site however is a temporary addition to downtown Wichita and will eventually be replaced by a new building. This site has become successful because of how it engages the public which is something the Chester I. Lewis Park is lacking in. ICT Pop-Up Park currently has food trucks on the weekdays that draw roughly 300 to 400 visitors a day. It includes interactive elements as well including ping pong tables, art, chalk board, and rotating elements like a beach during the summer months. The usage here dwarfs the Chester I. Lewis Park in comparison since through observation the highest usage seen through site analysis has yielded a number of only six visitors.

The stakeholders agree that the ICT Pop-Up Park is an excellent site to learn from and use information from it to better design the Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park.

Envisioning the Future Chester I. Lewis Park

When discussing the future of Chester I. Lewis Park many members sought out a vision of it being a place that brought the people of Wichita together. It would be space that was used during all hours and had a variety

of uses available. With the site's historical presence this space should become an iconic space for Wichita. The question was asked during the meeting "I know we have something pertaining to golf at the airport, do we have anything about our parks?" Another participant said, "No we do not but I could envision a plaque talking about Chester I. Lewis and his park is going to be a few blocks from three hotels, why not come and learn about Wichita's history." There were many good points made during the discussion and in conclusion of it all it seems people envision a space that is inclusive for all and tells the story of Chester. I. Lewis and the Dockum Sit-In. See discussion photos (fig. 4.1 and 4.2).

Identification of Site Elements Desired

Near the end of the meeting we began discussing desired site elements for Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park. All members expressed a deep desire to keep the trees that are on site or at the very least keep most them. Within downtown Wichita vegetation is an amenity that the public does not wish to see disappear. With the interest in making the park more active and usable at all times, the group discussed park ideas associated with day and evening life. During the day it is possible to have an outer extension of a building that offered outdoor seating for dining. Infrastructure was also important. The focus of the infrastructure is mainly on the ability to have food trucks at the site. The local food trucks at the ICT Pop-Up park

brings roughly 300 to 450 people a day, so this would in turn create more activity. Social interactions were also desirable to the group, which led to a discussion about having multiple spaces, offering public and semi-private space. Movies, live music, performances, a water feature, fire pits, and a beer gardens were also discussed. Lastly, the group was highly interested in the park telling the story of Wichita and the civil rights movement, which brought up a discussion of a mobile phone application idea for city parks.



Figure 4.1. (Left) Preliminary Stakeholder Meeting Discussing Issues - Wichita [Image by La Barbara James Wigfall 2017]



Figure 4.2. (Bottom Left) Preliminary Stakeholder Meeting Discussing Park - Wichita [Image by La Barbara James Wigfall 2017]

Site Observations, Inventory, and Analysis

What Amenities are Currently Available at the Park?

Currently Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park offers few amenities for its users. There are eleven tables with seating available at the park, eleven red maple (*Acer rubrum*) trees used for shade, low height shade tolerant vegetation, eighteen bar height tables (previous bollards at Wichia Art Museum), four sculptures including the lunch counter sculpture, one water fountain, and lastly one interactive water feature. The site also features a stop for the downtown trolley system. Surrounding the park are apartments, offices, hotels, and commercial businesses.

How are People Using the Park?

Through multiple site visits and observations, I have observed few people using the site. The highest quantities of users were a family of 6 taking photos with their children. Another experience I observed on site was a businessman taking a smoke break from his work day. The man soon left after he was finished with his cigarette. The last group of people I have seen using the park are homeless individuals. These men were doing a variety of things. One man was working on his bicycle while his friend relaxed on a chair nearby. Another man was eating his lunch for the day and the last man was attempting to take a nap in the sunlight. From our discussion with stakeholders, I learned that on MLK Day

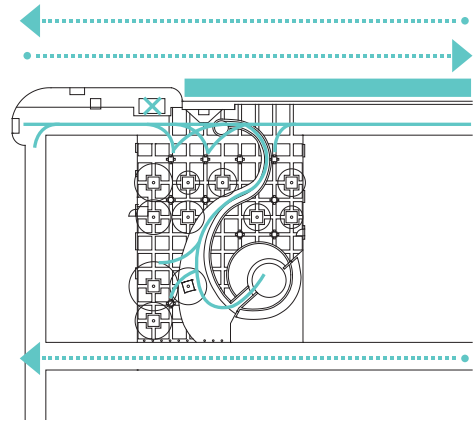
some individuals take children to the site and tell them the story of Chester I. Lewis and the Dockum Sit-In.

Benefits of the Park for the Community

Currently the park is not providing many amenities for the community. The site is a teaching tool, a place to sit for lunch, have a conversation, and also has the ability to provide live performance. Other than those few things the site is a flexible space that no one uses. It does however offer the chance to be near vegetation (trees) which is hard to come by in the heart of downtown.

Issues with the Park

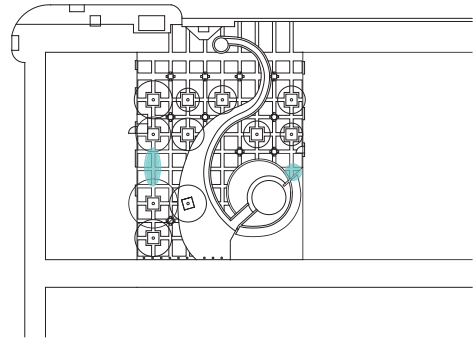
The park has multiple issues. It lacks signage, historical explanation, dedication, has experienced vandalism, and the materials and fountain are degrading. The site currently does not provide many amenities, and this illustrates as to why it is not used frequently by the public. In terms of micro-climate, the site is heavily shaded and is dwarfed by the surrounding buildings. See existing site diagrams (fig 4.3 - 4.7). It is also neglected by the city regarding maintenance since it is a less popular park. The city has attempted to activate the space by adding new elements to the park as seen by the addition of the bar height tables and bollards, but these are not cohesive to the design and seem like a failed attempt to save an inactive space.



Existing Site Circulation

- Pedestrian Circulation
- Vehicle Circulation
- Vehicle Parking
- Bus stop

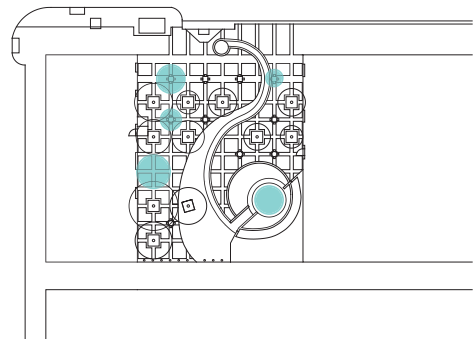
Figure 4.3. (Top) Site Circulation Diagram - Wichita [Diagram by Skylar Brown 2018]



Existing Memorialization

- Plaque
- Sit-In Sculpture

Figure 4.4. (Middle) Memorialization Diagram - Wichita [Diagram by Skylar Brown 2018]

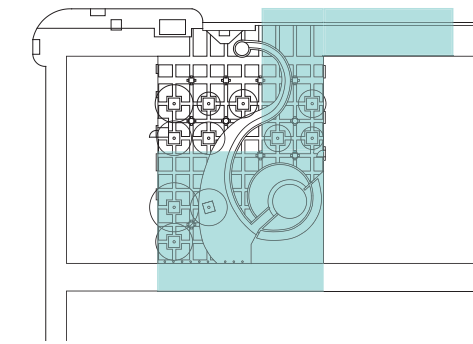


Existing Areas of Activity

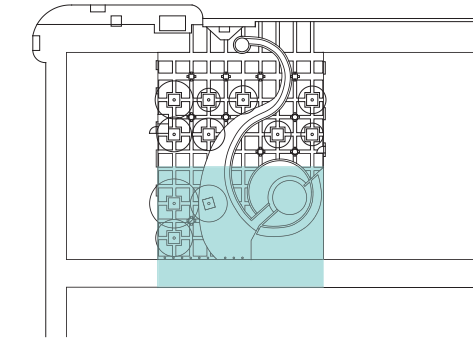
- Where People Gather

Figure 4.5. (Bottom) Areas of Activity Diagram - Wichita [Diagram by Skylar Brown 2018]

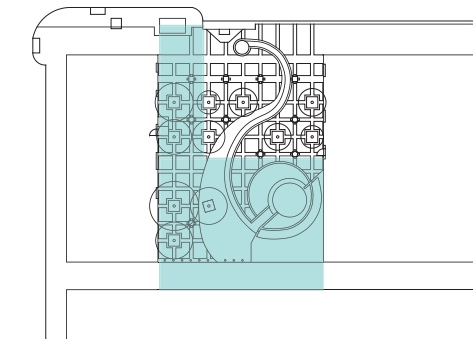
Figure 4.6. (Right) Shade Study Diagram - Wichita [Diagram by Skylar Brown 2018]



Existing Shade Study - 9:00 a.m.

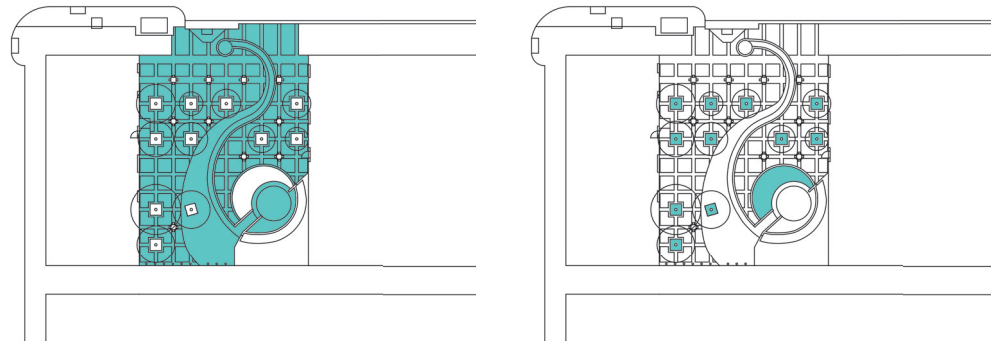


Existing Shade Study - 12:00 p.m.



Existing Shade Study - 3:00 p.m.

Existing Hardscape vs. Softscape



Key Information Gathered

Key things learned from doing site observations was that the site is highly under used and does not tell the story of Wichita's influence with the civil rights movement. The park needs to be renovated and provide a variety of uses for the public. As discussed previously the temporary ICT Pop-Up Park gathers roughly 300 to 450 people a day at lunch time alone and since it will be closing eventually the food trucks will need a new location. Chester I. Lewis park would be a perfect site for this since the park is about

bringing people together. Currently the site has a performance space that is not used but through discussions with stakeholders it is a desirable element. This means it just needs a reason to be used. Possible uses could be live music, theatre, poetry, and art. The site does offer adequate seating but would benefit in having a variety of seating elements. The site does have different spaces, but it is not well organized. It needs to have a variety of choices for people to make and create different opportunities within it.

Figure 4.7. (Left) Hardscape vs. Softscape Diagram - Wichita [Diagram by Skylar Brown 2018]

Participatory Observation

For this portion of findings, I will use first person, as I am the participant observer.

Introduction of Process

The participatory observation focused on my volunteer efforts at the Lord's Diner, a dining facility for the homeless and underprivileged. During my time volunteering I did not get the chance to serve food but did work more closely with the guests of the Lord's Diner. Before services I would sit outside from a distance and take notes regarding the activities happening outside and around the diner. This process served as a way to better connect with this population in a more empathetic way and learn about their lives.

Day 1, 2-9-18

I arrived at the Lord's diner to do my first service and interview with the volunteer coordinator. As I was walking up I saw crowds begin to gather outside for food. They soon unlocked the lobby for people get away from the cold. Before we started the interview, there was roughly forty people gathered outside. The interview started off with a tour of the facility and discussion about operations. I was informed they serve roughly 2,500 people a day with their different facilities. Some food trucks will do seven hundred people each a day. The Lord's diner is a place that is clean and well taken care of. The guests of the Lord's diner have always been very respectful of the place and they try to keep it as clean as they can. After the interview volunteers began to

arrive for service. I looked out into the main service hall and the crowd has gathered to roughly two hundred people. There are shopping carts, duffle bags, and trash bags of clothing and other items. The guests are all gathered together and talking. We get ready for service. I'm told what I will be doing: I will bus tables tonight and with a group of people from a church. We begin service with a prayer and the volunteers are very excited. We begin service and throughout the night more and more people come. They try not to leave because of the cold. Tonight, the low is nineteen degrees. If they do leave they are going to a shelter attempting to get a bed for the night. I met a man at the shelter and he had lost a majority of his fingers during New Year's Eve. He had passed out drunk and lost them to frost bite. The majority of the guests are very grateful for the food. I cannot count how many times I was told thank you. Some would bring us their trays. Another man came up and asked me if he could play music on the piano in the front. I told him I would enjoy it, but I pointed him towards the person he should ask. He played for twenty minutes. There was classical music and current music that he played and it seemed like people really enjoyed it. This place is something that the disadvantaged really appreciate. Some people have come together, and I hear them sharing stories and laughing. I sense a lot more happiness than I expected. There are people of all different types here. One man brought a present for the volunteer coordinator. Some people seem guarded about their food like it's

a meal they won't see again for a while. The servings are very large and most plates I do not need to scrape clean because all of the food has been eaten off. The plates go to be cleaned by the dishwasher. Soon it's time for the place to come to a close and people are told they have ten minutes to eat. People begin eating as fast as they can. The police officers walk around informing people. Some are frustrated because of the cold. I am mopping the floor and some people come up to say thank you. Soon service comes to a close and I walk out to my car to leave. I see a man looking through the trash bins outside.

Day 2, 2-10-18

I arrived early today to see where people are coming from. I watch the roads outside the Lord's diner and I see individuals traveling from the downtown area. Some come from the north but it's mainly south in the direction of the park. Some of them travel in groups together. Most likely from the same camps. Roughly twenty-five people are gathered out one and a half hours before service. I see a man that I had seen at the park earlier today. He is wearing multiple layers of clothes to stay warm in this fourteen-degree weather. I walk inside to start volunteering. I learned tonight I will be walking around collecting dining material tonight and it gives me the chance to hear more stories. I see many people that I saw from the night before. I walk around and listen to peoples' stories. Many people are quiet tonight, but I do learn some things. A woman is

talking about how she was arrested and thrown in jail for panhandling along the roads. With Wichita cracking down on panhandling and loitering, it has been more difficult for homeless individuals to make money. It seems that many people have been having this issue. Tonight, another man has begun playing the piano for the guests. His friend joins him at the seat and watches him play the piano. The crowd is smaller tonight and we begin closing areas faster than the night before. With how cold it is tonight and the freezing rain it seems most people have chosen to go to the shelter as early as they could. It seems best to find a warm bed for the night rather than a warm meal. When taking out the trash tonight I saw a man going through the garbage canisters outside the facility. With only having 248 people come tonight they decided to close the building early. The place was soon closed, and everyone called it a night. I drove to the park to see if anyone was there and I did not see anyone. It seems that most people went East to the homeless shelter a few blocks away.

Day 3, 3-19-18

Today I am not able to volunteer at the diner because of family constraints but I was able to go to the site and walk to the diner to better understand the journey the guests take during the day. I begin my trek from the Chester I. Lewis Park towards the Lord's Diner and the first thing I notice besides the cold is the busy traffic. The traffic on Douglas goes through shifts of being at high and low

use and currently it is higher. The traffic can be intimidating when making my way to the diner. I do appreciate the larger sidewalks on Douglas Avenue in downtown because it creates a buffer from the traffic. Traveling north on Broadway the sidewalk gets thinner. The stoplights make the journey easier since there is so much traffic around. None of the buildings create a pleasant walk. The facades are primarily closed off with advertisements on them. I have to watch myself when walking along the sidewalk because of the parking lots off to the right. A few cars are going in and out of the parking lot. It is nice having some trees along the walk, but it is still a tight area since the sidewalks are only five to six feet wide. I walk by the Quantum Credit Union and this area looks like a good place to sit during the day since it has bench like seating on site. Now I am near the Methodist Church and this is much more inviting because of the vegetation. I feel that this would be nice to travel by later during spring and summer. The trees make me feel safer because they add to the buffer along the sidewalk from cars. The traffic here is still intimidating like the traffic along Douglas. As I reach the last intersection I see the Lord's Diner and I can see people already gathering outside of it. I walk by some men who are also waiting at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. They are resting on the doorsteps. I feel bad for them since it is still cold out, but I know the Lord's Diner will soon begin letting people inside. See path and street (fig. 4.8 and 4.9).

Figure 4.8. (Below) The Path to the Lord's Diner in Downtown - Wichita [Diagram by Skylar Brown 2018]

Figure 4.9. (Bottom Right) Walking Down Douglas Avenue - Wichita [Image by Skylar Brown 2017]



Conclusion of thoughts from the Participatory Observations

The guests of the Lord's Diner have a variety of different stories and they are very open with sharing their experiences with each other. This gave me the chance to better understand what people need and how to start providing benefits for the homeless.

One-On-One Interviews - Advocates for the Homeless

Advocates for the Homeless

The author conducted a total of four interviews with advocates for the homeless. These individuals worked at a shelter, a soup kitchen, and with the Wichita Homeless Outreach Team (H.O.T.). The interviews lasted roughly thirty minutes and provided information regarding how they became interested in helping the homeless, what they are doing to help them, and what can the park do to improve the quality of life for the homeless.

Why They are Interested in Helping the Homeless?

Through talking with the interviewees, the author learned that many of them became interested in helping the disenfranchised because they saw some the issues people were facing. Through the eyes of a police officer he saw the same people going in and out of jail. All they were told to do was to write tickets and arrest people, but now since 2013 the H.O.T. has been helping connect the homeless with the resources they need. They no longer arrest people or write tickets at first, now they see these individuals as needing help and they try and provide it. The others all had similar thoughts that brought them into being a part of this public service. We discussed the stigmas faced by the homeless especially in Wichita and how it affects people. A large population of Wichita sees these individuals as people that cheat

the system or are pretending to need money. Unfortunately, though this is sometimes true, most of these people are just trying to survive. Many members of the homeless are facing mental illnesses, lack education, have drug habits, or have honestly had a run of bad luck. Those are the reasons the advocates I met are interested in helping. They see what the problem is for these people and they want to provide whatever help they can.

How are Advocates Providing Help?

Through these interviews the author found a list of resources that are available for the homeless and disenfranchised in Wichita, but the question is how do they learn about these resources? One possible way is through the H.O.T. A group that finds the homeless through patrols or through phone calls, and when they find the individuals they focus on getting them help. They find the best shelters for them to use, recommend where to find food, clothing, and other help. The overall homeless population in Wichita doubled from 2009 to 2011, but with the introduction of the H.O.T. the chronic homeless population has decreased by 72%. The difference between homelessness and being chronically homeless is that a chronic member has been homeless for at least a year or is repeatedly homeless. These members are typically dealing with mental illness, substance use disorders, or disabilities. This H.O.T. is one-way people can learn about where to find the resources

they need. Wichita is city that has many homeless services. The shelters and other resources not only offer a warm bed for the night but there are plenty of places to receive meals, go to food banks, receive mental and physical help, job training and employment options, transitional housing and other options. According to the H.O.T. by providing permanent transitional housing it lowers the chances of vagrancy issues by 84% percent for that individual.

In the view of the advocates there are also issues with the provision of resources; how are services helping and are they encouraging homelessness. Many of the resources are built upon bettering these people and providing help, but sometimes people may not take the necessary steps to move forward. This also comes down to a lack of affordable housing in Wichita. It is hard to find a job without a place of address and its hard to find a place to live when you do not have a job. Thankfully there is transitional housing available in Wichita. There is currently not enough of it, but it is a resource being provided in limited amounts.

How can Chester I. Lewis Park Be a Benefit to the Homeless?

Parks are a resource that people use for fun, relaxation, connecting to nature, and more. This is a simple foundation of most parks and it doesn't need to necessarily change for the homeless. The homeless want these same things. They want to be able to relax, sit down

and talk, and have fun. Many of them have pets and parks provide a space for that pet as well. Parks also serve another purpose. Churches and groups use parks as a public meeting space to provide lunches and other items to the homeless and so it also acts as a sanctuary for help. One thing Wichita is lacking is a location that tells and shows people where they can best get the help they need. The park can be used as this message provider. A space that has a map showing people where to go would be highly beneficial. Another option would be a kiosk or stand that volunteers can utilize to provide help. Other elements that advocates have recommended would be charging stations, low walls for sitting, a stage for live music, trees, grass, and picnic tables. These are all items that would not be difficult to provide in the park and they would be a benefit for all people, but especially those who are homeless.

One-On-One Interviews - Living Members and Relatives

Living Members and Relatives

These interviews focused on Galyn Vesey, a living member from the Dockum Sit-In and a relative to Chester I. Lewis. These interviews lasted roughly thirty to forty-five minutes in length and focused on their thoughts on the park at its current status, what they think of the current memorial, and in their eyes, what would be the perfect Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park.

Thoughts on Current Design

Both individuals see that the site is not used as frequently as they wish it would be. During the interview Dr. Vesey stated, “Civil Rights was a necessity” and no one can argue against this. What happened at Dockum and what Chester I. Lewis did was not only important for Wichita but for the nation and unfortunately there is a lack of identification there. The site does not currently tell the story or really provide any information regarding either topic. This disappoints both interviewees because it is highly important to both of them. Besides this lack of explanation, they both see that the site does not provide any real appealing elements. There is no reason for people to use the park at its current design. The site is a concrete jungle as one interviewee said. Both members are appreciative of the space, but they just

feel it could be done better, the relative of Mr. Lewis said, the space “lacks creativity and thoughtfulness.”

Thoughts on the Memorial

Both participants agreed that they wish the sculpture told the story better. The idea is a good approach to getting people involved by getting the chance to sit there but like stated earlier there is no explanation. To the uneducated person it is just a diner counter they can sit at. This is a key part of history that would be interesting for people to know about and there needs to be a plaque telling the story. They also felt that the placement of it was weird. They think it needs to have a better location instead of under the trees. The relative had stated that she has seen it vandalized not only with graffiti but by people skateboarding on it. If it was more front and center this would not be happening.

Visions Towards a Future Park

Throughout the interview we discussed ways that the park could be improved not only in telling the story and honoring people but also by activating the space. Both participants feel the story needs to be told in a better way. Dr. Vesey was highly interested in a way that not only honors Chester I. Lewis but the president and vice president of the students. They were key members of the Sit-In and it would not have been possible without them. This discussion involved the possibilities of statues, images, and a plaque. Another

interest was a water feature. When Dr. Vesey was a child a lot of his time was spent at the pool, much like all kids it was a place they could all come together, have fun, and get away from those hot Kansas summer days. A water element could connect back to that time and be an element that pulls in interest to the park. Other elements desired was something interactive. This element could better explain the history. We also discussed other elements that would be beneficial to the park. The living member felt it would be better if there was a grander entrance to the park. This entrance would provide an experience and also better inform people. Other elements mentioned include trees, grass, tables, and events that attract people to the space.

What do you envision for the future of Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park?

Figure 4.10. Feedback Wall of Desired Programming - Wichita [Image by La Barbara James Wigfall 2018]

Archival Research Leading to Community Dialogue Through Public Exhibit

Archival research influenced the exhibition work in the public exhibit that led to educating the public on the historical importance of Chester I. Lewis and the Dockum Sit-In. Then by talking to the public, the author and other team members were capable of learning what program elements they desire. Through discussions with the public at the event and two feedback walls it was possible to derive what elements could be best for the park. See community feedback wall (fig. 4.10). Primarily most of the programming correlated with elements discussed in the preliminary stakeholder meeting, site observations, and interviews. This event also led to further contacts for interviews.

Exhibition Work

1. Sit-In Member Interview Video Tapes – These interview tapes were played during the exhibit and acted as an audio-visual experience for the audience. These tapes told people about the sit-in and why the members did what they did.
2. Sit-In Interview Quote Banners – These banners were filled with quotes from the interview tapes. These quotes were selected based on how they illustrated the importance of why the members did what they did, how they felt during that time, and what it was like at the sit-in. See

quote banners (fig. 4.13).

3. Timeline – The timeline lists events associated with the civil rights in the United States and Wichita. The collection of these events works to educate the public and provide a reference to people for what has happened throughout history. This has also become a key element for the proposed park design. See timeline (fig. 4.14 and 4.15).
4. Chester I. Lewis Photo – This photo was used to show people who Chester I. Lewis was and how there could possibly be a sculpture of him within the site.
5. Newspaper Clippings and Photos – These photos and clippings were blown up to be viewed by the guests. These images focus on Chester I. Lewis and what he did as a lawyer during the civil rights movement in Wichita. See clippings (fig. 4.12).
6. The Civil Rights Wall Banner – Focuses on getting the guests thoughts on what they think of civil rights. The question is What do you think of civil rights yesterday, today, and tomorrow?
7. Site Photos Illustrating the Homeless – These photos showed how members of the homeless are using the site.



Figure 4.11. Person Writing Thoughts on Civil Rights - Wichita [Image by La Barbara James Wigfall 2018]

8. Programming Elements Wall - What do you envision for the future of Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park? This question led to people writing on the wall telling us what is desired for the park.
9. Blurbs – The blurbs are text that has been chosen from personal notes taken during the participatory observations at the Lord’s Diner.

Civil Rights Wall

The civil rights wall banner gave feedback into what people think of civil rights yesterday, today, and tomorrow. This feedback has provided inspiration into art being displayed at the new Chester I. Lewis Park. See feedback wall (fig. 4.11).

Yesterday

- “An appreciation for the great efforts of Humans”
- “Courage and bravery in the face of oppression”
- “Hope”

Today

- “We are all entitled to the pursuit of happiness”
- “Don’t let the hate make us forget that we are all one humanity”
- “Someone still cares...”
- “Faith and Hope”
- “Empowering our youth”

Tomorrow

- “Legacy and Equity”
- “Multicultural coexistence”
- “Love, not hate”
- “Hearing and seeing one another with an accepting heart”
- “Finish the dream”

Pieces of Work



Figure 4.12. Civil Rights Articles - Wichita [Source: Chester I. Lewis Papers; Image by La Barbara James Wigfall 2018]



Figure 4.13. Interview Quote Banners - Wichita [Banner by Skylar Brown; Source: Chester I. Lewis Papers; Image by La Barbara James Wigfall 2018]

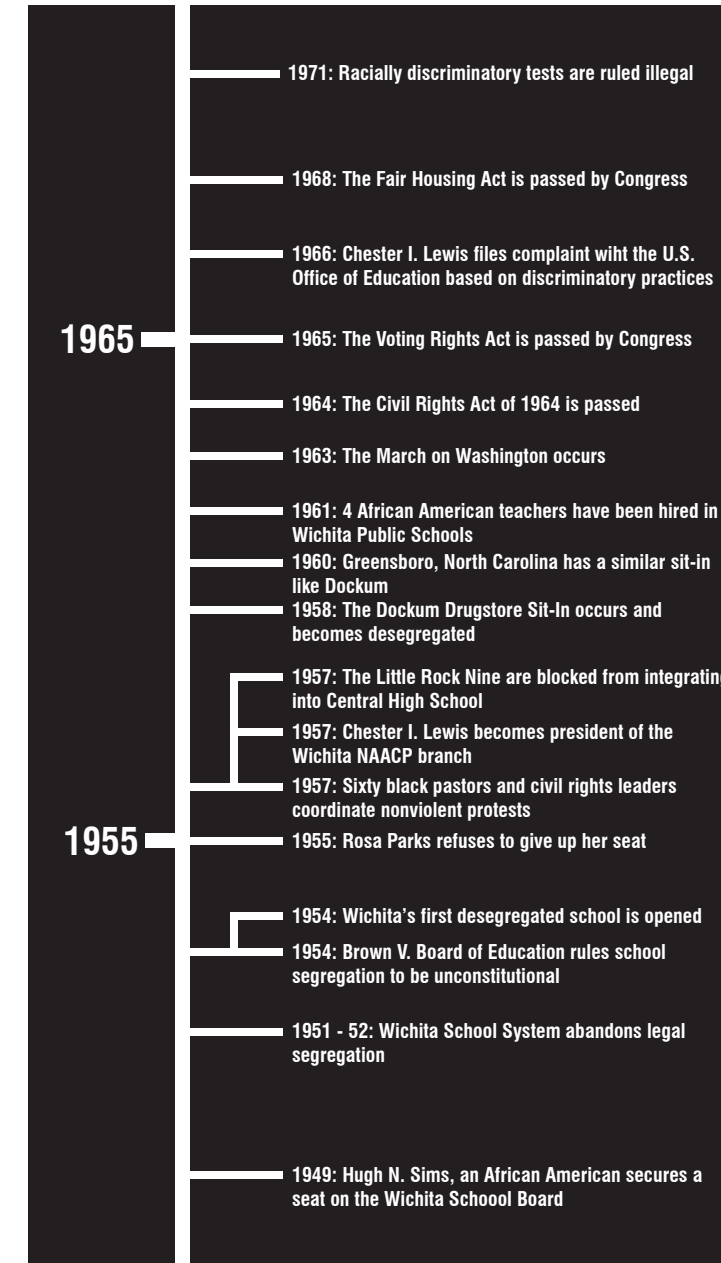


Figure 4.14. Digital File of Timeline - Wichita [Image by Skylar Brown 2018; adapted from information in Eich 2008, InfoPlease 2015]



Figure 4.15. People Viewing Timeline - Wichita [Image by La Barbara James Wigfall 2018]

Programming Elements Desired

Ping-Pong Tables

Water Features

Lighting Elements

Color

Water Conserving Plants

Local Art

Shade

Biking

Performance Stage

Story Telling

Animals

Farmer's Market

Restaurant

Trash and Recycling Bins

Texture

Comfortable Human Spaces

Movies

Running Trails

Food Trucks

Tables and Chairs

Green Walls

Live Music and Events

Big Sand Box

Sunlight

Outdoor Kitchen

Discussion of Exhibit During the Opening Night Overlaid with Program Elements Identified by Visitors - Wichita
[Image by La Barbara James Wigfall 2018]



5 - Conclusions from Research Leading to Design

Men Using Chester I. Lewis Park - Wichita [Image by Skylar Brown 2017]



People Discussing Site Models - Wichita [Models by Andrea Lemken and Image by La Barbara James Wigfall 2018]

Overview

Many themes and ideas were identified through using all of the methods within the research project. These methods have worked together in providing what elements are desired and organized four different ways within the park. These four categories deal with commemoration, inclusivity, events, and downtown amenities. See programming diagram (fig. 5.1).

Commemoration

The Preliminary stakeholder meeting, archival research, site analysis, inventory, and observation, interviews, public exhibition of work, and literature review all feed together into developing the program for commemoration.

Inclusivity

The Preliminary stakeholder meeting, site analysis, inventory, and observation, participatory observation, interviews, public exhibition of work, and literature review show what inclusive elements are desired on site.

Events

The Preliminary stakeholder meeting, site analysis, inventory, and observation, interviews, and the public exhibition of work tell us what events are desired in downtown.

Downtown Amenity

The Preliminary stakeholder meeting, site analysis, inventory, and observation, participatory observation, interviews, and the public exhibition of work illustrate what elements are needed downtown.

Methods

Themes

Themes

Program



Figure 5.1. Programming Diagram [Diagram by Skylar Brown 2018]
 68 Narrative and Design



Fountain Tiles - Wichita [Image by Skylar Brown 2017]

6 - Projective Design



Restaurant Seating Area - Elevations of Success [Image by Skylar Brown 2018]

Overview

Chester I. Lewis Park is a space that provides a link to our pasts. The civil rights movement is a key piece of American history and with the Dockum Drugstore Sit-In being the first sit-in in the nation it is important to commemorate it correctly. The park currently has a monument that has offered a historical link, but it lacks explanation. There are many issues with the current site design and these issues need to be addressed. The homeless population currently uses the site but the site does not provide any useful functions besides being a place to rest.

Ultimately the goal of these two designs are to create a space that activates the site, is inclusive for all individuals, and commemorates the Dockum Sit-In and Chester I. Lewis. This site will become a space that will offer reflection, relaxation, and amenities for all individuals within Wichita.

Intention of Designs

The goal of these site designs is to create an environment that attracts everyone in Wichita. The site is meant to commemorate Chester I. Lewis and the Dockum Sit-In while also being an amenity for the homeless population in Wichita. This site is based on reflection. Reflection of the historical importance and a reflection on human life. There is currently a stigma facing the homeless in public spaces and the site is designed to help eliminate this stigma.

Concept

The concept of the site designs are focused on creating a space that is inclusive for all individuals and is commemorative to Chester I. Lewis and civil rights in Wichita. The site is a desired space within downtown Wichita and it needs to provide opportunities for the users of the site. The site needs to have multiple improvements made to it in order to create a more successful site.

First, the site needs to better commemorate the civil rights movement in Wichita and how Chester I. Lewis was a key member in the history of shaping Wichita and the national civil rights movement. Next the site needs to be able to provide amenities that help the homeless. A kiosk can provide a space the homeless can receive help, find out where to receive more help, and a place to relax during the day. Flexible space is also a necessity within Chester I. Lewis Park. This flexible space would provide opportunities for a variety of uses in the park that pull interest during the day and night.

Process

The design process consisted of various methods of research and community feedback that led to creating a list of desirable site elements to be used within the park. These design elements were then categorized into different themes and issued into the design process. The process begins with understanding the current site issues and how they can be improved. By understanding this and what people desired in the park it was possible to create spaces that follow the design intent.

Future Narratives

These narratives imagine the proposed park through the eyes of hypothetical site visitors.

Great Grandchild of Chester I. Lewis

Her mother would take her on walks as a child down Douglas Avenue and they would come across the Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park. The park was named after her Great Grandfather Chester I. Lewis and her mother would tell her stories of him. Recently Wichita has been renovating the park and since she works downtown she wanted to see its progress. As she walks down Douglas Avenue the same way she did as a child and she sees in bronze along the sidewalk, a timeline. She reads the events that occurred and stops at 1958. The Dockum Sit-In occurred this year and her Great Grandfather was an important figure in this event. She looks up and sees the Counter has moved to the front of the park and behind that counter is glass with images and text printed on it. The images and text illustrated the story of Wichita during the movement and how her Great Grandfather, Ronald Walters, and the other students played a key role. She appreciates the story it tells because it shows something that was lost in the old park. The park now tells people what happened and how important this was to the movement back then.

Homeless Individual

He wakes up from the warm bed he found at the Open Door shelter on 2nd street. They are told it is time for them to leave for the day so he gathers his things and leaves. (He thinks to himself that he cannot believe this is all he has now since he lost his home). He sees many people that he has been seeing over the past few days and follows them. They appear to be walking further into downtown and they come across a park. They gather outside a small building that says it will open at 10 A.M. He talks to some people and they explain why they are there. He finds himself waiting as well and when the building opens they are greeted by a pastor and a few church members. They begin passing out items that people say they need. When he gets to the window he is greeted with a smile and receives some items he has been needing. He looks over and sees a on the glass of the kiosk showing more resources that are available and where they are in downtown Wichita. These are places that will help him get back on his feet.

Young Professional

She began her job at the Kansas Health Foundation on Tuesday last week and has already begun making friends at work. Her colleagues ask if she would like to join them for lunch today and she happily says yes. She is new to Wichita, so she has not explored much downtown and she asks them where they are going. Karen tells her that on Thursdays they always go to the park west of

here for the food trucks. 12:30 comes along and they begin their journey to the park a few blocks away. We walk past an old lunch counter and then enter these glass gates that say Chester I. Lewis Park. She sees some images on the glass that she wants to look at another time. While walking into the park on this Summer afternoon she sees children playing with the fountains trying to stay cool and their parents are off in the distance watching. It appears that this place is very popular in the afternoons with the food trucks because I see people everywhere. Karen tells me a little about the park and how its fun to go during the evenings because they have bands that play at night on Fridays and sometimes they show movies. They eat their lunch at one of the tables underneath a tree and then leave to go back to work.

Embracing Audiences

This design proposal is a fully open site that encourages different activities to take place. It is highly flexible and focuses on the audience rather than for a movie, a music festival, or other activities. It also offers food during the days, reflection of the civil rights movement, and an aid for the homeless population in Wichita. There are also employment opportunities for the homeless population.

Embracing Audiences is the design proposal that would cost the least. Although it is the cheapest, it still completes all design goals and would be a benefit to downtown Wichita. See plan rendering and context map (fig. 6.1 and 6.2).







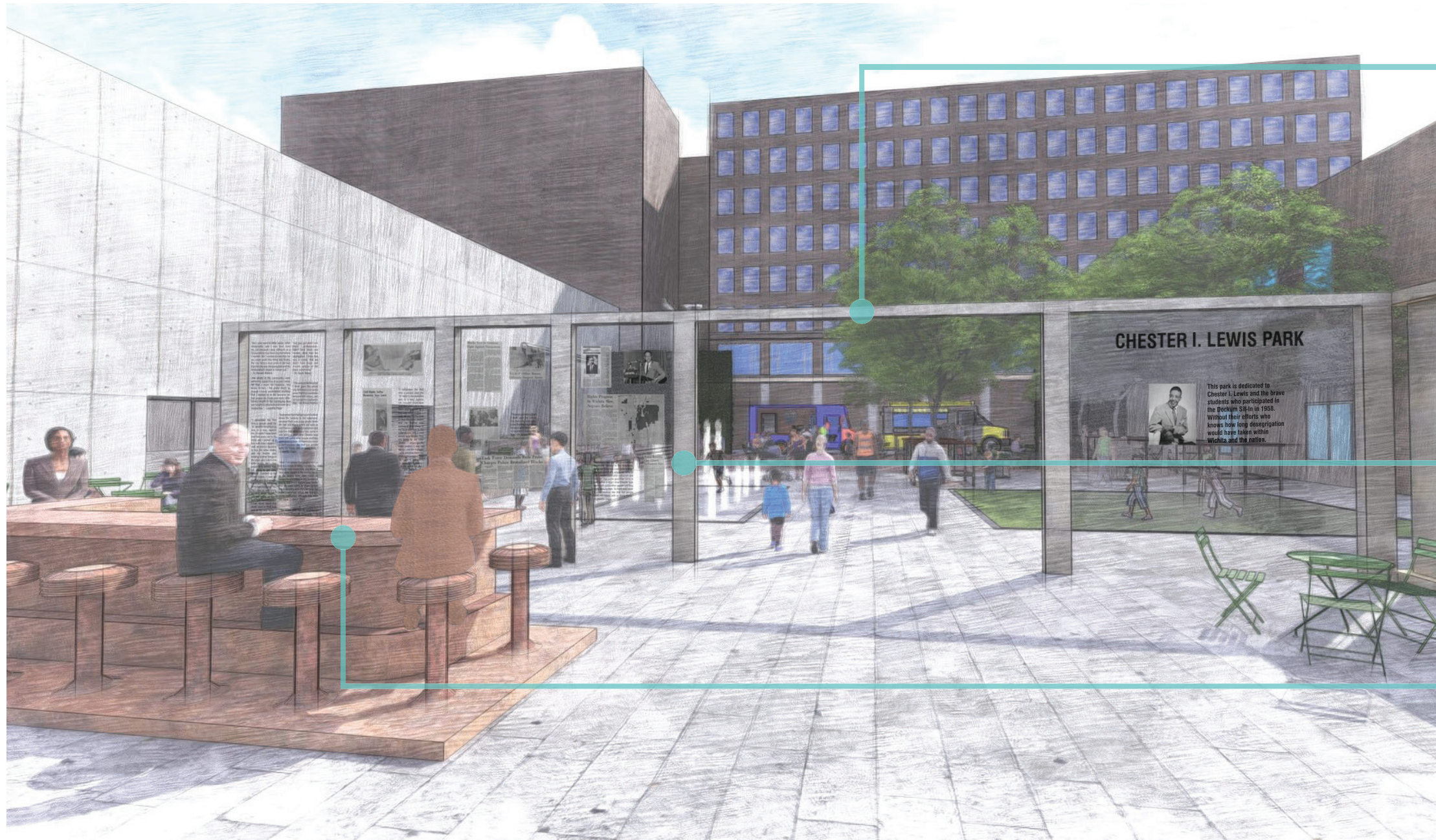
-  **176 Seats Available**
-  **34 Tables**
-  **8 Charging Stations**
-  **7 Trees On Site**

Figure 6.1. (Left) Context Map - Embracing Audiences [Diagram by Skylar Brown 2018]

Figure 6.2. (Right) Plan Rendering - Embracing Audiences [Image by Skylar Brown 2018]





Civil Rights Wall Entrance

The Civil Rights Wall creates the entrance to the park. The translucent glass with images and text creates a looking glass into the history of civil rights in Wichita. By illustrating the Sit-In and Chester I. Lewis's life people can better understand what happened and reflect upon it. See entrance (fig. 6.3).

QR Beacon

The beacon is a space that people can scan a QR code with their phones linking them to a video about the Dockum Sit-In and Chester I. Lewis. It is an interactive element that is capable of telling the story through an audio-visual experience.

Moving Existing Sit-In Sculpture to be Street Facing

Moving the sculpture forward towards the street activates its use and is more visible to the public. This would also increase observation and decrease vandalism.

Figure 6.3. Entrance to Chester I. Lewis Park - Embracing Audiences [Image by Skylar Brown 2018]



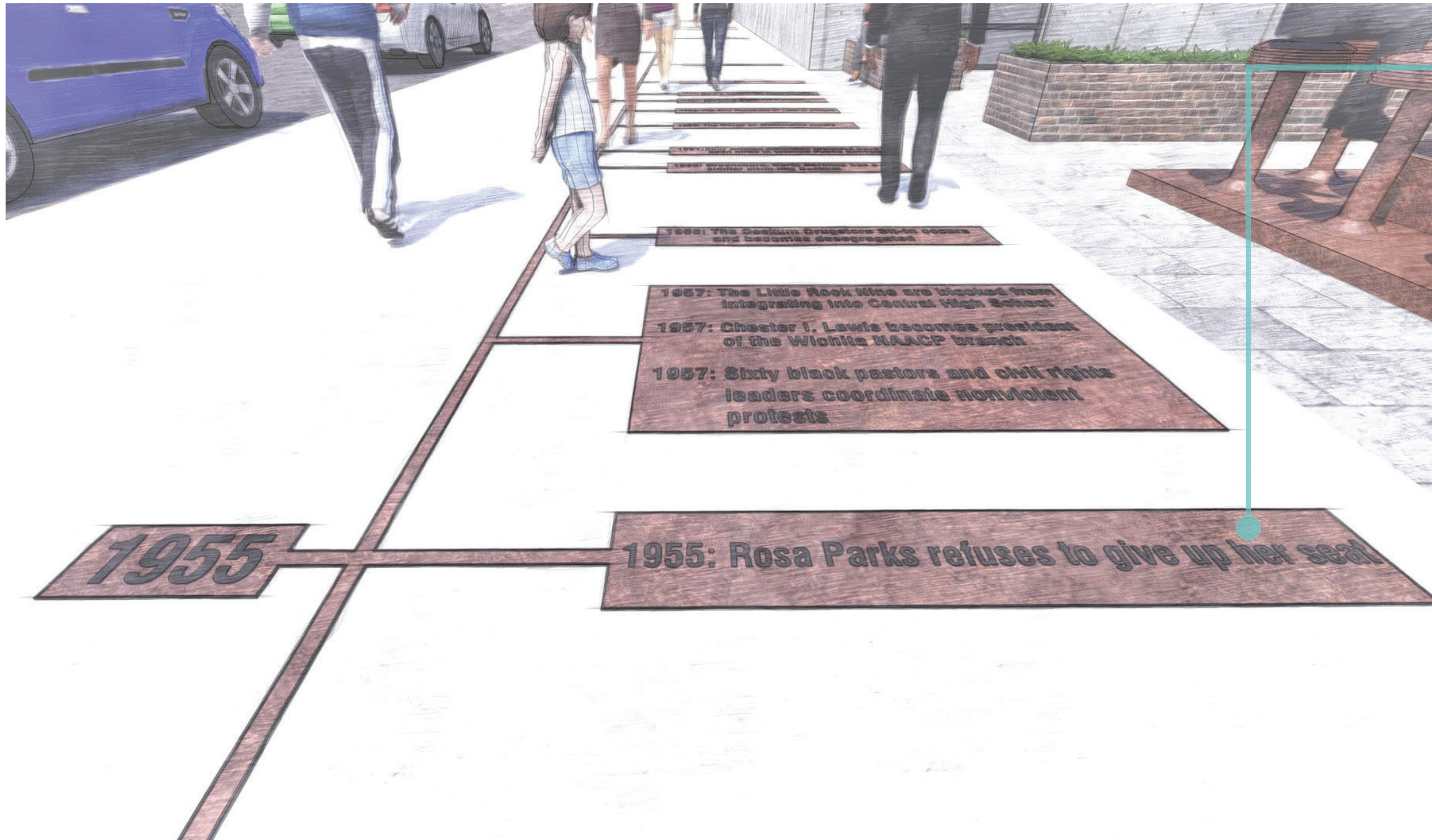
Figure 6.4. Homeless Kiosk - Embracing Audiences [Image by Skylar Brown 2018]

Homeless Servicing Kiosk

The kiosk has a variety of capabilities available within it. It offers a space where people can donate to the homeless population. Acceptable donations would be clothing, hygiene products, and food. It also offers a map showing where the closest resources are available. Besides those two options the kiosk also has volunteering options available. Much like the shelters and dining facilities around, the kiosk utilizes volunteer efforts to operate it. People would volunteer a few days a week working the kiosk providing help. The kiosk also offers possible employment the homeless. People would be able to work at the bicycle repair station during the day and clean up the park and Wichita's downtown. This would not only help clean up the downtown, but also create a sense of ownership and work towards removing the stigma against the homeless. See kiosk (fig. 6.4).

Book Share

A book sharing case allows for people to leave books in downtown that anyone can read and either keep or leave at the park once they are done using it.



The Timeline

The timeline begins at the corner of Market street and progresses onward along Douglas Avenue until it reaches the new Dockum memorial at the Ambassador Hotel. At the middle of the park the timeline would mark the year of the Dockum Sit-In and would be closely located to the sculpture on site. The timeline markings do not currently reach the length to the new memorial so this provides the opportunity to keep adding to it as the years go on and more milestones advance civil rights in the United States. See timeline (fig. 6.5).

Figure 6.5. Walking With the Timeline - Embracing Audiences [Image by Skylar Brown 2018]



Splash Pad

The splash pad offers a space where children can play during the hot Kansas summers. The community pool was an important place during the 1900s that offered a space for children to come together and play. Through interviews with living members an interactive element was desired and this links back to history of that time and Lewis' legacy of integrating Wichita's swimming pools.

Tapis Vert

The Tapis Vert acts as a public lawn for the people of Wichita. It creates a space where people can play and relax while also bringing more vegetation to the site. The site is in need of vegetation to create a softer experience within the site. See space (fig. 6.6).

Figure 6.6. Looking Across the Site - Embracing Audiences [Image by Skylar Brown 2018]



Food Trucks

By providing a space for food trucks downtown this space will become highly active during the lunch times. Since the ICT Urban Pop-Up park will be closing eventually the food trucks will need a new location and Chester I. Lewis Park will accommodate for it.

Bistro Seating

By adding restaurant seating and moveable seating across the site, people are able to choose where they sit on site. This creates a space where people are able to eat, talk, and relax on the site.

Flexible Space

The flexible space is a location on site that offers a variety of programming capabilities. The public are interested in many elements that can happen on site but they are not elements that can be permanently there. This space can be used for showing movies, having concerts, poetry reads, dancing, theatre performances, food trucks, art shows, fairs, a farmer's market, and more program that the citizens of Wichita are interested in. See space (fig. 6.7).

Figure 6.7. Food Trucks and Flexible Dining Space - Embracing Audiences [Image by Skylar Brown 2018]



Figure 6.8. Mural and Stage - Embracing Audiences [Image by Skylar Brown 2018]

Mural

The mural will act as an inspirational element in the park that works with the civil rights movement and offers a space for reflection. Words and comments left from the public during the public exhibition of work will go into this mural creating an image of Chester I. Lewis and also offer a chalk board space for people to make their own comments.

Stage and Movie Screen

The stage acts as a space for performances and would also double as a dropdown for the movie screen during those events. See space (fig. 6.8).



Bicycle Racks and Repair Station
Racks and a repair system will be overall beneficial to people that work downtown, live downtown, and the homeless. See space (fig. 6.9).

Wifi Hotspot
A wifi hotspot increases the options of what people can do on site. Everyone benefits from having public access to the internet.

Figure 6.9. Aerial of Site - Embracing Audiences [Image by Skylar Brown 2018]

Elevations of Success

This design proposal focuses heavily on the civil rights movement in Wichita and encourage growth within people of all groups. The planters share quotes of people's thoughts on civil rights within the past, present, and future. The site also encourages public events like music festivals, movies, farmer's markets and more. Elevations of Success also includes opportunities for

employment of homeless individuals in downtown because of bicycle repair and planters that could be used as a community garden. Elevations of Success is more expensive than Embracing Audiences because of the planters, but it is worth it because of the experience it provides for the public. See plan rendering and context map (fig 6.10 and 6.11).







-  **156 Seats Available**
-  **24 Tables**
-  **5 Charging Stations**
-  **5 Trees On Site**

Figure 6.10. (Left) Context Map - Elevations of Success [Skylar Brown 2018]

Figure 6.11. (Right) Plan Rendering - Elevations of Success [Skylar Brown 2018]





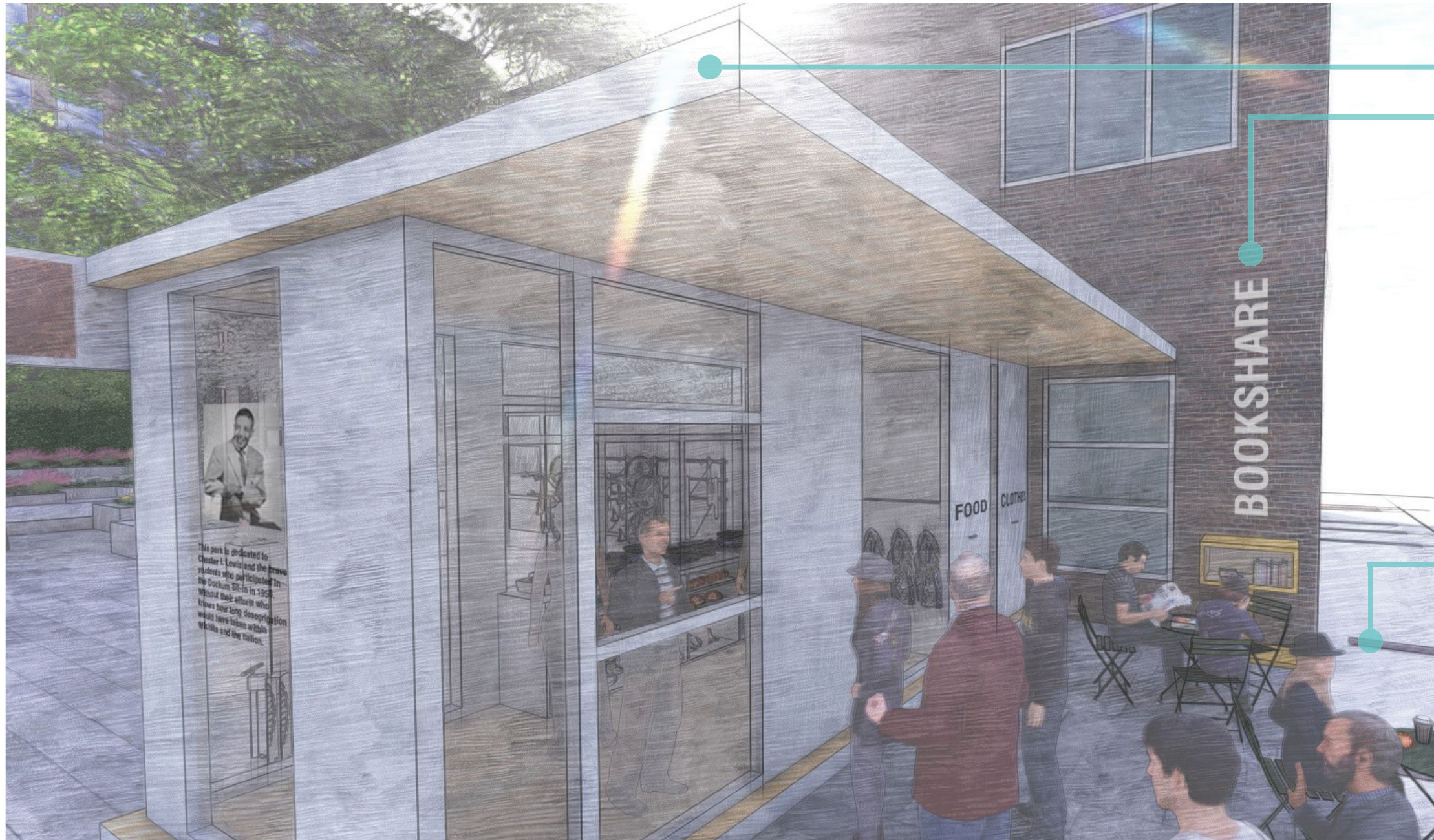
Figure 6.12. Restaurant Seating Area - Embracing Audiences [Image by Skylar Brown 2018]

Bistro Seating

By adding restaurant seating and moveable seating across the site, people are able to choose where they sit on site. This creates a space where people are able to eat, talk, and relax on the site. See space (fig. 6.12.)

Moving Existing Sit-In Sculpture to be Street Facing

Moving the sculpture forward towards the street activates its use and is more visible to the public. This would also increase observation and decrease vandalism.



Book Share

A book sharing case allows for people to leave books in downtown that anyone can read and either keep or leave at the park once they are done using it. See book share (fig. 6.13).

Homeless Servicing Kiosk

The kiosk has a variety of capabilities available within it. It offers a space where people can go and donate to the homeless population. Acceptable donations would be clothing, hygiene products, and food. It also offers a map showing where the closest resources are available. Besides those two options the kiosk also has volunteering available. Much like the shelters and dining facilities around the kiosk utilizes volunteer efforts to operate it. A few people would volunteer a few days a week to work the kiosk and provide help. The kiosk also offers possible employment the homeless. People would be able to work at the bicycle repair station during the day, clean the park and Wichita's downtown, and water plants. This would not only help clean up the downtown, but also create a sense of ownership and work towards removing the stigma against the homeless.

The Timeline

The timeline begins at the corner of Market street and progresses onward along Douglas Avenue until it reaches the new Dockum memorial at the Ambassador Hotel. At the middle of the park the timeline would mark the year of the Dockum Sit-In and would be closely located to the sculpture on site. The timeline markings do not currently reach the length to the new memorial so this provides the opportunity to keep adding to it as the years go on and more movements are made in the advance of civil rights in the United States.

Figure 6.13. Homeless Kiosk - Embracing Audiences [Image by Skylar Brown 2018]



Civil Rights Wall Entrance

The Civil Rights Wall creates the entrance to the park. The translucent glass with images and text creates a looking glass into the history of civil rights in Wichita. By illustrating the Sit-In and Chester I. Lewis's life people can better understand what happened and reflect upon it. See space (fig. 6.14).

QR Beacon

The beacon is a space that people can scan a QR code with their phones linking them to a video about the Dockum Sit-In and Chester I. Lewis. It is an interactive element that is capable of telling the story through an audio-visual experience.

Figure 6.14. Entering the Site - Embracing Audiences [Image by Skylar Brown 2018]



Food Trucks

By providing a space for food trucks downtown this space will become highly active during the lunch times. Since the ICT Urban Pop-Up park will be closing eventually the food trucks will need a new location and Chester I. Lewis Park will accommodate for it.

Stage and Movie Screen

The stage acts as a space for performances and would also double as a dropdown for the movie screen during those events.

Flexible Space

The flexible space is a location on site that offers a variety of programming capabilities. The public are interested in many elements that can happen on site but they are not elements that can be permanently there. This space can be used for showing movies, having concerts, poetry reads, dancing, theatre performances, food trucks, art shows, fairs, a farmer's market, and more program that the citizens of Wichita are interested in. See space (fig. 6.15).

Figure 6.15. Flexible Space - Embracing Audiences [Image by Skylar Brown 2018]



Text Inscriptions

These quotes are scattered throughout the park along the second tier of the three stepped planters. They identify what people think of civil rights in the past, present, and future. See space (fig. 6.16).

Community Gardens

The first tier of the planters currently show low vegetation, but they could also be used as a community garden for the public. These planting spaces offer a variety of microclimates for various plants. The adjacent restaurant could also use this space to acquire ingredients. It would also be beneficial not only for the public but for the homeless population as space they could find food in downtown for free.

Figure 6.16. Text Inscriptions - Embracing Audiences [Image by Skylar Brown 2018]



Splash Pad

The splash pad offers a space where children can play during the hot Kansas summers. The community pool was an important place during the 1900s that offered a space for children to come together and play. Through interviews with living members an interactive element was desired and this links back to Lewis' legacy of integrating Wichita's swimming pools. See space (fig. 6.17).

Figure 6.17. Looking into Space from Western Side - Embracing Audiences [Image by Skylar Brown 2018]



Mural

The mural will act as an inspirational element in the park that works with the civil rights movement and offers a space for reflection. Words and comments left from the public during the public exhibition of work will go into this mural creating an image of Chester I. Lewis and also offer a chalk board space for people to make their own comments. See space (fig. 6.18).

Figure 6.18. Mural Reflection Space - Embracing Audiences [Image by Skylar Brown 2018]



Bicycle Racks and Repair Station
Racks and a repair system will be overall beneficial to people that work downtown, live downtown, and the homeless. See space (fig. 6.19).

Wifi Hotspot
A wifi hotspot increases the options of what people can do on site. Everyone benefits from having public access to the internet.

Figure 6.19. Site Aerial - Embracing Audiences [Image by Skylar Brown 2018]

Possible Murals

These two images show possible renditions of the mural that would be made by a local artist in Wichita. They work as inspiration for what could be created and are only conceptual. Images of Chester I. Lewis are located at the entrance of the park with specific dedications towards him and the members of the Dockum Sit-In. Text was collected from the speech “I Have a Dream” by Martin Luther King Jr. in 1963 during the March on Washington. See murals (fig. 6.20 and 6.21).



Figure 6.20. Possible Mural #1 - [Image by Skylar Brown 2018]

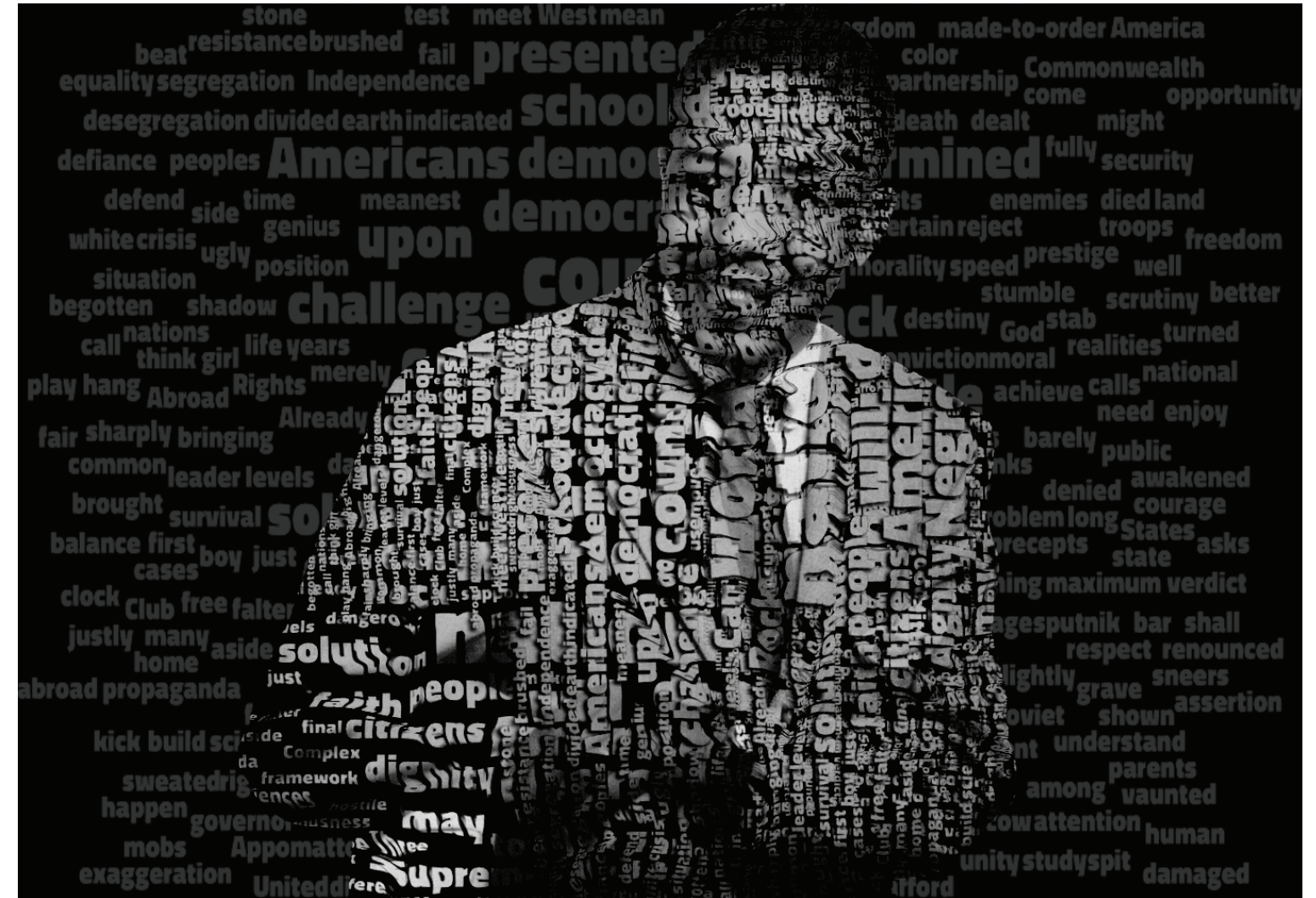


Figure 6.21. Possible Mural #2 - [Image by Skylar Brown 2018]



Figure 6.22. Lunch Counter Sculpture - Wichita [Image by Skylar Brown 2016]

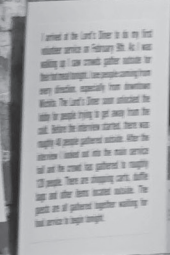
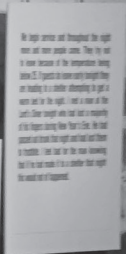
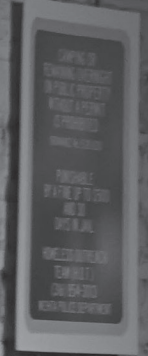
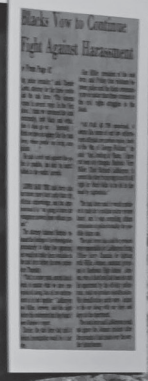
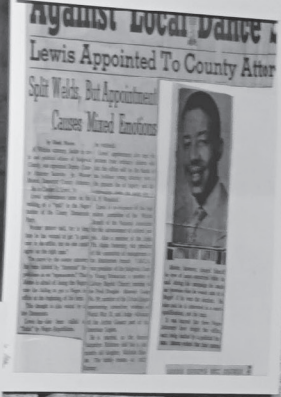
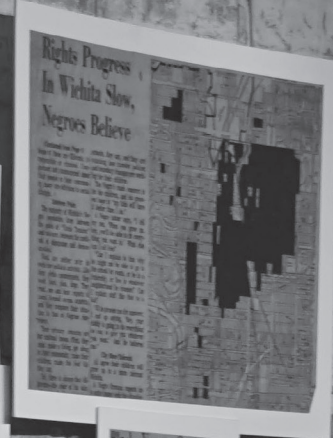
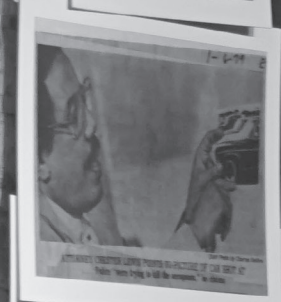
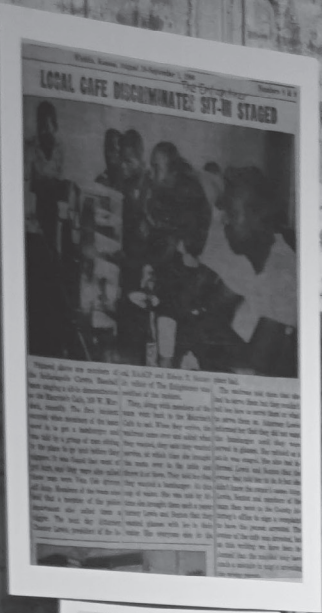
Proposed Memorial Plaque at Lunch Counter Sculpture

This sculpture symbolizes the efforts made by the African American youth of Wichita that fought for the desegregation of lunch counters in Wichita, Kansas. The Dockum Drugstore Sit-In lasted from July 19th to August 11th of 1958 and everyday students would come and sit at the counter without leaving unless they were to be replaced after their 4-hour shift. This event was a catalyst for other sit-ins including the Oklahoma City Kats Drugstore Sit-In and others. Thank you to all of the participants and their lawyer Chester I. Lewis. See sculpture (Fig. 6.22)

Conclusions

The intent of the two redesigns are to better honor Chester I. Lewis and the members of the Sit-In while also being inclusive for everyone. The homeless population has always faced a stigma against them, much like what African Americans faced in the past and some may say today still. These designs promote the inclusion of everyone and are meant to create an active site. It would be negligent to only cater directly to a memorial when Wichita is facing other issues within its downtown. At the end, these designs should bring everyone together and create a space that everyone wants to use.

ATIVE
DESIGN



7 - Conclusion

Viewing Archival Images - Wichita [Image by La Barbara James Wigfall 2018]



Reflecting on Chester I. Lewis - Wichita [Image by La Barbara James Wigfall 2018]

Conclusions

The Chester I. Lewis Park is a space that can inspire people of all backgrounds and create a location that everyone enjoys. It is possible to provide a variety of uses within the park that benefits everyone, from workers, visitors, educators, and the disenfranchised. This site can provide a new outlook for designing for all individuals, which designers and cities can learn from. Since the site accommodates for all it would also work on removing the stigma that faces the homeless population in Wichita. With people learning and understanding the issues better, Wichita can become a primary example of how cities should plan for the homeless.

Chester I. Lewis Park is a space facing many issues with a major source being a lack of activation. If there is nothing to do on or near the site, then why would people use it? The two alternative designs provide a variety of uses for people and will activate the space during the day and night.

With the change for employment on the site it gives a chance for the homeless to make money, creates a sense of ownership, extend the chance to find housing, and work towards removing the stigma against them.

These designs take a better and best approach to redesigning Chester I. Lewis Park. Embracing Audiences is a more affordable design that accomplishes all goals. However, Elevations of Success is the best design option. Elevations of Success better illustrates the importance of civil rights in Wichita and creates more opportunities for the homeless population. Although it is more expensive, it would offer a better experience for everyone.

Ideally, I sought out to better understand the history of civil rights in Wichita, while also creating an inclusive space for everyone. The two alternative designs accomplish both of these tasks and benefit the citizens of Wichita better than the previous design of Chester I. Lewis Park.



Wichita Panorama - Wichita [Image by Hugh Mason 2006]

Limitations of the Project

A majority of my limitations dealt with time restraints and this has influenced the recommendations for future research endeavors. It would have been beneficial to spend more time with living members of the Sit-In to get their opinion on the site and what they would recommend. They are the people that know the most about the history and would provide the best feedback on how to commemorate it accurately. It was also difficult finding time to collaborate with The Kansas African American Museum in Wichita, though it was desired, because of busy schedules at the organization.

Homelessness is a complex issue that the world is facing. Although I did talk to a several advocates, and learned a lot of information regarding Wichita's issues, I feel I could have learned more if I was able to talk to more advocates. Also spending more time with the homeless would have been beneficial. I still think interviewing members of the homeless would be beneficial, but it could be difficult recruiting and building a rapport with individuals to interview.

Future Research

Looking onward past this research it would be beneficial to keep working on coordinating with The Kansas African American Museum and learning more about the history of Wichita and civil rights. By doing so the site design could benefit even more. It would also be beneficial to understand the nightlife of the area more thoroughly. By understanding if and how the homeless are using the site and the area of downtown, it would be possible to provide better amenities for the homeless.

It is possible to commemorate the Sit-In and Chester I. Lewis in the site design of the park; however, the issues of homelessness are not possible to solve with one park. Further on it would be beneficial to work with the city of Wichita in creating a comprehensive plan that tackles the issues of homelessness and open space design. These issues include a need for public restrooms, community gardens that provide free food, and employment in public spaces. There are a variety of services available in downtown and by educating people, more and more can receive help. Also, by designing parks with the homeless in mind they are capable of creating more spaces providing help.



Articles Focused on Chester I. Lewis and the History of Civil Rights in Wichita - Wichita [Image by La Barbara James Wigfall 2018]

Personal Reflections

As a man that grew up in a small town that did not truly have any diversity you could say I grew up sheltered from other cultures. Because of this I have always wanted to learn about the different cultures that exist in and outside the United States. This project has provided experiences within fields that I honestly had little to no knowledge of. Of course I knew of the civil rights movement and the endeavors that African Americans faced but I never had a real connection to it. Why would I?

Reading the newspaper articles and listening to the stories of the participants has given me a connection that I do not think I ever would have had if I did not do this. They are and were people just like me and its hard to believe it has only been roughly sixty years since this movement. No one deserves to be treated how they were for so long, and it really makes me question as to why it still happens today. In conversations at the public exhibit a civil rights lawyer and I discussed an article that was on display. The article was from 1979 and it talked about plans for forming an independent review board for police brutality cases. They are still working towards creating this and its been nearly forty years. We were both surprised and disheartened. People do not deserve to be mistreated just because of the color of their skin or the other issues they face.

Homeless individuals are facing issues I do not know if I will ever fully understand. I know people that have drug problems and I understand how people end up leaning on it as a crutch, but I do not know anyone that really faces mental illness or poverty at this level. The interviews I did and participating at the Lord's Diner really brought a new understanding of these issues and it is disheartening knowing there is not a solution. It is good to know that there are many resources avialable in downtown for the homeless and that the H.O.T. is working hard to get people help, but it is dissapointing to hear that Wichita is passing laws that are harmful for the homeless. I was not there during the NCAA tournament in March, but I do wonder if Wichita did anything to get the homeless out of downtown during the event.

My grandfather and I spent a lot of hours talking about this project becuase he lived in Wichita during the time of the Sit-In. Hearing it from his perspective was interesting.

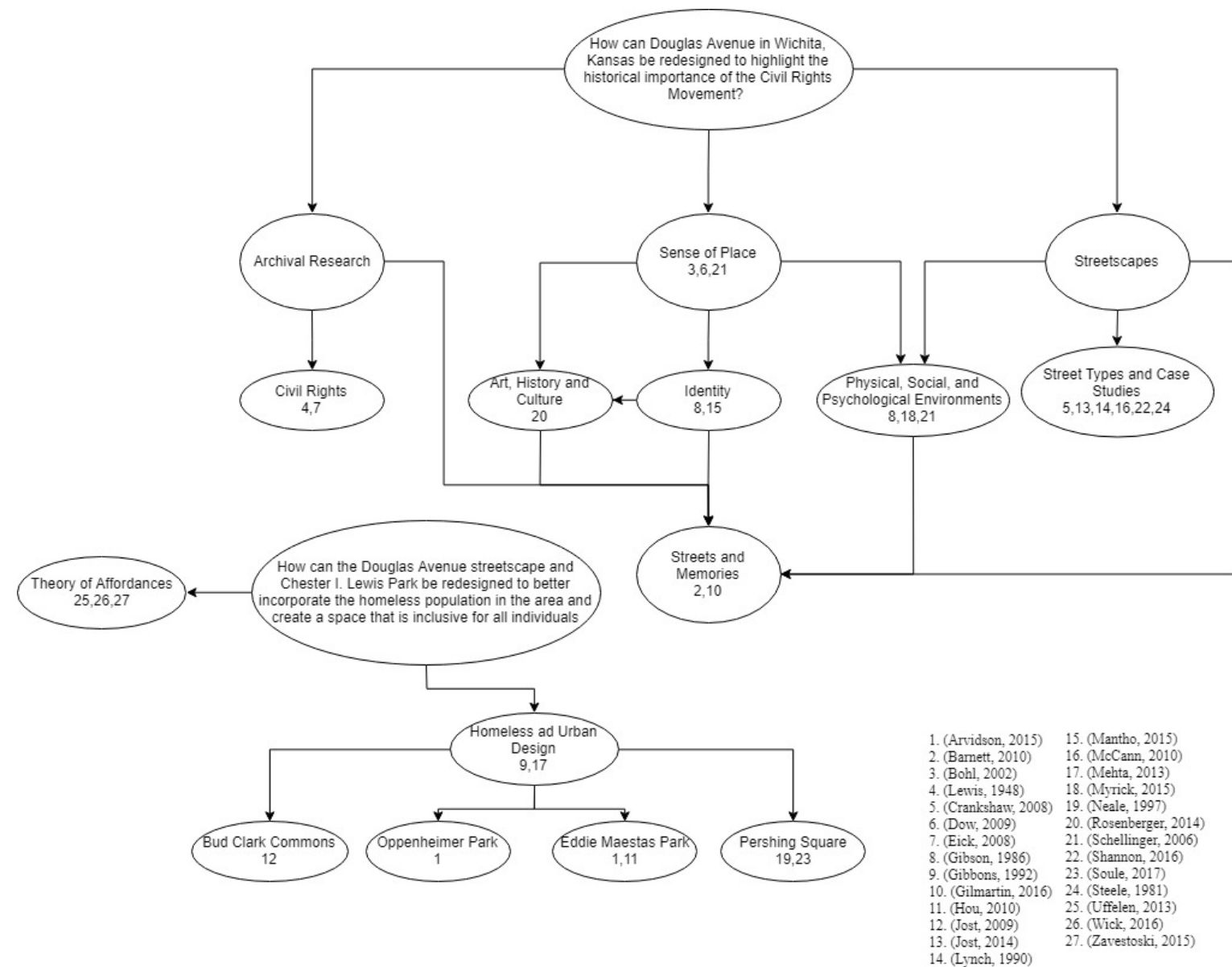
This project taught me so much about civil rights and the issues homeless individuals face. These issues are complex but someone has to find a solution. I know I will keep working towards a solution, and maybe this will inspire another person to as well. There is always a solution to a problem, it just takes time to figure it out.

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Appendix A: Literature Map



Appendix B: Glossary

Access

To have admittance to an area.

Affordance

A resource or support that the environment offers to a user.

Chester I. Lewis

An individual who focused on Civil Rights in the United States.

Civil Rights

The right to personal liberty established by the 13th and 14th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution and certain Congressional acts, applied to an individual or a minority group.

Homeless

An individual that lacks a permanent dwelling.

Inclusion

The act of being included.

Sense of Place

A connection to an area focusing on art, culture, or history.

Streetscape

The environment built with streets.

Urban sprawl

The uncontrolled spread of urban development into the regions around us.

Appendix C: Interview Questions

One-On-One Interview Questions with Advocates for The Homeless

1. What are your thoughts on the homeless population located in downtown Wichita?
2. How do you feel the homeless population is treated/perceived in Wichita?
3. What programs are currently available in downtown Wichita for the homeless?
4. What other programs would you like to see available?
5. Is there anything that could be provided through design for the homeless population?
6. Is there anything else you would like to state?

One-On-One Interview Questions with Living Members of The Dockum Drugstore Sit-In

1. What are your thoughts on the current Chester I. Lewis Park?
2. What do you think of the memorial on site?
3. In your eyes, what would you like to see the future design of the park to be?
4. Is there anything else you would like to state?

Appendix D: IRB Approval

TO: Dr. Katie Kingery-Page Proposal Number: 9051
Landscape Architecture/Regional and Community Planning
1096 Seaton Hall

FROM: Rick Scheidt, Chair
Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects

DATE: 12/11/2017

RE: Approval of Proposal Entitled, "Exploratory Study of the Potential for a Redesigned Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park."

The Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects has reviewed your proposal and has granted full approval. This proposal is approved for one year from the date of this correspondence, pending "continuing review."

APPROVAL DATE: 12/11/2017

EXPIRATION DATE: 12/11/2018

Several months prior to the expiration date listed, the IRB will solicit information from you for federally mandated "continuing review" of the research. Based on the review, the IRB may approve the activity for another year. **If continuing IRB approval is not granted, or the IRB fails to perform the continuing review before the expiration date noted above, the project will expire and the activity involving human subjects must be terminated on that date. Consequently, it is critical that you are responsive to the IRB request for information for continuing review if you want your project to continue.**

In giving its approval, the Committee has determined that:

- There is no more than minimal risk to the subjects.
 There is greater than minimal risk to the subjects.

This approval applies only to the proposal currently on file as written. Any change or modification affecting human subjects must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation. All approved proposals are subject to continuing review at least annually, which may include the examination of records connected with the project. Announced post-approval monitoring may be performed during the course of this approval period by URCO staff. Injuries, unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risk to subjects or to others must be reported immediately to the Chair of the IRB and / or the URCO.

