Balancing new urbanist ideas with the context and historic precedent in a derelict Indianapolis neighborhood

site photo taken by wendi schoenfeldt 2001

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words for thought.

“If we are now to reinvest in America, careful consideration should be given to what kind of America we want to create.”

– Peter Calthorpe 1993

“Look what we have built with the first several billions: Low income projects that become worse centers of delinquency, vandalism and general social hopelessness than the slums they were supposed to replace. Middle-income housing projects, which are truly marvels of dullness and regimentation, sealed against any buoyancy or vitality of city life. Luxury housing projects that mitigate their inanity, or try to, with a vapid vulgarity. Cultural centers that are unable to support a good bookstore. Civic centers that are avoided by everyone but bums, who have fewer choices of loitering place than others. Commercial centers that are lackluster imitations of standardized suburban chain store shopping. Promenades that go from no place to nowhere and have no promenaders. Expressways that eviscerate great cities. This is not the rebuilding of cities. This is the sacking of cities”

– Jane Jacobs 1961

“We have reshaped our environment into a form that does not function as an interconnected whole. Unavoidably, that dysfunctional form shapes us.”

– Roberta Brandes Gratz 1998
table of contents.

introduction.
abstract __ 1.
purpose of the study __ 2.
guiding questions __ 3.
definitions of key terms __ 4.
significance of the study __ 6.

review of the related literature.
historical perspective __ 9.
relevant principles and theories of new urbanism __ 12.
complimentary design trends and ideas __ 17.

case studies.
model projects __ 19.
negative techniques __ 28.
positive techniques __ 29.

site context and site selection.
criteria for site selection __ 30.
location maps __ 31.
site base maps __ 32.
opportunities and constraints of site selection __ 34.

project requirements.
client needs __ 36.
project type __ 36.
project goals __ 37.
assumptions __ 37.
delimitations __ 38.
inventory and analysis.
  historical information _ 39.
  inventory phase _ 44.
  analysis maps _ 48.

program.
  program overview _ 52.
  existing elements _ 53.
  proposed elements _ 53.

development of design concepts.
  layer analysis _ 54.
  design concepts _ 61.
  concept analysis _ 67.

concept for design development .
  combination concept _ 68.

preliminary master plan.
  preliminary land use plan _ 71.
  support graphics _ 75.

conclusions.
  before and after _ 80.
  goal satisfaction _ 81.
  experiences _ 83.
  bibliography _ 84.
Several decades of suburban sprawl and white flight have disrupted the historical economy of city life, and have destroyed valuable farmland, wetlands, and natural forests. There is an overwhelming need to help our cities regain their character and lure people back into the cities. Landscape architects, urban planners, and architects have developed many design theories in response to the needs of the city and its inhabitants. The principles and ideas stem from a movement more commonly known as new urbanism (DPZ 2000). This new way of thinking attempts to redirect sprawl back into the creative infill of downtown city spaces.

This study looked to several model projects, such as Kentlands, Maryland and Laguna West, California, which offered examples and applications of relevant theories and design principles of new urbanism. Kentlands featured a traditional neighborhood design with a very strong emphasis on walkability. Laguna West offered a different approach to new urbanist thinking and emphasized a transit-oriented development. These two designs included other principles such as mixed-use neighborhoods, a town center, and educational and health facilities. Unfortunately, these new towns were tested in a suburban environment, and did not show applications in an urban context. Hayward and Los Angeles, in
California were examples of urban designs that dealt with the existing urban contexts and historic precedent. These two cities, like Indianapolis, lost many of their historical buildings during the 1960’s urban renewal movement. However, the new plans for each of these cities maintained traces of their historic fabric, patterns, and materials. These case studies served as models for my study.

Many of these principles, theories, and concepts throughout my exploration of new urbanism were preserved, and other views of urban design were researched. Jane Jacobs’ (1961) reverence for the gritty context of urban life and Peter Calthorpe’s (1993) vision for efficient urban circulation were important ideas in my project. David Sucher’s (1995) theories about city comforts, such as narrow streets and hidden parking lots provided other examples of urban design.

The development of my study was located on nine blocks in a derelict northwest area of downtown Indianapolis. It focused on the contextual fabric, history, and patterns of surrounding areas. It was an attempt to test the applicability of some of the new urbanist principles, theories, and concepts in order to create an ideal urban setting that had the potential to promote social and economic vitality. It was intended to become a case study that can be used as an armature for other “new urbanist” design ideas for urban settings.

**purpose of the study.**

In Landscape Architecture Online News Digest, December 2001 issue, Bill Thompson wrote “Land Matters.” He asked the question, “Is the New Urbanist movement living up to the ‘urbanist’ moniker?” Thompson explained that the principles of new urbanism “were derived from the sound guidelines of traditional town planning.” He talked about the principles of new urbanism and how they were derived from many of the same principles of historic neighborhoods, which he felt was commendable. However, he believed that too many of the new urbanist developments were “built on Greenfield (open countryside) sites far outside the nearest urban center.” He also gave his interpretation of what the term
“urbanist” meant to him. “Urbanist should mean integral with the close-knit urban fabric.” Bill Thompson touched upon some of the key issues that my project dealt with, and proved that the issue was a seriously debated topic.

The purpose of my project was to develop a qualitative study dealing with urban design that created a case study to be added to the library of new urbanist design examples. This study was an attempt to test the applicability of some of the new urbanist principles, theories, and concepts to a derelict area of downtown Indianapolis. I wanted to create an ideal urban setting that had the potential to promote social and economic vitality. My study identified existing and historic patterns of the site and its surroundings. This resulted in a master plan that proposed a new pattern of development while maintaining the existing reference to historical precedence.

The following were important elements that focused on:

- circulation
- accessibility
- housing
- materials
- shopping
- service
- institutions (schools, libraries, banks)
- historical information

**guiding questions.**

1. What are the causes of urban sprawl and why is it so important to change our way of thinking?
2. Why are new techniques necessary for the success of our communities?
3. How can new urbanism help put our cities back together?
4. What are the principles of new urbanism?
5. What is context and why does it matter in design? How do we discover what that context is and how do we relate it to the principles of new urbanism?

6. Can the theories, principles, and concepts of new urbanism be applied to this area in downtown Indianapolis?

7. Is the area that I have chosen a good candidate for new urbanist design? Why or why not?

8. Does this area have enough history to make it an important aspect of this project?

9. Is the model project that I have selected a guide for my project and is there a fit? Does this model project fit the way people really live, or is it more like a resort town, or a suburban neighborhood?

10. What other ways of thinking about urban revitalization are important to consider?

definitions of key terms.

In order to truly understand the techniques and principles of a new urbanist development process and other design ideas, there are a few terms that get thrown around without a consistent meaning. So for the purposes of my study, these terms will be defined by the following:

*Community design* is “the art of making sustainable living places that both thrive and adapt to people’s needs for shelter, livelihood, commerce, recreation, and social order” (Hall 3).

*Context* is described in Webster’s Dictionary as the part of a text or statement that surrounds a word or passage and determines its meaning. For the purpose of this study, we are going to relate this definition to urban design. The context of a site is an extremely important factor to consider when designing a successful region, city, or neighborhood.
The context is made up by the elements that surround the site itself. Context can be as obvious as the materials that are used throughout the surrounding areas, or as inconspicuous as historical design patterns used by the original settlers. The true context of each place will combat the elements of that place and cater to its local ecology, including its social aspects. The context of each place is also very different from the next, which is why it is so important to consider. Authenticity is gained only when a city creates a unique identity for them that is based upon its surrounding context.

*New Urbanism* is a movement, which attempts to raise the quality of life and the standard of living of a place. It is a way to rebuild an environment the way that communities have been built for centuries. New urbanism “promotes the creation and restoration of diverse, walkable, compact, mixed-use neighborhoods, towns, and cities composed of the same components as conventional development, but assembled in a more integrated fashion, in the form of complete communities” ([www.newurbansim.org](http://www.newurbansim.org) 416429). This method of thinking is not just a revival of borrowing traditional planning concepts from the 1900-1920’s. Peter Katz states that “the New Urbanists acknowledge that many realities of modern life must be dealt with: automobiles and “big box” stores, to mention a few” (Katz x). Peter Calthorpe defines new urbanism as “the way we conceive of community and how we form the region - it is about diversity, scale and public space in every context” (Katz xvi).

*Vernacular* has become a term, which describes a standard style that runs throughout a specific era. The problem with this use of the word is that this style may not directly relate to the historical origins and styles of that same place.
Vitality is defined by the capacity to live, grow, or develop. This term is essential throughout every aspect of a successful urban design. Anyone can design features of a city, but in order to be truly successful, each of the aspects must be able to prosper and evolve with the times.

significance of the study.

For many decades, people thought that moving out of the cities solved all of their problems and provided them with a better quality of life. City planning and urban designs have suffered in the past because of the constant desire for urban sprawl, which is a large reason that inner cities, themselves, have suffered as well. The increased demand for urban sprawl has in turn, created many social, economic, and environmental hardships.

The social aspects of our communities have been severely hindered by the increasing amount of automobile travel throughout our cities and suburbs. It has become the norm to live in the suburbs, and spend hours every day, driving to and from the city to our places of employment. This unnecessary travel does not allow for the casual conversation on the sidewalks that might otherwise take place if we were able to walk to work. We also have a perceived notion as to how our homes should look, because of the predictable nature of suburban design. Our views are actually warped due to the absence of the historical qualities that make each neighborhood unique.

The economic aspects of our communities are also suffering as a result of urban sprawl. According to www.newurbanism.org, “we now spend more time than ever in stressful traffic, and nearly 30% of our income on car payments, gas, maintenance, and insurance” (416433). The government is constantly using our tax dollars to rebuild roads and highways that have crumbled. If we compact our growth patterns, then we might be able to use our money, and the government funding, for other more important purposes.
Urban sprawl has taken its toll on our environment as well. Increasing automobile traffic has also increased the number of deteriorating exhaust fumes that flow into the earth's atmosphere. The natural environment and its resources are in danger, and the more we spread out to build our suburbs, the more natural areas are diminished. "Our beautiful wilderness areas, which are some of the greatest treasures of America, are quickly being transformed into asphalt deserts" (www.newurbansim.org 416433).

The need for a change in design principles and techniques is overwhelming. Some may argue their need for privacy fences and large lots even though urban sprawl has done nothing but overuse our natural environment. Every notion of urban context has disappeared from suburban design techniques, although we are slowly moving back toward more urban ways of thinking. Some of the most popular principles have been commonly associated with the charter for new urbanism and their theories about urban design.

The new urbanism movement has taken the field of landscape architecture by storm and is becoming a more widely accepted view of urban thinking. Many ideas and innovative design possibilities are captured within new urbanist principles, such as smart growth, traditional neighborhood developments, or transit-oriented developments, just to name a few. There are a variety of guidelines for each of these theories; however, there seems to be no clear boundary that separates one from the next. The overlapping pattern found throughout these design ideas is what makes them so easy to incorporate into urban cities.

The charter for new urbanism has prepared guidelines for successful urban designs that are solely contingent upon their specified principles. There are many designers who would not dispute the fact that all of these principles are well thought out and somewhat critical to provide a true sense of a neighborhood. The truth of the matter is that although these principles are highly respected, they rarely begin to form anything more than a template that has been overused in the design of many well-known new urbanist projects. The problem then becomes one of context rather than principle.
The success of a city is measured very differently, depending on the judge. Anyone can design a city using several, if not every last one of the new urbanist guidelines, but if they have paid no attention to the city's surroundings, they have failed as a designer. One of the most controversial design problems today, is the "cookie cutter" subdivision that continues to disperse further and further from the inner cities. New urbanist development may have been introduced much later than the suburbs, but has quickly become worthy of the "cookie cutter" label since the context of each site is not incorporated directly into its design. The purpose of each city is not only function, but to distinguish itself from every other city. If they all have the exact same design characteristics, then what becomes so special about one city, if we could visit ten others that are exactly the same?

Jane Jacobs said, "cities are an immense laboratory of trial and error, failure and success, in city building and city design" (6). If we fail to try different techniques of design throughout each city, then we have not recognized our fullest potential. Not everything that is designed works out for the best, but the only way to decipher the good from the bad is to experiment with the large realm of possibilities.

As landscape designers, it is important for us to raise the awareness of the many problems that we face as a society, by contributing to urban sprawl. It is our duty to inform others of the newest and most innovative ways to address some of these problems. Landscape Architects have made several professional contributions to the development process of urban design, but the solutions are continuously evolving. It is our job to continue developing more sufficient ways of implementation of existing principles into urban design. We are continuously reapplying our knowledge of these principles, adding to the hundreds of existing case studies in urban design research.
From the mid-1500's to the mid 1940's the design concepts that led our notions for community design were "based on a vision" (Hall xvii). It took 450 years to develop successful urban design techniques, and thanks to urban sprawl, it has only taken us 60 years to dismiss them.

At the turn of the century, the industrial revolution brought people, in masses, to the cities, as well as several well-known social reformers of urban design utopias. (Hall xvii)

Ebenezer Howard and his Garden Cities movement brought a vision of "small towns built for workers surrounded by a greenbelt, combining the best of city and country" (Calthorpe 33). These towns were based on a rail system with "Romantic and Beaux Arts" urban traditions, village-type neighborhoods, and civic centers. (Calthorpe 33)

Another voice was Tony Garnier, who developed modernist solutions to problems such as isolating different uses, building setbacks, separating industry, and town planning in general. Calthorpe says "his was the first modernist vision of the twentieth-century city" (33).

Two other familiar names are LeCorbusier and Frank Lloyd Wright. These two men added to Garnier's vision in both urban and suburban developments, while keeping his fundamental principles in tact. They dealt with issues such as
segregation of use, love of the auto, and dominance of private over public space. Calthorpe believes this is why the street as the community’s habitable common ground disintegrated” (33) Daily routines changed because of the high dependence on the automobile to travel solely to a destination and then back home. Sporadic meetings on the streets disappeared, since no one was walking to get their daily needs, and driving instead.

The Industrial Revolution played a part in the growth of so many cities throughout the United States. Large factories began moving to densely populated urban areas in order to be closer to rail lines and major water sources. The cities with fewer densities saw a rise in their population when new industrial buildings sprang up because the people wanted to be closer to their place of employment. The constant arrival of new business was a result of an increase in people and other commercial stores and vice versa. Cities became substantially larger through this constant cycle. (Utt 82)

The end of the 19th century brought the increasing development of telephones, natural gas, and electricity, although they still remained costly. The cost of these new sources of energy is what continued to keep the businesses and industrial units within city limits. People remained in the cities because of the convenience and close proximity to their daily needs. (Utt 82)

Inner cities became overcrowded, the cost of living increased, and the desire to leave the city increased, which ultimately led to the acceptance of the automobile. Automotive transportation made it much easier to go greater distances to work. The economy was booming and people were suddenly able to move away from the cities toward “a less crowded lifestyle at the urban fringe” (Hall xviii).

During the 1940’s, the arrival of the automobile not only brought flight to the suburbs, but also brought an increase in family income levels. The more money that each family earned, the larger the living space that they deemed
appropriate for their family. The average number of people per room in 1940 was 0.74, and it dropped by 1987 to 0.48 (Utt 83).

The American Dream had changed and people were “free to exercise their preferences for privacy, greenery, larger and newer houses, and open spaces” (Utt 83). The Federal Housing Authority passed out low mortgage rates for moves to the suburbs and extended many of our highways, which caused the high demand for the suburbs. According to Utt, people were moving to the suburbs by the tens of thousands. So “the heritage of community design that had reached its zenith prior to the Great Depression was cast aside in favor of the more expedient suburban residential neighborhoods and strip commercial development that accompanies it” (Hall xviii).

The suburbs continued to grow and evolve and eventually were fully capable to stand on their own with no financial help from the larger cities. The inner cities began their downward spiral of unemployment rates and vacant buildings. White flight to the suburbs, along with the remnants of the Great Depression, caused many other people to lose their jobs. Unfortunately, African Americans were the majority of unemployed people who began to move to the first ring of suburbs to find jobs. The flight of African Americans drove the white people to move even further away which continued to increase the rings of suburbia. (Utt 83)

During the 1960’s, large cities tried to revitalize their downtowns through a process known as urban renewal. A movement, which was intended to make our cities better, only made them worse in reality. Instead of reviving the history of our great cities, many historical buildings were torn down and replaced with large modern buildings. The historical patterns of our gridiron streets and typical building facades were lost. Therefore, what began as an attempt to fix the mistakes of the previous decades, were worsened by our desire to wipe the design area clean and ignore the aesthetic character of the existing material. The end result contained larger and newer buildings that still remained vacant.
Peter Calthorpe provides statistical information about the drastic changes made within large cities. "From 1973 to 1985 five million blue-collar jobs were lost nation-wide, while service fields gained from 82 to 110 million jobs. This translated directly into 1.1 billion square feet of office space constructed in new suburban employments complexes. Over 40 percent of all commute trips are now from suburb to suburb" (19).

In recent years, we have developed another process of revitalization for our cities. The new urbanism movement has brought older, more traditional design techniques back to the cores of our cities. There are many places that have already applied the principles of traditional urban design principles, such as the SoHo district of New York, Toronto, and many other cities that are referred to later. Today, our theories of community design are reminiscent of community design techniques from the 1920's. It was interesting, learning about the complete circle that we have made in our ideas about community design.

**relevant principles and theories of new urbanism.**

The Charter for New Urbanism designed ten principles that are sought after in urban design solutions. These principles were intended for a wide range of development types, from single buildings to master-planned designs.

1. Walkability
   - ten-minute walk to most places with daily needs (1/4-mile radius)
   - pedestrian friendly street designs

2. Connectivity
   - interconnected street grid network
   - high quality pedestrian network
3. Mixed-Use
   • mix of shops, offices, apartments, and homes within blocks and buildings

4. Mixed-Housing
   • ranges of types, sizes, and prices in close proximity

5. Quality Architecture and Urban Design
   • emphasis on beauty, aesthetics, human comfort/human scale
   • create a sense of place with placement of special buildings

6. Traditional Neighborhood Structure
   • visible center and edge
   • range of uses and densities within ten-minute walk

7. Increased Density
   • more buildings, residences, shops, closer together for easier access and efficiency

8. Smart Transportation
   • network of high quality trains connecting cities and towns together
   • encouraged use of bicycles, roller blades, and walking for transportation

9. Sustainability
   • minimal environmental impact of development, more local production
   • less use of fuel, more walking

10. Quality of Life
    • raise by implementing principles 1-9
These are commendable design efforts, but not the absolute design solutions to urban design revitalization. It is equally important to be aware of some of the theories that may be the most visible among the design techniques, and what elements make up these different classifications. (www.newurbanism.org)

TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT (TND)

Traditional neighborhood developments replaced PUDs (planned unit developments) and were established during the 1990's due to the increasing desire to control urban sprawl and recreate the community feelings that were lost with suburban flight. The first half of the 20th century is used to model some of the styles and expectations of these new developments. (Leal 108)

The following are some of the characteristics more commonly found in older cities:

- Small lots with houses situated closely together
- Narrow streets connected to grid patterns
- Intertwining of commercial and residential uses
- Typical city life necessities within walking distance: stores, churches, schools, homes, jobs

Today's common definition for a TND, according to Leal, is "a mix of uses and housing types, a compact interconnected street and block pattern, a clearly defined center for each neighborhood, and pedestrian-oriented design" (Leal 108).

There are several examples of working TNDs, such as Seaside, Florida and Kentlands, Maryland.

SMART GROWTH

This term is a very broad theory that has surfaced through the theories of other new urbanist ideas. There are several different interpretations of what smart growth can be, but for now we will define it using Leal's definition in The
Guide to Smart Growth. Supporters have a few core concepts that they focus on which tend to overlap other theories as well.

- Efficient is the key word when it comes to infrastructure projects such as roads, sewers, schools, etc, meaning less infrastructure is better
- Developments are more "compact" and are built with higher densities than the typical suburban areas of today
- All new developments provide acceptance to a transit oriented development with a light rail system or bus route
- Urban Growth Boundaries are used whenever possible (Hayward 3-4)

**URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARIES (UGB)**

Urban growth boundaries were designed to maintain, control, minimize, and in some cases, prohibit urban sprawl. The idea has been around for decades and the concept was to define a specific circumference around existing urban areas, in order to label where growth was acceptable and where was not. The intention was to prohibit the entire city from sprawling out past a specific point, so that inner city abandonment and other problems did not arise. (Hayward 4)

**NEO-TRADITIONAL COMMUNITY DESIGN**

This concept can also be interpreted in several different ways, but the nature of the idea remains the same. The key element was to revert back to the "neighborhoodliness" of much older communities, for example, from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Typical features are similar, but not strictly limited to those of TND styles. They have front
porches with shorter setbacks from the street and between housing units, angular street parking, and of course, mixed-use development. (Hayward 4)

TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD)

A transit-oriented development was a “mixed-use community within an average 2,000 foot walking distance of a transit stop and core commercial area.” (Calthorpe 56) TODs typically included residential, retail, office, open space, and public uses for convenience and walkability of residents and others traveling by foot, bicycle, or car. They were broken down even further into urban TODs and Neighborhood TODs. (Calthorpe 57)

Urban TODs were usually placed “directly on the trunk line transit network” and either at light or heavy rail lines or bus stops. Since the word “urban” was attached, these were generally developed in high-density areas, like commercial clusters, and high residential areas. (Calthorpe 57)

Neighborhood TODs were placed along less dense rail lines, such as local or feeder lines. They were located no more than 3 miles from trunk line transit stops, which are within 10 minutes of travel time. These were more commonly found in moderately dense residential areas, and retail, entertainment, recreational, civic, and service uses. (Calthorpe 57)

Sometimes TODs were arranged strictly by principles that each designer followed:

- organize growth on regional level to be compact and transit-supportive
- place commercial, housing, jobs, parks, and civic uses within walking distance of transit stops
- create pedestrian-friendly street networks which directly connect local destinations
- provide a mix of housing types, densities, and costs
- preserve sensitive habitat, riparian zones and high quality open spaces
• make public spaces the focus of building orientation and neighborhood activity
• encourage infill and redevelopment along transit corridors within existing neighborhoods (Calthorpe 43)

complimentary design trends and ideas.

Peter Calthorpe’s vision of a transit-oriented development and Andres Duany’s vision of a traditional neighborhood development were not the only solutions to urban design. Although these theories and principles were positive ideas, many designers believed that a successful urban revitalization did not depend on so many theories. Their ideas were alternatives to the familiar concepts of new urbanism, although relationships existed between these ideas and those of new urbanism.

Roberta Brandes Gratz believed that our society had allowed the automobile to restructure every element of design that we once held true. She described how we had managed to create such a dysfunctional built landscape, “strictly by design and not chance. The garage door has replaced the front door, the parking lot the public steps to City Hall, and the underground garage the office building lobby” (Gratz 33-34). Her ideas stemmed from a technique that celebrated the existing history and materials of an urban site design, called urban husbandry. Gratz says “urban husbanders assume that assets are already in place to be reinvigorated and built and built onto in order to stimulate a place-based rejuvenation that adds to the long-evolving, existing strengths, instead of replacing them” (61).

According to Wendell Cox, there were only two choices considered when preparing an urban design:

1) Not to accommodate the inevitable increase in demand for automobile travel and create alternative modes of travel, such as transit, bicycles, and walking, or

2) To accommodate the inevitable increase in automobile demand, which will reduce traffic congestion and air pollution while improving the quality of life (57)
He believed that we only had one option if we intended to reverse the effects of urban sprawl. We must “accommodate the inevitable increase in personal vehicular travel...and use roadways more efficiently” (57). Whether we like it or not, our society is dependent on vehicular travel, and in order to create successful urban designs, we must plan with the automobile and not around it.

The ideas of David Sucher built on the ideas of vehicular accommodation and added ideas about pedestrian traffic. He felt that there were three crucial patterns to designing comfortable urban spaces. “Build to the sidewalk, make the street front permeable, and put the parking behind, or under, or above or to the side of the building” (12-13). Sucher said that sidewalks were important because “they channel pedestrian movement and force people into closer proximity where they may bump into each other and act neighborly” (12). His theories also complimented those of Jane Jacobs, reverting to the traditional elements and characteristics of old-fashioned downtowns.

Jane Jacobs had the very same opinion, but stated it slightly different. “Sidewalks bring together people who do not know each other in an intimate, private social fashion...” (Jacobs 55). She believed that the sidewalks were the backbones of our cities because it was there, that we interlaced with other people in our society and became more comfortable in our environments.
The number of available case studies dealing with new urbanism was enormous, so I chose a few examples to serve as guides for my study. Kentlands and Laguna West represented a typical new urbanist design, fit for a suburban context, and were studies that applied examples of new urbanist principles. Hayward and Los Angeles, on the other hand, served as models for my study because of their relation to historical and urban context.
Kentlands: Gaithersburg, Maryland, 1988

The town of Kentlands lies directly in the center of suburban growth and represents another example of a functioning TND. It was located about 23 miles northwest of Washington, D.C., in the city of Gaithersburg, and in an area known as the "I-270 technology corridor." (Katz 31)

The design was prepared for a 356-acre farm through a design charrette hosted by DPZ. Kentlands was to include six, multi-use neighborhoods that encouraged diversity. The ideas incorporated residential, office, cultural, and retail uses, as well as incorporated various levels of ages and incomes. The theory combined as many different elements of the community as possible, so that a genuine sense of community was maintained. Each individual neighborhood included public buildings and open space that fit directly into the residential genre of the place. (Katz 31)

The design included a wide range of natural features, such as a lake, wetlands, greenbelts, and various small squares that identified individual neighborhoods. This site also included a school, a health club, and a cultural center. The retail section of the town was based upon a major center with two cores at either end, which still remains connected to the
town's main street. The majority of the town homes had garages that are located at the back of the lots, which provided access to the ally. (Katz 32)

The overall capacity of Kentlands included 1,600 residential units and 5,000+ residents. The village had a colonial atmosphere due to the narrow alleys, brick sidewalks, and the village green. A 200-year-old Kentland mansion sat on the site and added historical presence to the town as well. The designers, in this example, used some of the existing historical buildings from the old Kent farm to house some of the new centers that they had created for the new village. The use of several old buildings added older characteristics to a fresh design, which helped develop some of the later architecture that was commonly found throughout the town. (Katz 32)

Kentlands was also involved with recreational activities for the members of its community. A recreation and youth center was located in the village, and was the host to many entertainment and social gatherings. It also housed weight lifting, aerobic, swimming, tennis, basketball, and volleyball facilities, as well as a cinema, music store, pizza parlor, and skating rink. Each of these facilities was designed within walking or biking distance of the residences. (Leal 109)

The town's center, known as Midtown, was located on an edge of the village instead of the center. This encouraged a higher density of customer traffic, both pedestrian and vehicular. The designers used outside sources of income for the retailers of the Kentlands project. (Shaw 109) According to Peter Katz, Kentlands was perceived as an "authentic town made up of distinct neighborhoods, in the classic American tradition" (Katz 31).
Laguna West: Sacramento County, California, 1990

Laguna West was one of the first implementations of Peter Calthorpe’s ideas of a transit-oriented development. This development contained defined public spaces, such as a village green, a town hall, a main street, and neighborhood parks. (Katz 19)

The community itself was based upon 3,400 units, with a primary focus of a 100-acre town center that included “civic and commercial uses as well as several different forms of high- and medium-density housing.” The current master plan located its high-density housing near a variety of shops and services, allowing the community residents the ability to walk to their destinations if desired. (Katz 19)

The plan also included diagonal boulevards that “directly link the dense central zone with a surrounding secondary area of low-density housing, single family homes.” An important feature of this design was the 65-acre lake that completely separated these two areas. A 20-foot easement provided the town with access to the waterfront at all times. (Katz 19-21)
The town had a primary recreation area, along a day care that resided next to the town hall. Most of the blocks in the high-density housing areas had both residential and commercial uses, while custom-built homes were located within the lower-density housing areas. Smaller houses lined the lakefront promenade, and a swimming and track area were shared among the community and a local school. Two large radial streets were the only connectors from the town's center to the single-family residential blocks. (Katz 20-23)

Calthorpe's design team organized a specific design sequence of a vision through the north-south spine of the site. Light industrial and office space lined the street, and provided connectors to nearby highways and intended light-rail systems. Then, a four-block commercial core "reconfigures man of the same elements typically found in a suburban retail strip." There was also a portion of senior housing and smaller stores found along these blocks. The city's civic buildings, a previously mentioned day care center, and the town hall were located around the central circle. From the town center, two- and three-story apartment buildings were made visible, along with a continuous lakefront promenade and several small bridges for access to the school. (Katz 22-23)

According to Katz, the Los Angeles Times "dubbed Laguna West as a better suburb" (19).
Hayward, California 1992

Hayward, California is located in the San Francisco Bay near several bridge crossings and freeways. In the 1960's, a large area was destroyed and replaced with several commuter parking lots for the transit system that passed through the site. Another problem was the 50-foot setback zone for an area of the site because it was located along a fault line. During the 1960's, a plan to connect the freeway on one end of the city with the bridge on the other was denied. A main street, known as Foothill Boulevard, was forced to become the major connection between these two elements, and traffic congestion became a severe problem for Hayward. A historic city hall was demolished as a result of a 1989 earthquake, and several stores moved away because of the competition of other malls.

It wasn't until the 1990's that the city took an active role in the revitalization process. The new proposal included "a new civic center complex with a public plaza and prominent civic building as its focal point, a transit center for bus and
BART (bay area rapid transit), and shopping. Several new streets and the realignment of others were intended to reverse the eroded historic gridiron plan" (Katz 129).

There was also an interesting implementation of a "park for billboards." The design team proposed to put a large tower in the park in order to draw attention away from the negative aspects of Foothill Boulevard. Another large focal point in this design was the termination of a street with a large marker added to the top of an existing supermarket. (Katz 129-133)

The new plan also reacted to the rail line that separated the city in two sections. The architects decided to realign a large parking garage with the street, as well as allow pedestrian traffic to move more freely through the area.

A "thin linear building" was placed in front of the garage in order to hide it from the view of pedestrians. A new civic center replaced the commuter lots, a larger pedestrian path replaced a narrow stairway, and an additional group of office buildings with bridge connections to each other were added to the city. (Katz 129-130)

Hayward encouraged the application of character and building types from surrounding neighborhoods to their own building designs, such as townhouses and podium apartments. The streetscapes varied, although many of them remained tree-lined. (Katz 132) The overall goal of this new design was to restore "a walkable environment within its center, but that didn't ignore the district's vehicular identity as seen from its edges" (Katz 133).
Los Angeles, California 1993

"Los Angeles has historically played a major role in the commerce, government, social life and culture of the vast metropolitan area that surrounds it" (Katz 213). According to Katz, Los Angeles was first "founded as a Spanish pueblo in 1781, and then entered a period of rapid growth in the late 1800's. By the 1920's, Los Angeles had become the hub of an extensive inter-urban rail network" (213). Many roads and freeways were built in response to the increase in population in this area, which lessened the importance of the trolley car. (Katz 213)

The goal of the new plan for Los Angeles was based upon the return to a "strong urban core." Included in the new plan were several mixed-use pedestrian neighborhoods, which allowed up to 100,000 new residents and a new transit system.

There was a large team of designers, such as DPZ, who were involved in the process. "Economic, transportation, historic preservation, environmental management consultants, and social services also participated in the process" (Katz 215). Four charrettes resulted in designating downtown Los Angeles into three areas: "The City - an area of mixed office, retail, civic, residential, and entertainment uses,"
The Markets - with clusters of housing, retail and a range of social services, and dominated by a large diverse concentration of manufacturing and wholesale businesses, and The Center City - spans the historic core of downtown, as well as theater, garment and jewelry districts" (Katz 215).

The new master plan improved the pedestrian circulation with a hierarchy of enhanced streets and sidewalks. There were new civic parks, plazas, and parking opportunities, and the zoning codes were changed to allow a higher density of housing units per area. The overall goal of this plan was "not to impose a predetermined end vision, but relied on numerous incremental steps to 'seed' future growth through joint public/private investment" (Katz 217).
Negative Techniques: contradictions to new urbanist theory

This section focused on just a few of the very well known, first attempts at some of the design principles of new urbanism. There is no such thing as a perfect design, although the principles and theories applied can be successful by their very nature. Jane Jacobs had a general explanation for the problems with design. "People are concerned with the way a city should look like, and not necessarily how its functioning order is" (Jacobs 14). The case studies on Kentlands and Laguna West were similar to the way Jane Jacobs thought about urban designers. Although the principles and theories involved with these designs were successful design alternatives by themselves, they did not necessarily fit into their context. For example, Washington, D.C. is a very urban village with an obvious central core, and Kentlands copied that aspect with its town center. However, the transition from urban to TND was not made very clearly. It appeared that one might not feel comfortable to enter into this neighborhood unless they had a residence there.

Although Laguna West was well prepared for a transit system to be incorporated, the distinct separation between the different densities of housing disputes was an exact contradiction to new urbanism that the city intended to strive for. The lake was another negative aspect used as a divider instead of as a naturally celebrated element on the site.

Portland truly demonstrated positive alternatives of thinking about limiting growth. Unfortunately, the theory of UGBs can only be helpful if used in a changeable manner and cannot be applied to Indianapolis. This approach would have been more difficult to apply to a city that had already been established, such as Indianapolis. Once the city was full with existing development, it was impossible to go back and put restrictions and limitations on the buildable area.
Positive Techniques: designs toward new urbanist direction

Kentlands contained many successful theories of new urbanism that can be applied to Indianapolis as well. The design followed many of the principles about the celebration of natural elements, and the location of garages in the alleys. This design was a positive attempt to reach out to the community and the contents were based on the needs of the people. Although Indianapolis is an urban environment and Kentlands was suburban, the idea of designing for the needs of the people is important for urban and suburban places.

Laguna West related to Indianapolis because of its strong central core and diagonal streets, which drew people into the center. It also provided an example of the application of a transit-oriented development within a community. Laguna West served as a design solution guide, including ideas about transit within a large city.

The master plan for Hayward dealt with the application of several principles, theories, and concepts of new urbanism, such as walkability and diagonal, on-street parking. David Sucher's theories of hidden parking lots were also seen in this plan, as well as many other urban design ideas. These were just a few good reasons why Hayward, California made a good case study to use as a guide for my study in Indianapolis.

Los Angeles was the model for my study because its plan tied directly relate to its historical background and context, just as I strived to do in Indianapolis. The highways in parts of Los Angeles, for example, followed the old railroad and trolley lines. Los Angeles had spread out immensely, but there were still nuggets of history reflected in several parts of the city. Although it was a large city, the new plan imposed several smaller pedestrian accessible areas that followed the 1/4-mile walkability radius in new urbanist principles. Los Angeles was a good example of patience because the biggest lesson to learn about urban design is that you cannot change a city overnight.
criteria for site selection.

The most important ingredient was a site with a good fit to the needs of my project. I needed to find a true urban city, as well as one that contained enough historical background to make my study worthwhile. Since Indianapolis was close to Muncie, it seemed like the obvious choice for this study.

Indianapolis was a very large city, so I obviously had to narrow down my site location. The Regional Center in downtown Indianapolis had recently completed a series of three charettes that each dealt with a different section of Indianapolis. The northwest section of Center Township was the last of the three charettes, and it contained the most opportunities for this type of project.

There were two promising areas within the northwest section, however, I chose to focus on nine blocks that encompassed the canal. This site had a variety of opportunities for infill and the re-use of existing buildings, as well as new development on the vacant land (parking lots).

The site was bordered by North Street to the north, Capitol Street to the east, New York Street to the south, and Martin Luther King Boulevard (West Street) to the west. Indiana Avenue cut right through the center of the square at a southeast angle, which dead ended at New York Street.
The site encompasses nine city blocks and is bordered by four main streets. North Street borders the north, Capitol Avenue borders the east, New York borders the south, and West Street (Martin Luther King Boulevard) borders the west.
base map of northwest section of indianapolis.

Large-scale elements

- Capitol Building to the south
- Circle Monument to the southeast
- White River (large body of water)
- Fall Creek (intersects White River)
- Historical Districts
- IUPUI to the west
- Hospital to the northeast
- Military Park to the southwest
- RCA Dome to the south
- Scottish Rite Cathedral to the northeast
- World War Memorials to the east

The overall area of the northwest section of Indianapolis had a large variety of interesting contextual elements that provided opportunities for connections. There were a variety of needs that have already been met within the context of the site, such as educational needs, municipal needs, medical needs, and residential needs. The overall context, however, lacked commercial, office, and retail spaces.
enlarged site map.

Small-scale elements

* Apartments
* Canal
* Pedestrian Corridors
* Commercial Buildings
* Industrial Building
* Lodging
* Parking Lots
* Restaurant
* Shuttle Stop
* Registered Historic Buildings
* One Block Historical District

The site contained elements that were appealing to both the historical and new urbanist objectives of my project. There was a historical district located on my site, along with several registered historic buildings. There were also a number of other equally appealing components of my site that provided a series of opportunities for new development.
opportunities and constraints of the site.

Opportunities

* There were several vacant parking lots that provided opportunities for new developments. In many cases, the parking consumed an entire block, therefore creating available valuable land for complete redevelopment.
* The canal was an opportunity all by itself because of the opportunity to allow people to interact with the water. It also holds a historical value due to its age of over 100 years.
* There were empty vacant buildings on the site, which provided the opportunity to re-use them for different functions. One of the buildings was for lease and provided an opportunity to possibly buy the building and redevelop it.
* IUPUI was located directly west of the site, so the opportunity for many students and faculty to visit the site was increased.
* There were several government buildings around the area since the site was so close to the center. Government workers and diplomats generally have meetings, thus providing lodging opportunities for a variety of time periods and convention types.
* The close proximity to the circle center allowed for the opportunity to gain visitors through weekend shopping trips, sporting and concert events at the RCA Dome and the Conseco Fieldhouse.
* The historical district and historical buildings provided opportunities for visitors and residents of Indianapolis to celebrate and appreciate the existing history left on the site.
* The implementation of new urbanist principles to this site hopefully encouraged other developers to incorporate these ideas into other areas of Indianapolis. These principles helped the site become closer to a sustainable environment with a better quality of life.

Constraints

* There were buildings on the site that joined the National Register of Historical Places in 1987. The buildings were very old, and in some instances, not very aesthetic. They obviously held some value since they were nationally registered, so they could not be removed from the site or destroyed.
* The canal had already been revitalized as a passive water feature, so the pedestrians could not interact with it. The sidewalks along either side suggested that the areas down along the canal were for through traffic and not active hang out areas.
* Many of the old historical buildings in the Indiana Historical District had been removed and the areas turned into parking lots. The opportunity to use sections or pieces from older establishments was lost when they were torn down.
* The areas around the site had already been developed, therefore erasing the possibility of gaining any more land to develop.
client needs.

During the initial portion of the charette for the northwest section of Indianapolis, the people asked for a series of design solutions that could help raise the standard of living and quality of life for their city. They wanted to feel a strong sense of community throughout the site and wanted to feel comfortable with the people in the area. They wanted to have spaces available to interact with others in both private and public spaces, and they wanted it to be interesting enough to draw others into the commercial and retail areas. Above all, they wanted to make safety a top priority and reconnect with some of the history of the place.

project type.

The object of this study was to create a balance between new urbanist principles, theories, and concepts, and other related urban design ideas in a derelict area of downtown Indianapolis. After the northwest section Indianapolis had been chosen, I researched the historical context of the site and its surrounding areas, looking for patterns, fabrics,
materials, and other specifics that helped to characterize the appearance and ambience of the site. A master-planned urban design was developed for the application of new urbanist design principles throughout downtown Indianapolis.

**project goals.**

* Create an urban design that incorporates new urbanist theories and principles
* Create a relationship between the site and its historical context
* Create a design that accommodates the needs of a diverse community
* Create an alternative destination to the Circle Center
* Create a connection between the site and its adjacent neighbors; IUPUI and downtown core.

**assumptions.**

Since the time allowance for my study was only four months, I had to make certain assumptions before I began. First, I assumed that the city of Indianapolis asked me to design a new plan for an area of their downtown that applied new urbanist concepts and principles. The previously mentioned consultants, city meetings, and surveys in the delimitations section were conducted, and explained to the general public. It was also assumed that the site chosen for this comprehensive project had already been properly zoned, allowing mixed-use development, along with any other provisions needed in a typical zoning ordinance. My study began with the site analysis phase, so that I was able to reach a final master plan within the semester.
delimitations.

This section acknowledges the typical processes involved in a project of this size, keeping in mind, that these elements represented the delimitations of my own project. The scope of my project and the time allowance to complete it were not large enough to work through these tasks.

Many urban design projects require a large number of surveys, and numerous consultants that come together to provide valuable information for each case. Here is one example of a typical urban development process:

1. A committee is assembled to assess whether a new development will have a positive or negative impact on their community.
2. Consultants are hired to assess different income levels that currently populate the area, along with those, which are incorporated into the new design.
3. Groups are assembled to decide how the public health, safety, and welfare requirements will be developed.
4. Architects, planners, and engineers review the different attributes needed in the design.
5. Certain cities require a marketing committee; in order to get the general public excited about a possible new development.
6. There are a series of public meetings, where the general public voice their opinions and make suggestions.
7. Zoning requirements are reviewed because it is rare to find an allowance for mixed-use in the current zoning requirements.
8. Designers visit the zoning board of appeals to get an approval for a mixed-use development.
Indianapolis, Indiana was rich in historical information. There was so much, in fact, that it had been broken up into several different time periods. Since this study had a time limit attached to it, I had to choose a specific era to focus on. I chose the time period between 1889 and 1916, better known as the Golden Years, because it seemed to be the most exciting period in history. The following were some of the other eras throughout Indianapolis' history.

1820-1846    The Settlement of Indianapolis
1847-1860    The Railroad Era
1861-1872    The Civil War Expansion
1873-1888    The Post-War Depression
1889-1916    **The Golden Years**
1917-1940    The Great War and The Great Depression
1941-1969    The Expansion and Revitalization
1970-2001    The Reorganization and Revitalization
During the Golden Years, the city grew beyond the mile square to over twenty square miles, which was an accomplishment in itself. Many of the people thought that the city would never sprawl past the mile square. By the end of this era there were 175 churches and 500 grocery stores established, and 1100 factories were constructed. The city already had sixteen railroads that provided access to and from the city, with 150 arrival/departures per day. By 1898 there were 340 electric trolley cars installed throughout the city, and not more than ten years later, there were 2300 miles of interurban tracks laid. The city also became a home to many German, Irish, and African American nationalities. By 1910, the end of the era, the population increased to 233,650 people. This was a time for growth in population and in business, which provided enough information to get a sense of what historical Indianapolis was like.

Within the city limits, Indianapolis was also divided into different areas that became well known for specific reasons. I studied the history of my specific site and found that Indiana Avenue was a very exciting place to be during the Golden Years. During the 1890’s, African Americans populated most of my site. It was there that they established a vibrant commercial community along approximately eight blocks on the avenue. This area became home to many black entertainers, entrepreneurs, politicians, and working people. Indiana Avenue turned out to be a widely known neighborhood mixed with theaters, jazz clubs, stores, offices, and residences. The energy and ambience portrayed in this era made it a positive time period to concentrate on for my study.
Historical Commercial Building, built in 1885, located on the west side of the northern triangle.

Historical Commercial Building that was built in 1909 and was located on the east side of the southern triangle. It was known as the Ferger Building and was recently revitalized.
The following buildings have been nationally registered as historic buildings as of 1987 and currently remain on site. This is a good indication that the city has placed importance on these buildings as an attempt to save a part of their history. This map also shows how diverse this area was because of the mix of functions that these buildings had. This area was a collection of a church, commercial buildings, industrial buildings, municipal buildings, residential areas, retail space, and a theatre. The city of Indianapolis found these buildings important, so they should be incorporated into the final design and not lost or destroyed.
The Martens was located along Indiana Avenue and functioned as apartment buildings. There were several vacant apartments in the building and it appeared to need a little renovation.

The Robert Kuhn house was added onto 36 years after it was built and became the Historic Landmark Foundation of Indiana.
building inventory.

1. Gregory & Appel Insurance
2. Payton's Place
3. Ferger Building
4. Girls Inc. Resource Center
5. Apartments
6. Church
7. Canal Square Apartments
8. Historic Landmark Foundation of Indiana
9. Senate Manor Apartments
10. Canal Overlook Apartments
11. Residence Inn Marriott Hotel
12. Browning Day Mullins Dierdorf Associates
13. Courtyard Marriott Hotel
14. Senate Manor Apartments
15. Firestone Building
16. Shuttle Station to IUPUI
17. Dance Company
18. Distillery
19. Musician Repair Service
20. Apartments
21. Warehouse
22. Volunteers of America
23. Fire Station
24. Indiana Historic Society
25. Parking Structure for Government Building
26. IUPUI School of Law
27. Madame Walker Theatre
28. Apartments
29. Single Family Luxury Homes
typical site characteristics.

canal & Indiana vehicular bridge  commercial office space  typical intersection

residential development  pedestrian bridge over canal  municipal building
hotel accommodations

open space

industrial building

local repair shop

automotive shop

flatiron building style
typical contextual characteristics.
Reverse Figure Ground map

study maps.

This map provided a better understanding of the amount of vacant space that existed on site. The majority of the site has served as vacant, unused parking lots for several years. The opportunity for new development was made extremely apparent with the analysis of this map. The spaces between the existing materials had also become apparent, which provided me with several opportunities for urban infill as well.

KEY

Unavailable ground
Building Height map

The building heights of an area give the space its character. The existing building heights ranged from 1-5 stories, but the majority of them were between 2-4 stories. There was a slight connection to the north between the off-site residential and the adjacent on-site buildings, but there was no connection to the southern commercial core. A gradual increase in heights from the northwest section of the site to the southeast section was needed to create a better flow through the site.

KEY
- One story
- Two story
- Three story
- Four story
- Five story
Land Use map

KEY
Commercial Shades
- Local business
- Office / bank
- Recreation / dining / theatre

Accommodation Shades
- Hotel
- Church
- Residential

Public Shades
- Neighborhood park
- Urban park
- Public building

Other Shades
- Existing building
- Industrial building
The majority of the site was either open space or a series of several vacant parking lots. The need for parking was evident during the weekdays; however, the amount of space allotted for this function was way overestimated. A desire for alternative means for parking was evident for the purposes of aesthetics and convenience. Parking availability had the potential to be satisfied without taking up such valuable land, and could be done by making second and third floor parking garages with shops underneath.

There were two recent residential additions made on the site. These new developments were massive and did not fit within the context of the place. It was, however, apparent that people did want to live in this location because these new residences were being occupied. The incorporation of these developments was important because of their recent construction. The final plan encouraged changes to be made on or around these establishments to make a better connection to their surroundings.

Most of the existing buildings on the site were being used, however there were a few vacant buildings as well. The aesthetics of these older buildings were to remain on site, and the vacant buildings should have been re-used for other functions.

The streetscape was sparse, and in some cases non-existent of any aesthetically pleasing elements. There should be greater attention paid to comfortable pedestrian streetscapes that followed the ideas of David Sucher and Jane Jacobs. The addition of trees and the extension of sidewalks can make the pedestrian feel welcome.

The canal was a positive addition to the site as well as the duel entrances on two separate levels. The entrances at the canal levels were not very aesthetic and they did not offer a pleasant transition from the hardscape to the building's edge. An addition of soft materials can make the lower level more inviting to the pedestrian users.
program overview.

The program determined some of the elements that should have been incorporated into the site. Some of the elements that were chosen as part of the program had already existed on site. In order to avoid any questions about the proposed and existing elements on site, two separate programs were developed. The existing program was created to emphasize the elements that were positive aspects of the site. The purpose of this program was to ensure that these elements remained, in some way, on the site. The proposed program was developed to include other elements that needed to be introduced to the site to increase the opportunity for growth and development.
existing elements.

The elements listed in this program already existed on the site when the project began. They were to be incorporated into the final design in some way, but they did not have to remain in the same location or in the same building. The program could be met as long as these functions were designed into the site, but the use of existing materials and/or spaces was encouraged.

* Church
* Apartments
* Commercial office space
* Lodging

* Shuttle Stop to IUPUI
* Canal Walk
* Pedestrian Corridor

proposed elements.

The site had a lot of missing pieces that were recommended to help make a comfortable urban space. The first four elements directly represented physical developments required in the master plan. The remaining elements could have been any physical element that linked two or more areas together. For example, the consistent use of elements, such as light posts, could have tied together certain areas and created connections between the site and its adjacent neighbors.

* Public Plaza
* Café / Coffee Shop
* Canal Overlooks
* Music / Entertainment

* Urban Infill & Re-use
* Connection with downtown
* Connection to IUPUI
* Historical reference
A design for an urban scheme had to have reason and purpose behind it, not unlike any other design that a landscape architect creates. Since my study looked at nine whole city blocks, it was difficult to come up with a way to decide how the concepts would form. After creating several design schemes that did not appear to have much meaning behind them, I decided that I needed to look at three important layers of my site before I proceeded with the concepts. The purpose of these layers was to determine positive and negative elements of the conditions of each layer, so that concepts could be drawn from them. The first layer was taken from a Sanborn fire insurance map from 1914, and showed the existing elements on site during that time. This was an important year to focus on because it was at the end of the Golden Years, the historical period that my research had centered itself around. The second layer was the existing elements that were found on the site today. This map looks similar to the site inventory map. The third layer was more conceptual, but it portrayed the typical “cookie cutter” ideas to an urban design.
LAYER 1: 1914 HISTORICAL PALETTE

KEY
Commercial Shades
- Local business
- Office / bank
- Recreation / dining / theatre

Accommodation Shades
- Hotel
- Church
- Residential

Public Shades
- Neighborhood park
- Urban park
- Public building

Other Shades
- Existing building
- Industrial building
Layer 1: 1914 Historical Palette

Positive Elements

* The buildings in this design were not massive, which gave the site an old fashioned feeling. The smaller buildings portrayed similar techniques with new urbanist ideas about Traditional Neighborhood Developments.
* There was a lot of retail and commercial activity that took place along Indiana Avenue. The more activity that the avenue made available to the users, the more successful it would be because of the appeal to pedestrian interaction within the space.
* There was open or unused space scattered throughout the site, which offered more variety for the users. A variety of public or open spaces gave the users options, which generally makes spaces more successful.
* There was evidence that mixed-use activities occurred throughout each city block. Mixed use is an important technique used in new urbanist and other urban theorists' design.

Negative Elements

* The commercial buildings were scattered throughout the site in no particular order. There was no opportunity for a gradual height slope into the core of the city because there were not enough buildings to support the idea.
* Although the small developments are positive, the single-family residential type buildings do not fit within the context of an urban downtown. They appeared to fit better into a suburban neighborhood, and did not make any connections with the surrounding context.
LAYER 2: EXISTING PALETTE

KEY

Commercial Shades
- Local business
- Office / bank
- Recreation / dining / theatre

Accommodation Shades
- Hotel
- Church
- Residential

Public Shades
- Neighborhood park
- Urban park
- Public building

Other Shades
- Existing building
- Industrial building
Layer 2: Existing Palette

Positive Elements

* The green corridors provided an aesthetic view to the canal. Pedestrians are generally drawn to water elements and green elements in design, so these types of ideas will benefit the overall plan.
* Several of the corner spaces were being utilized with flatiron buildings. These types of structures made good use of the edge a triangular block, and were typical of Indianapolis developments along the diagonal avenues.
* The buildings were built to the canal to allow entrances at both street and canal levels. There was more of an opportunity for interaction between the passive and active users because of the dual entrances.

Negative Elements

* There are too many vacant, unused parking lots of site. This land could have been used for more aesthetically pleasing and functional purposes.
* The land was not evenly dispersed for different functions, which did not allow for a mixed-use type of development and/or design.
* There was not enough commercial or retail development along Indiana Avenue. There was neither a trace of the vibrant historical ambience that was once there, nor enough activity to draw people into the site.
LAYER 3: NEW URBANIST PALETTE

KEY

Commercial Shades
- Local business
- Office / bank
- Recreation / dining / theatre

Accommodation Shades
- Hotel
- Church
- Residential

Public Shades
- Neighborhood park
- Urban park
- Public building

Other Shades
- Existing building
- Industrial building
Layer 3: New Urbanist Palette

Positive Elements

* There was mixed-use among the blocks in both vertical and horizontal planes.
* The users of this space were provided with walkable distances to most of their daily needs.
* The radial pattern provided the site with a sense of community and a hierarchy of places throughout the site.
* All of the parking was hidden from the view of the pedestrian. The interior spaces of each block held parking lots that were made available through small alleys between each block.

Negative Elements

* Although the parking was hidden from the plain view of the pedestrians, there was still too much land wasted on ground-level parking facilities.
* This design made no attempts to tie into any historical information about the site. The remnants of the old buildings were not even made apparent in this design.
KEY
- 12 stories (120')
- 10 stories (100')
- 9 stories (90')
- 8 stories (80')
- 7 stories (70')
- 6 stories (60')
- 5 stories (50')
- 4 stories (40')

- canal
- public space
- roadways
- existing buildings

design concepts.

CONCEPT ONE: GREENSPACE
The greenspace concept used the gradual slope idea that began at the north end of the site and increased toward the dense city core. There was an even flow from the 2-story, single-family housing on north end to the commercial skyscraper on the south end.

Sectional 3-D view cut from north to south

Spatial Relationship: looking south along Indiana Avenue toward city's commercial core
Two-dimensional View

This plan utilized the outer edges of each block, leaving the inner areas for community greenspace. This design was slightly less dense than the commercial core of downtown Indianapolis in order to announce the departure or entry into the center. There was an increase in value due to the public open space that was added, as well as an increase in pedestrian opportunities. Each space remained solitary and made no connection to the other spaces throughout the site.
The solid core concept also maintained the idea of a gradual slope toward the city core. The slope in this concept, however, was not as evenly proportioned as in the greenspace concept because the buildings were more massive.

*Sectional 3-D view cut from north to south*

*Spatial Relationship: looking south along Indiana Avenue toward city's commercial core*
Two-dimensional View

The existing footprints of the buildings were maintained throughout the site, but they were manipulated and changed in most cases. The main idea here was to use as much space as possible for development, so each block was used to its fullest capacity. The greenspace was kept to a minimum in order to provide maximum building potential. The inner buildings of each block were recommended to be made of glass, so that light could get into the buildings from the top. These buildings did not have access to windows or views out to the streets.
concept analysis.

GREENSPACE CONCEPT
* Catерed to a pedestrian friendly environment
* Maintained a gradual slope of building heights
* Provided individual open/public spaces within each block
* Created opportunities for indoor/outdoor spaces and connections
* Open spaces had functions that appeal to both active and passive users

SOLID CORE CONCEPT
* Maximized the opportunity for development
* Focused on high-density spaces
* Increased the amount of space for a variety of users
* Indoor central mall areas provided gathering spaces for the users
concept for design development.

The conceptual phase was done with building footprints and heights because these elements are important factors in the character of an urban scheme. The analysis of the two concepts provided me with a list of opportunities that I wanted to include into the final design concept. There were positive elements in each concept that could benefit the final urban scheme. These opportunities were combined to form the final conceptual master plan.
KEY

- 12 stories (120')
- 10 stories (100')
- 9 stories (90')
- 8 stories (80')
- 7 stories (70')
- 6 stories (60')
- 5 stories (50')
- 4 stories (40')

- canal
- public space
- roadways
- existing buildings
The final concept combines many if the positive elements that were found within the conceptual design phase. The vacant parking lots were all replaced with new development. The derelict areas between the existing buildings were replaced with urban infill. Each block was used to its fullest capacity for development, but there were public/open spaces implemented within each block.

The new design was a pedestrian friendly environment that had connected individual spaces to maintain continuity throughout the site. The automobiles remained accommodated and the existing roads unchanged, but the opportunity for an increase in pedestrian movement was encouraged. The addition of the green connection system throughout the site improved the pedestrian circulation.

There was an opportunity for both indoor and outdoor spaces added to the site with the extension of sidewalks, revamping of streetscapes, and outdoor seating opportunities. The variety of public spaces, both hard and softscape allowed for functions of both active and passive users.

There was a gradual slope in building height introduced to the site in order to help the user acknowledge the character of the space. The larger buildings on the south side if the site made connections with the buildings in the downtown commercial core, and the smaller buildings to the north of the site connected with the single-family residential homes.

Spatial Relationship: looking south along Indiana Avenue toward city's commercial core
preliminary master plan.

The conceptual phase was done with building footprints and heights because these elements are important factors in the character of an urban scheme. The next step was to decide the functions and uses of each block and each building. A preliminary land use plan was developed in very conceptual stages. A project of this size would often take years to complete this phase of the project because of the detail involved. This plan generalized the typical elements that would be incorporated into a plan that focused on new urbanism principles, historical techniques, and urban revitalization.
PRELIMINARY LAND USE PLAN

KEY
Commercial Shades
- Local business
- Office / bank
- Recreation / dining / theatre

Accommodation Shades
- Hotel
- Church
- Residential

Public Shades
- Neighborhood park
- Urban park
- Public building

Other Shades
- Existing building
- Industrial building
This preliminary land use plan was developed at the conceptual level. A design of this size often takes years to develop the design development part of the plan, so this was only in the beginning stages. The ideas of this plan were in reference to the design techniques of the Golden Years portion of Indianapolis' history, as well as the ideas of new urbanism. The majority of the buildings functioned as retail/commercial on the bottom levels of the buildings with residential opportunities on the tops. This allowed users of the space to shop for their daily needs, as well as occupy a residence on site, which limited the necessity of the automobile.

The existing church remained on site in its original location because it was a nationally registered building. The church was an important piece of black history for the site and the people of the area, so it remained undisturbed. The
existing hotel accommodations were also placed in an accessible location, so the city's visitors could have a short walk to the center of the city, but still enjoy the elements designed on site.

The addition of public buildings and public parking lots were an important proposal for this design. All of the ground level parking lots were destroyed in this plan, which meant that vehicles had to be accommodated somewhere else. It was a more valuable and efficient use of the land to design third and fourth level parking on the tops of some of the buildings. The municipal buildings were added for senate meetings and government meetings that are held within the city limits. They were placed near the hotel accommodations to provide them with an easily accessible place to stay overnight.

The functions along Indiana Avenue mimic those of the referenced historical period, the Golden Years. Several small shops, office buildings, and entertainment opportunities have been added in an attempt to recreate the ambience of the once well-known Indiana Avenue.

The areas that were designated public parks have not been separated into hard and softscape parks because of the conceptual stages of this plan. Those details would be worked out later in the design development stages, as would calculations for parking garage capacities.

Site functions and spatial relationships: looking south along Indiana Avenue toward city's commercial core
support graphics.
The typical streetscape was lined with vegetation along the building facades and lined with shades trees along the streets. Small shops added outdoor patios for pedestrians to interact with the users of the space.
The pedestrian bridge was an existing feature on site that allowed pedestrians to cross the canal through a pedestrian corridor. Vermont Street comes to an end on the east side of Indiana Avenue and the pedestrian corridor picks up directly to the west. The bridge lined up perfectly with the road to continue the linear view from east to west. The buildings at the canal level were cut out to allow pedestrians to pass underneath the first two levels.
The buildings that are located along the canal were designed to have two entrances to allow the pedestrians a variety of experiences. The street level entrances had much different experiences to offer than the entrances at the canal level. This section cuts through the plaza that was created as a result of the proposed canal extension at the north end of the site. There were stairs incorporated to move from one level to the next.
conclusions.

This design process has undergone many changes from the original plan, even though the overall output was purely conceptual. Even at a conceptual level, positive changes and design techniques were developed. The improvements made to the site throughout this study changed the character of nine city blocks in a very positive way. The changes were compared to the current conditions and characteristics of the site to prove that there had indeed, been an improvement.
**Current conditions of site**
* The building heights did not connect with the surrounding context
* The land use was sparse and much valuable land was wasted
* The existing views, if any, were undesirable
* The majority of the site was not pedestrian friendly

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**Proposed conditions of site**
* The building heights gradually sloped up toward the city core and connects to the dense city design
* All of the vacant land was used to the fullest potential for development and public spaces
* This design had a greater emphasis on pedestrian traffic and accommodation
* Mixed-use facilities were incorporated on a vertical and horizontal plane in order to provide diversity within each block
At the end of the design process, the goals were referred to in order to make sure that each goal was met.

* Create an urban design that incorporates new urbanist theories and principles
* Create a relationship between the site and its historical context
* Create a design that accommodates the needs of a diverse community
* Create an alternative destination to the Circle Center
* Create a connection between the site and its adjacent neighbors; IUPUI and downtown core.

Goal 1: The design implemented several of the new urbanist principles.

The new plan was more walkable and contained pedestrian friendly street designs with outdoor cafes and tree-lined streets. Connectivity was accomplished with the proposed high quality pedestrian-network of public greenspace throughout the site. There were certainly heavy amounts of mixed use proposed in the new plan, with a mix of shops, residential, and commercial opportunities within each block. The density was increased throughout the entire site and the design enhanced the overall quality of urban design.

Goal 2: There was a connection between the site and its historical context.

Urban design schemes can connect with their historical context in several different ways. This new plan made references to the smaller structures of the Golden Years, as well as the mixed-use techniques of that era. The proposed uses along Indiana Avenue resembled the character of the place during that same time in history.
Goal 3: The final design provided ample uses to accommodate the needs of a diverse community.

The uses of within each block were diversely mixed on a horizontal plane and on a vertical plane. Pedestrians were given more freedom to move about the site, as well as more opportunities for public gatherings.

Goal 4: The proposed plan provided an alternate destination to the Circle Center.

The activity that was proposed along Indiana Avenue will draw people in and out of the heart of the city because Indiana Avenue is a major diagonal access into the city. The new additions and extensions to the canal also proved to be exciting elements to draw a crowd.

Goal 5: Connections were made between the site and its neighboring context.

IUPUI had an existing shuttle station that traveled through the site, which already brings students and faculty there. Residential opportunities were placed directly across from the college to attract people in need of student housing off campus. The gradual slope and change in building sizes throughout the site made better connections with the downtown core.
The overall experience of this comprehensive project was positive. Urban design was an area that I only recently became interested in, but enjoyed researching and learning more about. The semester I spent researching theories and urban design concepts, was an eye opener because I never knew how large the base of information was. I merely scratched the surface in many of these areas because they could be studied for years before they were truly understood.

The important thing to remember was that design is in the eye of the beholder. As long as I had information, reasoning, and research to backup my ideas, then my proposal would merit a lot more credit than one without the backup. In every phase of my study, I had to make a choice as to what direction I wanted my project to go. Every decision I made throughout this project had to discard some portion of a typical design because the time allotted for this project was nowhere close to the amount needed for a project this size. An urban design could realistically take years to complete because of the battles that can develop between the city and its residents. If I would have more time I would have liked to take my project past the initial conceptual stages of the preliminary land use plan. The functions and uses of individual spaces are what gave the site its character. There were also public areas designated in the land use plan, but they were not developed. I would have liked to have had the opportunity and time to get into more of the landscape architecture aspect of the project and design the public plazas and parks.

I am very happy with the outcome of this project even though it was only in the conceptual phases. I had a lot of fun with project, and I have learned to observe urban design techniques and details much differently than when I started. Overall I would say that this project was a successful stepping-stone in my education and professional research.
bibliography.


