THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOWL:
THE STADIUM AS AN ACTIVE URBAN AMENITY

Ryan Birkey
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Professor: Robert Fisher
thesis studio instructor

Assistant Professor: Lohren Deeg
thesis advisor
DEDICATION

Special thanks
I would like to dedicate this thesis book to my friends and family and thank them for all their love and support. It is through them that I am able to be successful. Additionally, I would like to express my appreciation to Candace Curfman. She has encouraged me through all the obstacles and hardships and given me strength to carry on. Thank you everyone, I am truly blessed to be surrounded by loving friends and family.
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Professional and Personal influence

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THESIS OVERVIEW

Iconic image vs. Integration
The thesis inquiry pertains to stadium architecture and how to change the traditional typology. It will focus on an emerging paradigm of stadium integration. Traditional stadium design typically revolves solely around an iconic image conveyed by these civic monuments. However, they often ignore the social potential embedded within. How does a stadium become more than just a stadium? This thesis will address issues of community, embodying how a new stadium can provide a nucleus for urban regeneration within the city. Due to the inherent complexity of the building type, the focus will be an examination of the interplay of the “community concourse” which will envelop a typical bowl arrangement. The concourse will service the intrinsic functions of the stadium while exploiting the dynamic social potential independent of the central activity space. Thus, the iconic image associated with typical stadiums is sacrificed due to the objective of integrating the stadium into the physical and social fabric. Stadiums are traditionally designed with regards to the aerial view from a blimp; however, this is not how stadiums are experienced. Therefore, this thesis will examine how stadiums are experienced at the human scale. This notion challenges traditional stadium configurations. A paradigm shift for stadium design is necessary to change the way we view their role within the urban context.

Continuation of the street
Currently many stadiums, which are civic structures, tear unsustainable holes in cities and isolate themselves from their surroundings; therefore, this project will examine how a new stadium can become a continuation of street activity thereby uniting the urban fabric of the city. The stadium will be a facility that serves the sporting culture as well as the city. It is not enough for stadiums to just co-exist with the urban environment and become integrated into the skyline. They must infuse activity, vitalize the surrounding area, restore urban density, and create connections to the community. Stadiums are often wrapped in circulation concourses that turn their back to cities. Thus, the new proposed prototype will be a facility that opens up to the community. Instilled within will be an “active zone” consisting of retail and other social functions which engage the community on a daily basis, not just during sporting events. This configuration results in an open stadium which becomes a continuation of the street.
THESIS TOPIC: ISSUES AND POSITIONS

Descriptive Statement of the Thesis Topic
The proposed thesis topic examines the relationship between civic structures and their defined roles within the urban context. The primary issue will pertain to infusing economic regeneration and social revitalization into the city. Imparted social, economical, and environmental parameters contribute to diverse design ramifications, thereby evoking a sense of vitality within the community. Fostered by these cultural conceptions, the project will go well beyond the current isolation strategy employed in stadium design which creates a distinct separation between the stadium functions and contextual opportunities.

Background Issues
The set of issues enveloping the design project pertain to the inherent disconnection of interior and exterior activities embodied by stadium design. Throughout the modern era of sports architecture the stadium has been a sole expression of image, which is pervaded by the individualistic approach of professional franchises. Largely unconsidered were the social potentials of the stadium “at rest” or when sporting events do not occupy the facility. Although some stadiums are highly active with regard to programmed activities, they often fall short when addressing the multi-faceted issue of social dynamics. There exists an additional opportunity to actively engage the public independent from the central focus. Cities invest heavily in stadiums in terms of funding and support, therefore, it is imperative that stadiums invest in cities in terms of physical contributions and social benefits.

The project is for a new multi-use sports stadium for the city of Indianapolis which will also be home to the Indianapolis Colts NFL franchise. It will be also be utilized as a community center comprised of retail shops, public fitness facilities, and possible residential units. Since the focus of the project is exploring the cultural implications of the “community concourse”, the central core of the project is assumed to maintain the established design parameters conveyed by the Colts organization and the city of Indianapolis. They desire a new retractable roof stadium with 70,000 seats, 120 suites, and 7,500 club seats. The project has an estimated cost of $450 million. Currently, they are looking at a 25-acre section of land just south of the existing RCA Dome as the site for the new stadium. This project will establish a new prototype for stadium design in which the stadium becomes an integral part of the city.
THESIS PROJECT: DESCRIPTION / PROGRAM OUTLINE

Project Description
The established premise of the project revolves around the notion that current stadium design falls short of the social, economic, and environmental possibilities inherent within this building typology. Many questions will challenge the validity of current prototypes while striving to exploit these underutilized cultural resources. Why do stadiums maintain a strict inward focus? Traditional stadium design issues pertained specifically to crowd control, parking, and other technical restraints. While these issues are still prominent, new stadiums must address aspects of commerce and community. The thesis premise will examine the possibility of creating a shared urban corridor enveloping the central focus of the stadium, thereby creating an active zone which continually embraces the community. This interactive environment of the pervasive concourse will function independently from the stadium, yet will facilitate the intrinsic demands accompanying the stadium. An important issue will be conveyed through the implementation on these design principles. Can the iconic nature of stadium design still be expressed when the essential parts are broken down and infused into the urban fabric?

Program Outline
As previously mentioned the project will encompass the design of a new multi-use football stadium for the Indianapolis Colts. The expressed desires conveyed by the Colts organization and representatives of the city of Indianapolis are utilized as design considerations. The proposed site is located directly south of the existing RCA Dome. It entails a 25-acre section of land currently utilized as parking lots.

Project participants envision a retractable roof stadium capable of accommodating 70,000 seats. Since luxury suites contribute considerably to the economic prosperity of franchises, the Colts require the inclusion of 120 suites and 7,500 club seats. The estimated project budget is approximately $450 million. The new prototype will integrate these technical manifestations with the dynamic issues embodied within the social context. Thus, the stadium becomes an integral part of the city.

Additionally, the stadium concourse with house several commercial blocks with each bay containing roughly 5,000 sq. ft. of flexible commercial space. These multi-level commercial blocks line the perimeter and envelop the stadium concourse. Thus, this configuration results in a duality of function for the concourse. The area immediately surrounding the site reflects and reinterprets the historical urban prototype. The buildings are comprised of lower-level commercial spaces that directly address the street and upper level residential spaces restore a mixed-use component to the site. The commercial spaces utilize the same module as the stadium configuration while the upper-level residential is subdivided into units of approximately 500 sq. ft.
DESIGN OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGIES

Objectives of Thesis Design
The core objective of the thesis design is to redefine the social components of stadium architecture. Thus, it illustrates the potential for stadiums to have a direct cultural impact on their immediate surroundings. There is a difference between simply being located within a city and being an integral part of the social infrastructure. Unlike many stadiums, materiality is not the only way the enveloping context will be addressed. The design will convey the essential functions embodied within the new stadium prototype. The new paradigm focuses on not only the traditional feasibility and economic prosperity but also emphasizes social justice by focusing on public involvement and interaction.

Methodologies / Procedures
Throughout the development of this thesis project, design proposals will be evaluated based on their social, economic, and environmental contributions. These methodologies will dictate design decisions in which the public’s interest is of utmost priority. The underlying ideology relates to how the civic stadium structure fosters cultural interactions and become a multi-faceted asset to the community in which it resides.
CONTEXT: PHYSICAL AND CULTURAL

Physical Context
The physical context of the site is somewhat barren. Currently much of the site is dedicated to underutilized parking lots which service the surrounding area. Therefore, the intrinsic character of the site is portrayed as a void within the city. Located to the north, the RCA Dome and Convention Center provide social contributions to the site. A factory, small retail and service shops are dispersed throughout the perimeter of the site. Due to the low density and incompatible building types that envelop the area, the project will address an overall urban planning component examining the integrative potential of the entire site. Pre-existing charrette investigations courtesy of the Indianapolis Regional Center Plan 2020 establishes the framework for the desired urban character. Thus providing a basis in which the notions conveyed by the thesis project can be imparted. The proximity to the nearby White River State Park and revitalized potential of Illinois St. provide opportunities to establish connections within the city that would enhance the social dynamics.

Social / Cultural Context
Indianapolis is a growing sports city that includes professional football, professional basketball, minor league baseball, as well as being home to the NCAA headquarters. Concerns regarding the financial viability of the Indianapolis Colts organization have been brought into question. The current stadium does not meet the demands necessary for prosperity and functional expansion. While its ties to the Convention Center have allowed for more events, it severely hinders its ability to engage the public at the street level. The question is not whether the city of Indianapolis can support a professional football team; it is a question of how to facilitate social interaction while achieving economic prosperity. Located to the north is the commercial zone of Circle Center Mall. Thus, there is an opportunity to extend commercial activities to the south via Illinois St. This extension would tie the stadium site to the activities of Downtown, thereby creating a supportive network which enriches the vitality of the social and cultural context.
CLOSED CONFIGURATION

Isolation within the urban context

Traditional stadium design typically emphasizes iconic imagery conveyed by these defined civic monuments. However, they often ignore the dynamic social potential embedded within. These stadiums, which are civic structures, tear unsustainable holes in cities and isolate themselves from their surroundings. Inherent within their configuration, these stadiums are intrinsically inward focused. It is a narrow-minded approach which only addresses the stadium from an internal organization system. These stadiums work from the standpoint of a contained entity of which they are expressive; however, they fail with regards to contextual connections. Broader social and economic issues are ignored. These stadiums are wrapped in circulation concourses that turn their back to the community. Thus, this traditional “closed” stadium configuration becomes an isolated amenity void of activity the majority of time. Traditional stadiums have few ties to their surroundings. Their isolation portrays the idea that they can be inserted anywhere. By applying design notions universally it is impossible to establish a sense of place. Many current stadiums have been design with under this typology.
OPEN CONFIGURATION

Integration within the urban context
This is the desired configuration in order for urban stadiums to become fully integrated and realize the social potential embedded within. This is the emerging paradigm that is explored throughout the thesis. The stadium becomes a continuation of street activity thereby uniting the urban fabric of the city. It serves the sporting culture as well as the city. It is not enough for the stadium to just co-exist with the urban environment it inhabits and make design gestures that visually incorporate the stadium into the skyline. It must infuse activity, vitalize the surrounding area, restore urban density, and create connections to the community. Thus, the new “open” prototype opens up to the community. Activity zones which engage the community on a daily basis envelop the central core. This open and integrative approach will be utilized to facilitate the design pursuits of this thesis. Contributions to the community are an equal priority to that of the functional aspects of stadium operations.

- Stadium Enveloped by “Community Corridor”
- Opening up to the Community
CONCEPT

Design implementation
The preliminary concept proposed for the new stadium for the Indianapolis Colts revolves around capitalizing on the fieldhouse character associated with Indiana and its basketball heritage. The site is located to the south of the existing RCA Dome. There is a strong desire to connect the new stadium with the Convention Center located to the north of the site. The material pallet of the stadium fits with the overall character of the city. The stadium is rotated slightly on the site to capitalize on the views towards downtown. The retractable roof provides intrinsic flexibility in terms of diversity of use.

Personal thoughts
I believe that the proposed design does not fully realize the urban potential embedded within stadium architecture. There is enormous potential to activate the south side of Indianapolis as well as provide overarching connections to the downtown, thereby establishing social and economic ties. Currently, the proposed design follows the traditional approach which ignores the context. Its basic design reflects that of a suburban stadium which maintains no local identity or sense of place.

1. PROPOSED INDIANAPOLIS COLTS STADIUM Indianapolis, IN

- Stadium Elevation
- Stadium Dynamics (Night)
- Stadium Dynamics (Day)
- Aerial View of Stadium
2. CAMDEN YARDS  Baltimore, MD

DESIGN

Establishing a retro feel
Camden Yards located in Baltimore, was the first new stadium that conveyed a nostalgic atmosphere. It has become the model for ballpark design due to its inherent coziness. Formulated of brick facades, old-fashioned signage, and eccentric design features, Camden Yards has captured the emotion and feel associated with the sporting experience. This antique and retro stadium feel was a direct response to the multipurpose stadiums that opened in the 1960’s and 70’s. During this era, late-modernist American architecture provided many harsh concrete bowls surrounded by a sea of parking. These brutal interjections were ill-suited and never became beloved by fans. Thus, the ability for Camden Yards to successfully engage the surroundings became a tremendous draw for fans. The city has embraced the stadium as a vital part of its portrayed character.

PERSONAL PERCEPTION OF PROJECT

Camden Yards expresses great street-front character while addressing its urban environment. The atmosphere established by the inclusion of community functions creates a vibrant street edge. However, it does not function entirely as a permeable edge infused with activity. It is an excellent starting point to formulate notions of how stadiums should “feel.” The character of the façade is designed in a way to embrace the city. I will be able to build upon the foundations laid forth by stadiums such as Camden Yards while I formulate and explore my thesis premise.
**URBANISM**

*Integration into urban fabric*

The NYSCC proposal was to create an iconic, urban stadium which successfully integrates public functions into the stadium. Thus, the basic design aspiration infuses the stadium into the fabric of New York City. The stadium is viewed as an extension of New York’s urban and architectural heritage by incorporating surrounding urban patterns with the riverfront architecture and railroad history of the site. The New York Sports & Convention Center serves as an extension of Javits Center, thus completing a multi-purpose convention corridor between 30th and 42nd Streets on Manhattan’s west side. The building is designed to integrate seamlessly with its urban surroundings, providing an attractive link between the city and the Hudson River.

*Opening up to the community*

The NYSCC is designed to interact and engage its urban environment. Unlike many suburban stadiums, which often become solitary objects amid vast parking lots, the proposed stadium is infused with urban offerings. Green space, promenades, and retail storefronts mesh with the surrounding neighborhood thus creating a strong sense of place.
PUBLIC SPACES

Defining the character
Along the perimeter, the stadium will interact with the neighborhood by enlivening the waterfront, thus spearheading a renewal of the Hudson Yards community. Fourteen acres of parks and plazas at the building’s edges will offer new and engaging social spaces for neighborhood residents. These amenities include a Hudson River Promenade, 11th Avenue Park and Retail, and the High Line Farmers Market. These areas provide a lively mix of activities, including a museum, a small community theater, shops and cafés. These interventions will interject vibrant ambience into the surrounding community. The promenade provides an important connection to Hudson River Park. Thus, the basis of new development conveys the idea that establishing community connections are of utmost priority.

PERSONAL PERCEPTION OF PROJECT

The design aspirations conveyed by NYSCC are what I consider contributions to the emerging new paradigm for stadium design. Due to the relevancy and similar issues, this precedent is the primary source of inspiration. Although the constraints and issues differ for my project, many of the urban ideas are applicable for my investigation. The notion of actively engaging the urban environment and infusing vitality into its surroundings reflect the issues presented in my thesis inquiry. Additionally, amenities on the perimeter that actively address the edge are an inherent parameter which I have set forth to provide direction to thesis inquiries and design development.
PRELIMINARY CONCEPT

Encapsulating the bowl
Examining possible configurations on the site, the initial idea was to utilize the entire block. Commercial zones wrap the perimeter of the stadium core and address the street. Parking structures encapsulate the north and south ends of the facility. These structures service the demands of the stadium and commercial zones. Two main promenades run parallel to the stadium on the east and west side. Thus, the area surrounding the stadium becomes interconnected with activity. The edge of the stadium addresses the street through functional duality, where spaces serve both the public as well as the facilitating intrinsic demands of the stadium.

The stadium itself contains layers of circulation. An inner and outer loop comprise the stadium plan with gallery spines arraying off the commercial corridors. These galleries help tie the exterior stadium configuration to the ground and reduce the imposing scale. The overall stadium composition contains four corner circulation towers which connect upper and lower seating bowls.
DESIGN ISSUES

Diversion from thesis
Although this concept worked as a stadium, it did not fully address the issues that were presented in the proposed thesis inquiry. The focus was too much on how the stadium itself works and not on how the stadium addresses the street. How the stadium works within the community had not been successfully addressed. Defining the role within the urban context was necessary step to enrich the project.

Functional issues were examined; however, the technical aspect inhibited some of the design inventiveness. The goal for the next phase was to free myself from these parameters. Thus far, I had been approaching the design from the traditional mindset that pervades stadium architecture. To successfully address the issues, the design must be approached at the human scale and examine cultural interactions. It not only has to be economically feasible, it also has to accommodate the broader social dynamics present within the city.

VITALITY

Infusion of activity
Social interaction is essential to infuse vitality into this urban amenity. The concourse is viewed as a double-side activity corridor full of economic and cultural exchanges. It functions independent from the stadium core while benefiting from the periodic pedestrian density provided by major functions occurring within.
COMPOSITION

Defining the character
Structural fins enclose the lower commercial blocks and cantilever over the upper level seating bowl. Circulation towers are located on the periphery of the stadium seating configuration. The building skin is attached to the underside of the primary structure. Parking structures tie into the main concourse circulation zone. Designated "Tailgate Zones" are located on the upper levels of the parking structures. The lower level seating bowl is sunken down to allow for the stadium concourse and street to be located on the same level; thereby, permitting an ease of flow between supportive activities of the stadium and surrounding context.
**ZONING**

*Continuation of urban fabric*

Proposed zoning builds off the existing development patterns. The site is seen as a continuation of the commercial fabric that extends from the downtown. Thus, the infusion of this active urban amenity creates a strong connection between the new development and historic character thereby integrating the stadium into the existing context.

The area surrounding the site is comprised of lower density residential to the south, which is historically representative of the site. Light industry formulates the western fringe of the site. The Convention Center is located directly north, while other sports venues line the northern edge of the tracks, thus providing opportunities for connections relating to the sporting culture.

**TRANSIT**

*Interrelated activities*

The ability to make connections is vital to the success of the project. Therefore, a proposed transit system would link the main sports venues, Convention Center, Circle Center Mall, and downtown commercial with the new stadium development. This would allow for utilization of existing parking infrastructure as well as connect the economic and social dynamics inherent within the area.
SITE

**Intrinsic Characteristics**
The proposed site for development is currently underdeveloped and underutilized. It consists of mainly vacant parking lots and some sparse commercial buildings. Located directly south of the existing Convention Center and RCA dome, the site has tremendous potential for social and economic prosperity. The site itself is a 25-acre section of city-owned land enclosed by Missouri St. and Capital Ave. These streets simply define the immediate stadium development. The entire south side of downtown must be addressed to fully integrate this urban amenity, in which activities are interrelated and support each other.

**Aerial View of Site**

**Conveyed City Development Plan**

**Current Site Character**

**View from Convention Center**

**Site Context**

**Surrounding Industry**

**Plan called crucial for Downtown**

Mayor Bart Peterson intends to push the stadium deal as part of a larger $800 million package that includes a major expansion of the Indiana Convention Center, which draws more than 800,000 visitors to the city each year and which officials contend is vital to the Downtown economy.

Source: Capital Improvement Board

The RCA Dome would be torn down to make way for the expansion of the Convention Center.
**URBAN CONCEPT**

*Connection and interdependency*

The overall organization revolves around two main public promenades that encompass the immediate site. Secondary promenades are inserted between the stadium configuration and the parking structures. Located along the primary promenades, focal nodes establish a hierarchy of activity. These plazas organize the scheme and allow for concentrations of people along the circulation spine. An interior circulation corridor reaches out toward the existing Convention Center. Establishing this connection provides the opportunity to link the activities associated with the Convention Center to the economic possibilities inherent within this new stadium configuration. Thus, these separate amenities prosper from their direct relationship and connection.

**DEVELOPED SITE PLAN KEY**

1. COMMERCIAL BLOCKS
2. CONNECTION TO CONVENTION CENTER
3. CONVENTION CENTER
4. CONNECTION TO PARKING
5. EXHIBITION SPACE
6. OFFICES (COLTS ORGANIZATION)
7. PARKING STRUCTURES
8. PARKING LOTS (TAILGATE ZONE)
9. PARKS
10. PLAZA
11. PUBLIC PROMENADES (PRIMARY)
12. PUBLIC PROMENADES (SECONDARY)
13. RESIDENTIAL UNITS
14. TRANSIT STATION (GROUND LEVEL)
CONTINUATION OF URBAN CONCEPT

Dynamic composition
Medium density commercial spaces with upper level residential surround the periphery of the primary promenades. Interspersed are public parks that restore quality green space to the community and create focal areas that accommodate large crowds on gameday. Throughout the week they become more intimate spaces with personal appeal. Flexibility and adaptation are themes expressed throughout the project and reflect notions associated with the new stadium typology.

GAMEDAY PLAZA

Activity and flexibility
Gameday plaza is utilized as a public gathering space during gameday. Commercial storefronts directly address the plaza on all sides. Vendors, retail goods, and social functions infuse the plaza with vibrancy.
Non-gameday configurations promote flexibility in density and use. On weekends, the plaza hosts a farmers market with temporary shops. Restaurant seating spills outward from the lower level spaces, resulting in an active street edge.

PLAZA PLAN KEY
1. COMMERCIAL SPACES
2. FOUNTAIN MONUMENT
3. PLAZA (NON-GAMEDAY CAFE SEATING)
4. PUBLIC PROMENADE
5. TEXTURED SURFACE (DEFINED CIRCULATION)
6. TREE-LINED MEDIAN
7. UPPER LEVEL TERRACE
8. FARMERS MARKET

Gameday Plaza Plan

Farmers Market Configuration (Non-Gameday)
PERMEABILITY

How is the street addressed?
The stadium opens up visually as well as physically to the street. The perimeter of the stadium is encompassed by commercial spaces that open up to both the interior commercial concourse and exterior street promenade. This configuration conveys a permeable edge that directly addresses and interacts with the street. This results in an urban commercial zone that is active for a longer duration of time than the internal activities of the stadium core. Virtually, the entire perimeter is permeable; however, there are varying degrees of flow. The storefront clusters which are encapsulated by main entrances into the concourse express a hierarchy of circulation into the building. The storefront configuration interacts directly with urban environment while revitalizing the historic density and character associated with the community. This configuration allows the stores to directly engage both the street and the concourse, which capitalizes on both gameday attendees as well as bypassing pedestrians. Thus, the stadium becomes a vital amenity which helps re-stitch the urban fabric by opening up to the community rather than turning its back on it.
CIRCULATION

How do people, goods, and service circulate?
Facilitating a multitude of circulation demands is a vital part to the success of a project of this magnitude. This new paradigm for stadiums focuses on the layering activities which allow the stadium to become successfully integrated within the urban fabric. The layering of these activities creates opportunities for dynamic spaces. There are numerous levels of circulation pertaining to people, goods, and services.

The entire lower level of the stadium is utilized specifically for service access. This level is sunken down and it includes the area that wraps around the field which is located directly below the lower seating bowl. A service ramp located on the north side provides access to the lower level. This lower level consists of a circulation loop around the perimeter with loading docks anchoring the corners. These zones service the various commercial blocks. In addition to these main service arteries, the commercial blocks contain individual secondary access to the perimeter of the service loop. Mechanical spaces, storage areas and locker rooms are located along the inner loop.
CIRCULATION

First level dynamics

The first level which is the main circulation level is comprised of a concourse which encloses the central activity core. Vendors, restrooms and vertical circulation areas are located along the perimeter of the central core. The inner service areas form a buffer between the activity occurring within and the activity occurring in the commercial concourse. Additionally, there are security verification points that allow access to the lower seating bowl. A disabled accessible seating ring lines the top of the lower seating bowl. Within the stadium concourse exists a clear hierarchy of circulation. Vertical circulation towers utilizing ramps are located on the corners. They coincide with the location of the major gates into the stadium; therefore, they permit the ease of circulation. In conjunction with the ramps, inner circulation cores containing elevators and stairs enhance the flow of people throughout the facility. Secondary circulation stairs are located at the ends of each commercial block. They tie the multi-level commercial zones together.

Site Section (Through Concourse, Promenade, and Commercial Spaces)

1. COMMERCIAL SPACES
2. UPPER LEVEL RESIDENTIAL
3. GAME DAY PLAZA
4. PUBLIC PROMENADE
5. COMMERCIAL ZONE ENVELOPING STADIUM
6. SHARED CIRCULATION (CONCOURSE)
7. INNER SERVICE LOOP (STADIUM VENTILATION AND PEST ROOMS)
8. STADIUM CIRCULATION LOOP (ACCESSIBLE SEATING)
9. LUXURY SUITES
10. COMMERCIAL CIRCULATION SPACE
11. UPPER LEVEL COMMERCIAL ZONES
12. SERVICE ACCESS
13. MECHANICAL SPACE
14. STORAGE AREA
CONNECTION

Linking the street and stadium concourse
The lower seating bowl is sunken down so the main concourse circulation level is at street level. This allows for the stores located along the outer edge to maintain a direct connection with the street. The openness of the façade combine with the proximity to the street edge fosters a linkage between the central circulation spine of the stadium concourse and the exterior public promenade. This social dialog between these amenities promotes interdependence which allows the commercial zones to thrive. Therefore, the stadium is energized throughout day, week, and year even when the central activity core is not being utilized.

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

1. COMMERCIAL BLOCKS (WITH STREET / CONCOURSE CONNECTION)
2. COMMERCIAL BLOCKS (STREET LEVEL, CONNECTION ONLY)
3. LOWER SEATING BOWL
4. MAIN GATES
5. PARKING STRUCTURES
6. PARKING STRUCTURE CIRC.
7. PLAYING FIELD
8. RESTROOMS
9. PUBLIC PROMENADE
10. STADIUM CONCOURSE
11. TRANSIT STATIONS
12. VENDORS
13. VERTICAL CIRCULATION (ELE.)
14. VERTICAL CIRCULATION (RAMPS)

SECOND AND THIRD FLOOR PLAN

1. COMMERCIAL BLOCKS
2. CONNECTION TO CONVENTION
3. CONNECTION TO PARKING
4. LUXURY SUITES
5. PARKING STRUCTURES
6. PARKING STRUCTURE CIRC.
7. PLAYING FIELD
8. RESTROOMS
9. STADIUM CONCOURSE
10. TERRACE
11. VERTICAL CIRCULATION (ELE.)
12. VERTICAL CIRCULATION (RAMPS)
CIRCULATION

Upper level integration
The second and third levels are identical. They contain an outer ring of commercial spaces linked by a balcony corridor. The inner loop consists of all the luxury amenities. The VIP levels contain numerous luxury suites that overlook the playing field. These levels maintain controlled access regulated at supplementary elevators. Connecting bridges span between the luxury loop and the commercial spaces to ensure that patrons in the luxury suites have direct access to the surrounding amenities.

The upper level is similar to the first level in terms of function and access. The inner loop comprised of restrooms and vendors reappears along with the standard commercial characteristics portrayed by these zones. The entire concourse maintains an open feel to increase visibility and clarity which are vital elements for successful commercial space. Additionally, daylighting infiltrates the space through the implementation of overhead glazing that runs in conjunction with the concourse.

Fourth Floor Plan

FIFTH FLOOR PLAN

1. COMMERCIAL BLOCKS
2. CONNECTION TO CONVENTION
3. CONNECTION TO PARKING
4. EXTERIOR TERRACES
5. PARKING STRUCTURES
6. PARKING STRUCTURE CIRC.
7. PLAYING FIELD
8. RESTROOMS
9. STADIUM CONCOURSE
10. VENDORS
11. VERTICAL CIRCULATION (ELE)
12. VERTICAL CIRCULATION (RAMPS)
13. CIRCULATION CORE
14. MECHANICAL SPACE
15. STORAGE
16. VIP ELEVATORS
17. LOWER SEATING BOWL

Circulation Core Diagram
MODULARITY

Defining the commercial block

The commercial spaces are designed in clusters of four bays. Pairs of bays share a common core containing service access, restrooms, and auxiliary spaces. These commercial blocks group services while allowing for flexibility within the overall framework. Therefore, the bays are a consistent module from which retailers can adapt to facilitate their individual needs. This modularity provides continuity. These bays can facilitate a wide variety of functions including restaurants and retail.
STREET-FRONT CHARACTER

Characteristics of the proposed integrative approach
The success of stadiums based on the new integrative approach rather than the traditional iconographic approach relies heavily on the street interface. The critical issue is how the building addresses the surrounding urban fabric. Thus, the proposed design incorporates a commercial zone which wraps the stadium and formulates a permeable area of activity. Street level functions spill out onto the public promenade, thereby engaging pedestrians.

Additionally, the imposing scale of traditional stadiums is reduced to a more human scale by the interdiction of the commercial zone in addition to sinking the lower bowl. This configuration allows for the character of the stadium to mesh with the historic human scaled neighborhood.

- View of Stadium Exterior from Public Promenade
VERSATILITY

Importance of layering activities
The stadium concourse services both the functions inherent within sporting venues as well as being utilized as the commercial circulation spine. This duality of function infuses vitality into the concourse by layering additional activities onto the central focus of the stadium. The concourse serves as the interface between the perimeter activity zone and the stadium core. Both amenities support each other yet have the ability to function independently. The commercial zones are accessible throughout the week while the central core maintains differing levels of access, which are dependent upon activities occurring within.

On gameday, the concourse is saturated with Indianapolis Colts imagery that heightens the football experience. Flags, banners, and signs convey the power of “The Blue,” thereby promoting the image of the football franchise. The concourse is a dynamic space that changes based on activities and events. With the addition of the perimeter commercial zone, this new stadium prototype breaks from the typical static concourses associated with traditional stadium configurations.

- Stadium Concourse (Gameday)
- Commercial Concourse (Non-Gameday)
CHARACTERISTICS

- Human Scale
- Engage Public
- Layers of Activity
- Clarity of Circulation

ATMOSPHERE

Formulating the football experience

Gameday Plaza becomes a vital part of the football culture and enlivens the experience. The plaza conveys an aura of prestige, excitement, and interaction. Imagery associated with the Colts organization is prevalent throughout the plaza. The horseshoe, banners, and the color blue become manifestations which embody the passion of the culture. On gameday, the public promenade maintains pedestrian access only; therefore, the plazas become focal points which harbor activities that contribute to the overall experience. During this time, the promenade becomes the primary circulation which serves as an exterior commercial spine. The surrounding commercial and upper-level residential zones contain a similar character to that conveyed by the stadium façade. Utilizing the same building language and material palette provides continuity within the urban environment which is expressed at every level of built interventions.

View of Gameday Plaza along the Public Promenade
FLEXIBILITY

How do things change?
The public promenade and plazas fluctuate in their use, not only in terms of density but configuration as well. Gameday Plaza can accommodate a variety of activities. Its open design allows for flexibility. Enveloped by commercial spaces on the first and second levels, the plaza addresses permeable storefronts. Whether it is restaurant seating, sales racks, or street vendors, commercial activities infuse energy into the plaza thereby engaging the public. The promenade links Gameday Plaza with other secondary plazas thereby creating a hierarchy of circulation and destination.

Gameday Plaza (Farmers Market Perspective)

Perspective Locations
final model

PROCESS MODELS

- Vertical Circulation Towers
- Parking Structures
- Stadium Core (Upper and Lower Seating Bowls)
- Gameday Plaza
- Connection to Convention Center
- Tailgate Zone (Parking Lot)
- Commercial Blocks
- Existing U.S. Post Office
- Secondary Promenade
- Primary Public Promenade

Stadium Composition
ISSUES EVOKING CHANGE

Social implications
Stadiums have always been monumental structures that inhabit cities. This expression of civic architecture displays a powerful combination of function and scale. As a building type, stadiums maintain complex design issues. However, their roles regarding social implications have not always been clearly defined. With rapidly changing cultural demands, stadiums can no longer disregard their surroundings by continuing to consist of solely isolated amenities. Great stadiums not only capitalize on immediate economic implications, they also become valuable tools for urban regeneration. The era of stadiums simply being a single entity of limited interest beyond specific social clusters is over. Currently, stadiums have the potential to attract a variety of people accessing different events separate from that of the central focus. These activities can function independently or in conjunction with each others, thus expressing a sense of interrelatedness and flexibility.

Changing the way we think
The traditional prototype no longer is applicable to facilitate emerging social demands. The narrow-minded thought embodied within so-called modern stadium design completely undermines the very nature of stadiums. Historically, stadiums are places of civic importance with a focus on social dynamics. However, iconography and identity have become a higher priority in our ever-increasing individualistic culture. In order to change this mindset, investors, owners, and the public must be educated about the possibilities for stadiums to go well beyond the current configurations. There are many ways to establish identity within the new paradigm. In fact, due to their interactive nature, stadium aspects conveyed at the human scale create a more personal connection. With this configuration, it is about the interactive experience in addition to the pure essence.
NEW STADIUM PARADIGM

Active vs. Passive interventions
The new proposed stadium typology examined throughout this thesis views the stadium not as a venue for a single event that happens periodically, rather the new paradigm expresses the stadium as an active urban amenity. Support functions infuse vibrancy and activity into the city fabric thereby creating connections which enhance the community. It is by the inclusion of the whole community that future stadiums will thrive. Stadiums can no longer be static structures that passively address their environment. For too long, stadiums have torn holes in the urban fabric of cities. Now, stadium architecture must strive to repair the fabric of cities by actively engaging their surroundings. Stadiums are meant to be dynamic structures; however, the new prototype necessitates an infusion of activity throughout the life of the building, not just periodically.

Being “of the city”
There is a major difference between being “in the city” and being “of the city.” Examples of this can be seen everywhere. Many stadiums that are “in the city” don’t address the city at all. For all practical purposes they could be located anywhere. This raises the question of how does this universality convey identity or sense of place? The answer is simple, it doesn’t. A universally applied paradigm can not possibly address the complex issues presented by diverse cities. Stadiums such as Camden Yards, Wrigley Field, and even the proposed New York Jets stadium affectively address the surrounding context and are embraced by their respective cities. Now is the time to affect the change in stadium architecture and realize its enormous social potential in addition to its inherent economic impacts.
THESIS PROJECT

Overall investigation
Engaging a project of this magnitude has been challenging, yet very rewarding. The ability to address issues at multiple scales throughout the project provided a wonderful opportunity to facilitate a greater understanding of this unique building typology. This thesis inquiry allowed me to pursue my passion for sports and apply it to the realm of sports architecture. Due to the inherent time constraints and scale of the project, I was not able to explore the technique aspects of stadium design. I do, however, realize that there are tremendous demands associated with the planning of stadium functions. For this thesis I wanted to examine the stadium as a typology in general, and then explore how to modify that typology to fit into what I believe in the new paradigm for stadium development. I found the hardest part to the whole process was establishing clearly defined objectives for the project. Ultimately, I realized it was all about what I wanted to get out of the project. Once I aligned the project with my personal interest, the design process flourished. I believe the results are indicative of all the hard work and determination put forth to facilitate the completion of the project. Although the process was challenging and a little frustrating at times, I believe the project was very successful. It provided the opportunity to become fully immersed into specific building typology of which I am very intrigued by. I am pleased with the results of this inquiry and the final product is something that I am very proud of.

Development process
Upon initial investigation I was struggling with how to define and approach this new integrative paradigm in which I was trying to convey. Thus, the preliminary concepts when implemented fell short of the objectives that I had previously outlined. Subconsciously, I reverted back to the traditional stadium approach by not fully examining the street connection. A lack of clear definition caused the most hardships. I was going back and forth between focusing on internal stadium design issues and external connections. Ultimately, redefining the goals of the thesis inquiry provided focus for the project. Therefore, the project was to design a stadium with overarching issues of connection, configuration, and character rather than to design a stadium from a purely technical standpoint. Once the framework of important issues was in place, the development of the project came together. Ideas, concepts, and configurations were assessed based on these established parameters.
DESIGN FEEDBACK

Open air vs. retractable roof
The stadium which I proposed was an open air stadium. This was a direct result of my personal beliefs associated with the game of football and the appropriateness of how it should be played. It is a physical game that should include the elements of nature. Historically, football has had strong ties to the external environment. The legendary games are the ones in which elements of rain, snow, or fog altered the ideal conditions. Closed football stadiums are a recent interjection. Domes or retractable roofs are often a sign of a marginal NFL city. Great franchises don’t need to utilize controlled comforts to ensure a diverse fan base. This being said, I realize that the Indianapolis Colts will not build an open air stadium for a variety of reasons. Thus, a possible addition to my design would be the institution of a retractable roof. My proposed design is humble to maintain an appropriate fit into the urban context. However, the addition of the roof would provide increased stature thereby enhancing its civic identity.

Project enhancement
The final presentation brought about some issues that could enhance the quality of the project. These issues mainly addressed how to fully convey the character of the stadium. Many of the suggestions pertained to infusing the gameday atmosphere with vibrancy. The members of the jury spoke to capitalizing on the experience of attending a game. Additionally, I would have liked to explore more ways that the stadium can provide identity to the Colts organization while maintaining an urban character. These interventions could simply be utilizing Colts signage and franchise identity markers to relate the urban stadium directly to the context of sport. Another possible way to convey identity would be through lighting. The stadium could literally and figuratively become a beacon of light for the city. All of the issues raised were valid points that could lead to further design investigation. Based on time constraints, I was unable to explore these issues in greater detail. However, I believe the basis of the thesis inquiry is sound and provides an excellent foundation to for future aspirations.
SOURCE INFORMATION

Books


Chapin, Timothy Stewart. *Urban revitalization tools [microform]: assessing the impacts of sports stadia at the microarea level*. 1999.


Internet Resources

<http://bengals.enquirer.com/2000/08/16/ben_stadium_design.html>


<http://www.indyrc2020.org/>

<http://www.kpf.com/Projects/jets.htm>

<http://www.kpf.com/NYSCC/nyscc.html>
