

DEVELOPING VIBRANCY

transforming auto-dominated corridors into dynamic places



02 spring 2017

Urban Design Community Redevelopment Studio
instructors | Carolyn Esswein & James Piwoni
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee | School of Architecture and Urban Planning

MICHIGAN AND CLYBOURN CORRIDORS

Downtown Milwaukee

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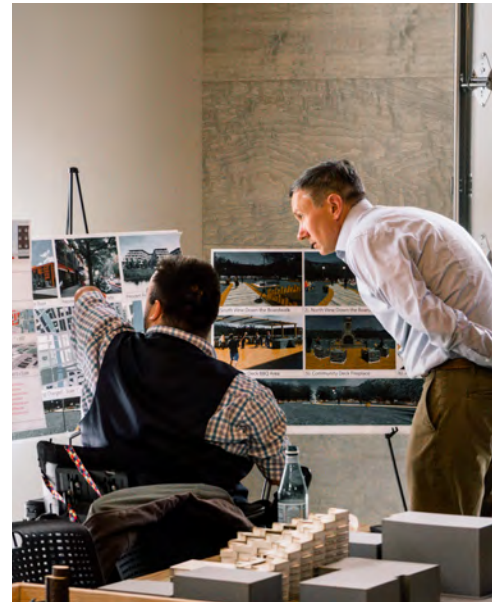
How do you reinvent a corridor of parking structures and transportation centric uses into a series of dynamic uses, public spaces, and pedestrian-friendly connections? Urban design is about making connections between people and places, movement and urban form, and nature with the built fabric to create vibrant communities and neighborhoods. The auto-centric Michigan and Clybourn Streets in Milwaukee challenge us to rethink the design of parking structures and surface lots, how to engage the Riverwalk, and what sites can be catalytic in transforming these critical connecting arterials.

Carolyn Esswein, AICP, CNU-A

SITE AND CONTEXT

W Michigan Street and W Clybourn Street are major downtown arterials that connect Milwaukee's lakefront to 6th Street. Both streets are dominated by parking structures, surface parking lots, and large non-descript buildings. Parking supports the 81,000 downtown employees and the active uses along Wisconsin Avenue, but it's time to rethink the look of parking and how to activate the pedestrian realm of these corridors.

The site is divided by the Milwaukee River, east of the river there are architecturally significant historic buildings and views of the enhanced lakefront. West of the river the site connects to Grand Avenue Mall and parallels the raised I-794 highway. Redevelopment can be viewed both at street level and from the highway. The Riverwalk, future streetcar, convention center, redeveloped Grand Avenue, and Lakefront Gateway provide catalytic opportunities to build on and compliment our transforming downtown.

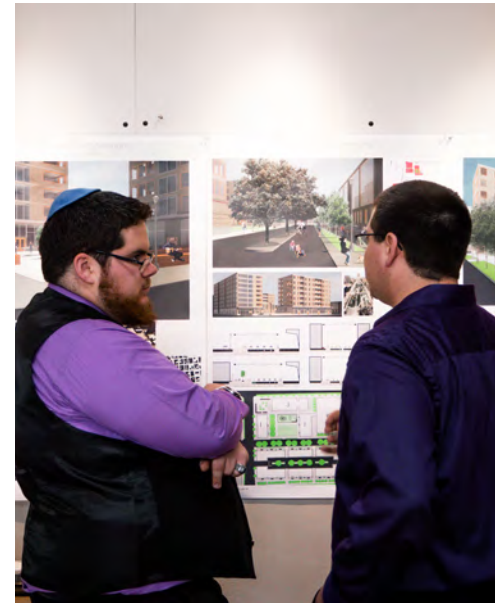


PROGRAM

Building on the reinvestment of Grand Avenue Mall, balancing the need of parking with redevelopment, and connecting the area to the lakefront and investment at the east end of the site were the main program requirements. Students were encouraged to explore different uses to attract visitors, serve downtown employees, provide housing options, and transform the corridors into a series of places rather than a series of parking structures.

Michigan Street could be narrowed by adding bike lanes or extended sidewalks, Clybourn could be altered but through traffic and on-street parking shall remain. The pedestrian realm on both streets needs to be enhanced, connected with public plazas and parks, and activated with ground level uses that create a memorable experience and gateway into downtown. The north-south connections through the site are as critical as the east-west linkage between 6th Street and the lakefront. Key intersections provide opportunities for nodes, landmark buildings, and memorable places.

Solutions vary widely, all providing a vision for how the corridors can be more than automobiles and blank walls. Housing, restaurants, plazas and parks, community center, Target, institutions, neighborhood retail, views of the lakefront, and enhanced parking structure design are some of the proposed redevelopment strategies. The flexible program allowed students to explore different building types and a variety of public spaces.



PROCESS

Students approached the transformation of the corridors in two phases. The first phase was a master plan identifying uses, building footprints and massing, public spaces, and street section changes. Chris Socha and TKWA Urban Lab architects and staff provided insight about the redevelopment of Grand Avenue Mall and Wisconsin Avenue, along with guidance for redevelopment strategies. Urban patterns for activating the streets and pedestrian realm were explored. Following a review with professional architects, planners, and city staff, students moved into the second phase which focused on refining the master plan and designing a public space within their schemes.

The design process was iterative, with reviews held approximately every two weeks. Precedent studies were gathered and presented by graduate urban planning student Ryan Peterson. Students were inspired by Peterson's research as well as their own explorations and included non-traditional solutions as part of their redevelopments. Bike lanes, activating the space under the highway, dense mixed-use neighborhoods, and re-envisioning the design of parking structures were common themes. A large site model allowed for an interactive design process.

Final presentations were held at TKWA Urban Lab on Tuesday, May 9, 2017. Several students presented their projects to local architects and city staff. Following the presentations all students displayed their work at an Open House for design professionals, planners, local media, and development stakeholders.

GATEWAY MILWAUKEE

Patrick Desamito

Density and destination uses create a gateway into downtown from the south, east, and west. High density housing, anchored by an urban Target, transforms the heart of the site where Plankinton intersects with Michigan, Clybourn, and the river. The Riverwalk is enhanced with a new mixed-use building along the west side.

Ground floor retail and boating excursions enliven the pedestrian realm, housing on the upper floors provides customers for the Target and Grand Avenue Mall tenants. You can work and live downtown while being connected to the riverwalk and lakefront. Public art and interactive features activate the public spaces, some large enough to accommodate food trucks or programmed events. The site plan illustrates how a public space feature is integrated with each redeveloped block.

right: public spaces activate the corridors
opposite: housing entrance along Plankinton







top: Target retail, looking north on 2nd Street from W Clybourn Street
bottom: site section looking east from 3rd Street
opposite: connected riverwalk experience and development site plan



URBAN NATURE

Alyssa Menolascino

Landscape is integrated into all developments to provide a connection to nature while increasing density and providing destination uses to attract people to the area. Housing buildings along the river take advantage of the views, while creating new retail and destination uses. The large surface parking west of Plankinton is developed as a mixed-use project to serve residents and employees of downtown including a cafe, fitness center, and community center along with offices and more housing. A mid-block curbless street serves as a plaza while allowing traffic to move slowly through the block.

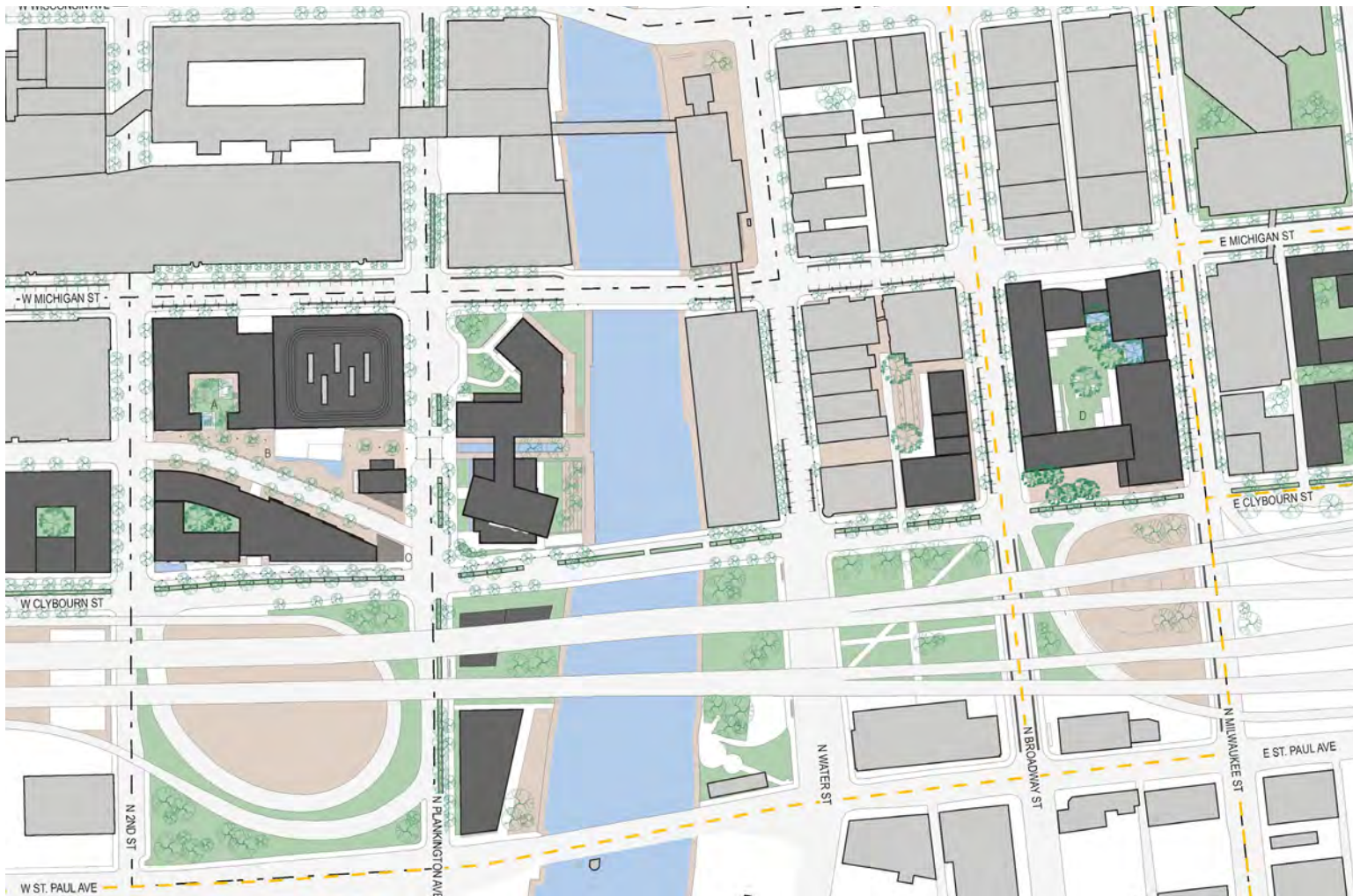
Placemaking in various scales and forms transforms the area into a series of plazas, walkways, and parks that can be used daily or programmed for unique events.

East of the river a school focusing on environmental learning provides a unique experience in a downtown neighborhood.



top: site model
bottom: redevelopment diagram
opposite: model of mid-block street connector





above: detailed site plan
right: model of mixed-use development and
housing west of the river





above: restaurant and community block between Plankinton and 2nd Street

above right: residential along Plankinton with coffee shop/fitness center on the west side of the street

right: section through Plankinton and river



Plankinton Avenue to the Riverwalk



above: residential plaza

above right: school courtyard

right: section through mixed-use block showing
fitness center over two levels of parking



Public Plaza Section

RENEWING NEIGHBORHOODS

Amanda Wagner

Parking lots are transformed into housing, offices, public spaces, and a new Public Museum. Activating each block with development, ground floor uses, and unique public spaces this area will become a neighborhood of choice for both living and working. Developments are connected with enhanced sidewalk zones and bike paths to make this area more pedestrian friendly.

Projects include:

- courtyard apartment buildings
- activated Everett Street as a connector between Zeidler Park and new housing along N 2nd Street
- Public Museum and riverwalk
- public space along Michigan Avenue at Broadway
- offices with ground floor retail

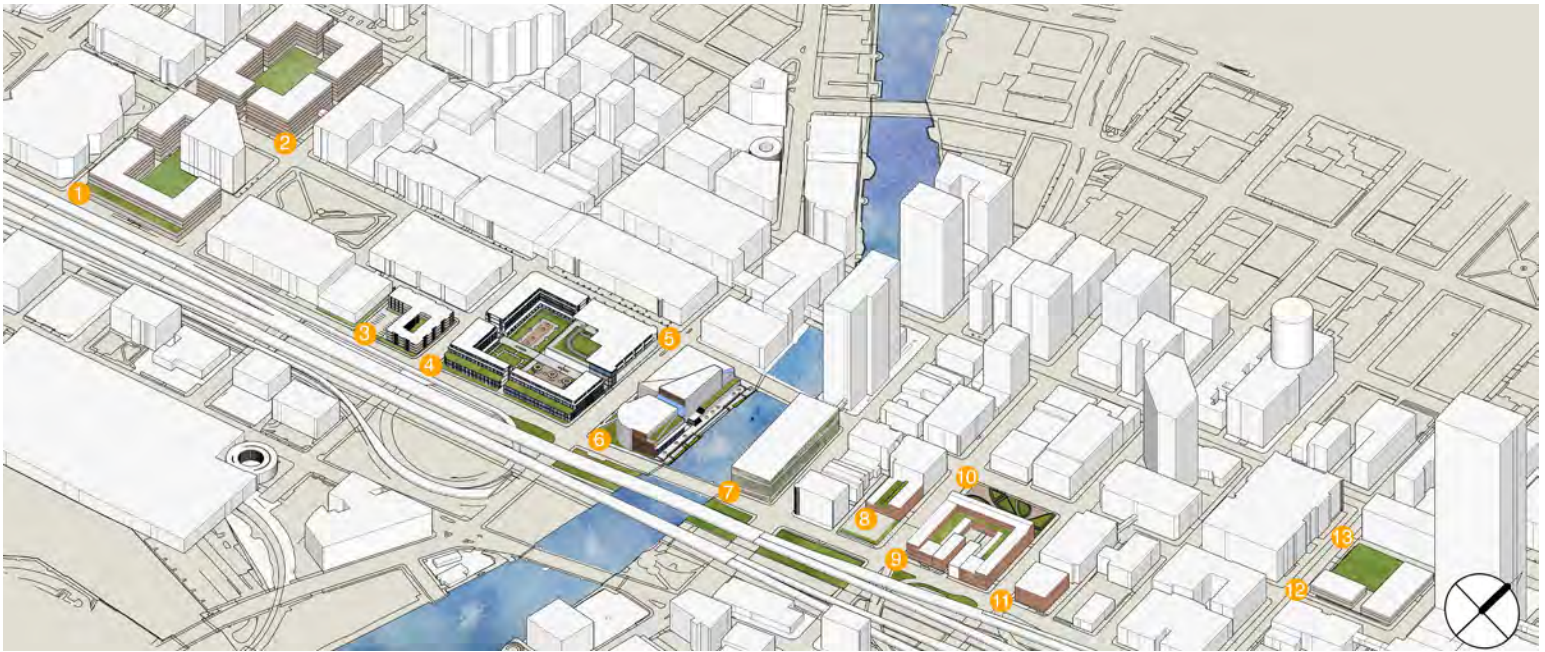
The public spaces have differing identities, public art, and lighting to transform the character of the two corridors.



above: detailed site plan from 2nd St. to Milwaukee St.

opposite: urban park at Broadway and Michigan







above: rendering of Everett Street as a connecting space

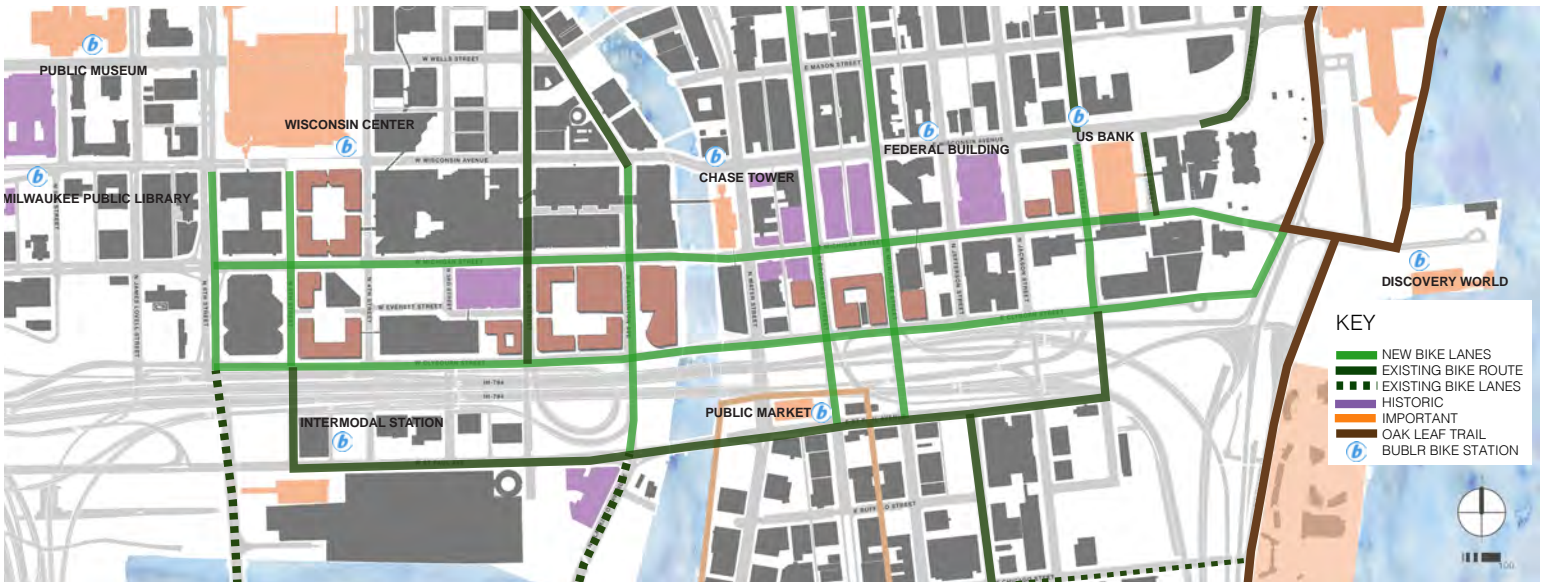
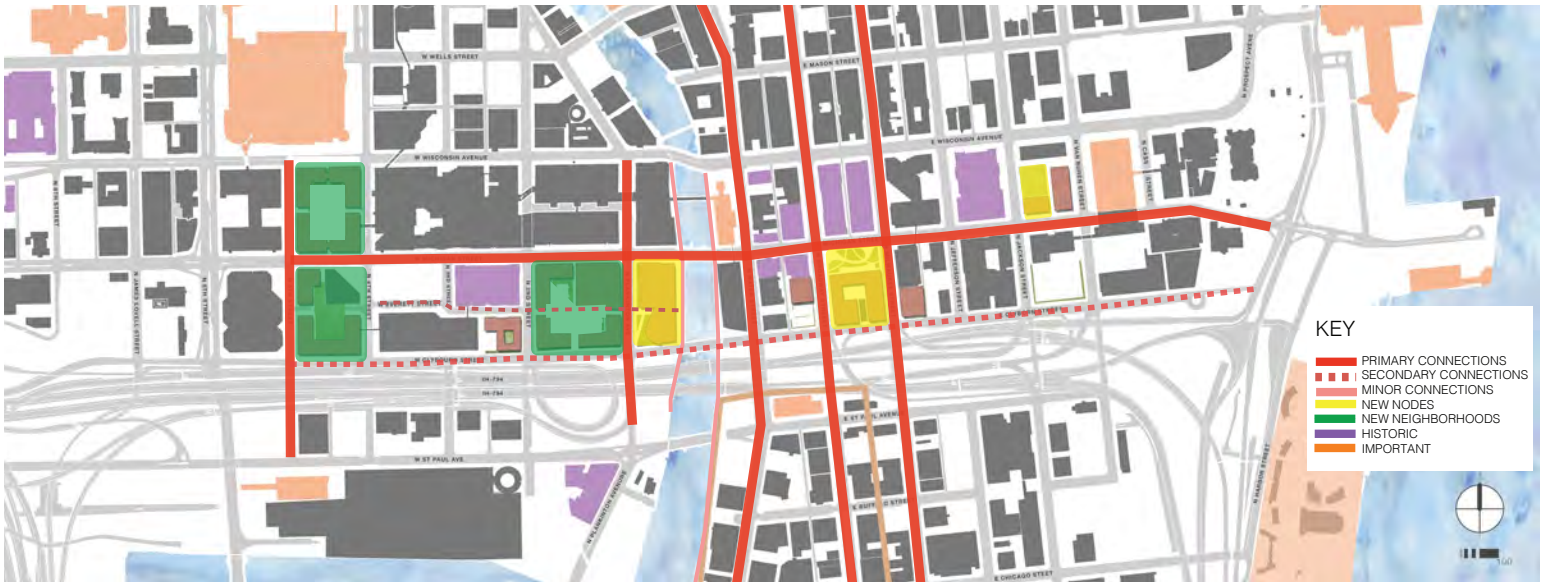
opposite top: bird's eye master plan, 2nd St to Milwaukee St.

opposite middle: site section looking north from 2nd to the river

opposite bottom: site section through housing block looking west



above: rendering of courtyard
above right: connections diagram
right: bike lanes diagram





above: rendering of Gimbels with office
above right: master plan
right: proposed figure ground map



STREETCAR CONNECTION

Garett Tomesh

Providing another hotel to serve current and future convention visitors, the block south of Wisconsin Avenue between 4th and 5th Streets is entirely redeveloped. Two new buildings are proposed with a large open space on the west side of the block that engages the Hilton and a future streetcar stop.

Building uses include a hotel, housing, restaurant, and additional retail uses to activate the ground floor along 4th Street and Michigan Street. A diagonal walkway brings pedestrians into the plaza at 4th and Michigan, opening up to the large plaza and lawn fronting Wisconsin Avenue which can be programmed for special events or used daily as a passive lawn space. There are a variety of places to sit, relax, and enjoy the downtown.

right: rendering of hotel and retail



HOTEL



section looking north on 5th Street



public plaza, restaurant, and housing along 5th Street across from the Hilton

EPISODIC SEQUENCE

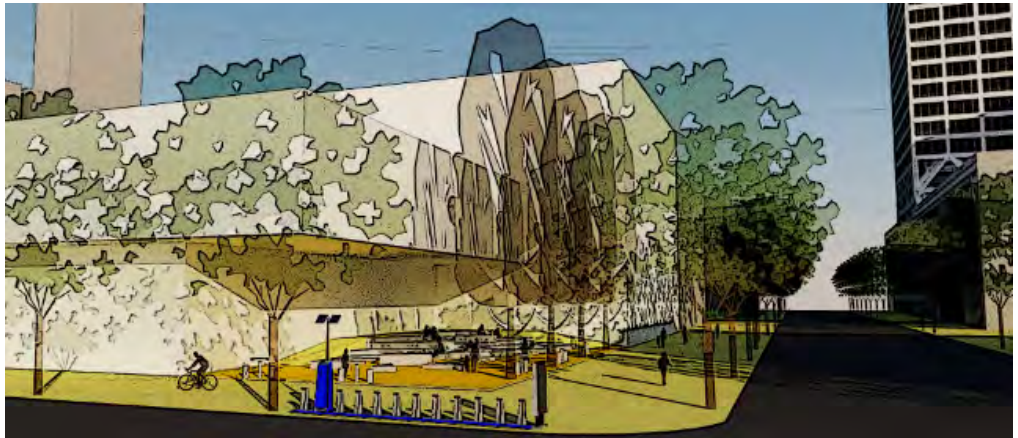
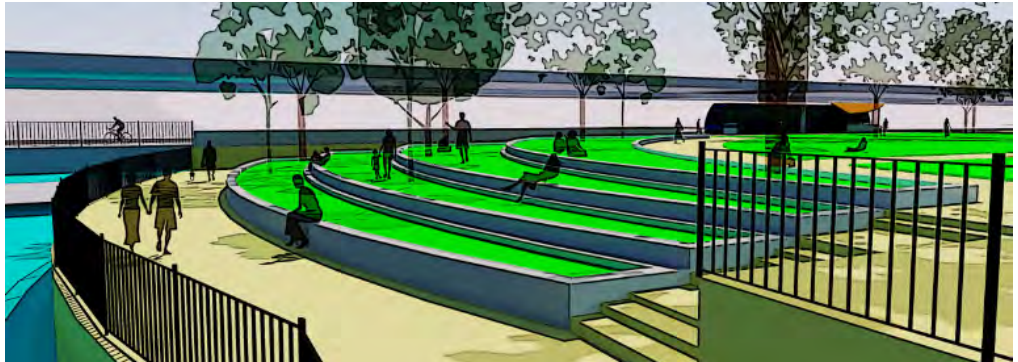
Alexander McWhirter

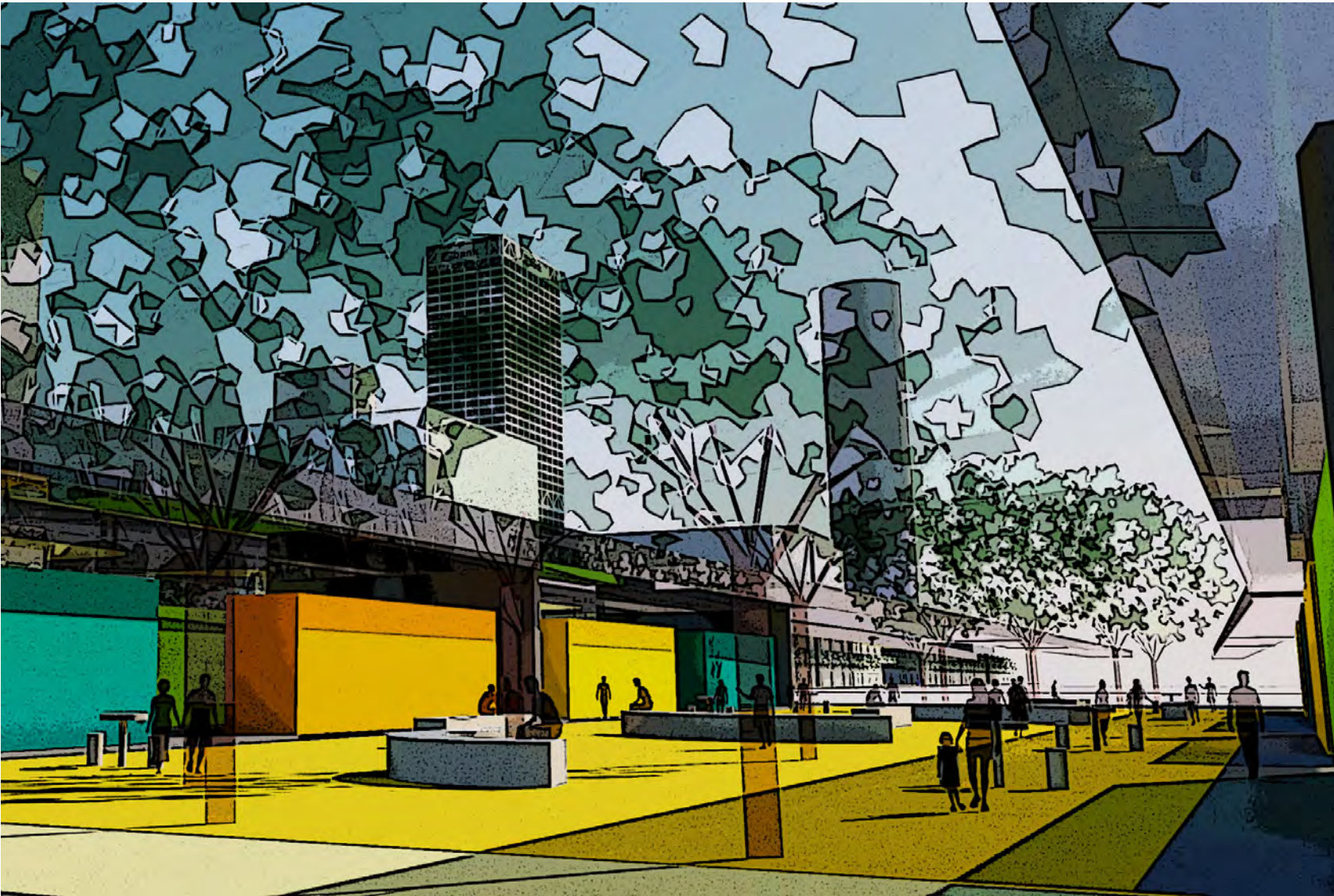
Utilizing the Project for Public Spaces “Power of 10,” the Episodic Sequence creates ten different experiences along the Michigan and Clybourn corridors. This placemaking effort includes a range of scales and varying activities to transform the character of the area from parking lots to pedestrian friendly streets. A series of spaces connect N 6th Street to the lakefront.

Public spaces offer unique elements and features including:

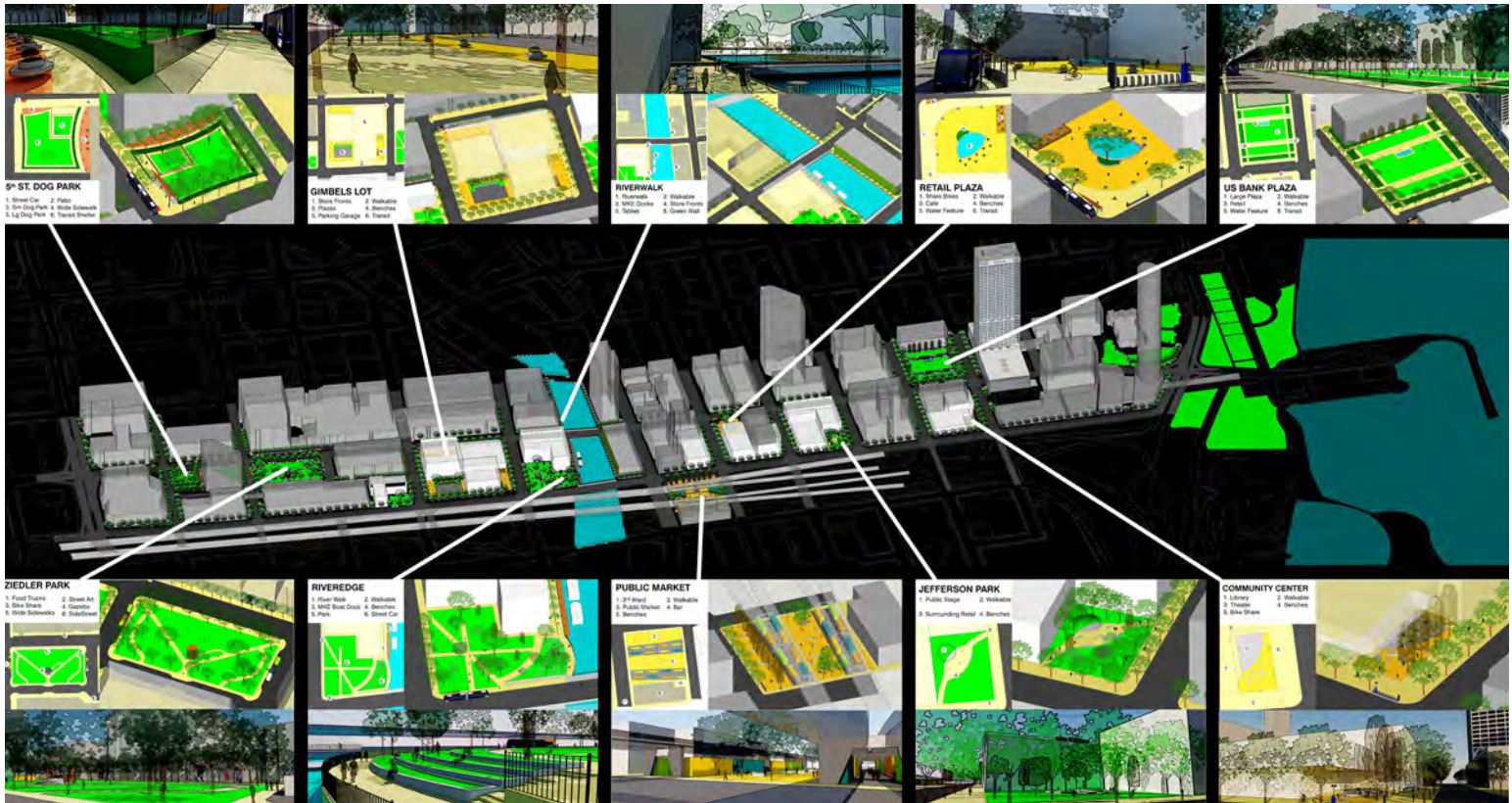
- farmer’s market
- outdoor dining plazas
- riverwalk
- game tables
- performance areas
- dog park
- green infrastructure
- open parks.

Each park is designed to have a different experience, yet provide a unified brand for the downtown arterials.

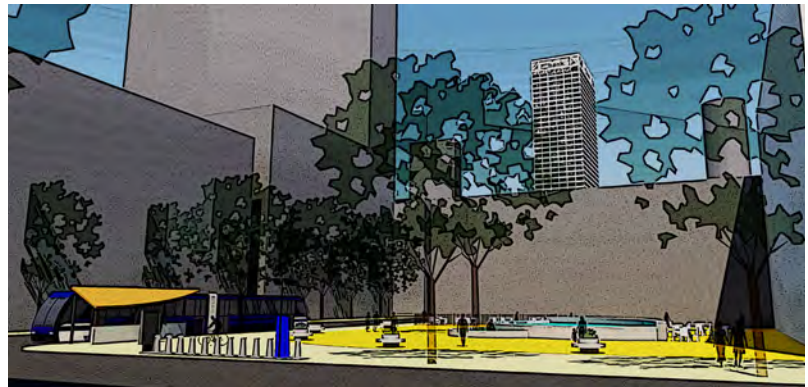


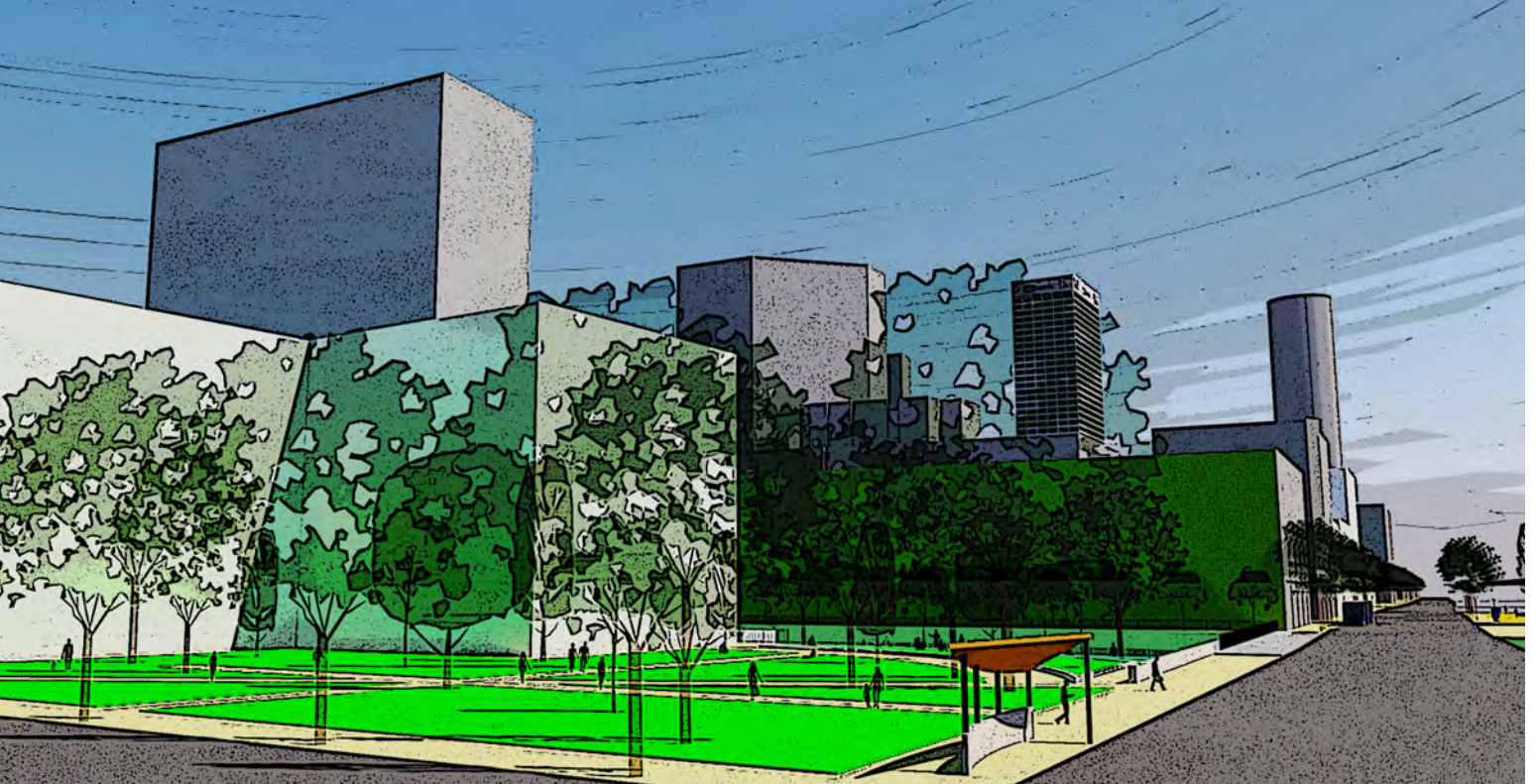
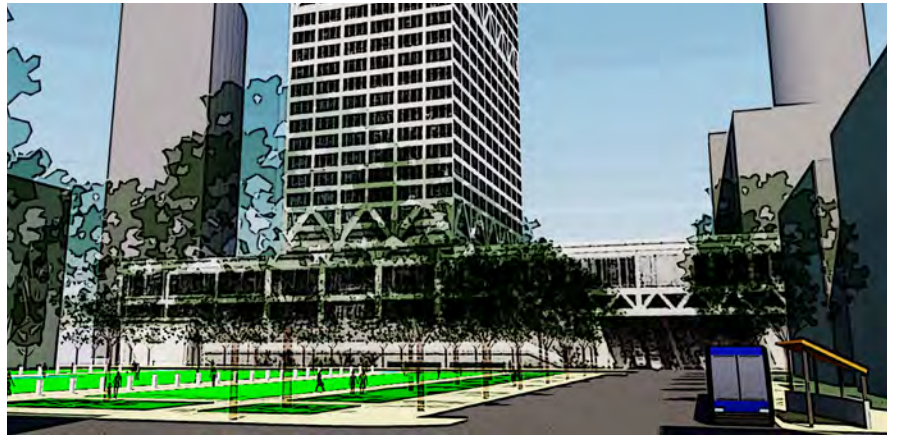


rendering of Public Market along Clybourn
opposite: river edge plaza and a retail plaza



above: series of public spaces diagram
right and opposite: plazas and parks





PLANKINTON COURTYARDS

Jonathan Heider

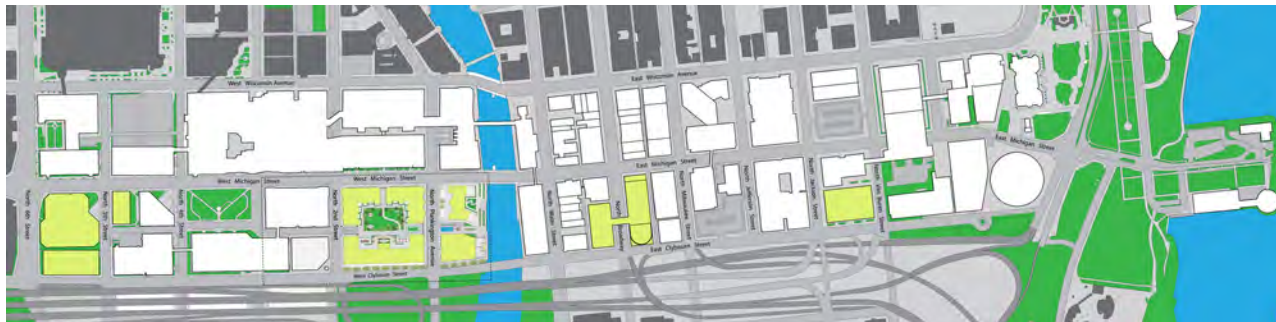
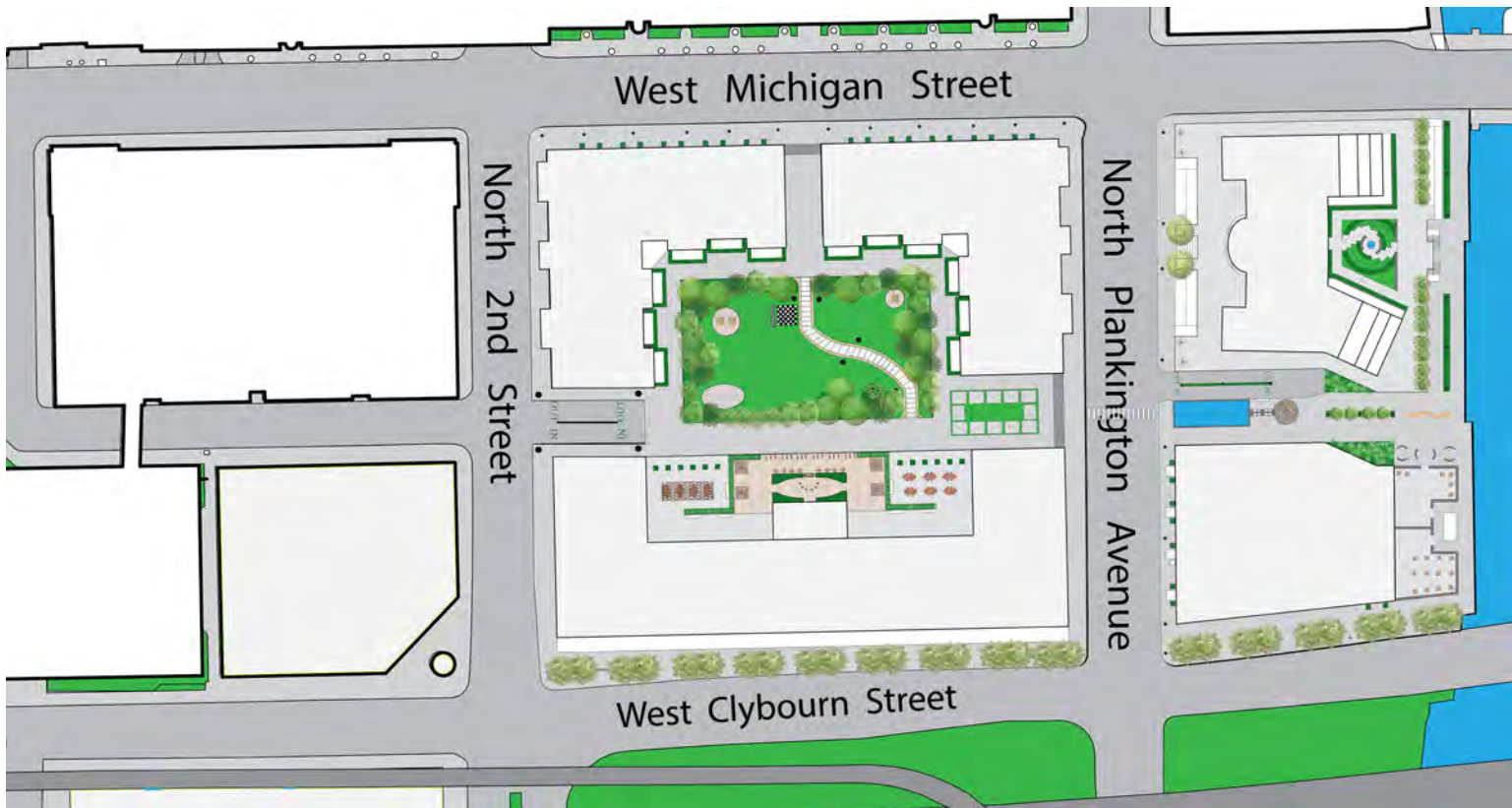
A neighborhood grocery is the anchor tenant for the development west of the river. It will serve the residents and the employees of downtown. Apartments are added along the river and throughout the Michigan and Clybourn corridors.

Courtyards, roof decks, and open lawns are integrated to provide natural amenities and shared grilling and gathering areas. Socialize with your friends or relax after work, the private roof patio provides views of downtown and the other new housing projects.

right: residential roof deck
opposite: bird's eye rendering of housing park







above and left: site plan
 above right: residential roof deck
 right: plaza boardwalk



DEVELOPING DENSITY

Hiep Nguyen

Downtown has several significant destinations, from individual buildings to clustering of entertainment and job activities. Attracting more people to live downtown will sustain the retail and event spaces, provide support for additional destinations, and allow for people to walk to work. Increased density that integrates parks and social gathering areas can increase the value and attractiveness of the Michigan and Clybourn corridors.



Residential units are grouped around a variety of courtyards with semi-private gathering areas. Ground floor retail along Michigan Street can serve both residents and people working downtown. Top floors can be either residential penthouses or community rooms for parties, casual resident gatherings, or exercise classes. Parking is integrated mid-block and underneath.

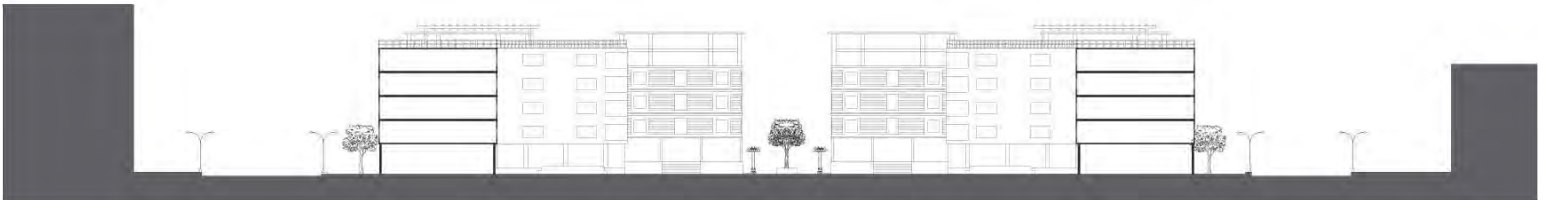


right: destination points and housing floor plans
opposite: residential courtyard





above: courtyard entrance
bottom: site section



above: mid-block residential street
bottom: building section

VERTICAL IDENTITY

Kalin Reed

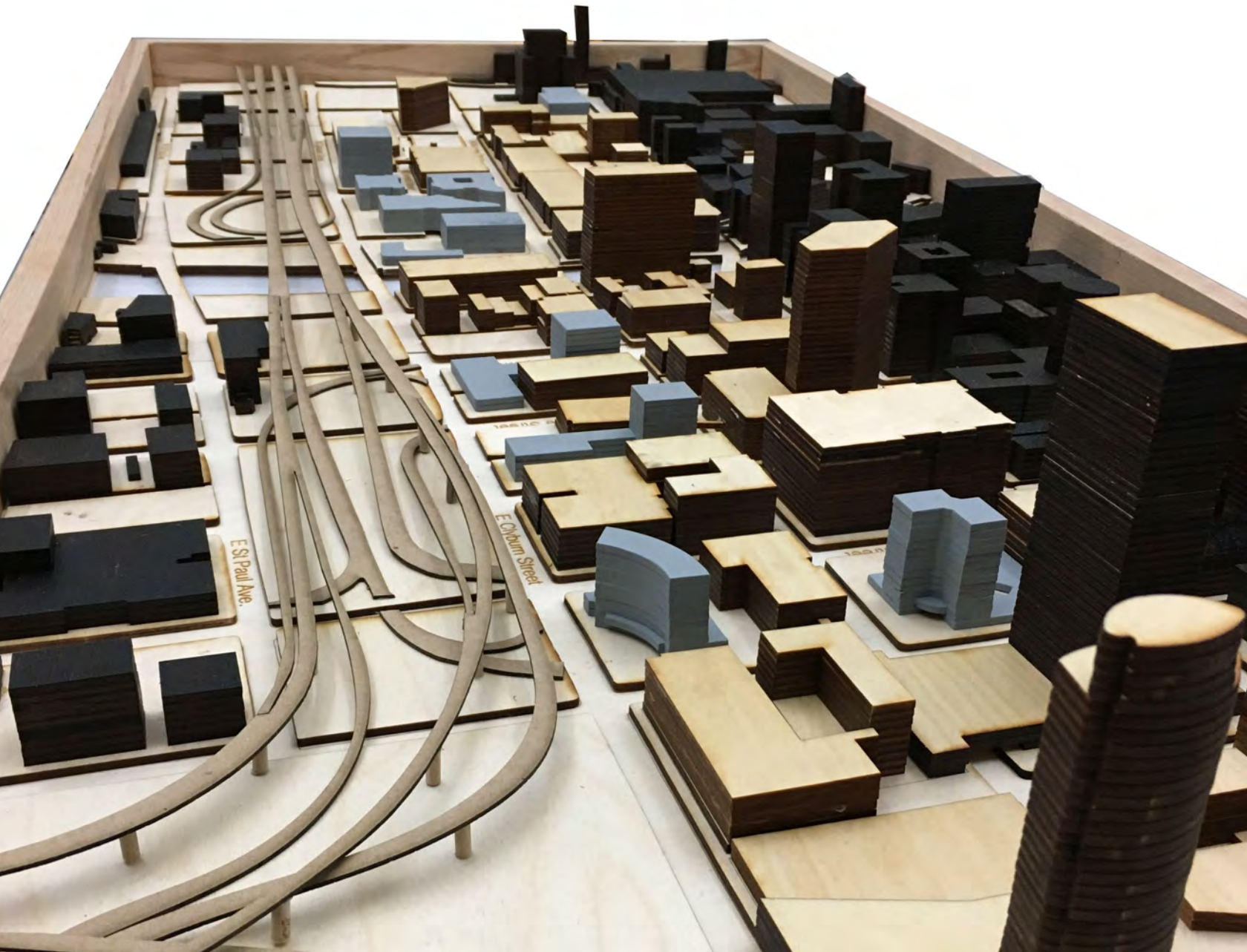
Adding to Milwaukee's skyline, two mixed-use towers are proposed between Van Buren and Jackson Streets. Active ground floor plazas create a pedestrian friendly environment with outdoor dining, terraced seating, and landscaping. The northern residential tower has views in all directions while the southern tower is focused on views of the lakefront. A hotel, office buildings,

and additional residential buildings are proposed west of the river. Each with high visibility from the highway for marketing their brand.

Modified street designs include bike paths and on-street parking. Circulation is maintained but slowed to provide a safer, pedestrian friendly connection from the river to the lakefront.



site plan





left: site plan detail for the towers
opposite: bird's eye rendering of the office and residential towers



SHIPPING CONTAINER HUB

Kelly Seniuk

Bright colored shipping containers are combined to create a destination collection of retail vendors and restaurants. The colorful boxes, rooftop spaces, and nighttime plaza lighting will be visible from the highway and attract people from both downtown and the Third Ward. Connected to adjacent office and hotel uses, parking is located in the first few floors of the proposed office building.

Clybourn is transformed into a significant walking street that connects the lakefront to 6th Street. Wide sidewalks and landscaping are added on both sides of the street. Retail and commercial buildings fill the empty parcels, showcasing the area as a destination instead of a series of parking lots.

A new office building at Jackson and Michigan maintains a cross block pedestrian path with a large interior plaza. Abundant landscaping creates a natural escape amongst the downtown density.



above: development areas
opposite: bird's eye rendering of "Color Square," a shipping container retail hub at Clybourn and Jackson



Johnson
Controls

BOO



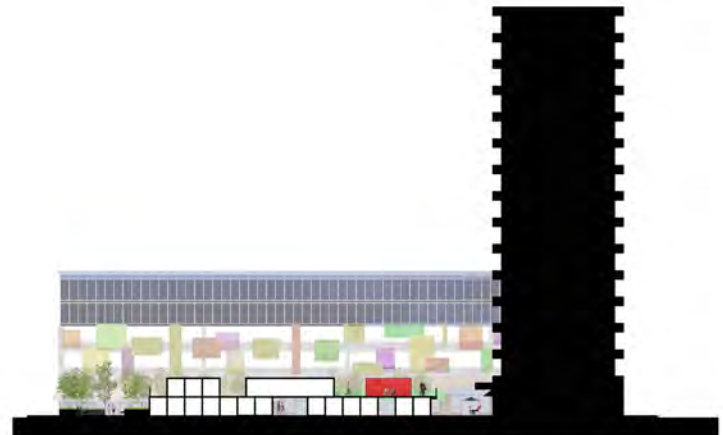
above: site plan diagram
 left: properties to redevelop

above right: public plaza between Color Square
 and office building
 right: shipping container retail hub along
 Clybourn



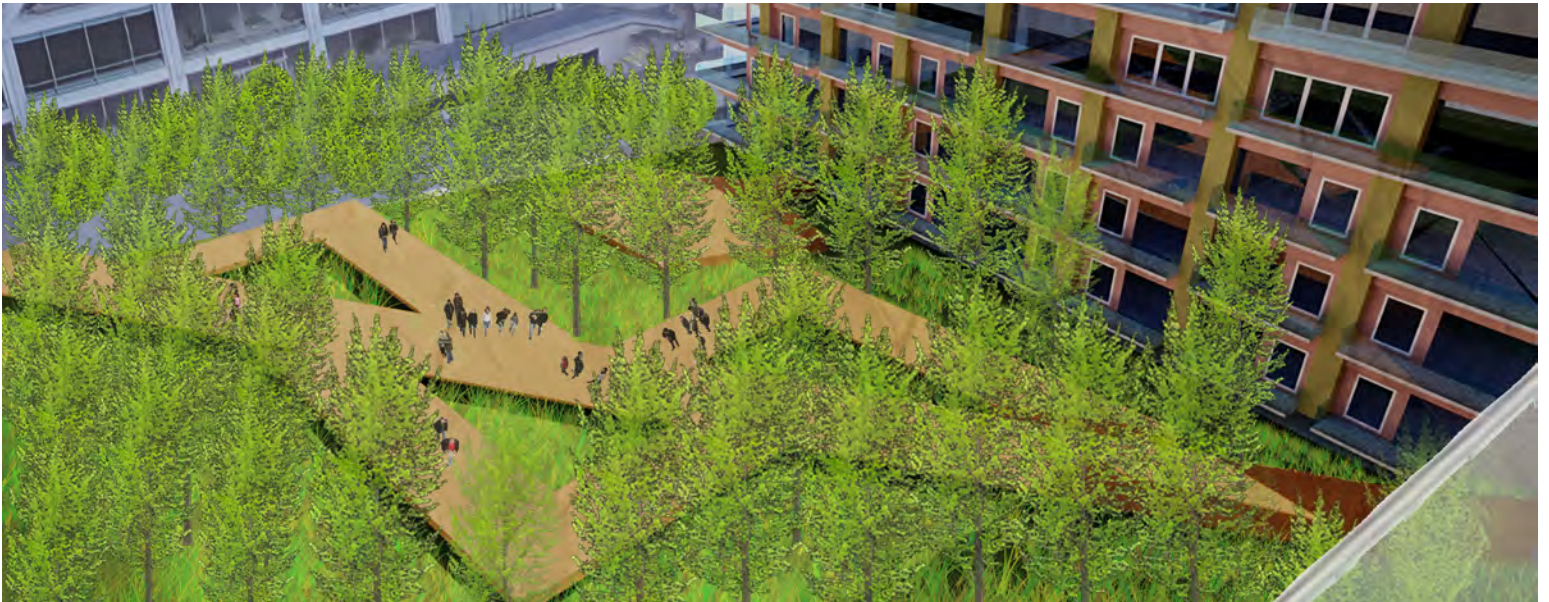


above: development massing
 right upper: section through Color Square looking north between Jackson and Van Buren
 right lower: site section looking west from I-794 to Michigan Street



opposite: mixed-use building at Michigan and Jackson and natural courtyard that connects Jackson to Van Buren





STEPPED VIEWS

McKenzie Hengel

Embracing Clybourn Street's connection with the lakefront, the priority is to activate this street with retail, offices, a hotel, and housing. Parking lots are redeveloped to create a strong street edge of 24/7 motion including daytime jobs and evening housing and hotel activities. Two significant buildings between Van Buren and Jackson Streets are developed in a unique architectural character so everyone has access to outdoor space and views of the lakefront.

The buildings follow a stepped pattern with outdoor patios, rooftop gardens, and balconies. The hotel along Clybourn includes a night club with an outdoor plaza that is visible not only from the street but from the highway. The residential tower along Michigan Street utilizes an interior courtyard for the residents and employees of the office located on the lower floors facing south. The activation of the parcels throughout the day will transform the character of Michigan, Clybourn, and the east end of downtown.



land use massing
opposite: bird's eye rendering of stepped building
proposals between Jackson and Van Buren,
residential and hotel



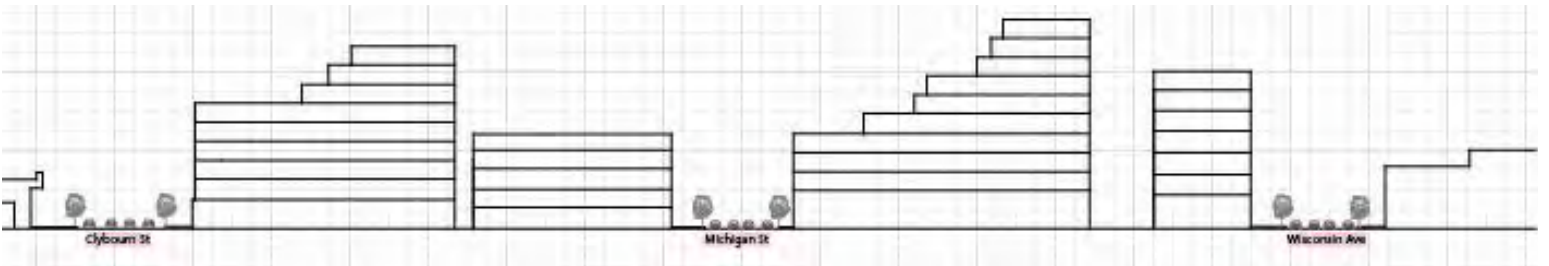


above: outdoor plaza along Clybourn
above right: outdoor plaza adjacent to the hotel
right: site plan





above: office development
above right: views from the roof deck
right: site section looking west



CREATING COMMUNITY

Zane Gayle

Creating a neighborhood for families and young professionals, this dense housing proposal includes apartments and townhomes. By providing townhome options in this part of the city, families will have an option that includes a park, rivewalk connection, and immediate access to the surrounding downtown amenities. Visible but buffered from the highway, urban living has a new identity.

The higher density apartment buildings provide the population necessary to support ground floor retail and small restaurants and cafes. The central green space allows the diversity of residents to gather together or relax in a peaceful park.

Parking is mid-block for the townhomes and underground for the apartment buildings. Additional housing and commercial uses are located along the Michigan and Clybourn corridors.



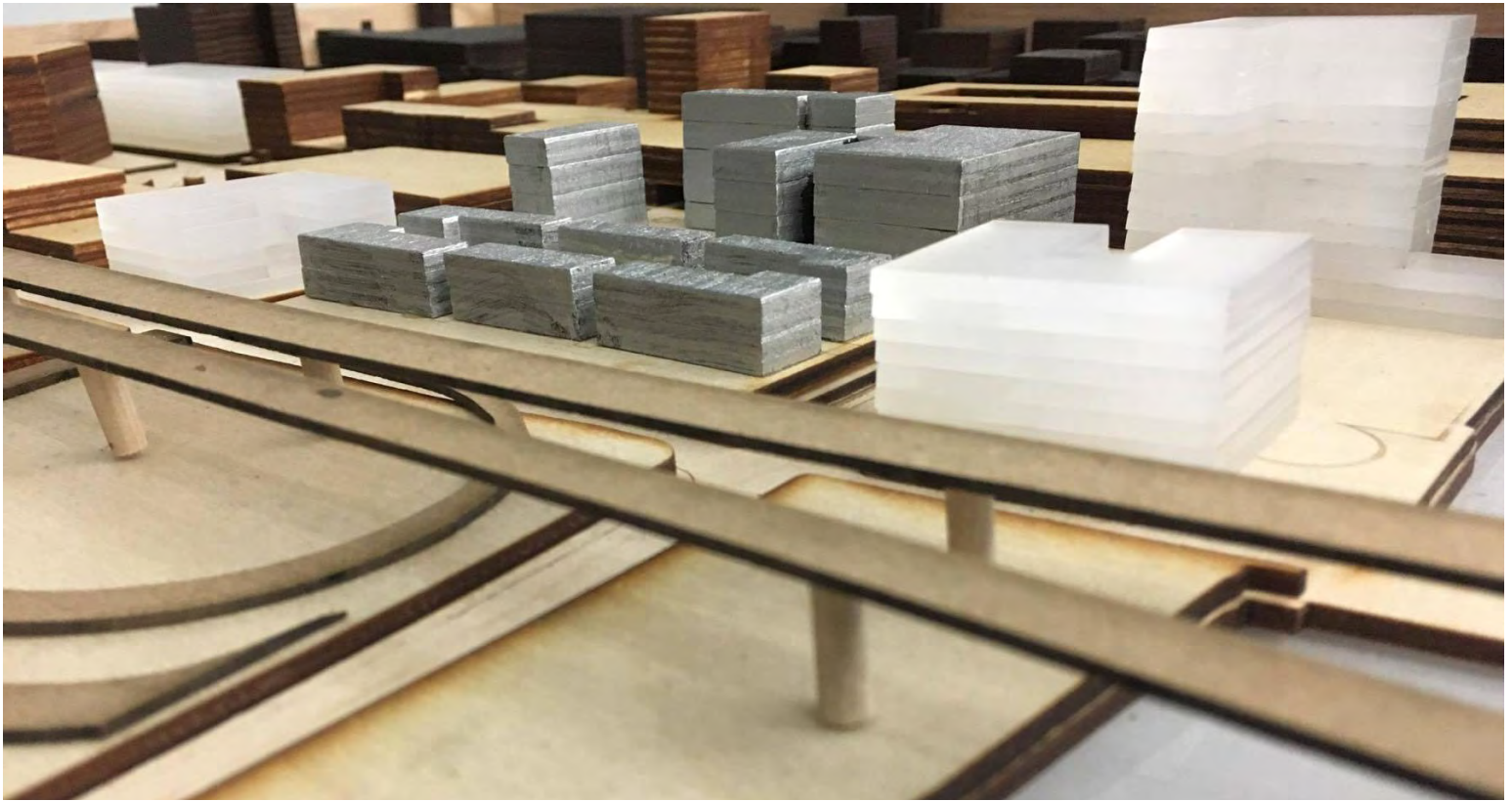
Site Section
East to West



Site Section
North to South

site sections
opposite: neighborhood street connection 2nd
Street and Plankinton

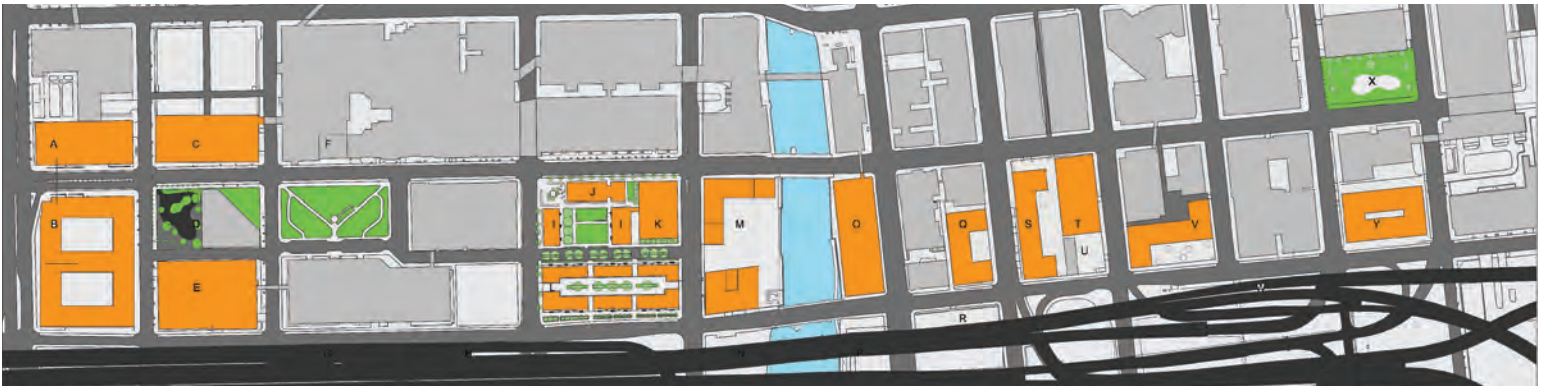




above: model photo looking north at Plankinton

above right: plaza entrance into mixed-use
development

right: development plan



INTEGRATED PLAZAS

Nicholas Eyrich

Everett Street becomes a lively connector of new buildings, parks, and experiences. Several new housing developments are located west of the river, each with a unique outdoor park or plaza.

A dog park serves the growing population of pet owners while providing an opportunity for neighbors to meet one another. Several plazas are extensions of ground floor commercial and retail, allowing the uses to spill out to the street. The streets will be activated by the new housing units, as well as the pedestrians exploring the public amenities.



above: proposed land use map

right: plaza





above: neighborhood dog park
right: site plan

opposite top: Everett Street plazas
opposite bottom: site section









ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Funding for this studio and book was provided by Wisconsin Preservation Fund, Uihlein Foundation, and UWM School of Architecture & Urban Planning.

Special thanks to:

Bob Greenstreet, SARUP Dean, for support and interest in our studio.

Chris Socha and The Kubala Washatko Architects staff for hosting our final presentation at The Urban Lab.

The students appreciated feedback from guest critics at both stages of development, including: Studio Client Greg Patin, City of Milwaukee Department of City Development.

Guest Critics:

Kevin Hardman

Erik Hancock, TKWA

Tom Kubala, TKWA

Joel Krueger, TKWA

Brian Peterson, SARUP Alum

George Meyer, Kahler Slater

Chris Socha, TKWA

Larry Witzling, GRAEF



The work included in this book was produced spring of 2017 by graduate and undergraduate architecture and urban planning students at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee enrolled in Urban Design Developing Vibrancy, an urban design and community redevelopment studio organized and instructed by Carolyn Esswein, AICP, CNU-A and Jim Piwoni, RA.

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Graphics: Carolyn Esswein, William Noelck
Front Cover Rendering: **Alyssa Menolascino**

Printed by UWM Print Services, Milwaukee, WI

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