

CHANGING VIEWS: EXPLORING PATHWAYS IN THE MOTOR CITY

A Thesis

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by

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ABSTRACT

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Pathways have informed movement and experience for a hundred years. Those pathways implied how we live, travel and the establishment of place. New modes of transportation shifted how people move, creating the need for organization of paths. Today, city planners are accommodating for new and growing needs of human movement. My thesis looks at the City of Detroit through the lens of pathways established and how to reestablish new paths. The City of Detroit is best known for its growth during the time of the invention and advancement of the automobile. Existing factories allowed for swift transition to car manufacturing that would go on to shift the urban development of the city. Today, Detroit is filled with highways, five lane wide roads, and factories that populate every neighborhood leaving disjointed residential and commercial parcels with voids of nothing between them. Pockets of livelihood exist in the commercial districts but left behind voids to be someone else's problem, its inhabitants. My thesis makes use of a new proposed greenway throughout the city of Detroit to establish an alternative pathway and leverage the greenways exposure through architectural intervention to fill in holes of the Poletown.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to:

*My loving family
My adoring cat Theodore
My fearless committee
&
My MVP Samandra Lynne*

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Introduction

In May 2021, a proposal by the City of Detroit General Services department published the Joe Louis Greenway Framework Plan. The greenway is a 27.5-mile-long recreational pathway combining existing and creating new pathways to create one loop around the city of Detroit¹. Popular sites such as the Detroit RiverWalk and the Dequindre Cut are points of interest for people to interact. Additional sites include Dearborn, Hamtramck, and Highland Park allowing the greenway to create a seamless “...safe and efficient loop around the city”¹. The location of the greenway’s route is heavily impacted by the community of Detroit. Several communities engaged with architecture firm SmithGroup and eight community members called the Citizen Advisory Council (CAC)¹ about the Joe Louis Greenway route. The greenway is a shared vision for the future of Detroit according to the Framework Plan¹. Six visions are outlined in the document: environmental sustainability, equitable growth, historic and cultural significance, bike and pedestrian infrastructure and safety, health and fitness, and connectivity and accessibility¹.

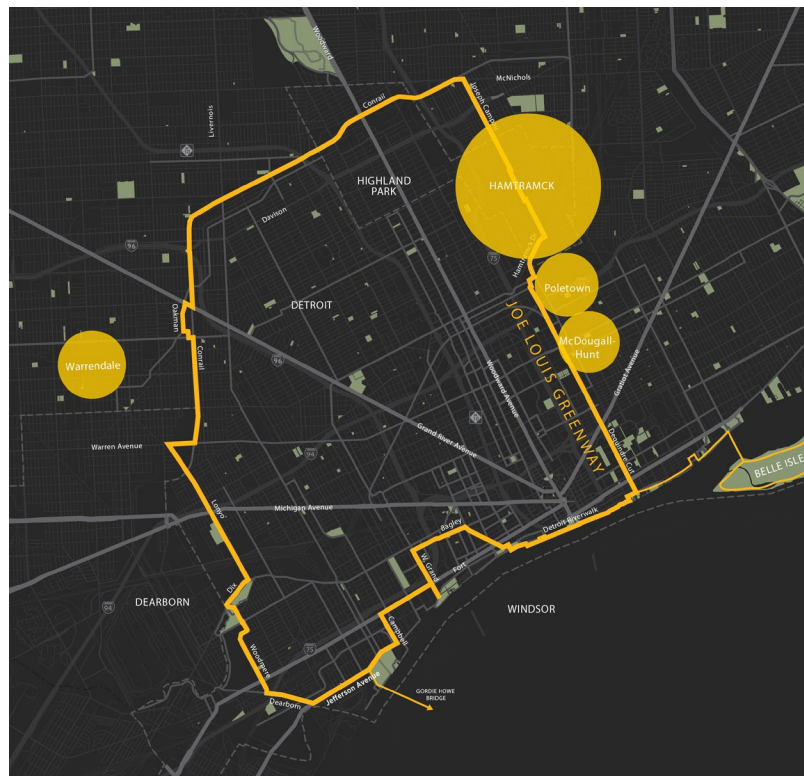


Figure 1 Joe Louis Proposed Greenway

However, this plan does not unite several communities to the main greenway loop, leaving many neighborhoods left out. (Figure 1). The figure shows the level of engagement, by sizes of circles, in select neighborhoods based on their involvement in the planning process of the greenways route. Neighborhoods such as Poletown, McDougall-Hunt, and Warrendale were left with no direct intersection with the proposed greenway route

¹ City of Detroit's General Services Department, "Joe Louis Greenway Framework Plan," vol. 1 (Detroit, Michigan: City of Detroit's General Services Department, 2021), pp. 7,14,20,23.

despite their community involvement. In my thesis, I will explore an alternative route to the proposed Joe Louis Greenway that engages the neighborhood of Poletown and its community. Their engagement in the pre planning of the route should not go unrecognized. I will use architectural intervention to serve both the greenway users and the Poletown community.

Thesis statement

How might connections between small spaces create large gestures towards architectural design and the formation of new urban pathways establishing alternative views of the city?

Key word(s)

Path, pathways, greenway(s), green space

Pathways

Pathways are both physical and social spaces that occupy physical and meta-physical space. Modern day planning exists today on the foundation of paths from the past. The city of Detroit is built on this principle. Michigan Avenue, Woodward Avenue, and Gratiot Avenue are important roads into and out of the heart of Detroit. Additionally, the development of the city of Detroit grew from its proximity to the river. The river serves as more than a landmark, but a beacon for human connectivity. The seminal work of Kevin Lynch in his book, *The Image of the City*, showcases how elements of the city make up the public image of a specific city, no two are alike. His opening statements about the environment in which cities live describe a city's image through visual form. A city is understood by its inhabitants and the way they use and move within its surroundings. Lynch states, "The need to recognize and pattern our surroundings is so crucial, and has such long roots in the past, that this image has wide practical and emotional importance to the individual"². Individuals form their own paths to experience the city and be broken down into five elements according to Lynch. Paths, edges, nodes, districts, and landmarks are the five elements of a city. Paths are defined as; "... the channels along which the observer customarily, occasionally, or potentially moves"². A city is observed by movement of the city, while paths are the channel for those movements. Movement in the city is perceived by its inhabitants and can create important paths that are traveled heavily².

Greenways

Greenways are an important component to creating public spaces in cities and highly populated areas. They allow people to enjoy being outdoors safely. Great Lakes Scientist, John H. Hartig describes greenways as links to accessible outdoor spaces from historical sites to conservation sites³

² Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Pr., 1979), 4,41.

³ John H. Hartig, *Waterfront Porch: Reclaiming Detroit's Industrial Waterfront as a Gathering Place for All* (East Lansing, MI: Greenstone Books, 2019), 142.

Literary Review

Historical context

To understand Detroit's urban landscape, studying the history of the mapping and planning of Detroit is key. The image of Detroit today was molded by the decisions made of the past.

Early settlement

Understanding whose land we stand on, speaks to the connection of pathways reaching far beyond the city's limits. Known as the Great Lakes tribes, indigenous people survived off the land in present day Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin⁴. The river was a way of life for Native Americans. Agriculture, trading, and transportation were all facilitated through the river for many decades. The arrival of European settlers brought many changes to the indigenous land. By 1701, the French had set up "Fort Detroit" and began claiming and constructing more pathways⁴. During the time of the French rule, the forts designated the urban planning of pathways. Pathways that extended from the forts would become the first small-scale urban pattern in what is today downtown Detroit⁴. According to the documentation in *Mapping Detroit: Land, Community, and Shaping a City*, Thomas and Bekkering found that these extensions from the forts could have been trails of the Native Americans. Next, ribbon farming was set up by the Europeans along the river setting the orientation of the central urban grid⁴. Soon generations of indigenous people intermingled with the European settlers, changing the makeup of people in Detroit and other Midwest states. However, indigenous groups were pushed out of their homeland under the Treaty of Greenville in 1795 and displaced them further south to places like current day Kansas and Oklahoma. Additionally, major paths created after this time would follow indigenous trails, like Woodward, Jefferson and Michigan Avenue (figure 2).

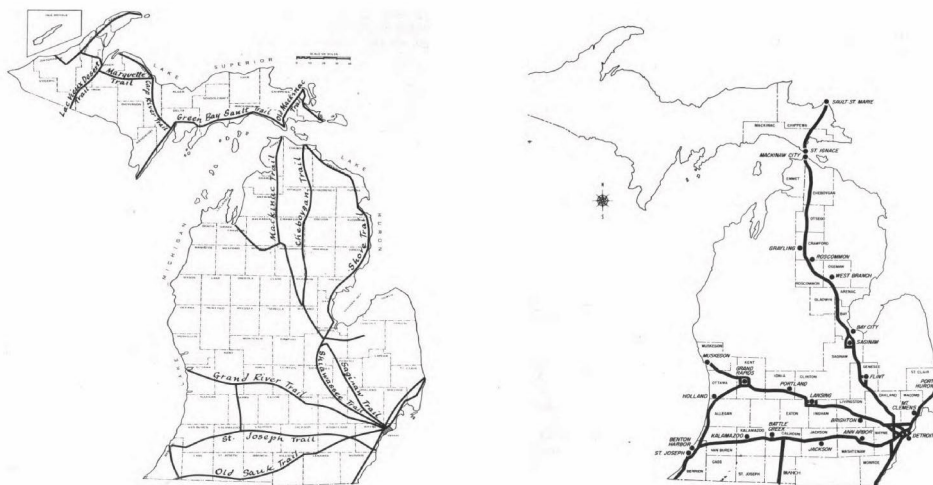


Figure 2 Native American trails and Michigan Freeways

⁴ Manning Thomas, June, and Henco Bekkering. *Mapping Detroit: Land, Community, and Shaping a City*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2015. 39.

Developing Detroit

As the land became more populated, a new spatial system would emerge known as the Ten Thousand Acre Grid in the early 1800's. The Ten Thousand Acre Grid built off ribbon farming, setting up a grid on a tilted angle in line with the Detroit River. An additional grid called the Jefferson Plan was determined and set up the orientation of the north-south and east-west. Then in 1805, tragedy would strike with a fire that destroyed the city. The damage of the fire destroyed all the wooden structures built and flooded the wetlands with debris⁴. By 1807, Woodward's plan of Detroit introduced radial avenues that interrupted the early paths of Woodward, Jefferson and Michigan Avenue. The start of the industrial age brought railroads to Detroit. By 1904, railroads connected Detroit to other industrial cities across many states, utilizing the railroad infrastructure. Detroit welcomed Michigan Central Station in 1913 as a hub for railroad public transportation and ran for several decades. However, with the invention of the automobile, focus shifted away from public transportation to single rider driven infrastructure and by 1968, a new type of infrastructure slashed the Detroit grids, highways. Highways demolished several occupied lands for the sake of road efficiency over neighborhood preservation in Detroit⁴. The inhabitants of Detroit needed public transportation in low-income neighborhoods but were met with buyouts of all competitors such as the streetcar lines. After Detroit's population apex in 1950, massive population loss followed with no public transportation system in place for neighborhoods outside the downtown district. Many factories were outside the downtown area and were made easier to drive to with highways from suburbs popping up outside the city, this led to many of the wealthy leaving Detroit.

Present day Detroit

Automotive manufacturing underwent changes as more companies outside of the United States started marketing their products to Americans. Ford, Chrysler, and General Motors were now competing with Honda, Toyota, Nissan, and high-end luxury brands producing cars. Existing factories across rust belt cities, including Detroit, started to close in early 2000's and moved overseas for cheaper manufacturing. By 2008, during a historic recession, then President Barack Obama saw the automotive manufacturing industry had lost thousands of jobs. Obama's decisions during his first term saved the American auto industry. Factories in Detroit are still subject to closing or merging into one plant as the industry adjusts with automotive advancements. Additionally, public transit in Detroit returned via the QLine in 2017⁵. After all of those shifts and changes to the urban landscape of Detroit there are still challenges affecting the city and its urban pathways.

⁴ Manning Thomas, June, and Henco Bekkering. *Mapping Detroit: Land, Community, and Shaping a City*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2015. 39.

⁵ QLine Detroit: History, accessed May 15, 2021.

Different type of pathway

Historically paths have served many roles across the world. Three categories of paths emerged which were paths as power, paths as individuals, and paths as reclamation. We will be focusing on European and western pathways and how they are used to define pathways of their time.

Looking at *paths as power* in European history, starting in 1565 Florence, Italy. The Vasari Corridor was commissioned by a member of the Medici family as a connection between two marrying houses. The corridor was used as a secret in and out of the palace between royalty giving them privacy and protection from unwanted wandering eyes. The corridor was placed on an upper floor so the passage was hidden, and people could walk between buildings without being seen. This enclosed passageway was a show of power the Medici's family held over Florence⁶. Next, we will travel to Paris, 1853, under the role of Napoleon the third. During this time, medieval neighborhoods were being destroyed to carry out Napoleon's wishes to bring Paris into the industrial age. He tasked Haussmann to create a new urban landscape in this image and between 1853 to 1870 demolished thousands of buildings for a new urban landscape envisioned by Napoleon⁷. In contrast, *paths as individuals* have no one direction. Kevin Lynch's book written in 1960, explains his idea of experiencing the city from an urban planning perspective. He created mental maps and studied places like Boston and Jersey City to understand how people experience them. His five elements of a city; path, edges, district, nodes, and landmarks; speak to his idea of a city as a public image that incorporates individual images⁸. At the end of decade, the group known as Situationist had their own ideas for moving through the city of Paris in 1968. They moved through space with movement throwing off alienation and hierarchical dispossession as a counter to the city's existing spaces. Their ideas came from Guy Deborn's publication titled "The Naked City" from 1957 showing psychogeo-graphical maps of Paris⁹. It was composed of chunks cut from Paris's map with floating space and red arrows to indicate movement that can be taken in Paris. Their form suggested the fragmentation of Paris. Next, *paths as reclamation* in contemporary architecture include the Dequindre cut in Detroit Michigan, and High line New York as recreational paths. Originally the Grand Trunk Western railroad line, the Dequindre Cut is a greenway located east of downtown Detroit. Abandoned from the 1980's until 2009 the new greenway has been serving residents of Detroit as a reclaimed urban pathway. Similarly, the high line was an abandoned above ground rail line converted to a greenway in 2003. The high line continues to expand its edges and proposes new architectural design on the once discarded pathway. The different roles of pathways in history and contemporary settings are prevalent in American cities today. Historical context is an important consideration to Detroit today as it influenced the current day urban pathways.

⁶ Jarzombek, Mark. "Corridor Spaces." *Critical Inquiry* 36, no. 4 (2010): 728-70.

⁷ Chapman, Brian. "Baron Haussmann and the Planning of Paris." *The Town Planning Review* 24, no. 3 (1953): 177

⁸ K. Lynch, 4.

⁹ McDonough, Thomas F. "Situationist Space." *October* 67 (1994): 59-77

Joe Louis Greenway Framework Plan Volume 1

The Joe Louis Greenway is Detroit's latest proposal to unite the city. The greenway hopes to unify neighborhoods with access to bike and pedestrian trails. Proposals in Detroit have shifted away from industrial infrastructure and looked at adaptive reuse in residential and commercial spaces. One main predecessor to the Joe Louis Greenway would be the Detroit RiverWalk. The previous work done before 2020 and current projects along the Detroit River showcase Detroit's interest in creating public spaces. However, unlike the Detroit RiverWalk, the goals of the Joe Louis Greenway do not match the proposed greenway route. Goals one and three rely on goal two being true. Goal two states it will promote equity¹⁰ but does not hold up when compared to the proposed route of the greenway (refer back to figure 1). While Hamtramck is given a direct trail through the neighborhood, areas like Poletown and McDougall-Hunt are swept passed. Residents in these neighborhoods are not given equal opportunity to benefit from the greenway's trail and contradict one's visions of "...enhance residents' quality of life and promote community development"¹⁰. Poletown has been neglected similar to other Detroit neighborhoods and would benefit from direct connection to the greenway route. Furthermore, goal three looks to unify "multi-modal transportation network"¹⁰. The greenway is designed to connect existing and improve non-motorized transportation. Two noticeable trails connected by this proposal are the Detroit RiverWalk and the Dequindre Cut. Both areas are established non-motorized spaces that encourage walking and cycling throughout. At several Detroit RiverWalk entrances you can spot bikes to rent and use to enjoy the wide sidewalks along the river. The framework plan lacks clarity on how it will ensure "accessibility for people of all needs and abilities"¹⁰. While many individuals might own bikes, it relies on the individual to have access to a bike. Users of all backgrounds are not heavily considered from wheelchair users to disabled bodies. Bike stations should be a part of the greenways initiative.

The 27.5 mile long greenway is composed of existing and new non-motorized pathways. The main focus of my criticism of the Joe Louis Greenway occurs between Hamtramck and the neighborhood of Poletown. The segment connecting Hamtramck and the Dequindre cut does not intersect with Poletown directly. The Hamtramck portion of the greenway is shown to move traffic, both pedestrian and cyclists, away from the surrounding industrial area. The figure 3 shows cars dominating while the greenway is used to shuffle individuals along to the next portion of the greenway. The shared bike and pedestrian paths don't feel sufficient and sends a message that cars still take precedence over the safety of individuals. This segment is an example of poor planning on the City of Detroit's General Services Department.

¹⁰Joe Louis Greenway Framework, 27-29.

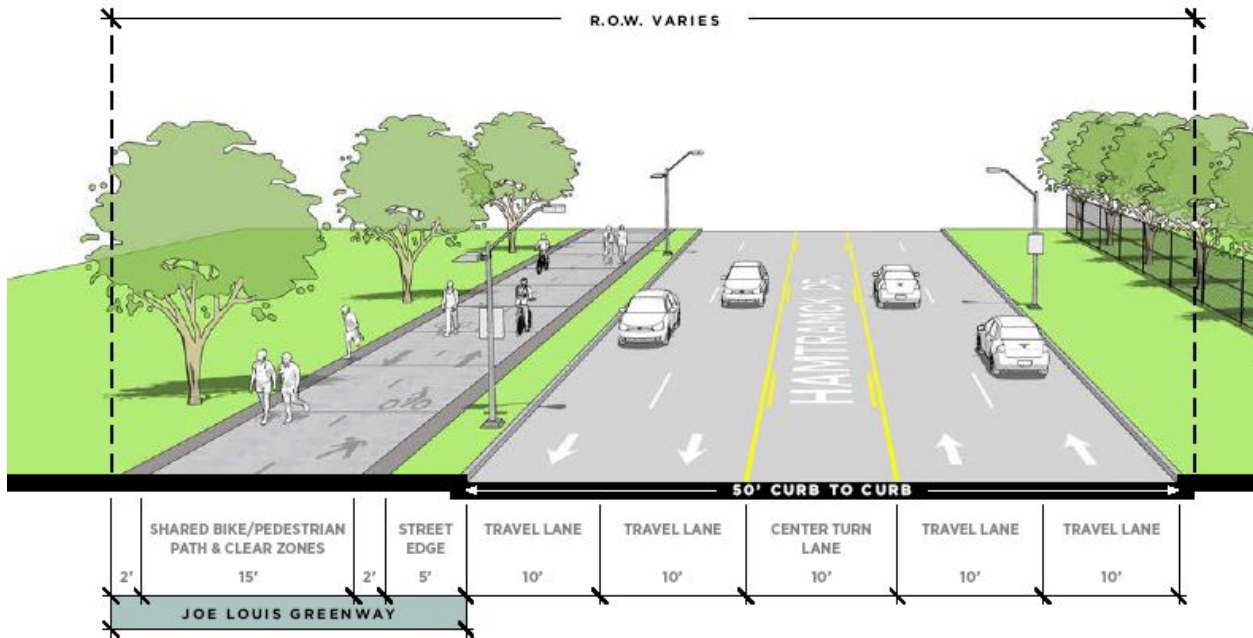


Figure 3 Hamtramck Greenway Segment

Another example of low consideration for pedestrians and cyclists is seen in the Dequindre Cut extension where the greenway route is sandwiched between a street and an active rail. The two greenway segments would benefit from being a larger version of the alley typology described in the framework plan. The alley typology is a single location along the greenway and provides a safe and accessible environment where bikes and vehicles share space¹¹. This typology allows for greater opportunities to connect to local business and strengthen the community. Altering the route could provide greater opportunities for the greenway to diversify its streetscape.

¹¹ Joe Louis Greenway Framework, 117.

Appendix 1: History of Poletown

Poletown was established in the 1870's and was a town of low-income populated with Polish immigrants and the working black population. The two rail lines made the town an easy place for factories to set up. By the turn of the century the population of Poletown had grown and with the addition of the Dodge Main Plant in 1910 would bring thousands of workers to the neighborhood of Poletown¹². A major path of Poletown to Hamtramck was Chene St. The street was lined with family businesses and homes creating a main artery of the town. Two story frame homes were used for living and business for many merchants. Locals took pride in their town with a farmers' market off Chene and Ferry Street and several Polish specific spaces¹³. Throughout the population of Poletown, different cultural groups found refuge. Poletown's urban fabric would change in the 1950's along with other low-income Detroit neighborhoods with the establishment of freeways. Population loss would follow the changes in the urban fabric and would forever be changed in 1980 with the announcement of the General Motors Detroit-Hamtramck Assembly. The new plant had a land area of 465 acres and through eminent domain demolished hundreds of homes and many businesses⁹. The completion of the new plant would open in 1985 and remain open until 2018. The impact of the automotive industry can be well represented by the damage done to Poletown. Freeway and automotive manufacturing in Poletown scarred the urban fabric and the sense of community. The state of Poletown will be examined more closely in the site analysis.

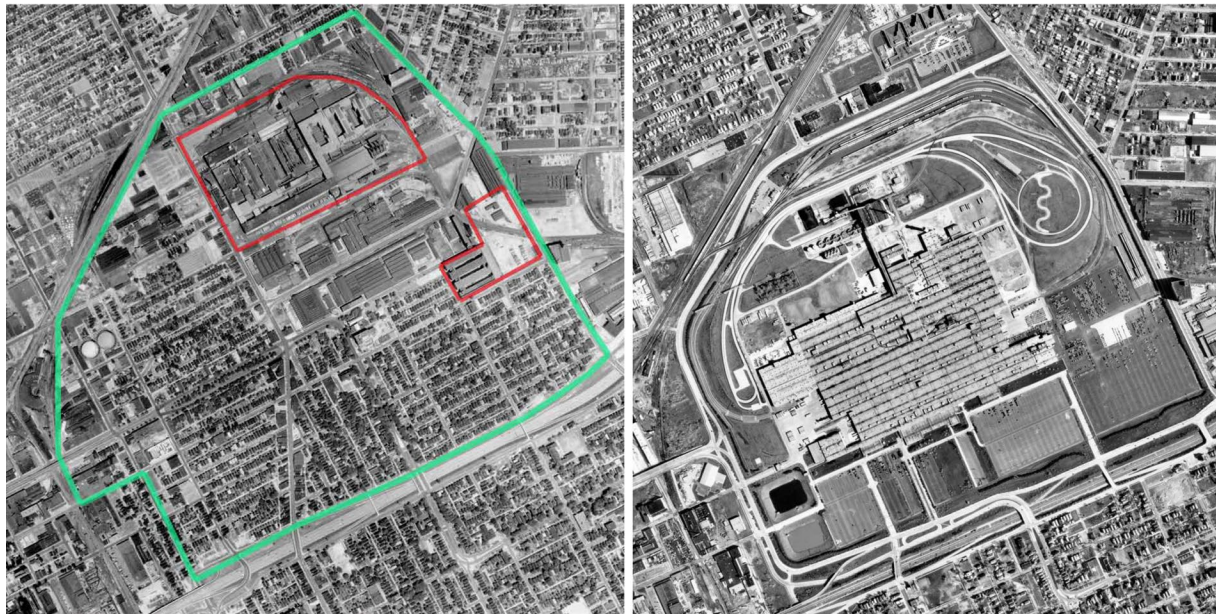


Figure 4 Dodge Main Plant & Detroit-Hamtramck Assembly

¹² Foley, Aaron. "In Retrospect, GM's Poletown Plant Was a Pretty Terrible Idea If We're Being Honest." *The Neighborhoods*. The Neighborhoods Channel City of Detroit Government, 2022.

¹³ Jeanie Wylie, *Poletown: Community Betrayed* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990). 2-12.

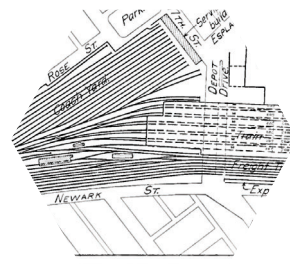
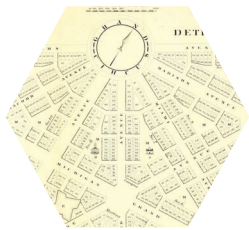
DETROIT

FORT DETROIT

WOODWARD PLAN

RAILROAD NETWORK
CONNECTS THE U.S.

FORD ROLLS OUT
MODEL-T



1701

1807

1904

1908

1805

1886

1870s

1910



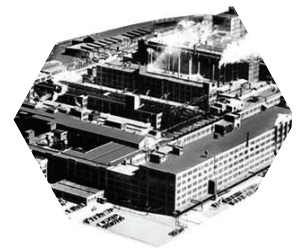
DETROIT FIRE



CARL BENZ
INVENTOR OF THE
MODERN CAR



POLETOWN IS
ESTABLISHED



DODGE MAIN
PLANT

POLETOWN

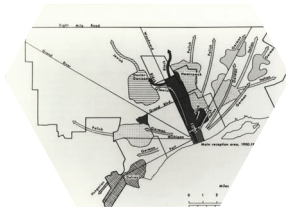
FIGURE 5 DETROIT & POLETOWN TIMELINE



POPULATION
CLIMAX

DETROIT EXPRESSWAY

RECESSION



1950

1959

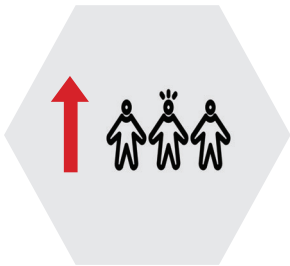
2008

1920-30s

1980

1985

2021



POPULATION
GROWTH



EMINENT DOMAIN



GM HAMTRAMCK
PLANT OPENS



REBRANDED PLANT



FIGURE 5 CONTINUE

Precedents

Dequindre cut

A former railroad line, the Dequindre Cut opened to the public in May of 2009. The two mile long greenway provides pedestrian and bicycle access between the East riverfront, the Eastern Market district and cuts along other residential neighborhoods. As of 2016, the Dequindre Cut and other routes for cyclists and pedestrians let thousands have used the greenway routes.



Figure 6 Dequindre Cut Greenway

Eastern market

The neighborhood of Eastern Market is home to the Eastern Market with its rich history of public commerce. The market's current location was moved as the city of Detroit grew past its originally sheds purpose of selling wood and hay and merged with two other markets located across Detroit in 1850. Today, the market is the anchor of the neighborhood and spans five blocks with five large sheds¹⁴.

¹⁴ Linn, Emily. Belle Isle to 8 Mile: An Insider's Guide to Detroit. 2nd ed. Detroit, MI: City Bird, LLC, 2018. 202.

High Line New York City

Known today as a public greenway in New York City was once an elevated rail line. The High Line was constructed as a large urban infrastructure plan conceived in 1924 and finished in 1934¹⁵. The High Line was fully operational between 1934 and 1960¹². The decline of railroad use shifted with trucks taking over the train's jobs transporting goods and people. The High Line would be abandoned for years until a call to action was made in 1999 to repurpose the elevated rail line. Actions were taken the following years and the High Line was given a new vision as a public space for New Yorker's and in 2009 the first portion of the High Line was open to the public

Years of planning went into making the High Line what it is today. The railroad tracks provided an "irreplaceable Piece of New York City infrastructure" according to Joshua David in "*Reclaiming the High Line: A Project of the Design Trust for Public Space with Friends of the High Line*"¹². The document highlights many benefits to the repurposing of the High Line into a public greenway for New York City. The construction of different segments along the High Line creates pockets of interest for the public to use the space. Access to public space in a crowded city is critical. The High Line provides natural daylighting and fresh air to individuals without compromising space on the street level of New York, while showcasing different views of the city. Additionally, the greenway provides opportunities for economic development. Businesses and property owners can develop the market under and around the High Line and strengthen communities. Having access to a different environment outside of busy sidewalks next to roads encourages other activities to take shape. Public art gatherings, vendors along the elevated rail, and space for natural grasslands were all utilized along the greenway (figure 7). The High Line is a good example of reuse in an urban setting creating new opportunities for all.



Figure 7 High Line Aerie Shot

¹⁵ Joshua David and Karen Hock, "PDF," February 2002 17,48.

Midtown Detroit TechTown district: A Heart for Techtown

Completed in 2013, the Midtown Detroit TechTown's new vision was finalized. As an urban design by architecture firm, Sasaki, the revitalization of the TechTown district was fully realized with plans to promote entrepreneurship and build a community with new mixed-use spaces¹⁶. The scheme set out to utilize existing buildings and repurpose other vacant areas to create an environment that generates innovation. Using a core plaza, the plaza would anchor all activities around the public outdoor space. Defined by the Sasaki team the vision for this project was "structured around a public realm framework that defines key corridors and connects anchor institutions"¹³. The plan allows for both pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles to traverse the area with ease. Additionally, landscape strategies take into consideration the environment through bioswales. Techtown is putting to work the needs of the community to heart with this inspirational urban design.

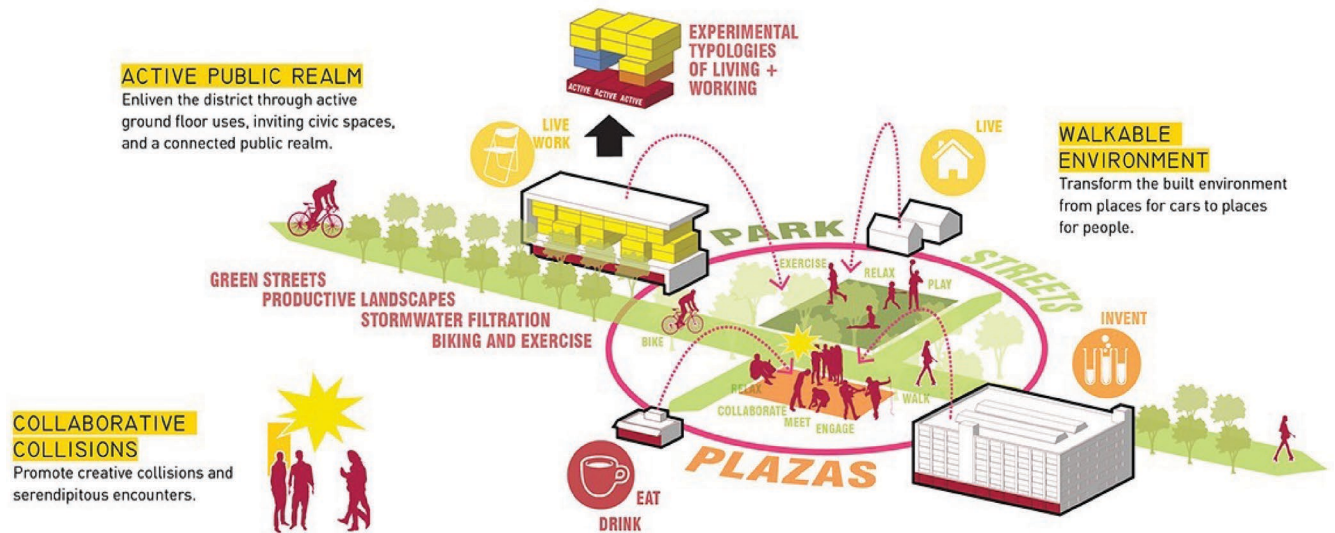


Figure 8 TechTown Design Scheme

¹⁶ American Society of Landscape Architects, "2014 ASLA Professional Awards," Midtown Detroit TechTown District | 2014 ASLA Professional Awards (Landscape Architecture Magazine, 2014)

Detroit RiverWalk Park

The Detroit River has been a central landmark of the city dating back to before European settlement was established. Decades of trading solicited the river as means for commerce and described in modern context as “industrial”. The Detroit RiverWalk projects would be a vision come to life once Detroit saw the city as more than a city for car manufacturing. Individuals wanted to change the city's views from an industrial town and starting with the Detroit River was the way to do just that. The river would become a public space for all to enjoy. The late 90s and into the early 2000s, Detroit constructed buildings along the river with the redesign of the Stroh's River Place campus and the completion of General Motors Renaissance Center opening in 2001¹⁷. After initial funding was granted to revitalize the riverfront, a new vision was written to go along with the project. The Detroit River would become a gathering place for all to work, live, and play¹⁷. Furthermore, the creation of the Detroit RiverFront Conservancy in 2003 would bring together appointed members of business, labor, government and planning together to make the Detroit RiverFront a reality. Divided into two major planning phases, the East and West Riverfront stretches a total of 7.5 miles long. The East Riverfront starts at MacArthur Bridge and ends at the Joe Louis Arena, while the West Riverfront fronts will extend all the way to the Ambassador Bridge. Today the East Riverfront is 90 percent complete with locations such as Gabriel Richard Park, Mt. Elliott Park, Chene Park and Milliken State Park. Additionally, work on the West Riverfront from design sketches will promote the same vision of the East Riverfront as a public gathering place. The Detroit RiverWalk is becoming an “iconographic image” of the city of Detroit¹⁷.



Figure 9 East Detroit RiverWalk

¹⁷ Hartig 82,84,117.

Superkilen

The colorful project known as Superkilen is in Copenhagen, Denmark. This urban space project is a collaboration between BIG, Topotek1 and SUPERFLEX. The half mile long landscape architecture is situated in one neighborhood between buildings and roads. To accomplish easier flow of traffic, bike paths were reconfigured, and bus routes were shifted to achieve better circulation to the infrastructure¹⁸. Three zones run right into one another and are composed of three separate themes dictated by color (figure 10). The green zone focuses on sports and play. Centered around children and families, the green zone incorporates green landscape and playful areas for games like hockey, badminton, and overall outdoor fitness. The black zone focuses on being a place to meet. Using a mix of landscape trees and sculptures like pieces of outdoor furniture, this zone is easy to identify different points of meeting for the community. The red zone focuses on market, culture, and sports. A large central square allows for the community to come out and play outdoors. The surface treatment of the hardscape is to enforce the edge not taken up by the buildings on either side of the zone.

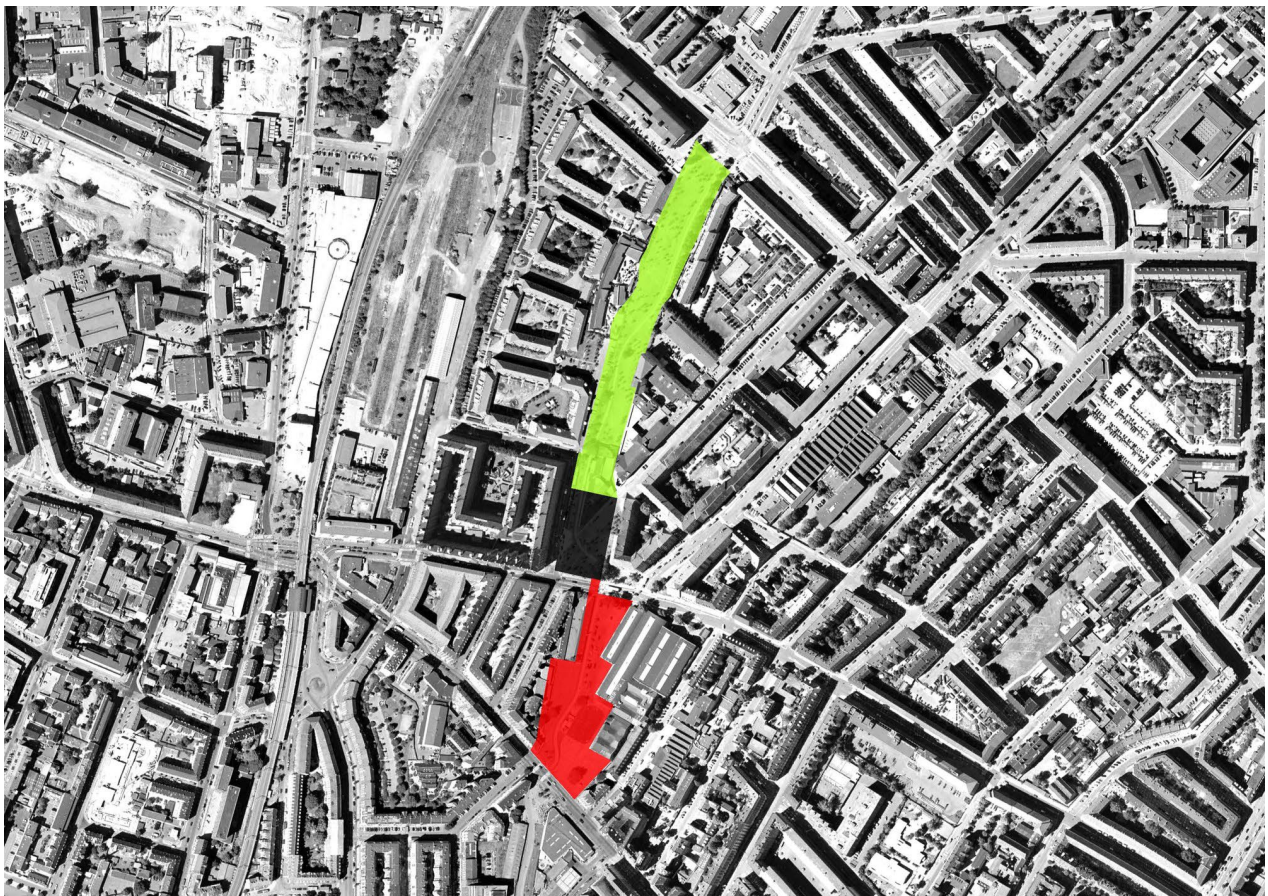


Figure 10 Superkilen Zones

¹⁸ "Superkilen / Topotek 1 + Big Architects + Superflex," ArchDaily (ArchDaily, October 25, 2012)

SITE ANALYSIS



FIGURE 11 POLETOWN BORDER



SITE CONTEXT

Poletown is one of several neighborhoods on Detroit’s North end. The North/South edges are Warren Steet and the city limit with Hamtramck on the other end. The East/West edges Saint Aubin St. and Mt. Elliott St. Most of the Detroit-Hamtramck Plant is in the Poletown border (shown in red). Large portions of Poletown were redlined including the factories (figure 14). One major rail line runs through Poletown on its west side. The proposed Joe Louis Greenway path runs along the rail line meeting up with the Dequindre cut beyond the limits of the neighborhood. Much of the neighborhood of Poletown is zoned for industrial or residential use. One important zone to note is the neighborhood commercial zone shown in figures 15 Either side of the neighborhood commercial zone is along Chene St. and Chene-Ferry Farmers’ Market. The farmers’ market was one of eight points of interest of the neighborhood.

- 1.General Motor Factory Zero Plant: This plant is the rebranded GM Detroit-Hamtramck Plant and is set to manufacture electric cars for General Motors.
- 2.Schlafer Iron & Steel Junkyard
- 3 -4 Two churches
- 5.The Chene-Ferry Farmers’ Market
6. John carpet House: A gathering place during the summer for live music and events
- 7.Greenhouses
- 8.Peacemakers International

Establishing anchors of Poletown allowed me to create my alterative greenway route.

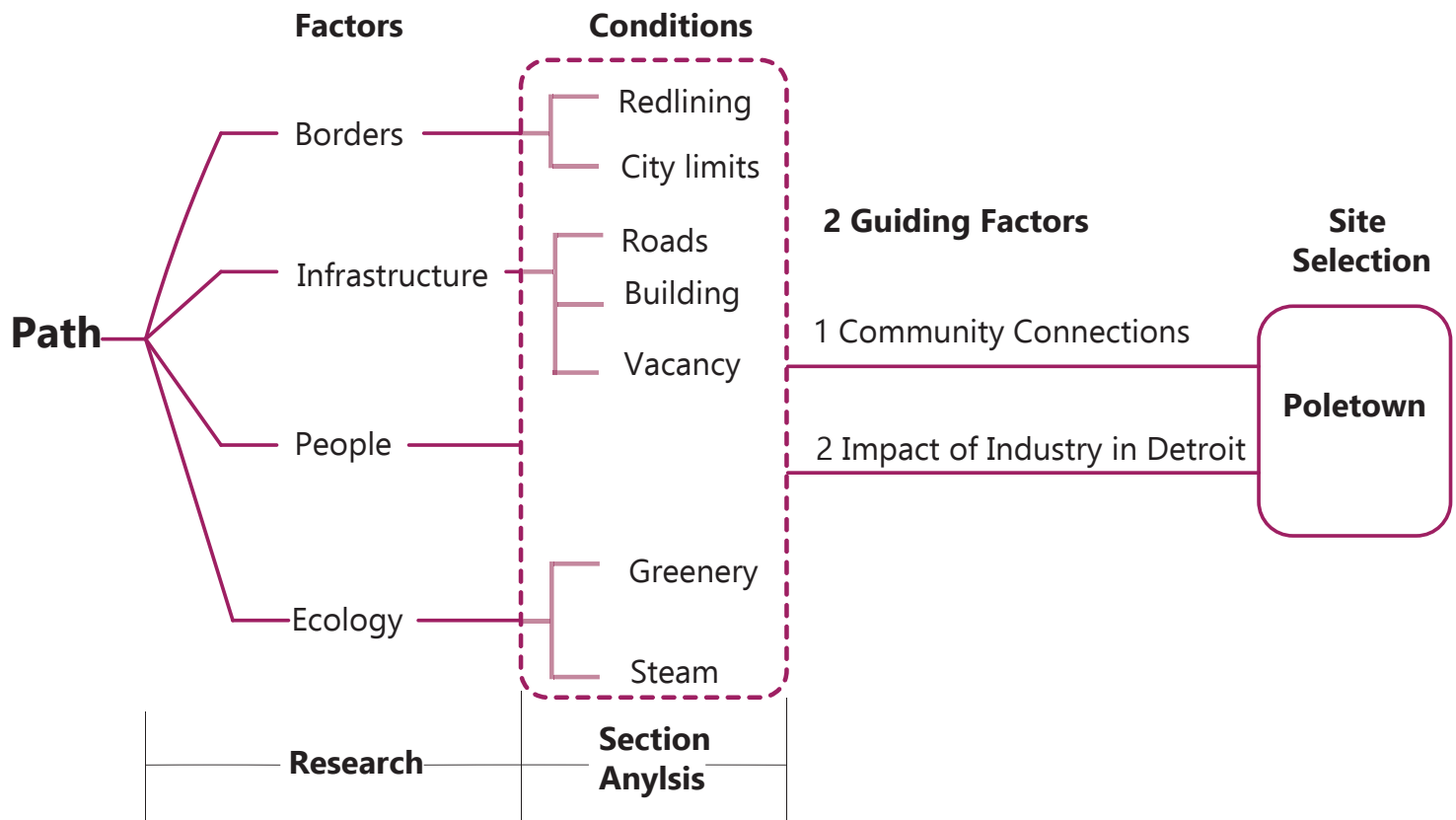


FIGURE 12 THESIS RESEARCH TO SITE AREA MIND WEB



FIGURE 13 RAILROADS

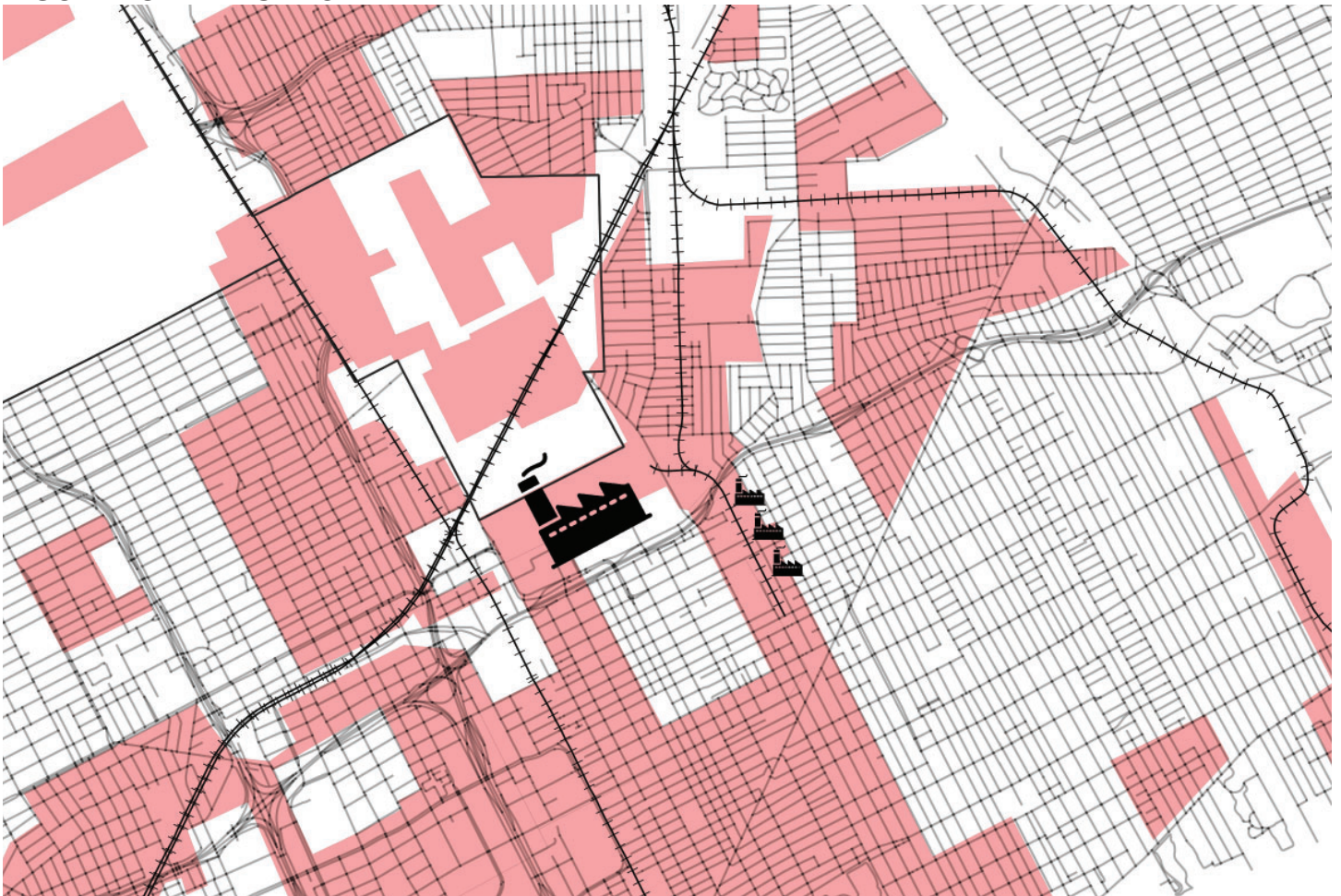


FIGURE 14 REDLINING

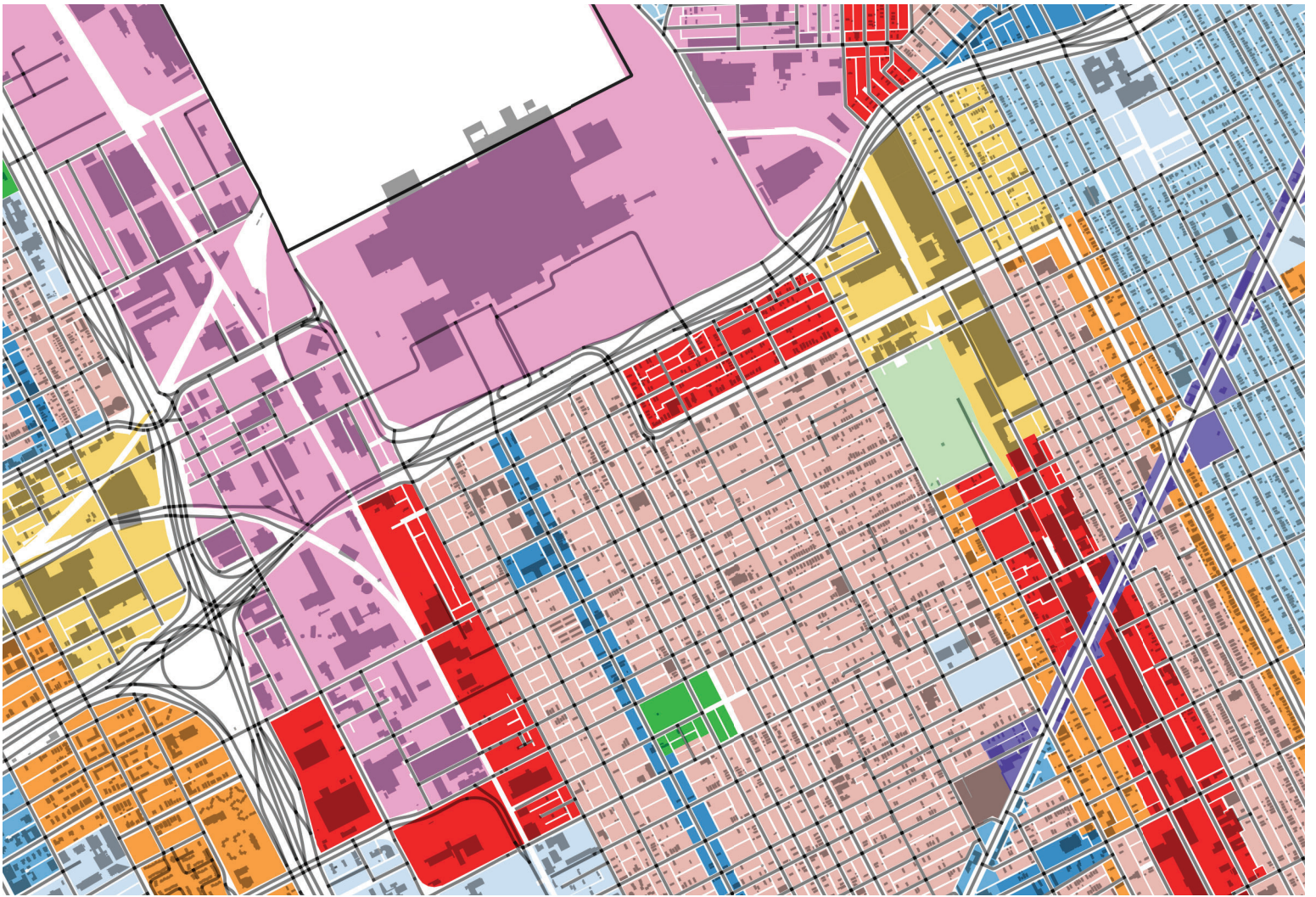
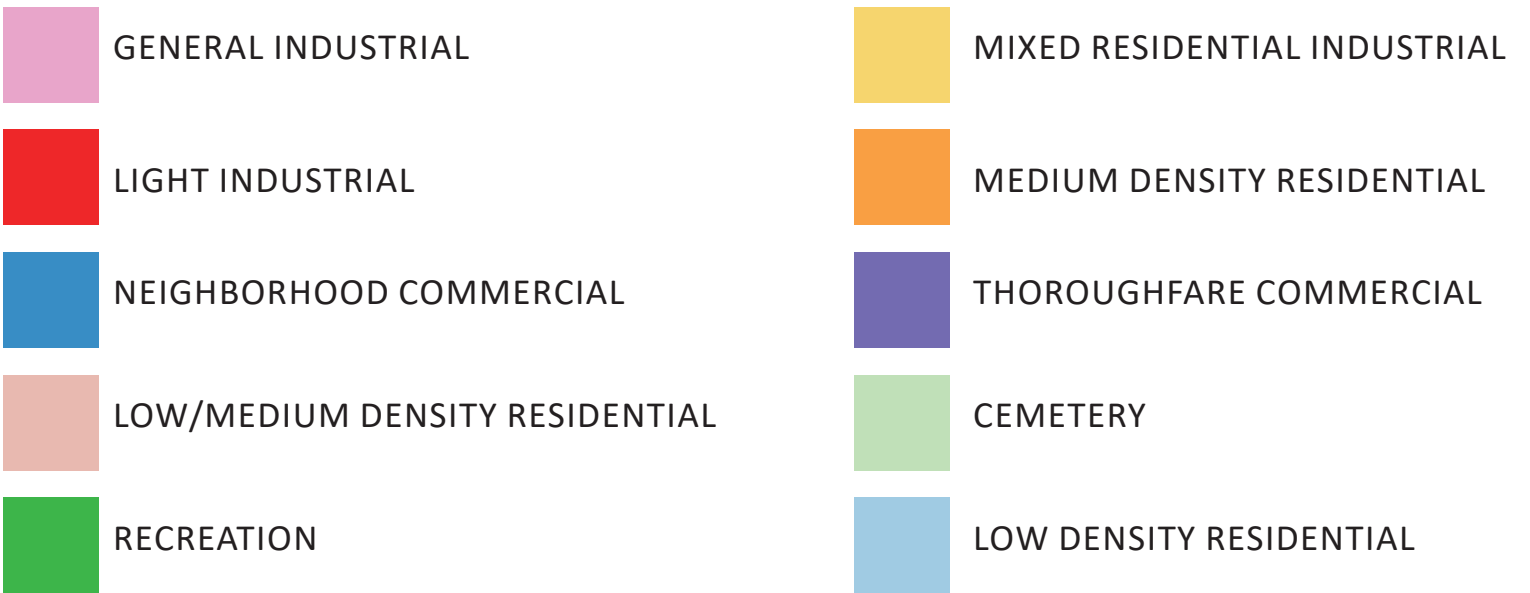


FIGURE 15 POLETOWN LAND USE



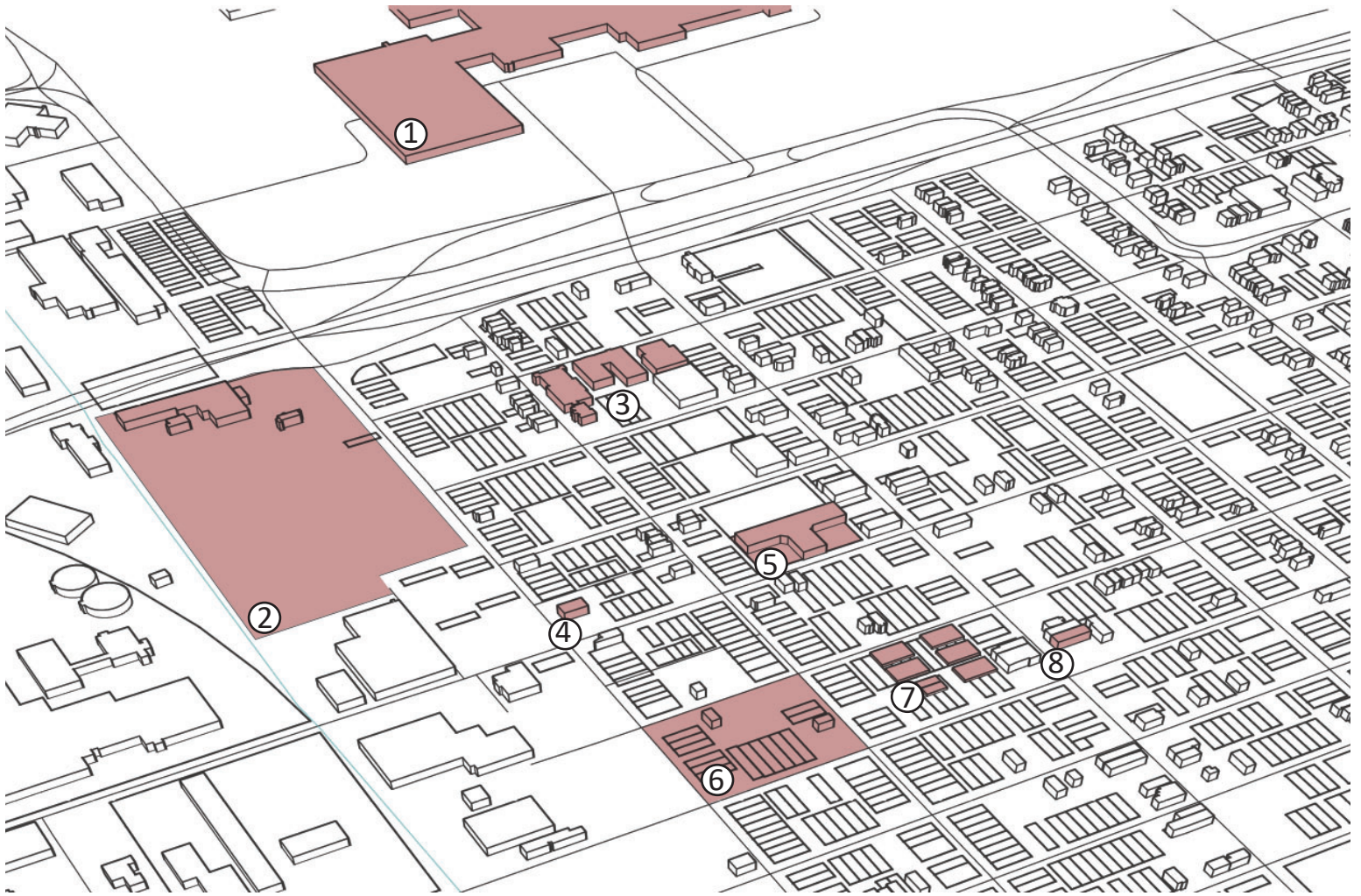


FIGURE 16 POLETOWN POINTS OF INTEREST



1 GENERAL MOTOR FACTORY ZERO



2 SCHLAFER IRON & STEEL JUNKYARD



3 FAITH XPERIENCE CHURCH



4 FIRST UNION BAPTIST CHURCH



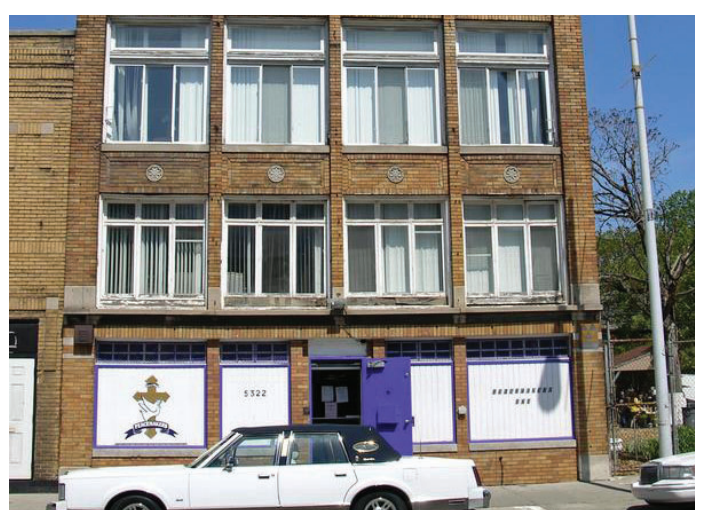
5 CHENE-FERRY FARMERS' MARKET



6 JOHN CARPET HOUSE



7 RECOVERY PARK GREENHOUSES



8 RECOVERY

Program

Upon completing an overall site analysis with GIS mapping, I determined a smaller site area for my design intervention. Focusing on a smaller site area enabled me to design a more cohesive design. I have defined three majors' users of my design: Poletown residents, pedestrians, and cyclists of the alternative greenway proposal. I wanted to design activities surrounding the greenway path to engage everyone. A low traffic street was decided on as the alterative greenway path for two main reasons. One, it allowed for easier transition for bike travel as the road is already paved. Two was to use this stretch of the Joe Louis Greenway as a statement of reclamation, claiming the urban path as a public space without automotive movement.

USE GROUPS



PEDESTRIANS



CYCLISTS






RESIDENTS

DESIGN GOALS:

1. IMPROVE THE GREENWAY ROUTE TO SERVE THE POLETOWN COMMUNITY MORE DIRECTLY
2. FILL VOIDS WITHIN POLETOWN



FIGURE 17 ALTERNATIVE GREENWAY PROPOSAL

-  ALTERNATIVE PROPOSED GREENWAY
-  JOE LOUIS GREENWAY
-  SITE AREA

Early Design



FIGURE 17 EXAMINING AXIS'S

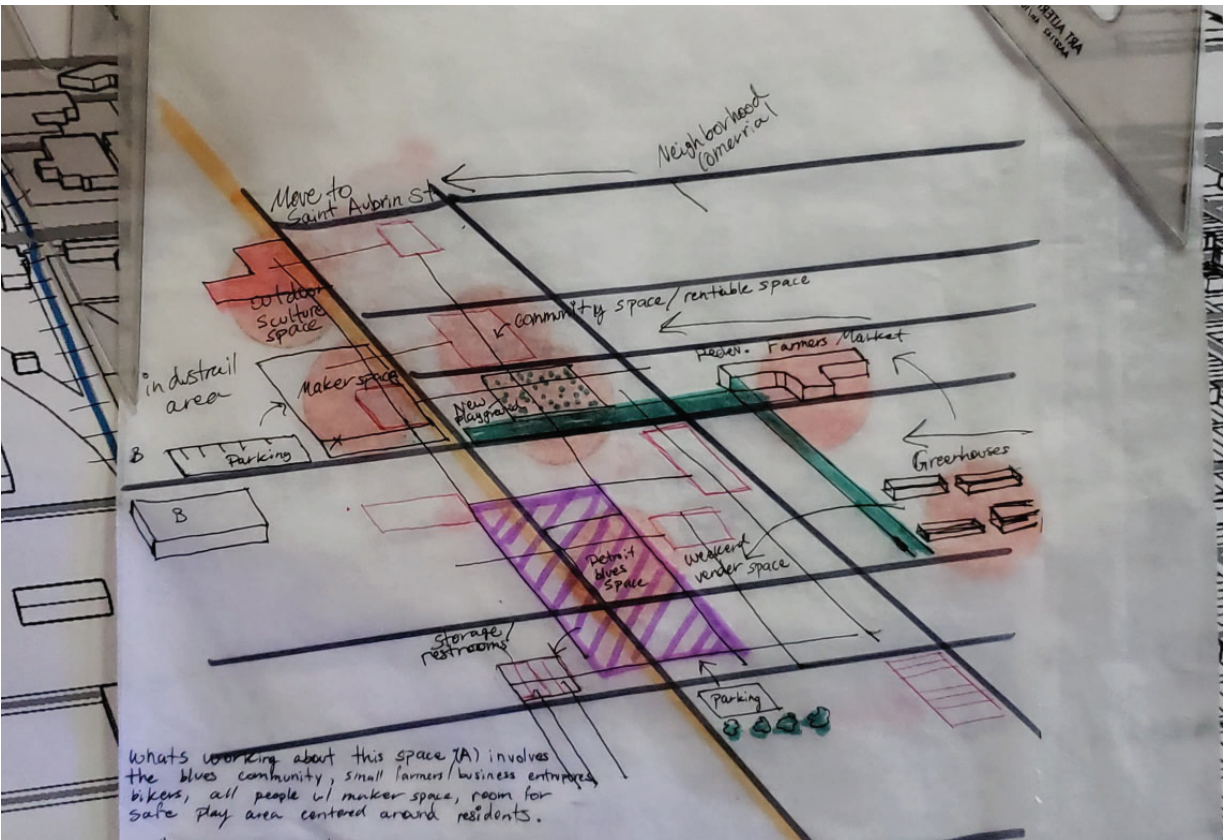


FIGURE 18 EXPLORING PROGRAM

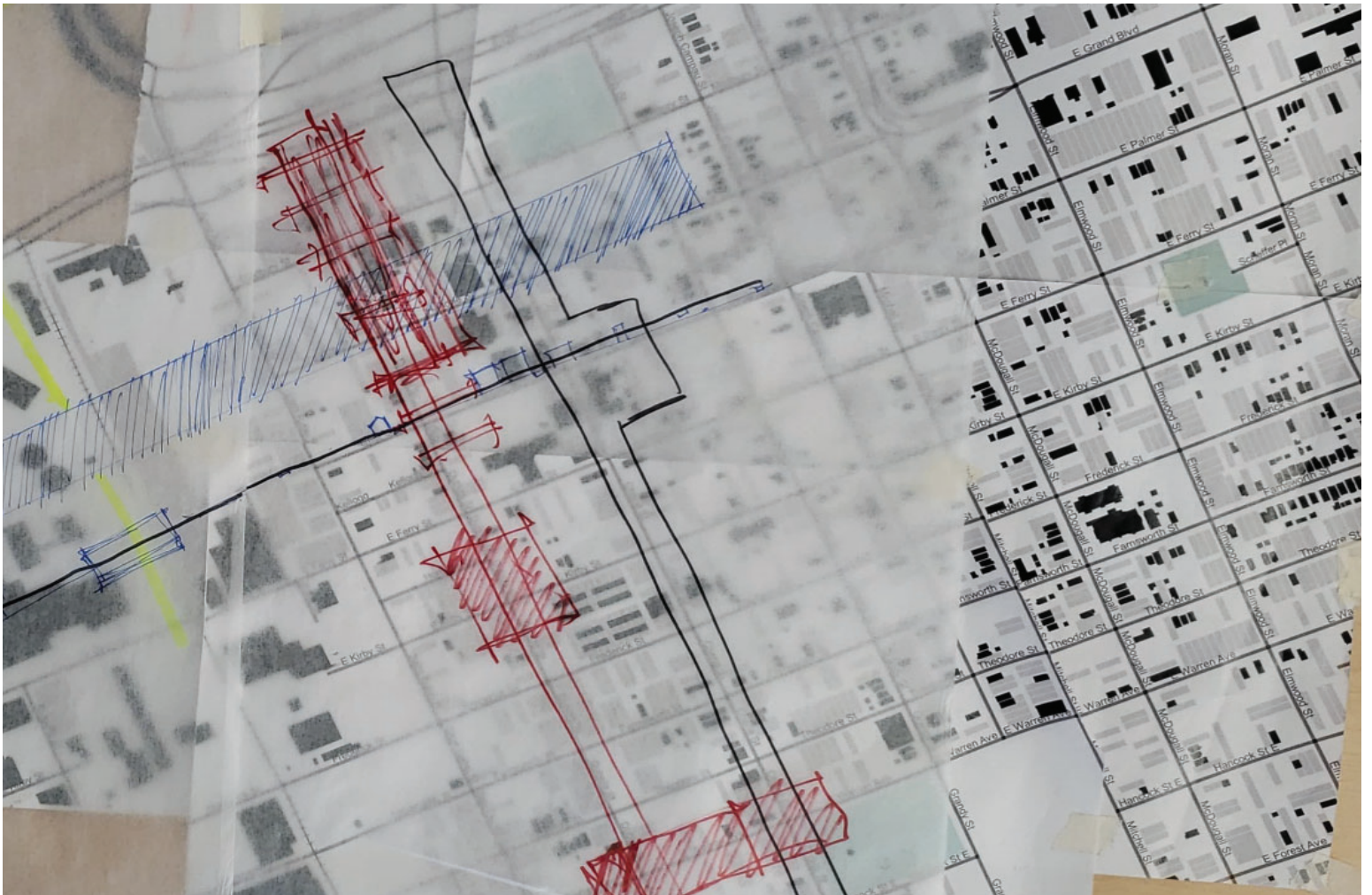


FIGURE 19 MAIN CORRIDOR



FIGURE 20 GREENWAY ACTIVITIES

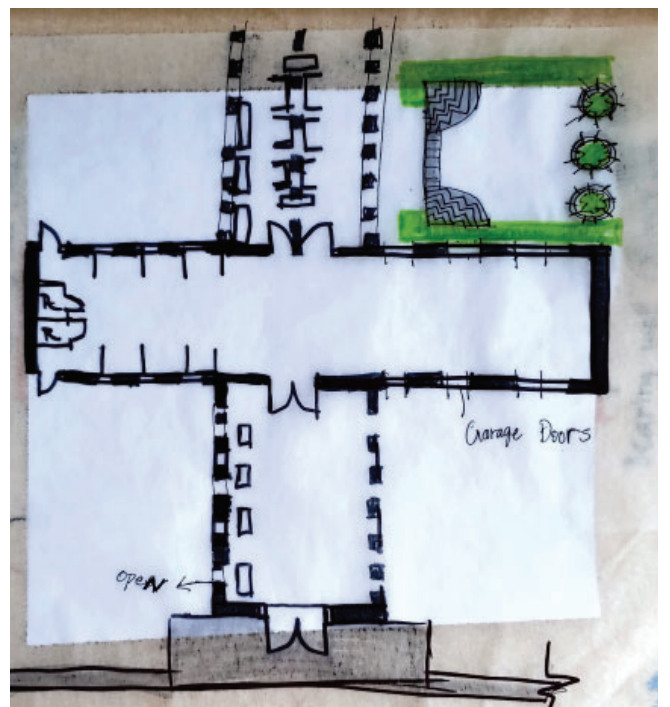
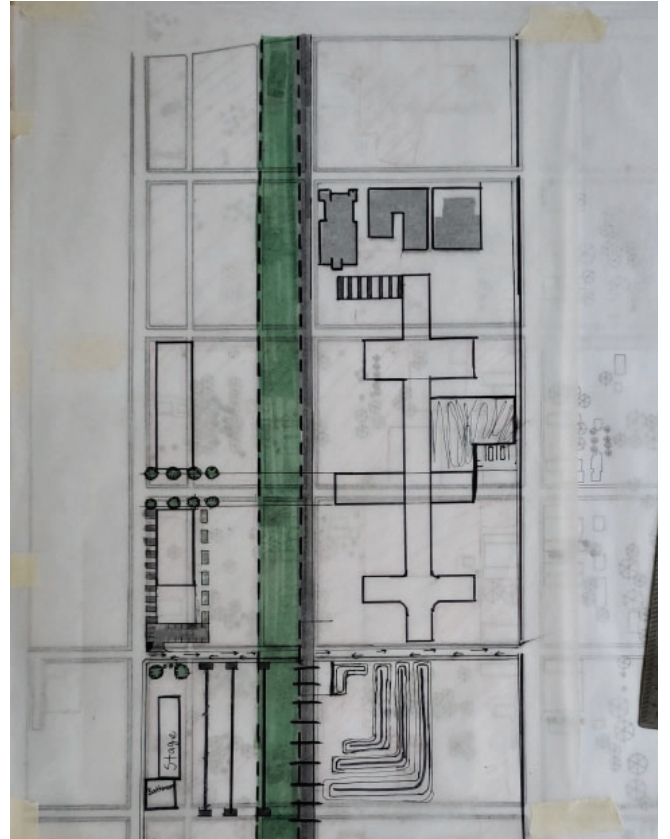
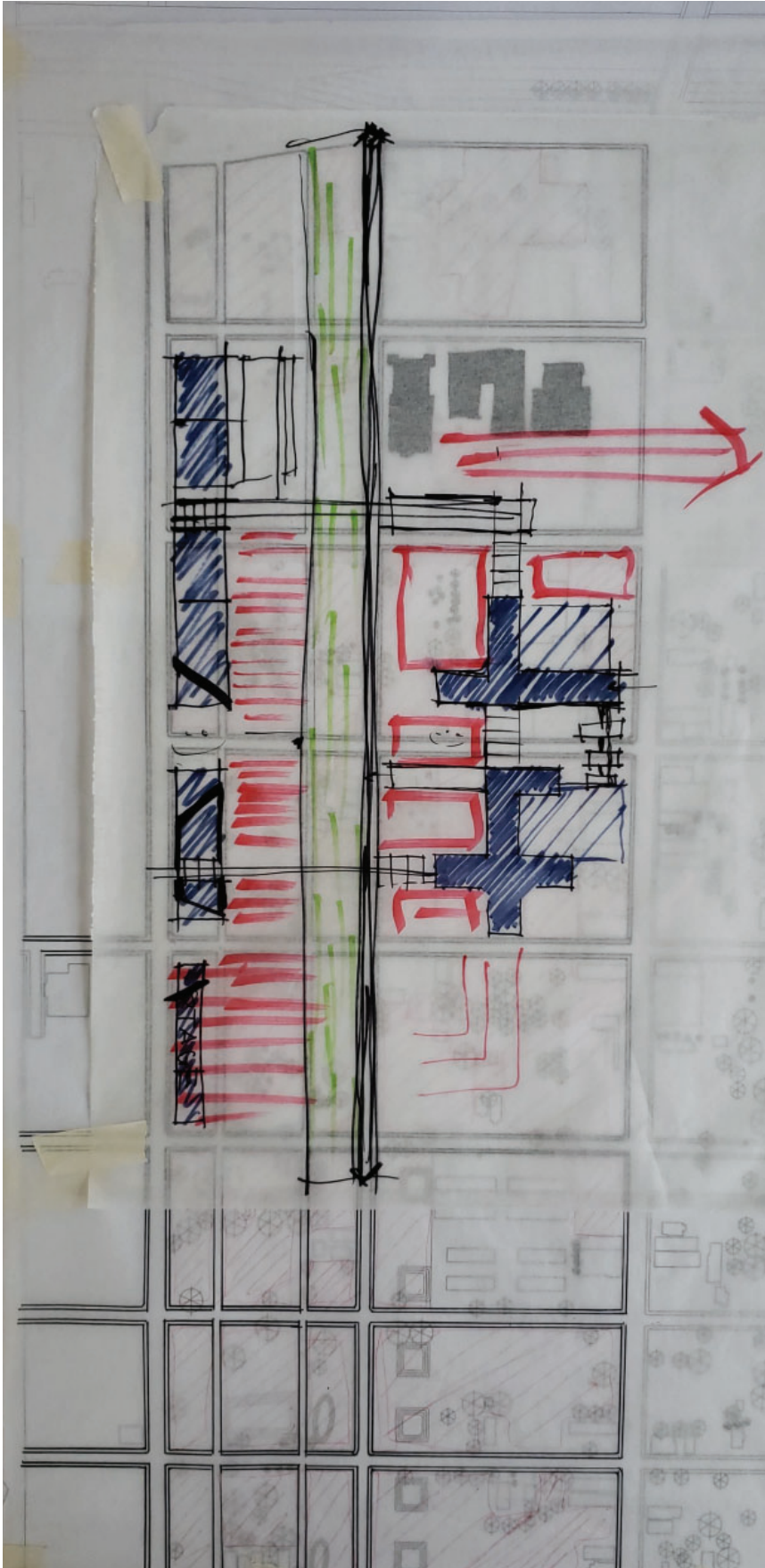


FIGURE 20-23 GREENWAY SPACE PROGRAMMING₂₅

■ ■ ■ FINAL DESIGN ■ ■ ■

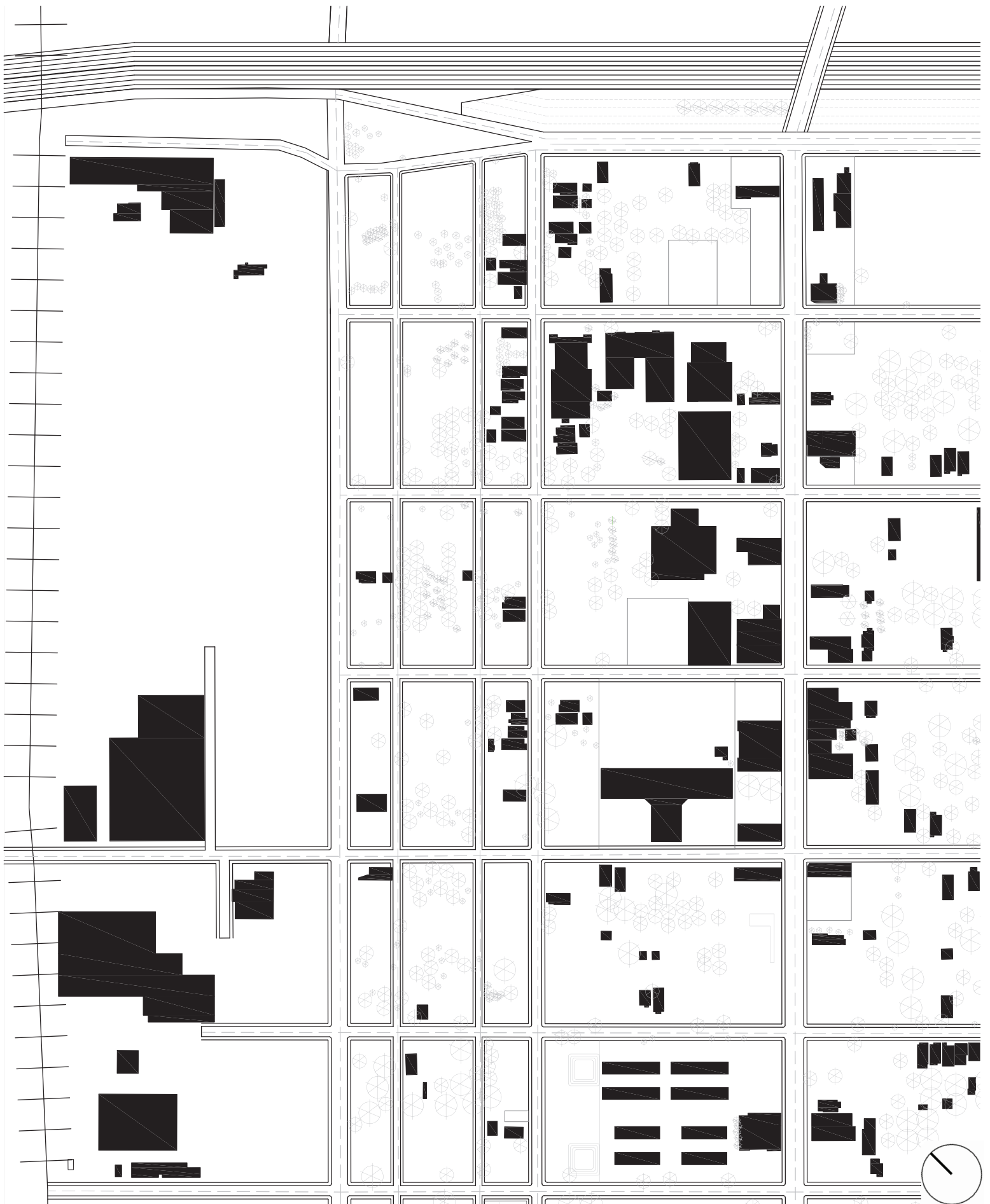


FIGURE 24 EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

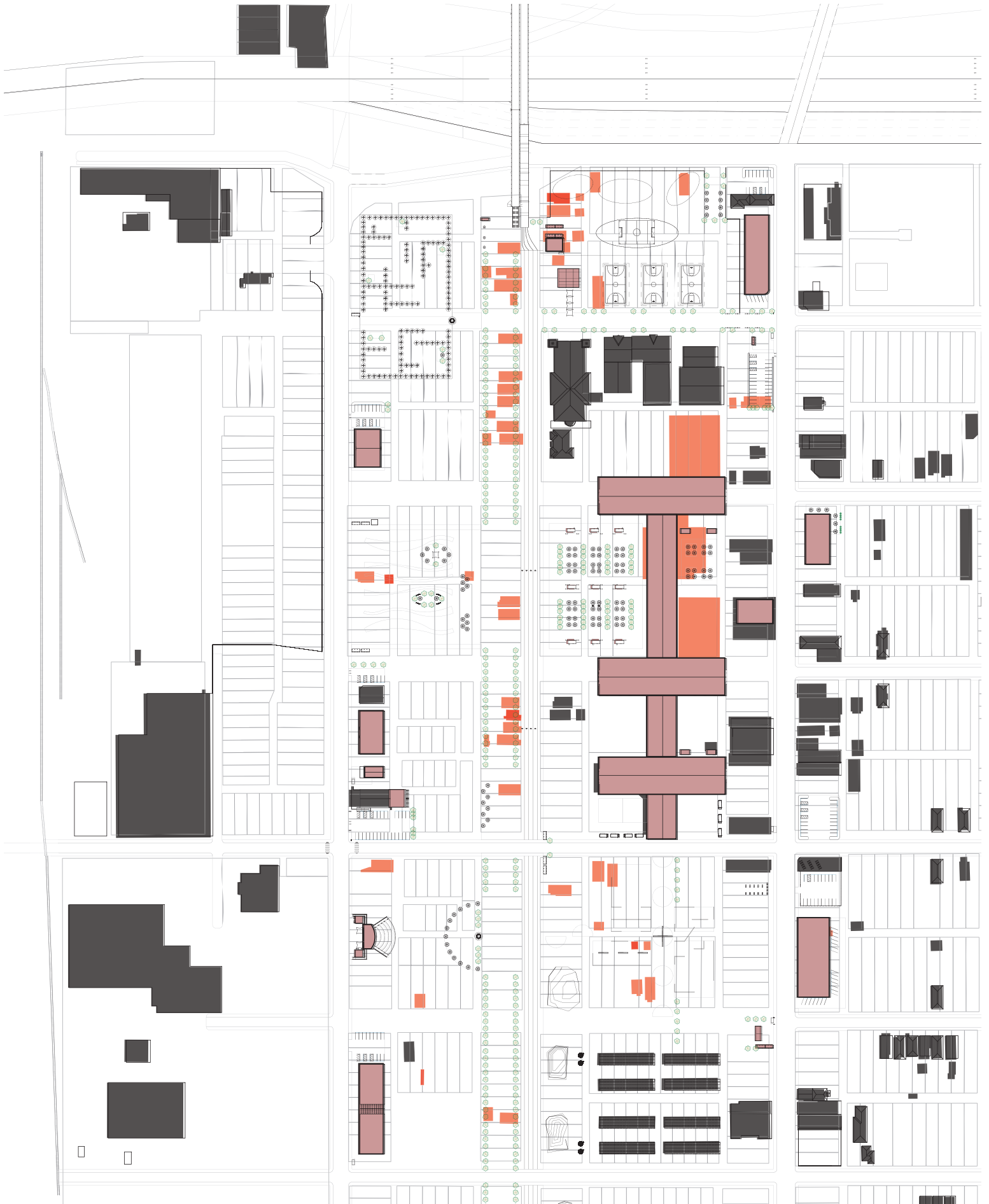


FIGURE 25 SITE PLAN WITH PARCEL OVERLAY

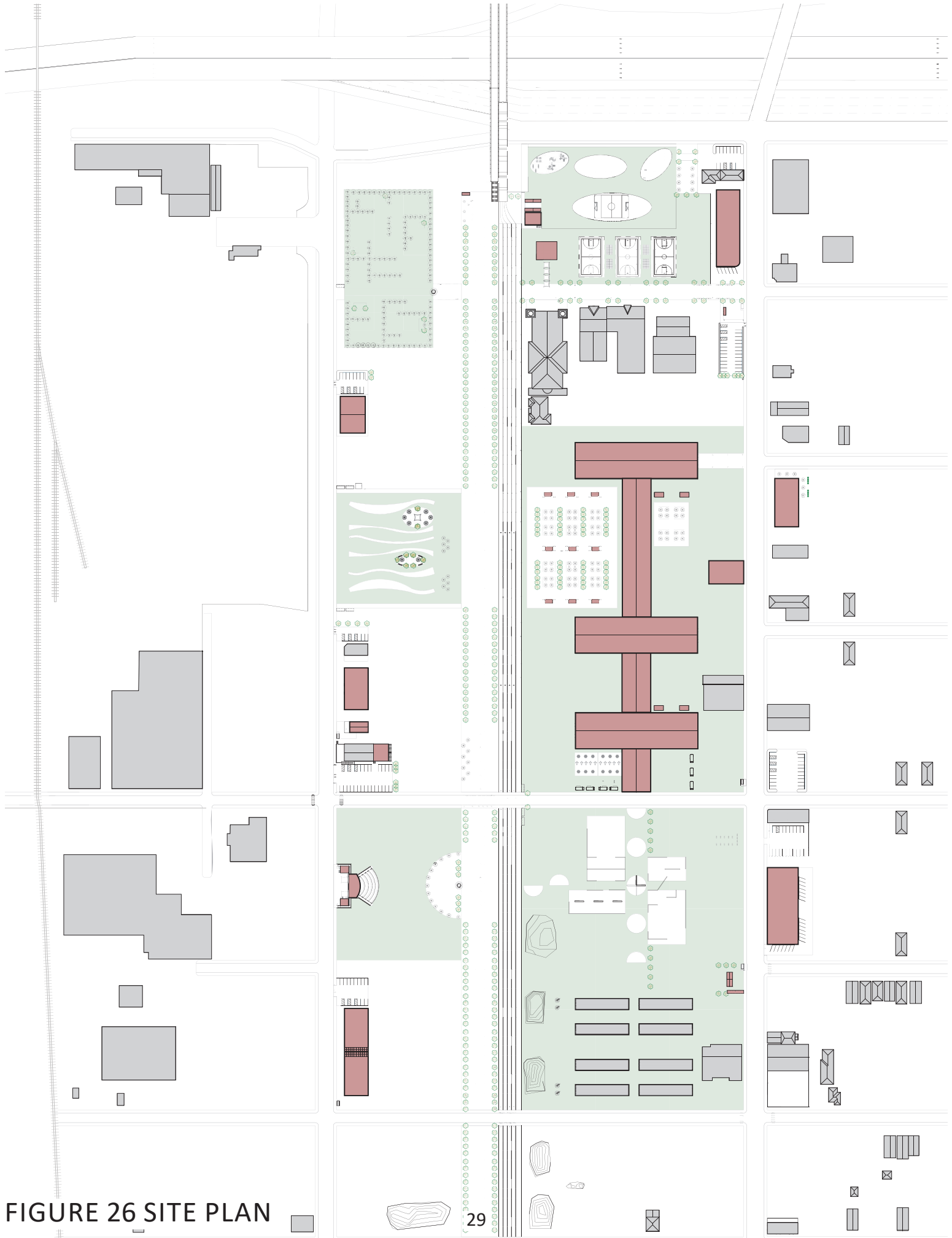


FIGURE 26 SITE PLAN

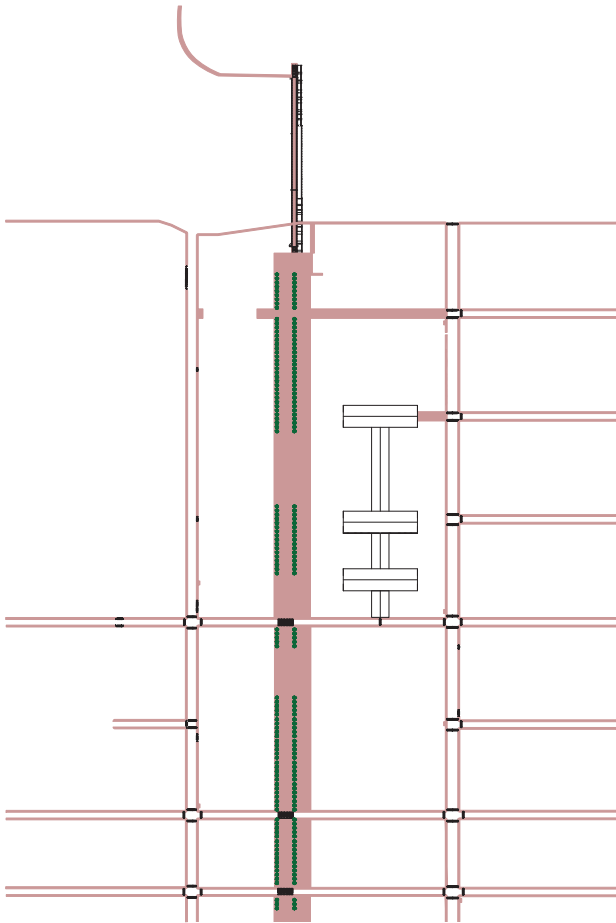


FIGURE 27 PEDESTRIAN PATHS

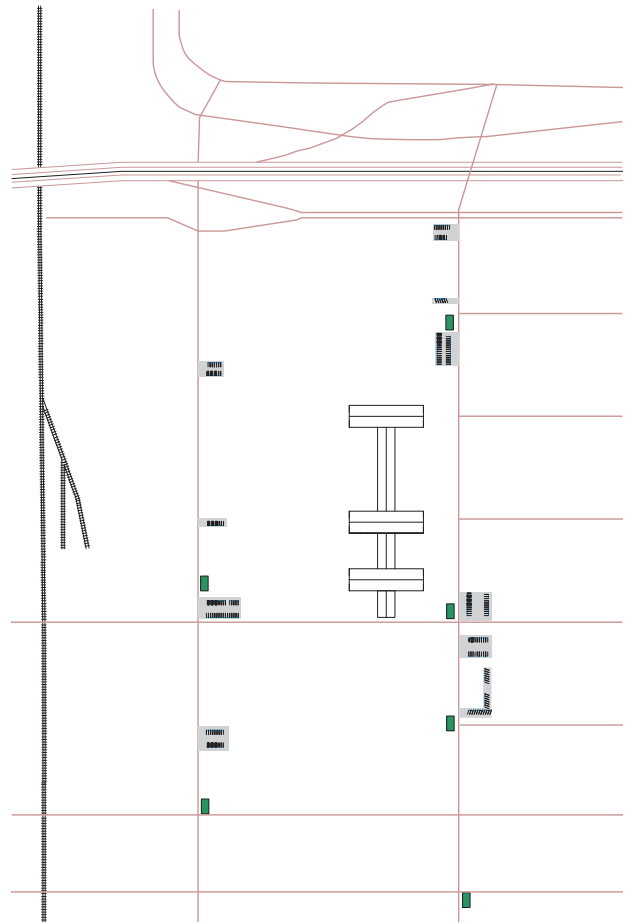


FIGURE 28 VEHICULAR PATHS

BUS STOP ■

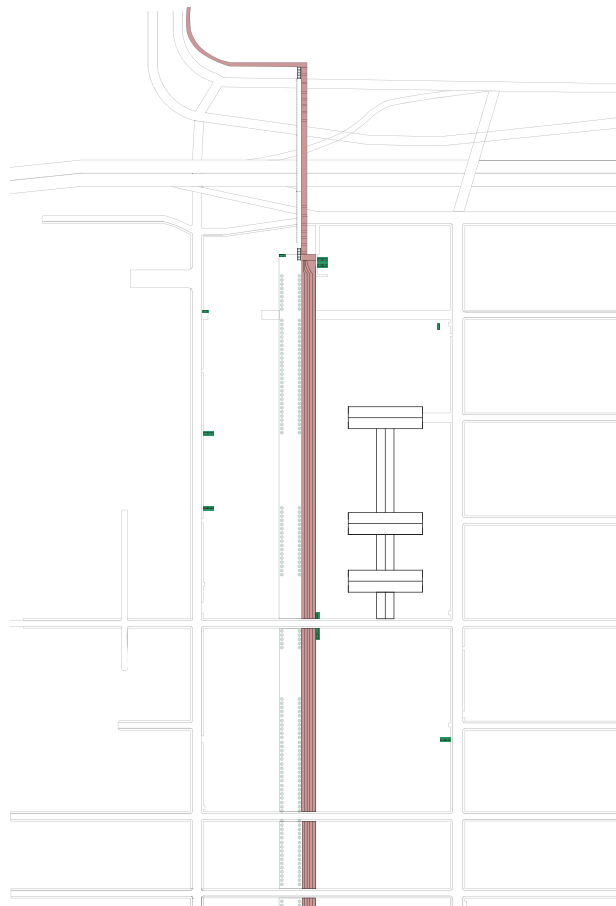
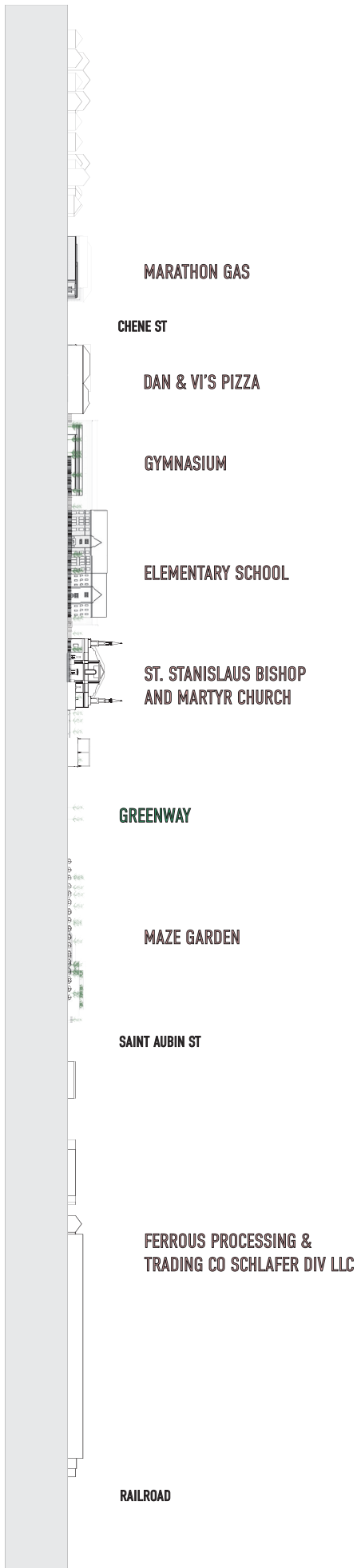


FIGURE 29 CYCLIST PATHS

BIKE SHELTER ■

NORTH ELEVATION
1/64" = 1'-0"



SOUTH ELEVATION
1/64" = 1'-0"

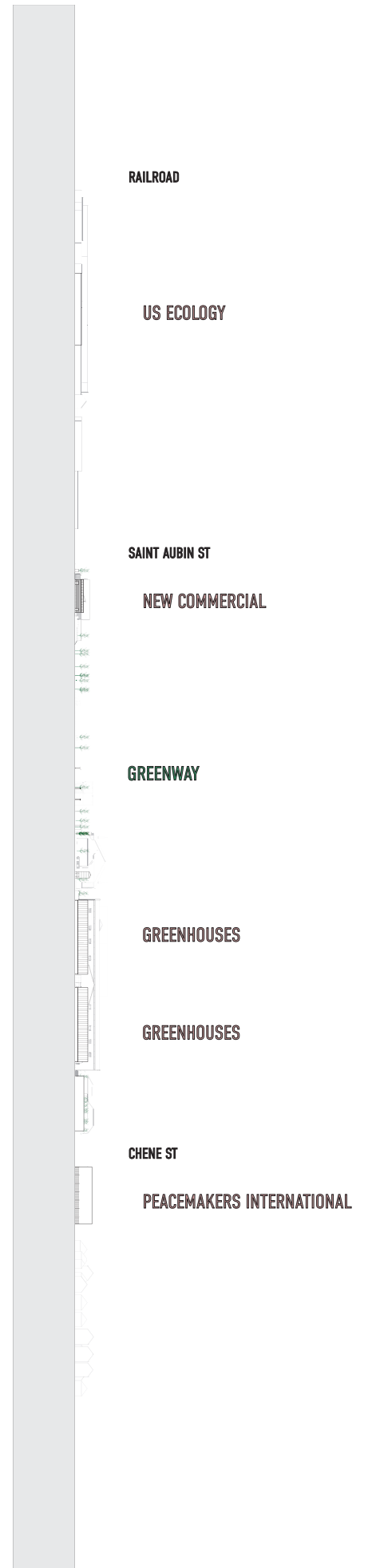
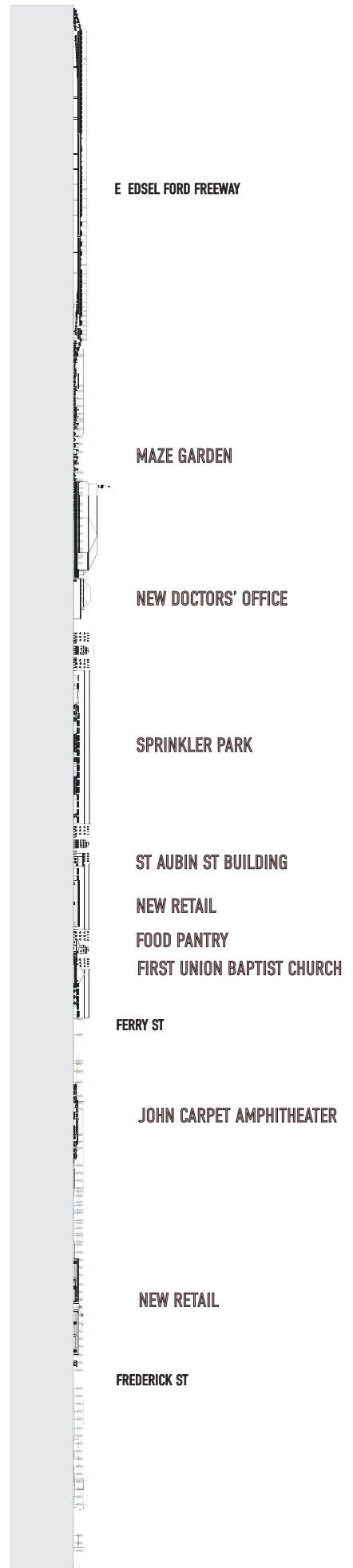


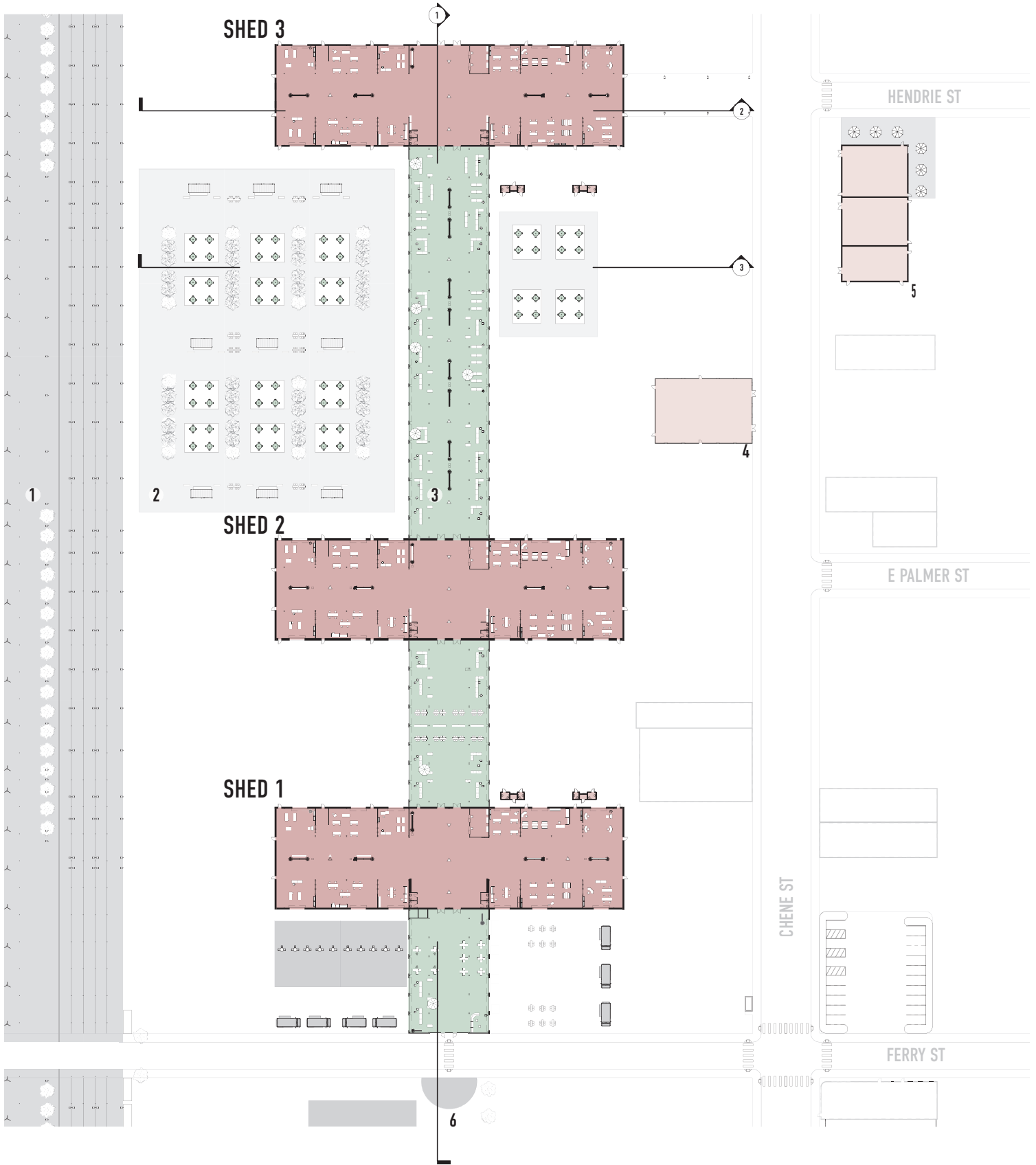
FIGURE 30-33 SITE ELEVATIONS

EAST ELEVATION
1" = 80'-0"



WEST ELEVATION
1" = 80'-0"





FARMER'S MARKET
GROUND FLOOR
1/32" = 1'-0"

- ENCLOSED SHEDS / NEW BUILDINGS
- CONNECTING SHEDS
- OUTDOOR AMENITIES

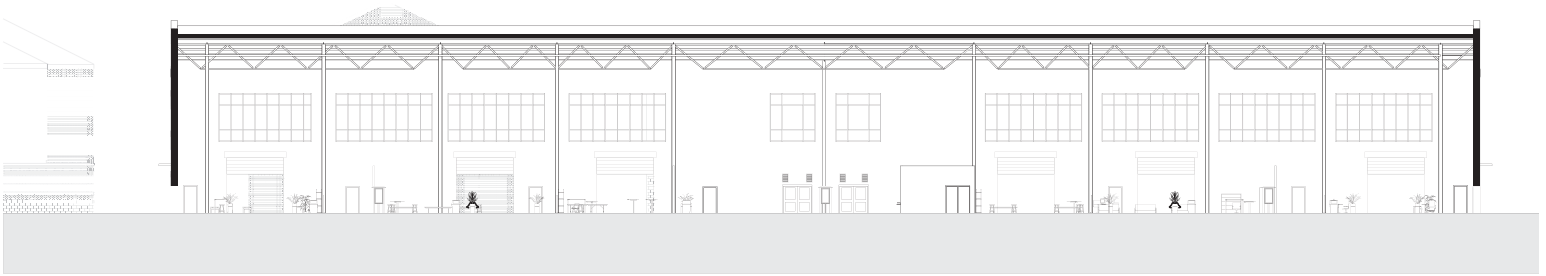
- 1 GREENWAY TRAIL
- 2 OUTDOOR EATER
- 3 EXPANDED FARMER'S MARKET
- 4 NEW COMMERCIAL
- 5 MIXED RETAIL
- 6 MURAL PARK

FIGURE 34



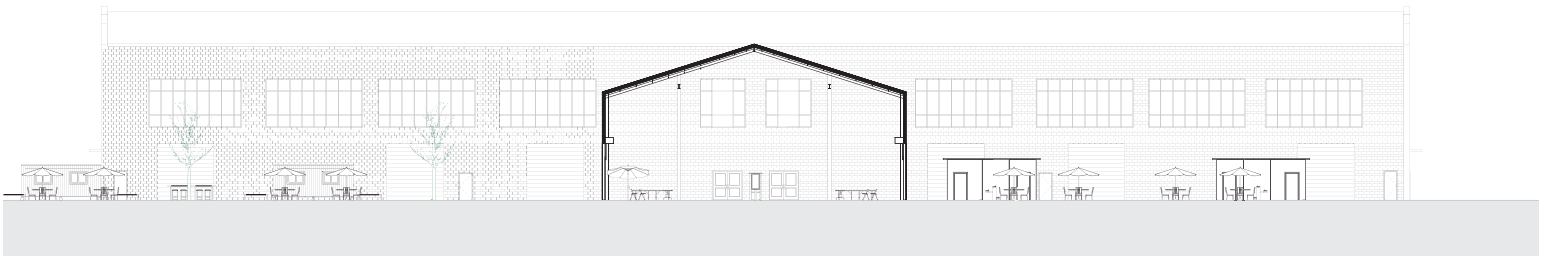
① FARMER'S MARKET LONGITUDINAL SECTION
1" = 20'-0"

FIGURE 35



② SHED 1 SECTION CUT
1/8" = 1'-0"

FIGURE 36



③ SHED 2 & 3 SECTION
1/8" = 1'-0"

FIGURE 37

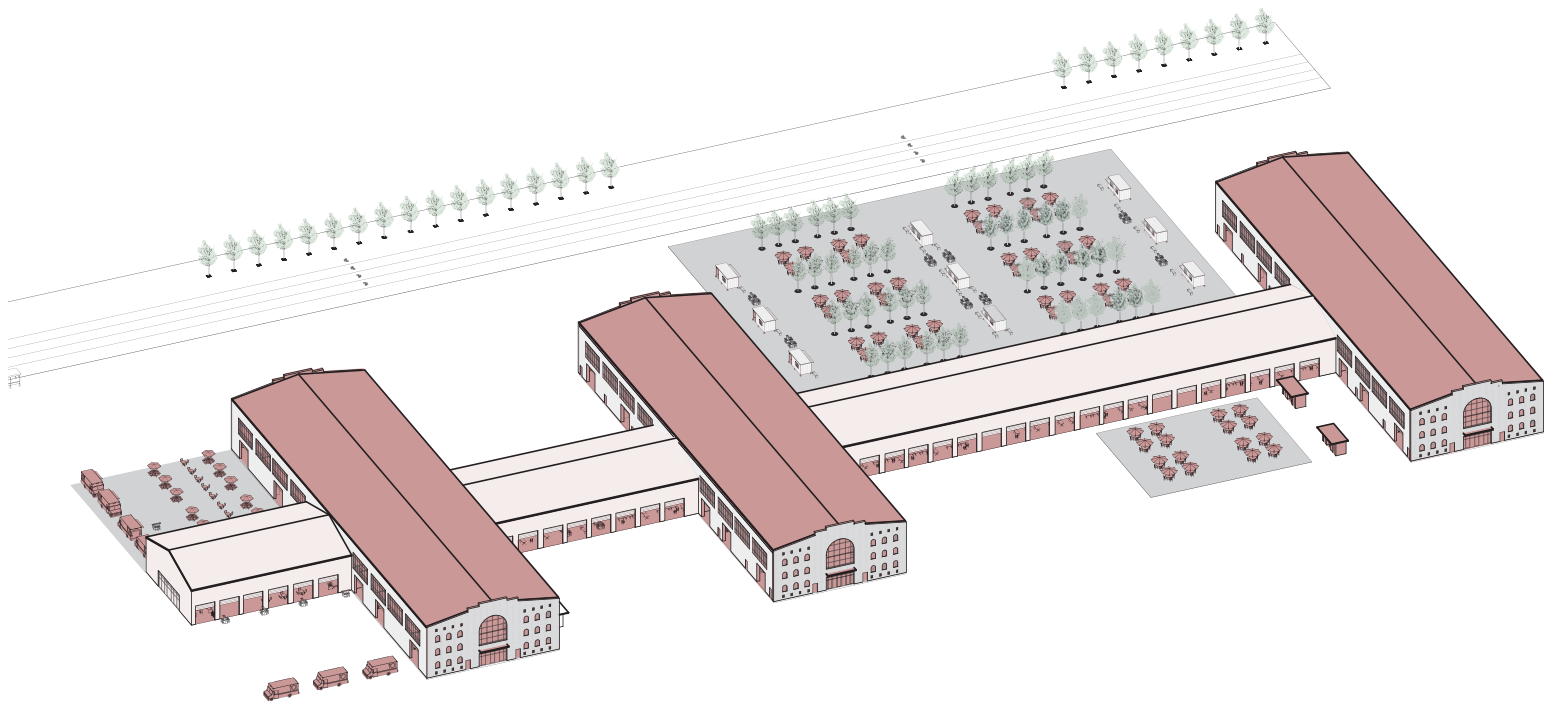


FIGURE 38 SUMMER DIAGRAM

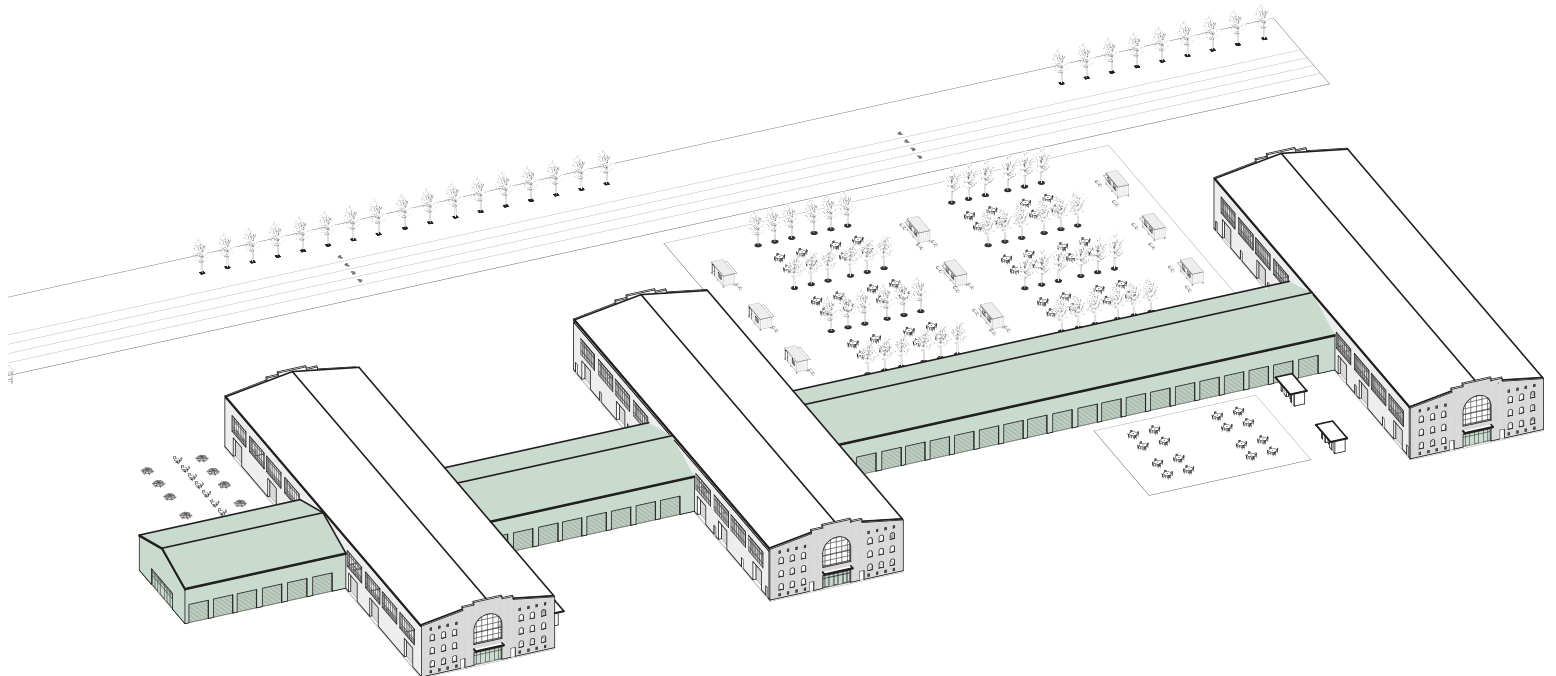
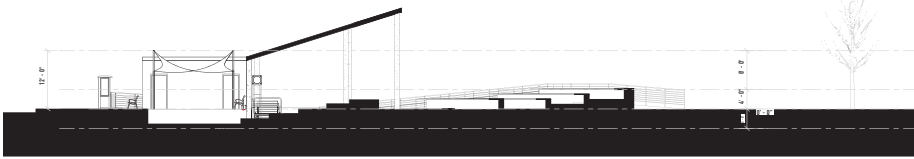
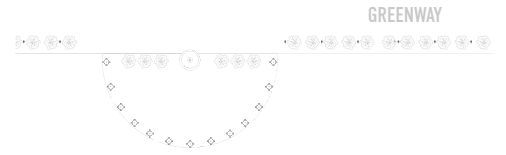


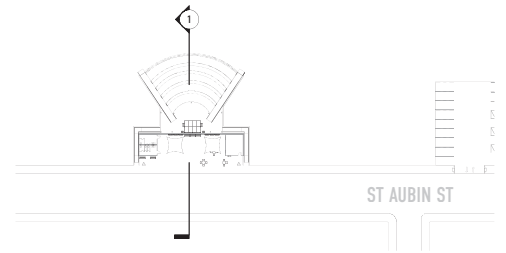
FIGURE 39 WINTER DIAGRAM



AMPHITHEATER ELEVATION
 1/8" = 1'-0"



1 AMPHITHEATER SECTION
 1/8" = 1'-0"



AMPHITHEATER PLAN
 1/32" = 1'-0"

FIGURE 40 AMPHITHEATER DRAWINGS



FIGURE 41 BRIDGE VIEW TO GREENWAY

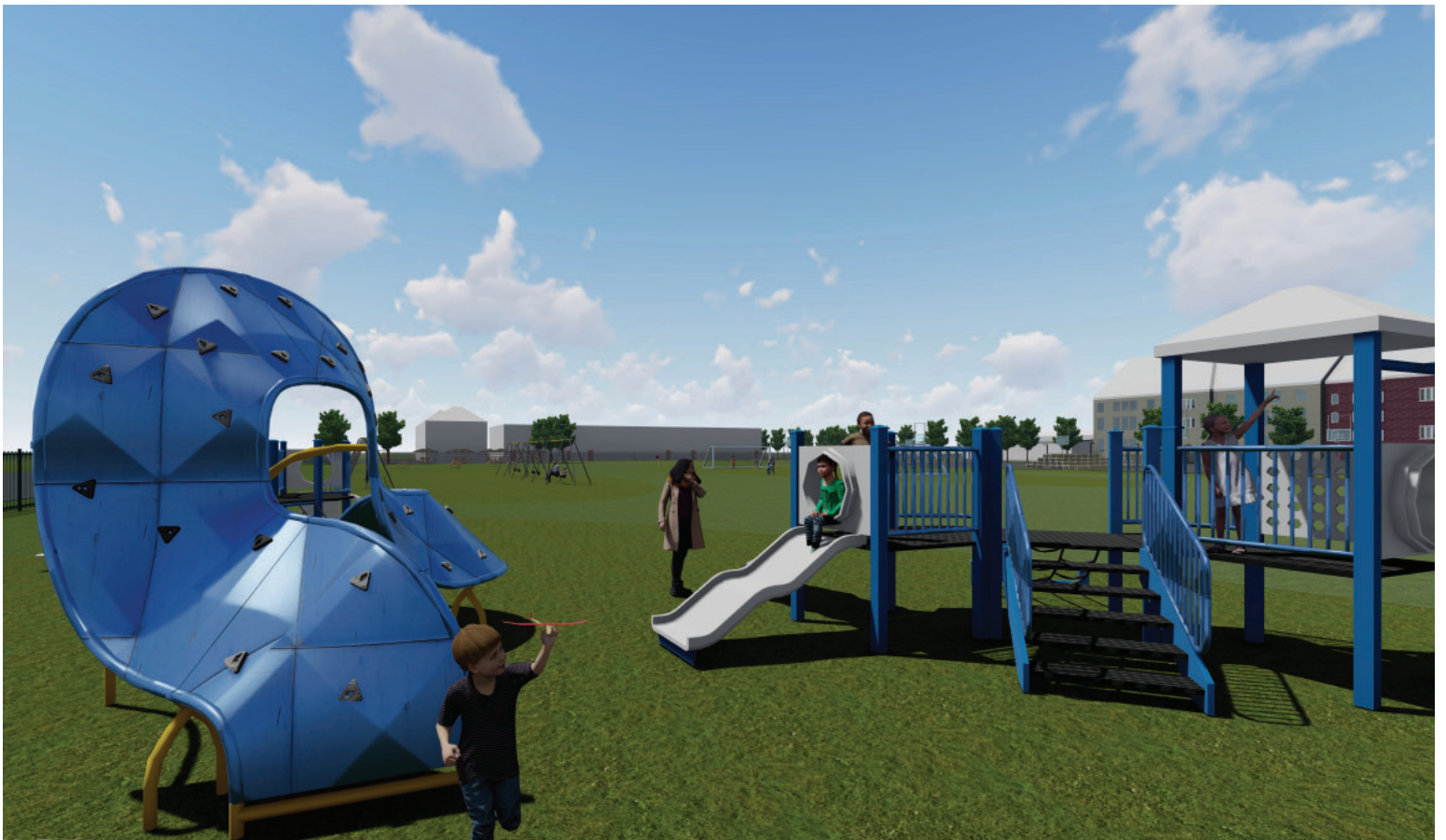


FIGURE 42 PLAYGROUND

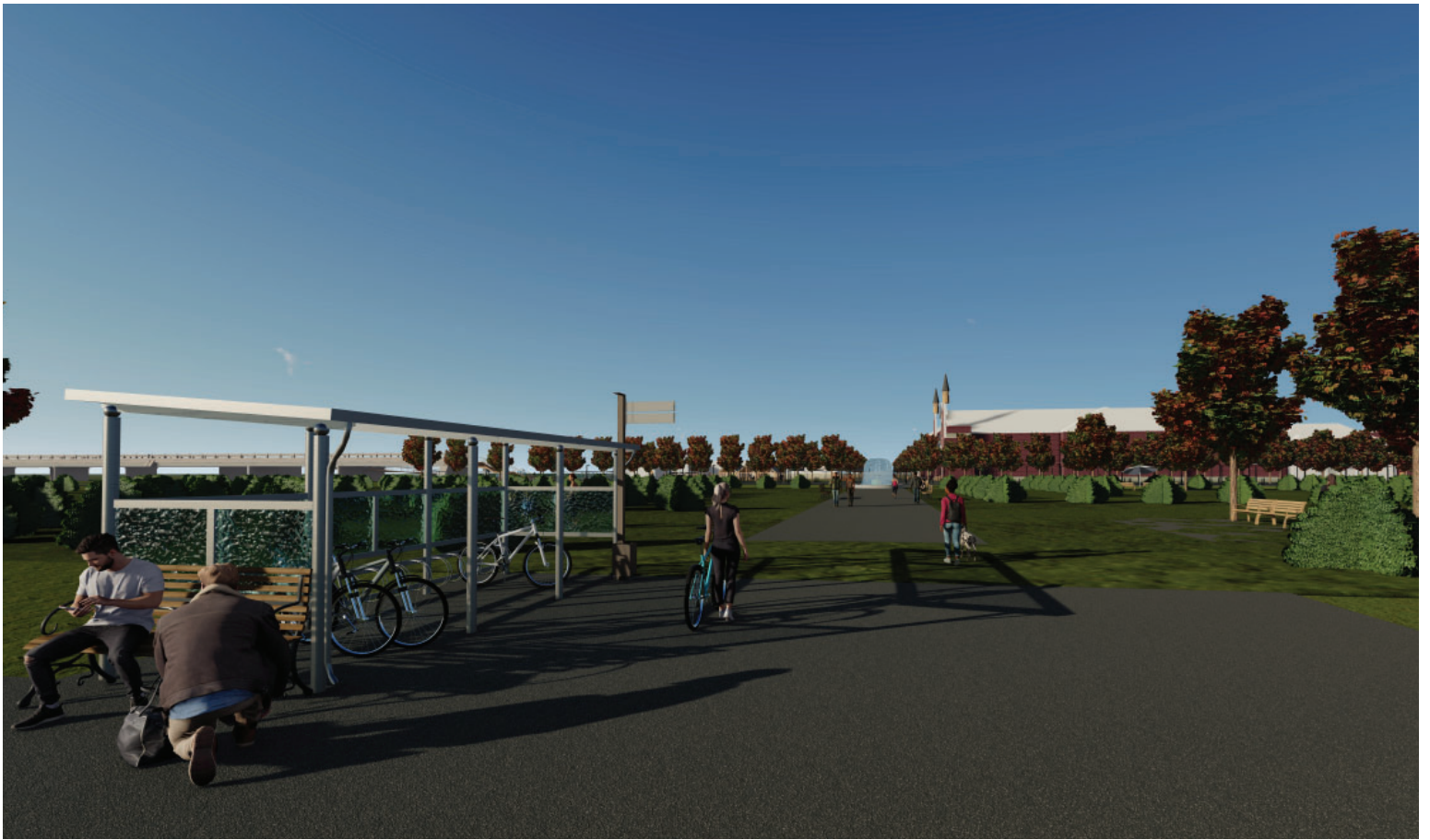


FIGURE 43 MAZE GARDEN STREET VIEW

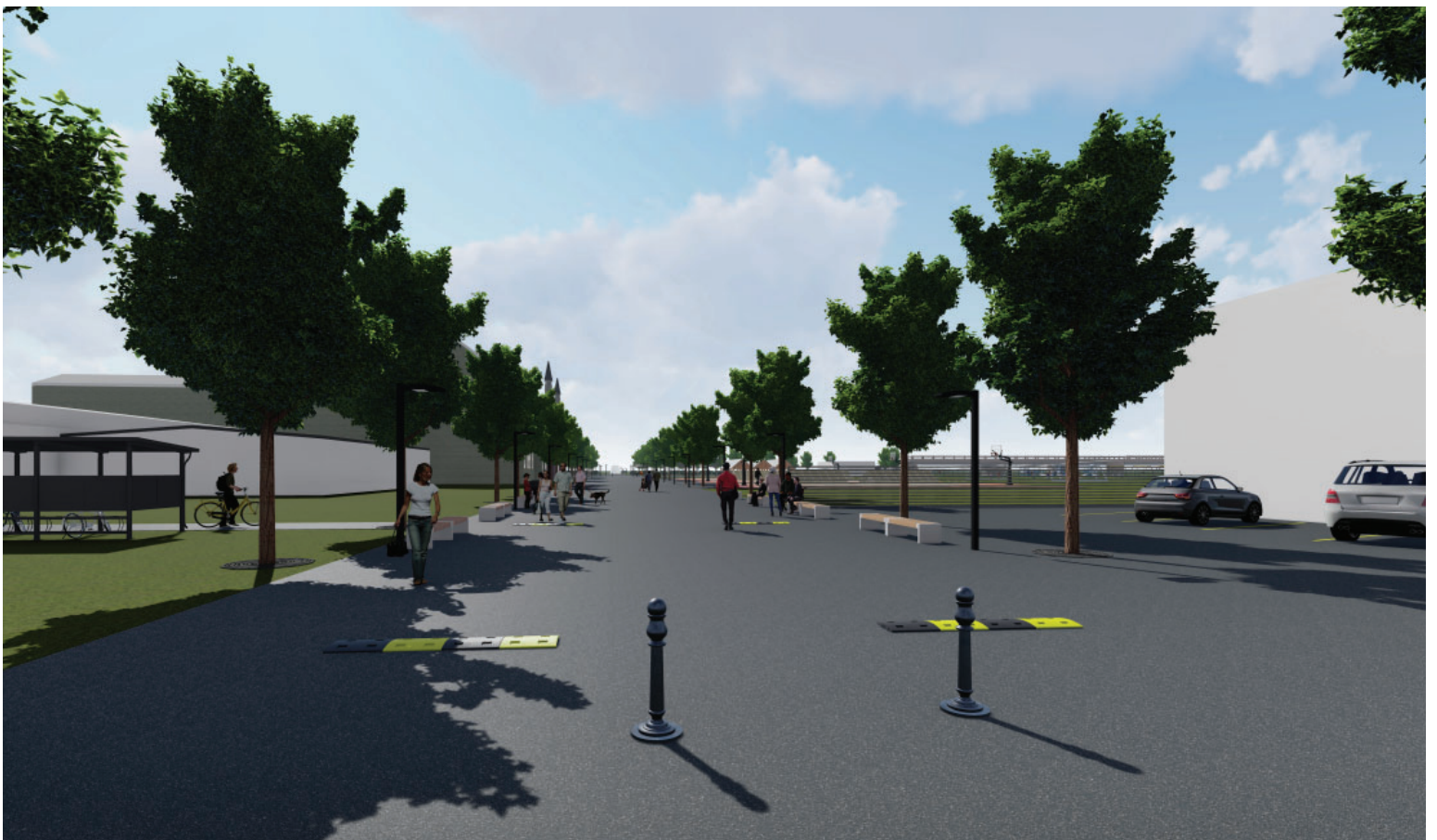


FIGURE 44 CHENE STREET VIEW



FIGURE 45 OUTDOOR FOOD MARKET



FIGURE 46 INDOOR MAKER SPACE

Reflection

After completing a full alternative proposal to the Joe Louis Greenway, I believe that many routes are now possible. The greenway is for gathering and public use and thus should be given the freedom to exist by design or by chance. Creating an inviting public space can be hyper designed down to the streetscape or be a parcel of grass next to an existing building. Communities that are willing to will make the best of what is already existing like the RecoveryPark. They were successful in creating a positive change in the community through employment and providing local food to the area. The goals of my proposal were to improve the greenway route to serve the Poletown community and fill voids in the neighborhood too. I felt successful with my final proposal in my second goal more strongly. The mix of defined and undefined public spaces feels meaningful. For example, leaving a large of the farmers' market unplanned can allow members of the community to fill those areas with their own activities. Providing the space for those activities to occur was created with the buildings wings as buffers to make part of the space feel enclosed. The duality of enclosed verses open space is a major driving force behind the design of the farmers market best showcased in figures 38 and 39. Additionally, view sheds between St Aubin St and Chene St were a secondary design strategy. The creation of minor axis along the site allowed for intentional views along all three major perpendicular streets; the greenway), Chene St. and St. Aubin St. My goal to make an intentional greenway alteration through Poletown could be stronger. Choosing Poletown over other neighborhoods like McDougall-Hunt or Warrendale was a personal choose. I was first interested in Poletown after doing brief history of the town and grew to appreciate it the more I dove into research. The injustices done to the community felt close to home as my father is a Polish man and an employee at General Motors. Planning out my design became clearer when I started to imagine what I'd like to see in a neighborhood I'd like to live in. One desire I have that did not get into the final design was smaller moments along the greenway that showcase the history of Detroit and Poletown. The greenway felt like a statement about the excessive consumption of automotive needs over human needs. A lot of my early research looked at how the shifts in Detroit were dilatated by changes in automotive industry. I saw the potential in the Detroit RiverFront firsthand when I visited in March of 2021. The misdeeds of populating the river with heavy manufacturing for decades caused damage to the river and the wildlife were vanishing. Milliken Park has dedicated portions of the land to small marshlands. While visiting that area I experienced a great sense of nature and the rest of the urban fabric faded away as I gazed out to the river. I hope that feeling of reflection can be applied to other project in Detroit. As a closing remark, I would like to celebrate Detroit as a city were people can gather.

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