How can we reinvent declining shopping malls to give them new life and make them more inviting?
“I would like to take this opportunity to disclaim paternity once and for all. I refuse to pay alimony to those bastard developments. They destroyed our cities.” - Victor Gruen “The father of the American shopping mall”
HISTORY OF THE SHOPPING MALL

AGORA - GREECE (8TH CENTURY BC)
TRAJAN MARKET - ROME (100 CE)
GRAND BAZAAR - ISTANBUL (15TH CENTURY)
BURLINGTON ARCADE - LONDON (1818)
ARCADE PROVIDENCE - RHODE ISLAND (1828)
SOUTHDALE CENTER - MINNESOTA (1956)
CHARACTERISTICS OF TODAY’S MALLS

- SURROUNDED BY PARKING
- ENCLOSED & PROTECTED FROM WEATHER
- LITTLE TO NO GREEN SPACE
- LIMITED ENTRANCES
- LOUD
- STALE
- RETAIL HEAVY WITH TYPICAL STORES
- OUTDATED
- FEW CONNECTIONS TO SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS
Shopping malls were designed to be **communal spaces** that mimicked town squares, where one could **shop**, **socialize**, and **feel connected**. The architect intended for them to be **dense**, to **promote walkability**, and have **mixed-uses** to attract a **diverse** range of people. What ended up being built was far from what was initially envisioned. Today the mall can be seen as a **large enclosed structure**, lined with shops, and **surrounded by parking lots**.

This unsuccessful model was **replicated** across the United States after World War II and is now **damaging** many cities. By bringing Victor Gruen’s vision of a shopping mall back and unstitching the urban fabric that they reside in, one can bring new life and an identity back to the community. My research investigates how architecture can solve the problem of a dying shopping mall and turn these spaces into a **destination** used by **everyone**.

By **deconstructing** the mall and adding **streetscape** activates the space and gives it an **identity**. Pulling city hall down to the ground level **welcomes** in the community and creates a new center to the site. Transforming Center Avenue bridge and the existing underpass parking lot creates new **entrances** into the site and **promotes walkability** while making a stronger **connection to the Red River**.
RESEARCH: HOW TO MAKE AN ATTRACTIVE CITY

1. ORGANIZED COMPLEXITY
2. VISIBLE LIFE
3. COMPACT
4. ORIENTATION AND MYSTERY
5. SCALE (Tallest = most important)
RESEARCH: WE LET KIDS DESIGN OUR CITIES

1. FUN, PLAY, MOVEMENT
2. PUBLIC ART
3. BRIGHT COLORS
4. CONNECTION TO NATURE
5. DESIGN FOR ALL LIVING CREATURES

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9cudn_vSdCY
RESEARCH: DESIRE PATHS

SHORTEST OR EASIEST NAVIGATED ROUTE BETWEEN POINT AND DESTINATION

- COMMONLY FOUND ON CAMPUSES

- DIFFICULT FOR MALLS
1960'S DOWNTOWN  EXISTING  PROPOSED
CASE STUDY - NOHO WEST

Hollywood, CA

25 Acres

Office, residential, retail, restaurants, movie theater, gym

2 acres of open space

“live, work and shop in a walkable, vibrant setting”
CASE STUDY - GRANITE RUN MALL

Lima, PA

88 Acres

Offices, residential, retail, entertainment, movie theater, bowling

Walls and roof torn down to create open air environment

https://betinvestments.com/category/news/
GOALS

1. Deconstruct the mall and add streetscape
2. Connection to river
3. More walkable/accessible (better connection to surrounding sites)
4. Reinvent city hall building (center)
5. Pedestrian scale
1. Tear out hallways

2. Reintroduce streets

3. Connect to surrounding buildings

4. Connect to river

5. Pedestrian “desire” paths

6. Serial vision = reward at end of journey

Sustainable Practices:
- Repurpose some structure
- Green space addition
- Promote walkability
- Bus routes
- Local materials
- Solar shading
SITE
MOORHEAD CENTER MALL
THE BAD
**Oran Greene**
Local Guide, 152 reviews, 62 photos

4 stars, a year ago
Terrible shop selection, mall is mostly dead.

---

**Sharon Wojnarowicz**
Local Guide, 43 reviews, 2 photos

4 stars, a month ago
Terrible, nothing there.

---

**Jose Briones**
Local Guide, 27 reviews, 7 photos

4 stars, 7 months ago
Might have been great in its day but not much there now. Kind of a eyesore.

---

**Tim Abbott**
Local Guide, 57 reviews, 1,449 photos

4 stars, a year ago
I don’t mind this mall per se, but the fact it replaced an organic downtown is a depressing historical fact.

---

**Leanna Wells**
Local Guide, 27 reviews, 9 photos

4 stars, a year ago
Nothing really in there.

---

**Cory Cullen**
Local Guide, 29 reviews

4 stars, a year ago
They need more shops.

---

**Vanessa Swanson**
Local Guide, 31 reviews

4 stars, a year ago

---

**Altravis Lewis**
Local Guide, 46 reviews

4 stars, 6 months ago
I’ve been to small malls but this one takes the cake! It’s split up oddly leaving little enclosed walkways between buildings that give you the feeling your about to be mugged. Only go if you want a specific shop. Not good at all for just bummimg around.

---

**Steffen Hymel**
Local Guide, 41 reviews, 2 photos

4 stars, a year ago
Out dated. I was coming from Texas so I suppose it may be the norm in this area but it seemed to be untouched since the early 80’s

---

**Devin**
Local Guide, 31 reviews, 9 photos

4 stars, a year ago
What the heck this place is like a zombie apocalypse mall. You can always get great parking though.

---

**Mike Jacklovich**
Local Guide, 121 reviews, 55 photos

4 stars, 7 months ago
The place is dying.
existing roads, parking garage, mall, strip mall

Goals
- More large green space
- Less buildings?
3/2

Green Grid + Existing Hallways
“Streets and their sidewalks, the main public spaces of a city, are its most vital organs.” - Jane Jacobs
CITY HALL EXTERIOR PROCESS
CITY HALL BALCONY PROCESS

https://www.homedit.com/stylish-balconies-facade/

WHAT MAKES A GREAT PLACE?

[Diagram showing various attributes and measurements for creating a great place]

WEBSITE:
https://www.pps.org/article/what-is-placemaking
Civic
City Hall, Library, Civic Plaza, Coworking Space

Entertainment
Bowling Alley, Brewery, Bars, Theater, Retail

Wellness
Fitness Center, Grocery, Green Space, Restaurants

Living
Apartments, Botique Hotel
EXISTING MALL MINUS HALLWAYS (BLACK)

INTRODUCE ROAD BACK INTO SITE

ACTIVATE STREETS WITH STOREFRONTS

ADD GREEN SPACE

LESS PARKING LOTS AND PAVEMENT

4TH AND 6TH STREET BACK TO SITE ENTRANCES ON EACH CORNER

GREENWALK CONNECTING OVER EXISTING UNDERPASS CENTER AVENUE BRIDGE = PEDESTRIAN GREEN = CONNECTIONS RED = NEW STRUCTURE

NODE SIZE DETERMINED BY HOW MANY CONNECTIONS AT EACH POINT

CONNECTIONS THAT PUSH AND PULL CIY HALL = CENTER AND HIGHEST POINT BLACK = EXISTING RED = NEW STRUCTURE

MORE ORGANIC SITE WITH BETTER ACCESSIBILITY SMALLER SCALE BUILDINGS FULL OF VARIETY RED = NEW STRUCTURE BLUE = RIVER GREEN = GREEN SPACE

SMALLER SCALED BUILDINGS VIEWS AND CONNECTIONS TO RIVER INCREASE DENSITY CONTINUE LINEAR GRID FROM SURROUNDING STREETS

Moorhead City Hall was rebuilt when the mall was constructed in the 1970s. It was placed directly on 5th street and was meant to be an anchor for the new shopping mall.

Many people do not know that city hall is located here due to its interesting entry condition. It is situated on top of the mall and is only accessible by elevator or stairs.

By bringing city hall out of their tower and extending the base down to the ground floor exposes them to the public and welcomes pedestrians in. This will allow for residential to take over the remaining floors.

One main goal of this design was to remove much “gray space” and replace it with “green space” while creating nodes and organic paths for pedestrians. Rather than being surrounded by parking lots, the site is now more welcoming and has noticeable entrances into the site from many different points.

Each entrance connects to a surrounding node or important space. By introducing a couple roads back into the site, it allows for better accessibility and gives the pedestrian a sense of place.

Each clock represents different times of the week. The goal is to keep the clock filled 24 hours a day, meaning that someone will always be on site, rather than it closing after shops and restaurants close for the night.
“Architecture can’t force people to connect, it can only plan the crossing points, remove barriers, and make the meeting places useful and attractive.” - Denise Scott Brown
BUS ROUTES
PERFORMANCE CRITERIA - GRAY TO GREEN SPACE
PERFORMANCE CRITERIA - CONNECTION
PERFORMANCE CRITERIA - 24 HOUR CLOCKS

Monday - Thursday

Friday - Saturday

Sunday

EXISTING

City Hall Hours
Monday-Friday 8am-4:30pm

Moorhead Center Mall Hours
Monday-Friday 10am-9pm
Saturday 10am-5pm
Sunday 12pm-5pm

Vic’s Lounge Hours
Monday-Saturday 11am-2am
Sunday 9am-12pm
CITY HALL - RE-ENVISIONED

CASE STUDY - BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WA CITY HALL
CITY HALL

GOALS
- Pull down from tower
- Make more accessible and visible to public
- “One-stop shop” for departments
- Two entrances for chamber

CITY HALL
Ground Floor

RESIDENTIAL
2-5 Floor

GOALS
- 28-30 Apartments
- 500-1000 SF
- Community lounge
- Elevators flipped for residential use
- Separate entrances/exits from city hall
CITY HALL PLAZA - Center Avenue Looking N

BEFORE

AFTER
E/W HALLWAY - Herbergers looking E to City Hall

BEFORE

AFTER
THAI ORCHID - Center Avenue looking NW

BEFORE

AFTER
LIBRARY - Center Avenue looking NE

BEFORE

AFTER
MICROHOTEL - 1st Avenue looking SE

BEFORE

AFTER
EXISTING MALL MINUS HALLWAYS (BLACK)
INTRODUCE ROAD BACK INTO SITE
ACTIVATE STREETS WITH STOREFRONTS
ADD GREEN SPACE
LESS PARKING LOTS AND PAVEMENT

4TH AND 6TH STREET BACK TO SITE ENTRANCES ON EACH CORNER
GREENWALK CONNECTING OVER EXISTING UNDERPASS CENTER AVENUE BRIDGE = PEDESTRIAN GREEN = CONNECTIONS RED = NEW STRUCTURE

NODE SIZE DETERMINED BY HOW MANY CONNECTIONS AT EACH POINT
CONNECTIONS THAT PUSH AND PULL CITY HALL = CENTER AND HIGHEST POINT BLACK = EXISTING RED = NEW STRUCTURE

MORE ORGANIC SITE WITH BETTER ACCESSIBILITY SMALLER SCALE BUILDINGS FULL OF VARIETY

RED = NEW STRUCTURE BLUE = RIVER GREEN = GREEN SPACE

SMALLER SCALED BUILDINGS VIEWS AND CONNECTIONS TO RIVER INCREASE DENSITY CONTINUE LINEAR GRID FROM SURROUNDING STREETS

STUDIO 1 BED 2 BED COMMUNITY

CITY HALL PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

Moorhead City Hall was rebuilt when the mall was constructed in the 1970s. It was placed directly on 5th street and was meant to be an anchor for the new shopping mall.

Many people do not know that city hall is located here due to its interesting entry condition. It is situated on top of the mall and is only accessible by elevator or stairs.

By bringing city hall out of their tower and extending the base down to the ground floor exposes them to the public and welcomes pedestrians in. This will allow for residential to take over the remaining floors.

One main goal of this design was to remove much "gray space" and replace it with "green space" while creating nodes and organic paths for pedestrians.

Rather than being surrounded by parking lots, the site is now more welcoming and has noticeable entrances into the site from many different points.

Each entrance connects to a surrounding node or important space. By introducing a couple roads back into the site, it allows for better accessibility and gives the pedestrian a sense of place.

Each clock represents different times of the week. The goal is to keep the clock filled 24 hours a day, meaning that someone will always be on site, rather than it closing after shops and restaurants close for the night.

CITY HALL GROUND FLOOR PLAN
SECOND FLOOR RESIDENTIAL PLAN

SUNDAY CHAMBER AVENUE CENTER AVENUE 1ST AVENUE BEND AVENUE CITI CITY HALL LIBRARY GALLERY POST OFFICE

RESTAURANT BAR COFFEE SHOP BOWLING ALLEY

FITNESS CENTER GREEN SPACE BASKETBALL TENNIS

RETAIL GROCERY PHARMACY MARKET

OFFICE COMMERCIAL APARTMENT HOTEL

UPPER LEVEL RESIDENTIAL APARTMENT HOTEL
**CITY HALL**  
Ground Floor

**GOALS**
- Pull down from tower
- Make more accessible and visible to public
- "One-stop shop" for departments
- Two entrances for chamber

**RESIDENTIAL**  
2-5 Floor

**GOALS**
- 28-30 Apartments
- 500-1000 SF
- Community lounge
- Elevators flipped for residential use
- Separate entrances/exits from city hall
1960'S DOWNTOWN  EXISTING  PROPOSED