

RE·VI·TAL·I·ZA·TION

The title 'RE·VI·TAL·I·ZA·TION' is centered on the page. Each letter is contained within a circular shape. The circles are colored in a sequence: light blue for 'R', yellow for 'E', light blue for 'V', yellow for 'I', light blue for 'T', yellow for 'A', light blue for 'L', yellow for 'I', light blue for 'Z', and yellow for 'A'. The final 'TION' is contained within a large yellow circle. On the left and right sides of the circles, there are grey, jagged arrows pointing outwards.

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RE·VI·TAL·I·ZA·TION

[REVITALIZATION OF AMERICAN CITIES]

Abstract

This thesis project is a detailed architectural study of the measures of revitalization projects, the tools used to measure successful projects, the importance of each measure, and how to apply each measure. The question on how to measure a successful revitalization project was vital for this research and what these measures do to help make a project successful were influential in analyzing the important factors that go into a revitalization project .

to make (someone or something) active, healthy, or energetic again

[Revitalization of Crystal City, TX]

1. Create a vibrant city that has its residents as the core foundation
2. Determine what measures can be implemented in order to revitalize this city
3. Analyze and incorporate key elements that help support the project and bring life back into the city
4. Create a blue print to help start a ripple effect that will help revitalize and start to change the city in a positive way

## [Revitalization Requirements]

Key elements that can help guide a revitalization project into a project that creates a ripple effect of positive changes over a period of time changing a city one step at a time.

### Community Involvement

A community-based project builds on the area's unique values and characteristics and responds to the specific needs and desires of residents. A revitalization project can help a community identify its unique characteristics, such as natural or man-made features, location, history, climate or economy. Having residents as a part of the project throughout every stage will help create a project that will connect and reflect the residents of the city.

### Shared Vision

For revitalization to be successful, all participants, including the public, business owners, local interest, recreation, service groups, and other levels of government must share the same project's vision.

### Partnerships

Partnerships capitalize on the strength of many contributors and make possible revitalization projects that would otherwise be more difficult. Partnerships can occur between organizations, private companies, community groups, local agencies or different levels of government.

### Realistic Goals and Plan of Action

Creating realistic goals that are feasible, practical, specific, measurable, and attainable should be addressed during the planning stages of the project. Making sure a comprehensive plan of action is implemented will help the flow of the project and help strengthen the project goals.

### Committed Leadership

People who are committed to a revitalization project truly believe that the project is important and they will show up, follow through, and stick with the project goals. The more people who are truly committed to a project the greater momentum the project will generate.

### Community Involvement

#### Possible Programs:

#### -Love Your Block

-Love Your Block is a high-impact service strategy in which the mayor's office engages community members in revitalizing their neighborhoods one block at a time. The city provides competitive mini-grants to community groups to purchase the supplies needed for their local project and coordinates city government services as needed to support the effort.

### Shared Vision

#### Key Elements:

- Significant Purpose
- Clear values
- Picture the future
- How is the project created?
- Strategies to leapfrog forward
- How's it lived?
- How is it communicated?
- Structural integrity
- Picture the future

## [The Research]

1. Clearly define what revitalization is and what it means to an architectural project.
2. Find what measures are used to quantify a successful project.
3. How were the measures applied to a project?
4. What strategies can be used to set up a successful revitalization project?
5. How can one find the tools to measure a revitalization project?
6. What goals are predominate in past projects and did they work?
7. Analyze the outcome of past revitalization projects.
8. What are some programs that helped make the project a success?

## [Applying the Research]

The case study analysis uncovered an array of information that I was not used to examining. The problem with examining a revitalization project is that it all happens over a long period of time and some of the measures are what is hoped to be achieved and not something that can be immediately quantified. The idea is to implement stages of revitalization that will continue to gradually impact a city over a period of time. Each case study presented new measures and ideas that I will carry into my own investigation on what measures truly make a revitalization project a success.

## [Case Studies]

1. Downtown Detroit, Michigan
2. Downtown Ripon, Wisconsin
3. Downtown Auburn, Indiana

Revitalization measures was the primary focus of all my case studies: Downtown Detroit, City of Ripon WI, and Auburn IN. Measures differed in all of the case studies, some focused on the community, some on the historical aspects, and some on the city as a whole. All of the case studies had a revitalization plan that was over a long period of time, and measures were used throughout different stages of the projects. I noticed that some case studies used similar revitalization measures but for the most part each project had specific measures that assessed the success of the project.

## [Analysis of Research]

Revitalization projects differ from typical architecture projects, thus my case study analysis informed and educated me in learning what exactly revitalization is and what measure are used to determine a projects success. The information I found useful in the case studies dealt with different measures used, what types of measures were implied, and what the process of revitalization was.

Throughout the investigation of revitalization I found that one of the main factors that all projects stressed was the involvement of the community. Whether the community was helping build, design, or taking surveys there was a clear understanding that every revitalization project should have the community as its core. This further helped me understand that you cannot revitalize a city that does not have its people as its core, and this is one of the most important attributes in analyzing whether or not a revitalization project is a success or not.

# [Research]

## Life and Death of Great American Cities

In this book, Jane Jacobs focuses on the problems with American city planning strategies and how the revitalization or rebuild of cities in the twentieth century has been unsuccessful. Jacobs analyzes how revitalization projects have accomplished little to help eliminate slums or help suppress a city from decaying. Jacobs breaks down what contributes to a successful neighborhood through the use of sidewalks, city streets, parks, and neighborhoods.

Jacobs continues to analyze all factors that contribute to the decay of cities including what do all the city's parks, streets, and neighborhoods have to offer to the community. Looking at how children use the parks, and if streets and sidewalks cater to the needs of the user in a safe and positive way are also examined.

Another factor that Jacobs stresses is the meaning of different ages and shapes in neighborhood buildings and what their uses are. The design, functionality, and cost are all important factors that give an identity to a neighborhood and can also destroy a neighborhood. With having different ages and types of buildings Jacobs makes the economic correlation between neighborhoods, people, and cost of living all of which are factors that help or hinder a city.

Jacobs criticizes how city planning has gone about revitalizing cities that are considered to be slums. The problem that Jacobs sees is that city planners are not seeking to solve the root of the problem but rather cloud the problem by tearing down and rebuilding cities. People are the heart and soul of a city and that is where the rebuild should start. If you want to have a successful neighborhood you have to have people that want to be there. City planners have to do a better job in understanding what makes a successful and an unsuccessful city. Successful factors should then be implemented and unsuccessful factors should be discouraged.

Although Jacobs does not provide a blue print, on what makes a revitalization project a success, she does provide useful criticism that helps address what factors contribute to successful cities. This book has helped me understand why American cities have become slums and how to go about revitalizing cities to make them great once again.

Jacobs's insight in her book shines light on a dark area that has recently been a big topic in architecture. Cities all over the United States are taking drastic measures to bring life back into a once beautiful city. The difference comes from learning from past mistakes that have been architecturally made. Designers need to take into account various information not just from the current state but the past state as well.

Designing cities for all the wrong reasons will not help revitalize a city and Jacobs does a good job explaining that there need to be a clear thought about what the real problem is and how to go about fixing that problem. Simply designing a building does not solve the problem it merely covers it up for a while and then reveals its true nature when the root problem takes over.

Identifying the root of the problem

Provide a strategic plan of revitalization

Identify measures that will prove a successful project

Constantly involve the community throughout the project

Understand and implement changes that will take place over a long period of time

# Case Studies

## Detroit, Michigan

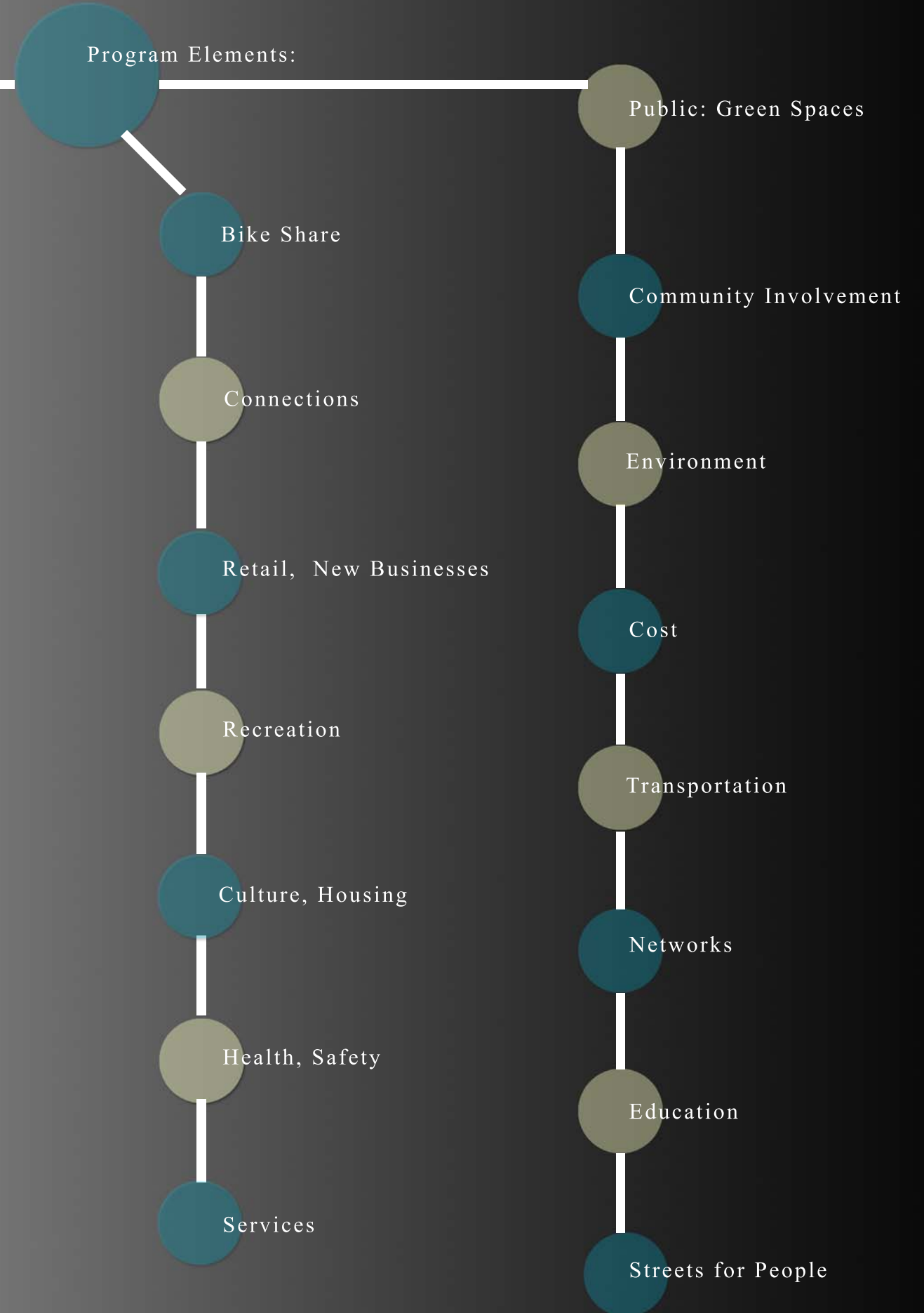
Distinguished Characteristics: Detroit has gone through many changes throughout its history that have reshaped what this great city looks like. Detroit started out as a fur trading post, that moved the city into a transportation hub, and then there was the rise and fall of industry and commerce, and in 1910 Detroit created an assembly line that forever changed this great city. Detroit has long suffered from hardships that have left this city in a deplorable state. Great American cities such as Detroit have long yearned for a revitalization that would bring life back into its cities scenery.

Detroit now looks to add a new change by revitalizing its great city using a term called "The Power of Ten Framework". According to PPS (2014), The Power of 10 framework suggests that a great city needs at least ten great districts, each with at least ten great places, which in turn each have at least ten things to do. Great public spaces produce an energy and enthusiasm that spills over into surrounding areas. By being conscious of this and planning for it from the start, Placemakers can speed up the process of revitalization by making sure that the key places within their district complement each other and great a major regional destination.

### Case Study Takaways:

Detroit's revitalization project is a useful structural guideline on how to begin, implement, and apply useful measures that will help revitalize a city. The goals and strategies being used provide a look at what it takes to make a revitalization project on a large scale a success. Implementing plans for the current, five, ten, and twenty years of revitalization creates a master plan that has clear and concise outlook at what exactly Detroit wants to achieve.

Unfortunately, we cannot see the revitalization plans happen in an instance but we have to set parameters and guidelines to help push the project in a positive direction. Revitalization happens over time and this project does a good job laying out important programs that will help Detroit re-establish itself again as a great city that keeps and brings people in.



# Detroit, Michigan Studies and Implementations

**DEVELOPMENT TYPES**  
FLEX  
WAREHOUSE  
ARTISANAL

**SAMPLE LIFESTYLE ILLUSTRATIONS FOR LIVE+MAKE NEIGHBORHOODS**

**NEIGHBORHOOD ILLUSTRATION**

**LAND USE TYPOLOGY MAP: LIVE+MAKE**

**SAMPLE LIFESTYLE DIAGRAM FOR LIVE+MAKE NEIGHBORHOODS**

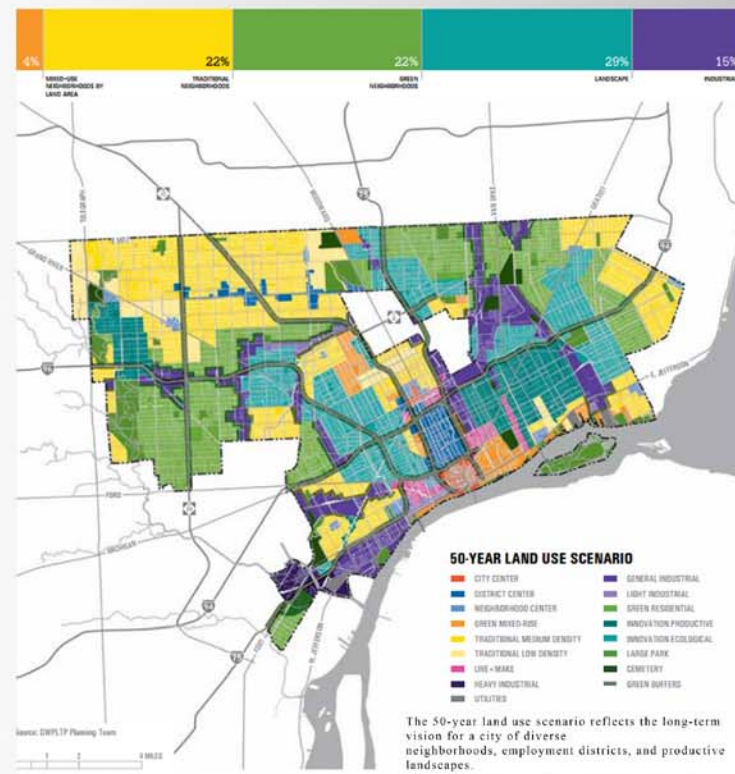
The adjacent illustration explains how each neighborhood type lays out a series of implementation actions necessary to achieve its land use vision. The implementation actions are organized around quality of elements prioritized for that typology. A range of appropriate development types for each neighborhood type is also included to ensure that new development supports the larger neighborhood vision.

"Make unique neighborhoods. Some of the world's best cities are known for their unique, walk-able neighborhoods/districts that connect to each other via rail, bus, bike etc."  
Antonio, Planning Cluster Meetings, 1/27/2011

"I imagine [the] Detroit that amazed me when I was a child in the '70s! The well-kept neighborhoods and businesses. The Downtown area full of shopping and tourists."  
Eva, Town Hall Meeting, 1/29/2011

This illustration shows how Detroit plans to implement neighborhood changes that are specific to each neighborhood and implement ideas that convey the bigger picture. Creating these types of neighborhoods that connect to the city provide a cohesive city that connects the community to its city.

This illustration shows how Detroit plans to implement neighborhood changes that are specific to each neighborhood and implement ideas that convey the bigger picture. Creating these types of neighborhoods that connect to the city provide a cohesive city that connects the community to its city.



This image shows the future open space networks throughout Detroit, Michigan

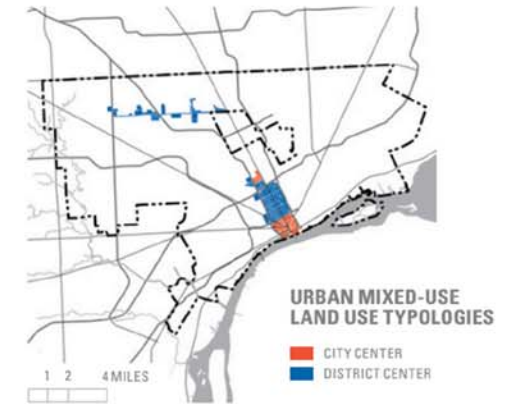
This image shows the 50 year plan for land use

## 1 2 3 4 5

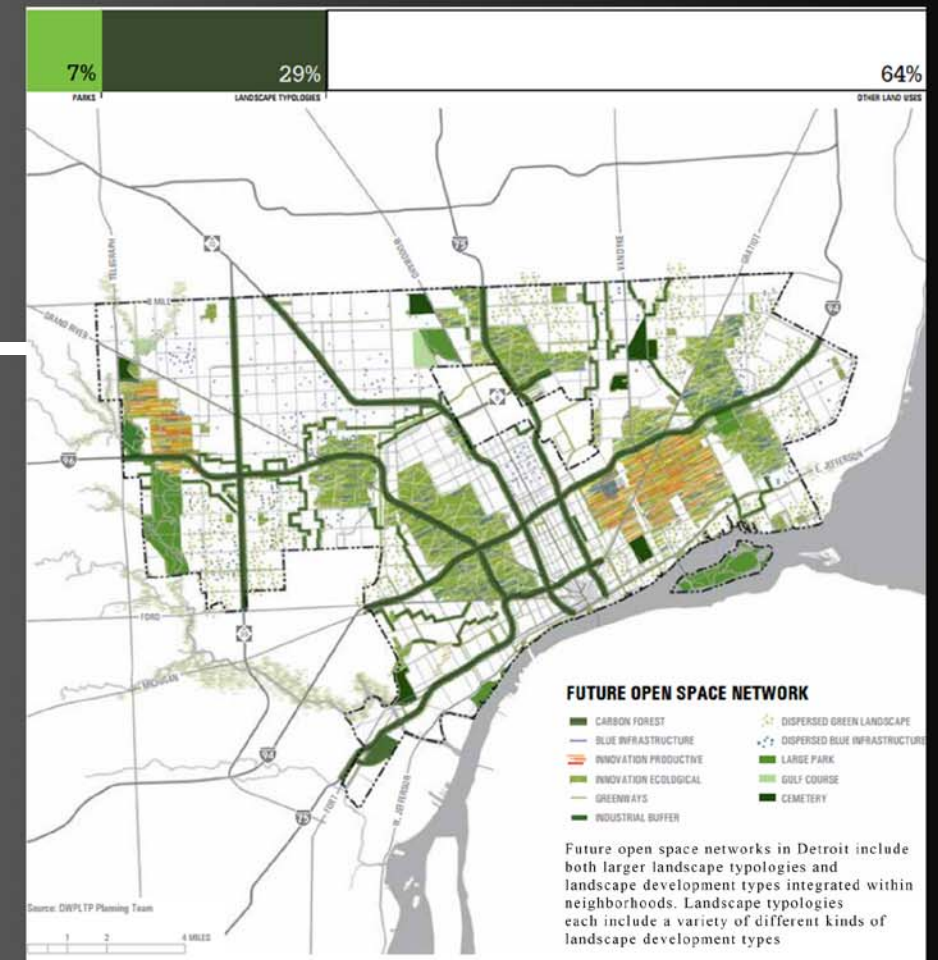
FIVE TRANSFORMATIVE IDEAS: SIX IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

### B CREATE DENSE, WALKABLE, MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOODS

**URBAN MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOODS** seek to leverage employment districts to create higher-density, mixed-use residential communities. Growth in these areas builds on the economic engine of medical centers, universities, industry, and corporations to catalyze future residential, retail, and economic development. These areas include the Central Business District, Midtown, New Center, and the McNichols corridor. The character of these districts is shaped by the major cultural and institutional assets within them, including high-quality parks and public spaces, museums, theaters, stadiums, and schools. Urban Mixed-Use districts are the hubs of a regional



transit network that can connect the city to the larger region, state, and Detroit Metropolitan airport.



## Case Study II

Ripon, Wisconsin

### Distinguishing Characteristics:

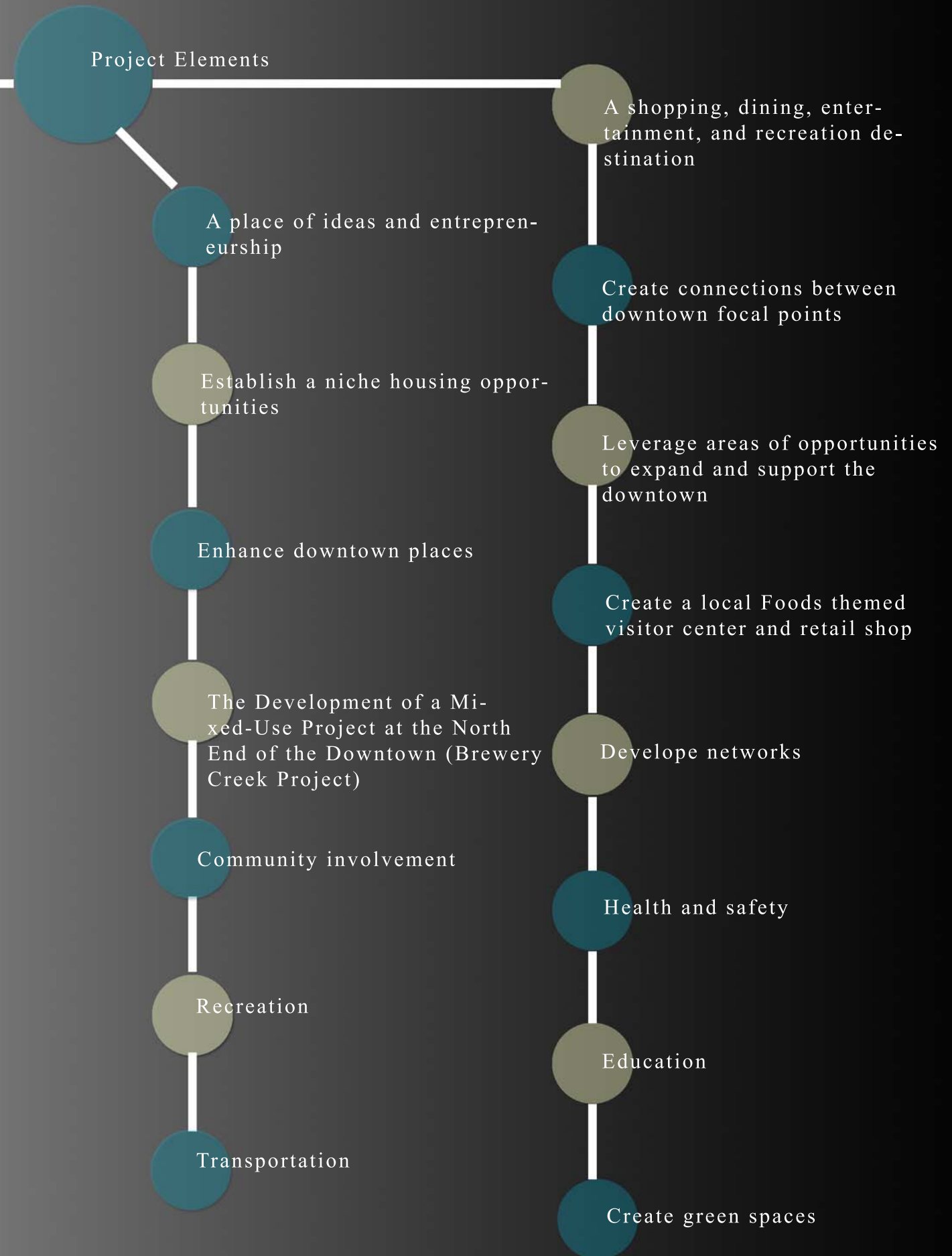
Named after the cathedral city of Ripon, Yorkshire, this city is a family-oriented community that offers the convenience of living near a metropolitan area. A revitalization plan was put into action in 1988 to implement plans such as creating a downtown tax increment financing district, business improvement district, and main street organization. This implementation has helped improve the economic vitality, physical condition, and has established a solid retail and service base with the historical core intact.

According to Vandewalle & Associates Inc. (2007) “The purpose of this Plan is to build on the existing foundation and provide strategies and recommendations that will bring Ripon’s downtown to a higher level of strength and vitality without compromising its current success or its historic character”. At the center of the project is Watson Street which is the “Main Street” style retail area that is filled with shops, restaurants, and historic buildings.

### Case Study Takeaways:

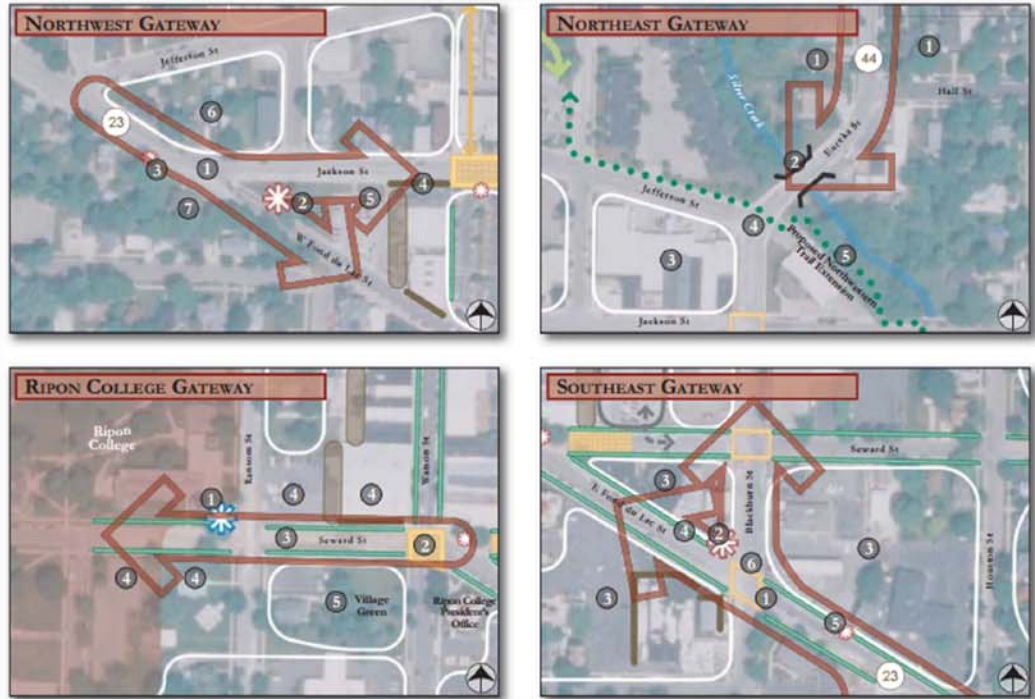
Through the process of applying these primary strategies to the downtown key areas and connections were identified. These keys hold potential for future enhancement and redevelopment that can make a revitalization project a success. Keeping the historic core of the city is a key element in revitalizing this city and it gives the project more validity.

This project was guided by a vision that articulated the community’s aspirations on what the current downtown area is and what it should become. The strategies used to implement the revitalization plans were cohesive and clear from the beginning, which in turn paved the way for a successful project.

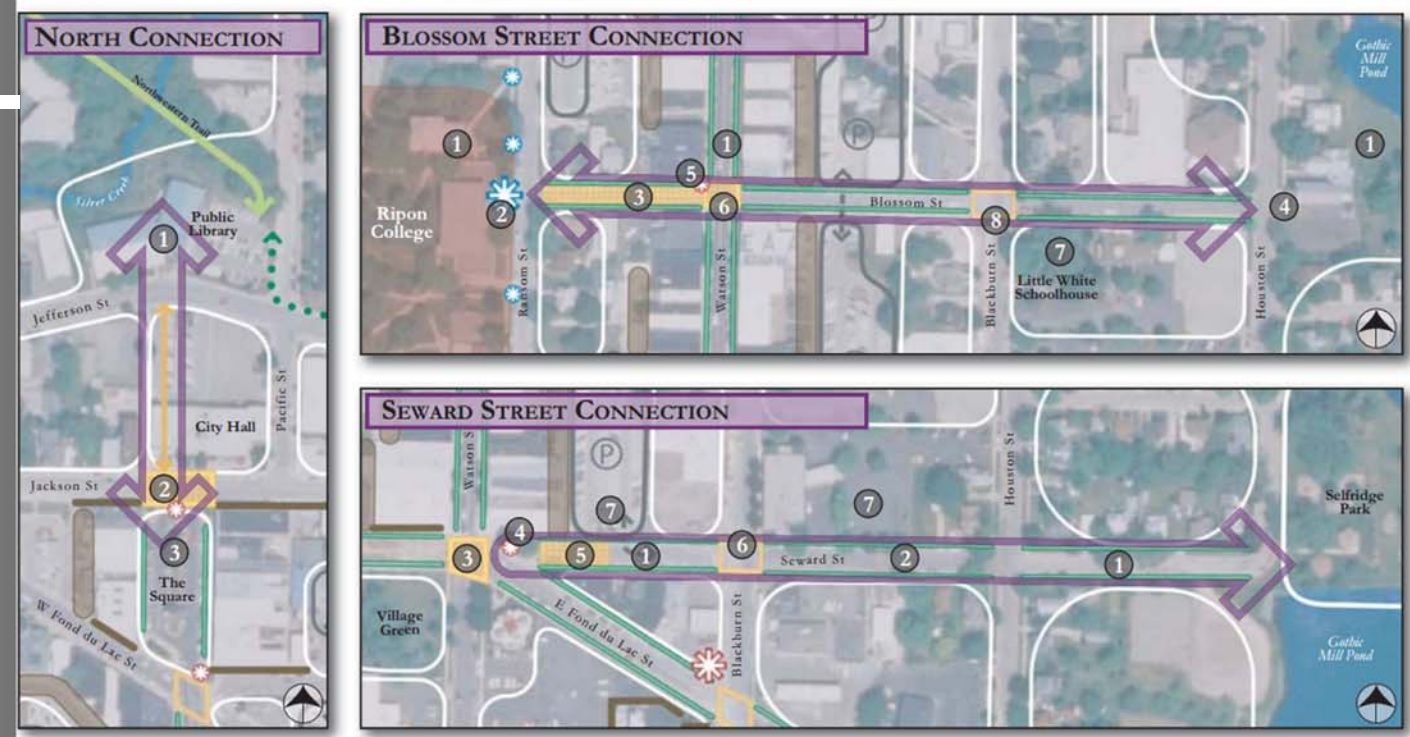




# Ripon, Wisconsin



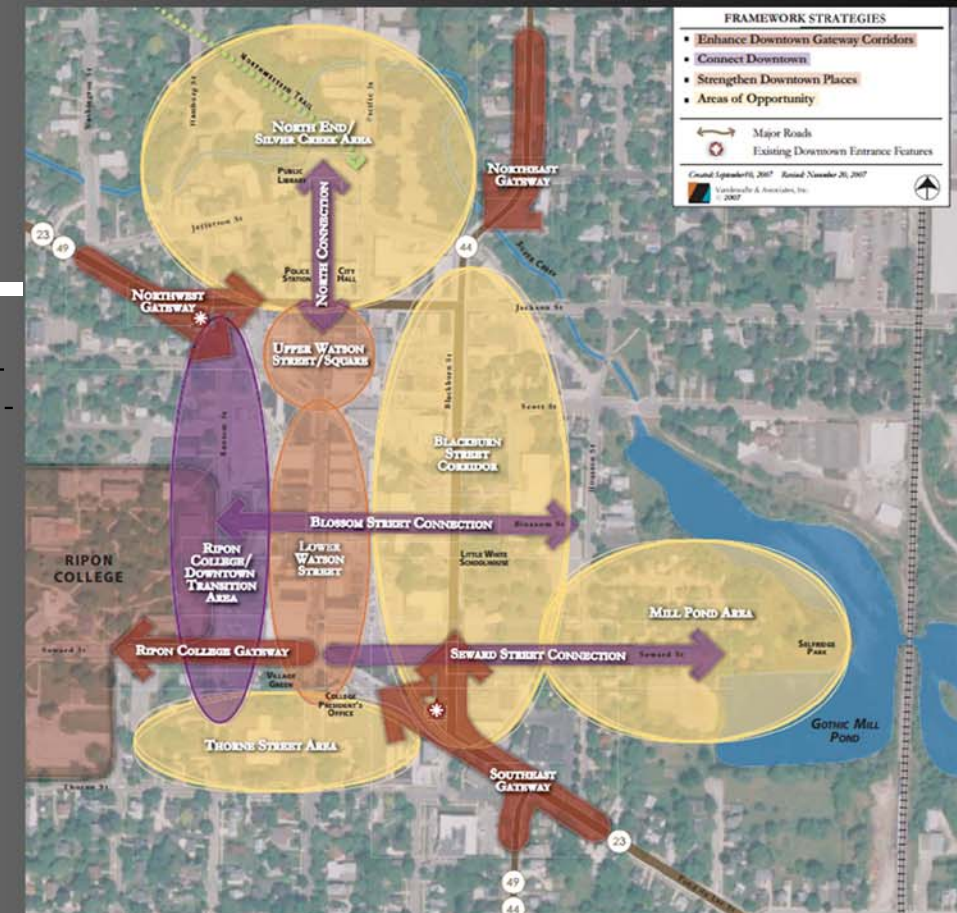
This map illustrated the key areas within and around the downtown area that create physical and visual connections between downtown and surrounding features.



This map shows Downtown Ripon's proposal for "gateways" and where key entrances are that clearly identify where downtown is and how to get there.



This is a map of the design framework of Ripon, WI, which highlight key elements that provide a vision for the project as a whole.



This map shows where improvements and reconfigurations take place on Watson Street (Main Street) and The Square, which is the historic heart of the Ripon community.

# Case Study and Typological Research Study

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## Major Project Elements



Analysing the state of constructed and natural surroundings



Numerous events and cultural activities that define the social composition of daily life



Places to facilitate material, service, and entertainment needs



Quality dwelling options that provide shelter and safety for all residents



Develop continuing education programs to focus job training around emerging local economies



Develop programs that prioritize hiring of Crystal City residents



Create systems to coordinate community based, institutional and public safety networks.



Revitalizing the city using effective recycling methods



Revitalize the city in order to have a healthy city



Revitalize the city using sustainable practices.



The ability to effectively connect all forms of transportation



Places to accommodate physical activity and social interaction

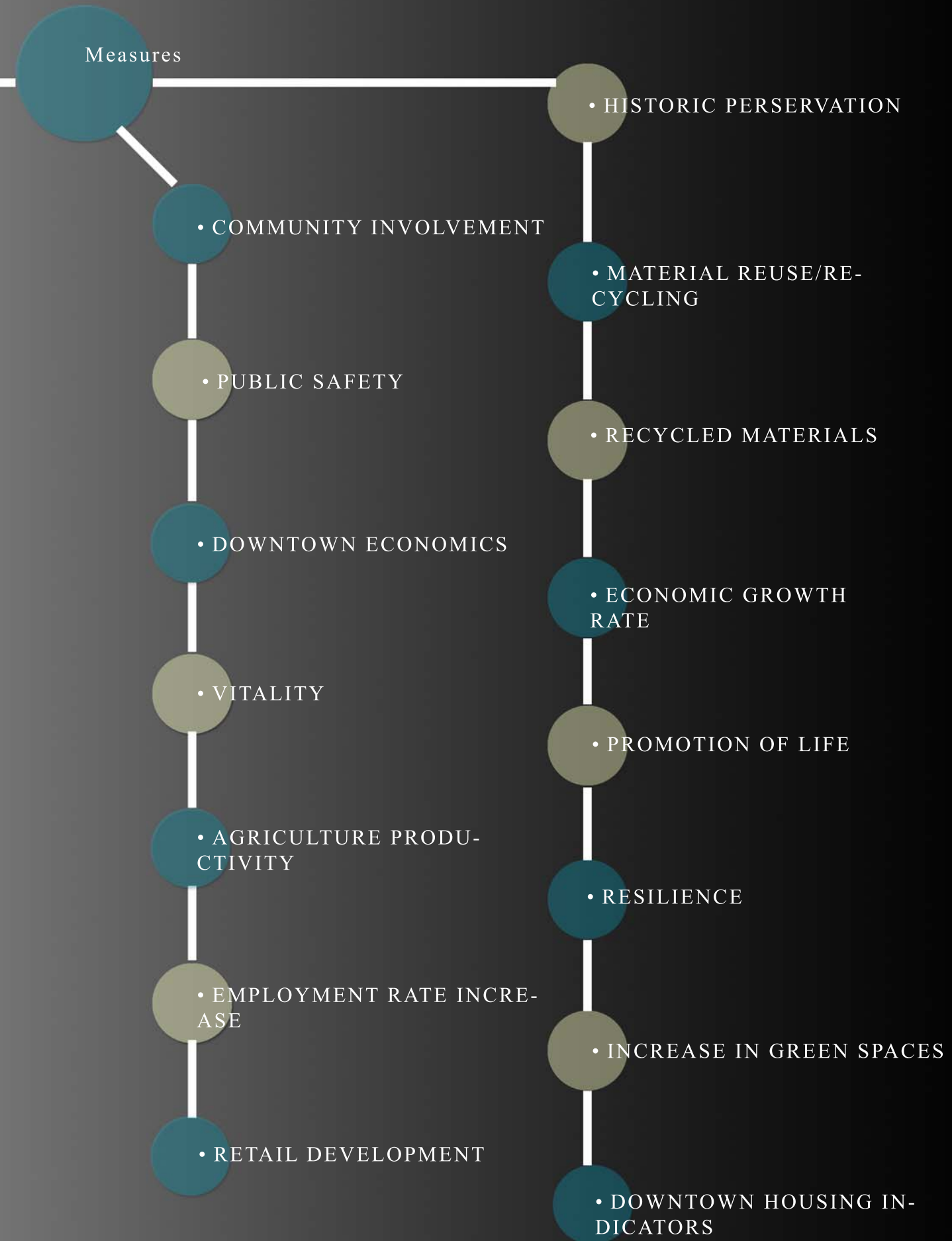
# Revitalization Measures

This project explores how to revitalize cities that are rich in historical culture and heritage and how we can measure the success of a revitalization project. Revitalizing a city through architecture, community involvement, and the use of innovative design strategies will be the basis of this project, these strategies will then give guidelines on what makes a revitalization project a success. Examining how cities have dealt with revitalization through case studies that have successfully revitalized a city and what types of measures are used to call a project a success will be a key in examining and solving how to revitalize an American city.

Taking a look at what types of measure are currently being used and how they are being visually displayed and recorded will also be a major key in this thesis. Models, charts, and other programs that will help generate a measuring tool for revitalization will also be explored and tested.

## Measures Takeaway

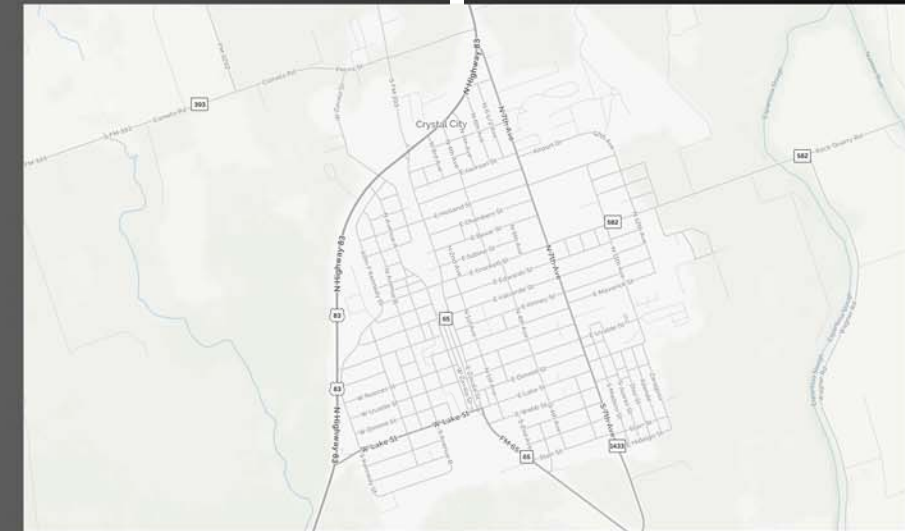
Each measure is a tool to use to plan and implement a successful revitalization project. Every measure is a helpful indicator to quantify and analyze a project. These measures do not necessarily apply to each revitalization project, each project specific to a city has its own set measures that would help a revitalization project. These measures are intended to help create a blue print for a city and do not mean each measure must be attained in order to have a successful revitalization project.



## Site Selection

Crystal City, TX was chosen for my thesis revitalization project because it is where my family and I are originally from. This site is dear to my heart and has the potential to once again be a beautiful city that truly shows all it has to offer. Seeing how vacant boarded up store fronts and abandoned buildings make up much of Crystal's downtown leaves the impression that no one cares anymore. There needs to be a change and that will only happen if there is a community collaboration with the city to revitalize this great city.

## Site Map



## Attributes

Connection to Nature: Crystal City's connection with the environment has huge potential with parks, rivers, and outdoor activities that range from fishing, biking, hunting, and general recreation. There is a strong connection between the city and its production of crops which include:

### Spinach



### Onion



### Carrots



### Cabbage



## The Potential

This city has a lot to offer and the passionate people of this community have long yearned for a change that will positively transform their city into a once again prosperous city. There are opportunities for this city to help excel itself in the areas of economy, landscaping, education, workforce, government, recreation, retail, infrastructure and overall connectivity of the city.



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## Typological Research

Typology: Revitalization

Crystal City is a more than just a city; it is a community of networks and connections that have a rich history and culture. This city is in a state of abandonment and that reflects negatively on the people that live and work here. Revitalizing this city can make it once again a healthy, aesthetic, educational, economical, and flourishing city that has the people of this city proud to say that they live here. Every action that takes place in revitalizing this city will have a ripple effect that will carry throughout the project. This city is filled with hardworking, proud, and very community oriented people that, with the right vision, would come together to rebuild their city. Bringing life back into the downtown area and connecting various amenities to the downtown area will make this city not only mesh but also seem more of a cohesive community oriented city.

## Research

The life and death of a city is determinate on what amenities and ties does each project has to offer back to the community. Simply tearing down a cities downtown to replace it with modern and aesthetic buildings will not suffice. The revitalization of Crystal City's downtown needs to incorporate useable existing buildings, the use of renewable resources, sustainable designs, programs that tie downtown to its inhabitants, and getting the community involved on all levels. There are many factors that contribute to the decay of American cities that range from economic decline, natural disasters, lack of community involvement, crime, lack of funding, and lack of government assistance. Regardless of the factors, the vision for a revitalization project needs to be clear and should start with community involvement. A revitalization project does not happen in an instance, it happens over a long period of time and there should be a gradual increase in every aspect of revitalization. The biggest factor should be to continue to involve the community on all levels and throughout the entire project to ensure that the revitalization project is something that reflects the people of the city and not the designers or contractors. With all this in mind, it is important to take special precautions when deciding the overall vision and direction of each revitalization project. Being able to measure and quantify whether or not a revitalization project is or is not a success and what measures are used will be the biggest challenge of a project.

## Key Priorities

Making sure there are stages of revitalization

Looking at revitalization measures

What makes a successful revitalization project

Impact:  
What measures are used in a revitalization project and how can they be quantified.