

# URBAN REVITALIZATION

PLACE-MAKING IN DETERIORATING DOWNTOWNS

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*By: Daniel Gottwalt*





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PLACE-MAKING IN DETERIORATING DOWNTOWNS

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*A Design Thesis Submitted to the  
Department of Architecture  
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*By  
Daniel Gottwalt*

*In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of  
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Fargo, North Dakota*

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# CHAPTER 1

## THESIS PROPOSAL

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# THESIS ABSTRACT

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*Figure 2.0: City Street - Cincinnati, OH*

Downtown urban centers are the key to any functional city. They provide a canvas for communities to establish a cultural hub and sense of place. Over the last decade, communities across America have had trouble maintaining vibrant downtown environments due to changes in today's social fabric. Pandemics, increased use of technology, and less dedication to small businesses have all lead to this issue.

Thoughtful architecture and urban planning are important tools to solving the issue of deteriorating downtown areas. This thesis explores the avenues for why urban America has seen a drop in downtown growth and how to overcome such struggles by means of place-making, flexible architecture, and thoughtful urban planning. Research investigates the precedents of urban zoning, walkable streets, sense of place, and multi-cultural integration by means of case study analysis and interviews.

# THESIS NARRATIVE

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Downtown urban centers are the key to a functional city. They provide places for us to work, live, shop, socialize, learn. To some, downtown may just be a weekly destination, to others home, and still others, a place to avoid at all costs. Regardless of an individual's position on the matter, one thing is for certain: the urban fabric of a community relies heavily on the vibrance and growth of its downtown.

Over the past few decades, the urban fabric of society has changed dramatically. With the onset of increased technology and remote-work, communities are finding it harder to maintain a flourishing downtown. Small private businesses struggle to stay open for more than a few years, and people have stopped coming to many downtown areas for lack of atmosphere and intrigue. The true issue with this revolves around the very future of American society. If communities cannot sustain a successful downtown now, what will happen in the future? Will we begin to do almost all things from afar? Will we become more secular in nature?

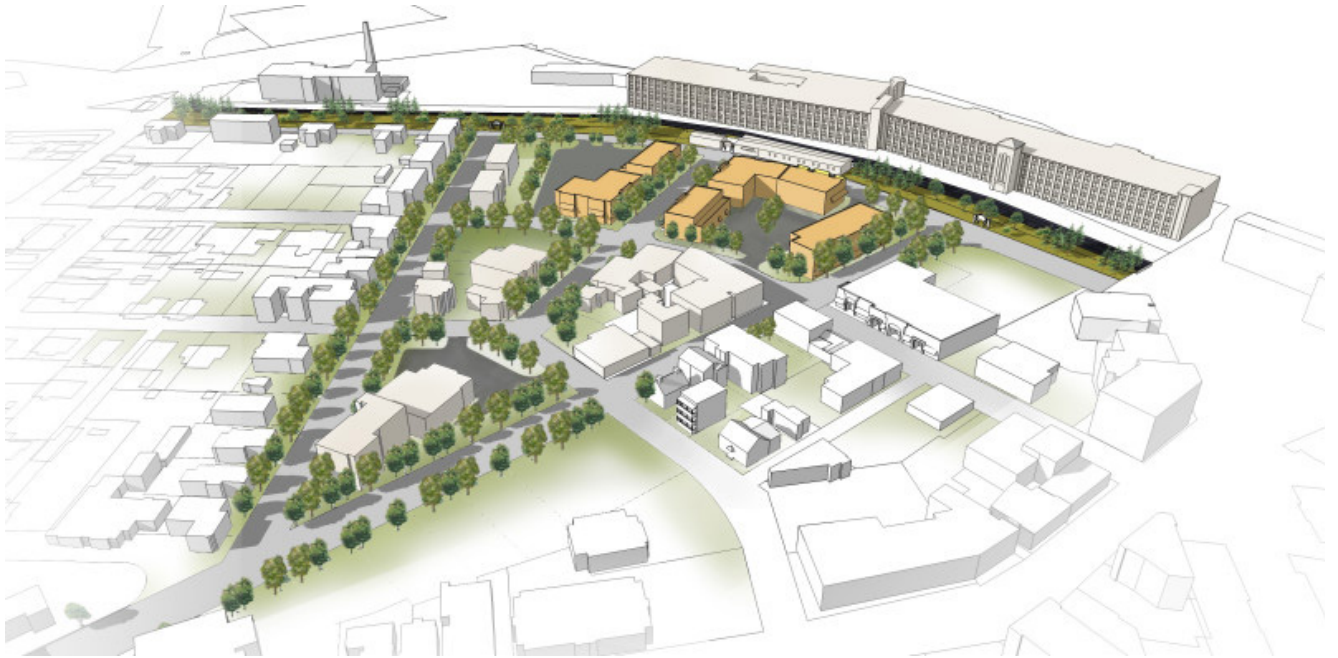
This will all be centered around the empty space which was once housed by Herberger's in downtown St. Cloud. This site is at the heart of the area and will be a promising subject for my research. With the nearby university, my hope is to give students a reason to come downtown as well as provide solutions for socio-economic growth and revitalization.

To help solve these issues, we need to develop a new strategy for enriching and maintaining downtown areas. We need to identify the root cause of why this is happening in the first place and work to make sure it does not happen in the future. The goal of this thesis project is to use architecture and urban design as a means of bringing people back downtown to enjoy and support local businesses. Through thoughtful urban planning and designing spaces that flexibly facilitate America's ever-changing lifestyle, downtown areas can be a hub for economic growth and societal union.



# PROJECT TYPOLOGY

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*Figure 3.0: City Planning - Chicopee, MA*

The project's typology is a downtown revitalization project designed to bring a wide range of demographics back to the hub of St. Cloud, MN. The plan is to add a new SCSU downtown-campus building and various other developments revolving around economic growth and cultural integration. The scope of this project is also in the realm of urban planning and design as the entire downtown area needs to be integrated to effectively address the issues in the area. This typology was chosen based on thoughtful consideration of the socio-economic obstacles presented in St. Cloud and will include the following: transportation, landscape, infrastructure, sense of place, businesses, demographics, and more. My research will investigate these aspects and identify the connectivity between them in other projects across the country.

# TYOLOGICAL PRECEDENTS

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*Figure 4.0: Renaissance Hall - Fargo, ND*

- Fargo, North Dakota - "Renaissance Zone" and relationship with NDSU
- Rockford, Illinois – legacy buildings (renewal projects)
- Chicago, Illinois – riverfront walk-ability
- Baton Rouge, Louisiana – arts and entertainment
- Detroit, Michigan - repurposing old infrastructure
- OSU/Columbus, Ohio - relationship between city/university
- UW/Madison, Wisconsin - relationship between city/university
- UM/Ann Arbor, Massachusetts - relationship between city/university

# MAJOR ELEMENTS

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The major elements of this project will include classrooms, street-scape redevelopment, transportation connections to and from downtown and SCSU, connections to the Mississippi River, and lastly, small-scale retail development.

In order to fully understand what makes urban revitalization projects successful, my research will focus on the following major features:

- **TRANSPORTATION**-this is important because it moves people throughout a community and connects different areas to one another that otherwise would not be correlated
- **SENSE OF PLACE**-every strong downtown should have a sense of place so that residents feel pride and comfort within the realm of their community
- **LANDSCAPE**-utilizing the surrounding landscape is beneficial to providing a sense of place as well as integrating natural elements into design
- **DEMOGRAPHICS**-analyzing the demographics of a community and the trends involved with different groups can be vital information to identifying the cause of deterioration as well as solutions
- **INFRASTRUCTURE**-mainly involving existing infrastructure, the historic buildings of an area are often valued by the community and finding ways to re-use these spaces is a great strategy for urban revitalization
- **BUSINESSES**-economic prosperity is always a driving factor in downtown areas as retail tends to make up the majority of the infrastructure



# AUDIENCE

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*Figure 5.0: SCSU LRC Building - St. Cloud, MN*

This project is for the people of St. Cloud, MN who want to see their city grow and prosper. I envision this being a plan that can be brought to the city council as a vision for what could be done to overcome the challenges St. Cloud is facing. The following are specific groups I intend to address:

- **COLLEGE STUDENTS**
- **SECOND-GENERATION IMMIGRANTS**
- **LOCAL RESIDENTS**
- **PROFESSORS**
- **BUSINESS OWNERS**
- **INVESTORS**

My research will involve an in-depth analysis of St. Cloud's demographics regarding these difference groups. Figuring out what percentage of the population falls under each category may help in prioritizing the different amenities of my thesis project.



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## **COLLEGE STUDENTS**

College students are a major target audience for my project as they are an annual economic driver. SCSU students come from all over the Minnesota area and provide opportunities for various initiatives aimed at young adults. A residential project targetted towards college students was recently developed across the street from the propped site, but has seen little to no luck filling rooms. A new reason for students to come downtown will help with this issue.

## **EDUCATORS**

Much like the students, educators from the area are also a target audience as they will be using the proposed facility and surrounding infrastructure. Some educators may be visitors to the area or may be weighing other job opportunities elsewhere. A downtown campus development may be a suitable strategy for drawing more students and faculty to attend the school and live in St. Cloud.

## **BUSINESS OWNERS**

Given the location of this project, business owners are important to address as they could house portions of the development and thus gain profit from more young adult presense in the area. Existing business owners throughout the downtown area will also benefit from being along the connection between the main campus and downtown.

## **INVESTORS**

Developments suchas the propped project require extensive investment from interested parties. This could involve SCSU alumni, economic developers or other large-mid scale corporations. This development could be a valuable opportunity to take St. Cloud to the next level and start growing the downtown area as a larger city hub.

## **SECOND-GENERATION IMMIGRANTS**

Over the past decade, the St. Cloud area has seen a large number of immigrants come to the area. Predominantly Somalian, this demographic is an important group to address and involve in the community. Instead of having division amongst long-time residents and immigrants, this project will aim to incorporate facilities for both cultures to interract. The second generation of immigrants is the future of the city and will be key to its success or failure.

## **LOCAL RESIDENTS**

Lastly, local residents that have been in the area for a long time will need to be taken into account. How will this developemnt effect them? How can I address their needs and concerns? The sentiment from these people will most-likely be to maintain the look and feel of St. Cloud's downtown. This will be another driving factor in my thesis.

# SITE



Figure 6.0: Herberger's - St. Cloud, MN

Figure 7.0: Downtown Map - St. Cloud, MN

The main site is located on the corner of W. St. Germain and 7th Ave. N. in downtown St. Cloud, MN. The downtown area is located right along the Mississippi river which is a major geographical feature of the region. The site was chosen due to its central location as well as the abandoned nature of the structure currently there. The existing building will be the shell for this project and serve as the hub of future downtown activity.

## **CREATING A SENSE OF PLACE**

Almost every successful downtown area has this involuntary sense of place. When you walk the streets of St. Cloud, I want you to know you exactly where you are because of the architecture and urban fabric provided by this project.

## **ADAPTABILITY AND CONNECTIVITY TO SURROUNDING AREA**

Connections to the history and landscape of the area is an important aspect of the project. The Mississippi is a great opportunity for this. Creating spaces that can be used for multiple programs is also important for any new project these days.

## **REVITALIZATION**

This is the core emphasis of my project as St. Cloud is suffering from lack of energy and growth in the downtown area. New developments and connections to other parts of the city will be an effective strategy for revitalizing the area.

# GOALS

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The main goal of this thesis project is to give people a reason to spend time in downtown St. Cloud. This is specifically targeted towards college students and other young adults as they are an annual population given the close location to SCSU. Another major goal is maintain an appreciation for the existing infrastructure of the site. My hope is to find unique strategies in re-purposing the Herberger's lot and providing solutions for the growth and decay of the project. Lastly, I hope to design a cohesive urban plan for the city so that all aspects of the downtown area are thoughtfully connected. This will strengthen my thesis in both an aesthetic and functional fashion.

In the end, this thesis is aimed to inspire other urban developments across the country to utilize existing infrastructure instead of tearing down and rebuilding. The final design solution will provide ideas for deteriorating downtowns to take initiative and create place and community. Specifically relating to the university system, this is a project aimed to connect students with their communities and inspire similar developments across the nation.

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## **ACADEMIC**

Academically, I want to challenge myself and use all of the tools I have at my disposal. My time at NDSU has made me who I am today; both personally and professionally. I want to reflect the quality education I have received and produce something which the department can be proud of. I have been staying in my comfort zone for the past few years and really want to branch out in my design strategies. A big goal of mine is to learn how to research properly and use that data to effectively solve the issues on my site. I am confident my classmates and professors will help me achieve this and more by the end of the Spring semester. Ultimately, I want to graduate with my Master in Architecture so I can begin my journey towards licensure.

## **PROFESSIONAL**

On a professional level, my goal is to have a project that I am both passionate and proud of moving into my career. I want to explore this specific typology because it may be something that I want to explore more in my professional life. This thesis is a reflection of all of the skills I have accumulated at NDSU and I hope that I can show my abilities to their fullest capacity. There may even be an opportunity to present my work to the city of St. Cloud and begin to make professional connections. When all is said and done, I want to look back at my work and feel a sense of accomplishment and assurance that I am in the right field.

## **PERSONAL**

On a personal level, I hope to improve my presentation and master planning skills. Through my development as an architecture student, I have grown an appreciation for urban design and planning. I want to apply this passion into my home town as I have known it all my life. Having a strong emotional connection to my work has always driven me to perform at a higher level. I want to get deep in the weeds and find solutions that can actually work. This is my way of giving back to the community that I grew up in. I don't want to see my hometown fall apart and continue on its current trend, I want it to head in the other direction. I have seen what proper urban planning and design has accomplished in Fargo, and I want to bring that to St. Cloud.

# PLAN FOR PROCEEDING

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## **PLAN**

My plan is to direct research towards successful downtown revitalization projects across the country and identify the strategies implemented to achieve such projects. Using my six main points of emphasis, I will explore how transportation, infrastructure, demographics, businesses, landscape, and sense of place are addressed. Other research I plan to do involves relationships between universities and cities and the benefits involved with these pacts. Through thorough case study work and demographical studies, I hope to have a well-informed base for the design of my own project in St. Cloud.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The data analysis methods I plan to use are interviews with individual city officials as well as graphical analysis of demographics over the course of the last decade. This information will be obtained via locally-obtained census data. My qualitative research will primarily come from observation of the site and direct interviews with city officials and residents.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

This data will be implemented into my design process early on. Using demographical information, I plan to prioritize the program of my project based on the most prominent demographical populations. My observations and interviews will help me develop a base for what the current state of the site is and what efforts have already been made to improve it. This base will continue to inform my design decisions as I further develop the project.

## **DOCUMENTATION**

Documentation for this data will be kept in a combination of digital and tangible books. Sketches, notes, research, models, and observations will all be documented. As information is compiled, the end goal will be to have all findings kept in a comprehensive thesis book which will ultimately be shared through the North Dakota State University Repository.



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## **SCHEDULE**

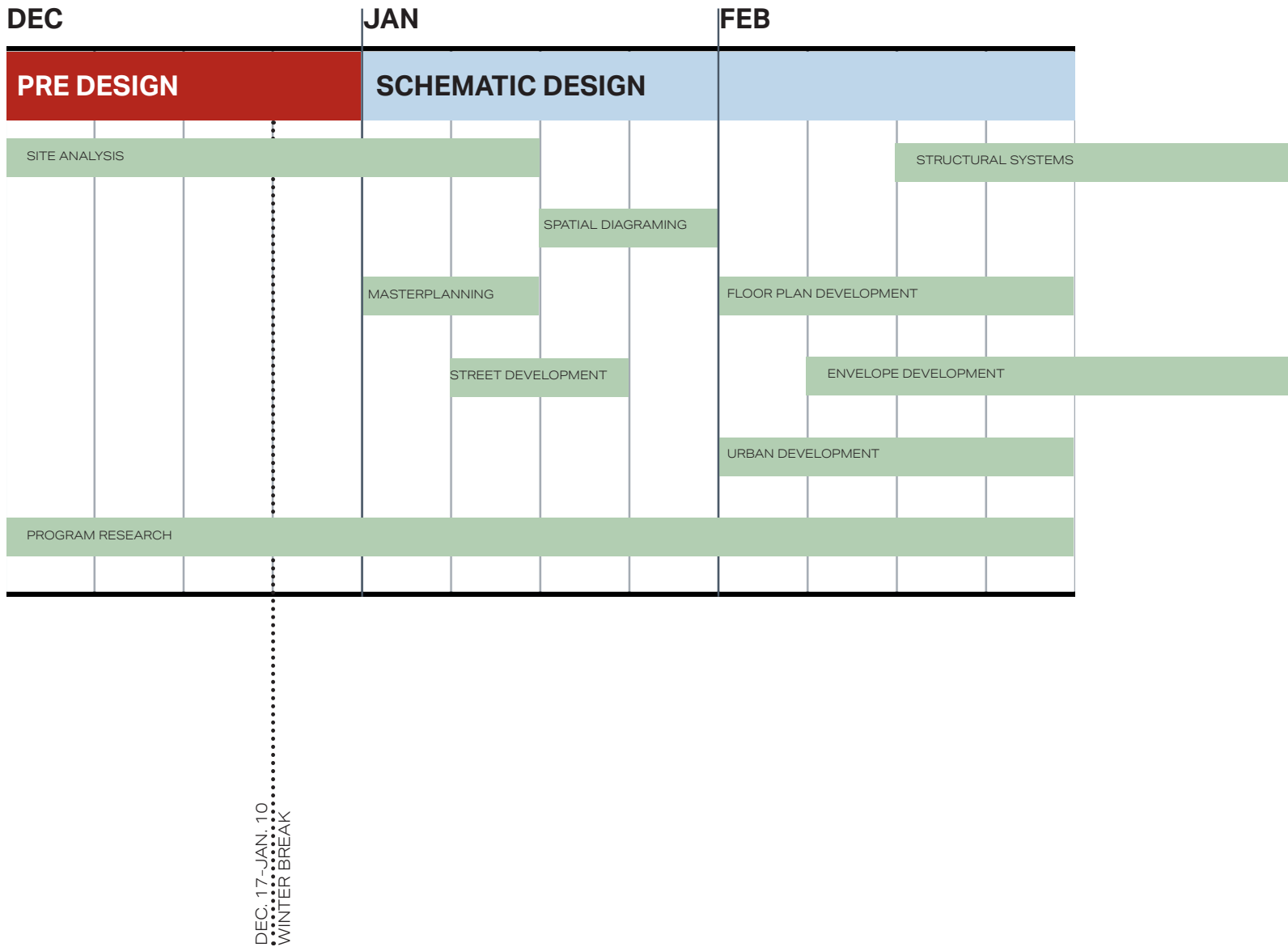
In order to effectively manage my time, a detailed schedule will be followed. Using the Fall semester for research, I will identify in-depth issues and analyze potential solutions for my program. In the Spring semester, I plan to have a lighter class-load and primarily focus my efforts on thesis. Starting with pre-design, I will analyze my research and data and investigate the context of my site. Next, I will focus on schematic design which will involve diagrams, programmatic analysis, and transit development. Design development will come next. This will involve finalizing design decisions and implementing key elements of emphasis. Lastly, I will finish my work with extensive documentation and imagery of the project. Using this guide, I hope to stay on pace and successfully achieve a project that I am proud of.

## **DELIVERABLES**

- THESIS BOOK
- DIGITAL PRESENTATION
- VIDEO
- PRESENTATION BOARDS
- PHYSICAL CONTEXT MODEL
- ORAL PRESENTATION

# SCHEDULE

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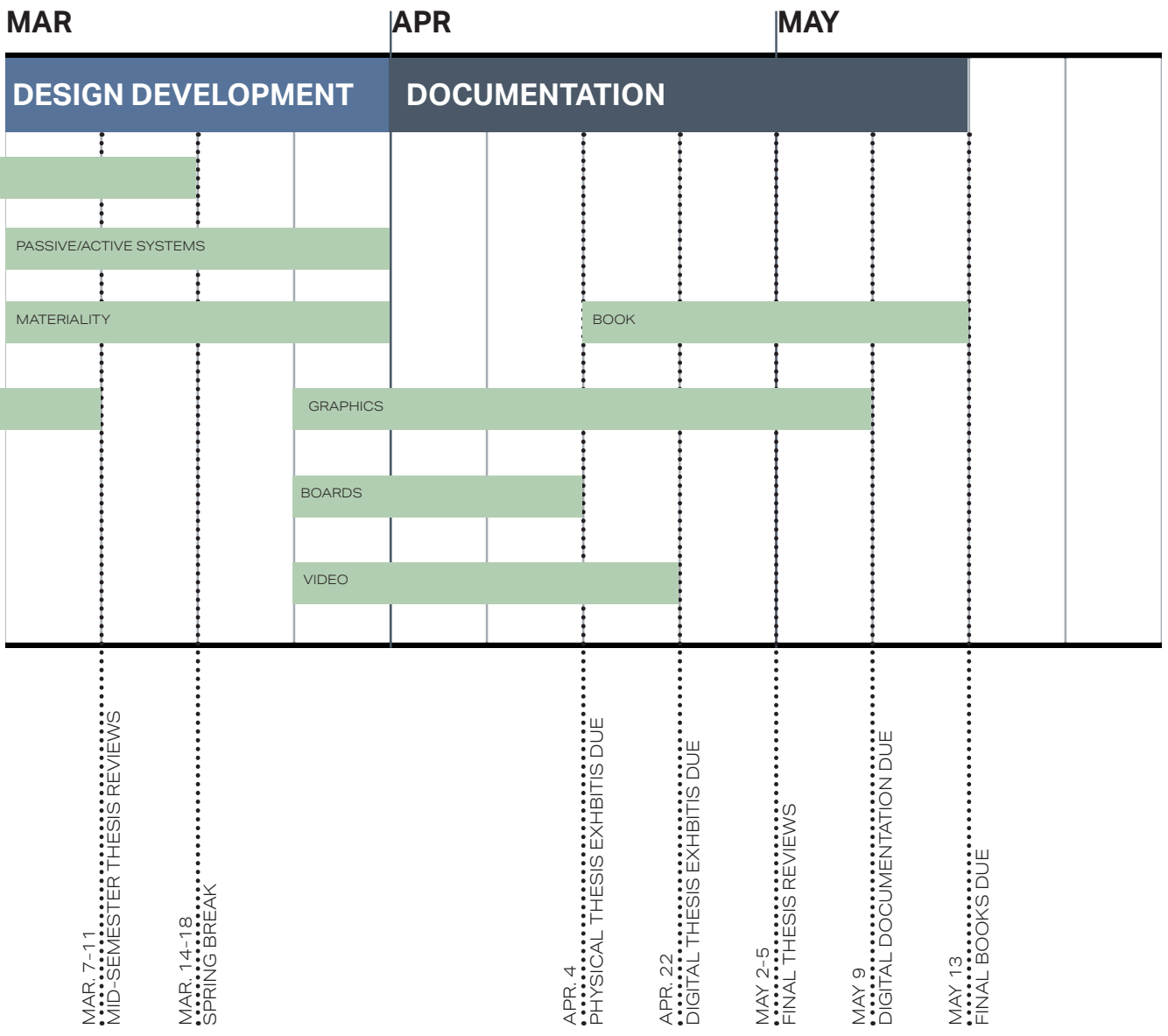


Figure 8.0: Schedule



# CHAPTER 2

## THESIS RESEARCH

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# SECTION 2.1

## LITERATURE REVIEW

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# LITERATURE REVIEW

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## OVERVIEW

The following literature review explores the history of American urbanism and the implications of historic preservation as a means of urban revitalization. The authors of this article are pushing for a greater understanding of historic preservation through extensive research regarding demographics, economics, and architectural development. This is beneficial to my thesis in that it provides a framework for how American cities have addressed historic preservation in the past and strategies to do so moving forward.

## ***HISTORIC PRESERVATION & URBAN REVITALIZATION IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY***

By: Stephanie Ryberg-Webster and Kelly L. Kinahan

Both of the authors are intellectuals from the College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University. They have published multiple articles on the topics of urban development, historical preservation, and other urban-related topics. Their extensive research on the topics mentioned give them a diverse perspective on American urbanization and how to move forward into the twenty first century.

In the article, the authors highlight four main topics to address in relation to urban revitalization. These are The New American City, Place Matters, Anchor Institutions, and Legacy Cities. This breakdown makes the article easy to follow and explores differing perspectives in regards to the topic. Throughout the article, the authors summarize each section and draw back to the main goal of the article which is to identify areas of improvement for research in each section.

## INTRODUCTION

The first section of the article introduces the reader to the topic and provides a basis of discussion for the rest of the paper. The authors are pushing for designers to rethink preservation policy in the twenty first century. They analyse the history of historic preservation in America and break it down into three main periods: patriotism in the 19th century, architectural treasures in the early 20th century, and environmentalism in the late 20th century. They also include examples of projects in each of these time periods. The ending statement is that Historic preservation has been a key economic development strategy and will continue to be in the future.

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## **HISTORY**

The early 1900s saw the first historic district zoning in South Carolina. Following WWII, the nation had to tackle issues with housing shortages and modernizing urban infrastructure. Interstate construction also played a major role across the nation and led to many historic buildings being demolished to make way for expansion. These are all factors that I identify to be true in St. Cloud.

## **RESEARCH**

The authors highlight various scholars' research on historic preservation. They found that economics dominate most of the research on this topic as money is a constant factor in all facets of American expansion. This research found that it is the best "bang for your buck" to invest in historic preservation at a local city level. This is justified through numbers that reflect new construction is less cost effective than reusing existing buildings for economic development. Other studies found that residents of historic districts are more likely to feel a sense of attachment to their neighborhood than that of new developments. The authors conclude that the best way to address these economic factors is to focus on sustainability and equity with preservative architecture.

## **DOWNSIDES**

The article also sets the stage by identifying the negative aspects of historic preservation and the common arguments made against it. Some people see historic preservation as elitist in that only the rich can afford to house and develop old buildings. The poor are less likely to use these spaces and thus makes the idea non diverse in nature. This ties into issues of gentrification across American downtowns. Another issue is that strict preservation standards in historic districts can restrict the evolution of cities that aim to grow and produce new infrastructure. This section is important as a reader because it explores the differing viewpoints that are related to the topic. The authors recognize that they cannot speak on this subject without identifying the consequences and backlash that their way of thinking may cause.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

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## **THE NEW AMERICAN CITY**

The first leading discourse the authors address is the New American City. This section explores the trends in urban America over the last few decades. Due to the migration of industry and commerce centers away from the urban core of cities, many buildings were left abandoned. Since this occurred, residential development has been the most successful in filling these spaces. Quantitative evidence shows that between 1970-2000, there was an 8% increase in households in urban centers. Downtown populations grew by 10% in the 1990s alone. The authors call this a paradigm shift in American cities and that we must reevaluate strategies for maintaining lively downtowns. The author references Jerry Mitchell (2001) in his comments about how the most successful strategies are, "self financed by local businesses, initiated by innovative public-private partnerships, and typified by an attention to historic preservation." One other topic mentioned in this section is that real estate owners need to have a hand in historic preservation as they are often the ones in control of sites such as this thesis.

## **PLACE MATTERS IN ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

The second leading discourse mentioned is that Place Matters. One of the main proponents of this topic is attracting the "creative class". The idea that this class drives economy and demand in downtown areas is explained in further detail as well. Another topic is creating a sense of place and authenticity in historic districts. Downtown areas are essentially clusters of geographic concentrations of companies or institutions. The authors address that these clusters need to be shaped into livable cities in order to attract talent. This ties into attracting students to come and live downtown in St. Cloud. Along with this idea comes the implementation of historic sites which draw off of a historical identity within a city and draws in tourism and residents alike. The overarching concept of these ideas is that we need to see the built environment in downtown areas as valuable assets rather than hurdles.



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## **ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS**

Anchor institutions are essentially community organizations that shape the community and are long-standing sources of jobs and culture. These can include universities, hospitals, community foundations, local governments, and art and cultural organizations. Since these institutions are specific to a given location, they have a common bond to place-based urban revitalization. They are large employers and often leaders in progress within their communities. The authors go on to provide examples of city-institution relationships that have worked in America already. This validates the concepts expressed throughout the article.

## **LEGACY CITIES**

Legacy cities are places that, after industrial decline, are experiencing socioeconomic issues. As of 2000, these places were found to include 15% of the American population. That is a large percentage considering all of the other places people live. These legacy cities are an important part of the American urban fabric and are a target for the principles expressed in the article.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the article calls for further research in all of the topics discussed. With more understanding of the factors related to urban decline, American cities can make more informed decisions related to revitalization. As cities age, this topic will continue to be relevant. If anything, this topic will be more and more vital to the progress of the urban fabric in America. The final statement provided by the authors is that historical preservationists should be part of the urban planning process moving forward. This way, cities can be more economically savvy and create unique places for people to grow in the community.

This article is effective in explaining the different facets of historic preservation by discussing the history and current viewpoints of the topic. I can identify many parallels between my frame of thought as a young urban designer in that I see so many opportunities with existing buildings. American cities can use these historic buildings to create new and flexible spaces while still maintaining that sense of place and authenticity discussed in the article. My thesis will aim to capture this essence in the end.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

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## OVERVIEW

The following literature review explores the components of university architecture on a broad level. The author of this article is giving a comprehensive analysis of how spaces are designed and correlated on university campuses. This is beneficial to my thesis because it provides a framework for how university institutions plot out campuses and what spaces are typically next to each other. This will help with my spatial diagramming and identification of what to include in the thesis program.

## **UNIVERSITY ARCHITECTURE**

By: Brian Edwards

The author has written several journal articles for Taylor & Francis on architecture and urban sustainability. He is based in London, but works to analyze important factors in America as well. This makes the author's analysis slightly less extensive given the broad scope of his work.

In the article, the author highlights the importance of university architecture and the impacts it has on students and faculty. Throughout the article, Edwards states base information on each topic, then dives into more detailed analysis of why things are done that way.

## INTRODUCTION

The article starts out with an introduction to the topic of university architecture. Edwards states that 40% of students that graduate high school will attend a university of some kind. Whether this data is for the UK or USA is not clear. Regardless, he is trying to expose the reader to the scope of the topic at hand. He then goes on to express how campuses can influence the outlook of tomorrow's decision makers. This is a strong point to make as my project is also focused on providing spaced where the next generation of professionals can learn and grow for the betterment of society.

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## **ACADEMIC MISSION & CAMPUS PLAN**

The first specific topic of the article addresses the importance of research in academic facilities. Specifically, research labs are an essential component of most universities. The author goes on to explain the dynamics of research and how it leads to progress within and outside the university. With this, Edwards goes into further depth regarding organization of these spaces and what is typically done. He states that long lengths of benching with separate discussion rooms nearby influence a balance between individual and collaborative work. This is something that can easily be applied to my thesis programming.

The final topic in this section is the three-way relationship between library space, lecture halls, and labs. In other words, 'the three L's'. His correlative analysis of these three spaces is one that i will look to expand upon when introducing differing educational spaces in my project.

## **MASTER PLANS OR DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS**

The next section talks about the traditions of university infrastructure on a macro level. As a designer, identifying the way classes are taught is important in understanding how spaces should be shaped. With this in mind, the author states that acknowledging the future needs of a space are also vital to effective design. Creating a space for a specific use is great, but creating a space that can be flexibly transformed into other uses is even better. The author goes into great depth about how sports facilities are able to do this. They can be changed from a basketball court into a hockey arena in the matter of a day. Edwards makes a strong argument that classrooms and spaces in general should be able to do this as well moving forward. With today's ever-changing technology and infrastructure, I plan to incorporate flexible spaces into all parts of the thesis project.

Another component of this section is how many campuses are centralized into blocks of lecture halls with smaller links to tertiary facilities. Though my project is not on a traditional university campus, it can still incorporate familiar aspects that make people feel like they are on campus. Centralizing certain spaces and providing 'support' spaces next to them is one effective strategy to do so.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

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## **PRACTICAL PROBLEMS**

Tying in with the previous section, the author talks about creating bridges between spaces. This often comes down to simply what makes the most sense. If a certain group uses labs often after lecture, then it makes sense to have those spaces next to each other, etc. This can come with challenges such as environmental versus functional factors. A commons area is a great environmental space, but might take the place of more storage or classrooms. These factors need to be taken into account when originally programming. One of the coined terms in this section is the 'delineation between the street and teaching spaces'. This means making it clear what spaces are for what purposes. Being able to distinguish the difference between a hallway and a commons area, a storage room and a classroom. Simple visual and tangible factors can tie into this. All of this is to make people feel comfortable in space and know where to go without looking at a floor plan.

## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & THE CAMPUS**

The next section is focused on more of the sociological aspects of university design. Edwards talks about providing a variety of housing options for students to choose from. Having a choice of type, style, standard, and cost is always a positive feature to a university scene. Housing is an aspect that won't be addressed in this thesis mainly due to the fact that 'The Lofts' is a brand new student housing development right across the street from the site.

Another aspect of providing choices to students is basic amenities like food and hygiene. Many students don't live on campus, but still need access to certain facilities. Providing the choice of where to get coffee or a bite to eat can have a lasting effect on students. This is a sustainable feature in university design because it is a major drawing factor in bringing in new people. This can also be applied to communities as a whole and a topic which will be addressed in my thesis.

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## **CRIME, POLITICS & THE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS**

The final section of my analysis talks about how universities overcome crime and create sense of place. Edwards says universities are 'places' as much as they are institutions. This ties in nicely with the first literature review which talks about the important of institutions for communities. It comes full circle that institutions help create a sense of space, but universities also are 'places' in it of themselves. The author states that successful universities link new ideals of design and innovation technologies to the mission of their developments. In other words, the fruits of their labor shine through when students succeed in the real world. Edwards goes on to say, "The university is, therefore, a place of history, a microcosm in buildings and urban spaces which reflects the changing ideals of the world".

The author finishes this section off with a the notion that universities that have a commitment to sustainability draw in more students. It is the way people are wired today. We seek to be more sustainable and environmentally friendly in all facets of our lives. Edwards is trying to express that designing with this same sentiment will attract more and more people to a community.

## **CONCLUSION**

This article includes a good analysis and basis for university standards of design. It is helpful in providing different aspects of design which I overlooked initially. These include spatial relations, providing choices to users, and examining the function of space and place as a drawing factor for new students. I want to utilize this approach by making the thesis design attractive not only in aesthetics, but in 'politics'. This way the building will reflect the community while providing a model of sustainability and continued progress through education.



# SECTION 2.2

## PRECEDENT STUDIES

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# CITY OF FARGO & NDSU

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*Figure 9.0: Barry Hall - Fargo, ND*

**Typology:** Office & Education

**Location:** Fargo, ND

**Population:** 121,889 (2019)

**Designer:** Keith & Kurke / Kilbourne Group

**Completed:** 2009 / 2008

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Barry & Renaissance Hall in Fargo, ND are two great examples of creating a relationship between university and city. These locations are used by hundreds of students on yearly basis for the college of business and college of visual arts and architecture. Not only do they provide more than suitable facilities for students, but they also bring great revenue to the surrounding downtown area. In partnership with the city of Fargo, NDSU has given its students a unique downtown experience while also helping boost the economic growth and diversity in the area. This includes coffee shops, boutiques, and more.

## **HISTORY:**

Renaissance Hall was built in 1903 and is one of the oldest buildings in downtown Fargo. It used to house a farm implement warehouse and was renovated by NDSU in 2008. This was the first building NDSU housed in the downtown area. The Visual Arts Department and Architecture Department are housed there. A fifth floor was added to accommodate for the new HVAC system and provide more studio space. This reuse project was also the first in North Dakota to receive LEED certification.





*Figure 10.0: Renaissance Hall - Fargo, ND*

**URBAN REVITALIZATION FEATURES:**

**Infrastructure:** Existing historic buildings due for demolition

**Sense of Place:** NDSU-specific signage and facilities

**Transportation:** MAT bus stops at both locations that connect to campus

**Landscape:** Walkable sidewalks with attractive pedestrian circulation around

**Demographics:** Student population growing means more need for facilities. Bringing younger population downtown to enrich economic growth.

**CONTRIBUTION TO THESIS:**

The relationship between NDSU and the city of Fargo is one that can be closely followed regarding St. Cloud and SCSU. Both cities have local colleges with about the same number of students enrolled each year. NDSU's commitment to salvage the existing historical buildings in Fargo is a testament to how a strong university-city relationship can help revitalize a community. This same strategy can be implemented in St. Cloud with the centrally located Herberger's site. Providing student with a reason to be downtown helps get them there which is half of the problem. Once they are there, retail and housing begin to see an increase in business just like in Fargo. NDSU's projects were a steppingstone to the major development that is seen downtown today.

# DULUTH TECHNOLOGY VILLAGE

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*Figure 11.0: Duluth Technology Village - Duluth, MN*

**Typology:** Multi-use technology office

**Location:** Duluth, MN

**Population:** 85, 915 (2019)

**Designer:** LHB

**Completed:** Early 2000s

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Sitting in the heart of Duluth, this building houses several office suites for local businesses. The building is specifically targeted towards executives and entrepreneurs in the area. This Class A office building is highly secure and touted as a successful reuse project from its original construction.

## **HISTORY:**

This building was originally built to house “.com businesses”. Here, offices and call centers filled the floors for years. As these sorts of businesses were phased out or grew too big for the building, the site went vacant and lost most of its sense of place. In recent years, it has been transformed into a more approachable building that houses new offices and some educational facilities.



*Figure 12.0: Duluth Technology Village - Duluth, MN*

**URBAN REVITALIZATION FEATURES:**

**Infrastructure:** Existing office space no longer being used

**Sense of Place:** Lighting and connections to street

**Transportation:** Ease of access to surrounding infrastructure

**Landscape:** Location close to university and urban hub

**Demographics:** Students and office workers interacting in same space

**CONTRIBUTION TO THESIS:**

Given the location and timeline of this project, there are many parallels to St. Cloud, MN. Since my target audience is young professionals and students, this project is a great comparison of what makes spaces attractive to this demographic as well.



# PABLO ARTS CENTER

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*Figure 13.0: Pablo Arts Center - Eau Claire, WI*

**Typology:** Performing arts & Education

**Location:** Eau Claire, WI

**Population:** 68,187 (2019)

**Designer:** Holzman Moss Bottino Architecture / Strang

**Completed:** 2018

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Located at the confluence of the Chippewa and Eau Claire Rivers, Pablo Arts Center is a collaboration between the University of Wisconsin and the city of Eau Claire. The facility houses the Music and Theatre Arts program and provides students with a place to expand their creative aspirations. The 155,000 square foot building includes large accordion-fold garage doors that open to the street during warm months, seating for nearly 1,300, and locally-sourced materials such as crinkled copper from St. Paul and black granite from Michigan.

## **HISTORY:**

Due to several generous donors and community leaders, the "Confluence" project was started to enrich and develop Eau Claire for the betterment of the community. This public-private initiative made way for the Pablo Arts Center to be built and continues to promote further development in the area. The facility was designed with the intent to house more facilities for the Music and Theatre Arts department of the University of Wisconsin as their existing facilities on the main campus were dated and being outgrown. Now the Pablo Arts Center serves as a great connection between the city of Eau Claire and the university as well as a tour destination for visitors of the city.



Figure 14.0: Pablo Arts Center - Eau Claire, WI

**URBAN REVITALIZATION FEATURES:**

**Infrastructure:** New privately-led development

**Sense of Place:** Local materials and prime location along river confluence

**Transportation:** Biking and walking paths line the shore of the river behind this facility

**Landscape:** Embracing the river as a landmark and bringing students downtown

**Demographics:** Students are able to show their talents to locals and visitors alike

**CONTRIBUTION TO THESIS:**

Eau Claire, WI as a city is a great comparison to St. Cloud, MN in that they are both located in the Midwest, have state universities, and are about the same size demographically. The Pablo Arts Center is a great example of creating a connection between the city and the university. An arts center is a great way to bring locals to see what students are working on. The designers also implemented useful strategies such as locally-sourced materials and strong geographic location to further emphasize a sense of place. St. Cloud could benefit from having a similar approach when redeveloping the riverfront and inner downtown sites.



# SECTION 2.3

## INTERVIEWS

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# KEY CONTRIBUTORS

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## Eric O'Brien

I reached out to Eric to complete a site visit of the Herberger Building. He kindly let me walk through the interior and gave me valuable insight on the past and current uses of the building. He also addressed some of the security concerns of the site and connected me with the developers interested in the building.

**Commercial Real Estate Agent  
at Commercial Realty Solutions**



## Cathy Mehelich

Cathy met with me over the phone and was a valuable resource in providing context on St. Cloud's past and current initiatives. She also gave me great ideas in terms of program; mentioning a high-end bar and billiard hall and strengthening the idea of education space downtown.

**Economic Development  
Director for City of St. Cloud**





**Professor of Economics, Dean  
at St. Cloud State University**

## King Banaian

King met with me over Zoom and was very impactful in helping me see the perspective of the university. He said that SCSU has been looking for a more public-facing facility and provided ideas on how to address office space and classrooms downtown. He also helped me narrow down which school to house in the building design and connected me with Kelly Bartlow.



**Space Utilization Manager at  
Saint Cloud State University**

## Kelly Bartlow

Kelly also met with me over Zoom and provided more insight on SCSU and their current facilities. Besides her interest in my thesis project, she also provided helpful tips for my career and how to proceed with my studies.



# SECTION 2.4

## PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

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# PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

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The project I have defined is important to me as a person because St. Cloud is my hometown and I care deeply about providing solutions to the issues I have seen grow in my time there. It is important for me to do this project at this stage in my academic development because it will test my ability to define and execute on a project which I have defined. It is the culmination of all that I have learned in my studies into one succinct goal. It is important to do this project at this stage in my professional development because it will set the stage for what I am capable of as a designer and help me practice my presentation skills for the professional world. The project will add to my knowledge base through my research of similar projects and ideas as well as through the connections I make along the way. The project will add to my set of skills by introducing me to a diverse perspective on design and research methodologies. Completing the project is important for the profession at this time because the issue of urban revitalization is one that can be applied across the country in similar communities experiencing a lack of identity and prosperity. The project is important as an academic exercise at this time because it is from my perspective as a student and someone from the area. It makes the most sense for a graduate architecture student to do a project like this in the sense that I have a unique perspective.

Economically, the influx of students and businesses from this project is a major driving factor. It should be a profitable venture quickly. This also ties into my justification of expending the funds to implement the project. Funding for a project of this magnitude would most-likely come from the state as it would be an educational building for SCSU. Other sources may include the chamber of commerce and other local donors. The beauty of the project is that the return on investment should be both monetary and intangible in the impact it will have on St. Cloud.



Figure 15.0: Downtown St. Cloud, MN



*Figure 16.0: Students*

The environmental impacts of the project should be very limited given the reuse of the existing building. The main impacts would involve the actual construction phase and transportation of materials to and from the site. This lack of impact justifies the project in that it will not cause a great deal of harm to the physical environment of the site and surrounding area. Cutting edge technology is to be utilized in the design of this project for the sake of those using the facilities. Students are constantly exposed to new technology and should be given all the necessary opportunities to continue this process.

The project is important to be implemented in its social context because it provides an opportunity for diverse demographics to connect and share a space. It is also important in that the plan is to liven the surrounding socioeconomic fabric of St. Cloud. This could have a great impact in the community to bring people back downtown and mix the differing cultures in town.

The project is justified in its chosen site location because it is central and well-placed for a connection between SCSU and downtown. This project has a potential to expand the profession by means of setting a standard for what deteriorating American downtowns can do to progress and be revitalized. Working on this project is an imperative because St. Cloud is at a point in its history where something needs to be done to bring the community together on a micro and macro level. The goal is to inspire other similar projects to sprout throughout the area after my work is completed. City developers and architects can pick up where this project leaves off to create a St. Cloud worth living and growing in.



# HISTORICAL CONTEXT

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St. Cloud, MN was once a combination of three towns known as Upper, Middle, and Lower towns. These were located along the Mississippi & Sauk Rivers which were vital to the economy of the area. In 1856, the three combined to create the city of St. Cloud. The city quickly grew as a major agricultural trade hub, but soon expanded to other products. In 1868, the first granite quarry was founded along with the arrival of the railroad. In 1869, St. Cloud State University was founded along with a state prison in 1889. By 1900, many neighborhoods had developed throughout the area. These ranged from Victorian mansions to traditional yellow brick houses which are still seen in the area today. In 1917, the Pan Motor Company was founded with the promise of making St. Cloud the next Detroit. However, with the onset of WWI, materials were directed towards the war and company soon fell under. Echoes of St. Cloud's long history are on display throughout the area, but are often overseen or under appreciated.

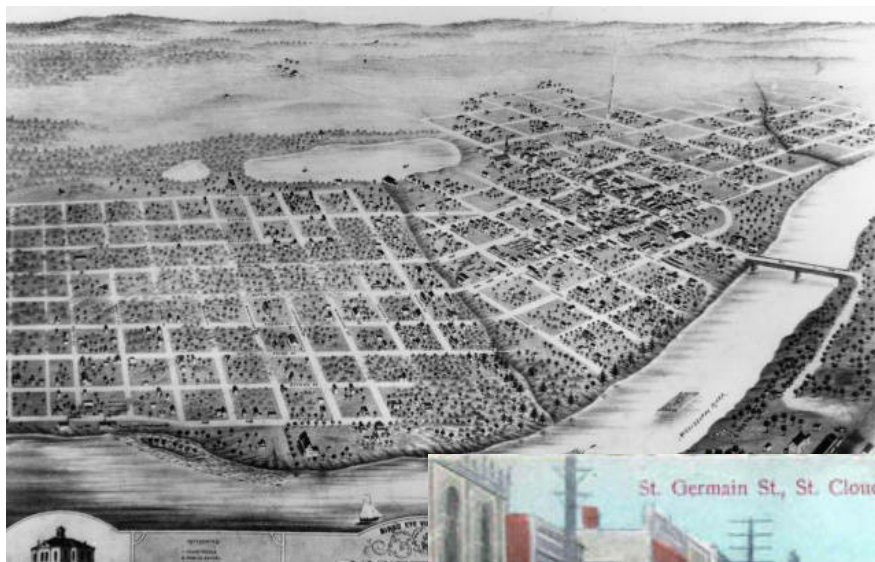


Figure 17.0: History - St. Cloud, MN



*Figure 18.0: Crossroads Mall*

In more recent history, the city continues to grow with a more diverse population and economic standing. In the last decade, the city rebranded to a "Greater St. Cloud" logo focused on improving and simplifying their identity. Still coined the "Granite City", St. Cloud is a leading resource of granite to the country. On a local level, the Crossroads Center mall was opened in 1966. This is the largest mall in the state outside of the metro. This development was a major success, but drew almost all of the areas commerce to the west side of town, away from downtown. Today, St. Cloud suffers from a lack of unique private businesses. Division Street cuts through the city and houses many chain restaurants and stores which take business away from locals. With the pandemic of COVID19, this has continued to be a trend for many small businesses in town.

# HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Relating to the site, downtown St. Cloud has many historic buildings from as far back as the late 1800s. These old buildings have been repurposed over the years to accommodate various mixed-use buildings. Some of these buildings include The Davidson Opera House (1897), The D.B. Searle Building (1886), The First National Bank Building (1889), and Breen Hotel & Sherman Theatre (1921). Each of these adds to the historic Midwest look and feel of the downtown area.



**1999:**

Bob Herberger dies. Family gives \$3 million endowment to SCSU.



**2018:**

Bon-Ton Stores Inc. files bankruptcy and closes all stores nationwide.

**1927:**

First Herberger's opens in downtown St. Cloud.



**2005:**

Bon-Ton Stores Inc. purchases Herberger's.



The site, which once housed Herberger's, has been vacant for over 3 years since its closing in 2018. The shopping center had been a prominent feature of downtown St. Cloud since 1927, when Bob Herberger, a local resident, opened the location. This closure left a big gap in the downtown economy which has not been recovered. At the time of its closing, executive director of the City Council, Jolene Foss commented:

**"There will be a hole left by Herberger's," Foss said. "I'm very hopeful about our downtown having the strength to absorb this and to be able to just continue to move forward. We will see changes and that space will be something new and something exciting, but we just don't know what that is yet."**

*-St. Cloud Times*



# SOCIAL CONTEXT

American downtowns are deteriorating in both physical and social elements. With the drop in small businesses, comes to drop in pedestrian traffic and sense of community. St. Cloud is no exception to these new standards due to the loss of herberger's but also the expansion of the Western commercial district. The following information highlights census data in relationship to St. Cloud.

**POPULATION:** 68,001 (2019)

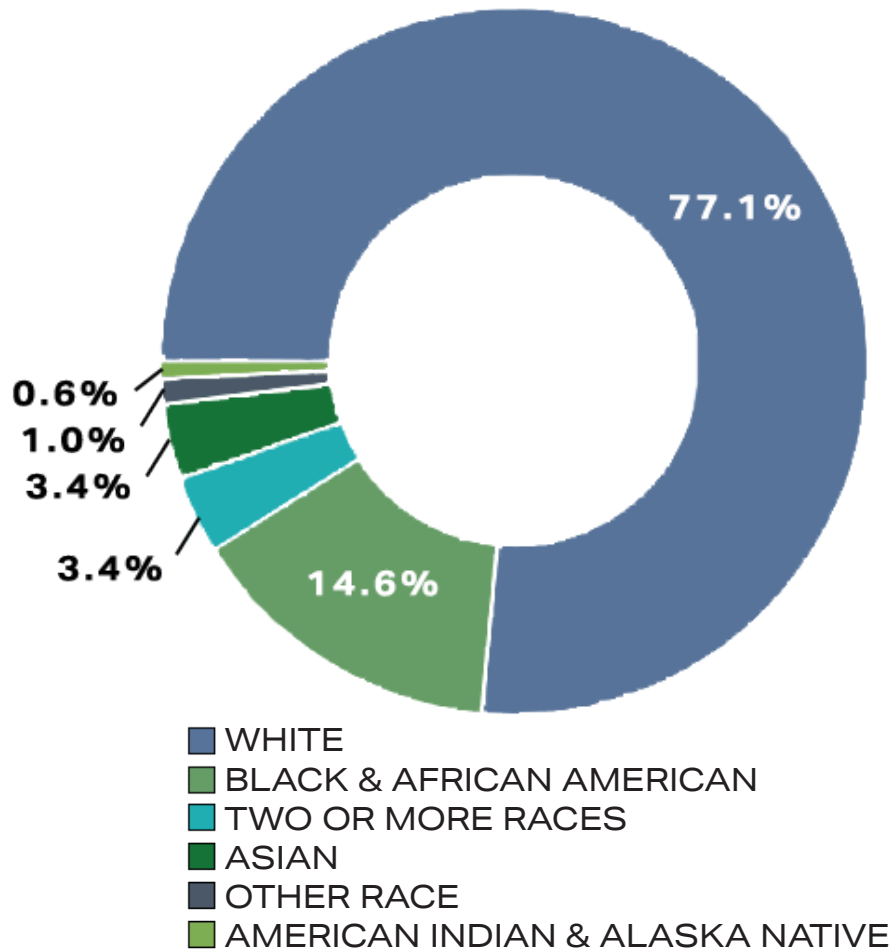


Figure 19.0: Demographics

Though the current demographics reflect a vast majority of white or caucasians in the St. Cloud area, there has been a major influx of Black & African Americans over the last few years. Most of this demographic is Somali and has established a large culture group in the city and Twin Cities metro. Diversity has become a major topic among residents when it comes to any new developments.

# SOCIAL CONTEXT

## POVERTY RATE

The overall poverty rate in St. Cloud is 22.50%. This means that 1 in every 4 people is living in poverty. Most of those living in these conditions have little to no education. Unfortunately, this number has stayed fairly steady over the last few years.

## INCOME

The average household income in St. Cloud is \$66,902 compared to the average of \$71,306 statewide. The average employment rate is 64.7%

## EDUCATION

High school graduation rates are at a high of 94.91% among white people, but at a staggering 60.65% among black people. Similar margins are reflected with bachelors degrees (33.74% white, 12.48% black). This is a trend in the city of St. Cloud. One potential cause could be related to a lack of inviting and community-oriented facilities for learning.

## ECONOMY

Though St. Cloud appears to be coming out of a recession due to the pandemic, many businesses are finding it difficult to find labor. According to the St. Cloud Times, 43% of surveyed firms expect it to be more difficult to find qualified laborers for beginning of 2022. 60% reported that there has been a smaller pool of applicants since last year. Not to mention supply chain issues have caused issues with inflation and operating costs for most businesses.

TABLE 1--CURRENT BUSINESS CONDITIONS\*

ST. CLOUD AREA BUSINESS OUTLOOK SURVEY Summary May 2021	May 2021 vs. Three Months Ago				February 2021 Diffusion Index <sup>3</sup>	May 2020 Diffusion Index <sup>3</sup>
	Decrease (%)	No Change (%)	Increase (%)	Diffusion Index <sup>3</sup>		
What is your evaluation of:						
level of business activity for your company	13.5	21.6	62.2	48.7	39.3	-44.7
number of employees on your company's payroll	5.4	51.4	43.2	37.8	-3.0	-27.7
length of the workweek for your employees	2.7	59.5	37.8	35.1	9.1	-34.1
capital expenditures (equipment, machinery, structures, etc.) by your company	0	62.2	37.8	37.8	27.2	-40.5
employee compensation (wages and benefits) by your company	0	35.1	64.9	64.9	42.4	-2.1
prices received for your company's products	0	40.5	56.8	56.8	48.4	-17.0
national business activity	10.8	21.6	54.1	43.3	27.2	-48.9
your company's difficulty attracting qualified workers	2.7	48.6	45.9	43.2	18.2	-8.5
Notes: (1) reported numbers are percentages of businesses surveyed. (2) rows may not sum to 100 because of "not applicable" and omitted responses. (3) diffusion indexes represent the percentage of respondents indicating an increase minus the percentage indicating a decrease. A positive diffusion index is generally consistent with economic expansion.						

\* Source: SCSU School of Public Affairs Research Institute

There has also been a dramatic increase in unemployment requests in St. Cloud despite the need for labor. Extended benefits from the federal government for the unemployed has prolonged this trend and hurt the economy in many cities across America. The chart to the left provides the numbers to reflect this issue.

Figure 20.0: Economy

# CULTURAL CONTEXT

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The main goal of this project is to bring students back downtown. Students are the future generation of our country so more effort should be made to give them the best possible opportunities to achieve their academic and professional goals. The traditional viewpoint is to focus university facilities on a condensed campus, but this project aims to challenge that idea. The benefits of having university campuses is clearly evident in many scenarios, but when a community is hurting for culture and connectivity, separating students and citizens is a mistake.

Demographically speaking, universities tend to be melting pots of both ethnicity and thought. They are places where ideas can be expressed and defended. Where information turns to knowledge and knowledge turns to wisdom overtime. Experiences in college often shape students into the adults they are in the professional world. This can relate to religion, politics, socioeconomics, etc.

With this base understanding, more American cities should embrace their local universities. Instead of looking down on the future generations, we should be looking to uplift them and provide them with the necessary tools to succeed. Many cities have already found success in this area. Ann Arbor, Michigan, Fargo, North Dakota, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and many more. These cities have developed strategies to intertwine the success of their community with that of the university.

The results are yet to be seen in many regards, but one thing is certain, it can't hurt to try. Instead of separating our American universities, we can combine them with our cities and create spaces where diverse communities can grow together. Not only does this benefit students, but it benefits the city too. With influx of enrollment, comes influx of economic growth. Bringing educational facilities downtown provides opportunities for heightened traffic and a younger market. With this come housing, retail, transportation, etc. The ever-changing aspects of American culture and society are pointing towards a new way to think about post secondary education system and how to grow cities with it.

# UNIVERSITY DATA

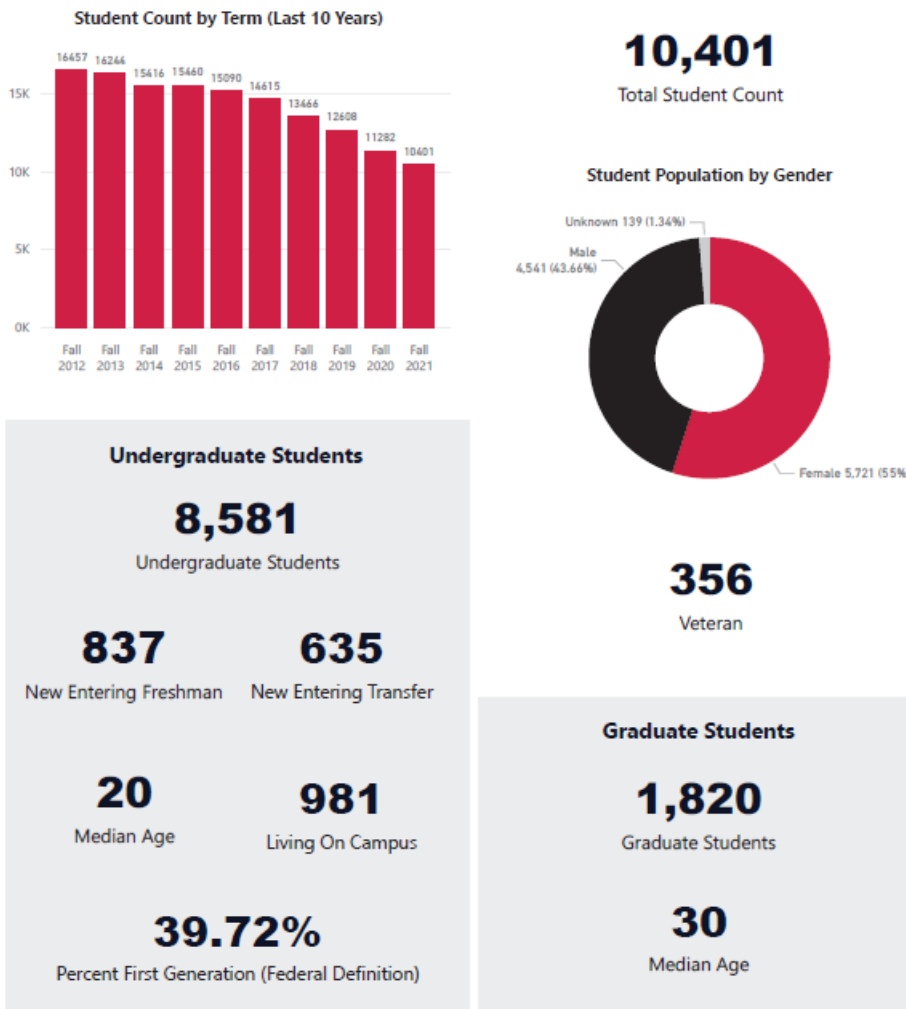


Figure 21.0: SCSU Numbers  
Data Courtesy of SCSU

St. Cloud State University is the third largest university by enrollment numbers, but has seen a dramatic dip over the last 10 years. Nearly 40% of enrollments is first generation college students. One surprising number is the median age of 30. Given that the student body, is my main focus group, providing spaces that 30 year olds would appreciate and utilize is important. Also, a notable 55% of students are female which may be another another group to address further. Clearly, SCSU has seen better days and could use a boost in enrollment to maintain the longevity of the university. My thesis aims to draw more people to St. Cloud and SCSU specifically.

# CITY INITIATIVES

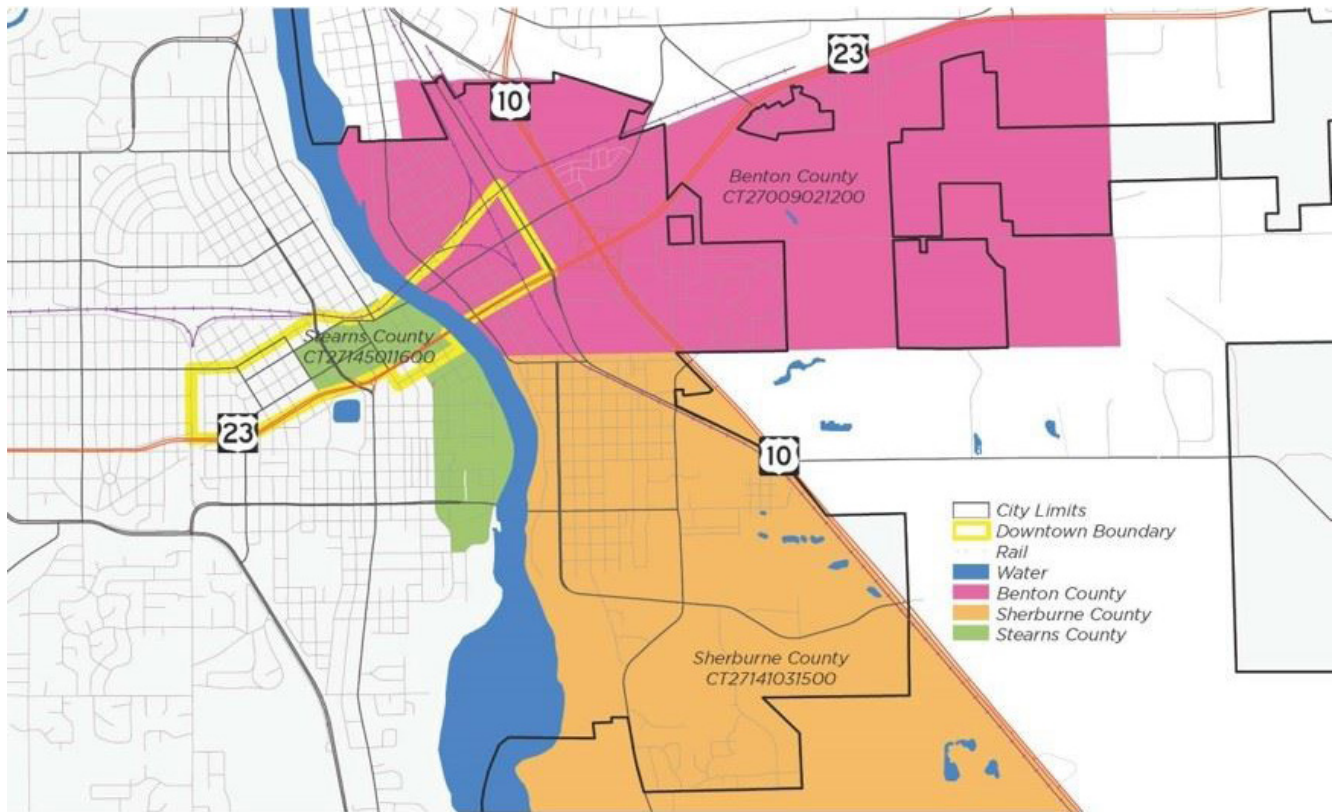


Figure 22.0: Opportunity Zones  
Image Courtesy of City of St. Cloud

The city of St. Cloud has established a series of 'Opportunity Zones' which are census tracts designated for new economic development over the next 10 years. According to the city, "The 2017 Tax Cut and Jobs Act created this incentive to direct investment into historically disadvantaged communities and neighborhoods. It provides tax benefits to holders of capital gains if they invest return in designated zones". The site is located within the Downtown Boundary and provides a great financial opportunity for a new development. Opportunity fund benefits include:

- **A Temporary Deferral - Defer the payment of your capital gains until December 31, 2026.**
- **A Reduction - Reduce the tax you owe by up to 15% after 7 years.**
- **An Exemption - Pay zero tax on gains earned from the Opportunity Fund investment.**

# CITY INITIATIVES

In 2015, St. Cloud came up with a Comprehensive Plan. This explores the different issues in the city on an urban level. One of the focuses addressed in this documentation is Gateways and Streetscape. Voids in pedestrian activity have been a contributing factor to the current state of downtown. In the imagery below, the city depicts areas of concern and provides solutions for creating enclosure.

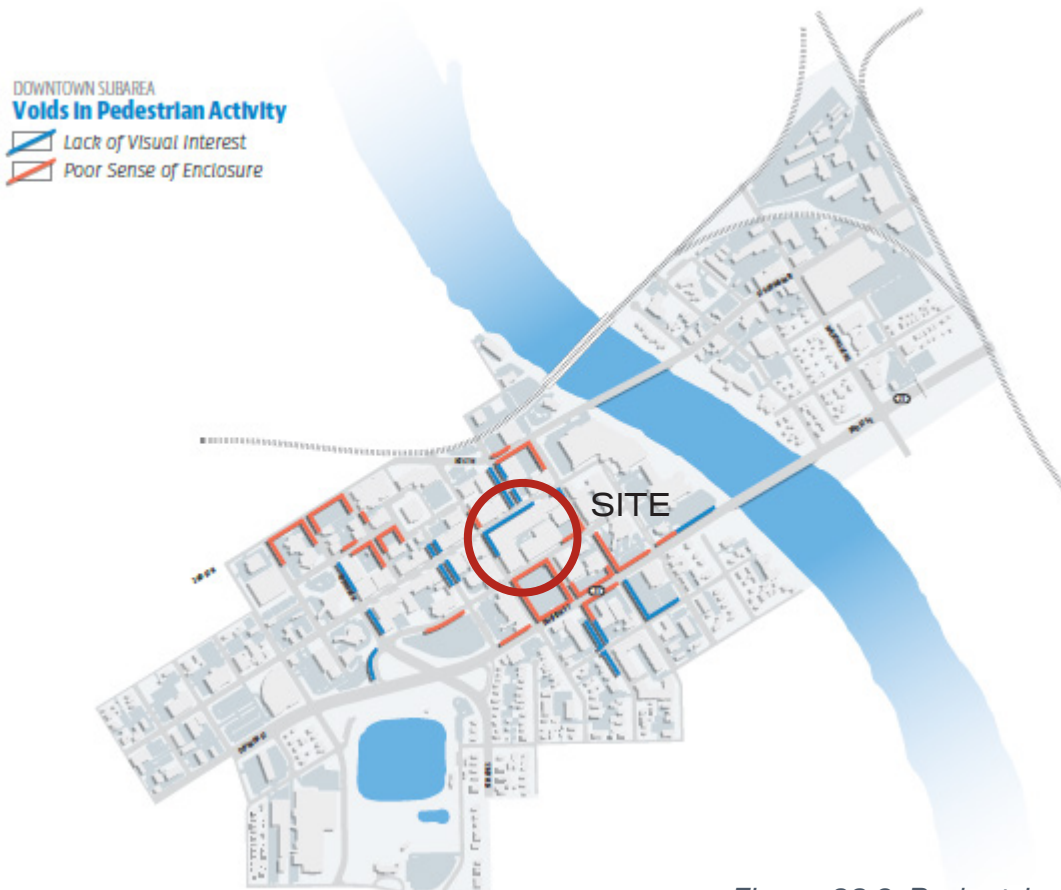


Figure 23.0: Pedestrians  
Images Courtesy of City of St. Cloud

## SENSE OF ENCLOSURE:

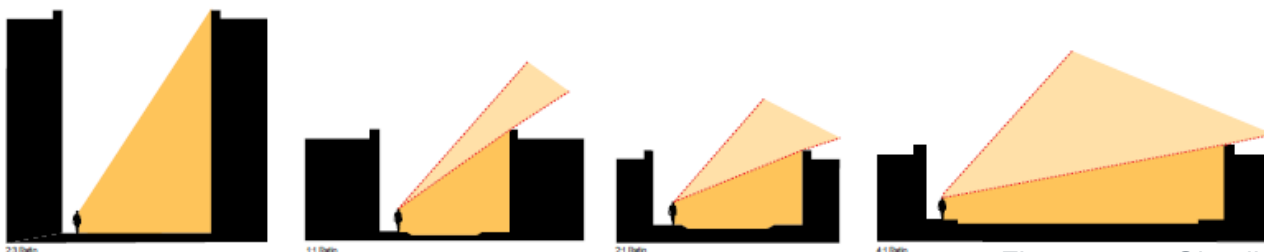


Figure 24.0: Shading



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Another important initiative to this project is St. Cloud's dedication to historic preservation. Home to 18 historic sites and 4 historic districts including 39 structures downtown, the city has a downtown preservation manual which has been used to effectively redevelop existing infrastructure downtown. They have a dedication to encouraging this type of work instead of new construction. There are many examples across the downtown area of this type of work.

The city also has several preservation initiatives. These initiatives include the Century Homes Recognition Program, Heritage Preservation Awards, Historic Properties Seminar, and Historic Downtown History Hunt. These help recognize and honor the city's past.



Figure 25.0: Historic Districts  
Images Courtesy of City of St. Cloud

The city also has a dedication to arts and culture. Gateway areas make way for mural installations, performing arts, and other arts-related developments. These all help create a sense of place and uniqueness downtown.





# SECTION 2.4

## SITE ANALYSIS

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# SITE LOCATION



*Figure 26.0: Site Location*

St. Cloud is located in the heart of Minnesota about an hour and a half NW on I-94 from the Twin Cities. The central location of the city provides a great opportunity for St. Cloud to grow and become an attractive destination along the interstate. The site includes an abandoned retail building situated on the corner of W St. Germain St and 7th Ave N in the center of the city's historic downtown district. Immediately surrounding the site are various mixed-use buildings with retail and restaurants as well as a multi-level parking ramp. Located 1 block north of the site is the River's Edge Convention Center along the Mississippi River. Half a mile to the South West is a park called Lake George, where various community events occur. Most-notably, SCSU is located 1 mile South East of the site where over 15,000 students enroll yearly.



# SITE CONDITIONS



*Figure 27.0: Site Analysis*

The site was selected not only because of its central location, but also to pose the challenge of redeveloping an existing building for a modern issue. Downtown St. Cloud is suffering from a lack of identity and place and this site presents a great opportunity to begin to address this issue. Given the close proximity to SCSU and various other city centers, like Lake George and the Civic Center, the site is accessible and reasonably-situated for a development of the project's magnitude.

The abandoned Herberger's shopping mall is comprised of three, 55,697 sq ft levels, totaling about 168,768 sq ft all together. Other existing features include trees, benches, bike racks, lamps, planters, and the "Granite Trio", which is a 32 ton rock sculpture outside the main entrance. The surrounding street scape is comprised of a combination of narrow and wide brick-paved sidewalks, metered parking, and 4-way stop intersections with crosswalks. The surrounding intersections are fairly quiet throughout the day due to the heavy flow of traffic along nearby Division Street. The goal is to maintain this atmosphere to encourage the flow of pedestrians as opposed to vehicular traffic.



# BUILDING CONDITIONS

(I have requested floor plans and other pictures for the Herberger's building. Still awaiting a response.)



Figure 28.0: Site Analysis



Figure 29.0: Site Analysis



Figure 30.0: Site Analysis



Figure 31.0: Site Analysis



Figure 32.0: Site Analysis



Figure 33.0: Site Analysis

Images Courtesy of Upland Read Estate Group, Inc.

# STREET SECTIONS

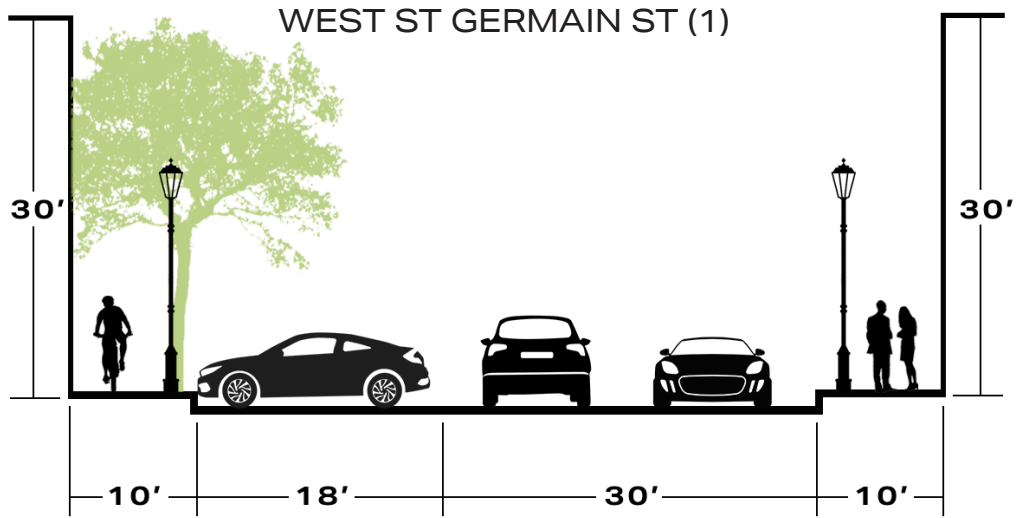


Figure 34.0: Street Section

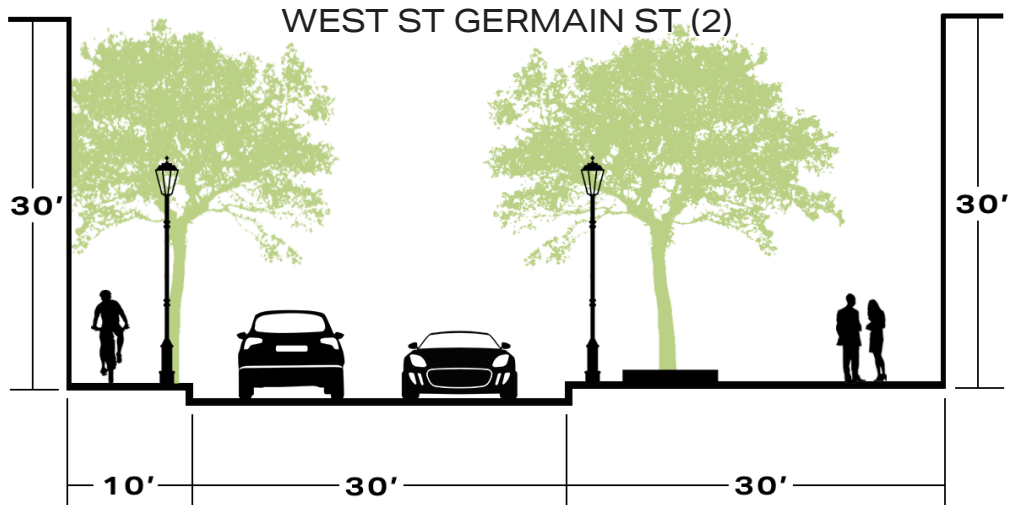


Figure 35.0: Street Section

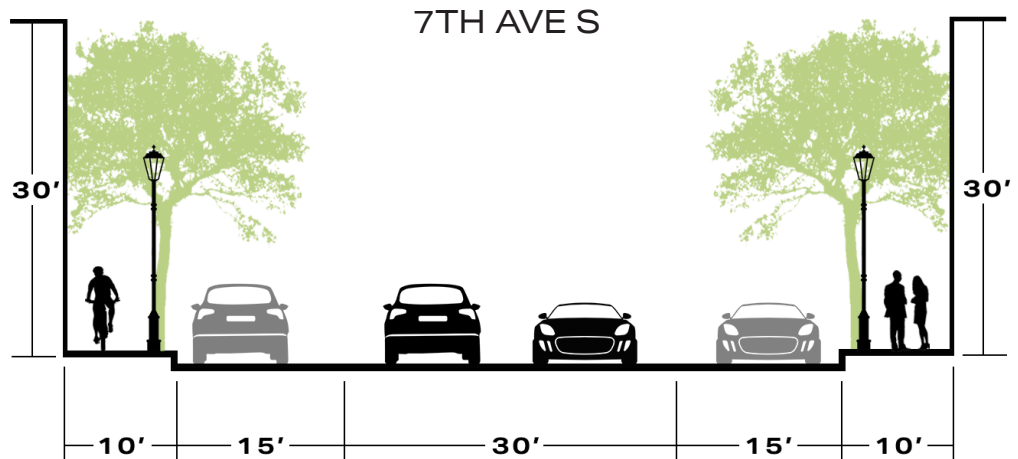


Figure 36.0: Street Section



# SURROUNDING CONDITIONS



Figure 37.0: Site Analysis



Figure 38.0: Site Analysis

The surrounding infrastructure is deeply lacking of any life. This is in part due to the fact that little to no businesses house these buildings. Those businesses that do exist are old and feel neglected when you walk by them. Despite the historical significance of some of these buildings, there is no draw for pedestrians to enter businesses. The aim is to bring life back to this street block as it is a vital connection to the River's Edge Convention Center and tangentially, the Mississippi River.





Figure 39.0: Site Analysis



Figure 40.0: Site Analysis



Figure 41.0: Site Analysis

One notable structure neighboring the site is the newest addition to downtown St. Cloud, "The Lofts". This housing development was aimed towards SCSU students, but has fallen flat due to its far location from the main campus and steep rent. Another recent nearby development is Capital One. Butting up against the site's building, the Capital One Cafe is a great spot for professionals to meet and enjoy a small meal. The building incorporates a tasteful combination of materials and is a major hub for pedestrian traffic given the many employees that work there. These buildings are attractive and set the stage for further downtown developments such as this thesis project.

# SITE ANALYSIS



Figure 42.0: Site Analysis

The site is tucked within the middle of downtown St. Cloud. It is on the corner of W St Germain S and 7th Ave S. This location is fairly sheltered from heavy vehicular traffic and sees a low to moderate amount of pedestrians through the daytime. Across the street, a tall radio tower is positioned above the infrastructure which slightly takes away from the human-scaled street scape.

Various infrastructure surrounding the site includes several bars, parking ramps, banks, city buildings, housing, small businesses, and restaurants. This diversity in economic development is a great start, but as explained earlier, the street scape and feel of these businesses lacks energy and place. Creating a mixed-use university building for SCSU will help liven the street corner and draw a new sense of community between students and business owners.

Natural elements include South Eastern summer winds, North Western winter winds, and mild vegetation and shading surrounding the site. The site is open to the elements and provides little to no seating for pedestrians year-round. Given the extreme temperature swings through the year in Minnesota, this is an important element to address with this project.



# CIRCULATION

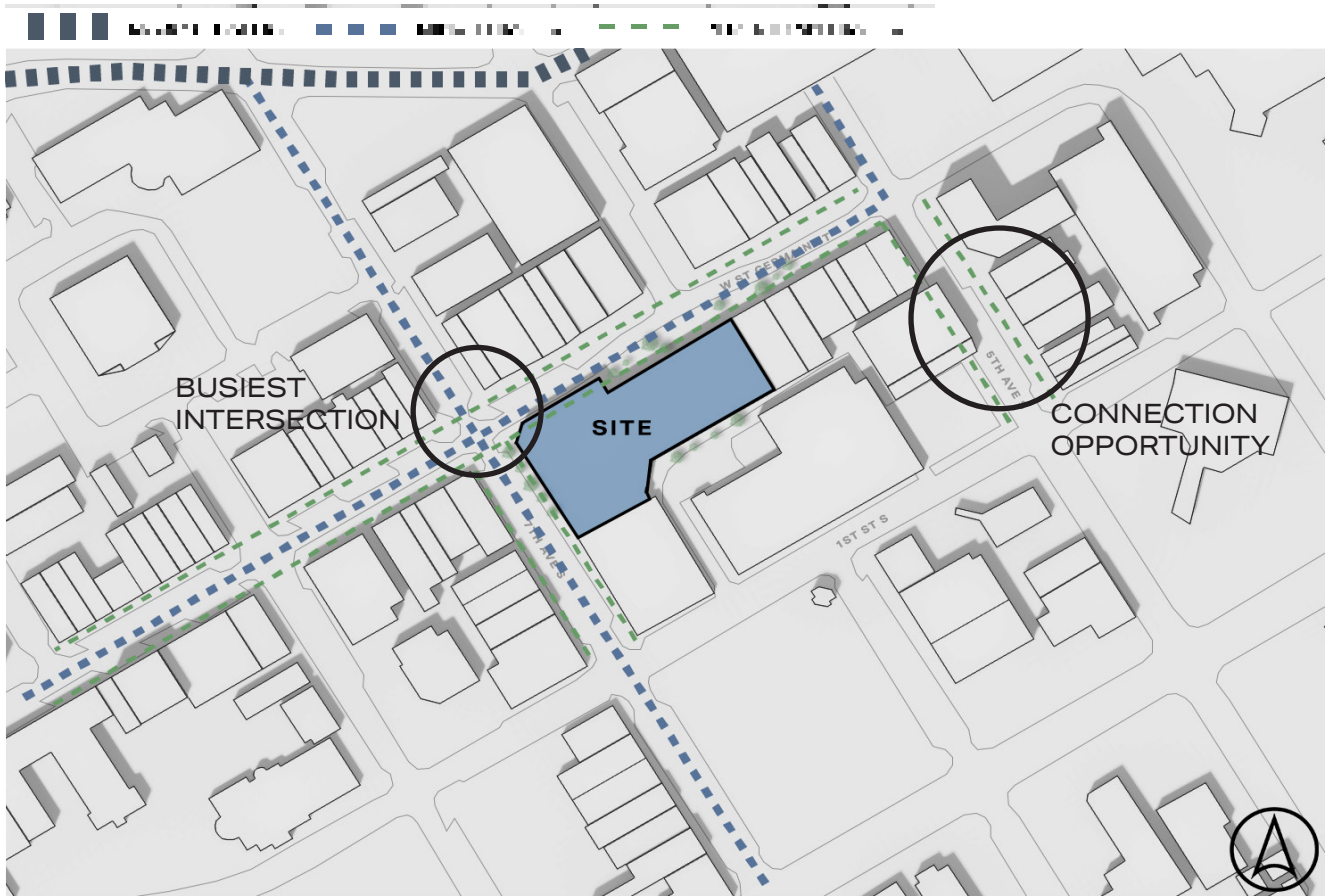


Figure 43.0: Site Analysis

Vehicular traffic is fairly light in the area and allows for a series of 4-way stop intersections. Most of the heavy traffic stays on 1st St N to the North of the site or Highway 23 to the South which later turns into W Division St. The goal is to maintain this level of quiet in regards to the vehicular traffic. In association with this, there are already several parking ramps with 1-2 blocks of the site as well as on-street parking throughout downtown.

Pedestrian traffic is also fairly quiet throughout the day, but sees an uptick in the evenings when the work day is over. Traffic is limited not only because of the lack of attractive businesses, but also because of the stark walkability in the area. One exception to this is 5th Ave S. Pioneer Place is a hub for live music and events. Inviting lighting is strung above and the street is blocked off to vehicular traffic. This is a good opportunity for connection from W St. Germain St. Bikers are provided with racks and wider sidewalks in most portions of the surrounding site. The goal is to add more shelter and seating directly around the site to provide outdoor experiences for pedestrians all year round.

# UTILITIES

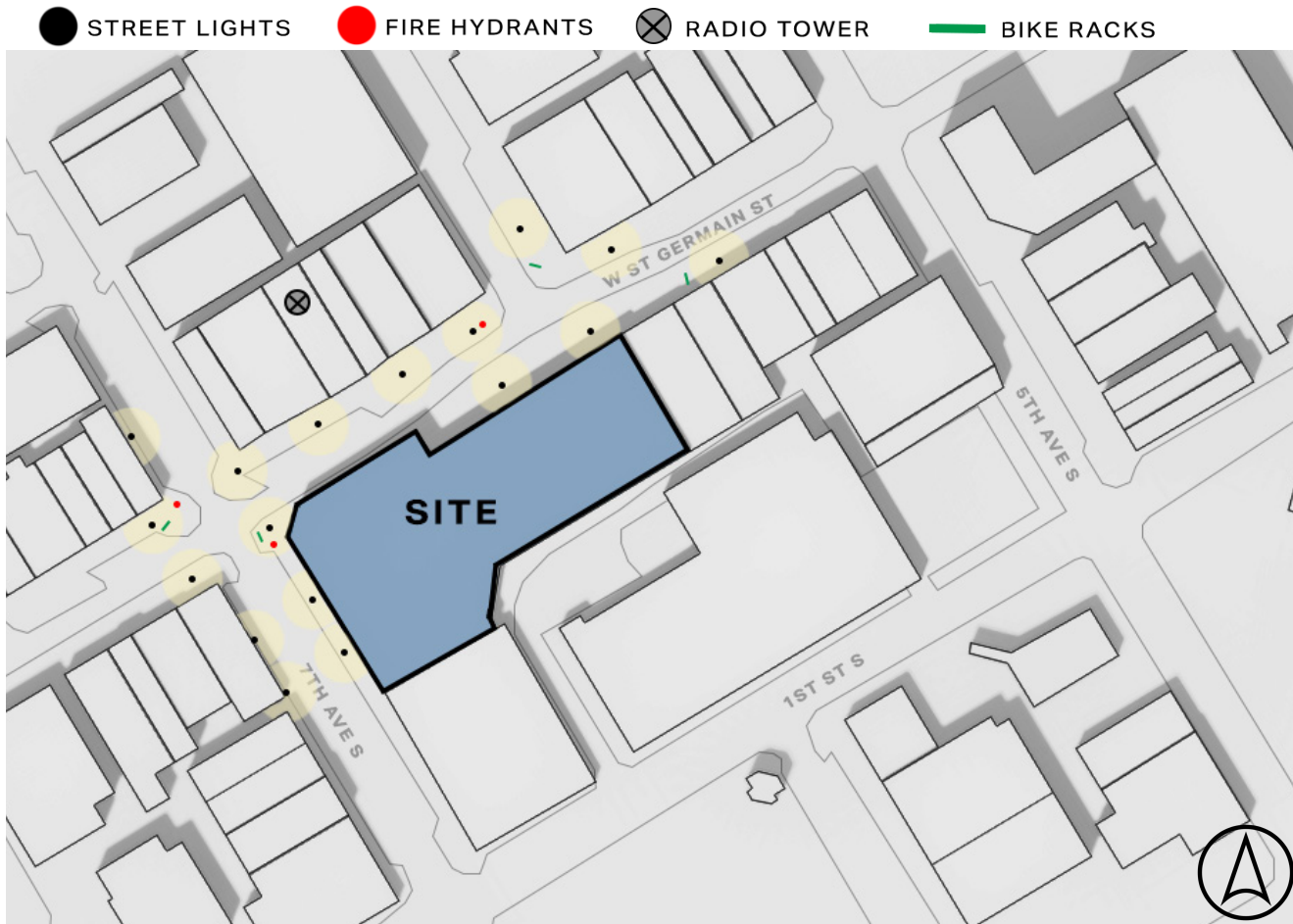


Figure 44.0: Site Analysis



Utilities on the site include classic street lights, bike racks, fire hydrants, and a large radio tower across the street. These fill the sidewalks with various benefits for pedestrians as well as provide the necessary services for surrounding buildings. The lighting in this area is adequate for the current traffic, but could be improved upon with the design of the project. Digital banners are attached to the street lights and display various city advertising or ambiance. The bike racks don't seem to fit the feel of the area and should be replaced to be more attractive and integrated into the street scape instead of scattered randomly.

# ZONING & BOUNDARIES



Figure 45.0: Site Analysis

The site falls within St. Cloud’s Central Business District which covers the majority of downtown. According to the city’s website, *“The C-3 Central Business District is designed to reflect central location and ease of access of being the hub of a system of radial thoroughfares. A prime characteristic of this district is the historic core of intense pedestrian activity.”*

South of the site is the Southside Mixed Use District which acts as a bridging between SCSU and downtown. According to the city’s website, *“The purpose of the C-6 Southside Mixed Use District is to facilitate urban scale mixed use redevelopment that complements the unique historic character and assets of the Southside University Neighborhood.”*



# SITE RECONNAISSANCE



# TOPOGRAPHY

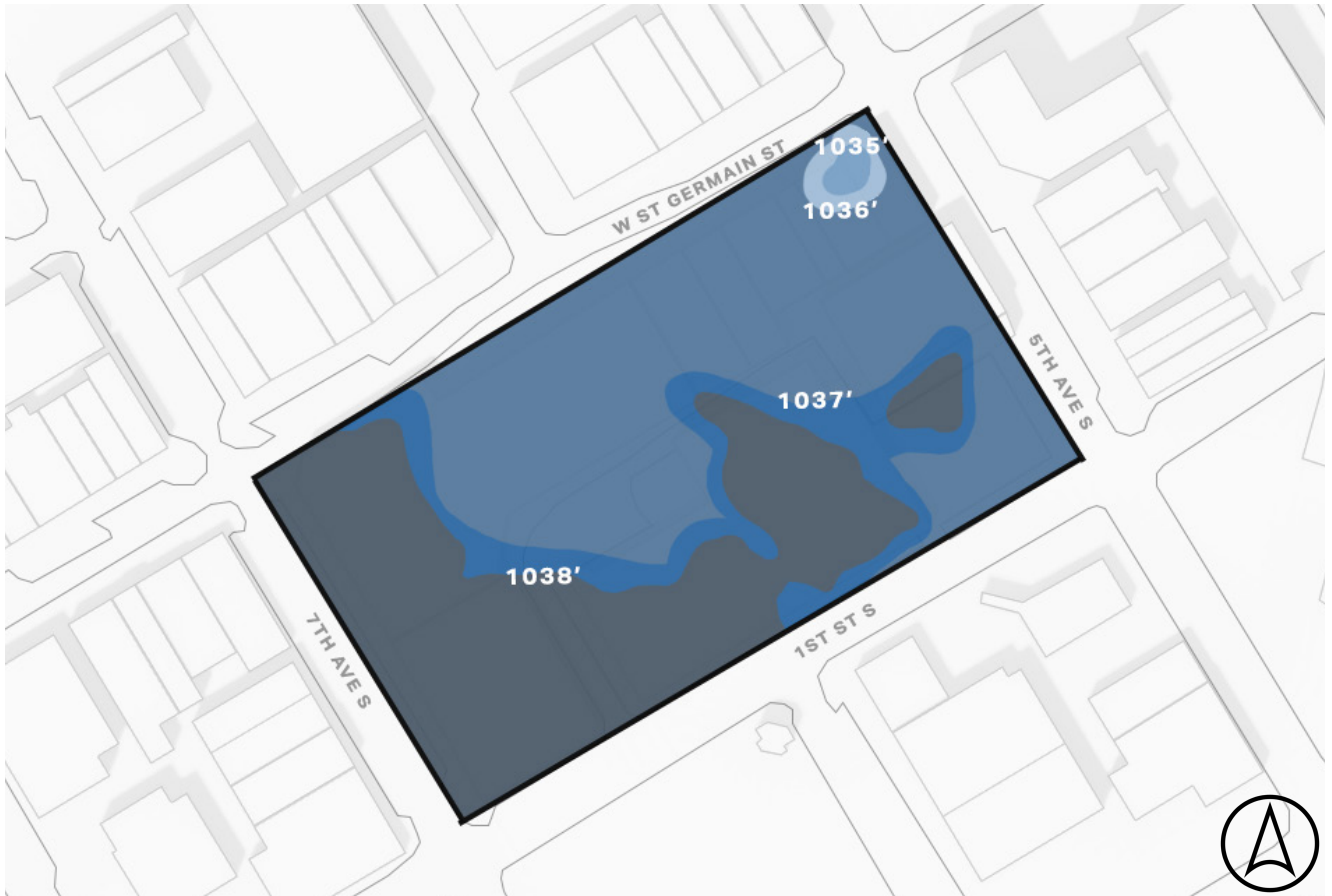


Figure 46.0: Topography

The site slopes downward towards the river to the North East. Given the nature of the area, the topography is relatively flat and stays this way downtown until you reach the Mississippi River. This flat nature means that winds and sound travel quicker than usual through the surrounding streets. Given the lack of green space and natural drainage, the site utilizes the road sewer drains as a means of moving water off the site. The brick pavers that surround the site allow for water to drain better than that of concrete sidewalks, but more could be done to provide natural drainage.

Given the scope of the project, little to no site work will be required. Topography will not play as important of a role as existing building conditions in this regard.



# SOILS



Figure 47.0: Soil

SOIL COMPOSITION			
MAP UNIT SYMBOL	MAP UNIT NAME	ACRES IN MAP	PERCENT OF MAP
D64B	Urban land-Hubbard complex, Mississippi River Valley, 0-8 percent slopes.	326.2	73.7%
D67A	Hubbard laomy sand, 0-2 percent slopes.	30.1	6.8%
D67B	Hubbard laomy sand, 1-6 percent slopes.	15.2	3.4%
1015	Psamments, sloping.	11.8	2.7%
1018	Udifluvents, frequently flooded.	2.9	0.6%
W	Water	34.1	12.8%
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>420.3</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Figure 48.0: Soil

Most of the soil on the site is classified as D64B. This is a composition of urban land, which refers to soils in areas of high population density in the largely built environment, and hubbard, which refers to predominantly well-drained soils derived from glacial till, with sandy loam textures. These conditions should allow for any site work required for the project.



# WATER TABLE

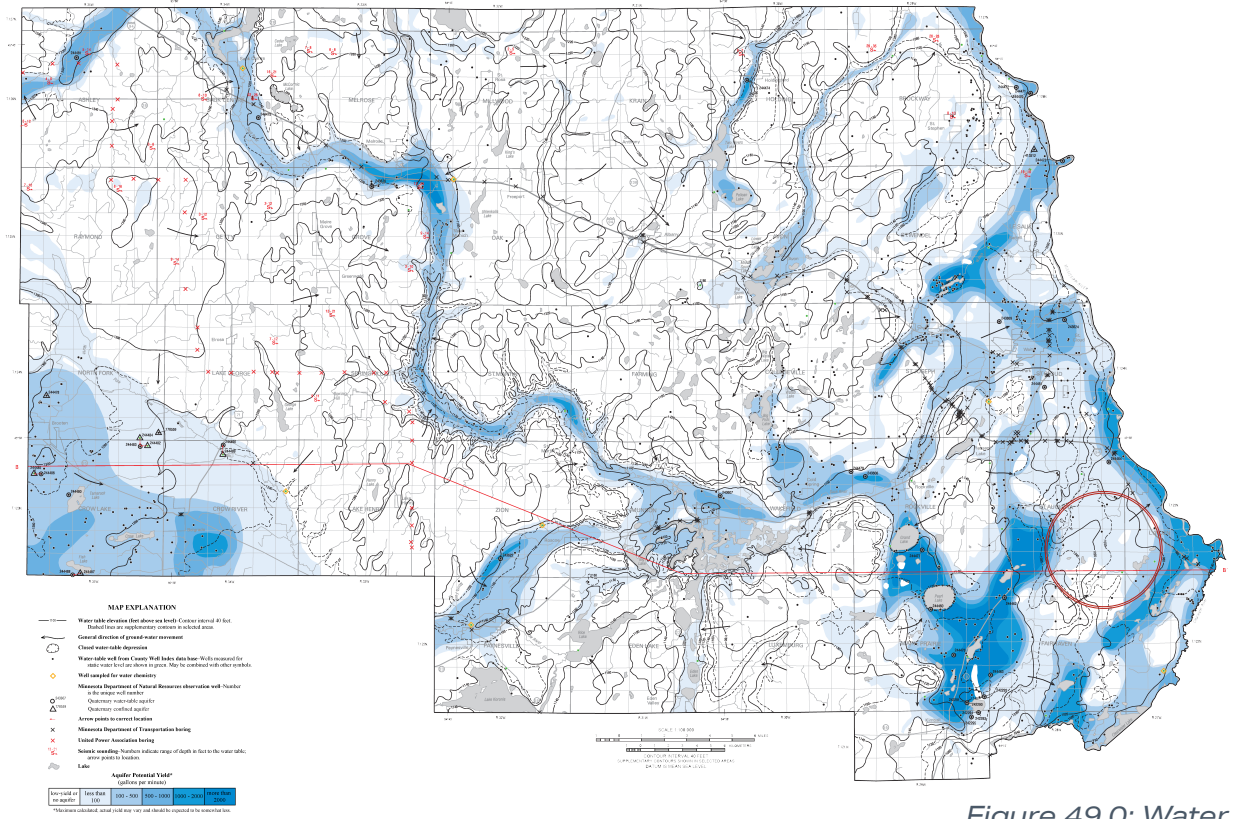


Figure 49.0: Water

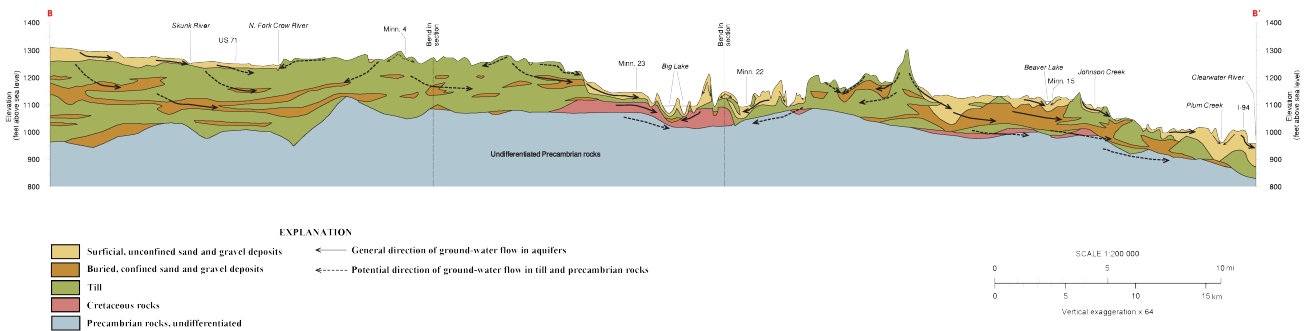


Figure 50.0: Water  
Images Courtesy of MN DNR

The city of St. Cloud sources its water from the Mississippi River. This is processed at their water treatment facility located just North of downtown. According to St. Cloud Public Utilities, this facility has the capacity to process 16 million gallons of water per day.

# CLIMATE

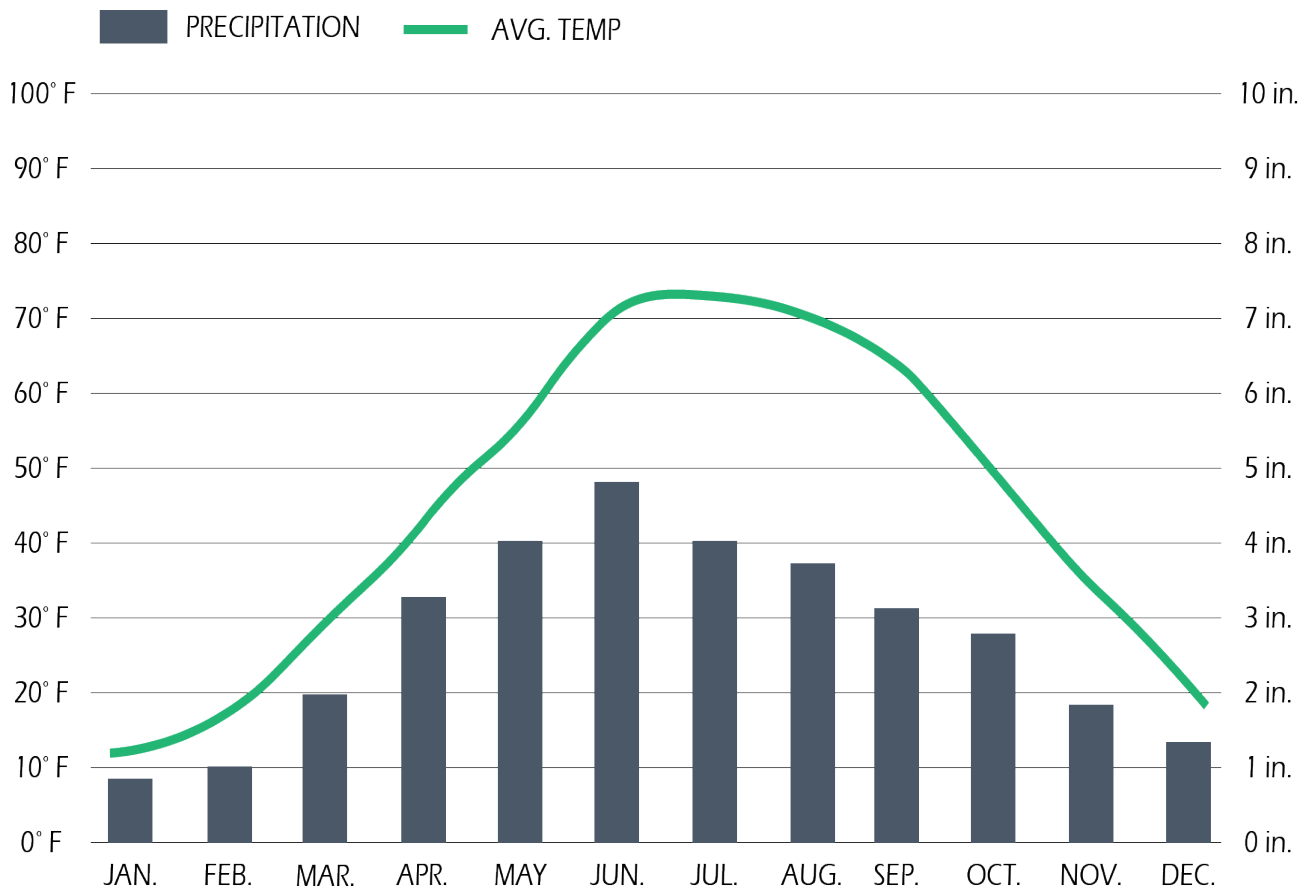
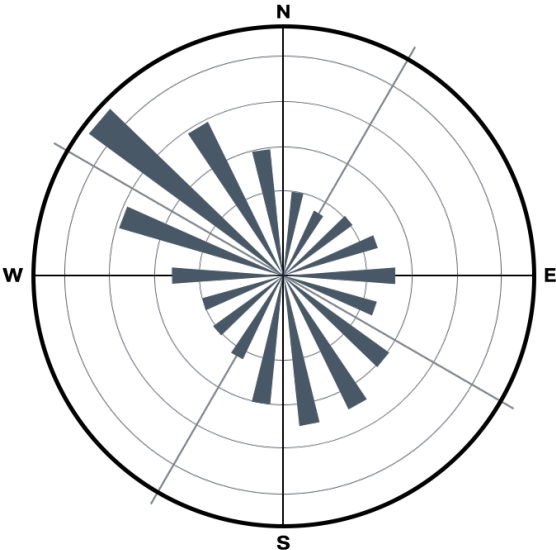


Figure 51.0: Climate

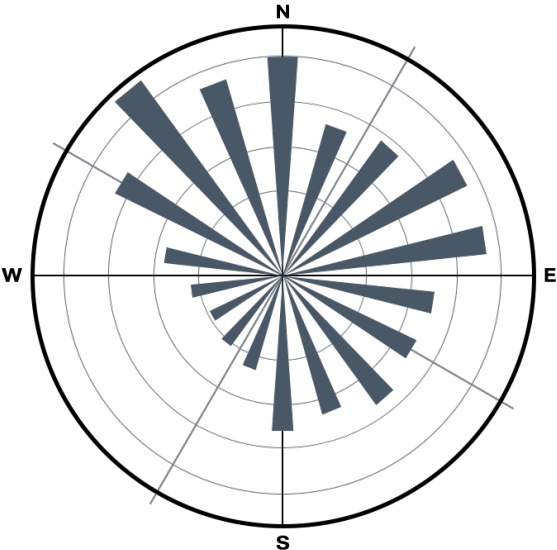
Minnesota sees a wide range of climate throughout the year. St. Cloud experiences the full extents of each season with temperatures dropping as low as sub zero in the winter and as high as 90s in the summer. Precipitation is highest in June and lowest in January. Heavy winds come predominantly from the North and North West in the colder months and from the South in hotter months. Given the hilly topography of St. Cloud, winds aren't too much of a concern unless they are unobstructed on long streets downtown. The elements can cause a great deal of wear and tear over time in Minnesota so building materials need to be able to withstand such conditions. The goal for this project is not only to utilize attractive locally-sources materials, but also materials that are sturdy and able to take the brunt of cold winters and hot summers.

# PREVAILING WINDS

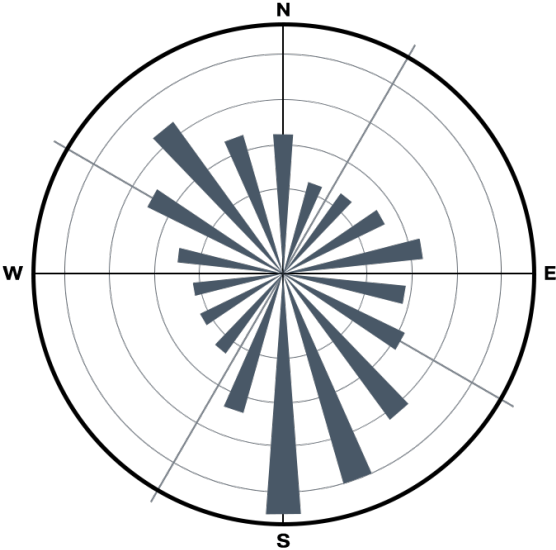
WINTER WINDS



SPRING WINDS



SUMMER WINDS



FALL WINDS

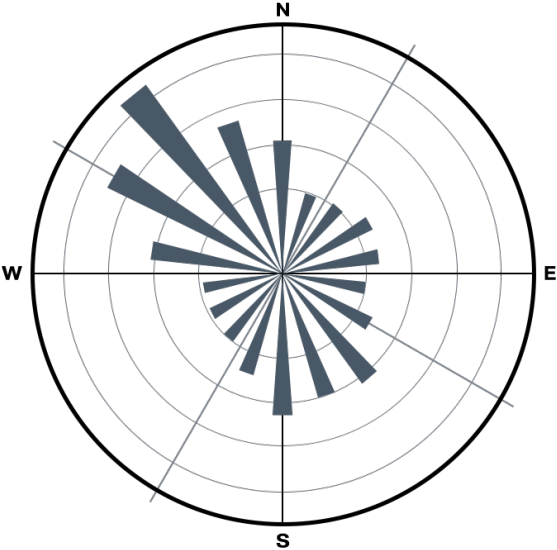


Figure 52.0: Wind



# SECTION 2.5

## PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

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# PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

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As American downtowns continue to navigate deteriorating infrastructure, centrally-located university buildings can be a solution for housing old structures. With an efficient and well-thought out mixed-use design strategy, existing infrastructure can be repurposed to revitalize local communities.

The project will require a variety of design measurements for analysis. To make sure that the design meets the goals of creating an efficient and well-thought out mixed-use design, I will be conducting various analyses of the environmental, economic, educational, and demographical impacts of the project. St. Cloud poses specific design criteria which will be addressed with the final presentation.

I will be using several digital sources to develop my project and research. These programs include Excel, Revit, Rhino and other graphic design software to design the layout and spaces needed for a mixed-use educational building. Revit plugins in conjunction with model analysis will define quantifiable results based on the performance of the building, as well as the success of my project goals. To properly program the facility and define the needs of the community, I will be looking at census data and personal accounts on what the St. Cloud area is lacking and could use on the site.

To calculate and measure the desired design goals, I will be conducting a series of simulations and digital models throughout the length of the project using Revit plugins. Because the goal of the project is to develop an efficient and well-thought out mixed-use design strategy, simulations must be conducted for the layout of the facility to ensure proper distances for students from space to space. Utilizing this strategy will ensure intentional decision making throughout the early design phases.



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In addition to the layout and program of the design, the energy consumption and materiality of the project will be evaluated. Given that the site is an existing building, extensive analysis of existing and new materialization will be important to address. The embodied energy of these materials will be calculated to justify the use of certain resources on the project. This will factor in square footage and facade usage.

The other design criteria that will be analyzed is how it will impact the community and the surrounding environment. Though this cannot exactly be quantified, I plan to identify specific strategies used in this project and how they have functioned in similar scenarios. Using other projects to justify design decisions is a suitable strategy for performance evaluation in this regard.

To judge whether the project meets the performance criteria and is beneficial to the community, I will be comparing it to other similar developments. Both to see if it's strategies are new and improved as well as serve as a basis for future projects. While partnerships between universities and communities are becoming more common, it is a relatively new strategy in revitalizing downtowns. Further analysis and research will need to be conducted even after this project is complete. Lastly, all modern designs should aim to be sustainably-driven and focused on environmentally friendly practices. There is no specific goal as far as certification goes, but the project will nonetheless meet or exceed national green build standards.

# SPATIAL INTERACTION NET

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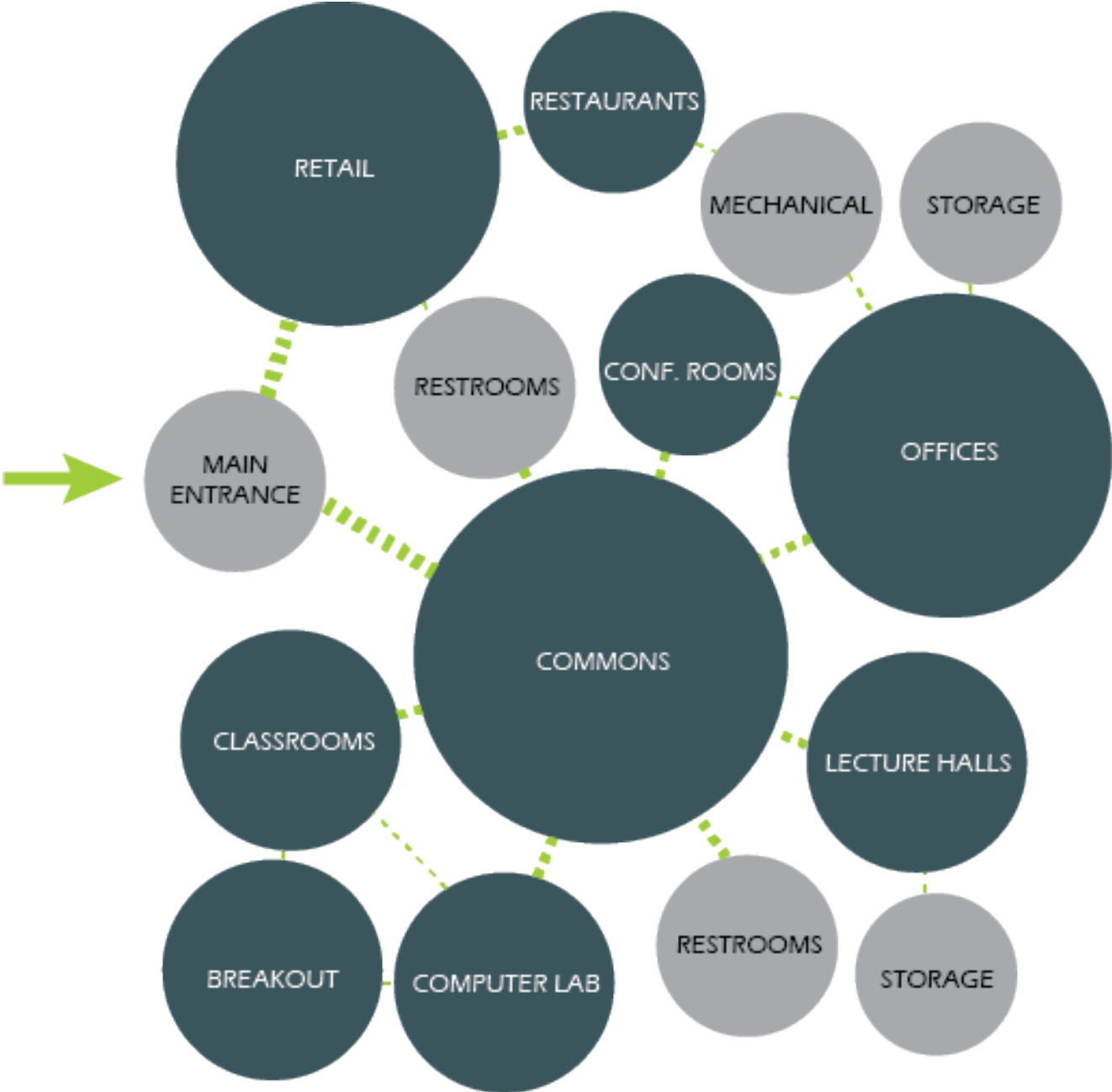


Figure 53.0: Spatial Interaction

# SPATIAL ADJACENCY MATRIX

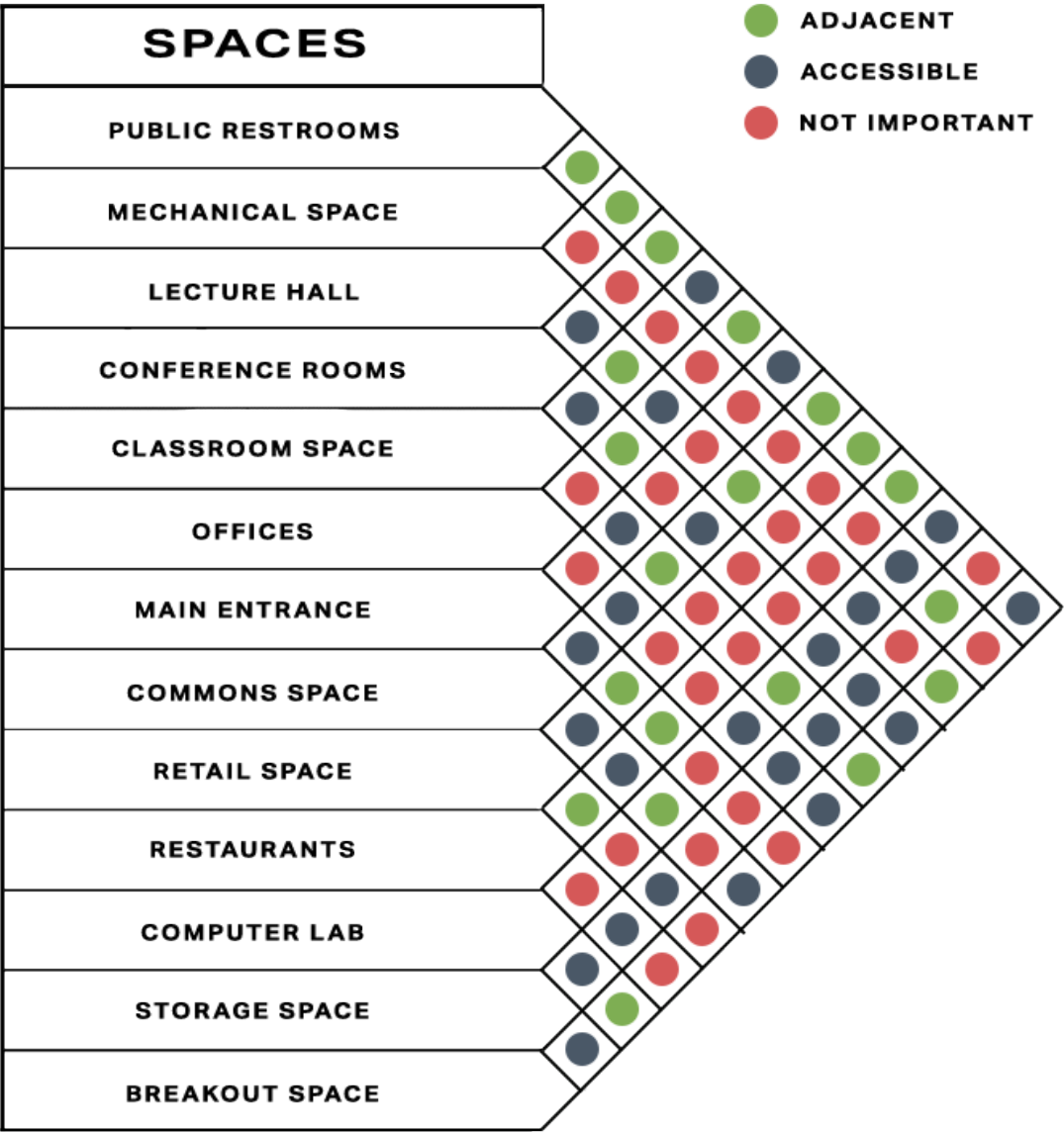


Figure 54.0: Spatial Adjacency

# SPACE ALLOCATION TABLE

<b>SPACES:</b>	<b>PERCENT ALLOCATION:</b>
CONFERENCE ROOMS	2%
OFFICE SPACE	18%
BREAKOUT SPACE	2%
COMPUTER LAB	2%
LECTURE HALLS	4%
CLASSROOMS	36%
COMMONS	2%
ENTRANCE	1%
RETAIL	15%
RESTAURANTS	8%
RESTROOMS	3%
MECHANICAL	2%
STORAGE	1%
CIRCULATION	4%

HOURS OF OPERATION: 24/7 DURING SCHOOL YEAR  
HOURS OF OPERATION: 8:00AM-8:00PM DURING SUMMER

Figure 55.0: Space Allocation

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Given that the building is nearly 170,000 square feet, there is more than enough space for the needed program. There is a sub level which will house most of the mechanical and storage space, but may provide opportunities for restaurants, retail, or study spaces. On the upper two levels, the plan is to have a two-story commons area with monumental vertical circulation and natural lighting. Completely changing the look and feel of the spaces within the site will help make a modern and flexible place for students to learn.





# CHAPTER 3

## DESIGN SOLUTIONS

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# SECTION 3.1

**PRE-DESIGN**

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# DESIGN GOALS

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APPRECIATION FOR  
**HISTORY**



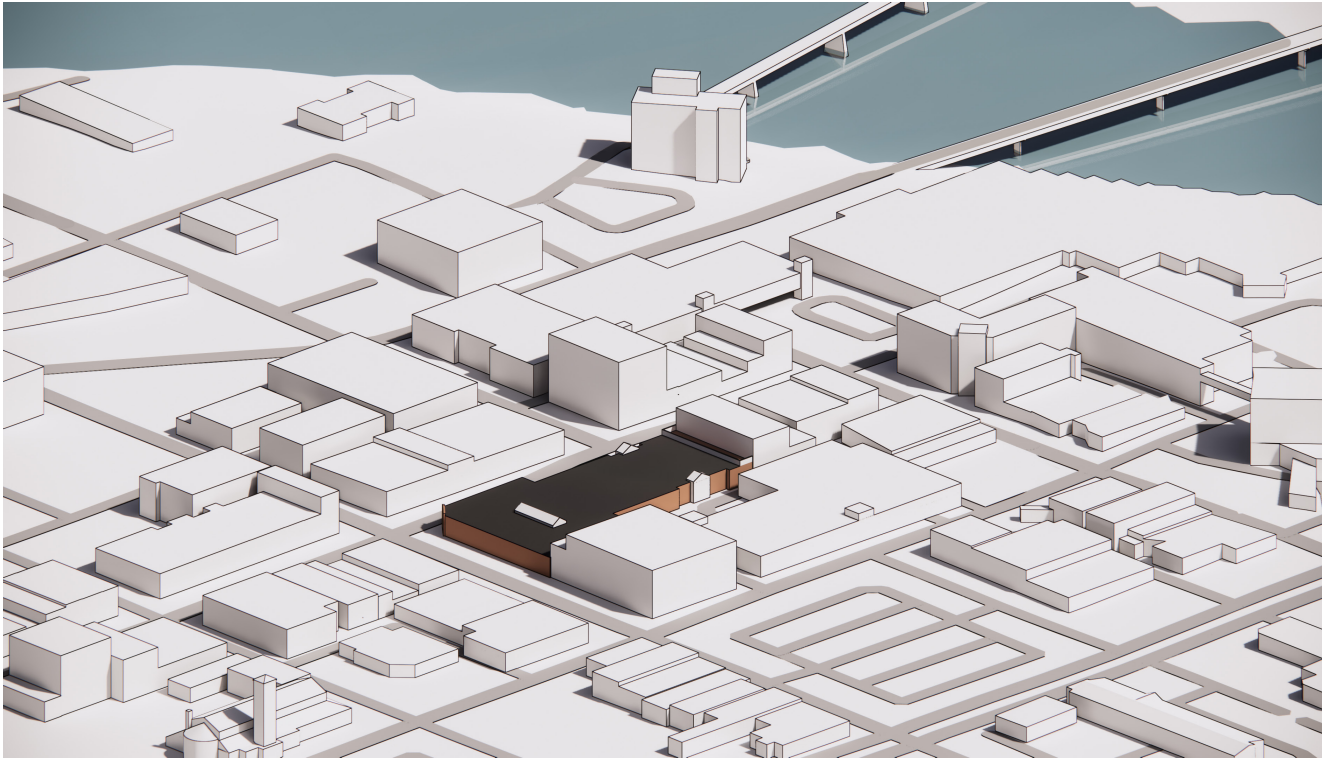
SENSE OF  
**PLACE**



PLAN FOR  
**GROWTH**

Before starting any design work, I identified 3 major goals for the project. Establishing an appreciation for history was important so the building feels more incorporated into the urban landscape and reduce the environmental impact of the project. Given that the area is a historical district, I wanted to ensure the building maintained some or most of it's original elements. Creating a sense of place is at the heart of the project. Designing spaces and places for people to come and stay downtown is the most important solution to St. Cloud's issues. Lastly, planning for growth and providing a canvas for new businesses to grow is a major goal. Making areas for young professionals and entrepreneurs from SCSU or elsewhere is a great opportunity for downtown st. Cloud to come back to life. With these goals in mind, I began my work with the site and surrounding area.

# SITE GOALS



*Figure 56.0: Site*

Site analysis was key at the onset of this project. Addressing an entire downtown was difficult since there were many avenues to go with. In the end, the plan was to create a connection between West St. Germain St and intersecting 5th Ave S. Identifying the existing Herberger Building and a nearby empty lot as opportunity sites, I continued my design process.

Goals for the site included creating a connection between different businesses in town, making the street scape more walkable, and providing a catalyst building for entertainment, education, and commerce.



# PLANNED DELIVERABLES

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The initial plan for my thesis was to complete a comprehensive presentation including a physical model, video, book, presentation board, and verbal presentation.

The physical model would include a wood CNC model with 3D printed buildings of the St. Cloud area. This would be helpful in showing the context of my design and how it connects and fits within the urban fabric of the downtown area.

The video would include various moving graphics and perspectives from inside and outside the building. This would also include a narration of some kind if possible.

A thesis book including research and findings as well as my full analysis of process would be a major deliverable as well.

The presentation board would be a supplemental piece with graphics and diagrams explaining the project typology and solutions. This would act as a backdrop to my physical model for the final thesis display.

Lastly, a verbal presentation thoroughly explaining my process and solutions would be completed. This is the most important part of the project and includes all necessary information to the narrative, research, and outlook of the project.

# CNC MODEL

The pan for the CNC model started early on as I wanted to complete the process properly given it was my first time. The base is a simple layout of the topography of downtown St. Cloud.

Next, roads and other paths are laid out on top.

3D printed buildings are placed within etched building footprints to ensure proper placement.

Lastly, bridges and final design models are added using different materials to bring more attention to them. Final dimensions are 2.5'x2.5'.

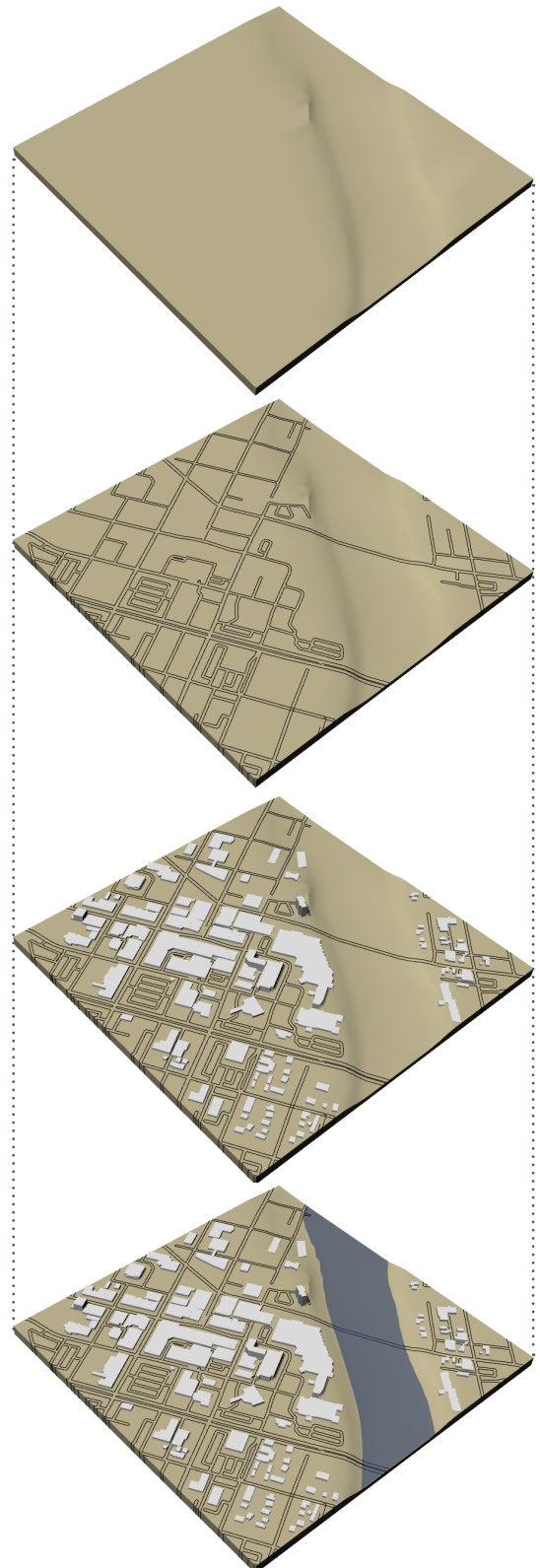


Figure 57.0: CNC Model



# SECTION 3.2

## SCHEMATIC DESIGN

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# PROCESS SKETCHES

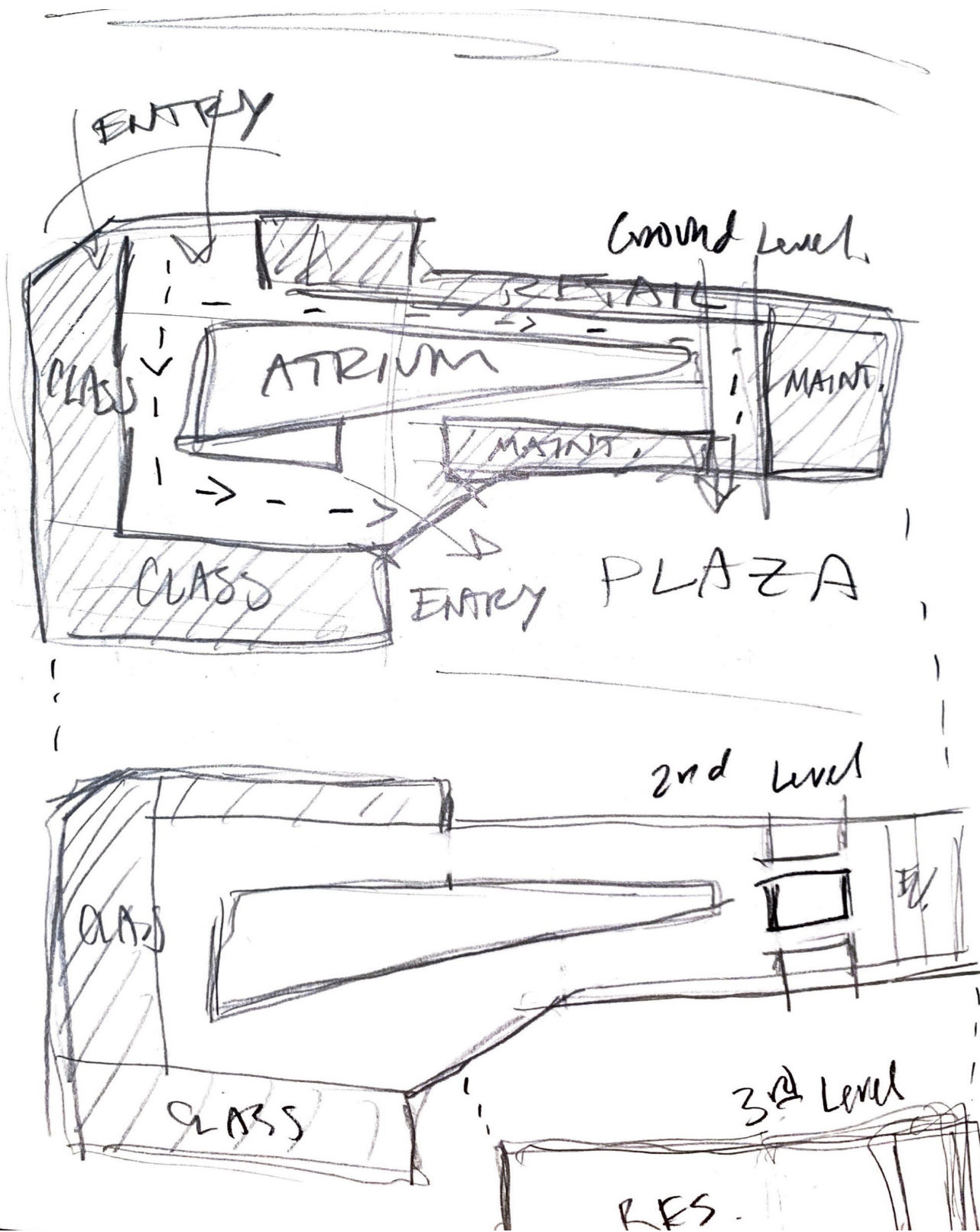


Figure 58.0: Sketches



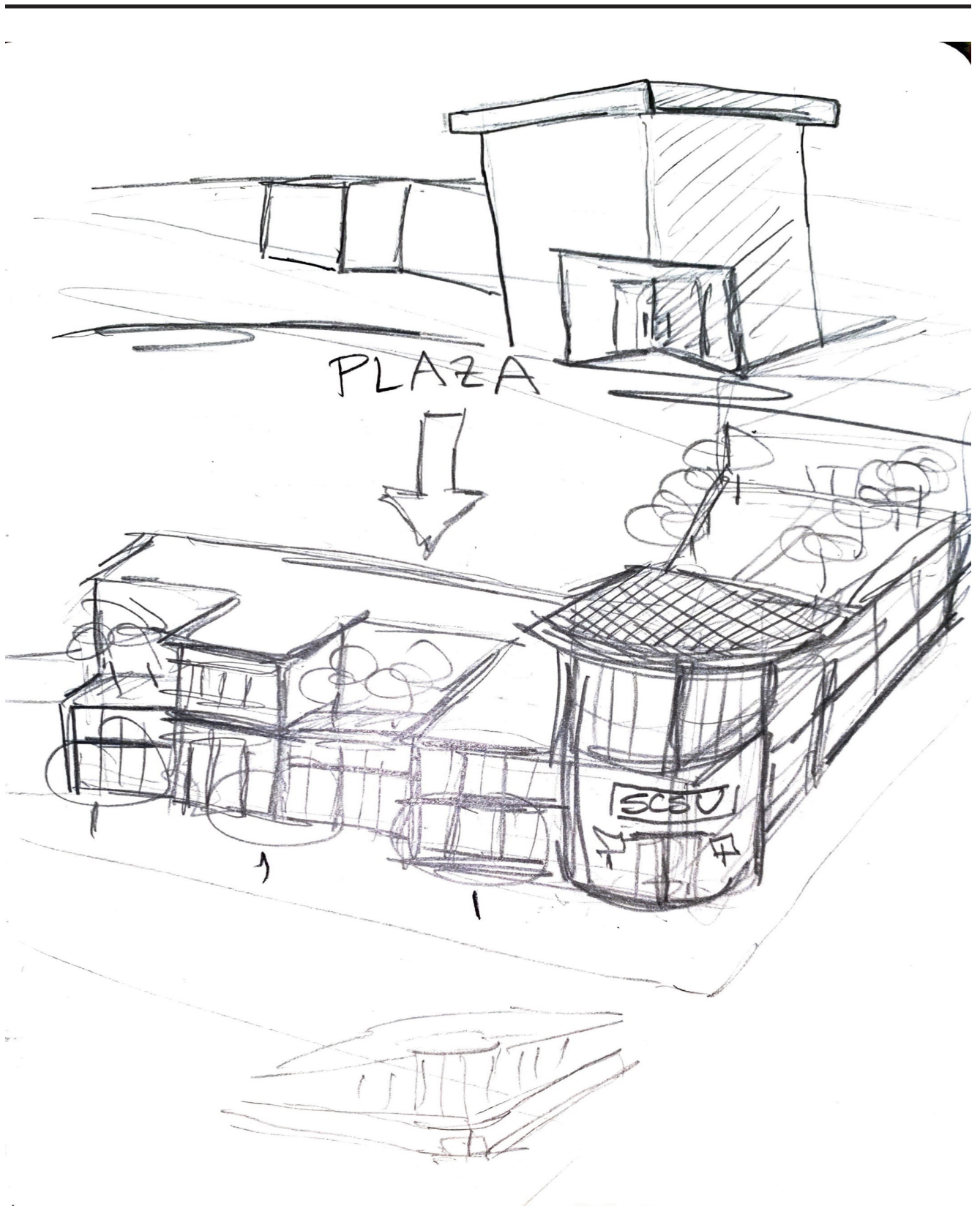
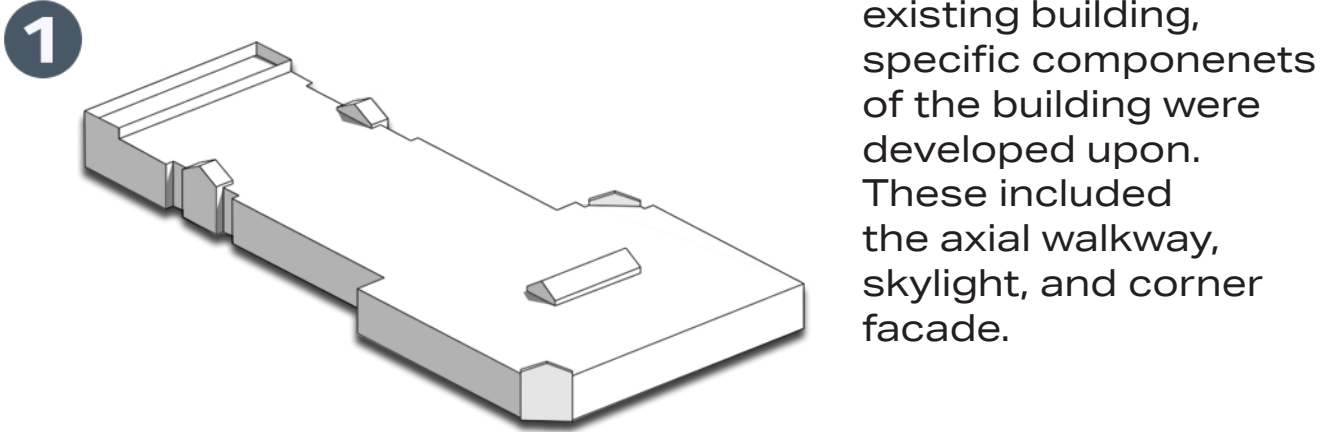


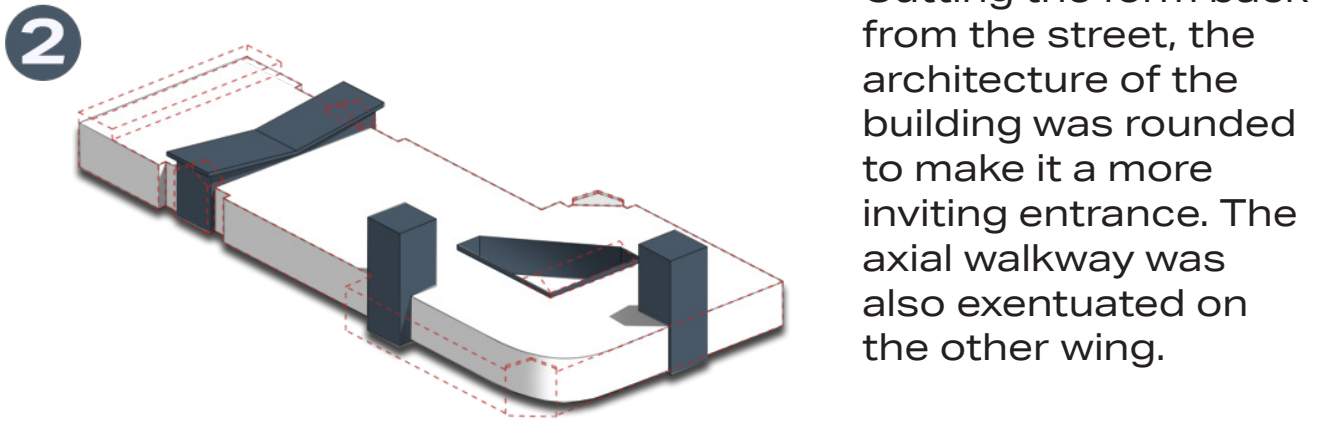
Figure 59.0: Sketches

# FORM EVOLUTION

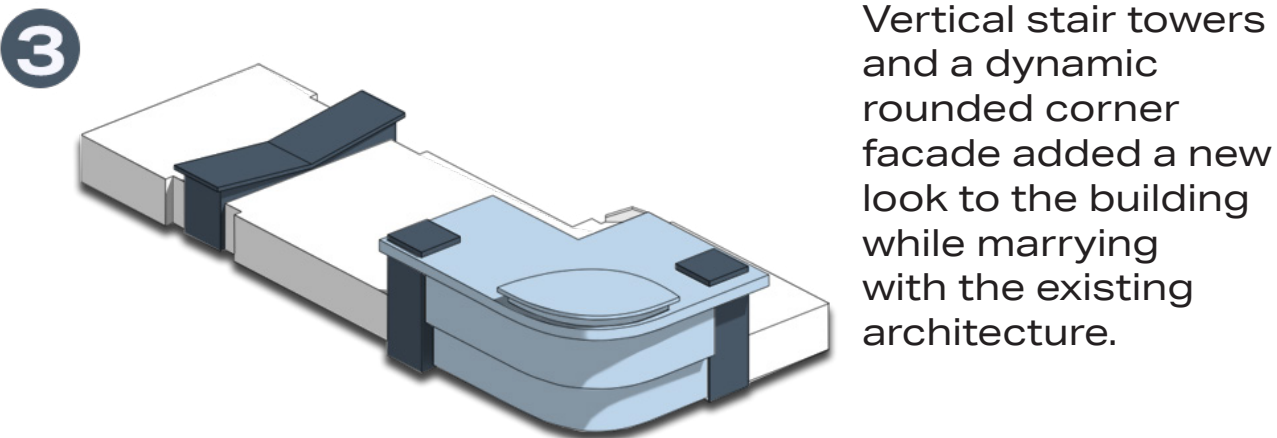
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Starting with the existing building, specific components of the building were developed upon. These included the axial walkway, skylight, and corner facade.



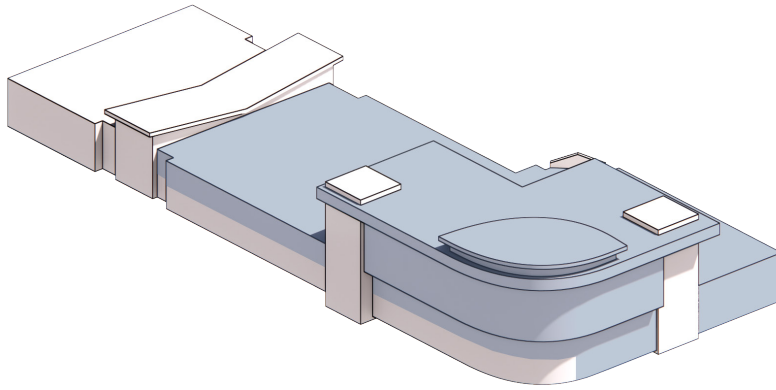
Cutting the form back from the street, the architecture of the building was rounded to make it a more inviting entrance. The axial walkway was also exentuated on the other wing.



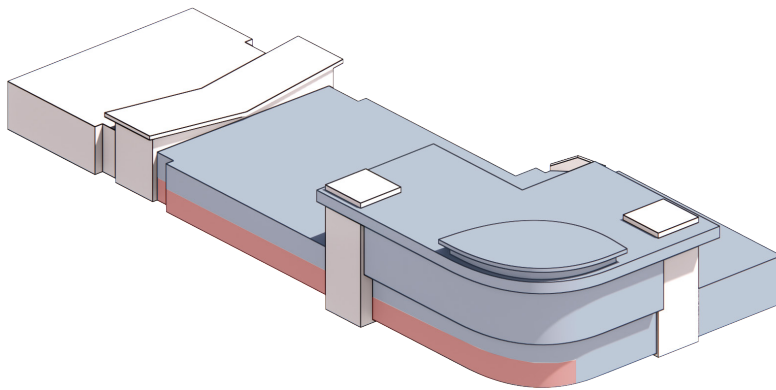
Vertical stair towers and a dynamic rounded corner facade added a new look to the building while marrying with the existing architecture.

Figure 60.0: Form

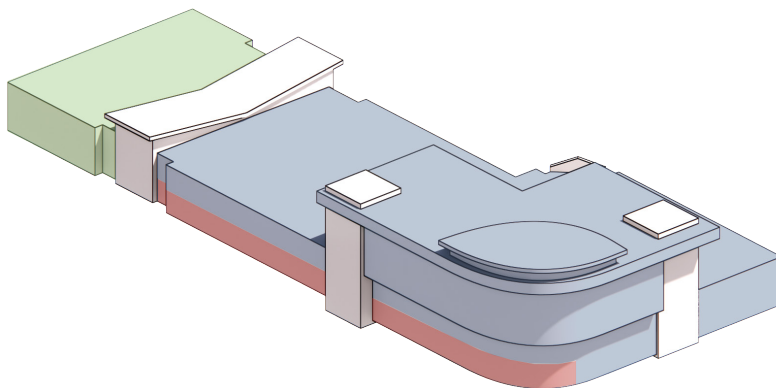
# PROGRAM USE



The building is split into three main programmatic components. Education space is located on the 7th Ave side as well as on the upper levels of the corner.



On the main level, street front retail space and restaurants are opened up to the sidewalk. An interior mall is also included in the core of the building.



Entertainment opportunities are located on the opposite side of the axial walkway. A billiards bar and grill and restaurant provide opportunities to socialize.

Figure 61.0: Program

# MATERIALIZATION

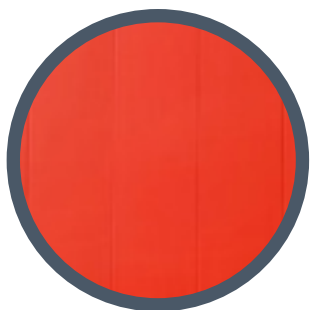
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Existing red and yellow brick from Herberger Building to appreciate historic infrastructure.



Wood paneling and columns throughout to incorporate more natural and light material.



Bright red cladding to excentuate vertical circulation and incorporate pop of color. Also adds to sense of place for SCSU facility.



Reflective metal panels along roof lines as modern material addition.







# SECTION 3.3

**FINAL DESIGN**

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# EXTERIOR

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*Figure 62.0: Corner View*

The exterior facade of the new building is a much inviting and dynamic corner piece for downtown St. Cloud. With woods louvers, bright red stair towers and added greenery, the area is brought to life. Lighting and other necessary amenities are also included to add to the walkability of the surrounding site.



*Figure 63.0: Back Plaza*

A plaza is located in the back of the building to create a welcoming transition space from the neighboring parking ramp behind the site. This area is meant to draw pedestrians into the building and through the axial walkway. Greenery and unique lighting sculptures add to the inviting nature of this space.



# EXTERIOR



*Figure 64.0: Herberger Plaza*

On the other side of the axial walkway through the building, Herberger Plaza pays homage to the former site conditions. The Granite Trio sculptures have been removed to make way for a more open and walkable space. Benches, existing trees, and differentiating pavement materials help guide pedestrians along the sidewalk.





*Figure 65.0: Street Scape*

Cafes and bistros line the sidewalk and provide a new sense of place along the building. With the new design cutting away from the street, there is more safety and space for pedestrians to socialize and circulate. Shading from existing trees and overhead balconies add to the communal feel of this area.

# STREET SECTION

On the street level, the goal was to create a sense of place and happening. Multiple levels of street-sidewalk interaction are incorporated to achieve this. A main walkway is discerned by a different material of pavement. Sidewalk cafes and restaurants are also included. Existing trees are kept, but their former planters have been removed and replaced with simple tree grates in the sidewalk. All of these components aim to make the street more walkable and inviting to pedestrians.



Figure 66.0: Street Section

# EXPLODED VIEW

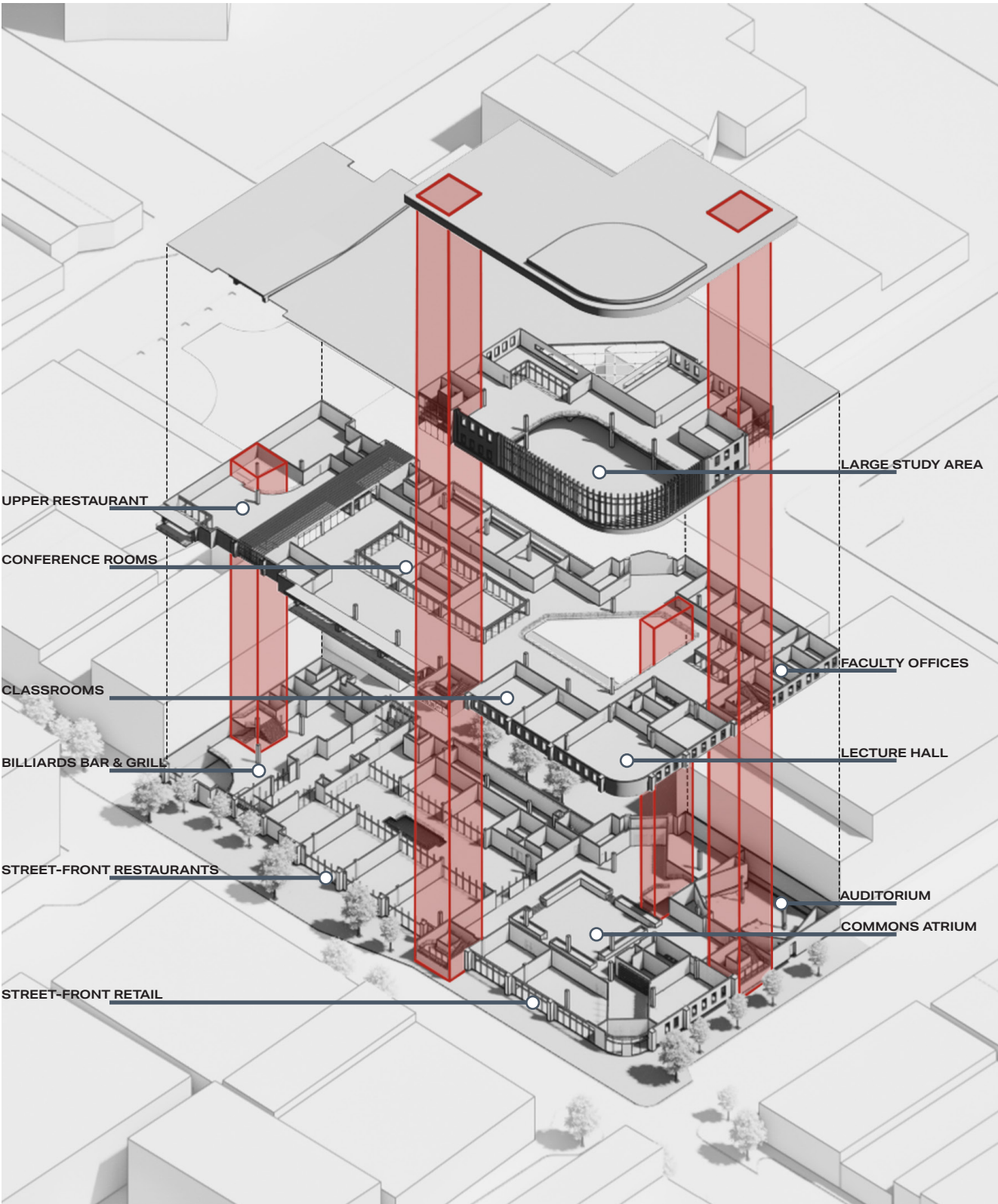


Figure 67.0: Exploded View



# EDUCATION



*Figure 68.0: Commons Atrium*

The first space students are met with when they enter the corner of the building is a central commons atrium. Based on my literary research about creating spaces that flow into each other and provide options for users, this space is a great place to chat or relax. Given the wide nature of the building, it was necessary to open the space up and let lots of natural light in.



*Figure 69.0: Study Area*

On the upper level of the education wing, students are able to use this large study area to work and collaborate. Louvers diffuse natural lighting from the 2-story corner glass facade. This facade also provides views out to the surrounding downtown area which provides a sense of place from within the building.



# ENTERTAINMENT

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*Figure 70.0: Billiards Bar & Grill*

On the opposite side of the building, just off the axial walkway, a billiards bar & grill houses a great place to take a break. Targetted towards young adults, this space is designed to keep users downtown even after a long day of classes and studying.



*Figure 71.0: Granite Trio Plaza*

The Granite Trio sculptures are relocated to the empty lot on the corner of 5th Ave S. Here, they are more of a center piece and are encouraged to be interacted with by families and passersby. This outdoor concert plaza is meant to draw food trucks and pedestrians to stay and enjoy live music events. Friendly lighting and turf platforms add to this idea.



# SECTION 3.4

## PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

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# RESPONSE TO SITE

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As shown in the previous section, the design effectively addresses the issue with the site. The existing barren sidewalks have been transformed into happening places where pedestrians are encouraged to shop, eat, and relax. In order to connect the Herberger Building to the surrounding landscape, a plaza in the back of the site helps draw users through the building and out onto the main street. An outdoor concert venue on the 5th Ave S corner is another great addition that provides a main node of downtown for users to enjoy outdoor events and more.

The building itself was carefully designed so that it would not impede on the existing dynamic of the downtown area. Utilizing the existing building and adding the right amount of modern architecture helps create a sense of place. Overall, the project effectively addresses the issues of the area and provides solutions to fix them. One addition could have been to incorporate more of the street scape design throughout the downtown area as well as design more pocket parks for pedestrians to take a break.



*Figure 72.0: 5th Ave S.*



# RESPONSE TO RESEARCH

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My research gave me a great base for designing in this specific typology of mixed-use downtown buildings. I identified 3 main takeaways from NDSU and the city of Fargo which I did my best to apply to my own project:

- strategy for bringing students downtown
- example of city-university collaboration
- successful historical reuse

I also identified some major takeaways from the Pablo Arts Center in Eau Claire, WI:

- example of how to connect community to university
- locally-inspired architecture
- creating sense of place

And lastly, after talking with Cathy Mehelich from the city of St. Cloud, I discovered more key factors from the Duluth Technology Park:

- similar space and issue resolution
- reusing existing infrastructure
- meeting needs of community

Applying these to my project, I did my best to appreciate the existing building and think about all the factors involved with this. I used Renaissance Hall as an example of how to use existing brick and infrastructure while still incorporating new architecture. I used the Duluth Tech Park as a local example of programming and what I could place inside the building as far as classrooms and offices go. And lastly, I used the Pablo Arts center as an example of how to connect the building to the community. I incorporated spaces for jump start

# RESPONSE TO GOALS

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The main goal of this thesis project was to give people a reason to spend time in downtown St. Cloud. This was specifically targeted towards college students and other young adults. Another major goal was to maintain an appreciation for the existing infrastructure of the site. My hope was to find unique strategies in re-purposing the Herberger's lot and providing solutions for the growth and decay of the project.

I identified 3 key goals specifically:



APPRECIATION FOR  
**HISTORY**



SENSE OF  
**PLACE**



PLAN FOR  
**GROWTH**

My design addresses an appreciation for history in that it utilizes the existing Herberger Building and reuses the Granite Trio sculptures. The project creates a sense of place in downtown St. Cloud by adding levels of interaction with the street and opening the building up to multiple demographics of the community. Lastly, the project allows for growth and provides opportunities for similar projects to follow suite in the area.

# CRITIQUE OF RESEARCH

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My initial research was not as focused in on my main goals in the end. I investigated the Chicago River Walk but ended up not addressing the river in St. Cloud since my project scope was too large initially. My other case studies still helped me with showing that similar projects have been accomplished and that this was a feasible goal.

My literary research forced me to get into topics I hadn't thought of before. The various books and articles I read helped me think about the bigger picture, but also some of the smaller details of creating spaces. The importance of the sidewalk, the flow of spaces, etc. All of these were very beneficial to my design process and made me a more well-rounded student.

The most worth-while research was speaking with professionals from the area and getting their perspective and ideas on my design. They all helped in specific and unique ways which gave me a new appreciation for the history of the site. They also provided solutions to some of my problems and questions and helped me think through them from a different viewpoint than my own.



# SECTION 3.5

## PRESENTATION MATERIALS

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# PHYSICAL MODEL



Figure 73.0: CNC Model



Figure 74.0: Thesis Display



Figure 75.0: Thesis Display



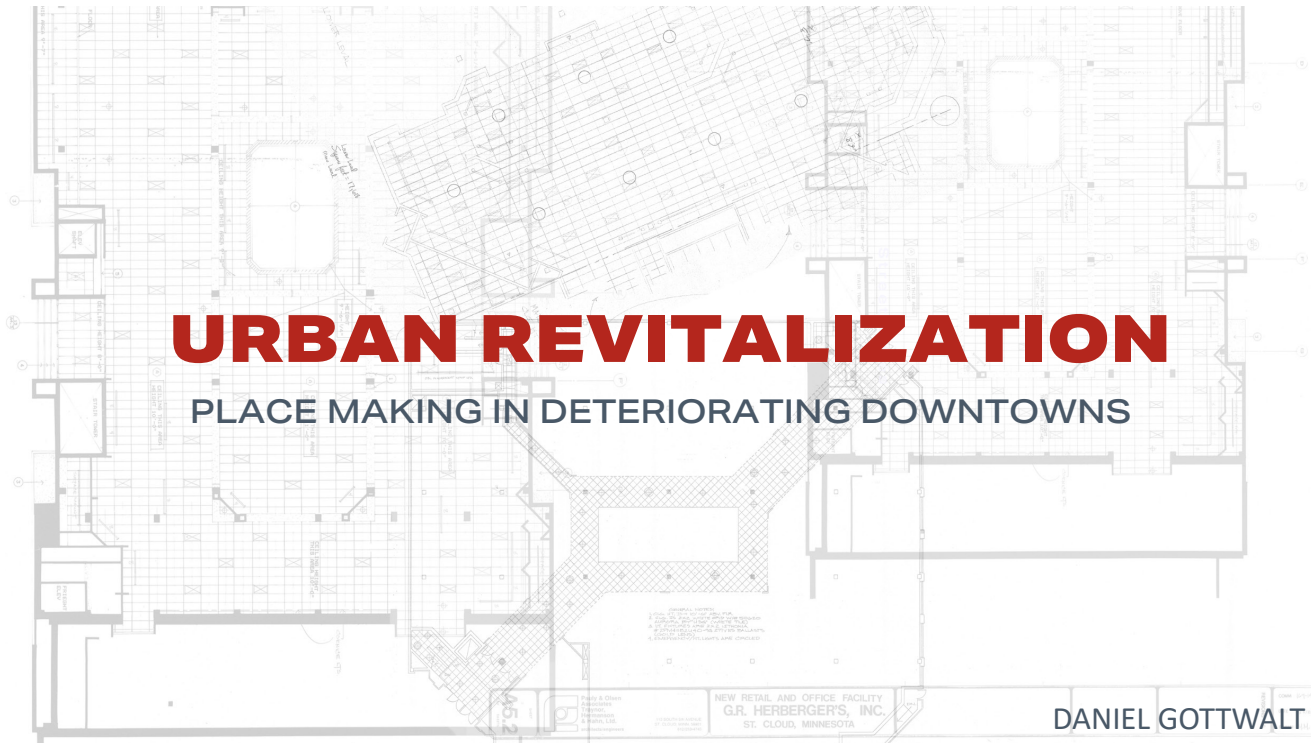
# PRESENTATION BOARD



Figure 76.0: Presentation Board

# DIGITAL PRESENTATION

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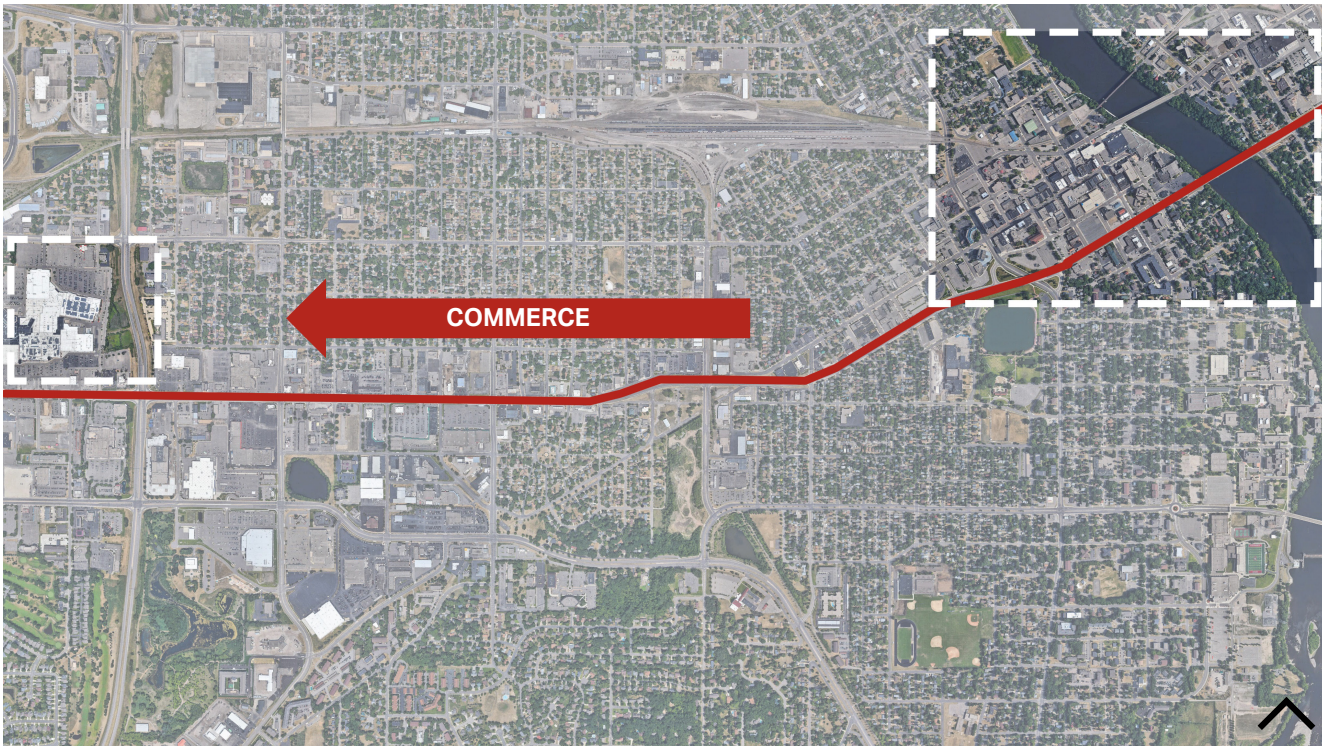




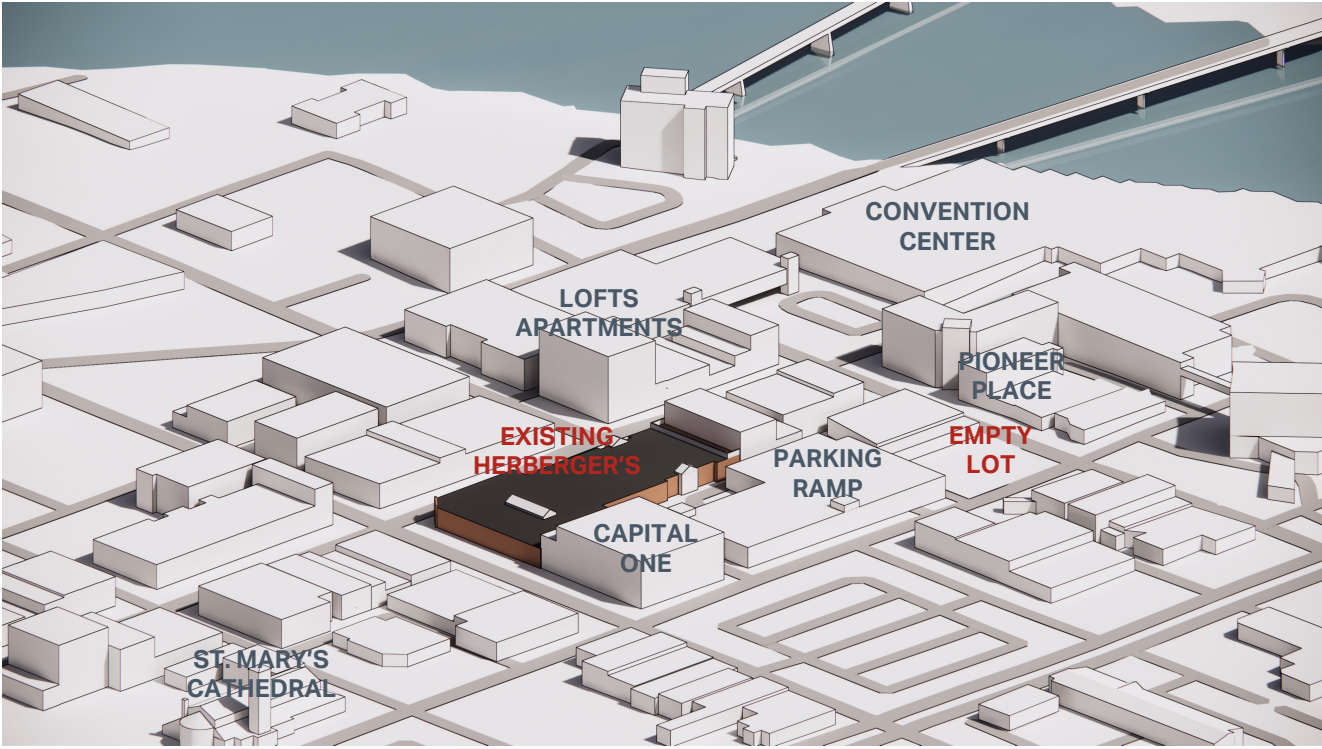


# DIGITAL PRESENTATION

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# DIGITAL PRESENTATION

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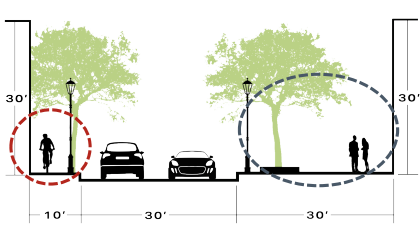




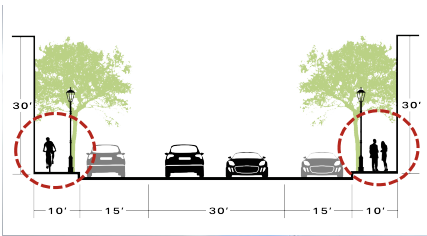
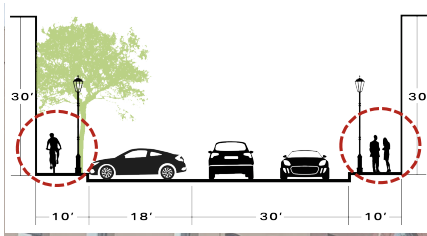




# DIGITAL PRESENTATION









# DIGITAL PRESENTATION

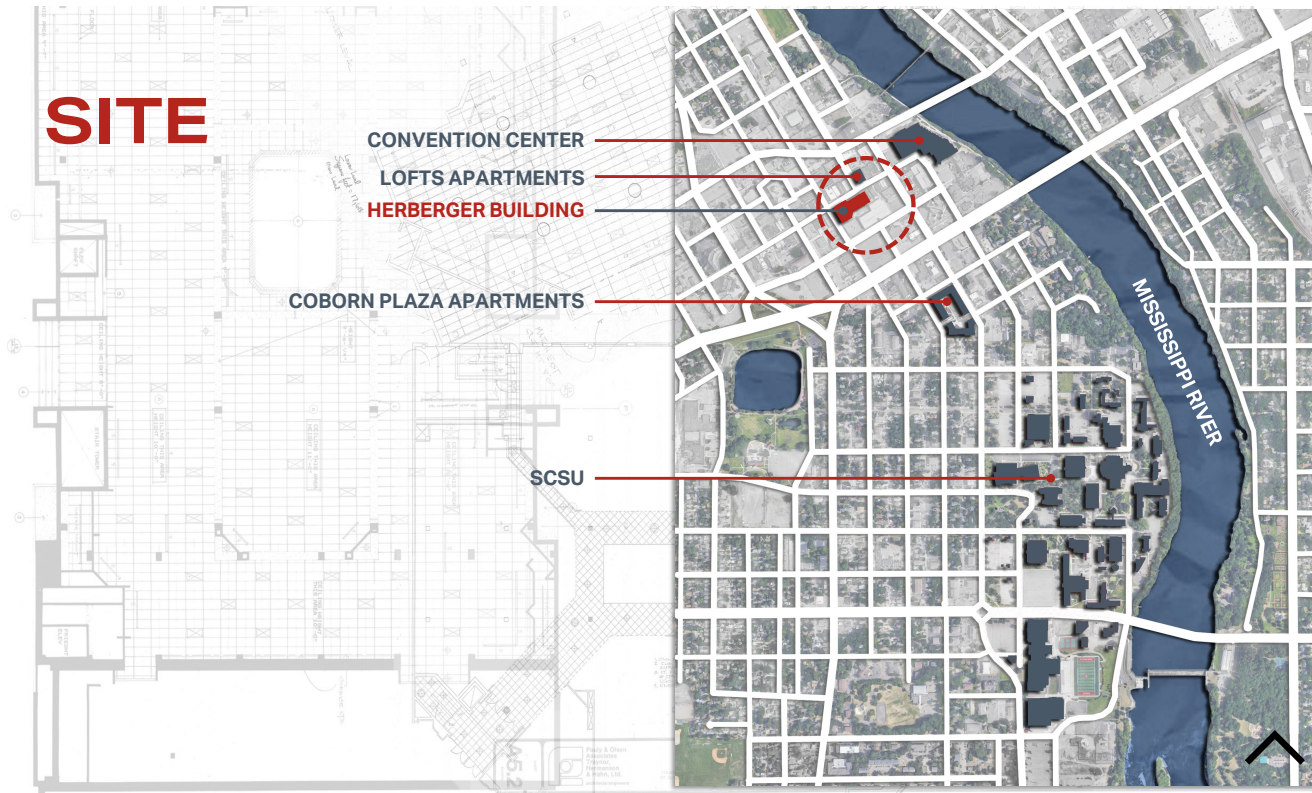








# DIGITAL PRESENTATION



## CITY OF FARGO & NDSU



**TYPOLGY:** Office & Education  
**LOCATION:** Fargo, ND  
**POPULATION:** 121,889 (2019)  
**DESIGNER:** Keith & Kurke / Kilbourne Group  
**COMPLETED:** 2009 / 2008

**KEY TAKEAWAYS:**  
-strategy for bringing students downtown  
-example of city-university collaboration  
-successful historical reuse



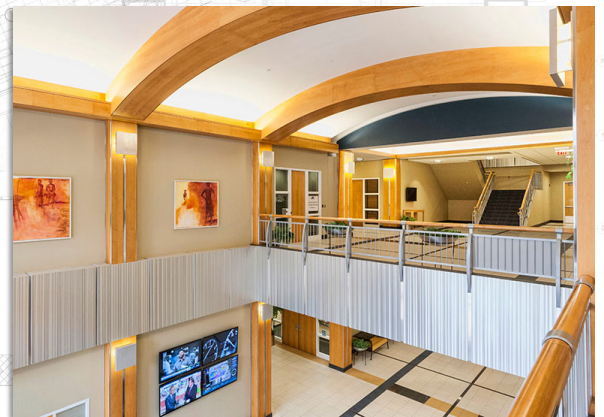
# PABLO ARTS CENTER



**TPOLOGY:** Performing Arts & Education  
**LOCATION:** Eau Claire, WI  
**POPULATION:** 68,187 (2019)  
**DESIGNER:** Holzman Moss Bottino Architecture / Strang  
**COMPLETED:** 2018

**KEY TAKEAWAYS:**  
 -example of how to connect community to university  
 -locally-inspired architecture  
 -creating sense of place

# DULUTH TECHNOLOGY VILLAGE



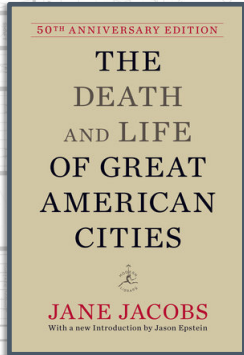
**TPOLOGY:** Multi-Use Technology Office  
**LOCATION:** Duluth, MN  
**POPULATION:** 85,915 (2019)  
**DESIGNER:** LHB  
**COMPLETED:** Early 2000s

**KEY TAKEAWAYS:**  
 -similar space and issue resolution  
 -reusing existing infrastructure  
 -meeting needs of community

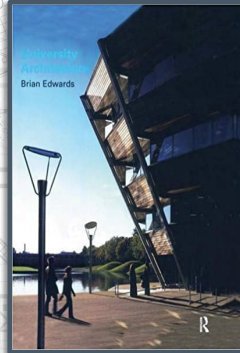


# DIGITAL PRESENTATION

## LITERARY RESEARCH



**THE DEATH AND LIFE OF GREAT AMERICAN CITIES**  
-JANE JACOBS



**UNIVERSITY ARCHITECTURE**  
-BRIAN EDWARDS



**HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND URBAN REVITALIZATION IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**  
-WEBSTER & KINAHAN

## KEY CONTRIBUTORS



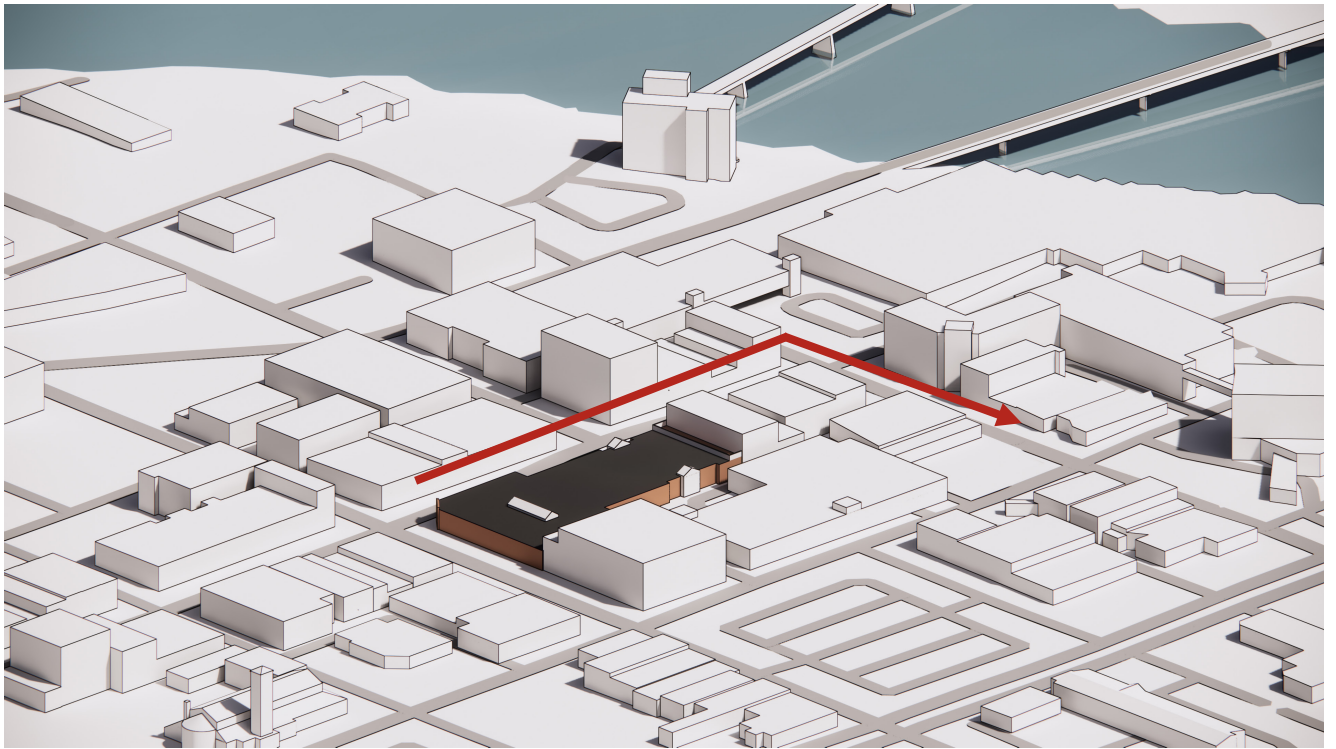
**Commercial Real Estate Agent at Commercial Realty Solutions**



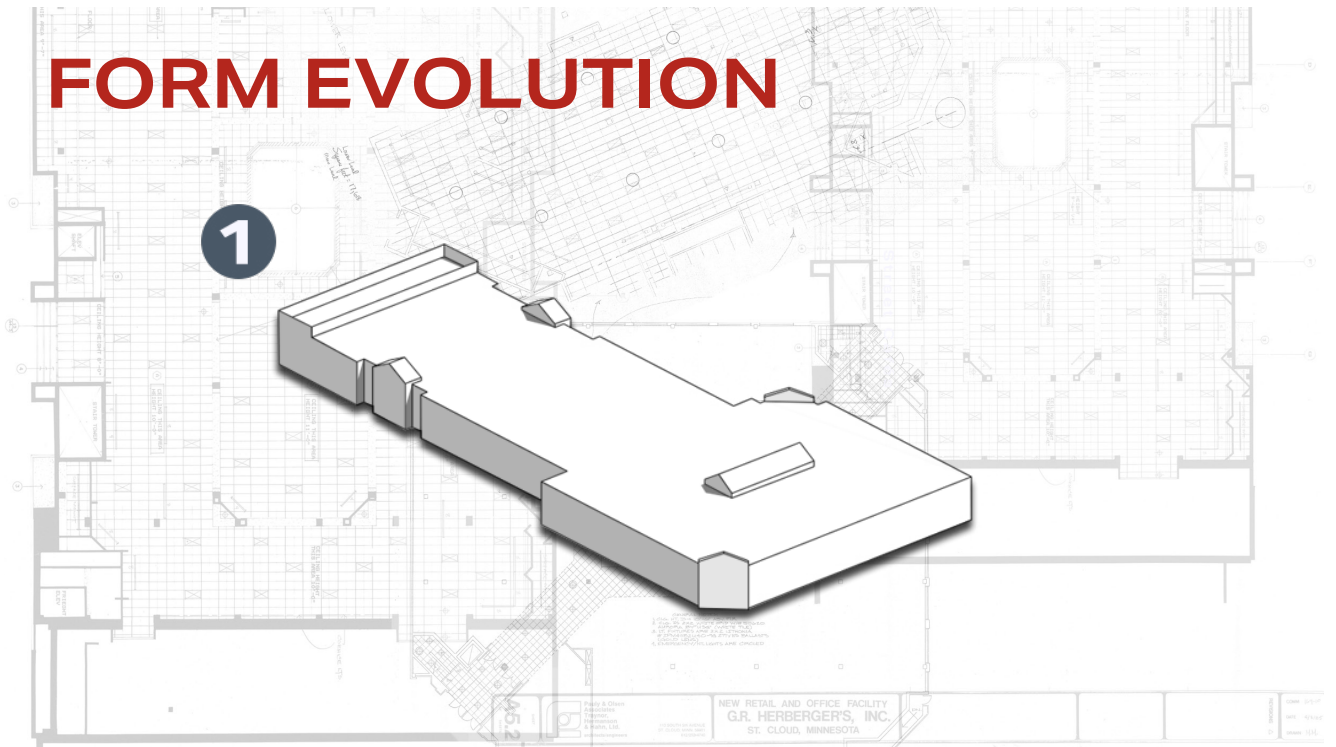
**Professor of Economics, Dean at St. Cloud State University**



**Economic Development Director for City of St. Cloud**



# FORM EVOLUTION

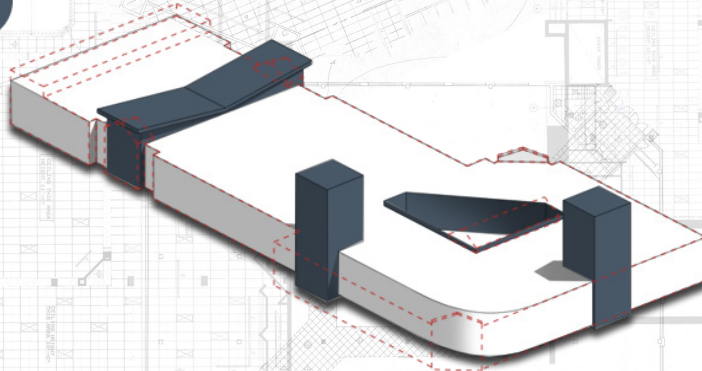




# DIGITAL PRESENTATION

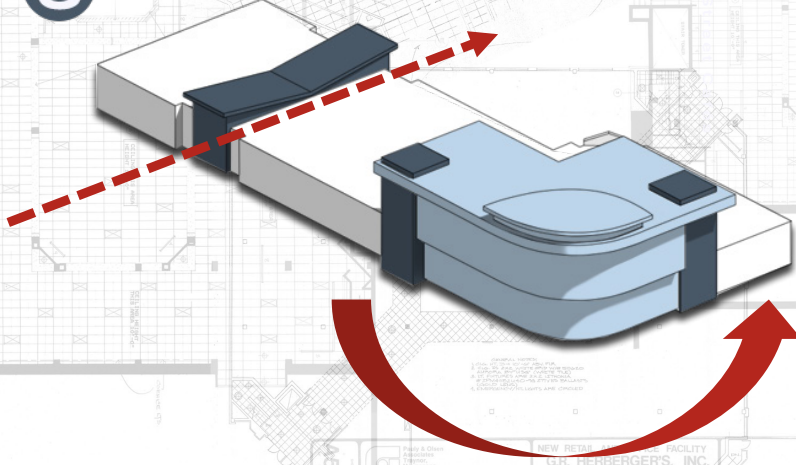
## FORM EVOLUTION

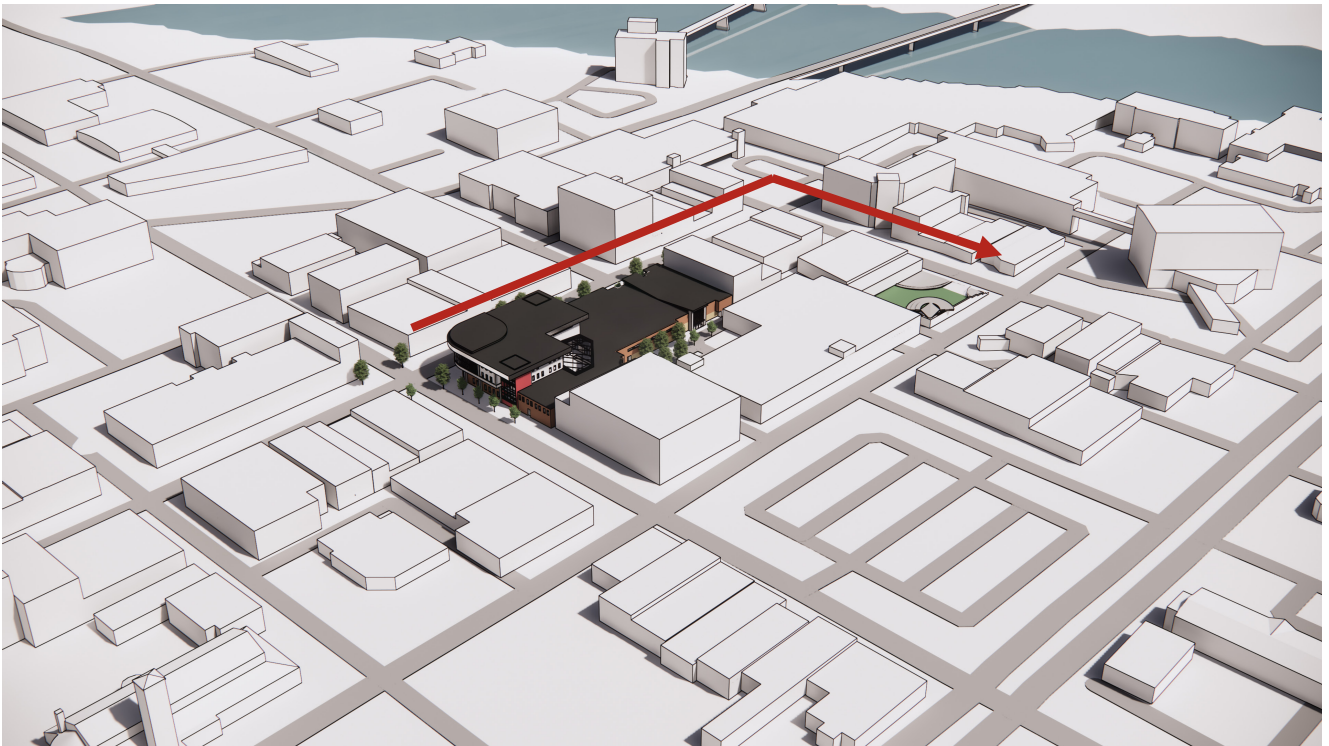
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## FORM EVOLUTION

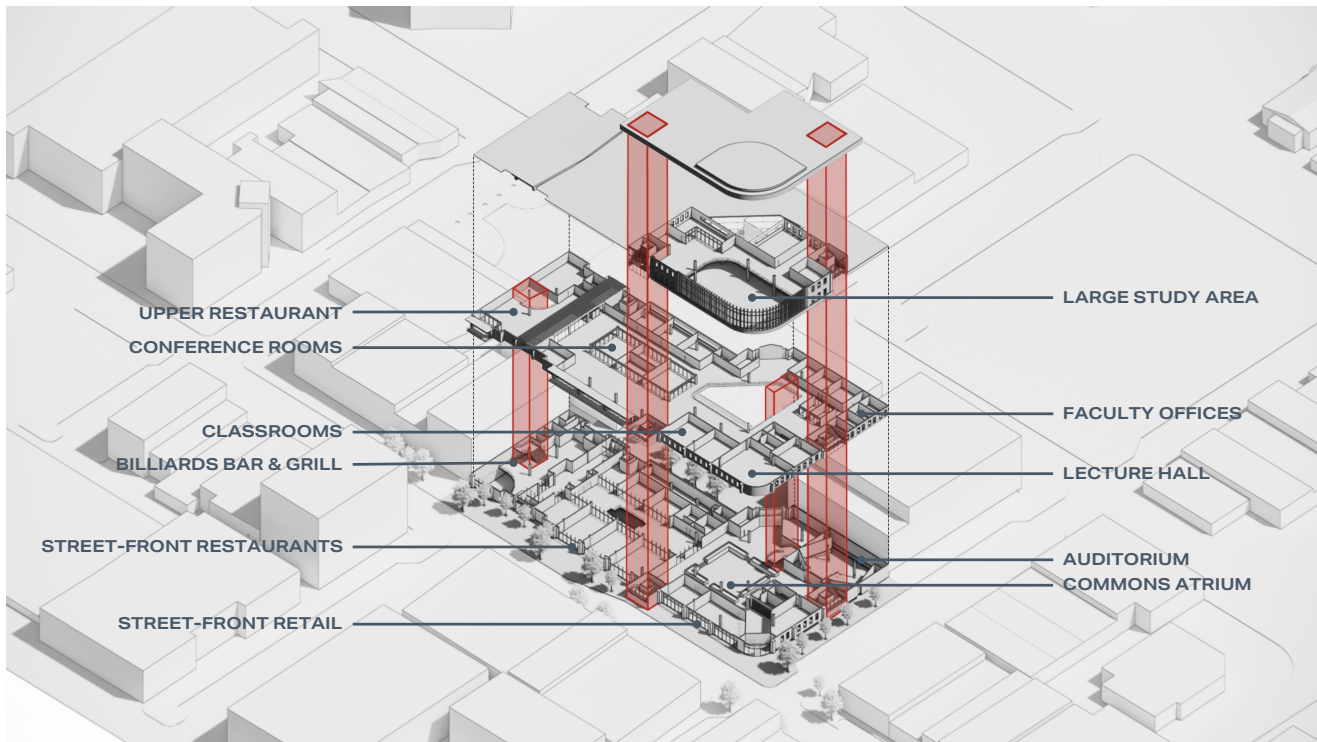
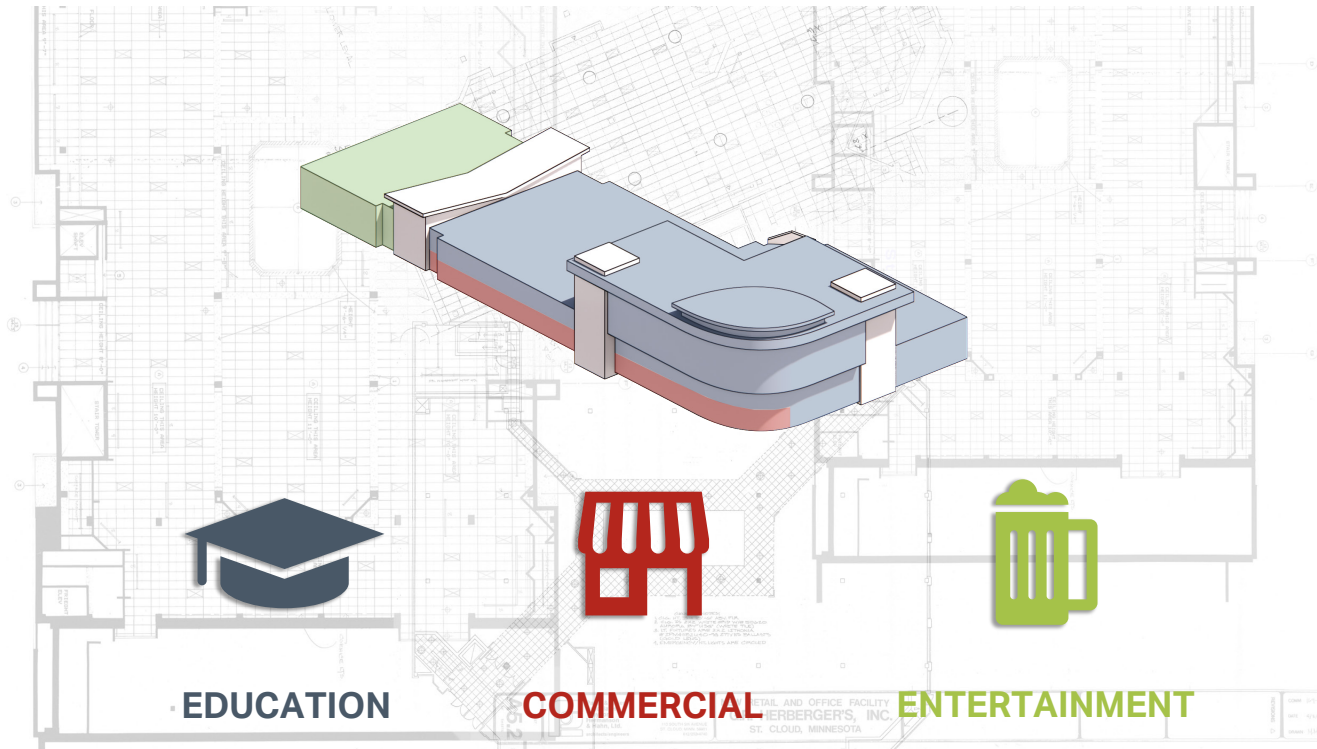
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# DIGITAL PRESENTATION

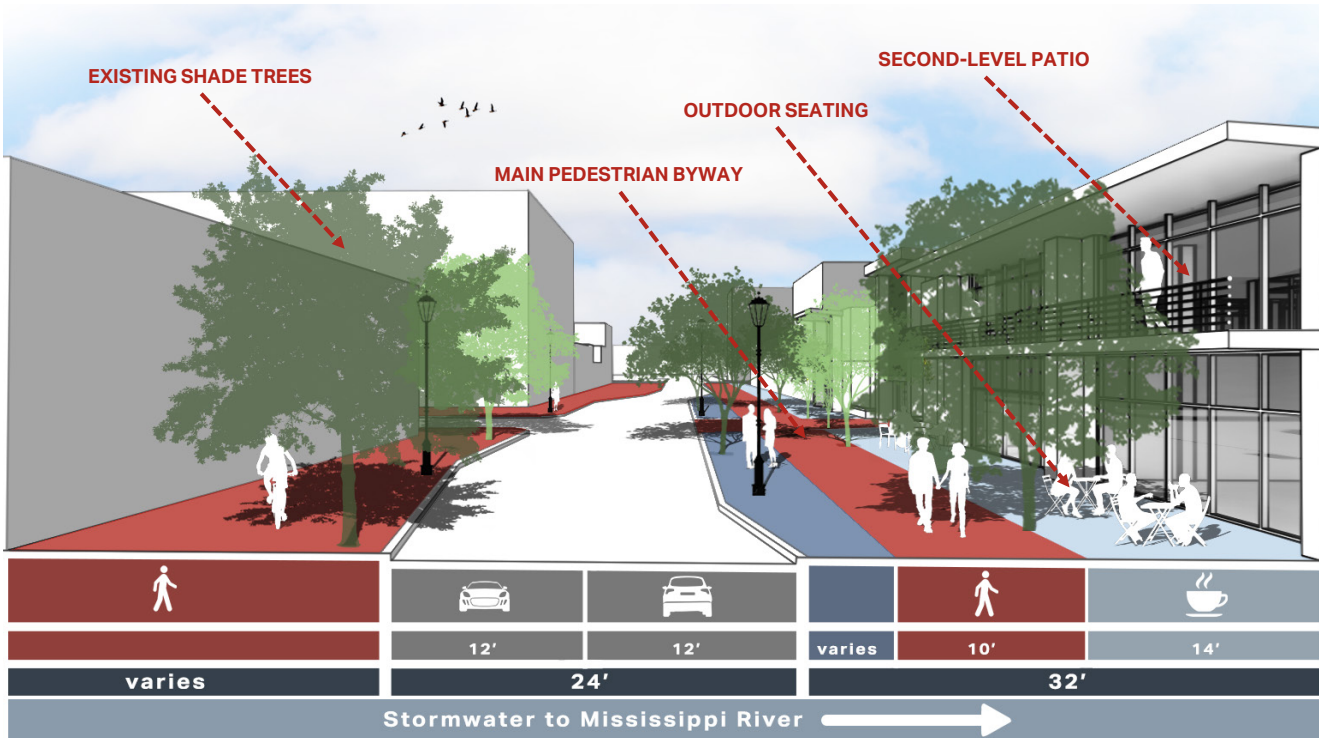








# DIGITAL PRESENTATION









# DIGITAL PRESENTATION






**APPRECIATION FOR HISTORY**


**SENSE OF PLACE**


**PLAN FOR GROWTH**



Design & Construction  
 G.R. HERBERGER'S, INC.  
 ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA





# APENDIX

## REFERENCES & EXPERIENCE

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# REFERENCES

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# STUDIO EXPERIENCE

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2

**2ND YEAR: 2018-2019**

**FALL STUDIO: DARYL BOOKER**

- Breathing Room Project
- Minneapolis Rowing Club Project

**SPRING STUDIO: CINDY URNESS**

- Cripple Creek Dwelling Project
- West Fargo Mixed-Use Project

3

**3RD YEAR: 2019-2020**

**FALL STUDIO: REGIN SCHWAEN**

- Oscar Zero Visitor Center Project
- Nekoma Pavilion Project

**SPRING STUDIO: SELERIA ALENJERY**

- Architecture of the Apocalypse Design Competition
- Bismarck Office and Landscape Project

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# 4

**4TH YEAR:** 2020-2021

**FALL STUDIO:** MARK BARNHOUSE  
-Miami Highrise Design Competition

**SPRING STUDIO:** KRISTI HANSON  
-Marvin Windows Design Competition  
-Vision for Medora Project

# 5

**5TH YEAR:** 2021-2022

**FALL STUDIO:** LANCE JOSAL  
-Fargo Bullet Train Urban Design Project

**SPRING STUDIO:** BAKR ALY AMHED  
-Urban Revitalization Thesis Project



# PERSONAL INFORMATION

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**DANIEL GOTTWALT**  
ST. CLOUD, MN