



# Manufactured Quality of Life

Landscape Architecture Master's Thesis  
North Dakota State University

A Design Thesis By: Abigayle Brown

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# MANUFACTURED QUALITY OF LIFE

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Planning for Equity, Environment and Community in a Rural Mobile Home Park

A Design Thesis Submitted to the Department of Landscape Architecture of North Dakota State University

By: Abigayle Brown

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Landscape Architecture

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# *Thesis Proposal*

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*Figure 2.0, Vintage Homes & Gardens by Click Americana*



# Thesis Proposal

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## Abstract & Statement of Passion

Over 20 million Americans reside in a mobile home park. The homes are hardly mobile and calling them a park is an exaggerated compliment. The automobile industry birthed the trailer that is now used as a permanent home. After the industrial revolution and World War II, reaching suburbia quickly became an American dream. Manufacturers took advantage of this movement by rapidly producing homes that have resulted in the permanent communities of today. Banks view mobile homes as personal property, which depreciates at the same rate as an automobile. Since a mobile home is not valued as real property, it makes it more challenging to obtain financial equity. These neighborhoods lack in programming and maintenance, keeping this lower income population within the cycle of poverty. However, mobile homes still provide housing to over 20 million Americans which is why certain aspects of this built environment need to be preserved. This type of housing mends the gap between needing government assisted housing and financially obtaining real property in the form of a home. This thesis will show how we can measure the quality of mobile home communities to promote sustainable and equitable justice.

By the age of 10-years-old I discovered what it meant to have value in a neighborhood. Every other weekend I would reside in a single-wide mobile home with my mom and three other (half) siblings. When I wasn't with my mom, I was living with my dad in a newly built four bedroom home with a fenced in backyard, streetlights and trees in the boulevard. The differences between the neighborhoods was not only something I could see, but feel. At my dad's I saw well-manicured lawns, nightly tee-ball games, Fourth-of-July firework shows, snow-fort building, and garage graduation parties. I also felt comfortable, safe, welcomed and taken care of. At my mom's, I saw kids riding bike on broken pavement, pick-up basketball games played on a hoop with no backboard, and small grilling parties during late-night summer hours. I felt desire and hope in this neighborhood. I also felt the silver lining in which happiness was found when little was provided.

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*"I do like this home, I think I like it because it's mine" -Gladys Turner in Galvanized Ghettos*



*Figure 3.0, Vintage Homes & Gardens by Click Americana*

# *Thesis Proposal*

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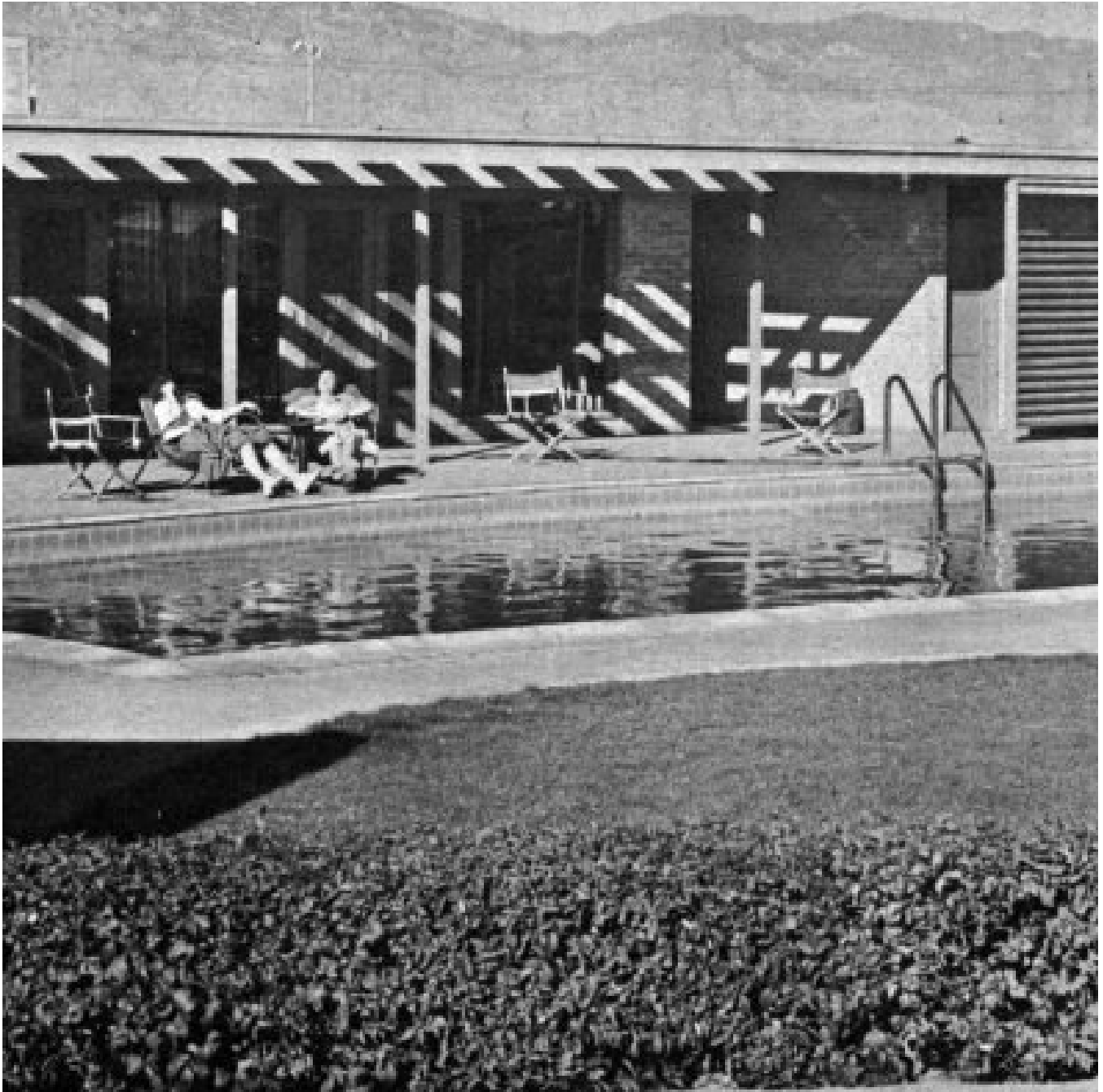
## Narrative

Growing up I felt like I lived in two different worlds that were less than 5 miles apart. This concept and questioning has inspired me to move forward with this research. The form of neighborhoods are compiled of many different elements that have a physical, social, psychological, political, ecological and economic impact on measuring the quality of life. As Teddy Roosevelt states, "comparison is the thief of joy." However, when measuring quality of life, it is essential to compare relationships between its dimensions. When measuring equity, it is essential to compare.

The physical elements of a thriving place to live include infrastructure for recreation, community gatherings, utilitarian services and transportation—or at least being in close proximity to these. At my dad's, I had everything I needed right at my fingertips. School, recreational facilities, restaurants and grocery stores were all within walking distance. I would utilize sidewalks and popular walking paths to travel to these destinations before I could drive. Since these walking paths were utilized so much by the community, I always felt safe. At the trailer park, we had some recreational facilities within a decent proximal distance. However, there were no sidewalks connecting us there. If we wanted to go to the local mercantile, we would have to walk across a drainage field and through a Burger King driveway. It felt hazardous and unsafe, but we were given no other choice.

Taking pride in a home is something everyone longs for. I selfishly always prided the home my dad established for us. We hosted birthday parties, family get-together, and my high school graduation party. I knew I could never repeat these social events in a trailer home. Most mobile home parks make this nearly impossible due to the social perception of it not being perpetual and unsafe. For my family, some of us took pride in our galvanized dwelling and some of us looked forward to the day when we moved into our permanent home. We always longed for a sense of permanence and belonging. Sometimes we found it, like when we would wake up on the morning of December 25th to open gifts. But the feeling would never last for long. For me, I looked forward to the following Sunday when I would return to a neighborhood that better served its people. But I never was able to share this with my siblings.

The following research investigates what the true definition of quality of life is, and how it measures in the environment of a mobile home park. In order to better explain my personal experiences living between two opposite neighborhoods, this study searches for recommendations on how to introduce improvements to the quality of life by planning for equity through designed neighborhood elements.



*Figure 4.0, Vintage Homes & Gardens by Click Americana*

# Thesis Proposal

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## Plan for Research & Design Documentation

Research will be conducted by analyzing quality of life and desired proximity to community services to establish recommended design principles for equity and social justice in mobile home park neighborhoods. This research will measure qualitative aspects of environmental, physical, mobility, social, psychological, economic and political entities as well as quantitative aspects of a proximity analysis. A historical analysis will aid in this research to help better understand the form and jurisdiction of the modern mobile home park. Three case studies are researched to establish comparison of mobile home parks across the country.

## Design Methodology:

### Historical Research

- + The Form and Jurisdiction of Modern Mobile Home Parks

### Mixed Methodologies

- + Qualitative Analysis
  - Quality of Life Index
  - Desired Proximity to Community Services

### Case Study Research

- + Sleepy Hollow, Athens, Georgia
- + Trailer Estates, Bradenton, Florida
- + Lake Terrace Estates, Three Lakes, Wisconsin

### Graphic Archiving

- + Process drawings and gatherings of graphical work will be properly scanned and documented
- + Data will be stored on a cloud system & locally on personal desktop

### Institutional Repository

- + Project book, presentation, digital boards and any other material used to defend the proposal will be saved on NDSU Library's Institutional Repository under the Landscape Architecture Thesis category

### Project Presentation

- + Oral and visual representations of the project will be conducted in front of a thesis jury

# *Research*

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*Figure 5.0, Vintage Homes & Gardens by Click Americana*



# *Research*

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Typology

## Mobile Home Parks

Typology Investigations:

- + Sleepy Hollow, Athens, Georgia
- + Trailer Estates, Bradenton, Florida
- + Lake Terrace Estates, Three Lakes, Wisconsin



*Figure 6.0. The LeMar Trailer Park by Josh Haner*

# Research

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Case Precedent № 1

## Project Typology:

Community Planning  
Residential Design

## Context:

Sleepy Hollow, located in Athens, Georgia, is a mobile home park and outdoor recreation area. The 6.9 acre development encompasses 20 mobile home parks with one primary road directing to every home. Heavily vegetated areas create a boarder on three side, while the fourth, the entrance, faces a highway. There aren't any included community buildings on this site.

## Contribution to Thesis:

This case study is apparent to utilitarian designed communities. Landscape is integrated within the small development, however it is extremely isolated from other luxuries, i.e.: grocery stores, community gathering spaces, gas stations, sidewalks, churches, etc.

## Conclusion:

Sleepy Hollow is a practical example of highly dense mobile home development in the 1960-70s.

## Community Type:

Family Community



Figure 7.0, *The LeMar Trailer Park* by Josh Haner

# Research

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Case Precedent № 2

## Project Typology:

Community Planning  
Residential Design  
Mixed-Use Development  
Streetscapes & Pedestrian Corridors

## Context:

Trailer Estates, located in Bradenton, Florida is a mobile home park and outdoor recreation area. The 160-acre waterfront village consists of 50 clubs and over 1250 mobile homes. At the center of the development exists a post office, fire department, church, and parks and recreation facilities. Hugging Trailer Estates are hotels, gas stations, marinas, single and multi-family developments, restaurants, and other community necessities. In the form of the Jeffersonian grid pattern, Trailer Estates has long, narrow blocks for mobile homes to be placed on a 30 degree angle. This angle permits adequate room to provide shelters that are most likely for cars. Meaning, cars are the dominant mode of transportation, especially with the lack of sidewalks on portions of the blocks. The roads are made up of asphalt and pedestrian zones are defined by brick inlay. Landscape trickles between the homes with the exception of plantings near almost every perimeter of a home. Outdoor recreation facilities provide a central place for communities to come together. In Trailer Estates there are bocce ball courts and an outdoor pool. Close access to the water and activities provide yet another outdoor community gathering space.

## Contribution to Thesis:

This case study is reminding of the original purpose of mobile home parks. Trailer Estates was founded on principles establishing culture and community amongst its residences. Major landscape features contribute to amenity and cultural appeal. The mobile home park doesn't have any visible immediate need of maintenance. Everything seems to have been kept well preserved and respected amongst neighbors alike. Although it is the first, and oldest mobile home park in the nation, it isn't maintained as an undesirable location to live.

## Conclusion:

Trailer Estates continues to stand to its once intended purpose: to provide inexpensive housing in a highly dense area. By providing close proximity to community necessities and cultural experiences, the mobile home park remains relevant today

## Community Type:

Family Community



Figure 8.0, *The LeMar Trailer Park* by Josh Haner

# Research

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Case Precedent № 3

## Project Typology:

Community Planning

Residential Design

## Context:

Lake Terrace Estates, located in Three Lakes, Wisconsin, is a mobile home park resting upon the southern shore of Little Moccasin Lake. Views of the lake remain relevant to the relationship with the landscape. The main access branches off from Lake Terrace Road, ending in a loop back to the entrance. This road, as well as a secondary access point, enclose the mobile homes in two separate loops. 35 mobile homes array the curved roads geometry. Vegetation is implied along the shore of the lake and to the south of homes to provide privacy amongst other reasons. There are no sidewalks, and no adequate spaces for vehicles even though that is the implied primary source of transportation.

## History:

The design of the mobile home park was intended specifically to be a model for the Mobile Home Manufacturers' Association Parks Division. This entity would provide the design and regulation of mobile home communities for free. This service intended to boost sales in the mobile home market. The idea was to make this community desirable for American consumers when it was developed in 1968. The MHMA Parks Division influenced the design of mobile home parks on a national level, which was exactly what Lake Terrace was built for.

## Contribution to Thesis:

This case study represents how the market directed design of community planning. The residences were prioritized over anything else, putting landscape, circulation, community and culture second. The notion to sell quickly and turn over a quick profit is noticeable in communities like this, which begin to establish unsustainable design elements that lead to an undesirable quality of life. The ultimate isolation from commercial entities disassociates the fundamental needs of a community making it more difficult for sustainable living.

## Conclusion:

Relationship to the landscape, even if it is just substantial views in a cooler climate, provide assets to the value of quality of life. Therefore, it adds value to the community. Lake Terrace promotes market over quality and tried to make this the standard for future mobile home parks.

## Community Type:

Age Restricted Community



*Figure 9.0, Vintage Homes & Gardens by Click Americana*



## Principles of Urban Quality of Life for a Neighborhood

*Author(s): Haman Serag El Din, Ahmed Shalaby, Hend Elsayed Farouh, Sarah A. Elariane*

The article examined, Principles of Urban Quality of Life for a Neighborhood by Haman Serag El Din, Ahmed Shalaby, Hend Elsayed Farouh and Sarah A. Elariane, defines the term urban quality of life and its measurable dimensions, and addresses its relationship to sustainable developments. To aide in this research, contemporary urban planning theories are compared to urban quality of life dimension to create standard principles for the design process and policy makers. These results are explained in a matrix that analyze environmental, physical, mobility, social, psychological, economic and political aspects or quality of life to new urbanism, smart growth, urban village and intelligent urbanism planning theories.

## Urban Quality of Life Definition:

The urban quality of life is a network of the relationship and dynamic between physical and psychological experiences. It cannot stand as one single dimension, rather a summary of several dimensions depending on one another. They can be experience on numerous contemporary urban design platforms. To comprehend the definition of urban quality of life, it is apparent to investigate the definition of quality, quality of life, sustainable development, and urban planning.

- + *Quality*: the attractiveness or excellence of the product
- + *Quality of Life*: people's wants and the contentment of their ambitions; their wants can be defined using a detailed methodology within a particular cultural setting
- + *Sustainable Development*: achieving the current needs of culture without deterring the achievement of the future needs of culture
- + *Urban Planning*: influencing the use land and design imply on the urban environment

There are seven dimensions to define the urban quality of life. Those dimensions are environmental, physical, mobility, social, psychological, economical, and political urban qualities of life. To truly define the urban quality of life, one must consider the relationship between each dimension. One dimension will not suffice to understand the definition.

- + *Environmental*: natural aspects of the neighborhood
- + *Physical*: *facilities*, urban fabric, land use, services and facilities infrastructure
- + *Mobility*: accessibility, traffic and transportation
- + *Social*: individual choices and participation of citizens
- + *Psychological*: feeling of citizens toward their neighborhood
- + *Economical*: characterizes the neighborhood as a place of economic activity
- + *Political*: city policies and the extent to which these policies are implemented

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**Table 1** Urban quality of life Vs urban planning theories and approaches.

	New Urbanism	Smart Growth	Urban Village	Intelligent Urbanism
Environmental	No principles dealing directly with environmental issues.	Preserve open space and critical environment areas. Strengthen and direct development toward existing communities.	Sustainability.	Balance with nature. Efficiency. Appropriate technology.
Physical	Mixed land use. Compact neighborhood. Eco-building.	Mixed land use. Adopt compact building patterns and efficient infrastructure design.	Mixed-use and diversity. Increased density. Traditional neighborhood structure.	<i>No principles dealing directly with physical issues.</i>
Mobility	Pedestrian and transit friendly neighborhood. Fine network of interconnecting streets. Hierarchy of streets networks.	Create walkable neighborhoods. Provide a variety of transportation choices.	Walkability. Connectivity. Smart transportation.	Balanced movement.
Social	Provide civic building and public gathering places. Provide a range of parks. Create a range of housing types. Reinforcing a safe and secure environment.	Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.	Mixed housing.	Conviviality. Human scale. Opportunity matrix.
Psychological	Architecture and landscape should be linked to context. Preserve historic areas.	Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a sense of place.	Quality architecture and urban design. Quality of life.	Balance with tradition.
Economical	<i>No principles dealing directly with economic issues.</i>	<i>No principles dealing directly with economic issues.</i>	No principles dealing directly with economic issues.	No principles dealing directly with economic issues.
Political	Control evolution	Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective.	No principles dealing directly with political issues.	Regional integration. Institutional integrity.

## Urban Quality of Life vs. Urban Planning Theories and Approaches Matrix:

The results of the represent the departure point for deducing principles of urban quality of life. It is obvious that there are some gaps pointed out by this matrix, as it is clear for example for the economical dimension. Although it may seem these specific urban planning theories and approaches may not have any influence on certain topics that define urban quality of life, they do have indirect influence in specific circumstances.

### Personal Views:

Quality of Life is a heavily loaded word with many interpretations. It is important to further define and specify these qualities, especially when designing for them. However, in this article, it is not clearly identified on how to precisely measure each aspect of quality of life. It is broadly mentioned what quality of life defines as in each planning theory. However, it is difficult to understand how to reinterpret this matrix if the guidelines are not quantifiable or particular enough.

### Conclusion:

This paper tried to deduce urban quality of life principles that enhance the quality of life, ensure the sustainability of the neighborhood, and try to solve problems facing the developed urban areas and new developments.



*Figure 11.0, Vintage Homes & Gardens by Click Americana*

## Guidelines for Improving the Mobile Home Living Environment

*Author(s): Urban Research & Development Corporation, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania*

Guidelines For Improving The Mobile Home Living Environment by the Urban Research & Development Corporation Bethlehem, Pennsylvania outlines design principles and guideline for mobile home living environments. The reading addresses background information, recommendations, the cost of improving livability and actions to improve mobile home livability. The methodology for this study consists of the following tasks:

- + Survey of existing literature; field reconnaissance throughout the nation; interviews with HUD personnel, mobile home developers and government officials
- + Analysis of existing mobile home development standards
- + Identification and analysis of livability determinants
- + Identification of the costs of providing design features which improve livability
- + Review of the design process and development of an implementation strategy
- + Recommendation of design principles and standards

Recommendations concerning location and the desired proximity to community services will serve as the focal point in this literature review.

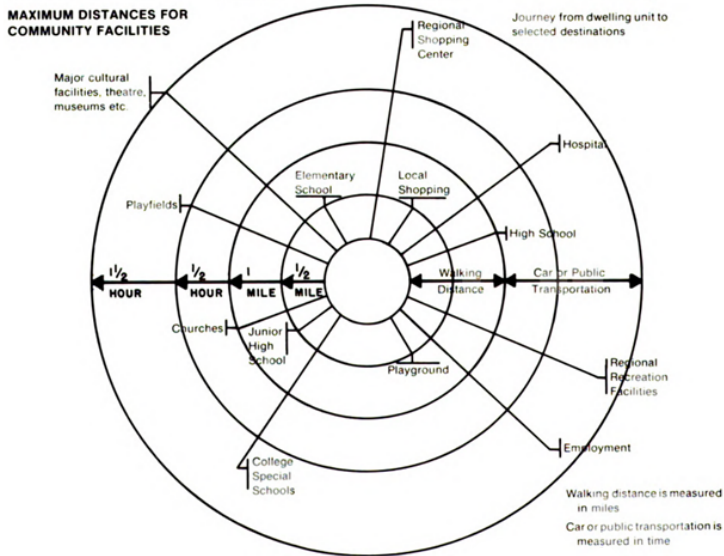
Zoning usually dictates the location of mobile home developments. This is typically determined by planning principles and existing or proposed jurisdictions. This article argues that emotional considerations shape the zoning of mobile home parks rather than land use planning principles. Mobile homes may have the perception of being visually unattractive, repelling lower income housing and individuals. Communities have a pre-conceived idea that mobile homes also devalue the property and are tax liabilities. The pre-conceived ideas of mobile home developments does not justify the high density living environments being located in undesirable places, away from utilities and community facilities.

## Typical Residential Zoning Principles:

- + *Compatible land use and surrounding environments;*
- + *Adequate utility and road support systems;*
- + *Reasonable convenience to community facilities;*
- + *Similar density such as mobile home density of 4 to 7 dwelling units per acre, much like townhouses and low density apartments;*
- + *Logical extension or infilling of the existing urban growth pattern (page 13).*

Some standard locational requirements follow health and safety requirements in concern with developing. Hazards such as insect or rodent infiltration, smoke, undesirable quality of air (smoke), noise, flooding or erosion are restricted aspects of land to be developed. This only touches on a few aspects of land that defend why is should, or should not be, acquired into a neighborhood. The elements that aren't included, and assumed to be permitted to develop are poor conditions pertaining to the soil, groundwater level, drainage and rock formations, and topography.

Addressing relationships to surrounding land uses, buffer areas and community services is essential to achieving maximum compatibility with adjacent land uses. Adjacent land should be used in similar manners, with comparable residential density or smaller convenience businesses. The inclusion of mature trees or landscaping between mobile homes, or mobile homes and streets a more suitable use of land. This makes the development not feel like a conventional mobile home park. Buffer areas serve as the transition from one land use to another. They are essential to program so individuals have adequate access to community services. In many instances, it is nearly impossible to provide sufficient proximity to all community services. However, it is still in the best interest of the residents to make as many community service elements as close to the maximum traveling distance as possible.



### Topics Analyzed:

COMMUNITY FACILITY	SUGGESTED MAXIMUM DISTANCE
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION	¾ mi. walking distance
COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL	¾ mi. walking distance
REGIONAL COMMERCIAL	40 min. driving distance
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	¾ mi. walking distance
SECONDARY SCHOOL	1 mi. walking distance
COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL FACILITY	15 min. driving distance
EMPLOYMENT CENTER	40 min. driving distance
POLICE AND FIRE PROTECTION	Within service capability

### Desired Proximity to Community Services Matrix:

The results matrix represent standards for the maximum distance community services should be from a selected dwelling unit. This matrix is based solely upon travel distance and time. There are some methods of travel left out of this measurement, such as biking. However, it is safe to assume that walking and vehicular transportation are two modes that are the most necessary to measure.

### Personal Views:

It is interesting to discover that this matrix is near impossible to be competent in, however these are appropriate design metrics that we face. The way we get from one place to another is one challenge, but the route taken is another. When analyzing lower-income neighborhoods, it only seems just to provide these services in a manner of independent or public travel. If transportation is not planned for, and services are not in proximal distance to dwelling units, low-income neighborhoods become isolated to an inequitable way of living.

### Conclusion:

The proximity matrix is something that will be repeated in this article, to visualize and analyze how existing infrastructure and mobile home parks compare to the ideal proximal measurements. If a neighborhood results are inefficient, design can solve burdens in buffers and surrounding land uses.



*Figure 13.0, Vintage Homes & Gardens by Click Americana*



## Moving Beyond the Mobile Myth: Preserving Manufactured Housing Communities

*Author(s): Renia Ehrenfeucht*

Moving Beyond the Mobile Myth: Preserving Manufactured Housing Communities by Renia Ehrenfeucht is a journal article centered around the idea of preserving aspects of affordable housing by explaining how they are essential to over 20 million people in the United States.

The main topics discussed in this article focuses on finding truths in manufactured housing communities, needs for change and opportunities to take action. Manufactured housing often has a social stigma with being undesirable when placed in a neighborhood setting. Debunking those specific beliefs and making suggestions for change are what this article focuses on. Not only does it address a problem, solutions are also considered.

### The Truths about Manufactured Housing Communities:

- + *Manufactured housing communities are neighborhoods*
- + *Manufactured housing is built to high standards*
- + *Manufactured homeowners can build equity*
- + *Manufactured homes are affordable*
- + *Manufactured homes are stationary*
- + *Collective ownership has benefits*
- + *Manufactured homeowners can be subject to confiscatory rent increase*
- + *Residents face legal eviction when manufactured housing communities close*
- + *Few new manufactured housing communities are opening*
- + *When forced to move, manufactured homeowners lose equity*

## The Need for Change:

- + *Manufactured homeowners have fewer rights than other homeowners*
- + *Manufactured homeowners have less access to conventional mortgages*
- + *Infrastructure maintenance is often deferred in manufactured housing communities*

## Personal Views:

Having the focus of research be on mobile home parks, it is interesting to take a step back and see how manufactured housing as a whole is perceived. Often times it is forgotten that mobile homes are too manufactured homes. This research is not only applicable to manufactured homes, but specifically to mobile homes as well. The methodology present a clear issue and how to solve it. This is something admirable in developing research.

## Conclusion:

Manufactured homes have a completely different perception that limit their potential to aid to bettering communities. This literature reveals hidden or ignored issues within this market of housing. Although specific design measurements aren't in detail, programmatic and policy suggestions are.



*Figure 14.0, Vintage Homes & Gardens by Click Americana*

## Is Manufactured Housing a Good Alternative for Low-Income Families?

*Author(s): U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Policy Development and Research;  
Dr. Thomas P. Boehm, Dr. Alan Schlottmann*

Is Manufactured Housing a Good Alternative for Low-Income Families by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Policy Development and Research, Dr. Thomas P. Boehm, and Dr. Alan Schlottmann argue whether manufactured housing is a viable option for the lower class. Topics discussed in this literature include analyzing American Housing Surveys from 1993-2001, the determinants of structural and neighborhood quality, changes in structural and neighborhood quality, and household and neighborhood stability.

## Topics Analyzed:

- 1. Manufactured housing is a viable alternative for low-income households from the perspective of the consumption of housing services. This is true from the perceptions of both perceived structural quality and neighborhood quality.*
- 2. Across all time periods, in terms of included measures of neighborhood quality and structural quality, owned manufactured housing is perceived to be (ranked) higher quality than rental units. This holds true even when the sample is stratified by metropolitan and non-metropolitan location.*
- 3. Those factors that contribute to either lower structural quality or lower neighborhood quality are similar between manufactured housing and owned housing.*
- 4. There is no evidence that perceived structural quality deterioration occurs over time more with manufactured housing than traditional housing.*
- 5. A major result of the analysis is that both ownership of manufactured housing and traditional owner occupied housing are associated with neighborhood stability, that is, a decreasing likelihood to move over time.*
- 6. The potential for appreciation of manufactured housing is clearly bifurcated upon the ownership of the land (lot). Even recognizing the limitations of the price appreciation data in this study, three observations appear worthy of note.  
Pages 6-7*

## Personal Views:

This literature review helps better understand how policy and finance create the neighborhoods of today. Housing for lower-income families is an essential part of modern communities. To improve on any issues that may be problematic, it is essential to understand that not everything is what it seems. Doing research on concepts, such as testing to see if structural quality is worse in manufactured homes versus traditional homes, proves why having pre-conceived ideas is not the best approach to research. It is important to detach feelings or personal experiences from research before conducting it.

## Conclusion:

Manufactured homes is proven to be a practical option for low-income households in consideration to being able to locate, obtain or retain housing. In manners of them holding quality in structures and neighborhoods, they are also similar to traditionally owned housing neighborhoods. Through this study, there seems to be no substantial differences in manufactured housing and traditionally owned housing, other than the of who owns the land the structure sits on. The actual homes themselves and neighborhoods seem to be adequate, however the ownership of land is what is lacking in being able to gain equity.



Figure 15.0, *Vintage Homes & Gardens by Click Americana*



# *Research*

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## Summary

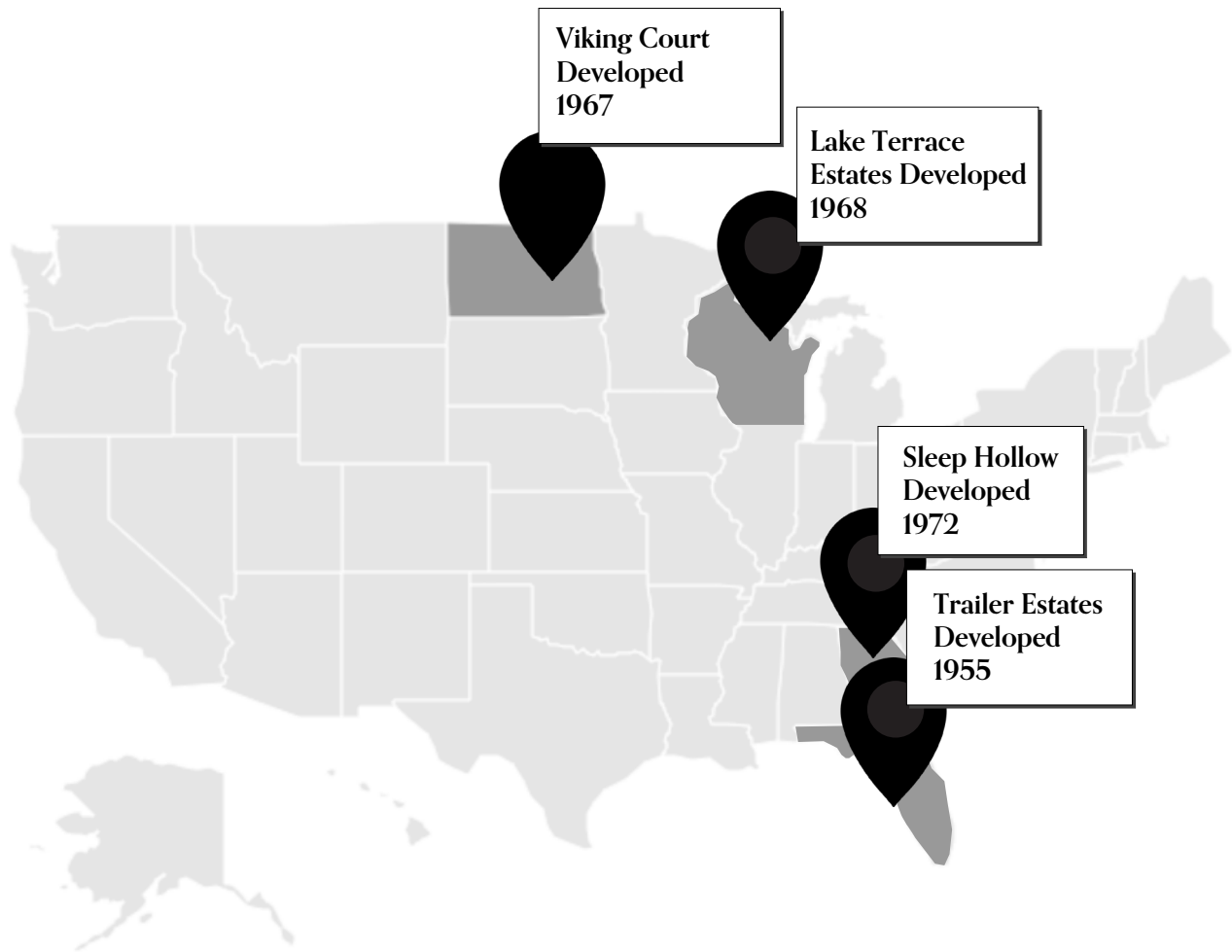
The case precedents help to understand the variety and similarities between mobile home parks across America. They all share unifying ideas of establishing places to live, but they differ in specifically how they choose to do that. It seems to be that the mobile home parks with the most infrastructure are the ones that are maintained with more of an effort, catering directly to the residents. No matter how rural, mobile home parks can be found anywhere in the nation and they all typically have similar elements; multiple manufactured homes, few pedestrian corridors, and a central design around vehicular circulation. Each of these examples are significant to the mobile home market, in ways that they have all pioneered a movement to shape those existing communities of today.

The literature reviews help to take a step back from the scope of mobile home parks, and understand all the factors that go into defining this neighborhood. The Guideline for Improving the Mobile Home Living Environment allows us to see the perspective from the 1970s, when this form of living was just being introduced. With the many years that have passed from this research and analysis, new issues have risen in the structure and neighborhood of mobile home parks. To understand how to fix the issues that are existing today, it is important to understand how they were formed. Every environment has some sort of quality of life, whether it be urban or rural. Considering how this is interpreted in mobile home parks will be an effort made in the conclusion of this research.

# *Results*

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Figure 16.0, United States Graphical Map

# *Results*

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## Premise & Research Types

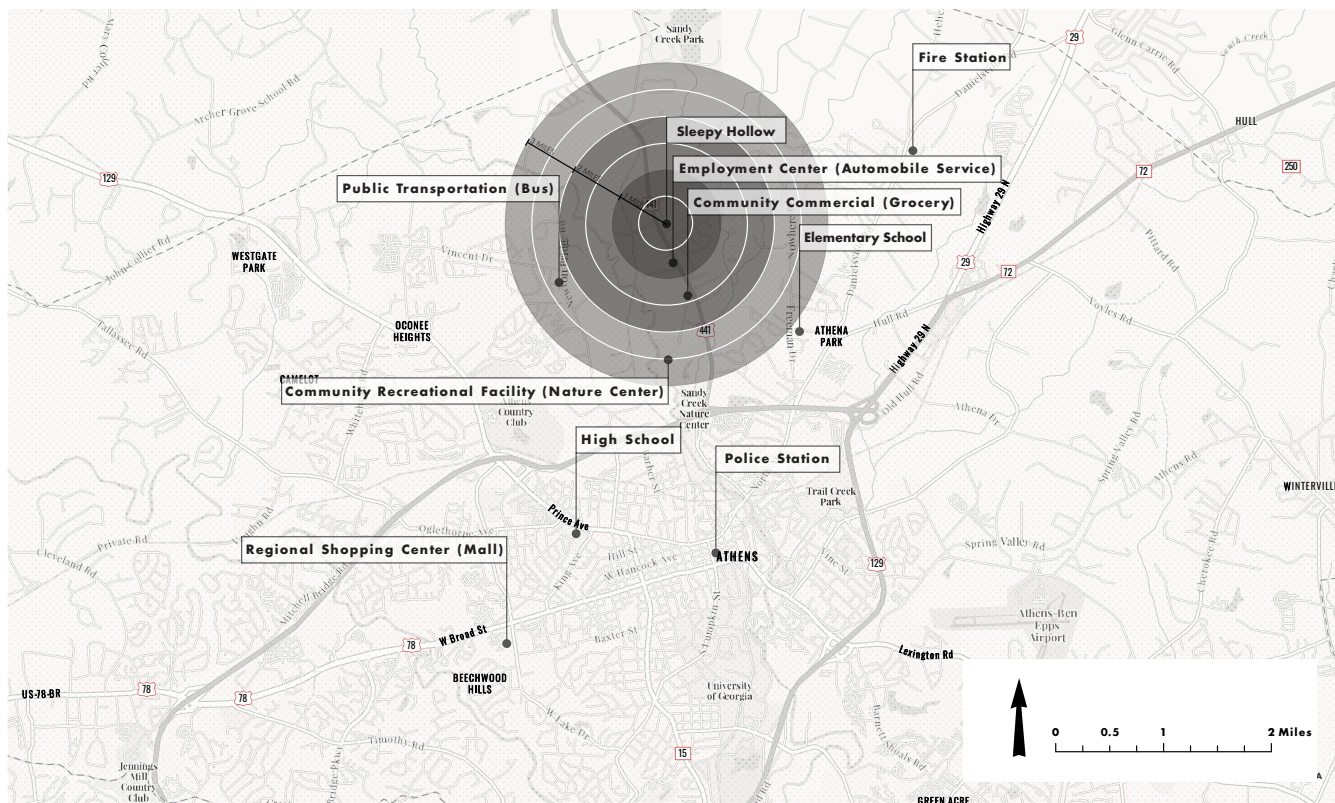
This project seeks to reinvent Viking Trailer Court to better fit the communities needs through improving physical connection and the quality of life by planning for equity through designed neighborhood elements. Research will result in recommendations for the following; street design, public gathering spaces, and pedestrian corridors. Desired proximity to community services will be met through enabling connection and transportation with designed elements. In result, this is will also improve the quality of life in this neighborhood.

Through research, historical arguments, theories, and interpretations over time of Mobile Home Park communities were discussed. With the want to find out how schools of thought on particular events change over time. An in depth analysis of published articles and books on the theme are compared. In order to understand/contribute to reinventing a Mobile Home Park, understanding the history of form and jurisdiction they were intended for is needed.

Historical - Understanding the Form and Jurisdiction of Modern Mobile Home Parks in a Timeline

Quantitative - Analyzing Results from the Quality of Life Index and Desired Proximity to Community Services Matrix's

Case Studies - Comparing and Contrasting Results from Matrix's

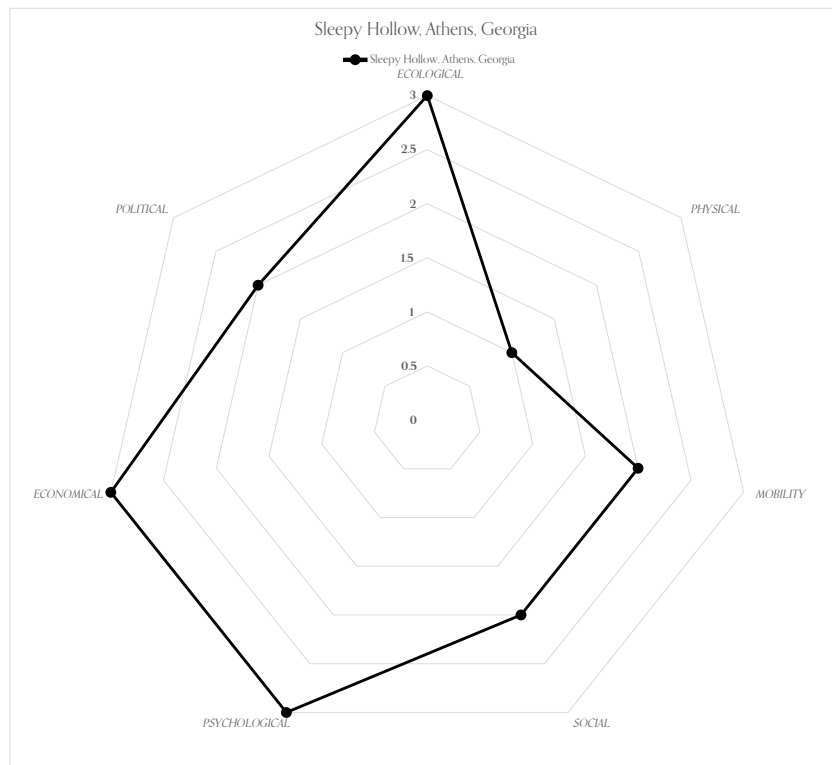


Sleepy Hollow, in Athens, Georgia, is within proximal distance of most community facilities by mode of walking or driving. Community commercial, employment centers, police and fire protection, regional shopping centers and high schools all seem to be within the suggested distance, as per conducted by the matrix. The two major red flags include the fact that the elementary school and public transportation elements are just outside of adequate walking distance.

Figure 17.0 Sleepy Hollow, Athens, Georgia Proximity to Community Services

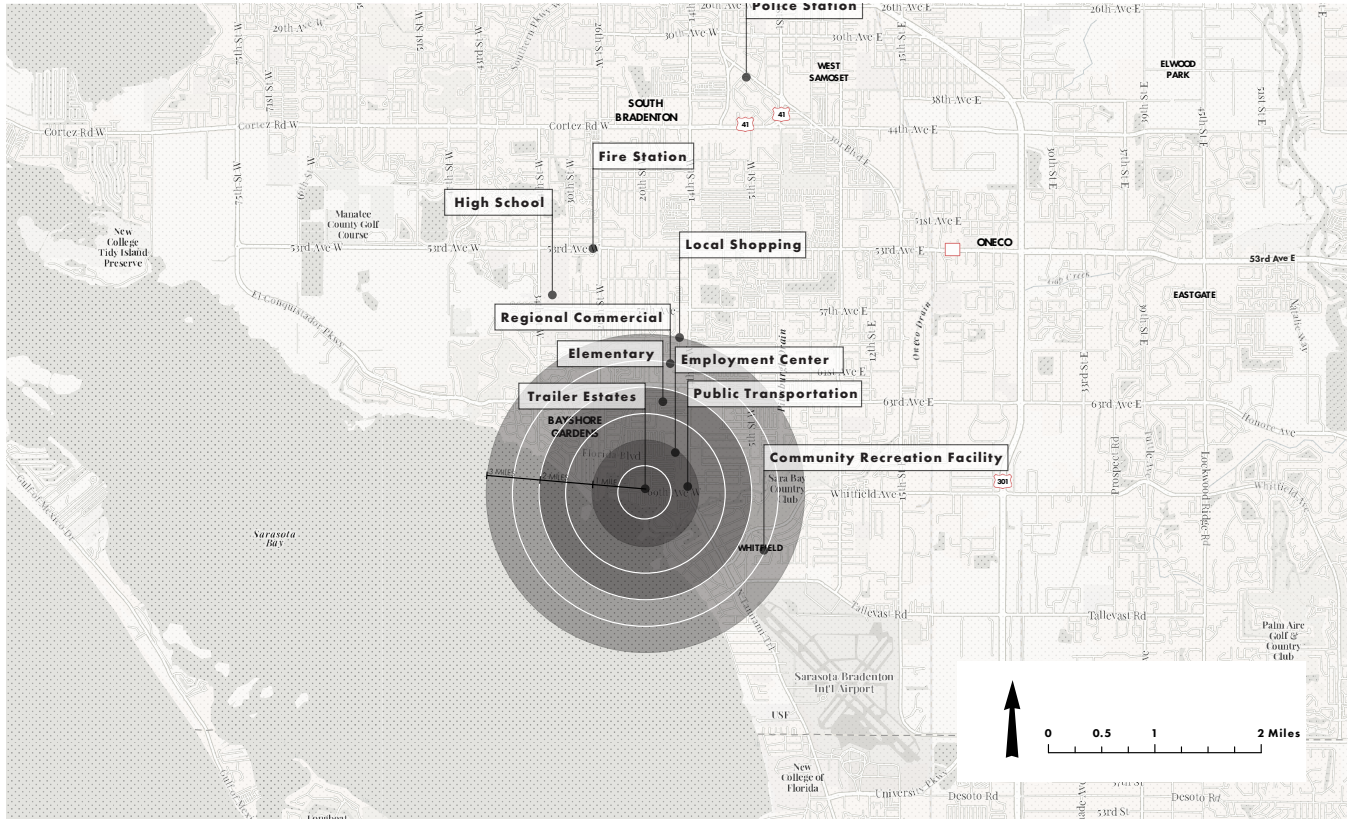
# Results

## Case Precedent № 1



The Quality of Life Index is rated on seven different elements. These are; ecological, physical, mobile, social, psychological, economical and political. Altogether, Sleepy Hollow permits a result that lacks in physical, political, mobile and social aspect to the quality of life.

Figure 18.0 Sleepy Hollow, Athens, Georgia Quality of Life



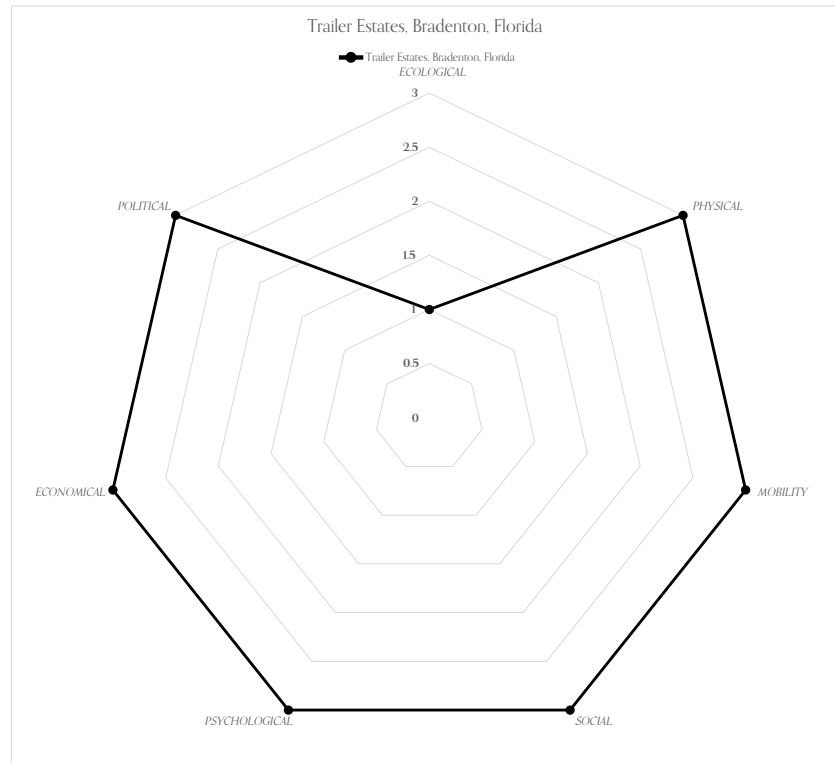
In Bradenton Florida, Trailer Estates is within proximal distance of most, if not all community facilities by mode of walking or driving. Community commercial, employment centers, police and fire protection, regional shopping centers, elementary schools, regional commercial, high schools and public transportation all seem to be within the suggested distance, as per conducted by the matrix. There don't seem to be any major red flags, which suggests that this community is dense enough to support this neighborhood.

Figure 19.0 Trailer Estates, Bradenton, Florida Proximity to Community Services



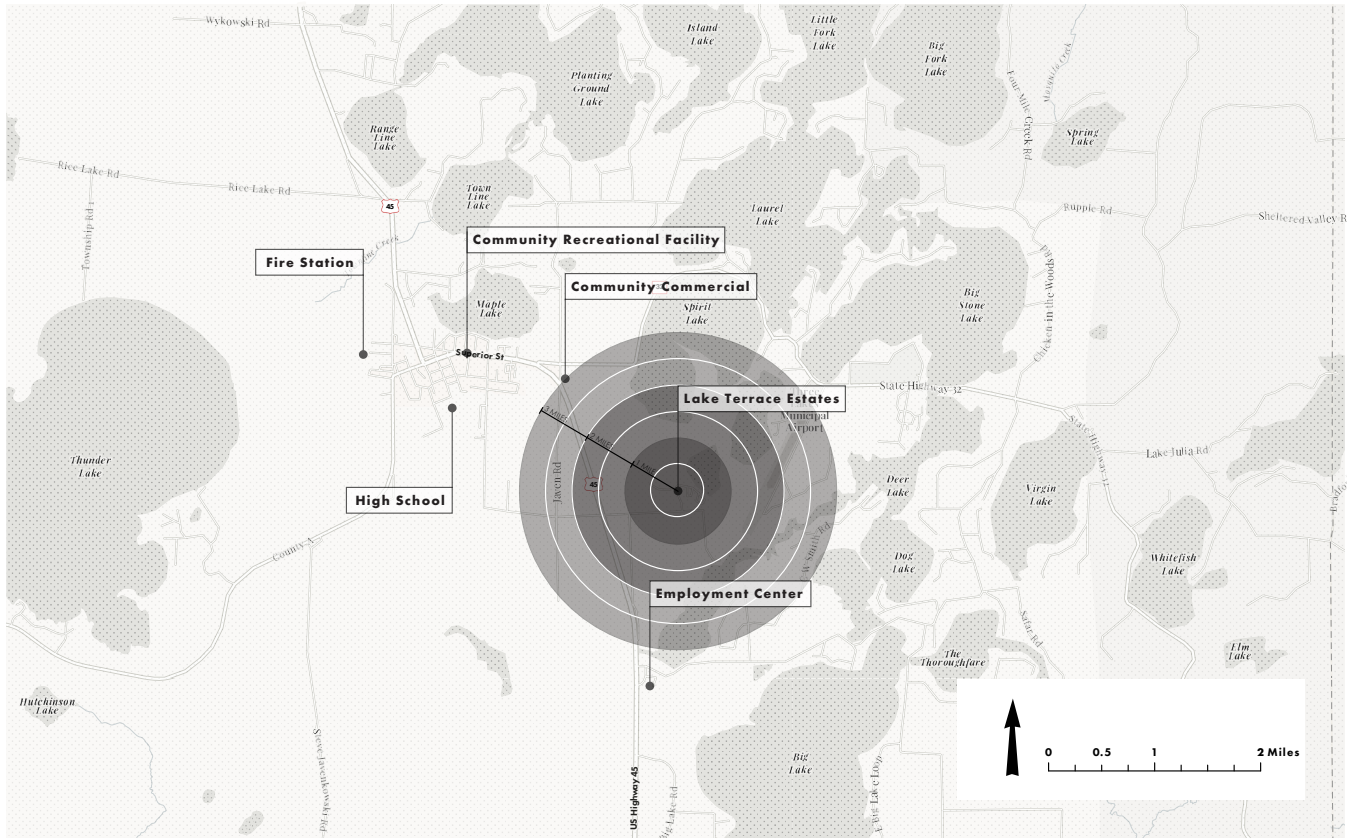
# Results

## Case Precedent № 2



The Quality of Life Index is rated on seven different elements. These are; ecological, physical, mobile, social, psychological, economical and political. Altogether, Trailer Estates permits a result that promotes all but one quality of life; ecological.

Figure 20.0 Trailer Estates, Bradenton, Florida Quality of Life

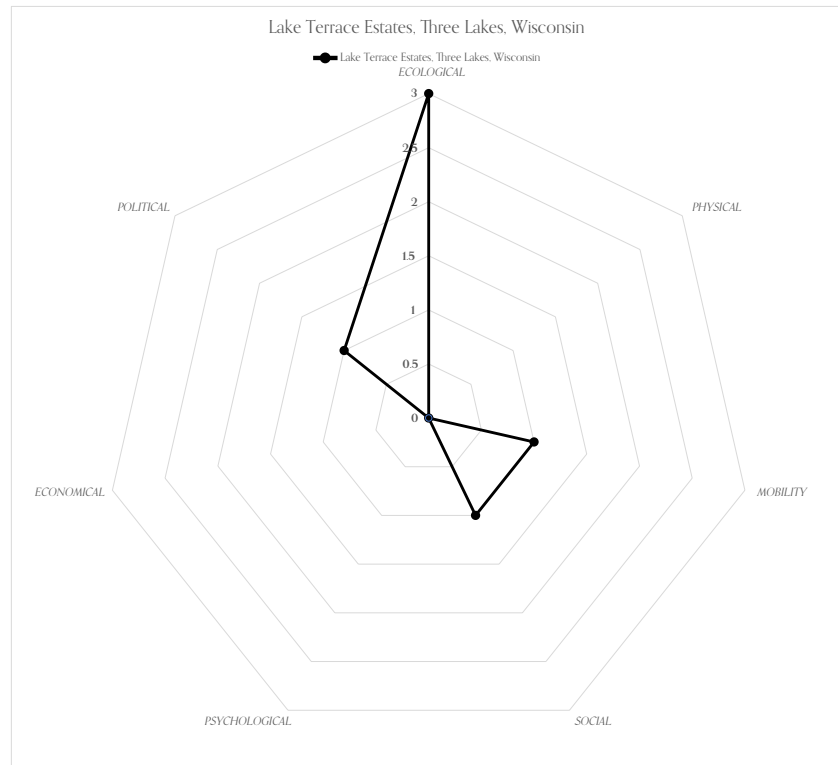


Lake Terrace Estates, in Three Lakes, Wisconsin, is within proximal distance of few, if any, community facilities by mode of walking or driving. Community commercial and the employment center seem to be the closest facilities within the suggested distance, as per conducted by the matrix. The two major red flags include the fact that the elementary school and public transportation elements were not found in this matrix.

Figure 21.0 Lake Terrace Estates, Three Lakes Wisconsin Proximity to Community Services

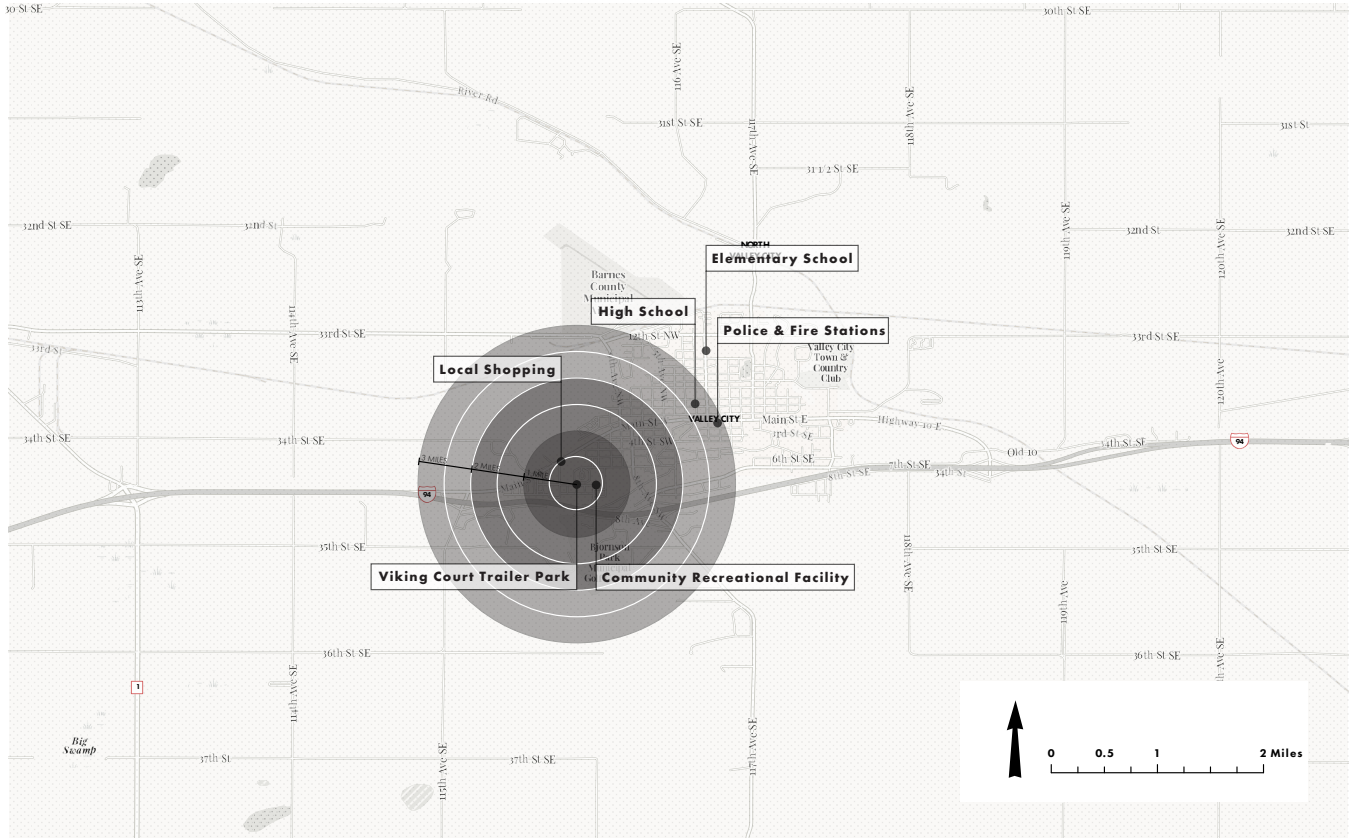
# Results

## Case Precedent № 3



The Quality of Life Index is rated on seven different elements. These are; ecological, physical, mobile, social, psychological, economical and political. Lake Terrace estates results a lack in all qualities of life, except for ecological.

Figure 22.0 Lake Terrace Estates, Three Lakes Wisconsin Quality of Life

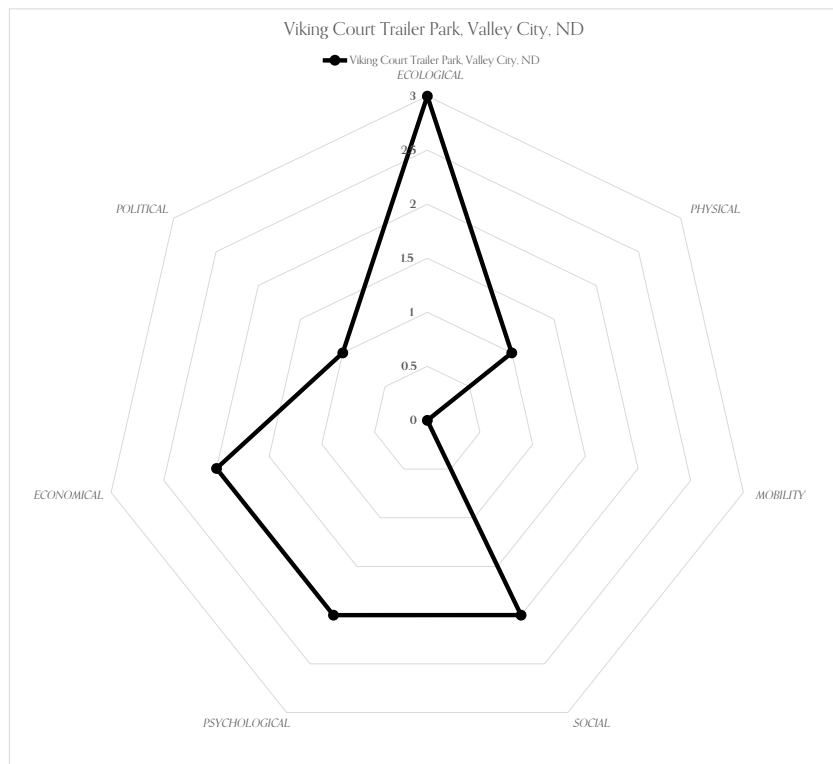


The chosen site for design, Viking Trailer Court in Valley City, North Dakota, is within proximal distance of most community facilities by mode of walking or driving. Community commercial, employment centers, police and fire protection, regional shopping centers and high schools all seem to be within the suggested distance, as per conducted by the matrix. The two major red flags include the fact that the elementary school is outside of adequate walking distance and there is no access to public transportation.

Figure 23.0 Viking Trailer Court, Valley City, North Dakota Proximity to Community Services

# Results

## The Site



The Quality of Life Index is rated on seven different elements. These are; ecological, physical, mobile, social, psychological, economical and political. Viking Trailer Court permits a result that lacks in physical, political, mobile and social aspect to the quality of life.

Figure 24.0 Viking Trailer Court, Valley City, North Dakota Quality of Life

## Sleep Hollow, Athens, Georgia

This is a prime example of a typical rural mobile home park in the 1960-70s. With the priority of the design being directed towards utilities, aesthetics becomes secondary.

## Trailer Estates, Bradenton, Florida

Trailer Estates is the first mobile home park in the nation. Sydney Adler developed the park in 1955 and went on to build similar mobile home parks in Florida, Arizona and California. Adler conceived the idea that landscape elements are priority because of their permanence, while the residencies are always viewed as interchangeable. A new form of community was coined from Trailer Estates in terms of community planning and development schemes.

## Lake Terrace Estates, Three Lakes, Wisconsin

This is the first mobile home park in the nation. Sydney Adler developed the park in 1955 and went on to build similar mobile home parks in Florida, Arizona and California. Adler conceived the idea that landscape elements are priority because of their permanence, while the residencies are always viewed as interchangeable. A new form of community was coined from Trailer Estates in terms of community planning and development schemes.

## Viking Court, Valley City, North Dakota

Viking Court was designed to replace FHA units built for families to live in post World War II. This was developed in 1967, near the Sheyenne River.

# Results

## Historical Context

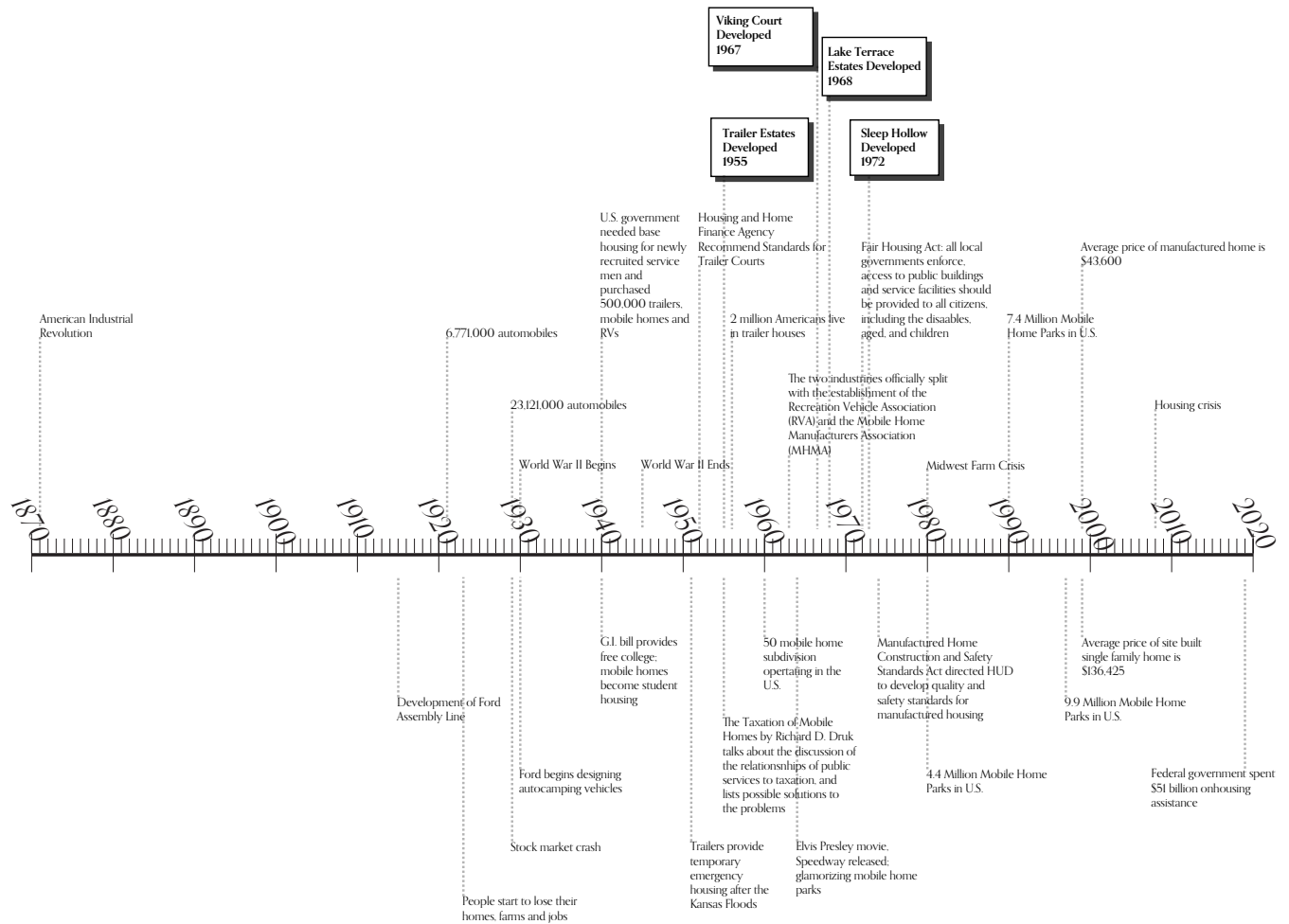


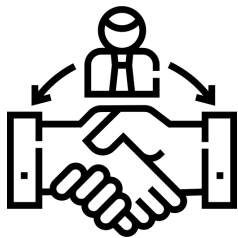
Figure 25.0 Mobile Home Park Timeline

# *Program*

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Third Party  
Ownership



Resident Owned Community



Nonprofit Organizations



Community Land  
Trusts (CLTs)

### Client List & Description:

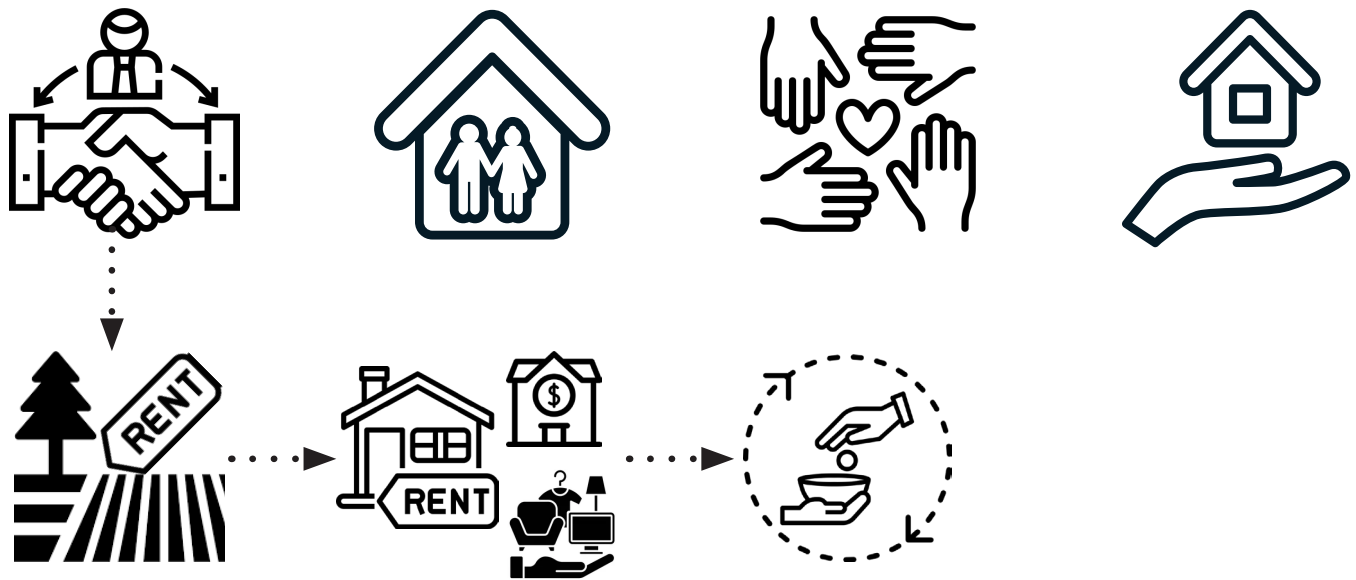
The potential clients for this thesis include private investors and local governments looking to improve the jurisdiction influencing quality of life for manufactured home communities.

### Mobile Home Resident Demographic in the United States:

- + 23% are between ages 18-29
- + 22% are between ages 50-59
- + 16% are homemakers
- + Less than 5% make more than \$100,000 per year
- + Average household income is \$28,400
- + 13% received food stamps
- + Common leading source of independent housing for Latinos

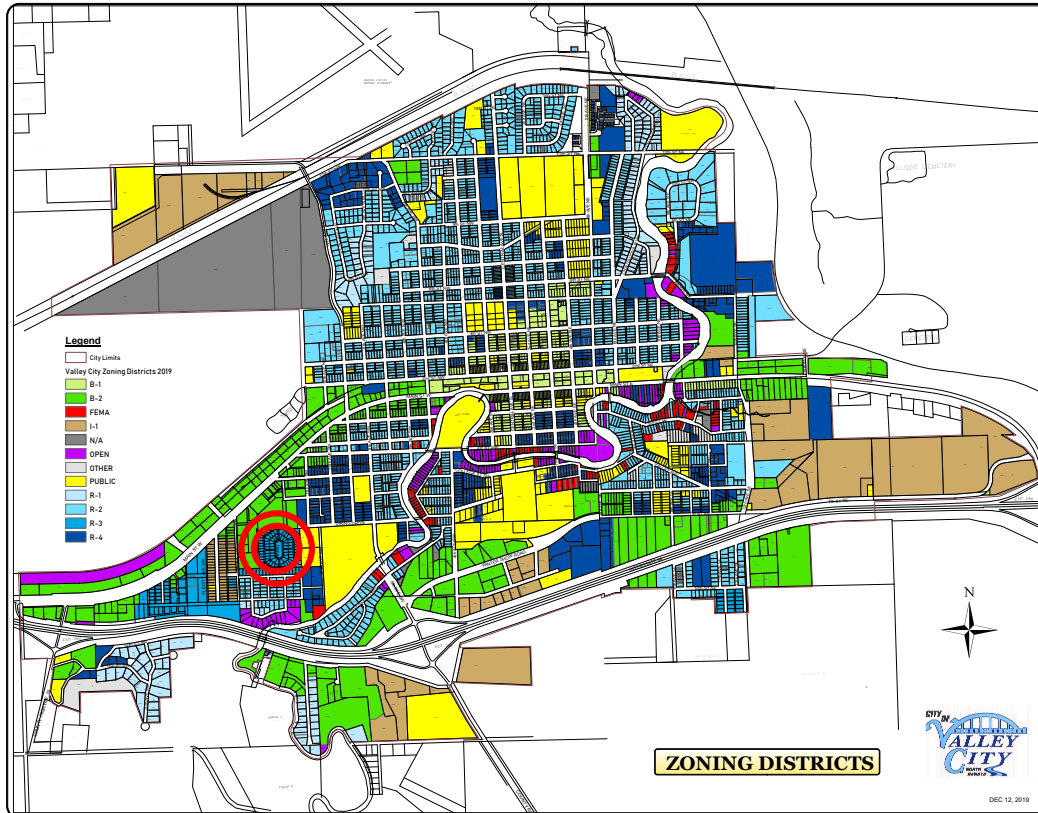
# Program

## User Description



## User Description:

The manufactured housing option particularly serves low-income family households or individuals with little wealth who desire ownership and appreciating assets. It is an exceptional alternative for financially disadvantaged individuals in the aspect pertaining to consumption of housing services for both structural and neighborhood quality. Manufactured housing is ideal for individuals wishing to get out of the rental market but are not financially stable enough to partake in a conventionally owned home. Mobile homes are a form of manufactured housing, partaking in housing more than 20 million people in the United States



Location:

Valley City, ND

Site Typology:

Community Planning

Climate:

Humid Continental

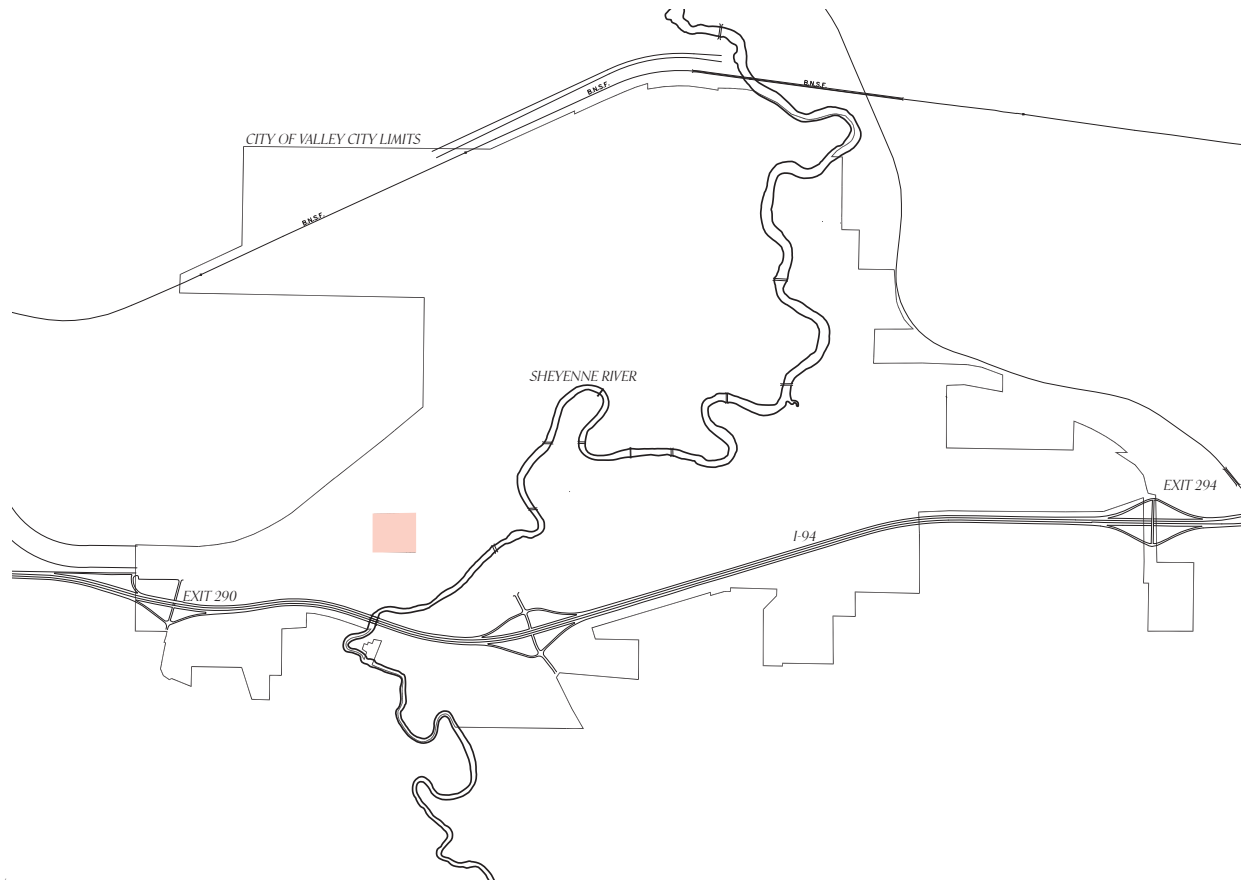
Zone:

R-3

Figure 28.0 Comprehensive Plan for Valley City by Stantec

# Program

## The Site



## Status:

The current status of the Viking Court Trailer Park is in need of maintenance, connectivity and equity to community services. The site is not walkable and disassociated from adequate access to food, jobs, churches, schools and other entities. With being developed on undesirable land, the foundation is literally failing in aspects of transportation and structure. Because of this, utilities are unable to work properly.

The existing 12-acre Viking Trailer Court in Valley City, North Dakota is bounded on the north and partially west side by existing undeveloped commercial lots, on the south by existing single-family residential, and on the east by public and multi-family residential land zones.

The initial design program is intended to improve current living conditions, as well as capitalize on opportunities that are underutilized. This includes meeting basic requirements in the streetscape, creating privacy with vegetation, optimizing the attractiveness of a home and lot through residential landscaping, controlling the climate by including stormwater mitigation, and organizing uses by providing outdoor public gathering spaces.

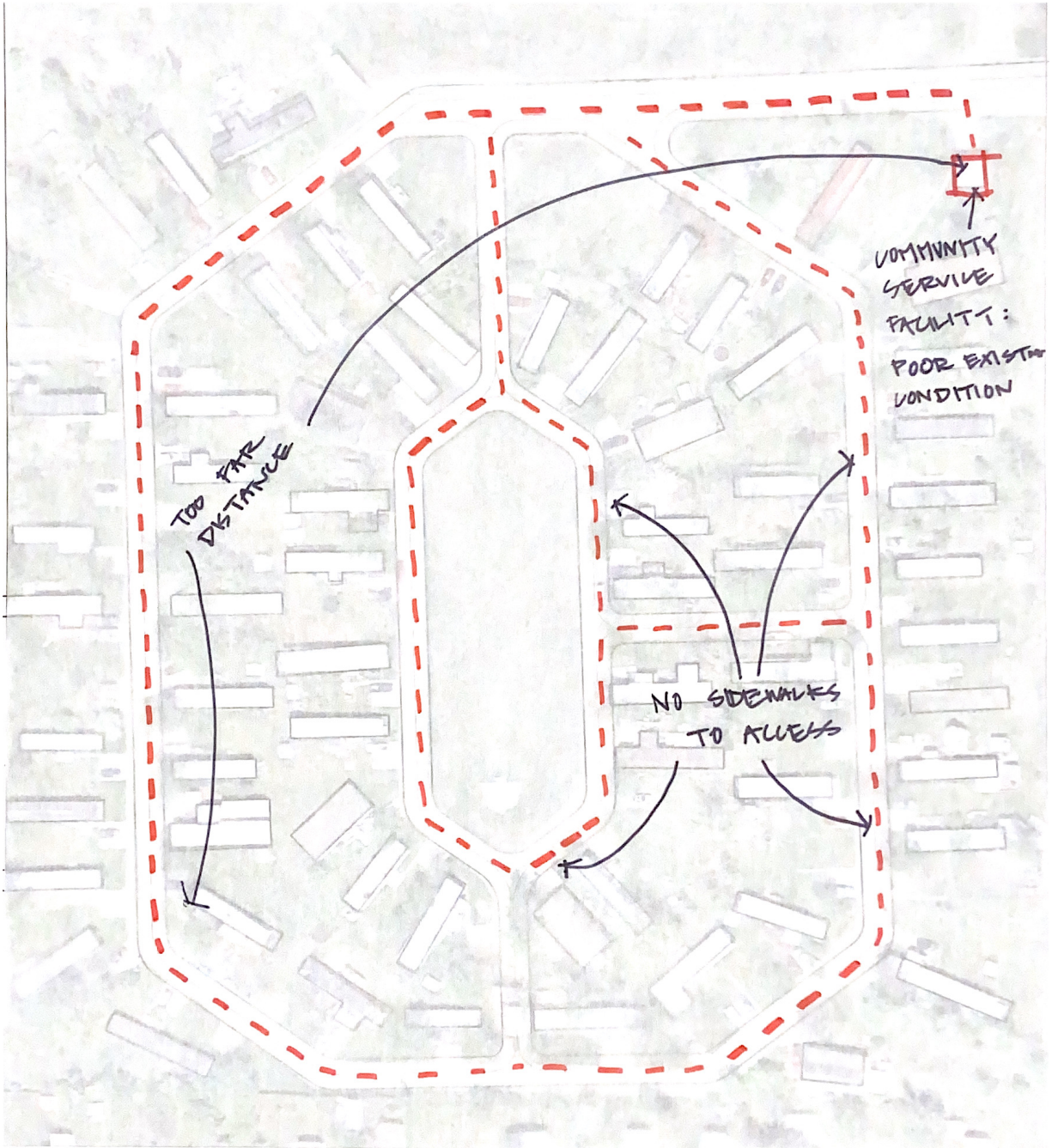


Figure 30.0 Valley City, North Dakota Site Analysis I

# Program

## Site Inventory

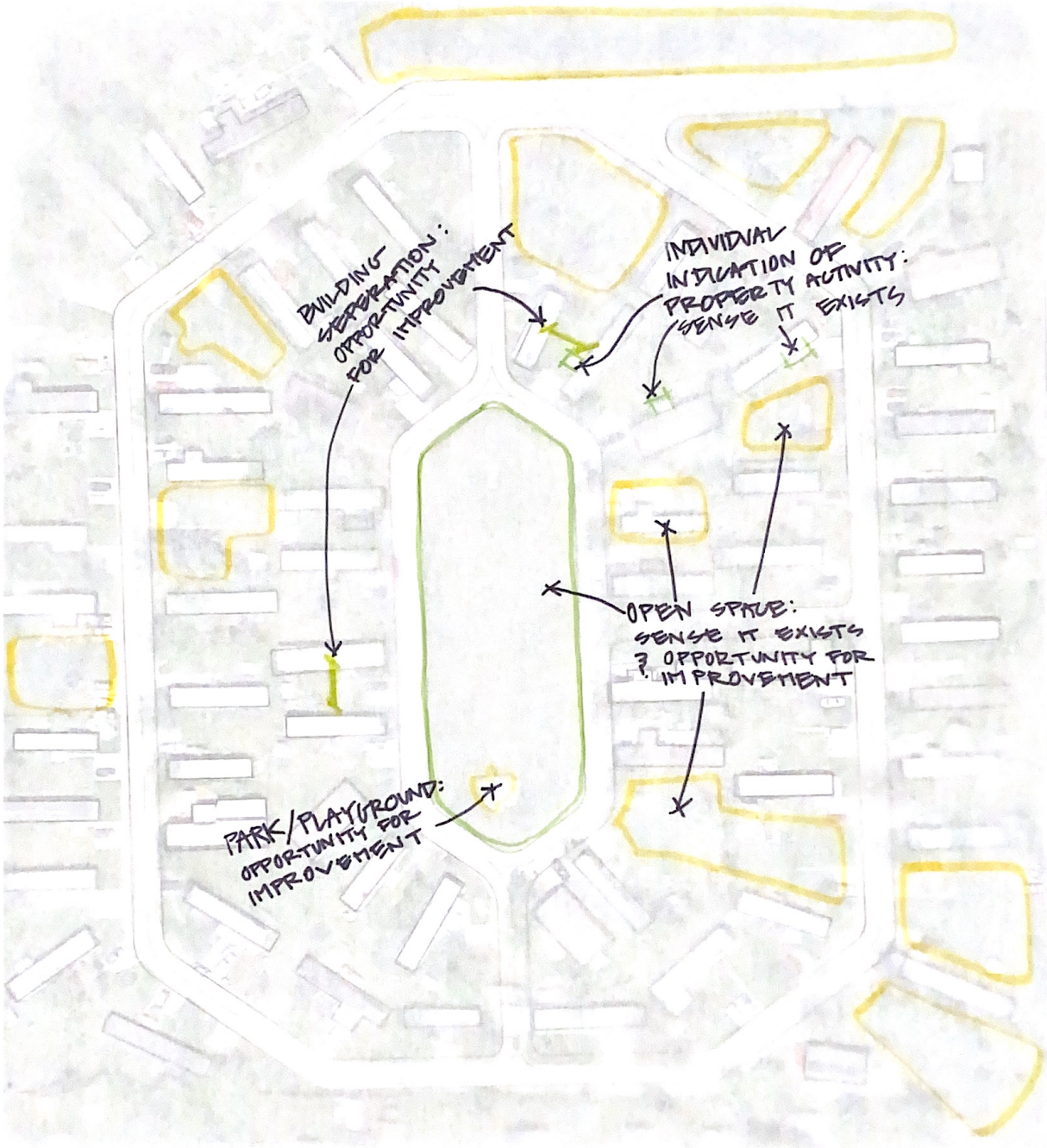


Figure 31.0 Valley City, North Dakota Site Analysis II

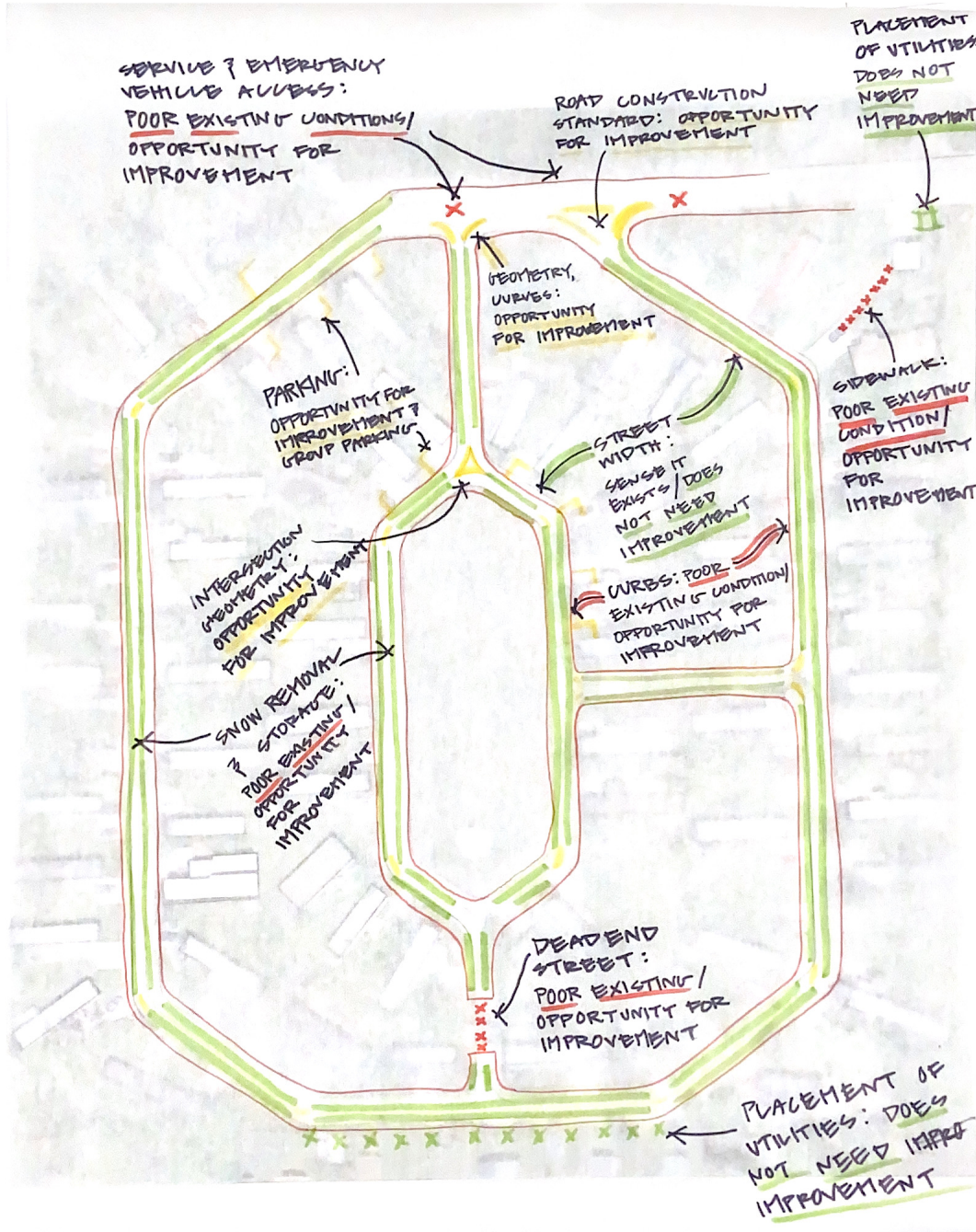


Figure 32.0 Valley City, North Dakota Site Analysis III



# Program

Site Inventory

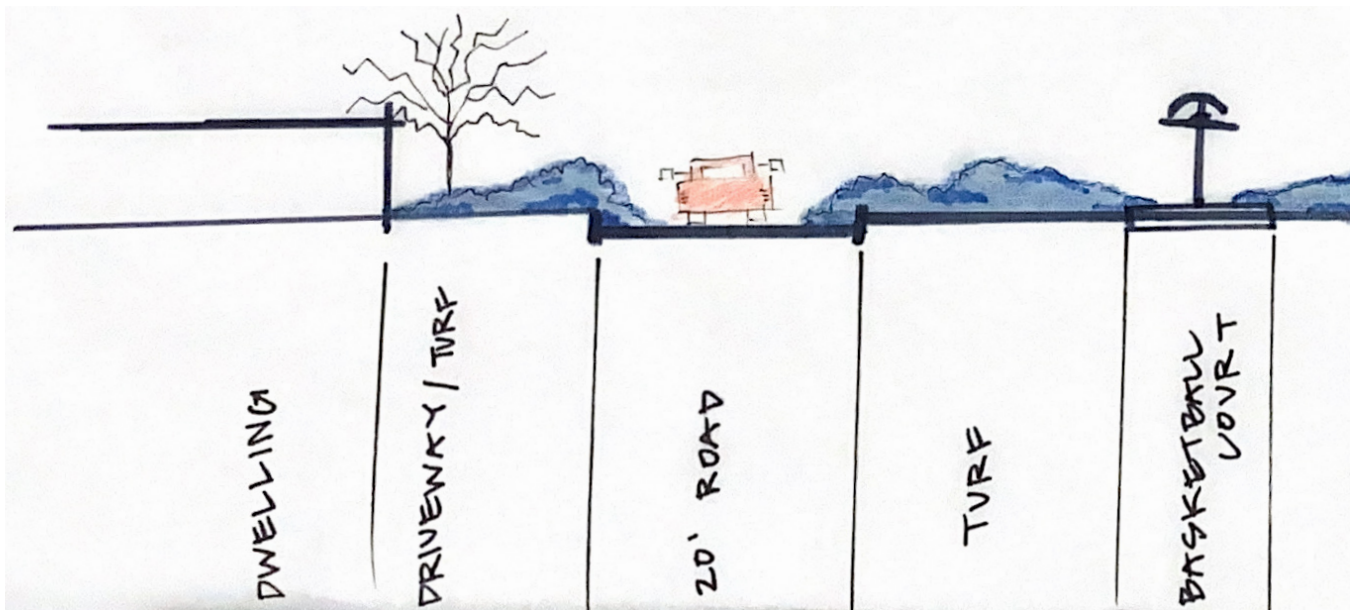
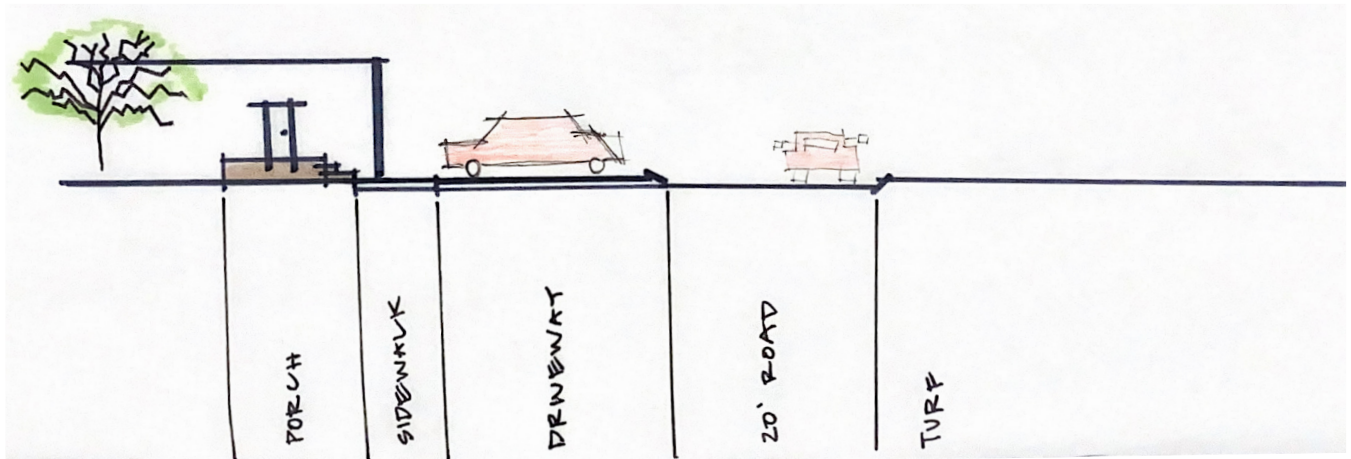


Figure 33.0 Valley City, North Dakota Site Analysis IIII



Figure 34.0 Valley City, North Dakota Site Analysis V

# Program

## Site Analysis



Figure 35.0 Valley City, North Dakota Site Analysis VI

## Individual Mobile Home:

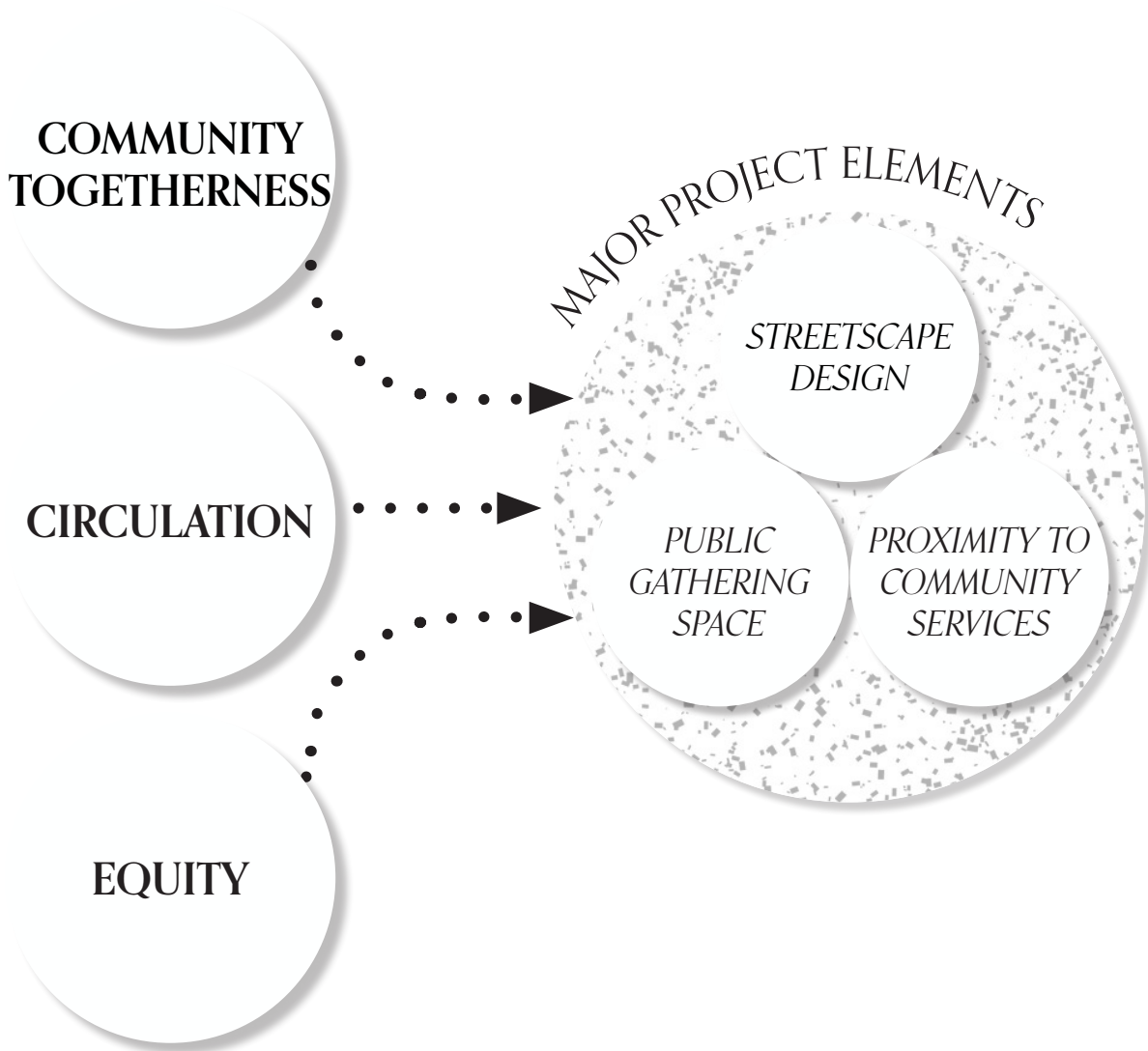
- + Mobile Home Pads And Patios
  - » *ecologically sustainable materials*
- + Vehicle Storage
  - » *parking pad material/car port*

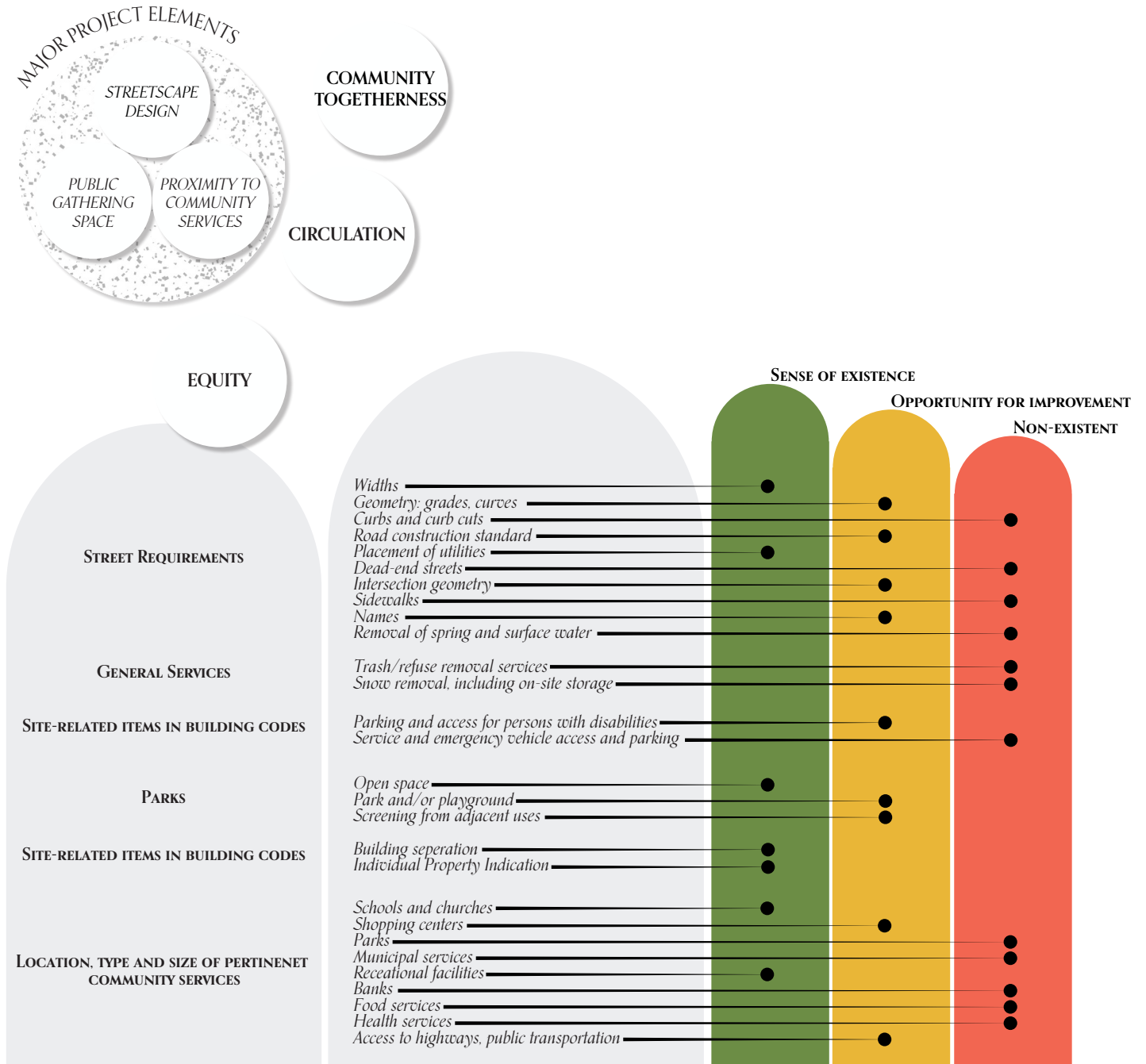
## Group Mobile Home:

- + Street Design
  - » *lane programming (width, amount, speed, defined and designated rows)*
  - » *curb/lawn connection*
  - » *parking lane*
  - » *bus stop*
  - » *bollards*
  - » *signage*
  - » *bike lanes*
  - » *lighting*
- + Public Gathering Space
  - » *community building (mail, administrator office)*
  - » *tot lot playground*
  - » *swimming pool*
  - » *tennis courts*
  - » *basketball courts*
  - » *park/programmed open space*
  - » *art installation*
- + Pedestrian Corridors
  - » *primary and secondary sidewalks*
  - » *vegetated boulevards*

# Program

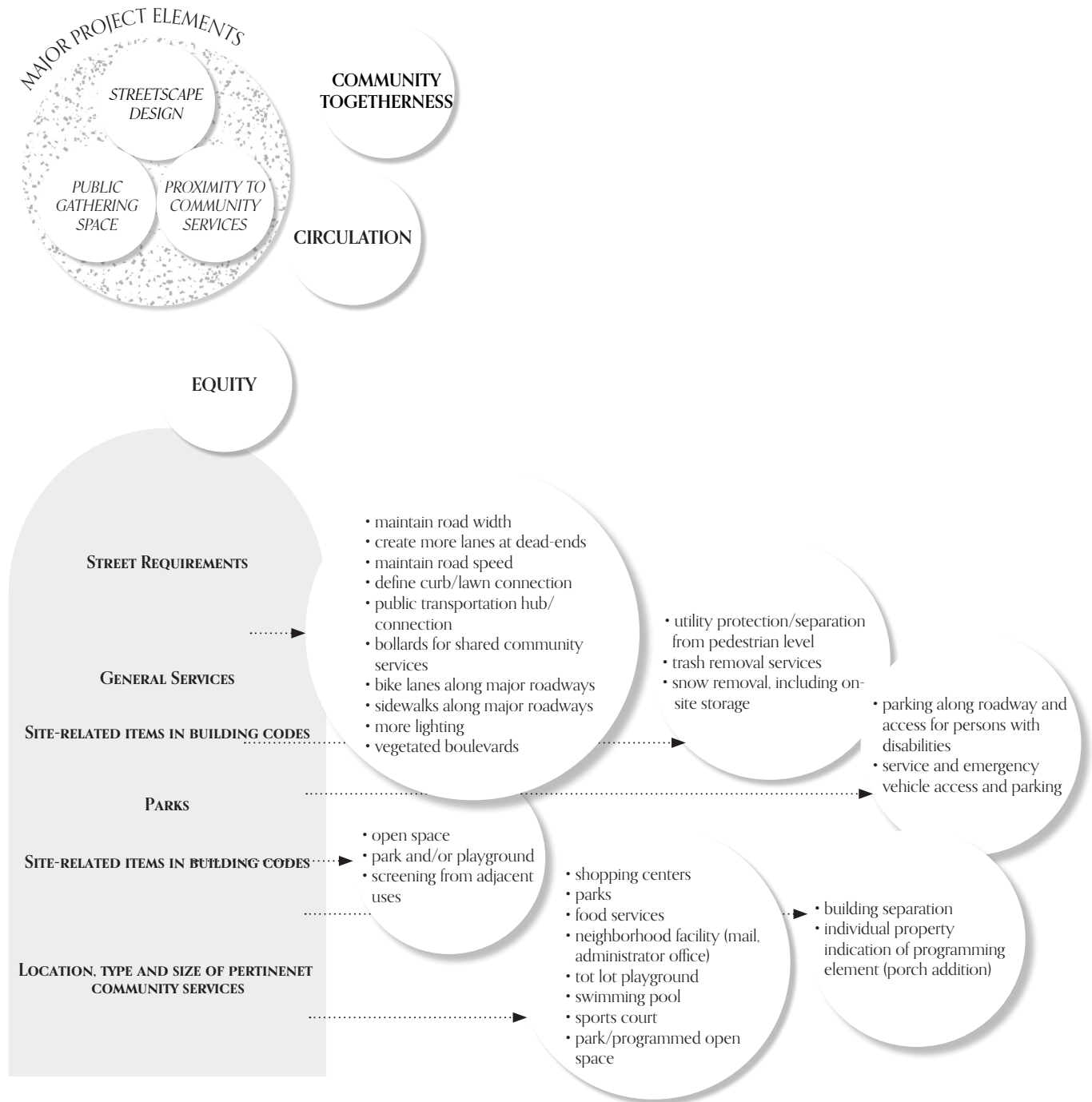
Major Project Elements





# Program

## Project Goals



# *Design*

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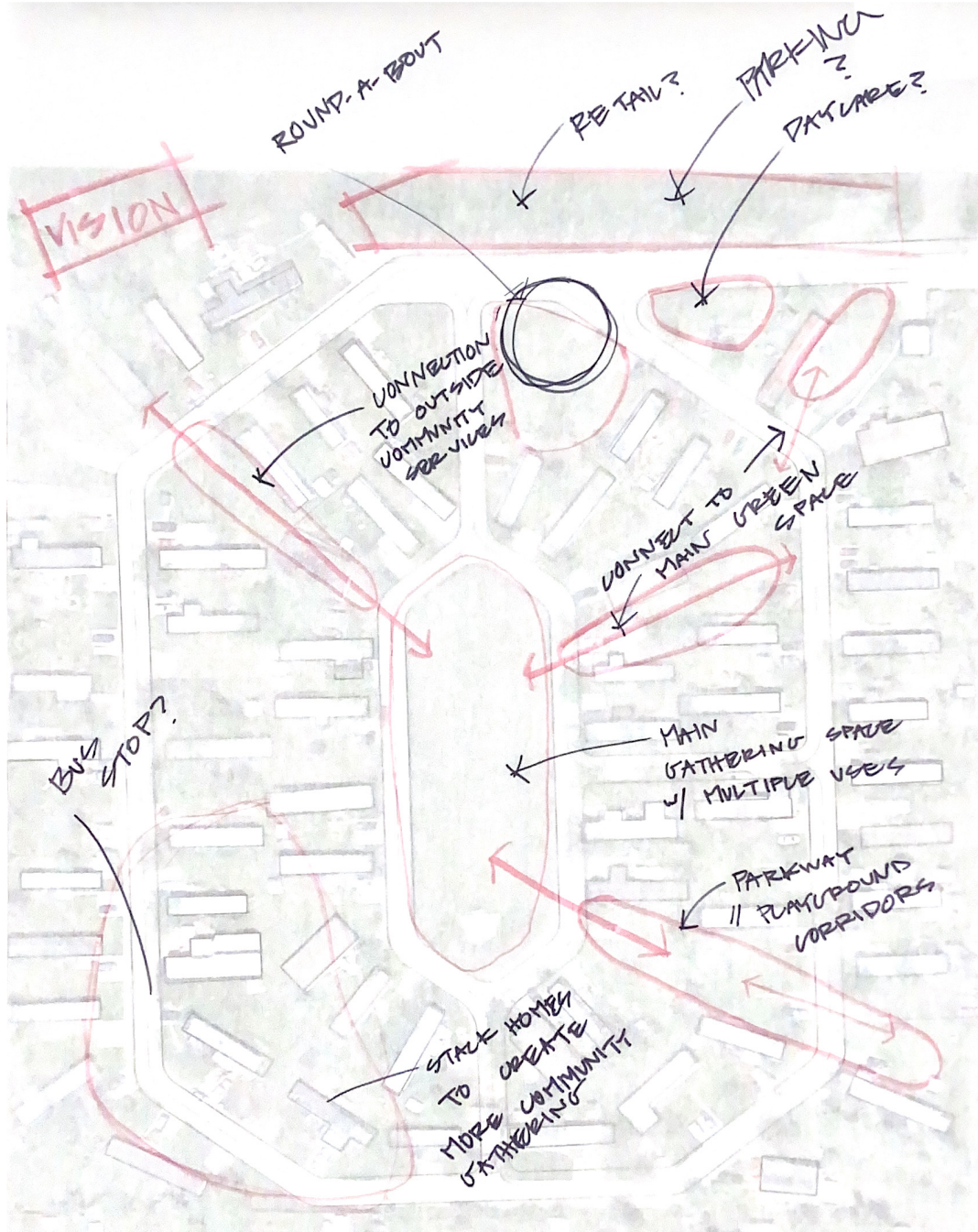


Figure 36.0, Vision 1

# Design

Vision

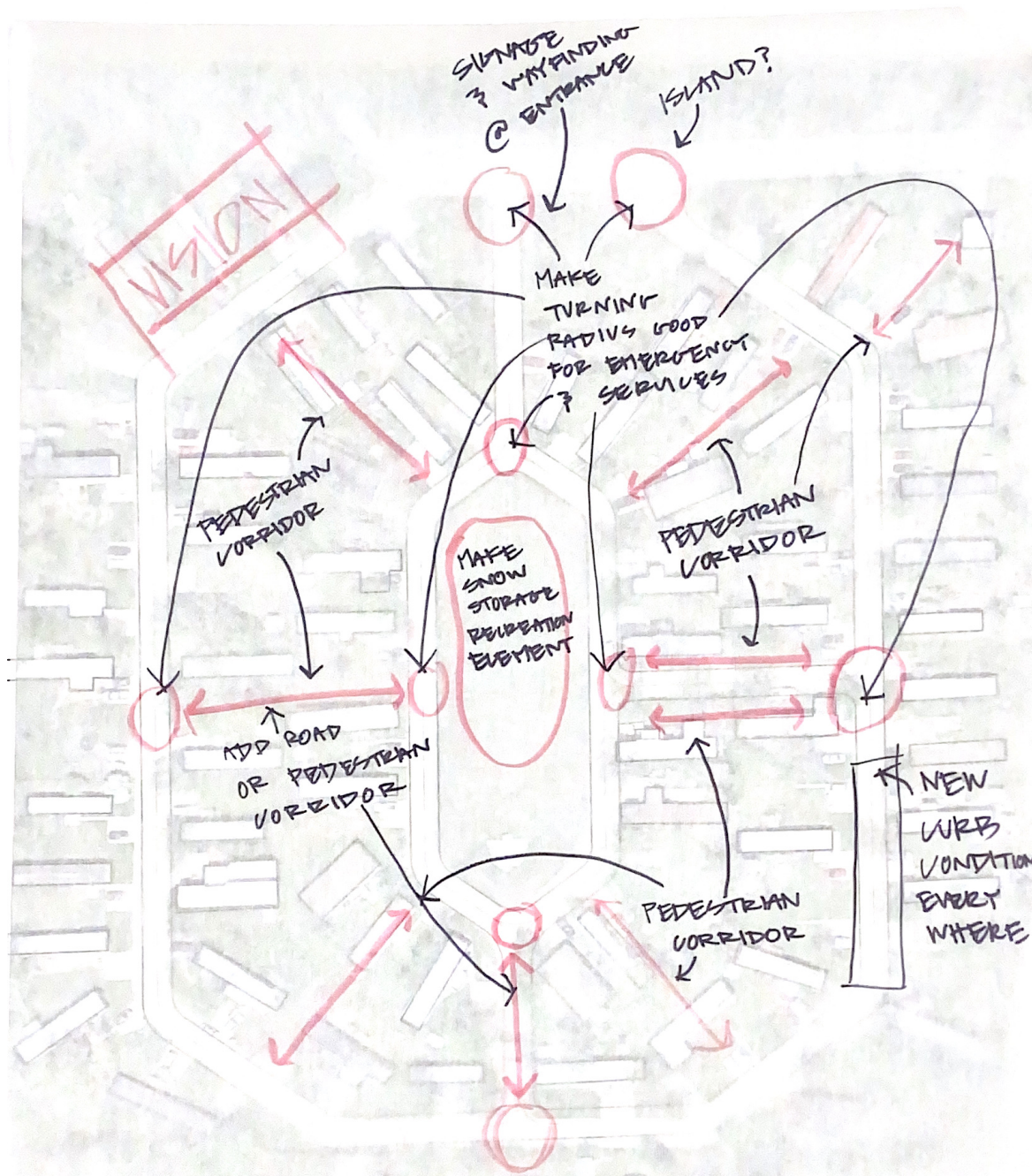


Figure 37.0, Vision II

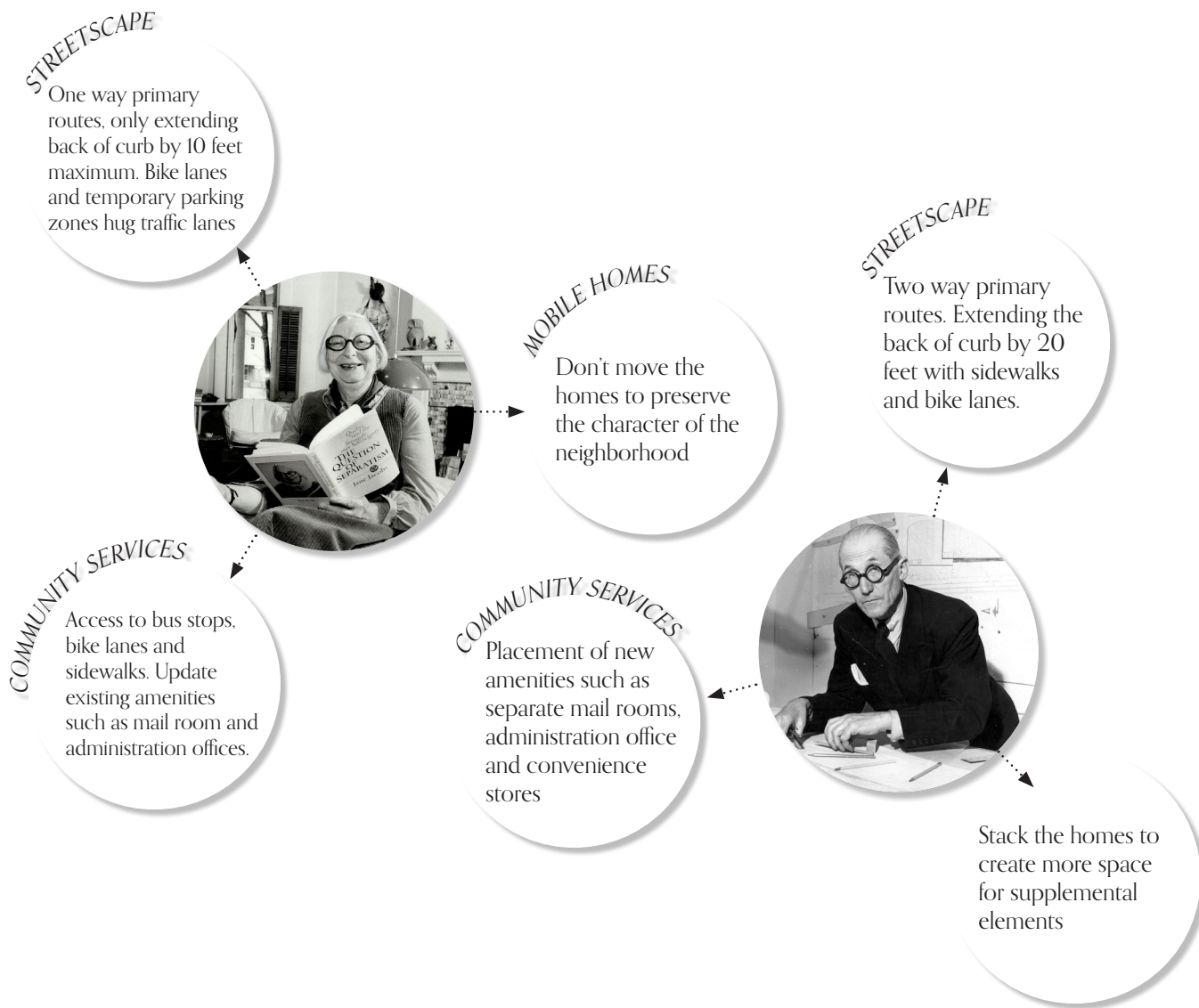


Figure 38.0, Jane Jacobs; Figure 29.0 Le Corbusier

# Design

## Development

“... there must be a clear demarcation between **what is public space** and **what is private space**... [buildings] **cannot turn their backs** or blank sides on it and leave it blind ... [and] the **sidewalk must have users** on it fairly continuously.”

Jane Jacobs

*The Death and Life of Great American Cities*



“The **house is a machine** for living in.”  
Le Corbusier

*Towards a New Architecture*

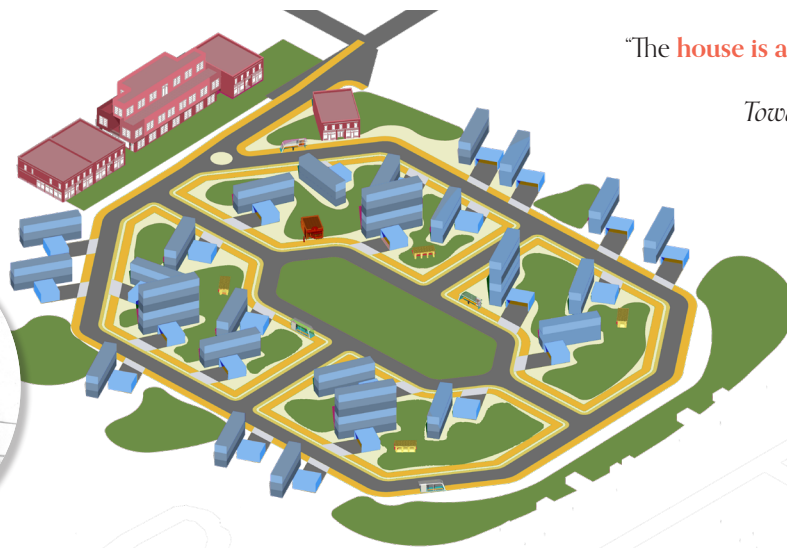


Figure 40.0, Jane Jacobs Extreme Scheme; Figure 41.0 Extreme Scheme



Figure 42.0, Hand Drawing Compilations

# Design

Development

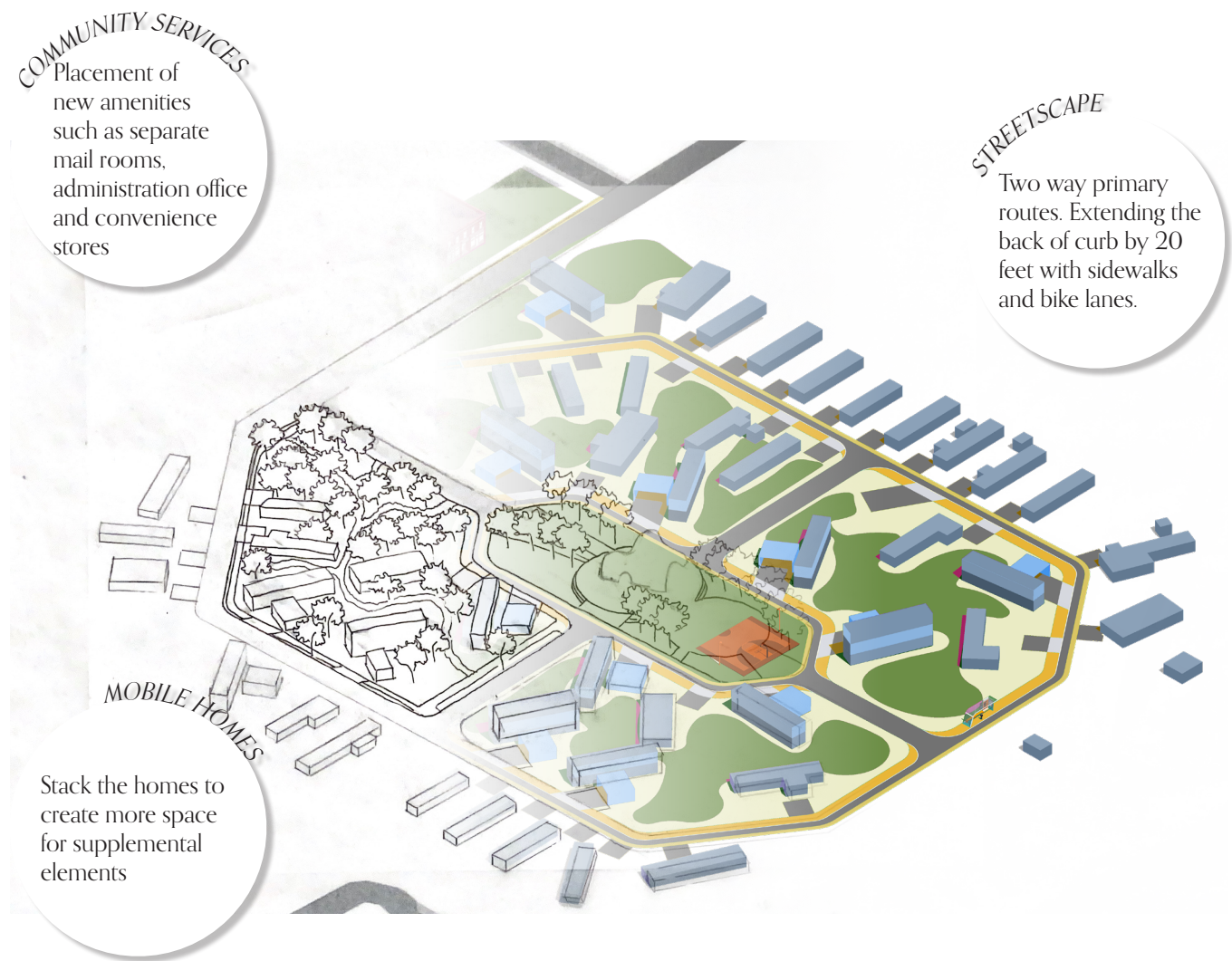


Figure 43.0, Hand Drawing Final Scheme

As the waves from the storm welcomed themselves upon the longship, the Vikings kept rowing in pursuit of land to rest on. Once in site, the Vikings were en route to their nearest port. Rows of longships can be found resting at the boundary between water and land. Faulty ships are tipped upside down to create shelter from the elements that once steered the Vikings back to shore. Land that once became harbor in a storm is now an informal, temporary settlement—maybe for a night, a month, or many years to come. The harbor may begin to take on city-like characteristics; a center for trading goods, common areas for socializing, and a home for the night. For some, the voyage does not end at this make-shift ports town. Vikings will carry their longship on land to steer away from undesirable travel conditions. Onward they travel in pursuit of new adventures to fill their riches. However, this may mean that they are leaving remnants of settlements that still may be occupied, creating the cities of our future.



# Design

## Form Based Narrative



VIKING ROW

Bright and lively, where the sidewalk ballet takes production, exists the street encompassing multiple lanes of vehicular and pedestrian life. Outlining its boundaries are sidewalks and bike lanes, that are often transpositioning between another. The spine of the streetscapes serves the dominant form of transportation; the car. Interrupting the current of traffic are pedestrian crossings, often becoming the confluence between two distinct pathways. Native plantings welcome storm water to be collected at the end of pavement, again interrupted by pedestrian crossings. Scattered along the its spine are bus stops, providing equitable access to community services otherwise not provided within walking distance. What the street provides now becomes the most vital part of any person's expedition.



VIKING MARKET

Created with thrifted modular units and borrowed modernistic ideas, the market repurposes architecture and brings community back to the residences. Performing as the informal trading post of this settlement, economy will grow and provide job opportunities to those in-need. Goods from outside the community will be imported and distributed in a fair market value. Catering trucks buzz around the modular units, swarming in trending places. Services like food halls and administrative offices become the hive that events swarm around. People and goods are constantly coming and going, reiterating the temporary activity within a permanent place.



LONG HOUSE PARK

At the center of the site is where market is separated from recreation. The Long House Park is for gathering and celebrating—a home outside of a home. Children will have spaces allocated for play. A large pavilion will provide shelter and space to acknowledge festivity. Community is established here, where there are no walls to separate ideas.



PRIVATE PORTAGE

Like ships resting in the night, modular pieces of architecture are relaxing upon the restorative landscape—some hovering, and some hugging the native fabric. In a way, individuals regain their privacy and safety within their temporary shelter that has now formed to be unintentionally permanent. To preserve and improve the quality of ideal characteristics, structures are thrifted from a lifetime before, when the future of communities was a secondary thought.



RIPARIAN

A habitat to wildlife and native plants, the Riparian Gardens bring the landscape back to its origins before man tampered with its future. Conservation Restorative Prairie (CRP) grass mingles between light and dark wildflower mixes. A poetic journey through the intentionally planted mixes provides an individual to be connected to the restored environment.



Figure 45.0, Master Plan I

# Design

## Master Plan



Figure 46.0, Master Plan II

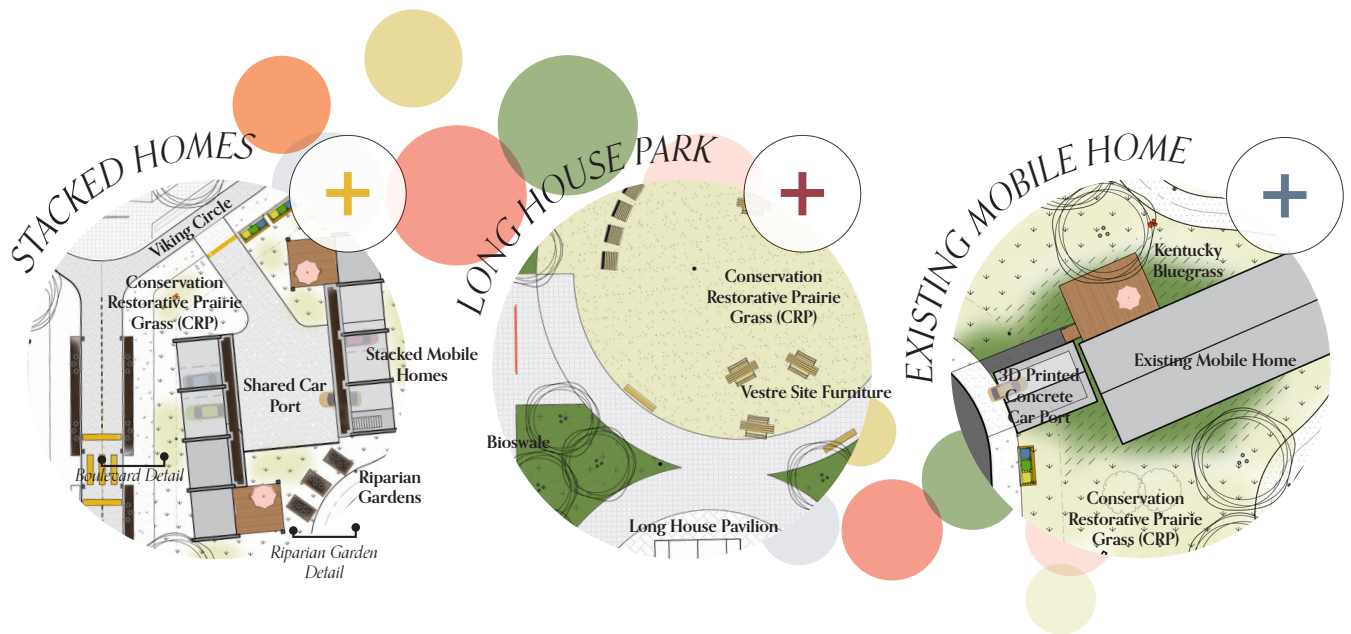


Figure 47.0, Site Plan Compilations

# Design

## Viking Market Section

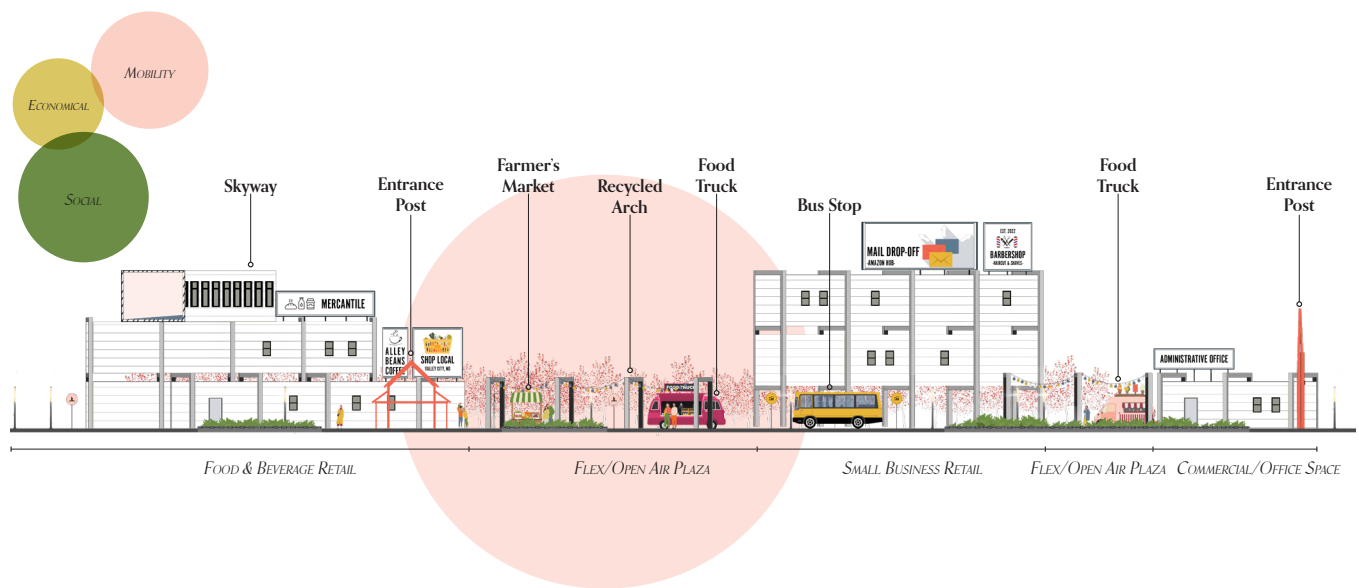


Figure 48.0, Viking Market Section

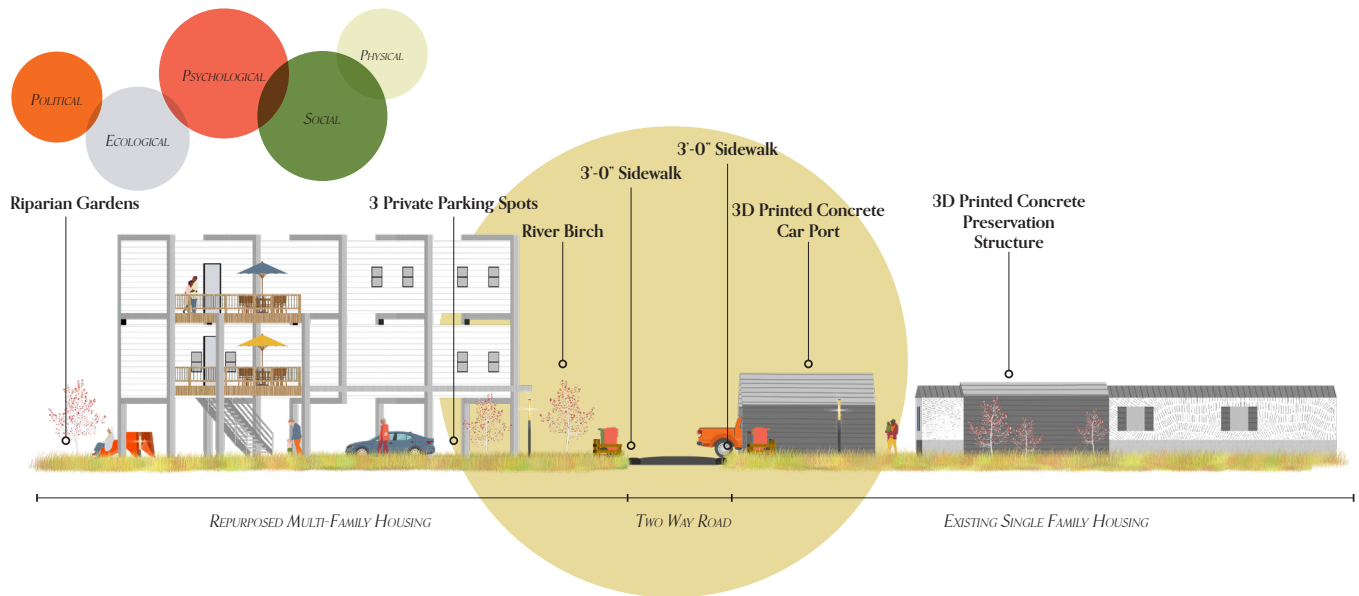


Figure 49.0, Stacked & Preserved Section

# Design

## Future Infill Section

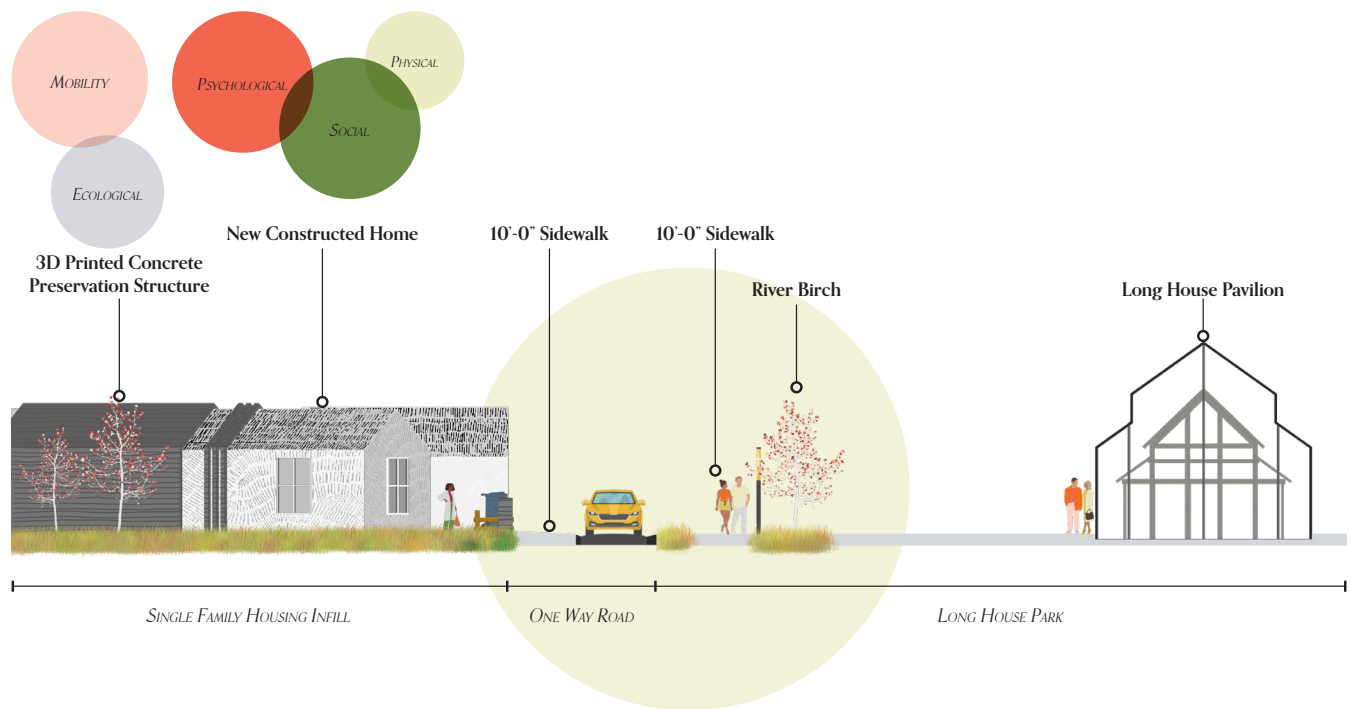


Figure 50.0, Proposed Section

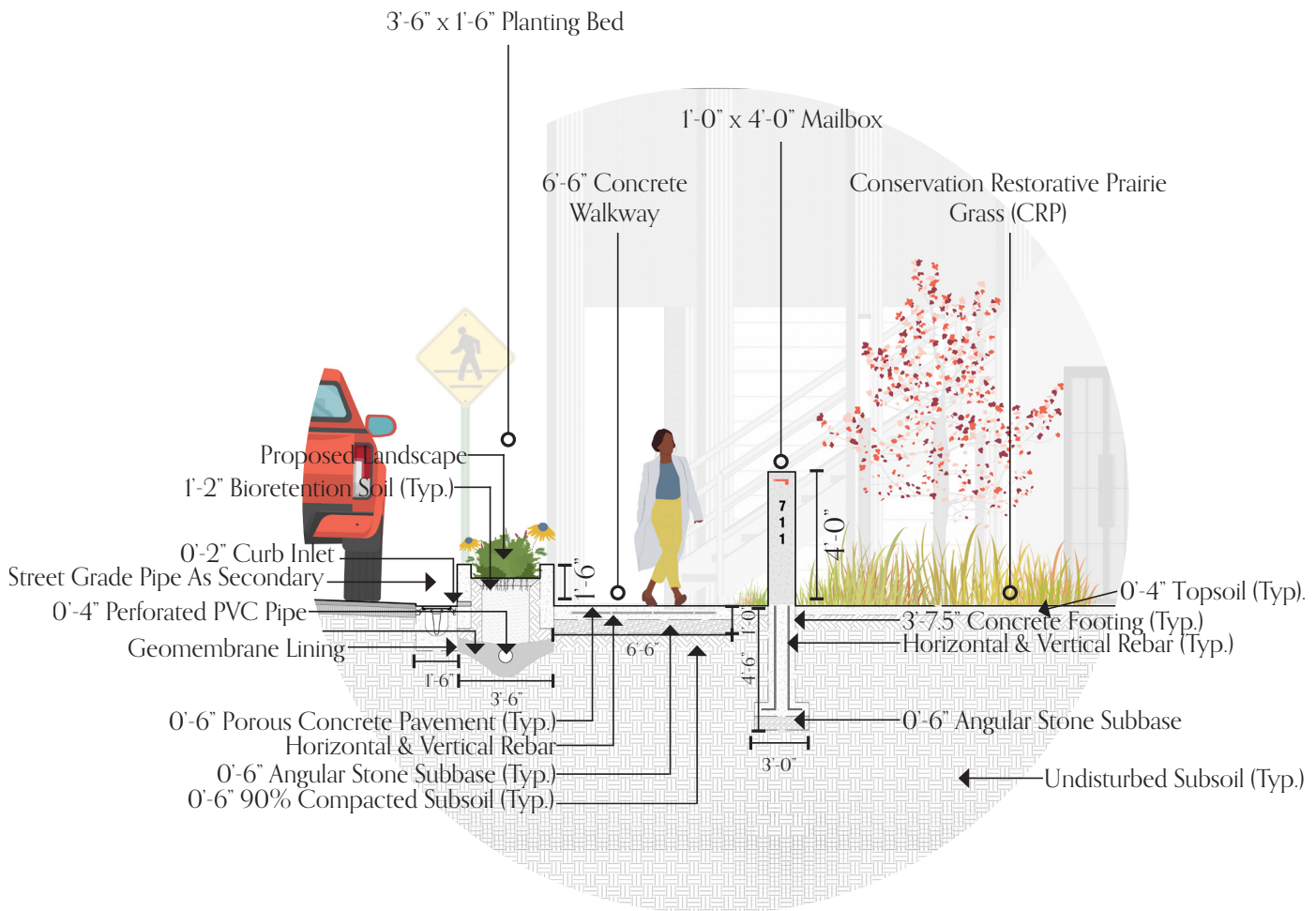


Figure 51.0, Boulevard Detail



# Design

## Riparian Garden Detail

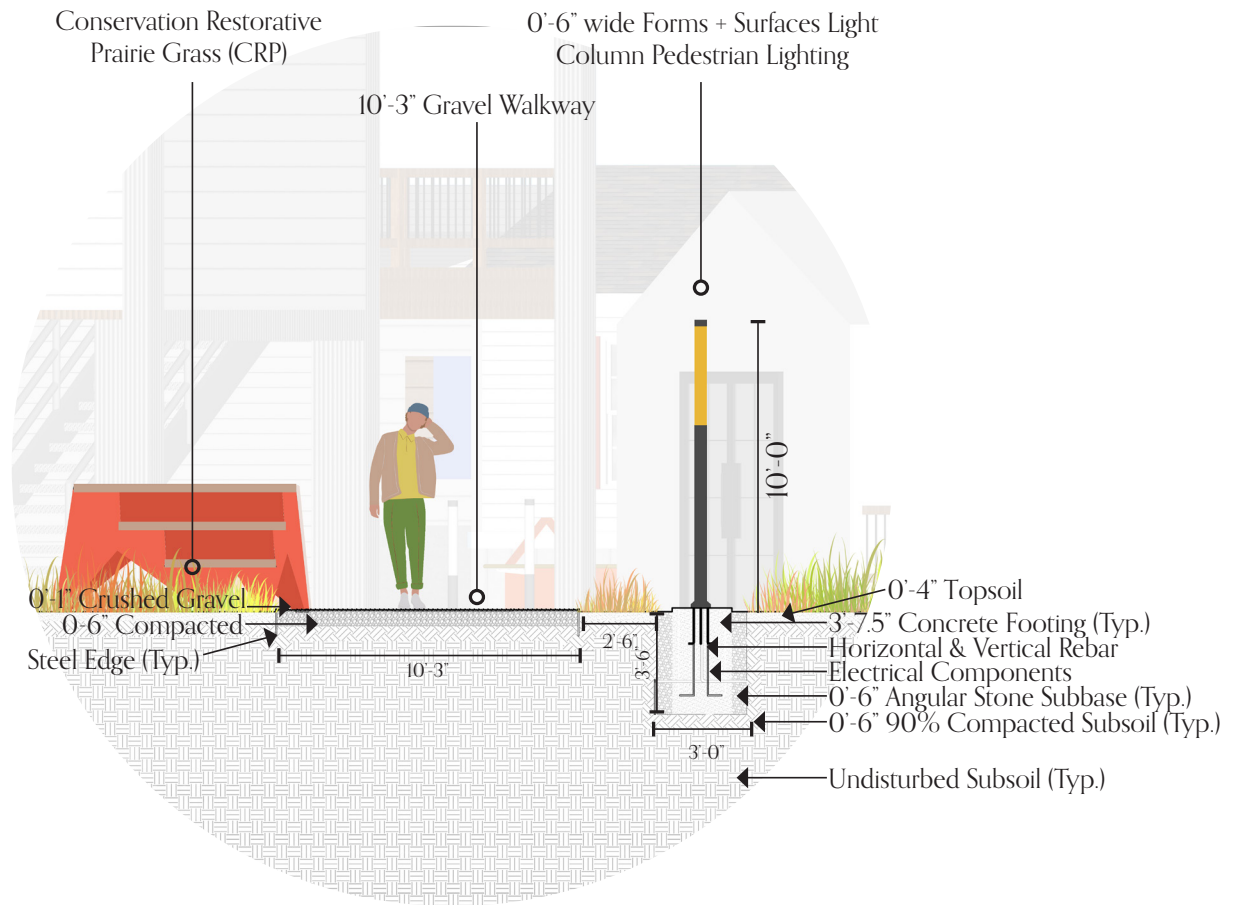


Figure 52.0, Riparian Garden Detail



*Figure 53.0, Viking Row Perspective*

# Design

## Long House Park Perspective I



Figure 54.0, Long House Park Perspective I



*Figure 55.0, Riparian Garden Perspective*

# Design

## Long House Park Perspective II



Figure 56.0, Long House Park Perspective II

# *Appendix*

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- 
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# Appendix

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## Research List, APA Format

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# Appendix

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## Design Studio Experience

### 2nd Year - 2018-19

LA 271 | Introduction to Landscape Architecture | Fall 2018 | Prof. Anna Maria Visilla  
Tea House | Moorhead, MN  
Greek Square | Itea, Greece

LA 272 | Parks and Open Spaces Studio | Spring 2019 | Prof. Dominic Fischer  
Twenty Below Pocket Park | Fargo, ND  
Neighborhood Park | Chicago, IL  
Dill Hill | Fargo, ND

### 3rd Year - 2019-20

LA 371 | Site Planning & Design Studio | Fall 2019 | Prof. Jason Kost  
Dike East Park | Fargo, ND  
Spicy Pie Plaza | Fargo, ND

LA 372 | Community Planning & Design Studio | Spring 2020 | Prof. Anna Maria Visilla  
Campus Plaza | Fargo, ND  
State Capitol Grounds Competition | Bismarck, ND

### 4th Year - 2020-21

LA 471 | Urban Design Studio | Fall 2020 | Prof. Dominic Fischer  
Miami Dade Revitalization | Miami, FL  
Green New Deal | Fargo, ND

LA 472 | Remediation & Planting Studio | Spring 2021 | Prof. Jason Kost  
Estes Park Remediation Plan | Estes Park, CO

### 5th Year - 2021-22

LA 771 | Performance Based Design Studio | Fall 2021 | Prof. Dominic Fischer, Charles Anderson, Morgan Davis-Kollman  
Landscape Performance in Medora | Medora, ND  
S.I.T.E.S. in "Old Town" Scottsdale | Scottsdale, AZ

As I reflect upon the origins of this project, I tend to draw myself into a nostalgic state of thought. A year's worth of research and design is a lot of work, commitment, discipline and responsibility. Although most of this work was developed within the past few months, the seed of this project started growing when I was very young. This is my life, and I somehow made it into a thesis project.

I am a chronological thinker, so it was important to first begin with investigating how a mobile home park came into existence. It seemed to be successful when discussing this train of thought with others, as they too discovered instances in their past built environment that surprised them. History is fascinating. It will never go away or can be erased. To really grasp modern concepts, we must investigate into our past. I believe the time spent on this portion of research was well worth it.

Next, I researched case precedents to see how the Urban Quality of Life measures across different mobile home park locations in the United States. I was surprised to find that not all mobile home parks have a poor quality of life. The perception on my project had began to shift into a hopeful mindset, reassuring me that this realistically had potential to make a positive impact.

To determine performance assessments, I then felt it was vital to do a site visit and capture images to further do an analysis on. This step made it easy for others to see why I picked the site that I did, and how I began to measure performance. These measurements developed further into design goals, and were specified into micro goals from there. This really developed my understanding of the site; however, I felt there was something missing. The design narrative further developed the story and began to make sense of everything. At this point it was time to shift from the No2B drawing pencil to digital renderings. The longer the hand drawing process took place, the better the narrative developed.

Finally, to conclude this reflection I leave you with the following advice: detect the historical narrative, investigate your hypothesis, do an in person site visit for analysis, and be straight-forward with your goals. This is what I would have told Abby a few months ago. I think it would have saved her a lot of time.

# Appendix

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## About the Author

Abigayle Brown is a Visual Artist and Landscape Architect student who works both in digital and analog worlds. Brown's ultimate goal is to communicate design in the most transparent way possible. Whether it be a graphic, an architectural model, or a picture, she's constantly interested in learning new techniques to express her creative language. Brown's journey begins in Valley City, North Dakota, where she grew up and lived for 18 years. There began her inspiration from the hills, valleys and bridges she brings to her study in landscape architecture and visual arts. Abby's current academic career resides in Fargo, North Dakota where she attends North Dakota State University in the process of achieving two degrees in design. During her free time, she loves to coach gymnastics, visit art museums and participate in community yoga classes. Abby believes designers hold the power to change the world and hopes to become a voice in the conversation, serving as both an artist and landscape architect.



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Hometown: Valley City, ND

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Figure 58.0, Image by Dan Francis