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Title

REIMAGINING THE POLICE STATION:
FOSTERING COMMUNITY CONNECTION THROUGH ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

By

Micah John Swedeen

The Supervisory Committee certifies that this *thesis* complies with North Dakota State University's regulations and meets the accepted standards for the degree of

MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE:

Stephen Wischer

Thesis Coordinator

DocuSigned by:

Stephen Wischer

CBA6CA6223024AC...

Regin Schwaen

Primary Advisor

DocuSigned by:

Regin Schwaen

37E12D7FC241476...

Approved:

05/10/2024

Date

DocuSigned by:

Susan Schaefer Kliman

C9FF1C4ACFB7438...

Department Chair



REIMAGINING THE POLICE STATION:
FOSTERING COMMUNITY CONNECTION THROUGH ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

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Micah John Swedeen

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ABSTRACT

American community between the police and minority communities, particularly the African-American community, is a significant challenge in American society. This thesis advocates for design to support community policing efforts and rebuild trust between law enforcement and the public. Through research, design strategies such as embracing mixed-use typologies, repurposing civic assets, integrating mass timber construction, and fostering healthy interactions within built environments have been identified. These interventions aim to create spaces where community members can engage with law enforcement in environments conducive to building trust. Moving forward, further exploration and refinement in police station architecture are essential. While architectural solutions alone cannot resolve complex issues, architects have a crucial role in envisioning and implementing spaces that foster positive social change and restore trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to the courageous individuals who have selflessly served as police officers, first responders, and dedicated community leaders who tirelessly strive every day to make their communities safer.

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1. INTRODUCTION

“The police are the public and the public are the police.”

This is a quote by Sir Robert Peel who is considered the father of modern policing. Peel believed that the effectiveness of a police force was dependent on the support and trust of the community in which they served in. The authority of the police is entrusted to them by the community and can also be taken away if the police fail to uphold their responsibilities and maintain the trust of the people. This raises the question of how police architecture interacts with the community. Is the design of police stations done in a way to earn trust or do the buildings prioritize the policing of the community more than the community itself?

1.1. Problem Statement

A recent Gallup (2024) poll showed that only 43% of Americans reported having a great deal of trust in the police. This marks the lowest levels of trust on record. But the problem does not stop there. In a Gallup Poll (2020) that surveyed Black and White Americans on trust in various institutions in America, the largest divide in trust was observed in the Police. Only 19% of Black Americans expressed a great deal/quite a lot of confidence in the police, compared to 56% of White Americans (Jones, 2020). This is the largest gap in trust between White and Black Americans. So why does this gap exist?

The relationship between law enforcement and African Americans has been a long and unlovely history. The first form of policing in the South was the Slave Patrol which existed solely to catch runaway slaves, deter slave revolts, and uphold the institution of slavery within America (Potter, 2013). After the Civil War, new freedoms were granted to the African American community only to be steadily stripped away post-Reconstruction by local and state

governments within the South. It was not until the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s that these laws were finally struck down, but only after images of law enforcement using high-pressure water hoses, tear gas, and attack dogs on protesters became seared into the American psyche (Fryer, 2018). Instances of abuse and police brutality unfortunately continue. From the beating of Rodney King by four police officers in 1991 to the death of George Floyd in 2020, the discourse surrounding bias in policing against minorities, particularly the African American population, has been a persistent challenge for the United States.

As a result of this long history of abuses that carries on into today, the relationships between many police departments and African Americans as well as other minority communities can easily fall into a downward spiral that begins with the historical bias in policing which has led to generational distrust. When a population no longer trusts the police, they are no longer going to cooperate and support the work of the police and as a result, more crime goes unpunished, more cases go unsolved, and more people in the community get hurt (O'Brien & Tyler, 2019). A community that does not trust the police will have a less effective police department which leads to more distrust and a higher likelihood that the members of that community will resort to seeking vigilante justice themselves. (Clayton, 2020). This is not the fault of any one police officer but, if this deadly cycle is to be broken, then police departments need to take ownership of the role they play and work to improve trust and as a result their effectiveness as a service to the public. So how is trust rebuilt between the police and disillusioned communities? How is the downward spiral put to an end?

1.1.1. Research Question

How can design support community policing efforts and rebuild trust through the built environment?

1.1.2. Proposed Outcomes

The proposed outcomes for this thesis will include an evaluation of existing research on the topic of police architecture which will push a design prototype of an improved police facility that actively engages the public and fosters trust and empathy.

1.2. Objective

The objective of this thesis is to examine architecture in law enforcement as well as modern practices and identify ways in which the architecture of the police can be advanced to create healthier communities and relationships that are built on trust and not fear. This will be a focus of the design process in creating spaces where open discussion and dialogue can take place in a form of architecture that is both attainable and yet pushes the model of existing police facilities forward. This thesis does not propose that architecture is the only solution to problems that exist within the current model of policing or to solve tension that exists in American society. A building on its own cannot solve an issue as complex and multifaceted as the relationship between police and urban communities. However, this should not discourage the exploration of new forms of architecture that facilitate dialogue and stress-free encounters between the public and police, fostering relationships, humanizing interactions, and building trust.

1.2.1. Aim

This research aims to establish ways in which architecture and subsequently, architects, can better support the relationship between the police and their surrounding communities. This will involve examining two primary concepts: policing and the architecture that supports policing practices. By examining the history of police, modern police practices, and the present relationship between police and the communities they serve, one can gain a more thorough understanding of the present state of police practices and how they evolved to this point. Secondly, an examination of how architecture has evolved with, and shapes modern policing can provide valuable insights. Through this research, opportunities to improve both policing and architecture can be identified, fostering healthier relationships built on trust between communities and the police officers who serve them.

1.2.2. Significance

The significance of this research is both professional and personal in nature. It is undeniable that the relationship that exists between the police and minority communities is an unhealthy one. In today's public discourse, the debate has become politically polarized, and division has arisen where unity of mind is needed to make rational decisions. If one criticizes the police, then they must believe that the police need to be disbanded completely, and if another individual supports the police, then they must believe the present model is perfect, and no reform is needed. Both mindsets are unproductive and do not allow for the important conversation that needs to take place within local, state, and the federal government. Architecture and architects have a responsibility and role to play in this conversation because it is the architect who is called

upon to design spaces for the police within our communities. Architects are responsible for envisioning spaces that can bring about positive change.

1.2.2.1. Promote Humanization

One of the largest challenges that American society faces when it comes to the present division between disaffected communities and the police is the tendency for both sides to isolate from one another which inevitably begins the process of dehumanization (Colwell & Huth, 2010). This results in individuals who fail to see the other as a human being worthy of respect. Building healthy relationships between the police and community and allowing for open discussion and dialogue is crucial. This will be a focus of the design process in creating spaces where healing can take place organically and a form of architecture that is both attainable and pushes the model of existing police facilities forward.

1.2.2.2. Promote human dignity and community healing

My worldview is shaped by my Christian faith which holds to a principle known as ‘Imago Dei’ which means that every human is made in the ‘Image of God.’ This is a core pillar of my faith and is a tenant of the Bible (Gen. 1:27 ESV) and has instrumentally shaped Western society’s values and judicial system. The Declaration of Independence states, “we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed, by their Creator, with certain unalienable rights” (United States, 1776). But just as this document was written by a man who owned other human beings, our nation’s application of these values has consistently fallen short since its founding. Every human has God-given worth, which cannot be taken away. As a result, every individual deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. My goal for this

thesis is to push for architecture design that partnered with proper police reform, can genuinely embrace the promise of 'Imago Dei.'

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. Project Type

Police stations have long served as staples within American communities, both rural and urban, however, their significance as forms of civic architecture have often been overlooked in architectural discourse. Unlike libraries, post offices, and fire stations which have undergone extensive exploration of design and meaning within the architecture community, police stations have received comparatively little attention in this regard.

2.1.1. History of the Police Station

The history of police architecture is inevitably linked to that of the police. In the United States, the first rudimentary form of policing was known as the ‘Watch,’ an entirely volunteer-based system of watchmen who patrolled the nighttime streets of colonial towns and villages. The ‘watch box’ was a small shed-like structure and was the first form of architecture specifically designed for policing in America (Gang et al., 2017). The watchmen utilized these boxes to store essential equipment as well as to write down and store records for each night. Boston was the first city to create an official night watch in 1636 but this form of policing proved to be ineffective as many watchmen were either easily bribed, drank on the job, or simply slept through the night (Potter, 2013). In 1829, the first modern police force was established in London by Sir Robert Peel (Reinhardt, 2023). What made this police force unique was its strict code of conduct which became known as ‘Peel’s Principles’ [Figure 2.1] which laid out the behavior and role of the police towards the public (Balko, 2021). Peele was an avid believer that the power of the police resided within the community and that without the community’s support, the police would be ineffective. As the Industrial Revolution crossed the Atlantic so too did Peel’s model of policing and American cities began to create their own municipal police

departments. By the end of the nineteenth century every major American city had a police force resembling that of Peel's in London (Potter, 2013).

Figure 2.1 Sir Robert Peel's Principles (n.d.)

**Sir Robert Peel's
Principles of Law Enforcement
1829**

1. The basic mission for which police exist is to prevent crime and disorder as an alternative to the repression of crime and disorder by military force and severity of legal punishment.
2. The ability of the police to perform their duties is dependent upon *public approval* of police existence, actions, behavior and the ability of the police to secure and maintain *public respect*.
3. The police must secure the willing cooperation of the public in voluntary observance of the law to be able to secure and maintain public respect.
4. The degree of cooperation of the public that can be secured diminishes, proportionately, to the necessity for the use of physical force and compulsion in achieving police objectives.
5. The police seek and preserve public favor, not by catering to public opinion, but by constantly demonstrating absolutely impartial service to the law, in complete independence of policy, and without regard to the justice or injustice of the substance of individual laws; by ready offering of individual service and friendship to all members of society without regard to their race or social standing, by ready exercise of courtesy and friendly good humor; and by ready offering of individual sacrifice in protecting and preserving life.
6. The police should use physical force to the extent necessary to secure observance of the law or to restore order only when the exercise of *persuasion, advice and warning* is found to be insufficient to achieve police objectives; and police should use only the minimum degree of physical force which is necessary on any particular occasion for achieving a police objective.
7. The police at all times should maintain a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that *the police are the public and the public are the police*; the police are the only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the intent of the community welfare.
8. The police should always direct their actions toward their functions and never appear to usurp the powers of the judiciary by avenging individuals or the state, or authoritatively judging guilt or punishing the guilty.
9. The test of police efficiency is the *absence* of crime and disorder, not the *visible evidence* of police action in dealing with them.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the first facilities dedicated solely to the police were constructed in larger American cities. With the rapid industrialization and growth of urban centers at the turn of the century, police stations became more integrated into the urban landscape in what were known as 'Row House Stations' (Gang et al., 2017). At this time, with the invention of the telephone, the Call Box [Figure 2.2] was introduced, allowing police officers

to report to the police station from around the city and expanding their patrol area from several blocks to entire neighborhoods (Gang et al., 2017). Another transition point in policing took place during the 1930s as Americans adopted the automobile as the primary mode of travel. With the introduction of the ‘patrol car’ the police were now more physically separated from the community and police stations needed to both accommodate these vehicles and position their facilities closer to roads and highways (Reinhardt, 2023).

Figure 2.2 Police box at street corner (Harris & Ewing, 1911)



In the 1960s, with racial unrest and the civil rights movement growing across the nation, cities began building stations that consolidated multiple units and staff under one roof in what became known as ‘fortress stations’ (Gang et al., 2017). These buildings were designed to be ‘riot proof’ and used materials such as reinforced concrete and steel, resembling bunkers more

than facilities from which to serve the community (Quirk, 2017). After the civil rights movement and in an effort to reengage with the community, many police departments began building stations in the 1980s with public plazas and softened facades. These stations were part of a larger effort to implement 'community policing' reforms, however, these architectural moves were mostly superficial (Gang et al., 2017). While many community policing efforts at this time successfully improved the relationship between the police and the community, the 1990s saw a transition to data-driven policing which was only exacerbated after the September 11th terrorist attacks (Balko, 2021). Police stations now had to address additional security concerns, leading to more reliance on data and surveillance technology to enhance efficiency but also served to keep the police and community more separated (Gang et al, 2017).

Today, this attitude of maximizing efficiency within police departments has shaped not only the culture of policing but how the public interacts with the police daily. Modern police stations are larger and often situated amidst large parking lots, prioritizing access to highways and roads over engagement with the communities they serve (Gang et al, 2017). Even if members of the public need to visit the police station, the interiors of these spaces are tightly controlled for security purposes, offering little in terms of an inviting atmosphere or public services beyond the common help desk, which is typically shielded behind multiple layers of bulletproof glass (Phillips et al., 2003). If trust is established through repeated interaction, these facilities significantly fall short in providing the necessary space for engagement crucial for building relationships and nurturing trust.

2.1.2. Function

Over the past century, the design of American police stations has gradually adapted to accommodate the evolving requirements of law enforcement. Yet, the essential purpose of the interior space has remained the same. The Police Station by Simon Holdaway is a “dramaturgical analysis of how police maintain an occupational imagery intended for public consumption.” (Holdaway, 1980). This examination of English police houses, while not explicitly focused on American police stations, aligns closely with the operational roles of police stations in the United States. Holdaway explains how space within the police station creates a ‘front stage’ and ‘back stage’ that shape how the public and police interact with one another. The transition point between these two separate spaces is the station office or help desk. This border means the police as an institution can easily project a public image of security and legality while informal police practices can remain hidden from both the public and senior officers (Holdaway, 1980). The author observes that the division between public and restricted areas perpetuates a culture lacking in accountability, as it allows officers to easily withdraw behind the security boundary. Moreover, it reinforces the mindset of "us vs. them," which can pervade police departments (Reinhardt, 2023).

2.1.3. Image

Architecture possesses a unique ability to communicate messages and meaning to those who encounter it. It can symbolize religions, governments, economies, and communities. The architecture of the police is no different. The design of police stations serves to convey the values of law enforcement and how the police view the surrounding community. Additionally, the public can interpret this architecture and form their personal judgments of the police. A 2021

study titled "The Psychology of Justice Buildings" conducted by the University of Georgetown and John Jay College of Criminal Justice investigated the impact of police architecture on public sentiment. The study surveyed seven hundred respondents, including 238 Black, 237 White, and 225 Latino individuals. The findings revealed that police buildings perceived as hostile resulted in a diminished appreciation for the police. However, researchers were surprised that Black and Latino individuals showed a higher appreciation for hostile police buildings than welcoming buildings (Headley et al., 2020). The researchers proposed several hypothetical reasons to explain these results. One of the reasons stated was,

“ Black and Latino respondents may not be as reactive in the face of hostile buildings due to their familiarity with hostile conditions in the U.S. Research in urban neighborhoods suggest that communities of color have historically received less resources and more divestment...we do not mean to suggest that these individuals prefer or thrive in hostile environments, but rather they may have learned to cope with and navigate around these environments better than their White counterparts...” (p.7)

An additional explanation by the researchers suggested that the Black and Latino communities do not see the police station as an asset but instead as an intrusive force. Likewise, financial investment in the police force does not make the Black and Latino feel any safer. The researchers proposed that more resources and funding to make “nicer” police buildings signal to the community the potential for greater levels of enforcement and abuse. So instead, these communities prefer seeing a hostile police building (Headley et al., 2020).

The results of this survey provide valuable insight into what is an extremely complex issue. What is understood from the survey is that police architecture does affect how people perceive law enforcement, but it goes beyond merely changing surface appearances to alter

public perception. The police station must be more than just an attractive facade; it must genuinely address the needs of the community it serves. Further research in this area is essential to fully comprehend the intricacies of this topic and to understand how police station design can better meet community needs and foster healthier police-community relationships.

2.2. Project Issues

2.2.1. Problems

This thesis addresses two crucial issues: rebuilding trust and examining the impact of police station design on the community. These issues significantly influence policing strategies and community well-being. To develop effective change, it is necessary to have a thorough understanding of these two problems.

2.2.1.1. Lack of Trust

A lack of trust in the local police is one of the deadliest challenges facing urban communities today, especially those with limited resources. Acts of police brutality, over-policing, and abuse have contributed to heightened levels of distrust in law enforcement which have proven to be a significant factor in driving gun violence in American cities (Clayton, 2020). When communities no longer trust their police they are no longer willing to cooperate as witnesses or report crimes which only results in more violent crimes going unpunished (Clayton, 2020, Tyler, 2006). Studies consistently demonstrate that a community's confidence in their police plays a critical role in maintaining public safety and that members of the community are even more likely to follow the law if they believe the police are a legitimate force in their community (Braga et al.,

2019, Sunshine and Tyler, 2003), Goldsmith, 2005). The sad irony is that the communities that need the police the most typically trust the police the least

2.2.1.2. Architecture that Isolates.

The design of police stations has traditionally been divided between front and backstage, separating the public from the police (Holdaway, 1980). Due to the nature of the police profession, there are logical reasons for this, however, this physical divide can easily lead to isolation and over time dehumanization (Reinhardt, 2023). Unfortunately, the priority of most police station designs has not been on positioning officers to better connect with the communities they serve but instead to maximize security, provide ample parking, and ease of access to travel corridors (Gang, J., et al, 2015). These stations when analyzed through the architectural lens tend to be described as ‘fortress-like’ and ‘intimidating’ (Mille, 2012). This language matters because the design of police stations inherently shapes the public’s perception of the police as an institution (Headley et al., 2020). If police stations are designed to be fortresses and intimidate the public, then they will become intimidated by the police officers who staff them.

2.2.2. Solutions

To combat the problems of distrust in police and architecture that reinforces the division between the public and police there are two specific solutions: Community Policing and architecture design that is geared towards building community.

2.2.2.1. Community Policing

One reform that several police departments have adopted and has proven effective in certain studies is known as ‘community policing.’ The foundation of community policing lies in

fostering personal connections within communities, emphasizing crime prevention, and assigning officers to smaller geographic areas. This approach enables officers to consistently engage with neighborhoods and build healthier relationships with residents. (Reinhardt, 2023). Research indicates that community policing generates enhanced citizen satisfaction, improved perceptions of disorder, and improves communities view of police legitimacy (Gill et al., 2014). This relationship between the community and the police is mutually advantageous. Enhanced perceptions of law enforcement not only foster greater compliance but also contribute to a community that is more willing to adhere to laws, enabling law enforcement to curtail violent crime more effectively (Braga et al., 2019).

One community that serves as a case study of how specific community policing reforms have proven effective is Camden, New Jersey. In 2011, Camden was one of America's poorest cities and could no longer afford their police department while violent crime was on the rise. The city was bankrupt, so the city's police department was disbanded, and a new county police force was established (Zernike, 2014). This new police force adopted community policing methods which included talking to community members as much as possible and knocking on doors within the city to simply introduce themselves and engage in conversation with community members. These officers were also taught how to diffuse circumstances where a mental health crisis may be taking place (Goldstein & Armstrong, 2020). By simply engaging with the public and trying to build relationships, the city has seen a significant drop in violent crime. Between 2012 and 2018, the city experienced a 67% reduction in homicides and while cities across the United States saw a dramatic rise in crime after 2020, Camden New Jersey experienced the city's lowest rate of crime in 50 years (Walsh, 2019).

2.2.2.2. Architecture that supports the police AND the community

Studio Gang's 'Polis Station' research examines the role of architecture in police facilities and provides six design principles applicable to the design of police stations (Gang, J., et al, 2015). These include:

1. Expanding programming within the station to incorporate more community resources and amenities.
2. Creating common ground around the station through landscape design that serves the community and is welcoming.
3. Provide unrestricted access to information through free Wi-Fi, as well as a computer lounge that is free to use by the community.
4. Utilize surrounding neighborhood assets to foster learning opportunities and create a community campus.
5. Establish a shared wellness network that not only benefits the police officers and community but also allows for increased interaction through recreational activities and fitness.
6. Encourage officers and service workers to live nearby or preferably in the communities they patrol.

By integrating these design principles, police stations can transform into community hubs that foster trust, collaboration, and well-being, promoting safer and more inclusive neighborhoods. These principles provide design solutions that can help reinvigorate existing and new police stations.

2.3. Mind the Gap

The most relevant work in police station architecture remains Studio Gang's "Polis Station" which offers a framework for pushing the design of police stations forward but falls short of providing a detailed proposal. On this topic in general there is a lack of extensive research on police architecture and no proposed designs to date that truly push the model of what police architecture looks like. This thesis seeks to bridge this gap that exists on the topic by applying existing research to develop a design that advances police station architecture while meeting the practical needs of both police officers and the community. This will result in final drawings and renderings that show what the proposed police station could become.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Approach

Figure 3.1 - Framework Diagram (Made by Author)



A framework was created through which design decisions were made for this project. At the top level is Reinhardt's *Rethinking the Police* which examines police culture and the need for reform as well as effective community policing. The next level is *Polis Station* by Studio Gang which provides the context of American police stations as well as design principles that can be applied to police architecture. These principles provide an outline of specific areas in police architecture that can be reimaged and pushed by designers. The third level is *The Psychology of Justice Buildings*, a survey experiment that examined effects of police station design on public perception and attitudes toward the police. The last level of the framework is *The Police Station* by Simon Holdaway which analyses police station architecture as a tool for constructing occupational imagery while also raising questions about accountability and transparency in policing.

Figure 3.2 Minneapolis skyline seen from Prospect Park tower (Hicks, 2014)



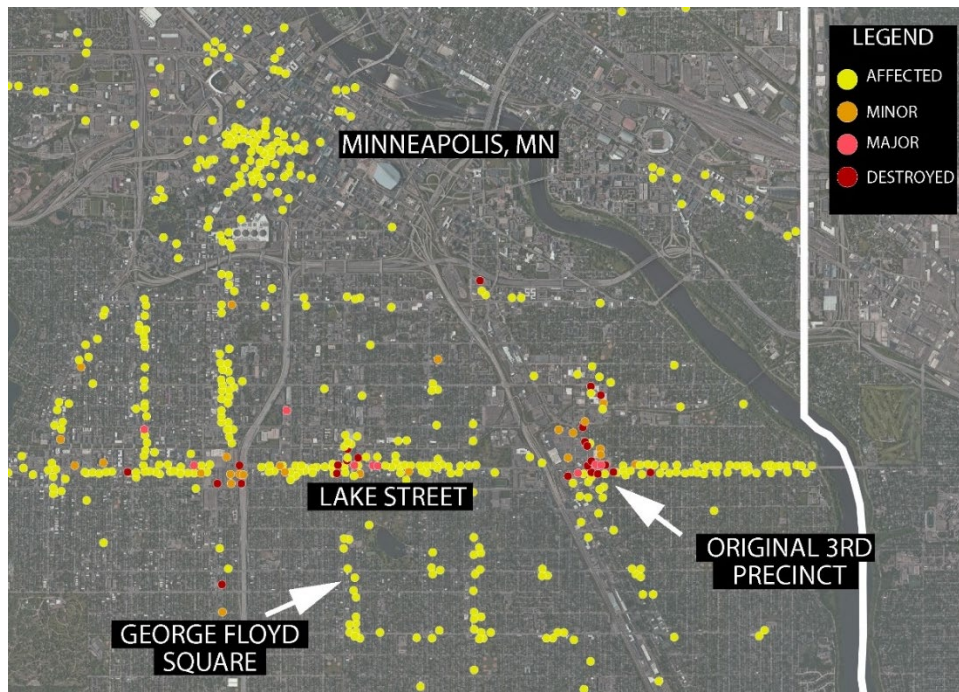
3.2. Minneapolis, Minnesota

Minneapolis is the largest city in the state of Minnesota with a present population of approximately 430,000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020) with its neighbor St. Paul forming the greater ‘Twin Cities’ metro area. Located along the St. Anthony Falls of the Mississippi River, the climate of the city is one of the most extreme experienced by a large metropolis in the United States with warm to hot, humid summers and cold to frigid, snow-filled winters (National Weather Service, n.d.). The urban landscape of the city encompasses a mix of densely populated neighborhoods, downtown skyscrapers, and sprawling suburban. In the aftermath of George Floyd’s death in 2020, Minneapolis has grappled with the profound issues surrounding policing and trust in the Minneapolis Police Department. The aftermath of the ensuing protests and riots have underscored deep-seated tensions within the community, prompting renewed calls for systemic reform and accountability within law enforcement (Nakamura et al., 2023). As Minneapolis is endeavoring to navigate these challenges and rebuild trust, efforts to address racial disparities and reimagine policing practices have emerged as crucial priorities (Wurzer & Kuznetsov, 2024).

3.3. Lake Street – South Minneapolis

Lake Street is in South Minneapolis and has been home to a diverse community and hundreds of small businesses for a century (Nathanson, 2020). In the summer of 2020, Lake Street was hardest hit-when protests escalated into violent riots after George Floyd’s death resulting in over \$500 million in damages (DePass, 2024).

Figure 3.3 Map of Minneapolis Damage During Unrest (City of Minneapolis, 2020)



A map [Figure 3.3] created by the city of Minneapolis in the aftermath highlights the centralization of damage taking place along Lake Street and around the location of original Third Precinct Building. Amidst the ongoing recovery efforts, the decision to relocate the precinct to a vacant warehouse at 2633 Minnehaha Ave reflects a disconnection from the surrounding neighborhoods and underscores the need for thoughtful, community-centered design interventions (Swanson, 2023).

3.4. Specific Site

The site selected for this thesis project, situated at 2800 E Lake St in Minneapolis, MN, offers a strategic location characterized by its proximity to key civic assets and diverse neighborhoods. Positioned on Lake Street, it serves as a transition point between commercial and residential areas, making it a unique site for redevelopment. Once the home of a US Bank branch, the site was damaged during the unrest of 2020 and donated to the local community to be redeveloped (St Anthony, 2021).

Figure 3.4 Temporary art installations on site



Apart from temporary art installations [Figure 3.4] positioned sporadically, the site is entirely vacant. The site's adjacency to the East Lake Street Public Library [Figure 3.5] and accessibility via public transportation further enhance its appeal as a focal point for mixed-use redevelopment. This strategic location offers many opportunities to create a unique, dynamic, and inclusive space that bridges gaps within the neighborhood and between the larger community and the Minneapolis Police Department.

Figure 3.5 East Lake Street Public Library



3.5. Mass Timber Construction

In reimagining the architectural identity of police stations, this thesis project deliberately departs from conventional design norms prevalent in police architecture. Instead, it embraces the innovative use of Mass Timber construction methods. While police facilities traditionally favor metal and concrete elements that convey strength and security, this project challenges this paradigm as those design elements can seem cold and off-putting. Mass Timber, with its natural wood composition, offers benefits beyond structural integrity, including aesthetic appeal and the creation of inviting interior spaces. By avoiding traditional materials associated with police station design, this project aims to nurture a sense of connection and well-being for both officers and the community they serve, reshaping the relationship between law enforcement and the built environment.

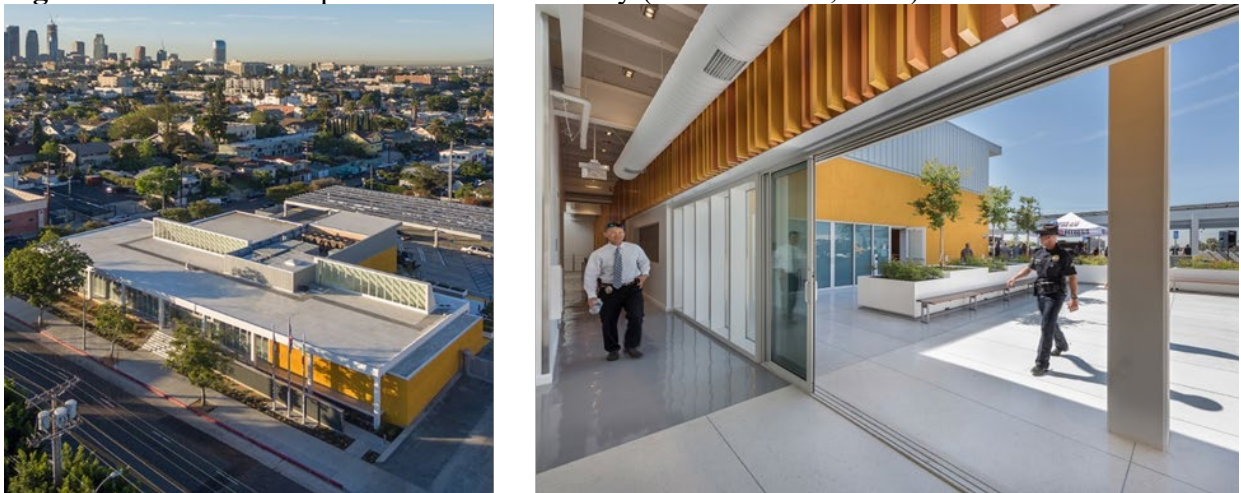
The decision to utilize Mass Timber is rooted in several factors. First, its sustainable nature aligns to reduce embodied carbon compared to materials like steel and cement. Additionally, Mass Timber has been shown to foster a calming atmosphere, benefiting both

community members and police officers facing the stresses of their profession (Abed et al., 2022). When adopting Mass Timber, careful consideration must be given to design integration from the outset to capitalize on its strengths while acknowledging its limitations. This entails understanding the supply chain and leveraging local manufacturing capabilities. Furthermore, the structural system heavily relies on a grid, necessitating careful selection to optimize interior space and minimize material waste. Prefabrication off-site presents another avenue to reduce waste and enhance efficiency in the construction process.

3.6. Precedents

3.6.1. LAPD METROPOLITAN DIVISION FACILITY, Los Angeles

Figure 3.6 LAPD Metropolitan Division Facility (Perkins&Will, 2016)



The LAPD Metropolitan Division Facility, nestled within Los Angeles, California, stands as a testament to the transformative power of thoughtful design in the realm of law enforcement architecture. Originally constructed in 1966 as a formidable concrete fortress, the facility was designed to withstand the social and racial unrest prevalent at the time, serving as a stronghold for SWAT, a K-9 unit, and administrative and field officers (Quirk, 2017). The architects, innovative renovation project, completed in 2016, revitalized the facility's ambiance while

respecting its historical significance (Sisson, 2017). Through the strategic use of additional glazing and a distinct yellow paint color, the renovated design achieves a more welcoming atmosphere without compromising the integrity of the original structure. Situated within the historic ‘Filipinotown’ neighborhood and nestled on a slope descending from West Temple to Hyans Street, the facility harmoniously integrates with its residential surroundings, embodying a blend of functionality and community-centric design.

The design solutions implemented at the LAPD Metropolitan Division Facility reflect a holistic approach to creating an efficient and user-friendly space for law enforcement personnel. Emphasizing indoor-outdoor connectivity, sheltered parking, and pocket park landscaping, the layout fosters a sense of openness and accessibility. Additionally, incorporating diffused natural light and flexible workspace configurations enhances occupant comfort and productivity, aligning with modern workplace trends while catering to the unique security needs of a police facility. By leveraging color as a cost-effective means of enhancing the built environment and optimizing daylighting to create pleasant and secure spaces, the LAPD Metropolitan Division Facility sets a precedent for the intersection of functional design and community engagement in law enforcement architecture.

3.6.2. LINCOLN CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT, Lincoln City

Figure 3.7 Lincoln City Police Department (FFA Architects + Interiors, 2020)



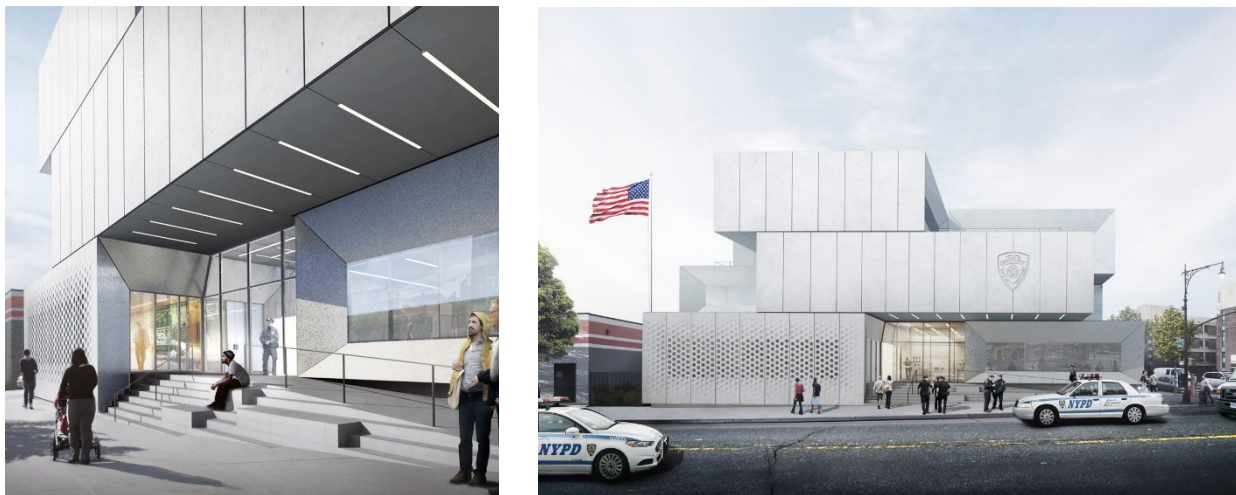
Designed by FFA Architects + Interiors in Lincoln City, Oregon, the Lincoln City Police Department is a 18,500-sf facility that was constructed using Cross-Laminated-Timber (CLT) and steel. According to TimberLab (2020), the mass timber supplier for the project, integrating mass timber into a public safety building leverages the warm and calming atmosphere of wood to create an environment conducive to relaxation and stress reduction, particularly in a traditionally tense setting. Security concerns regarding the façade of the building were resolved by FFA using “...concrete tile and solid CLT walls which met the same requirements...” for ballistic performance (DJC Staff, 2021). Input from citizens on what the building should represent partnered with extensive research conducted by the architects created a building that reflects the region and the community authentically.

The Lincoln City Police Department is a building used entirely by the police. However, there are several aspects of the design that can be applied to my proposal. The application of mass timber, while uncommon, pushes police architecture forward while also being environmentally responsible. The wood interior softens the space and makes it more inviting for

the users. Another lesson that can be learned from the architecture team in this project is the importance of thoroughly researching the region and sitting with community members to craft a design that not only accomplishes the goals of the police but accurately represents the community. The implementation of mass timber into my proposal and conducting extensive research on the communities surrounding my site will help strengthen my proposal.

3.6.3. 40th PRECINCT POLICE STATION, Bronx

Figure 3.8 40th Precinct Renderings (Bjarke Ingels Group, 2016)



The new 40th Precinct Police station in New York City, designed by BIG Architects, is the first of its kind in the city with a public mixed-use community space and interior design focused on reducing the stress of officers (Rosenfield, 2016). The interior layout of the building is split into separate ‘bricks’ which house individual functions that are placed around a central atrium with clerestory windows that allow natural light into the building’s interior (Keskeys, 2016). Durability was a key priority for the police department and resulted in precast concrete panels which served as the façade of the building. The result is a police station design that pushes the model of what police architecture can be and how it interacts with the community while still

feeling as Elizabeth McDonald, BIG’s project leader described it, a “tough building” (Keskeys, 2016).

The 40th Precinct Police Station is similar in scope to my thesis proposal as it establishes a contemporary design for a police precinct within an urban setting. Design aspects specifically applicable to my thesis include the mixed-use space provided for the community and the central atrium that connects the police station's interior functions. While BIG’s design incorporates added resources specifically for the public, the overall design relies on the common motif of police architecture feeling ‘tough’ and intimidating. This reliance on police architecture having a ‘fortress-esque’ quality leaves me skeptical that merely adding a community space will alter the public's perception of law enforcement. Regardless, by using various community-oriented spaces in my proposal well as incorporating a central atrium for police functions, I can design a space that is better oriented towards police officers and the community.

3.6.4. OAK PARK COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER, Chicago

Figure 3.9 Oak Park Community Center (Perkins&Will, 2023)



Located in Chicago’s Oak Park neighborhood, the Oak Park Community Recreation Center is a three-story, 42,000-square-foot community center with a wide range of interior

programming. Bryan Schabel, the Design Director for the project said, “We pushed the program to the limits of the site to fit everything in, but carefully calibrated the plans and facades to provide a street presence that displays the activities and invites the public to participate.” (Pintos, 2023). Within the community center, visitors enjoy access to inclusive locker facilities, childcare services, versatile meeting spaces, and an esports lounge. Ascending to the second level by a grand staircase in the lobby, visitors meet a gymnasium with basketball courts, alongside a fully equipped fitness center, a multi-purpose group fitness studio, and the office suite of the Community Mental Health Board. Suspended above the gym on the third floor is a walking track (Sheridan, 2023). By providing various public uses, this community center is a welcoming addition to the Oak Park neighborhood.

The Oak Park Community Center is a case study that highlights several ways in which my proposal can connect with the surrounding community. The community center effectively incorporates a wide range of community spaces that are oriented towards the street and enhanced by transparent windows that invite natural light, making it more welcoming to pedestrians and motorists passing by. By adopting a comparable strategy of orienting community spaces towards the street and employing windows that emphasize transparency, my proposal can foster a better connection with the community through its design.

3.6.5. HIDDEN CREEK COMMUNITY CENTER, Hillsboro

Figure 3.10 Hidden Creek Community Center (Opsis Architecture, 2021)



The Hidden Creek Community Center, found in Hillsboro, Oregon is a 51,500 sq-ft mass timber community center designed by the Opsis Architecture group based in Portland. The center features a gymnasium equipped with two basketball courts, dance studios, weight rooms, several community rooms, and an outdoor futsal court. According to The Architect's Newspaper (2022), the design is one of the first of its kind in the nation, employing a post and beam frame to support cross-laminated-timber (CLT) floor and roof planes [Figure #]. The building is designed to achieve net zero energy with a substantial solar panel system, alongside natural ventilation, water conservation strategies, and intentional daylighting (AIA Oregon, 2022). Through the effective use of mass timber, this building caters to the community, offering multifunctional spaces and facilities designed to address the needs of all community members while also prioritizing environmental sustainability

This community center serves as a valuable precedent that showcases the essential elements required for implementing mass timber in a multi-functional facility. The integration of various passive and active design solutions, including solar panels, natural ventilation, and water

conservation, all provide valuable insights that can influence my proposal. Furthermore, the utilization of mass timber alongside concrete paneling in the gymnasium serves as another key aspect informing my thesis. By embracing mass timber as the primary structural system and leveraging its advantages across my design, I aim to craft a space that is not only inclusive and inviting but also environmentally sustainable. This approach ensures that my proposed design results in a space that enriches the community experience while minimizing the environmental impact.

3.7. Detailed Space Program

Table 3.1 Space Program (Made by Author)

1st Level		Area	2nd Level		Area
Community			Community		
Corridor Hall	2600		Large Auditorium	4750	
Café	500				
Multi-Purpose Room(s)	2700				
Help Desk	300		Wellness Center		
E-Sports Lounge	500		Fitness	3775	
Barbershop	500		Gym Track	3000	
Courtyard	520		Restrooms	600	
Restrooms	600				
			Police		
Wellness Center			Relaxation Suite	420	
Gym	770		Office	1200	
Men's Locker Rooms	840		Open Office	780	
Women's Locker Rooms	840		EOC/Training Room	1400	
Family Locker Rooms	110		Investigations Division	1380	
Mixed-use Rooms	700		Interview Suite	120	
Offices	1050		Storage	1280	
			Restrooms	900	
Police					
Lobby	880				
Help Desk	650				
Lounge	800				
Offices	500				
Kitchen	300				
Conference Room	620				
Booking/Holding	2000				
Sally Port	850				
Officer Locker Room(s)	680				
Storage	450				
Armory	120				
Food Bank					
Lobby	950				
Offices	600				
Storage	1200				
Community Kitchen	780				
First Level Total		23910	Second Level Spaces Total		19605
Total - Fac./Circ./Walls		38600	Total - Fac./Circ./Walls		26500
TOTAL SPACES					43515
Total - Fac./Circ./Walls					65100

4. RESULTS

4.1. Final Project Description

Figure 4.1 Rendered View of Community Safety Center from Lake Street



The final project design for this thesis is a 65,000 sq. ft mixed-use community safety center that houses a police station, various public spaces, a wellness center, and a food bank. The design is modern in style while utilizing mass timber construction. The materials chosen include a dark even-drag brick on the street level which is durable and provides space for several community murals to be placed along the building façade. The second level is wrapped in an aluminum wrapper which helps break up the massing and distinguishes the street level from the second level. Windows and curtain walls are placed towards Lake Street to allow the interior spaces to be more inviting while also providing views from the interior to public spaces such as the plaza, recreation space, and Lake Street. Wood accenting is additionally used in the second

level façade to soften the harder materials (brick and metal) and contrast the darker tones of the facility while hinting at the mass timber elements inside.

4.2. Objectives

The objectives I established for the design of this thesis were:

1. Embrace a mixed-use typology.

The integration of mixed-use typologies into my design primarily served as a driver for social interaction and human connection. By incorporating other spaces into the police station such as community spaces, a wellness center, and a food bank, the facility can foster an environment that can break down societal barriers and increase the community's social capital (Gang, J., et al, 2015). This also accomplishes the first design principle in Studio Gang's *Polis Station* of expanding the programming within the station.

2. Utilize civic assets for community campus.

Positioning the site near civic amenities like the public library and public transportation was strategic for the project. This decision ensured that essential resources were readily available within a short distance, enhancing accessibility for community members, particularly those without vehicles. Moreover, this proximity encourages collaborations between the police and other community groups or organizations, leading to potential training opportunities for officers and a broader range of resources for the public (Gang, J., et al, 2015). Moreover, through the thoughtful design of landscaping and exterior areas, incorporating elements like playgrounds, community gardens, and athletic courts, the campus transforms into a welcoming and practical space, catering to the community's needs.

3. Leverage mass timber construction.

Historically, police stations have prioritized durability and the projection of security and authority when it comes to their architectural style. As a result, a common theme in police architecture has been the utilization of metal and concrete for both structural and exterior elements in the design. The decision to utilize mass timber construction came about due to the review of the Lincoln County Police Department, designed by FFA Architecture and Interiors which showed that this form of construction could successfully be used within the model of a police station. Using mass timber in this project instead of traditional construction methods offers additional benefits. These include environmental advantages from utilizing a sustainable construction method with embodied carbon and incorporating wood in the interior design to create a warmer ambiance, proven to reduce user stress levels (Abed, J., et al., 2020). The use of Mass-Timber in Minnesota is feasible due to the ample amounts of forests in Minnesota that can be resourced sustainably for the project which would serve as both a reinvestment into local economies and a sustainable supply chain.

4. Promote healthy interactions within the interior

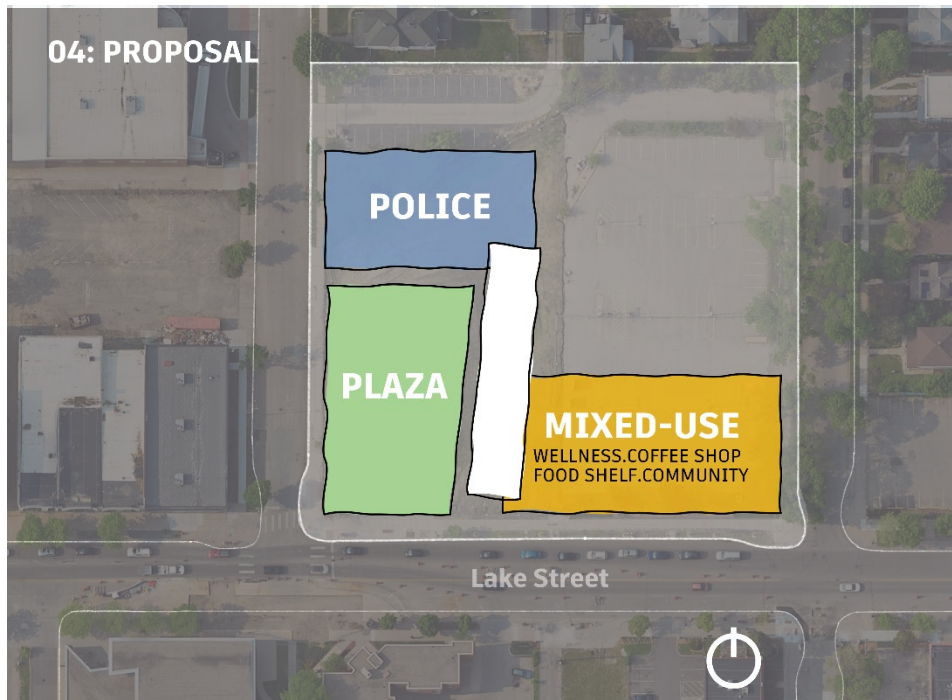
The programming of the interior space is important because you can have a mixed-use facility that provides multiple uses and does not allow the users to easily interact with one another. Because of this reality, it is important to design the space to encourage interaction. To accomplish this, the four primary spaces (wellness, community, food bank, and the police station) all share direct access to the central corridor which serves as the backbone of the facility and allows easy access to other spaces. Other community spaces such as the computer lab, barbershop, and café are located along the corridor to enhance the community aspect of the design.

4.3. Project Documentation

4.3.1. Design Process

4.3.1.1. First Iteration

Figure 4.2 First Iteration Diagram



In the early stages of designing the project, I was unsure about placing the police and mixed-use spaces directly next to each other, however, after having a virtual discussion with Third Precinct Inspector Jose Gomez from the Minneapolis Police Department, he encouraged me to push the design further and believed that the line between the police station and community spaces should be blurred. The first iteration kept the community and mixed-use spaces divided and Inspector Gomez believed that the facility could be more cohesive. This discussion was extremely beneficial in the design process as it challenged me as a designer to imagine a space that truly pushed the limits of what a police station could be and how it interacts within a mixed-use design.

4.3.1.2. Second Iteration

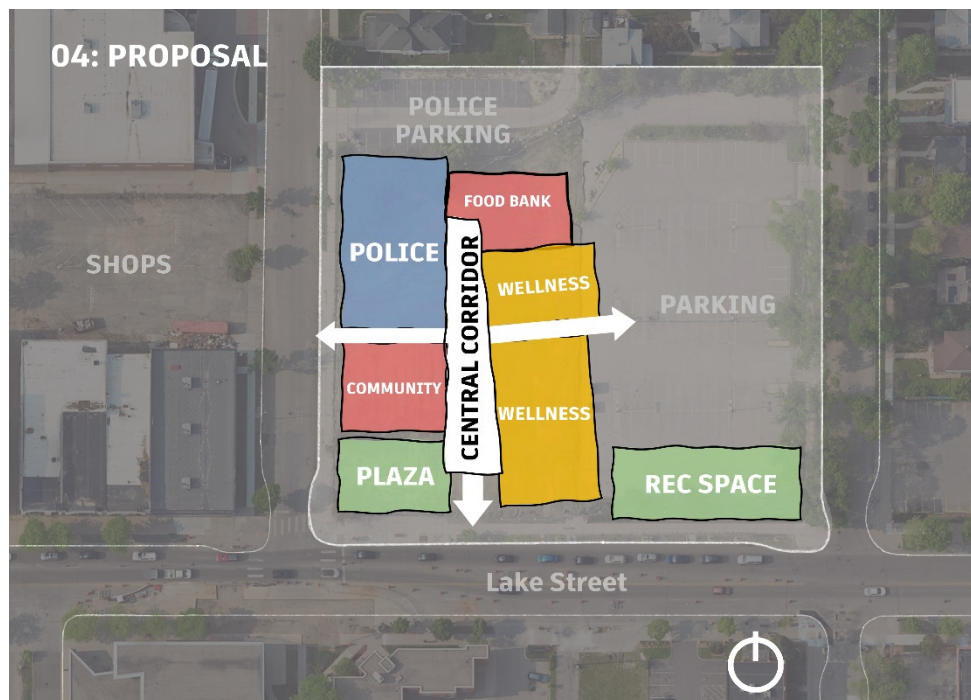
Figure 4.3 Second Iteration Diagram



The second iteration of the design focused on a shared courtyard that was positioned at the center of the facility. The intention behind the design was to provide a shared community space that was both accessible to every user and provided a secure and peaceful experience outdoors. This iteration at first seemed to accomplish all my goals, however, through the evolution of this design, the courtyard seemed to serve more as an obstacle for connection especially when considering the weather in Minnesota would limit the use of the space in the winter months. The courtyard also pushed separate spaces further apart than intended and encouraged users to use multiple entrances that would have limited the interaction with other users using different spaces.

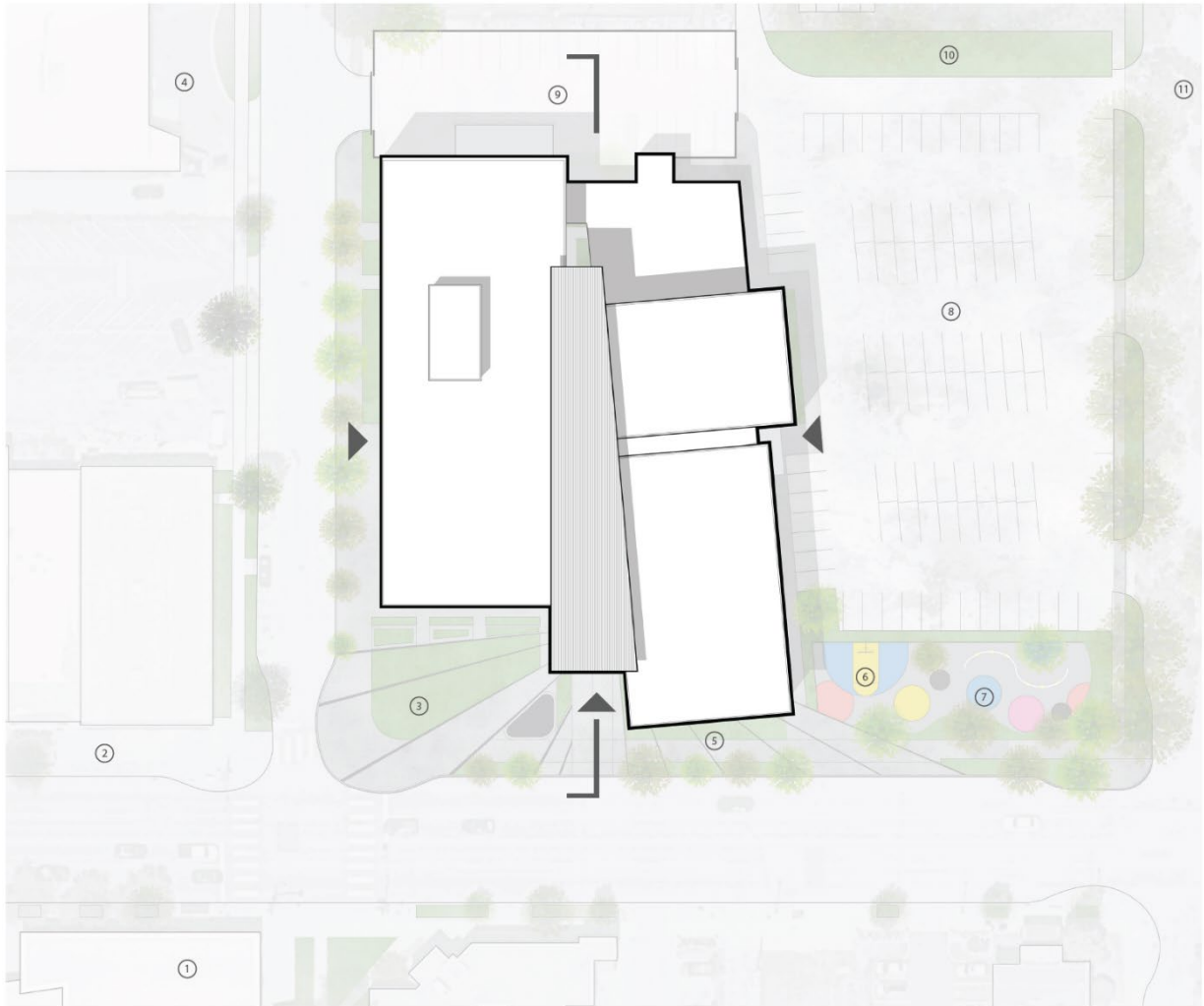
4.3.1.3. Third Iteration

Figure 4.4 Third Iteration Diagram



The third iteration solved many of the problems faced with the courtyard-centric design by creating instead a shared central hall that runs the entire length of the facility and connects all the different spaces. This hall also allowed the different spaces to be closer to each other. The wellness spaces were rotated by 5 degrees to break the rigidity of the design and make the space more inviting. This slight adjustment meant that as one enters from Lake Street, the space gradually gets smaller and visually draws you in through the repeated pattern of mass timber arches that support the roof above [Figure ##]. Additional connections to the surrounding site are made by east-west corridors while the central hall connects to Lake Street and frames the public plaza.

4.3.2. Final Images



Site Plan



- | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| ① Public Library | ⑤ Community Mural | ⑨ Secure Police Parking |
| ② Lake Street Shops | ⑥ Outdoor Basketball Court | ⑩ Community Gardens |
| ③ Public Plaza | ⑦ Playground | ⑪ Residential Neighborhood |
| ④ Charter School | ⑧ Parking | |

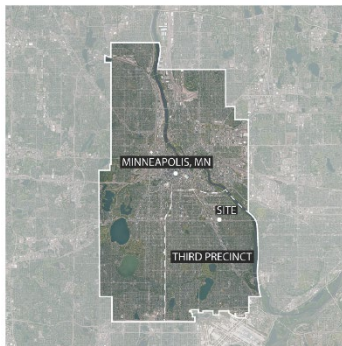


Figure 4.5 Site Plan and Context



First Level Plan

Community

- ① Corridor Hall
- ② Cafe
- ③ Multi-Purpose Room(s)
- ④ Help Desk
- ⑤ E-Sports Lounge
- ⑥ Barbershop
- ⑦ Courtyard

Wellness

- ⑬ Gym
- ⑭ Men's Locker Rooms
- ⑮ Women's Locker Rooms
- ⑯ Family Locker Rooms
- ⑰ Mixed-use Room
- ⑱ Offices

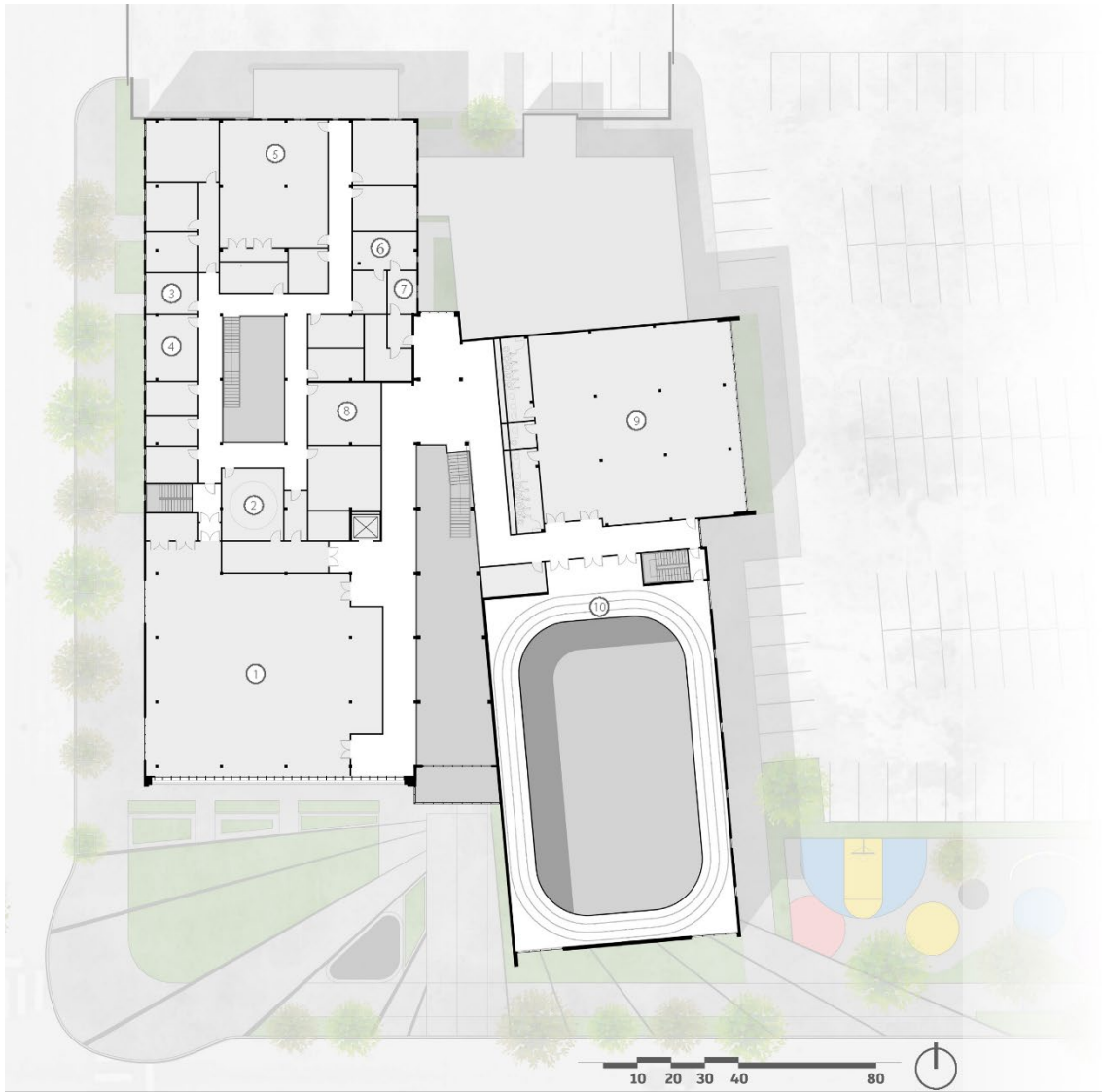
Police

- ⑧ Lobby
- ⑨ Help Desk
- ⑩ Lounge
- ⑪ Offices
- ⑫ Kitchen
- ⑬ Conference Room
- ⑭ Booking/Holding
- ⑮ Sally Port

Food Bank

- ⑲ Lobby
- ⑳ Offices
- ㉑ Storage
- ㉒ Community Kitchen

Figure 4.6 First Level Floorplan



Second Level Plan

- Police**
- ② Relaxation Suite
- ③ Office
- ④ Open Offices
- ⑤ EOC/Training Room
- ⑥ Investigations Division
- ⑦ Interview Suite
- ⑧ Storage
- Community**
- ① Auditorium
- Wellness**
- ⑨ Fitness
- ⑩ Gym Track

Figure 4.7 Second Level Floorplan

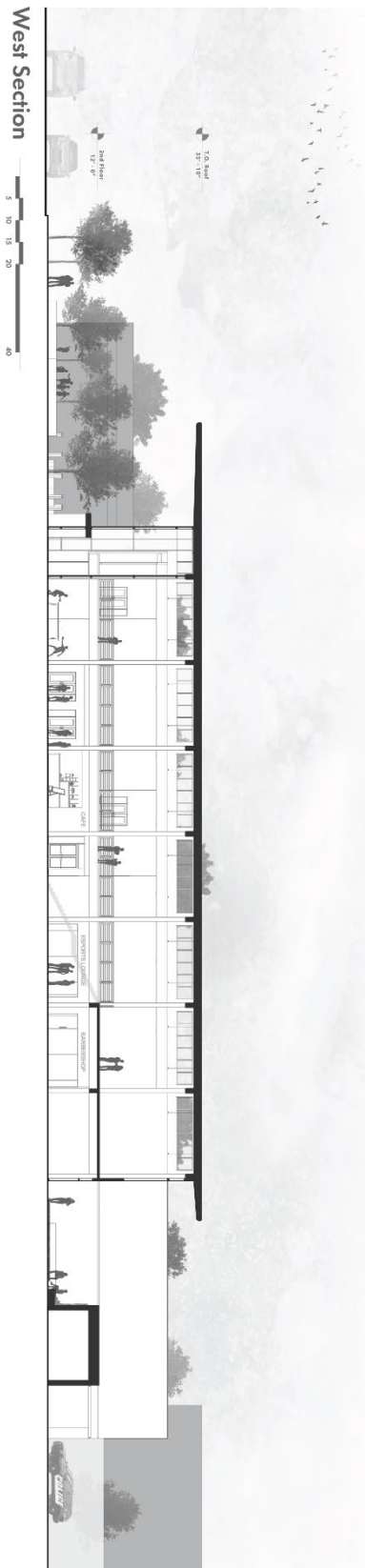


Figure 4.8 West Section



Figure 4.9 Central Hall



Figure 4.10 Police Lobby

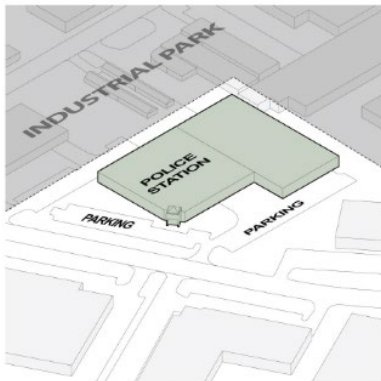


Figure 4.11 Gym Track



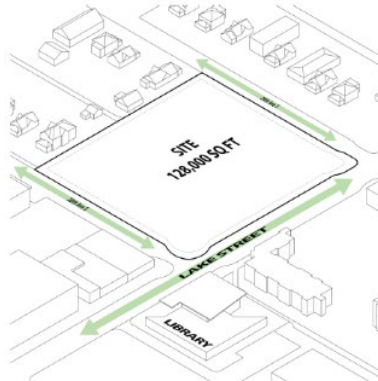
Figure 4.12 Police Station Lounge

Figure ##: Police Lounge



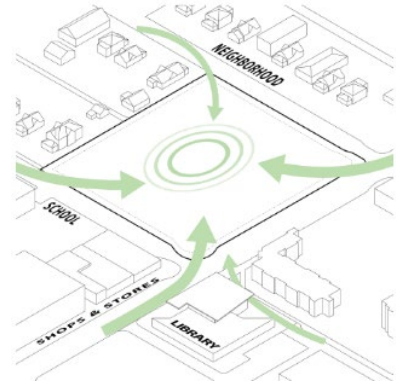
1. TYPICAL POLICE STATION

The prevailing model of police stations prioritize vehicular access and proximity to main roadways over integration/ accessibility with the surrounding community.



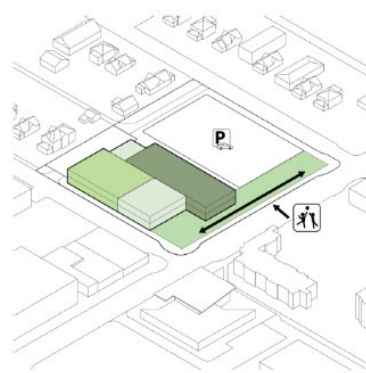
2. PROPOSED SITE

The proposed site embraces the community as an asset. Located along Lake Street, the site is surrounded by local shops, with the public library just across the street.



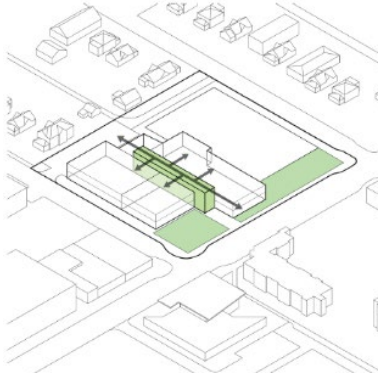
3. SITE RELATIONSHIPS

Situated at a transitional point, the site acts as a link between civic, commercial, and residential nodes.



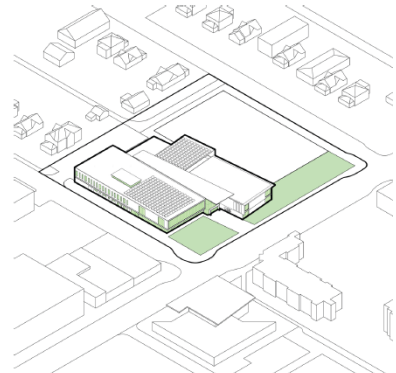
4. BASIC SITE OBJECTIVE

Different functions and spaces are positioned within the site, promoting a mixed-use approach. Public green space is oriented towards Lake Street.



5. CREATING CONNECTIONS

A welcoming central corridor connects the various spaces, encouraging spontaneous interactions amongst the users.



6. ACTIVATE MASS

The facade is activated and windows are strategically placed to overlook the public plaza, encouraging visitors to engage with both indoor and outdoor spaces.

Figure 4.13 Massing Diagrams

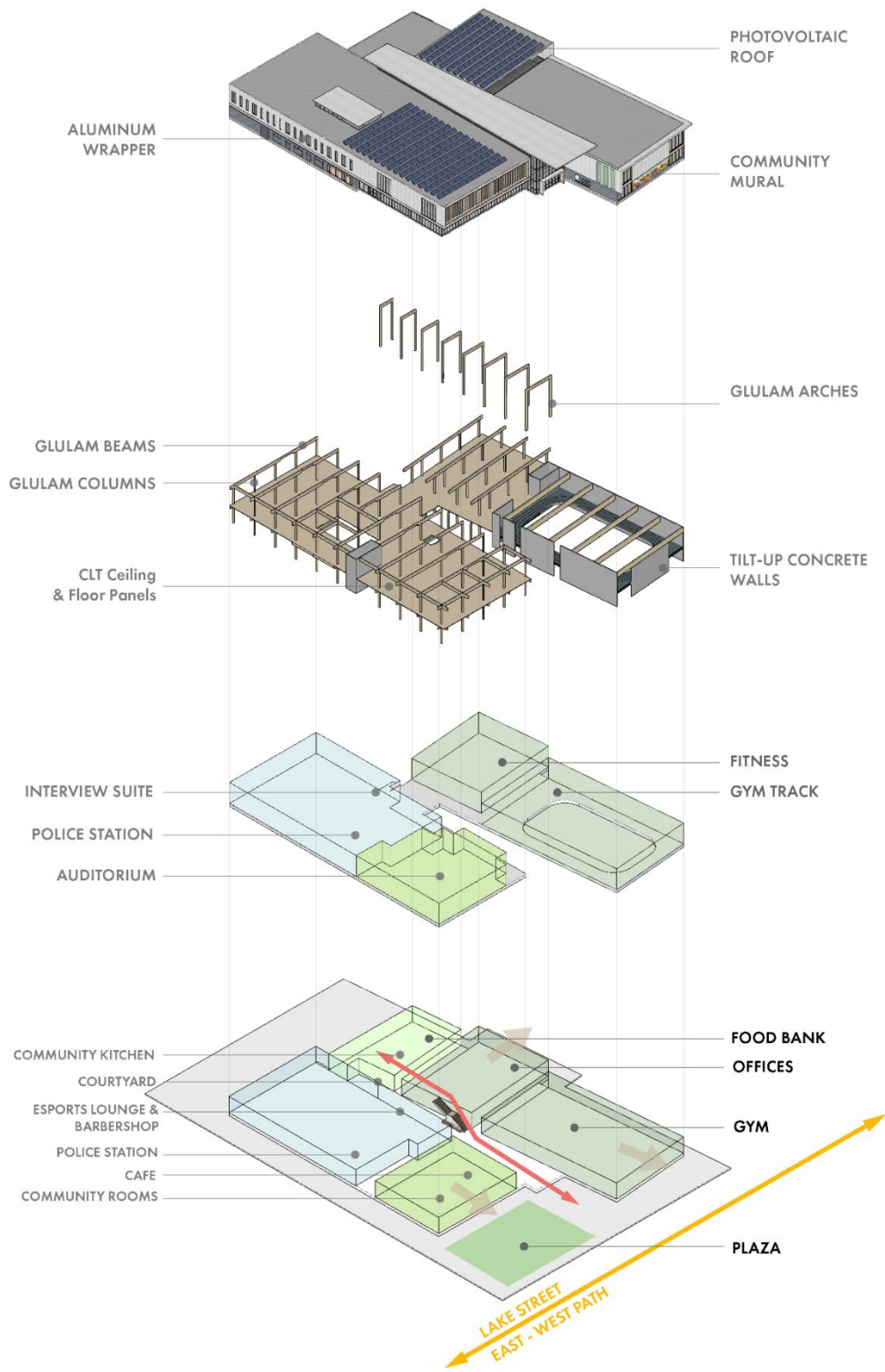


Figure 4.14 Exploded Isometric Diagram

Discussion

The presentation of this thesis and the subsequent discussion brought up several valuable points for future exploration, as well as some areas of concern. One avenue for future research involves conducting surveys with police officers, social workers, and members of the public. These surveys would serve to better understand how to create user-centered spaces for both the police and the community. Additionally, exploring the integration of Mental Health Services into police stations is crucial, as police often encounter incidents involving mental health issues. Establishing services that can educate officers on handling such situations effectively while also serving as a resource to the public could significantly enhance the thesis and the project.

Furthermore, investigating the optimal site location for police stations is essential. Balancing the station's role as a community resource with its ability to respond to incidents and emergencies requires careful consideration. Utilizing GIS tools can help analyze how different sites impact police response times while also facilitating better community engagement through police architecture.

One concern discussed in this thesis is the inherent risk of co-locating police and public facilities. While integrating a police station into a mixed-use facility aims to foster community interaction, maintaining the security of the police facility remains paramount. This dynamic underscores the need for a nuanced understanding of the relationship between the police and the community in the 21st century, particularly considering the challenging and sometimes life-threatening situations police officers encounter in their line of duty. This ongoing discussion is crucial for shaping the future of these relationships.

5. CONCLUSION

One of the primary challenges facing American communities is the lack of trust between the police and minority communities, specifically the African American community. This thesis proposes that design can support community policing efforts and serve as a tool in rebuilding trust between the police and the public. Through the research, key strategies have been identified, such as embracing mixed-use typologies, repurposing civic assets, integrating mass timber construction, and promoting healthy interactions within the built environment. These design interventions aim to cultivate spaces where community members can engage with law enforcement in an atmosphere conducive to trust-building. There remains a pressing need for further exploration and refinement in police station architecture. While architectural solutions alone cannot resolve the complex issues at hand, architects play a pivotal role in envisioning and implementing spaces that facilitate positive social change and contribute to the restoration of trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

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APPENDIX A. HEADING FOR APPENDIX USING “GS – MAJOR HEADING” STYLE

Please read our appendix format guidelines thoroughly, as they contain specific instructions pertaining to how your appendix material should be presented. Note that if you have only one appendix, then remove the letter A from the major heading, but keep using the letter A in any table and figure numbers to denote that they are *appendix* tables and figures.

Table A1. Title of Appendix Table in “Appendix Table title” Style.

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
Row 1	“Table text” style		
Row 2			

Note: This style (Table note) is used for any table notes.



Figure A1. Title of Appendix Figure in “Appendix Figure title” Style.

Note: This style (Figure note) is used for any figure notes.

APPENDIX B. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information about disquisitions, timelines, deadlines, graduation requirements, and other resources, see the North Dakota State University Graduate School website (<http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/>).

For more information about the guidelines for electronic submission of disquisitions, and for downloadable templates of disquisition sections, see the online Format Guidelines (http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/graduating_students/dtp/format/).

For more information about citations, academic honesty, and how to use style manuals, contact the Graduate Center for Writers to make an appointment for a writing consultation. Additional resources are also available on their website (www.ndsu.edu/cfwriters/).

For more information about using Microsoft Word and other software applications, contact the Learning and Applied Innovation Center (LAIC). You can use the walk-in consulting service located in Quentin Burdick Building 150C, or you can find resources on their website (<https://www.ndsu.edu/it/help/laic/>).