

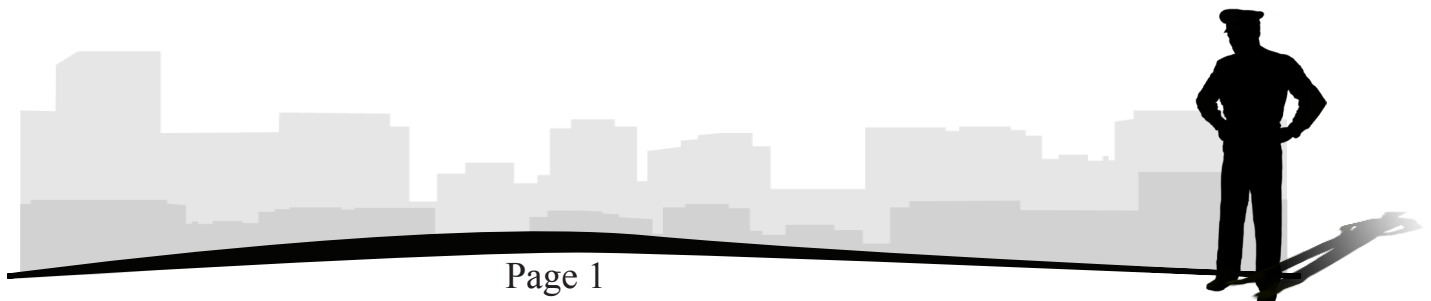
## Introduction

This project is a proposal for the revitalization of downtown Rapid City. Rapid City has for the past years been growing outwards. There have been improvements to building facades. There have been new buildings constructed. There have been entire building renovations and additions. One thing that is lacking is planned, designed, and inviting public exterior spaces. My project recognizes the need for these spaces and outlines a core area to begin the revitalization process.

The site provides countless possibilities with rich history, diverse demographics, and an ever increasing tourist base. The goal is to create a place that has both a strong sense of community and a comfortable image, as well as a setting and activities and uses that collectively add up to something more than the sum of its often simple parts.

Being in a good public space is comforting. Being in a great public space is absolutely invigorating, even spiritual. To see people comfortable, natural, and engaged is to see them at their best. They come out of themselves; they participate in community life; they learn the mores of their culture and community. Good spaces breed good activity. Bad spaces breed little to no positive activity and are often a breeding ground for negative activity. (Anonymous)

The focus area consists of 4 blocks of 6th Street, one block of Kansas City Street, and one block of 7th Street. *Refer to figure 1.1.* The purpose of this focus group is to take an in-depth look at the aforementioned area and gather input from all viewpoints, and to clarify the issues, needs, and desires of all concerned.



## Ten Benefits of Creating Good Public Spaces

### 1. Support local economies:

Often times the creation of a good public space is the catalyst for new and proposed construction. It is a common occurrence to be the beginning of a downtown's renaissance.

### 2. Attract business investments:

In downtown Oak Park, Illinois recommendations were made to replace a failed pedestrian mall with the original street. Even before the changes were fully implemented, there was a 100% increase in inquiries from potential tenants, and the vacancy rate eventually decreased from 30% to 5%.

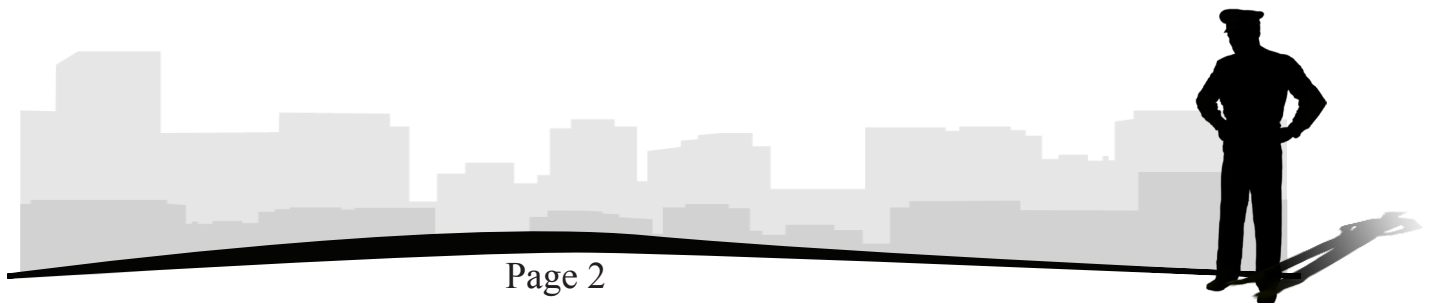
Triangulation is the process by which some external stimulus provides a linkage between people and prompts strangers to talk to other strangers as if they knew each other (Holly Whyte)

### 3. Attract tourism:

The creation of a central node or destination gives tourists a place to visit with a multitude of activities to enjoy while there. Family oriented tourist attractions have more appeal when there is a varied spectrum that accommodates the differing ages.

### 4. Provide cultural opportunities:

Public spaces can be used as a way of showing visitors the cultural influences a particular town or city might have. A secondary benefit of such a place often acts as a source of civic pride.



## Ten Benefits of Creating Good Public Spaces

### 5. Encourage volunteerism:

When designing a new public space one way of gaining public support is by allowing the involvement in the creation of the space. In Corpus Christi, Texas, 1500 adults and children helped to make ceramic tiles decorating the benches, light poles, columns and central archway of Staples Street Station, a bus transfer center.

### 6. Reduce crime:

In the early 1980s, seven-acre Bryant Park in New York City was over-run by drug dealers - office employees and tourists didn't dare venture in. With the changes recommended, the park now attracts 10,000 people on a sunny day, and presents a popular film festival on summer evenings.

### 7. Improve pedestrian safety:

By simply changing parking and lane configurations there can be a substantial increase in pedestrian traffic and possibly an increase in parking spaces.

### 8. Increase use of public transportation:

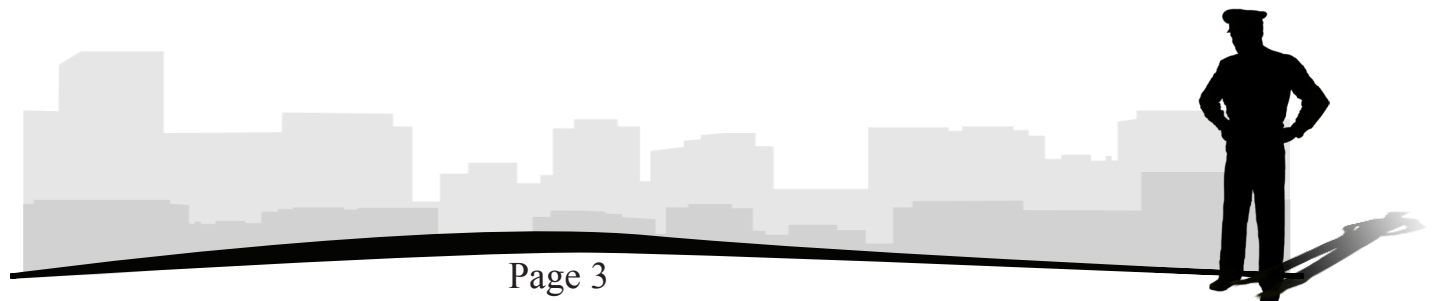
The creation of a good public space can bring new life into public transportation and increase ridership.

### 9. Improve public health:

Research shows that in neighborhoods where people walk less, people are more likely to be overweight. By designing more walkable neighborhoods tenants are more inclined to walk and exercise.

### 10. Improve the environment:

Increased awareness of the importance of open spaces increases responsible use of these resources, and reclaims waterfronts, rivers and meadows.



## Planning Goals and Key Issues

### Develop the Downtown as a Community Resource

- Presidential Plaza
- Native American Plaza
- Mixed use Housing / Business building

### Enhance the Pedestrian Experience

- Visitor services
- Traffic Calming
- Events and Entertainment
- Street side eateries
- Enhanced pedestrian paving / Street paving
- Additional pedestrian amenities - trash receptacles, historical lighting, special signage, etc.

### Increase the Efficiency of Parking, Pedestrian and Vehicular Traffic Flow

- Minimize vehicular / pedestrian conflicts
- Designate private / non-private parking

### Strengthen Downtown Image and Character

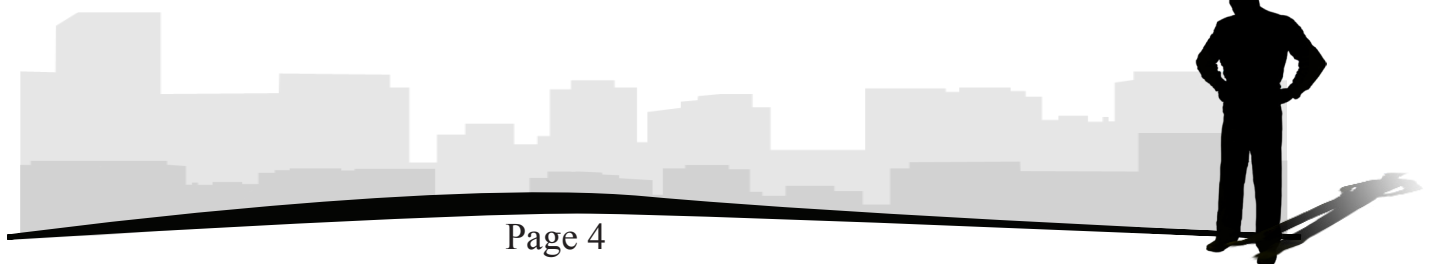
- Landscaping
- Lighting
- Signage
- Walkways
- Public Spaces
- Historical References

### Develop a Space Utilization and Growth Plan

- Optimize use of existing space
- Accommodate existing and proposed programs
- Weekend, evening, and summer use
- Integrate and increase technology

### Enhance Downtown Security and Safety

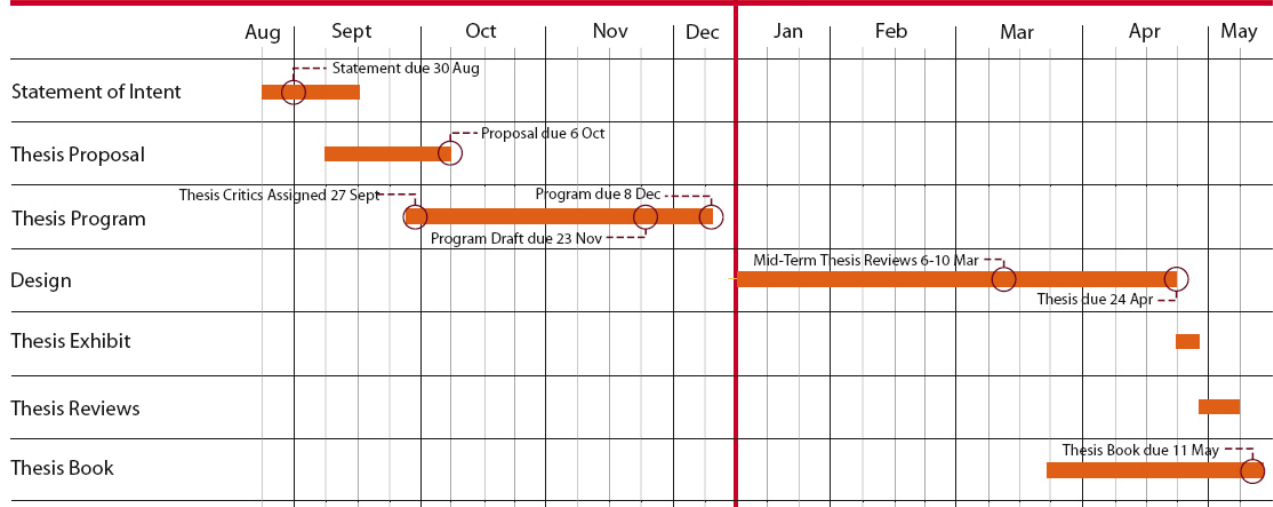
- Lighting
- Visual Openness



Supplemental Information

Fall Semester 2005

Spring Semester 2006



Design Thesis Schedule



Sweeny Building



Test Rendering

