Patrick Steven Paige
Bachelor of Architecture

PUBLIC LIFE IN PATHS AND SPACE

Patrick Paige
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Professor Tricia Stuth

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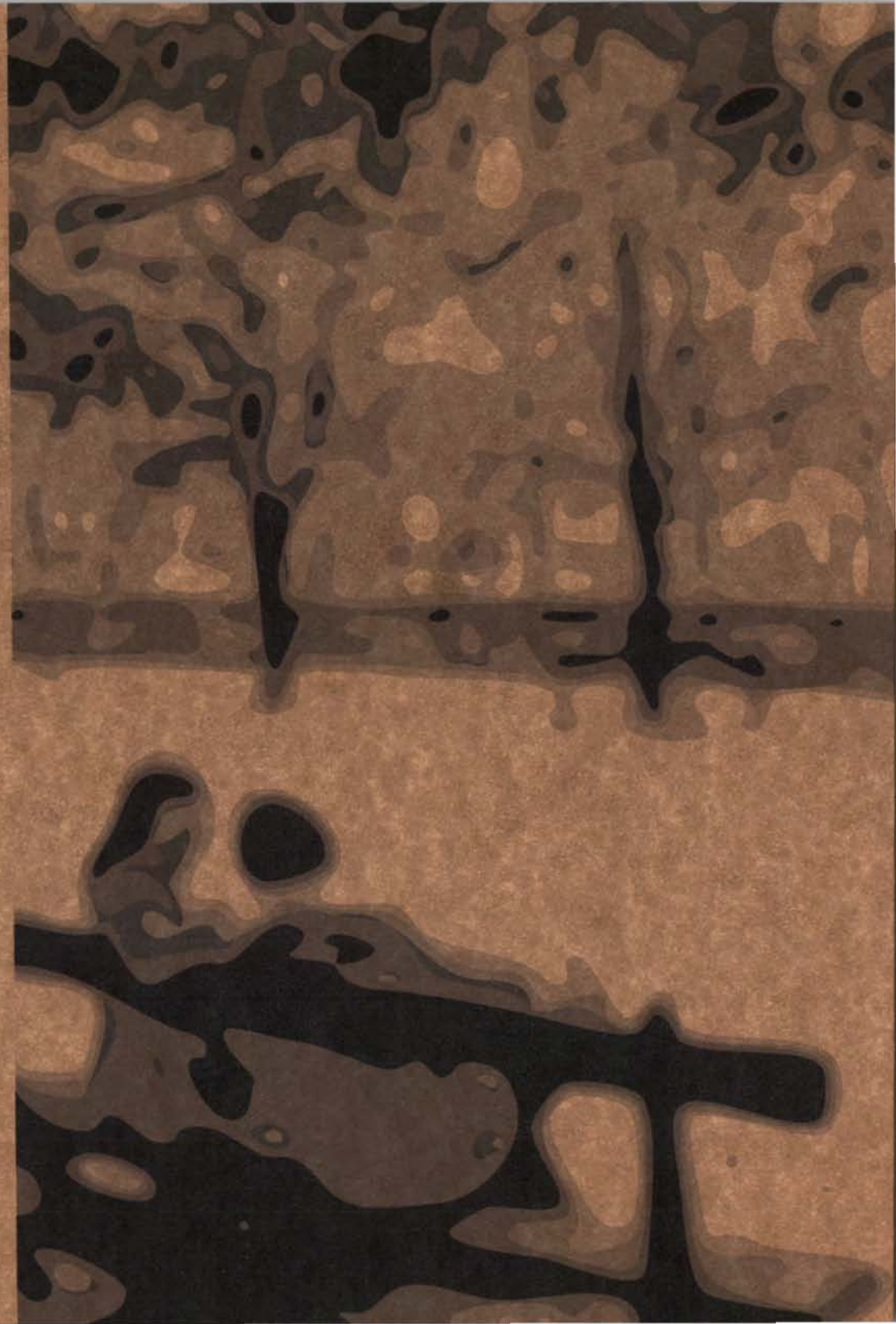
FRAMING

"The first job of every architect is not to make a great building, but to make a great street, a neighborhood, a city." – Stroud Watson



Strengthening a Community

Connections and Encounters

Civic Plaza

Piazza del Campo

Cities are defined by their urban fabric. Patterns of a city, common aesthetics, and that certain *je ne sais quoi* of a city all come together to create the fabric.

But like cement, which awaits a form work to become something spectacular, urban fabric likewise needs structure. The structure is created by roads, sidewalks, plazas and parks. In other words, the paths and spaces of the public realm also bind a city together. They are the stitching of the urban suit connecting otherwise disparate pieces.

But for most American cities, the stitching struggles to be anything more than a required function. As James Kunstler puts it, "[the traffic engineer's] mission is to make sure that wheeled vehicles are happy,"[1] to the detriment of any other objective. Vast networks of roads whisk people back and forth from one building to the next with no desire to explore the very connectivity that defines travel. Connectivity, in fact, is considered a detriment to efficient commuting: the fewer intersections, the better. Why stop in a neighborhood when one can simply fly through it without blinking?

Highway efficiency: minimize connections.

This situation of 'anti-connectivity' also leads to the failure of many attempts at making public spaces. Without understanding what defines the public realm, many planners have created what are essentially holes in the urban fabric. Voids not only go unused, but are unsightly and – even worse – embarrassing to the city. This occurs despite the otherwise well-intentioned attempt at improving the quality of life in a community.

Community is a tricky concept: in common usage it may be used to describe any number of things. For a parent, community could be defined by the life of the child, for a businessman it could be potential customers and for the politician, it could be a matter of lip-service. But there is an idea behind the word that may be universally understood.

Kunstler asserts, "[community] is a living organism based on a web of interdependencies – which is to say, a local economy. It expresses itself physically as *connectedness...*" (italics his)[2] and that this occurs in the public realm of paths and space.

By the reckoning of the Oxford English Dictionary, community is "social intercourse; fellowship, communion," and "life in association with others; society, the social state."[3]

Richmond, Virginia / Park Avenue Sidewalk

Jane Jacob's "Eyes on the Street" concept is derived in great part from the idea that people in an area form connections with others - not necessarily physical or emotional connections, but a visual one: "the buildings on a street equipped to handle strangers... must be oriented to the street. They cannot turn their backs or blank sides on it and leave it blind."[4]

All three of these sources treat community as a word describing **a network of human interaction**. So when the paths of a city inhibit interaction, the strength of a community is diminished. Kunstler adds, "Some shoppers will spend [a great deal of time] haunting the supermarket aisles because it is practically the *only* place where they

can be in the public realm and engage in some purposeful activity around other live human beings. Here they even stand the chance of running into someone they know."[5]

A common attempt at "community building" is beautification: making the public aesthetics match the public perception of what a strong community *looks* like. But the ugliest town on the planet may foster an intimate network of relationships that result in a strong community. And the opposite is also true: aesthetics Band-aids with little human connection will result in a mere shell of a town, a false front obscuring a society of "supermarket haunters." Community building must take place at the structural level. The most beautiful urban fabric can't be held together by weak stitches.

How may paths and space facilitate public life?

In simple terms, paths and space bring people together. Given that a community is defined by the connections between people, paths and space are, then, community builders.

Does that supposition follow? No, because a connection is not made every time people come together. Sitting in traffic on the Interstate – a path – is not an activity that strengthens communities.

There is a system of encounters, however, that builds on the system of human interaction. They are *routine* or *casual* encounters and *serendipitous* encounters.

"The street, which is the public realm of America, is now a barrier to community life." – Andres Duany

"All truly great thoughts are conceived by walking."

– Friedrich Nietzsche

Many routine encounters are limited to specific, chosen times and places. "Soccer practice is at ____," "We're gathering for dinner at ____," "The church social is from ____ to ____."

This is the category that everyday events occur in. Routine establishes familiarity with a place, and familiarity leads to comfort. Routine is taking a walk down the street and recognizing faces.

While there is nothing wrong with scheduled encounters, a community built entirely of them lacks vitality and dynamism. The aforementioned supermarket scenario is an example of an unexpected encounter.

The serendipitous encounter is running into an old friend. It is finding a wonderful painting at a market. This kind of encounter is the discovery of place, a sudden realization about something that was otherwise routine.

The expected and the unexpected: these form the basis on which place and people are approached. The two public spaces following, Civic Plaza and Piazza del Campo, both have siting, program, and design issues that effect the encounters possible within their spaces. This, in turn, greatly effects how successful they are as community elements. ◻

Endnotes

1. James Howard Kunstler, *The Geography of Nowhere* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), 115.
2. Kunstler 186.
3. "Community," Oxford English Dictionary, http://dictionary.oed.com.
4. Jane Jacobs, The Death and Life of Great American Cities (New York: Random House, 1993), 35.
5. Kunstler 119.

Civic Plaza, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

The entrance to Civic Plaza. The steps and retaining walls, while they define the plaza space, also visually discourage passing through the space.

Murfreesboro, Tennessee's Civic Plaza is an example of a public space which was not designed to support serendipitous encounters, despite its location in an active downtown neighborhood.

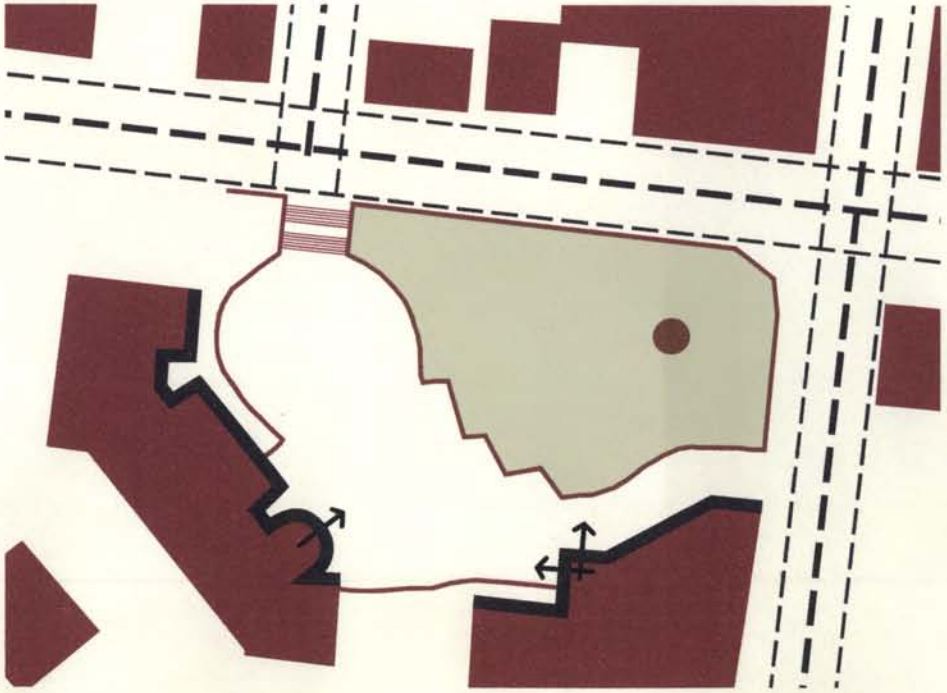
The plaza is formed by the main city library, the city hall, and two roads. The plaza might not even exist if not for the parking garage on top of which the complex sits.

The plaza is empty most of the time. There is very little reason to be in it. If one is looking for a quiet spot for respite, the adjoining park offers shaded benches. The library has space, both indoors and out, for small meetings or classes. There are no businesses on the plaza that could spill into the space.

Given those problems, Civic Plaza could still be used for informal gatherings. There is seating available. Unfortunately, no one wants to sit there. Except for the rotunda of city hall, there is nothing of visual interest to look at. There is a fountain, but it is out of sight of most of the seating - and more often than not the fountain is not even on.

The scale of the plaza is also a problem. If there were a steady flow of people through the space or regular events, the size (approximately 130' by 230') would make more sense. But given its empty state, walking through the plaza becomes very uncomfortable. Anyone standing in the middle feels as though they are on display. The

Limited connections and uses prevent Civic Plaza from encouraging interaction among Murfreesboro's residents within the space. The diagram scale is equal to that of the like diagram for Siena.



paving pattern appears to be an attempt at breaking down the scale, but the repetition and size of the pattern are of little help.

The plaza could host the city's formal events, but its siting isn't conducive to events in which the city participates, because just a block to the north is the town square, which hosts a number of major events throughout the year. The square has greater symbolic importance and more flexible space. The space of the square also has much greater visibility and accessibility. ◻

Right: Downtown Murfreesboro and Civic Plaza's relationship to nearby neighborhoods. This map is the same scale as the like map for Siena.

Below: Civic Plaza, the library to the left, and city hall to the right.

Urban Environmental Department

Guidelines, Rental Requirements, and Regulations for the use of the Civic Plaza

7. No hanging, tying, or attachment of awnings, banners, signs, posters, etc., to any building, pavilion, or other fixed object (including plant materials) will be allowed.

8. Any items being moved in, out, or within the plaza area shall be transported in a manner so as not to cause any damage to surfaces, including but not limited to brick pavers, stairs, amphitheater seating, gravel pathways, and landscape beds.

12. No pets or animals are permitted on the plaza except in such cases where the animal is trained to provide assistance to a person who is physically challenged.

13. Bicycles are not to be ridden on the plaza or permitted in garden areas. All bicycles not in use are to be placed in bicycle racks where available.

14. No sports activities using airborne objects (such as balls, Frisbees, etc.) are permitted on the plaza.

15. The fountain may not be used for drinking, swimming, wading, climbing, throwing money, retrieving money, floating boats or other toys, or washing; nor are foreign materials or substances to be placed or poured into the water.

16. Goods may be sold on the hardscape area of the plaza, subject to the following restrictions: No commercial or for-profit sale of goods or services is allowed. Upon proper application, a not-for-profit organization exempt from federal taxation or a governmental subdivision will be allowed to sell goods or services on the hardscape provided that the sale is organized, operated, and controlled by the applicant. This requirement is not met if a not-for-profit organization merely receives the proceeds of the sales activity, or a portion thereof. No goods, including food and beverages, or services may be sold, or offered for sale...

20. Bird seed may be thrown at weddings only at the stairs as the couple is leaving.

<http://www.murfreesborotn.gov/government/urban_environ/civic_plaza_use.htm>

Piazza del Campo, Siena, Italy

Where Civic Plaza struggles to connect to the city of Murfreesboro, Siena's Piazza del Campo is accessed by nearly a dozen different streets and is edged by homes, restaurants, shops, and the city hall. Unlike Civic Plaza, this space is active all day, every day.

The edge of the piazza is activated by the businesses, which spill out into the space and are utilized by both residents and tourists. The interior, broken up into nine segments by paving,[1] provides a more informal area for groups to gather and relax. The Fonte Gaia near the edge not only acts as a piece of civic art in the piazza,[2] but it is a source of fresh, potable water that thirsty travelers and residents can drink.

Even though the Piazza del Campo is larger than Civic Plaza, the scale is appropriate and comfortable. The varying heights of the buildings around the space visually break down the scale. The gentle slope of the ground toward the city hall also makes the piazza seem smaller. Finally, the high level of use means that there are typically people – lots of people – in the piazza. This helps eliminate the "on display" feeling that a visitor to Civic Plaza may have.

Piazza del Campo's relationship to the rest of Siena. This map is the same scale as the like map for Murfreesboro. Note that, while Siena has very specific neighborhoods (the contrada), they are not defined by physical boundaries. Therefore, the zones marked below are an abstraction of the city's organization and not representative of actual neighborhoods.

On a typical day on the Piazza del Campo, residents and tourists fill the space and edges with activity.

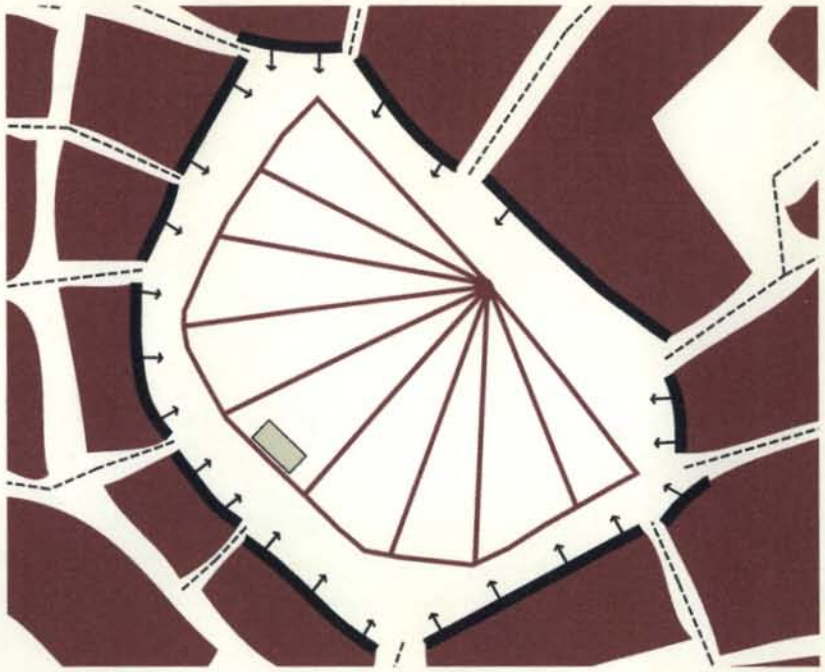
One of the most remarkable things about Piazza del Campo is the radical transformation it undergoes twice a year for il Palio, the horse race between the different contrada of the city. For il Palio, it becomes a highly structured and formal space for the races. During this time thousands of people cram into the piazza and surrounding residences. ◻

Endnotes

1. Christopher Catling, *Eyewitness Travel Guides: Florence & Tuscany* (New York: DK Publishing, 1994), 213.
2. Catling 214.

Right: This diagram is at the same scale as the like diagram for Murfreesboro.

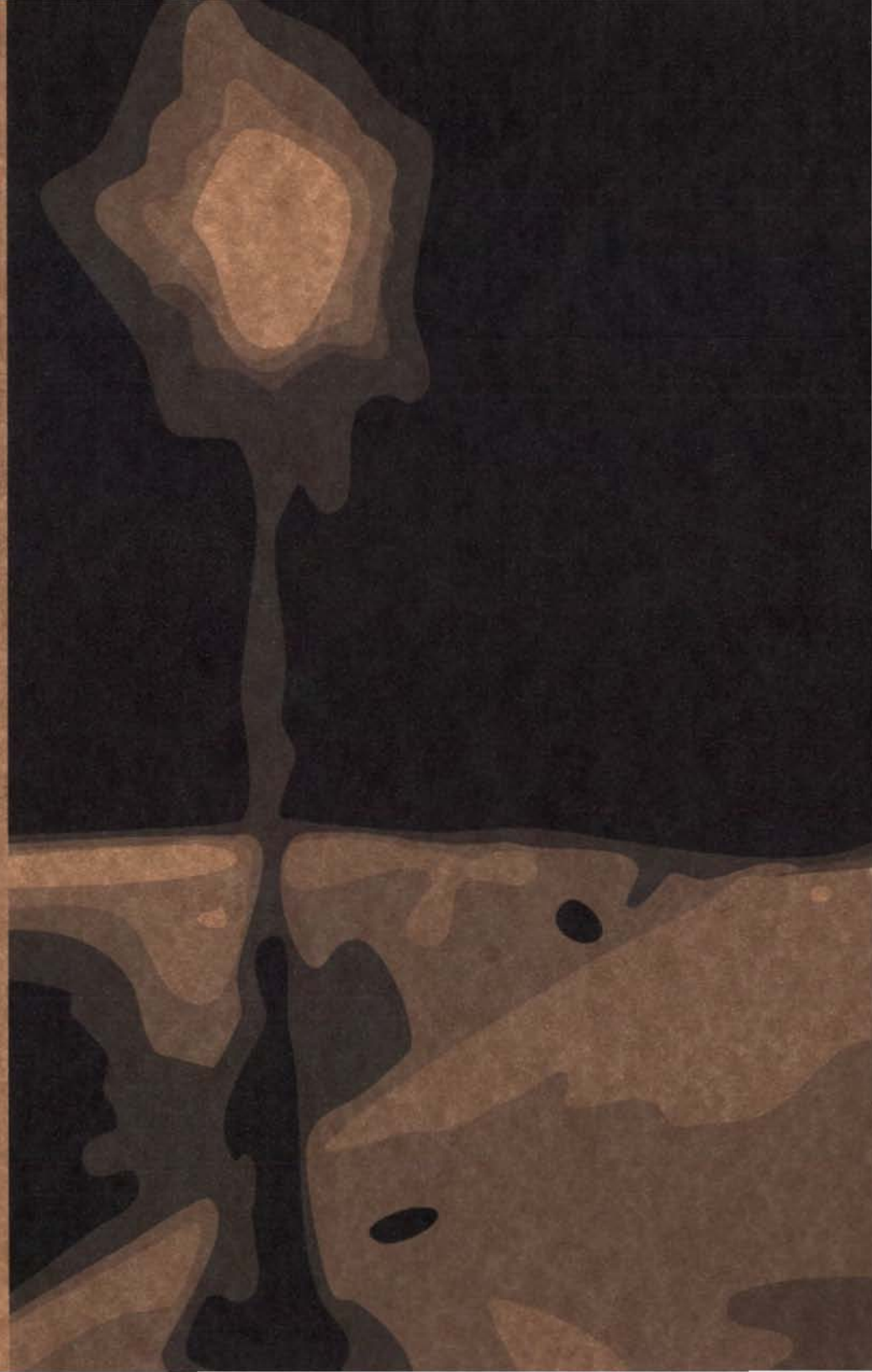
Below: The shadow of Siena's city hall also serves to change the scale of the piazza.



Both of these examples, Civic Plaza and Piazza del Campo, generate connections between people. But for reasons related to their siting, attached program, and design, Piazza del Campo is far more effective at bringing people together. To site such a development, care must be taken in locating and programming.

LOCATING

"[Cumberland Avenue] is Knoxville's melting pot." – Harry Moskos



Cumberland Avenue

The Site

History

Analysis

Southeast United States
East Tennessee
Knoxville Metro
Central Knoxville
Cumberland Avenue
The Site

Southeast United States
East Tennessee
Knoxville Metro
Central Knoxville
Cumberland Avenue
The Site

States

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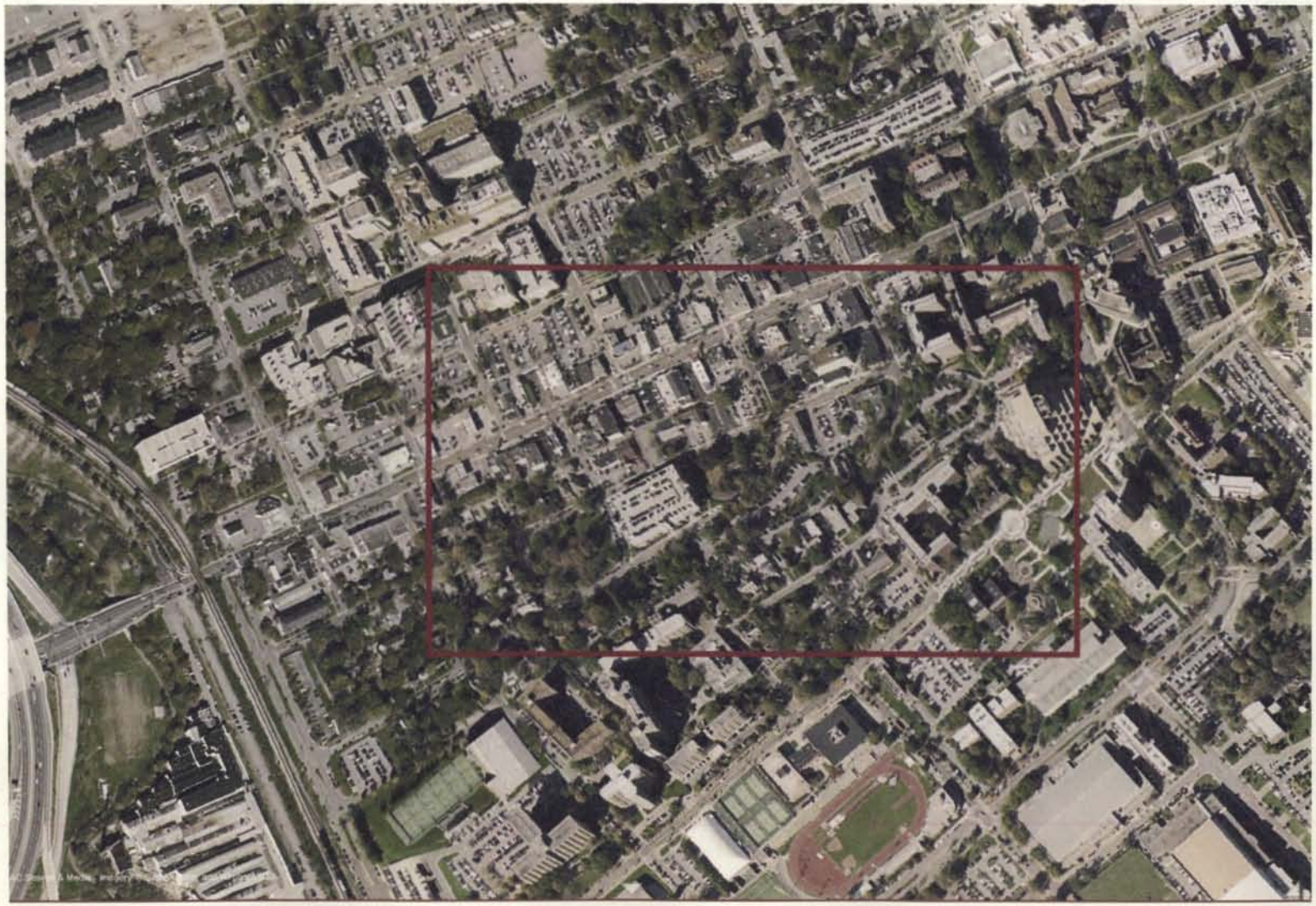

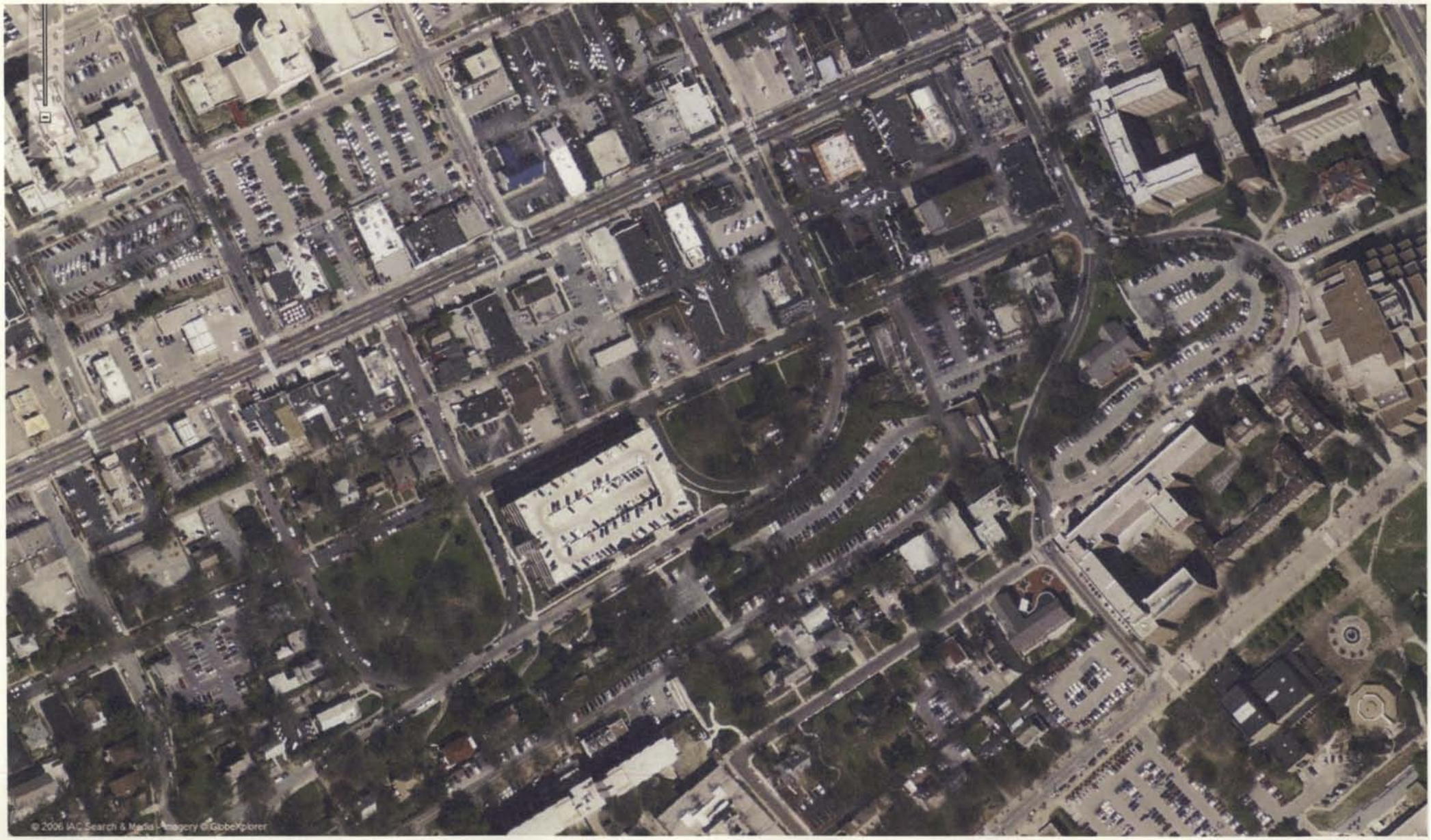
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Site Space:
Approx. 525' x 150, including
70' R.O.W. of Cumberland
Total Area: 69,000sqf.
East Path:
Approx. 600' long
Approx. 58' elevation change
West Path:
Approx. 1030' long
Approx. 104' elevation change

History

The history of Cumberland Avenue is a tumultuous one. Filling roles ranging from a Civil War battle site to a college student playground, the road has seen its landscape change dramatically from one decade to the next.

Part of the original 1791 plat of Knoxville by Charles McClung, what began as Fourth Street wasn't known as Cumberland Avenue until 1800. The section of the road that this project focuses on – from 16th Street to Volunteer Boulevard – didn't adopt that name until 1889. Before then, it was known as Kingston Pike and was outside Knoxville's city limits. Both names were derived from the road's destination: the town of Kingston and beyond Kingston, the Cumberland River Valley and Nashville, Tennessee. For most of

The street grid of Fort Sanders is visible to both the north and south of Cumberland Avenue in this 1924 Sanborn Insurance map. The breaks in the grid and irregular roads are a result of both Civil War military forts (one of which was the namesake of Fort Sanders) and steep topography.

Fort Sanders, the University, and downtown Knoxville in the first half of the twentieth century. Cumberland Avenue (in red), harbors a small collection of neighborhood businesses.

Cumberland Avenue's history, its primary function was to connect Knoxville to these distant regions.

Around the turn of the century, the Fort Sanders neighborhood (on both sides of Cumberland Avenue), was populated by two groups of people. The north side was populated by Knoxville's elite and wealthy, who built large Victorian style homes and mansions away from the factory pollution that plagued downtown and Summit Hill. Names that resonate in Knoxville today, like W. W. Woodruff and D. P. Temple, called north Fort Sanders home. The south side was primarily composed of the working class homes of those employed by L&N railroad. Cumberland Avenue itself was lined with homes and small shops such as bakeries, grocers, and clothiers. It was the heart of the Fort Sanders neighborhood. The University had yet to have a strong influence on the road, except to employ many of the Fort's residents.

Over the decades, the neighborhood gradually increased in density with craftsman homes and small businesses. The University slowly grew on and around its hilltop home and eventually added buildings just across Cumberland. By and large, though, it had little physical impact on Fort Sanders.

In 1944, Congress passed the GI Bill. Under this bill, thousands of American troops gained access to finances that allowed them to attend Universities across the country. In a few short years, UT's student population ballooned, and demand greatly outstripped the availability of student housing. In the early 1960s, Congress passed another bill that allowed the University to buy large sections

Above: Cole Drugs was located where Rocky Top Books East now resides.

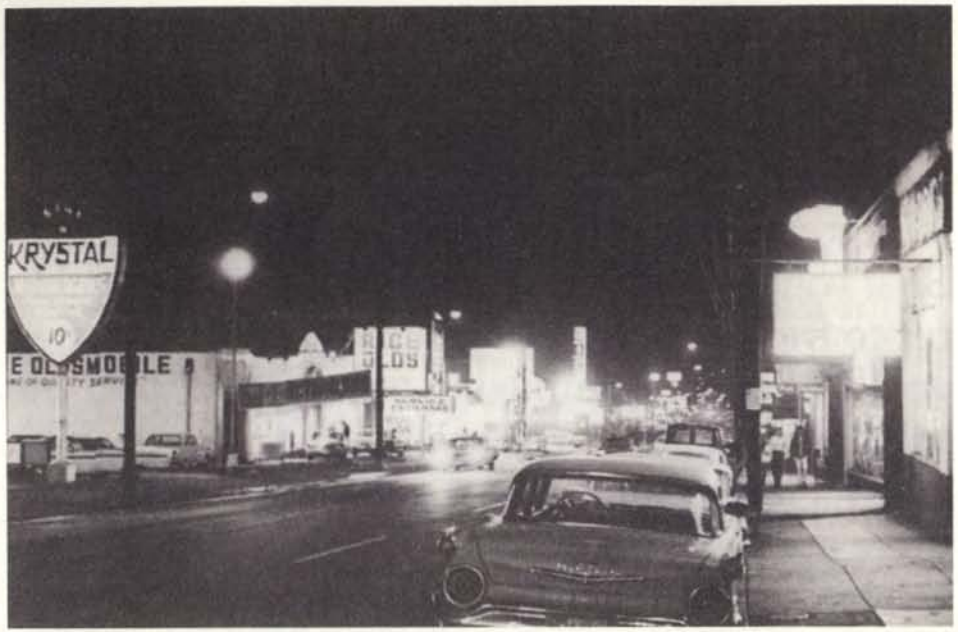
Below: The beginning of the healthcare campus in the early part of the twentieth century.

of individually-owned parcels, essentially forcing landowners out. 1963 would see the most extreme example of this when the University implemented the Yale Avenue Urban Renewal Plan. The University bought most of the land south of Cumberland Avenue all the way to Yale Avenue (now Volunteer Boulevard). Over 400 families were forced out and their homes razed to make way for UT facilities.

During this time, UT ended its policy requiring all student to live on campus. Along with the Yale Avenue Plan and the continuing climb in student population, Fort Sanders shifted from a family-oriented neighborhood to a student-oriented one. Changes on Cumberland

Above: The UT Fieldhouse - now Stokley Athletic Center - surrounded by the residential fabric of southern Fort Sanders. Lake Loudon Boulevard is visible along the right.

Below: The hospitals today.



The late 50s and early 60s witnessed Cumberland's transformation from a neighborhood shop district to a college student district.

Avenue soon followed: the familiar grocers and clothiers became bars and discos.

The houses along Cumberland were bulldozed to make way for more commercial establishments. The old Victorian and craftsman homes once occupied by Knoxville's elite were subdivided into student apartments or removed for parking lots. In the late 60s, a drug bust that ended with the arrest of over 200 people in Cumberland Avenue businesses led to the then-derogatory nickname that so many people use today: "The Strip."

In 1982, a change in University policies sharply reduced student intrusion in Fort Sanders. Enrollment was capped at 25,000 (bringing down enrollment from a peak of around 30,000). UT also changed its mission statement, becoming a research institution and letting community colleges and technical schools fill other educational needs.

Today's schizophrenia on The Strip: Highway? Suburban strip mall? Main street?

Today, the University is once again faced with a climbing student population caused by Tennessee's Hope Lottery Scholarship. The houses that were quickly and callously subdivided in the 60s are today facing serious deterioration. Large student housing projects threaten to demolish what little is left of the Fort Sanders neighborhood legacy.

Roughly every seven to ten years for the past several decades, efforts have been made to clean up and improve the infrastructure of Cumberland Avenue. These efforts range from clean-up days to far-reaching concepts like turning the entire Strip into a pedestrian mall with strict architectural guidelines. All of these

"When classrooms emptied, the bars filled. Beer was the big drink, wet t-shirt contests the big attraction along Cumberland, especially at a disco called Cheeks, which had been Casino Royale, which had been Foxy's, Foxy Lady, and Good Friday's. Before that it was a Shoney's and an Ireland's. Today, it is a Wendy's."

proposals have either been temporary fixes or call for the demolition and renewal of the area.

Recently, a new effort has begun in earnest called the *Cumberland Avenue Corridor Study*. This study does not approach the Strip as an obstacle, but as an existing condition with its own character and challenges. From the Study's web site,

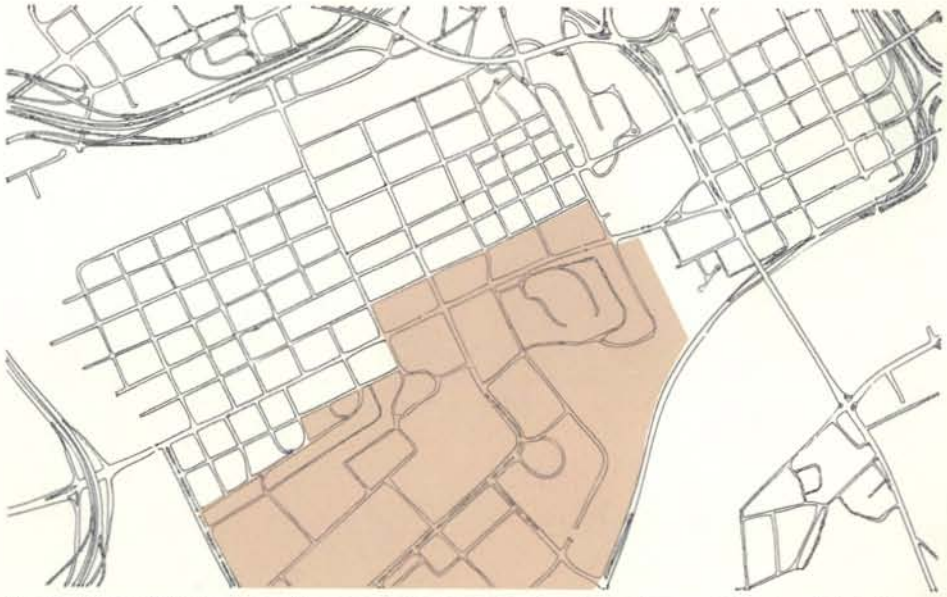
> *"The Cumberland Avenue Corridor study will chart the course for a more inviting, vibrant and safe Cumberland Avenue that enhances the connections to the University of Tennessee and area employers and improves the residential and retail character of the district while effectively moving pedestrians, motor vehicles and bicycles."*

The study also acknowledges that Cumberland Avenue has shifted in function. At one time, it served to connect Knoxville to the West. As the city grew and Interstate 40 was built, Cumberland's primary function became connecting Knoxville to the western suburbs like Sequoyah Hills, Bearden and West Hills.

Today, while it is still used to access downtown from the West, Cumberland is much less a connector than a destination. The study begins looking at Cumberland as a center. ◻

Endnotes

1. "Memory Lane," *Torchbearer*, Spring 1997.
2. Beth Kinnane, "Patrons May Have to Bid Adieu to Strip's Long Branch Saloon," *Knoxville Journal*. 29 Oct. 1990.
3. Joe Dew, "The Changing Face of The Strip," *Knoxville Journal*. 8 May 1986.
4. Harry Moskos, "Knoxville's Melting Pot," *Knoxville News-Sentinal*. 15 Oct. 1989.



The University of Tennessee today: Incursions into Fort Sanders have damaged the urban fabric that once bound the neighborhood together.

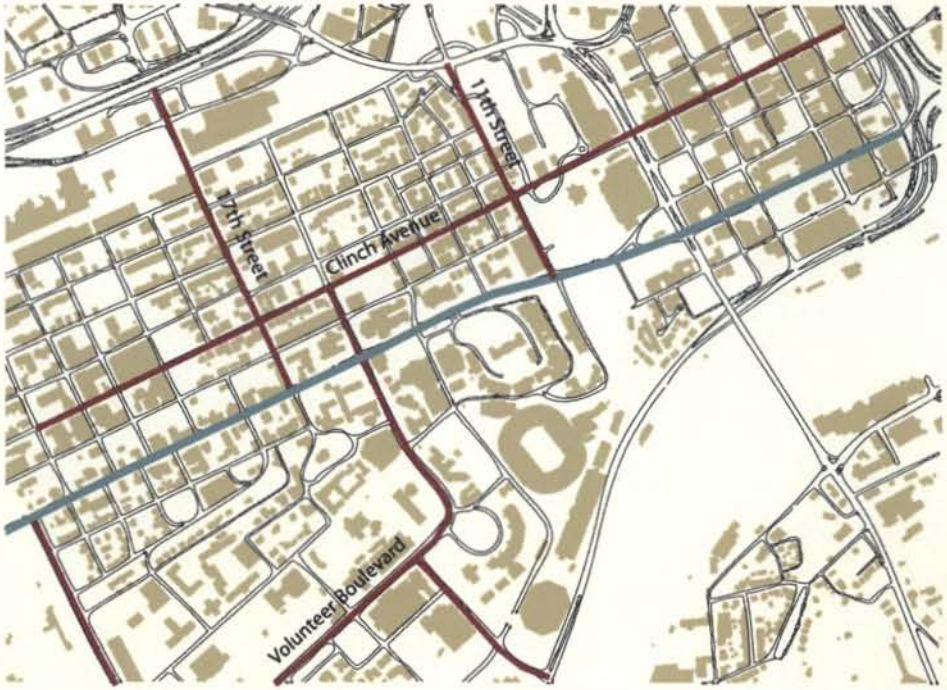
The neighborhoods along Cumberland lack any cohesvie center, although their geography implies a center along the road.

The east and west bounds of the Cumberland Avenue Study are the gultches formed by Second and Third Creeks. The development of parks at either end has provided an ideal opportunity for the creation of gateways into the area, the center of which has yet to be defined.

The Pedestrian Network along the Strip

Fort Sanders to the north of Cumberland and what little remains of the neighborhood to the South has a well developed sidewalk network (albeit in varying states of disrepair).

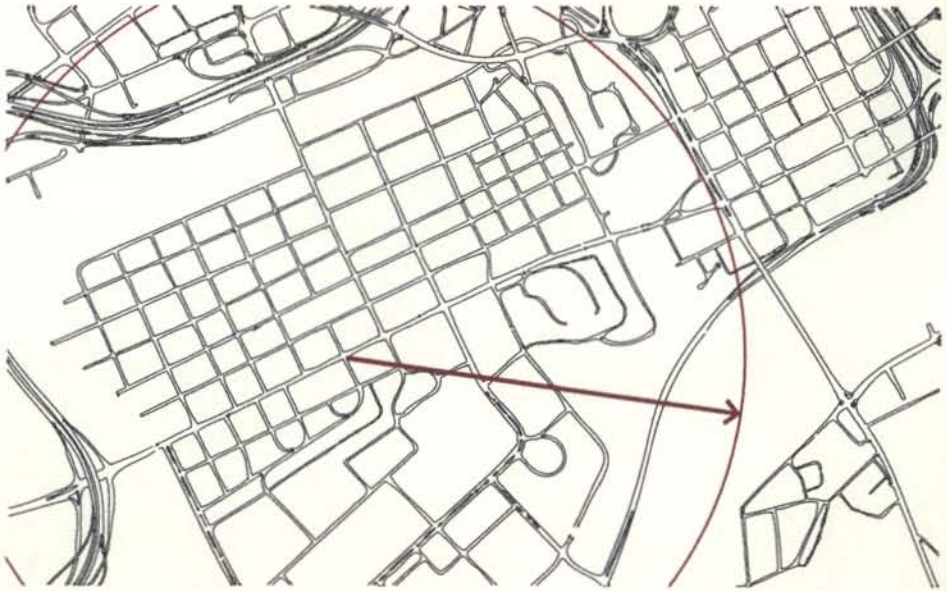
But the University's pedestrian network, due to factors of topography, history, and significant redevelopment, requires a major upgrade to strengthen the connection to Cumberland Avenue. A great deal has been invested in the sidewalks that connect the student dorms to the academic facilities, but students have largely been left to create their own paths to the Strip, as indicated by the blue lines.



Major Vehicular Connections to Cumberland Avenue

Five Minute Walking Distance at 3 mph.

While there is some residential within a five minute walking distance (including some of the University dorms), much of Fort Sanders and many dorms are outside of that range. Further complicating matters is the steep terrain which makes a five minute walk much more difficult than it may be in flatter locations. This makes comfortable pedestrian paths all the more important.



Five Minute Biking Distance at 10 mph.

Biking has the opportunity to become a major form of transportation. The entire Fort and most of the campus are within a five minute biking distance. Additionally, downtown Knoxville is just at the edge of this travel time. Encouraging and emphasizing this mode of transport may significantly reduce car usage within the radius.

The site is located near the crest of Cumberland Avenue, which occurs at 17th street. It gradually slopes to the south, from where the paths start their steep climb onto a small ridge. The hillside has been terraced over the years, providing opportunities for stopping points along the path.

McDonald's

SUPPORTING

"A city sidewalk by itself is nothing... It means something only in conjunction with the buildings and other uses that border it..." – Jane Jacobs

A Mixed-Use Development

Precedents

Pike Place Market

The Bridge Cinema

Miller Plaza

Program & Analysis

By providing a medium through which personal connectivity is strengthened, this development could potentially have a significant impact on not only Cumberland Avenue but Fort Sanders, the University, downtown, and greater Knoxville.

The site for this project provides an ideal opportunity to bind together the different neighborhoods around The Strip. But what elements will best support the goal of enhancing connections within the community?

The following three projects explore this question in a number of different ways. Pike Place Market is not just a destination but a *home*, bringing people together 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The Bridge Cinema is representative of a University reaching out to its neighbors, seeking to strengthen connections to those around it. Finally, Miller Plaza serves not only as a space for daily gathering but to generate connections outside of the neighborhood and city. ◻

Pike Place Market, Seattle, Washington

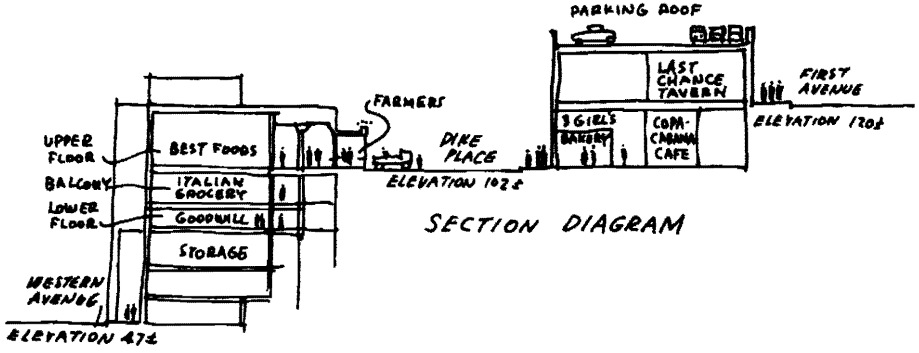
Pike Place has also achieved an iconic status in Seattle. Although it has been around since 1923, it was nearly wiped out by urban renewal schemes in the 1960s. While many cities lost precious icons of their histories, the market was fortunate enough to have the

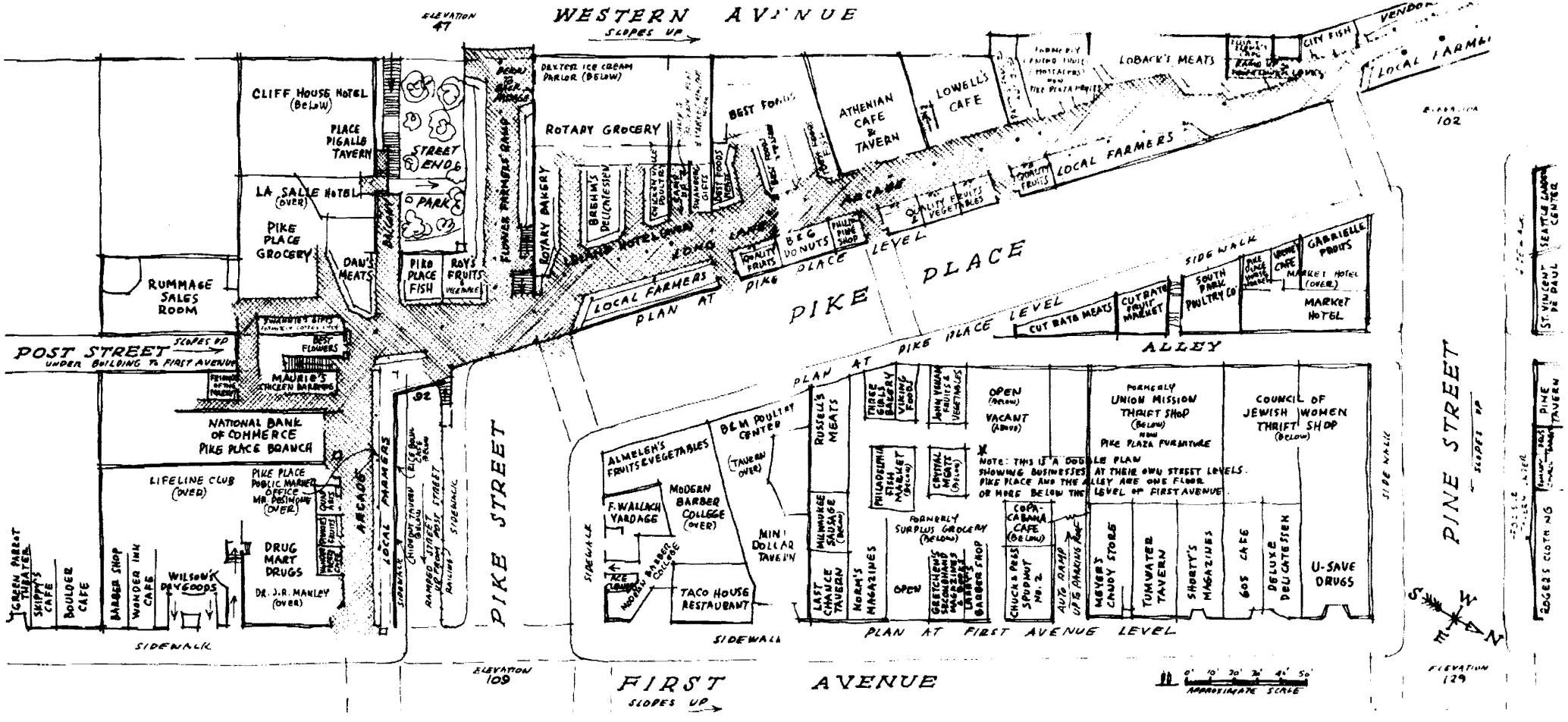
highly devoted following of the "Friends of the Market" led by Victor Steinbrueck. The Friends recognized the unique heritage of the market and successfully saved it from the wrecking ball. [1] Today, the red "PUBLIC MARKET CENTER" sign and clock are a Seattle icon. Visible from great distances throughout the city, it has become a symbol of civic pride.

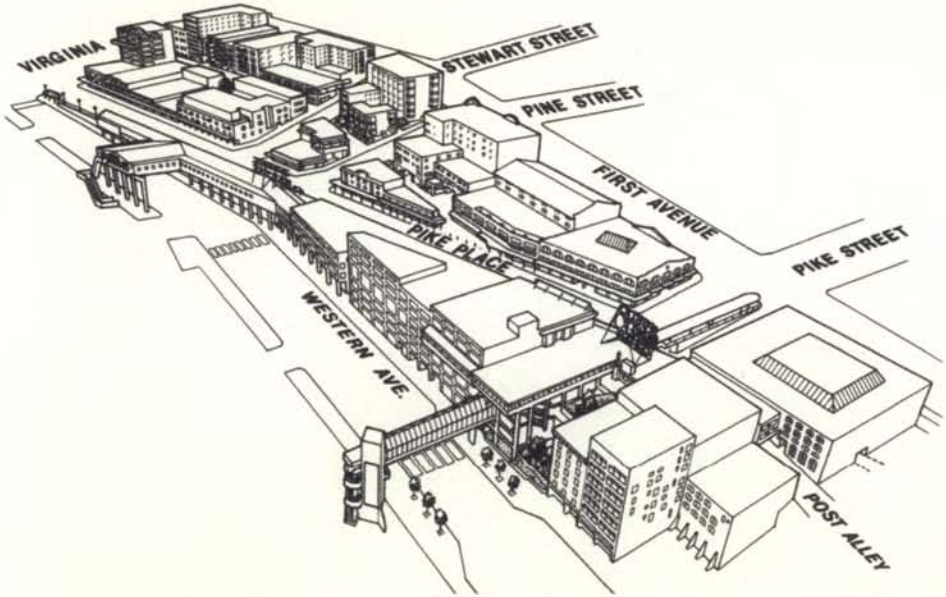
Pike Place Market represents how a daily part of life - the market - can become the heart of a community. No one project or architect can lay claim to the market, as it is the result of decades of growth and evolution. One of the keys to Pike Place's success: diversity. Time has brought a multitude of different ethnicities, races, and classes of

people to the market. That diversity also extends to the endless array of small businesses: over two hundred shops offering wares and services can be found here.

But how did Pike Place come to house such a variety? The fragmentation of its users is reflected in its plans. The rich layering of shops and stalls in both plan and section creates a space to be explored and discover.[2] A hidden niche in one of the arcades might contain the







"Nowhere else is there to be found such a broad social mixture going about its business in a broad and uninhibited way. People of all races, all religions, all nationalities, and all income levels come together freely to work and shop, to linger and look and enjoy themselves in an easy atmosphere traditionally and necessarily free of prejudice. Here is the dramatic experience of people acting out their daily existence through face-to-face encounter..."[2]

Pike Place Sketch by Victor Steinbrueck.

best bowl of rice one ever has. The rummage store could be selling that one of a kind item that can't be found in any conventional shopping mall.

By engaging the topography and embracing the otherwise awkward streets, the market takes advantage of its location. A wide variety of stalls and spaces allows sellers of all scales to congregate. A farmer selling oranges can comfortably set up next to a thrift store or tavern. In more typical circumstances, business owners and chain store managers would be concerned with visibility and exercising control over their surroundings. At Pike Place, the merchants complement and feed off each other.

In spite of the otherwise slap-dash atmosphere, there are clear arcades to facilitate the movement of pedestrians through the market. The arcade system keeps shoppers comfortable by helping them stay oriented to their surroundings.

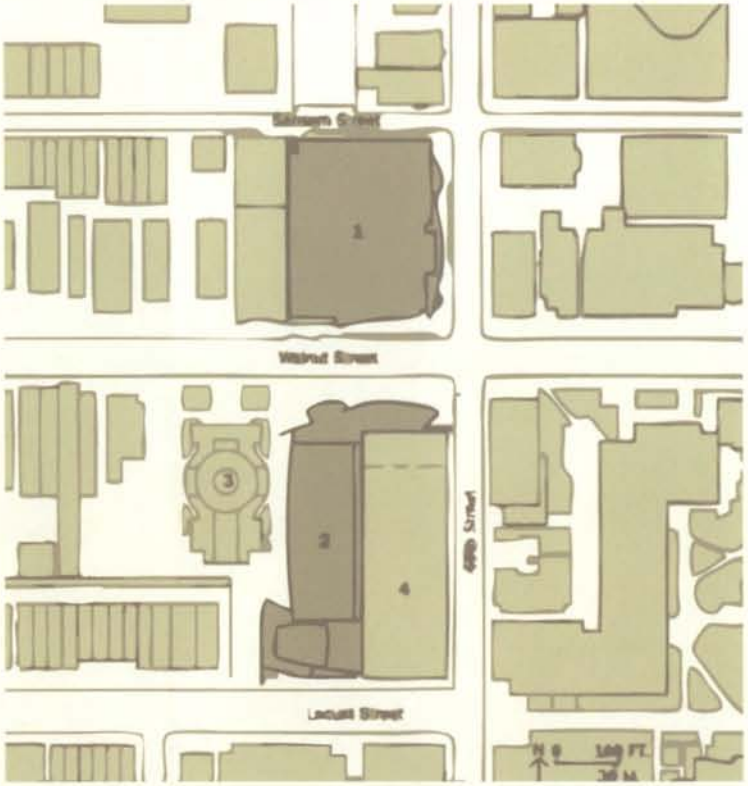
Pike Place goes a step further than being just a market, however. Adjacent buildings house everything from hotels and housing to social welfare programs like a food bank and senior center. Other daily needs available are medical services, child care, and a preschool.[3] All of this comes as the result of investments by both the public and private investors. ◻

Public Development[4]
Private Development[4]

Endnotes

1. "Pike Place Market (Seattle) -- Thumbnail History," Historylink. org, http://www.historylink.org/essays/output.cfm?file_id=1602.
2. Victor Steinbrueck, *Market Sketchbook* (Seattle: U of Washington Press, 1968), Introduction.
3. Great Public Spaces, "Pike Place Market," PPS: Project for Public Spaces, http://www.pps.org/great_public_spaces/one?public_place_id=101.
4. Robert G. Shibley and David Herzberg, "Pike Place Market, Seattle, WA," *Time-Saver Standards for Urban Design*, 8.4-4.

The Bridge, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



1. Parking Garage
2. Cinema and Cafe

"By redefining their land grant mission, universities are expanding their teaching and research focus to include social outreach to youth and families, K-12 education, information technology, the environment, and public policy. The social component of creative partnership agreements is taking on greater importance as universities acknowledge that the campus is part of a community of neighborhoods." (Steinkamp)

The Bridge Cinema complex, by Wood and Zapata Architects, at the University of Pennsylvania represents that University's realization that cutting itself off from the community was a mistake. UPenn began funding projects to help reinvigorate West Philadelphia's economy by bringing more people to the area, chasing out crime and gentrifying the neighborhoods.

This project includings a large parking garage with a grocery on the bottom floor and a multiplex theater with a shared cafe. The cinema and grocery both open up to the street corner, and the cafe opens to a pedestrian path that runs behind the cinema.

The garage, despite its massive scale, is turned into a succesful urban element by opening the ground floor up to the public with the

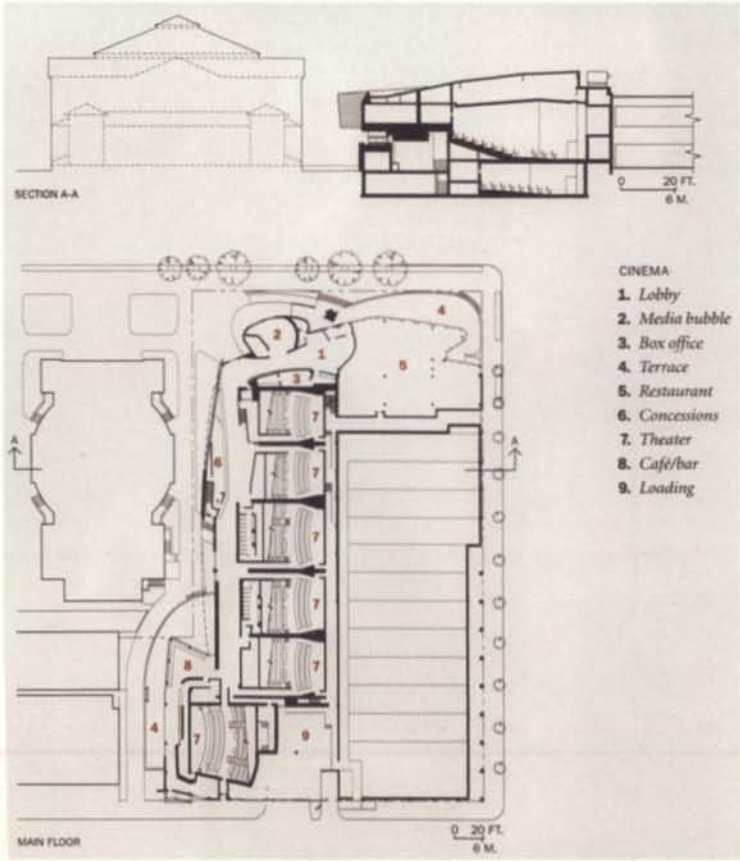
Street Plaza Entrance

grocery store and by breaking up its huge facade with the layering of different materials.

The cafe is used to activate what would otherwise be a dead space between the cinema and an old church. By pulling people down that path, it becomes a safe and integral part of the urban fabric. ◻

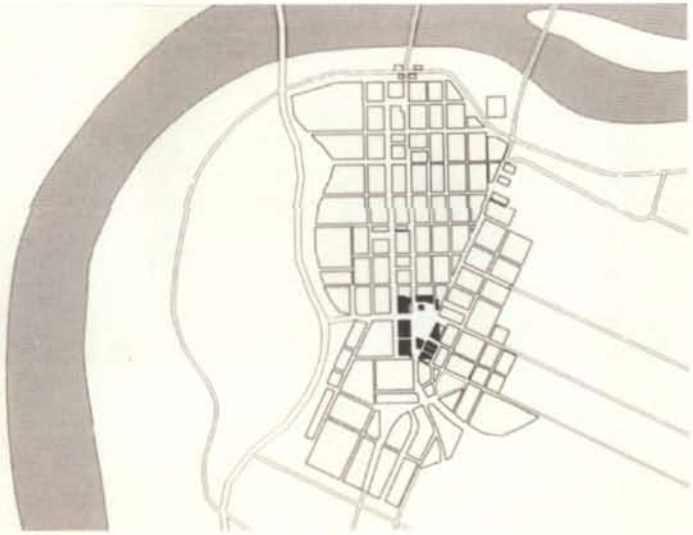
Endnotes

1. Judith Rodin, "The 21st Century Urban University," Journal of the American Planning Association, Summer 2005.
2. Clifford A. Pearson, "Bridge Cinema de Lux," Architectural Record, August 2003.



Miller Plaza, Chattanooga, Tennessee

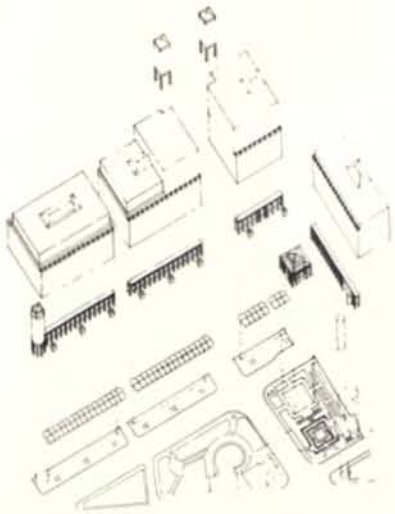
Like so many downtowns, Chattanooga's was a virtual ghost town after hours in the 1980s. City leaders looking to bring people back downtown commissioned Koetter Kim and Associates to build Miller Plaza next to Miller Park. The park is located at the junction of the two historic street grids, right in the middle of the old city. The city officials were seeking to encourage public activity downtown,

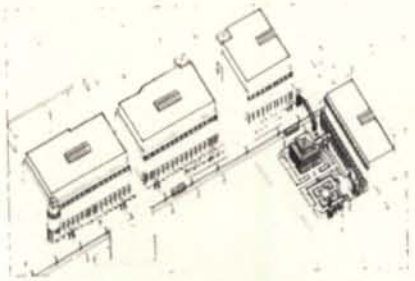


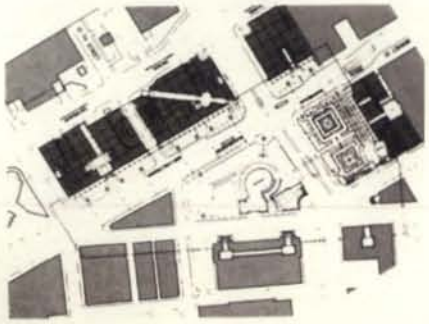
reinvigorating the community not only in the downtown area but in the city as a whole. The siting provides excellent access to the city since major collectors pass through the intersection of the two grids.[1,2]

"We thought about this. What sorts of activities might actually serve these goals? What kind of built stuff might support these activities? Without doubt, many of the uses might tend to be unpredictable, changing, unscheduled, and unprogrammed."[3]

What resulted was a public pavilion and adjacent stage. The pavilion is used for a wide variety of activities from meetings to exhibitions. It is small enough that church or school groups aren't overwhelmed, but large enough that it can be functional for many purposes. The walls of the lower floor open out onto the plaza, creating a continuous outdoor space.[3]



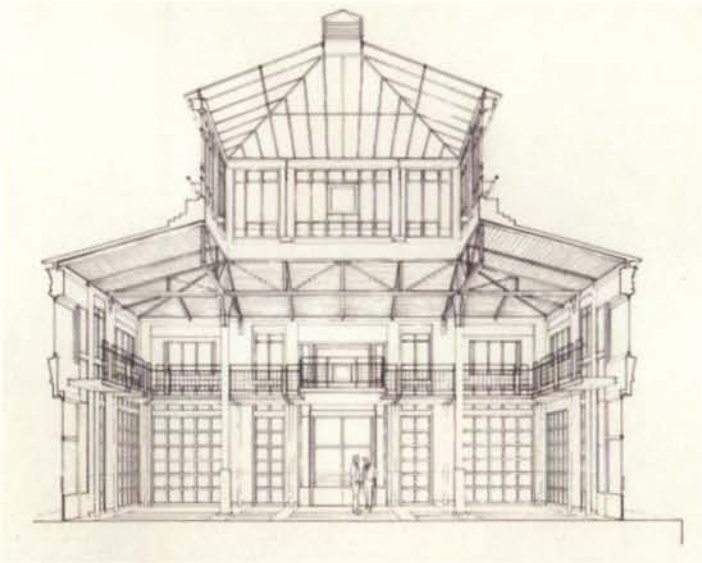




Like the pavilion, the plaza can function at different scales. During concerts, the plaza and park beyond serve as seating. But when there are no large events, the terraces and planters of the plaza provide a comfortable pedestrian space and ample seating.

Along the north edge of the plaza, an arcade houses small shops and cafes. The arcades serve to define the edge of the space and to protect pedestrians that pass through Miller Plaza. The floors above the arcade and the buildings that will further define the park house offices and residences.

As a entertainment venue, Miller Plaza brings people in from all over the city of Chattanooga. On a daily basis, downtown residents and workers use the plaza for relaxation and gathering. If the residences are successful, the plaza will remain active 24 hours a day.



Above: The pavilion interior, open to the outside.
Left: A cross-section of the pavilion.

Endnotes

1. Alan J. Plattus, et al., Koetter Kim & Associates (New York: Rizzoli, 1997), 128.
2. Plattus 129.
3. Plattus 131.

Program Context + Goals

Cumberland Avenue experiences high and regular turnover in the businesses that make up the half mile stretch of The Strip. That is the nature of the area. Most users relocate after four or five years when they graduate. This results in very few "landmark" businesses occupying The Strip. Landmark businesses can be considered businesses that have developed a distinct (although not necessarily "good") reputation and loyal clientele with the passage of time.

These kinds of businesses are important because they bring people back over and over. The customers are comfortable with and protective of these establishments. As far as developing connections within a community, these may be among the strongest.

The success of businesses is tied very closely to the student population. Increasing the number of permanent residents would help stabilize the commercial risk, allowing businesses to stay open for much longer than they may be otherwise. With time, many of these would become landmark businesses.

Cumberland lacks depth in the variety of businesses available. Although restaurants can be found to suit nearly every taste, there are very limited services available otherwise. There are no grocers or media stores. There is only one clothier and one specialty shop.

Pike Place market serves as a strong example that increasing the availability of services and choice would only strengthen the area. Residents would be more inclined to shop there rather than drive to the suburbs. As it is, there are so few choices that most people have to go to the suburbs to purchase many goods. As buying habits shift, residents would form stronger connections to Cumberland, utilizing it more on a day-to-day basis.

There are no twenty-four hour businesses. A handful of restaurants offer delivery or drive-thru until very late at night, but there are no establishments that can be entered or shopped.

As observed in the prior analysis of Cumberland, there is a desire to create a center to which people from the various neighborhoods can gravitate. Currently, there are no public spaces or facilities of any signifigance on The Strip.

Finally, there is no residential present on Cumberland Avenue itself. In the neighborhood, very little (if any) single family housing remains. Students live in either apartment buildings of varying sizes, in houses that have been subdivided into apartments, or in on-campus dormitories. Virtually all of the student housing is designed for temporary residence. Few of the apartments are suitable for long-term living, which only further discourages people from living in the area after graduation.

Business Type	Number of Type
Restaurant	卌 卌 卌 III
Fast Food	卌 卌
Bar/Club	卌 卌 I
Drink Shop	IIII
Bank	卌
Gas Station	IIII
UT Bookstore	卌
T-shirt/Graphic Art	III
Hair/Tanning	IIII
Copy Shop	II
One of the following: General Merchandise/Pharmacy, Clothier, Liquor, Oil/Lube, Florist, Dry Cleaner, and Skateboard Shop.	

In summary, these are the goals for development on The Strip:

1	More landmark businesses
2	A wider variety of businesses
3	Twenty-four hour businesses
4	A public space and/or facility
5	Long-term residential options

At the root of these goals, however, are three primary ideas:

1	To remain active twenty-four hours a day
2	To bring nearby residents to the site on a regular basis
3	To bring distant people to the site on a periodic basis

These ideas support the primary objective of enhancing the connection between residents of the surrounding neighborhoods. Greater security, more day to day interaction with others, and the engagement of those outside the area all contribute to stronger communities.

Two distinct parts of this project will work together to accomplish these goals.

The first part is the mixed-use building and space development on Cumberland Avenue. The second involves strengthening the site's pedestrian paths to both the university dorm complex and the academic center.

The program selected to go in the mixed-use complex will satisfy at least one of the three objectives.

1	***To remain active twenty-four hours a day*** **A small grocer** (13-18,000sqf) such as an Aldi or IGA would fill a much needed void in services on Cumberland. **Residential apartments and condos** ranging from 1-3 bedrooms (800-1400sqf) targeted to young professionals and faculty for long-term use. Approximately 32 units. **A small restaurant/cafe** (2,500-3,000sqf), to provide a destination on The Strip even late at night.
2	***To bring nearby residents to the site on a regular basis*** **A bakery, deli, and/or cafe** (2,000-3,000sqf ea.) to compliment a small grocer. **A medium-large bookstore** (13-20,000sqf) for media sales. **A protected transit stop and bike rental** (1,500-2,000sqf) for easy access to and from the development, allowing more people to come from around the city. **Public hardscape and/or softscape multiuse space** (varies) to complement the businesses and integrate into the site's circulation patterns.
3	***To bring distant people to the site on a periodic basis*** **Small public stage and seating area** for preformances or rallies. **Art and rummage market** for students and professionals to sell their wares. Stall based, with a high degree of flexibility in size.

Large Bookstore (20-22,000sqf)

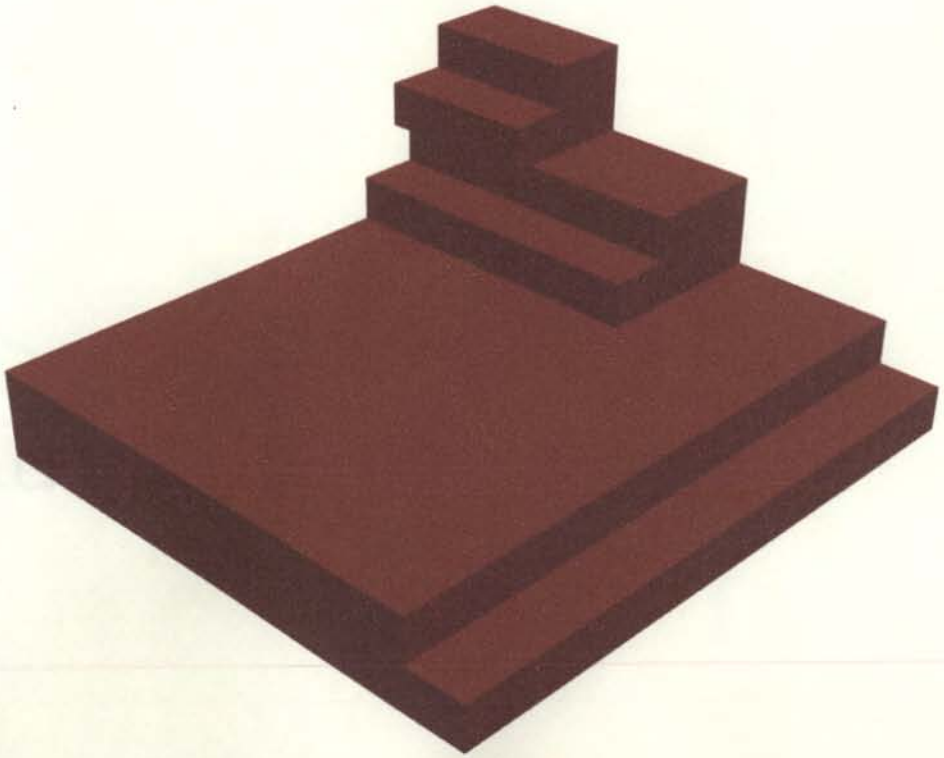
Small Grocery (18-20,000sqf)

Large Restaurant or Shop (3,500-4,000sqf)

Small Restaurant or Shop (2,500-3,000sqf)

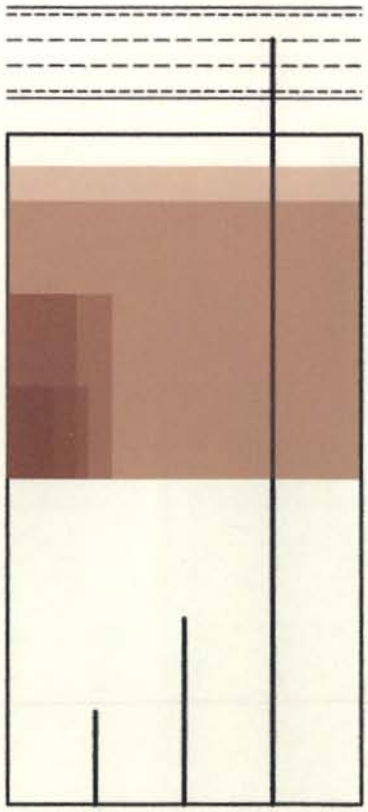
2-3 Bedroom Residence (1,400sqf)

1 Bedroom Residence (800sqf)



Open space dimensions, as suggested by Kevin Lynch.

330' - Maximum distance to see events



80' - Facial Expressions still recognizable, pleasant.

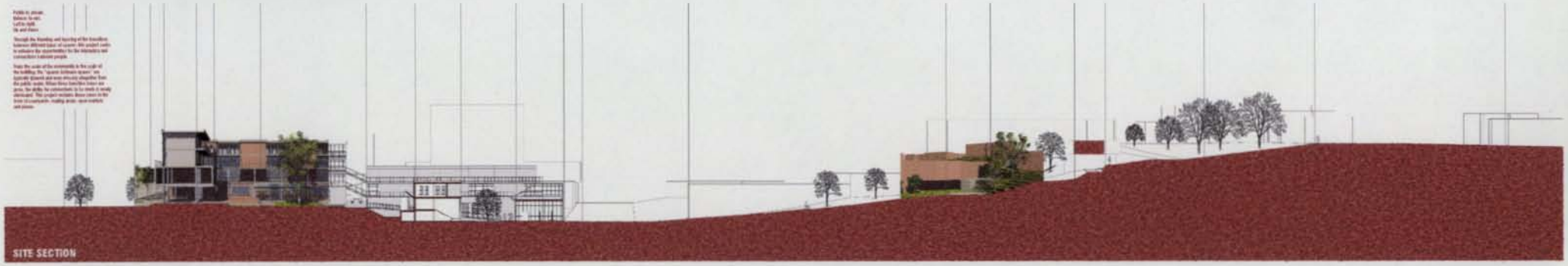
40' - Intimate in scale

FORMING

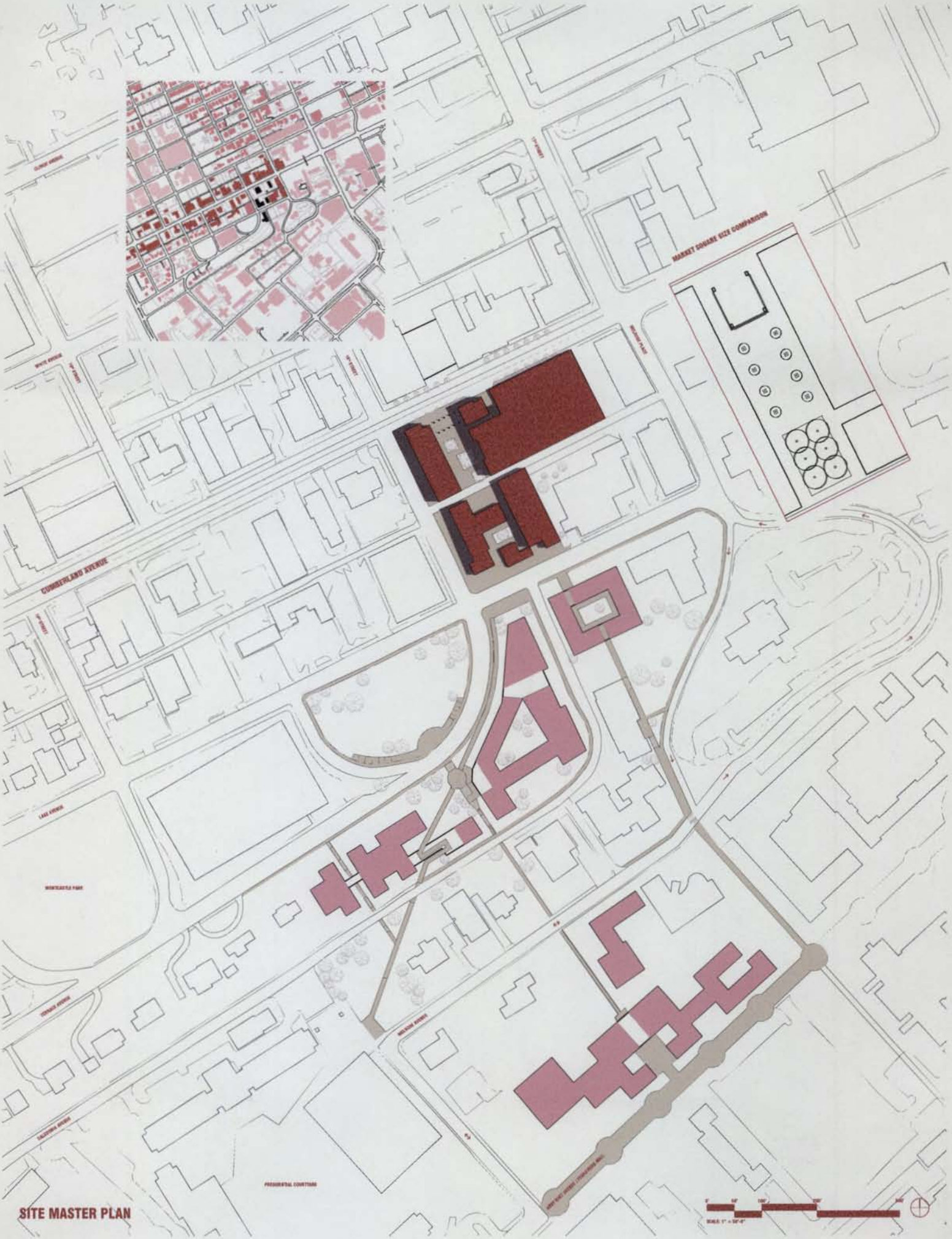
"They can say to the square: I am really glad to be situated on this square. Or they could say: I am the most beautiful building here – you lot all look ugly. I am a diva." – Peter Zumthor

CUMBERLAND AVENUE

CONNECTING PEOPLE THROUGH SPACE

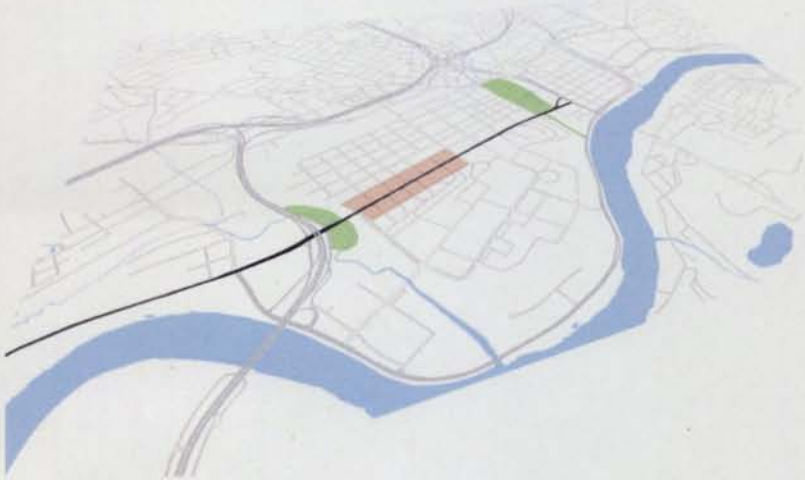


SITE SECTION

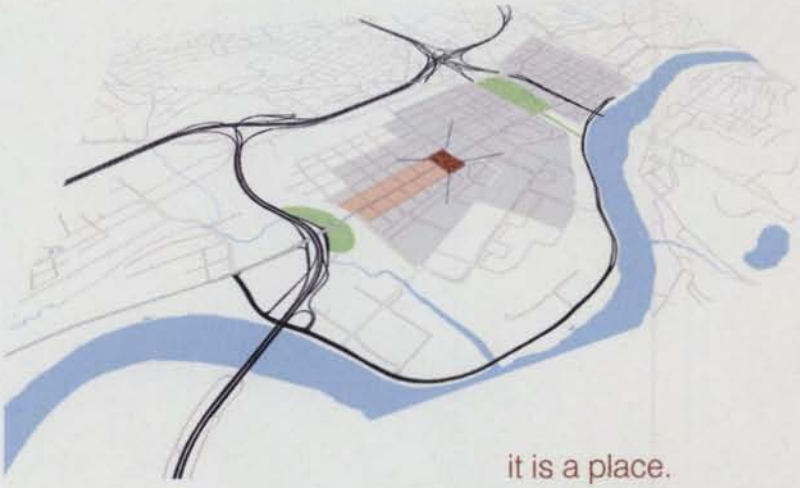


SITE MASTER PLAN

paths and space
define communities by bringing people together



cumberland avenue
is no longer a corridor



it is a place.

A route developed to connect Knoxville to Kingston and the Cumberland River beyond, Cumberland Avenue has, for most of its history, been a means to an end, a way to get from point A to point B.

In the late 1960s and first half of the 1990s, the road was the commercial heart of Fort Sanders. At the time, Fort Sanders encompassed the land all the way from the railroads to 11th street.

As the university and hospitals began to expand rapidly in the 1960s, Fort Sanders began to disappear and Cumberland Avenue became a confused mix of main street and strip mall. Drug rains in the 80s led to the main occupancy nickname, "The Strip."

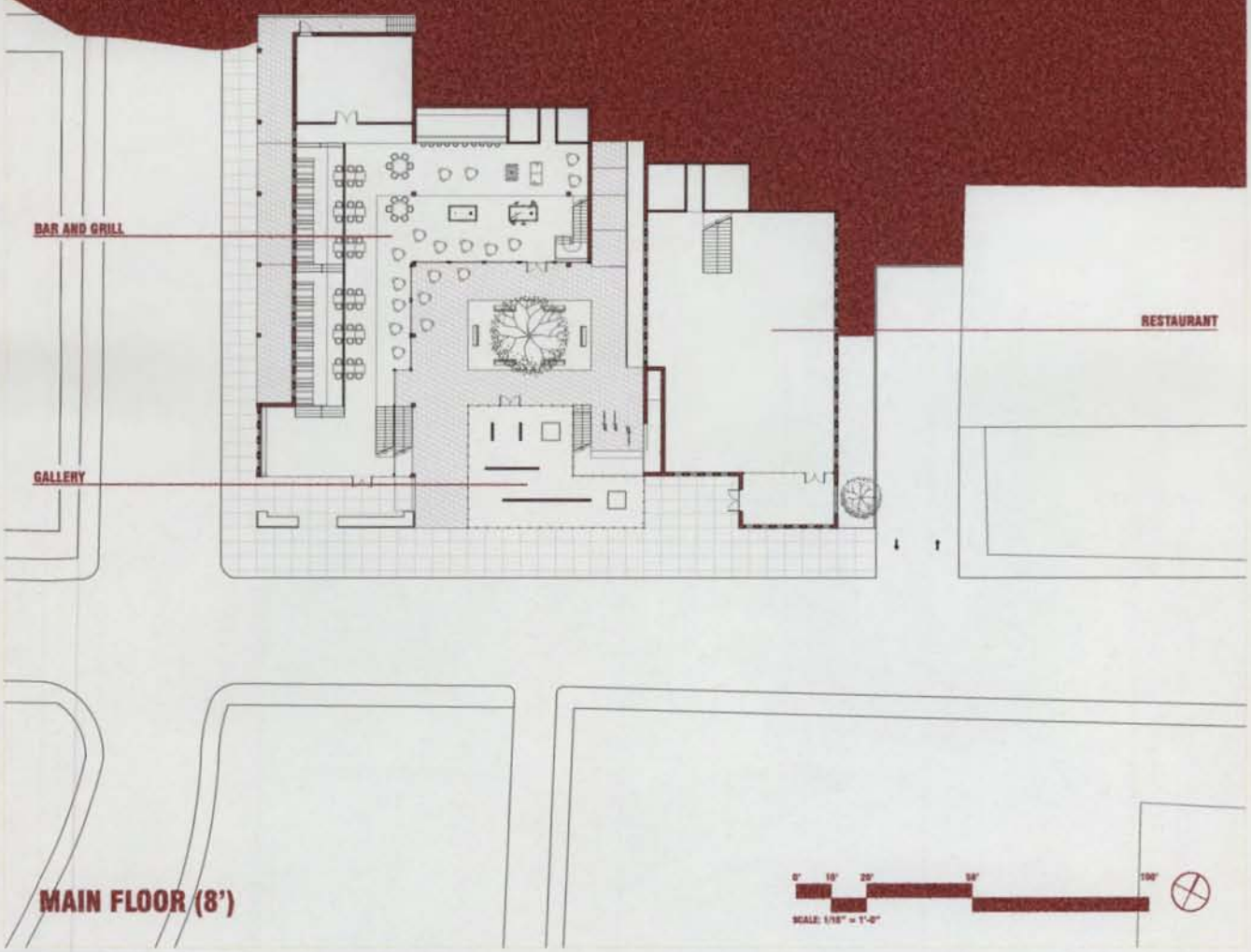
FORT SANDERS & DOWNTOWN, PRE-1950

FORT SANDERS HOSPITAL, EARLY 20th CENTURY

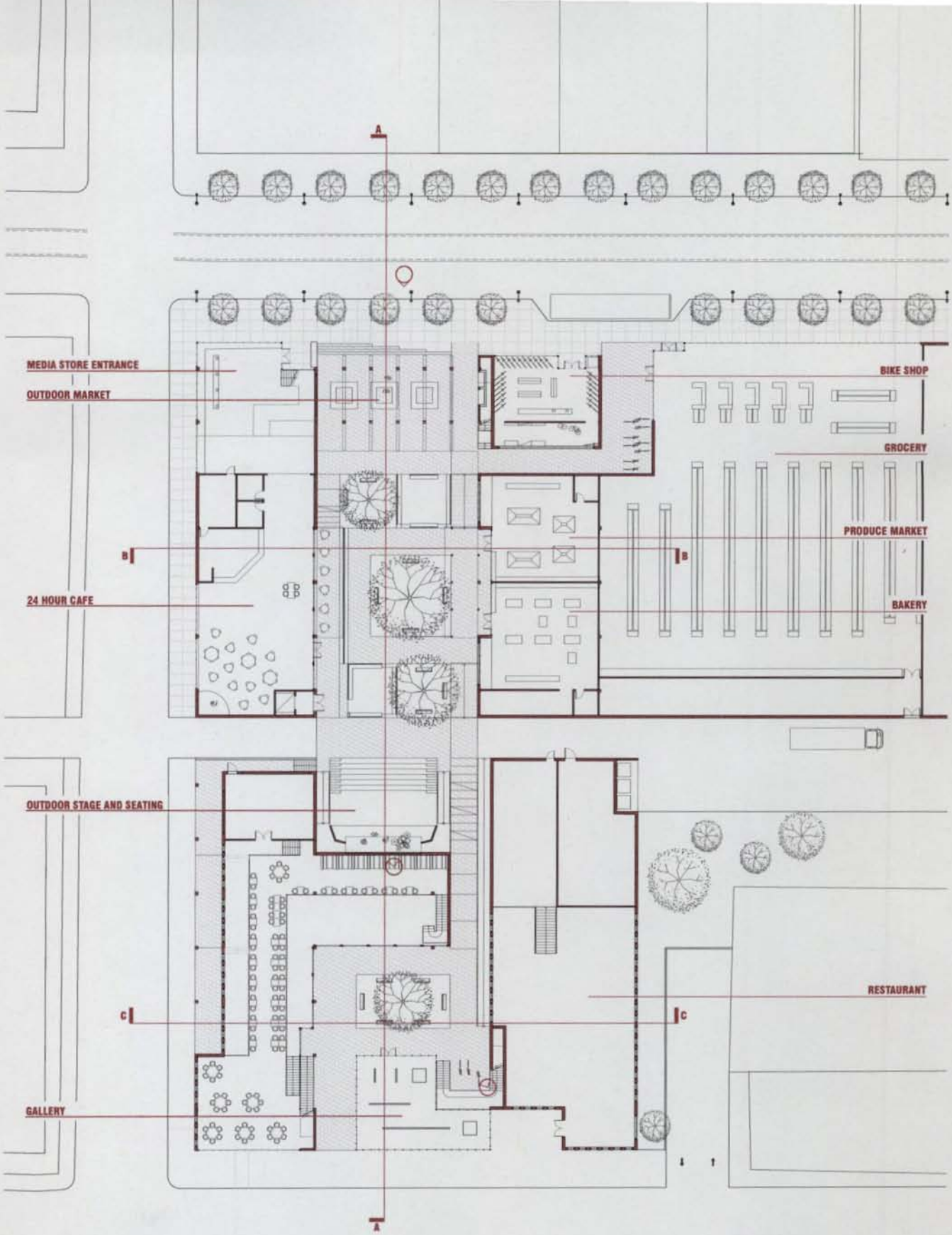
TODAY

THE STRIP, 1950s-60s

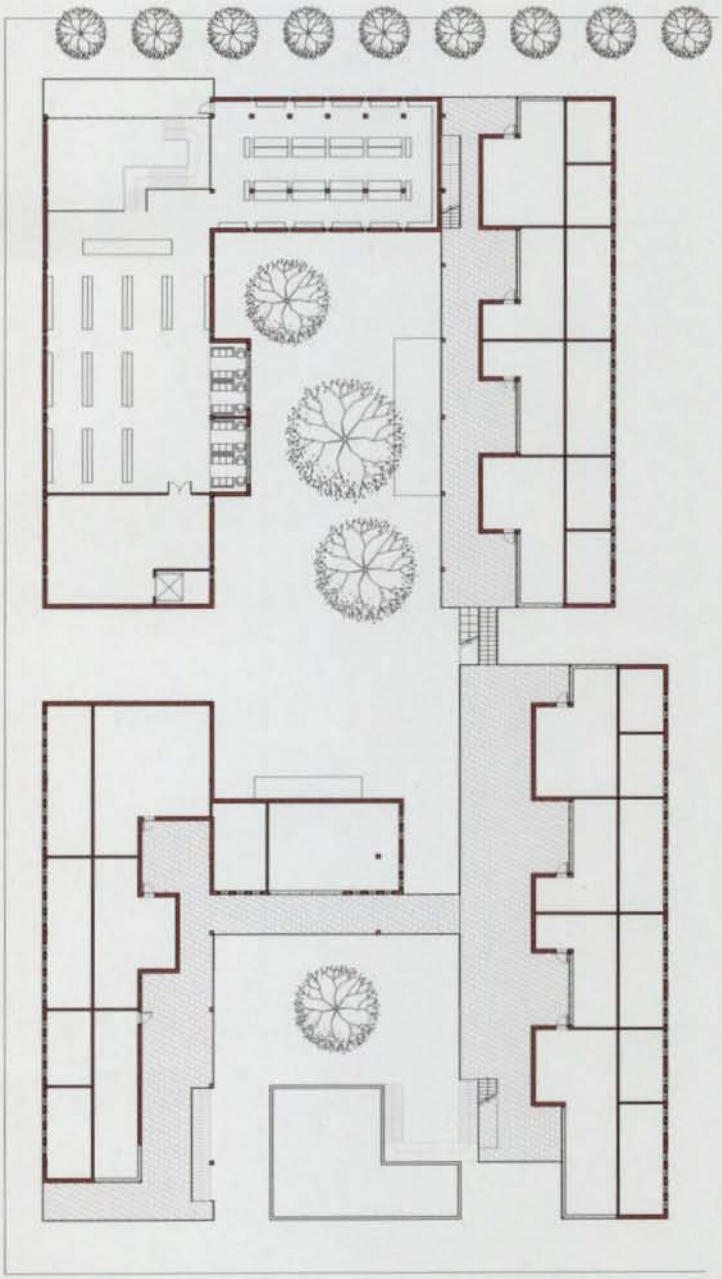
TODAY



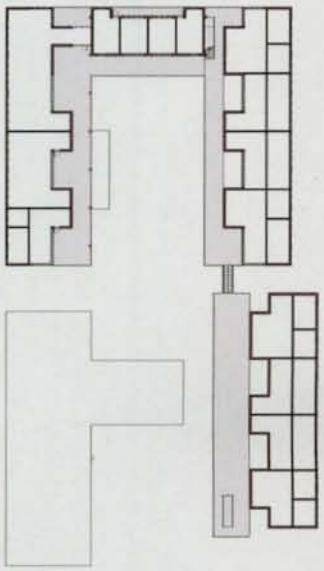
MAIN FLOOR (8')



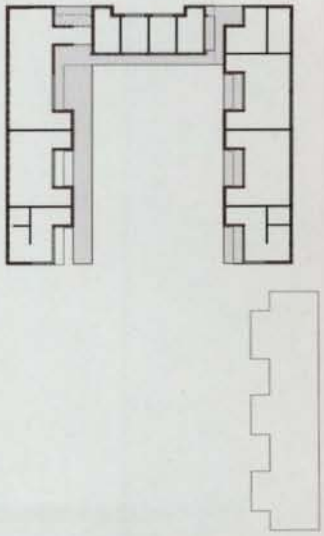
MAIN FLOOR (17')



SECOND FLOOR



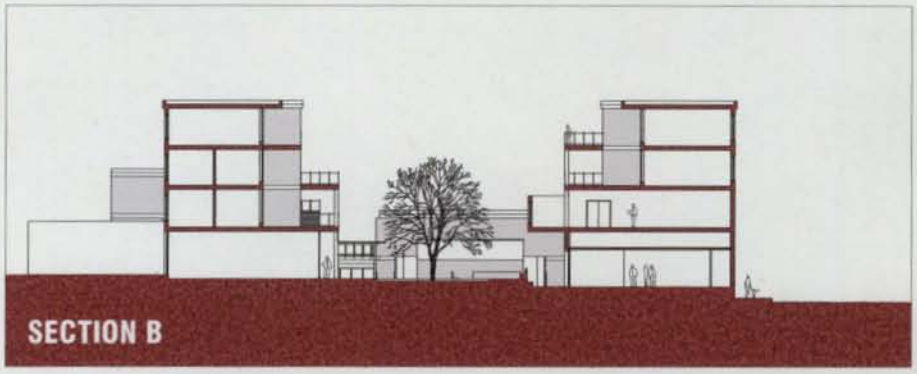
THIRD FLOOR



FOURTH FLOOR

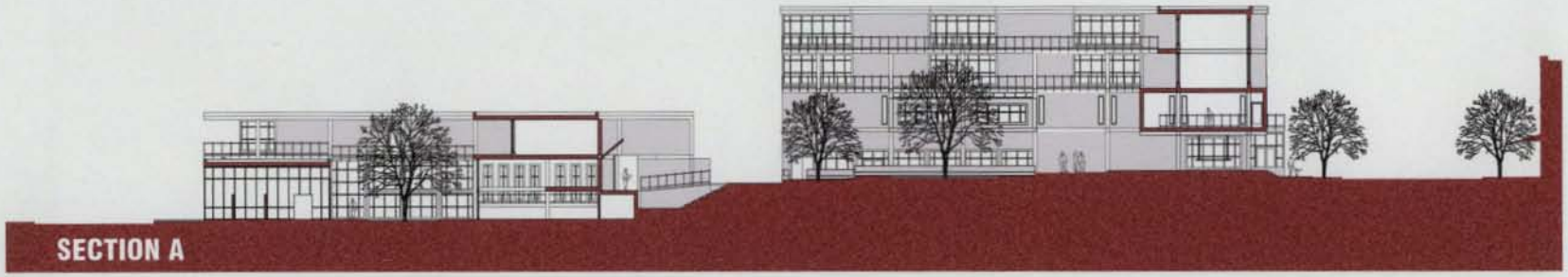
CUMBERLAND ELEVATION

"A city sidewalk by itself is nothing…
It means something only in conjunction
with the buildings and other uses that
border it…" - *Jane Jacobs*



SECTION B

SECTION C



SECTION A

RESOURCES

"I get by with a little help from my friends"
– John Lennon & Paul McCartney

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