



South of Mission

Fall 2010 • Architecture

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Sustainable Cities Initiative

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About SCI

The Sustainable Cities Initiative (SCI) is a cross-disciplinary organization at the University of Oregon that seeks to promote education, service, public outreach, and research on the design and development of sustainable cities. We are redefining higher education for the public good and catalyzing community change toward sustainability. Our work addresses sustainability at multiple scales and emerges from the conviction that creating the sustainable city cannot happen within any single discipline. SCI is grounded in cross-disciplinary engagement as the key strategy for solving community sustainability issues. We serve as a catalyst for expanded research and teaching, and market this expertise to scholars, policymakers, community leaders, and project partners. Our work connects student energy, faculty experience, and community needs to produce innovative, tangible solutions for the creation of a sustainable society.

About SCY

The Sustainable City Year (SCY) program is a year-long partnership between SCI and one city in Oregon, in which students and faculty in courses from across the university collaborate with the partner city on sustainability and livability projects. SCY faculty and students work in collaboration with staff from the partner city through a variety of studio projects and service-learning courses to provide students with real-world projects to investigate. Students bring energy, enthusiasm, and innovative approaches to difficult, persistent problems. SCY's primary value derives from collaborations resulting in on-the-ground impact and forward movement for a community ready to transition to a more sustainable and livable future. SCY 2010-11 includes courses in Architecture; Arts and Administration; Business Management; Interior Architecture; Journalism; Landscape Architecture; Law; Planning, Public Policy, and Management; Product Design; and Civil Engineering (at Portland State University).

About Salem, Oregon

Salem, the capital Oregon and its third largest city (population 157,000, with 383,000 residents in the metropolitan area), lies in the center of the lush Willamette River valley, 47 miles from Portland. Salem is located an hour from the Cascade mountains to the east and ocean beaches to the west. Thriving businesses abound in Salem and benefit from economic diversity. The downtown has been recognized as one of the region's most vital retail centers for a community of its size. Salem has retained its vital core and continues to be supported by strong and vibrant historic neighborhoods, the campus-like Capitol Mall, Salem Regional Hospital, and Willamette University. Salem offers a wide array of restaurants, hotels, and tourist attractions, ranging from historic sites and museums to events that appeal to a wide variety of interests. 1,869 acres of park land invite residents and visitors alike to enjoy the outdoors.

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Executive Summary

The intent of this study and design work is to respond to the needs and distinct characteristics of the South of Mission area in the City of Salem, Oregon. Our Mission Statement is to encourage economic development through the creation and revitalization of vibrant communities. This report describes our careful examination of the City of Salem, followed by planning and design proposals that explore the vast opportunities for development in the South of Mission area.

Research was gathered not only through books and online resources but also through local interviews, attendance at neighborhood meetings, and extensive time spent on site. The main objective of such broad-reaching research is to gain a sensitive understanding of the existing conditions, history, and community in Salem before proposing any specific changes or interventions.

Much of the focus of this studio work was on urban planning, which required us to look beyond the six blocks we examined in depth for the South of Mission district. Before any specific planning or design recommendations were made for sites within the study area, the studio conducted research on a regional level to ensure a response to local needs and trends.

We considered the proximity of South of Mission to the vibrant downtown district, numerous civic functions, and green amenities such as Bush's Pasture Park. The goal of this regional research was to begin to understand the larger framework of paths, transportation, and urban fabric that connect to the site.

In addition, we visited and studied precedent examples to gain knowledge about similar developments that have been realized. Key studies are highlighted in the Precedent Studies section of this report.

The South of Mission area is in a unique location on a major path from the south to the downtown urban core. Though Salem as a whole is densely populated with a variety of activities, at present the South of Mission site is only lightly populated with activities and services. There is a potential to encourage local and national businesses to occupy the site. The area south of Mission Street can become its own district and provide a distinctive character that transitions the built environment from housing and suburbia to the density of downtown while providing citizens services and amenities along a major corridor in the city.

Introduction

The analysis and projects included in this report were carried out by 30 students in a fall 2010 Architecture studio course, led by professors Michael Fifield and Mark Gillem, at the University of Oregon in Eugene. The intention of this work was to examine the opportunities for redevelopment in the South Waterfront Urban Renewal Area south of Mission Street. Following the research portion of the term, the students moved to creating design guidelines along two different urban planning paths. Finally, the term concluded with students exploring various scales of design projects, which were intended to work cohesively to demonstrate potential for rejuvenation at the South of Mission site.



Figure 1: Figure-ground plan

The South of Mission Site

The South of Mission site has the potential to serve as a gateway corridor to the dense and active downtown district of Salem. A small group of civic buildings is located just north of the site and includes the Municipal Court, Police Station, and Library. The State Capitol is a few blocks farther north and east. The state government is the largest employer in Salem, and the proximity of these civic functions to our site encourages the development of amenities nearby to which employees could walk on their way to or from work. Furthermore, opportunities for mixed use are present, potentially allowing for housing to develop close these major areas of Salem.



Figure 2: Regional context



Figure 3: Built Environment Conditions Map

Another critical adjacency is the proximity to Bush's Pasture Park. This 90-acre green space is a treasured amenity for the citizens of Salem, and it is located just east of the site area. The park offers running paths, playgrounds, and vast open fields for a variety of activities throughout the year. Our analysis also revealed a potential to connect west, to the Willamette River and Minto-Brown Island Park. Nearly all the design and planning work we developed later in the term (included in the student work section of this report) had some component of this east-west "green connection", hinged around the further development of Bush Street.



Figure 4: Local Green Space

Central to the six-block study area is north-south running Commercial Street. It is part of a one-way couplet with Liberty Street, to the east. Traffic on Commercial Street heads south and carries much of the commuter traffic from downtown to residential areas to the east and south. Currently, the site is only sparsely populated with activities and services, with much of the land in the study area devoted to surface parking. Crossing the street is made difficult by the one-way traffic patterns.



Figure 5: Parking type map

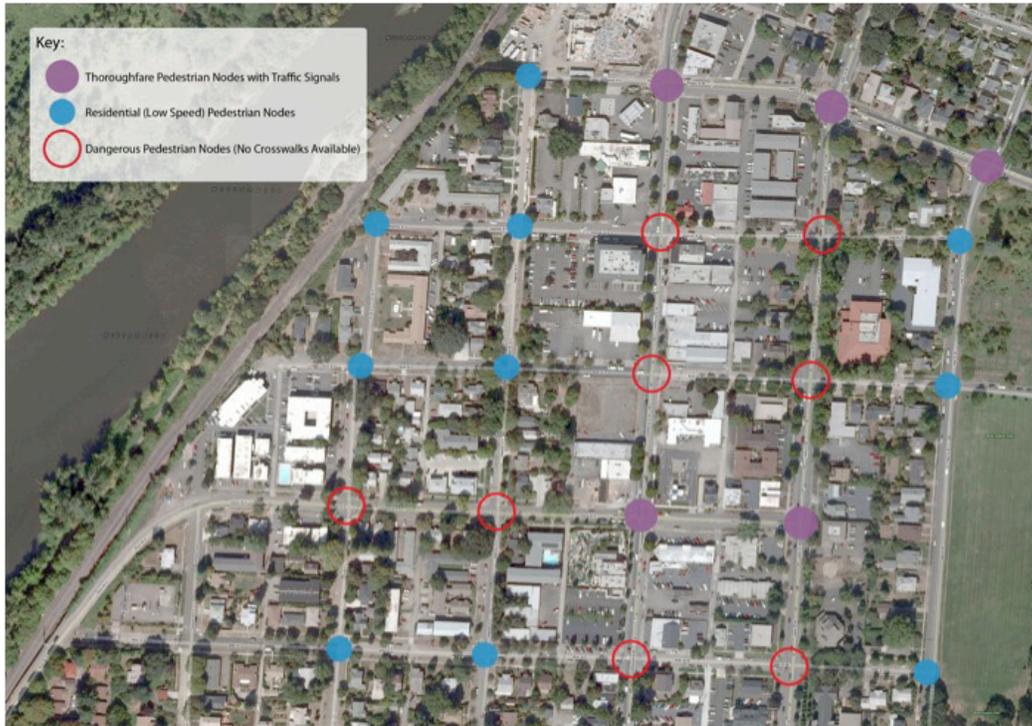


Figure 6: Pedestrian Intersection Map

Most of the blocks on our chosen site have mid-block alleys, which provide interesting challenges to creating a sense of front and back, as well as challenges with access to certain buildings. These mid-block alleys also have the potential to create interesting urban conditions, linking parking to the vibrant street fronts through paseos. We studied a successful adoption of the paseo approach in our study of Castro Street in Mountain View, California, which will be highlighted in the precedent section of this report.



Figure 7: Meridian Rendering

Concerning the connection to Salem’s downtown, the Meridian is a recent housing development that is just outside of the study area to the north. The Meridian, along with the proposed 13-acre Boise Cascade site redevelopment, intended as mixed use, could begin to establish a connecting path, or a consistent urban edge, for the downtown district.

History and Background

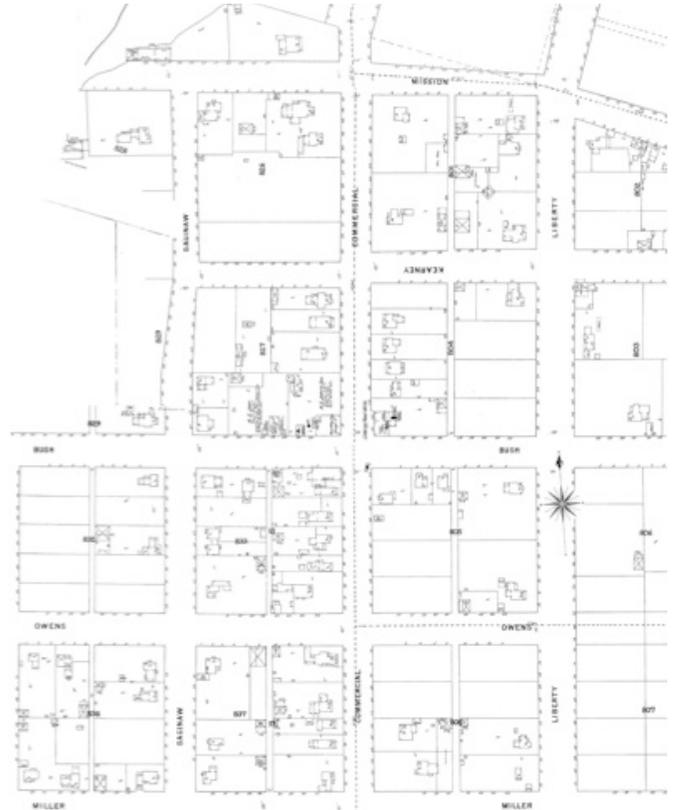
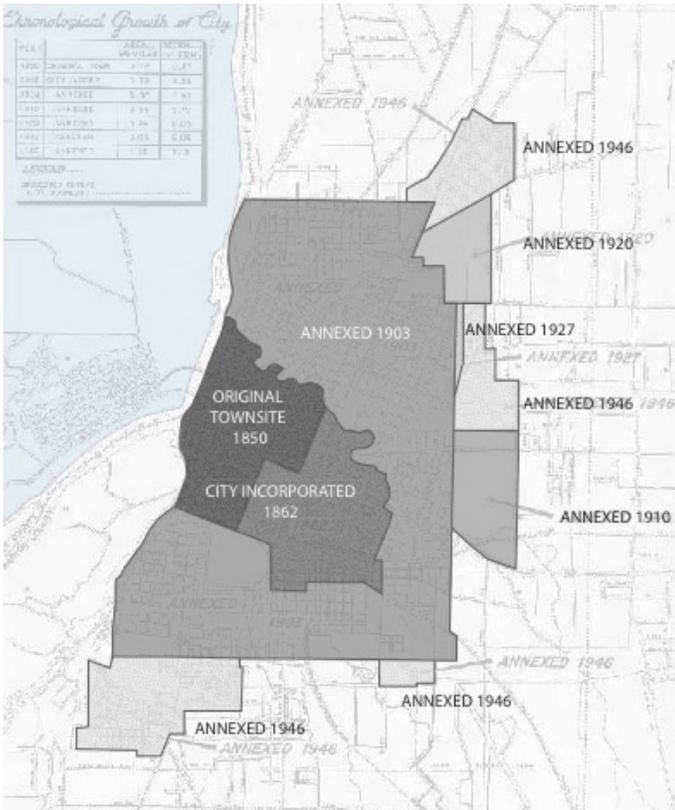
Salem is the capital of Oregon, with a current population of about 157,000 people. It is third only to Portland and Eugene in population size among Oregon cities, and it is growing. Salem is historically and currently an agricultural hub with farms surrounding the city. It is necessary to consider and respond to the needs of this agricultural community when planning for any urban expansion.

In 1864, Salem was selected as Oregon's state capital. Through the remainder of the 19th century, Salem established its identity and character. Businesses were starting off as the economy grew and developed. In 1920, the Oregon Pulp and Paper Company began operations near Pringle Creek. 1926 saw the construction of two major downtown buildings, the Elsinore Theatre and the Livesley Building, which is today's Capitol Center.



Figures 8 - 10: Oregon State Capitol, Elsinore Building and Livesley Building

At the start of the 20th century, Salem's population tripled in the span of 20 years. Several factors contributed to Salem's expansion at this time. One was the increased ownership of automobiles; people could travel longer distances with ease and moved to Salem and its outskirts, where property was affordable, as roads became accessible. The north side of the city became home to developing industry, entertainment, and governmental organizations. South of the city saw the establishment of suburban shopping centers and residential neighborhoods. Urban sprawl took hold as increased mobility and developments outside of the city center diverted attention from the core of Salem.



Figures 11 and 12: Salem Annexation and Growth Map, 1895 South of Mission Map

The postwar years brought further decline to Salem’s downtown. Sulfurous odors from the paper mill penetrated nearby homes. The return of veterans after World War II greatly expanded the male work force and contributed to another increase in population. The Chamber plan of a 1964 annexation of a large South Salem area was carried out to accommodate the new housing needs. Busy railroad crossings and other traffic problems made it easier to stay in the suburban areas, discouraging travel to downtown Salem.



Figure 13: Salem Paper Mill

In the 1970s, Salem entered an era of urban renewal. This is when transformations begin to occur on and around the South of Mission site. Once an area largely detached from the downtown because of physical boundaries and blighted areas, the South of Mission area started to reconnect with the downtown district and waterfront in the later part of the 20th century. The following timeline highlights crucial dates and developments in Salem in this time period:

- 1971 – Pringle Creek Urban Renewal Area established
In the early 1970s, the area south of downtown, near Mission Street, was characterized by deteriorating warehouses, underdeveloped and undeveloped land, and inadequate infrastructure. In an effort to revitalize this area, the City of Salem created its first urban renewal district. Since 1971, a variety of commercial and public buildings in this district have linked Salem’s downtown to the South Waterfront area, which includes the South of Mission site.
- 1972 – Salem City Hall leaves downtown
The relocation of City Hall to south of downtown Salem, just north of the South of Mission site, was a large step in connecting the South of Mission area to the downtown core.
- 1973 – Oregon Bill 100 passed, Salem establishes an urban growth boundary (UGB)
The implementation of the UGB in Salem forced city officials to encourage inward development, largely contrasting the urban sprawl that defined Salem’s development through the mid-20th century. Over the next four decades, the city established eight more urban renewal districts to encourage density and revitalization within its UGB.
- 1986 – Gaiety Hill-Bush’s Pasture Park Historic District established
The South of Mission project site lies immediately to the west of this Historic District.
- 2007 – South Waterfront Urban Renewal Area created
Resulting from a study done by the Urban Land Institute, the South Waterfront Urban Renewal Area was created in an effort to revitalize and reconnect the district to the waterfront and create a more vibrant, mixed use community.
- 2009 – Meridian complex completed
The demolition of the Oregon Capitol Inn, home to a very low income and transient population, and construction of the Meridian created a major shift in the socioeconomic makeup of the South of Mission area.

Growth and Future Planning

Salem's population is projected to grow significantly in the next 40 years, and it is critical that the city address how it can expand to absorb the influx of residents. A few basic options are available, and each would have an enormous impact on the usability of the site South of Mission. Were the city to choose to expand its Urban Growth Boundary, it could potentially almost double in land size. To maintain current levels of density the city would have to annex approximately 31,000 acres into the city limits. This is an enormous amount of land, and such an approach would create significant suburban sprawl around the city. Commercial Street and Liberty Street would likely continue to serve as arterials, and would be clogged with commuter traffic.

Salem could also choose to increase density within the city. This would allow the Urban Growth Boundary to remain intact, and has the potential to revitalize the urban core without compromising agricultural land. The South of Mission site would be an ideal location to encourage higher-density living due to its proximity to downtown. Ultimately, the city's policies will have a significant impact on the success of the South of Mission site. Understanding and guiding policy to encourage high-density living could have a significant positive impact on both the site and the City of Salem.



Figures 14 and 15: Conditions of Current Urban Growth Boundary, Projected 2050 Urban Growth Boundary

Current Population of UGB: 189,510

Land in UGB: 43,432 acres

Current Density: 4.36 people/acre

2050 Projected Population: 326,042

Additional Land Required to Maintain Current Density in 2050: 31,348 acres

Density if UGB is Maintained: 7.51 people/acre

Issues of density and development are inextricably linked to zoning codes and guidelines. Overall, the Salem Zoning Code is a fairly typical use-based code. Within the study area, current zoning limits development along Commercial Street to retail, service, and entertainment uses, and along Liberty Street to commercial office and service. Both zones make some provisions for multifamily residential development. Within the single and multifamily zones of the study area, non-residential uses are essentially prohibited, and low-density development is permitted.

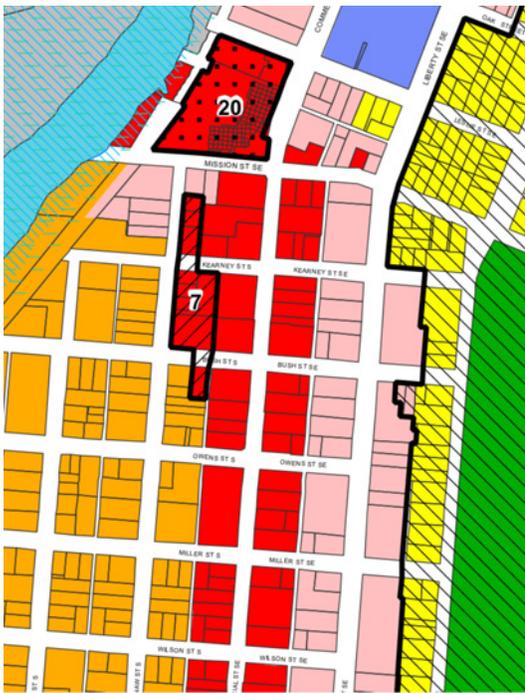
The Salem Area Comprehensive Plan provides high-level goals and policies for the Salem metropolitan area with a 20-year outlook. For urban development in areas like the study area, the following excerpts provide guidance:

“Encourage efficient use of land by facilitating compact, high-density development and minimizing the amount of land that is needed to accommodate automobile parking.”

“Provide a mixture of complementary land uses that may include housing, retail, offices, services, industrial and civic uses, to create economic and social vitality.”

“Reinforce streets as public places that encourage pedestrian and bicycle travel.”

The comprehensive plan generally provides guidelines that would increase the quality of the urban space within the study area. However, the requirements of the zoning code do not support the plan’s guidelines in this respect. The zoning code includes limits on mixes of use, high parking requirements, and setback requirements that make urbanization difficult or impossible. Density limits and allowances will not provide for an adequate number of residences within a walkable distance to support businesses such as restaurants and grocery stores without heavy reliance on automobiles. The zoning code emphasizes separation and screening of uses to mitigate conflict as opposed to a vision-based standard to encourage positive engagement of buildings with the street. Without changes to the code, it is unlikely that the goals laid out in the Comprehensive Plan will be realized.



Zoning map of the study area

- multifamily residential
- commercial retail
- commercial office
- single family residential

Another aspect to consider in growth planning is building size and quantity. These maps show the development of the neighborhood in three phases, the first being the development of lots between 1895 and 1925. The number of buildings almost doubled, but the average footprint of buildings stayed relatively constant. However, between 1925 and 2010, most likely due to the proliferation of automobile use and the growth of Salem as a whole, the number of buildings dropped significantly and the size of the buildings grew on average. The neighborhood is now characterized by larger buildings occupying entire lots with other lots serving as parking lots for these buildings. This is especially noticeable in the core of the neighborhood along Commercial and Liberty Streets.

This trend of fewer, larger buildings shows a movement toward building on a larger scale. While this provides for larger businesses, it also creates gaps in “street room”, creating a streetscape that moves further away from human scale.

Figure 16: South of Mission Zoning Map

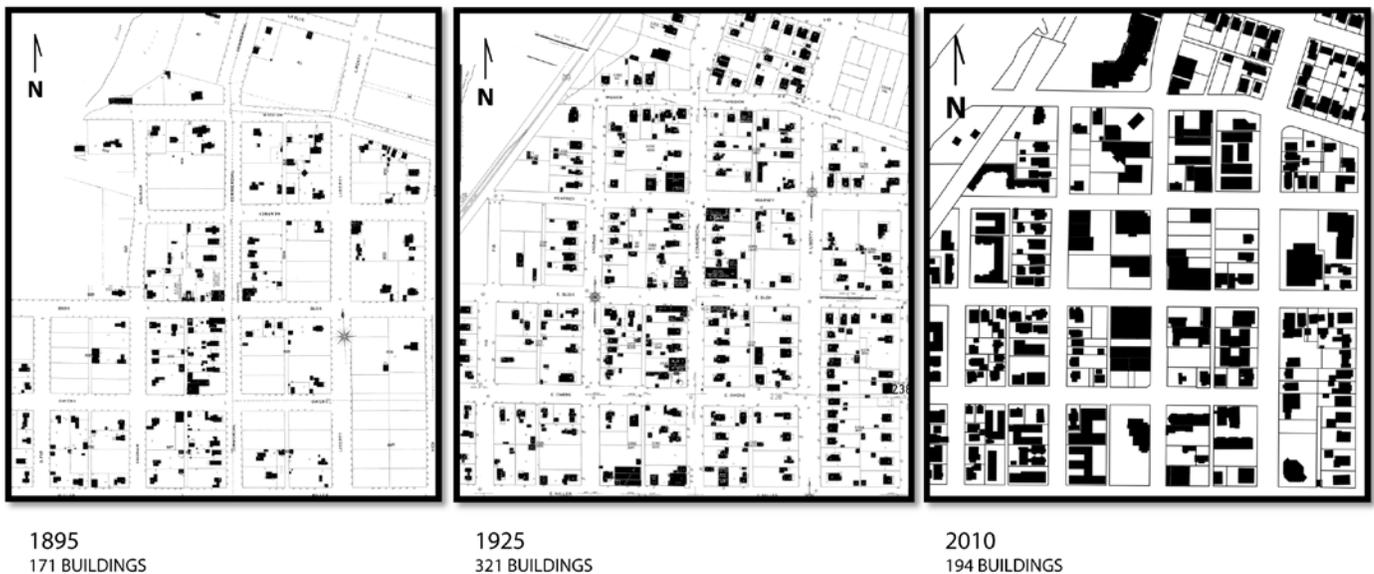


Figure 17: Building Development Trends Over Time

Site Analysis and Methodology

During our time on site, the studio evaluated the state of current buildings and came up with criteria for ranking buildings based on their potential longevity. This was really the first step for many of the students to begin to see areas of potential where changes could start to occur to transform the area.



Figure 18: Building Longevity Over Time

Green: represents strong presence of the building; it should exist for the next 20 years.

Yellow: need for superficial or aesthetic improvements to the building.

Red: buildings which are detrimental to the neighborhood and could be removed for future redevelopment opportunities.

In addition to considering the physical built character of buildings along Commercial Street, Figure 19 shows an evaluation of the activity zones on the site. What becomes important is the overlap between a deteriorating physical building and a zone of low activity – these areas have the greatest potential for development on the site. Addressing the

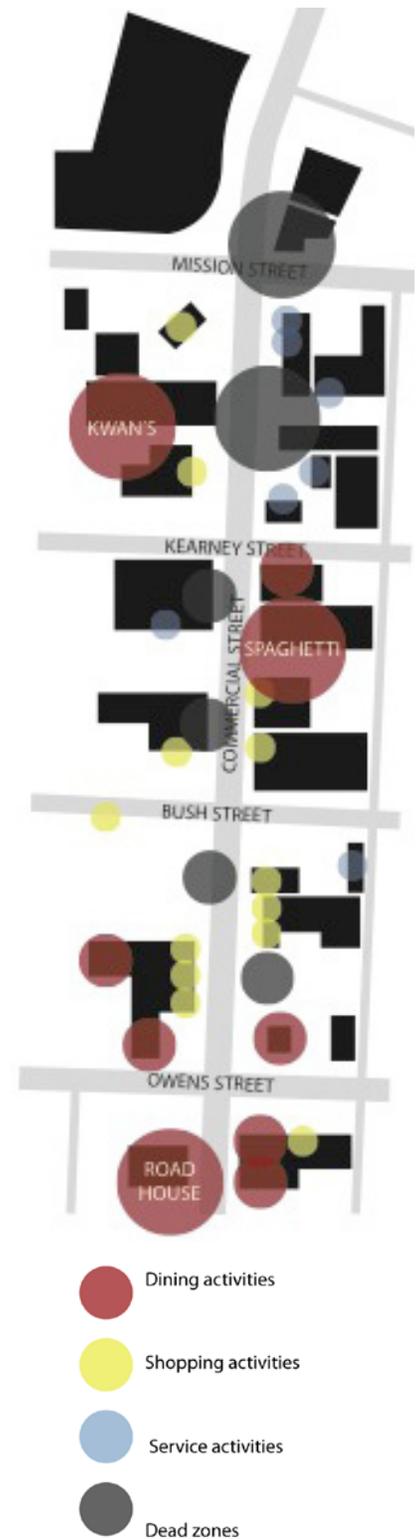


Figure 19: Commercial Street Activity Zones

lack of variety in business types on the site is important to aid in bringing activity to the area.

The students also conducted an analysis of building setbacks and heights. As these graphics show, the low building heights and the deep and inconsistent building setbacks along Commercial Street detract from any continuous urban edge. The current setbacks can provide opportunities for infill not only with buildings but also with gardens or courtyards for pedestrians to enjoy.

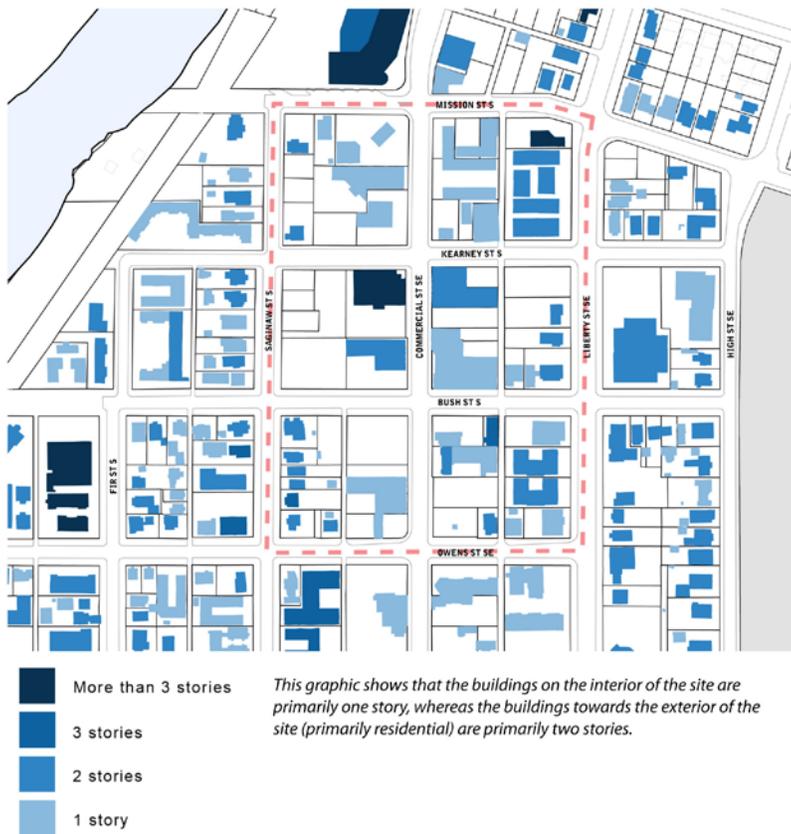


Figure 20: Building Heights

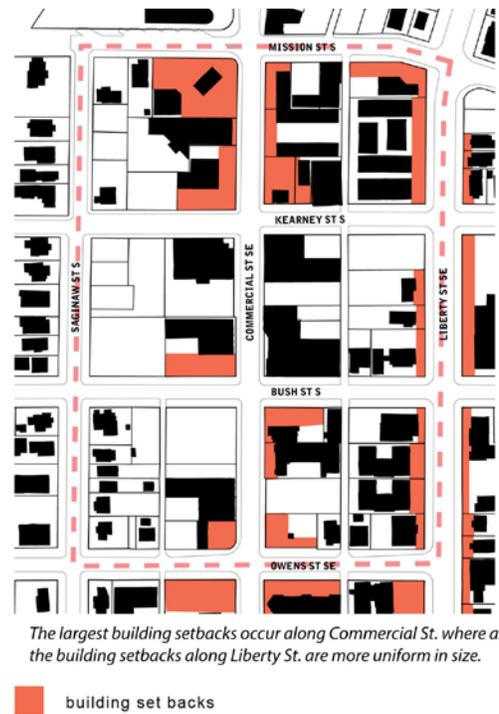


Figure 21: Building Setbacks

Liberty and Commercial Streets have distinct characteristics, which are outlined below. Figure 22 shows the differences in tree growth and maturity between streets. Also the connecting east-west streets of Mission, Kearney, Bush, and Owens will be critical in establishing any type of dialogue between Commercial and Liberty as well as Bush's Pasture Park to the east and the river to the west.

Liberty Street

- Larger setbacks
- Parking located behind buildings
- On-Street Parking
- Bicycle Lanes
- Full, Hearty Trees
- Variety of Building Typology
- Primarily Medical Offices

Commercial Street

- Generally Small Setbacks
- Exposed Parking Areas
- Lack of On-Street Parking
- Few Trees
- Low Building Heights
- Medical Office
- Retail
- Coffee Shops
- Restaurant

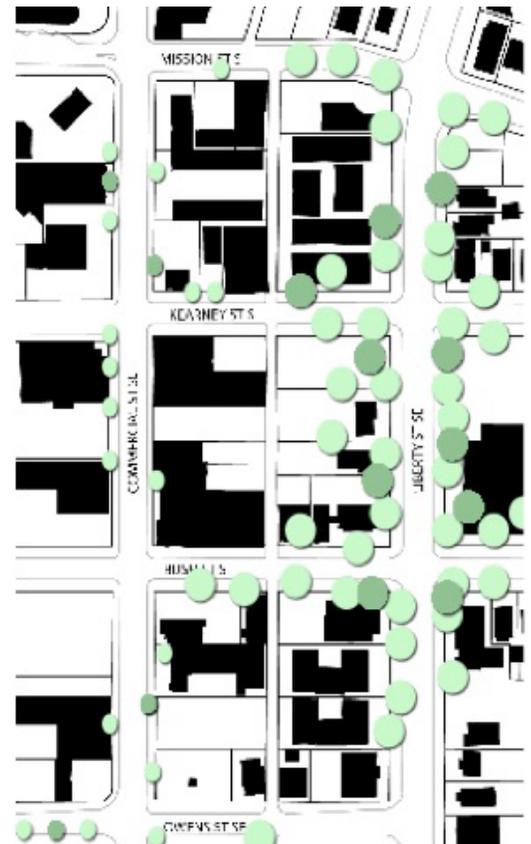


Figure 22: Commercial Street and Liberty Street Trees

Precedent Studies

Urban design is a field best studied through hands-on analysis. On-site observations allow researchers to experience the scale and character of a place, which in turn enable them to better evaluate its successes and shortcomings. Metrics identified at specific sites can potentially be applied elsewhere. In October 2010, our studio took a trip to California to visit nine sites in seven different cities. Each site was, in one aspect or another, relevant to the South of Mission area.

Our documentation and analysis on each site was extensive; we included street widths, building heights, styles, and tenants, traffic patterns, and parking counts. At each location, the 30 students divided into groups to take measurements, create sketches, and conduct interviews. From a regional perspective, we looked at data including public transportation networks, employment statistics, and commuting trends in each of these case studies. This research enabled us to have real metrics and real experiences to compare with our findings at South of Mission. The three precedent studies outlined in this section have been chosen to represent the most useful analysis we performed.

The criteria for evaluation were:

- block design
- street character, scale, traffic and parking
- building height, style and frequency of entrances
- urban design elements including street furniture and vegetation
- local interviews

It is important to remember that the following case studies are not necessarily the most successful; they are instead the most valuable in terms of applicability to South of Mission. In some cases the best lessons learned were actually what not to do.



Figure 23: Santana Row Elevation Collage

Santana Row

Santana Row, a “lifestyle center,” is located in San Jose, California. The development opened in late 2002. It includes amenities such as entertainment, shopping, restaurants, and condominiums, all designed in what can be considered a European style. It is an extreme urban planning example, in that the entire 10-block “neighborhood” was planned and built at one time. What results is an artificial-feeling atmosphere that appears to connect poorly to the

rest of San Jose. Despite these factors, our interviews revealed that visitors and residents of Santana Row like it there, and the project has received a lot of positive press.

Santana Row is designed and developed to foster social interactions between visitors and residents. There is a strong focus on creating a very specific environment for visitors. It is



Figure 24: Park/Plaza in Santana Row

both socially engineered and architecturally designed to feel active, natural, and diverse. There are several design elements within Santana Row that give people opportunities to interact with one another, including two urban parks, street furniture, and performance space. Throughout the site there are a variety of benches, chairs, and couches for visitors. These elements are all carefully curated and fit the style of the overall Santana Row “brand.”

However, unlike a naturally evolving city, where visitors are likely to interact with everybody who uses the street, Santana Row offers users a specific cross-section of society. For the homeless, street performers, and many more, Santana Row is entirely off limits. The private police force present there have authority over who is allowed to be on the premises and what activities take can place. In fact, during our site visit, we were instructed by the police force to stop photographing the area.

In addition, it lacks the character of what one usually envisions when conjuring the image of a neighborhood. There were no organic evolution processes that

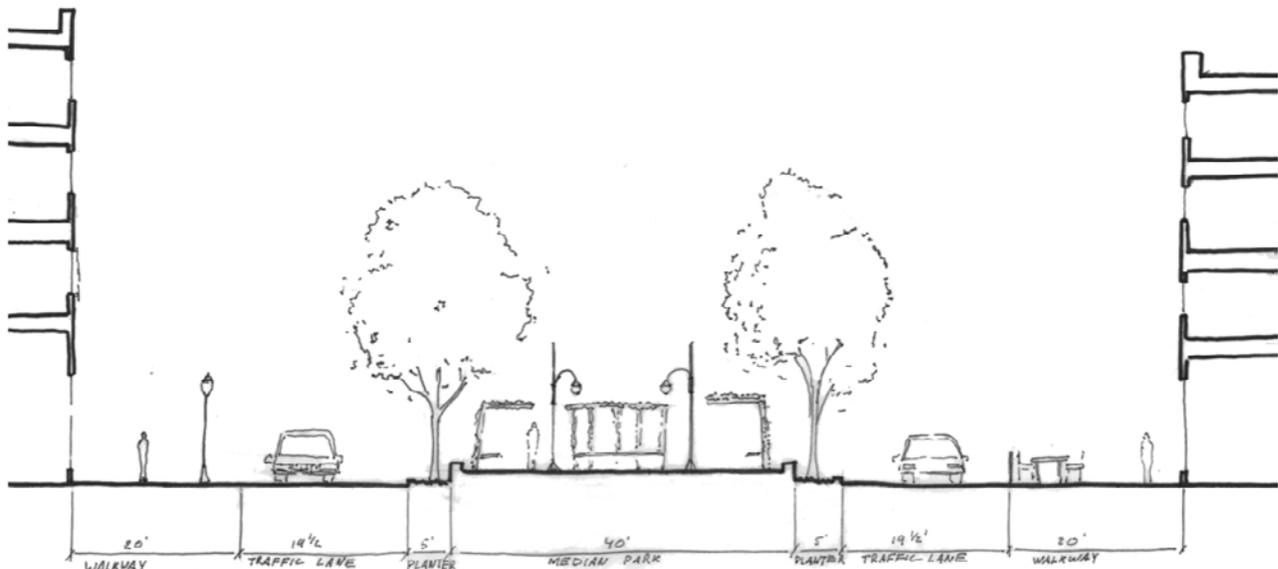


Figure 25: Santana Row Section

took place here. Urban design guidelines, which can be helpful in shaping urban space and aid in its positive development, seem to actually stifle anything real in Santana Row.

This precedent case raised important questions for the rest of our studies. What is the better urban planning approach? To plan and engineer everything and see it through to execution as one complete vision that tends to disregard the greater context of the city? Or is the more reasonable approach to create a framework and design guidelines that simply unify any naturally occurring developments to foster a more organic urban growth?



Figure 26: 4th Street Elevation Collage

4th Street

4th Street is an active retail corridor in the Berkeley area. It is known for its mix of upscale retail, local artisan shops, gourmet restaurants, cafes, and bookstores. However, it was not always such a destination.

The 4th Street area was largely residential in the 1950s, but in the 1960s the area was declared a redevelopment zone, and approximately 80 historic homes were torn down to make space for a new industrial district. The industrial zone never took off, and the area sat essentially uninhabited for the better part of the next fifteen years, save for a few staple restaurants and a small artisan community looking for low-cost rent.

In 1976, the Berkeley Redevelopment Agency accepted a proposal from a design/build firm called Abrams/Millikan & Kent, which had previously been

known primarily for residential work. The firm re-envisioned the area as a “Building Design Center” that would cater to the many home maintenance needs of the local population. The opening of these “destination” shops and restaurants began to draw more retail business to the area and around the year 2000, 4th Street hit its stride. Today, the area is composed of shops targeting an artistic and educated clientele.

The street is framed by low-height buildings, on-street benches, outside restaurant seating, and full-bodied trees that provide a great deal of



Figure 27: 4th Street streetscape

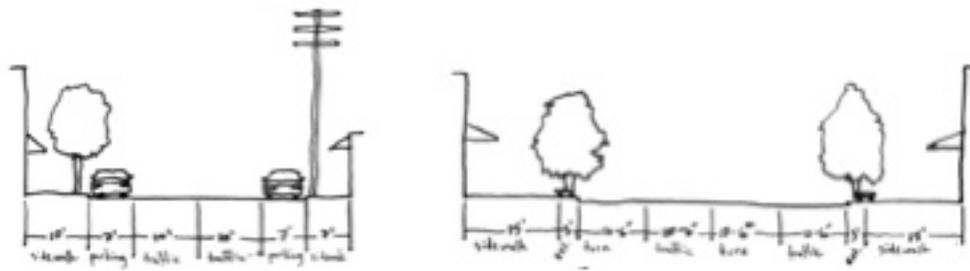


Figure 28: 4th Street cross-sections

shade and an appealing landscape. The street itself is fairly narrow, with on-street parking supplemented by five small parking lots within the blocks and two full-block lots at either end of the shopping zone. There are a variety of restaurant and cafe types, which help to bring people to the area at all times of the day.

The renewal of the 4th Street area brought a new life to West Berkeley and a boost to the city's annual sales tax revenue. It also brought more traffic to the neighborhood and significantly higher housing prices. This precedent case is perhaps the most applicable to South of Mission with respect to scale. A themed approach to development helped spur economic growth in a relatively short amount of time. One of the greatest strengths to take from this example is the redevelopment effort that took place, infusing old buildings with new life, keeping as much existing character as possible once this area was built within an industrial zone.



Figure 29: Castro Street Elevation Collage

Castro Street

Castro Street in Mountain View, California is a story of ongoing public investment, a back-and-forth interaction between the city and business owners. Castro was historically lined with businesses, but most were not successful, and the street was plagued with empty storefronts. At the recommendation of an urban planning firm, the city altered the four-lane, two-way street into a three-lane street. They also altered the parallel parking spaces, articulating them with trees between parking spaces, different paving material, and steps up to the sidewalk in order to create a space that can be occupied by cars or not. These parking spaces can be rented by businesses along the streets for outdoor restaurant seating.



Figure 30: Planted median at Castro Street

Medians and a circular planting bed were placed in another major street that intersects with Castro Street in order to provide a safe haven for pedestrians who are crossing the street. Additionally, parking lots behind the businesses fronting Castro Street are connected via paseos, or pedestrian-scaled alleyways between buildings, which are lined with green elements and windows of adjoining businesses. In the case of Castro, the design plan included steel archways to mark the entries of the paseos, which serve to unify them and create a consistent architectural language throughout the streetscape.

After this improvement, businesses along Castro Street saw a growth in business. Empty storefronts were occupied again and existing businesses began to thrive. To keep up with the demand for parking, the city invested in a public parking garage behind the businesses on Castro Street showing a continued potential in economic growth for downtown Mountain View.

The investment of the city in infrastructure has provided an opportunity for certain businesses to thrive. With the costs of infrastructure paid for, small businesses have an opportunity to move into prime real estate and establish themselves, keeping a diverse economic character and a varied clientele. Additionally, human-focused streetscapes with medians, green elements, and connections to ample parking provide for pleasant spaces that are conducive to human activity.

Willingness and an ability to invest in infrastructure that responds to pedestrian activity and respects local businesses is what made Castro Street a successful urban space. The retail corridor is thriving and unified. With proper planning and funding, the South of Mission district can potentially see some of the same benefits. Of particular promise is the integration of paseos between the main corridor on Commercial Street and the mid-block alleys, which can serve as access to parking. Should this opportunity be pursued, the South of Mission infrastructure is already set up for the implementation of paseos.

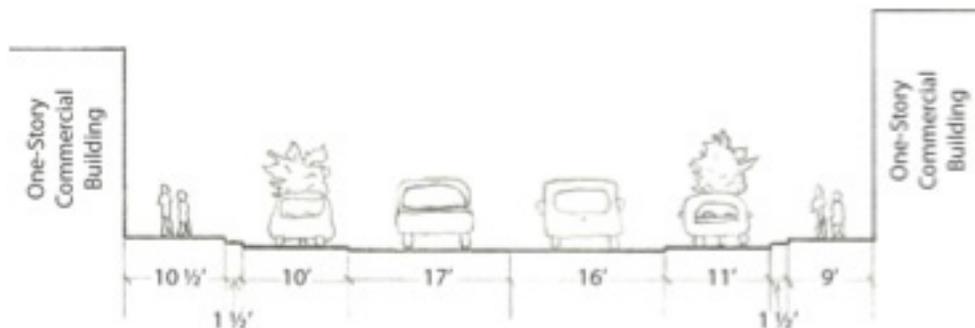


Figure 31: Castro Street cross-section

Mission and Vision

An important step in beginning any design process is to outline goals and principles one seeks to achieve. After research and analysis was complete, we began to ask the question “why?” Why is any of this relevant, what makes it useful, why does it work? Our studio attempted to answer these questions about the precedent studies to inform our analysis of and recommendations for the South of Mission district.

Our studio held visioning sessions to distill the research we completed and the impressions we gained into focused elements. First, we were challenged with authoring a vision and mission statement for the South of Mission district. This exercise was intended to extract the big ideas behind what we envisioned for this area of Salem. The students also met with dozens of local residents, business owners, and the local neighborhood association board in order to incorporate their goals for and perspectives on the district.

After this broad approach, each student listed and diagrammed three specific principles that we believed could be applied to the South of Mission district. The process was quick and intended to get at the most realistic goals for the area. We were given Post-It notes and ten minutes to get our ideas down. The principles were to be succinct, measurable, and attainable. They were based on the successes we saw in our precedent studies and our understanding of the South of Mission area.

The final step of this group visioning exercise was to identify themes common between the individual principles. Each one of the almost 100 notes was pinned to a large wall and we got to work grouping corresponding principles together. Soon there began to emerge larger themes, which were refined into five goals: DISTINCT, CONNECTED, WALKABLE, MIXED-USE, and GREEN.



Figure 32: Vibrant streetscape with vegetation



Figures 33 - 35: Images depicting pedestrian scale buildings and a lively street life with outdoor seating

In order to make further progress with the visioning session results, the students were divided into groups to further refine the goals and mission statement. The following are the final results.

Mission Statement: To encourage economic development through the creation and revitalization of vibrant communities.

Vision Statement: To create a vibrant neighborhood within Salem by introducing five goals.

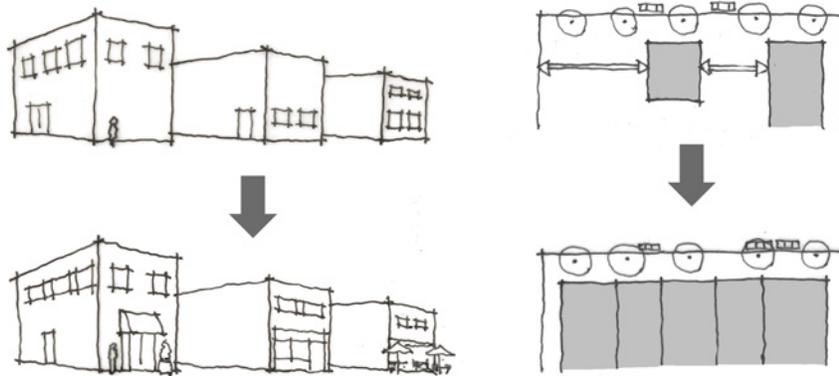
Goal 1: Distinct

The area South of Mission is a unique area in the City of Salem. It is different in character from the downtown commercial center to the north and the suburban areas to the south. We will embrace this distinct character of the neighborhood

through a variety of measures. These measures will strive to embrace the nature of the neighborhood, as it currently exists.

Principle A: Building Fronts Facing the Street

Main entrances should be architecturally obvious and adjacent to the sidewalk. When building entrances face the street, people coming and going contribute to



Figures 36 and 37: Building fronts facing the street, Continuous building fronts

the vibrancy and safety of the street. Entrances on the side reduce pedestrian activity on the street and require redundant space off-street for access.

Principle B: Continuous Building Fronts

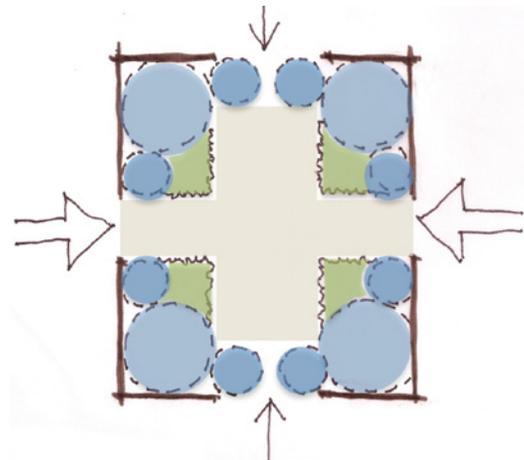
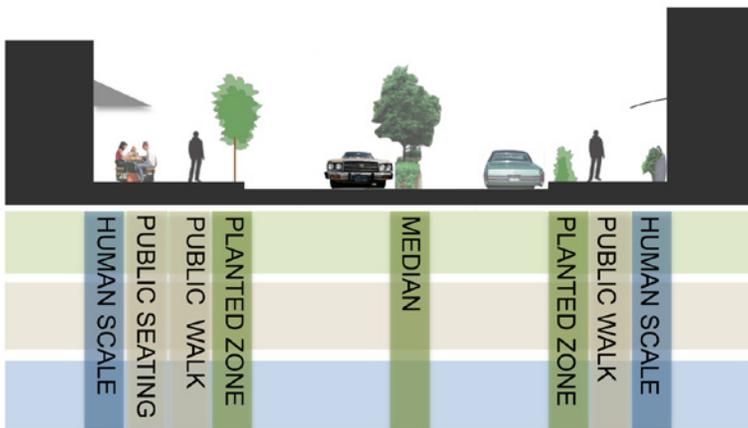
Eliminate large side setbacks, parking access ways, and other gaps between buildings. Continuity of building fronts creates an edge, spatially defining the street. It also increases the efficiency of land use, providing more space for buildings, parking, and useful green space.

Goal 2: Connected

To achieve a vibrant community, we will integrate the South of Mission district with the City of Salem through multiple modes of transportation and integration with the existing urban fabric. We will emphasize connections within the smaller community through pedestrian pathways, public gathering spaces, and a blending of the boundaries between buildings, pedestrians, and vehicular traffic.

Principle A: Semi-Public and Public Spaces

To provide a comfortable and linked environment for the community South of Mission there should be a series of public zones on the street, taking different scales and needs into account to weave the activities on the street together.



Figures 38 and 39: Semi-public and public space, Public gathering space

Principle B: Public Gathering Space

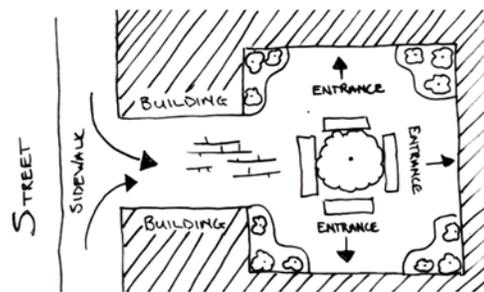
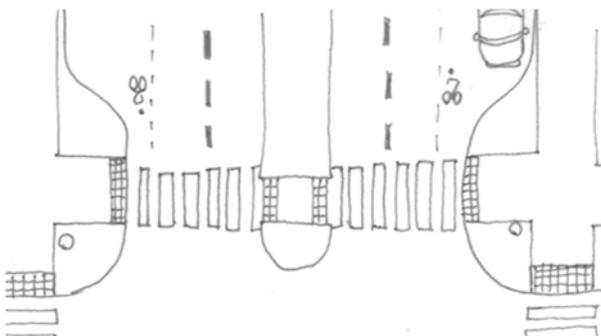
The South of Mission district should have a public area to provide a place for the community to gather. This should be an accessible place, comfortable for small and large groups, for a variety of activities throughout the year.

Goal 3: Walkable

To encourage pedestrian friendliness by enhancing street aesthetic and comfort while increasing safety measures and reducing pedestrian/vehicle interaction. To achieve this, a combination of parking strategies could be employed, as well as emphasizing the journey of the walk by using arcades, landscaping features, and courtyards.

Principle A: Continental Curb Markings

Continental Markings, also known as Ladder Stripping, has been proven to be the safest way of marking a crosswalk as it is the most easily visible to oncoming drivers. Some cities are now experimenting with inserting small lights into the pavement along the edges of crossing zones as a means of taking visibility another step further.



Figures 40 and 41: Continental curb markings, Courtyards open to the street

Principle B: Courtyards that open to the Street

Opening up courtyards to the street gives pedestrians more incentive to explore what the buildings in the area have to offer. The added sense of privacy that courtyards offer gives people a safe haven from the traffic outside, while also providing a place to sit and relax. Businesses can also gain greater access to both people and natural lighting by opening their buildings into the courtyards.

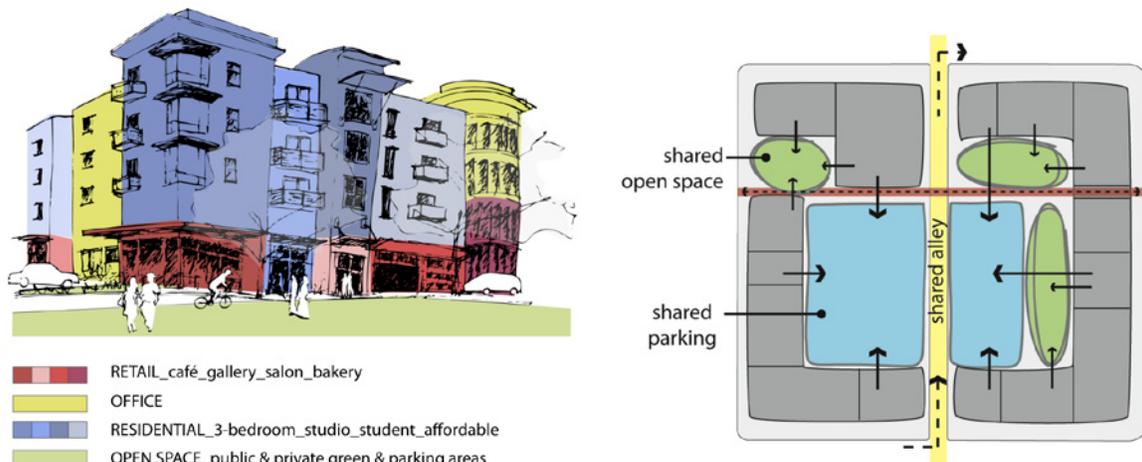
Goal 4: Mixed-Use

The goal of a mixed-use neighborhood is to create a diverse and active community through the integration of a variety of housing types supported by a mixture of businesses, including retail shops, restaurants, and offices. In order to be successful, this type of neighborhood must achieve a balance between the various activities and people passing through to create a vibrant environment.

Principle A: Multiple Users and Uses

Social and economic vitality is achieved by the variety of uses provided for a diverse array of people. Design cues such as a change in materials, colors, landscaping, and proportions help demarcate the transition between public and private spaces and give an identity to each use.

For example, affordable housing, artist lofts, and family condominiums can reside above or adjacent to a cafe, grocery, salon, and law office, thus supporting and attracting a diverse group of people within the site, surrounding neighborhoods, and more distant context.



Figures 42 and 43: Multiple uses and users, Shared spaces

Principle B: Shared Spaces

Shared spaces, such as access drives, pedestrian walkways, parking, and courtyards, saves on infrastructure and wasted space while increasing density

and promoting community interaction. Shared parking maximizes utility of spaces at different times, serving offices functioning from 9 AM - 5 PM and restaurants from 5 PM - 11 PM.

Goal 5: Green

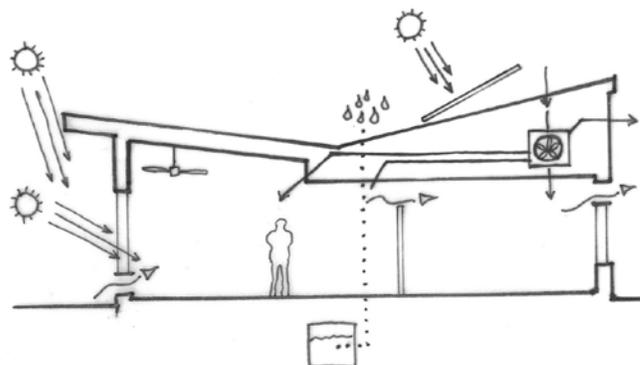
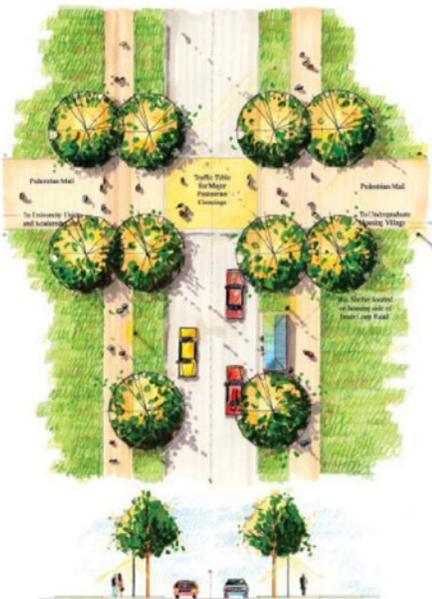
In South of Mission it is imperative to implement sustainable strategies for responsible growth. Considerations include compact development, green space and elements, and environmentally responsible infrastructure and buildings.

Principle A: Layers of green space

Green spaces should be integrated in various scales in the form of planting strips, parks and plazas, medians, planters, and green roofs, in order to help define public spaces and uses. Street trees in planting strips, for example, separate motorists from pedestrians and buildings. Green spaces adjacent to streets help mitigate pollution from vehicles and help absorb runoff. Tall trees provide shade, offering temperature differentials of up to fifteen degrees. Species of plants native to the region should be used in order to reduce maintenance costs.

Principle B: Sustainable Materials and Building Practices

As part of the effort to minimize materials use while maximizing building performance and lifespan, design considerations should include the following: renewable or recyclable materials, resource and energy efficiency, water conservation, indoor air quality and comfort, and technological advances such as solar photovoltaic systems. Use of these design ideas should also be appropriately applied by responding to existing environmental and site conditions to reduce environmental impacts through construction, renovation, and demolition. However, building reuse should be noted as one of the most sustainable practices, since it conserves materials and promotes historic preservation.



Figures 44 and 45: Layers of green space, Sustainable material and building practices

Student Projects

The studio identified two major urban development paths, or framework plans, to take when proceeding with in-depth design work. One is focused on incremental growth, and the other on a major and faster-paced development strategy centered on a grand boulevard. The students then split into groups to either develop along the Incremental Growth Framework Plan or to follow the Grand Boulevard Framework Plan.

Each student project fits into one of these two approaches to the South of Mission district site. Beyond choosing an Urban Design framework to follow, the students chose to focus on either one entire block on the South of Mission site, or to pursue one building project somewhere on site. Each one of these scales fit together so that there was continuity between goals and planning seen from the regional level all the way down to the individual buildings. The program for building projects was determined by need, based on our analysis of the site and the district.

First, we will introduce the Incremental Growth plan, starting with the framework developed and followed by block designs and individual buildings within that framework. Then we will zoom back out and consider the second framework option, the Grand Boulevard, and go through the block and building iterations developed for that framework. This Boulevard approach attempts an east-west connection linking green space through the city. We will see a few student design proposals for more developed park spaces within this framework as well.

Incremental Growth Framework:

Brian Don Carlos, Erik Bonnett, Stanley Chuang, and Agatha Wieczorek



This urban framework plan sets up a pattern of organic growth with careful consideration of the existing conditions at the South of Mission site. We identified quantifiable strengths and opportunities within the site and on a regional scale that were used to inform our interventions. An incremental approach allows for a natural progression of development, with private development spurred by public investments through the city's Urban Renewal Area, which we believe to be a successful model for growth. We set out to create a logical framework, which would be used to regulate and inform any new developments as to the best interest of the immediate community and City of Salem.

This plan outlines 3 major goals:

- to create a pedestrian streetscape
- to connect northward to downtown
- to establish a network of green space

We identified a strong mid-block connectivity throughout the site and centered many of our proposals on utilizing this alley connection. Paseos are introduced as means of connecting mid-block parking and activity

Figure 46: Salem Regional Map



Figures 47 - 49: Salem Regional Maps

back to Commercial Street. Developments on Commercial Street address the pedestrian scale by increasing the landscaping at the street edge, providing for street furniture, and increasing the setback required for new buildings in order to widen the sidewalk.



Figure 50: Illustrative site plan

Bush Street serves as a natural connection between the river and Bush's Pasture Park, as seen in the regional maps, Figures 46-49 (previous pages). This scheme incorporates medians and streetscape interventions along Bush Street (see Figure 51) to reinforce the green connectivity and make it legible for pedestrians, motorists, and cyclists.

Christopher Alexander's "A New Theory of Urban Design" was used as a benchmark for how to approach our interventions. He encourages the establishment of patterns based on a centering process and the creation of wholes. Any intervention should support itself, and a whole greater than itself, and be guided by necessity. The potential growth over time can be seen in the phasing snapshots in Figure 55.

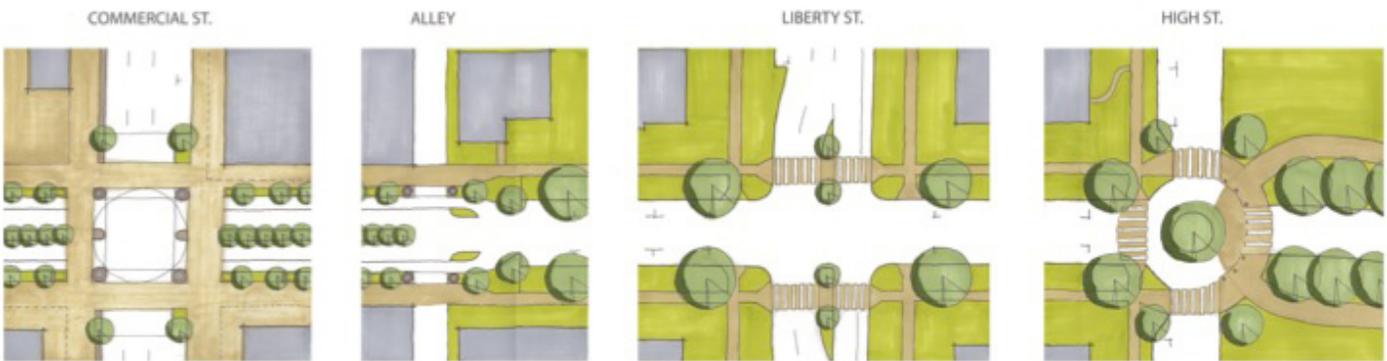


Figure 51: Bush Street Intersections



Figures 52 - 54: Perspective sketches

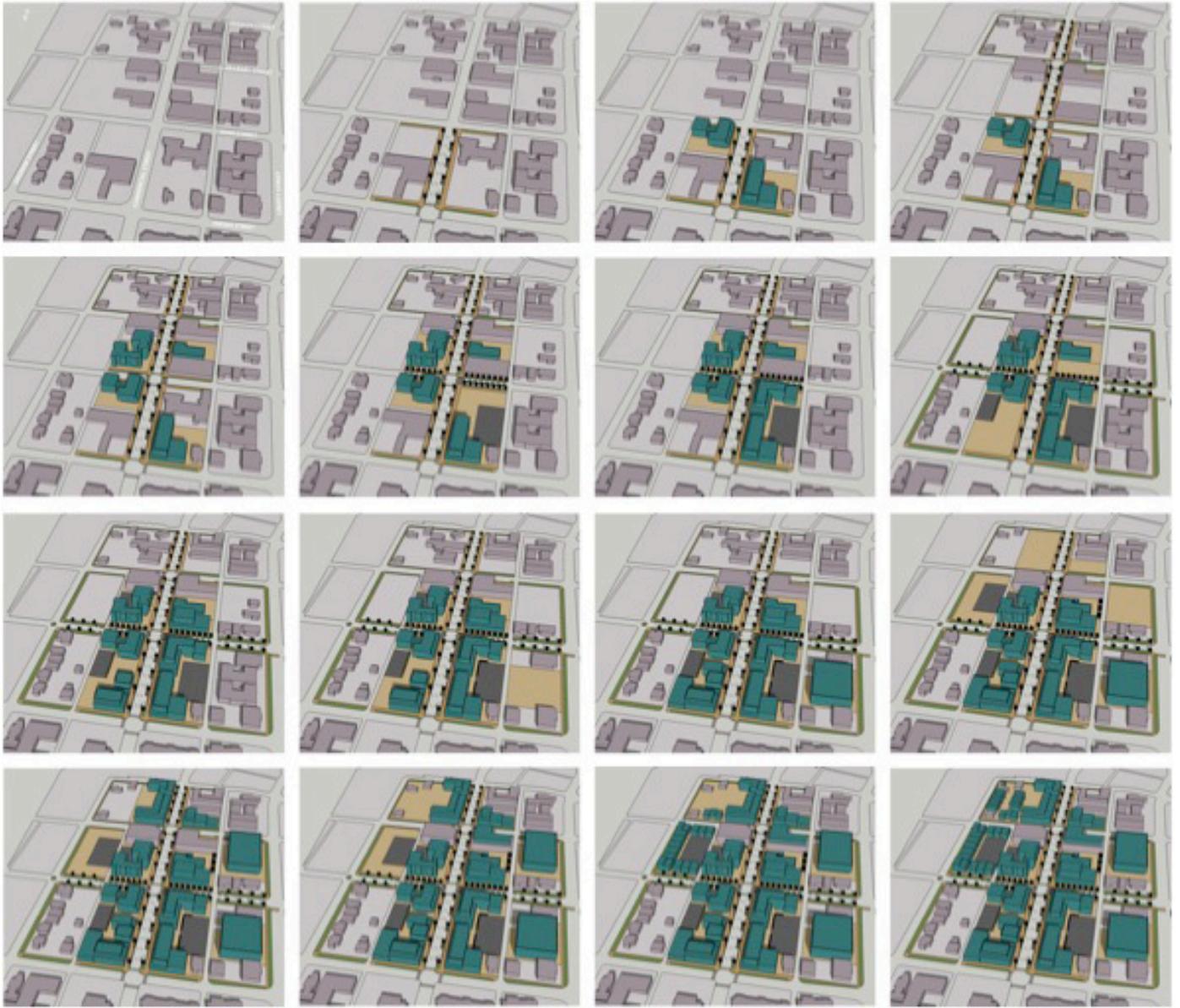


Figure 55: Phasing snapshots

Incremental Growth Block Plan: Kwan's Block

Amanda Morgan and Becca Seward

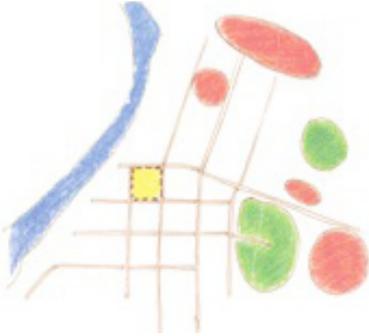


Figure 56: Kwan's Block site and nearby activity nodes

Context: The Kwan's Block consists of the block situated at the northwest corner of the study site, located between Mission and Kearney (east-west streets) and Saginaw and Commercial (north-south streets.) This block serves as a gateway to the new district, and is home to one of the area's most well-established restaurants, Kwan's. Immediately to the west of the block lies the Willamette River Slough; to the north is the new mid-rise Meridian building. Saginaw Street is a quiet, residential street, while Commercial is busy and bustling with traffic.



Figure 57: Kwan's Block site plan

Circulation: The block is designed as a pedestrian-priority shared space, with active alleys and urban design strategies to ensure pedestrian safety and comfort. Automobile traffic is welcome within the block and is amply provided for. All access paths through the block are pedestrian-friendly; pedestrian-only zones are demarcated in yellow while shared zones are demarcated in gray.

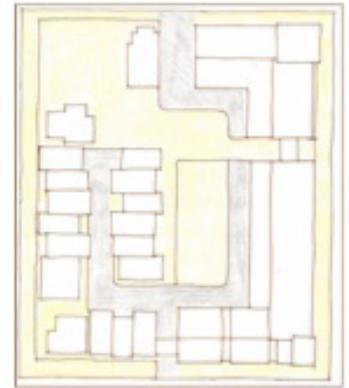


Figure 58: Circulation diagram

Uses: The block is programmed to respond to the varying characters of the block's perimeter streets. Three-story row houses are situated across Saginaw Street from existing single-family residential housing. Open space at the northwest corner of the block gesturally connects to the running path to the river. The northeast and southeast corners are built up to respond to existing mid-rise conditions. The center of the block is "hollowed out," creating open space that doubles as stormwater management and separates residential from commercial uses.

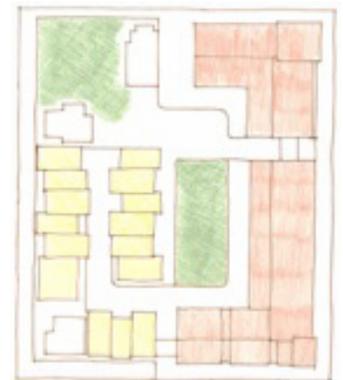


Figure 59: Uses diagram

Connections: To the northwest is the Willamette River Slough, to which the block connects via the open, organic corner. To the north and east are Salem's downtown district and Commercial Street, more heavily trafficked areas. To the immediate west is Saginaw Street, tree-lined and residential and a favorite of Salem's cyclists.

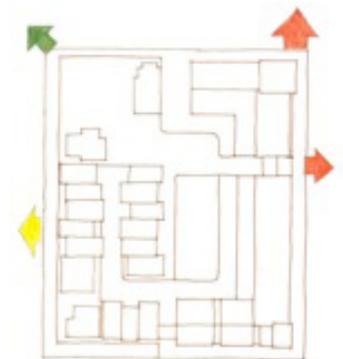
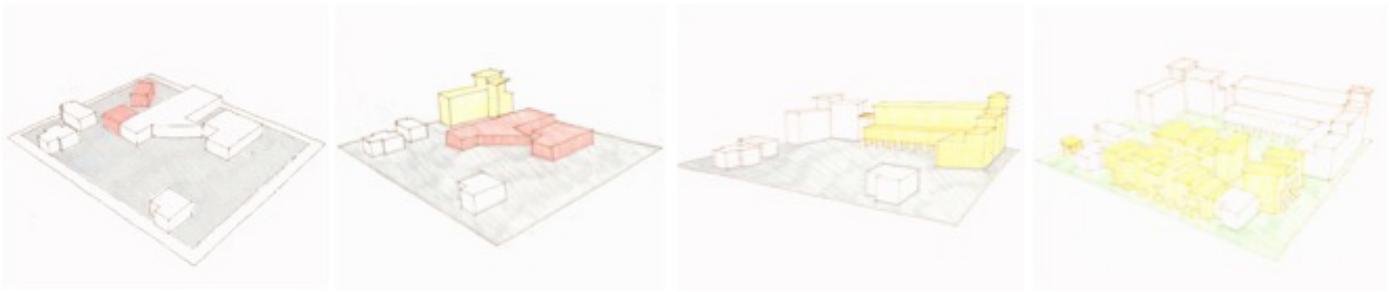


Figure 60: Connections diagram

Phasing: Working under the umbrella of the Incremental Growth Plan, we propose to phase the build-out of Kwan's Block in order to avoid homogenized development and to stagger interventions so that they unfold organically within the structure of the Incremental Plan. All design decisions are predicated on Salem's forecasted need for increased density within and near its downtown core within the next 30 years.

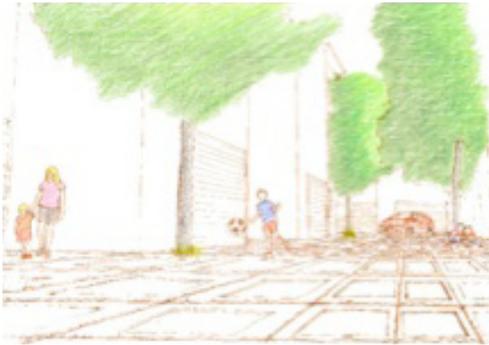
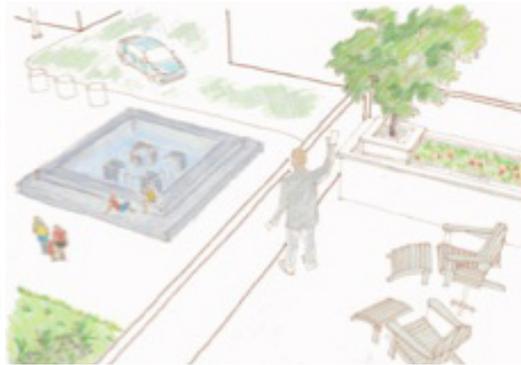


Figures 61 - 64: Phasing diagrams, phases one through four

Phase 1 consists of remediation of existing brownfield conditions at a gas station on the corner of Mission and Commercial. EPA evaluations studied by the Incremental Growth Framework Plan team revealed a leaking gas tank on site, which would be resolved prior to construction. The gas station and mini-mart would be demolished. Three existing one-story single-family buildings are retained in order to preserve the historic character of the block.

Phase 2 consists of partial build-out of the corner lot to house a new and expanded Kwan's Restaurant. Parking conditions remain consistent with phase 1. The existing Kwan's building and adjacent steel butler building currently housing The Fussy Duck would be demolished after both moved into a new commercial flagship building at the corner of Mission and Commercial Streets.

Phase 3 consists of a mixed-use building on the former Kwan's and Fussy Duck sites. Tuck-under parking replaces surface parking, and a bioswale is placed adjacent to new parking to treat stormwater runoff. Asphalt is replaced with permeable pavers. The final phase completes landscaping interventions, including a bioswale, permeable pavers, and an open space park, and adds residential row houses on the east and south sides of the block. Parking for row houses is on-site in tuck-under garages facing the internal alley.



Figures 65 - 68: Perspective sketches

Incremental Growth Building Plan: The Sage

Christina Larson



Figure 69: East elevation

This four-story building is a sleek example of how multi-family housing and mixed use retail could be incorporated into the urban fabric of Salem, while increasing the housing density, and bringing vitality to the area. The building is sited on the corner of Bush Street and Commercial Street and emphasizes a healthy interaction between public and private, indoor and outdoor, residential and commercial.



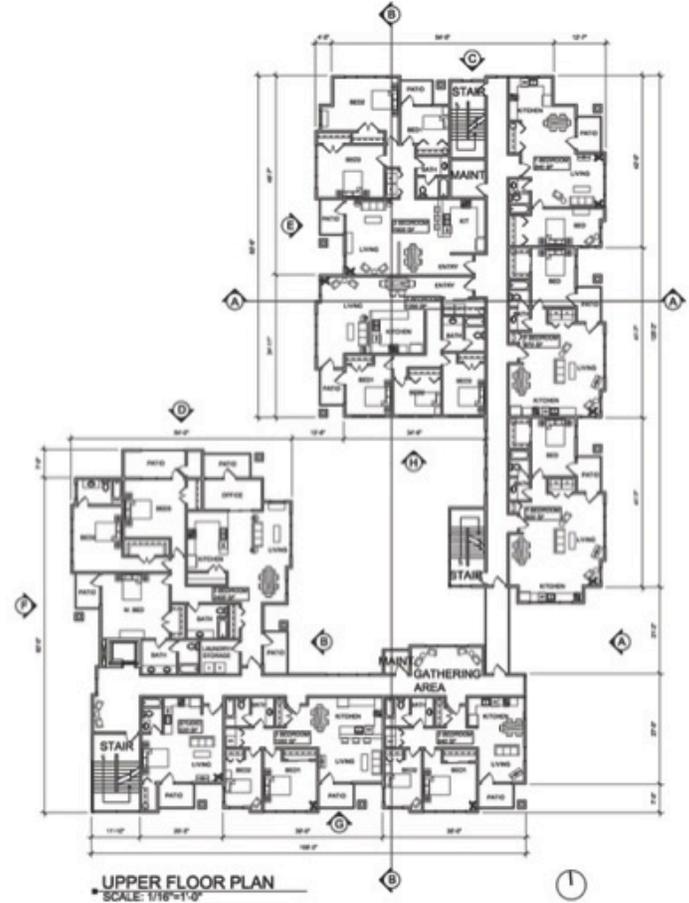
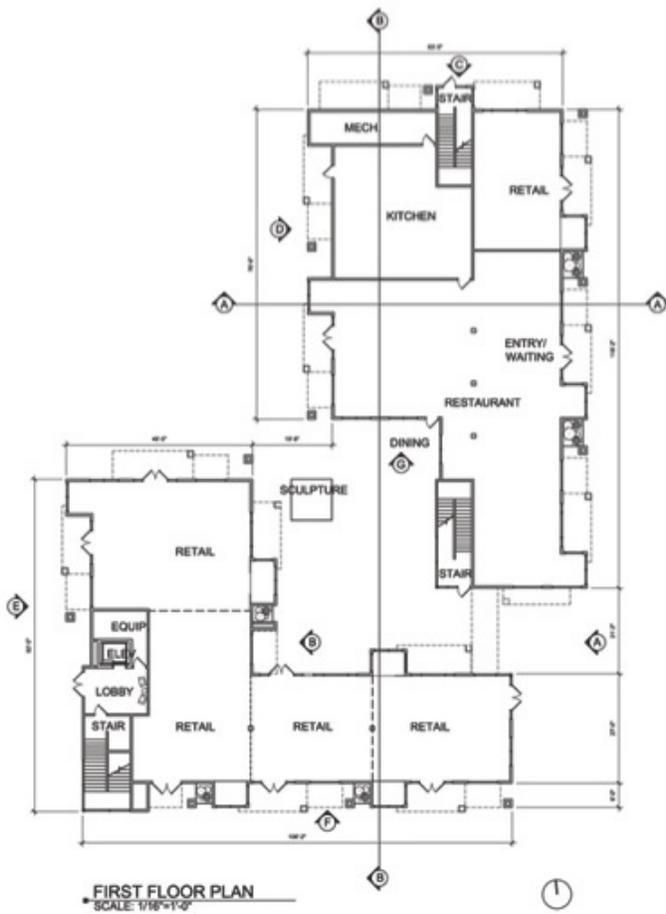
Figures 70 - 72: Perspective sketches, and Model photograph

Features:

- 5 Flexible Retail Spaces,
- 1 Large Restaurant Space,
- Outdoor Dining and Courtyard,
- 27 Apartments,
- Size of Site: 0.68 Acres, 40 Apartments per Acre



Figure 73: The Sage block plan



Figures 74 and 75: Level one plan, Level two plan

Incremental Growth Building Plan: Mixed Use

Misha Belyayev

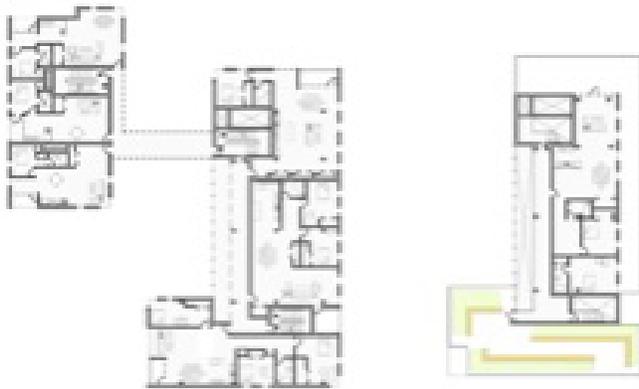


Figure 76: Front perspective

The new development in the area South of Mission has to attract new users and more activity to improve this area that is currently defined by traffic from downtown on Commercial Street. The building incorporates a variety of dwelling units at a much greater density to bring more businesses into the area. It also incorporates possibilities for different business types that range from a bigger



Figure 77: Site plan



Figures 78 - 80: Building plans and Physical Model

established business to a smaller one that is just starting out. This project is responding to the surrounding residential areas by breaking up along Bush Street and stepping down in order not to appear too intimidating and imposing onto the existing buildings. The skin of the proposed building responds to the two expected lifestyles that might happen. The outside façade is more solid and responds to the faster moving life along the street, while the interior façade is softer and might promote a more leisurely lifestyle. In order to make the interior courtyard more successful all the circulation corridors are located on the interior and provide both visual activity and safety to this space.

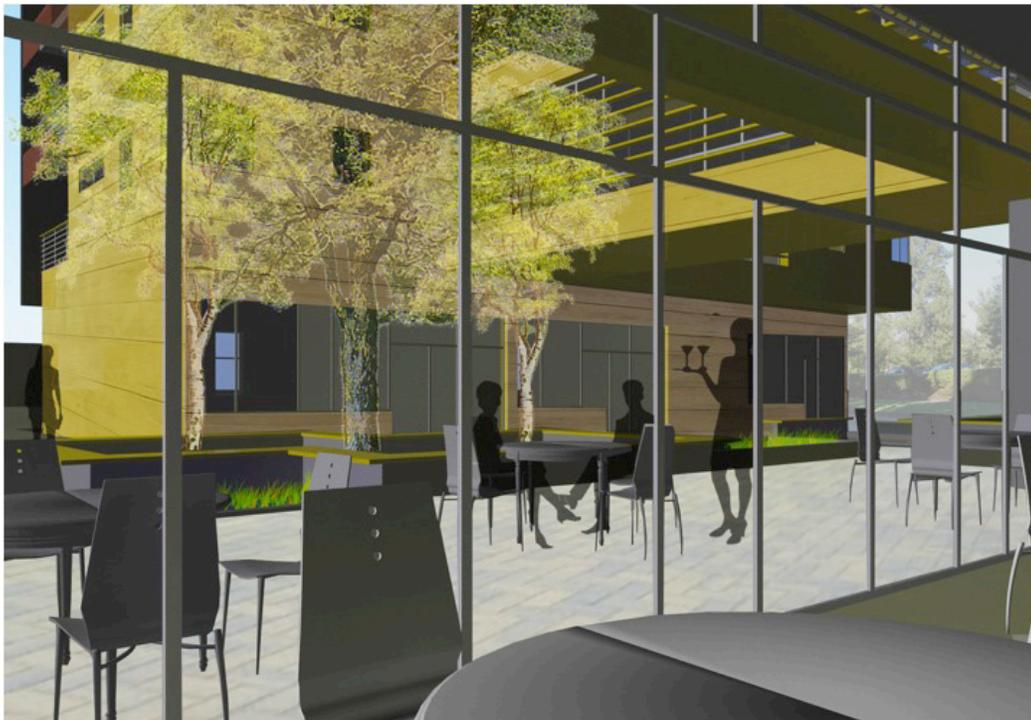


Figure 81: Interior perspective

Incremental Growth Building Plan: Nature at Hand

Wei Yan

This design for one block at the corner of Bush Street and Commercial Street emphasizes access to green spaces, and to passive and active solar energy, with multi-family residential buildings on the south side of the block, green space in the middle, and commercial buildings on the north side of the block.



Figure 82: Scale study



Figure 83: Orientation study

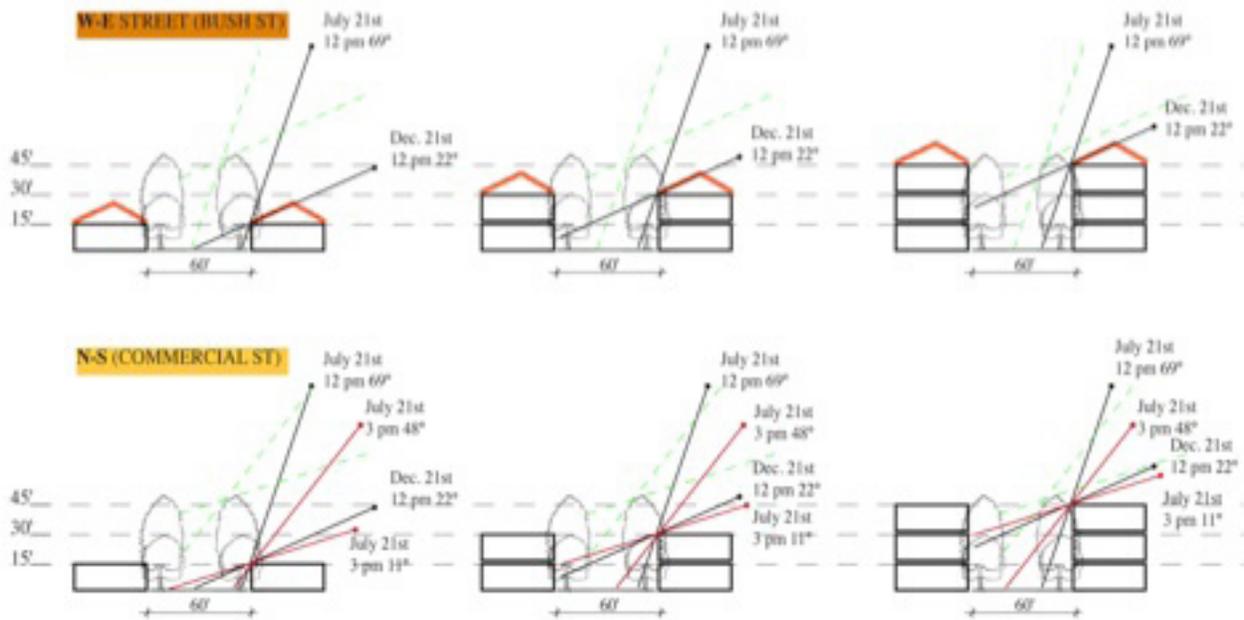
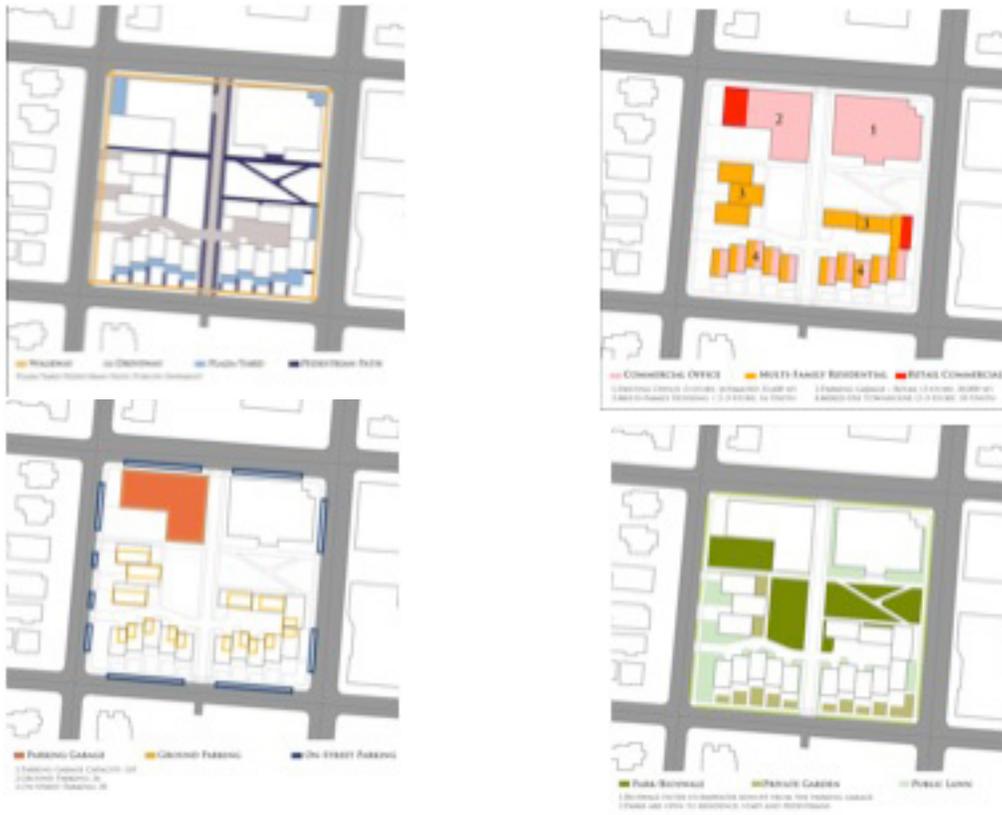


Figure 84: Sun angle studies



Figures 85 - 88: Plans



Figure 89: Site axonometric



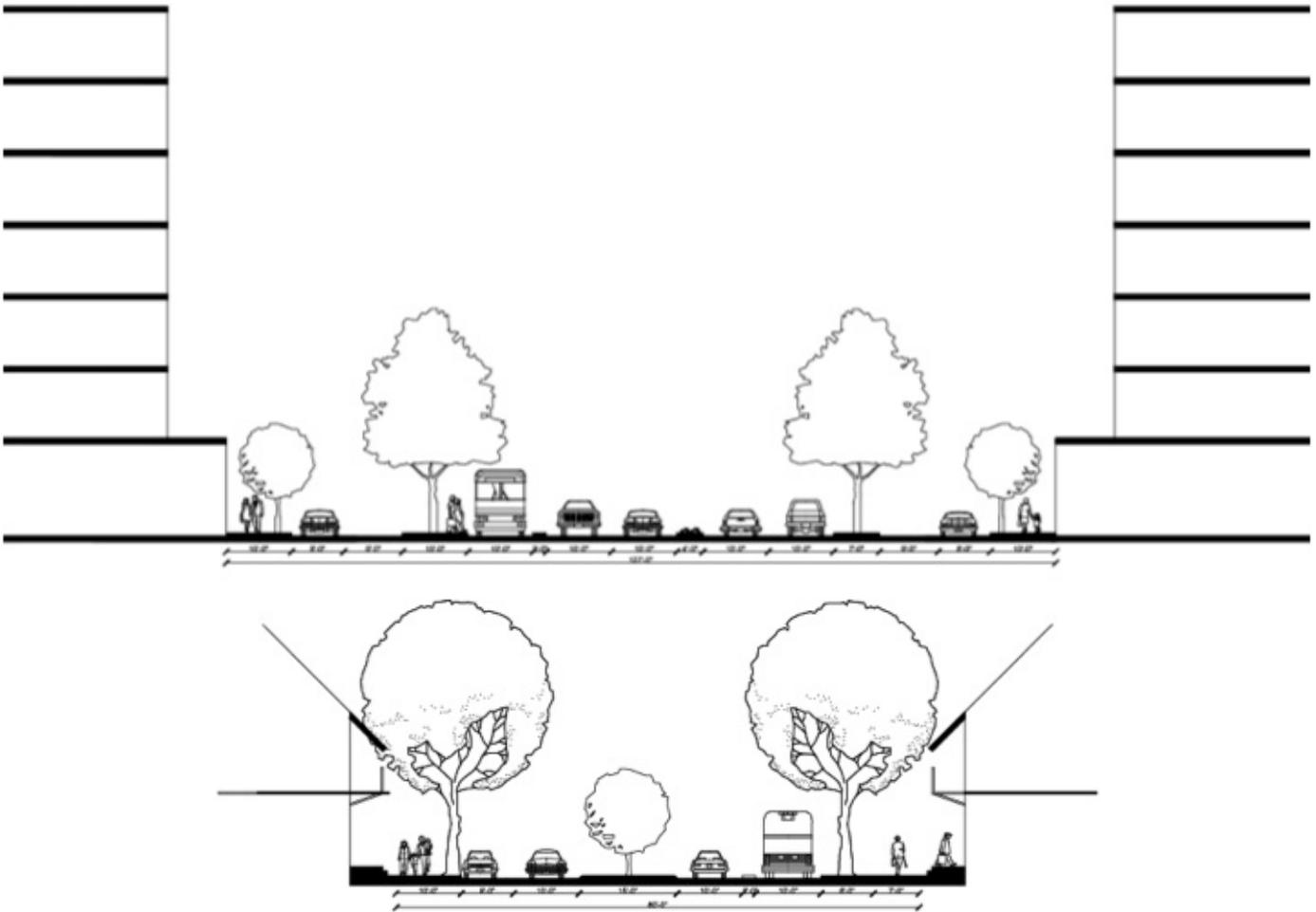
Figures 91 and 92: Building conditions map and proposed Bush Street boulevard



Figure 93: Impacted sites



Figure 94: Bush Street cross-section



Figures 95 and 96: Commercial Street cross-section, Liberty Street cross-section

This plan carries two-way traffic on Commercial and Liberty Streets, from the current start of the one-way couplet, up to the current end of the couplet, north of the downtown area of Salem. Commercial Street, south of Miller Street, would need to expand its right-of-way six feet in order to preserve the current number of north- and southbound lanes.

This overall system creates the opportunity for public transportation infrastructure in order to accommodate the future expected growth of the population, while at the same time creating a new, distinct location that bridges the gap between downtown and South Salem. This transitional zone can be made into a destination, rather than a zone through which commuters must travel in order to move between the north and south sides of the city. While this plan serves to create a new destination, it also functions as a buffer between the historic neighborhoods to the west of Saginaw Street and to the east of Liberty Street, a feature that was strongly emphasized by area residents to whom students spoke during this project. By focusing density and change onto the Commercial Street corridor, the distinct and positive nature of these

neighborhoods can be protected without stagnating the growth and progress of a struggling business district like the area South of Mission Street.

The City of Salem has many great parks, but there is an opportunity for better connection between these green spaces.

The development of Bush Street moves toward better park connectivity and provides an opportunity to create an urban park for patrons and residents of Commercial Street. To fully establish this greenway, the plan proposes a park leading from Bush's Pasture Park, through the South of Mission District, to a bridge connecting to Minto-Brown Island Park.

Phasing:

Phase 1: The improvements will begin with the development of the Grand Boulevard and Bush Street Park. Encouraging economic development at the corner of Bush and Commercial Streets are a strong focus.

Phase 2: During this phase, development expands to include the rest of the four blocks that surround the Commercial Street and Bush Street intersection.

Phase 3: The last phase of the development will expand to include the blocks on Commercial Street and immediately south of Owens Street and north of Kearney Street.



Figure 97: East/West connection diagram



Figure 98: Phasing diagram

Grand Boulevard Block Design: Active Alleys

James Austin and Shane Gibbons



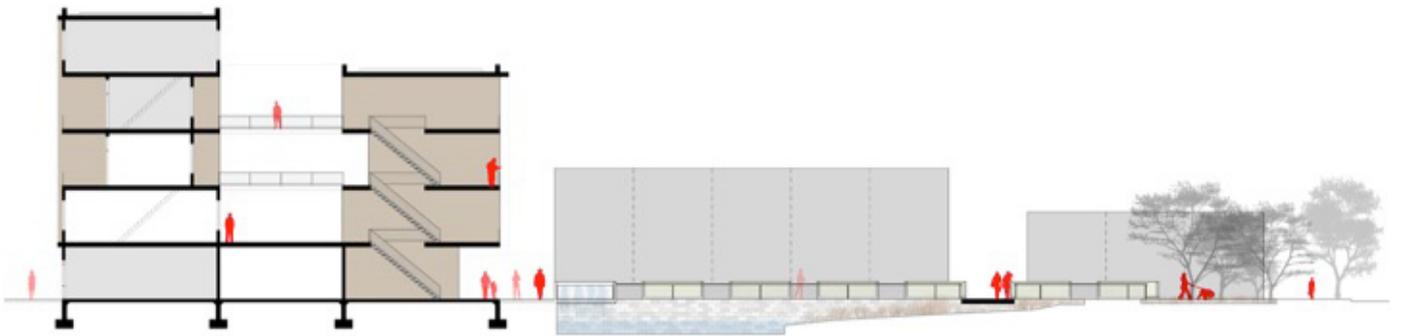
Salem, Oregon is projected to increase in population significantly by 2050. Salem would need to increase the UGB by over 30,000 acres to accommodate this population boom if the current density is to stay unchanged. We propose that Salem keep the current UGB in place and increase population density throughout the city. The South of Mission site showed tremendous potential to accommodate some of this growth. Our site, located on the corner of Bush Street and Commercial Street, exhibited a great location for attracting new residents. A linear park is located immediately to the south, and a pedestrian alley system bisects the block. The project works with these new urban conditions to create a pleasant live/work atmosphere.

Our block design incorporates open urban spaces, buildings that address the alley, and new business venues for potential entrepreneurs. We see the pedestrian alleys as a vital part of site interaction. The alley provides an active urban condition where residents and consumers can eat, shop, and recreate. The design also incorporates green systems to accommodate healthy and responsible growth through the use of wetland implementation and green roof systems to mitigate stormwater runoff and retention, and sustainable materials and practices to ensure and promote healthy living conditions. Our design addresses the future population growth through the creation of active urban spaces, providing for a mixture of uses, varied density increase, and the incorporation of natural systems.

Figures 99 - 101: Alley perspective, Exterior perspective, Courtyard perspective



Figures 102 and 103: Courtyard plan, Block plan



Figures 104 and 105: Site section, Site elevation

Grand Boulevard Block Design: A Unified Landmark

Jenn Pacenka, Diana Hogard, and Marc Asnis

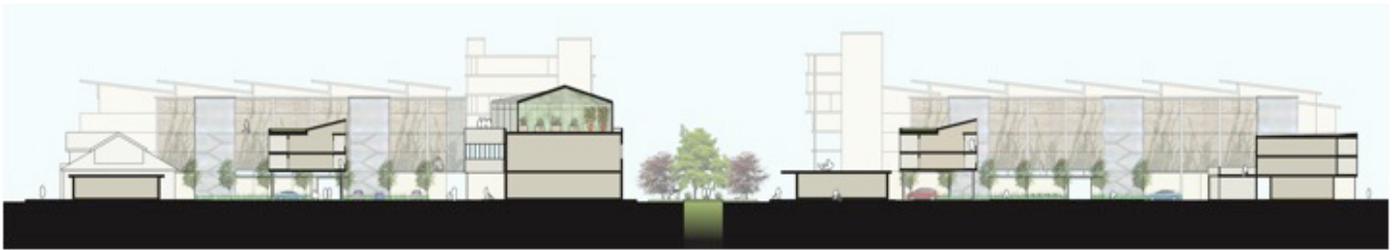


Figure 106: Site diagram

Development of two central blocks in the heart of the South of Mission district can bridge the gap between historic neighborhoods, downtown activity, and ecological systems.



Figures 107 and 108: Street perspective, Exterior perspective



Figures 109 and 110: Site section, Section perspective



Figures 111 and 112: Market perspective, Exterior perspective

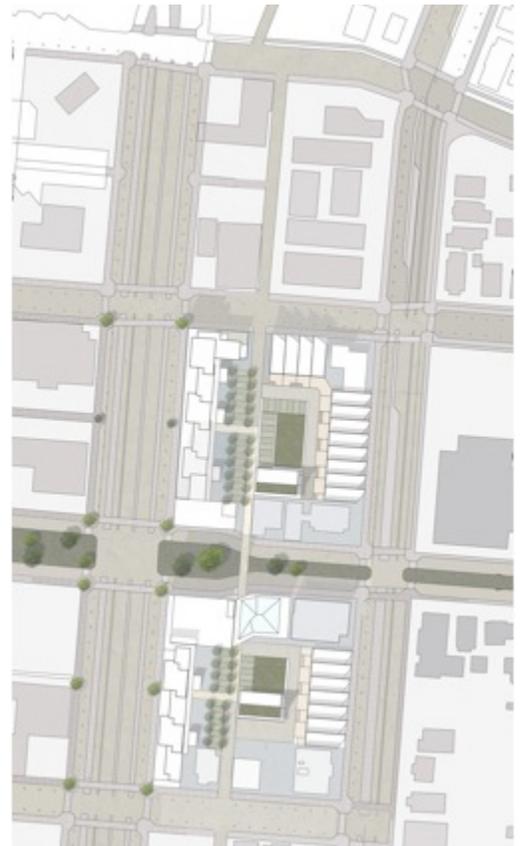


Figure 113: Site plan

Grand Boulevard Building Design: A Home in Salem

Daniel Abrahamson

Due to the location of the State Capitol, Willamette University, and the Salem Hospital system in the city, Salem serves as a home to temporary residents of various populations. However, it currently does not offer any temporary housing that invites these travelers to be a part of permanent neighborhoods. This project integrates temporary residents into the South of Mission neighborhood, a neighborhood that is conveniently located near these attractions, as well as parks, the Willamette River, and other amenities.



Figure 114: Exterior perspective

The project serves as a neighborhood within a neighborhood. The residential units are complemented by various services and retail spaces on the site. The residential units are oriented in a north-south direction to take advantage of natural ventilation and daylighting. The building's massing responds to the different character of Commercial and Saginaw Streets.

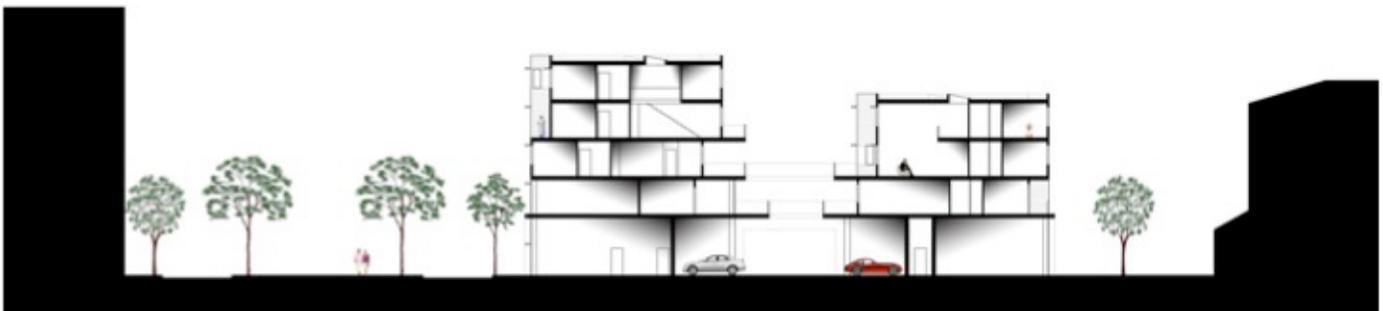


Figure 115: Site section



Figure 116: Exterior perspective



Figure 117: Elevation

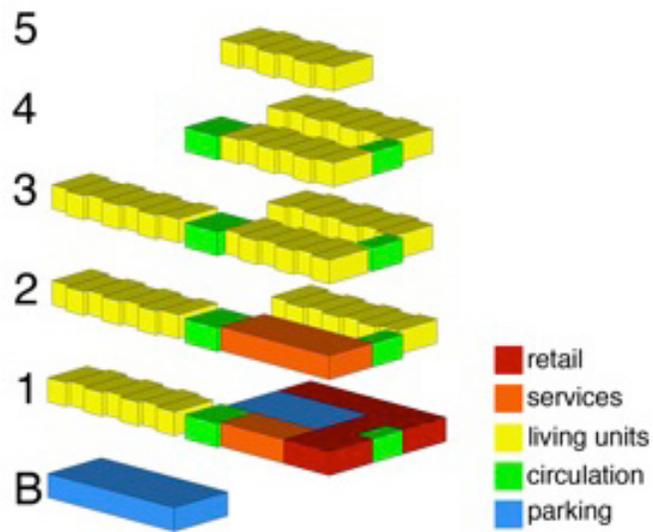


Figure 118: Use diagram

Grand Boulevard Building Design: Urban Canopy

Alex Arizala

This mixed use complex on the corner of Commercial and Bush Streets consists of a hotel, with a grocery store and restaurant on its lower floors. It takes the urban boulevard framework's principle of layers of green spaces that weave throughout the city and turns that concept on its side as a means of enveloping the building's various functions. It features a built-up corner with stepped back heights that allow for multiple terraces. The idea of a tree's canopy changing with the seasons informs the green roof, which changes from season to season and allows for different lighting conditions.

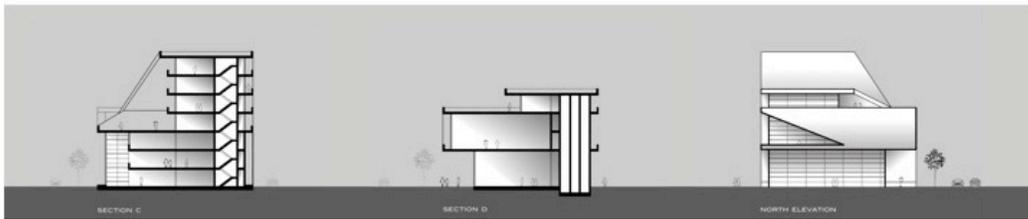
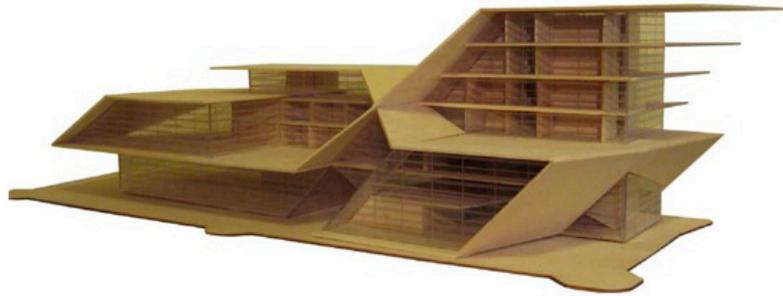


Figure 119: Physical model and Sections

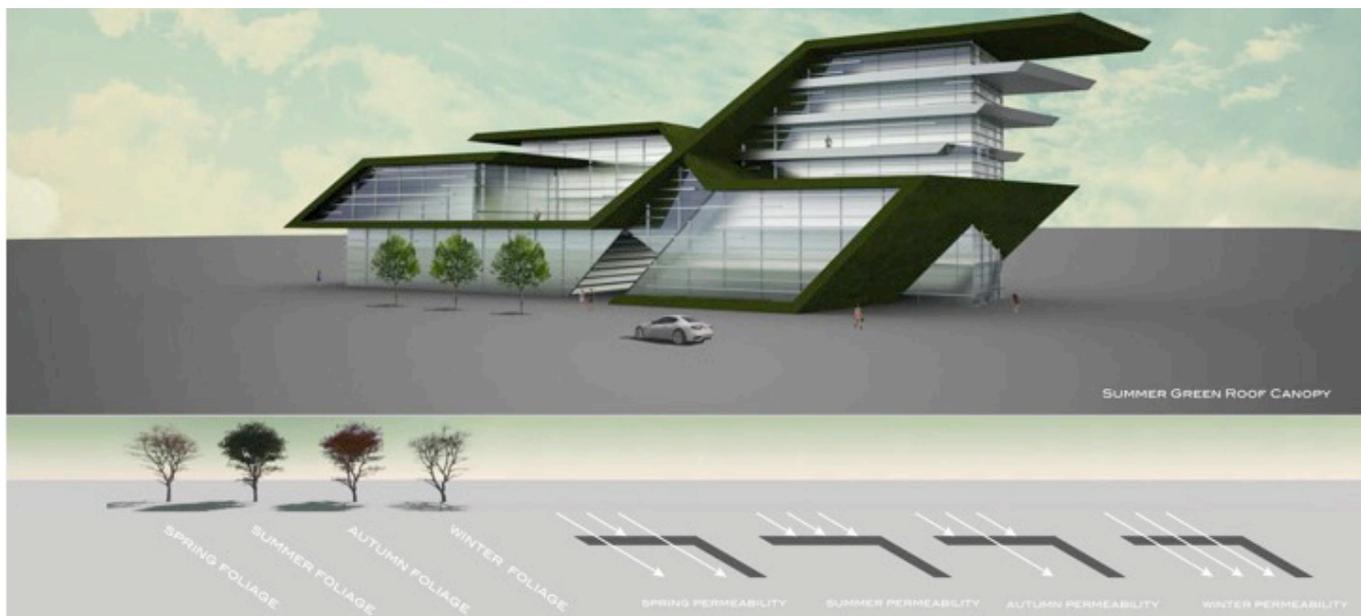


Figure 120: Summer perspective

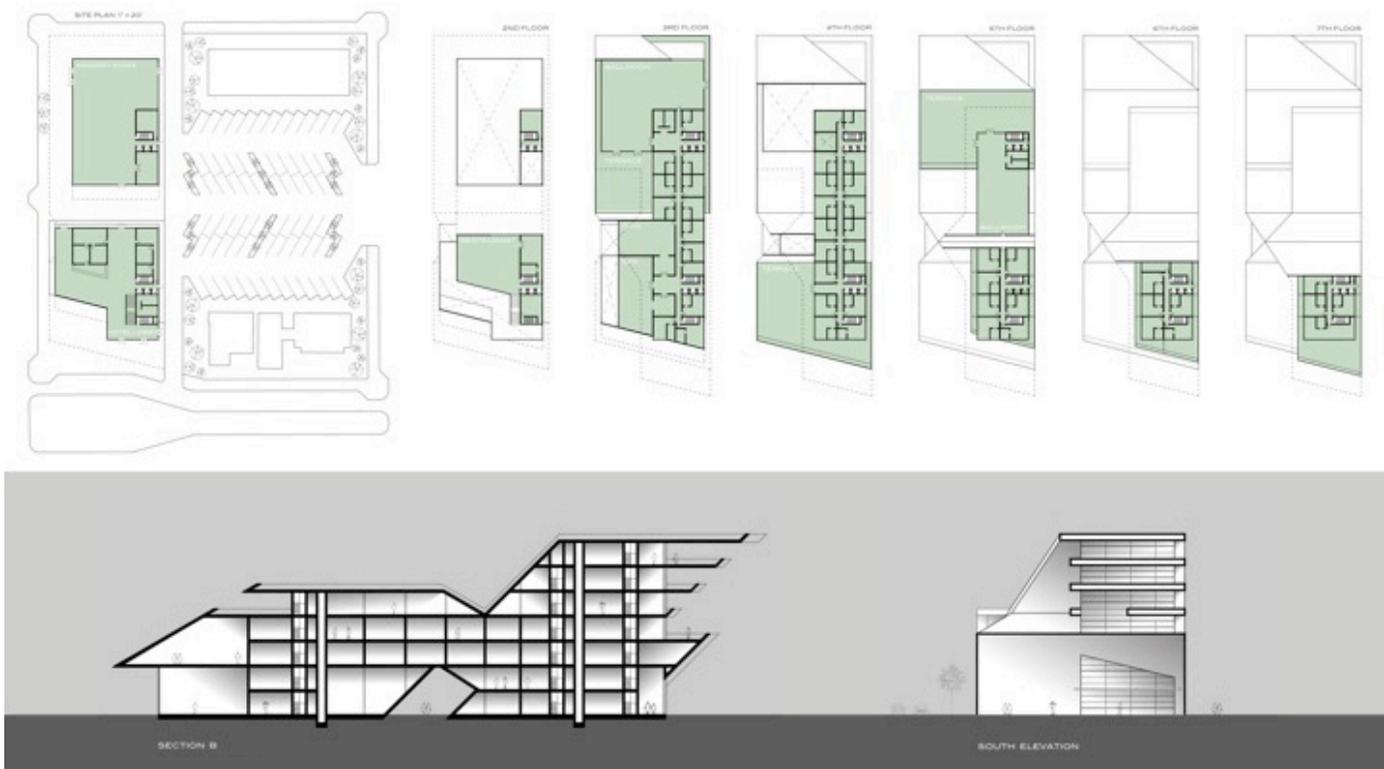


Figure 121: Plans and sections

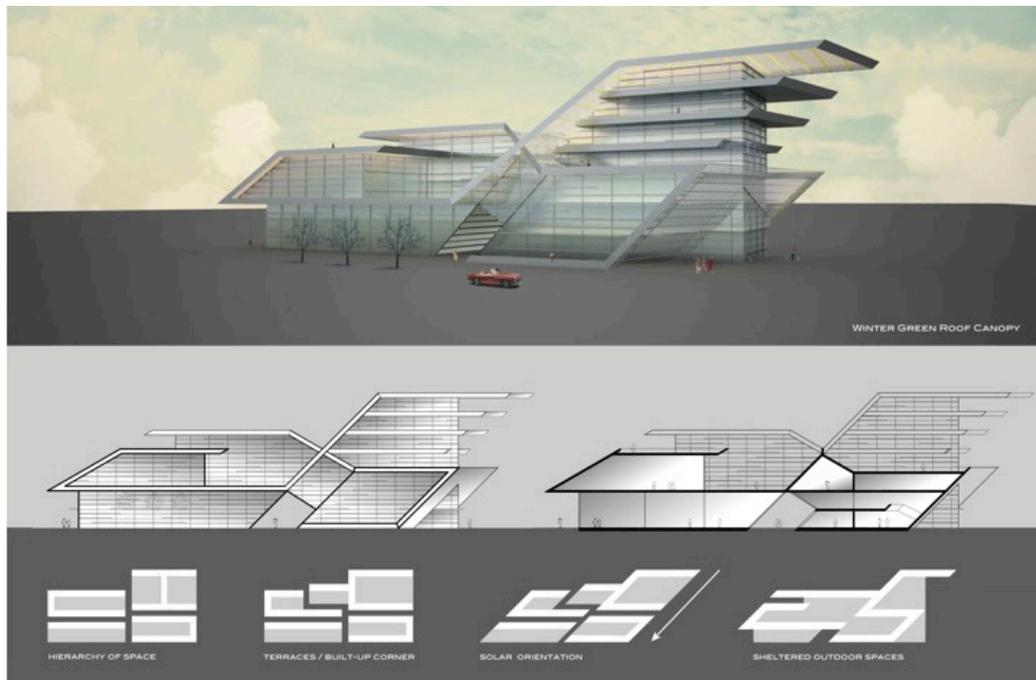


Figure 122: Winter perspective

Grand Boulevard Building Design: Bridge Hotel

Eileen Chua



Figure 123: Exterior perspective

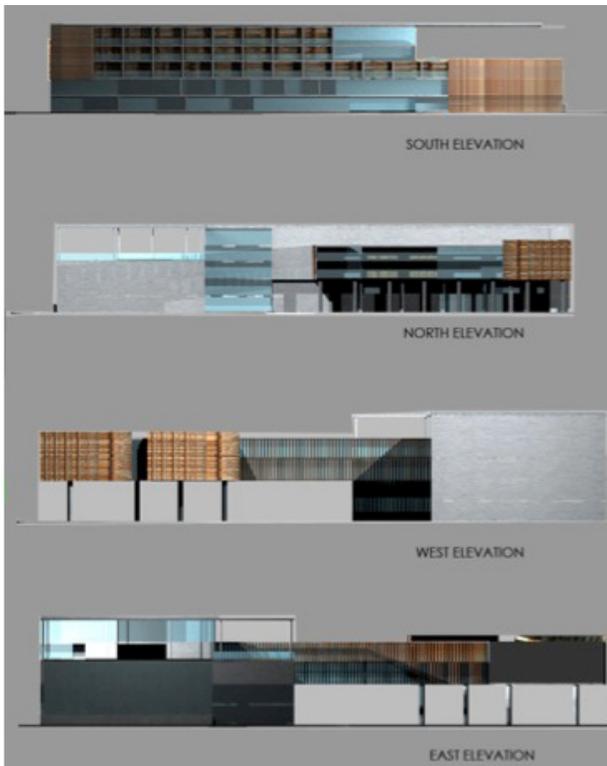


Figure 124: Building elevations

Both Commercial and Bush Streets are altered to be two-way streets to increase human traffic. With the boulevard plan installed, it also aims to increase human activity through the creation of a park connector at Bush Street and the expansion of commercial areas.

Located at the northwest corner of the Bush Street and Commercial Street intersection, it is a focal point as an active node and it provides nice views of the park connectors on Bush Street.

The hotel is created with the aim of maximizing views of the surroundings from within the building. The hotel provides two kinds of rooms – the typical rooms and suites – to cater to both families and business travelers.

With an infinity pool that overflows into a waterfall feature that is located on the high

ground at the east side of the building, it allows splendid views for both the guests of the hotel and the pedestrians on the walkways. It enables the guests to look upon both Bush and Commercial Streets while pedestrians could enjoy the water feature while walking past the hotel.

The connecting bridge also allows guests to view the various activities on Commercial Street from above.

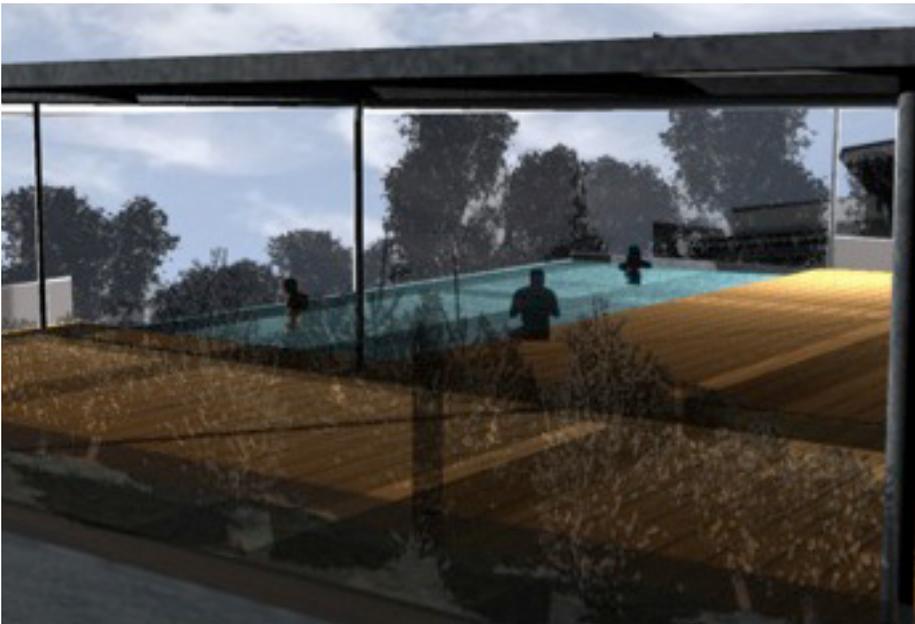


Figure 125 and 126: Perspectives

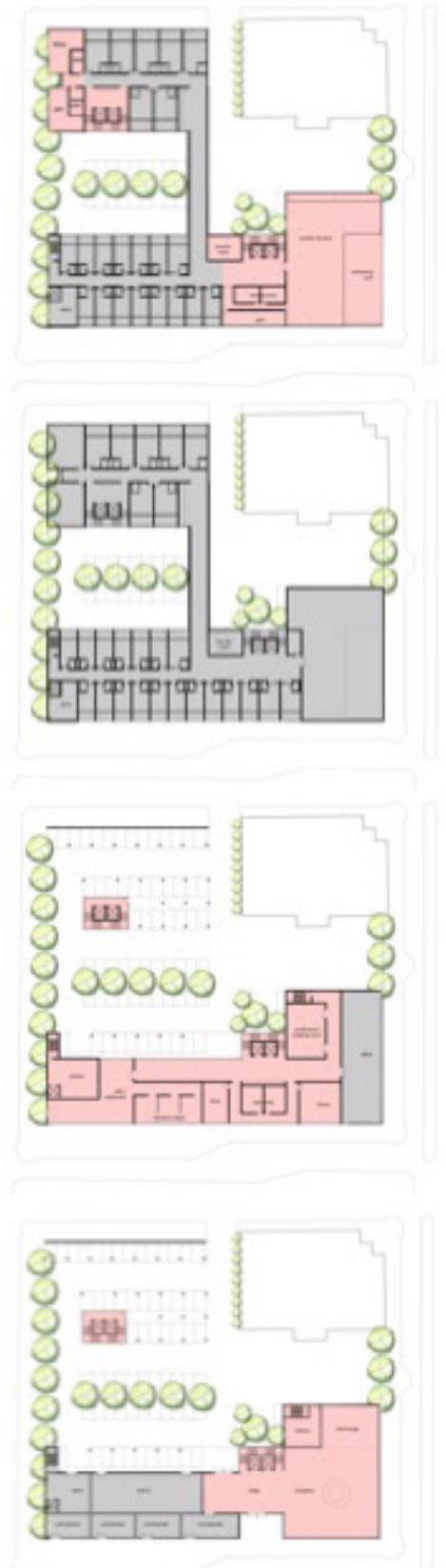


Figure 127 - 130: Building plans

Grand Boulevard Building Design: Infill Housing, Permeation for Revitalization

Hali Knight

This block is the first introduction to the area when coming from downtown. Close to the Civic Center and the Library, as well as the Meridian, this

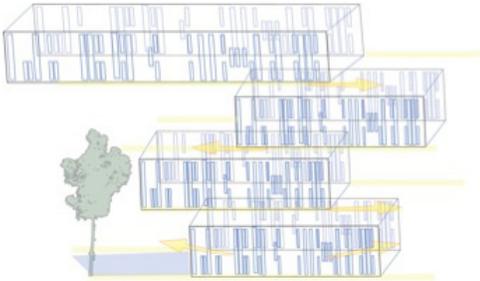


Figure 131: Infill diagram

area is appropriate for mixed-use and residential uses. The block would provide for the predicted density anticipated for Salem's growth and would emphasize the new cohesive nature of the redesigned Commercial Street. A cohesive community needs to be based around awareness of other individuals, so this block plan reflects and frames interaction.

This project examines the permeation of people through a site, attempting to emphasize the public use of many parts of the site while also providing privacy for

all residents. Each unit has one public front, then a more private space facing an internal garden or courtyard. Each unit is composed of 20'x50' bases which can be configured to provide for need. Outdoor space provides an opportunity to create a neighborhood related to Commercial Street. This block is an attempt to take a different approach from typical housing blocks. Perhaps if the unit

size condenses and the usable outside space increases, the likelihood of inhabitants to use those spaces more will increase, and people may become more aware of other individuals surrounding them.



Figure 132: Entry perspective

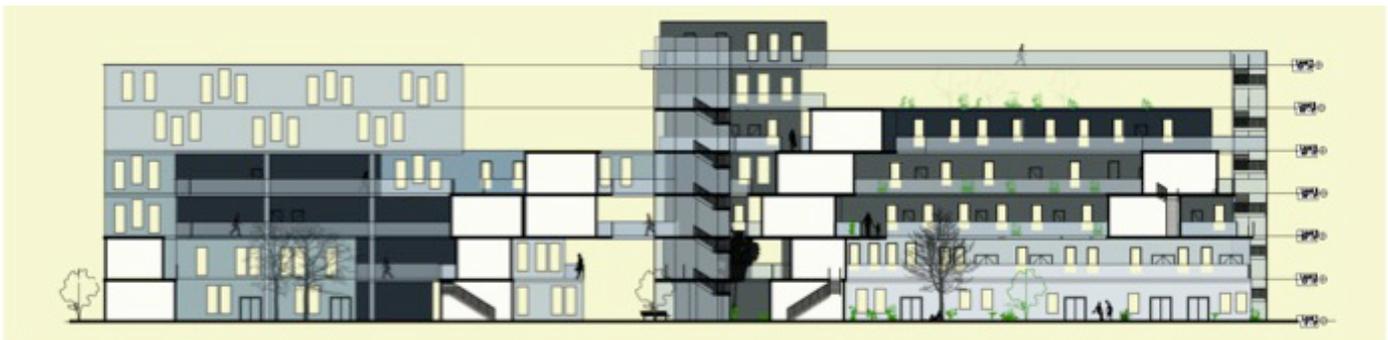


Figure 133: Longitudinal section



Figure 134: Site plan



Figure 135: Commercial Street elevation

Grand Boulevard Building Design: Courtyard Suites

Isaac Lim



Figure 136: Building section



Figure 137: Perspective view from hotel room

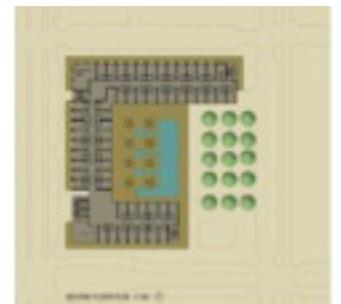
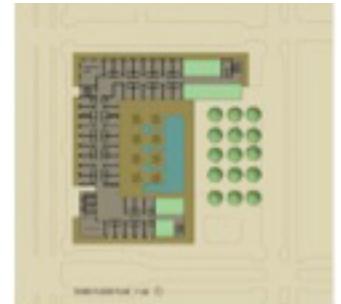
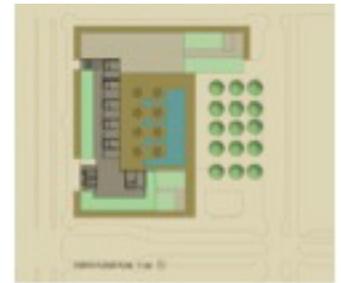


Figure 138: Exterior perspective

The building is a small hotel that caters mainly to the business traveler who prefers to stay away from the busy downtown. As an alternative location that complements the downtown district, it is situated within a quieter neighborhood that offers views toward the natural green spaces of Salem. The executive suites, with living rooms to conduct business meetings, are located on the top floor with a view out toward Bush's Pasture Park. The building has two faces. One face addresses the streetscape, with commercial activities and the hotel entrance on the ground level. On the second level, the building steps back to become a courtyard and pool area for the enjoyment of the guests. This other face encloses within itself a private oasis for the guests while still maintaining a visual orientation and connectivity to the urban landscape beyond.



Figure 139: Building elevation, front view



Figures 140 - 144: Building plans

Grand Boulevard Building Design: Fueling Center

Kate Bidwell



Figure 145: Building section perspective

Housing is the most basic architectural need that we provide to society. It is always going to be necessary. Modes of transportation will always be key in getting users from those houses to other services, places of employment, and entertainment. In today's culture, fuel is necessary to keep the different modes of transportation active, but what will a fueling station look like in the near future? This is an exercise to find how housing and the ever-changing needs of transportation can work together.



Figures 146 - 148: Site location, Existing conditions, Proposed conditions



Figure 149: Exterior perspective

The southwest corner of Mission and Commercial Streets was chosen as the site because it currently is the site for a gasoline station, and an activated gateway is needed to mark the beginning of the South of Mission District.



Figures 150 and 151: Building elevations, Unit plans

Grand Boulevard Building Design: Courtyard Housing

Shweta Thakur



Figures 152 and 153: Overall perspective and Exterior perspective

This plan proposes housing built around interaction spaces and focused inward as well as outward. A vegetable garden and a play area will attract families. A variety of courtyard spaces have been provided. Parking provided outside the lot allows connections to community areas. The design allows for rainwater harvesting for the community garden. The site takes advantage of a north-south orientation for daylighting. Operable windows provide natural ventilation. Openings in between modules allow air circulation on site.



Figure 154: Building elevation

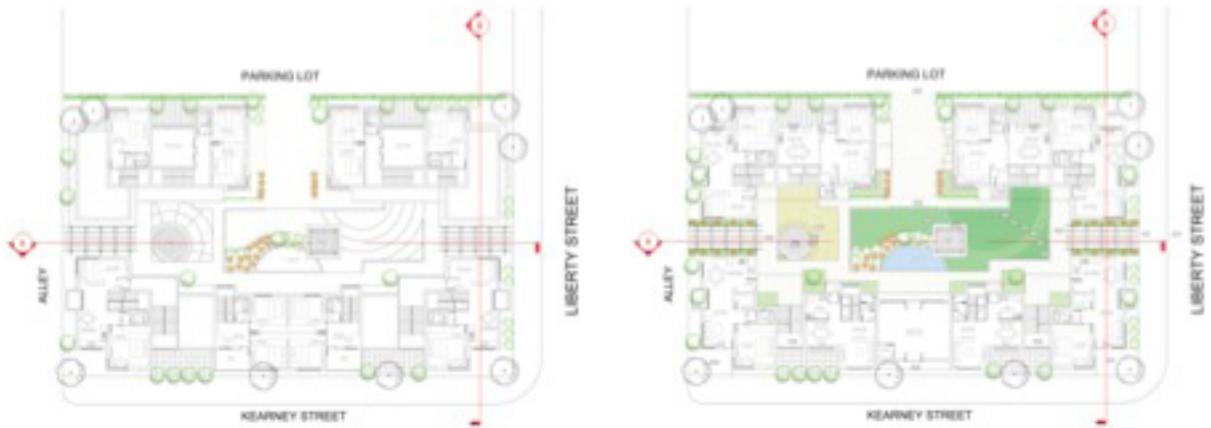


Figure 155: Building plans

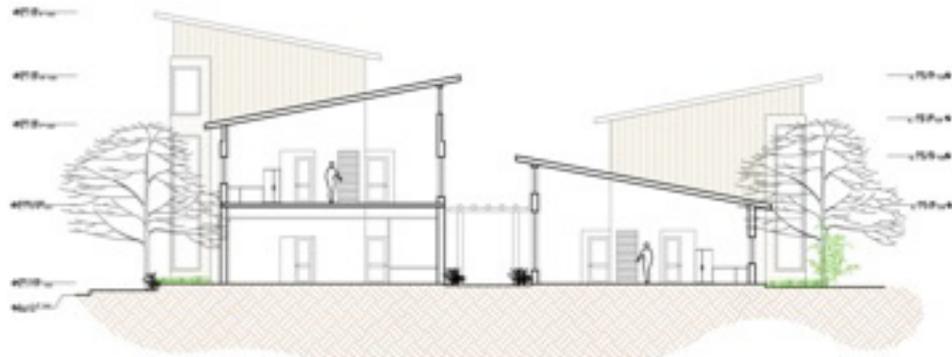


Figure 156: Building section



Figure 157: Building elevation

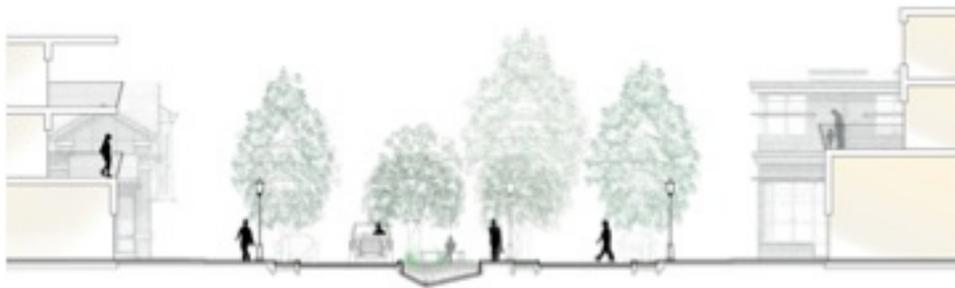
Grand Boulevard Park Design: Willamette Greenway

Halla Hoffer and Helen Yang



Figure 158: Site plan

Salem has a wide variety of services and activities, but the current connections between these spaces do not facilitate an interactive streetscape. Given the projected growth of the city, there are many opportunities within the site to provide a more sustainable future for Salem. By showcasing sustainable systems such as bioswales, and promoting a denser, more walkable neighborhood, the City of Salem could reduce its environmental footprint. Additionally, the sustainability of the community must be addressed. Creation of public spaces that connect and channel the community through and into the site intensifies interaction and enriches the community. Given these issues, and the current lack of connectivity between two of Salem's largest parks, it became clear that a new public space could serve to connect these spaces and provide a more sustainable foundation for the city.



Figures 159 - 161: Park plans, Park section



Figure 162 and 163: Park perspectives

Located within the middle of the South of Mission site and only a few blocks away from downtown, this space could potentially attract a variety of visitors from throughout Salem. The South of Mission neighborhood is bordered by both the Willamette River and Bush's Pasture Park, one of Salem's largest parks. People, traffic, services, and entertainment become more dense between these spaces. The new park connects Bush Park to the Willamette River while also accounting for the increased use of the space around Commercial Street by widening significantly around the intersection of Bush and Commercial Streets. The park provides a sense of place within the South of Mission neighborhood and creates a public space for residents and visitors alike.



Figure 164: Physical model



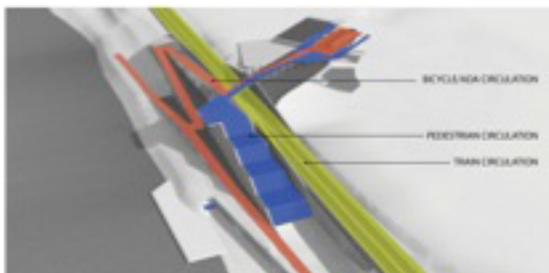
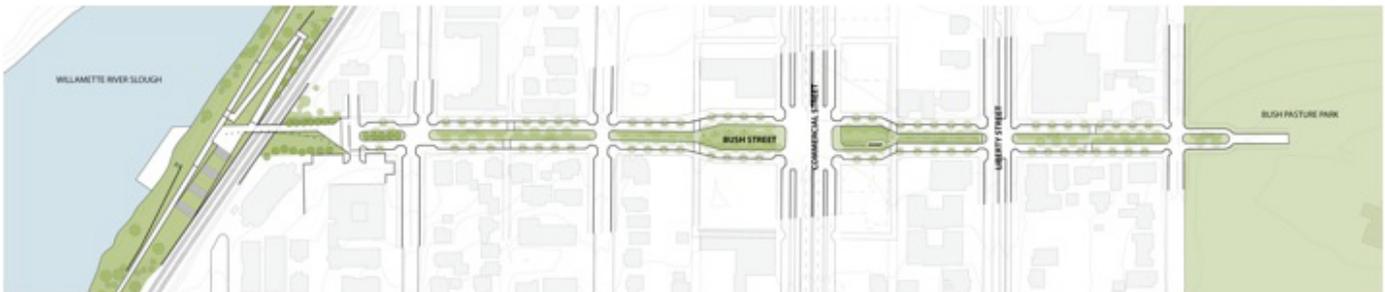
Figure 165: Park section

Grand Boulevard Park Design: Gateway Plaza

Lee Jorgensen



Figure 166: Site plan



The Willamette Greenway proposal has the potential to not only create a sense of place and natural relief within the South of Mission district, but also connect the area to the Willamette River Slough, the network of bike paths and surrounding parks. Currently, railroad tracks,

Figures 167 and 168: Green Boulevard connection and Gateway Plaza

drastic topographical changes and dense undergrowth divide the neighborhood from these amenities. Gateway Plaza is designed to bridge this divide and to not only serve as a recognizable point of connection but also to be a gathering and relaxation destination for the neighborhood.

Gateway Plaza Design Goals

- Physically connect the South of Mission to the Willamette River slough in a unique and recognizable manner.
- Improve and link the river bike path to the South of Mission district (and beyond).
- Provide a place of distinct and relaxing natural refuge for the neighborhood.
- Allow access to the river for recreational activities such as kayaking or canoeing.

Three substantial parks lie within one mile of the site and provide bike and hiking trails, an amphitheater, playing fields, a boat launch, playgrounds, and other amenities.

A proposed riverfront trail aims to connect Minto-Brown Island Park at the south to Riverfront Park at the north. A goal for the Gateway Plaza design is to provide an iconic and thoughtful connection to this trail from the South of Mission district.

The site for Gateway Plaza presents several challenges including crossing the railroad tracks and dealing with large topographic changes. The design capitalizes on these perceived hurdles by creating a bridge over the tracks which leads to an overlook plaza, giving pedestrians dramatic views of the river to the north and south. Accented by sculptural lighting elements, this connection serves as the formal gateway to and from the Willamette Greenway and South of Mission District. Wetland plantings also provide visual cues of what is to come and balance the space with formal and informal planting techniques.

From the overlook plaza, pedestrians may access the river-level green spaces via a terraced stairway. Intimate spaces such as these terraces are created throughout the park and relate to a residential scale, in contrast to the vast open areas of nearby Riverfront, Bush's Pasture, and Minto-Brown Island Parks. Bicyclists may connect to the river using the ramp stemming from north of the overlook plaza, which doubles as an accessible route for pedestrians. A large platform on the slough provides access to the water for kayakers, canoes, or even performances.

The gateway plaza functions as a way to connect to and from the South of Mission district and as a relaxation area for residents. In an effort to reconnect

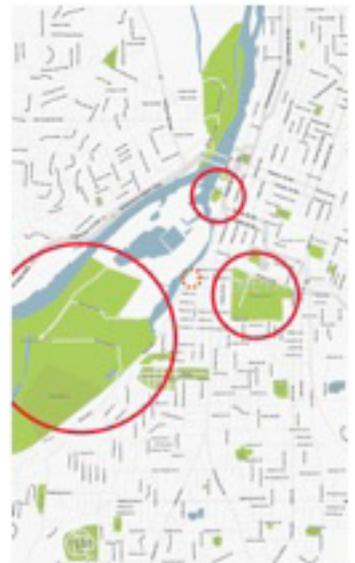


Figure 169: Area parks

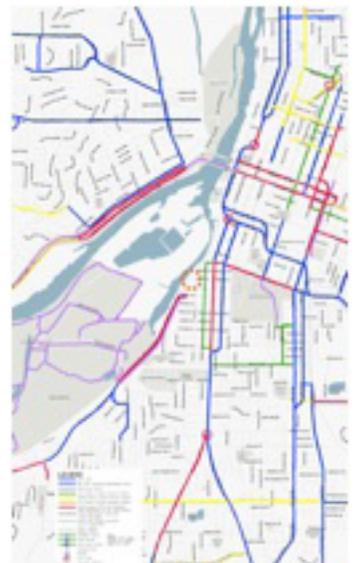


Figure 170: Bike Connectivity

to the river, this plaza design helps to overcome many of the hurdles currently dividing these two entities.



Figure 171: Perspective across bridge

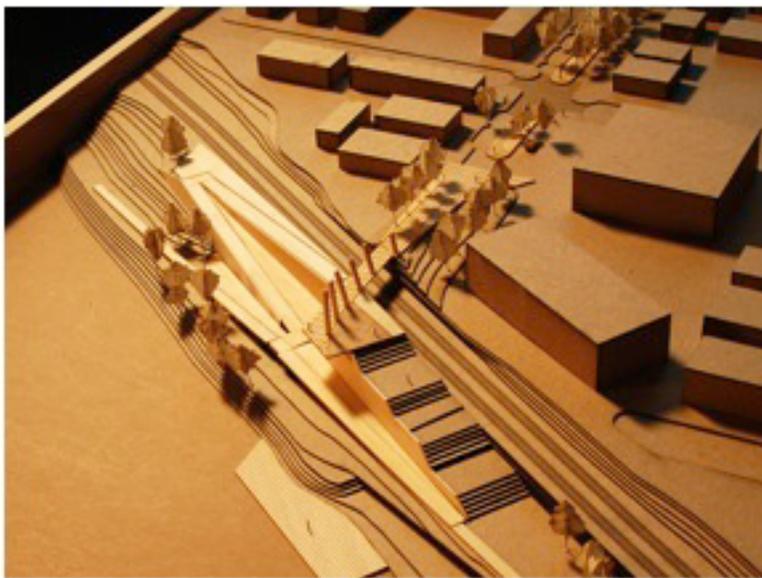


Figure 172: Physical model

Conclusion

The South of Mission site has enormous potential for rejuvenation in the City of Salem. Though the site currently lacks a certain vibrancy and level of activity, we believe a redevelopment effort would reenergize the area and begin to connect to the already active downtown.

Our research indicated that in order to preserve the Urban Growth Boundary currently in place for Salem, density would need to increase within the boundary limits. Through responsive planning and design, increasing density within Salem could help revitalize pockets of the city that may be isolated and disconnected from areas of higher activity and prosperity within the city.

South of Mission is a site with great potential for mixed use. It is bordered by various uses already, including residential, business, and government. There exists some variety of business on site, but more importantly, South of Mission has infrastructure already established for the growth of future businesses.

Our proposals featured in this report range in scale and scope and fall into one of two approaches for urban development. We created mission and vision statements outlining urban design goals we believe would be integral to creating a successful urban environment. Amid the broad and diverse range of proposals, each informed by the studio's design mission, a singular idea emerges: by taking advantage of the established and ordered infrastructure of Salem and by making efforts to connect to major city assets such as Bush's Pasture Park and the Willamette River, the South of Mission site has the potential to establish its own identity as a vibrant and valued community within Salem.