

Embracing Spectacle: Immersing Entertainment into an Urban Fabric

by

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# Embracing Spectacle:

Immersing Entertainment into an Urban Fabric

▯▯ We are not simply  
observers of this  
spectacle, but are  
ourselves a part of it, on  
the stage with the other  
participants. ▯▯

-Kevin Lynch

# Abstract

The City of Sudbury has struggled to maintain vibrancy in its downtown core. Urban revitalization is critical to reestablish livelihood and draw people in through all seasons. Vibrancy shall be restored through the analysis of existing interventions within the city, the exploration of the current image of the city, and through the help of various precedents which involve revitalization, entertainment and multi seasonal spaces. With these explorations, an urban design strategy shall be proposed for Durham street, including the partial enclosure of the street to vehicular traffic and the recovery of surrounding alleys.

Keywords:

Spectacle, Activity, Community, Identity, Recovered Space, Urban Design, Revitalization, Architecture, Sudbury.

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““Cities have the capability  
of providing something for  
everybody, only because,  
and only when, they are  
created by everybody.”“

-Jane Jacobs

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# Preface

This thesis strives to bring hope to members of the Greater Sudbury community for a brighter, more vibrant future. I have heard the wonderful stories of Downtown Sudbury's vibrant past over the years and have seen the pictures that prove the tales such as figure 1. It is deeply saddening to see the city in the state that it has been in in most recent years, rather than its previous state of glee and activity. The creation of retail districts in outlying neighborhoods has led to an underutilized downtown. Causing this drastic change and a diminished sense of community. The issue has been so prominent that many have been leaving the city in hopes to find home in more exciting places. It seems that people do not see potential in the city, and the few that do are fighting a war without any support. My hope is to bring spectacle to the core, so that the city may thrive as it once did before I was ever born. Although this project is only hypothetical and most likely will not be built, I aspire to inspire the community to come together and fight for a better, more vibrant city.

I have chosen to design an intervention for Sudbury because it has always held a special place in my heart. It is home after all. Growing up here was the most ideal lifestyle for me as it allowed me to explore nature while still having the convenience of city amenities. Although it is not the largest, most exciting city, I always saw potential in it. In fact, one could say that the very reason I wanted to become an architect was so that I could participate in the efforts to rehabilitate the city, and bring it back to what it once was. I never felt that I was missing much as I got to travel beyond the bounds of the core, but this opportunity is not present for all members of the community. Not everyone may have the means nor the funds to escape the city.

Being located in the south end of the city meant that my family and I did not go Downtown very often. Why would we bother when we had the basic necessities in close proximity or we could drive a bit further and visit New Sudbury where parking was abundant? There were a few times that we had to make our way to a particular store located downtown and I dreaded it every single time. On these occasions, my fearless, energetic attitude would vanish. I quickly became very timid and made sure to hold my mother's hand. Downtown was completely terrifying to me and I could not wait to leave so that I could ease my anxiety. Winter was always particularly dreary. Not only was the

city already terrifying, the harsh winter made it so that absolutely no one was around. This meant that if you did see someone, you kept them in your periphery at all times. Over the years, it seems that this uncomfortable feeling is not so prominent. Perhaps this is because I have matured, or maybe this is due to the endless efforts of community members to help rehabilitate the city. Nonetheless, that faint spark seems to have turned into a candlesized flame and my goal is to keep fueling this fire of hope. I truly believe that downtown can be vibrant once again.



Figure 1: Durham Street.



"Like a piece of architecture, the city is a construction in space, but one of vast scale, a thing perceived only in the course of long spans of time."<sup>1</sup> Cities are in constant evolution and Downtown Sudbury is not an exception to this rule. This Northern Ontario city about four hours North of Toronto, started out as a logging camp called St-Anne-des-Pins. After some time, the town turned into the mining capital for nickel and eventually evolved into the city of Greater Sudbury as we know it today. A city which has fluctuated in appearance and vibrancy over the years.<sup>2</sup> Once known to be a dreary moonscape caused by mining pollution, Sudbury was not an aesthetically pleasing place. It was covered in black rock without a tree in sight. Regardless of its lifeless landscape, it had a thriving downtown core full of energy, light and glee for decades as seen in figure 2.<sup>3</sup> The core was filled with vibrant lights and crowded with people, especially after a long week of hard work. The inviting atmosphere created opportunity for community building as the core flooded with people. The lively downtown streets sparked various activities to occur which in turn inspired even more to blossom. The city and the people in it created a wonderful spectacle for all to enjoy and participate.

Now that the city has revitalized its reputation into a globally admired greenscape thanks to its greening efforts in the 1970s,<sup>4</sup> it has neglected the gem that once was. The black rock has been covered, greenery and trees are abundant but the downtown core is no longer regarded as a place to be desired. It is generally avoided by anyone that is not required to be there for one reason or another. Whether it be due to competing retail districts such as the New Sudbury Center or the Southridge Mall, the lack of accessibility or a missing sense of safety. There just isn't enough excitement to attract people to the area.<sup>5</sup> It has remained this way for many years, holding on by a thread that is the arena. Although the arena attracts people downtown, it does not necessarily encourage people to navigate surrounding areas and most certainly does not create spectacle.

Other than a few shops and events, not many people navigate the streets of Downtown Sudbury. Most urban life outside of these established businesses exists along Durham street which has been primarily responsible for sustaining the core. It may be the most prominent street for activity and nightlife, but it too has a long way to go. Downtown Sudbury lacks connectivity, beauty and most importantly, it lacks spectacle. Spectacle not in the sense of theatrics, but meaning small scale activity. The spectacle that the community creates as a whole in their daily activities. The term spectacle often has negative connotations. It tends to suggest capital gains, over the top theatrics and tacky

design. Although this may be true in some cases, spectacle does not necessarily have to be inauthentic. Spectacle has the power to promote activity, beauty and entertainment for communities. Making people want to interact with their urban fabrics. To improve the qualities of Sudbury's urban fabric, spectacle needs to occur on the streets and alleys themselves throughout the year. It must not only occur in buildings or during scheduled events.

It is clear that the issue at hand is that Downtown Sudbury is lacking a component to draw people into less prominent areas. Retail does not seem to be enough in creating a network of activity within the core. It certainly does not encourage people to interact with the urban fabric outside of these specific locations. The uncomfortable fronts of the city outway the vibrant ones. Creating a culture of fear rather than one of community and joy. The question at hand is how can architecture and urban design reignite spectacle in the core and attract people through all seasons? This issue is particularly important because allowing the city to proceed in its current trajectory will quite possibly lead to its deterioration. An unhealthy downtown will not inspire people to stay in the city. Future generations will continue to leave the city until no one is left if nothing is done to inspire further growth. As stated by Jane Jacobs "You can't rely on bringing people downtown, you have to put them there."<sup>6</sup> We cannot expect a city to improve and attract people on its own and we certainly cannot expect people to navigate all areas of the city on their own. Exploration must be encouraged by the urban fabric itself.

Evidently, the topic of revitalizing the city is not new. City officials and community members have been well aware of the issue for quite some time. Many interventions and strategic plans have been attempted to revitalize the area with little improvement. Many interventions do not benefit every demographic, do not have an immediate impact, and certainly do not influence the streets themselves significantly. This is true because most of the activity associated with these updates occurs behind closed doors. Without an existing culture for spectacle, the streets remain unsafe and vacant. Generally speaking, the most significant interventions for the urban fabric have been on a smaller scale. For example, the Up Here festival's mural projects have had a major positive impact on the image of the city overall. Perhaps with a collection of a few smaller interventions using these murals as the initial stepping stone, the spectacle of the city can be reignited for all to enjoy. This change can occur immediately with gradual progression over time. The objective for the project is to create a benchmark design for the core to inspire many more interventions to come. Although the city may benefit from any small scale design, it

is important to preserve its existing identity as seen through the eyes of the community while creating it. This way the community will feel more connected to it.

The contents of this thesis have been divided into 4 parts. Part 1 elaborates upon spectacle and reflects upon entertainment architecture such as Disney Parks and Las Vegas. It analyzes their downfalls and successful features to inspire the project. Part 2 provides an analysis of place. It elaborates upon Downtown Sudbury as it has evolved over the years, in the context of the core as a whole and Durham street itself, where the design project is to be located. The sections of this part shall venture through the various interventions that have come to be in the city and the ones to come, while analyzing the negative and positive effects that came of them. Other Sections will touch on existing conditions of the site and look to social media for the current spectacle of the city through the eyes of the community, while cultivating the existing points of interest within the city and investigating their positive attributes. Part 3 encompasses urban precedents to fuel inspiration for the city of Sudbury. These precedents involve a variety of components such as revitalization, entertainment and multi seasonal spaces. Part 4 unveils an urban design strategy for Durham street while elaborating on various design strategies gathered from previous parts.



Figure 2: Elm and Durham, 1963.

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<sup>1</sup> Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City*. (Cambridge [Mass.] Technology Press, 1971) ,1.

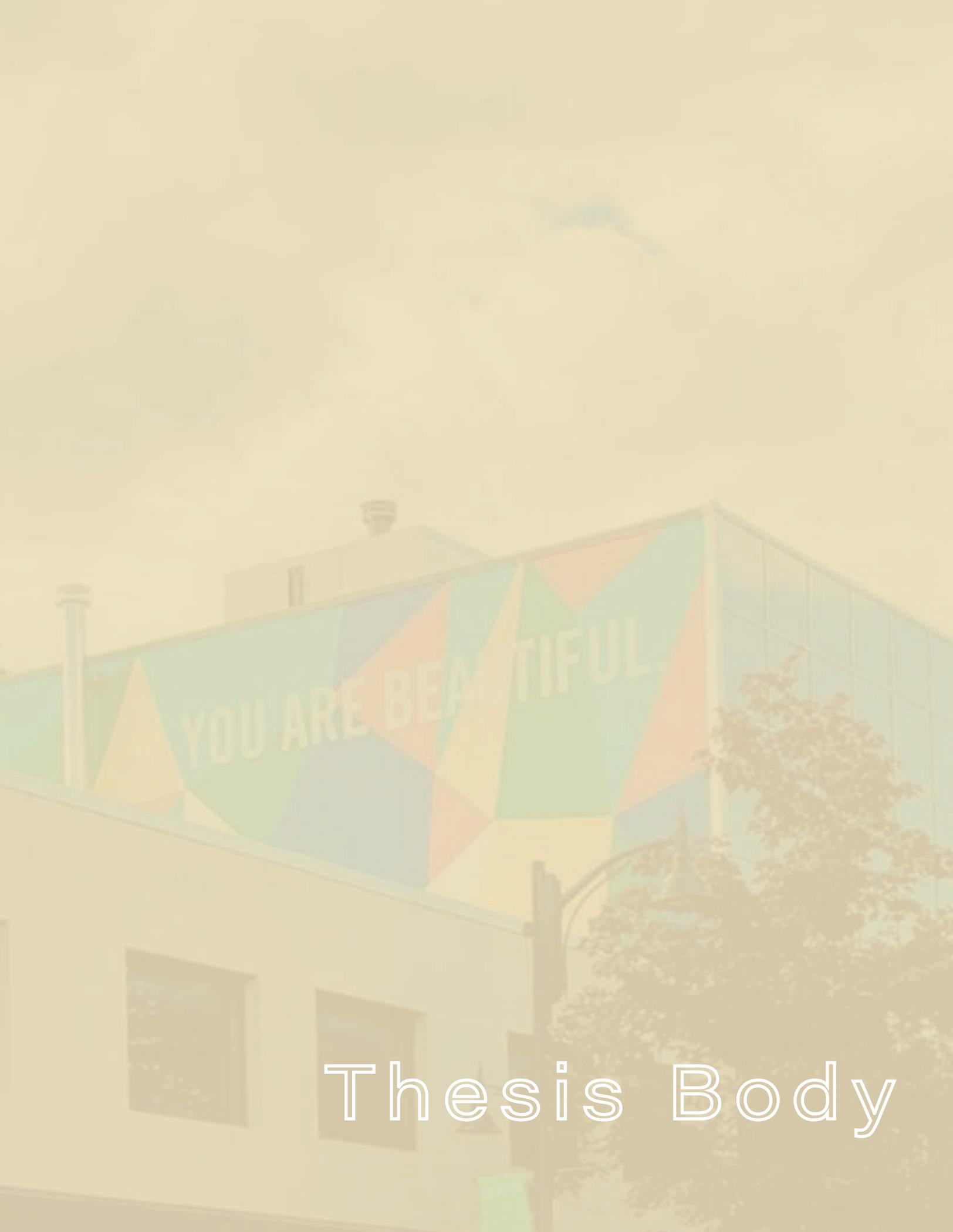
<sup>2</sup> *Sudbury Life in a Northern Town* (Musagetes; Laurentian Architecture, 2011).

<sup>3</sup> Jason Marcon, "Sex, Drugs and Durham Street: The Turbulent 1960s Land in Downtown Sudbury," *Sudbury.com*, September 8, 2021, <https://www.sudbury.com/local-news/sex-drugs-and-durham-street-the-turbulent-1960s-land-in-downtown-sudbury-4313296>.

<sup>4</sup> *Sudbury Life in a Northern Town*.

<sup>5</sup> "Downtown Sudbury a Plan for the Future," (Sudbury, ON, 2012).

<sup>6</sup> "Jane Jacobs Quotes (Author of the *Death and Life of Great American Cities*)," *Goodreads*, Accessed December 21, 2021, [https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/17285.Jane\\_Jacobs](https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/17285.Jane_Jacobs).



YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL.

Thesis Body

# T h e s i s

## Q u e s t i o n :

How can architecture and urban  
design reignite spectacle in the  
core and attract people through all  
seasons?



Aria

BARDOZ

View to  
French Street

Open  
Sunday & Monday

CANTIER  
PALACE

Spectacle

1

# E n t e r t a i n m e n t A r c h i t e c t u r e

This section discusses the importance of spectacle for the survival of cities and describes key takeaways gathered from existing entertainment architecture, in order to preserve authenticity.



Figure 3: Elm street.



Figure 4: Durham street.

# 1.1

## Importance of Entertainment

As we spend the majority of our time working and taking care of our daily duties, it is easy for us to get caught in the routine of things. Evidently, when we do get time to ourselves, it is important to find an escape. Many people resort to trips to other cities or destinations abroad to find this escape. In the case of Sudbury residents, this is especially true as there is not much to entice people to spend their vacation time here. Although exploring various cities is fantastic, it would be ideal for people to have things to do here when time and money do not permit them to escape to distant places. Otherwise people remain at home or do the same few activities that exist within their rotation. A spectacle of sorts needs to be created within the city to motivate people to explore. Entertainment and activity will not only encourage people to further explore their own city, it will also encourage youth to stay or even build a life here. Bruce Mau states, the way to keep people in the area is to compete with beauty. "If we want those people to be in Sudbury, we have to create beauty of all sorts to build a culture that people will love."<sup>1</sup> Embellishing the urban fabric may promote the beauty and culture required to keep people interested in the city and this change can be achieved through small scale interventions. We must offer the same beauty as the places people are drawn to offer. This beauty can be literal physical beauty which includes elaborate buildings and landscapes, but it can also include liveliness and activity. Beauty in this case is a sentiment of pride, culture, ownership and value. Beauty is the people and the things they do. In order to retain some of the younger population or the 5,000 students that graduate each year from Sudbury's three postsecondary institutions. We must incorporate small interventions which drastically improve pedestrian life. This in turn will keep the community engaged with the core and keep it as well as its businesses afloat.<sup>2</sup> This way, the city may look more like the one pictured in figure 3 rather than its current dull state as seen in figure 4.

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<sup>1</sup> "Sudbury Letter: The KED, Laurentian's Green Space and Climate Change All Connected," the SudburyStar, August 6, 2021, <https://www.thesudburystar.com/opinion/letters/sudbury-letter-the-ked-laurentians-green-space-and-climate-change-all-connected>.

<sup>2</sup> John Allemang, "Bruce Mau's Northern Exposure," The Globe and Mail, November 13, 2009, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/bruce-maus-northern-exposure/article4292594/>.

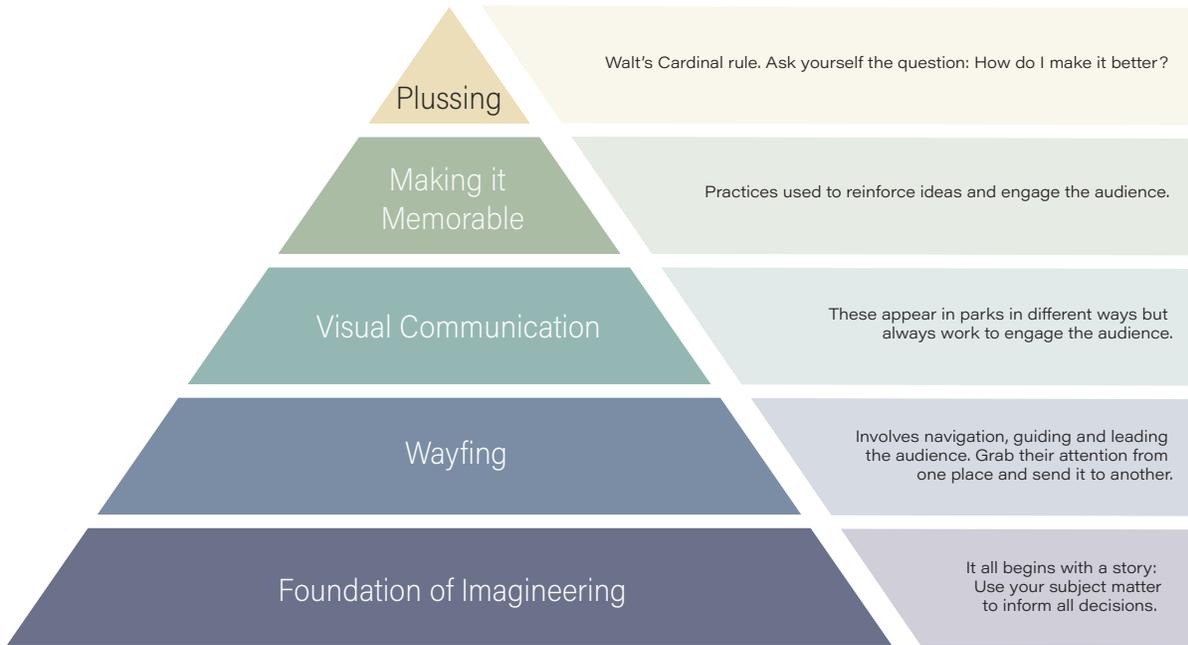


Figure 5: Imagineering pyramid.

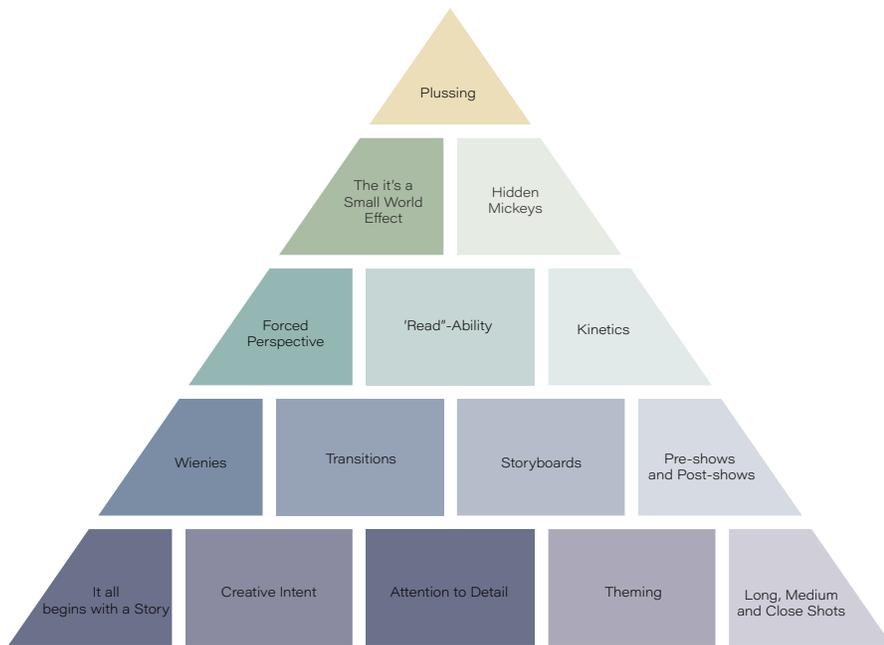


Figure 6: Imagineering pyramid breakdown.

# 1.2

## Disney Parks

Disney parks are known for creating the perfect vacation getaway. The masterminds behind the Disney Parks experience called the Imagineers, credit their 'Imagineering Process' for the successes of their parks. The magic lives on through the tireless effort of various professionals coming together to build magical kingdoms of fun. Following Walter Disney's initial framework, they continue to build on this foundation while learning from past mistakes. The term 'Imagineering' stems from engineering and imagination put together, but is also much more than that. It is said to be the blending of creative imagination and technical know-how. Technical know-how meaning the technical and science.<sup>1</sup> We've all felt Disney's magic but which attributes make this recipe so successful? It seems that the formula used for the creation of these exciting experiences by a multiplicity of experts including architects, may not be so dissimilar to that of real world architecture. The design strategy stems from the 'Imagineering Toolbox'. A couple of books which include the Imagineering process and 'Imagineering Pyramid'. The Imagineering Pyramid includes five major tears as pictured in figure 5. These can be further elaborated into smaller categories as seen in figure 6.

In summary, these categories are:

- It all begins with a story - Using your subject matter to inform all decisions.
- Creative intent - Staying focused on your objective, don't stray away from it.
- Attention to detail - Every little detail counts, don't get lazy.
- Long, medium and close shots - Organize your message to lead your audience from general to specific. Macro to Micro.
- Wienies - Attract interest with a visual magnet. These can be landmarks like castles or the Epcot dome. They also help with navigation.
- Transitions - Make transitions seamless from one area to the next.
- Storyboards - These are not found in the parks themselves but are used to focus on the big picture. Each aspect of a ride or park can be found on a storyboard somewhere.
- Pre-shows and Post-shows - introducing and reinforcing your story to keep the

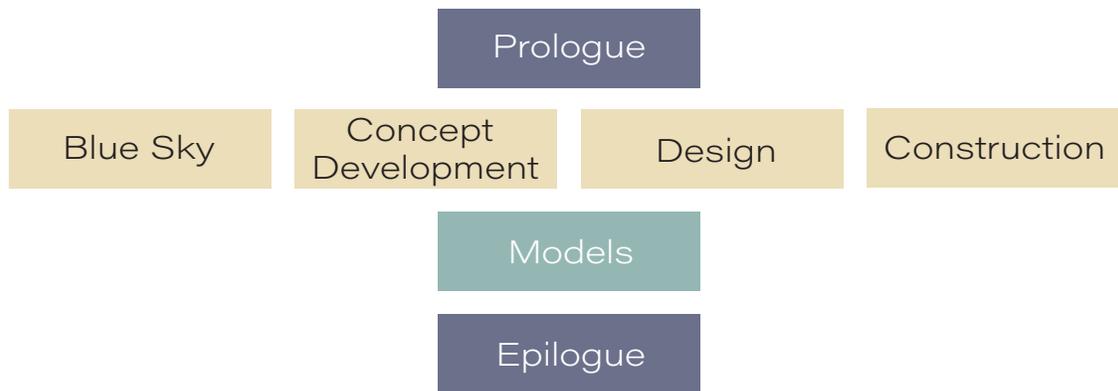


Figure 7: Imagineering process.

1. **Know your audience**  
Identify the audience before starting the design. Work with them in mind.
2. **Wear your Guest's Shoes**  
Try to experience the attractions like the guests would, stand in the queue lines with them.
3. **Organize the Flow of People and Ideas**  
Make sure there is logic and sequence in your stories.
4. **Create a Wienie (Visual Magnet)**  
Create visual targets that lead visitors clearly and logically through the experience.
5. **Communicate with Visual Literacy**  
Make good use of colour, shape, form, texture, all the non-verbal ways of communicating.
6. **Avoid Overload, Create Turn-Ons**  
Resist temptation to use too much information and objects.
7. **Tell One Story at a Time**  
Stick to one storyline. A clear logical and consistent story.
8. **Avoid Contradictions, Maintain Identity**  
Don't confuse the audience.
9. **For Every Ounce of Treatment, Provide a Ton of Treat**  
Educate people without letting them know that's what you are doing.
10. **Keep it Up (Maintain It)**  
Poor maintenance is poor show.

Figure 8: Mickey's 10 commandments

audience engaged. Lead people into and out of an experience with a smile on their face. Pre-shows set the mood. Sometimes even before entering the door such as interactive queue lines. Post-shows can mean games related to the attraction or the typical exit through retail strategy.

- Forced perspective - Use illusion of size to help communicate your message.
- "Read" ability - Simplify complex subjects.
- Kinetics - Keep things dynamic and active.
- "It's a small world" - Use repetition and reinforcement to engage and make experience more memorable.
- Hidden Mickeys - Involving and engaging your audience. Challenge your people and push them to learn new things.
- Walt's Cardinal rule - Plussing. How do you make it better?<sup>2</sup>

The Imagineering Process includes these seven steps as illustrated in figure 7:

- Prologue - Identify project needs and constraints.
- Blue Sky - Ideas and concepts are created.
- Concept Development- chosen idea is fleshed out.
- Design - Detailed design, drawings and specs.
- Construction - Building the project.
- Models - Made at every stage
- Epilogue - Evaluating the end result and learn from it.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, in addition to the Imagineering Toolbox, the Imaginners draw on 'Mickey's Ten Commandments' as seen in figure 8 to design Disney Parks. These include:

- Know your audience - Identify the audience before starting the design. Work with them in mind.
- Wear your Guests' shoes - Try to experience the attractions like the guests would, stand in the queue lines with them.
- Organize the flow of people and ideas - Make sure there is logic and sequence in your stories.
- Create a Wienie (Visual Magnet) - Create visual targets that lead visitors clearly and logically through the experience.
- Communicate with visual literacy - Make good use of colour, shape, form, texture. All

the non-verbal ways of communicating.

- Avoid overload, create turn-ons - Resist temptation to use too much information and objects.
- Tell one story at a time - Stick to one storyline, clear logical and consistent story.
- Avoid contradictions, maintain identity - don't confuse the audience.
- For every ounce of treatment, provide a ton of treats. Educate people without letting them know that's what you are doing.
- Keep it up (maintain it) - Poor maintenance is poor show.<sup>4</sup>



Figure 9: Main Street USA.

<sup>1</sup> Louis J. Prospero and Bob McClain, *The Imagineering Process: Using the Disney Theme Park Design Process to Bring Your Creative Ideas to Life*, (Theme Park Press, 2018.)

<sup>2</sup> Louis J. Prospero, *The Imagineering Pyramid: Using Disney Theme Park Design Principles to Develop and Promote Your Creative Ideas*, (Theme Park Press, 2016).

<sup>3</sup> Louis J. Prospero and Bob McClain, *The Imagineering Process*.

<sup>4</sup> Marty Sklar, and Leslie Sklar, *One Little Spark!: Mickey's Ten Commandments and the Road to Imagineering*, Los Angeles: Disney Editions, 2015.

# 1.3

## Las Vegas

Las Vegas has been known to be an over-the-top, extravagant place full of large signs and ornamentation. The city began as a collection of 'decorated sheds.' This means simple buildings with elaborate signs that create vibrancy and set each building apart. As stated in the book 'Learning from Las Vegas' "Modern architecture uses expressive ornament and shuns explicit symbolic ornament."<sup>1</sup> Large signs are regarded as tacky and unwanted so design pushed to shift from this vernacular. In order to escape the ornamental sign, buildings turned more sculptural so that the building itself may be distinguishable rather than requiring a sign to set it apart from others. In doing so, the decorated shed has become the sign that society was trying to reject. The building is one giant ornament. This has not been successful in preserving the identity of the city because "Symbol dominates space. Architecture is not enough. Because the spatial relationships are made by symbols more than by forms."<sup>2</sup> We cannot simply assume that people will understand what spaces are without the signs and symbols that define them.

Not only does the new type of sculptural architecture fail to define space, it has also redefined the identity of the city in a negative manner. The space has become a field of competing landmarks which has taken the extravagance of the place to an extreme. Rather than maintaining the vibrant sign culture, the city has been so oversaturated with ornament that many do not regard it as being real architecture. This city is purely for entertainment purposes in the eye of the visitor. From this book we can learn that "Learning from the existing landscape is a way of being revolutionary for an architect. Not in the obvious way, which is to tear down Paris and begin again, as Le Corbusier suggested in the 1920s, but another, more tolerant way; that is to question how we look at things."<sup>3</sup> We need to preserve the positive traits of the city rather than start over and create an entirely different culture or vernacular.

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, Steven Izenour, and William Dendy. *Learning from Las Vegas* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1972.), 1.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Venturi et al. *Learning from Las Vegas*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 3.

# 1.4

## Lessons Learned

In sum, to liven up Downtown Sudbury and create spectacle, it is important to look at the successes and downfalls of entertainment architecture such as Disney Parks (Figure 9) and Las Vegas (Figure 10). As we look to entertainment architecture such as these, we witness the ultimate extreme of creating spectacle in order to build a perfect experience for visitors. These urban fabrics are carefully crafted for the sake of capitalism. The happier people feel, the more they will want to spend money and return some day. Essentially these types of overly controlled urban fabrics feed off of consumerist culture to build spectacle. These pieces of architecture successfully achieve their goal of attracting visitors and making money, but they fail to build community and discourage curious exploration. Consecutively, these types of fabrics distract from reality and do not build connection nor a sense of ownership to the spaces.

Although these fabrics do not promote authenticity, they offer key insights that may benefit the city of Sudbury in some shape or form. These very specific urban fabrics have been criticized for their lack of authenticity but provide good insight to building a spectacle which may benefit the design in some way. For example, Disney's design principals taken too literally may lead to an overly controlled environment which does not organically feed into the existing fabric. Nonetheless, we can use some key concepts such as what they call 'wienies' otherwise known as landmarks, to attract people to the core. Despite the fact that Disney uses immense wienies, in Sudbury's case, they can be simple small scale interventions that attract people to various locations. Disney also uses 'transitions' to ensure that there are no harsh transitions from one area to another. Following this principle, it is critical to keep the same vibrancy from main streets to back alleys.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, one learns about unity from this urban fabric. We must make sure that no corner is forgotten and that the design tells one story at a time. This story being the one told by the community, for the community and for the community. We must not create too many different design languages as this will hinder unity. From Las Vegas, we learn to honour identity. The book 'Learning From Las Vegas' states that "Architects have preferred to change the existing environment rather than enhance what is there."<sup>2</sup>

Attempting to change the idea of the city may send the city down the wrong path. We must embrace what already is and strengthen it. As a community we have adopted formulas from other places to create our own. We have ignored what makes Sudbury beautiful to embrace characterless environments which diminishes connection and value to place.<sup>3</sup> As the design works to promote spectacle through the incorporation of Disney's strategies, it shall seek to honour the community's identity so as to not lose its authenticity.



Figure 10: Las Vegas Strip.

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- 1 Louis J. Prosperi, *The Imagineering Pyramid*.
  - 2 Robert Venturi et al. *Learning from Las Vegas*.
  - 3 "Rebranding the North: Why Ontario Cities Are Overhauling Their Image,"



Place **2**

# D o w n t o w n S u d b u r y

This section provides analysis of  
Downtown Sudbury concerning its  
historical reputation as an entertainment  
hub for the North, its evolution  
through time in an attempt to preserve  
spectacle within the core, its current  
growing identity through the eyes of  
the community, and its geographic  
properties.



Figure 11: Durham st. in the 70's during the holiday season.



Figure 12: Brady street.

# 2.1

## City Selection

The city of Sudbury has been struggling to maintain activity within its downtown for decades. We have created a culture which embraces nature and that does not particularly pay attention to urban life, especially in its downtown. As stated by Bruce Mau "You can see clear signs of growth in the look-alike malls and big-box stores that stretch out toward the endless bush where many of Greater Sudbury's citizens find their peace in nature. But that has created a new set of problems, as the city's small downtown struggles to hold on to its quirky vibrancy,"<sup>1</sup> the vibrancy as seen in figures 11 and 12. The community has prioritized development in outlying neighborhoods and in the process, the core has fallen behind on growth. Despite the city's best efforts, the situation has not improved a significant amount. For this reason it is important to elaborate upon ways the city could improve the core. Some of these interventions may not have been considered or may have been overlooked in the past as larger developments have been prioritized. The fact that Sudbury struggled to maintain its vitality, even though it serves as the northern hub for entertainment and retail is an issue that should not be overlooked. People come from all over to attend events here and shop in its stores but the city has failed to tap into this and inspire people to do more. We know that people are coming from places as far as Sault-Ste-Marie to attend concerts or visit Costco. People are willing to come all this way, so why not give them a reason to stay a bit longer? People who live here are willing to drive several hours to entertain themselves in other cities, we must be able to entice them to visit their own city once in a while. Especially in the winter months which are often very long for people that do not participate in winter sports. We must find a reason for people to embrace both the downtown core and winter regardless of their hobbies. With a few carefully crafted interventions, spectacle can be reignited within the city to encourage people to come again and perhaps even stay longer.

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<sup>1</sup> John Allemang, "Bruce Mau's Northern Exposure,"

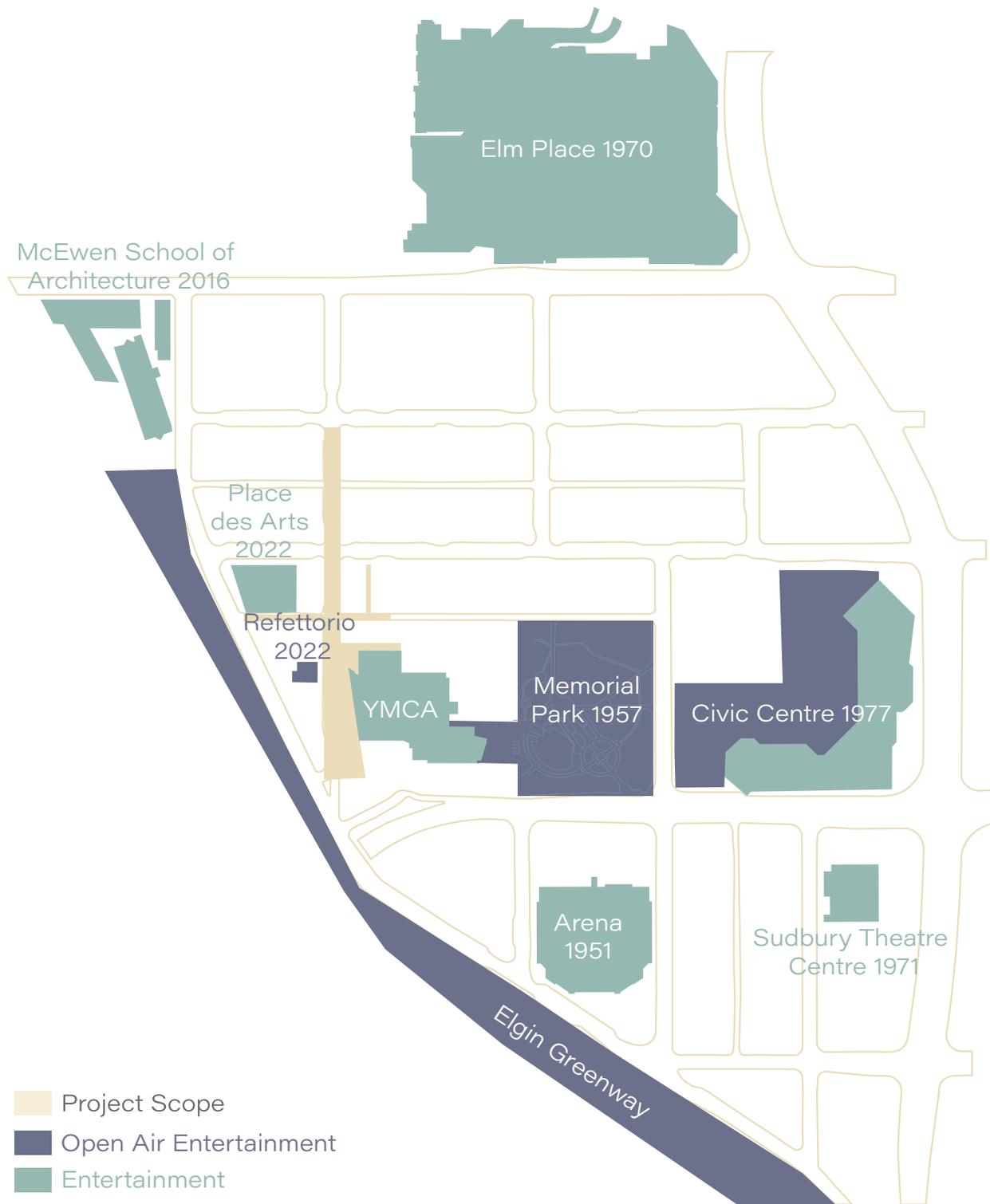


Figure 13: Map of downtown Sudbury interventions.

## 2.2

# Sudbury in Evolution

In order to revitalize Downtown Sudbury, it is essential to understand the various efforts that have been attempted to improve the area. From this understanding, one can see what has worked and what has only worsened the situation. Figure 13 is a map which highlights some of these interventions over the years. At a first glance, one can see that there have not been many entertainment specific interventions in the core of Downtown Sudbury. Most have occurred on the outskirts of the core or have been in proximity of Durham street. Outside of bars, restaurants and minimal retail options, there are relatively no reasons to go downtown. One essentially has to have money to do something here. In blue you can see the various buildings that have been added over the years and some that are in progress. In purple there are open air interventions such as the elgin greenway, memorial park and the civic center complex. The YMCA has successfully attracted people over the years but only people with a membership. The school of architecture has brought students, professors and multiple events to the area, but is mainly not open to the public. Elm Place was constructed to widen the shopping opportunities in the city but has mainly taken people away from the core. This is because the convenience of an indoor mall in the winter was much preferred in conjunction to the more easily accessible parking opportunities found here. The Civic office complex has brought working professionals to the city core but has not encouraged many to explore beyond its bounds. Although it does offer opportunity for social gatherings in its large open outdoor square, it is mainly left vacant. The Sudbury theater center has entertained people for many years but does not offer much more than concerts and theatrical productions. As previously stated, the arena has been the primary entertainment provider for the core but is not generally open to the public outside of these scheduled events. Memorial park has mainly been seen as an unsafe zone and has become a refuge for many unhoused people. As for the greenway, the Refettorio and Place des arts, their impact has yet to be determined since they either have not been built or are incomplete. All of these interventions, whether complete or planned, have primarily been large scale interventions that do not improve the livelihood and the connectivity of the city.



Figure 14: Durham Street as it looked in 1970s during the brief Durham Street Mall, an open-air shopping centre, experiment.

## 2.2.1 Durham '74

In 1974 the city of Sudbury closed off Durham street to make an outdoor pedestrian mall as seen in figure 14. The intervention was inspired by the success of Ottawa's Sparks street mall in the 60's. Its goal was to fight back against the various shopping malls that came to be in the city and bring more shoppers downtown. The outdoor "mall" had mixed reviews. Some people felt that cars were more beneficial than people eating on the street. They felt that it was a big waste of tax dollars that only attracted hippies. They argued that people could eat at memorial park which had already cost the city a significant amount of money. Some on the other hand, such as store owners benefited from the project as they saw an increase in revenue and were supportive of the mall's "peaceful atmosphere". They even suggested that the city implement the farmers' market here along with arts and crafts displays. At the time, the growing popularity of downtown's outdoor restaurants and pubs suggested that the area could benefit from restricting motor traffic on a temporary or part-time basis. The five-month trial cost the city \$80,000 in flower beds, tree saplings and picnic tables.<sup>1</sup> These minor interventions which consisted of simple infrastructure and minimal effort had a great impact on the connectivity of the city. People were encouraged to interact with the urban fabric and experience the spectacle of the city. The presence of this street allowed for additional activity to occur while inspiring a web of other activities to happen and promoting the exploration of various retail locations. Despite some of the negative feedback received, small scale interventions such as this are often the most effective at creating community. Extravagant buildings are not always necessary in promoting spectacle within the city. A collection of small changes erected over extended periods of time may even be the most effective method to build growth. This is because they typically cost a lot less to produce and can be completed in shorter time frames without decommissioning specific areas of the city. This way, risk of rejecting the project, canceling the project or pushing the project to a future date are much less probable. The community may begin to see changes at a comfortable pace starting immediately.

## 2.2.2 Interventions to Date

On top of this outdoor mall, the city has attempted to spark interest in the core through large-scale projects over the years. The projects include Elm Place, the Civic office complex, Memorial Park, the YMCA, and the McEwen School of Architecture (Figure 15) as previously outlined.<sup>2</sup> These projects have ultimately not been enough to entice people to the area, let alone encourage people to explore the core outside of their purposeful visitation. People come in for what they need and leave once their task is completed. These large scale interventions typically do not occur often and the city may go years without seeing something new. Additionally, the projects often take years to complete, inevitably interrupting the urban fabric while temporarily dampening the image of the city. Moreover, they do not typically have an immediate impact. In many cases these projects are intended for a select few such as paying members for the YMCA and students in the case of the school of architecture. The community itself may see the buildings but most do not get to benefit from such projects. Interventions should strive for inclusion of all demographics rather than for capitalistic gains.

## 2.2.3 Festivals

Small scale interventions such as festivals like Rib Fest and the Up Here festival have managed to attract people temporarily, but do not serve as long term solutions to the issue. People attend events and often do not come back to the core until the next major spectacle. We need something that will entice people to frequent the core all year round and encourage small-scale spectacle such as play, busking and more throughout Downtown Sudbury. Although festivals may not bring entertainment all year round, one more permanent positive outcome of the Up Here festival is that it has improved the general image of the city through its mural projects. People are starting to explore more to find these murals. Thanks to the murals along with a few resilient businesses, downtown has been slowly evolving into a delightful place. These small scale interventions are perfect real life, successful projects which improve the image of the city. They are proof that one does not need to implement robust projects to influence change. Not many people have seen the core evolve and still regard it as an uncomfortable environment with no reason to explore it. Others have seen and appreciated this growth, but there is much work to do in order to revitalize the image of the city as a whole. Using these murals as inspiration, the community can produce other small scale interventions which promote positive change. Moreover, as seen in figures 16 and 17, the festival has

also encouraged other small scale interventions. This event has already successfully been closing down Durham and interacting with alleys for years now. Perhaps if these were to become permanent interventions, the city could host events more regularly and encourage smaller spectacles to occur organically.



Figure 15: McEwen School of Architecture.



Figure 16: Up Fest dome.



Figure 17: Alley installation.



Figure 18: Place des arts concept



Figure 19: Refettorio concept.

## 2.2.4 Planned Interventions

Downtown is currently working on two projects for the purpose of entertainment. These include Place des arts (Figures 18 and 20) and the Refettorio theater (Figures 19 and 20). Although these may attract people, they mainly only attract people interested in the arts for specific scheduled events. Outside of these events or activities, they may not actually encourage people to visit downtown and get outside. Place des arts is to be the first multidisciplinary arts center in Northeastern Ontario. The multipurpose cultural center will be a contemporary arts and culture facility. The space is to accommodate a 299 fixed-seating theater, a multifunctional studio, a contemporary art gallery, a youth zone, an early childhood artistic center, a bistro, a boutique bookstore, office spaces and a meeting room. It is expected to attract 50,000 people to the core each year.<sup>3</sup> The Refettorio theater is a project planned by YES theater which hopes to bring the theater to the open air.<sup>4</sup> As wonderful as these projects are, they involved many years of planning and in the case of Place des arts, a hefty budget. Additionally, these interventions do not necessarily improve connectivity and quotidian spectacle within the city. The image of the urban city will not improve if all activity occurs behind closed doors. The city may benefit more from updating the urban fabric itself.

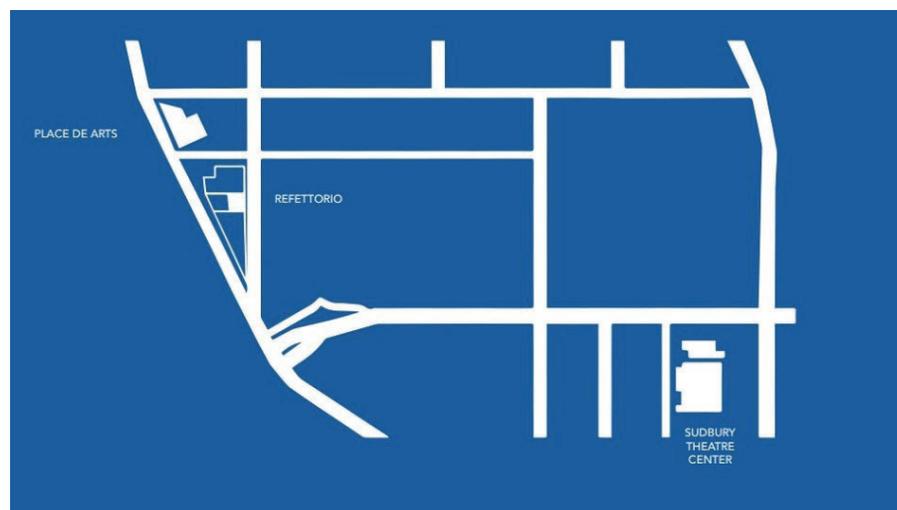


Figure 20: Refettorio and Place des arts location.



Figure 21: Kingsway Entertainment District.



Figure 22: Project Now.

## 2.2.5 Future Considerations

Sudbury has various plans for the future such as the Elgin Greenway which hopes to attract people and further the greening efforts of the city.<sup>5</sup> As downtown continues to deteriorate, this section of land that once served as the gateway to discovery into a thriving town for people entering the city on trains, has turned into a dead parking lot with decaying architecture. Rather than the lifeless parking that currently exists, the space would be transformed into a green walking path with numerous gathering spaces. This plan includes plazas, parking, paved paths, seating, water features, bioswales, enhanced pedestrian crossings, public art, plants, natural rockscape, gateways, stone walls, a cycle track and light installations. Although the effectiveness of the project is unknown as it has not been constructed, it seems that these components would enhance the space and make it more inviting for pedestrians and cyclists which could certainly benefit the city.<sup>6</sup> As productive as this concept may be, with the proposed relocation of the arena to the Kingsway as suggested for the KED project (Figure 21), it may not be enough to sustain the area.<sup>7</sup> Even if the arena were to remain downtown as proposed by Project Now (Figure 22), people may continue to visit the arena or the greenway without exploring beyond their bounds.<sup>8</sup> There must be something which tempts people to come to the core of downtown outside of their scheduled activities. For decades now the city has discussed the need for a new arena or at least the refurbishment of the current Sudbury Community Arena.<sup>9</sup> Sudbury being the primary sports tourism area for the North has attracted many people for hockey games over the years. Now the same goes for basketball as the city has started up a team for the National Basketball League called the 'Sudbury Five'. The arena has even become the entertainment hub for the city as concerts, acrobatic shows, ice dancing shows and other events take place in this same arena. This establishment has been a major source for creating a sentiment of community in the city and has attracted people from all over. Whether the arena remains where it is currently or makes its way to the Kingsway, the large scale project does not consider the quality of the urban environment in Downtown Sudbury.

## 2.2.6 KED

'The Kingsway Entertainment District', otherwise known as KED has been a working solution for a new arena but it has one major flaw. The space is planned to hold casinos, various event spaces, bars, restaurants and even a hotel but it has been proposed outside of the confines of Downtown Sudbury. As the arena has held the city together for so long, relocating it may cause the ultimate demise of Downtown Sudbury. The city looked to a consultant for the proposed locations of the KED. Three locations were investigated for the project and these include the South End supported by Dalron, Downtown and the Kingsway supported by Dario Zulich. The consultant came back to the city and stated the best location was downtown. City leaders continued to disregard the consultant's feedback, while investigating their own list of pros and cons for each location.<sup>10</sup> The city states that this arena/event centre on the Kingsway would have 5,800 seats as a sporting venue, the capacity for 6,500 people for concerts in comparison to the current arena which has 4,610 seats and capacity for 5,100 during concerts. The city believes that the benefit of the design is that it allows vehicles to drive directly onto the floor area for unloading of equipment to stage concerts and other special events, something that the current Sudbury Community Arena does not offer.<sup>11</sup> Some people who hold on to Sudbury's car culture dearly are supportive of the relocation but most are very much against it. The concern for the project is that the location will not be easily accessible for everyone as it is located so far from the transit hub located downtown. Not to mention that this could encourage people who cannot afford to pay for a taxi to drive under the influence after an event. The project may also cause more traffic issues on the already congested Kingsway and it will surely replace the primary reason people currently visit downtown. If a project such as this makes its way to the point of completion, the core will suffer tremendously. The city will require quick interventions that make a big impact almost immediately. For this reason, focusing on small scale projects may be logical and more financially feasible for the city to implement in various phases.

## 2.2.7 Project Now

3rdline studio located here in Sudbury has taken the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity to rethink this strategy and create a counter project called 'Project Now'. It would essentially serve the same program as the KED but be a refurbishment of the current arena rather than a new construction. The city has ultimately disregarded this proposition. Some people argue that downtown does have the capacity to host the amount of parking required to support an event space. Project Now takes pride in their concept as they claim it would make for 40 million dollars in savings for the city and allow for more parking during game nights, as well as during the day. Therefore proving concerns about building the event space downtown wrong.<sup>12</sup> This project would most certainly help revitalize the city to an extent as it will bring new life to the existing arena but it fails to acknowledge the lack of connectivity within the city and the dull environments that surround the arena. Project Now may have a stronger impact on the city amidst a more vibrant core achieved through small scale interventions.

- 
- 1 "Then & Now: Sudbury's (Failed) 1974 Experiment with a Pedestrian Mall," Sudbury.com, July 29, 2021, <https://www.sudbury.com/then-and-now/then-now-sudburys-failed-1974-experiment-with-a-pedestrian-mall-4177839>.
  - 2 "Downtown Sudbury a Plan for the Future."
  - 3 "Place Des Arts," Greater Sudbury, accessed December 21, 2021, <https://www.greatersudbury.ca/city-hall/current-projects/large-projects1/place-des-arts/>.
  - 4 "Outdoor Theatre Slated to Open in Downtown Sudbury next Year," Sudbury.com, October 14, 2021, <https://www.sudbury.com/local-news/outdoor-theatre-slated-to-open-in-downtown-sudbury-next-year-4513006>.
  - 5 "Elgin Street Greenway," Greater Sudbury, accessed December 1, 2021, <https://www.greatersudbury.ca/play/downtown-sudbury/elgin-street-greenway/>.
  - 6 "Downtown Sudbury a Plan for the Future."
  - 7 "Letter: Arena Should Stay Downtown, Whether through Refurbishment or a New Build," Sudbury.com, December 22, 2020, <https://www.sudbury.com/letters-to-the-editor/letter-arena-should-stay-downtown-whether-through-refurbishment-or-a-new-build-3205456>.
  - 8 "Project Now: Architecture Firm Has a New Vision for Sudbury Community Arena," Sudbury.com, June 29, 2020, <https://www.sudbury.com/local-news/project-now-architecture-firm-has-a-new-vision-for-sudbury-community-arena-2527397>.
  - 9 Letter: Arena Should Stay Downtown.
  - 10 Ibid.
  - 11 "Kingsway Entertainment District and Arena/Event Centre," Greater Sudbury, accessed December 21, 2021, <https://www.greatersudbury.ca/city-hall/current-projects/large-projects1/kingsway-entertainment-district-and-arena-event-centre/>.
  - 12 "Home," Projectnow, accessed December 21, 2021, <https://www.projectnow.info/>.



Figure 23: Dancer in alley.

## 2.3

# Theoretical Framework

As a community we have a deep attachment to home as it is familiar and distinctive. While cities evolve over time, we create a public image of them. As noted in the book 'The Image of the City', "any existing functioning urban area has structure and identity, even if in weak measure."<sup>1</sup> Even Downtown Sudbury has identity and any changes made to this urban fabric should be guided by the public image and existing form. "We are not simply observers of this spectacle, but are ourselves a part of it, on the stage with the other participants."<sup>2</sup> The city is a spectacle of its own and it is important for us to highlight it. As the late Jane Jacobs has said, "Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody."<sup>3</sup> We can certainly create interventions in an attempt to revitalize the city but these may fail if the community does not feel involved in the process. It is important to listen to the community rather than make rash decisions based on personal opinions. Everyone must be included and considered in some way in order to build value and a sense of ownership.<sup>4</sup> As Bruce Mau pointed out "With the KED, participatory democracy did not happen."<sup>5</sup> He does not believe that beauty can come from a casino on the edge of the city center beside a garbage dump, nor that this would be the community's optimum location choice.<sup>6</sup> Without community involvement, projects have low probability for success. Noting the image of the city through the eyes of the community is a simple first step at making the community feel involved in a positive way. An effective way of collecting this image would be through the observation of organically taken images from social media.

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<sup>1</sup> Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City*, 115.

<sup>2</sup> Kevin Lynch, 2.

<sup>3</sup> Jane Jacobs Quotes.

<sup>4</sup> "Sudbury Letter: The KED, Laurentian's Green Space and Climate Change All Connected,"

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.



Figure 24: Beverage downtown Sudbury.

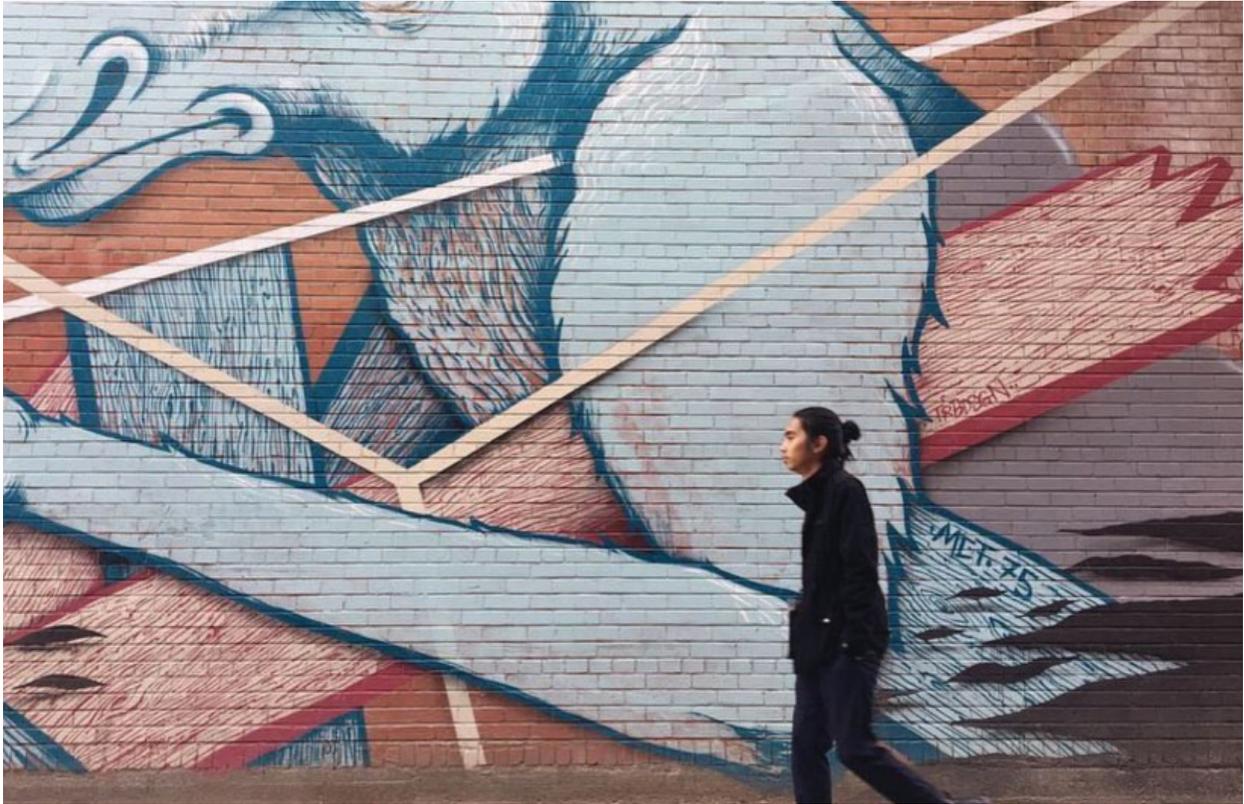


Figure 25: Downtown Sudbury mural.

## 2.4

# Sudbury as a Spectacle

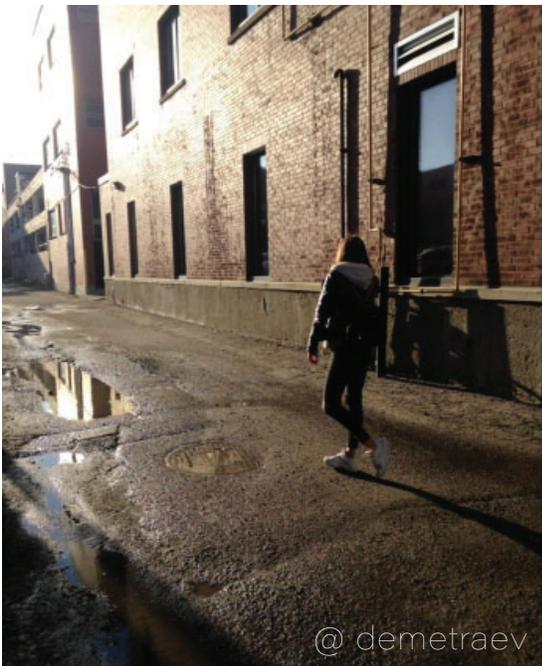
Some cities benefit from an extensive history. Sudbury on the other hand, has another equally significant quality which gets neglected. Rather than the past, Sudbury should embrace the future as it is known for progress, change and growth both economically and natural.<sup>1</sup> Aldo Rossi states that "The soul of the city becomes the city's history".<sup>2</sup> History does not necessarily have to come from historic architecture or preserved landmarks. The history of the city can come from the people in it. The city's evolving culture can become its history. Since the city of Sudbury has already destroyed its heritage buildings and has become much larger over the years, what once sparked spectacle in the core will not help the current evolving identity of the city.<sup>3</sup> Using social media, the current spectacle and identity of the city can be perceived, emphasized and carried on for generations to come. These images become the storyboards for the design process. Based on a collection of images, the identity of the city appears to be quite pleasant. The figures 23 to 49 are just a glimpse of the ones gathered for the purpose of this study. They collectively demonstrate what people notice and appreciate within the city. Things such as alleys, texture, murals, details, lighting, outdoor dining, streets, rooftops, buildings, human scale and landmarks. These qualities need to be emphasized and/or developed within the design and carried throughout, in order to preserve the existing positive identity of the city. This way, unlike Disney Parks and Las Vegas, its authenticity can be preserved. The primary takeaway from this exploration is the positive relationship to the dingy laneways. People seemingly love exploring these areas despite their uninviting appearances and this is surely a missed opportunity that must be explored. The project strives to embrace some of the previously outlined qualities and they should continue to be explored as the city evolves over time.

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<sup>1</sup> "Rebranding the North: Why Ontario Cities Are Overhauling Their Image,"

<sup>2</sup> Aldo Rossi, and Peter Eisenman. *The Architecture of the City* Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1982.

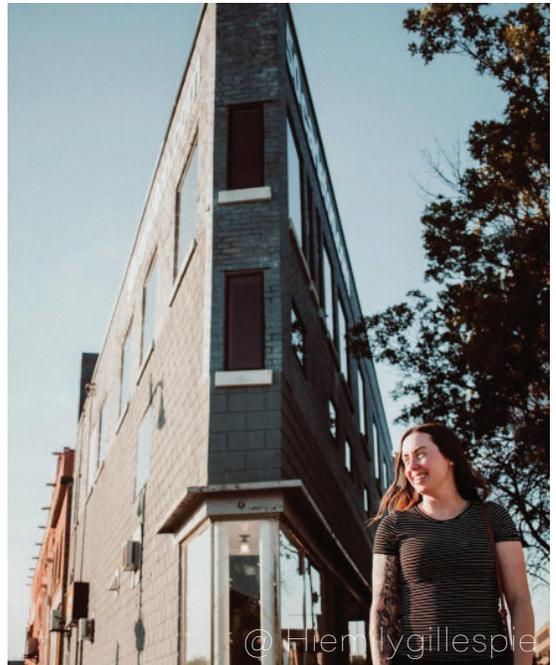
<sup>3</sup> "Downtown Sudbury a Plan for the Future,"



Figures 26-37: Instagram Images



@ Neemagonja



@ Henrygillespie



@ Dance\_by\_akaiserphot



@ veebeadry



@ Thealibirm



@ demetraev



@Thealbirm



@Dance\_by\_akaiserphot



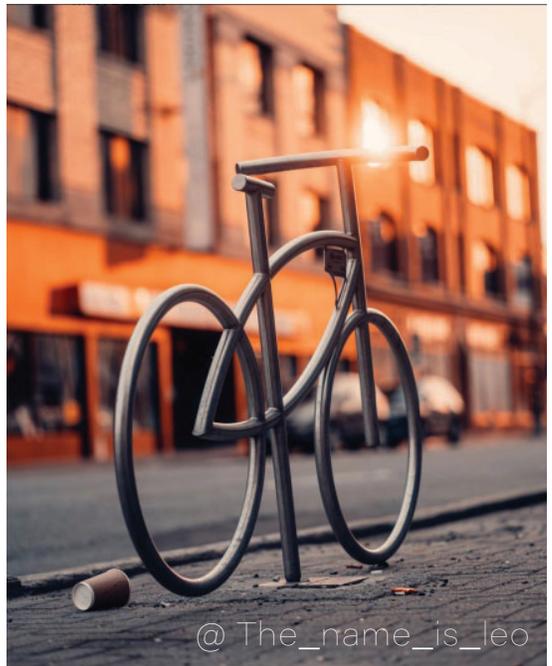
@Hemilygillespie



@veebeaudry



@northernvibes705

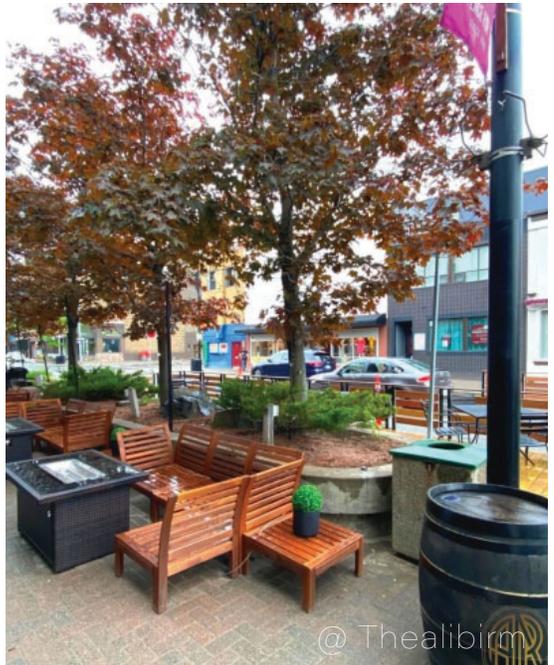


@The\_name\_is\_leo

Figures 38-49: Instagram Images



@ jacobartnur



@ Thealibirm



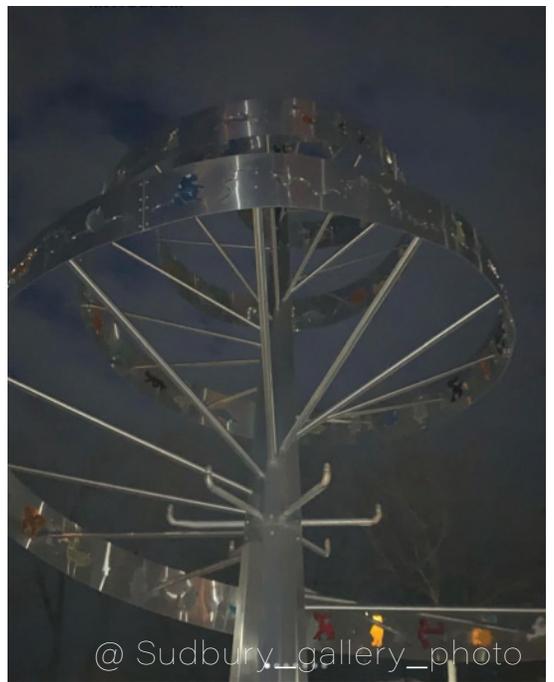
@ Hemilygillespie



@ Simonorser



@ Thealibirm



@ Sudbury\_gallery\_photo

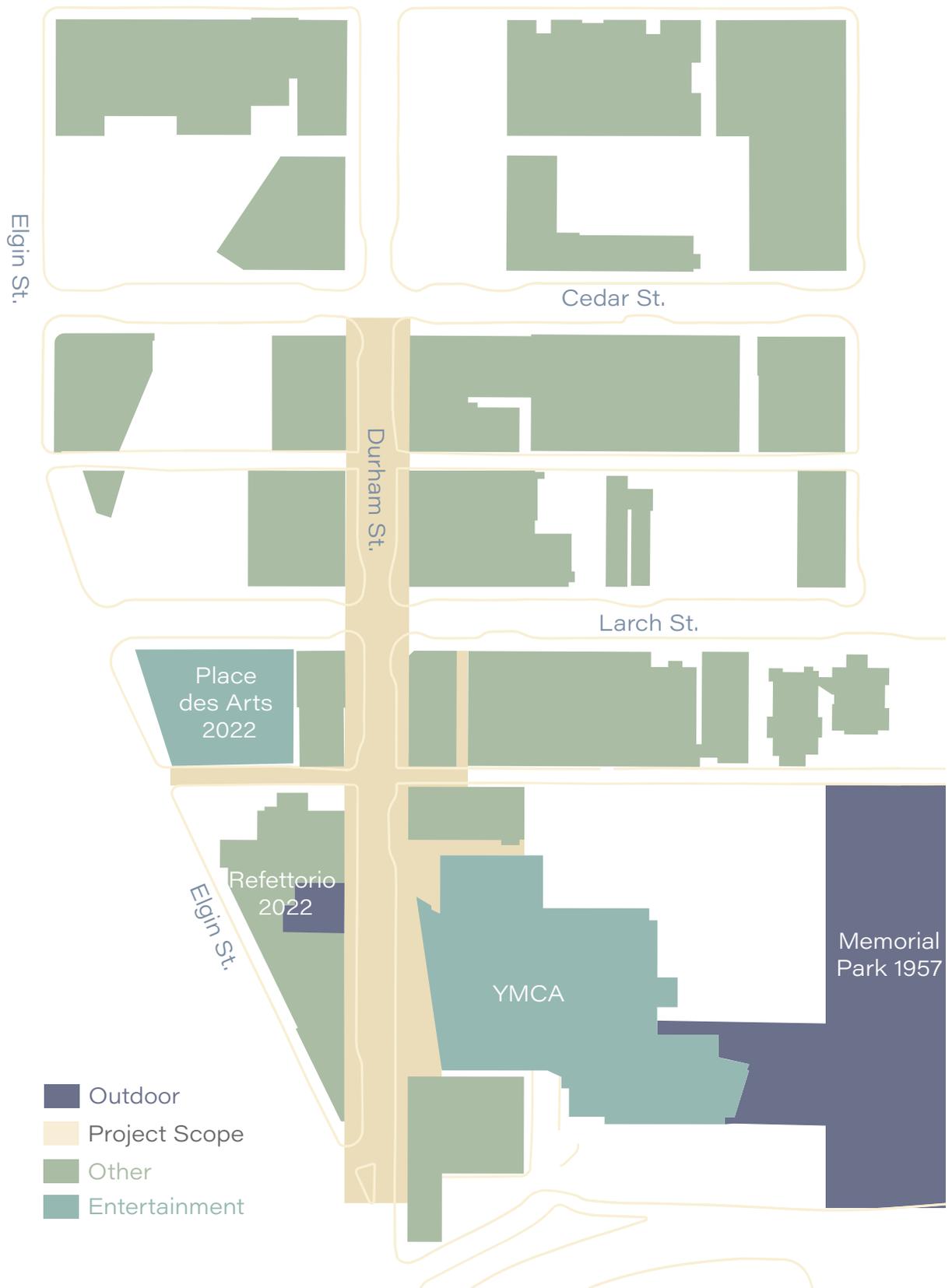


Figure 50: Site selection.

# 2.5

## Site Selection

Durham being considered the main street of Downtown Sudbury (Figure 50), means that this particular region of downtown has so much potential with the most popular establishments found on or in proximity to the street. It has been primarily responsible for preserving the image of the city and so emphasizing it may draw people in and encourage them to explore a bit further. Since the 1974 closure of Durham was not particularly embraced by all and the city has not recommended the intervention in the past, the complete closure of the street may not be the best intervention. Even though this poll from July 30th 2021 suggests (Figure 61) that the evolving culture of the city may be ready to embrace the closure of Durham, there are other logistical factors to be considered. Accessibility and fire safety are major components working against the full enclosure of the street. Perhaps rather than entirely blocking off the street, the street can be reduced intently to promote further activity. As Jane Jacobs insisted, cars are responsible for the troubles of cities. They are the villains responsible for destroying the city and so reducing their prominence on Durham street may help heal the city.<sup>1</sup> By reducing the impact of the vehicle on the built environment, the city may thrive through the implementation of varying updates on this street. Such interventions will ultimately help the city support a multiplicity of events and activities that will make the area feel more inviting. The goal for the project is to revitalize the Durham street region along with neighbouring alleys. Several alleys have been investigated as seen in figures 52 to 60. As pictured in these images, the site feels very uninviting, dark and somber. There aren't many people on the street and alleys at any given moment. The filtered scenes in instagrammed moments need to be kept alive throughout the year. The alleys to be included in the intervention are ones which may help unify the area at the most southern portion of the street as seen in figure 51.

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<sup>1</sup> "Jane Jacobs Quotes.



Figure 51: Downtown Sudbury.



Figures 52-60: Images of Downtown Sudbury

# How would you feel about the city closing down part of Durham Street to create a pedestrian mall?

[View related story](#)

I like the idea 689 votes 66.83 %

I don't like the idea 342 votes 33.17 %

Total votes: 1031  
 Added: Jul 30, 2021 8:08 AM

Figure 61: Poll on Durham pedestrian street.

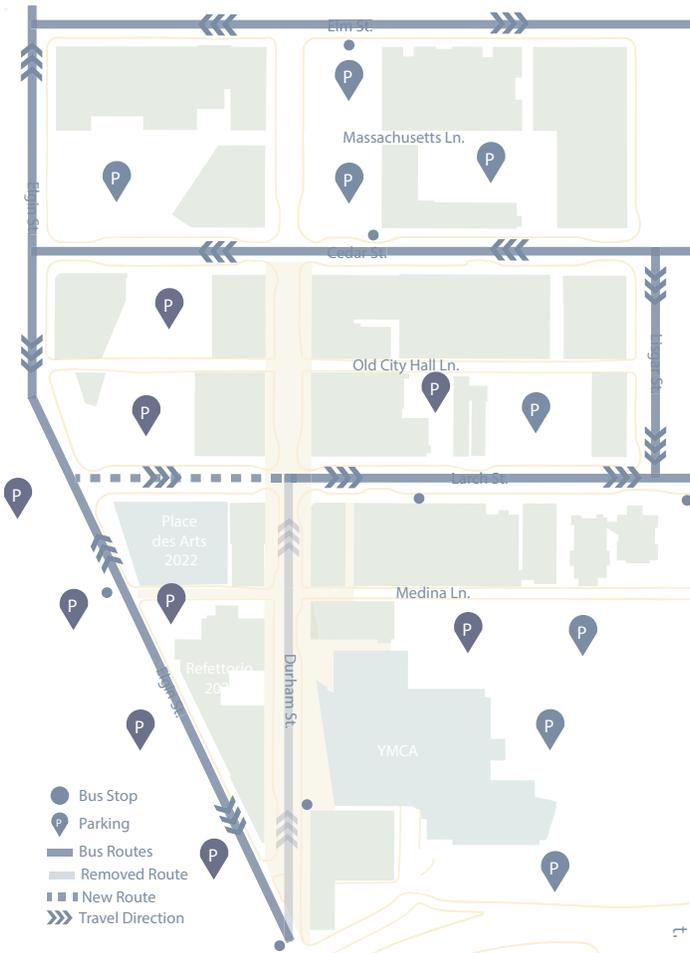


Figure 62: Bus Routes.



Figure 63: Traffic Circulation.

# 2.6

## Site Analysis

### 2.6.1 Parking and Circulation

As outlined in figure 62 and 63, the project scope consists of altering the existing road. This presents a few challenges and means that bus routes need to be rerouted to reduce traffic. Such an intervention may be inconvenient for the city but is completely feasible and should not disrupt the vehicular flow greatly. Reducing vehicular flow also presents the challenge of removing on street parking which would further improve pedestrian activity within the downtown core but remove quite a few spaces. Since on-street parking is being eliminated, the alleys become the threshold to Durham street. They are the transitional zones which create connectivity to outlying parking.

### 2.6.2 Surrounding Activity

As seen in figure 64, there are numerous activities which already exist downtown. These consist of health clinics, pharmacies, residential units, office buildings, bars, stores, restaurants and more. In this area of Durham street you will find restaurants, bars, the YMCA, offices, retail stores and so on. Of course these tenants may fluctuate over the years and so interventions to the site should allow for some growth. Even with fluctuating tenants, the general occupancy types will most likely remain the same. The planned interventions may be designed to accommodate some of these spaces such as bars and restaurants.

### 2.6.3 Instagram

Since the image of the city has been perceived through social media, it is important to locate commonly photographed areas within the site. This way, we can preserve this positive image while simultaneously improving it. This may inspire key moments within the design. Frequently "instagrammed" areas can be seen in figure 67.

### 2.6.4 Planted Areas

There are multiple planted areas found around the site as seen in figure 66. The intent for the project is to preserve existing trees and green zones as much as possible while expanding them for water retention.



Figure 64: Surrounding Businesses

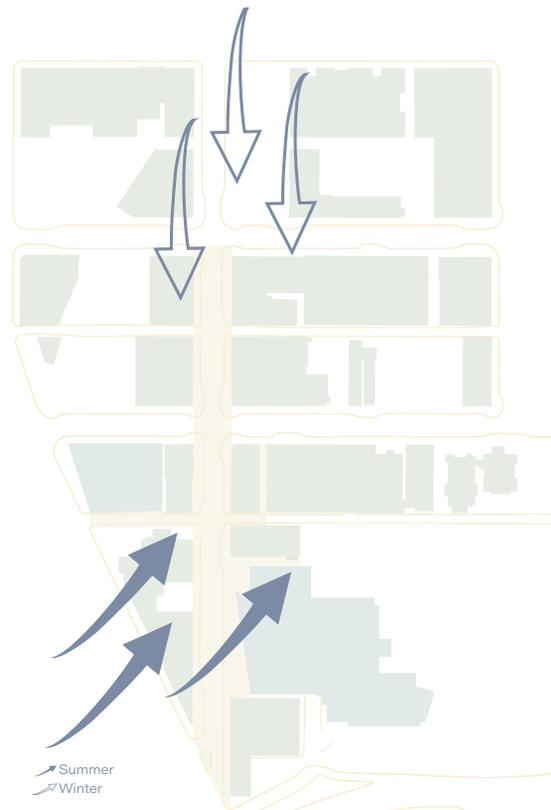


Figure 65: Wind Direction

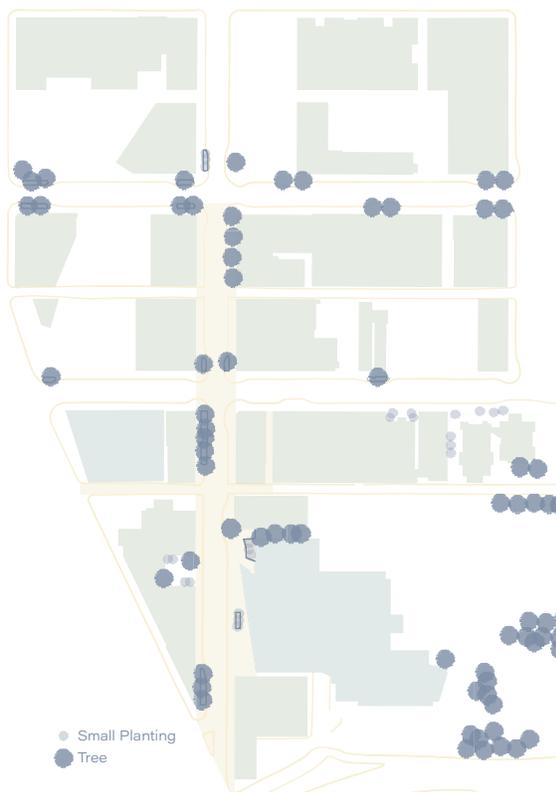


Figure 66: Planted Areas

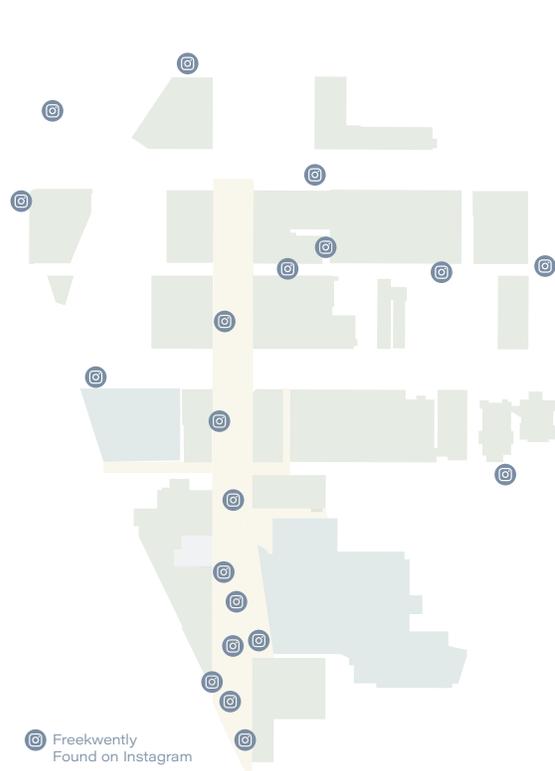


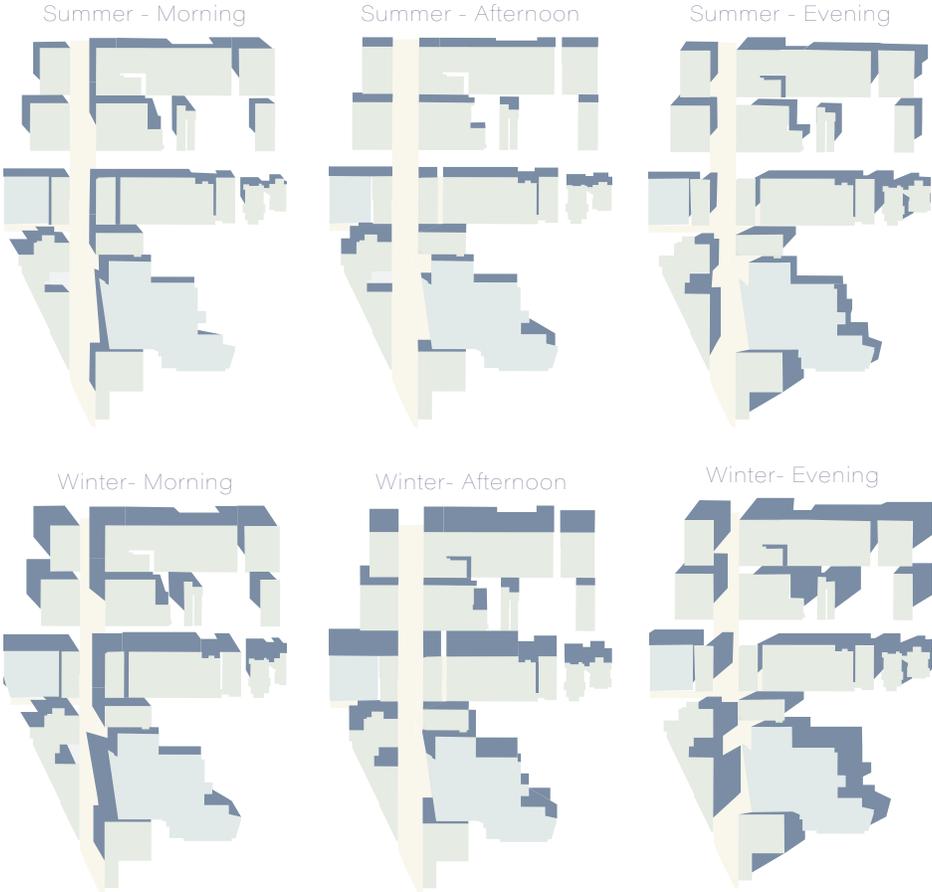
Figure 67: Frequently Instagrammed areas

## 2.6.5 Wind

As indicated in figure 65, Sudbury winds are primarily directed from the North in the winter and from the South/West in the summer. In order to make the winter months feel less harsh and more comfortable, it is important to consider wind direction in the design. Especially since Durham street is oriented North to South. In the summer, this wind could be beneficial for creating a cooler environment. Since the street is mainly exposed to winds, intervening in the alleys provides little wind broken niches for people to get away from the harsh winter conditions.

## 2.6.6 Shadow Study

Since Durham street is oriented North/South, the street is only shaded in the mornings and evenings throughout the year as seen in figures 68 to 73. The alleys on the other hand experience a lot more darkness than the street itself. Since the street is primarily in the sun throughout the year, alleys provide an escape from the harsh summer sun. Alleys may also require extra lighting, especially in months with shorter days to maintain brightness and make them feel more inviting to users.



Figures 68-73: Shadow Studies



Precedents

3

# R e c o v e r e d S p a c e s

This section analyzes recovered public spaces to inspire components for an urban design strategy.



Figure 74: Yorkville park water feature.



Figure 75: Yorkville park paving.

# 3.1

## Precedents

As Aldo Rossi stated, "Architecture, attesting to the tastes and attitudes of generations, to the public events and private tragedies, to new and old facts, is the fixed stage of human events."<sup>1</sup> Architecture and urban design that is well conceived is built on the fundamentals of community and the needs of multiple generations. In order to discover the possibilities that will serve the people of Sudbury and successfully build spectacle in the downtown core, it is crucial to investigate various revitalization initiatives such as repurposed alleyways and vibrant urban parks from different cities. From these we can develop ideas that may be useful in creating a vibrant downtown at all seasons. These types of projects may spark inspiration and guide the project. When considering urban design strategies, many don't want any part of it. As Bruce Mau states, "A lot of people hear the word design and think 'expensive' and 'fancy,'...But that's not actually what it's about. It's about a capacity to shape the world."<sup>2</sup> It is about making thoughtful choices that will improve culture and community. The following precedents are real life examples of ideas that can be implemented to improve our city. These interventions do not have to be large or complicated ones. It is said that designers have a reputation for making extravagant and expensive projects that never make an appearance in the real world.<sup>3</sup> If designs are often too large to actually be implemented, a few tasteful changes may be all the city needs to make a large impact. As Sudbury possesses vast natural beauty, we have the potential for creating an extraordinary place and culture at little cost. Bruce Mau argues that the city has a predesignated budget to be allocated to build new things and is constantly building. The money has to be used therefore it is for the city's benefit to design beautiful attractions that will create interest and make people stay.<sup>4</sup> We have nothing to lose and everything to gain.



Figure 76: Quartier des spectacles street level.



Figure 77: Quartier des spectacles birds eye view.

## 3.1.1 Quartier des spectacles

This precedent is a perfect example of a street turned into a pedestrian zone. Located in Montreal, this intervention attracts a multitude of people through all seasons thanks to the help of various events. Notably including Luminotherapie, a light festival which occurs in the winter. This particular project among others may inspire sculptures and infrastructure to be found in the project. The key takeaways from this project consist of fun lighting, varying hardscape surfaces, sculpture, green spaces, water features, gathering areas, fixed seating and dining areas as seen in figures 76 to 80.



Figure 78: Quartier des spectacles seesaws.



Figure 79: Quartier des spectacles benches.



Figure 80: Quartier des spectacles lighting.



Figure 81: Yorkville park sheltered area.



Figure 82: Yorkville park structure.

## 3.1.2 Yorkville Park

This urban park offers multiple green spaces which include a diverse collection of trees and plantings. There are various shaded and open areas which include multiple types of hardscapes such as pavers, concrete, stones, pebbles, wood, gravel, and softscapes such as grass, mulch and dirt. The park contains multiple structures, one including a water feature. The site also consists of a combination of fixed and not fixed seating. This project is a perfect example of how to diversify landscape design, how to create spaces using landscape, and how to build relaxing environments for people to gather as seen in figures 74, 75 and 81 to 85.

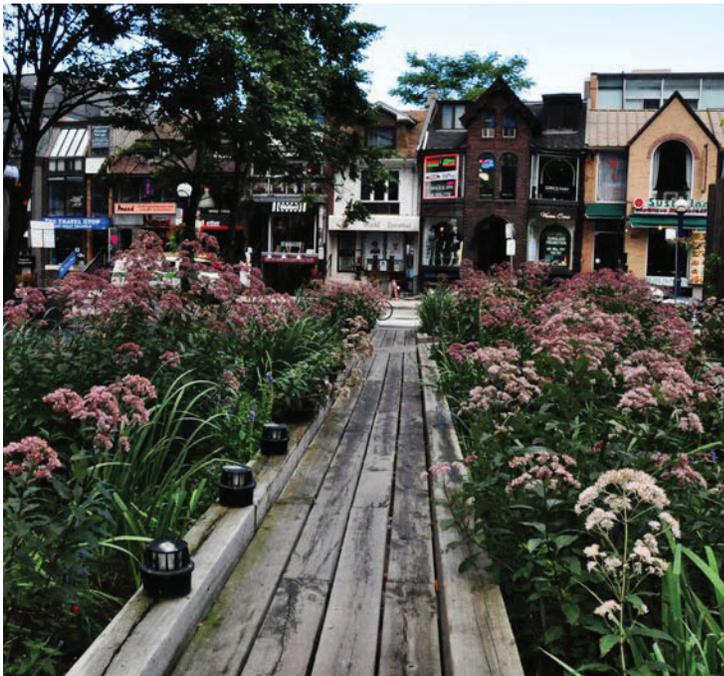


Figure 83: Yorkville park path.



Figure 84: Yorkville park frozen water feature.



Figure 85: Yorkville park rock.



Figure 86: The Bentway path.



Figure 87: The Bentway basketball net.

### 3.1.3 Bentway Park

This urban design project found under an expressway in Toronto features various types of interactive playground installations, walkways, skate parks, ice skating paths and flexible areas open to multiple activities. It contains a mixture of various types of hard and soft surfaces and plantings. It also includes a combination of fixed and flexible seating. The project as seen in figures 86 to 90 is exemplary for its ability to attract and entertain people using urban strategies.

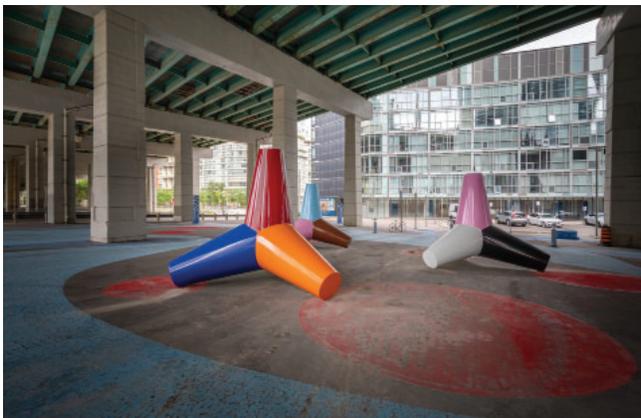


Figure 88: The Bentway skate path.

Figure 89: The Bentway playground.



Figure 90: The Bentway playground slide.



Figure 91: The Highline 1.



Figure 92: The Highline 2.

### 3.1.4 Highline

The highline is a beautiful walking path that features fixed seating, multiple paving types, soft surfaces and plantings of various kinds. The park is fully open to the elements without shelter. This project pictured in figures 91 to 93 serves as inspiration for creating a holistic yet diverse walking path and may benefit any urban design strategy.

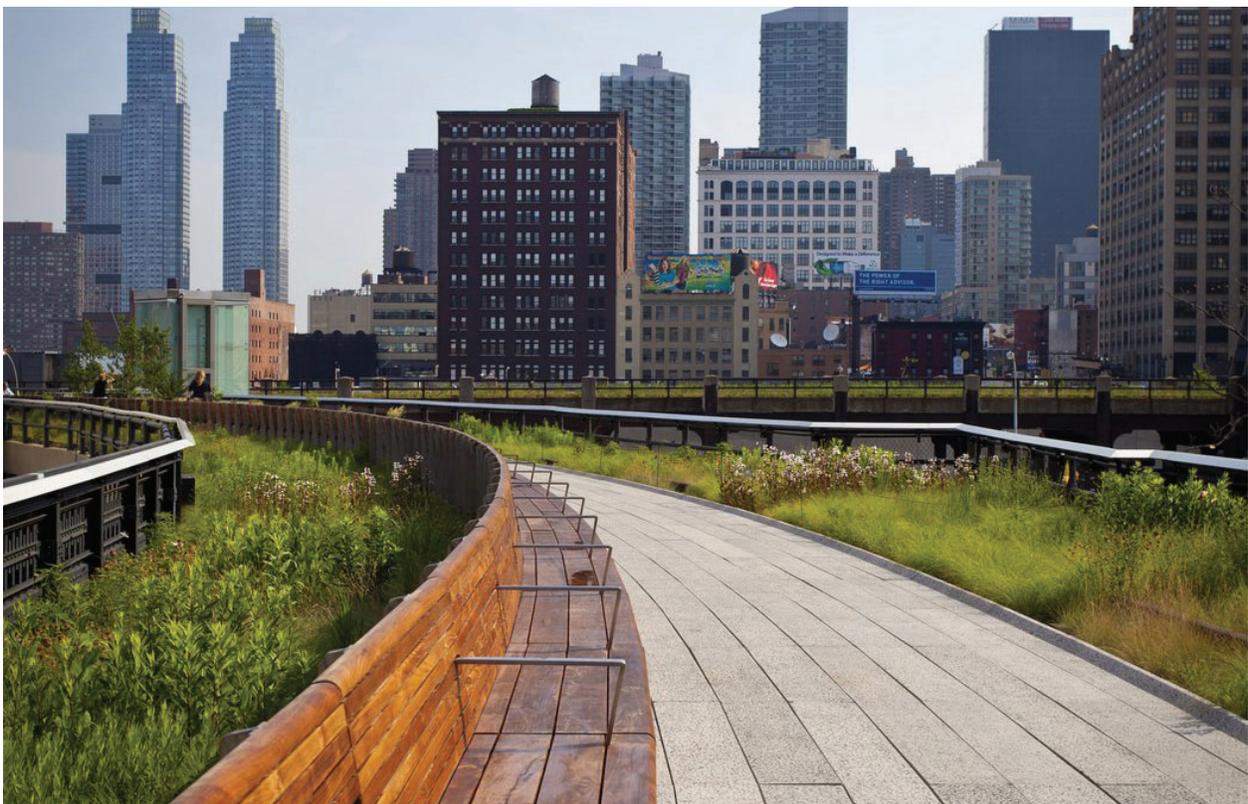


Figure 93: The Highline 3.



Figure 94: Vancouver alley.

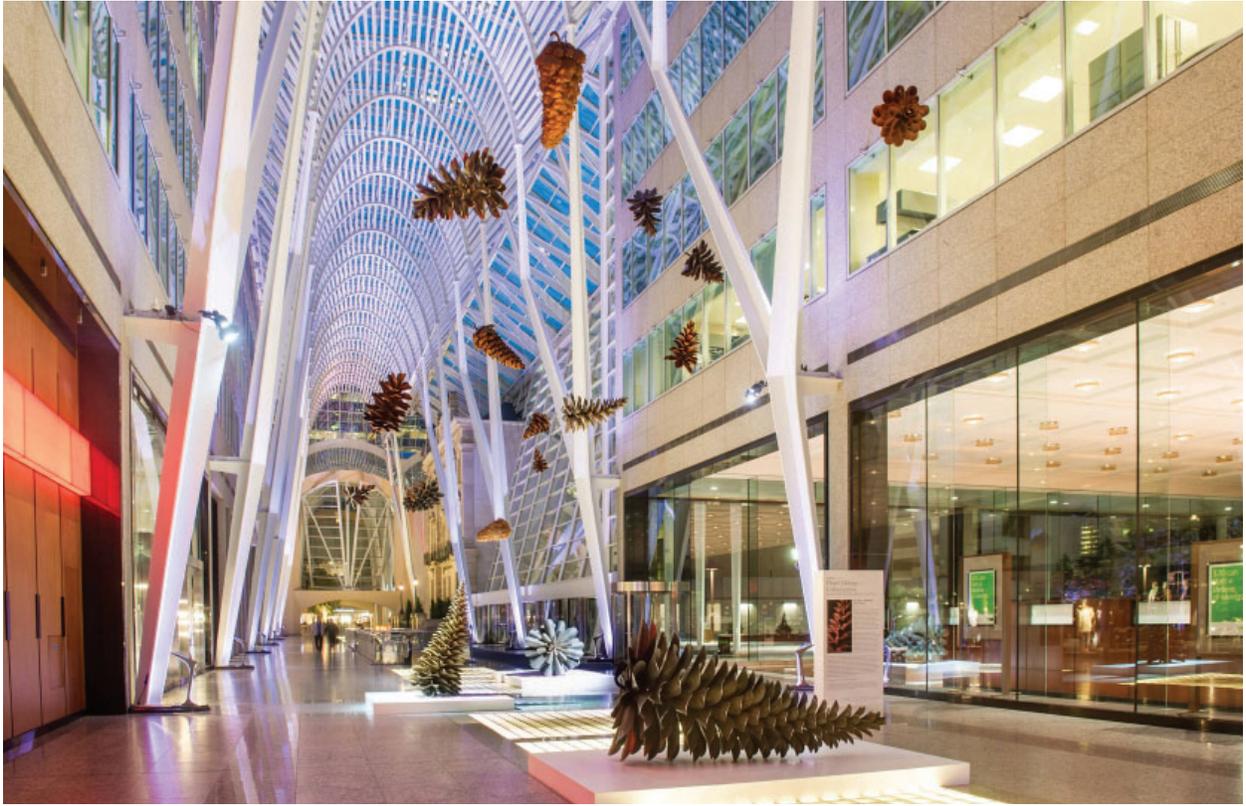


Figure 95: Brookfield Place.

### 3.1.5 Alleys

Many alleys have been reanimated all over the world (Figures 94-97). Places such as Chicago, Detroit, Toronto, Vancouver, Melbourne and more have all benefited from fixing up their alleys. This type of intervention not only makes for a prettier city, it also improves infrastructure, makes the city more inviting, safe, active, and brings people back to the city after work hours. Laneways have a huge amount of untapped potential which is currently primarily reserved for garbage and other utilitarian services. It is essential to cultivate the positive attributes found in these alleys so that Sudbury alleys can thrive as well. Some key takeaways from these alleys include: storefronts, infrastructure which protects against the elements in harsh weather conditions, murals, lighting, hardscapes, softscapes, planters, greenery, water retention, as well as installation art among others.



Figure 96: Melbourne alley.



Figure 97: Detroit alley.

- 
- 1 Aldo Rossi and Peter Eisenman. *The Architecture of the City*, 22.
  - 2 John Allemang, "Bruce Mau's Northern Exposure,"
  - 3 *Ibid.*
  - 4 "Rebranding the North: Why Ontario Cities Are Overhauling Their Image,"
  - 5 *Ibid.*



Figure 98: Design elements

# 3.2

## Design Elements

There are many factors that influence good design. The previously mentioned case studies have pinpointed some of these factors such as lighting, materiality, seating, sheltered areas, vegetation, installations, activities, paths and zones. The incorporation of any or all of these ideas may drastically improve the city. The benefits of these components and how they manifest themselves in the project shall be expressed in the coming paragraphs.

### 3.2.1 Seating

As people wander around cities and explore, they may simply walk through without experiencing them. Even with activity, if one is not given a reason to stop and enjoy their surroundings, they may not do so unless prompted. Creating opportunity for assembly and observation creates density and may stimulate spectators to participate in the existing spectacle.<sup>1</sup> Assembly and observation can be created through seating. Seating encourages people to stay, interact with one-another and therefore creates a secondary layer of spectacle of its own. If the options for sitting are few or inadequate, people will pass through without interacting with the space or the people. If people do not stay to enjoy themselves, they will miss the wonderful activities that can also happen in these spaces. In addition to social interaction, seats are the primer for various activities such as eating, reading, sleeping, knitting, chess, sunbathing, and more.<sup>2</sup> To help liven the image of the city and create a quality outdoor urban fabric, one can never go wrong with seating.<sup>3</sup> Seating is found throughout the project for the previously mentioned reasons.

## 3.2.2 Lighting

Even in masterful designs, the absence of proper lighting may dampen the environment. Lighting can be part of building a spectacle as it helps create sensual variation. Whether it be a simple street light, elaborate signage as seen in Las Vegas, festive lighting for the holidays, interesting light installations and more, it can bring a sense of safety, activity and joy to the community. Small spaces such as alleys are often dark and sunless. Design must bring life to these areas so that they may not be forgotten or avoided. Various lighting types are incorporated into the project such as street lighting, installation lighting and more. The community is encouraged to further explore lighting opportunities that suit the city best.

## 3.2.3 Materiality

Similarly to lighting, materiality can be used to create sensual variation and interest. Materiality may also help encourage or designate certain activities in various areas. Materiality choices may also help mitigate climate conditions such as heat, water retention and more. Materiality is suggested throughout the project but is open to interpretation by the community. Where applicable, the use of salvaged materials is highly recommended.

## 3.2.4 Infrastructure

Sheltered areas may help keep the community cool in the summer months and protect from the elements all year round. These sheltered areas can range from trees to patio umbrellas or canopies to walk under. Sheltered areas in the design manifest themselves in the form of trees and canopies. Business owners may also incorporate patio umbrellas as they see fit.

## 3.2.5 Vegetation

Summers in the city often get quite warm. Greenery is essential to help regulate temperatures but also create a more comfortable and inviting atmosphere for all users. As Sudbury is known for its greening efforts, it may be useful to keep these efforts going in the city center as well. Vegetation is incorporated throughout the project to contrast the harsh hardscapes of the city, for water retention and to mitigate climatic conditions as inspired by precedents. This way, the existing identity of the city of growth can be honoured as learned from Las Vegas.

## 3.2.6 Installations

Interactive installations of any kind help spark activity in the city. They draw people in and force them to interact with the infrastructure as well as each other. They bring people together while improving the general aesthetic of the city. The design incorporates a few installations to help promote activity within the site at varying locations. The installations serve as wienies as inspired by Disney Parks. Installations may appear as outlined by this project or can be designed by local artists and be changed over time.

## 3.2.7 Paths and Zones

Designated paths and zones help guide people through the urban fabric. They help designate certain activities to certain areas and organize flow. As inspired by precedents, the design designates various paths and zones throughout the site to maintain visual interest while also maintaining unity as inspired by Disney Parks. Each area is unique but transitions are not overly harsh. Unlike Disney, users are free to explore as they chose and do not have to stick to these designated areas and paths. For this reason, vehicular traffic and pedestrian traffic are not distincted.

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**1** Jan Gehl, *Life Between Buildings* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2011).

**2** Ibid.

**3** Ibid.



Project

4

# U r b a n   D e s i g n S t r a t e g y

This section introduces a design strategy for Downtown Sudbury and discusses various design components and traffic calming strategies incorporated in the design.

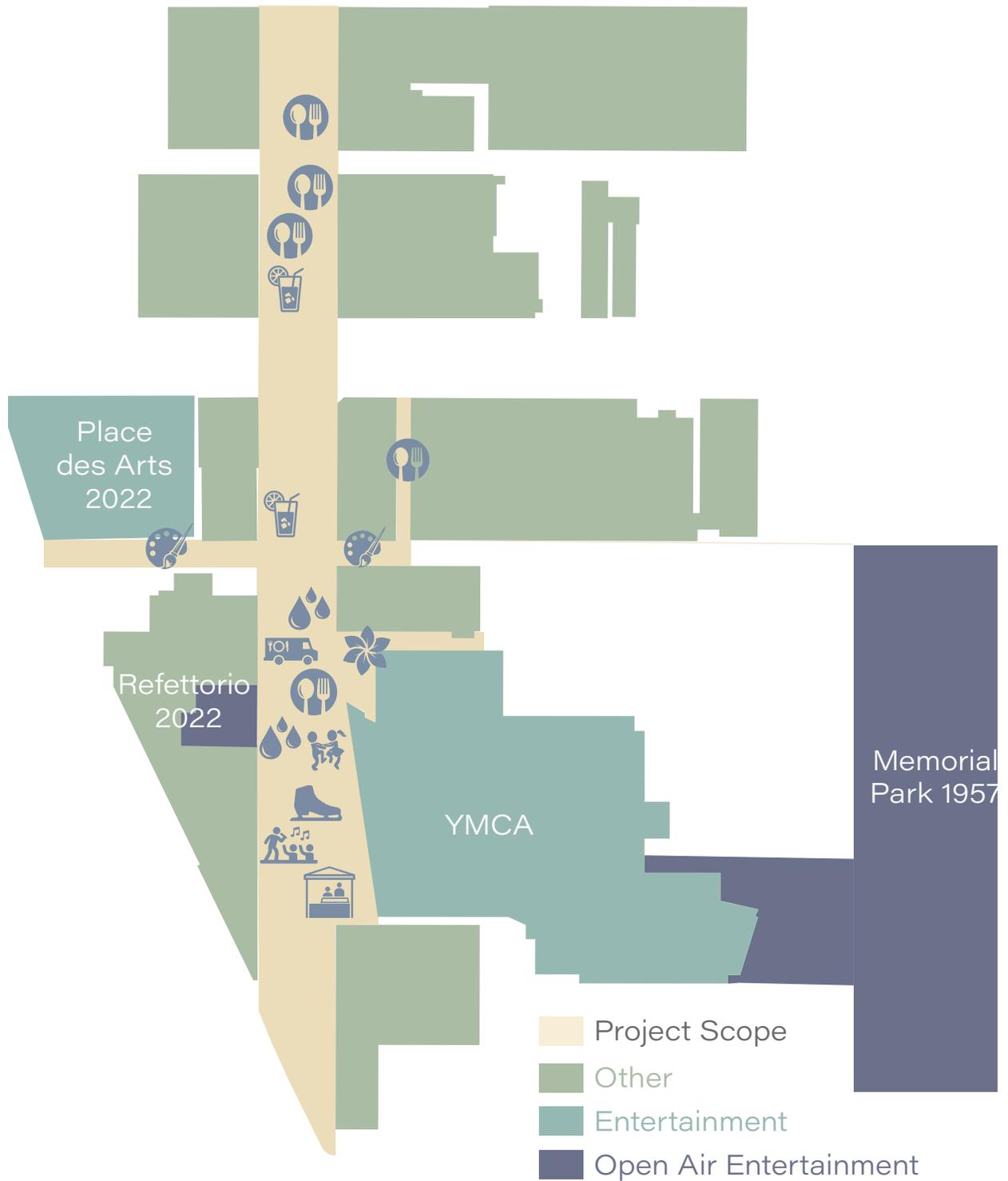


Figure 99: Program.

# 4.1

## Program

Although the primary focus of this thesis does not necessitate a fixed program, It must support existing or planned establishments as seen in figure 100. As long as attention is fostered to these key points of interest, the program can be free to grow with the city. As long as outdoor dining can be maintained, the upcoming outdoor theater can be embraced, festivals can be hosted and overall activity can be encouraged, the community is free to use the space as they see fit. Some possible uses are diagrammed within figure 99. These activities could range anywhere from markets, family friendly play areas and more. Reinforcing existing entities with supplementary interventions will help support the current community culture, and encourage more people to roam the streets. It may also build an increased culture for tourism. Using proper traffic calming strategies, a collection of small interventions can help build spectacle in the city. As these spaces remain flexible, it is essential to create flexible boundaries as well. Transitional zones that are neither completely private nor completely public will help encourage people to use the designed spaces. There must also be connecting links between areas to enable people to move from one area to another.<sup>1</sup>



### Food Trucks

Food truck parking spaces.



### Bar

Outdoor bar area.



### Garden

Green spaces to add visual interest.



### Dining

Outdoor dining for food trucks, restaurants and other.



### Market

Flexible market vendor area.



### Ice Skating Area

On green space.



### Event Space

Flexible outdoor space.



### Water Features

Intergrated splashpad area.

<sup>1</sup> Gehl, *Life Between Buildings* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2011).



Figure 100: Program infrastructure.

# 4.2

## Design Considerations

As the project adopts ideas from precedents and the image of the city, there are other outstanding factors to be considered while designing in an urban fabric such as Sudbury. These factors include climatic conditions, automobile retention and the importance of activity.

### 4.2.1 Climate

In cities where colder climates are prominent such as Sudbury, maintaining outdoor spaces becomes problematic. Careful planning can help avoid multiple problems associated with climatic factors such as precipitation, extreme cold or heat and wind to name a few. Design elements such as windbreaks, trees, hedges, and covered areas in certain areas may benefit the design to help people feel more comfortable while frequenting the area. As we work to create thoughtful environments for the winter months, we must not forget to consider other seasons as well. Designs for winter must not conflict with the conditions and experiences in the spring, fall and summer. While attempting to mitigate uncomfortable conditions, embracing the seasons for what they are must not be forgotten as well. The varying weather conditions and seasonal changes bring new opportunities and sensual variation for all to enjoy throughout the year. Each season is to be embraced for what they are, and not be erased entirely.<sup>1</sup> In the summer, greenery shall be embraced while the design shall promote the use of snow in the winters.

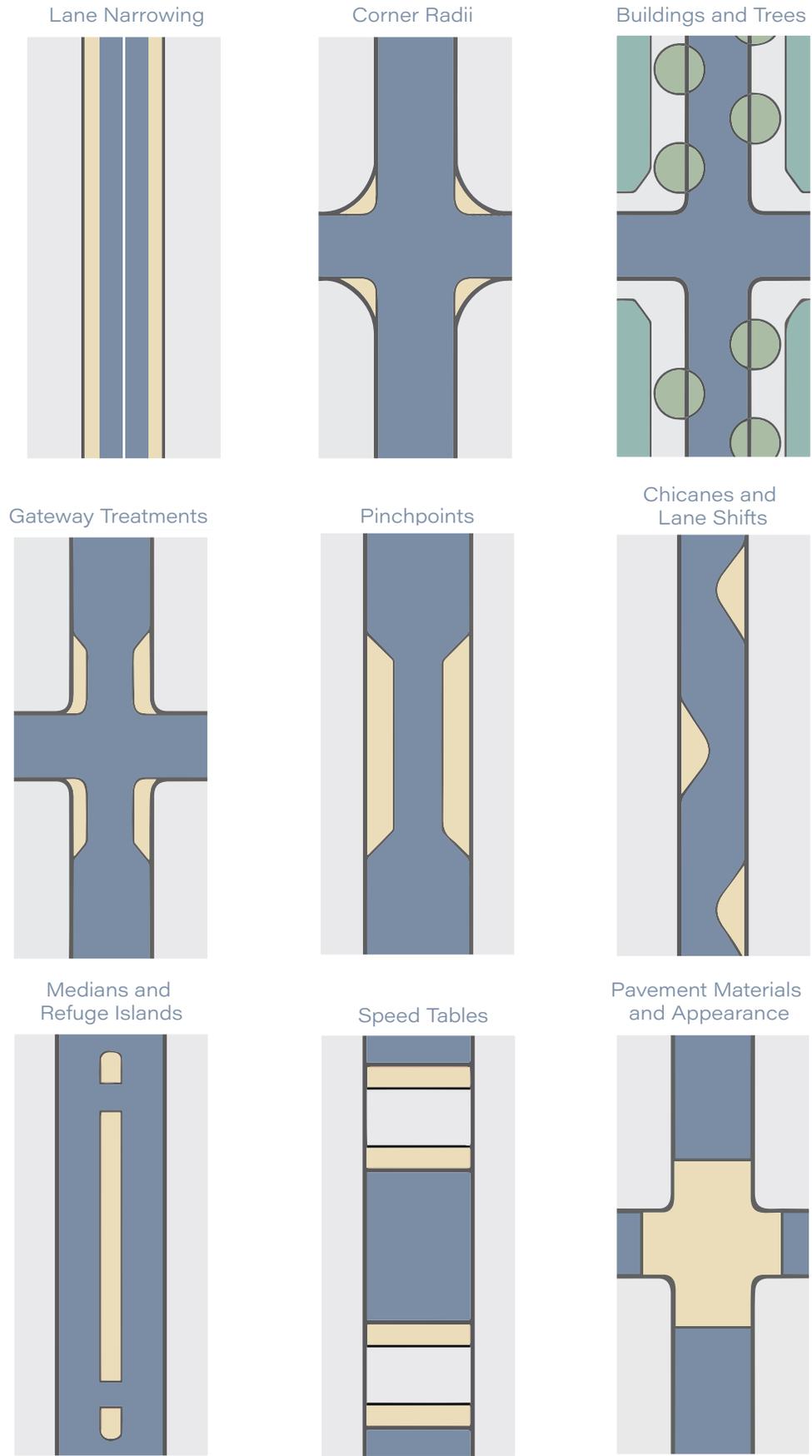


Figure 101: Traffic calming strategies

## 4.2.2 Automobiles

Cities are frequently designed with the automobile in mind. This is very much the case in Sudbury as we have a prominent car culture. As designs are crafted with cars in mind, cities become generally unpleasant.<sup>2</sup> Despite the convenience of the automobile, traffic is a key influential factor in activity. Put simply, less cars makes for more activity. City centers that have gone through the transformation of becoming a uniquely pedestrian street have improved activity. They see drastic changes in vibrancy and encourage events of various kinds to occur.<sup>3</sup> For this reason, it is pivotal that this urban design strategy works to diminish the impact that cars have on the urban environment. This way, pedestrian activity can thrive on Durham street. Although cars are problematic, we cannot simply remove them from the street altogether. For accessibility and fire safety reasons, this strategy simply will not do. Rather than eliminating vehicles entirely, we may consider reducing their impact on the community. The current design of the street enables rapid flow of traffic which disturbs existing activity and poses safety concerns as well. Traffic calming strategies can be used instead of the expulsion of vehicles to mitigate traffic in a way which may support existing activities. These strategies include (figure 101) lane narrowing, corner radii, buildings and trees, gateway treatment, chicane sand lane shifts, medians, speed tables, pavement materials, two way street and shared street.

1. The first strategy of lane narrowing helps to reduce speeds, making drivers more cautious. This minimizes crashes, puddle splashes and rocks from being thrown.
2. Corner Radii is a strategy used to narrow corners to reduce turning speeds and pedestrian crossing distances.
3. Buildings and trees can be added or articulated to promote the fact that drivers are in an urban environment, rather than a highway. Although the buildings are already established, canopies and trees can be added to tighten up the open space and help reduce speeds.
4. The gateway treatment much like corner radii narrows the opening of a street at intersections to let drivers know to slow down. This can be achieved through signage, entry portals, speed tables, raised crossings, and curb extensions.
5. As the gateway treatment does, pinch points narrow the roadway. Rather than at the intersection, this can occur at various points in the road. They help reduce speeds and in combination with speed tables, they help create high quality crossings for pedestrians.

6. Chicanes and lane shifts create alternating parking curb extensions to create a windy road and the "s" shaped curve of the road lowers speeds.
7. Medians and refuge islands help reduce lane width to reduce speeds, organize traffic at intersections. They also block access to certain paths strategically.
8. Speed tables are flat top speed bumps typically 6-9 meters long. They double as pedestrian crossings in many cases. These raised crossings also help reduce speed.
9. Pavement materials and appearances can be varied to add visual interest but also encourage drivers to reduce speeds. They are visual or tactile cues that help control traffic.
10. Two way streets make drivers more cautious on roads due to oncoming traffic. Keeping the two way street is essential for controlling traffic speeds.
11. Shared streets remove the distinction between pedestrian, cycle and vehicular spaces. These types of roads force all users to be wary of one another and reduces motor speeds.<sup>4</sup>

### 4.2.3 Activity

Activity becomes the magnet which draws people into public spaces. Without it, spaces remain vacant. Allowing for vehicles to be less prominent on the street, provides opportunity for these activities to occur. As we see activities unfold, we become intrigued to participate and explore for ourselves. Lifeless cities remain unanimated while cities designed for activity embrace spectacle and provide the stimulation that humans need. People are attracted to vibrancy and experience, so sensual variation makes each moment different from the next. It is the experiences and the people that make for vibrant cities rather than lifeless architecture. As much as Sudbury has benefitted from various new constructions, they do not bring life to the streets themselves. No matter how many elaborate buildings are added, cities can only thrive when they are designed for activity beyond the building itself.<sup>5</sup> It is critical to look at the urban fabric itself and create opportunities to interact with others. It is the small interventions that allow for this activity to occur. The bright, colourful murals of the city encourage exploration, the temporary outdoor dining infrastructure entices people to spend time in the city. These minor interventions have been key in building a culture for activity.<sup>6</sup> If someone has to choose between walking through a dark, lonely alley or a lively street full of glee, they will most certainly feel safer choosing the option which contains people and things to see.<sup>7</sup> People want to interact with children at play, people walking by, an artist with his easel,

musicians strumming guitars and other large and small events. After all, human activities are always the main attraction and these activities make for higher street quality.”<sup>8</sup> People avoid stops in front of banks, offices, showrooms, and dull exhibits but would stop for things which have a direct relationship to other people and to the surrounding social environment. Things like photography exhibits, film stills outside movie theaters, clothing stores, toy stores, and human activities that go on in the streets.<sup>9</sup> In creating urban design strategies, it is critical to consider how one can guide people to existing activities all while promoting new ones to occur simultaneously. Linking these activities or points of interest together creates unity in the city without compromising existing infrastructure.

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**1** Gehl, *Life Between Buildings* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2011).

**2** Jan Gehl, *Life Between Buildings*

**3** *Ibid.*

**4** “Traffic Calming Strategies,” Global Designing Cities Initiative. Accessed March 25, 2022, <https://globaldesigningcities.org/publication/global-street-design-guide/designing-streets-people/designing-for-motorists/traffic-calming-strategies/#:~:text=Narrow%20lanes%20reduce%20speeds%20and%20minimize%20crashes%20on,green%20infrastructure.%20See%3A%20Sidewalk%20Extensions%20and%20Speed%20Management.>

**5** Jan Gehl, *Life Between Buildings*

**6** *Ibid.*

**7** *Ibid.*

**8** *Ibid.*

**9** *Ibid.*



Figure 102: Overall street vignette.

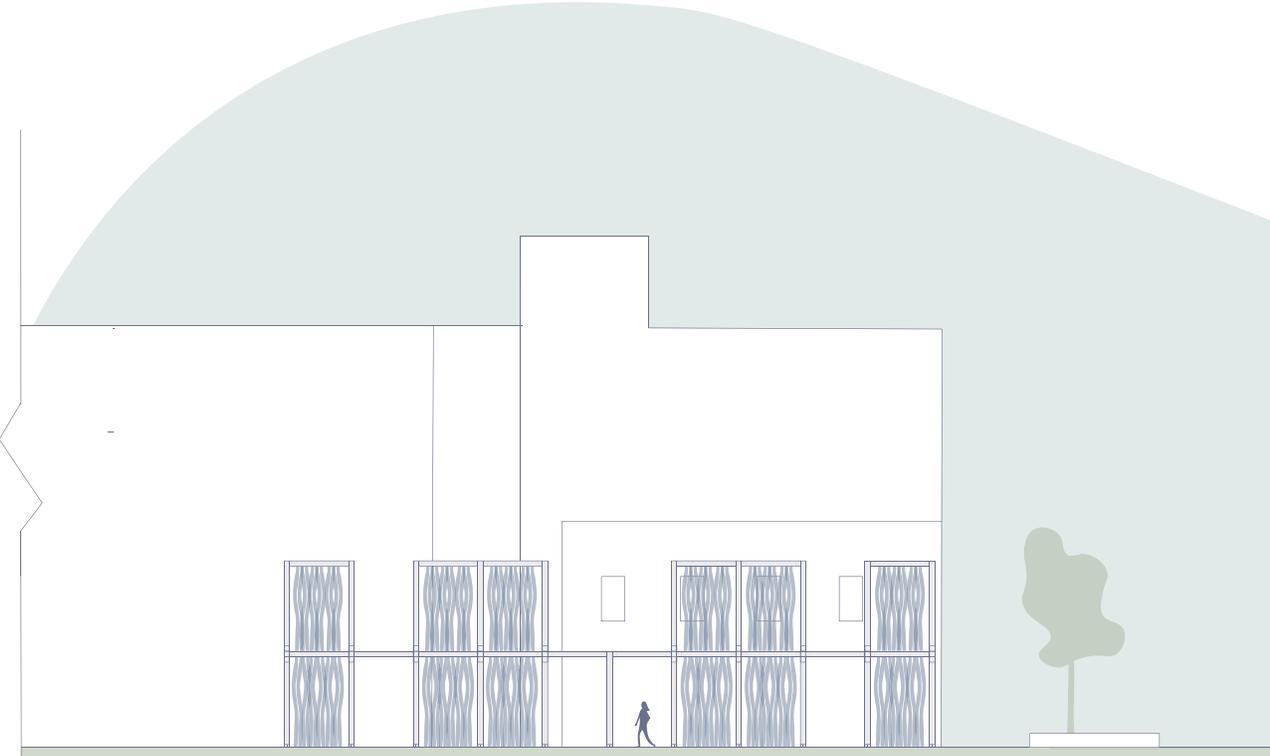
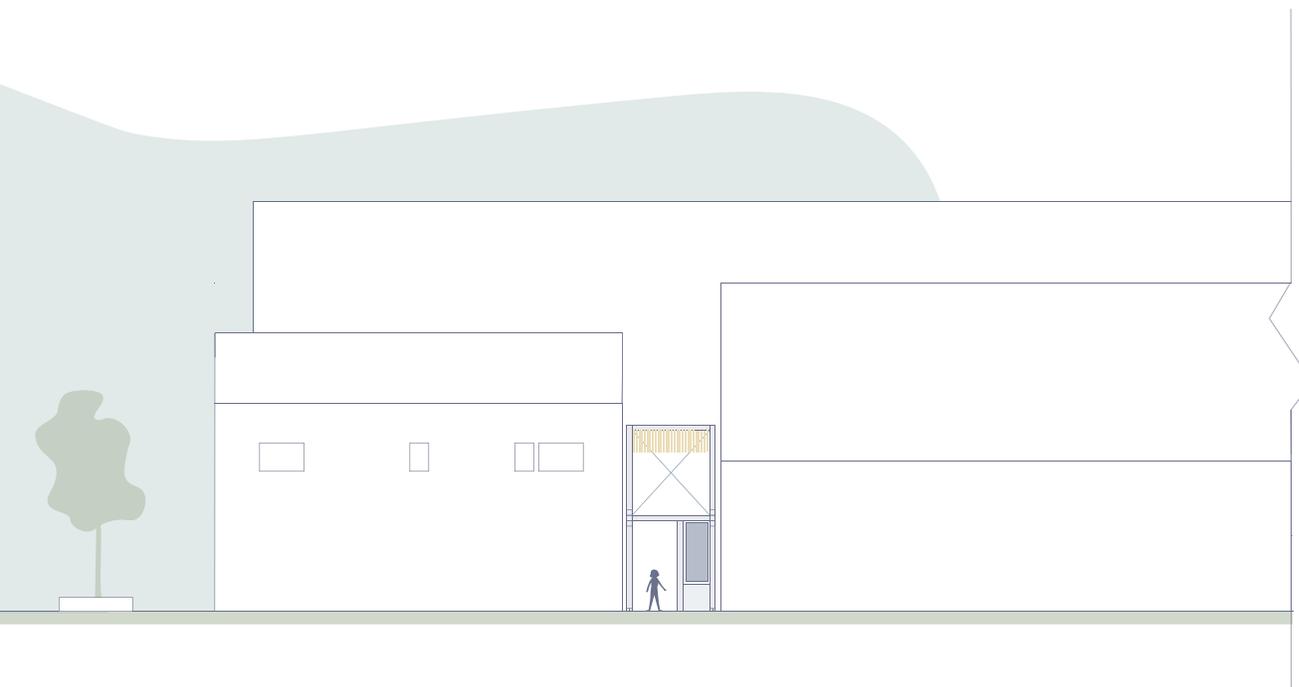


Figure 103: Site section.

# 4.3

## Detailed Design

The previously mentioned design ideologies have been incorporated into an overall urban design strategy for Durham street and adjacent alleys. If these ideas were to be incorporated into the city's urban fabric, there would have to be a sequence of phases. The sequence of the project is intended to start by intervening with things that already work on Durham street, followed by alley interventions that can have a more immediate impact, without having to shut down the street. Lastly, other street interventions can occur. Succeedingly, other alleys and streets found in the core may be updated to follow suit in the same sequence, following constant principals. The design consists of simple stylistic representation in hopes that this will allow the community to project their own ideas onto the potential that has been demonstrated. The following vignette (figure 102) and Section (figure 103) give an overall glimpse of the project's scale. The design will be represented in an overall plan as seen in (figure 104). This example plan is to be further divided into zones. Each zone offers a glimpse of options that can be achieved on the site. Some may relate to the overall example plan while others offer other opportunities that can be implemented on the site.



### 4.3.1 Overall Site Plan

The following plan (Figure 104) is oriented with North to the left for the sake of legibility. The project consists of a concentrated event space to the south for festivals, markets and more to occur in front of the YMCA as this zone has already been used in such a way successfully over the years. In addition to other traffic calming strategies, the primary southern portion of the design is intended to be used as a shared street

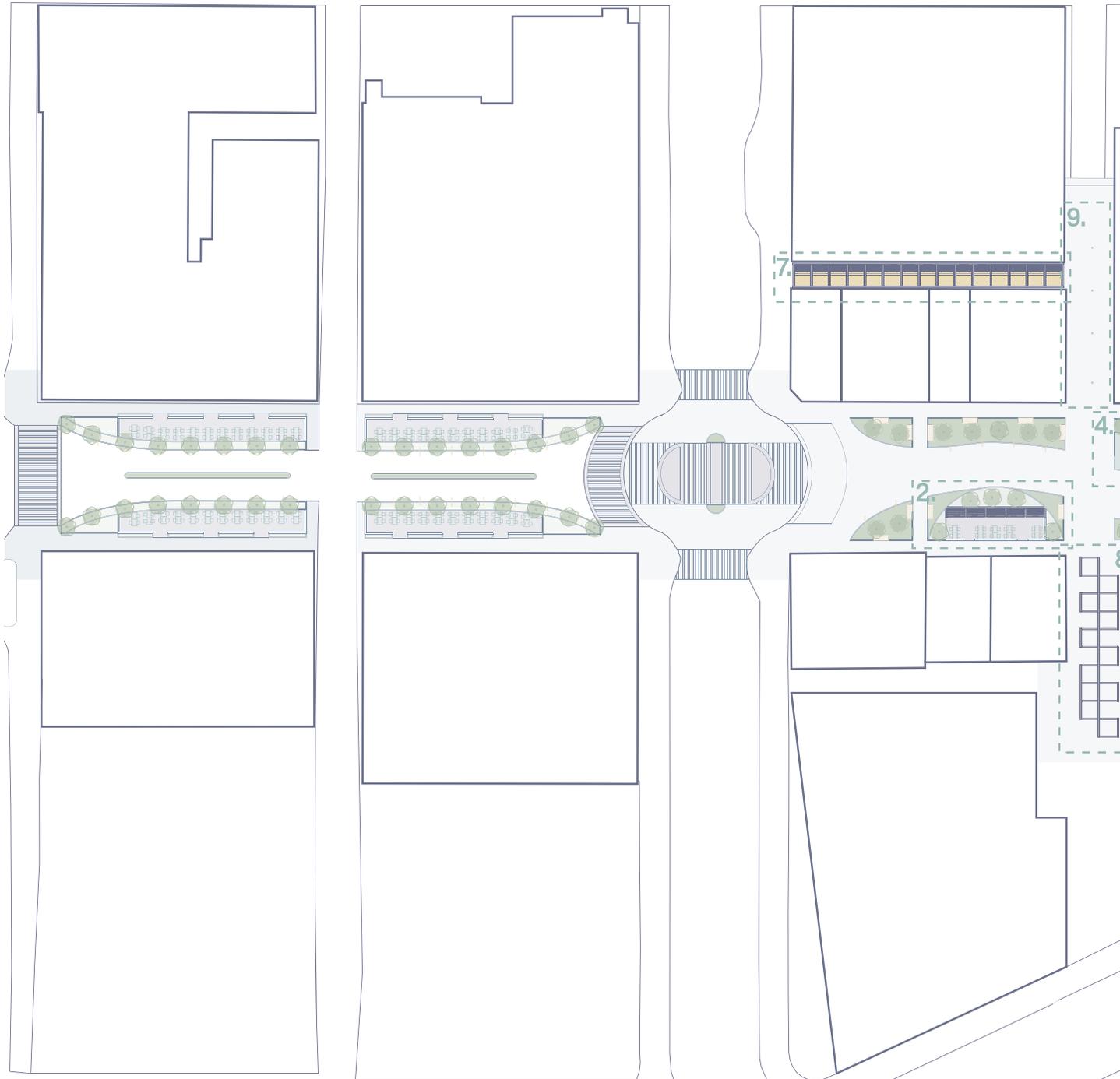
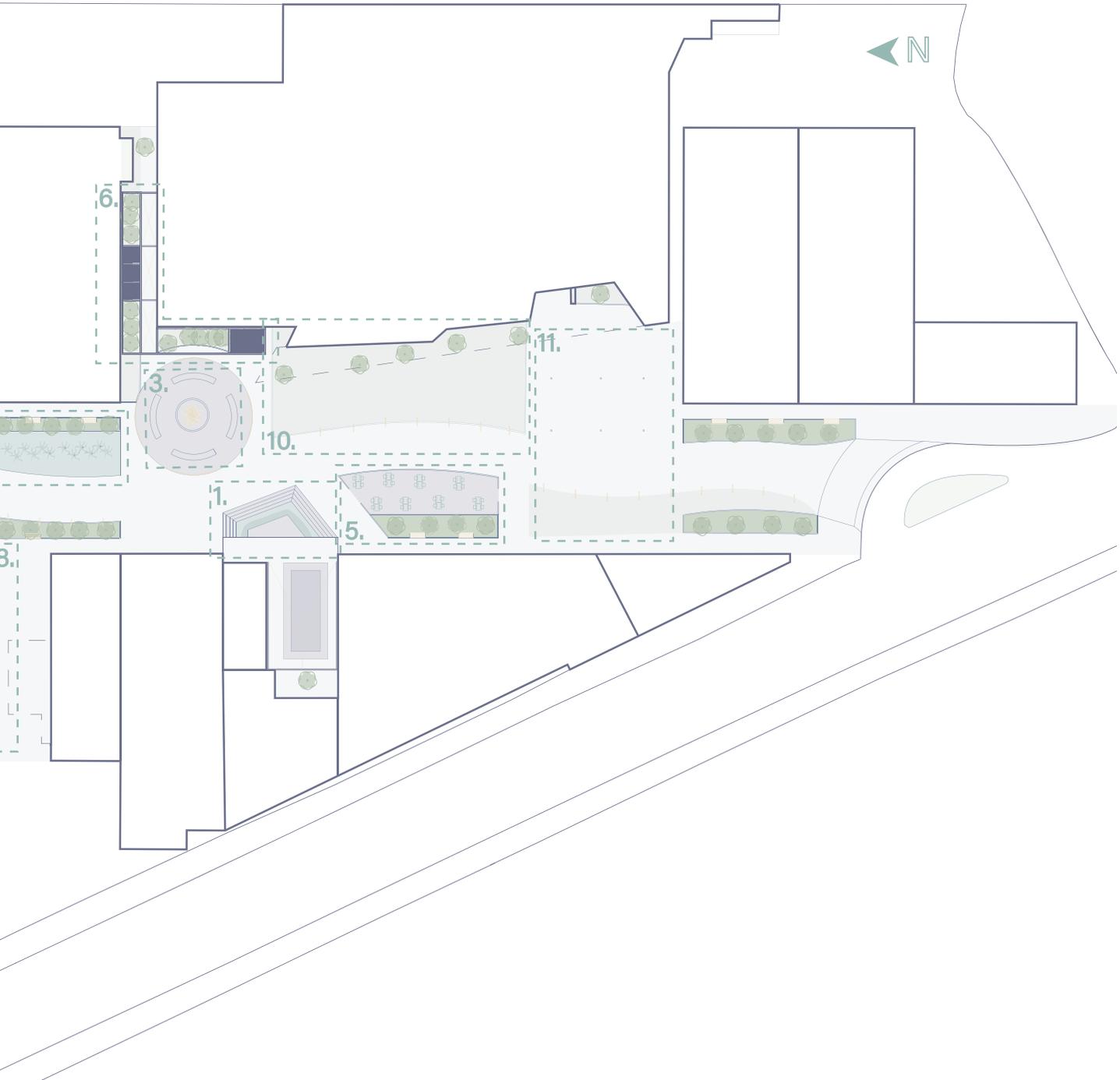


Figure 104: Example site plan.

for vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Entrances to the shared street are designed to discourage vehicular traffic from entering, even though they are permitted. This allows for pedestrian activity to thrive. The secondary intervention to the north of the site includes patios to support existing restaurants. Additionally, there are a series of structures on the site that can be changed to suit the evolving needs of the community as well as lit benches.



## 4.3.2 Zone 1: Theater

As previously mentioned, the upcoming Refettorio theater is accentuated in the design without altering its existing plan. A water fountain with bench seating creates a secondary theater, outside of the theater which encourages people to watch the spectacle that is the city and its people in action. Figure 106 is a vignette which represents this intervention as seen on the example plan and figure 105 pictures how the space could appear in the winter.

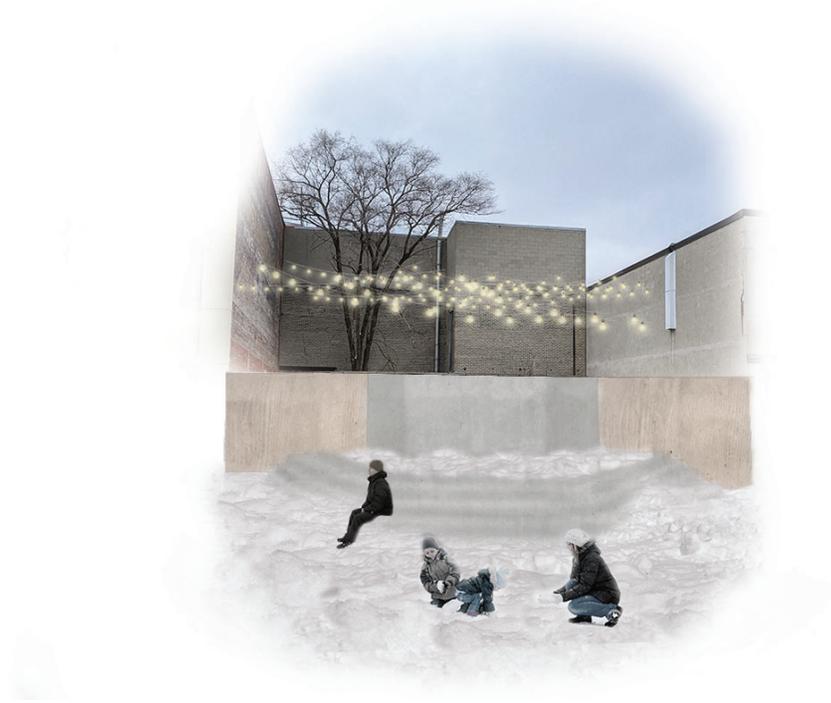


Figure 105: Theatre winter collage.



Figure 106: Theatre vignette.

### 4.3.3 Zone 2: Bar Area

In front of the Alibi room bar, there is a semi covered patio space (Figure 107) which includes a structure inspired by the outdoor theater concept. This structure is carried throughout the site in various forms. Lit benches can also be found here as pictured in figure 108. These benches are composed of a steel front structure with a lit acrylic extension. This series of frames throughout the site doubles as instagrammable moments for all to enjoy.

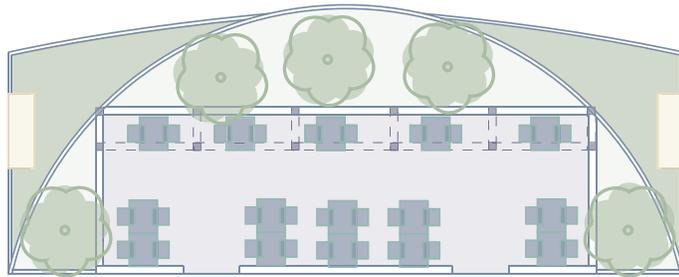


Figure 107: Outdoor bar patio enlarged plan.

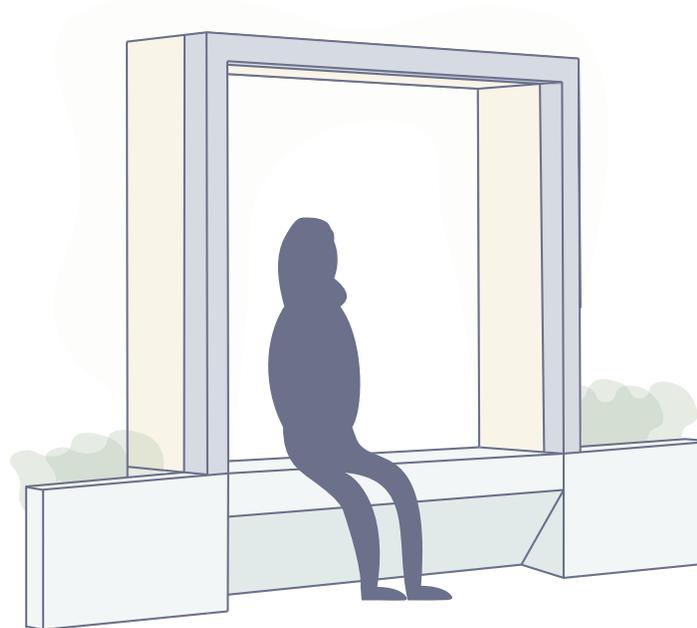


Figure 108: Light bench detail.

### 4.3.4 Zone 3: Firepit

The firepit area (Figure 110), encroaching on the garden alley offers a unique opportunity not typically offered in city centers. This simple gesture will promote community and keep people warm during winter events or late night activities in the summer. Figures 109 and 111 demonstrate how such an intervention can appear in the summer and winter months.



Figure 109: Winter firepit collage.



Figure 110: Firepit plan.



Figure 111: Summer firepit collage.

### 4.3.5 Zone 4: Splash Pad

The splash pad as seen in figure 112 offers an interactive activity which keeps children entertained and cool in summer months. It also provides visual interest to the site.

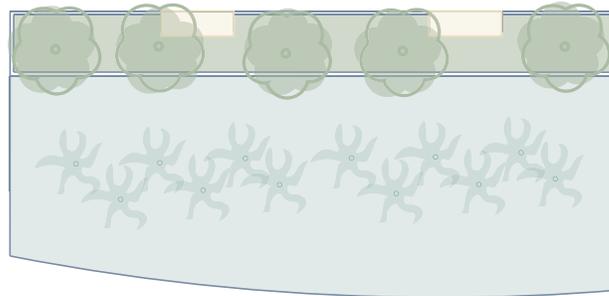


Figure 112: Enlarged splashpad plan.

### 4.3.6 Zone 5: Picnic Area

The picnic area as pictured in figure 113 is useful for everyday and festival use. It promotes the gathering of people as they indulge in seated activities such as chess and eating among others. It offers a curb to protect against vehicular traffic.

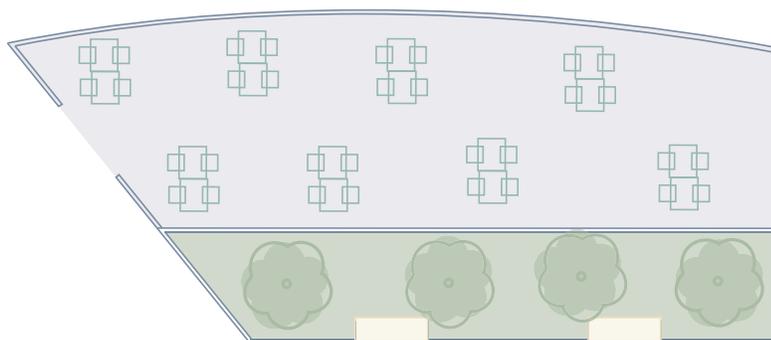


Figure 113: Enlarged picnic area plan.

### 4.3.7 Zone 6: Garden Alley

As green spaces are being maintained throughout the site as much as possible, an existing vegetated alley is being accentuated next to the YMCA (Figures 114 to 117). This space creates a cozy seating niche which can be further greened by the community. The garden alley serves as a link and transition space to memorial park, the largest green space downtown. It includes string lighting and another variation of the Structure inspired by the outdoor theater.

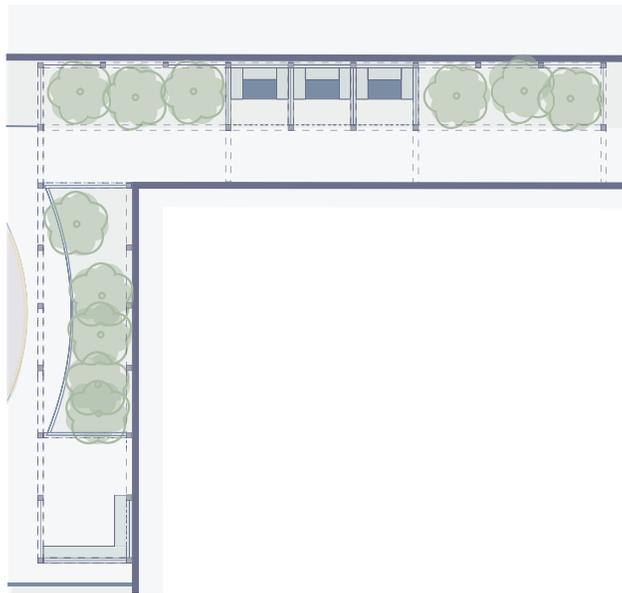


Figure 114: Enlarged garden alley plan.

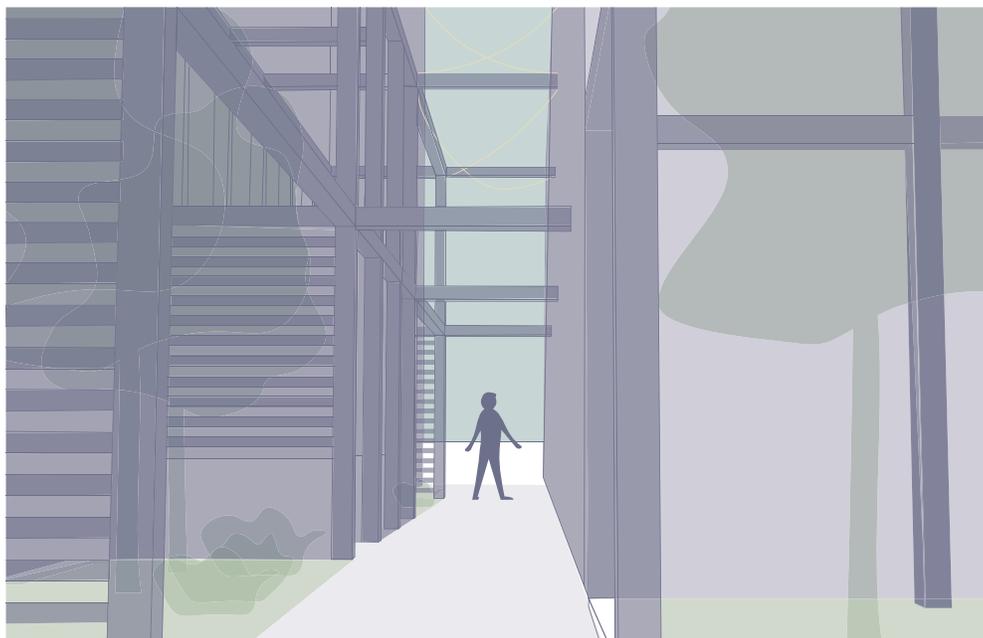


Figure 115: Garden alley vignette.

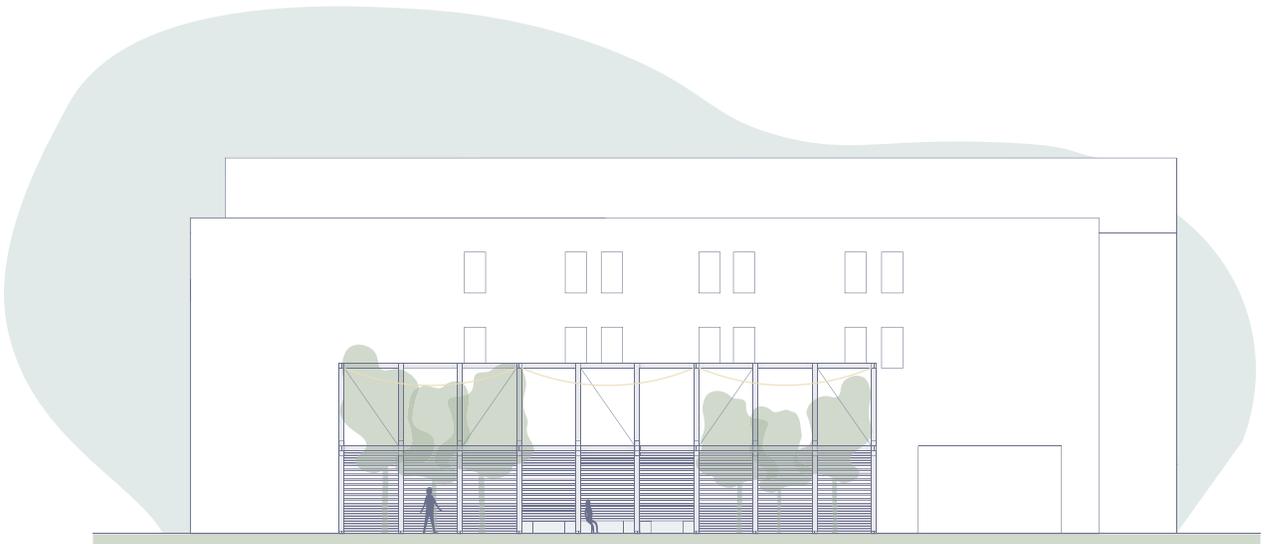


Figure 116: Garden alley North section.



Figure 117: Garden alley elevation.

### 4.3.8 Zone 7: Dining Alley

The dining alleys make use of forgotten space for restaurants to use as patios. It is suggested that building walls be punctured with doors and windows to create access to this alley so that kitchens may access the covered alley more easily. The alley as seen in figures 118 to 120 consists of a simple structure as mentioned in previous zones with features connections that anyone in the community can volunteer to construct as seen in figures 121 and 122. The alley also includes booth seating with privacy panels that can be designed by local artists as seen in figure 123.

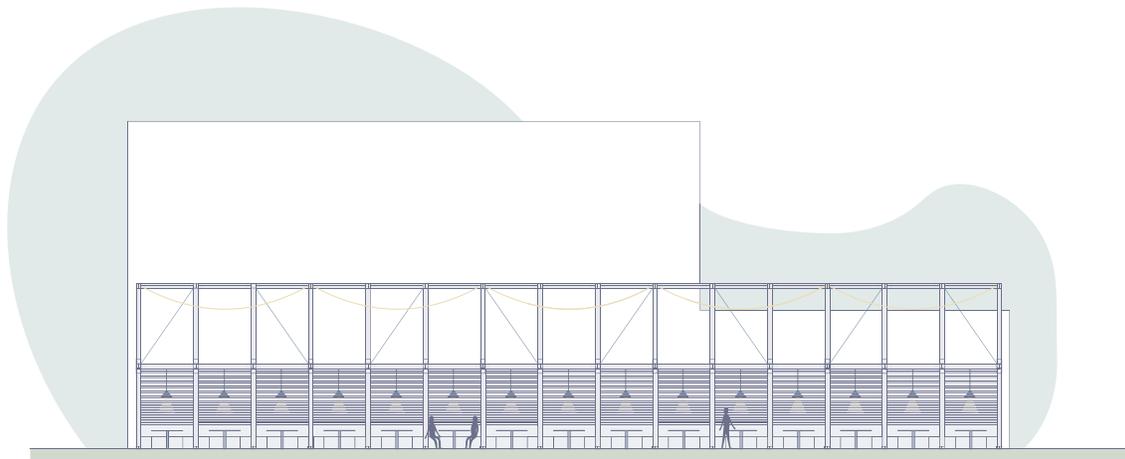


Figure 118: Dining alley East section.

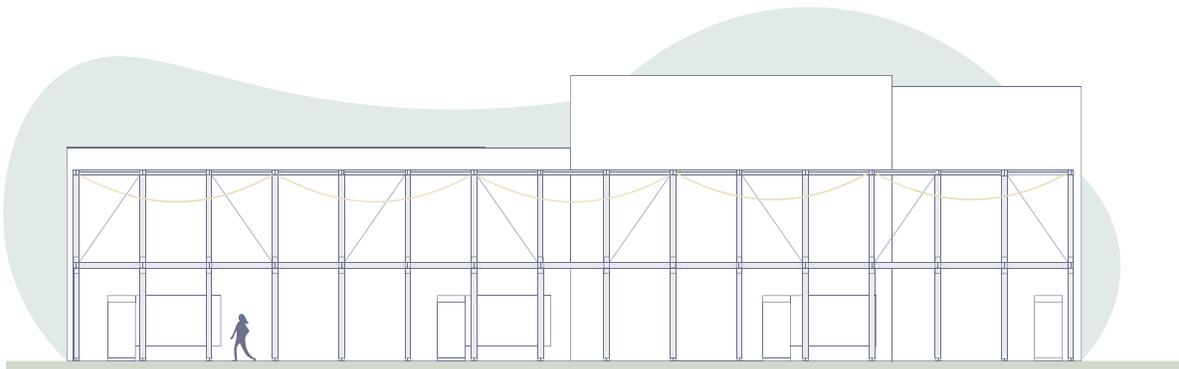


Figure 119: Dining alley West section.

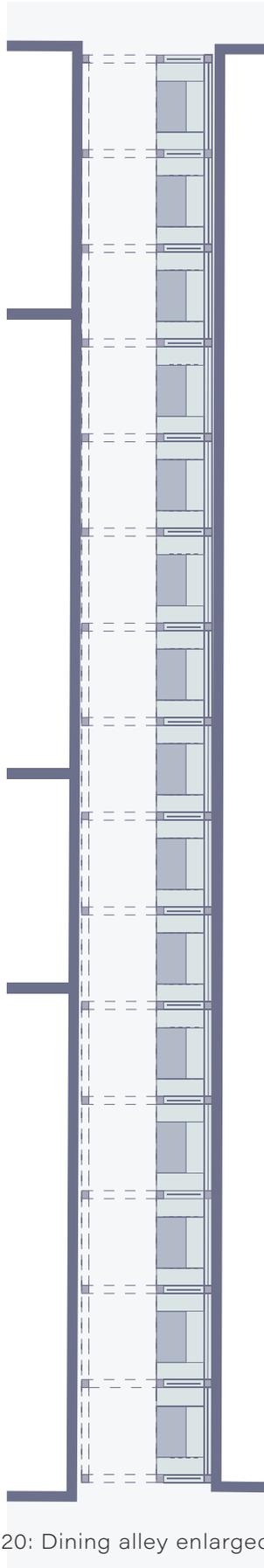


Figure 120: Dining alley enlarged plan.

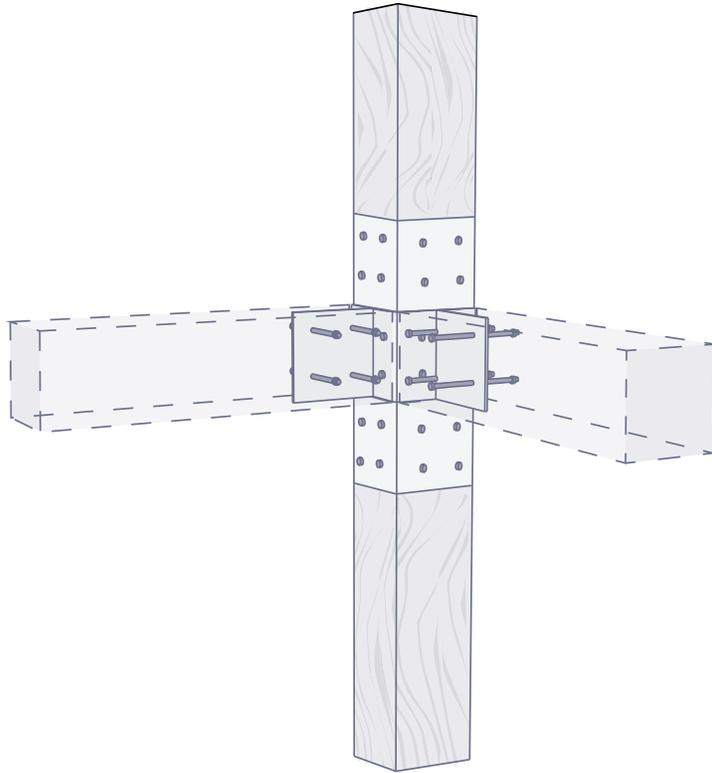


Figure 121 Structural detail.

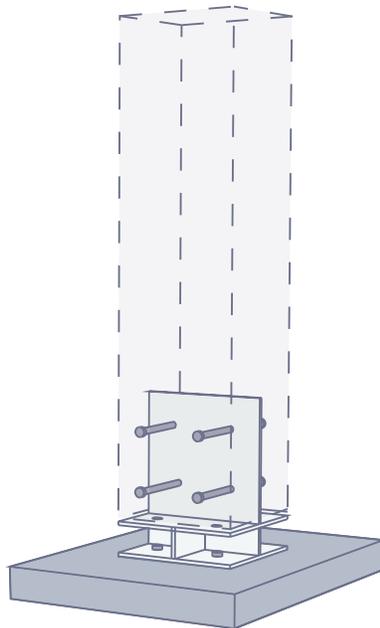


Figure 122: Base structural detail.

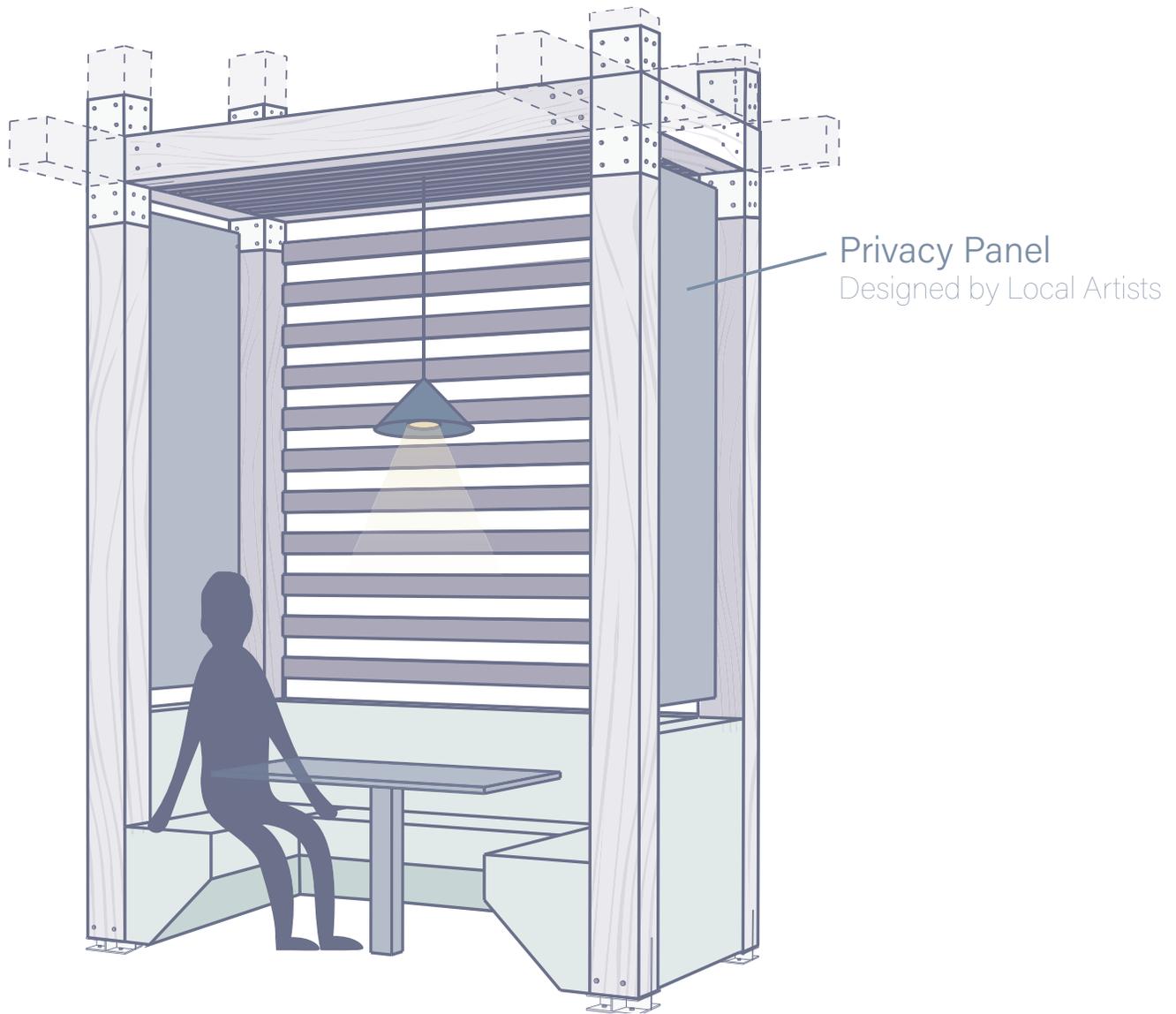


Figure 123: Dining alley booth.

### 4.3.9 Zone 8: Art Alley West

The art alley serves as a transition space from Place des arts. It has a free standing installation (Figures 124 and 125) with built in power panels which follows the same structural connections as the other alleys but is intended to support multiple types of art installations created by the community that can fluctuate over time. People can walk under the structure and interact with it directly.



Figure 125: Art alley West, West elevation.

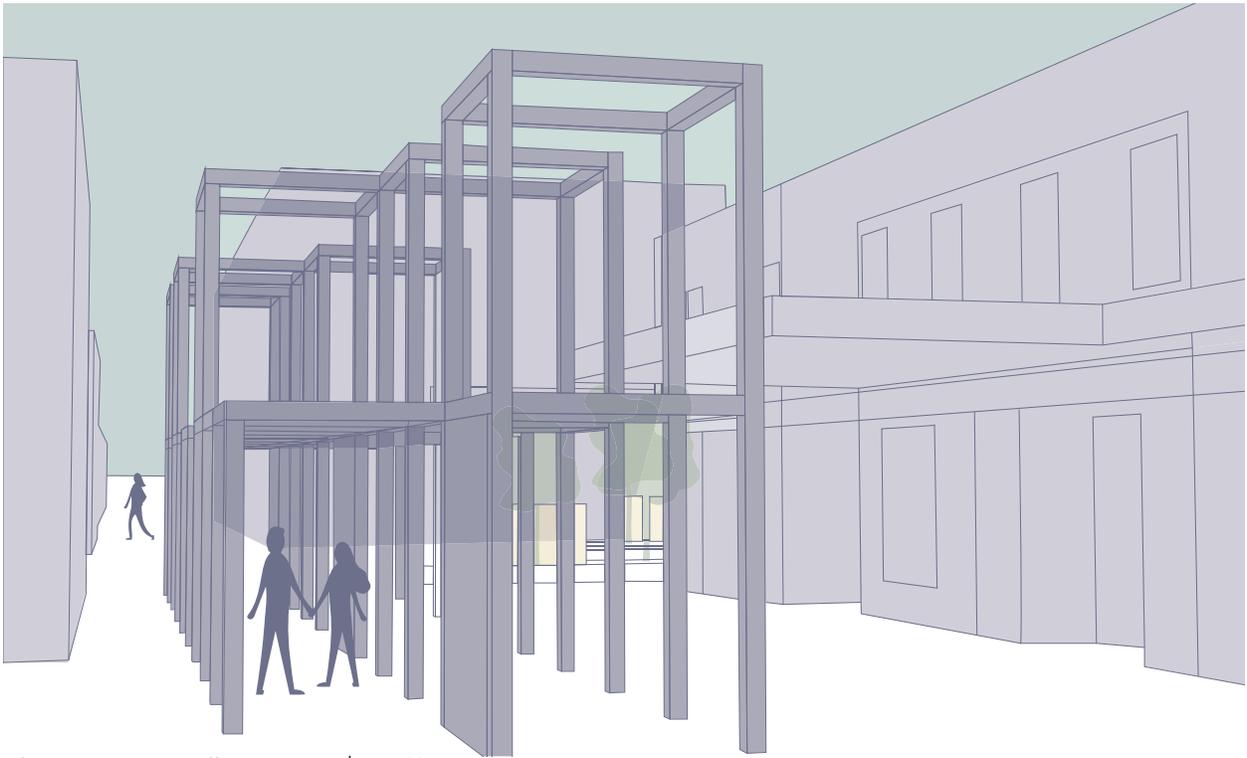


Figure 124: Art alley West vignette.



### 4.3.10 Zone 9: Art Alley East

The east side of the art alley is a flexible empty space with power outlets for various installation types. There are no fixed pieces of infrastructure for fire safety and to not take away from existing murals. Some design options can be seen in figures 126 to 128.



Figure 126: Art alley East collage.



Figure 127: Art alley East vignette.

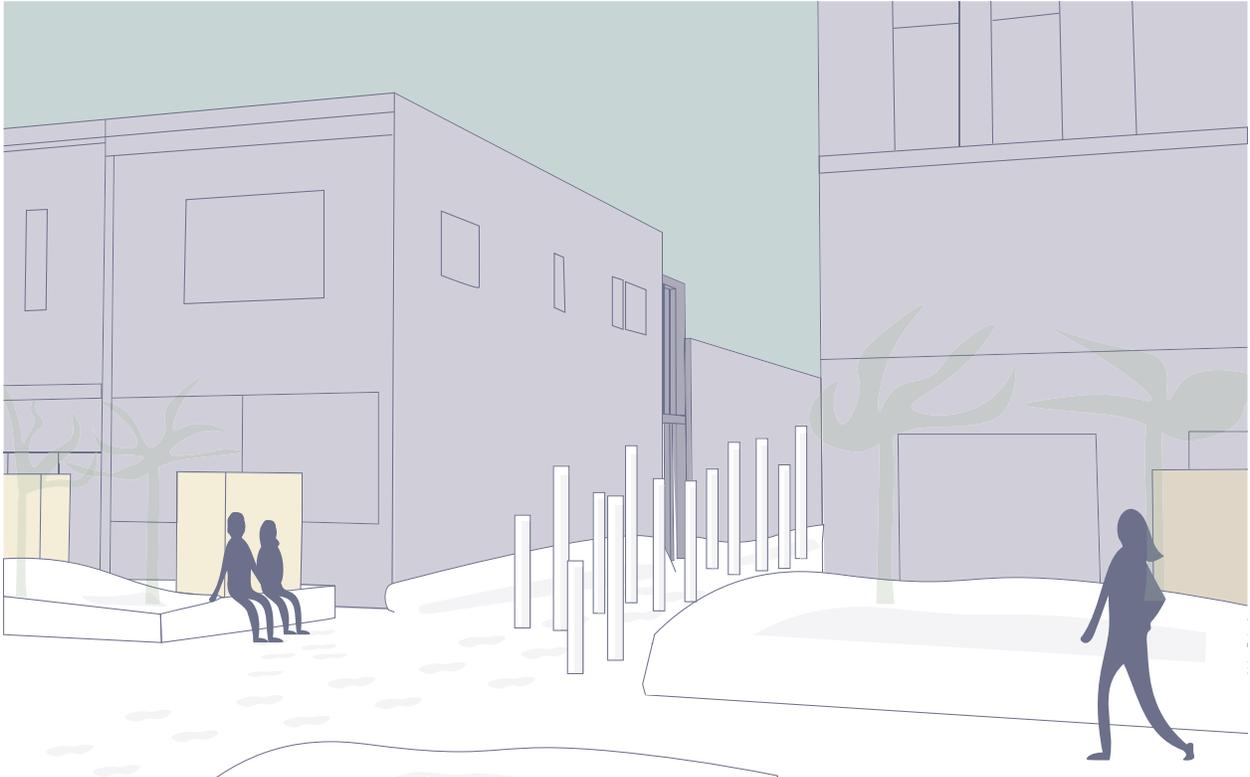


Figure 128: Art alley East winter vignette.

### 4.3.11 Zone 10: Green Area

This zone serves as an extension for events where people can gather on the lawn. The space doubles as a skating area in the winter with the addition of temporary walls. Figures 129 and 130 demonstrate how the space can be used in the summer and winter months.



Figure 129: Green space collage.



Figure 130: Green space winter collage.

## 4.3.12 Zone 11: Event Space

This zone allows for snow collection, markets, festivals, play and installations of various kinds to occur. The space remains completely flexible for each unique activity but a couple options can be seen in figures 131 and 132. Essentially the space is open to collect snow, temporary infrastructure and more.



Figure 131: Event space winter collage.



Figure 132: Event space collage.



This thesis project has consisted of a larger intervention for Durham street and a few smaller scale alley interventions. Both aspects are relatively small compared to the construction of buildings or the complete revival of the city as a whole. Although these interventions are small, they would have a major impact on the community. They would encourage activity, bring beauty to the city and create a generally more inviting atmosphere for all. Regardless of the project being constructed or not, these minor interventions are intended to guide the community towards a more vibrant future. Somewhere along the way the city's vibrant past has faded and has created a generally uncomfortable environment. This project is meant to be a stepping stone or inspiration for the revitalization of the image of the city of Sudbury, as it has suffered for too long. As vibrancy has faded, the spectacle in the city may not be evident at a first glance. With more intentful inspection, its potential may be seen through the eyes of the community, carefully framed on social media. There are key moments that people celebrate throughout the core that should be emphasized in the design of the urban fabric. These moments include outdoor dining patios, alleys, murals and more.

Although the revival of spectacle in the city is not a new concept, it has been primarily explored through large scale interventions that often do not make significant impact, for they only support select demographics with activities occurring behind closed doors. The projects take years to be constructed and oftentimes do not get constructed at all. Additionally, these large projects do not help with building spectacle in the streets, nor do they create connectivity or honour the identity of the city. Even without a connection to its history, Sudbury has its own identity of growth that should be embraced. This growth being economic growth and natural growth through its greening efforts. Small projects such as the mural projects curated by the Up Here festival and road enclosures occurring during festivals or more permanently in 1974, have been most impactful in improving the city's overall image. It is essential to follow suit for any further intervention in keeping them small. Undoubtedly, these minor interventions may occur concurrently to the larger ones as the city strives for a better future to ensure growth at various scales. It is clear that progress does not always necessitate large budgets and impressive buildings. Progress is built through community and by bringing this community together. The city of Sudbury may borrow ideas from this thesis and adapt them for future projects in hopes to revitalize the city. The writing serves as a guide book

for progress. This design language found in the thesis project should eventually be implemented throughout the core in a phased approach so that the city may see gradual progression without interrupting the overall flow of it. With every update implemented, the experience in the city is filtered and controlled just like instagram images are staged and filtered to promote positive images. The slightest change evolves the core in a positive way, encouraging people to stay and explore the city while simultaneously allowing for organic spectacle and activity to occur. This way, the design may tell the unique evolving story of the community, through the eyes of the community and be conceived by the community.

““ If we want those people to  
be in Sudbury, we have to  
create beauty of all sorts  
to build a culture that  
people will love.”“

-Bruce Mau

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