



North Corktown

Design Handbook

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North Corktown Design Handbook: The Redevelopment of North Corktown

By

Jason P. Braidwood

Paul J. Coseo

Chris J. Cox

Jen-Jia Huang

Jessica A. Kenzie

Joanna M. Paine

Derek J. Roberts

Ben R. Smith

Ethan G. Solomon

Faculty Advisor:

Professor Larissa Larsen

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Abstract

Historically, North Corktown was a dense urban neighborhood, however the area currently has only a small fraction of its original structures standing. It is largely comprised of vacant and abandoned land due to isolation and disinvestment. The North Corktown Master's Project was designed to provide consultative services to the Greater Corktown Development Corporation (GCDC), identifying key areas where assistance was needed, and defining mutually beneficial tasks and deliverables. Once tasks were identified, we worked closely with the client, local residents, and other key stakeholders to ensure that the vision of the community was the focal point of every analysis and design process. Several design workshops were held to ensure that ample community input was received. The result of our project is a comprehensive set of deliverables including financial and market analyses and design guidelines for a planned commercial district, architectural standards for residential development, and overall recommendations for improving the neighborhood. To achieve this goal we have assembled a multidisciplinary group of graduate students: five Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA) students, two Master of Urban Planning (MUP) students, one dual degree Master of Architecture/Urban Planning (M.ARCH/MUP) student, and one dual degree Master of Business Administration/Urban Planning (MBA/MUP) student.

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Project Team Profiles

The project team consists of five landscape architects, two urban planners, one dual degree architect/urban planner, and one dual degree urban planner/business. The group's interdisciplinary structure ensures that a variety of perspectives are reflected in the final product, and makes for a well-rounded approach to problem solving.

Jason P. Braidwood

Jason is graduating in April 2004 with a dual Master's Degree in Business Administration and Urban Planning with a concentration in Real Estate Finance. He brings financial acumen and project management experience to the project.

Paul J. Coseo

Paul is graduating in April 2004 with a Master's Degree in Landscape Architecture. His primary interest is in the overall design of urban spaces.

Chris J. Cox

Chris is graduating in April 2004 with a Master's Degree in Landscape Architecture. He is interested in specializing in urban design and revitalization.

Jen Jia Huang

Jen Jia is graduating in April 2004 with a Master's Degree in Landscape Architecture. She is interested in recreation design in metropolitan areas and she has a thorough knowledge of ornamental plants.

Jessica A. Kenzie

Jessica is graduating in April 2004 with a Master's Degree in Landscape Architecture. Her main interests are in the design of urban spaces and natural areas and in integrating natural function with the designed landscape.

Joanna M. Paine

Joanna is graduating in April 2004 with a Master's Degree in Landscape Architecture.

Her interests include urban and brownfield redevelopment, ecological restoration, and the social and cultural impacts of parks and open space on communities.

Derek J. Roberts

Derek is graduating in April 2004 with a Master's Degrees in Architecture and Urban Planning. His interests lie in real estate development, neighborhood and community organization and revitalization, and mixed income development.

Ben R. Smith

Ben is graduating in April 2004 with a Master's Degree in Urban Planning with a concentration in Economic Development and Real Estate. He brings to the table knowledge of the City of Detroit and its development context as well as a financial skill set.

Ethan G. Solomon

Ethan is graduating in April 2004 with a Master's Degree in Urban Planning. Ethan is interested in land use and physical planning and enjoys working with community groups in the planning process.

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Glossary

Active recreation: Any activity that requires physical exertion, i.e. recreational walking, running, bicycling, athletic sports, sweating to the oldies etc. Often park areas that accommodate active recreation will have facilities such as athletic fields, playgrounds and exercise equipment.

Aesthetics: Visual appeal. In our context, this appeal is related to architecture and landscape elements.

Brownfields: “Defines "eligible property" to mean property that is or was used for commercial, industrial or residential purposes and is either a "facility" located anywhere in the state or is "functionally obsolete" or "blighted" and located in a qualified local governmental unit. Facility, blighted and functionally obsolete are defined terms under the Act.”

Capitalization Rate: ratio between a property’s first year net operating income and the asking, or sales price. (Income/Price)

Clerestory: The upper part of the nave, transepts, and choir of a church, containing windows.

Floor to Area Ratio (FAR): The percentage of space taken up on an entire lot by the footprint of a building. In the United States, the percentage is most often calculated via square footage measurements. Cities have FAR specifications expressed in zoning ordinances in order to maintain a specific and unified density and aesthetic for specific locations within the city.

GCDC: “(The Greater Corktown Development Corporation) is a community-based housing development organization who, since 1976, has facilitated the redevelopment of a diverse, vibrant and affordable urban village in the Greater Corktown area.” –*GCDC mission statement.*

Landscape Architect: A career that most frequently involves individuals in the process of researching, designing and overseeing the manipulation of spaces outside of structures; including streetscapes, streets, parks, water mitigation systems, etc.

Metrics: A baseline from which to compare the current situation. Example: financial metrics describe standards and averages with regard to financial issues.

Mitigation: A word describing the lessening of the negative impact of something. More positively, mitigation also means the building of a constructive relationship between two or more entities.

Open Space: Unbuilt areas within a city consisting of small pocket, local or large recreational parks, cemeteries, linear corridors, such as bike paths, and large-scale public lands primarily within or adjacent to neighborhoods and which are generally available for public use and enjoyment.

Passive recreation: Any activity that doesn't require major physical exertion, i.e. reading, drawing, tai chi, meditating, walking, people watching, interpretive dance etc. Often park areas that accommodate passive recreation will have facilities such as nature trails, barbecue pits, picnic areas, and scenic viewing areas.

Pocket park: A pocket park, a one to two lot parcel set into the surrounding matrix of the neighborhood used for active or passive recreation.

Sustainability: Design that accommodates current needs and the needs of future generations. This can relate to buildings, vegetation, paving materials, social diversity, and economics.

Urban: Within proximity to the center core of a city and all of its services. This often is reflected in the density of a place, as urban typically involves higher density building due to high desirability with limited space.

Urban Planner (Planner): Often, a person engaged in mediating relationships between public and private organizations and groups in the interest of organizing the many complex elements of cities.

Variance: The legal process a developer, builder or homeowner must pursue to change current city zoning in the interest of construction that does not correspond with current zoning specification.

Walkability: Neighborhood design that focuses on insuring that pedestrians have easy accessibility, by reducing automobile-pedestrian conflicts and allowing good pedestrian circulation. Walkable areas are usually dense and have several amenities to keep pedestrians safe.

Zoning: The rules set by a city for development within the city. These vary based upon the intended uses of specific properties or locations.



AP Photo