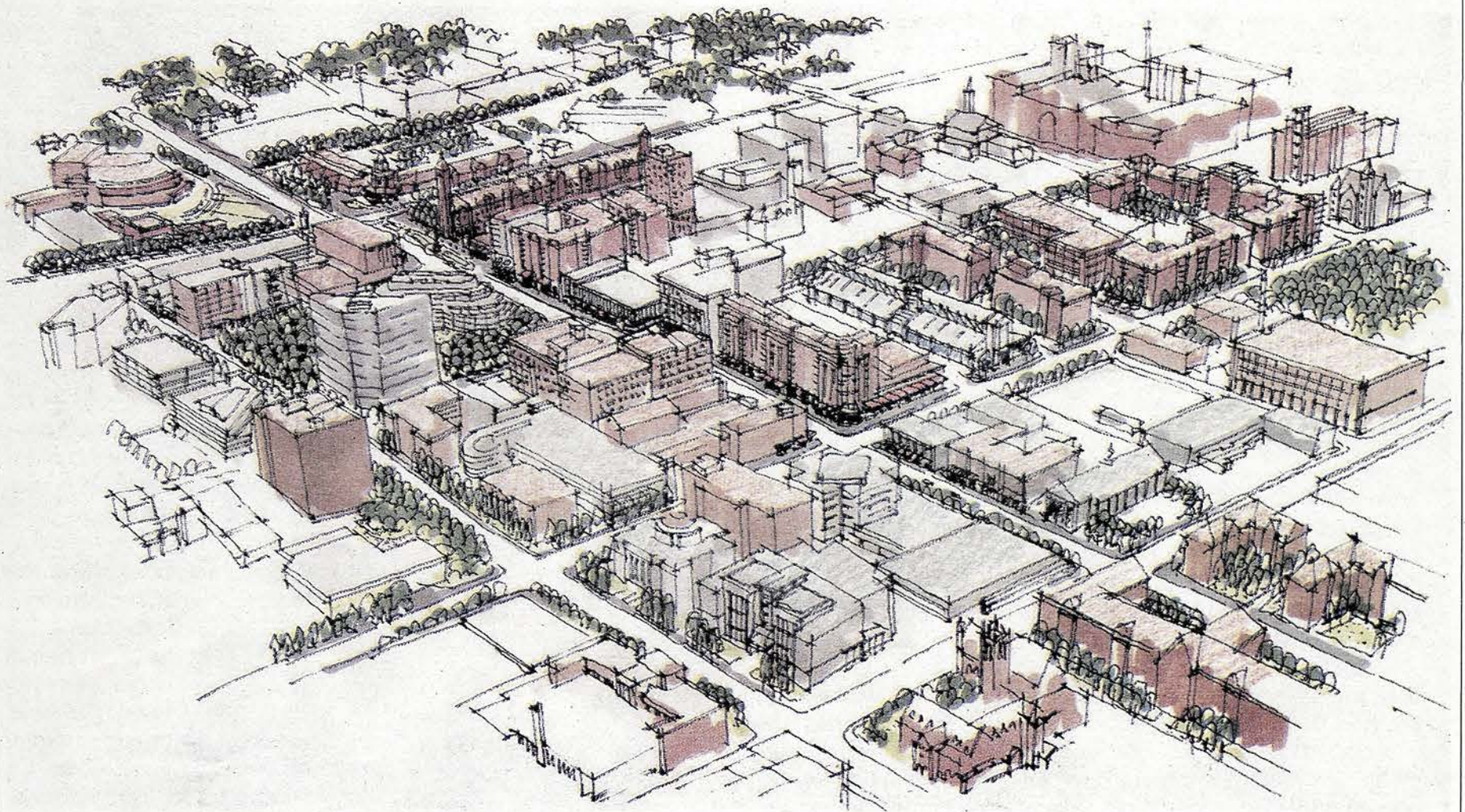


Restarting the Heart



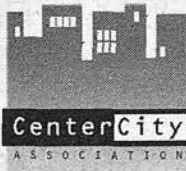
The Center City Renewal

**A Proposal by the
Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team
(RUDAT)**

A program of the American Institute of Architects

Value of the Center City, the True Heart of Springfield

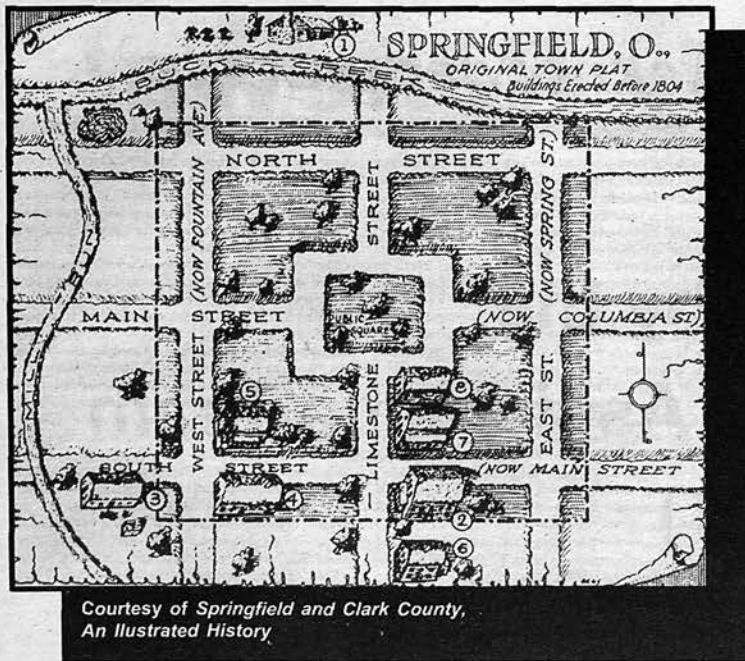
The Center City Association invited members of the American Institute of Architect's Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) to study Center City Springfield. A team of professionals from across the country visited the city from March 7 through March 11, to assess its strengths and challenges and to recommend a downtown revitalization plan. Although the reasons for revitalizing any city's downtown may seem evident, the challenges facing Springfield are real and typical of many cities. Citizens in Springfield have proven their commitment to their downtown through the Springfield Center City Association's decision to host R/UDAT. The city and private citizens have also shown this commitment through many downtown projects in the last decade.



During the March 9 R/UDAT Town Meeting, a citizen offered the comment that Springfield, like so many cities, had become like a patient sustained with an early-model artificial heart: a crude external device that did not serve the body well. He deftly suggested that Springfield's current efforts at reinvigorating its downtown are like that same patient finding a new, natural heart.

Springfield's passion for its downtown revitalization reflects a long and proud history dating from the time when the city was known as "The Town at the End of the Pike." This name symbolized that the city literally found itself at the end of the National Road in the early 1800's. The continued extension of the nation's road westward, the subsequent expansion of agricultural and later industrial businesses, its central location, and the diversity of its population propelled Springfield as a center of commerce in central Ohio.

Over the past century Springfield built a beautiful downtown nestled south of the Buck Creek and characterized by continuous rows of well-crafted architecture. These downtown buildings were organized on a grid street system and offered an urban presence unrivaled by cities of similar size in the country. International Harvester called Springfield its home, and manufacturing industries girded the local economy



Courtesy of Springfield and Clark County, An Illustrated History

through most of its history. Springfield came to exemplify the best of the American town, so when *Newsweek Magazine* featured Springfield in its fiftieth anniversary issue, entitled "The American Dream," it was a source of justifiable pride to this historic Mid-Western community.

Gains and Losses

Unfortunately, Center City suffered many of the setbacks that confronted American cities and towns of all sizes after WWII. Changes in the national and local economies, as well as the exodus of urban population, led to disinvestment in the core downtown. For Springfield this meant the loss of decades of historic buildings. For the remaining structures, many have been under-utilized and an overall sense that downtown might have seen its best day has haunted the community. This last perception prompted many to question the viability of downtown Springfield, but it has also spurred many others to take up the cause of its revitalization.



There is cause for optimism. Many distinguished and significant buildings do remain from Springfield's history. Certainly, there are enough



in the Center City to help define the character of downtown. Some of these buildings, such as the Bushnell Building, are on their way to new lives and uses. Enough of these treasures remain to give the impression of a downtown of unique architectural

distinction.

Unlike many less fortunate places, Center City has not been cut off from its surrounding neighborhoods by expressways, or other urban projects. While the connections to surrounding neighborhoods need to be enhanced; happily there are no major built dividers to undermine that effort.

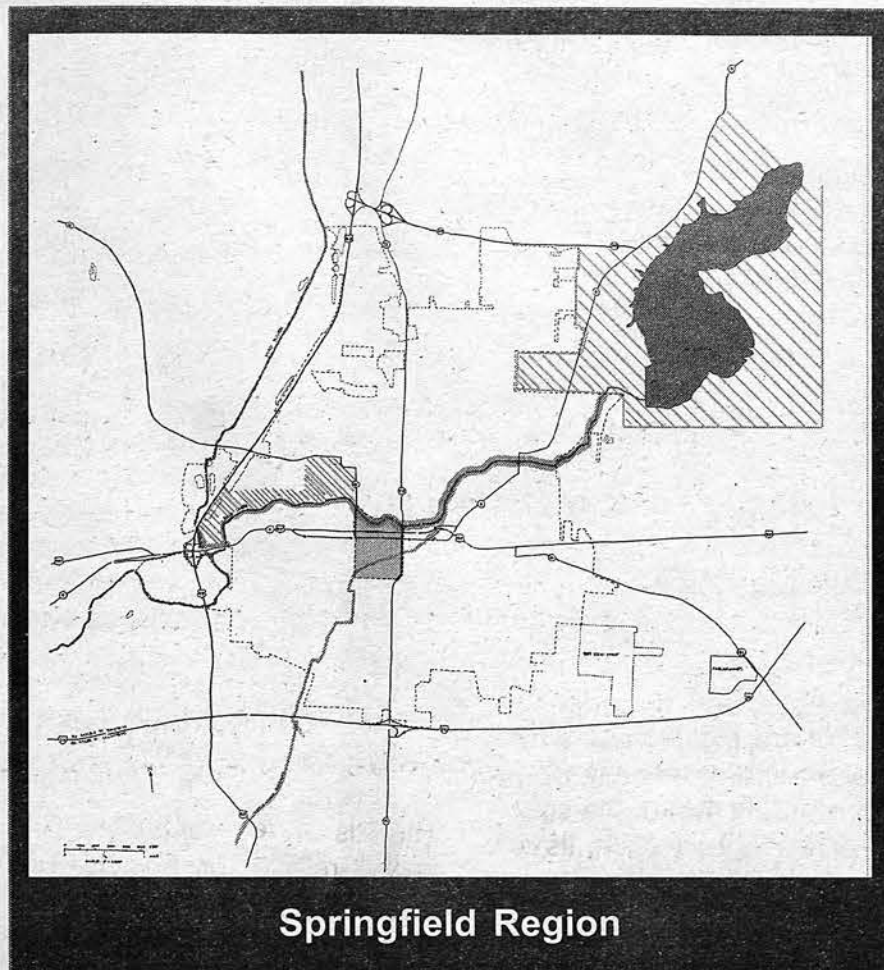
There has been a major round of recent investment in arts and culture, such as Kuss Clark State Performing Arts Center, the new library, the renovated Heritage Center, and other new, exciting projects that are on the drawing boards. The renovation of the Shawnee building, as well as adaptive reuse of other buildings for entertainment and housing, show Springfield's willingness to take risks in the revitalization of older buildings.

Value of the Center City, the True Heart of Springfield

Gains and Losses, Cont.

Downtown is now a viable contender for previously elusive economic opportunities. Such projects include a recreational ice-skating rink and other larger employment-generating opportunities.

Downtown is now a viable contender for previously elusive economic opportunities.



How to Continue the Momentum

Given the commitment to Downtown Springfield that the city government, the Center City Association, numerous not-for-profit institutions, and individual investors have made to revitalization, it is the Springfield R/UDAT's opinion that the primary challenges are of strategy and implementation. The value of the downtown to the community is recognized. The City Center Association is strong demonstration of that recognition.

Therefore, this report is going to focus specifically on new ways in which the community of Springfield needs to look at the downtown in order to harness the energy and passion for its re-

talization. Along with suggesting an organizational framework for implementing revitalization programs, R/UDAT will cite specific project opportunities Springfield should consider.

In order to organize and act on these projects, R/UDAT will recommend institutional or regulatory changes to facilitate the plan's implementation. These recommendations should also indicate how the Springfield community can adapt the plan, or even recreate one to yield the maximum results in downtown revitalization.

Essentially, R/UDAT recommends:

1. The formation of districts within the downtown each with a coherent and specific development strategy for infill and program;
2. The connection of developments and districts by well designed, active streets and public spaces;
3. The enhancement of corridors and gateways into downtown to create a positive experience of arrival.

What is R/UDAT?

The Urban Planning and Design Committee of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) has been sending Regional/Urban Design Assistance Teams (R/UDAT) to various American cities since 1967. Teams are invited into a specific area to address environmental and urban problems which range in scale from a region to a small town and in type from recreational areas to public policy issues.

Each R/UDAT team is specially selected to include professionals experienced in the particular problems of the area under study. Members are not compensated for their service and agree not to accept commissions for work resulting in their recommendations. The team acquaints itself with the community and its people, presents its analysis, offers recommendations, and may propose a new approach for planning or action.

Center City Association

In the conviction that a vibrant downtown is the life source of a successful community, the Center City Association exists to support the continuing evolution of an aesthetically pleasing downtown center that serves as the hub of the civic, business, cultural and recreational life of the Springfield/Clark County community.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the R/UDAT report or the Center City Association, contact:

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Center City Association
1-937-325-0047
tinker@center-city.org



Urban Structure for the Revitalization Plan

Urban Structure 101

The City of Springfield is defined by a clear and systematic series of streets and rights of way. They not only establish the hierarchy for travel and movement within the entire city, but also set the framework around which the city neighborhoods and historic downtown have developed. The major north south axis is Fountain Avenue running through the Center City and extending both directions into neighborhoods beyond the Center City boundary. Other major east west streets bring travelers in from the interstate and state road systems intersecting Fountain and spilling travelers, in many cases very unceremoniously into the downtown.

Prominent natural features also complete the framework of the city's physical organization. The most evident is Buck Creek, which bounds the northern fringe of the City Center. It connects from Lake Lagonda and winds its way in a predominantly east west direction, linking the city with the region.

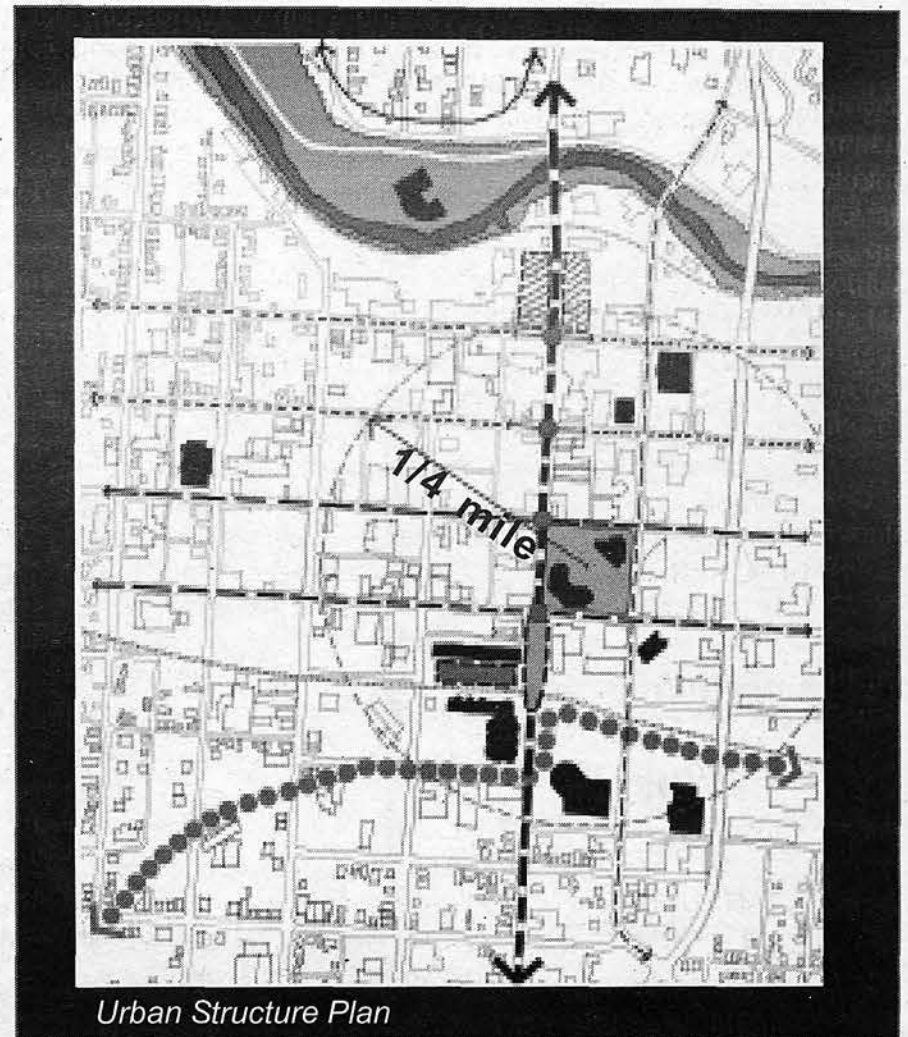
Finally the rail system that has long historic significance in the city still exerts its presence. Most of the lines coming through the Center City in an east west direction and framing zones, particularly to the south of town. The on-grade crossings at Fountain Avenue beckon periodic train whistles as they warn of their approach. However, the abandoned rail line south of the Center City has become a valuable asset, connecting with the rest of the region through the Little Miami Bikeway.

Public buildings such as City Hall, the Post office, the Library and the Kuss Performing Arts center define extend the public realm by their use and architectural presence.

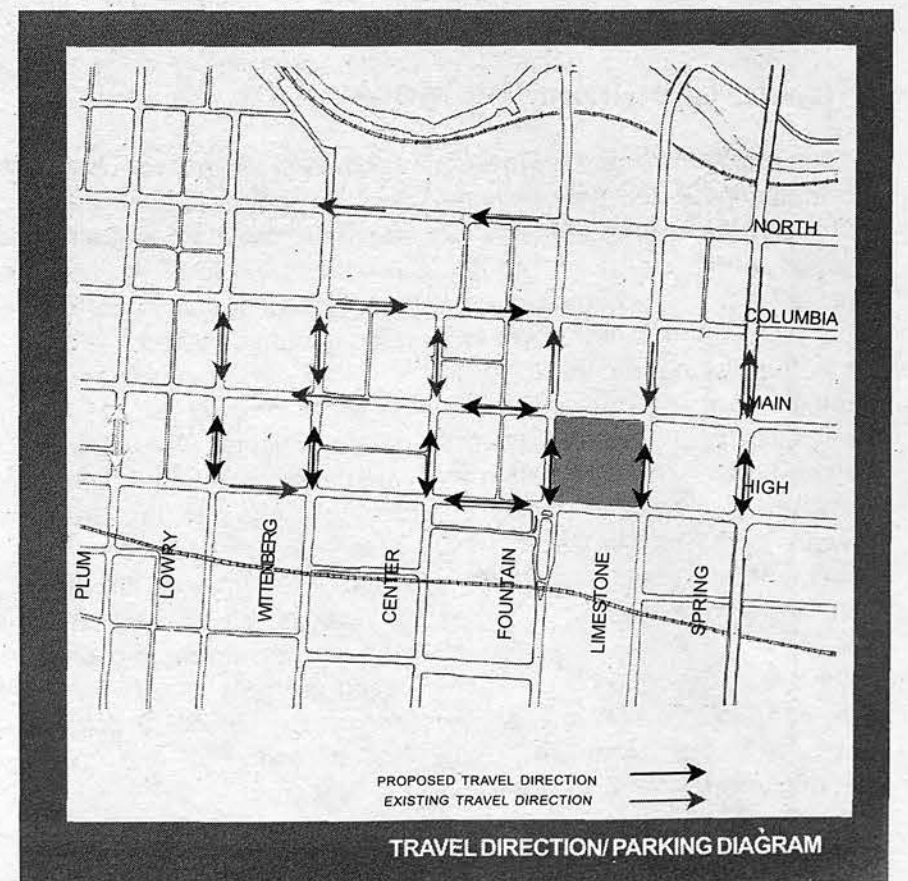
It is these primary features that largely define the framework or "armature" of public and private spaces in the City of Springfield.

On the Street

Springfield has an impressive inventory of beautiful buildings and cultural destinations. In addition to the existing inventory of buildings, many new suggestions came forth from the R/UDAT interviews, focus groups and the public meetings. However, it became very clear that any strategy for revitalization had to include deliberate plans to enhance the pedestrian experience.



Urban Structure Plan



PROPOSED TRAVEL DIRECTION
EXISTING TRAVEL DIRECTION

TRAVEL DIRECTION/PARKING DIAGRAM

Urban Structure for the Revitalization Plan

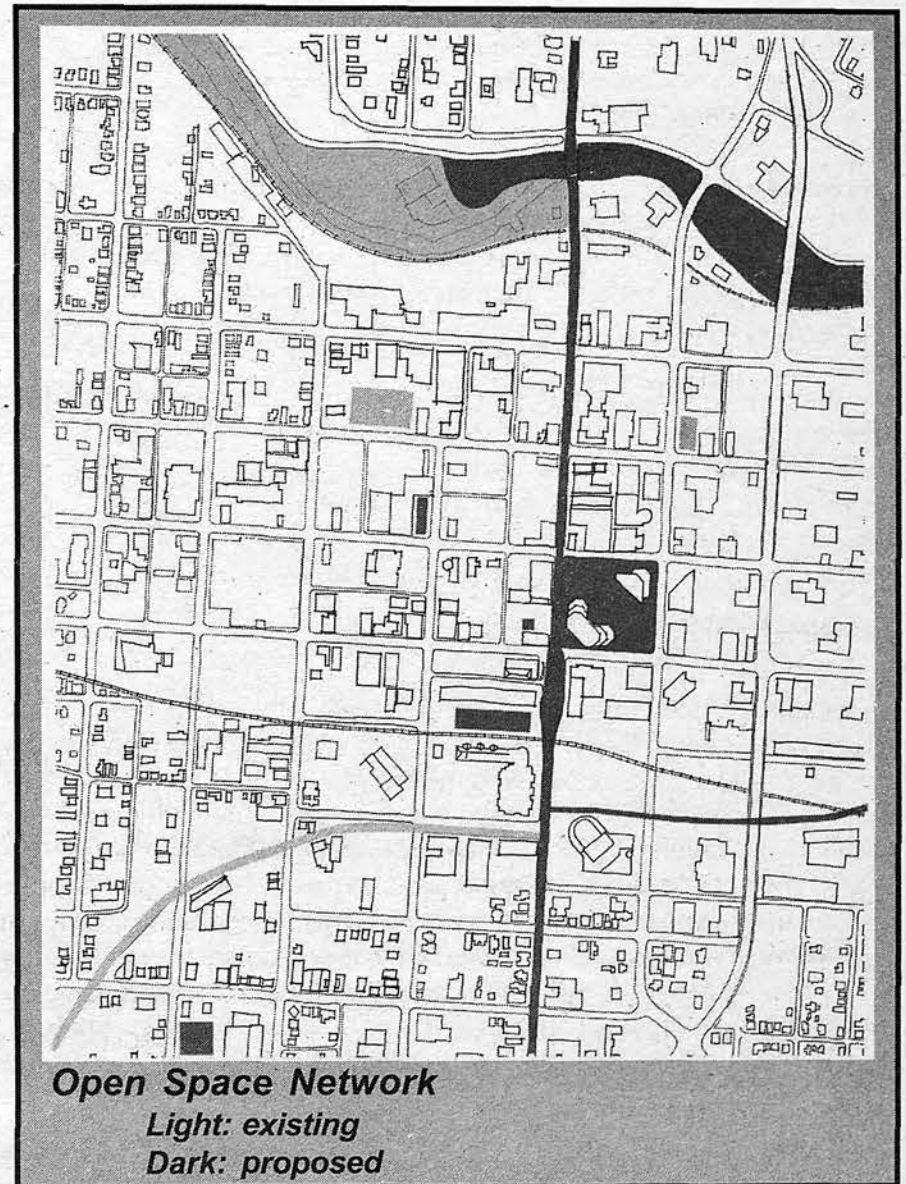
These improvements are also needed to create a visual hierarchy of streets to emphasize the more significant streets to people visiting the downtown and give them a better sense of when they had reached streets of special interest or amenity. Within the time frame and scope of this study it is not possible to make specific design recommendations for all of the streets downtown. However, the team did agree on some basic principles:

Intensify with intent

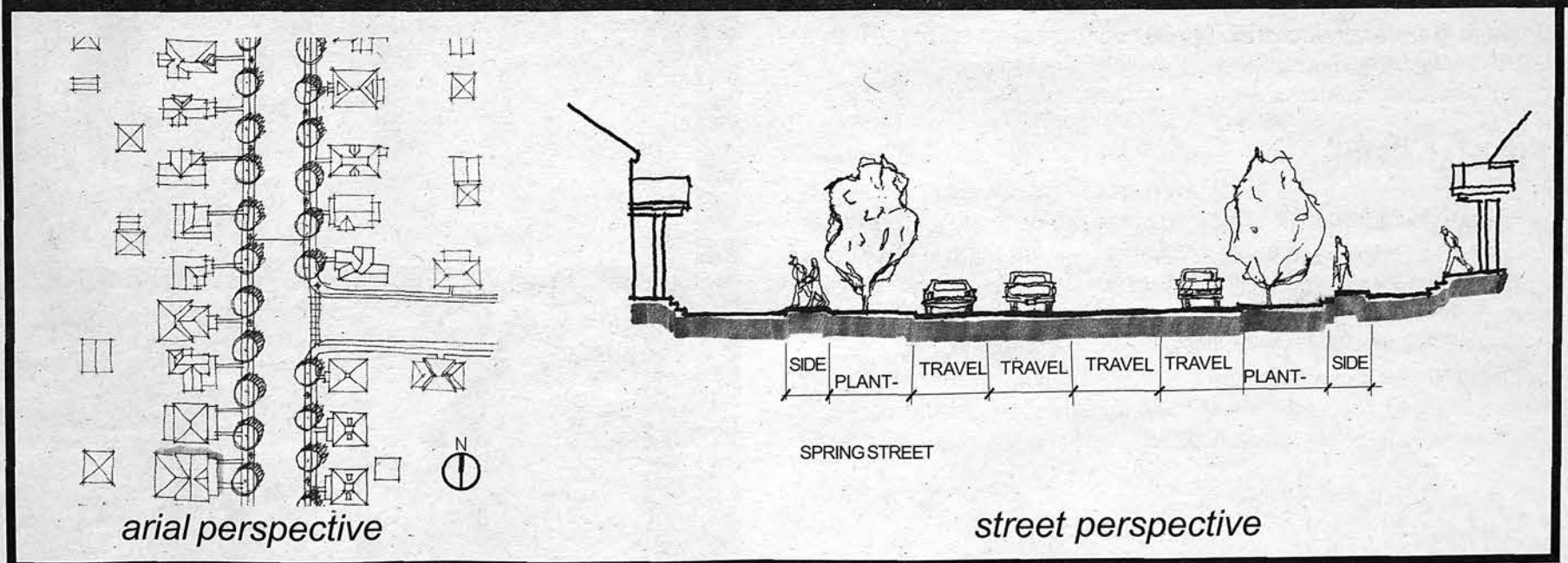
Do not make uniform sidewalk landscape or streetscape improvements throughout downtown. Use sidewalk enhancements to emphasize major streets and maintain other sidewalks handsomely. This selective intensification should not restrict the occasional sidewalk enhancement on non-major axes where warranted. Special recognition needs to be given to gateways and entrance corridors, such as the South Limestone Street entrance to the Center City. Here recommended improvements include four, 10 foot lanes with five foot planting strips with shade trees and pedestrian scaled lighting. These planting strips located between the sidewalk and road way protect and buffer pedestrians from the road and offer shade.

Establish zones

Sidewalk pavers that run from building face to edge-of-curb often substitute one form of anonymity for another. In most instances there is enough width of sidewalk to allow three zones: the first zone would be adjacent to the building edge and allow for the greatest articulation with pavers, colored concrete, brush patterns, etc.; the middle zone where the pedestrian walks should be the most uniform. In some instances, it may be a designed pattern or special material, but that pattern should run the length of the sidewalk and not vary from property line to property line; finally the sidewalk-to-



South Limestone Street - Proposed



Urban Structure for the Revitalization Plan

curb zone would accommodate planters, street signs, street lights, etc. This is also where benches, newspaper dispensers, and other fixtures could be placed.

Obviously, this template for streetscape merits further exploration with a professional urban design appointment, but the concept of streetscape zones has proven very successful in many cities. In effect, it balances visually interesting right-of-ways with the streetscape continuity that keeps places connected.

In the description of each of the recommended districts, there shall be a major orienting axis and street hierarchy. The basis for these may vary, but will consider existing land use, potential developments, traffic flow, tourist and cultural destinations and connections to natural assets, such as Buck Creek.

Public Places, Public Spaces

In addition to the street and corridor systems, there is a need for a real public park in Downtown Springfield. Cities across America are finding that parks are becoming major catalysts for the revitalization of adjoining properties. Perhaps the most celebrated park credited with revitalization of its downtown is Centennial Park in Atlanta, which provides a range of interactive and passive experiences. Cities and towns throughout the country are reinvigorating their cores with carefully crafted parks. One very obvious way in which public parks become community connectors is simply by their role as gathering spaces. They also provide a visual relief from the built urban fabric while enhancing the buildings around them.

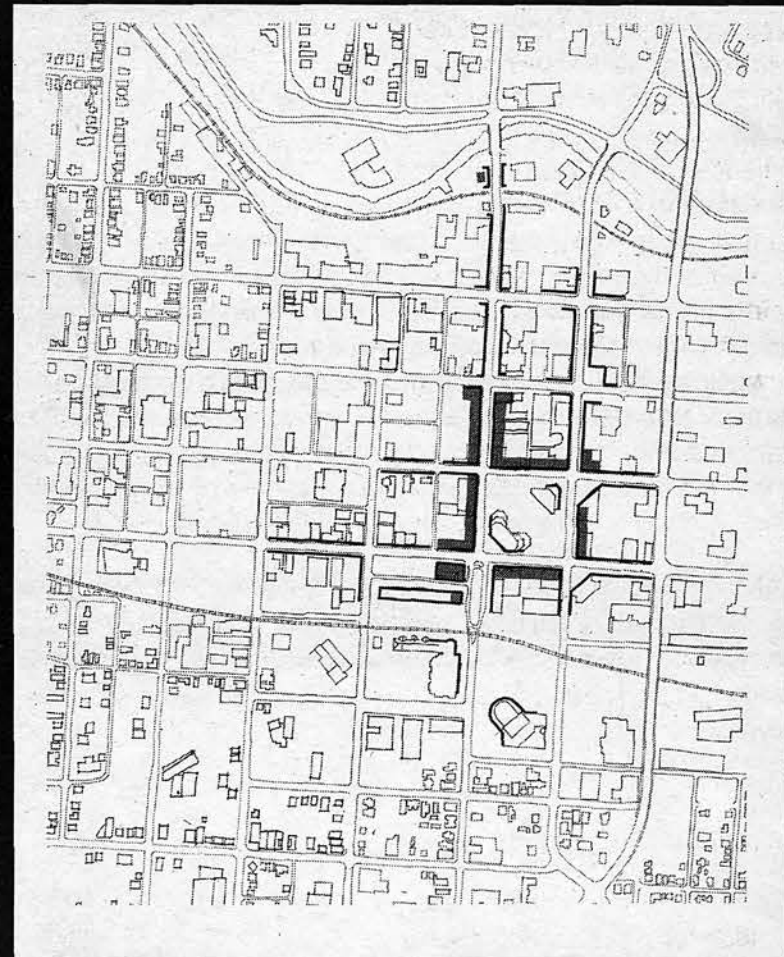
There is a "textbook" opportunity with the Buck Creek linear park to the north of Downtown connecting Wittenberg University and the Clark State Community College Performing Arts Center, and the Miami Valley Bike trail to the south of downtown to make downtown Springfield a major regional conduit for cyclists, hikers and other recreational explorers. The opportunity is to make the Center City Springfield THE connection for these two natural amenities. R/UDAT shows how this connection can be effected along a prime downtown street merging urban and rustic spaces.

Fill in the Blanks

In Springfield, the role of infill development to "re-stitch the fabric of buildings along streets" is critical. For all the proposals to rebuild the continuity of Downtown Springfield with streetscape and public spaces, nothing replaces the authenticity of a continuous row of well-considered buildings. It is still the best element in any urban setting to make a place feel active, secure and inviting. To that extent R/UDAT recommends specific design strategies for each district to intensify the streetscape with building developments.

In Springfield, the role of infill development to "re-stitch the fabric of buildings along streets" is critical.

- R/UDAT



Retail and Building Frontage

RETAIL FRONTAGE

BUILDING FRONTAGE

Urban Structure for the Revitalization Plan

The Springfield R/UDAT members debated the efficacy of planning around an immediate, strong surge in housing downtown. Current indicators are that the market for housing opportunities in downtown Springfield will need to be tested and re-tested before such a plan component can be developed. Even if housing does occur immediately in Center City, bear in mind that in many cities like Birmingham, Alabama, the conversion of older downtown buildings for housing, or even the construction of new downtown housing, was looked upon skeptically. Now loft conversions and new housing are re-defining that city's center.

Patience in the development and implementation of a sound housing policy is truly a virtue.

Being Good Neighbors

Downtown Springfield is surrounded on three sides by neighborhoods. Their characters vary from the stabilizing presence of Wittenberg University to the transitional feel of old industrial and commercial anchors. Fortunately, Springfield has a system of neighborhood associations, which give a structured form of interaction among many of these communities.

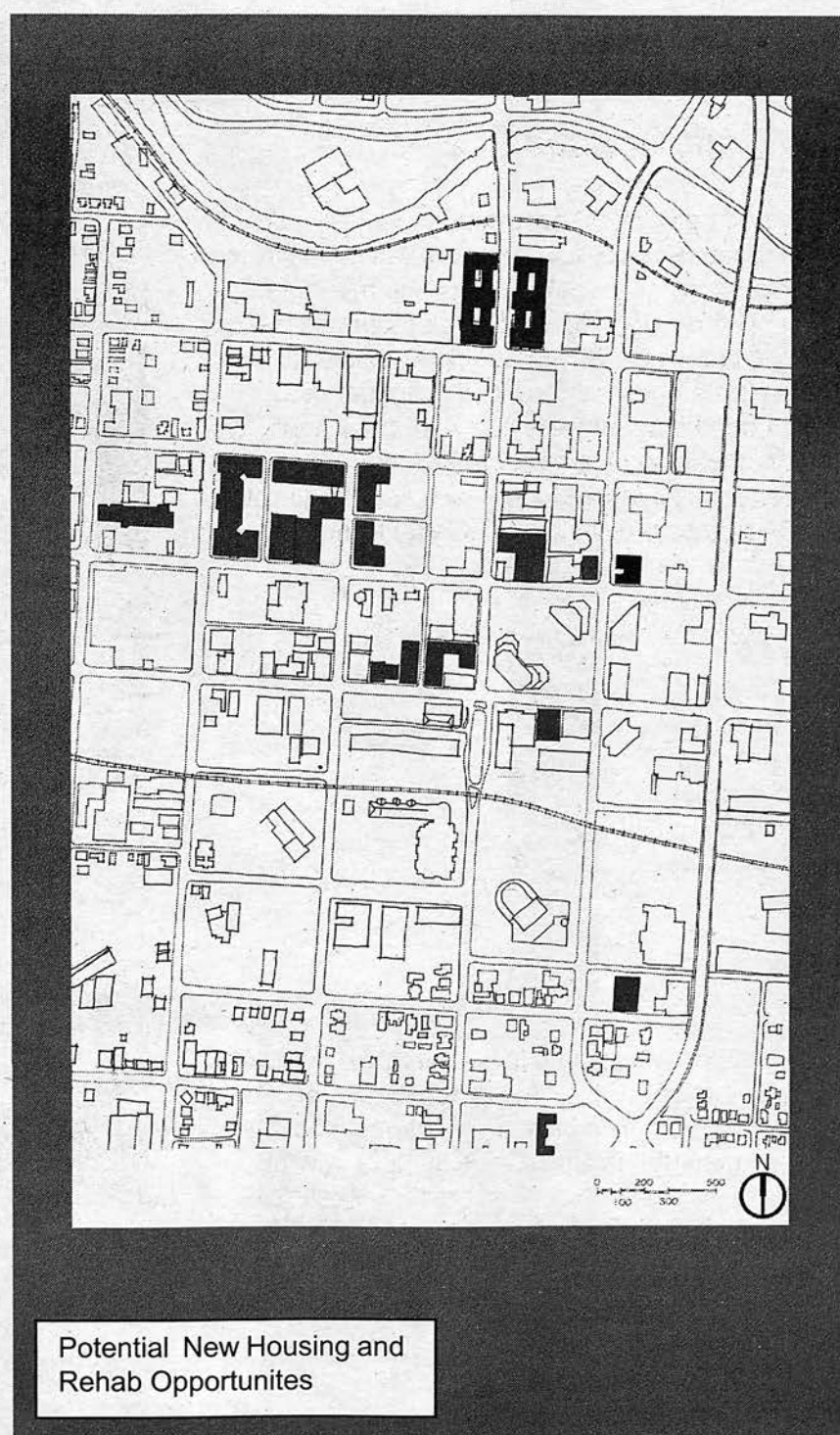
For the purpose of Center City revitalization, it is critical that the Center City Association understand its fortunes are tied directly to the fortune of the surrounding neighborhoods. To quote one of downtown Springfield's investors, the three rules of investment are "location, location, location." It is in the Center City Association's self-interest to play a supporting role in enhancing the adjoining communities and improving their quality of life.

In addition to providing accessible amenities in the arts and culture to nearby neighborhoods, there may be special programs that the downtown institutions can offer the neighborhoods, such as meeting space, and special programs for in-town living and special education and training. On a more specific note, individual development projects and opportunities

should be "tested" for the advantages or disadvantages they bring to the surrounding neighborhoods. Restaurants, bookstores, and other amenities that make for a welcoming downtown also make for a healthy neighborhood.

Perhaps the most important steps toward healthy neighbor-

hoods is the redevelopment of housing, and other infill opportunities in the adjoining neighborhoods. As the Center City Association and other organizations move forward in development efforts, they may be able to lend expertise to the surrounding neighborhood-based development initiatives through Community Development Corporations.



Potential New Housing and Rehab Opportunities

Districts of Energy and Opportunity

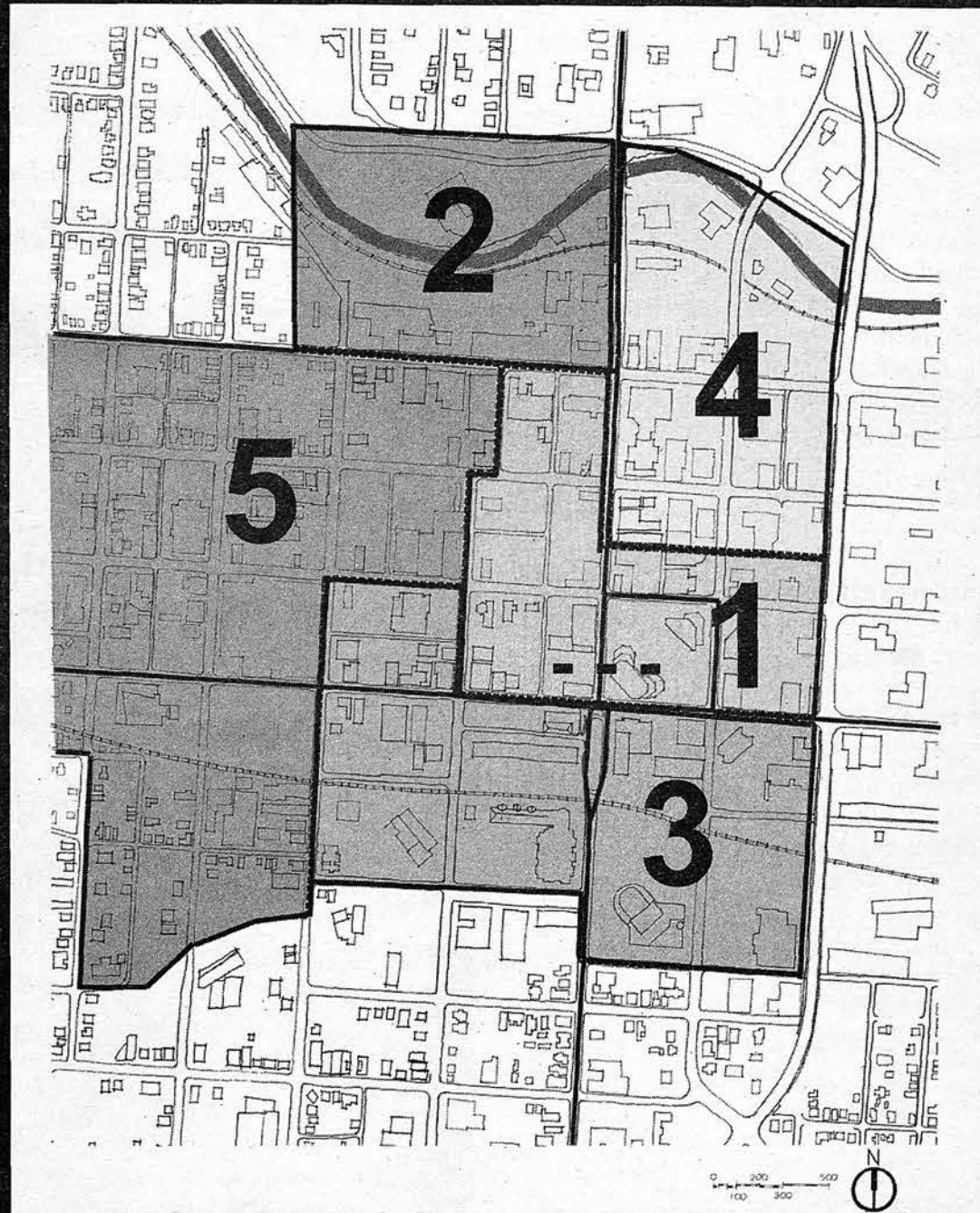
Springfield's Center City is clearly organized along a grid that begins at the winding natural slopes of Buck Creek to the north. This rustic edge separates the Center City from Cliff Park, the Springfield Museum of Art, Wittenberg University, and the northern residential neighborhoods.

Moving into the Center City, the grid forms around Fountain Avenue, the primary north-south axis stretching from Buck Creek and into the South Fountain neighborhood. This historic axis continues to be viable and houses major new uses in the Center City such as the new library, the Clark State Performing Arts Center, and the revitalized Heritage Center. In addition to these projects, there are smaller businesses that operate along Fountain Avenue and many architecturally significant buildings still exist along this prominent axis.

The R/UDAT team devoted a significant amount of time to understanding the built form and land uses within the Center City. During this analysis, it became clear that any Center City development strategy needed specific geographic focus. Emphasis is needed in planning the parts as well as the whole.

The result of this reconnaissance was the definition of five districts, each very distinct from the other with significant opportunities for investment. Similarly, the nature and level of anticipated public and private investment is also different in each district, calling for well-crafted development strategies.

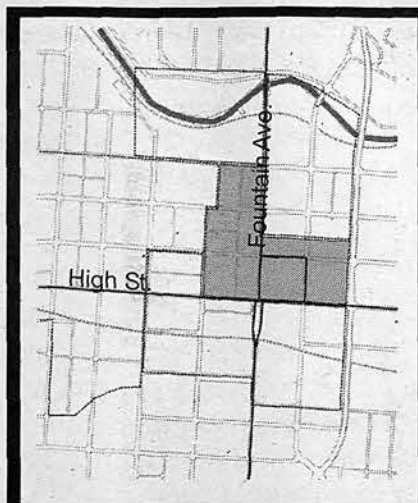
Proposed Districts



The recommended districts are:

1. Core District
2. Buck Creek District
3. Arts, Culture and Heritage District
4. Civic/Institutional District
5. Redevelopment District

The Core District



Core District

The following streets bound the Core District:

- Center
- High
- Spring
- Columbia
- Fountain
- North

It includes the 1970s City Hall, many of the Center City's banks, office buildings, restaurants, parking lots and parking structures. It offers enormous potential for investment in what was once and should be again the most densely developed part of Center City.

The near term focus of revitalization in this district suggests rehabilitation and occupancy of the existing buildings for a mix of uses, including housing, and infill opportunities in prime locations surrounding the proposed Core Block open space. The public realm, including the Center City streets and plazas enhance the existing investment opportunities. The Core District is positioned to attract a high level of private investments in the near term.

Short-Term and Long-Term Actions

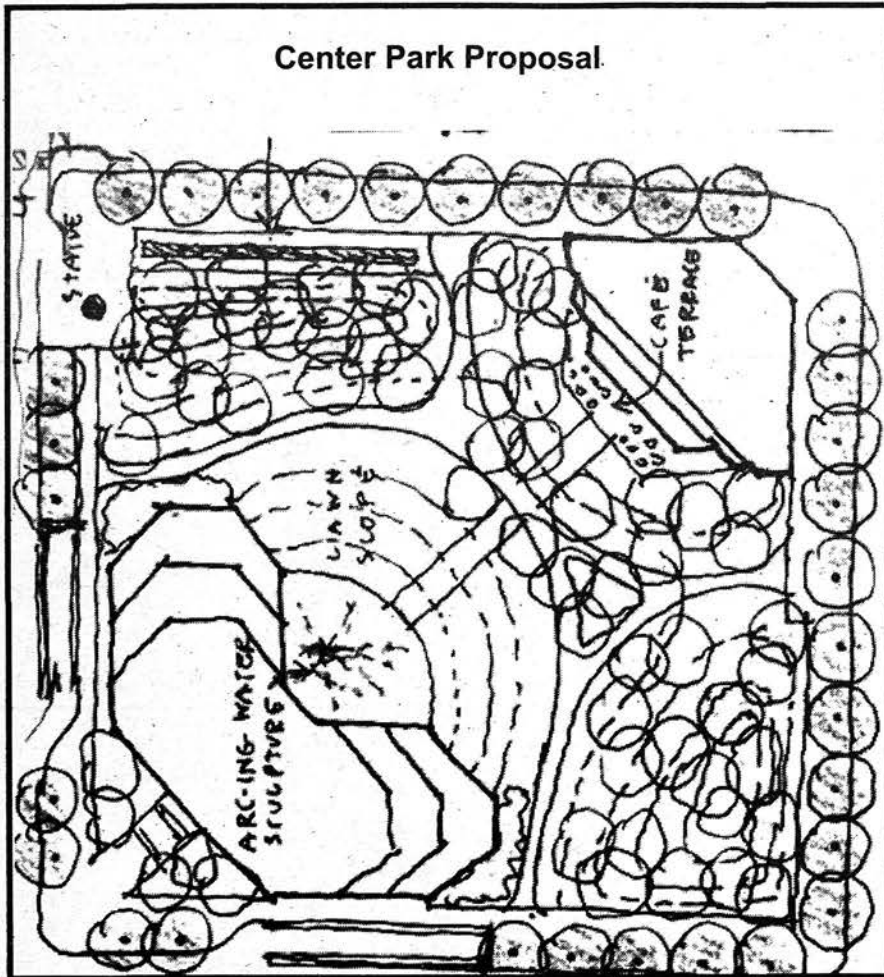
The agenda for short and long-term actions in this, the very heart of downtown Springfield, includes these important efforts.

- Enhancing the streets and sidewalks
- Developing Fountain Street as a central passage for pedestrians and cyclists as well as cars
- Transforming the core block into Center Park for Springfield at City Hall
- A robust mixed use project including conference facilities, an ice skating rink, housing and shared parking.

The Fountain Avenue proposed cross section increases the potential for landscaping and channeling traffic by building "bump-outs" that make crossing the streets easier for pedestrians and automobile turning movements more convenient. There needs to be a strong relationship to the adjacent Esplanade and to the public spaces of the Heritage Center and the Clark State Performing Arts Center.



The Core District

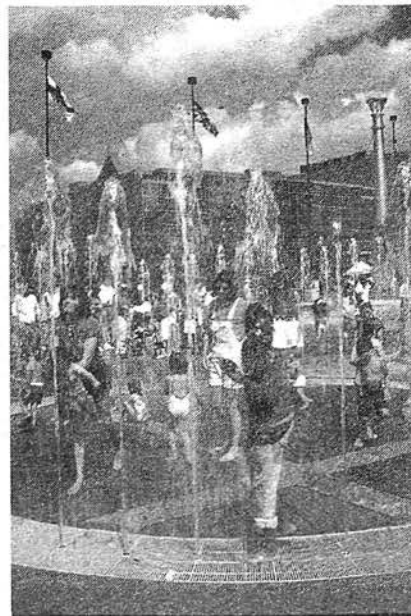
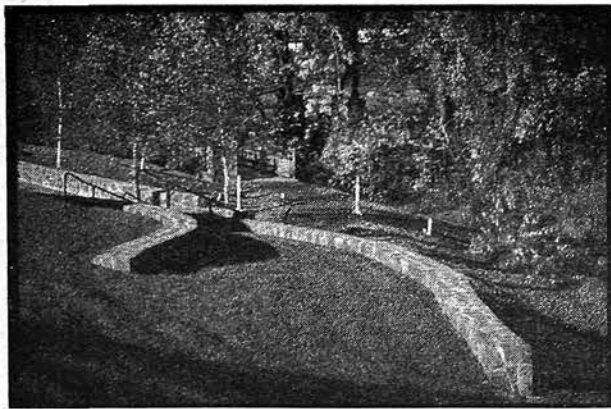


The Center Park proposals include creating a green space, and introducing a lawn amphitheater and interactive fountain. A series of cross-street pedestrian paths, a performance area, and outdoor sitting and dining will complement the existing fountain area. A significant number of trees are added to the periphery of the park and building areas to produce a bold flash of green in the heart of downtown. The green theme set here can be carried forward into adjoining streetscape at a scale and intensity appropriate to those areas.

The mixed use development includes meeting and conference space, housing and a proposed ice skating facility. Parking will be in a structure serving the ice rink, conference center and bank patrons and with some grade level parking. The grade level parking could provide for a second ice surface in the future if expansion is warranted. Housing at the west edge of the block would help to support downtown business and form a transition to the nearby residential neighborhoods. Important features for these proposals include:

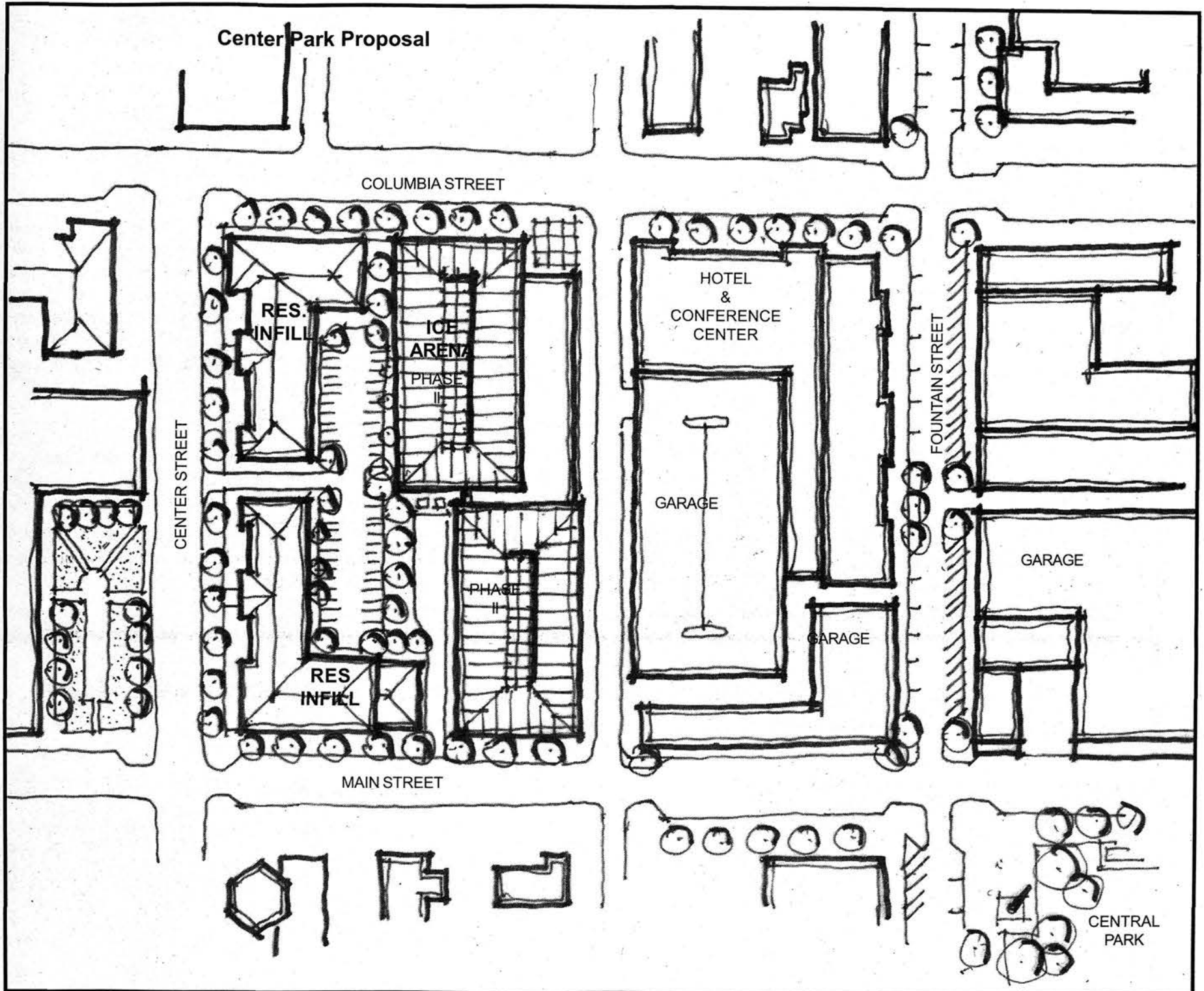
- Ground level retail and restaurants
- An ice skating rink visible from the adjacent streets
- Expansion possibility for the ice skating amenity
- A meeting and conference facility that leverages the investment in the Springfield Inn and expands the potential for attracting meetings to Center City.

A dash of green, city fountains, and expanded bike and pedestrian paths have added to the revitalization in other communities across the country.



Photos courtesy of EDAW

The Core District



The Core District - an illustrative drawing

The Buck Creek District



The east-west boundaries of this district are Fountain Avenue and Wittenberg Avenue. It is bounded by North and Warder Streets as well. Buck Creek is a powerful draw as a natural amenity in the northernmost edge of downtown and the southern edge of Wittenberg University, but access and visibility must be enhanced. A mix of buildings and open spaces flank Buck Creek along its edges. Cliff Park, the Springfield Museum of Art, industrial uses and Wittenberg University occupy or own much of the land around Buck Creek. This district also provides opportunities to improve the transition between Center City and Wittenberg University and the adjacent northern neighborhoods.

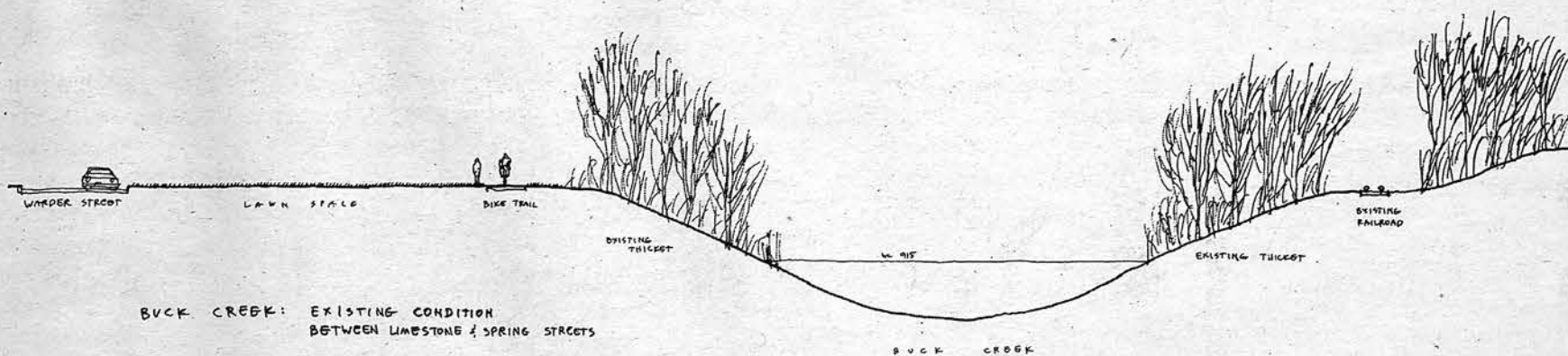
Water is a magnet for housing development, for family recreation, and for the arts. This amenity also suggests developments and connections that expand the visibility and accessibility of Cliff Park and its performing arts/cultural mission, the visibility and accessibility of the Springfield Museum of Art, and to take advantage of Buck Creek as the backdrop for new student housing.



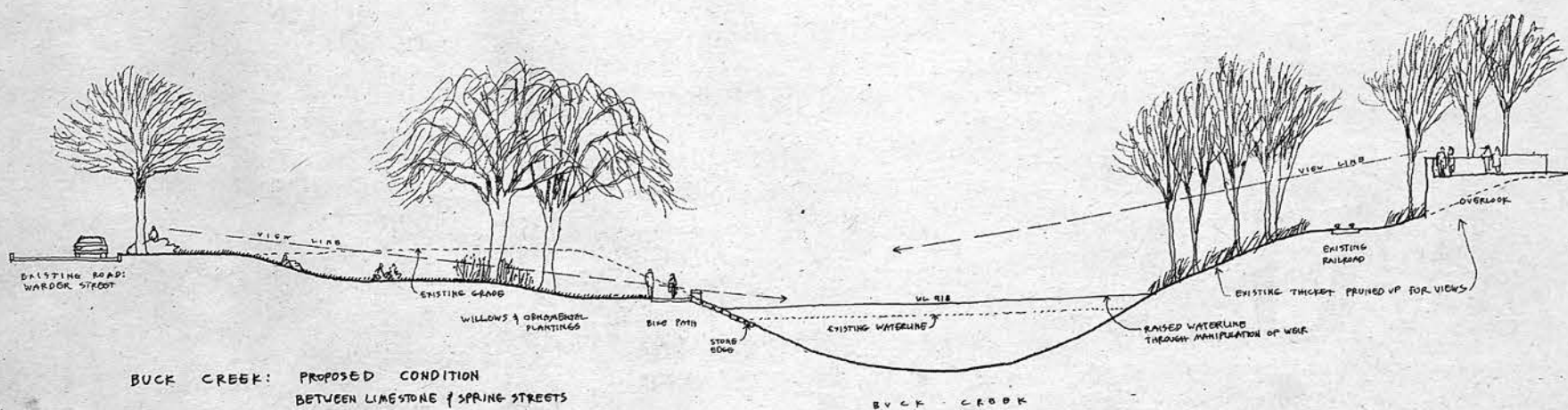
The proposed projects include:

- The Wittenberg Avenue pedestrian/bicycle bridge spanning Buck Creek to link Center City and Cliff Park
- The enhancement of the exterior grounds of the art museum as a sculpture garden
- The ponding of Buck Creek to create better vistas to the water and sloping the banks more gently for enjoyment.
- Student housing along Fountain Street south of Buck Creek in a building with substantial parking. Additional university housing north of the art museum in the existing residential neighborhood would also be desirable.

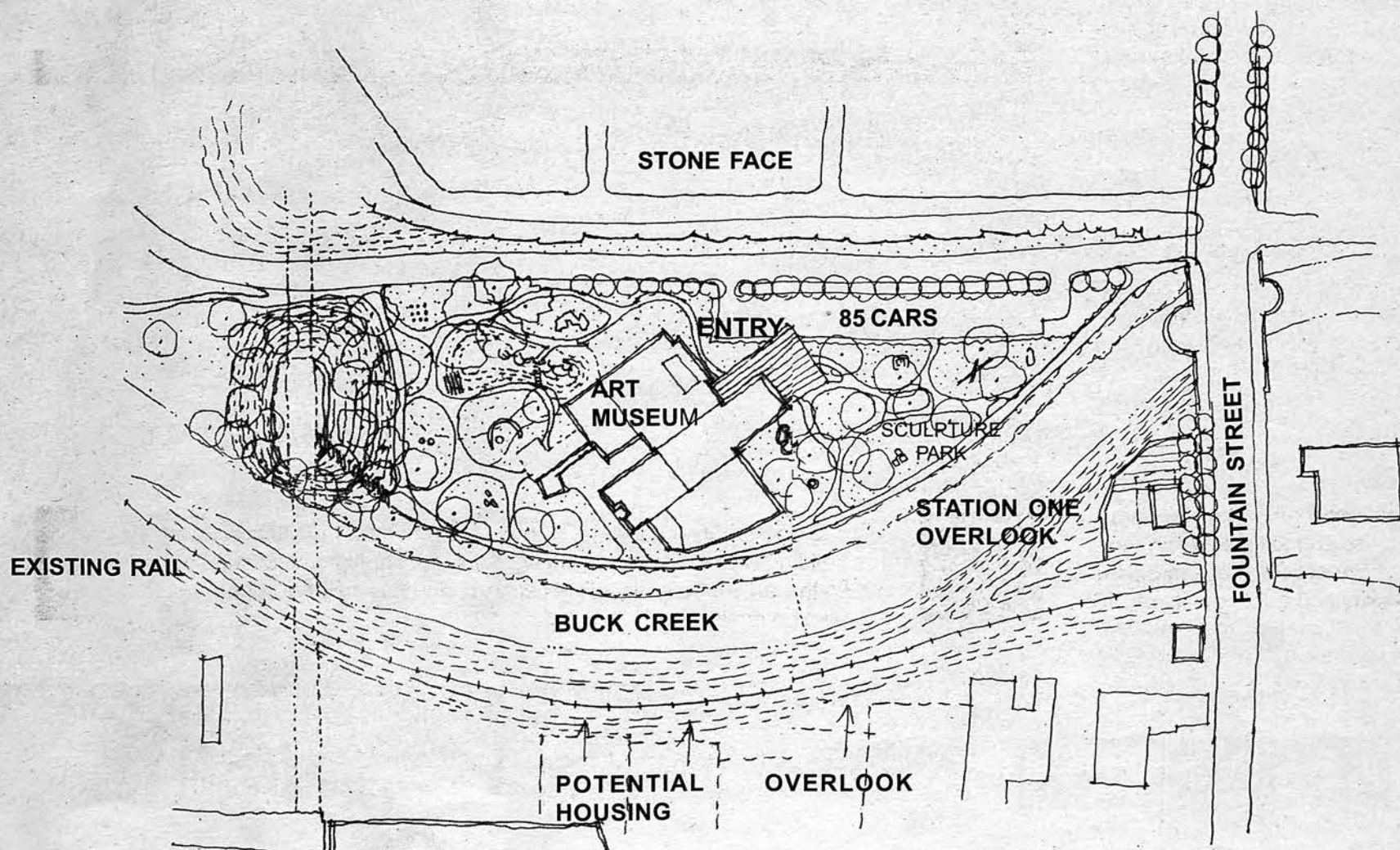
The Buck Creek District



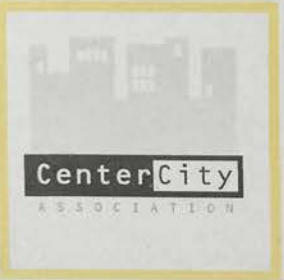
BUCK CREEK: EXISTING CONDITION BETWEEN LIMESTONE & SPRING STREETS



BUCK CREEK: PROPOSED CONDITION BETWEEN LIMESTONE & SPRING STREETS



RUDAT
It's
Happening...



- SCULPTURE GARDEN
- NEW PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
- STUDENT HOUSING
- HOTEL/CONFERENCE CENTER
- NEW ICE ARENA
- DISTRICT PARKING
- RESIDENTIAL INFILL
- POTENTIAL LOFT REHABS
- RESIDENTIAL INFILL
- NEW HERITAGE PLAZA
- HERITAGE PAVILION
- GATEWAY CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS
- BIKE TRAIL EXPANSION

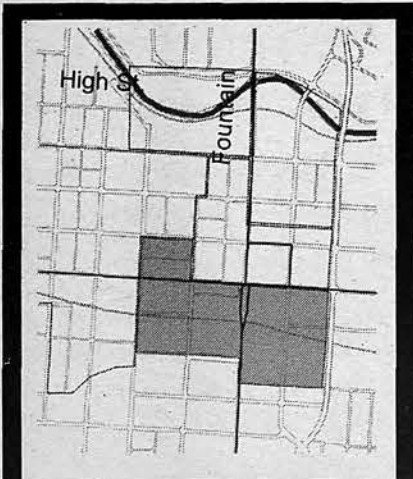


- NEW BELVEDERE
- RIVER AND GREENWAY ENHANCEMENTS
- RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY
- CIVIC INFILL OPPORTUNITY
- STREET LANDSCAPING
- POST OFFICE EXPANSION
- DISTRICT PARKING
- CORE BLOCK REHAB
- ESPLANADE ENHANCEMENT
- DISTRICT PARKING
- FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT
- YMCA EXPANSION

RUDAT
It's
Happening...



The Arts, Culture and Heritage District



**Arts, Culture, and
Heritage District**

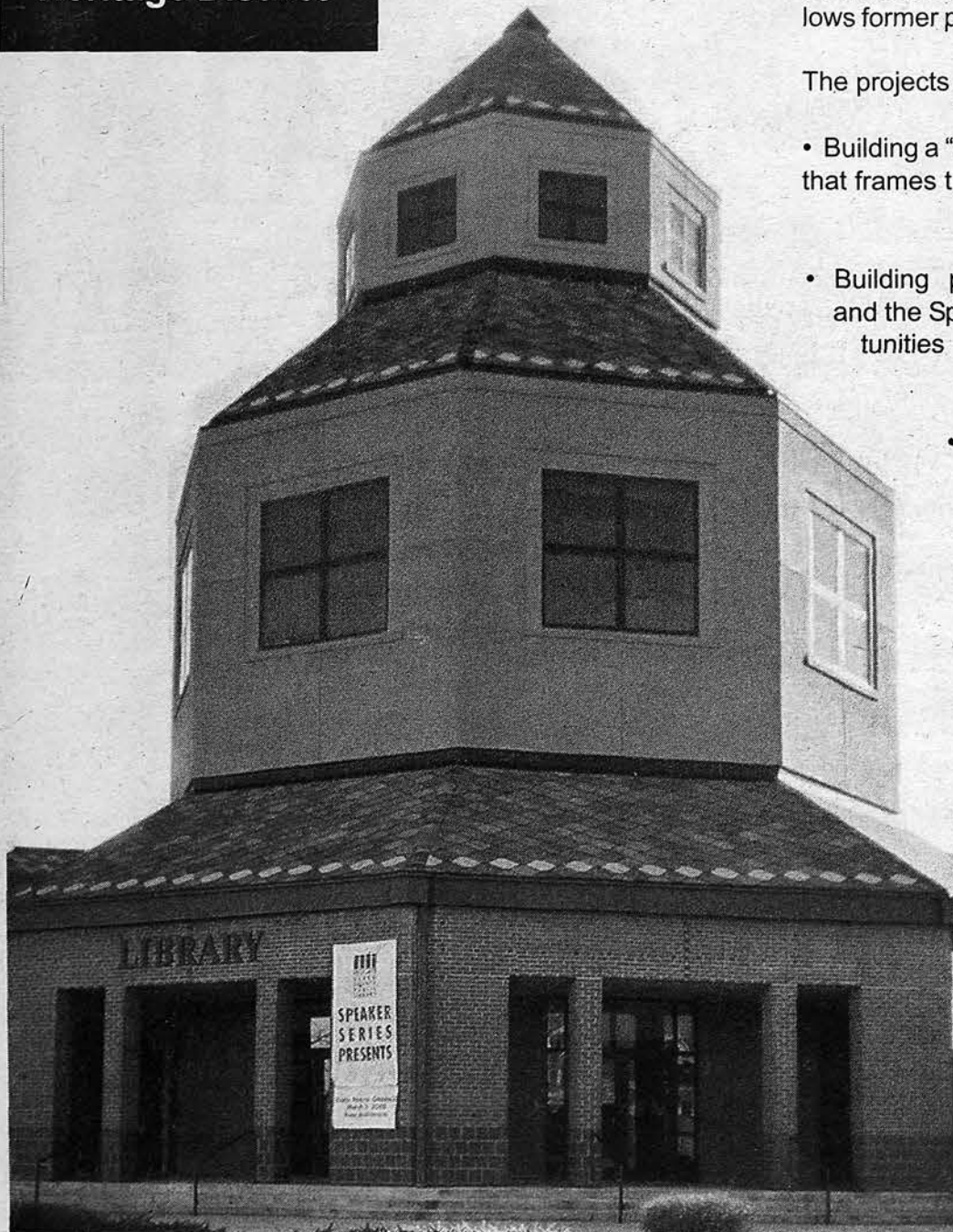
This district is bound by the following streets: High, Wittenberg, Spring, Center, Main, Mulberry, and Jefferson. These eight square blocks around the Esplanade contain the Heritage Center, the Clark State Performing Arts Center, the YMCA, the bus transfer station and other related uses, including the Springfield Inn and Clark County Public Library. In two of these blocks, important fraternal organizations are significant destinations for members. The historic Esplanade punctuates this district at the southern end of Center City on Fountain Avenue.

The anticipated expansions of the Heritage Center and the YMCA and the potential for additional cultural and destination facilities can attract even more citizens to this important destination of culture, entertainment, and the arts.

The development goals for this district are to enhance the many important projects already built, to enrich and connect buildings and functions, and to provide a destination for people seeking quality family and youth entertainment. Consequently, organizing parking in structures allows former parking lots to become public plazas and development sites.

The projects proposed include:

- Building a "transparent" pavillion on the site of the Bus Transfer Station that frames the Heritage Center's northwest corner
- Building parking structures adjacent to the Performing Arts Center and the Springfield Inn to serve multiple users and create infill opportunities
- Building a family and youth entertainment complex adjacent to the Performing Arts Center
- Expanding the Heritage Center and YMCA
- Connecting the Heritage Center, Clark State, and the Performing Arts Center with a unifying public plaza
- Extending the biking trail into the Center City to the Clark State Performing Arts Center, focusing even more attention on this district as a regional destination
- Commissioning a marketing survey for the Clark State Performing Arts Center to determine existing audience clients, potential audiences, and future programming to increase geographic audience draw

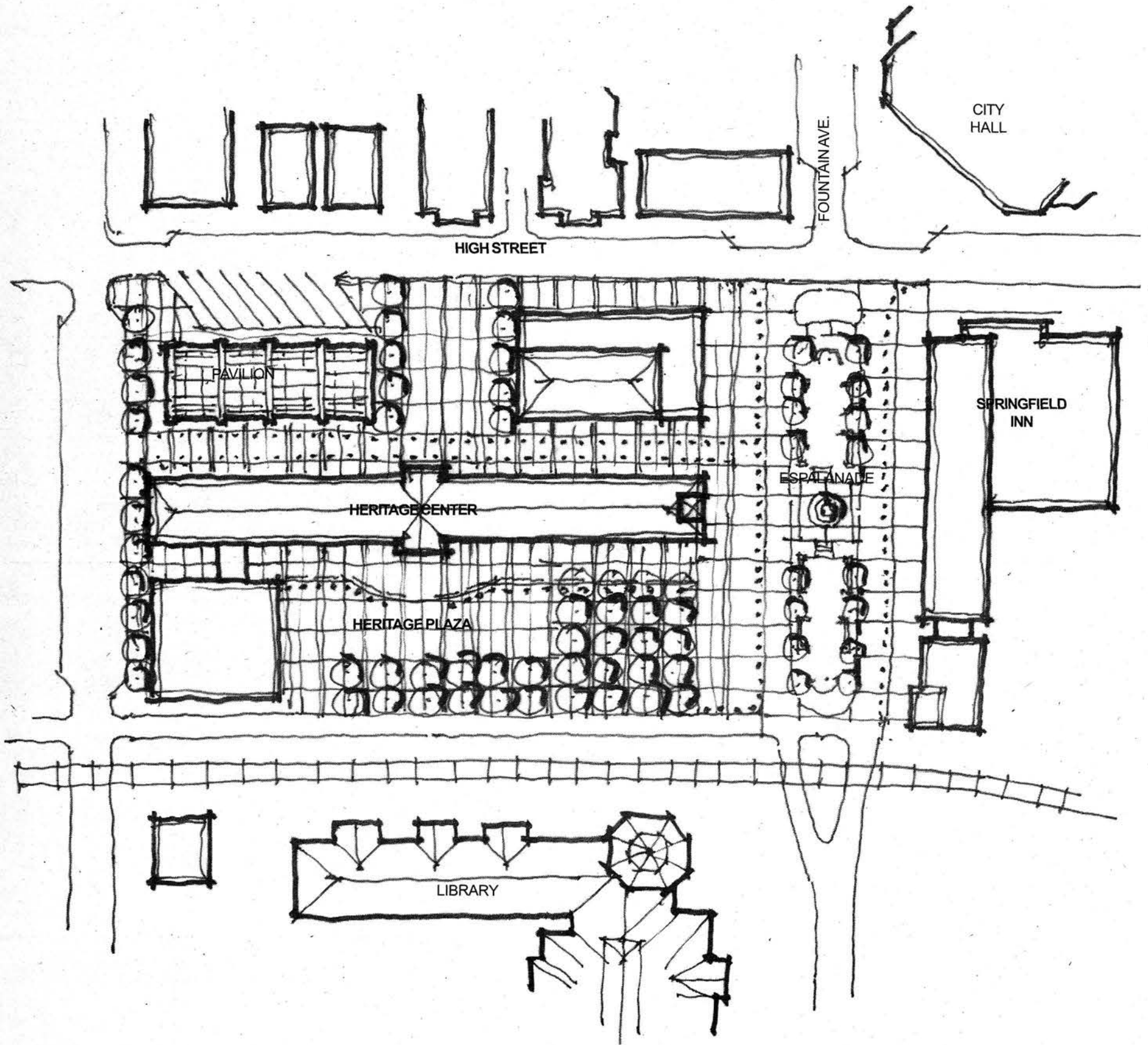


The Arts, Culture and Heritage District

The anticipated expansions of the Heritage Center and the YMCA and the potential for additional cultural and destination facilities can attract even more citizens to this important destination of culture, entertainment, and the arts.



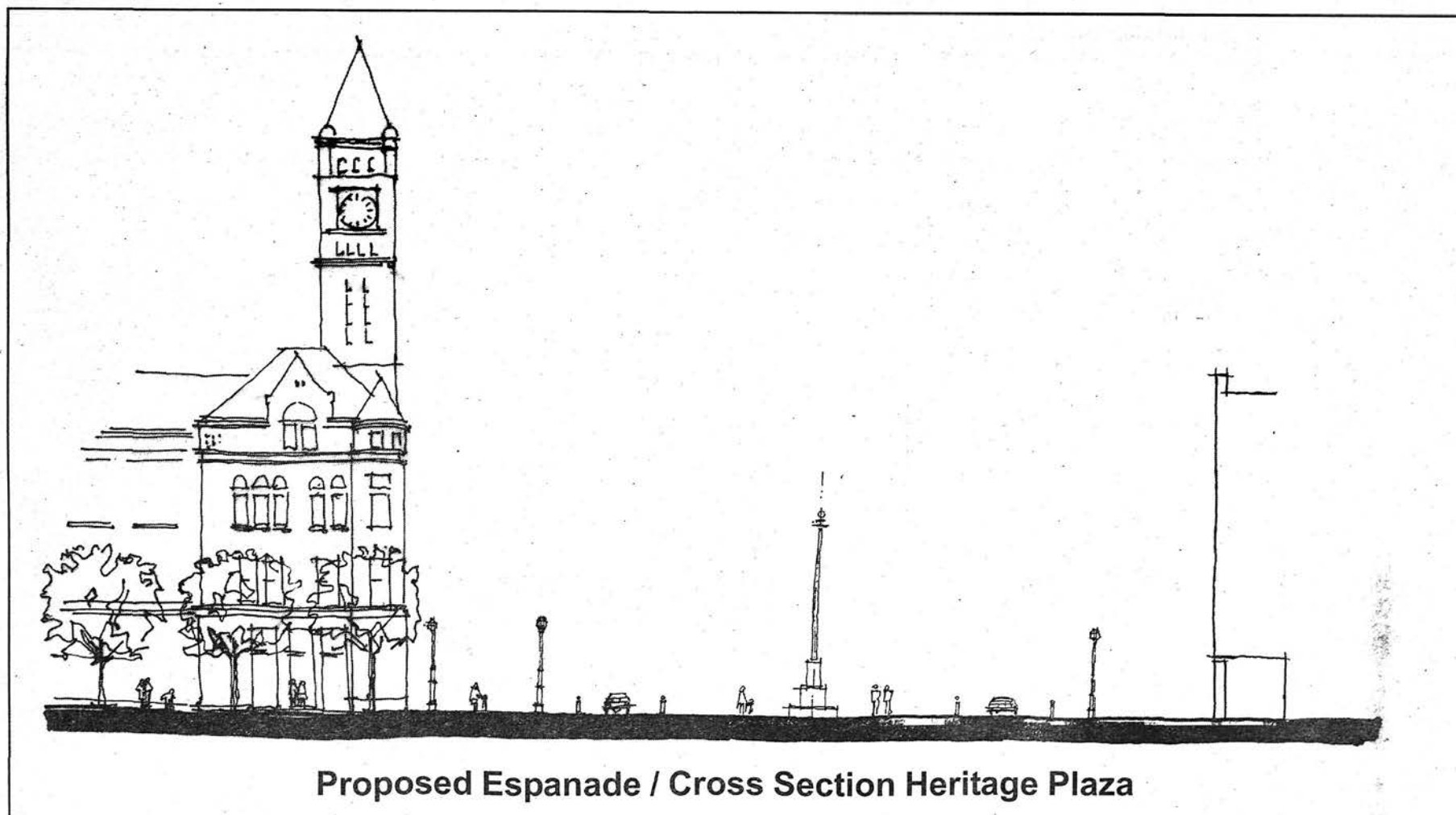
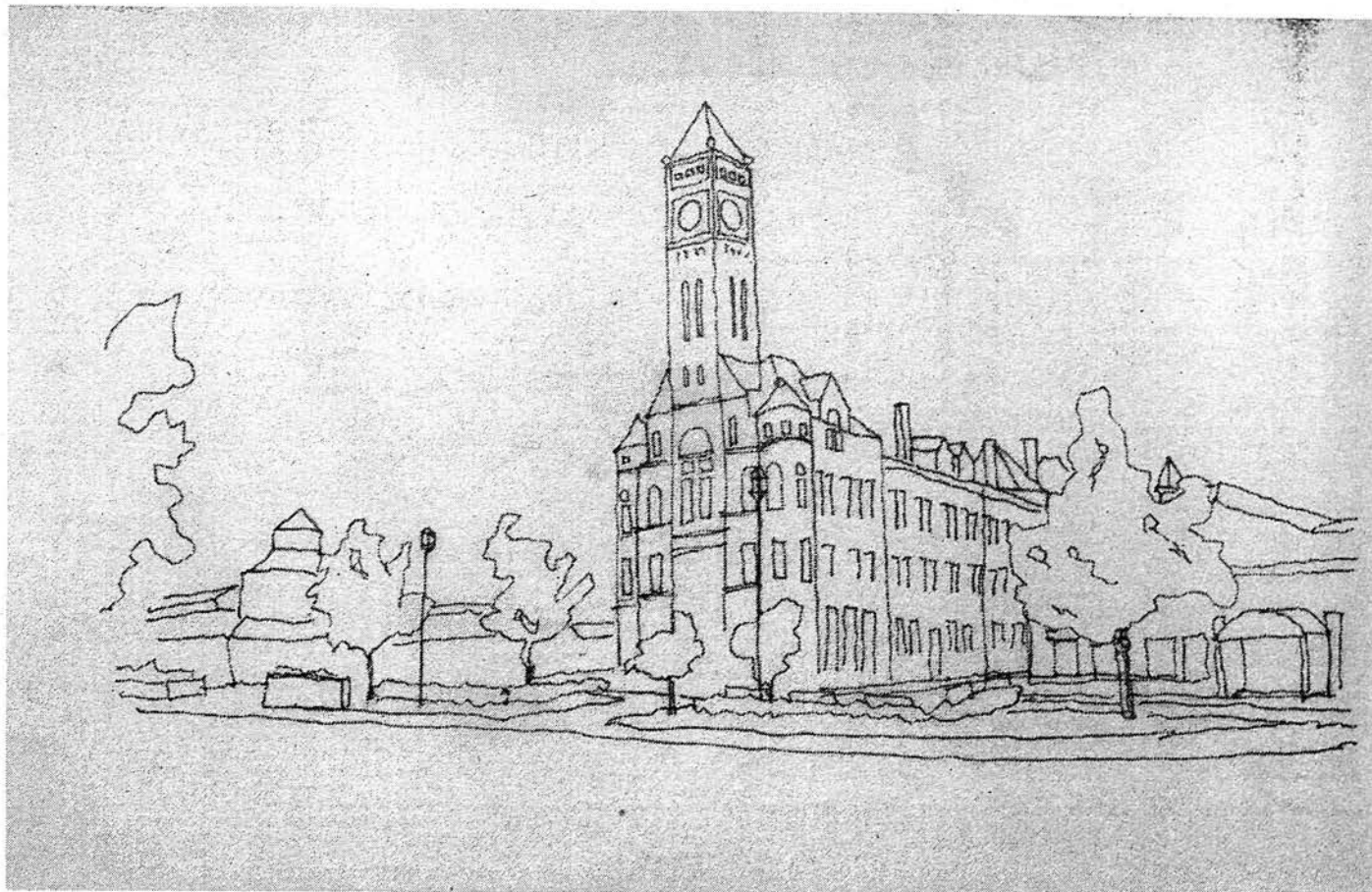
The Arts, Culture and Heritage District



Arts, Culture and Heritage District Map

The Arts, Culture and Heritage District

Heritage Center



Proposed Espanade / Cross Section Heritage Plaza

The Civic/Institutional District



Civic/Institutional District



The following streets bound this district: Fountain, Spring, Warder, and Columbia. County administration and security services, the U.S. Post Office, the newspaper, and a fire station are clustered in this northeast corner of downtown.

These large and stable uses are surrounded by a substantial amount of parking, some of which might be consolidated to provide for the future expansion of existing uses and the opportunity to build future new civic

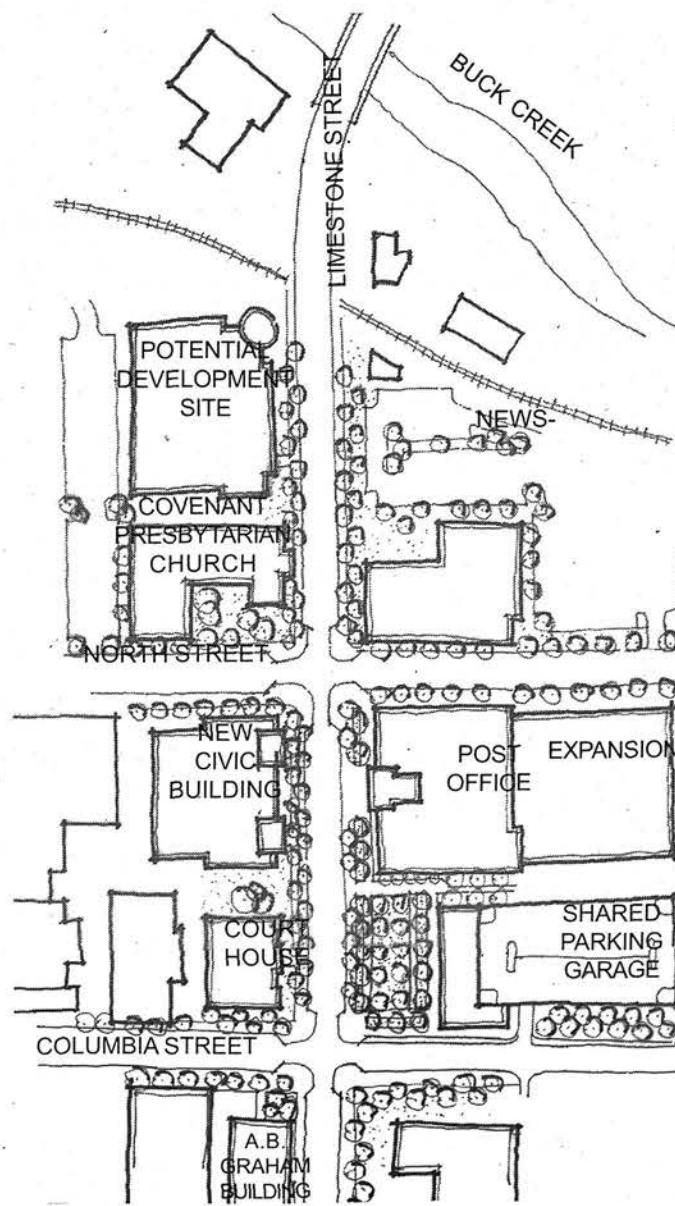
buildings in the district.

The majority of the land around the buildings is devoted to grade level parking. This area could accommodate an expansion of the post office and additional city and county buildings, with structured parking.

The Limestone Street south-bound gateway into downtown confronts a parking lot at the bend in the road. A civic building in this location adjacent to the church would be beneficial to the appear-

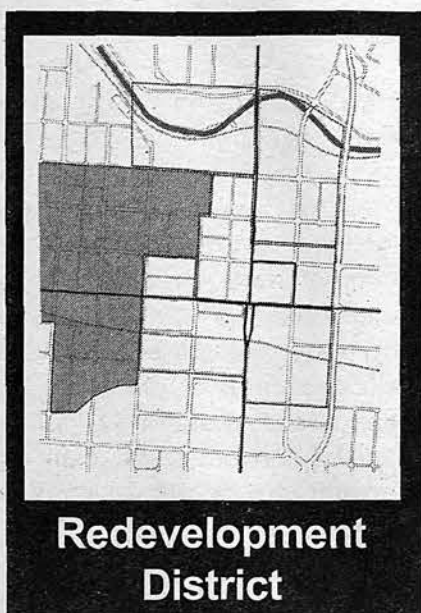
ance of this district.

The existing one-way pair of Route 41 (North and Columbia Streets) seems to provide more roadway capacity than is necessary currently and in the foreseeable future although this assumption needs to be tested. Conversion of the one-way pairs back to two-way traffic with curb parking is proposed and would help travelers feel that are coming TO the Center City, not just passing THROUGH the Center City.



CIVIC/INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT

The Redevelopment District



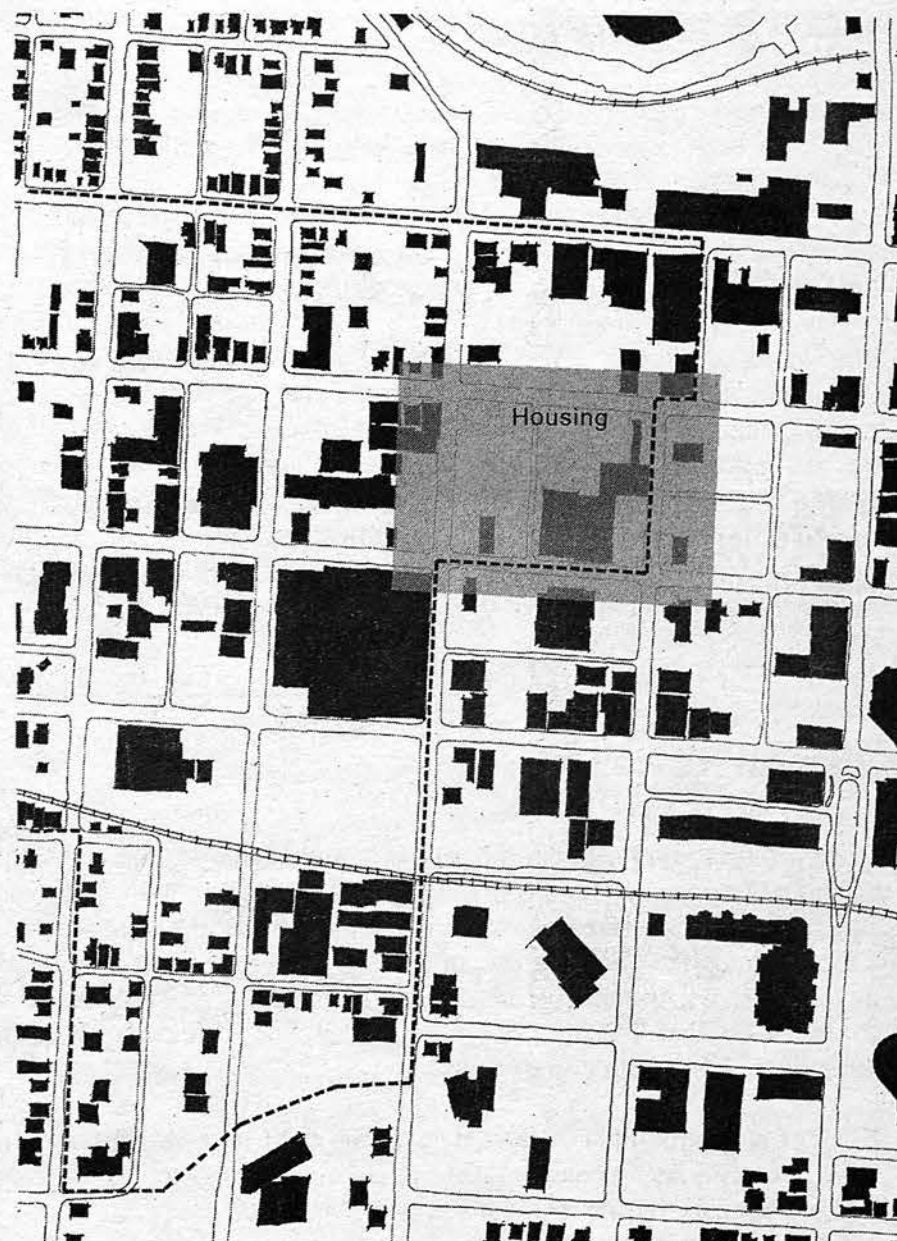
The following streets roughly bound this district: Center, North, Main and Northwestern. From the Center City, this district extends beyond the western edge and has several square blocks of significant vacant and poorly maintained industrial buildings. Several of these are brownfields. It also has buildings of extraordinary architectural merit. Unfortunately, the Veteran's Memorial Hall has been unused for some time.

This area has the potential for serving large project needs that could bring employment and ancillary businesses to the Center City. This could be a perfect opportunity to leverage public and private investment. For large-scale project opportunities, the City of Springfield and the Center City Association should work to make sure that the develop-

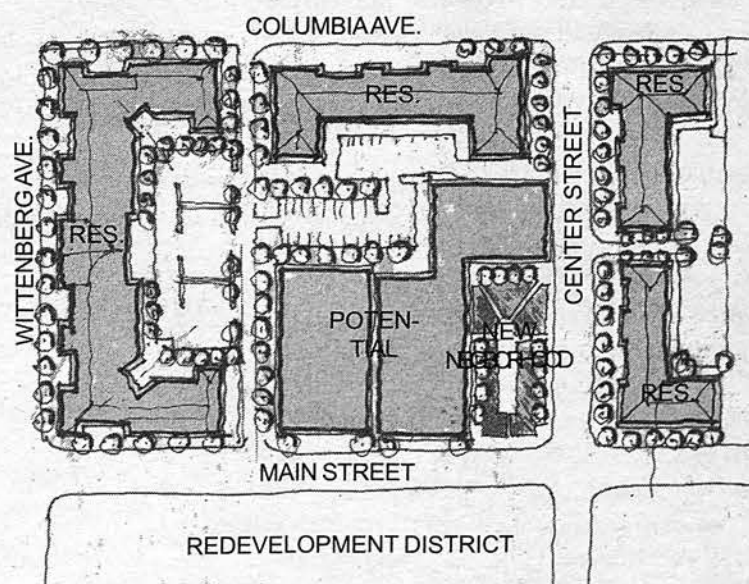
ment occurs in a way that works architecturally with the Center City and contributes to the sense of arrival from the west.

Major institutions requiring campuses and large facilities are target developments. This is the kind of development that could be accommodated in this district, supporting both downtown and neighborhood revitalization goals with related developments – a real public private partnership.

The City of Springfield already has an advantage in developing this district. It has designated the West Central Redevelopment Area, leveraging program-specific environmental clean-up levels to use certain properties in this for their new developments.



(right) Partial Redevelopment District Map



Retooling for the Job - making the plans work

Land and Zone Uses

Local government is in a unique position to balance interests between public and private parties, as well as among multiple public interests. The role of government in the design review process is a classic example of this role, and its application in Springfield illustrates both its importance and its difficulty. In order to support the R/UDAT recommendations, the City of Springfield should review its development ordinances and codes to assess whether they

hinder or facilitate appropriate Center City redevelopment.

During the R/UDAT visit, the City of Springfield indicated that it had adopted a new downtown zoning overlay. Its intent is to encourage the construction of buildings that create strong urban edges to the right-of-way. The new overlay also requires that parking lots be landscaped and set back from the street to make them more contextual with adjoining buildings with zero setbacks.

Certainly, this is a positive step forward in fostering better architectural character in the Center City. The overlay might be more effective if it is linked with zoning that encourages mixed use. This would allow creative developments that stimulate synergy along the urban grid. The land use and zoning should be reviewed in tandem with the development goals espoused in each proposed Center City district. It is possible in some cases to link

zoning of large mixed-use developments with master plans that guide the character of sites so they are compatible with adjoining land uses of varied scale and character. Such a designation might also work well for a developer if it accounted for site specific needs at the time of adoption including setbacks, parking and other aspects that might otherwise require time-consuming variances.

Design Reviews

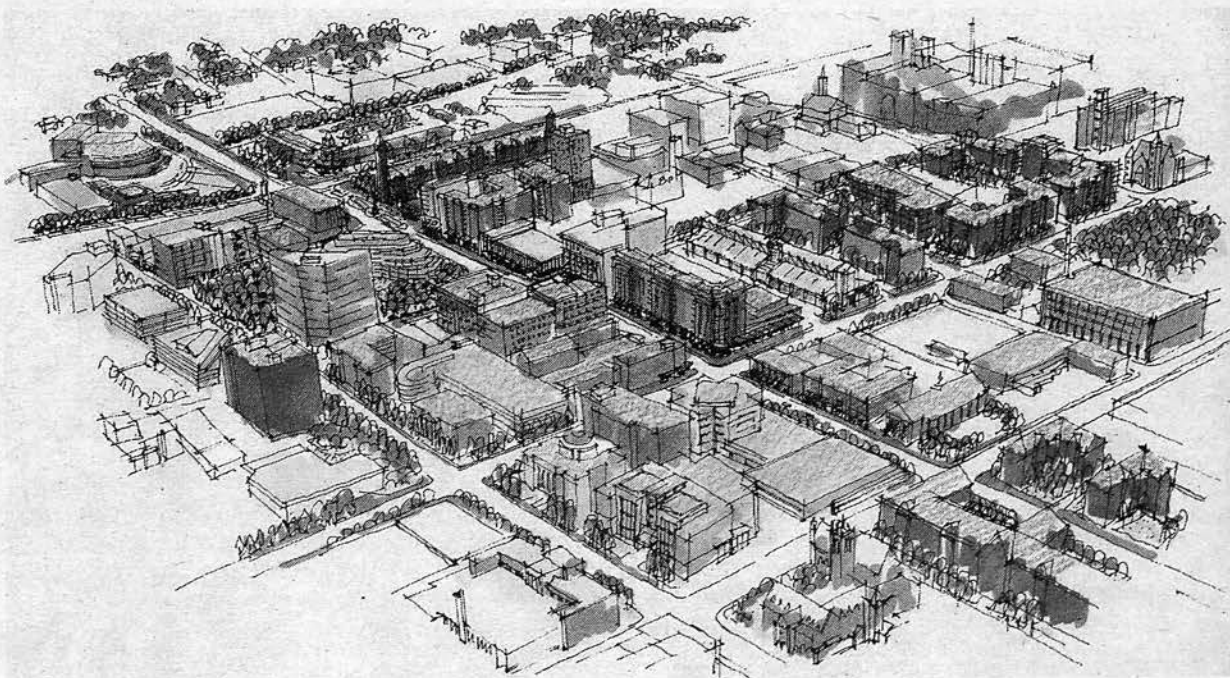
Center City contains the remnants of a rich, historic fabric which, Springfield's citizens told the R/UDAT team, matters to their quality of life. Even as the team recommends enhancing the city's recently adopted design overlay, we recognize that design review policy must be responsive to the unique development objectives and architectural character of each block. They must be applied with clear intent in each district and between districts.

R/UDAT recommends that the City of Springfield, in collaboration with the Center City Association, work to develop design review guidelines that are specific to each of the districts on a block-by-block basis. These guidelines would work under the authority of amendments to the downtown overlay and would look specifically at each district and corridor to avoid a "one size fits all" approach toward this type of regulation.

The guidelines could be developed in cooperation with the affected property owners and merchants within the area of aesthetic concern. Also, a Design Review Board should be constituted of design professionals and other citizens, perhaps no more than a five member committee, which would meet on a regular cycle to keep any serious backlog of building permits from developing. In the spirit of public-private partnership that is a common thread throughout R/UDAT's recommendations, this design review process would protect both public and private investment

in Center City revitalization.

Whatever the level of appropriate design review, it is critical to the success of this process that guidelines be brought on line in time to help guide desired development. In addition to a number of competent professional firms who could help develop the guidelines and recommend a Design Review Board process, there may be academic centers in Ohio, whose design resources could assist in setting up this process much as Chattanooga's Design Center has for that city.



Retooling for the Job - making the plans work

Public/Private Partnerships

These days downtown revitalization requires greater reliance on innovative local support for financing and implementation than in previous times. The best national models for downtown development demonstrate that the challenge of harmonizing the development goals of the public realm and private investment calls for new and creative approaches through public/private partnerships.



Springfield's Center City will also need to rely on the blending of public and private resources to achieve projects like those offered by R/UDAT. Mixed-use development projects, which combine common infrastructure elements such as utilities, parking, landscaping, and commercial spaces, are prime targets for collaborative funding efforts.

scaping, and commercial spaces, are prime targets for collaborative funding efforts.

The future role of the private sector in development will continue to be primary. Springfield has entrepreneurs, investors, building owners, and major tenants who have been the vanguard of its boot-strapped revitalization movement for the past decade, with some successes in preserving older buildings from demolition.

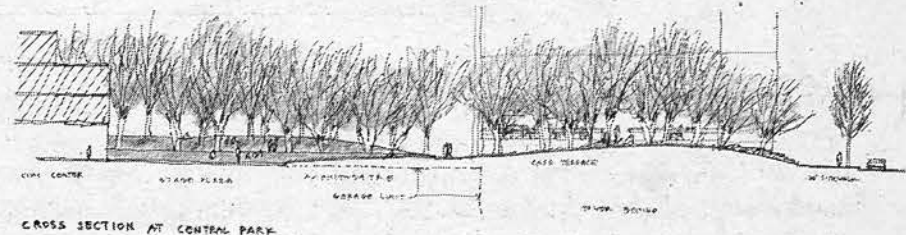
The City of Springfield has developed public spaces, redeveloped heritage buildings, invested in the public realm, and supported private initiatives in a prudent manner. The City of Springfield has worked successfully with private interests in advancing many important civic projects. It can continue this effort in offering local tax relief, land and building assembly, and public capital funding for worthy initiatives.

It can also function as a conduit for state and federal grants, such as Transportation Authorization funds for trails, sidewalk improvements, bike lanes and other innovative projects to activate the City Center. When resources are available, county and state government agencies can be participants in funding programs of importance to downtown's future and to the future of neighborhoods out of economic development programs.

Beyond government, the important contributory role of foundations and private philanthropists in Springfield's redevelopment has been outstanding by any measure. The Harry M. Turner Foundation, the Springfield Foundation, and individuals like Richard Kuss are examples to all communities everywhere of generous and effective civic stewards.

In addition to the pure public or private sector organization, another entity has emerged: the local not-for-profit redevelopment agency. The Center City Association is an example of such an agency in Springfield.

Other non-profit and agency partners in the redevelopment process include some non-traditional players. The Chamber of Commerce, Clark State Community College, Wittenberg University, and others have spearheaded major projects, marshalling private donations to supplement public sector initiatives. It is likely that they will be called on again in the future for continued leadership. Fraternal and religious organizations could also be of great assistance in spearheading innovative development opportunities.



The unique role of the Center City Association is first and foremost to serve as a forum for continued planning, marketing, coordination and idea-generation. The organization must facilitate good plans developed and funded by both the public and private sector.

The Center City Association is the principle advocate for the sustained and methodical improvement of downtown Springfield. It can also be the center of support for neighborhood improvement, working with its city and the private sector partners to assure that continued improvement spreads to and from the adjacent neighborhoods.

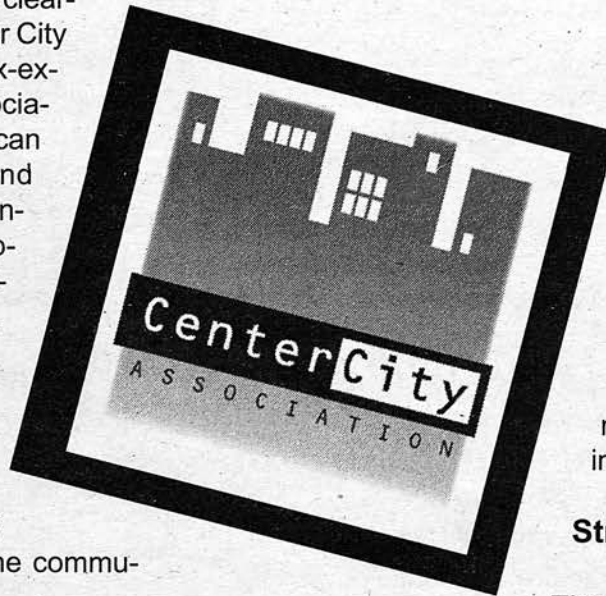
The unique role of the Center City Association is first and foremost to serve as a forum for continued planning, marketing, coordination and idea-generation. The organization must facilitate good plans developed and funded by both the public and private sector.

Implementation of R/UDAT's Plan

Center City Association

The Center City Association should be the clearinghouse for the varied sources for Center City development support. As a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, the Center City Association can pursue foundation grants that can be put to work on downtown plans and projects. A variety of local sources and agencies exist to support proposed redevelopment initiatives. Other non-profits, including foundations, educational institutions, religious organizations, and others could provide the risk capital and offer strategic solutions for enacting projects that advance the development of Center City. These organizations can leverage a range of projects, such as urban art programs to educational programs for the community.

The Center City Association can assist in the formation of other non-profits for specific development programs for the Center City, such as Special Improvement Districts funded by voluntary payments by district property owners. Tax Increment Financing, a program which redirects future incremental increases in tax dollars generated from a specified area into focused infrastructure projects, is another resource for consideration that eventually could work for Center City in Springfield. The Board of the Center City Association should be flexible and inno-



vative in the support it gives its staff and how it structures itself to maximize the organization's role in stewardship over downtown development and quality of life. The range of representation the Center City Association enjoys at the board level should be a harbinger of even greater and sustained community involvement as the R/UDAT community meeting demonstrated.

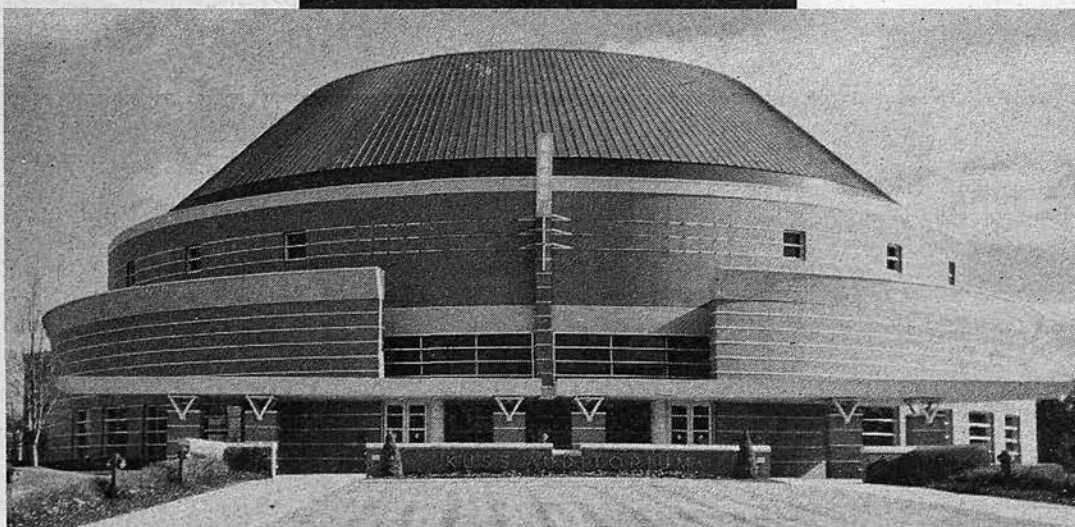
Strategies for Implementation

Throughout this R/UDAT report, specific projects and strategies have been cited as potential catalysts for redevelopment in the Center City. The key step to success in any plan, including R/UDAT, is implementation. The schedule for action must be determined finally by the Center City Association, the City of Springfield and other related institutions. We offer some suggestions for timing that should establish a viable sequence.

The team is recommending the following steps as action items to be considered by the Springfield community to advance the Center City Plan:

NEAR TERM IMPLEMENTATION (Within six months to a year)

- *Make the "town meetings" an annual Springfield event!!!* Use this forum to celebrate the accomplishments of the last year and present ideas for the upcoming year
- Make every public dollar bring in private opportunity, for example, develop related projects, private or public, with the skating rink to take full advantage of the rink as a public attraction;
- Visit other cities that have established effective public private partnerships with foundation support, such as the Lyndhurst Foundation in Chattanooga, Tennessee
- Research how Ohio state law impacts the viability of a Community Reinvestment Area for Center City. Some requirements may suggest new partnering strategies for public private developments that should be considered for specific Center City Districts



- Develop and nurture relationships among government with non-government institutions, like the Turner Foundation, Clarke State Community College, and Wittenberg University for development opportunities;
- Find and nurture creative developers who can execute innovative projects that support private opportunities and public needs



Invite the outstanding arts community in Springfield to advise Center City planning efforts on how the arts can enhance the public realm with innovative projects such as environmental art, murals, etc. Check

with the National Endowment for the Arts program on Public Works

MID-RANGE IMPLEMENTATION (Within two years)

- Establish districts for redevelopment within the Center City; focus on manageable development areas united by theme and project opportunities;
- Identify corridors and project areas of special concern where Design Review overlays can be of benefit;
- Establish a Design Review Committee consisting of members of the various design construction professions with input from local merchants, residents, and property owners; this committee can make informed decisions to preserve the quality of public and private investment in Center City in locations of special concern;
- Coordinate and update the zoning ordinance, building codes, and design overlays in tandem to promote adaptive reuse of structures;
- Conduct a parking study to see where decks or surface parking can be consolidated to encourage development and to align the perception of parking space availability with reality;
- Re-route the streets as one-way pairs as recommended in this report to allow more visitors to travel TO Center City, not just THROUGH Center City

Conclusion

The Springfield, Ohio, R/UDAT concludes that the Center City enjoys enormous support from its community. This community has proven capacity in the development of individual projects, the renovation of landmarks and the provision of stellar cultural resources. The R/UDAT members, whose combined experience spans scores of cities, have all noted that with better coordination of effort, Springfield would not only have a vibrant Center City, but would be a national model of public-private partnership. While many Springfield residents seemed aware of this potential, the question remained how to make the connections within the community yield more effective outcomes.

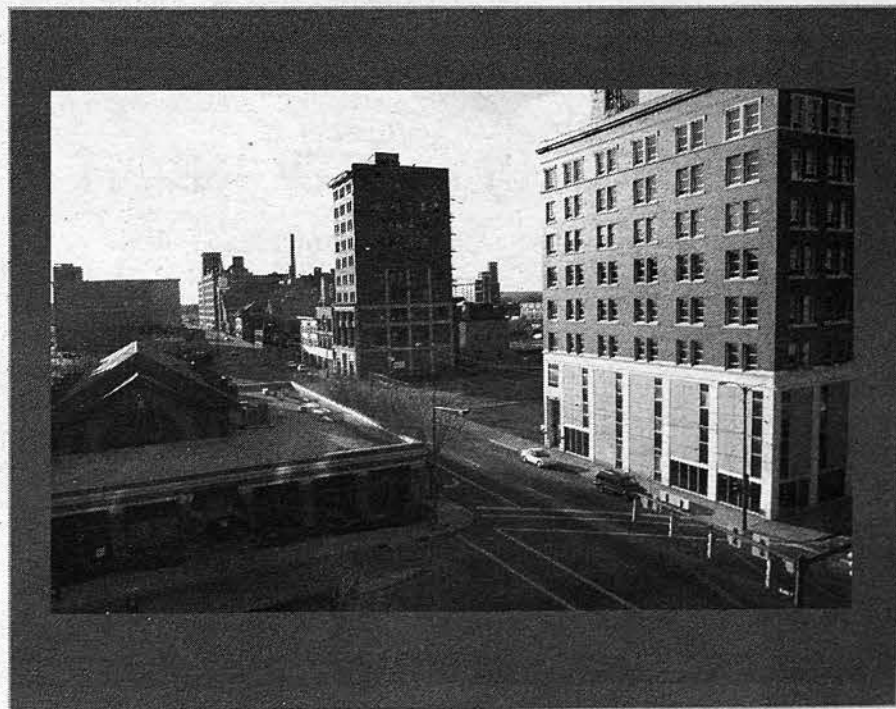
In light of this question, there are two, basic responses: focus on specific, strategic areas for greatest returns whether they are districts or corridors; and try to leverage very public investment with sound private opportunity.

It is our hope that the Springfield R/UDAT report provides an outline of how to do both.

It is our hope we have provided an outline of how to do both in this document.



R/UDAT is committed to the success of this effort as well. Within the next six months, a subgroup of the team shall return to assess Springfield's response to our recommendations. We all look forward to that reunion.





The R/UDAT team

Grace A. Perdomo

Grace is an architectural and urban designer skilled at translating principles of new urbanism into pragmatic planning and design solutions with experience in both public and private sector development. Since 1997, she has been directly responsible for the preparation of traditional neighborhood plans for the redevelopment of inner city committees as part of HUD's federal HOPE VI community revitalization program. Grace's experience also covers institutional and commercial architectural design and project management

R. Hunter Gee, AIA, NCARB

Hunter, a licensed architect in Tennessee, has worked on a wide variety of planning and design projects across the United States and in Poland. Hunter has worked on both public and private large-scale mixed-use projects, and he has extensive experience with downtown redevelopment projects. In 1999, Hunter chaired the local steering committee for the East Nashville R/UDAT. He is now Vice President of *Rediscover East!*, the organization charged with implementing the R/UDAT Plan.

Charlotte Kosmela, MAA, AICP

Charlotte Kosmela is highly experienced in architecture, master planning and urban design. She has been responsible for the design and planning of a wide range of projects, with particular focus on educational and institutional master planning of urban revitalization initiatives. Charlotte brings a strong vision of what makes cities and campuses livable communities within the United States, as well as England, Spain, and Italy.

Tom Leader

Tom Leader, a graduate of Harvard University Graduate School of Design Master of Landscape Architecture, oversees Tom Leader's studio in Berkeley, California. He has designed projects across the nation and around the world, including: Australia, Japan, and Germany. He has won international awards for his efforts, and he is an accomplished writer with several architectural publications. He also received a Rome Prize fellowship at the American Academy in Rome. A number of his works have been acquired for the permanent collection of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

William A. Gilchrist, AIA, NCARB

A licensed architect in Alabama and Georgia, Mr. Gilchrist is active in urban planning activities around the nation and the world, in addition to his expert department management for the City of Birmingham. Mr. Gilchrist is an alumnus of Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he received his degrees in Architecture and Business. He has worked on international planning missions to Kenya and Ukraine, and he is a member of the R/UDAT task group.

Stephen F. Dragos

Steve had directed privately funded non-profit downtown revitalization in four states over the past 35 years. He has a degree in architecture from Notre Dame and advanced training for public service from Syracuse University. He is currently chair of the Urban Fund Public/Private Institute Partnership Council. He has received numerous national and international awards including the American Institute of Architects Award of Excellence in Urban Design.

Siân Llewellyn

With over a decade of experience in planning and design consulting, Siân brings a strong background in real estate and land research. Project work has included strategic planning, real estate research and analysis and land acquisition strategies for cities, counties, and non-governmental agencies as well as private sector development entities. Siân has a Masters Degree in City Planning from the Georgia Institute of Technology; and a Bachelor of Science in Finance and a Bachelor of Arts in History from the University of Florida.

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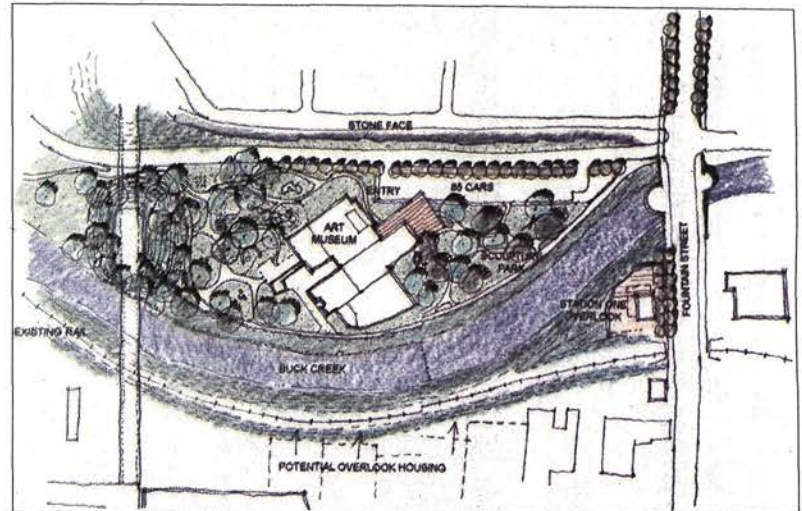
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The Editorial staff apologizes for any misspelled or omitted names



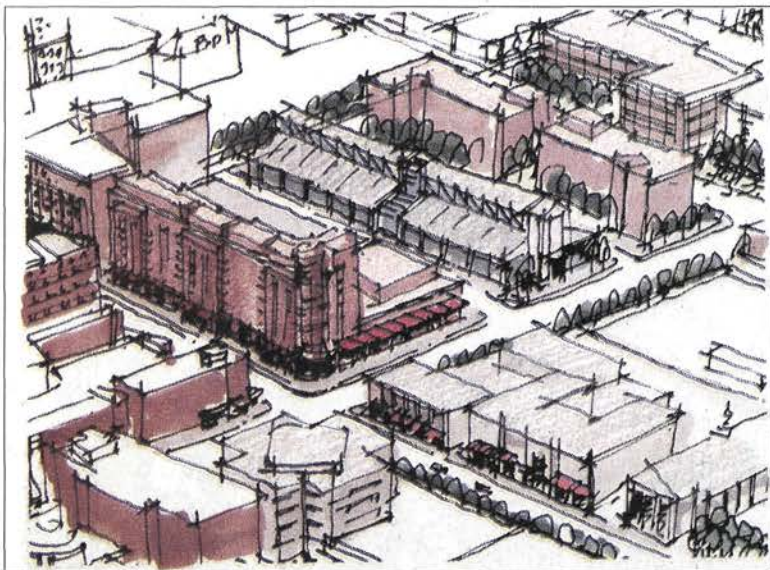
(Aerial Perspective of Arts/Core)

Fountain Avenue is Springfield's central spine that connects the arts district at the South to New Center Park at the Core and Buck Creek Park to the North.



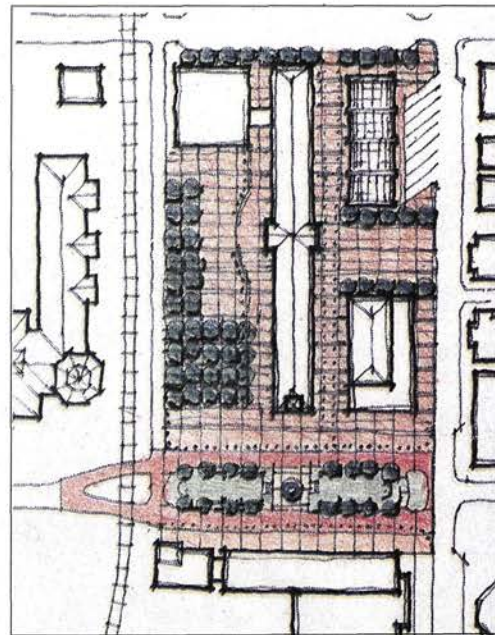
(Buck River/ Art Museum Plan)

The Art Museum's program can be expanded to include major outdoor sculpture display as part of the Buck Creek Park.



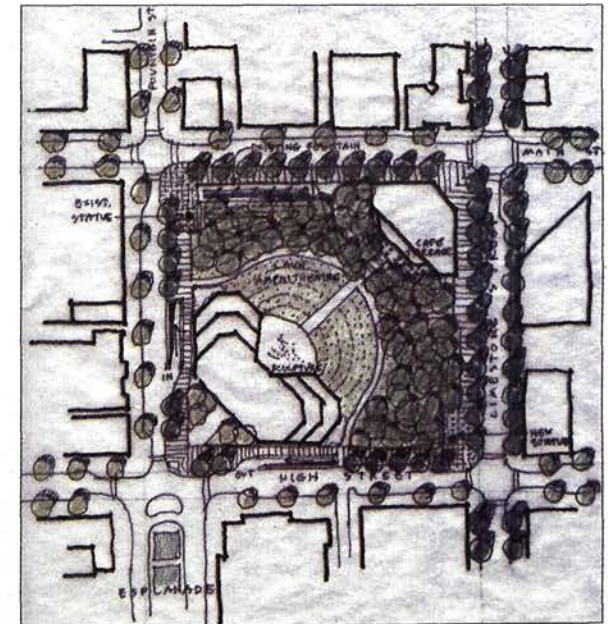
(Offices/Convention Center/Ice Arena)

New residential infill, leveraged by a city ice arena and conference center and offices demonstrates mixed use development and public/private partnership opportunities.



(Heritage Plaza Plan)

As Clark County's cultural nucleus, the Heritage Center is celebrated by a new Heritage Plaza, which extends the Esplanade to the West.



(Center Park Plan)

The Core Block is transformed into a green urban oasis. The predominant materials are gently sloping lawn, groves of shade trees and meandering pathways.