

Hidden in Plain Sight

Proactive Designer Instigated Projects

Patrick Pirtle

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Landscape Architecture

University of Washington
2015

Committee:
Thaisa Way - Chair
Jeffrey Hou

Program Authorized to Offer Degree:
Landscape Architecture

University of Washington

Abstract

Hidden in Plain Sight

Proactive Designer Instigated Projects

Patrick Pirtle

Chair of the Supervisory Committee:

Associate Professor Thaisa Way

Department Chair Jeffrey Hou Committee Member

Department of Landscape Architecture

This research is divided into two acts. The first act defines the hidden potential within the built environment that offers the chance for responding to the negative consequences of conventional development practices. The second act outlines a road map developed through a design instigated project that allows a designer to use their critical stance in identifying conditions within the built environment that should be altered in creating a healthier public domain and built environment. The process takes strategies and thinking from “tactical urbanism” and pairs it with participatory design in appropriating landscapes to define a model of planning and design that changes the conventional process of “competition, outline plan, development plan” to “phases of informal activation as establishment and the cultivation of temporary use” (Oswalt 221). The resulting process is labeled as Proactive Design Loop, a hybrid method of design that promotes the creation of dynamic landscapes derived out of a partnership between the designer and a local community.

Contents

First Act: Finding Opportunity

Hidden Potential	1 - 9
Introduction	
Conventional Problems	10 - 17
Literature Review	
Framing a Vision	18 - 35
Case Studies	
Proactive Design Loop	36 - 41
Critical Stance	

Second Act: Road Map for Designer Instigated Projects in Seattle

Fallow Landscapes	44 - 51
Site Selection	
Feedback	52 - 59
Public Participation	
Design	60 - 65
Clean-Up	
Loop	66 - 75
Conclusion	
Works Cited	76 - 77

*Hidden
Potential*

PARK



Chapter 1

The urban environment is filled with potential waiting to be realized. This potential lies within elements that others might see as waste: vacant landscapes, construction debris, parking lots, and trash. This potential is not limited to elements that are perceived as valueless, but can also be dormant within what others see as assets. Landscape architects and other design professionals are educated to realize such opportunity through design implementations that reflect the designer's vision of the urban environment. Unfortunately these hidden treasures often remain lost until a developer or community decides to realize their potential. At this point, a landscape architect and architect are often hired to complete a design for a client. I see the conventional model of design as reactive, allowing others to define our urban form, in which designers realize through their creative process. Landscape architects and architects have the potential to become proactive leaders, rather than solely facilitators in the creation of new urban form that values place, ecology, culture, play, learning, and economics envisioned by designers supported by local communities.

This design research project is divided into two acts. The first act defines the hidden potential within the built environment that offers the chance for responding to the negative consequences of conventional development practices. The second act outlines a road map developed through a design instigated project that allows a designer to use their critical stance in identifying conditions within the built environment that should be altered in creating a healthier public domain and built environment. The process takes strategies and thinking from "tactical urbanism" and pairs it with participatory design in appropriating landscapes to define a model of planning and design that changes the conventional process of "competition, outline plan, development plan" to "phases of informal activation as establishment and the cultivation of temporary use" (Oswalt 221). This research defines this process as the Proactive Design Loop, a hybrid method of design that promotes the creation of dynamic landscapes derived out of a partnership between the designer and a local community.

This research project uses a case study approach to experiment with the role of landscape architects as proactive creators of projects and built landscapes. Utilizing the methods and thinking

derived from tactical urbanism, a term coined by Mike Lydon in 2010 to define projects “relating to small scale actions serving a larger purpose and adroit in planning or maneuvering to accomplish a purpose” (Lydon), in instigating the appropriation of a public owned, neglected site with a local community. The Proactive Design Loop works towards building permanent adaptive landscapes that are created through an iterative design process between the community and designer resulting in places that are democratically self-managed, shared open space that values experimentation and a gradual development process. This form of design thinking has been used by other practitioners to instigate projects, these include but are not limited to, Belt Line in Atlanta, Rebar, and Steve Rasmussen-Cancian of Outdoor Living Room in West Oakland, but has not been broadly adopted by landscape architecture and architectural practice.

The designer instigated project in this research takes places on a site located in the University District of Seattle, with highly transient college students in appropriating, designing, building, and taking ownership of a vacant, neglected landscape. Contemporary scholars such as Setha Low, Diane Davis, Margaret Kohn, and Peter Marcuse have expressed the importance of having the public engaged in the process of creating public space for its ability in creating the “commons” and reestablishing our “right to the city” as a place that supports the “full development and human capabilities” by having the public experience and be part of democratic decision making processes (Kohn 70, Marcuse 194). This research begins by examining the negative results of our conventional development model, that then links “tactical urbanism” as a response to subvert conventional development by creating small scale, low cost, design interventions on appropriated landscapes focused on the public becoming active in creating their own right to the city (Oswalt, 221).

Landscape architects and other designers of the built environment are educated to see the unrealized and actual potential apparent on a site. University training relies upon studios in which the professor defines a set of problems or sites for the students to resolve. It is not until a thesis or capstone project when students are empowered through their previous coursework to identify a

problem in the world that they feel is important. This form of education values learning through experience and doing over simply memorizing and regurgitating information which has been shown to be predominate in our educational system (Freire). As designers of the built environment we are educated to be critical of the built environment, always looking for hidden opportunities and inspiration. It is our unique vision as creators of space paired with our imbued professional privilege that requires us to use “proactive, not reactive, thinking” in creating a better world (Harrington).

This research begins by defining problems within the conventional method of design resulting in the creation of sterile, highly controlled consumer driven open spaces (Diane 88). The current trend in the design and creation of public space is the integration of open space into the development of private property owners. It has been shown that this transfers the cost of maintenance and control to a private entity resulting in a public/private partnership that allow private interest to take control over public space (Low, 83). This increased control and rigidity of public space is challenged by the increased dynamics and unpredictably of the city.

Complex migration patterns and increased job turnover has resulted in urban environments that are constantly trying to adapt in order to attract new business and residents (Oswalt, 12). Within the current system, the public domain is designed and realized as a static armature for program to occur within, without considering the potential changes it may need in the future to respond to the changing character of a place. A response to this problem has come out of the DIY culture and has been labeled generally as “temporary urbanism” (Haydn, 56). The essence of these intervention is subversion, using design and art as a form of protest that is created for the public (Gestel, 79). Tactical urbanist strategies need to understood as “profoundly local- as taking place in a certain locale”, which does limit their ability to be utilized for addressing larger scale urban development issues (Karvonen, Lerner). Rather the strength in these approaches comes out of their flexibility, negotiation, and situational spontaneity (Davis, 90).

In framing the Proactive Design Loop within the gamut of existing projects defined as tactical urbanism, seven projects have been identified based on the value they offer to the creation of socially produced public space. These case studies are used as a foundation on which strategies for designer instigated projects are drawn. The seven case studies were selected based on their unique perspective for creating a better public environment by re-envisioning the potential of designing with waste, empowering the local citizenry, and using the landscape as a place to test new ideas. The combination of these different ideas provides a robust set of methods for landscape architects to use as a template for instigating proactive design loop processes in the landscape. The proposed Proactive Design Loop framework is outlined in Chapter 4 as an iterative design process instigated and facilitated by designers in cultivating the community's eventual appropriation of the site. Act Two applies the Proactive Design Loop approach developed out of Act One in instigating a project on a vacant neglected site with the local community.

A common trend identified in the case studies is a description of how acts of tactical urbanism commonly occur on landscapes that are vacant, neglected, or lack any perceived social, cultural, or economic value. These landscapes have been shown to pose the least resistance from the public, though the “type of spaces chosen for temporary uses are as diverse as those selected for conventional use” (Lydon). This project will focus on vacant landscapes as potential landscapes to appropriate. Research shows that private landowners have begun to exploit tactical approaches to “build up use milieus that attract commercial users” on their site prior to major investment (Oswalt, 229). Chapter 5 looks at the conditions of vacant landscape that offer the greatest potential for long-term community appropriation based on their unique challenges. Seattle is a city that could be considered as lacking in terms of available vacant land for future development when compared to other major US cities, thus making site appropriation potentially important for the production of public space in the city. I see these landscapes as the final frontier for public space in Seattle, where development is on pace to fill many of the remaining vacant sites. Instigating projects that persuade communities to take ownership or interest in a site prior to conventional development is seen as an obligation for landscape architects

to engage in empowering the profession and public in growing a stronger voice in terms of how our urban environment is developed.

For my project I tested what I came to call a Proactive Design Loop process in appropriating a publicly owned vacant site in the University District of Seattle. This design process as I developed it consists of multiple phases, starting with research and site appropriation that then uses an iterative process of feedback loops between community feedback and design implementation to develop temporary interventions on a site that “are not mere temporary stopgaps, but are given the opportunity to become serious partners and catalyst for use” (Oswalt, 221). This site was chosen because it is within my residential community and will allow me to explore the challenges and opportunities related to working with highly transient student communities, coming and going on a yearly basis. This community poses significant challenges in terms of public participation and community engagement and is an example of how the vision and creativity of landscape architect’s is pivotal in the realization of this project. Engaging college students in this process promotes active learning through acts of tactical urbanism.

The chosen site, Truck Hill is a steep, left over triangle that provides an ideal opportunity for community appropriation and design experimentation because of its history as an informal parking lot used by students and being situated along a proposed greenway that currently has minimal adjacent open space planned. Truck Hill also has the potential to be catalytic in its “means of developing new networks of different professionals and social groups, aimed at finding new ways in cultural production as well as education, leisure, open space, environmental services, and governance” (Oswalt, 137). This project not only values the final product, but also the process that are used in its creation.

The Proactive Design Loop uses the three step iterative process of feedback-design-loop as a framework for instigating and facilitating projects using this approach. In this framework, feedback is

a process that leads to design intervention, that then are evaluated and presented back to the public as a feedback loop that leads to another loop and then back again. The initial effort and challenge of this process is gaining local community support and engagement in order to facilitate the production of shared open spaced produced iteratively through the process of negotiation between the designer and the community. During the initial feedback phase of this project, an evaluation of public engagement strategies was done to identify the different constraints and opportunities related to eight categories of public engagement. From this analysis it was found that utilizing multiple strategies for public engagement the designer can better engage the community stakeholder in empowering them to participate in the process with the hopes of the public eventually taking ownership of the site.

The authority and ownership of the process begins with the designer but changes over time to transfer to public. The transfer of ownership between the instigator and community occurs throughout the process. This process is also working to engage multiple stakeholders in adding potential synergies to the loop by building upon existing and new relationships and opportunities. The early results of this project are positive, showing potential for continued exploration and scalability. Through expanding upon the resources produced from this project, like online maps, this theory can be used to promote this effort across the entire city. The reach of this approach is only constrained by ones creativity in asking the right question and instigating the appropriate action.

Within the Proactive Design Loop, activities that are part of the feedback phase allow the public to respond to previous actions and is a means for encouraging them to take ownership of the site. Choosing the proper public engagement strategies is important for properly engaging the public in acquiring the proper type of feedback. This project used multiple strategies during the initial feedback phase; community presentations, informal feedback and a online platform. The process of feedback, design and then repeat uses the information gained from previous phases for the following stges. In this process, all “feedback” actions are considered to be any processes used to invoke a dialogue between the designer and community to provide personal feedback about the design of the

site. While the actions defined in this process as “design” are any activities that intentionally alters the physical site. In the Proactive Design Loop the process and the products are direct results of one another and facilitated through the loop.

When working with communities that are highly transient they need to have quick wins through out the process in order to feel as though their participation makes a difference. Where heavy equipment might provide a quick solution, the educational and experiential value of manual efforts is exploited. Utilizing manual labor also helps reduce cost, reducing the number of potential barriers for communities when appropriating this process. It is through the designer enacting change that the community gains agency which over time may lead to actions that spill over onto other sites in the community and across the city. This research use both theory and experiential learning to explore the Proactive Design Loop while also providing a road map for designers to follow and build upon in instigating personally defined projects on vacant landscapes with local communities in the hopes of producing adaptive, democratic, socially just space. This is an ongoing process and project that will evolve with new knowledge, constantly adapting through reflection in order for it to meet the dynamic and changing needs of local communities and the built environment.

First Act

Finding Opportunity

In examining the negative perceptions of conventional urban development, a new approach to design called “Tactical Urbanism” has been a response. Specific projects are selected and analyzed to glean multiple strategies into a vision for urban design and landscape architecture that has the potential to address the problems produced from conventional practices.

Conventional Problems



Chapter 2

*Boston - Edison Historic District / Detroit, Michigan
Photo courtesy of Patrick Pirtle*

There is a concern amongst design professionals, academics, and the public with the current state of public space in the US. Diane Davis, Chair of the Department of Urban Planning and Design at Harvard believes that public space is becoming homogenized due to “standardize rational efficient with cookie-cutter urbanism on the physical environment” (Diane 88). The result of this has been the increased privatization and commodification of our public space (Carmona 134). Even the spaces owned by public agencies are becoming more and more regulated. These issues related to the quality of public space are shared across the developed world (Carmona 124). This has resulted in our “right to the city” as defined by Lefebvre being denied through limiting the number of activities that are allowed in public space and through new policy structures that support “local governments relying upon private proxies to employ tactics that are forbidden by government actors. (Kohn 87, McCann 78),” The over commodification and homogenization of space has resulted in citizens becoming more resistant to the hyper control, criminalizing specific cultures and eroding our “public space“ (Diane 88).

Some argue that with developers and planning agencies looking at space as abstract conceptions based on economic motives, we are left with homogenous, highly controlled, consumer driven environments that lack diversity (Carmona, Low & Smith). This is seen as more and more of the urban open spaces are represented as public space, but are owned and control by the private sector. Setha Low, Director of the Public Space Research Group at City University of New York has recognized a growing trend towards POPS or Privately Owned Public Space that is constraining public freedoms of expression and culture by actively removing specific people and actions from a space through policing. “The private sector may be able to provide social spaces, but it is unable to provide public space (Kohn 196).” The increase private control of public space further segments society into economic cohorts by creating sterile public environments for the middle and upper class (Low, 83). The negative externalities of these new consumer-driven public environments are left without access to most spaces because of their lack of purchasing power (Kohn, 196).

As facilitators of these spaces (landscape architects), we must be proactive in trying to change

the condition knowing the potential harm they might be causing locally, nationally, and globally. Partnering with cities and local communities, designers like Milenko Matanovic the Founder of the Pomegranate Center and Professor Ben Spencer creator of the Informal Urban Communities Initiative have been able to develop new models for urban development that works with the public rather than force things upon them (Matanovic 12, Spencer). Author of the book *Temporary Urban Spaces* Florian Haydn writes that cycles of change are becoming shorter and shorter, with capital extremely flexible when it comes to changing locations (Haydn 39). This makes the built environment more unpredictable and dynamic.

In order to facilitate a change to the current state of public space in the US, there needs to be opportunities for testing new ideas at the local level. Because a strategy's success is not guaranteed to work the same in different locales, experimentation is necessary for implementing in new locales as well (Karvonen 6). What is also important is that "actors meet face to face to exchange tacit knowledge and undertake collective action" (Karvonen 11). As builders and with the proliferation of digital fabrication technologies, landscape architects have the necessary tools to test and fabricate at all scales; cheaply, and quickly. When experimenting, it is best to start small to refine ideas prior to moving to a larger scale. Many firms use private space, like their firm's roof or principal's backyard to test different ideas, but rarely are they doing this in the public realm beyond their commissioned projects. Their work does allow for testing of new ideas, but if a failure occurs it can be extremely expensive to repair or change. So there is a need for spaces where designer can explore ideas with in a community and with the community, with the result being a process for design that views experimentation and iterative landscapes as critical to better aligning communities needs with constructed space (Spencer, Matanovic, Carter).

To achieve "a free flow of information, the interaction of multiple differences, and the triumph of use value over exchange value..... there needs to be spaces of insurgent citizenship in which to avoid, resist, and subvert dominant discourse of the state and capital" (McCann,78). Within

these spaces, citizens can gain agency to provide critical discourse and visions that challenge the business as usual mentality. Michael Hardt, contemporary Political Philosopher argues that in order for the U.S. to reach a true state of democracy, we, the citizens, need to change our human nature and habitats by experiencing the democratic process more regularly. He suggest this can change our subjectivity - Who we are and What we are. Through collective organizing and participatory management our mutual efforts result in creating space that is part of the “commons” as defined by Hardt.

As a revolt against the growing trend of increased control and management there is an effort to move closer towards democratic space in the US called “tactical urbanism” (Oswalt 5). In the cities of Berlin, Copenhagen, Rotterdam, Aarhus and Amsterdam there exists a culture of temporary urban experiments, used as a means towards establishing an active street culture and to catalyze economic development (Ferguson). This strategy challenges the homogenizing trend by intervening on a site through local means and labor that inspires, experiments, and/or poses questions. These activities have taken many forms ranging across scales, from turning on-street-parking into parklets to the creation of an ephemeral city. One of the challenges with tactical and temporary strategies, however, is their effectiveness at the city and regional scale (Lerner). Lerner, writer on architecture and urbanism argues that tactical approaches are too light and local to take on the big infrastructural design strategies and have interface issues between the urban and rural at the regional scale. Also, the results of these activities vary in terms of their long term effectiveness at instigating change or awareness. The intentionality varies between why people use tactical approaches, with many not being driven by systemic or cultural change. In light of this, one major value of this approach is its subversive expression towards existing planning and development frameworks. The existing frameworks are seen by these proponents as obstructive, irrelevant, sluggish, and unlikely to generate nimble solutions (Lerner). In a society where individual, societal, and global conditions can change quickly, it is critical to promote strategies that are flexible and dynamic.

In the production of tactical spaces the local community plays a key role in providing insights

into the culture of a place that is latent. The culture or identity of a place is established through interactions between people and the urban environment. This dialogue begins to establish a sense of place through the interactions that are occurring and activities which are being manifested through social agency. David Seamon environmental behavioral researcher states that “place interaction is based on the daily interactions of everyday life and it is these interactions which place gain activity and a sense of environmental presence” (Lynne 16). When these encounters are supported and merge spatially, they result in an urban “ballet”. This type of public realm can be disruptive to conventional processes through actions or events that encourage the co-presence of people and opportunities for interaction. Positive interaction with a place establishes a greater sense of place attachment with the users beginning to be a significant part of their world (Lynne 17).

Over the last 100 years we have seen the evolutionary time scales of markets, technology, jobs, and social norms telescoping in evolutionary time (Healy). Today, we see major shifts in these systems within the matter of 5 - 10 years and even sometimes less. In 2012, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that average stay at a job was 4.4 years in contrast to half that long for young adults. This fluctuation in employment, speaks directly to the same situation within the economy. Employers come and go, and with the proliferation of telecommuting, fixed workplaces are becoming less necessary. There is also a growing trend toward less permanence and increased sharing as seen by the growing popularity of car and bike sharing (Oswalt, 10). This new culture recognizes the bureaucratic nature of participatory planning; feeling frustrated and powerless a do-it-yourself (DIY) mentality has taken its place (Oswalt, 14). This DIY culture feels that “cities should be built gradually as people make decisions about how to use the space in which they live” (Bowman 342).

This new culture of DIY’ers has recognized the dynamic nature of buildings and public space being in constant flux; shifting, aging, and changing use. The temporal nature of the city has a range of sites at different stages of their life, some newly born with others looking for a new life. A goal of successful planning and design is to limit the number of spaces that are dead or dying, while also

preparing for future growth. Some cities suffer from an abundance of vacant land, while others are challenged by an under supply (Bowman, 8). A city with an under supply of vacant land, while expecting significant future growth is challenged with balancing private development and public space. Within a context of under supply, architects can use their privilege and “soft power“ to embrace “our fundamental and prime responsibility towards the public value and welfare good” (Ferguson 2004).

When considering the different characteristics of neglected landscapes, there are those that reflect more of an ideal condition for a design effort through designer or public appropriation to be successful. When considering sites for appropriation, their position from high to low social and development value should be considered, with sites at the low end of those spectrums potentially having the highest value in terms of sites to appropriate. (Bowman). When delving deeper into specific perceived valueless sites, other factors may lead to an even more favorable site because they may be difficult to develop using conventional methods. When development is challenging, informal, temporary tactics can be used in the interim to build social, cultural and economic value in a site. Philip Oswald leader in the movement defines this as an exploitative use of temporary interventions. When defining temporary, it should be understood as situated between ephemeral and provisional (Haydn, 55). It has the essence of ephemerality, but has the potential to last longer than initially consider, thus it can outlive a provisional state, which is destined to be removed (Haydn, 55). This type of process for design has the potential to resolve the problems being produced through conventional processes.

This public value and welfare good could be referred to as a “just city,” where there must be public space that is “rooted in the active negotiation of multiple publics” who share the “belief of shared spaces, shared resources, and shared services” (Soja 28, Ferguson 14). Based on this definition of “just space” it is both a process and product. To achieve a just space, the process must allow “all equally the ability to inscribe meaning into the place” (Soja). This responsibility is shared by all in the community, which promotes true democracy in the public realm. This then transforms a space from

private or public into what professor Michael Hardt describes as the “commons.”

As populations change and neighborhood identities evolve, thus the design and program of a site may need to shift so it can properly meet the needs of the new public. This thinking does not promote a reduction in program, rather it promotes programming that is easily manipulated or altered which allows for the site to be responsive to not only the citizens, but also the weather, time of day, and season. Without the active vibrancy of active programming, sites can become dull, lost, and neglected by the community, deteriorating into a state as described by the “broken window theory”. Karvonen and Bas van Huer recognize that “at irregular intervals of time, some quality of place is deemed problematic by someone or a group experience place,” potentially causing a loss of social or development value (Karvonen 7). Tactical urbanism, provides an ethos to follow in reenvisioning neglect derelict sites in resources and assets that is not only concerned with the making of space, but also the “design of organizational structures, ownership, and resourcing” (Ferguson 165).

The one challenge to all of this is risk. Risk becomes a major deterrent of experimentation or entering into uncharted territory within the political discourse of the built environment. How will this community respond to this activity? How might this affect the surrounding neighbors? How will this make the community be viewed? Could someone get hurt? Is it safe? Who is liable? Will it be vandalized? These are all questions that city officials have to ask themselves prior to allowing interventions or activities into the built environment. Unknown answers to any of these questions or potential unknown risk, normally results in most new ideas being vetoed prior to ever them being testing. Allowing new and creative ideas to be implemented as experiments may increase the flexibility that a site or building could establish, helping reduce its chances of becoming obsolete or loss its cultural, social, and environmental value. Tactical approaches offer a potential resolve between promoting a flexible built environment at minimal risk.

Framing A Vision

MAGIC IN THE
MUNDANE

by Ali Ingle



My vision for a proactive designer instigated design process that challenges conventional process is inspired by projects produced by design leaders across the world who have shown the courage and vision to reenvision landscapes that are seen as mundane or worthless, into assets. They share the value that we should be addressing what has already been built (Oswalt 15). The previously unperceived potential of places offers the opportunity for building strength in our communities through the design and building of “shared open space that is democratically self-managed and encompasses a form of organization and a space” (Ferguson 14). The instigators of this work come from a broad range of agents, all of which share a passion for design and creative expression that challenge conventional wisdom. Within the US these strategies have recently gained traction in major cities like New York, San Francisco, New Orleans, Detroit, and Seattle to name a few. While in cities like Amsterdam, Berlin, Montreal, Copenhagen, and Bogota, these strategies have been allowed and encouraged for many decades. I take insights from the breadth of knowledge provided to define a strategy for design that encourages designers to use their privilege derived from the profession in working with the public in appropriating vacant landscapes in local communities. Each precedent engages a different layer of emphasis in my thinking that when combined defines my design process as one that promotes upcycling, community participation, sharing of knowledge, and design experiments.

The following case-studies frame my vision reflecting different opportunities for landscape architecture to be proactive in appropriating techniques to create socially produced space within, for, and by communities. The case studies are categorized into project typologies each defining a way of thinking about how to engage the public in appropriating space through informational equity, upcycling waste, and design experimentation. This project’s design thinking and creative process is inspired through the relationship between these strategies that combined reflect a multi-faceted approach to redesigning public space in cities using a diverse range of tactics. These projects help reveal the everyday in building democratic space and offer a framework for positioning this research into a larger pool of knowledge.

Informational Equity

As new policies and opportunities become available their promotion is important for making sure the knowledge reaches the people it may impact most. This is the same with development. As the volume of public interest grows in project or process, it reflects how well a method is responding to the uniqueness of a place. The language used, types of wording, or means of access can greatly limit an individual's ability to gain access to information that they need. Across the country, there are efforts to level the playing field or enact calls to action via various means of media. The goal is to identify and use multiple means of engagement that reaches the broadest range of people possible. Non-profits and the private sector are leveraging their skill set to innovate new ways of communicating with the public that allow for a broader audience to understand and grasp important information. These strategies have also been used to aggregate fragmented information across different government websites, academic articles, and other resources into a single resource. Through social media and the internet, these tools are being shared to allow others to steal. But it requires a vision to see the opportunity that lies with these ideas to be appropriated as a combined strategy.

The following projects are examples of how I would like to communicate my project and process to others. The mapping projects show how education can be paired with action to build upon the works ability to encourage engagement and empower the public through knowledge sharing. The open source nature of these projects provide proof that everything does not have to be money driven, but can result in profitability socially, culturally, professionally, and economically. Combining the web with printed media helps information reach larger audiences because it can be accessible through multiple channels. In certain cases, it is easier to have a printed copy when information needs to be accessed quickly without the internet. Additionally, different mediums offer different advantages so the more strategies that can be used; the greater reach and depth can be achieved.

Making Policy Public

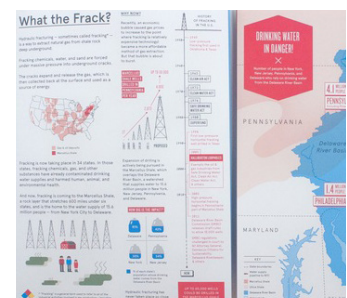
Center for Urban Pedagogy : New York : 2009

The center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP) is a New York based non-profit organization that uses design and art to foster civic engagement. CUP uses design to create resources that offers to develop information in forms available to the communities and individuals who will benefit from it most. They developed the Make Policy Public project to “make information on policy truly public: accessible, meaningful and shared” (Pedagogy). Their method favors engaging social issues through experimentation to help educate the public about specific situations or rights that can be confusing and overwhelming: child support, getting arrested, street vending, domestic workers rights, improving your local park, and to break down stigma’s for people previously incarcerated.

For this project, CUP leverages printed materials with bright colorful graphics to outline the topic that is being introduced to the public. Many of products are a type of pamphlet that is easily distributed and carried because they are designed to fold into a small enough size to fit into an individual’s pocket. Based on their intended audiences, the content is translated into the appropriate languages to provide equitable access to all communities. The multi-lingual text is paired with graphics that express the content in a visual format. This combination of both graphics and text, allows people



CUP Making Policy Public Photos courtesy of <http://welcometocup.org/>



who may be illiterate to have access to the information also. The printed materials are accessible through CUP's website where these materials can be downloaded for free or purchased (hard copy) for a small fee. With their primary content being free, they remove barriers for people to get access to their valuable resources.

CUP's focus is in educating marginalized, low-income minority communities about laws or issues that many of them may encounter during their lives. Through this knowledge, communities are empowered by simply knowing their rights. They feel safer in a world of complexity that may be foreign to them by being more aware of how to work within the system rather than against it. Each of the pamphlets is created with cross-disciplinary teams because of the multiple specializations needed to get everything right: content, translations, graphics, and dispersal. CUP work shows that "cross-disciplinary collaboration is a key method for developing new tools that enable the pragmatic empowerment of citizens" (Ferguson 116).

Mapping Opportunities

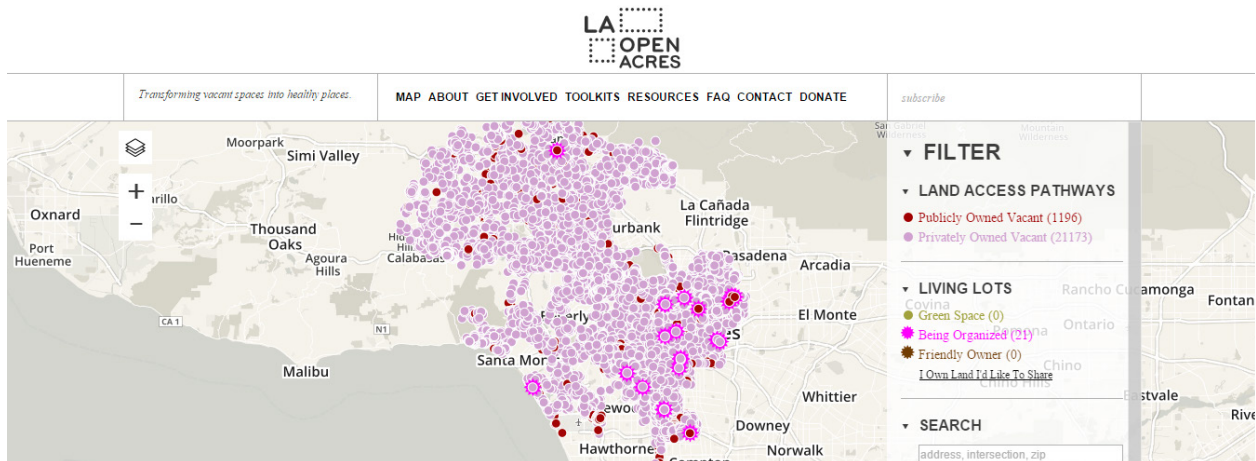
LA Open Acres & 596 Acres in New York City

Using online maps to reveal valuable information to the public is becoming more prolific with the number of open source web platforms growing. These tools allow the public to access maps that can be queried to then refine a larger set of geo-located data into a smaller subset. The range of information that is currently being expressed with online maps ranges the gamut of topics: urban forestry, real estate, public realm reporting, and social advocacy. Some of the open source tools that are being used to implement these strategies are: quickstart-map-js, Leaflet, Bootstrap, and citizen service request to name a few. Many of these platforms require multiple applications to be installed in order to gain the same functionality as provided by a consumer product like ESRI's ArcGIS. These open

source systems rely upon a collaborative informal community of users who help support and expand upon the functionality of the products. These systems are built upon existing coding languages like json, mysql, and javascript making translating between open source and consumer products seamless. This along with the copious amount of educational online tutorials and videos makes entry into this world easily accessible to the general public. Access requires a computer with access to the internet, which is becoming easier for the average US family to access.

With more and more data being geo-located in space, maps become the ideal method for displaying the information to the public. In addition, there is a growing trend for cities to provide GIS data to the public for free which can be used freely to publish and create services that are then displayed online. The level of complexity is limited to the attributes of the data and the creativity of the creator. Like the CUP pamphlets, ease of access and understanding is critical, so editing is important when producing these maps, not only when considering the actual data being emphasized but also what should be visible or present in the background. The technology allows creators to customize all aspects of the map, so color, text size, contrast, scale and symbology need to be considered at the different view scales of the map and on different screen sizes along with devices.

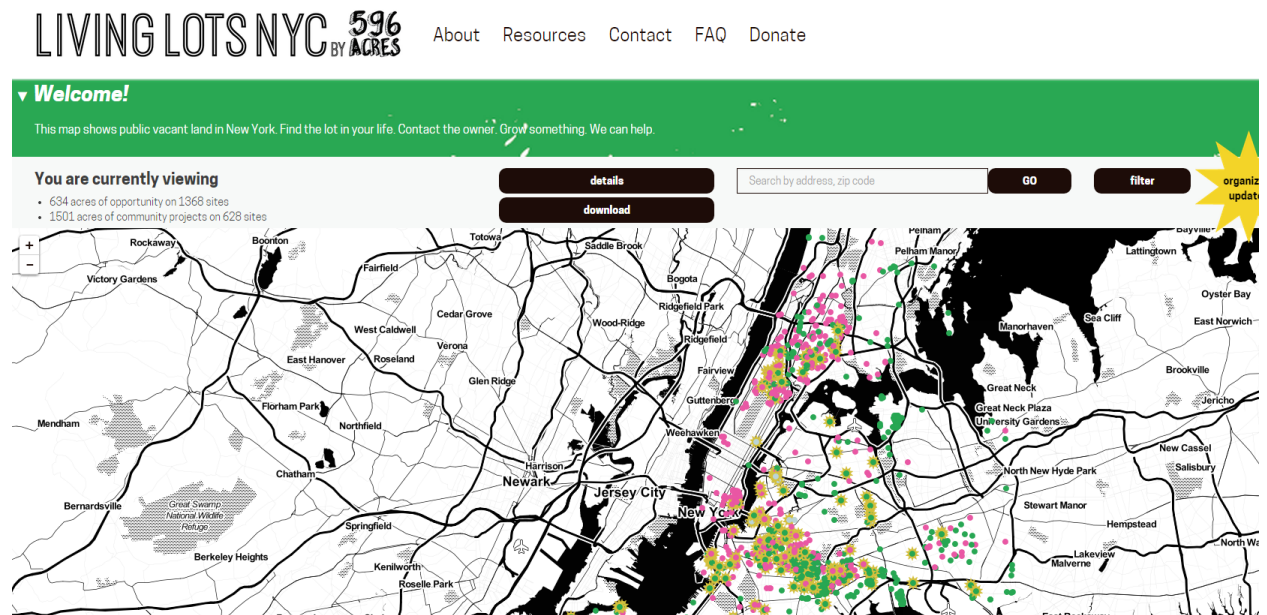
LA open acres and 596 acres in New York City are facilitating residents to appropriate vacant landscapes by giving citizens the knowledge, resources, and tool. These two websites are part of a



La Open Acres Website Screenshot : www.laopenacres.org

collaborative effort with other cities to promote urban agriculture on vacant landscapes in the city, in addition to connecting interested community members with the right people. Each of them offer users the ability to click on a geo-located point set on a simplified base map to then see who owns the property along with notes and the chance to see the property on Google street view. Each map was created using different methodologies giving them varying levels of accuracy. LA open acres used a purely data approach, taking the data provided by the local assessor, then running a couple queries to reduce the data down to what was of value to their interest. None of the resulting parcels were verified on the ground resulting in the data having locations listed that are not potential sites for potential appropriation. 596 acres used a more robust four step process that began with simple queries, to “virtual ground-truthing”, then more refinement through transaction records, with finally relying upon the community to provide information about the factuality of the information being displayed online. This has resulted in a map with greater accuracy. In addition to highlighting the potential parcels, both maps also denote if an action is underway or if something has been completed.

These projects show how online, open source maps can be a tool in promoting community empowerment through information that supports a specific effort. In contrast to CUP efforts which



596 Acres Website Screenshot : www.livinglotsnyc.org/

are solely outlining existing conditions, the following mapping projects go beyond existing realities to promote a better future as defined by the creator. Research, along with a vision was paired in creating this collaborative effort. When the community is involved these sites become more robust in content and value. LA open acres has a blog on the site, that provides more insight into the current efforts and actions. One challenge with a blog, is that it needs to be updated on a regular basis, or the site appears to be outdated. This added layer of information also creates a greater sense of transparency to the process for the participating community. Both sites could use a better visual representation of the data so that it is easier to understand at the different viewing scales. Other maps like the NYC Street Trees by Species map have been stylized to allow density relationships to be seen at the different scales of viewed by aggregating adjacent points as the scale increases. The Street Tree map also adds another subtle level of complexity to the data by proportional sizing the feature's point based on the diameter of its trunk.

All of these examples show how mapping can be used to promote the appropriation of vacant landscapes by local designers and community members. Using open source resources with free online educational tutorials gives the public access to tools necessary for replicating and adapting projects. In the nature of community driven projects, open source, collaboration, experimentation, and iterations are important components to this new DIY, subversive culture challenging the consumer driven culture through sharing, innovation, and experimentation.

Each case study offers resources and thinking that could be tested and used in Seattle to promote designer and community instigated projects on vacant landscapes. With all of the websites offering detailed outlines on how they created their maps, along with LA open acres hosting resources on Github, the opportunity has few road blocks. These types of websites can be paired with written resources to outline the Proactive Design Loop process to Seattle residents. One of the greatest challenges to the online map method, is making sure the data is current and that when people provide feedback, there is a quick response otherwise people will lose trust in the process. Trust is a critical

component when dealing with communities, without it these projects are a waste, so making sure public relations is at a high quality, along with current data is important. Even with these challenges, maps and other easily accessible information broken-down into simple narratives helps eliminate information equity issues and promotes a wide awareness or adoption of a resource.

Upcycling Waste

When designing and building space, many projects are challenged with a lack of funding and resources. In many cases the cost of design services, engineering, permits, and excavation results in a site staying dormant because of the perception that designing and building quality spaces requires significant funds. With a vision, strategic community support, and creative recycling/reuse, space can be transformed into a healthier condition with minimal monetary resources needed. Designers working alone and with communities have provided examples for how to turn a site that is a liability into an asset with very little needed in terms money by repurposing waste and reenvisioning existing conditions. This begins to remove the economic constraints from the equation, making this approach equitably available to all designers, citizens, and communities.

Upcycling strategies emphasize utilizing what is existing on the site, in the neighborhood, and in the city. With cities producing large volumes of waste in terms of material and space, realizing what is available could result in free resources and opportunities. The existing vegetation on site, can be saved or reinterpreted to produce an inviting experience. In this process, designers are required to identify materials first and then design within their constraints. This process realigns the conventional relationship between designers and the consumer driven world that results in mutual gains. The designer receives free or cheap material and the producer gets free disposal. The resulting increased social interaction between the multiple publics of the city gives rise to sharing knowledge, resources, and space as a means of “enacting the publics’ democratic voice (Ferguson, 14)”.

The following projects are examples of how creative upcycling design thinking can result in landscapes that are experimental in their use of materials, vegetation, and space, yet result in strong formal design elements. They also show the different relationships and partnerships that can result through tactical interventions. Realizing that government structures vary depending on what country the project lies, I am focusing on how the appropriation of a space was accomplished through minimal monetary means in different context. These strategies involve not only mobilizing materials, but also exchanging information, building new social networks and structures that go beyond conventional “public” or “private” means (Ferguson , 165). All of the sites were previously left-over, vacant landscapes that had seen little care in recent years, yet offered a significant amount value, expressed through the actions of designers.

Basurama

Art Collective, World Wide

Basurama (trash-o-rama) is a collective of Spanish artists that travel around the world intervening on neglected, under utilized landscapes using waste in creative ways (Ferguson). They implement these interventions in places of mass consumption and marginalization to bring light to the negative externalities of the local and global consumer culture. In some cases, these projects highlight the culture of trash collectors that exist in developing and developed cities. Basurama works with the local community to develop an intervention that responds to the unique needs and conditions of each community. They use materials that are locally sourced from the community to construct temporary landscapes filled with playful elements made from trash. Through sharing their knowledge of tools for building public space, they empower the community to continue customizing their environment with this new knowledge. These projects result in spaces that celebrate trash and waste in reimagined forms of play and leisure, giving communities new eyes for seeing the potential of neglected spaces and waste in their community.

Basurama offers me creative inspiration in being innovative with waste to create new social



*Basurama Intervention Examples
Pictures Courtesy of Make_Shift City*



conditions on neglected landscapes through playful interventions that are novel and confounding to the public. The value of experimentation, appropriation, and temporality in their work is something that I would like to replicate with my project. Each intervention becomes an edition or chapter to a site that continues to evolve through increased awareness and continued engagement between the place and the public. The issues that are addressed through their work has relevance in all parts of the world by providing replicable examples of creative visions using waste and space.

Atelier le Balto

Landscape Architect, Berlin Germany

The landscape architecture firm Atelier le Balto describes on their firm's website that they have been dedicated to appropriating what they define as Berlin's greatest asset - undervalued, neglected, and overlooked space into places of recreation and discovery (Ferguson). In their 12 years of practice they have completed 16 projects under the category of "realizations". The scale of these projects is small, with the interventions only consisting of platforms, paths, and places for leisure. Each intervention is subtle, giving the place unlimited opportunities for continued transformation of the space and others like it in the city. The interventions are carefully curated by the landscape architect, to "show people places they know but do not see (Ferguson , 53)." Some of the designs are self-initiated, while others rely upon community partners and cultural funding programs.

The subtleties of the designs and use of pioneering vegetation give each space a unique quality of controlled wilderness in the city. Introducing elevated paths through these lost environments reengages the public with these sites while preserving the natural ecology of the site. Even with the subtle gestures, the impact is huge, combining the aesthetic detail of high design with the values of the DIY culture.

As landscape architects, we have the ability to see places with optimistic and opportunistic eyes. The spaces we create have the potential to change the daily lives of people for the better or worst. Within the built environment there are many opportunities to engage these spaces which both Atelier and Basurama showcase. Atelier expresses similar values as Basurama, but uses the existing vegetation with a minimal approach to material use and aesthetic. Basurama uses play as its motive to the designs which results from the available trash while Atelier uses clean natural materials, giving the resulting spaces high contrast between their material quality and program. Atelier's work could be perceived as conventional design at first glance, while Basurama's interventions are bold and challenge conventions. Even with the different results the concepts of both strategies remain the same; to use interstitial space in new ways as a tool for inspiring citizens to see space and materials of the city with new eyes. It is through these self defined projects that an awareness for the potential of temporary interventions in lost space is discovered.



*Atelier le Balto Intervention Examples
Pictures Courtesy of Make_Shift City*

Design Experimentation

Aspects of each of the previous projects are forms of experimentation implemented as a test or experiments to change the existing negative conditions of our built environment. Every day, science, technology, and medicine are experimenting with our futures by creating new materials, changing DNA, and testing new devices. Experimentation in these fields is important to fully understand the impacts of these new ideas on humans, nature, and the economy. While this is occurring within the built environment, there are few opportunities for testing new ideas about how we should live and assemble the built environment. Land use policy and building's code are designed to eliminate risk and liability by restricting what is possible to known success. In many cases, developers take these codes and optimize what can be achieved to maximize profit, resulting in a built environment of homogeneity. The rigidity built into the public domain is being challenged by new problems stemming from climate change, water scarcity, and increased social inequities. Because there is very little room for experimentation, alternative solutions are singular or non-existent.

Cities across the world have recognized the opportunity associated with allowing temporary design experimentation. In response a number of US cities have begun to allow the public to experiment in the landscape as a tool for exploring the potential for varying land uses and to nurture interest in a lost space that has high potential. Different cities have used different means for allowing experimentation in the landscape; from removing land use restrictions on a site to city governments building temporary public spaces to test their potential future uses. Design experimentation gives designers and communities the opportunity to express their personal vision for a place without having to circumvent the law. When looking at land use codes, the list of activities that are allowed under the title as temporary is greater than the list of permanent long term uses. Defining strategies as temporary, gives people greater flexibility in taking risk and expanding upon the potential of what can occur on a site. This is a major component of the small house movement, which recognizes that a structure on wheels is considered temporary, thus constrained by less rules.

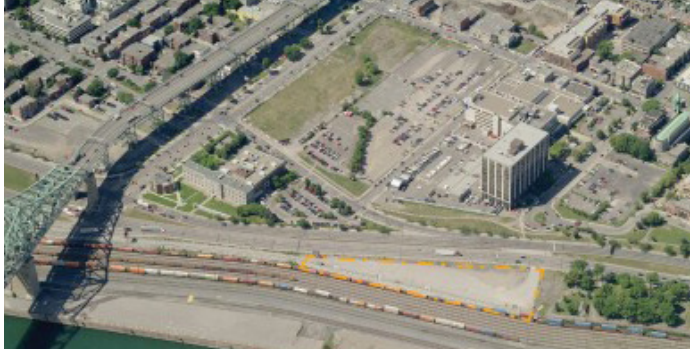
Many cities having been using temporary, experimental interventions to create new communities, re-envision lost space, promote art and gain insight into the evolving needs and wants of a community. Signs of temporary appropriation exist all over cities, but takes a keen eye to recognize them: piles of trash under some trees, a small memorial at an intersection, a swing attached to a tree, and chalk on the ground all speak to the spirit of adding new uses to a space through personal agency. The following examples provide a taste of the multitude of ideas that are growing in different cities across of the world. These strategies have many names: temporary urbanism, guerilla urbanism, make-shift, informal urbanism, everyday urbanism, tactical urbanism, iterative place making, adaptive landscapes, flexible urbanism, and open-source urbanism, all of which promote experimentation in the built environment implemented by the public, with the public and on behalf of the public.

Ephemeral City

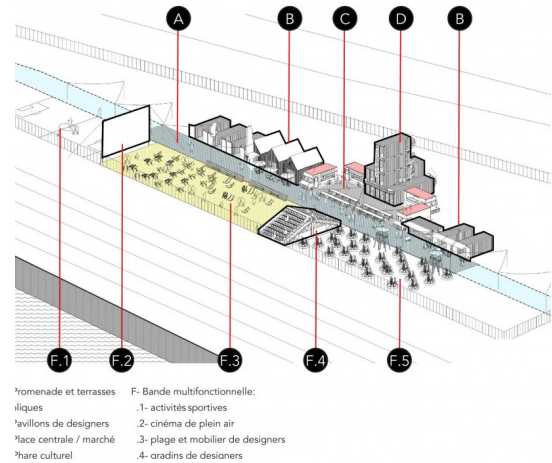
Montreal, Canada

The Ephemeral City project was started in 2009 by the Institute for Research in the History of Architecture at McGill college with five universities to showcase the value of investing in abandoned landscapes (Quebec). Since 2009, this project has been implemented as three events. Each event consisted of a symposium, design competition, and then design implementation for the winners which lasted anywhere from a week to two months. This project is research driven with an interest in the potential of design experimentation in creating new ad hoc communities. The relationship between the three is a unique quality of this approach that may be the result of it being instigated by multiple university programs in architecture and history. A major activity of this approach is a design competition with the winners having the opportunity to realize their design in transforming a site in Montreal into a temporary neighborhood. The program includes both landscape and architectural element with a range of amenities and social institutions being reinterpreted as having multi-layer programming or are of an adaptive modular form.

The long term results of these efforts are unknown, but do offer a new model for tactical urbanism that promotes a collaborative effort between academic institutions, design professionals,



2014 Ephemeral City Location
 Pictures Courtesy of www.aduq.ca/village-ephemere/



students, and the public in re-envisioning a space. Through combining efforts between specializations and the community the impact can address larger scale experimentation and research, with diverse sets of knowledge and resources. As the scale is increased, it requires a greater volume of resources to achieve success in this work. In 2014, the IHRA had to establish a crowd sourcing finance campaign to insure that the event was a success.

Crowd source financing platforms can be a good avenue for funding this work because they can act also as a test to identify the level of interest a place or community has for an idea or the quality of the projects outreach. A bad result shows that the vision is not aligned with the public, while a good result can gain immediate validation from the support. This project is a seminal work in North America, rethinking the relationship between architecture and the built environment as fixed elements with singular programs to flexible indeterminate space that adapts to the expedited pace of physical and social change in cities. It could be an example of how craft, high design, research and tactical urbanism can come together to create a whole.

Neuland

Berlin, Germany

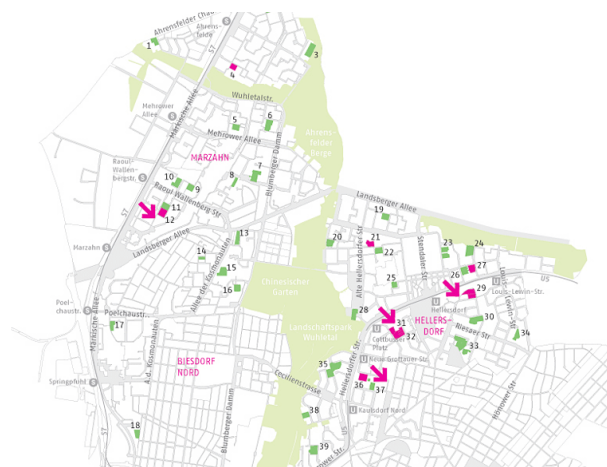
Neuland was a project initiated in 2006, to find users for fallow landscapes and buildings on a temporary usage basis in Berlin (Ferguson). These sites were marked with arrows, flags and

signs paired with a website to encourage potential renters or users to appropriate the site. Many creative ideas were manifested but could not remain on the site because leasing prices were oriented towards the market not vegetable gardens or green space. Understanding the problems of the previous program, the municipality partnered with the local housing association to focus on selected sites. The economic model also changed from one that was profit seeking to one that promoted an “unprofitable” pricing structures to keep tenants for the long term. They also found that it was important to have an independent nonprofit as an intermediary between potential temporary users and private land owners. The restructuring of the program resulted in it being a success, with the creation of many new professional services to meet the demand derived from the program.

Like the interventions themselves, the program has evolved, adapting to direct feedback from the participants. This approach enabled the local community to engage in temporary acts by minimizing educational, economic, and policy barriers. They found that it was important to give agency to the public by allowing them to design and implement freely with minimal supervision in order to “promote the original qualities of temporary use (Oswalt, 236).” This project outlines both policy and social considerations related to promoting authentic forms of tactical urbanism. A challenge to regulating informal activities is that they are unpredictable and spontaneous so putting any constraint on that aspect begins to erode away the subversive nature of the act which is a major part of the attraction. In the end, the program helped protect 100 ha of land from remaining in a fallow state, resulting in new community space for the city.



Neuland Call to Action
Pictures Courtesy of Make_Shift City

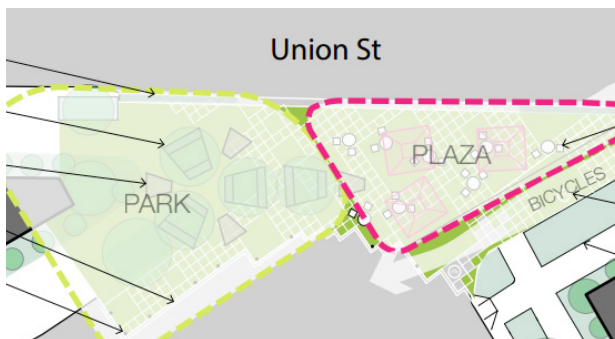


First Hill Temporary Parks

Department of Transportation, Seattle, WA

Seattle has developed a permitting process to allow for temporary interventions within the public right-of-way. This permitting process was a response to a project implemented by the Renegade Planning Cooperative called 4 Car Park (Wieland). This group informally turned a small strip of road and a left over triangle median into a small park by bringing chairs and tables along with people to the site. This project consisted of three iterations with the last adding a counterfeit parks department sign to the site. The response from the community was not positive because they were not informed. The city's response was to develop a means to allow these types of projects through regulations. Leaders saw the value of tactical approaches, but needed to develop a means for minimizing potential conflicts that might arise with other dynamic urban systems, so they created the Public Space Management Plan managed out of the office of the Seattle Department of Transportation's Open Space Division.

Realizing the value and potential that temporary interventions have for testing new opportunities, the city has proposed two temporary parks on First Hill in Seattle to test changing two insignificant intersections into open space. These temporary parks are part of a larger plan to improve the amount of green space in the neighborhood while also making the neighborhood more pedestrian friendly. These temporary public spaces are outlined in the city's First Hill Public Realm Action Plan, giving the idea of experimentation creditability. The plan provides a comprehensive

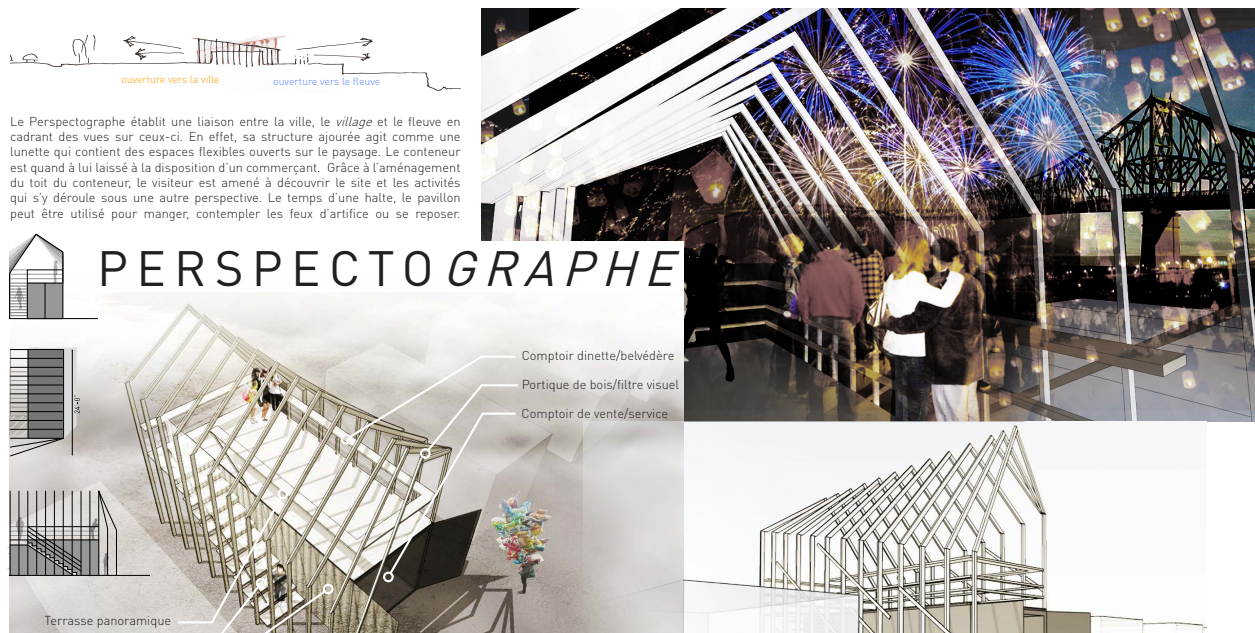


First Hill Temporary Park Renderings

Photos courtesy of First Hill Public Realm Action Plan



proposal for future improvements that will be completed incrementally as development occurs. This implementation of this process is design to be aligned with development; as a new development occurs previous experiments will be evaluated prior to full build out. The incremental approaches can be paired with phased development to allow communities to evolve based on adaptations derived from previous experiments. In contrast to the work of Neuland, Seattle is not responding to the intrinsic value of a tactical intervention as the city does not allow a community to implement such activities within a system that gives them an authentic texture. Rather they require tacticians to acquire a permit to implement a temporary intervention in public space. In my opinion this amount of control and top-down use of these ideas is contradictory to the ethos of tactical, temporary urbanism. I would argue that Neuland has it right, by giving the public their freedom, with less control the community is empowered to more likely continue to engage in these processes. Neuland's methodology has the potential to create new types of citizens that see interstitial space with new eyes, that then could lead to more interventions and community appropriation. Like the process, the system that structures these ideas should also be iterative in its thinking and goals.



2014 Ephemeral Intervention Proposal
Pictures Courtesy of www.aduq.ca/village-ephemere/



Proactive Design Loop

Chapter 4

Each of the previous case studies offer a unique way of looking at the built environment, that values social and independent agency, community engagement, experimentation, and an iterative approach to design that allows a site to evolve in order to reduce its chances of becoming lost or de-valued by the community. Within those projects there is an interest expressed by the public and designers that they want to leave their mark on the landscape. Like the wall of Facebook, or Twitter feed, we are now accustomed to presenting ourselves in the public domain, so when the chance is presented in public space, participation is normally high. When placing new elements in the landscape or on Facebook, the public responds through their engagement or lack their off with the post or action. In the field of landscape architecture this feedback process in Seattle is limited to voting on options, and when possible community ideas will be solicited (Recreation). This conventional process has made it challenging for the public to be involved in the creation of our built environment, giving rise to the production of homogenous, highly controlled consumer driven space.

I propose a design process that challenges conventional development strategies by promoting experimentation and an iterative feedback loop as a process to achieve social, economic, research, environmental, and public health goals. This approach relies upon feedback loops strategically integrated into all aspects of the process that allows the design to be adaptive to the changing needs of the public. This process recognizes that the city is in constant flux, changing and evolving with shifts in economic and political capital. The dynamics of the city are growing in entropy with the public constantly on the move searching for the next opportunity. We as citizens have become less fixed in a place. The Proactive Design Loop celebrates this condition by promoting temporary interventions on a site that are encouraged to be removed and changed when necessary or to simply test a new alternative; “experimentation informs design” (Lydon 9). This method allows place attachment to grow, along with the abilities of the community to reshape the programming of the site. In order for more places to be build of this nature, “design needs to steer away from its emphasis on forms and products in favor of sociospatial practices” (Mukhija 134).

The Proactive Design Loop is inspired by “tactical urbanism”, an approach that argues for the revealing of potential hidden within the built environment by instigating interventions that are “flexible, negotiated, or situationally spontaneous rather than controlled, rational, or ordered” (Davis, 90). These spontaneous and flexible actions range in their legality and legitimacy. They “blur the boundaries between public and private, serious and play, and ephemerality and permanence (Kamel, 126)”. Some strategies are derived through a partnership between local stakeholders and the government, while others are in direct conflict with the law. Each offer a valuable means towards protesting the existing conditions of the built environment. Both legal and illegal acts of tactical urbanism have the goal of changing the use of space in the city (Pagano 338). The different interventions and projects that define this movement in the US exist along the full spectrum of the law. They offer a “lens to critically analyze planning policies and discursive representations of place, and explore the possibilities and limits of urban design in response to urban informality (Rios 177).” These interventions insert themselves into the cracks, left-over space, and gaps of the formal city.

My approach encourages working within the realm of law to gain creditability in the tasks and allows the process to be promoted publicly. There is value in intervening outside of the law, but this should only be done if no other options are available. Chicago Mayor Daly took the law in his own hands for the betterment of the many over the few when he destroyed a private airport on the city’s shore to create an open space (Fountain). Identifying within what side of the law one feels comfortable working in needs to be defined by an individual’s ethics and morals. Working within the boundaries of the law requires users of this process to gain access to the property by working with the landowner prior to any activity on the site. This goes for both public and private landowners. If there is a challenge to gaining access, assembling a critical mass of local supporters could help create a stronger awareness and force in creating action.

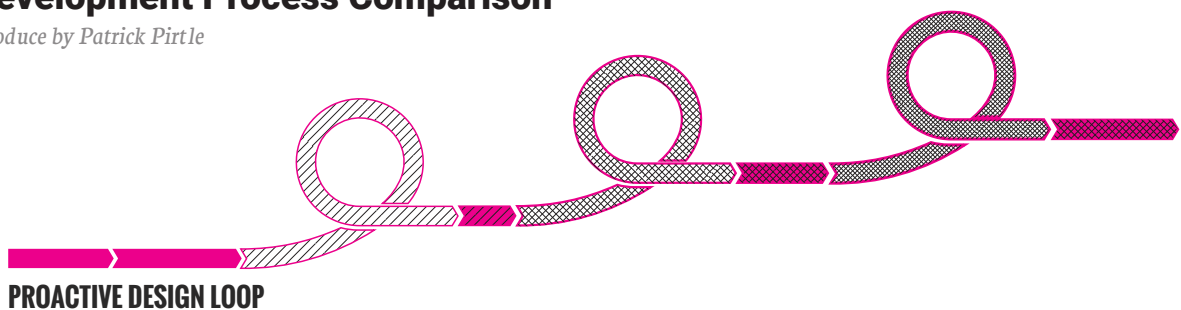
The Proactive Design Loop is used to integrate the values of high design with the sociospatial qualities of community through proactive design that creates adaptive landscapes that are both

products and producers of change in the built environment (Gottdiener, 394). These landscapes have the potential of revealing the unintended consequences of the law and provide an opening to challenge planning policies for practical, professional, and political purposes (Rios 174). These are considered spaces of possibilities by spatial theorist Stavros Stavrides; “a space that is not fixed in its form, meaning and uses, but open to challenges and acts of interpretation” (Ferguson 83). The benefit of instigated tactical approaches on vacant land is the opportunity of exploring the possibilities and limits of urban design and landscape architecture in the city by pushing the limits of promoting social-spatial benefits over economic gain and expedited processes.

The built environment should not be envisioned and created by the few who seek to maximize profits. Landscape architects and architects have the potential and skill set to be proactive instigators in creating common space on neglected landscapes that work to create awareness about latent issues in the built environment. Landscape architects have the ability to leverage their authority and privilege in the design and creation of our built environment physically, socially, and politically. The current contradiction between the known value of experimentation and informal

Development Process Comparison

Produce by Patrick Pirtle



DESIGN INTENT	COMMUNITY DESIGN	●	●	HIGH DESIGN
PROCESS SPEED	SLOW	●	●	FAST
EMPHASIS	PROCESS	●	●	PRODUCT
PROCESS DESIGN	BOTTOM-UP	●	●	TOP-DOWN

interventions within a rigid built environment is one that I am exploring in my approach and research. Landscape architects are well versed in this thinking and process, making them ideal leaders in this movement. Their professional skill set and knowledge can be leveraged for them to be masterful tacticians in gaining access to otherwise hidden resources and opportunities. Their credentials gets them in the doors of city offices quicker and their knowledge gives them the authority to produce all of the document necessary for construction documents.

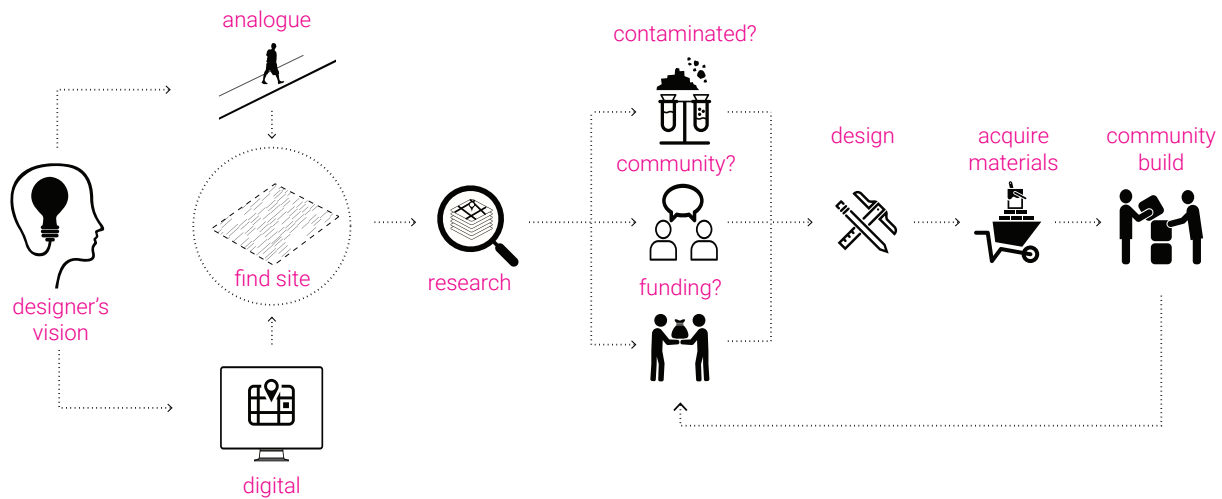
The Proactive Design Loop is a design process that is initially instigated by a landscape architect on a site discovered through a critical professional lens. The identification of the site is done using the systems thinking of a landscape architect. Occupation is then achieved through a negotiation process with the owner, until an agreement is met. Next the designer begins to instigate community participation strategies to create an awareness through some form of call to action that gets people engaged in the site. This can occur through a multitude of strategies all which should be aligned with the place. After information has been collected, some form of design activity should occur on the site, getting the public involved in creating change to its physical structure. These activities can range from site prep to building an amphitheater. The important part is that the designer and the community are changing the physical quality of the site together. When the community is involved with physical participation they are more likely of gaining ownership of the process (Lydon, 2). Once the design effort is complete, the process uses the previous effort to provide guidance into the next iteration. The goal is for the landscape architect to work themselves out of job, by handing ownership and control to the public at the right time. The process for handing the community ownership has not been resolved in the current phase of this research. More experimentation is needed.

The goal of this project was to initiate multiple design loops to begin testing the opportunities and challenges in this process, in addition to reimagining the space with the community. Instead, only one feedback and one design exercise has been initiated with good results. In the Second Act, the

process for creating awareness about the project and beginning to establish community support will be discussed. This research reflects the limited extent in which this process was tested. So the emphasis is on community driven design and feedback strategies for creating excitement around a designer instigated project. The narrative of the second act is expressed as a road map to encourage designers to instigate projects that push the limits of established policies through a design approach that utilizes the lesson learned from tactical urbanism which promotes temporary, low cost interventions on vacant, derelict, and neglected landscapes.

Proactive Design Loop Diagram

Produce by Patrick Pirtle



Second Act

Road Map for Designer Instigated Projects in Seattle

To test the validity of the “Proactive Design Loop“ an experiment was started, working with a local community to create a public space that is designed and built through an iterative process of various interventions. The following pages provide an outline of that process with insights and recommendations for others to consider when replicating.

Fallow

Landscapes



Chapter 5

The ideal sites to engage in the Proactive Design Loop are on vacant, neglected, interstitial landscapes. The volume of these landscapes varies from city to city, with Seattle having 4.7% of its parcels vacant occupying 6.1% of the total land area of the city, based on parcel data provided by the city. Seattle can be considered a city with an under supply of vacant land when compared to other major cities. In addition the city is growing rapidly, as noted in 2013 by the Census Bureau for being one of the fastest growing cities in the country, meaning that more and more of the remaining vacant landscapes have the potential of being consumed by development. A major component of this growth is the city's recent success of attracting large corporations and philanthropic organizations like Amazon, Google, and the Gates Foundation into downtown. With an improving public transportation and bike system, along with a major redesign of the waterfront the potential for increased growth is being realized and can be seen in the large number of cranes throughout the city.

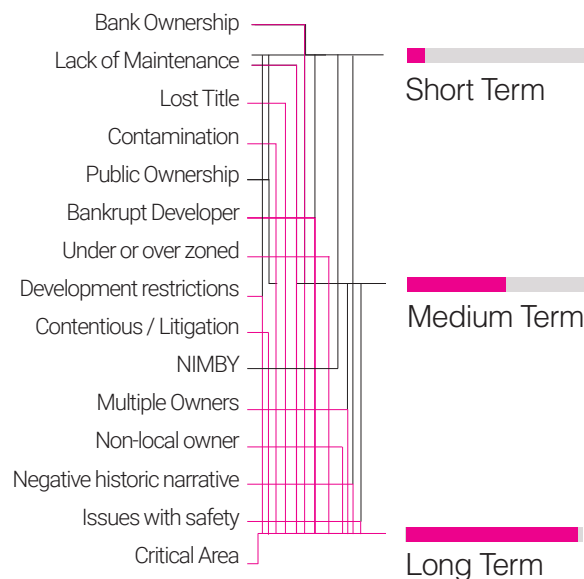
With the pace of development increasing in Seattle initiating activities on vacant landscapes becomes an ideal strategy for communities to preserve open space in the city. In cities where vacant landscape is overly abundant the role of instigation is about improving the health of the environment and in some cases attracting development. While in cities of under abundance it becomes about protecting sites from development and preserving open space. The role of landscape architects as instigators of creating public space on vacant landscapes within the context of an under abundance of vacant landscapes is important for "fulfilling their potential" (Harrington). Through gaining a form of control or stewardship of a site prior to the market seeing value in the space, the community gains a stronger voice during future design decisions. A challenge to relying upon the community to initiate these projects is the limitations of many publics to see an alternative to existing conditions, lack of interest, time or confidence to take ownership of the solution. The recycling of space requires individual skills and ability to reintroduce value to discarded space, in addition to ingenuity and creativity (Mukhija 130). Landscape Architects are trained with an ideal skill set for reintroducing value into discarded space. As development quickens designers need to be an active leader in preserving and creating public democratic space with, for, and by local communities, in addition to

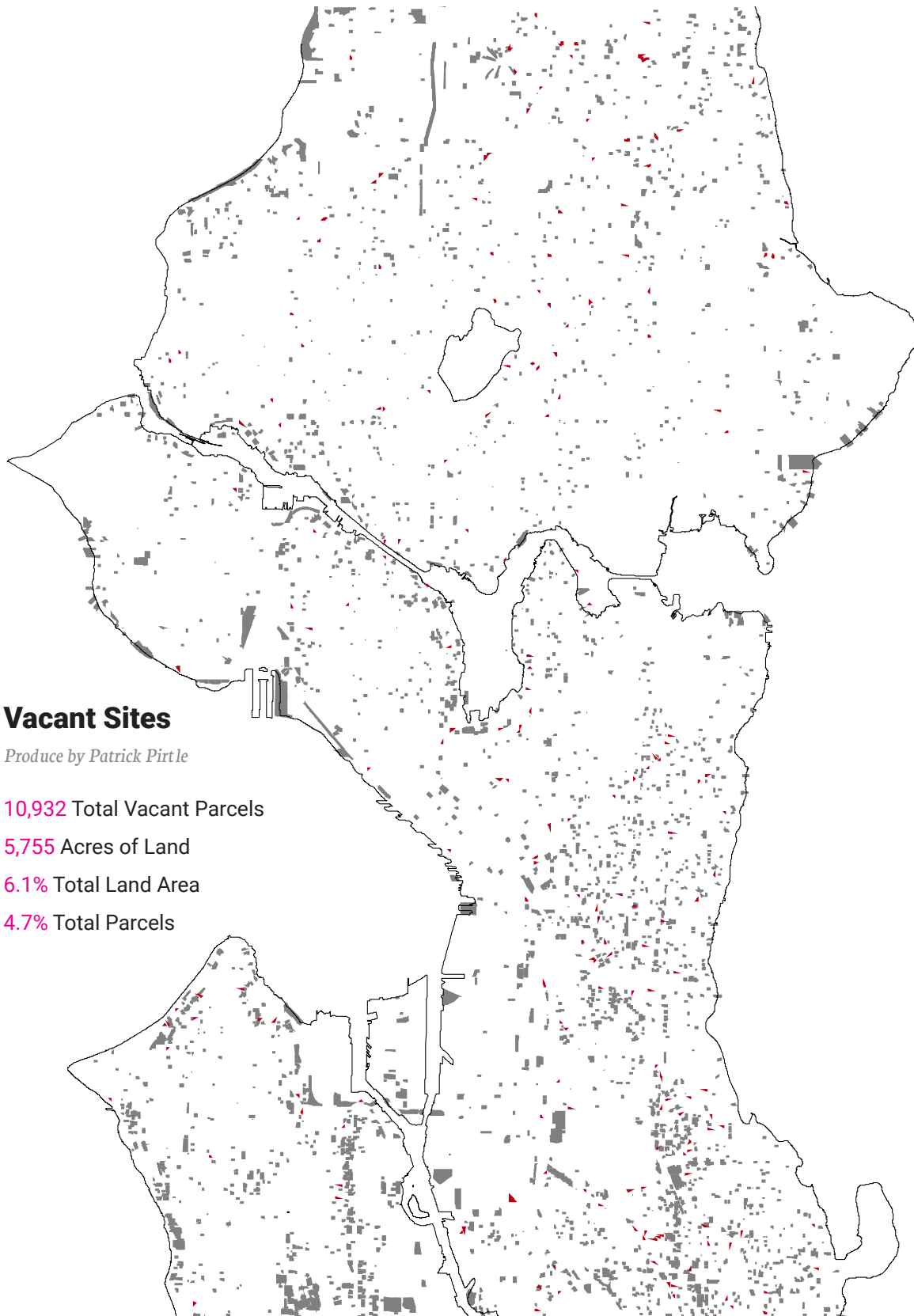
seeking commissioned work.

When looking for an ideal site for appropriation additional focus is needed to begin visiting and identifying potential sites and communities for this project to begin negotiating an appropriation. Fallow sites that suffer from certain physical, social, and political conditions are more prone to long term neglect due to structural or environmental challenges. The diagram below is an evaluation of different issues that can be associated with a site, resulting in different lengths of being in a fallow state. This list is not exhausted and could be further developed. Because this strategy is initiated through temporary interventions, it can help bypass certain zoning or legal constraints resulting in a win for all parties involved. The majority of listed site characteristics below have the potential of causing a long term fallow state, but can be altered quickly once the real-estate market shows interest. Social conditions can also be used as an additional overlays, to identify where a particular type of intervention may have the most impact or when looking for specific social conditions like food deserts or a specific community type. The conventional development strategies favors sites that have less barriers to implementation, thus the remaining vacant landscapes may have challenging problems for designers to engage with. This makes working with these landscapes potentially difficult, but could be highly rich in critical thinking and creative problem solving.

Vacant Site Characterization Study

Produce by Patrick Pirtle





Vacant Sites

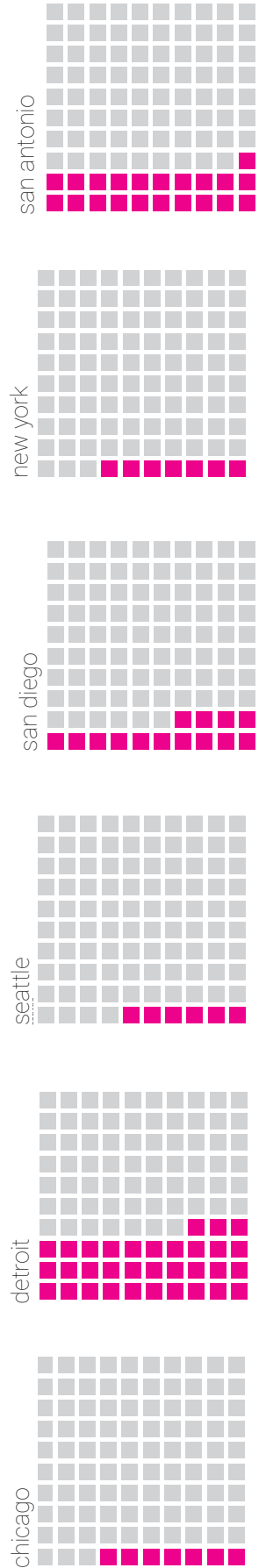
Produce by Patrick Pirtle

10,932 Total Vacant Parcels

5,755 Acres of Land

6.1% Total Land Area

4.7% Total Parcels



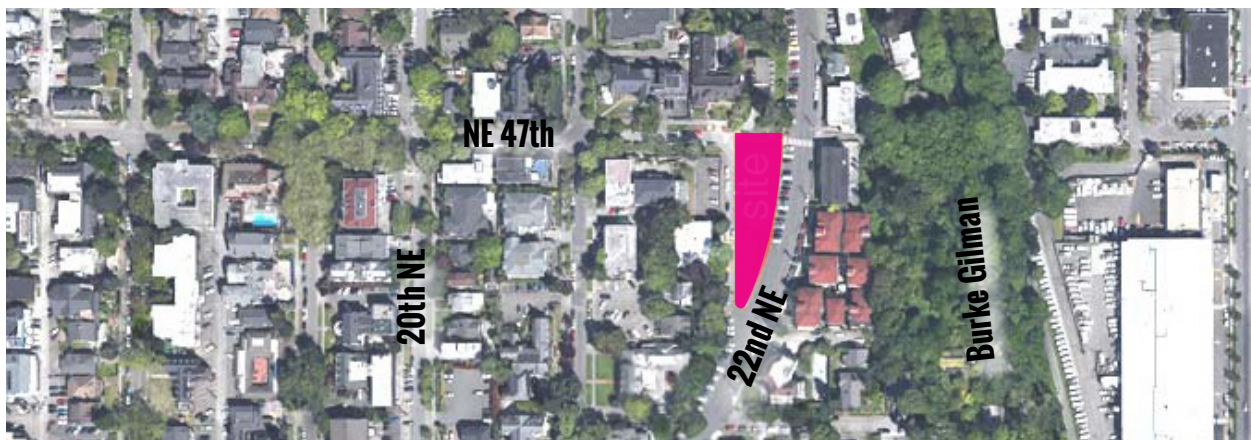
Truck Hill

Using both social and site considerations, I was interested in finding a site that was a publicly owned, left-over triangle space that is situated in a context of residents whom are highly transient and have a negative public perception. I also wanted the site to be located within my residential community, so that I would have a direct connection with the neighborhood which could aid me in gaining the publics' trust and getting them involved in the project. Accessibility was also a consideration, since moving materials to and fro could become more challenging over longer distance.

Following my interests and looking for the site with the most potential, I found Truck Hill, a steep-triangle site seven tenths of an acre and owned by the Seattle Department of Transportation. The site is a left-over space created when the roads were first build and engineers need to meet grade from NE 47th to 22nd Ave, so they had to break the grid leaving this triangle without a use. The site was initially given to SDOT's engineers to dump excess cut from local project, which over time turned into an informal parking lot for the students who lived in this area. The shallower slope on the southern half of the site was used by students as a place to show-off their truck's ability to climb the slope, hence the name. With the constant traffic on the south end of the site it became bare with compact earth, while leaving the northern half to be covered with invasives. Today, the ground of the historic parking area is a patchwork of grasses, weeds, and scotch broom with a random row of five *Alnus rubra*. The northern portion has remained covered with a dense eight foot layer of Himalayan blackberries along with copious amounts of trash. Historically and today this site suffers from a lack

Project Site Location

Base Images Courtesy of Google Maps



of respect and perceived value.

Truck Hill is located at the foot of a proposed greenway along 47th Ave NE that would connect the U-District and Wallingford via a pedestrian thoroughfare. Also within the city's Bike Master Plan is a proposed pedestrian bridge to cross over I-5 at 47th. With limited public green space adjacent to this path, Truck Hill becomes a critical node along the route that provides users a place to pause and engage in civic space. In addition, there is a public easement across that street currently being used as a driveway that has the potential to connect 22nd NE down through the Ravenna Woods (neglected park) to U Village along a pedestrian path. Turning Truck Hill into a public asset has the potential to be catalytic in establishing a new urban condition for this area that has the chance to positively impact the community. Truck Hill is just one example of how a single neglected site can result in transforming the perception of a place and culture from the negative into one that heals, educates, and builds new futures. Site selection becomes critical in maximizing the impact that this form of design can have on a place, community, and city.

The surrounding community consists of predominately college students (18-24) living in rental housing. The site sits at the edge of the fraternity and sorority community to the west and non-greek students along with long term residents to the east and north. The site is visible from two fraternities and one sorority. One of the fraternities is a dry house, meaning that they do not drink alcohol. Next to it is a Muslim House. The site is situated within a dynamic social condition that changes from year to year. In addition, its proximity to the University



Site Images Courtesy of Google Maps

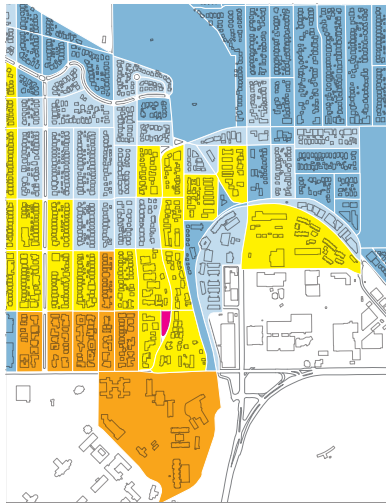
of Washington also offers the potential for creative partnership building that could expand the range of ideas that may be explored on the site. One thing to notes is that even with the constant turn-over of student population, the Greek system, University and other existing community organizations provide potential long-term partners and stewards of the site.

There are many sites like Truck Hills scattered through out Seattle where a valuable asset is hidden below the trash and negative perceptions. As landscape architects, we are able to identify these gaps in the network and hidden in the cracks and situate them in long term planning efforts to create more effective lasting change (Lydon 2). Beyond just simply finding these sites, landscape architects are able to reveal the potential through design and community participation. These abilities gives landscape architects the obligation to become active agents in shaping how our built environment is discussed and built (Harrington). This grandiose statement might be exaggerated but is needed in the face of the environmental, economic, and societal issues that are looming ahead.

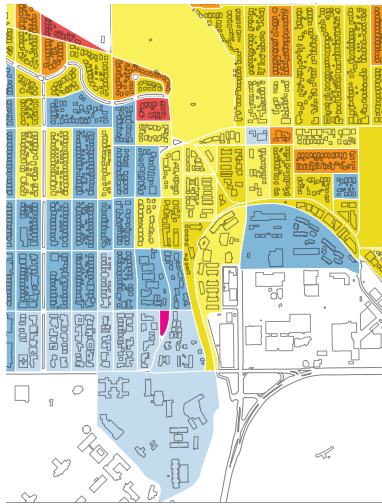
For the process explored here it was critical to gain a multi-dimensional understanding of the site, its community, and how it is situated into larger frameworks because it helps build the story for the public to why it should become an open space rather than something else. Revealing the different layers of a site and its context allows the designer to begin developing a strategy for conducting outreach, engaging the community, and building support. Being able to frame a project in these multiple dimensions can make writing grants and seeking funding easier as well. This initial research helps vet a site to justify time and effort being dedicated to its transformation because of an heightened awareness for potential issues that could arise that may kill the project. Each site has a unique history that consists of economic, social, cultural, and environmental layers each which need to be uncovered prior to proposing a change. I have used this process to identify a site that meets the needs I identified, in addition to meeting mobility and green space goals of the city and community. Engaging in strategies that produce multiple victories is paramount to project and process.

Community Analysis

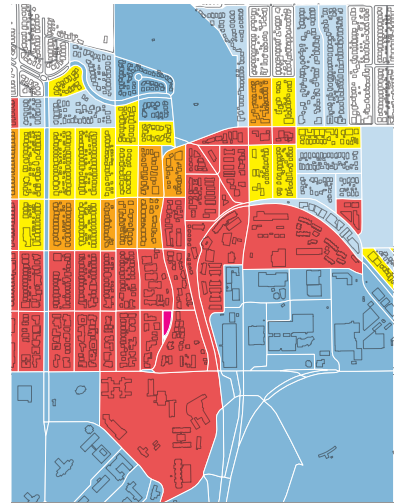
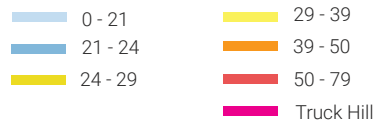
Produce by Patrick Pirtle



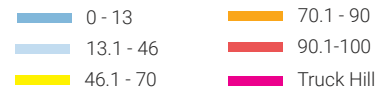
Population Density PEOPLE PER ACRE



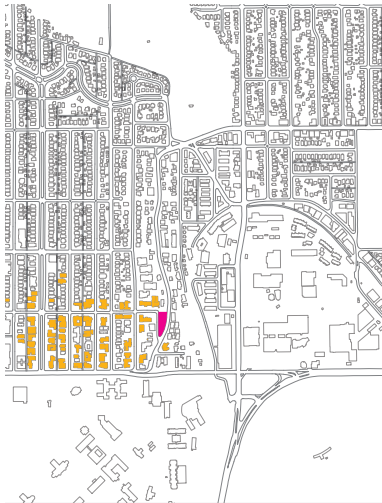
Median Age



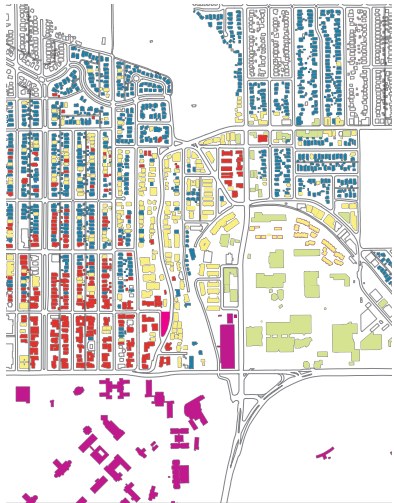
Percent Renter



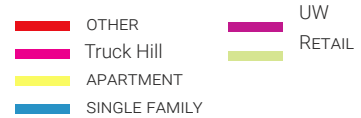
Vacant + Park



Greek Community



Land-Use





Feedback

Chalk Board Sign Detail Photo courtesy of Patrick Pirtle

After a site has been identified the next step is to engage the local community to gain support and provide initial feedback. Engaging with the community offers many benefits; it promotes them to be stewards and take ownership of the site, it allows the designer to understand what their perceived needs are, it allows for members of the community to meet and learn from one another, and it promotes the creation of democratic space in cities. Seattle's planning code recommends that landscape design projects provide an opportunity for the public to provide input or feedback, but is not required. This is in contrast to non-residential architectural projects which are required to go through a formalized design review process. In both cases, the city has outlined a public process that becomes standardized which commonly results in a limited amount of feedback.

The Proactive Design Loop encourages the use of a combination of both formal and informal strategies for public engagement because of the different benefits each type offers. When considering strategies for public engagement, 5 factors have been identified that should be considered and used to evaluate the best strategies based on a community's specific conditions. Ideally, it is best to use complimentary tools that gain the greatest volume and diversity of data. Like a menu, these strategies can be mixed and matched to address different needs. People are encouraged to build upon this list, using the same factors as the evaluation tool. The 5 factors that I have used to analyze the different methods of outreach are: DEPTH of information gained, BREADTH of information gained, level of TRUST required, required INTENTIONALITY for participation, and if it EMPOWERS the community. When conducting this work, I have also found that it is best to focus outreaching efforts in a gradient from the site; meaning the most energy should be focused closest to the site with the effort being reduced the farther you move away from the site. In addition, the strategies of going to where people are and to integrate these efforts into the daily lives of the community can aid in getting greater volumes of participation.

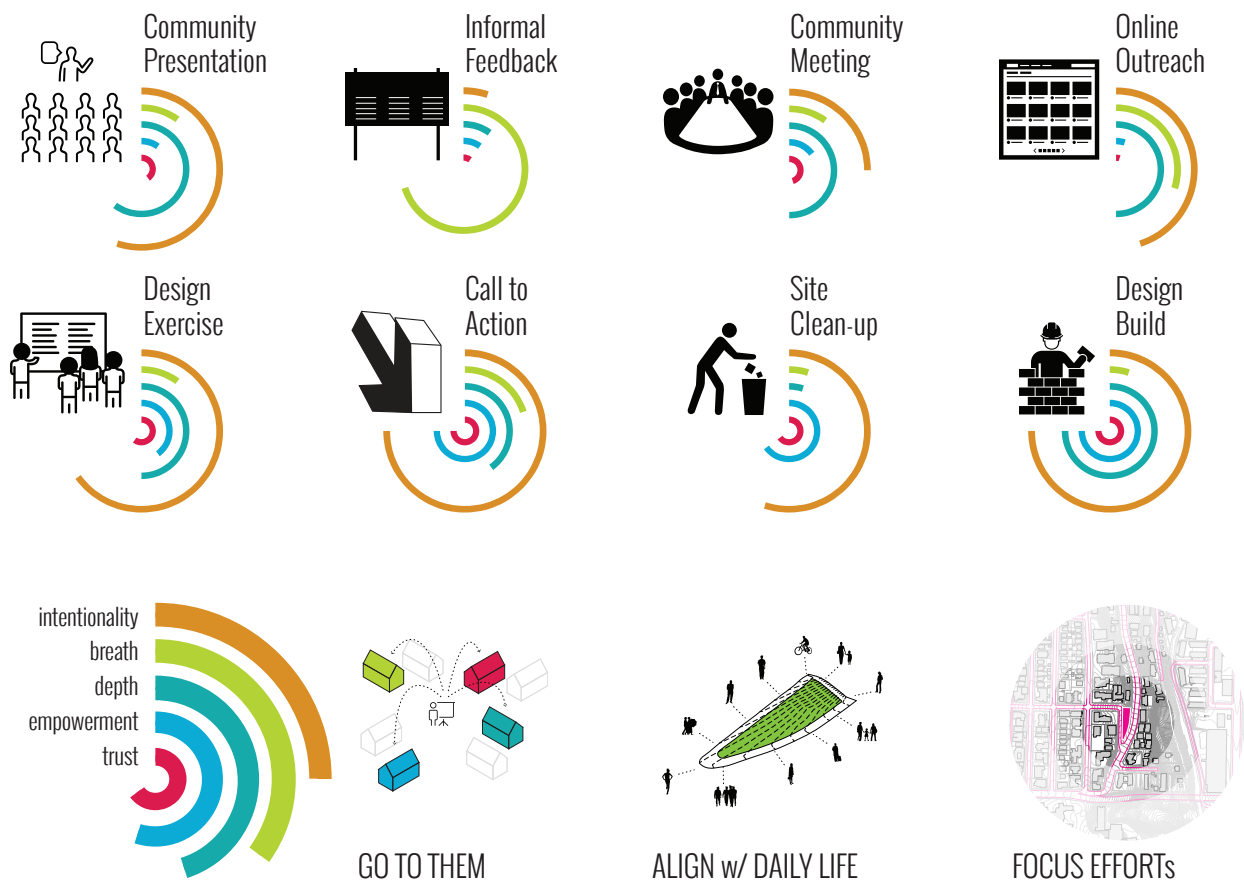
This analysis classifies the different types of public engagement process used by planners, designers, and artist into eight categories that then were evaluated based on the five criteria

for consideration. The categories are as follows: community presentations, informal feedback, community meetings, online outreach, design exercise, call to action, site clean-up, and design build. The scoring of each strategy is based on personal experiences derived from this process and past experience. Each category consist of a multiple actions, so the values are derived as a generalized average for all ideas within a typology. The diagram below shows the results to this analysis.

One major discovery derived from the tactics used in this process was that as intentionality increases, participation decreases. This makes sense because the harder it is to participate the less likely people will. This could be part of the city’s tactic to reduce the potential for something out of the ordinary to happen by requiring a significant amount of intentionality in the public engagement strategies normally implemented. The city could be concerned with too many people getting involved

Community Engagement Analysis

Produce by Patrick Pirtle



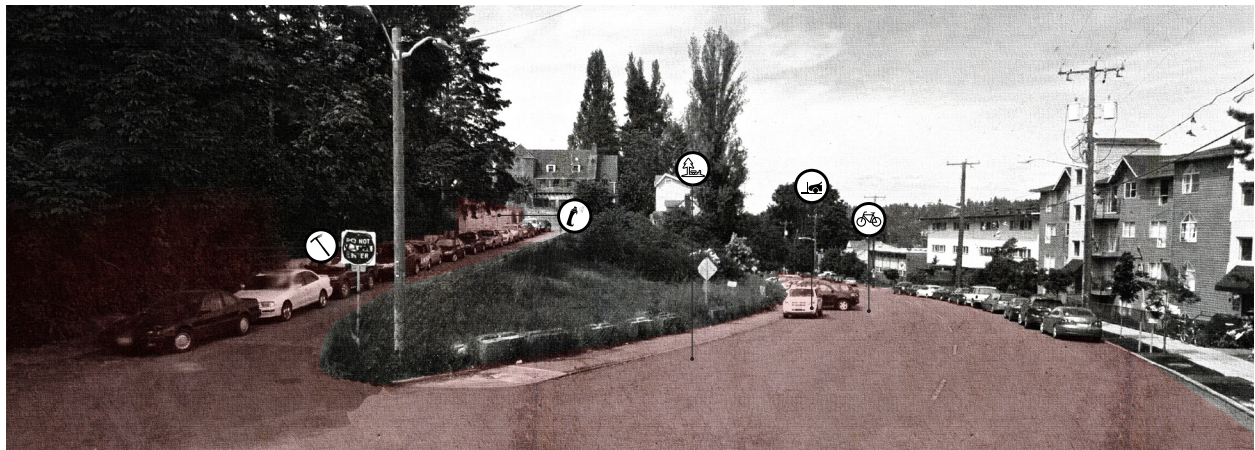
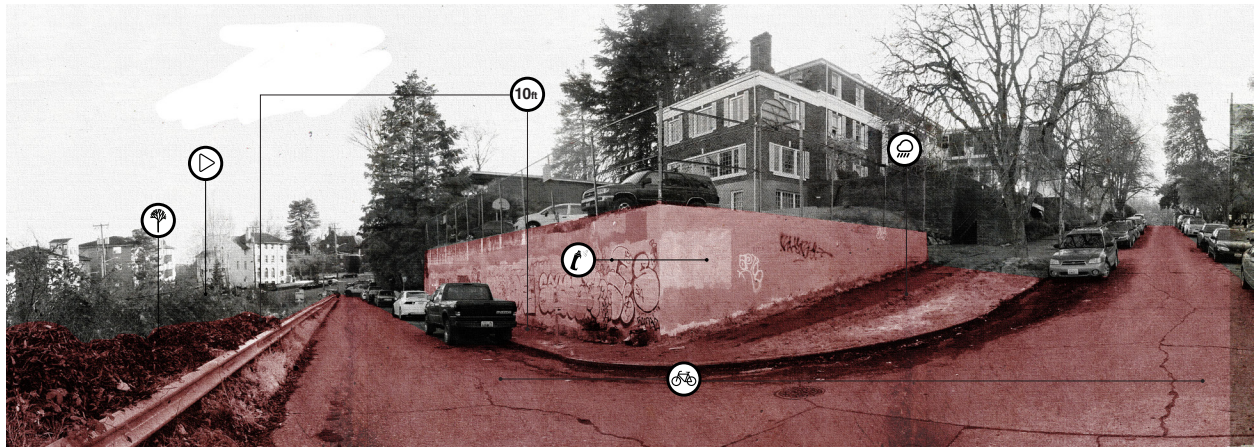
resulting in unplanned problems which may require more work and effort on part of the city and the designer. By providing some barriers to engagement, it removes certain groups from the process, for better or worst. To address this concern, it is recommended to use multiple methods of community engagement with varying levels of intentionality to maximize the breath and depth of information provided. This thinking recognizes that different people favor different means, some people favor the digital while others prefer a tactile option. It is important that through these processes trust is being established and built upon in every stage of the process.

I found that when the public is able to provide feedback on their terms and the means are aligned with their daily lives, the greatest volume of information is collected. When the community is brought together for an open forum, a greater depth of knowledge is gained through dialogue amongst the participants. Internet and informal surveys allow this to an extent, but as individuals, rather than part of a multi-directional dialogue. This is not to say that one is better than the other, because some people may prefer one means over another, rather it is best to try different methods till one works. Time, effort, and potential risk should be considered when deciding on the types of strategies to use. One thing to note is these strategies can also be used to collect social and cultural information that may help with future steps in the process. It is recommended to start with strategies that require minimal intentionality that can help build trust and interest from the community, before moving into efforts that require greater commitment.

THERE SHOULD BE BLANK? HERE

The first feedback process began by turning the initial site research and visioning into simple graphics to be presented at public and private meetings. The project was presented at over 10 meetings ranging from the fraternity presidents meeting to the University Greenways group resulting in total support with some skepticism about the strategy. In responding to the community having convenient access to the internet a website was also created with a blog and embedded online survey to allow the public to provide feedback digitally. Realizing the limitations of an online survey, a

chalk board sign was built out of a sheet of plywood and 4"x4"s with the statement, "There should be BLANK? Here" spray painted on the sign. It was installed on the site as an informal approach for collecting feedback that was aligned with the daily lives of the local community. The sign collected site program ideas from what was written and also provided insight into cultural concerns related to vandalism and belligerence. Community leaders believed that the sign would be immediately



Initial Site Analysis

Produce by Patrick Pirtle



Chalk Sign on Site

Photo by Patrick Pirtle

vandalized because of the nature of Fraternity Row. Over the course of one month, the sign was damaged only once. This result challenged the perception that is held by the outside community of the Greeks. This could have been a lucky result, but does encourage continued exploration of this aspect of the culture. Utilizing community presentations, informal feedback, and an online survey provided the project with a plethora of ideas and stories to use in the next step of the Proactive Design Loop process.

Over 150 responses were collected from the sign with only 10 responses from the website. The information gained from the online survey has greater depth than the sign, with each response layered with multiple ideas provided in sentence form over single written ideas. Though the website was also able to collect contact information from seven residents who can now be contacted for future efforts. The combined results begins to paint a picture of the community through the ideas proposed and the language used in their responses. The feedback provides a good starting point for beginning to experiment with different design ideas on the site with the designer working with the community. Over time, the feedback process evolves from discussing design ideas into a process for negotiating change and shifts in the structure to meet the evolving needs of the community. This process can occur as often or little as needed and be as long or short as necessary; it is about a negotiation between the landscape architect and the community working together in fulfilling each others interest.



Photos by Patrick Pirtle

BLANK? Here

The sign was installed on February 22nd 2015 and was removed on March 10th 2015. A plastic cover was used to protect it during the rain, with the public carefully removing it once the sun had returned.

The amount of care and respect that was shown to the intervention was inspiring. When the sign was knocked over, a group of students took some milk crates from an adjacent house and turned it into a ramp. The following is the list of ideas for what the public thinks should be on the site.

Parking Lot	8
Park	7
Community Garden	7
Outdoor Gym	6
Skate Park	5
Safe Sidewalks	4
Flowers	3
BBQ Pit / Fire Pit	3
Open Graffiti Wall	3
Big Kid Playground	3
Pot Farm	3
Giant Swing	3
Cinema	2
Community Pool	2
No More Parking	2
A Lawn	2
Natural Area	2
Lighting	2
Bandstand	2
Food Trucks	2
Giant Slide	2
Putt- Putt Golf	2
Community Art	1

Dank Memes	1
Free Cigs	1
Giant Hot tub	1
Giraffe Enclosure	1
Helipad	1
Herd of mooses	1
Jimmy Johns	1
Labrynth	1
Liquer Store	1
Lounge Set	1
Mini Mart	1
Mosh Pit	1
Mud Pit	1
Not a building	1
Not Pinwheels	1
Panda Habitat	1
Peace	1
Rain Garden	1
Stairway to Heaven	1
Strippers	1
Taco Bell	1
Tomato Patch	1
Totem Poles	1
Trees and herbs	1
UW spelled in Flowers	1
In and Out Burger	1
Dutch Bros	1
Peace	1
Love	1
B Ball Court	1
Bar	1
WIFI	1
Socialist 3d printing	1
Nice Hill	1
Dog Park	1
No Trash	1

Design

Chapter 7



Clean-Up Day Photo courtesy of Patrick Pirtle

For this design process a completed design is not necessary for interventions to begin occurring on a site. Getting on site early in the process to begin cleaning and clearing the site promotes community empowerment by involving them in the process. This is the same for creating and installing design interventions on the site. For this process, it is recommended to follow a feedback exercise with a design activity prior to asking the community to provide more feedback. Working with young, transient communities it is important to engage them in doing, early and often to promote active learning throughout the process and to help keep them engaged and interested. In this process design is considered as all aspects of the process that are required to implement a design on a site, this includes site prep, trash pickup, weeding, in addition to actual building and constructing. Design tasks provide considerable opportunity in instigating action on the site to test programming ideas, construction methods, and site preparation techniques. Starting with quick wins and site prep can aid in establishing a spirit of stewardship and critical thinking right away. In addition, having activity happening on the site can help spur greater interest from the community because of the visible change.

This change can range in scales, but continued evolution to the site is important in order to minimize the chance of it losing social value. Having the community involved in the “physical testing of ideas can yield unique insights into the expectations of future users: truly participatory planning must go beyond drawing on flip charts and maps” (Lydon 2). The continual loop between design and feedback allows sites to be evaluated during each phases of the project. This iterative relationship creates an environment where experimentation and active learning is emphasized and encouraged. This process begins to change designers and citizens from passive to active in shaping their built environment. Working directly with designers, the public learns how a designers sees and builds, while the designer gains inspiration from the relationships and creativity of the public.

Within conventional development there are limited opportunities for the community to be empowered. The public’s role is one of input which is represented in the city of Seattle’s; they have the

chance to speak their mind, with varying results. Allowing the public to be only involved in design visioning, can help in getting them to take ownership of a site, but does not empower them with new knowledge to take back to their community. In conventional development, the conversation between the designer and the public is commonly a one-way channel, rather than a bidirectionally dialogue.

Looking at the methods of community engagement strategies that provide the greatest value for empowering the community come from efforts that give them direct involvement in the creation and management of the space. Processes utilizing hand tools over industrial equipment may take longer, but offer a greater opportunity for everyone involved to gain new knowledge and skills. Design-Build efforts with communities offer a robust means towards empowering communities to take ownership of their environments. Being part of the construction process may empower the participants with new tools in managing the environment around them. Like Parking Day, an intervention implemented by landscape architects in San Francisco, these interventions have the potential to be catalytic in instigating additional change in the community. Integrating opportunities for the public to be empowered early in the process is important for prolonged engagement.

LET'S BUILD A PARK

The first step in getting people onto the site was a clean-up day. During the initial feedback process there was skepticism expressed by parts of the community about the actual potential that the condition of the site could change; the clean-up day provided an opportunity to begin changing that perception. With Truck Hill having been in a state of neglect for over 10 years it needed significant maintenance to give it a healthy aesthetic, plus it would reveal areas of the landscapes surface that have been hidden below blackberry bushes for even longer. Following the guidance and interest of the community, while also working to gain support and validation for the project, the clean-up day was organized with the University of Washington Eco-Reps, the North of 45th Committee, and the Department of Neighborhood's University District Office. Through partnering with known

Let's Build a Park

@ intersection of NE 47th & 22nd NE

Join the effort in beginning the transformation of the vacant lot at the intersection of NE 47th & 22nd NE into an asset for the community.

What
Site Clean-Up

When
Friday April 17
10am - 4pm

Questions?
Patrick - pirtlp@uw.edu

Visit
www.universityhill.wordpress.com

Supporters
Friends of University Hill, UW EcoReps,
North of 45 Group, University Greenways,
SDOT, & the Community



ALL TOOLS PROVIDED, BRING YOUR OWN GLOVES IF POSSIBLE

Clean-Up Day Flier

Produced by Patrick Pirtle

community stakeholders and leveraging existing relationships I was able to give the project additional credibility. The public's involvement with an effort to intentionally alter the site allows the public to gain a more intimate relationship with the site before proposing changes.

To create an awareness for the effort and the project, a flier was created and published in the monthly Greek newsletter and was also dispersed using social media, email, and posting on walls and bulletin boards across campus. Like the Center for Urban Pedagogy's work, bold colors were used with highly saturated graphics to attract the eye and entice the public to read. Once promotion began, preparation for the event was necessary. This required getting enough gloves, and proper tools for the volume of volunteers that would be in attendance. Since, the process for participating was informal, participants could simply show up at any point during the time frame to assist with the clean-up. This allows for greater flexibility in the process, but makes planning more difficult.

Working to reduce cost as much as possible is a strategy being used to help remove barriers from this process that may limit low-income community's ability from appropriating and redesigning space in their community. Certain resources were derived through leveraging the privilege that I, the author have gained through professional and academic relationships. Tools were required from the NE Seattle Tool Library, where for a small fee of thirty dollars annually the public has access to a plethora of tools and resources. Their tool volumes can facilitate large clean-up activities. For gloves, the Seattle Department of Utilities provided an assortment of gloves and tools for communities to have for these types of community activities. For cleaning the built environment of waste and invasive vegetation, the city of Seattle offers citizens the necessary resources for free or at a low-cost, making accessibility available to the majority of city residents.

The event had over 30 students show up throughout the day to aid in the effort of eradicating invasive objects from the site. Five bags of trash and 10 truck loads of yard waste were removed, still leaving half of the site to clear of Himalayan blackberries and trash. Through the relationships built,

it began to establish a critical mass around the project with multiple attendees wanting another event soon. This initial event spurred an excitement in the community with multiple students stating that they were going to tell their friends about the project and how they were determined to make the place better. The president of the Interfraternity Council personally requesting that the project be presented at a future Fraternity presidents meeting and that his house would be interested in taking ownership of the site . Slowly, the public's vision of the site is changing and eventually their vision will become a reality.

Through the Proactive Design Loop the ownership and leadership of the process is exchanged between the community and the landscape architect. In certain aspects the designer takes the lead to implement a personal project, this was expressed in the chalk board sign and website. During the clean-up day and as part of certain program exploration the community can take the lead. It is the sharing in gaining and giving value between all parties involved which gives the process a richer texture than conventional design processes which might favor one aspect of design over another; high design or community design. Here a combined approach is taken to create democratic, socially built public spaces.

Another clean-up day has been organized to fully remove all of the invasive weeds from the site. Having the site cleared prior to moving forward with any design feedback exercises is important for giving the public and designer a new identity of the site that was previously hidden under blackberries and trash. It is through these types of small victories that can lead to a massive response from the public that pushes the site forward. This helps empower the public to stay engaged and continue making changes to the site. Feedback loops between the two processes provide insight into how the site is functioning as a tool for responding to the communities evolving needs year to year, quarter to quarter.

Loop



Chapter 8

The Proactive Design Loop between the community's feedback and physical changes made to a site is important for allowing a site to be flexible and adaptable to the shifting culture of a place. The loop also allows for experiments to reset or shift to utilize what was learned from before to make another hypothesis. Recognizing mistakes and victories, then responding to them is part of the value of this process. Conventionally, the community gets options to choose from, while here they create and experience the choices and then make a decision based on active learning. Over time, the feedback loop becomes richer as the public gets accustomed to this process. Because elements are temporary, it allows for them to be removed and re-mixed into another element. Like in a closed loop system, the goal is to never let resources go to waste.

The loop is a symbol of infinite potential because the loop allows for limitless iterations and ideas to come from a single action. Designers can use the loop to test ideas which can lead to them being used at much larger scales. Here the loop can grow in scale becoming a new standard or vision. For the community and city, this loop can multiply, creating copycats in building new public spaces and programming through out the city. The project themselves can also multiply through synergies derived out of previous projects. As citizens become more accustomed to seeing the world with new eyes, they are given new authority over their environment to alter their private property with low-impact-development techniques or appropriate the planter strip for a food garden. It becomes the iterative projects derived from these single actions which reflects the greatest value in terms of investment. The more the project is replicated and the more the public is involved, the better.

Always looking a couple steps ahead is also necessary in this process. Things are unpredictable, so foresight and planning for Murphy's Law can help ease the process. Like community outreach, the design loop needs to also use different methods for moving between the different phases of the Proactive Design Loop. As designers and community members become more familiar with the process they can begin to predict the types of issues that may arise and prepare accordingly. The challenge is that each site has its own unique circumstances, thus each site and community will

have their own unique issues. A critical element of this work, is a means for providing these insights back to the public. A blog or online platform has been known to work as a tool for transparency and sharing stories. Other non digital tools like a bulletin board or newsletter also work, but lack archival benefits and dynamism which the internet provides. It is best to start exploring both, until the proper strategy reveals itself over time. “Eames sold his ignorance and desire to learn about a subject” (Harrington,). The same goes for these projects, since all communities are different and new interventions will result in unknown results.

One important piece of the loop, is that the previous efforts and thinking need to be directly linked to one another. Not responding to previous feedback or design activities relegates them and dismisses the importance of reflecting upon the content. Transparency is important to this process to built trust and to allow outsiders the ability to follow and engage with the project on their time. This does not limit what can be done, but requires that the structure be nimble. From maintenance, to repairs, or testing a new idea there can always be an opportunity for new participants in the process. The Proactive Design Loop provides this flexibility and values the potential that is hidden in new relationships, partners, and ideas.

Truck Hill

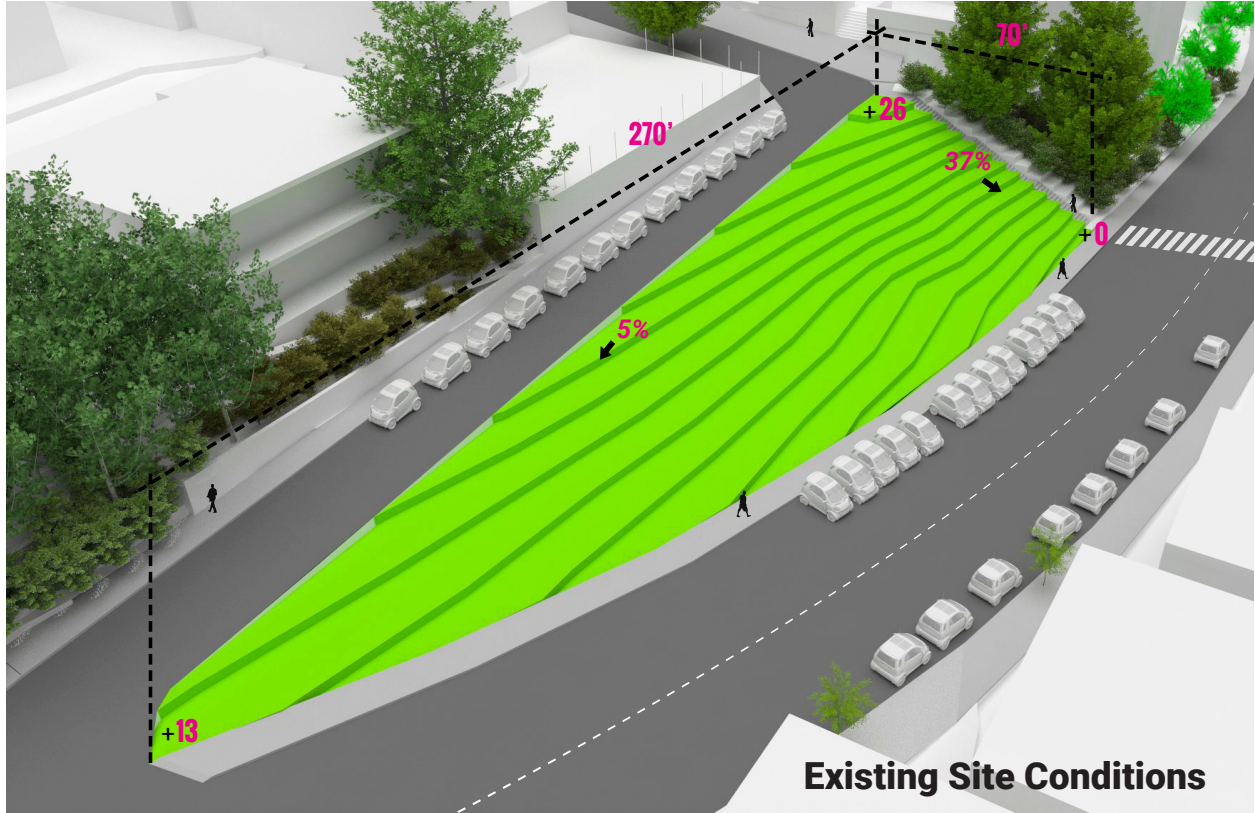
The first feedback loop in this project has yet to occur, meaning that the information gained during the initial feedback phase has yet to be presented back to the community as a discussion. The next step is to move forward with developing design ideas about the potential of the site using the comments from the website, chalk-board sign, and public meetings. The number of responses and participants in the clean-up show me that the methodology and thinking is working thus far. The next step becomes organizing a design charrette with the community to begin a dialogue about the future of the site. When moving between different phases of the process, the information gained needs to be translated back to the public. This is another aspect of the process which makes landscape architects valuable to its success. Synthesizing and organizing complex thinking into simple to read images and diagrams is a strength of landscape architects. The use of graphics has been a constant in

this process to help people better understand the site and to potentially conjure a response from the viewer.

Using the feedback gained, paired with the knowledge that some groups are concerned with the projects feasibility, I developed a menu of design ideas, each representing a different potential site component. Each design idea is either directly from the board or a hybrid of multiple ideas. Each is rendered on the landform which would best suit its function. The images help ground each idea to the place, giving it form. It also helps establish a visual baseline for the community to begin discussing different design ideas for the site. Ordering them side by side allows the public to begin identifying their own relationships, revealing for themselves potential designs for the site. These graphics will be paired with three generic site designs derived from taking multiple menu items and turning them into three different potentials. The program for each design is keep primarily the same, but the form and infrastructural requirements change. This results in different costs and constraints for each of the designs.

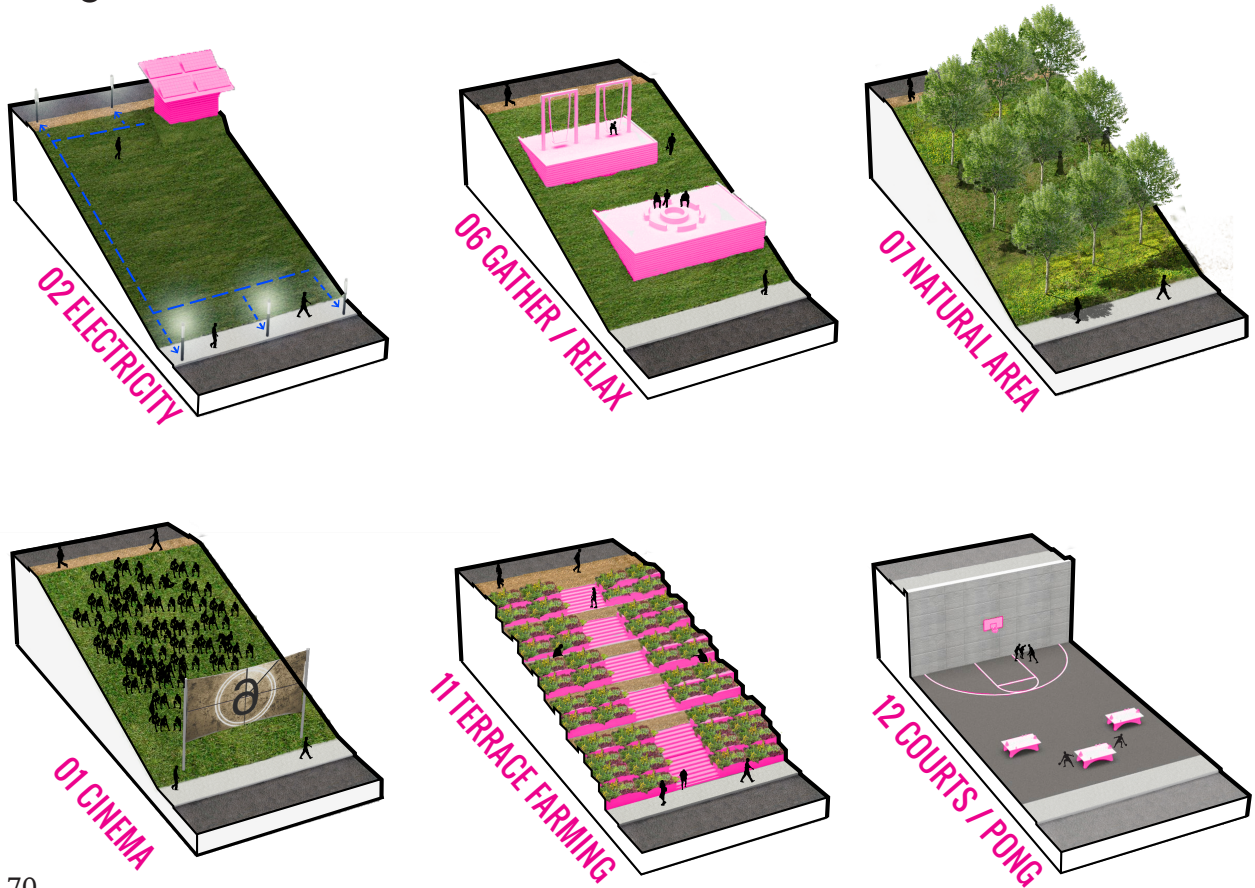
Wish Bone park represents what could be done right away. It requires minimal grading and takes advantage of the existing conditions of the site. University Plaza creates a large flat area by filling in the slope. This design is responding to the fraternity's interest in having a basketball court. The final design, reflects a potential end scenario where the site has been sold to a developer, but because the community has ownership over the site, the building is integrated into the landscape. All three designs are meant to be templates for others to work from at the design charrette which will occur on site, to put the participants into the space in which they are designing. Using a handout the public will be asked to work in groups on designing the site in a fashion that they would enjoy. On the backside of the handout is the list of ideas provided from the sign. With these three tools, the community will be supported in proposing their design ideas about the future potential of the site.

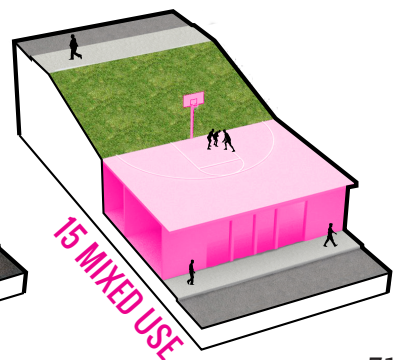
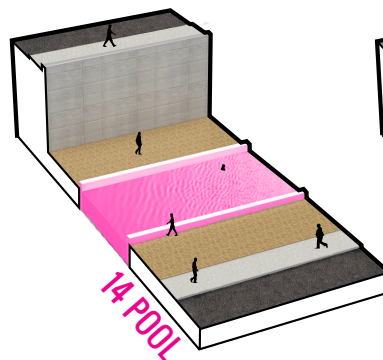
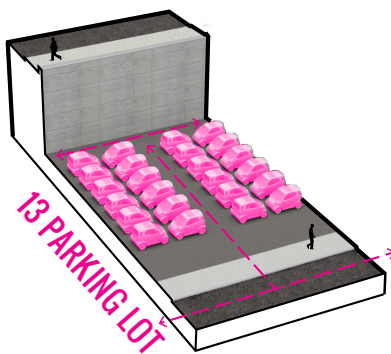
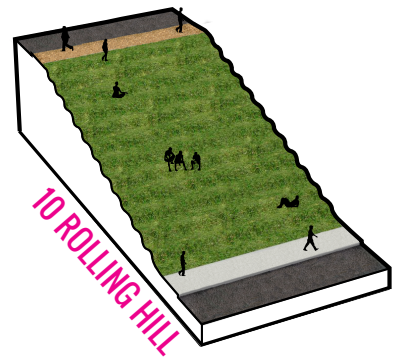
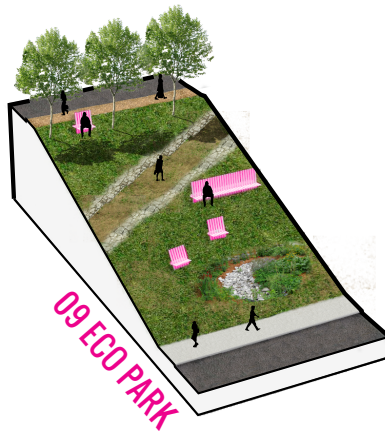
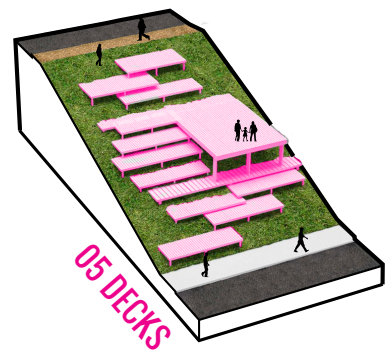
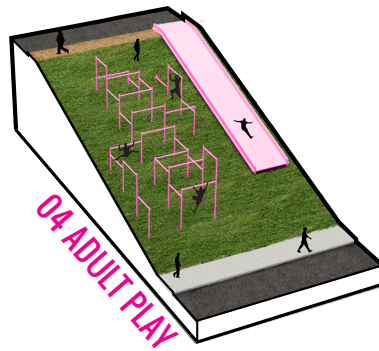
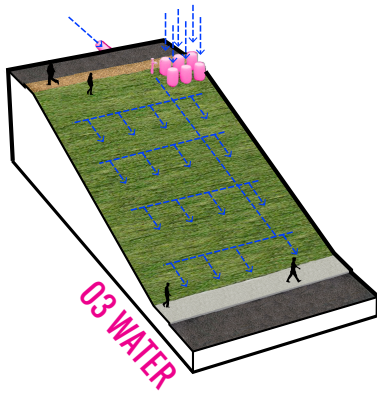
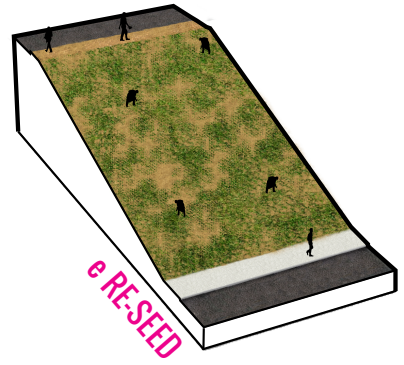
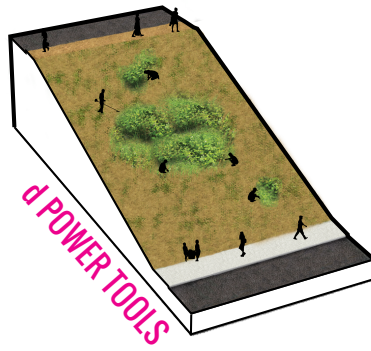
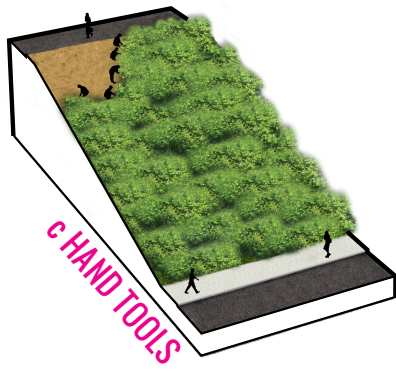
During each phase, other gaps or missed opportunities can be explored, potentially creating



Produced by Patrick Pirtle

Design Menu





multiple loops within the concept diagram, adding to the complexity of the project. Being aware of the potential to salvage plants from landscapes on UW’s campus prior to development, discussions are in the works for putting language into future construction contracts allowing students to remove plant material prior to demo. UW can also be a resource for fill if need for a design idea. Strengthening established relationships and creating new ones allows this process to flourish into synergistic force with the hopes of creating “social space” which implies “a great diversity of knowledge (Lefebvre 73).”

The Proactive Design Loop used in this pilot project looks similar to many existing ideas, with the caveat of it being instigated by a designer who sees value in the community’s input and their personal visions. Through the creation of a robust set of resources outlining this process, Seattle residents will have the tools for replicating this project in more communities across the city. When instigating any new action it is important to be prepared for success and failure. This project has offered me the opportunity to build a name for myself and a couple of my peers who could become specialists in this type of work. Going through the process of realizing where the hidden potential lies

DESIGNTHISPACE

Let us see **your vision** for this site. On the back of this is the list of design ideas provided by you using the chalk board. Next steps are about experimenting on the site.

Site Preference [check one]

- FLAT SLOPED SLOPED - FLAT

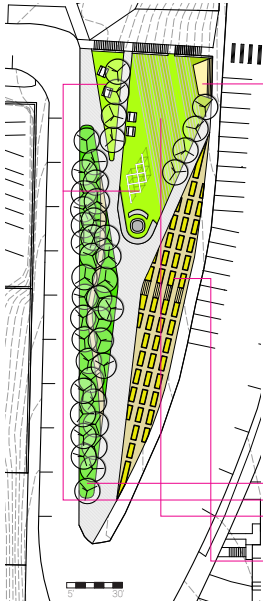


TENNIS COURT [78' x 36'] HALF COURT B-BALL [44' x 22'] PING PONG [5' x 9'] PARKING STALL [9' x 18']

Friends of University Hill
www.universityhill.wordpress.com

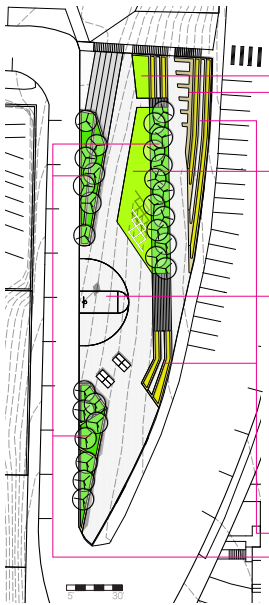
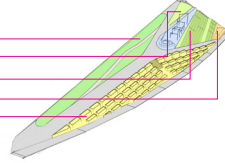
Design Charrette Handout

Produced by Patrick Pirtle



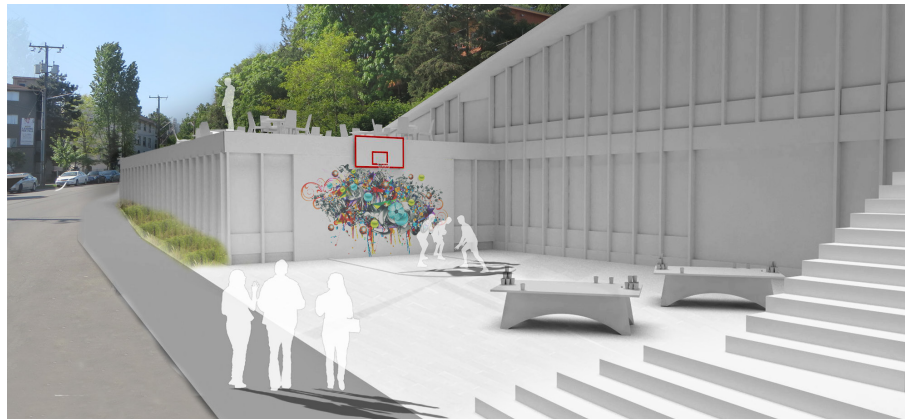
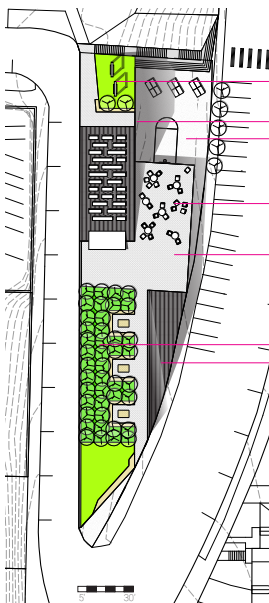
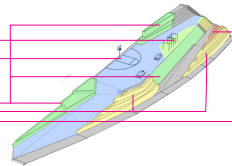
WISH BONE PARK minimal cut and fill

- 07 Nature Stroll
- 04 Adult Play
- 10 Rolling Hills
- 05 Stage
- 11 Planters



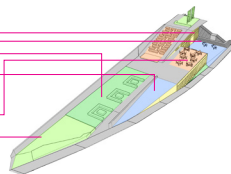
UNIVERSITY PLAZA all fill

- 04 Adult Play
- 12 Court Play
- 11 Terracing
- 09 Eco Services
- 06 Gathering



UNIVERSITY CENTER all cut

- 15 Mixed Use
- 06 Study Space
- 04 Slope Play
- 12 Court Play
- 06 Lounge
- 04 Adult Play

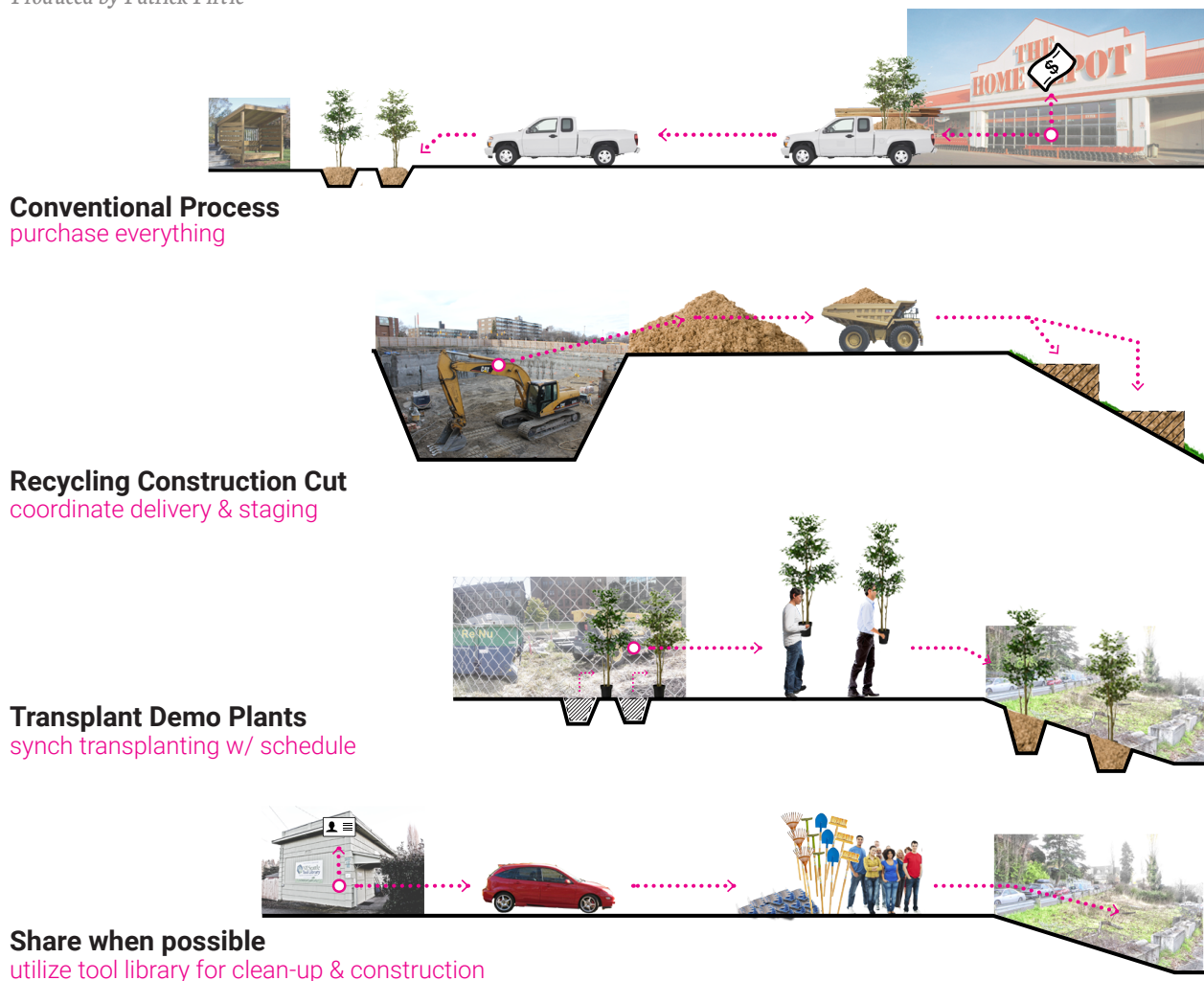


within the city can give landscape architects an upper hand in being tacticians in creating landscapes which recycled materials that reflect a high design aesthetic and promotes experimentation with the local community.

Nueland gives insight into a potential gap within the process of vacant land appropriation that could be partnered with a design firm to create a centralized entity for these actions in Seattle. This new service could aid communities with identifying sites, experimenting on sites, and building on sites. In Seattle, an insured fiscal agent is required prior to gaining access to grants and there is also a need for contracts to be established between legal owners, public and private, with community

Resource Option Diagram

Produced by Patrick Pirtle



groups which can also be facilitated by the new service. This process can act as a means to creating jobs with the use of city funds derived from the vision of landscape architects. This type of landscape architecture practice could be partnered with the Department of Neighborhoods to aid people in applying for grants online, which helps increase the value and interest in their programs. Working with the city helps built trust in the work that gives this approach more traction and power, resulting in greater freedoms and opportunities. The same process and ideas that are seen at the smaller scales have the potential to be translated into larger frameworks. These larger scale applications of tactical urbanism is still being tested and explored both practically and conceptually through out the globe.

The education and thinking that is required for being a landscape architect has prepared us to become proactive leaders in the creation of cities that responds to the dynamic nature of change. Our vision allows us to identify opportunities both hidden on vacant landscapes and within well used spaces of the city. The challenge is being able to leverage this knowledge in shifting conventional thinking of established policies and structures that limit human capabilities and the public's right to the city. This work explores one way of re-examination how we build our cities and the impacts it might be having on public space. This process is an example to how we can challenge the status quo by following a different process and by working with a under-valued community. These are the types of challenges that we should be welcoming because there is always hidden potential in this type of work. I hope that others can find the hidden potential that lies within this text that may encourage them to explore the opportunities hidden in plain sight within their daily lives. This work has revealed to me a path of opportunity that has not been fully realized yet in Seattle. To be continued.....

Works Cited

- Balk, Gene. "Census: Seattle is the fastest-growing big city in the U.S." *Seattle Times* 2014 22 May. website.
- Bowman, Ann and Micheal Pagano. *Terra Incognita: Vacant Land and Urban Strategies*. Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2004.
- Carmona, Mathew. "Contemporary Public Space: Critique and Classification, Part One Critique." *Journal of Urban Design* (2010): 123-148. Copy.
- Davis, Diane E. "Urban Informality: Remnant of the Past or Wave of the Future?" *Harvard Design Magazine: Urbanism core* (2014): 86-91.
- Examined Life*. Dir. Astra Taylor. Perf. Michael Hardt. 2009. Film.
- Ferguson, Francesca. *Make_Shift City: Renegotiating the Urban Commons*. Berlin, Germany: Jovis, 2014.
- Florian Haydn, Robert Temel. *Temporary Urban Spaces: Concepts for the Use of City Spaces*. Basel, Switzerland: Die Deutsche Bibliothek, 2006.
- Fountain, John W. "Chicago Mayor Bulldozes a Dmall Downtown Airport." 1 4 2003. *New York Times*. 3 6 2015.
- Freire, Paulo. Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Bloomsbury Academic, 1970. 57-119.
- Gestel, Tom van. *Art as urban strategy*. Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2009.
- Hanson, Susan B. "Critical Mass: FOrging a politics of sustainable mobility in the information age." *Transportation* (2001): 347 - 362.
- Hardt, Micheal. *Democracy! What we are fighting for*. Vienna, 14 March 2013. Video.
- Harrington, Paddy. "Why designers must put Invention first." 22 May 2015. <http://www.fastcodesign.com/>. 1 4 2015.
- Haydn, Florian. *Temporary Urban Spaces*. Basel: Birkhauser, 2006.
- Karvonen, Andrew. "Urban Laboratories: Experimenting in Reworking Cities." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* (2014): 379-392.
- Kohn, Margaret. *Brave New Neighborhoods: The Privitation of Public Space*. NY: Routledge, 2004.
- Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Malde: Blackwell Publishing, 1974.
- Lerner, Johathan. "Growing Pains." *Landscape Architecture Magazine* (2015): 111-116.
- Low, Setha and Neil Smith. "Introduction: The imperative of Public Space." Low, Setha and Neil Smith. *The Politics of Public Space*. New York: Routledge, 2005. 1 - 17.
- Low, Setha. "How Pirvate Interests Take Over Public Space: Zoning, Texas, and Incorporation of Gated Communities." Low, Setha. *The Politics of Public Space*. New York: Routledge, 2005. 81 - 100.
- Lydon, Mike. *Tactical Urbanism Volumes 1,2,3,4*. Case Study. New York, 2012. PDF Document.
- Manzo, Lynne. *Place Attachment: Advances in theory, methods and applications* . New York, NY: Routledge, 2014.

- Marcuse, Peter. "From Critical urban theory to right to the city." *City* (2009): 185-196.
- Matanovic, Milenko. *Multiple Victories: Pomegranate Center's Art of Creating Community-Crafted Gathering Places*. Seattle: Intern, 2011.
- McCann, Eugene. "Space, Citizenship, and the right to the city: A brief overview." *GeoJournal* (2002): 77-79.
- Mitchell, Don. "The Fight for Public Space." Mitchell, Don. *The Right to the City*. 2003. 1 -11.
- Mukhija, Vinit and Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris. *The Informal American City: Beyond Taco Trucks and Day Labor*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2014.
- Oswalt, Philipp. *Urban Catalyst: The Power of Temporary Use*. Berlin: DOM Publisher, 2013.
- Padagogy, The Center for Urban. *CUP*. 2015. 1 4 2015.
- Pagano, Celeste. "DIY Urbanism: Property and Process in Grassroots City Building." *Marquette Law Review* (2013): 337-389.
- Quebec, Association of Urban Design. *Association du design urbain du Quebec*. 2014. 15 02 2015.
- Recreation, Seattle Parks and. "Public Involvement Policy." 3 May 2007. *Seattle.gov*. 16 4 2015.
- Rosa, Marcos L. *Handmade Urbanism: From Community Initiatives to Participatory Models*. Berlin, Germany: Jovis, 2013.
- Soja, Edward. "Why Spatial? Why Justice? Why Now?" Soja, Edward. *Seeking Spatial Justice*. MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2010. Copy.
- Spencer, Ben. *Informal Communities Initiative*. 2014. 12 3 2015.
- Trancik, Roger. *Finding Lost Space: Theories of Urban Design*. John Wiley & Sons, 1986.
- Weiland, Jennifer. "When Tactical Urbanism Grows Up: Managing public in Seattle." *Seattle Design Festival*, 13 September 2014. Presentation.