Microcommunity

Opportunity is the Heart of Small Urban Spaces

Logan Kaiser

Microcommunity

Opportunity is the Heart of Small Urban Spaces

Logan Kaiser
University of Detroit Mercy
School of Architecture
Arch 5100, Fall 2019 - Winter 2020
Studio Advisor | Prof. Christoph Ibele
External Advisor | Johnathan Hanna

Table of Contents

Abstract

The microcommunity, which is a pocket within a defined area, often contained in a surrounding neighborhood or community, which creates a location that begins to relate to communities immediately surrounding community or neighborhood. The essence of microcommunity seeks to provide inclusivity in urban spaces, something that often is not expressed by many existing urban spaces. This thesis focuses on this idea of microcommunity and how the definition and concepts of microcommunity begin to inform more meaningful design outcomes and to provide more insightful urban design strategies. Through the study of microcommunity and the ideas it expresses in urban space, a microcommunal design criteria is produced, establishing a way to produce social and spatial opportunity for active groups and subcultures in urban spaces.

Introduction

What is a microcommunity? How does microcommunity contribute to the study of urban spaces? What role does microcommunity play in the future design or outcomes of urban space? This thesis examines the idea of microcommunity and how it contributes to creating more meaningful urban spaces. This idea is achieved through the defining what a microcommunity is and what purpose it serves in determining stronger outcomes for urban spaces.

To identify a microcommunity, it is important to understand the context of the space as well as how it creates the idea of destination or place within the urban environment. This idea relates to spatial and social qualities that contribute to the idea of a microcommunity and how they form the idea of location and place. Spatial, social and temporal aspects begin to help expand this idea, defining important elements of an urban space that contribute to the definition of microcommunity.

As a result of these aspects, it can be understood that microcommunal space is the heart and child of opportunism both socially and spatially. Social opportunism deals with the idea the people congregate to a space for the social opportunity that lies there, regardless of the spatial elements that exist there. In opposition to this is the spatial opportunist, is more concerned with the spatial elements and spatial qualities that exist in an urban space, but are not necessarily concerned with the social opportunity that exists there. In microcommunal spaces, it is important to include both types of opportunism so that it better establishes a sense of location and place as well as does not create exclusivity of groups in urban spaces and environments.

The basis of microcommunity begins to revise existing ideas and urban design principles from urban theorists such as Jan Gehl and William H. Whyte and begins to modernize them based on current and changing necessity for different types of opportunism. Microcommunity provides a strong lens to understand how to improve current urban design principles, looking at how existing spaces could have been or could be better established to form a stronger urban pocket and space.

By establishing a better foundation to create stronger, more identifiable urban pockets, microcommunity begins to reshape how urban spaces are thought of, creating a better vision and outlook of how small urban spaces are designed.

Chapter I

Defining Microcommunity

What is a Microcommunity?

A microcommunity is defined as a pocket or location within a neighborhood or larger surrounding urban context that is contributes to a population of people or a common interest shared by users of that space. In a microcommunity, active groups that consistently utilize a space can be identified as subcultures. A subculture can be defined as a group that begins to assemble in a microcommunity that ultimately establishes a culture within the space, creating a sense of location for other likeminded people outside of the immediate surrounding community.

This definition is derived from the idea of small urban spaces that begin to function as a miniature form of a community.

To further examine the function of a small urban pocket as a miniature community, it is important to define the overarching idea of community. As defined by the Oxford Dictionary, a community is "a feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals," as well as being "a group of people [coexisting] together in one place, especially one practicing common ownership" (Oxford, 2019). This definition attributes to the idea of small urban spaces as a miniature community because of the activities and uses expressed by active groups and subcultures in a given area. The active users and subcultures contribute to this idea of community to establish an identity for an urban space, providing a space for likeminded groups and subcultures to assemble in a space. This idea is expressed in Jane Jacobs book The Life and Death of American Cities, where she states that ""Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody" (Jacobs, 1961). Because active groups and subcultures contribute to the identity that

produced through the elements in an urban space, a pronounced sense of community is formed, establishing the idea of a microcommunity.

The identity of an established microcommunity provides important ideas about how people use an urban space and how it should function to be inclusive of different groups and subcultures. Inclusivity is defined by the spatial elements that are existing in a given urban space and how they begin to contribute to the inclusion of different groups and subcultures in a space. This idea relates to identity because the higher amount of inclusivity achieved by a space, the stronger an identity, creating a sense of place and location.

The idea of microcommunity produces a model for urban spaces, proposing how to accomplish effective placemaking through producing inclusivity and identity. By defining microcommunity further and understanding the underpinnings of creating more inclusive urban spaces, more utilized urban spaces can be formed, contributing to the overall urban condition that an urban space seeks to improve.

Figure 1.1 ~ Mircocommunity At The Wig in Detroit, Michigan 13

Spatial Aspect of Microcommunity

Figure 1.2 ~ Eidetic Image Representing Spatial Aspect of Mictocommunity

After defining the idea of microcommunity and understanding that it is a place that conforms to individualistic and group needs, it is important to understand how spatial elements and their organization play an key role in how a strong urban spaces are established.

The spatial aspect of microcommunity is formulated from the idea of meeting specific spatial conditions in order for different groups to utilize a space for their specific activity or need. This is a prominent idea of how an urban space or pocket can drive and incorporate a sense of inclusion while combating exclusion. Designing small urban spaces creates an urban hub by promoting the idea of inclusion of different groups in core urban areas, allowing for more diverse and dynamic urban spaces.

Spatial elements themselves attribute to how people use flexible spaces and how different individuals and groups use the same element or elements in different ways, but coexist in the same place at the same time without pushing the other out of the space. The idea that one specific space or spatial element allows for a space to become a variety of different things promotes different groups to be able to be in the same place and not feel excluded. For example, something such as a ledge can act to be used in a vast variety of ways that allows different groups to manipulate the element to their benefit. The ledge could be a seat, a bed, an obstacle, a stage, a kickstand, a moment of pause or it could be a meeting place.

Applying the Spatial Aspect of Microcommunity to Existing Space

The Wig Skatepark in Detroit, Michigan expresses many ideas of the spatial aspect of microcommunity through the way it was conceived and how the spatial elements create a flexible environment for various groups and subcultures.

The Wig Skatepark was established in 2014 by a local organization called Community Push, spearheaded by founder Derrick Dykas. The skatepark was created on an existing basketball court in the Wigle neighborhood, which, at the time was incredibly stricken by blight and negative activity. Dykas states, "When we came and started building, we were picking up dirty needles, condoms, and there were kids that were right out here playing on recess while there's guys shooting up in the building next door" (Metro Times, 2017). As the skatepark was constructed and groups and subcultures began to utilize the space, the identity of The Wig began to transform the identity of the surrounding Wigle community. As a result of this identity, people from Wigle began to participate in the space, helping to maintain and provide more activity. Eventually, The Wig functioned as more than a skatepark, but rather as a social hub for the community, as well as a hub for groups such as skateboarders and basketball players.

The spatial elements that existed at The Wig provided flexible elements that provided different groups and subcultures an area to be able actively participate in the space. Some of those elements include, but are not limited to, the DIY ramps that were made and the existing basketball nets that were kept throughout the space. The layout of the skatepark took up approximately two-thirds of the existing basketball court, leaving one-third of open space for other activity. When programming and building the park, the existing basketball nets and hoops were left there so that surrounding community members could come and utilize the space for something other than purely skateboarding.

As a result of accommodating other groups, The Wig saw constant use from groups such as basketball players and skateboarders that contributed to the day to day identity of the space. These two groups effectively created a healthy, inviting environment, other groups and subcultures began to participate in the space because of constant social activity present in the space. The flexibility of The Wig contributed to creating a highly inclusive space, creating a very strong identity as an urban space.

On September 19th, 2019, The Wig was demolished by the City of Detroit in order to build mixed-use residential spaces in place of the skatepark that once existed there. Once demolished, people from the different groups and subcultures that congregated there were left without an inclusive, identifiable urban space, displacing many of the groups into different parts of the surrounding urban fabric. Even though demolished, The Wig highlights the importance of flexible space and how it contributed to establishing an inclusive urban space. In this sense, The Wig functioned as a microcommunity, where the flexible elements contributed to the use of people in relationship to the spatial elements that existed there.

Figure 1.3 ~ Friends of The Wig

Figure 1.4 ~ The Remnants of The Wig's Demolition

Figure 1.5~ The Elements of The Wig

Social Aspect of Microcommunity

Figure 1.6~ Eidetic Image Representing Social Aspect of Mictocommunity

At the intersection of where different groups and subcultures utilize spaces and spatial elements differently, social interactions can be formed where people coexist at a specific place or element.

The social aspect of microcommunity explains how groups begin to coexist in a space and how symbiotic relationships are formed between these groups. A symbiotic relationship can be defined as mutualist interaction or relationship between two groups, each offering a specific benefit to the other. At this defined intersection, an identity or recognition of the space is formed by users and those who are coming to use the space. This is because of the coexistence and inclusive nature that is created by the symbiosis that occurs between different groups of people and subcultures.

The symbiotic elements of an urban space relate to the organization of spatial elements and how they contribute to social activity. If organized effectively, a space will facilitate social interaction and a symbiotic relationship between groups. If an urban space fails to do this, people will not assemble in a space, creating an unlively and tense urban space. These ideas are expressed similarly though urban theorists such as William H Whyte, who discuss that strongly designed urban space should facilitate human interaction to promote the behavior of people rather than hinder it.

Applying the Social Aspect of Microcommunity to Existing Space

A strong example of a place that exemplifies the ideas expressed in the social aspect of microcommunity is Peace Park (Place de la Paix) in Montreal. Established in 1994, Peace Park was originally constructed to stand as a monument to attest to the City of Montreal's 1986 proclamation to be a nuclear-free zone. The space was designed by architect Robert Desjardines. After its construction and inauguration, the project was awarded the Association des architectes payagistes du Quebec (AAPQ) Citation Nationale Grand Prize of Excellence. In 2001, Peace Park quickly became an "internationally known skate spot" (Peace Park, 2018) with its' black marble ledges.

Over time, Peace Park established a strong identity that attracted more groups and subcultures outside of skateboarders. Peace Park became a gathering space for local homeless populations, street performers and other groups and subcultures that could use the existing spatial elements provided.

As these interactions occurred more frequently, the different groups and subcultures in the space began establishing a symbiotic relationship revolving around the spatial elements in the park. A strong example of this idea can be seen between skateboarders and the homeless at the black granite ledges on the north side of the park. Both groups congregate to the ledges, the skateboarders using the ledge as a obstacle to do tricks and the homeless use the ledge as a bench. While both groups are present, the skateboarders provide social interaction and amenities to the homeless, and in return the homeless act as guardians of the park, watching over the ledges and activity that occurs there. The homeless aid in preventing negativity and promote an inclusive space for not only skateboarders, but for other individuals and groups as well. Through the display of a symbiotic relationship between these two groups, it is apparent that the social interaction between the skateboarders and the homeless establishes a desirable and attractive urban pocket, creating an important location in a dense urban fabric.

Peace Park displays the social aspect of microcommunity because of the way spatial elements facilitate positive social interactions between different groups that utilize the space. The spatial elements used contribute to the idea that Peace Park exemplifies how the space actively uses the microcommunity model.

Figure 1.7 ~ Social Interaction Between Skateboarders and Homeless

Figure 1.8 ~ Groups Utilizing the Same Spatial Elements in Peace Park
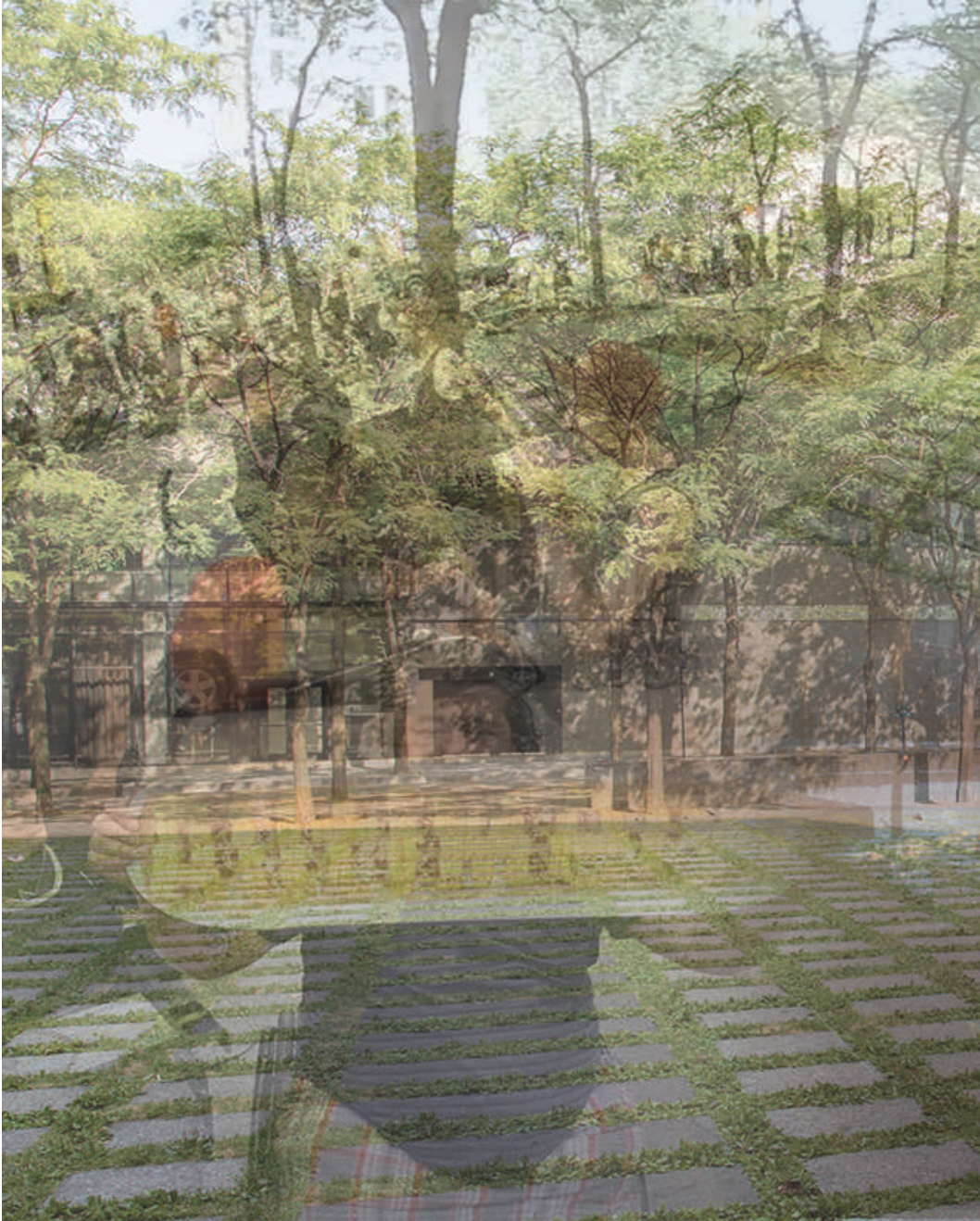
Temporal Aspect of Microcommunity

Figure 1.9~ Eidetic Image Representing Temporal Aspect of Mictocommunity

After determining the importance of both the social and spatial aspects to understanding what defines a microcommunity, both of these ideas work together to create an identity or symbol that impacts how people and groups congregate to an urban pocket or space. This idea relates to how the subcultures and individuals who congregate there create the idea of place and how this idea of place becomes an identifiable pocket in an urban fabric.

This idea relates to the temporal aspect of microcommunity, relating to how the identity of a microcommunity is temporary and can change over time. The dynamics of a microcommunity can vary based on the subcultures and individuals that utilize a space and its elements, creating the idea that the identity of a microcommunity is tied to how people use a space and the groups and individuals organize within an urban space. Because one or more groups can define how a space is visualized based on how or when they use the space as well as how often, this identity or idea of creating an urban icon is tied to how active subcultures and individuals use space. When the subcultures and/or individuals no longer use the space because something has occurred that altered the dynamic in a microcommunity, the identity changes, being defined by the current users and uses that are present at that given moment. This establishes the crucial idea that the identity of a microcommunity is everchanging and fleeting, understanding that the idea of place and identity are temporary. An active group or individuals in a space can vary, being also be affected by outside influence or other changes that affect how a microcommunal space is identified. The current active groups or subcultures helps define the space and location at that moment in time but does not necessarily define it in the future.

Applying Aspects of Microcommunity to Spatial Elements

Walls
- A canvas for muralists
- A backdrop for Instagram users
- A subject for photographers
- A work of art for art enthusiasts
- A message for neighborhood ideals

Stairs
- An obstacle for skateboarders
- A transitional element for passersby
- A stage for street performers
- A seat for people-watchers
- A training element for athletes

Ledges
- A place for pedestrians to rest
- A bed for the homeless
- An obstacle for skateboarders
- A bikestand for cyclists
- A meeting place for passersby

Pond
- A fishing spot for fishermen
- A relaxing place for pedestrians
- An iconic body of water for tourists
- A calm environment for paddleboaters
- A subject for painters

Figure 1.10 - Axonometric View of Microcommunity and Spatial Elements

Sculpture

• An icon for placemaking
• An obstacle for skateboarders
•A subject for photographers
• An identifyer for wayfinding
•A representative object for past and
   present subcultures

Overall, there are three aspects that establish the idea of microcommunity: spatial, social and temporal. After identifying and understanding these three aspects and how they contribute to the idea of what a microcommunity is and how it functions, there is a basis for understanding how these aspects of microcommunity function with spatial elements and how this begins to define how the idea of microcommunity works to create stronger and more significant urban spaces.

Spatial elements begin to function in accordance with the spatial aspect of microcommunity by creating a flexible device that conforms to a subculture, group or individual spatial need and usage.

The social aspect of microcommunity occurs at the intersection of where different groups and subcultures   gather and uses specific spatial elements, creating, creating a social interaction between the different groups that utilize these spatial elements. Where this interaction occurs, a symbiotic relationship typically forms between different subcultures and groups, helping to establish a strong culture and that provides an identity to an urban space.

When this identity is promoted through social interactions, this ground the idea of the temporal aspect, where the idea of place and location are defined by the specific groups and subcultures of the space and how the space is used during a specific period in time. In understanding this idea of how places are ultimately defined through the social interactions that occurs at spatial elements, it begins to define the idea of microcommunity as a strong visualization to understand how to promote and strengthen the design of urban space.

Conforming Microcommunity to Non-Public Space

Figure 1.11 - 3500 Riopelle Street. Detroit, Michigan

While the spatial, social and temporal aspects are the primary driving factors of what establishes a microcommunity, it is important to understand that a microcommunity can exist in different forms and entities. This idea applies to many public spaces in an urban fabric such as public parks and infrastructures. Would this idea apply outside of the public sector, namely spaces that are inhabited in an impromptu manner that functions in the same way that reflects the ideology of a microcommunity? This idea begins to relate to how people use spaces such as abandoned buildings that are considered a part of the non-public sector. Due to the open thresholds that can occur on the sites at places and locations such as this, they tend to allow more activity from groups and subcultures that begin to wander inside those spaces.

A case can be made that microcommunity can be formed in non-public buildings such as abandoned buildings, where different groups and subcultures form to revitalize a space and begin to establish a location or identity for the building that otherwise would not exist. To examine this idea, 3500 Riopelle Street in Detroit, MI, formerly the water and waste department building for the City of Detroit, was used to observe the idea that that microcommunity can exist in non-public or non-conventional urban spaces such as abandoned buildings.

The reason why this building served to function as a microcommunal space is because it was very open and accessible on different facets of the building, at least until it was purchased recently by a private landowner. Because of the easy accessibility of the building to different groups, a privately-owned space can begin to function and form as a microcommunal space.

In the case of 3500 Riopelle Street, the

tall walls of the building became a canvas for urban graffiti artists, where the layout of the building relates to an abstract idea and function to being an urban art gallery.

As a result of the artwork on the walls, other subcultures began forming as a result of the space, those being groups related to urban exploration, photography and cinematography. Another spatial aspect that resulted in including another group was the smooth concrete floors. Skateboarders responded to these floors by using the post-industrial spaces as a skatepark.

The social aspect of the space primarily occurs when photographers, cinematographers and skateboards cross paths with each other. As the subcultures individually utilize the building in the ways they visualize, there is a loose relationship formed between the groups which retains a passive sense of formality in how the members from different subcultures

interact. Being an abandoned building that is not necessarily meant to be a public space, groups that enter are often on edge because of the notion of danger is lurking inside the space. When groups run into each other there is an interaction that occurs, but each group goes their separate wats, interacting with the space as they came to do. This interaction identifies that the microcommunity can be further facilitated to push more symbiotic interaction between groups, however; interaction being present from spatial elements allows for a stronger microcommunity to occur, resulting in a stronger sense of destination for the building located at 3500 Riopelle Street.
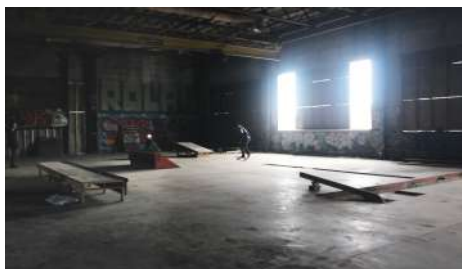

Figure 1.12 - Spaces Throughout 3500 Riopelle Street

Figure 1.13 - Old Redford Community Garden. Redford, Michigan

What is NOT a Microcommunity?

After defining a microcommunity, the aspects of microcommunity, the application of these aspects and how microcommunity can apply to non-public urban spaces, it is important to identify what kinds to spaces do not exhibit the traits of microcommunity.

A key component to understanding the idea of what is not a microcommunity is the idea of objectivity, function and how a space serves a specific role in an urban fabric. Spaces that behave this way often serve a specific purpose and do not integrate with an urban fabric. This prevents different groups from using the space as they choose. This idea of urban space does not seek to promote specific ideas of the spatial and social aspects of microcommunity. These kinds of space do not define a specific location or sense of place in an urban fabric.

A community garden is an example of a place that is not a microcommunity. The function and activity of a community garden only serves one specific purpose and only seeks to serve one group of people or neighboring community rather than establishing an urban hub that different groups and subcultures can use. In this observation, it is important to understand that the spatial aspect of microcommunity would not apply because the spatial elements that exist there do not provide an environment where any group or subculture can come use the space and its elements as they would like; users of the space and its elements must succumb to the programmatic function of a community garden, establishing the assertion that a community garden becomes a more objective type of space rather than a subjective space that the spatial aspect of microcommunity proposes.

Defining the difference between a subjective and objective space is an important concept that helps to further explain why urban spaces such as community gardens don't serve as microcommunal spaces. Using the community garden as a model, the organization and functionality of these spaces do not allow for other groups to utilize the space, correlating to the idea that the program of the space is only meant to serve one specific group. As a result, exclusivity is evoked by the programmatic function of the space.

As a result of not being able to accommodate different groups and subcultures, the organization and structure of a community garden would present a lack of social interaction in the space. Because of this, the social aspect of microcommunity would not apply to a community garden because of the lack of spatial elements that allow for symbiotic social interactions between different subcultures and groups. For this reason, the temporal aspect of microcommunity does not apply because a community garden does not express a specific identity or sense of place.

Chapter II

Opportunism and Microcommunity
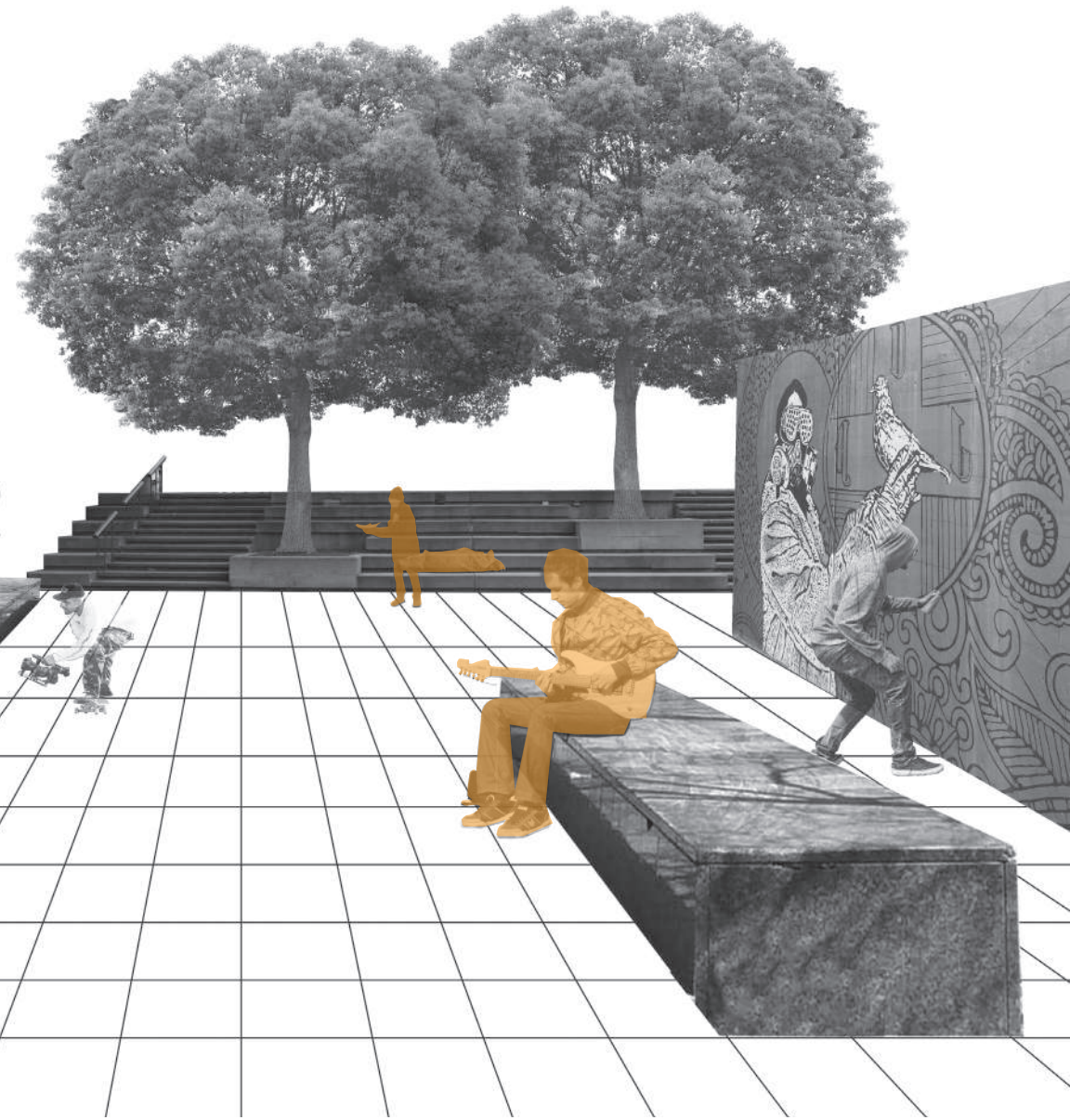
What is Social Opportunism?

After defining microcommunity is and is not, another important concept to understand is how opportunity contributes to the idea of microcommunity and promotes inclusivity in urban space. This idea attributes to how specific groups and subcultures utilize space and how specific opportunities exist for different groups and subcultures. The more opportunities that existing within a given urban space, the more inclusive the space becomes.

Relating to Walter Benjamin's idea of the Flaneur, a social opportunist is an individual that seeks intrapersonal and social interaction in urban spaces, maintaining indifference on how they feel about the surrounding environment and urban context. The social opportunist differs from the Flaneur, relating to how each participates in the social interaction that occurs. The social opportunist seeks to participate in social interaction that occurs within an urban space while the Flaneur seeks social interaction as a third-person observer, one that visualizes how people interaction and function in an urban space.

Examples of social opportunity include subcultures such as street performers, homeless people, musicians and other groups that go to urban spaces for the social interactions that exist there. In these examples these groups seek direct social connection with other groups that congregate there, drawing a correlation to the importance of how people congregate to certain spaces because of the identity provided through the social interaction and not just the existing spatial qualities.

Figure 2.1 - Visualization of Social Opportunism
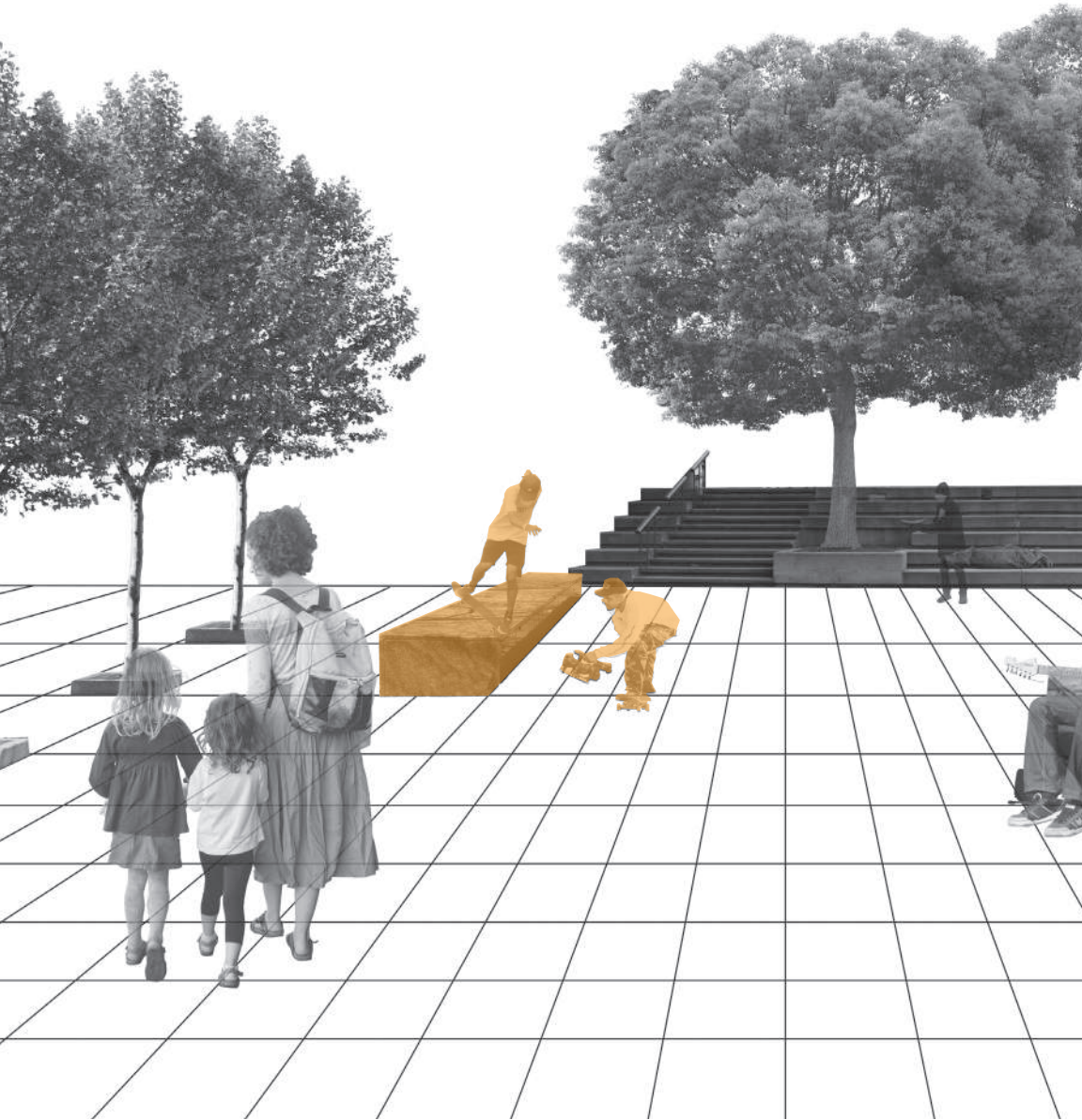
What is Spatial Opportunism?

Figure 2.2 - Visualization of Spatial Opportunism

While certain groups come to urban spaces because of the social interactions that occur there, other groups and subcultures are more concerned with the actual spaces and the spatial entities that exist in urban pockets.

As opposed to social opportunism, spatial opportunism is the idea that certain subcultures and groups seek interaction between themselves and the spatial entities that surround them in an urban context. These groups go to a specific urban space because of the spatial entities and elements there rather than the social interactions that occur there. Even though spatial a opportunist's primary concerns are with specific urban elements in urban spaces, they can still generally be observed traveling in groups rather than as an individual. This distinction is important to understand because although there is some social interaction occurring within a group of spatial opportunists, their primary concern is with specific spatial entities, not the social interaction that can take place there.

Examples of spatial opportunists include groups and subcultures such as skateboarders, outdoors recreationalists (cyclists, hikers, hammockers, etc.), muralists and other urban artists. The commonality between all of these groups is that they seek different urban spaces for the specific spatial elements that are present there and how these elements benefit the activities they are performing. How elements attribute to activities of spatial opportunists contributes to the identity of a space, where the specific elements and the activities performed help dictate a sense of place for likeminded subcultures and groups in an urban environment.

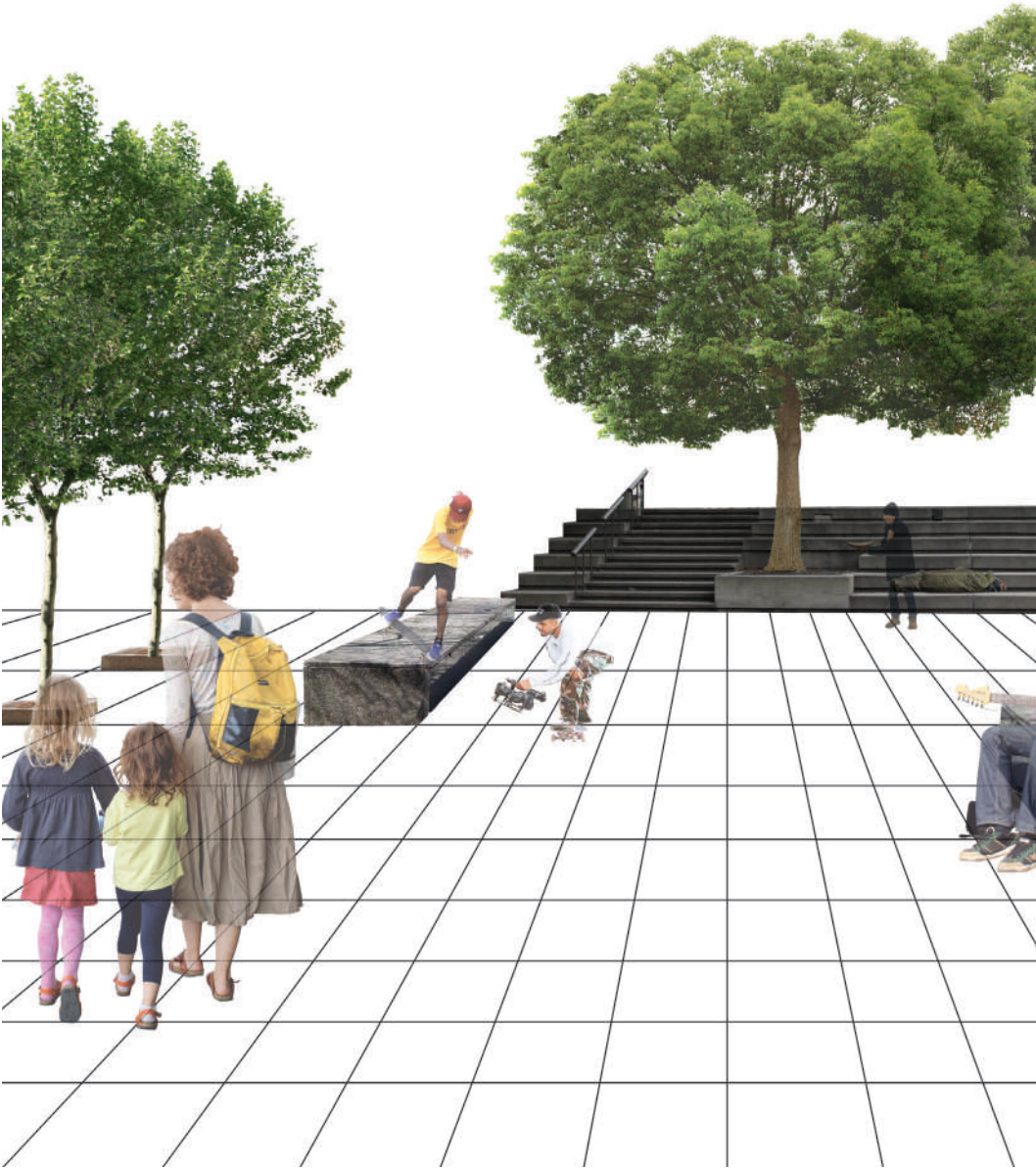# Opportunity at the Heart of Small Urban Spaces

Figure 2.3 - A Visualization of a Balance of Opportunity Creating Microcommunity

Both social opportunists and spatial opportunists contribute to establishing more inclusive urban spaces. Both of these types of opportunity utilize specific spaces, being attracted to how opportunism is conveyed in urban spaces. Although each type of opportunist uses urban spaces for different goals and purposes, both contribute to the identity of a space and how this idea of opportunity begins to drive the concept of microcommunity.

When defining microcommunity, an important idea is that an inclusive space for all types of subcultures and groups that congregate should be created, rather than establishing an urban space that focuses on the interests and opportunities that lie with one specific group. By promoting this idea of inclusivity, an important correlation is made that both social opportunists and spatial opportunists to have equal opportunity in a given space rather than advocating for one type of opportunity over another.

If this balance is disrupted, it begins to change the dynamics of an urban space, removing the ideas strategies that a microcommunity seeks to employ. Most of this distruption attributes to how a space is changed or revitalized and how that change impacts the identity of the space and the opportunity that existed there. This relates to the temporal aspect of microcommunity and how changing the existing spatial or social opportunity can alter the identity of the urban space. This leaves either a positive or negative effect based on the balance maintained between the social and spatial opportunity that exists in the space and how it is presented through a change that occurred.

Chapter III

Visualizing Microcommunity
and Opportunism

Viewing Social Opportunism
in Existing Spaces

By defining the kinds of opportunism that occur in urban pockets and the relationship shared between opportunity and the goals of a microcommunity, it is important to be able to visualize this idea of opportunity in urban spaces. A crucial part of being able to visualize these types of space comes from identifying opportunism and how the begins to contribute to the goals of microcommunity in a given urban space.

To be able to identify and visualize opportunism in urban space, a lens should be defined in order to understand where spatial and social opportunity exist in a given urban space. By defining this distinction between the two, an observation can be made that reflects the amount of spatial opportunity that exists in a space and the amount of social opportunity that exists in a space. When making this observation, something important to take note of is the amount of social and spatial opportunity present in a given space. If that space has more social opportunity as opposed to spatial opportunity, people would not come to a specific space for the spatial elements that exist, eliminating a core group that assembles there and helps establish an identity for the urban space. The same case can be made in the opposite manner, where spatial opportunity outweighs the amount of social opportunity present in an urban space, a space can be seen as unaccommodating. If a space is not able to fulfill social interaction, people will not come to that urban space identifying the balance of opportunism is essential in being able to visualizing spaces and how it contributes to establishing a microcommunity.

When visualizing social opportunism, a key element to look for is where people are congregating in an urban space and how that facilitates social interaction between different groups. Where people congregate defines how the space is working to express social interaction.

For example, the Piazza Duca d' Aosta (Stazione Centrale) in Milan is a very large plaza located at the front of the Milan Train Station and is comprised of stepping spatial elements and planters that strongly accommodate the human scale. The planders provide a strong hub of social interaction because of their arrangement/ organization and their scale. The MACBA Museum Plaza and Peace Park Montreal act in a similar way, employing strategic spatial organization of elements and scale to facilitate how people socially interact in the given urban pocket. These ideas relate to Love Park and the Tompkins Square Park Training Facility and how they facilitate social interaction. Love Park establishes social opportunity by making use of the organization of the park, although many of the elements that were established there were not accommodating of human scale. The space itself being organized around a centralized fountain with the famous Love Sculpture by Robert Indiana contributes to how people come to the spaces. This centralized location is a place where social interaction occurs; where different groups and subcultures meet in the space. The Tompkins Square Park Training Facility is different from all of these, where the space itself is a large piece of tarmac in the East Village neighborhood in New York City. It facilitates social interactions through the surrounding the context that it is contained in, reflecting the identity and ideas of the neighboring East Village. This culminates with outside groups and subcultures that come to utilize the space as well. An identity is established in the space as a social hub through the social interaction that occurs

Piazza Duca d'Aosta (Stazione Centrale)
Milan, Italy

Tompkins Square Park Training Facility
New York City, New York

MACBA Museum Plaza
Barcelona, Spain

Love Park (JFK Plaza)
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

within the confines of that space.
because all of these different groups and subcultures mix in a very flexible type of space,

Peace Park (Place De La Paix)
Montreal, Quebec

Figure 3.1 - Seeing Social Opportunity in Existing Spaces

Viewing Spatial Opportunism
in Existing Spaces

In a similar fashion as viewing social opportunism in microcommunity, an important component to the lens of observing spatial elements is understanding how to visualize spatial opportunity and how the spatial elements contribute to how an identity of a space is formed through how the space is used.

Spatial opportunity contributes to an identity of space differently than social opportunity because the elements themselves begin to become representative of the park, establishing the space as an icon for groups and subcultures that would utilize the space for the specific spatial elements that it contains. Spatial opportunism focuses on the idea that specific groups and subcultures are more concerned with spatial elements rather than the social interactions that occur there that is of primary focus of social opportunity, a key understanding to assert is that spatial opportunity relates to how a group or subcultures use or activity is able to be performed by the spatial elements that exist and to how the elements attribute to the quality of the activity or use that occurs. In relationship to quality and manipulability of spatial entities, spatial opportunity can be visualized by looking at these elements and seeing how they contribute to a spatial opportunity present in an urban space, creating an identity for that urban space.

An established identity is a strong concept of microcommunity, determining how spatial elements contribute to the identity of an urban space is imperative to being able to determine if an urban space is creating an environment for different types of opportunity and how that relationship strengthens the functionality of the urban space that it is contained in. Understanding how spatial opportunism contributes to

urban spaces is important because of how it defines spaces and contributes to the application of microcommunity.

Like spaces mentioned when discussing social opportunism, spatial opportunism also exists in these spaces. The difference between the two types of opportunism in relationship to spaces discussed relates to how certain groups and subcultures are drawn to urban spaces because of the social interactions that occur in comparison other groups and subcultures are drawn to a space for the spatial elements that exist and how they can be manipulated for the specific activity that occurs at those spatial elements. At the Piazza Duca d' Aosta, spatial opportunity exists harmoniously with social opportunity, where spatial opportunists use the planters for the greenery in them as well as the surfaces of the planter ledge and how they contribute to how the element is used. Peace Park, similarly to Piazza Duca d' Aosta, creates an identity based on ledges and greenery that act to serve as a conduit for the activities that occur within an urban space and how spatial opportunism creates an identity for the space. The Tompkins Square Park Training Facility and the MACBA Museum Plaza both make use of the open space that is present at both spaces, creating a highly flexible spaces that allows endless amounts of social opportunity to occur, exemplifying the spatial aspect of microcommunity and the relationship to creating flexible spaces for different groups and subcultures to utilize for their benefit. In Love Park, spatial opportunity lies throughout the park, especially in th downward projected surfaces located at the centralized fountain. The spatial opportunity that exists in Love Park strongly exhibits the spatial aspect of microcommunity because the way the spatial elements are organized in
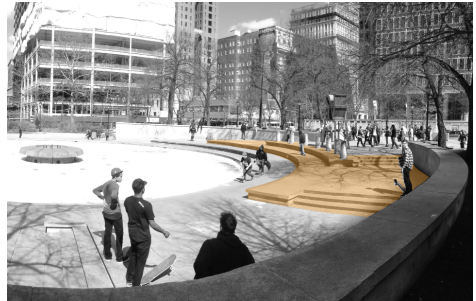
**Piazza Duca d'Aosta
(Stazione Centrale)**
Milan, Italy

**Tompkins Square Park
Training Facility**
New York City, New York

MACBA Museum Plaza
Barcelona, Spain

Love Park (JFK Plaza)
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

combination with how they are presented establishes a very vast and high amount of spatial elements that are able to conform to different spatial needs while still maintaining the idea that the different spatial elements can be used and activated in several different ways by different groups and subcultures. The amount of elements and the accommodation of different activity relates strongly to the idea of microcommunity and how flexible spaces provide inclusivity for groups and subcultures that congregate there.
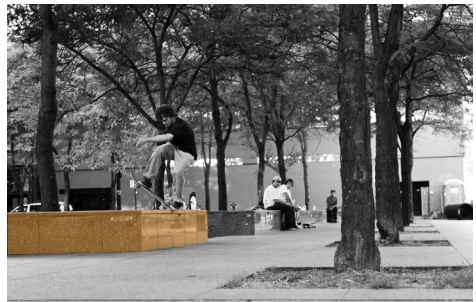
Peace Park (Place De La Paix)
Montreal, Quebec

Figure 3.2 - Seeing Spatial Opportunity
in Existing Spaces

Visualizing Microcommunity Through Film and Photography

Visualizing social and spatial elements is a key component in determining if an urban space is functioning as a microcommunity and to what extend that the ideas involving microcommunity apply to a given urban space. This can be done by examining specific moments or opportunities that can enhance a specific space. Using a lens provided by social and spatial opportunity, tools such as film and photography can be utilized to explore where opportunities can be enhanced or improved in an urban space.

Film and photography act as important mediums visualizing microcommunity and how the visualizations begin to display and expand specific moments and instances of where microcommunity exists and how an urban space expresses opportunity, identity and inclusivity. Film helps explore the idea of microcommunity by being able to record spans of time or instances that express aspects of microcommunity and how that contributes to how opportunity is seen in spaces. Additionally, film also begins to help portray human activity and how active groups and subcultures utilize a space and how it aids in determining or establishing an identity of a space. By viewing or recording film of an urban space, creating a richer understanding and different perspective of a space is achieved through a lens, as the videographer (or cinematographer) is able visualize how spaces evoke specific properties, presenting how opportunity and identity are being portrayed by the space. This idea of portraying opportunity and identity in space can be further clarified down to specific moments occurring in an urban space and how these moments contribute to a focused idea of where microcommunity is present in a given urban space. Photography, like film, helps to present information about

where opportunity and identity exist to provide inclusivity in urban space through observing groups and subcultures that are utilizing an urban space. However, photography helps to hone in on specific moments and establishes more clarity on where microcommunity exists in an urban space and moments or areas where an urban space can exhibit more principles and strategies that a microcommunity seeks to employ. By examining these specific moments, it can suggest where an urban space is lacking established identity and opportunity and where there are strong moments or strategies being employed by a space to create a more compelling, inclusive urban pocket.

In the City of Detroit, film and photography was used to study this applied idea of visualizing microcommunity using five urban spaces: Clark Park, Boyer Playground, the plaza at Bagley Pedestrian Bridge, Capitol Park and the Peace Pavilion located in the Old Redford neighborhood. These urban spaces were selected for this study because of the urban environments and neighborhoods that they are contained in as well as how they could establish a stronger presence or identity in their respective urban contexts. The primary medium used was film, where various clips from each space were overlaid in an expressive way to see how different spatial elements and entities in these spaces work together. After overlaying the videos, still images were captured utilizing frames in the video, revealing specific moments in the selected urban spaces that display where the spaces could improve the conditions to support more opportunity and express identity in order to establish more inclusive and more compelling urban pockets.

When examining these spaces, a common

Figure 3.3 - Still Images of Visualizing Microcommunity Video

theme was that the spaces themselves did not feel very socially accommodating, regardless of the existing conditions that were present. Clark Park and Boyer Playground exhibit these traits because of the way the spaces are organized and the lack of spatial entities that exist. Both urban conditions had tons of open space, but because they are so wide open without any spatial elements to allow people to assemble and create social or spatial opportunity, the pockets felt more like intermediary passageways rather than establishing a place or identity of destination. Similarly, Capitol Park displayed a lack of spatial elements that invited spatial and social opportunity. An interesting observation that was seen in the examined frames from Capitol Park was that people observed tended to walk around Capitol Park rather than pass through it, identifying key moments where opportunity and inclusivity are not being achieved as a result of lacking spatial elements. The Peace Pavilion in Old Redford was also similar to these other examples because the space and elements

itself do not contribute to promoting social or spatial opportunity and interaction. The space itself is rather objective, but different than a space such as a community garden, the pavilion functions as a destination for community members, using the elements on the pavilion to communicate specific ideology. The Plaza at Bagley Pedestrian Bridge differs from these other spaces because it does contain compelling spatial elements that allow spatial opportunity to occur fairly frequently, however, these spatial elements do not contribute to social opportunity. Typically, spatial opportunists come and use the plaza because of the spatial elements that exist there, but because the spatial elements existing in this space do not facilitate social interaction, the plaza just functions as an intermediary space between the pedestrian bridge and the strip mall surrounding the plaza.

Chapter IV

Theories of Urban Space and The Application of Microcommunity

Existing Theory on Cultivating Urban Spaces

The process of defining microcommunity introduces a core set of values and ideas that begins to examine the ideas of urban space and how it cultivates those spaces through establishing inclusivity, identity and a promotion of a balance of social and spatial opportunity. In alignment with the core values proposed, existing theories on cultivating urban space are important to acknowledge because they help further define some of the goals of microcommunity and how they align with current designs of urban spaces.

The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces by William H. Whyte discusses the study of people and their interaction with urban spaces. This relates to the design of public spaces and how they should be designed to reflect human behavior and how humans use space. Whyte states, "It is far easier, simpler to create spaces that work for people than those that do not— and a tremendous difference it can make to the life of a city." (Whyte, 1980). In his work, Whyte talks about how people are attracted to human spaces and how specific devices effectively allow human activity and interaction to occur in urban spaces. Of those discussed, four key strategies that were analyzed saw direct correlation to the space itself and how it promoted human interaction in urban space. The four strategies involve daylight, water, people to observe and adequate seating.

When studying urban space, Whyte observed that people did not prefer to sit in the shade of overcast buildings and infrastructure, but rather that they were attracted to daylight and warmth. To observe this, Whyte and his team of observers set up cameras to overlook a plaza that was surrounded by high-rise buildings in a very dense urban setting,

leaving the cameras for extended periods of time to record how people reacted to sunlight during different times of the day. After analyzing the film captured from this experiment, Whyte formed a correlation between the time of day, the light at the time of day and the human activity at that specific time of day. He noticed that people were most active in the plaza around noon, the time of day when the most daylight can be achieved. As the hours passed and the surrounding buildings cast shadows on the urban space, people shifted positions towards the daylight and the amount of people lessened over time as the space was covered by shade as time passed on. This also relates to other natural elements that occur in urban such as trees and the breeze which attribute to how people are attracted to daylight. If an urban space is being covered in shade, a breeze is not welcomed, but if the sunlight is very intense and the breeze is helps cool the heat, then the breeze is welcomed. Trees are treated a similar way by people. When there is a shade cast over an urban space, people do not tend to use the shade the tree provides. However, when there is lots of light present, people will sit in the shade to cool themselves from the sun.

In his second observation, Whyte analyzes that seating is often not scaled appropriately to people. He asserts that this is why people often are seen sitting on spatial elements such as stairs and ledges, as they accommodate the human scale. Whyte explains this idea by saying that "A dimension that is truly important is the human back- side. It is a dimension many architects ignore. Not often will you find a ledge or bench that is deep enough to be sittable on both sides. Some aren't sittable on one." This idea expresses the need for adequate seating in an urban space

Social Stimulus (Triangulation)

Daylight

Adequate Seating

People to Observe

Figure 4.1 - Images of Observations by William H. Whyte

and how that contributes to promotion of human activity.

Whyte's third observation was that, simply put, "What attracts people most, it would appear, is other people" (Whyte, 1980). Whyte addresses that people are interested in the activities of other people and that their behaviors in a public space will be determined by the possible interactions that exist there. For example, when people began a conversation, they were seen in the heat of heavy pedestrian traffic rather than finding a secluded spot away from other people.

In relation to Whyte's third observation, his fourth observation dealt with the idea of a social stimulus, which he called "triangulation" (Whyte, 1980). This idea relates to how people are more open to social interaction when in the presence of a stimulus. Examples of these stimuli,

as described by Whyte, include spatial elements such as sculptures or exhibits or it can be something such as a street performer or a musician.

This idea strongly relates to the idea of social opportunity as described by the microcommunity model which examines the idea that people are drawn to spatial elements and urban spaces that promote social interaction between groups of people. This relationship between William Whyte's theory and the microcommunity model supports the idea that urban spaces should be designed and catered to promote social interaction between different groups and subcultures.

Existing Theory on Cultivating Urban Spaces

In addition to William Whyte, the work of Jan Gehl and his study of people in the urban space is another large contribution to existing theory on cultivating urban spaces. In opposition to Walter Whyte's specific focus on small urban spaces, namely plazas, Jan Gehl's work is much broader, focusing on the urban fabric as whole. In his discussions of the larger urban fabric, Gehl discusses strategies and ideas that help establish stronger, healthier urban environments and spaces that contribute to healthier people in both a physical and mental sense. While focusing on the broader idea of the urban fabric as a whole, an important connection can be made between these observations and ideas and how they can apply to small urban spaces.

One of Gehl's observations is that people are attracted to the activity of other people, which is very similar to idea discussed in William Whyte's theory. This idea is portrayed in an anecdote, where Gehl observes people and human activity.

"'What brought the people out?' Gehl watched, scribbled down every movement to find out. When the city added a new bench, Gehl counted the people who came and lingered. The benches told a story. A bench facing the passing crowds got ten times as much use as a bench that faced a flower bed. He also noticed that more people gathered on the edges of construction sites than in front of department store display windows. But as soon as the construction crews went home, the audience dispersed. 'They were much more interested in watching people doing things than watching flowers or fashion,' he noted. His conclusion seems obvious, and yet it was revolutionary at the time: 'What is most attractive, what attracts people to stop and linger and look,

will invariably be other people. Activity in human life is the greatest attraction in cities'" (Montgomery, 2013).

Similar to the findings of William Whyte, people will congregate in urban spaces where other people and displays of human activity are present.

In addition to the relationship of people being drawn to human activity in urban spaces, Gehl also discusses how social inclusion is an important part of why people go to specific urban spaces or are drawn to human activities. Much of what this relates to is human psychology and how when people are often healthier when social inclusion is present and people have access to this inclusion. Gehl states that, "In a Society becoming steadily more privatized with private homes, cars, computers, offices and shopping centers, the public component of our lives is disappearing. It is more and more important to make the cities inviting, so we can meet our fellow citizens face to face and experience directly through our senses. Public life in good quality public spaces is an important part of a democratic life and a full life" (Gehl, 1971).

Relating to his idea about social inclusion, Gehl also discusses how assemblies and events are important to creating a more compelling, healthy urban environment. The importance of assemblies and events, Gehl states, is to allow for necessary, optional and social activity to occur in combination with each other, creating a more dynamic and meaningful space for facilitating interaction.

Gehl's fourth point, which more specifically relates to small urban spaces, is that idea that urban spaces should provide a buffer

or a "soft edge" to accommodate human interaction, creating a separation or a moment of pause between people and the dense urban fabric that surrounds them. Much of this idea relates to Gehl's point of creating "life between buildings," meaning that built environment should be designed to enhance specific human activity rather than creating a built environment and forcing human activity to conform to it. The "soft edge" that Gehl is talking about is intermediary space, situating itself between pre-existing human activity and the built environment that should surround this space. The goal of a "soft edge" is to be able to facilitate human interaction that exists in a given urban context, enhancing given spaces to create a moment of pause or isolation to benefit intimate human interaction from the dense urban infrastructure that surrounds it. This idea strongly correlates to the ideas expressed through spatial elements in the microcommunity model, where spatial elements in a given area should enhance the human interaction that occurs in a given urban space. This idea promotes social opportunity and how urban spaces should be designed and established to be able to facilitate more human interaction through the design of a given space and how it aids to enhance or create a sense of location or identity through the human activity that occurs there.

Other People

Assemblies + Events

"Soft Edge" for Adequate Pedestrian Flow

Social Inclusion

Figure 4.2 - Images of Observations by Jan Gehl

Modernizing Existing Urban Theory Using Microcommunity

In reference to the ideas and strategies discussed by both Jan Gehl and William H. Whyte, a key take away is that urban spaces and pockets should align to with ideology that the space itself should promote human interaction and should facilitate this through design choices and ideas that the space employs. Much of these ideas relates strongly to the idea of social opportunism that the microcommunity model seeks to employ. The strong connection between social opportunism and the existing theories that discuss how to cultivate more positive and significant urban spaces is that they intently discuss how urban conditions and spatial elements should enhance human interaction and human activity, making it necessary to design spaces that reflect how people use space. However, the models proposed by Jan Gehl and William H. Whyte primarily only discuss the idea of social opportunity in their body of work, but do not mention the idea of spatial opportunity and the idea that certain groups and subcultures will come to an urban space for the actual spatial elements that exist there rather than the social interactions that can be facilitated by the spatial elements present in an urban space.

As defined by the microcommunity model, a microcommunity should strive to establish a space that is inclusive, is identifiable and establishes a balance between social and spatial opportunity. The balance between social and spatial opportunity allows for more compelling spaces to be established, making it necessary to elevate spatial opportunity to the same amount of consideration when designing urban spaces. Resulting from a need for this balance, it is important to identify key strategies that can be employed through modernized theoretical concepts that considers what draws spatial opportunity

to urban environments and what strategies can be employed to attract relating groups and subcultures to urban spaces.

The first concept that can be considered is the idea of materiality. Groups and subcultures that can be identified as spatial opportunists utilize specific urban spaces because of the material qualities that they present in part with how the material adds to the activity that they are performing. This idea of material helps to establish an idea of location through the material presented in that space and how it reflects unique qualities in comparison to other spaces around it. For example, groups such as skateboarders will go to specific urban spaces because of material preference that favors that activity. Skateboarders are highly unlikely to use space that have grounds or spatial elements that are rough and rugged, but rather they will assemble in urban spaces where elements are smooth.

In conjunction with materiality, spatial quality contributes to how spatial opportunity occurs in an urban space. If the spatial elements begin to hinder rather than enhance the experience of an activity or usage because of the quality or condition that it is in, groups and subcultures will not prefer to use that space and will seek other urban spaces whose condition better suits their activity. The quality presented by the condition of the space helps to create establish an identity of a space, where spaces that have better conditions or spatial quality will tend to be favored by spatial opportunity.

The third idea that should be considered when attracting spatial opportunity to urban spaces is to create elements that conform to different spatial needs. This relates strongly to the spatial aspect of microcommunity,

Materiality

Spatial Quality

Identity or Symbolism

Elements that Conform to Different Spatial Needs

Figure 4.3 -Images Representing Modernized Concepts of Urban Theory

where urban spaces should express the idea of flex space, where different groups and subcultures can utilize the space for their own specific need or activity. This idea ties into some of the strategies and ideas the Whyte and Gehl discuss, however this ideology should be applied in order to express spatial opportunity in coexistence with social opportunity. By creating elements that can conform to both types of opportunity, a stronger inclusive space is established, contributing to a stronger sense of location and place.

The fourth idea that contributes to creating a stronger urban pocket is the idea that the space itself should evoke an identity or symbolism. The idea of an established identity or symbolism relates to a connection between creating an inclusive space and the amount of opportunity that can exist in a given space

due to the flexibility for different groups. As a result, the identity or symbolism that is formed correlates directly to how an urban space produces inclusivity and a dynamic urban environment, impacting the idea of preference by social and spatial opportunists through the spatial elements that are defined and utilized in an urban space.

This idea combined with the other modernized theoretical concepts defined by microcommunity help contribute to existing theories on cultivation urban space, establishing a strengthened conceptual basis on how to establish more inclusive and identifiable spaces that express both spatial and social opportunity.

An Updated Urban Design Criteria Utilizing Microcommunal Ideology

Using the modernized urban theory based on the microcommunity model and the existing theories of cultivating urban spaces by Gehl and Whyte, an urban design criteria can be achieved and created through the principles and strategies that these theories discuss.

Using the principles from Whyte's existing theory of cultivation urban space in his Social Life of Urban Spaces, one portion of the design criteria that becomes evident is creating spaces that effectively facilitate human interaction so that they form stronger urban pockets. This contribution to an urban design criteria references Whyte's idea of creating spaces and spatial elements that reflect human behavior and how people utilize urban space. To accomplish this, one designing an urban space should, scale spatial elements appropriately for the human scale, organize spaces and spatial elements so that they facilitate human interaction between different groups and individuals, account for the natural elements that people are attracted to and how they contribute to the experience people have in an urban space and how spaces and spatial elements begin to stimulate social interaction through Whyte's idea of "Triangulation" (Whyte, 1980).

To compliment the strategies that Whyte proposed in his urban theory, Gehl's social theory provides additional strategies on how to further allow urban spaces to facilitate social interaction. Using Gehl's theory on cultivating urban space, an urban space should draw people to an urban space because of the human interaction that is exhibited there, provide social inclusion to all groups and subcultures using a space as opposed to a select few, allow for adequate space for people to assemble and conduct events that display social interaction, and should establish a "soft edge" that accommodates a buffer between a dense urban environment and intimate human spaces in order to further the social interaction that can occur in an urban space.

Whyte and Gehl established a strong basis on a design criteria for social interaction and opportunity, however, they do not mention or discuss the idea of spatial opportunity and how certain groups and subcultures are more interested in interacting with the spatial elements themselves rather than the social interaction that occurs there. Expanding on the ideas of both Whyte and Gehl's theories of urban space, the microcommunity model provides modernized strategies and ideas to establish more inclusive urban space to contribute important ideas as an updated design criteria based centered around the ideas and definition of microcommunity. In addition to the social ideas that are expressed similarly to Whyte and Gehl, the microcommunity model expresses the need for a balance between both spatial and social opportunity and how that balance achieves a more inclusive and identifiable space in an urban fabric. Using the modernized strategies to update theories of existing urban space, a space should utilize the idea of materiality to contribute to the identity of an urban space, display strong spatial quality so that conditions are favorable and different groups and subcultures, contain spatial elements that conform do different spatial needs and evoke an established identity or symbolism to create a connection between the idea of inclusive space and coexistence between groups.

In combining crucial strategies from both

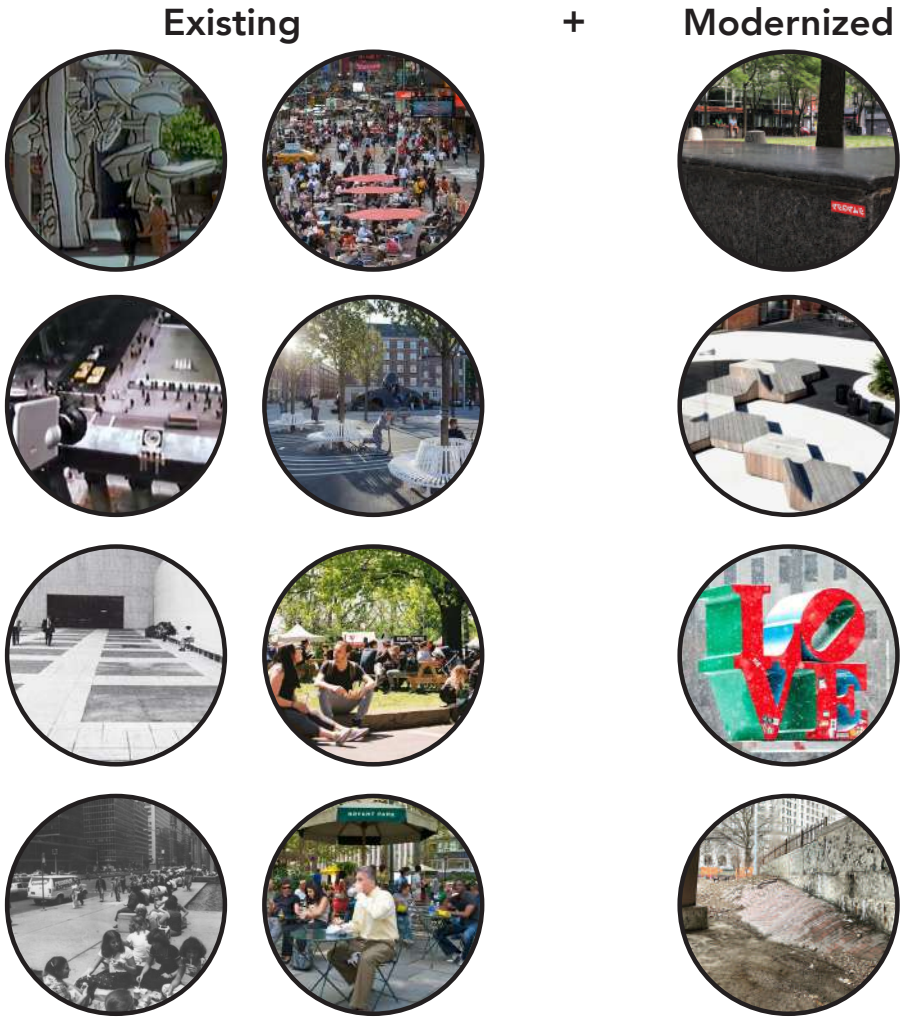## Existing   +   Modernized

Figure 4.4 - Diagram Combining Existing and Modern Ideas to Form
Microcommunal Design Criteria

existing modern theory on cultivating space to more modernized ideology and strategies proposed by the microcommunity model, the following design criteria is established. Urban spaces and spatial elements should:

- *Accommodate social and spatial opportunity equally to prevent exclusivity in spaces.*

- *Be designed with flexibility in mind, evolving with past, present and future subcultures that utilize the space.*

- *Must assert an identity in the larger context of an urban fabric to create and establish a sense of place and destination.*

By applying this updated design criteria that is modernized by the microcommunity model, more social and spatial opportunity will be present, creating a more identifiable and inclusive urban space.

Chapter V

Applying Microcommunal Design Criteria
Through Design Strategies

Applying the Microcommunal Design Criteria To Urban Spaces

Figure 5.1 - Love Park. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Figure 5.2 - Capitol Park. Detroit, Michigan

Figure 5.3 - Hart Plaza. Detroit, Michigan

After identifying and establishing the microcommunal design criteria, the ideas and strategies can be applied to existing urban spaces. By implementing strategies from the microcommunal design criteria, stronger potential outcomes for urban spaces can be achieved, contributing to an establishment of a stronger sense of place.

The process of examining urban spaces consists of understanding what moments of spatial and social opportunity are present, and how they can either be preserved or improved to promote a more inclusive urban space. This can be done by understanding the history of a space and its design in order to study if existing spatial elements promote opportunity, and how inclusive this opportunity is. The more a spatial element contributes to inclusivity, the stronger that spatial element mediates social and spatial opportunity.

To prove the effectiveness of the microcommunal design criteria, existing spaces Love Park, Capitol Park and Hart Plaza are examined to visualize possible outcomes that could have improved the urban conditions of these spaces. The reason each of these spaces were chosen is because of the rich history and design background each space provides and how certain aspects of those designs could have been amplified to create more inclusive, identifiable urban spaces.
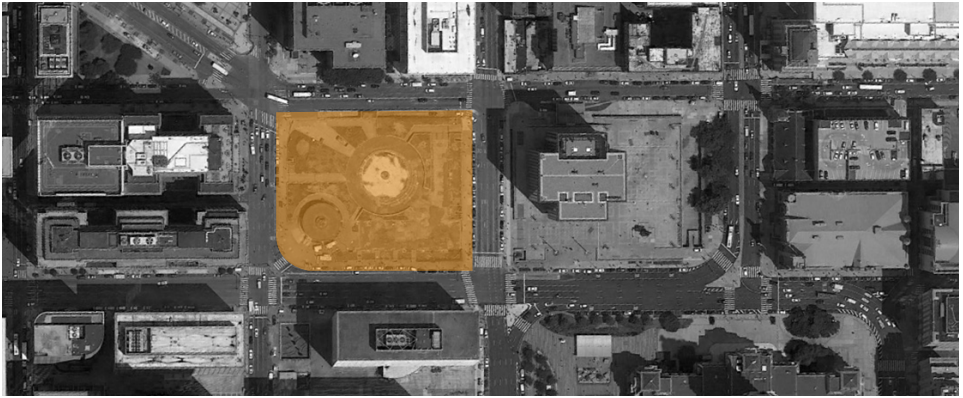
Design Investigation of Love Park

Figure 5.4 ~ Aerial Image of Love Park

Love Park was established in 1965 by city planner Edmund Bacon and architect Vincent E. Kling. It was designed to serve as a "grand entrance to the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, carrying residents and visitors between City Hall and top attractions like the Barnes Foundation, The Franklin Institute and the Philadelphia Museum of Art" (Visit Philadelphia, 2020). The original design of Love Park was established as a hub for social opportunity, creating a strong urban core in Downtown Philadelphia. Even though this mainly had the intent of acting as a social space, spatial opportunity began to appear as a result of the spatial element that existed there. These elements includd the large fountain at the heart of Love Park as well as a vast array of ledges and other concrete structures throughout the park.

Over time, different groups and subcultures flocked to Love Park because of both the social and spatial opportunity that existed there. The groups that varied from spatial opportunists such as skateboarders, to social opportunists such as homeless people, school children and businesspeople using Love Park as a meeting place.   Johnathan Rentschler, a photographer and resident of Philadelphia, states that Love Park "was such a mixture of people" (Vice, 2018).

In 2002, The City of Philadelphia announced a renovation of Love Park, changing the spatial elements and face of the park. The renovation was a direct reaction to skateboarding and other spatial opportunity that existed in the space, mainly because city officials believed those activities were ruining the infrastructure and image of the park. As a result, the City of Philadelphia incited a skateboarding ban, ticketing anyone who was caught skating in the park. Interestingly enough, Edmund Bacon, aged 92 at the time of announcement, did not support the renovation or the skateboarding ban because of the intent that it suggested. In protest on live television, Bacon rolled across Love Park on a skateboard, stating that "in total defiance of Mayor Street and the council of the city of Philadelphia hereby exercise my rights as a citizen of the United States and I deliberately skate in my beloved Love Park." (Neely-Cohen, 2016)

Figure 5.5 ~ Images Representing the Past and Present State of Love Park

Eventually, Love Park had gone through a series of renovations, resulting in a very significant change to the park beginning in 2016 and ending in 2018. The redesigned Love Park established a very wide-open space with almost no spatial elements other than movable park furniture. Although the park was reimagined to be a social hub in a core part of the city, the barren spaces do not allow for gatherings. The new movable furniture creates a space that feels temporary, rather than a space that creates a location with more permanent elements. In comparison to the original design, there is little to no facilitation for social and spatial opportunity to exist. After the most recent renovation, the iconic Love sculpture by Robert Indiana was placed in the same location as it was before, remaining as an icon and identity of Love Park, contrasting the design and ideas between the new and old Love Park.

Visualizing Opportunity and Microcommunity in Love Park

Figure 5.6 ~ Collage Representing the Successes and Opportunities
        Through The History of Love Park

After investigating the design of Love Park and the history of the park itself, it is apparent that the old design created a stronger inclusive and identifiable urban space than the newly renovated Love Park. The redesigned park, as investigated does not contribute to spatial opportunity because of the lack of spatial elements for groups and subcultures to utilize. Additionally, the lack of spatial elements in the park does not effectively establish a basis for strong social interaction to occur either. While the redesign has potential to incorporate spatial opportunity, some of the elements such as the movable furniture and barren landscape do not house an accommodating environment for social interaction.

By using defining concepts proposed by the microcommunal design criteria, overlaying images between the old and new Love Park designs displays where social and opportunity existed. This portrays key moments where different outcomes could have been achieved had both social and spatial opportunity been taken into consideration when redesigning the urban space.

Had these ideas been considered in the redesign of Love Park, a more identifiable and inclusive space could have been achieved. After visualizing the space and seeing where the idea of microcommunity exists, the updated design criteria that utilizes microcommunity ideology can be used to seek future outcomes that could have resulted in a stronger urban space.

Application of Potential Microcommunal Design Strategies to Love Park

Figure 5.7 ~ Representative Collage of Love Park Overlapping Strategy

Strategy I - Overlapping

By combining strategies from the old and new design of Love Park, more compelling space for social and spatial opportunity is established. Principles of this strategy include using the downward project of spatial elements from the prior design, while still incorporating open green areas and moveable objects so that users can use the space as they see necessary.

By incorporating more spatial elements that accommodate a strengthened balance of social and spatial opportunity, there would be less exclusivity in the space as a result. This possible outcome would comply with the updated design criteria because it acknowledges the past and present subcultures that exist in a space. By doing this, the space would be more inclusive of different groups and subcultures, applying the ideas and strategies employed in the microcommunity model. In this possible outcome, the idea of microcommunity would be defined through the overlap between ideas in order to create spatial elements that integrate spatial and social opportunity equally.

Application of Potential Microcommunal Design Strategies to Love Park

Figure 5.8 ~ Representative Collage of Love Park Retrofitting Strategy

Strategy II - Retrofitting

Retrofitting existing elements in Love Park to include more green and social spaces would promote more social opportunity while keeping the existing spatial opportunity intact. In promoting the social opportunity with the existing spatial opportunity, Love Park would continue to maintain the established identity it already had, drawing more users and opportunity to an already strong urban hub.

Spatial opportunity was strongly prevalent in Love Park, leaving most of the structure and organization of the park there would have kept the existing identity the park produced. By retrofitting the existing elements that were in Love Park, elements could have been designed to incorporate most social opportunity. By doing this, the space would promote more inclusivity allowing more groups and subcultures to utilize the space. This idea maintains flexible spaces and takes into account past, present and future groups and subcultures that use the space and how it improves the condition for all. In doing so, the idea of microcommnuity would be present in the manner that elements are retrofitted, where existing elements honor past and existing groups and subcultures. New implementations to those existing elements promotes inclusivity for more groups and subcultures to use the space.

Application of Potential Microcommunal Design Strategies to Love Park

Figure 5.9 ~ Representative Collage of Love Park Encapsulation Strategy

Strategy III - Encapsulation

Leaving the existing fountain and centralized spatial element while revitalizing the areas outside would allow for more social interaction. This idea can function similarly to Peace Park in Montreal, where centralized spatial elements provide for cross-pollination of social and spatial opportunity, where at the same time social and spatial opportunity can function separately from one another.

By honoring the existing fountain and the centralized space it creates, the past and existing subcultures will be able to continue the use of the space to accommodate their spatial and social needs. By revising the space around the fountain with more social opportunity conscious choices, more inclusivity is produced as a result. Some of this can be simply achieved by adding more green space as well as appropriately scale seating elements to promote social interaction. This allows for both new and existing groups and subcultures to utilize a space to for their own social or spatial needs. Similar to the retrofitting strategy, microcommunity would exist by the way these spaces are organized and structured. where existing and new spaces work together, a result that promotes the existing identity with additions of more inclusive elements is achieved.
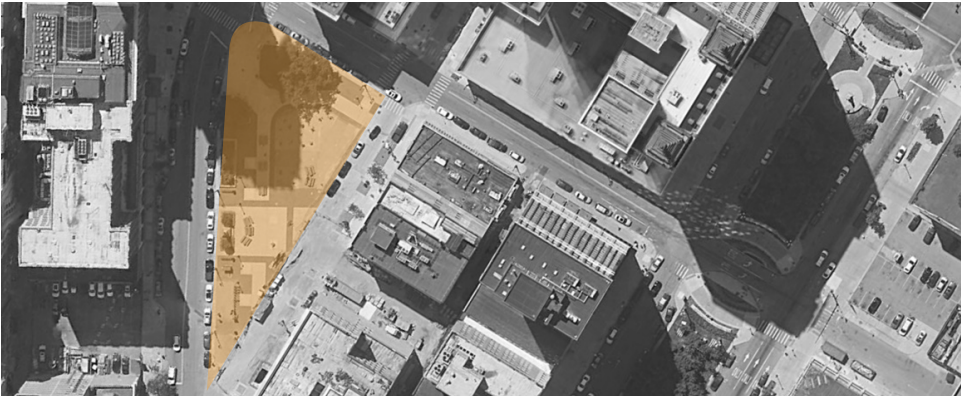
Design Investigation of Capitol Park

Figure 5.10 ~ Aerial Image of Love Park

Established in 1905, Capitol Park was constructed to honor the old Michigan capitol building that burned down in 1893. Over time, Capitol Park became surrounded in a dense urban environment where it acted as a social hub for the surrounding urban context. Since its original conceptualization Capitol Park functioned as a social green space that fostered social interaction in a growing urban environment.

As time passed, "Detroit hit its heyday" (Historical Society of Michigan, 2012) near the 1950's. During this time, Detroit was entering a renaissance. The city population hit the peak of two million people, and as a result the city began to further develop and change. Capitol Park was affected by the surge in development, becoming a transportation hub in the middle of the downtown area.

The design of the transportation hub reflected typical urban design strategies of the 1950's, calling for "converting the site into a public transport center, with a comfort station and four bus loading shelters" (Historical Society of Michigan,

2012). By changing the program and function of Capitol Park from a public green space to a bustling transportation hub, the dynamic of how people interacted with each other and the space itself changed. As time progressed, more technological advancements were made, reducing the need for a transportation hub in core areas of the city.

Much of this relates to advancements with the automobile and how the success of the automobile led to a drastic change in urban infrastructure, often times putting the needs of the car before the needs of the people. This had become a common issue in many urban environments throughout countries such as the United States, causing failure of urban infrastructure to promote the success of the car. This relates to experiences that Jan Gehl had in cities such as Medellin and Bogota, Colombia, where he observed that city infrastructure was constructed to favor the car rather than human activity.

As other infrastructural changes occurred in Detroit due to technological advancements, there was less need for a

Figure 5.11 ~ Images Representing the Past and Present State of Capitol Park

transportation hub and the station located in Capitol Park became neglected and failed to serve as an attractive urban space. As Detroit's urban fabric changed further, Capitol Park received another renovation. The renovation itself imposed several spatial elements that did not promote social or spatial opportunity to occur, imposing concrete elements that did not contrubute to social or spatial interaction. Rather, the renovation created another dead urban space that had potential to create a strong urban center in a core area of Detroit.

After the 2011 renovation proved not to be successful, an improved proposal for Capitol Park was created to reflect the original design for Capitol Park. The proposed design meant to promote social opportunity and create a lively urban space much like the original green space design in the early 1900's. After returning Capitol Park to a similar state as the original, Capitol Park quickly became underutilized due to reusing old design principles for a modern space. Had the redesign for Capitol Park taken more modernized design concepts and design criteria in mind, a more inclusive, meaningful space could have been established in a core urban environment.

Visualizing Opportunity and Microcommunity in Capitol Park

Figure 5.12 ~ Collage Representing the Successs and Opportunities Throughout The History of Capitol Park

It is evident after reviewing the history of Capitol Park that the designs produced for the park were never able to sustain extended human interaction, nor were they able to sustain social or spatial opportunity. The historical details of the Capitol Park reveal that the space was constantly used as an urban design experiment, using sets of design principles that did not offer any timelessness nor evolved with past, present or future groups and subcultures in mind. As a result, the space quickly became underutilized because of the lack of inclusivity and identity provided through the design of the space.

Using the concepts proposed by the microcommunial design criteria, the designs introduced to Capital Park never guaranteed social or spatial opportunity to be facilitated thought the idea of flexible space that kept active and prior subcultures in mind. As a result, a strong identity of the park could never be achieved, creating a dead urban space in a very core urban environment.

If ideas expressed by the microcommunal design criteria were to be utilized in the design of Capitol Park, richer more inclusive spaces can be established creating stronger outcomes for how the space functions. The underpinnings of Capitol Park begin to highlight the need for incorporating a modernized design criteria to provide design outcomes that establish constant use in the space by promoting social and spatial opportunity.

Application of Potential Microcommunal Design Strategies to Capitol Park

Figure 5.13 ~ Representative Collage of Capitol Park Combination Strategy

Strategy I - Combination

Using the original idea of incorporating social green space and the strategies employed by the most recent scheme, a combination of the two organizations of spatial elements can be utilized to promote more social and spatial activity. Much of this can relate to reorganizing how spatial uses are optimized by both spatial and social opportunity and how the combination of the two design concepts could program the space more effectively.

While both the original Capitol Park design and the most recent design primarily focus on the idea of social opportunism, a combination of the two can integrate the possibility of spatial opportunity to occur. By combining positive aspects of each concept, a more cohesive design concept can be achieved to promote inclusion of social and spatial opportunity. The strategies implied by the microcommunity model can aid this updated design by implying a flexible space that can accommodate both of these types of opportunity. In doing so, a stronger sense of location and place can be established, creating an identity of a more inclusive space.

Application of Potential Microcommunal Design Strategies to Capitol Park

Figure 5.14 ~ Representative Collage of Capitol Park Projection Strategy

Strategy II - Projection

Like the combination strategy, using the idea of social green space would become effective by adding ideas such as grade change and more compelling landscape to allow for more spatial and social opportunity to occur in the urban space. By strategically landscaping and designing the established green space, it would allow for more diverse spatial and social opportunity to occur, reducing the idea of exclusivity produced by the current green space.

The way that the landscape elements are organized and how they are utilized will contribute to the balance of spatial and social opportunity that exists. The balance should be maintained through how the spatial elements are organized with open space in order to facilitate interaction between other people and the spatial elements themselves. If done correctly, the organized space will function flexibly, complying with the strategies employed by the microcommunal design criteria. In establishing a more flexible space more social and spatial interaction will occur, producing a more inclusive, yet intimate urban space.

Application of Potential Microcommunal Design Strategies to Capitol Park

Figure 5.15 ~ Representative Collage of Capitol Park Succession Strategy

Strategy III - Succession

Reflecting on past iterations of Capitol Park, the successes of each iteration can be examined and utilized to produce a more effective result based on prior spatial themes. In using this strategy, it is important to accommodate effective spatial use and layout so that when combined with an already successful social strategy, ideas from each iteration synergize to create a strong urban center.

Due to the social nature of most of the iterations that were employed in the designs of Capitol Park, social opportunity would be present in most of the positive traits that are displayed by the prior design concepts. An improvement that could be made to prior design concepts for Capitol Park would convey spatial opportunity and the devices it would use to accomplish this goal. This can be achieved by accommodating flexible spaces that attract groups and subcultures to the spatial elements themselves rather than using the elements solely to force social interaction. By incorporating positive past ideas and ideas to improve interaction with spatial objects, the idea of microcommunity would imply a more inclusive space, creating a familiar identity using past and modernized ideology.

Design Investigation of Hart Plaza

Figure 5.16 ~ Aerial Image of Hart Plaza

Hart Plaza is a concrete plaza that was constructed in 1975, serving as a concert venue and urban hub that was named after the late senator Philip A. Hart. Preceding the current design for Hart Plaza, Eliel Saarinen was commissioned early on to design a waterfront green space to commemorate the site of where the first settler of Detroit, Antoine de La Mothe Cadillac first landed in 1701.

The original design by for Hart Plaza was designed by Eliel Saarinen in 1924 as a civic center for the City of Detroit and, as described by AIA Detroit, was "an enigma" (AIA Detroit, 2003). The reason for the design being an enigma was because the "departure from the Saarinen's vision was the nature of the proposed public space itself, which they envisioned as a predominantly green sweep of lawn and naturalistic tree clusters gently terracing towards the [Detroit] river"(AIA Detroit, 2003). As a result of this departure in design, the concept was never realized.

After Saarinen's design was not realized, Smith, Hinchman and Grylls, the firm that that would eventually become Smithgroup,

collaborated with Isamu Noguchi and came up with a current design that was conceived a civic center that would ultimately become Hart Plaza. The design for Hart Plaza was meant to be a space to house events such as festivals and city celebrations, but constantly remains empty due to the lack human activity occuring in the space.

The spatial elements created by Hart Plaza are compelling, although they were not designed to promote social opportunity. The organization of the spaces in Hart Plaza creates tons of non-intimate social interaction, creating intimidating areas that do not work to facilitate social interaction. Much of the spaces were designed to serve specific events rather than day to day human activities. Generally, Hart Plaza remains dormant most of the year and sees little to no social opportunity due to the organization of spaces.

Although the design of Hart Plaza does not contribute to social opportunity and human interaction, the space contributes heavily to spatial opportunity. Different

Figure 5.17 ~ Images Representing the Past and Present State of Hart Plaza

groups and subcultures flock to Hart Plaza due to the specific spatial elements in the urban space and how those elements contribute to a specific activity.

In contrast to Love Park and Capitol Park, Hart Plaza, by design, favors spatial opportunity by creating spaces that specific groups and subcultures come to because of the identity exhibited through spatial elements. Had some of the ideas from Eliel Saarinen's Civic Center design concept appeared in the constructed design of Hart Plaza, a stronger balance of social and spatial interaction could have been achieved, creating a highly active urban space that would see constant use. Most of this could be achieved through Saarinen's use green space to faciliate more social interaction by creating a less intimidating space. If design concepts to establish more human interaction via spatial elements were utilized, then a more attractive, inclusive space could have been produced, asserting a stronger presence in the surrounding urban landscape.

Visualizing Opportunity and Microcommunity in Hart Plaza

Figure 5.18 ~ Collage Representing the Successes and Opportunities
Through The Histoty of Hart Plaza

Although strong spatial elements were utilized in Hart Plaza, the structure of the space does not contribute to social interaction in urban space. The reason being is because of the organization of the space and how it creates intimidating, uncomfortable spaces that do not express social opportunity. However, the spatial elements that exist in Hart Plaza provide strong spatial opportunity because of the spatial elements placed and how they contribute to an identity of Hart Plaza. Examples of this are included through the concrete structures surrounding the event spaces, creating compelling spatial elements that attract spatial opportunity though primary use of materiality and being able to conform to different spatial needs.

In correlation with the microcommunal design criteria, Hart Plaza in its' current state does not function to provide a strong urban hub. The spaces that are created do not allow for social interaction to occur, establishing a dead space during the time it is not being utilized. The reason for this is that the spaces created do not function as flexible spaces that allow for a balance of social and spatial opportunity in an urban space to occur. As a result of this, inclusivity is reduced, diminishing the value of the spaces in Hart Plaza seeking to contribute to a stronger identity.

Utilizing strategies established by the microcommunal design criteria, Hart Plaza would have sought to establish a strong balance of social and spatial opportunity. To achieve this balance, the spaces in Hart Plaza would have to be able to contribute to both spatial and social opportunity equally in order to create a stronger urban core. If this is achieved, a more inclusive space will be produced, correcting the issues of uncomfortable spaces in the current design utilized in Hart Plaza. This inclusive space will seek to provide a more positive outcome, creating a more pronounced urban space in a dense surrounding context.
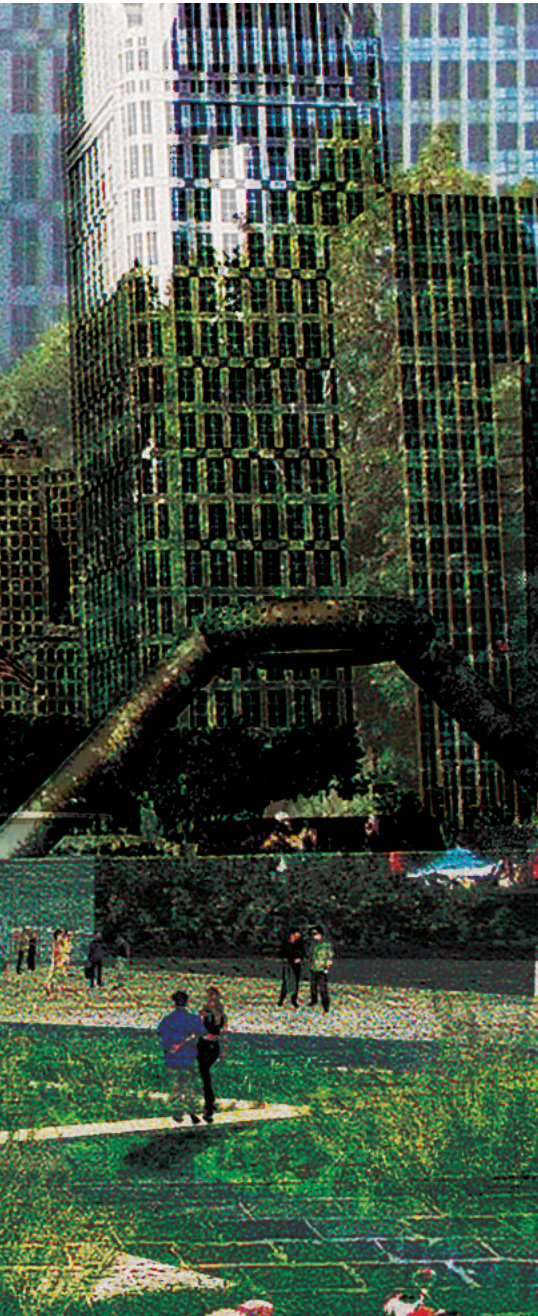
Application of Potential Microcommunal Design Strategies to Capitol Park

Figure 5.19 ~ Representative Collage of Hart Plaza Intersection Strategy

Strategy 1 - Intersection

Revitalizing the existing and intermediary spaces between all of the event areas with hospitable green space will accommodate social opportunity as well as more potential for spatial opportunity. In doing so, much of the existing structure that defines Hart Plaza's identity will remain intact while revisiting past ideas that reflect the original intention of designing a green urban space on Detroit's Riverfront.

By combining the idea of making the intermediary space greener and leaving the event spaces alone, a much stronger link between the intermediary spaces can be achieved to create a more unified design concept. By this unification, social and spatial opportunity would coexist as a result of preserving elements attract spatial opportunity and improving elements and spaces that were meant to attract and facilitate social opportunity. This idea uses the microcommunity design criteria to produce a flexible space that integrates more social and spatial opportunity. By doing this, a more inclusive space is achieved, creating a more even more identifiable by establishing a sense of place.

Application of Potential Microcommunal Design Strategies to Capitol Park

Figure 5.20~ Representative Collage of Hart Plaza Burgeoning Strategy

Strategy II - Burgeoning

Using ideas from both the original concept for Hart Plaza and the concept implemented in 1975, social and spatial opportunity can exist if both design concepts were combined in order to establish a more cohesive plan that allows for the event spaces and intermediary social space to coexist more effectively. Adding more green spaces and areas to the existing sculptural elements will provide more social and spatial opportunity to exist. Possibly the most effective way to do this is to strategically funnel elements from the existing plan and original ideas proposed by Eliel Saarinen into the event spaces and their spatial elements.

This idea employs more social green spaces throughout Hart Plaza, not just in intermediary spaces. By using this design strategy, more social opportunity would occur throughout Hart Plaza and not just in select spaces. By using this strategy it is important to respect the spatial elements that are already existing so that it does not disrupt or hinder the spatial opportunity that exists in certain spaces. If the design works successfully, it will coincide with the microcommunal design criteria, as it will establish a flexible space that produces a strong balance of social and spatial opportunity to create a stronger sense of place for different groups and subcultures.

Application of Potential Microcommunal Design Strategies to Capitol Park

Figure 5.21 ~ Representative Collage of Hart Plaza Conversion Strategy

Strategy III - Conversion

The current event spaces that exist at Hart Plaza can be implemented and redesigned to accommodate both social and spatial opportunity more consistently and during times when events are not being held. When redesigning these spaces, it is important to keep in mind the intermediary space so that the connection between the redesigned event spaces function cohesively.

By converting event spaces to function more as social hubs, this activates compelling spaces that are otherwise underutilized during most times of the year. Doing this will produce more social opportunity within the spaces providing more constant human interaction during time when events are not being held. By doing this the spatial opportunity that exists among the event spaces should structurally remain the same. Drastically changing the spatial elements too much from their current function would disrupt the balance of social and spatial opportunity that this strategy would provide. Through a process of converting specific spatial elements within the event spaces, the design criteria of microcommunity would apply through the creation of a flexible space that would accommodate existing and new groups and subcultures. In doing this, more inclusivity is achieved, creating a stronger connection to spaces throughout Hart Plaza.

Conclusion

When beginning the thesis process, I was very interested in urban spaces and the interactions that occur in them. Being invested in activities such as skateboarding, I often found myself intertwined with urban space and the elements that existed there and how the space evoked a sense of place through the elements and opportunity that existed there. The Wig skatepark in Detroit and Peace Park in Montreal helped me identify this idea of an urban pocket as a miniature form of a community, hence a microcommunity. As a result of the positive interactions of the space, I began to define what a microcommunity is and sought to figure out what makes these spaces so special and how they contribute to specific groups and subcultures that actively use the space.

Throughout the process of defining and understanding this idea of microcommunity, it became apparent that this idea could strongly contribute to the design of urban spaces. The definition and strategies evoked by microcommunity could provide stronger design outcomes for urban spaces, creating more pronounced urban spaces that contribute to establishing more meaningful, inclusive spaces for both social and spatial opportunity to occur.

By concluding the study of defining microcommunity and how its contribution to urban design creates more positive outcomes for the design of urban spaces, a few takeaways became apparent in the final moments of study. Some of those takeaways include questions such as how do people and the elements in an urban space assert a sense of place or location? How can the conditions in urban spaces improve this? What can be done in future urban planning initiatives to create stronger designs for urban spaces? While compiling all the information and ideas from throughout this thesis process it was evident that some of my initial ideas referring to these questions could have been answered and integrated through the study of urban space leading to microcommunity. Through the process of defining microcommunity and the creating of an applicable microcommunal design criteria, these questions could be produced an enriched body of work that can continue to be explored further.

Microcommunity plays a key role in helping to push the boundaries of urban design, seeking to provide spatial and social opportunity to groups and subcultures that utilizes urban spaces. By promoting the urban design criteria proposed by microcommunity, stronger outcomes for urban spaces can be achieved, creating more dynamic and attractive urban environment. By pushing the boundaries of establishing a stronger urban space, more inclusive, meaningful and identifiable urban spaces can be produced more than before.

Figures

Figure 1.1 ~ Microcommunity At The Wig in Detroit, Michigan
Taken during "The Wig's Last Rites" event.
Logan Kaiser, 2019

Figure 1.2 ~ Eidetic Collage Representing Spatial Aspect of Mictocommunity
This collages represents the ideas that are evoked through the spatial aspect of microcoomunity and how flexible space contributes to inclusive spaces.
Logan Kaiser, 2019

Figure 1.3~ Friends of The Wig
Taken during one of the last days of The Wig.
Logan Kaiser, 2019

Figure 1.4 ~ Mircocommunity At The Wig in Detroit, Michigan
Taken the day of The Wig's Demolition.
Logan Kaiser, 2019

Figure 1.5 ~Elements of the Wig
Taken on a less busy day at The Wig
Logan Kaiser, 2019

Figure 1.6 ~ Eidetic Collage Representing Spatial Aspect of Mictocommunity
This collages represents the ideas that are evoked through thes ocial aspect of microcoomunity and how spatial elements facilitate human interactions.
Logan Kaiser, 2019

Figures

Figure 1.7 ~ Social Interaction Between Skateboarders and Homeless
This image represents the symbiotic social interaction in Peace Park that is facilitate through the black marble ledges.

Sourced from: Peace Park. Peacepark.org

Figure 1.8 ~ Groups Utilizing the Same Spatial Elements in Peace Park
A collection of different groups that collected around the spatial elements in Peace Park.

Logan Kaiser, 2019

Figure 1.9~ Eidetic Collage Representing Temporal Aspect of Microcommunity
A collage representing the idea that the activity provided by groups and subcultures contriburtes to the identity and inclusive nature of an urban space

Logan Kaiser, 2019
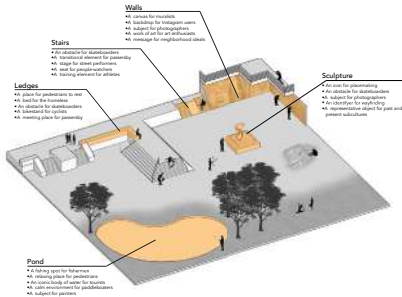
Figure 1.10 ~ Axonometric View of Microcommunity and Spatial Elements
An axonometric diagram repsenting how spatial elements in an urban space contrubute to how elements of a microcommunity are achieved.

Logan Kaiser, 2019

Figure 1.11 ~ 3500 Riopelle Street. Detroit, Michigan
Taken to represent the compelling spaces created through the graffiti art and nature retaking the space.

Logan Kaiser, 2019
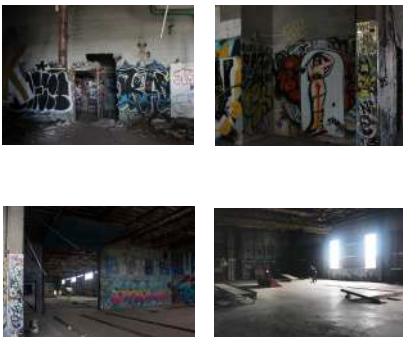
Figure 1.12 ~ Spaces Throughout 3500 Riopelle Street
These images are representative of the function of 3500 Riopelle and how the space became a location for different groups and subcultures because of the sense of place established.

Logan Kaiser, 2019

Figures

Figure 1.13 ~ Old Redford Community Garden. Redford, Michigan
An image of the Old Redford Community Garden to discuss the idea that these types of spaces are not able to support the microcommunity model.

Logan Kaiser, 2019
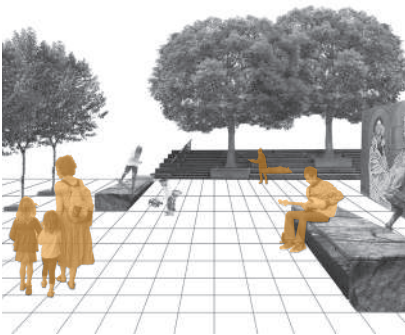
Figure 2.1 ~ Visualization of Social Opportunism
An abstract, collage perspective created to provide a lens or insight of where social opportunism exists.
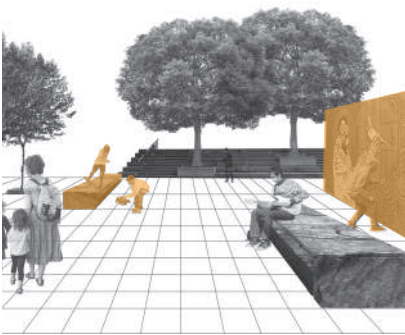
Logan Kaiser, 2020

Figure 2.2~ Visualization of Spatial Opportunism
An abstract, collage perspective created to provide a lens or insight of where spatial opportunism exists.
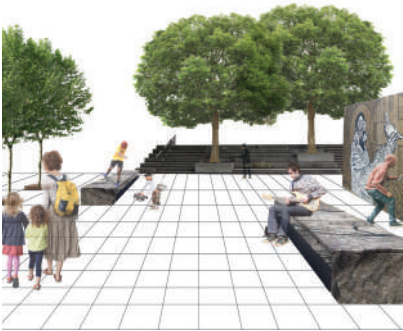
Logan Kaiser, 2020

Figure 2.3 ~ A Visualization of a Balance of Opportunity That Creates Microcommunity

A perspective collage that represents that both social opportunity must be present in order to create an inclusive urban space.

Logan Kaiser, 2020

Figure 3.1 ~ Seeing Social Opportunity in Existing Spaces

Using images of existing urban spaces, social opportunity was highlighted in order describe how social interaction can occur in space.

Sourced from (in order left to right):
1. Editorial Board (Milano Today)
2. Jason Lecreas (Quartersnacks)
3. MACBA Museum (Macba.cat, visita)
4. Streets Department
5. Peace Park (PeacePark.org)

Edited by: Logan Kaiser, 2020

Figure 3.2 ~ Seeing Spatial Opportunity in Existing Spaces

Using images of existing urban spaces, spatial opportunity was highlighted in order describe how groups and subcultures seek spaces that accomodate their specific activity.

Sourced from (in order left to right):
1. Editorial Board (Milano Today)
2. Black Top Street Hockey (BTSH.org)
3. Cultural Center of Espania (CCE)
4. Brian Panebianco (Quartersnacks)
5. Peace Park (PeacePark.org).

Edited by: Logan Kaiser, 2020

Figures

Figure 3.3 ~ Still Images of Visualizing Microcommunity Video
Still images produced from frames achieved from overlaid video clips. These images were paired with the video to examine moments of microcommunity and how the urban spaces studied could improve opportunity.

Logan Kaiser, 2020

Figure 4.1 ~ Images of Observation by William H. Whyte
A collection of images captured from William H. Whyte's film The Secret Life of Small Urban Spaces for visual representation of his ideas.

Sourced from: Whyte, *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces* (Film)

Figure 4.2 ~ Images of Observation by Jan Gehl
A collection of images that aid to explain the ideas expressed by Jan Gehls theories involving the cultivation of urban space.

Sourced from (in order left to right):
1. Gehl People
2. Gehl Studio
3. Iwan Baan (Arch Daily)
4. Gehl People

Figure 4.3 ~ Images Representing Modernized Concepts of Urban Theory
A collection of images representing the concepts in a modernized theory of cultivation urban space.

Sourced from (in order left to right):
1. Logan Kaiser, 2019
2. William "Bill" Strobeck (Instagram)
3. Thom Carroll (Philly Voice)
4. Effekt (Archtalent.com)

Existing   +   Modernized

Figure 4.4 ~ Diagram Combining Existing and Modern Ideas to Form the Microcommunal Design Criteria
A diagram showing the relationship between existing theories of cultivating urban space and modernized contepts that, in combination with each other, propose an updated urban design criteria based on the microcommunity model.

See Figures 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 for source information.

Figure 5.1 ~ Love Park. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Sourced from: David Swanson (The Philadelphia Inquirer).

Figures

Figure 5.2 ~ Capitol Park. Detroit, Michigan
Sourced from: Tracy Kaler (TravelMag.com)

Figure 5.3 ~ Hart Plaza. Detroit, Michigan
Sourced from: Detroit Riverfront Convervatory
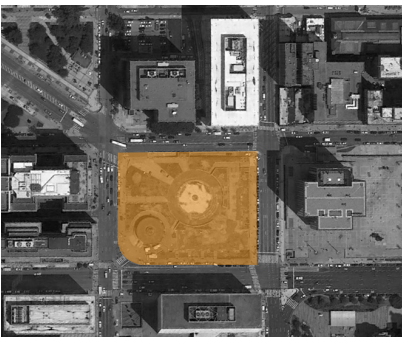
Figure 5.4~ Aerial Image of Love Park
Logan Kaiser, 2020

Figure 5.5 ~ Images Representing the Past and Present State of Love Park
A collection of images representing the evolution and history of Love Park between old and new design schemes. These images represent where social and spatial opportunity has or has not existed, showing where moments inclusivity could be further achieved.

Sourced from (in order left to right):
1. Johnathan Rentschler (Vice), 2-6. David Swanson (The Philadelphia Inquirer).

Figure 5.6 ~ Collage Representing the Successes and Opportunities Through the History of Love Park
A collage produced by overlaying images from past and current design schemes of Love Park, identifying stronger moments of opportunity and how certain ideas could have been implemented to provide stronger design outcomes.

Figure 5.7 ~ Representative Collage of Love Park Overlapping Strategy
A representative collage that refers to the overlapping strategy that can be applied to Love Park, combining successful ideas from both past and present design strategies in order to establish a more inclusive, effective urban space.

Logan Kaiser, 2020

Figures

Figure 5.8~ Representative Collage of Love Park Retrofitting Strategy
A representative collage that shows the retrofitting strategy that can be applied to Love Park and how retrofitting the elements that used to exist in Love Park with more socially inclusive elements would have provided a stronger outcome for creating a creating a more prominent urban space.

Logan Kaiser, 2020

Figure 5.9 ~ Representative Collage of Love Park Encapsulation Strategy
A representative collage referring to the Love Park encapsulation strategy and how surrounding existing elements with new socially inclusive features. This idea would not disrupt the existing groups and subcultures that actively use the space while creating spaces that would provide more social interaction.

Logan Kaiser, 2020

Figure 5.10~ Aerial Image of Capitol Park
Logan Kaiser, 2020

Figure 5.11 ~ Images Representing the Past and Present State of Capitol Park
A collection of images representing the evolution and history of Capitol Park between old and new design schemes. These images represent where social and spatial opportunity has or has not existed, showing where moments inclusivity could be further achieved.

Sourced from (in order left to right):
1-3. Jack Dempsey (Historical Society of Michigan)
4. Downtown Detroit Partnership
5. Future Detroit
6. Tracy Kaler (TravelMag.com)

Figure 5.12 ~ Collage Representing the Successes and Opportunities Through the History of Capitol Park
A collage produced by overlaying images from past and current design schemes of Capitol Park, identifying stronger moments of opportunity and how certain ideas could have been implemented to provide stronger design outcomes.

Logan Kaiser, 2020

Figure 5.13 ~ Representative Collage of Capitol Park Combination Strategy
A representative collage that refers to the combination strategy of Capitol Park and how combining positive aspects of past design could have achieved a stronger. The combinations, if proposed and designed correctly, would create more social and spatial opportunity, creating a more inclusive urban space.

Logan Kaiser, 2020

Figures

Figure 5.14 ~ Representative Collage of Capitol Park Projection Strategy
A representative collage that refers to the projection strategy of Capitol Park and how adding more green space to contribute more social interaction. The key element to this strategy is the organization of spatial elements and how they provide a key balance of social and spatial opportunity. If achieved, a more inclusive compelling space is achieved.
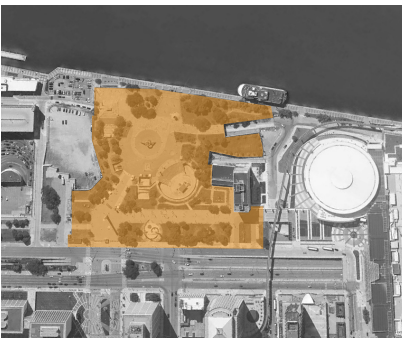
Logan Kaiser, 2020

Figure 5.15 ~ Representative Collage of Capitol Park Succession Strategy
A representative collage that refers to the succession strategy of Capitol Park and how utilizing positive design features from the past can inform stronger urban design choices. The iterative process of this strategy implies that positive aspects of prior designs should be integrated in order to achive a more cohesive and inclusive result.

Logan Kaiser, 2020

Figure 5.16~ Aerial Image of Hart Plazae
Logan Kaiser, 2020

Figure 5.17 ~ Images Representing the Past and Present State of Hart Plaza
A collection of images representing the evolution and history of Hart Plaza between old and new design schemes. These images represent where social and spatial opportunity has or has not existed, showing where moments inclusivity could be further achieved.

Sourced from (in order left to right):
1. Tony Spina (Wayne State Library)
2. Trish Harrington (Detroit Historical Society)
3. The Concert Database
4-5. Michelle Gerard (Curbed Detroit)
6. Unspecified (Public domain)

Figure 5.18 ~ Collage Representing the Successes and Opportunities Through the History of Hart Plaza
A collage produced by overlaying images from past and current design schemes of Hart Plaza, identifying stronger moments of opportunity and how certain ideas could have been implemented to provide stronger design outcomes.

Logan Kaiser, 2020

Figure 5.19 ~ Representative Collage of Hart Plaza Intersection Strategy
A representative collage that refers to the Intersection strategy of Hart Plaza and how adding more green space to intermediary areas will promote more social activity and inclusivity. By doing so, most of the spatial elements that contribute to spatial opportunity would remain in tact and would create more social opportunity in otherwise intimidating urban spaces.
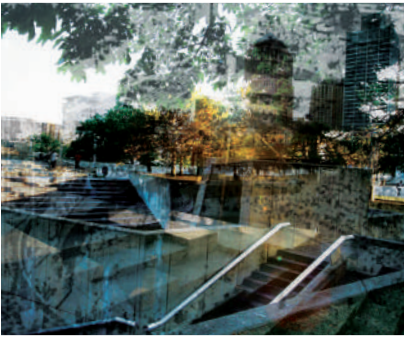
Logan Kaiser, 2020

Figures

Figure 5.20 ~ Representative Collage of Hart Plaza Burgeoning Strategy
A representative collage that refers to the burgeoning strategy of Hart Plaza and how adding more green spaces throughout Hart Plaza will promote more social interaction throughout the space. An important consideration is to respect the strong social opportunity that exists in the space. If done properly, would create a strong balance of social and spatial opportunity contributing to a highly inclusive space.

Logan Kaiser, 2020

Figure 5.21 ~ Representative Collage of Hart Plaza Conversion Strategy
A representative collage that refers to the converstion strategy of Hart Plaza and how adding more green spaces to the existing event spaces will promote more social interaction. By converting event spaces to function more as social hubs, this activates compelling spaces that are otherwise underutilized during most times of the year. Doing this will produce more social opportunity within the spaces providing more constant human interaction during time when events are not being held.

Logan Kaiser, 2020

References

"About Peace Park." Peace Park, Peace Park, 2018, peacepark.com/about-peace-park/.

Armborst, Tobias, et al. The Arsenal of Exclusion & Inclusion. Actar Publishers, 2017.

Beshouri, Paul. "Ten Detroit Developments That Never Quite Made It." Curbed Detroit, Curbed Detroit, 26 Feb. 2014, detroit.curbed.com/maps/ten-developments detroit-never-got-around-to-building.

"Community: Definition of Community by Lexico." Lexico Dictionaries | English, Oxford Dictionary, www.lexico.com/en/definition/community.

Cooper, Jeremy, et al. "LOCALS: BUILDING THE FUTURE OF DETROIT WITH DERRICK DYKAS." Jenkem Magazine, Jenkem Magazine, 16 Dec. 2015, www.jenkemmag.com/home/2015/12/04/locals-building-the-future-of-detroit-with-derrick-dykas/.

Craig, H.B. "Capitol Park Bus Station." Detroit Transit History, Detroit Transit History, 18 Jan. 2014, www.detroittransithistory.info/Misc/CapitolParkStation.html.

Cuchulainn, Cameron. "Photos from the Last Days of Philadelphia's Legendary Skate Spot LOVE Park." Vice, 13 Jan. 2018, www.vice.com/en_us/article/ne44bw/photos-from-the-last-days-of-philadelphias-legendary-skate-spot-love-park.

"Encyclopedia Of Detroit." Detroit Historical Society, Detroit Historical Society, detroithistorical.org/learn/encyclopedia-of-detroit/hart-plaza.

Dempsey, Jack. "Landmark of Liberty: Detroit's Capitol Park." Historical Society of Michigan, Historical Society of Michigan, Feb. 2012, www.hsmichigan.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Capitol-Park.pdf.

"Detroit's Capitol Park: History Lost in Sterile Design." Didactic Discourse, 13 Jan. 2012, didacticdiscourse.wordpress.com/2012/01/10/detroits-capitol-park-history-lost-in-sterile-design/.

Gehl, Jan. Cities for People. Island Press, 2010.

Gehl, Jan, and Jo Koch. Life Between Buildings: Using Public Space. Island Press, 2011.

Hill, Eric J., and Gallagher, John. AIA Detroit: the American Institute of Architects Guide to Detroit Architecture. Wayne State University Press, 2003.

Ikonomova, Violet. "Not Vacant: the Midtown Site Where Detroit Has Approved a $77M Development Is Actually a Skatepark." Detroit Metro Times, Detroit Metro Times, 17 Sept. 2019, www.metrotimes.com/news-hits/archives/2017/05/01/not-vacant-the-midtown-site-where-detroit-has-approved-a-77m-development-is-actually-a-skatepark.

Jacobs, Jane. The Death and Life of Great American Cities. Random House, 1961.

"Jan Gehl." RSS, Project for Public Spaces, 2008, www.pps.org/article/jgehl.

Montgomery, Charles. Happy City. The Science and Story of Urban Wellbeing. Allen Lane, 2013.

Neely-Cohen, Maxwell. "How Philadelphia Destroyed The Greatest Skate Spot Ever Made." BuzzFeed News, BuzzFeed News, 29 July 2016, www.buzzfeednews.com/article/maxwellneelycohen/how-philadelphia-destroyed-the-greatest-skate-spot-ever-made.

Rade, et al. "Love Park in 2015: An Interview With Brian Panebianco." Quartersnacks, Quartersnacks, 7 Aug. 2015, quartersnacks.com/2015/08/love-park-in-2015-an-interview-with-brian-panebianco/.

Saffron, Inga. "LOVE Park Was Supposed to Be the People's Park. How Did It End up as a Granite Sahara?: Inga Saffron." The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Philadelphia Inquirer, 26 Apr. 2018, www.inquirer.com/philly/columnists/inga_saffron/love-park-was-supposed-to-be-the-peoples-park-how-did-it-end-up-as-a-granite-sahara-20180426.html.
"Save Tompkins." Quartersnacks.com, Quartersnacks, 2019, quartersnacks.com/savetompkins/.

Sennett, Richard. Building and Dwelling: Ethics for the City. Allen Lane, an Imprint of Penguin Books, 2019.

"#TFREPORT: Tompkins Square Park Is Saved." Quartersnacks.com, Quartersnacks, 7 Sept. 2019, quartersnacks.com/2019/09/tompkins-square-park-is-saved/.

Whyte, William H. The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces. 1980.