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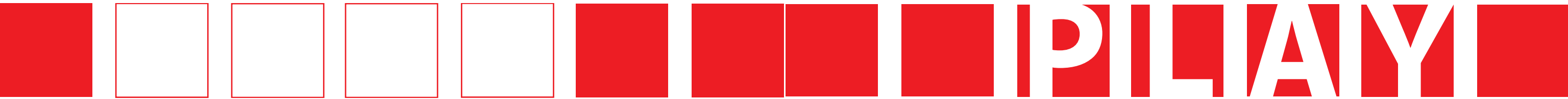
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NAOMI BEASLEY | university of detroit mercy | school of architecture | master's of architecture | prof. noah resnick, advisor | arch. 5100, 5110, 5200, 5210



thank **GOD** for everyone that has invested in and believed in me. this book is for you.

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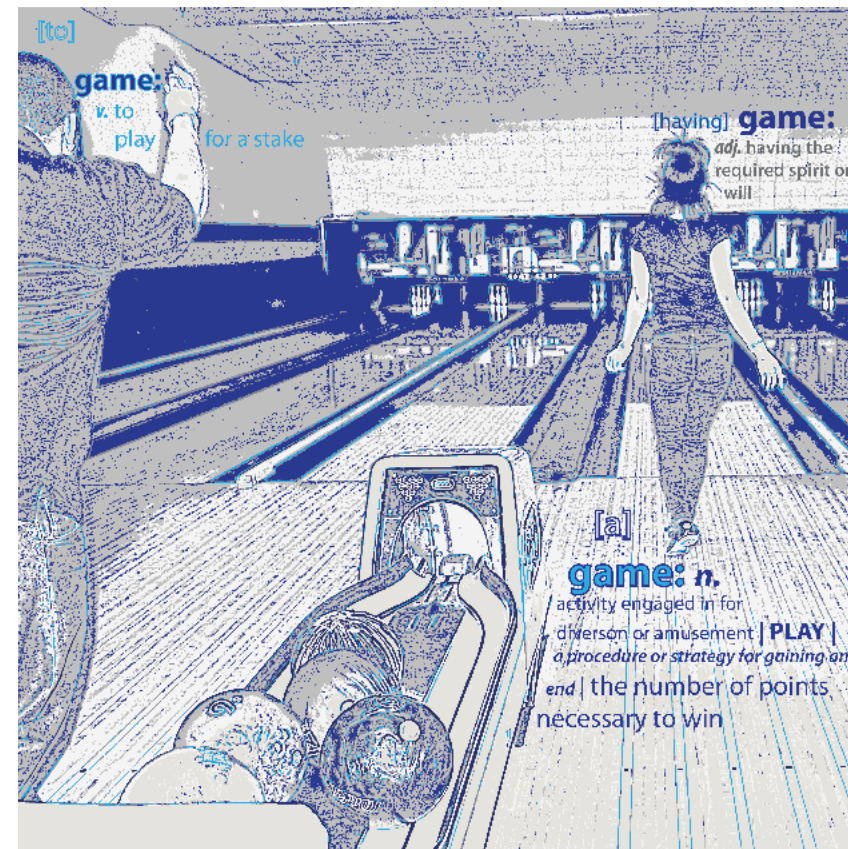
Statement

This thesis explores the notion of “gam[-es]-ing] as a unique methodology|process that evokes a new interaction and relationship between people [the Detrouiter, the non.Detrouiter, and the Visitor] with the Detroit landscape. Such a game could potentially assist the architect|planner|designer in creating more functional, [inter]active spaces|places throughout the city; in hopes that a physical intervention can act as a destination and “game” to integrate communities and attract new “players”.

Definitions

It is important to contextualize the key terms of this thesis through images: [a|the|to] landscape, [a|to|having] game, and [at|the|to] play[ing]. Each image demonstrates one or more definition of a theme; a landscape that has been "landscaped", gamers gaming in a game, and a player making a play.

These themes are imperative to the purpose of this investigation, as well as the process of what is to be developed and the manner in which it will transpire.





Landscape. Game. Play.

[introduction]

As a native Detroiter, I have often found myself pondering the relationship others have with the city. Yes, there is a sense of conviction and pride to some extent; but what about a real relationship and identification with Detroit? To me, it is home; the place that holds most my memories, while for others-- the non.Detroiter| metro.Detroiter| visitor-- a strange land with a questionable reputation. By sharing memories with one another, we learn about space in place through others' eyes; their experience in that moment in time. It is a new and different experience for each: the storyteller in their recollection within a different environment and the listener[s] relying on imagination to paint the picture. The storyteller's memory becomes the listener[s]; which gives way to new opinion and a skewed perception of a foreign landscape. The sharing of memory in addition to limited experience of a landscape determines a city's reputation. "A striking landscape is the skeleton upon which many primitive races erect their socially important myths"[Lynch, 4]. Very familiar, Detroit's landscape is a story that has long been told. Decades of storytelling have left the city's perception in the eyes of others quite daunting. In an effort to counter such, the intention of this thesis is to first determine the image of the city landscape to better understand relationships between the person[s] and Detroit. Moving forward, it will suggest how to go about altering that image through re.identification| re.definition in an unconventional way, in hopes of establishing new, more positive experiential relationships with and memories of Detroit.

[the good. the bad. the unknown.]

Detroit has long combatted negative slander. There is more time spent defending its name as opposed to sharing in all of its splendor. Infamous for crime, vacancy, poverty, and racism [just to name a few], Detroit's

reputation exceeds its realities and accomplishments. However, such calamities clout perception and heavily influence how the non.Detroiter| metro.Detroiter| visitor [dis]engages with the city. Granted numeric statistics' further validation of such opinions, the city's ability to survive and revive amidst economic and social disparities model strength and perseverance; whilst simultaneously setting the tone of a need for change.

[the good.]

Historically a city of farming, Detroit is agriculturally endowed. Though many city lots sit vacant, neighborhood task forces and community organizations have been acquiring such land, and turning them into community spaces and gardens. A renewed sense of civic duty and pride has set in as citywide collaborations have produced new community amenities such as safety initiatives, design-build projects, installations, and other uplifting creative conveniences. Youth Nation's "The Alley Project [TAP] Gallery" in Southwest Detroit is just one catalyst for collaboration and community impact. Their mission is "to promote holistic development of youth in urban settings through building relationships, community education, and passion-driven projects" [Youth Nation]. TAP Gallery is just that: an alley converted into a [legal] graffiti gallery, a garage turned studio, and a communal open lot for art and social interaction that has attracted people from all areas of the city. Like TAP Gallery, there are many similar working projects throughout Detroit.

Directly adjacent south, the Detroit River has always provided a great amenity. The riverfront today is one of downtown's main attractions, bringing visitors from all parts of the city and metropolitan region. Downtown and its neighboring communities [like Midtown and Corktown] have become ideal for local businesses, living, recreation, and entertainment. Acknowledging transportation issues, many major thoroughfares now

have bike lanes. Amidst pockets of progress, there still remains loads of potential in building reuse and alternative education with new technologies.

[the bad.]

The vast vacancy of city land also has its drawbacks. Many blocks have a handful of homes [mostly abandoned and used for illegal activity] and open fields of tall grass that act as dumping sites for bulk waste. These areas are also more susceptible to crime. Proclaimed the “Motor City”, it was important that residents contribute to its economy. The removal of mass-transit-like systems in the 1950’s [such as street cars] made automobiles a necessity. Streets in grid plan are separated by freeways; not only making it difficult to move from one side of the city to the other, but also hindering the possible implementation of citywide mass transportation [which the lack there of has been crippling to Detroit’s already decreasing population]. Detroit’s hard racial lines [for example, 8 Mile Road, which is both a city and county line] are a blatant reality of regional race issues; time has not changed the situation, nor healed the wounds of a history past. Like the lack of mass transit, racism still plays a big role in deterring population growth and diversity; there is still a long way to go.

[the unknown.]

Many fear the unknown because it robs us of the ability to master fate. People prefer to not take risks because of the possibility of failure. That stated, Detroit is a city governed by fears of failure. Chance takers are few in number, and in time [with no support], retreat. “Most ordinary social settings set very definite limits on the behavior of participants. Elaborate social rules govern levels of involvement, and the patterning of activity and passively in social interchange” [Crowhurst, 9]. Set social standards have limited experience, jumbled perspective, “governed” time, conformed memory, and determined

landscape. It is the exploration of the unknown that holds the potential to reconfigure Detroit’s landscape. Community-scale trial and error has proven success in social forum and the power of initiative; to offer a new experience in a new space in place. Though this thesis will not explore the entire city scale, it is necessary to note that such a process of trial and error has yet to be conducted at such scale. With every risk, there is a lesson learned. By riskily applying new methods of social interaction, it creates a sense of place-belonging and familiarity, which could possibly provide a stepping-stone towards a new city landscape. Familiarity is the foundation of identification; and identification with the landscape has the potential to generate a more positive perspective. “Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody” [Jacobs].

[why?]

“Working on ‘how’ without rigorous control of ‘why’ inevitably excludes reality...” [Jones, 9]. In order to better determine how to reconfigure Detroit’s landscape, it is necessary to understand why it has transpired to its current state, as well as how and why people have played such an integral role in its transition. The realities of the current landscape emerged from events of the past and the reactionary measures taken in that moment in time. Probably the most detrimental to Detroit’s landscape was the Urban Uprisings of 1967 [i.e. race riots]. A city in ruins with no hope of repair, the “White Flight” movement immediately following, left the city in worse condition. Our human nature causes us to not only be reactive, but to react in response to our emotions [i.e. an act of fear or enthusiasm].

Detroit is a vault of many stories; all of which evoke an emotional memory tied to an encounter between

a person and the landscape. The cycle of **mind, body, environment, and social structure** begins to suggest how



one interacts with[in] the city and other persons. The mind controls the body's response to one's environment [the city|landscape]; each environment reflecting a unique social structure derived from the byproduct of a multitude of memories, opinions, and assumptions of the mind, caused by an

emotionally charged experience in an environment.

Demographics of **culture|generation, history, legislation, race, and socioeconomic status** [separately



and combined] have "permitted" [by its influences on people] situational circumstances that have shaped the landscape, which in turn has broken down, divided, and shifted over time **land use**; the why factor. Inherently, such demographics have been and still are influential in how the mind processes an experience and reacts to it. The realities of the current landscape have been skewed by memories of its' past, with neglect to look to the future; time.

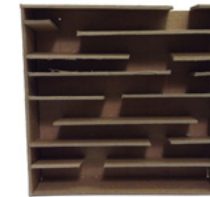
[landscape]

So, what is "landscape"? It far surpasses the physical land; relating more to the person[s] in|on|around it. James Corner's "Eidetic Operations and New Landscapes" define the poetics of landscape as it pertains to the eidetic image: the ability to identify and obtain information vividly,

permitting a more in depth exchange of information with a reliance on imagination and instinct; "...how one 'images' the world literally conditions how reality is both conceptualized and shaped" [Corner, 153]. The layering of image questions subject matter of reality, offering insight to characteristics of the landscape in relation to the story of an event from a personal point of view [the experience]. It allows for an emotional relationship with and understanding of the landscape, heightening awareness and consideration of it and its surrounding context.

Landscape is the image of an environment; image being **the city** [Detroit], the physical **space** of a **place** in the city, the **experience** of space in a place, the **identification** with|of place, the **memory** of the experience, the **imagined** experience of a space and|or|in place, and|or the moments in **time**.

[landscape + the city]



The physical nature of a city is the all-encompassing landscape of the many conditions of landscape. The landscape that is Detroit paints an image of uncertainty by those that "relate" with it, while appealing to the outsider as a lost cause.

[landscape + space and place]

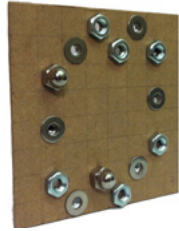


Space is a designated area of a place. Each are both physical and psychological. The image of physical space recalls a thought|memory of either a physical place or a psychological one [which is more like a day dream]. Psychological space is the open-mindedness of the

imagination. Physical place is a destination for the

interaction of person and landscape. The psychological image of place is a state of mind limited by the experience in an environment. Space and place are conditional upon the individual and their relationship with Detroit.

[landscape + experience]



Every human encounter is an experience. The experience of landscape allows for the making of memories and an opportunity to formulate an eidetic image of a space or in place [the image either mimicking the reality of the landscape or being a completely new and different space|place]. One's

experience is open for interpretation when considering how to plan, organize, and/or design for target users.

[landscape + identification]



Identification with the landscape is the reassurance of place-belonging. The familiarity of the landscape to the person validates their relationship. It is through identification that emotions arise, memories are recalled, and ultimately how one chooses to engage with the landscape. By

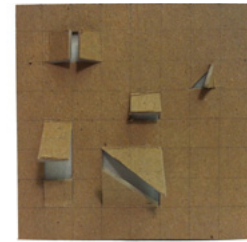
reviving and revamping what is there, it will allow for a new identify and means of identification for the user.

[landscape + memory]

Many find escape from the ills of contemporary society in the scene and in their experience of recollection. That the scene itself displaces viewers, keeps them at a safe and uninvolved distance, and thus presents the landscape as little more than an aesthetic object of attention, escapes the attention of the gazing subject, as

does the factor that the scenic moment literally transports viewers back in time, effectively decontextualizing them from the very real ill of the present [Corner, 156].

The recollection of a memory of an experience becomes



a new experience. One's thoughts return back to the landscape of the memory; mentally visualizing the body there, and reliving that moment in time. Memories of a Detroit landscape past temporarily displace reality, however, simultaneously tells a story that introduces it.

[landscape + the imagined]



Imaging the potential of a space and/or in place allows the imagination to recollect and explore past experiences, piecing them together to craft a new one. Such activity [like in landscape + memory] takes the mind to another landscape, new and realistic yet not of reality.

"Consequently, to continue to construe the practice of landscape as the creation of seductive and beautiful settings is only to forestall confronting the problems of contemporary life" [Corner, 158].

[landscape + time]



Every image captures a moment in time. The landscape is altered by events over time and its relationship with the person as a result of their experience. Time also has the ability to alter the memory and allow for a new

relationship between the person and the landscape. Detroit's landscape is contingent upon both its history and future.

Overall, landscape affords a variety of conditional experiences, and somewhat classifies how people have interacted with and interpreted the landscape that is Detroit. The conditions of landscape reason a multitude of Corner's definition of the eidetic image; encompassing such experiences, and ascertaining the formulated relationships between the person[s] and the landscape.

[what if...?]

When considering the daunting reputation of Detroit, alongside the recollection of history, time, a memory, a story of the good countered by a thought of the bad, and the many conditional relationships with and of the landscape, it leaves one to wonder how can it all be altered? What can be done to help begin relieve Detroit of its negative pressures, with simple fixes? Have we been living in a box, and allowed our city to travel down a whirlwind of no return? How can we start a new movement in line with other city initiatives?

One thing is certain, "We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them" [Albert Einstein]. Whatever has been done is proven to not work, hence a need for newly original yet practical, creative tactics that push the envelope of the conventional whilst appealing to users of ALL types. What if all of these underlying issues could start to be reformed by something as simple as a game? Yes, a game. Why not a game?

Most times, games are played for fun, with an ultimate goal to win. During play, participants are fully emerged [physically and psychologically] in the game; all working either collectively or individually towards an end result. "There are at least two kinds of games. One could be

called finite, the other infinite. A finite game is played for the purpose of winning, an infinite game for the purpose of continuing the play" [Carse, 16]. By adhering to both -- a multiplayer|multi-user game with set goals that are continuous in rounds|phases-- what if by "playing" a game, the city could not only change how the person[s] [re] engage[s] with the city [relationships], but also formulate a process to re.identify the landscape? A provocative notion, it is in this thesis that through a series of sketches and site studies, [a] game[s] will be suggested with intent to revive, re.identify and redefine Detroit's landscape and users. This "game" will not only act as an interactive "play" between players, but may potentially serve as a tool for the planner|designer|architect to better service Detroit communities. The idea of something fun—GAMES— has the potential to withdraw the negative and infill positivity; providing another chance at [re]writing the story and [re] creating new memories.

[G.A.M.E.S]

To better understand the concept of gaming, it is important to generalize "...principles for modifying game elements using the 'G.A.M.E.S.' acronym" [Henkel, 16]: Goals|Alignment|Movement|Equipment|Social.Structure. Steven A. Henkel's "Games for Success" details how to be proactive in playing games through the application of G.A.M.E.S.. By application of such elements to the Detroit landscape, it may help suggest ways in which the game can be designed and played.

[goals]

Every game has a goal; be it to be the first or collect the most. "Goals are best modified by emphasizing the process of playing a game, and by emphasizing the products of a game besides winning. Process goals are measured during a game, whereas product goals are measured after a game" [Henkel, 16]. The overarching

goal is to simply suggest a process of “games|gaming” for the re.identification and [re]engagement of the Detroit landscape, with the product being measured in its success as time progresses.

[alignment]

The alignment and observation of the layers of the current landscape will work to create the “game board” [game board possibly being many things: the actual game played, the interface between user and data, or the architectural physical intervention].

[movement]

Using walking|riding|driving patterns of the potential player[s]—the Detrouiter, non.Detrouiter, metro.Detrouiter, visitor— as a resource to observe and note paths traveled throughout the city, they will help to pin point site[s] that will be more accessible to a greater diversity of people for “play”.

[equipment]

“Equal opportunity requires having equal access to equipment” [Henkel, 18]. Equipment is the landscape that is “played”. “The more people in a game, the more necessary it is to add equipment. Adding equipment gives opportunities to perform skills to players who would not otherwise have a chance” [Henkel, 20]. It is vital that, in this instance, the landscape not only be public and available to everyone, but also “designed” by everyone [within reason].

[social.structure]

It is important that the “game” be a shared experience of re.creating new relationships between players as well as players with the landscape. “It is through styling... that one imbues the landscape with allusions to regional and cultural identity, enabling its occupants to believe that they are actually part of a collective, refined, and enlightened society” [Corner, 157]. The game needs to appeal to a variety of players to further stress the necessity

for diversity within Detroit communities.

[who’s going to playing?]

Everyone can play; the doctor, the secretary, the college student, the single parent, the mayor, the 5th grader, the senior citizen, the factory worker; ANYONE! With most games, there are age restrictions or status requirements. However, the intention of the game is to bring people together in sharing new and unique experiences with each other and Detroit. The game seeks to remove all racial, social, and physical boundaries in hopes of allowing for a similar psychological response to the game and the landscape. Every player has a story in relation to Detroit, and adds something unique to the process. Working first at a very small scale, it is important that each player’s past experiences are incorporated to create new ones as the “game” evolves.

[press play]

Play is the process of creating a set of activities for pleasure based upon a set of rules and boundaries defined by the players themselves... Transformation is the process of taking the rules, the boundaries, the images, the characters of the real world and recasting them without the boundaries of play. At the heart of play is this process of taking a given space or object and devising a new use for it, thereby making it one’s own [Dargan, 106].

When playing a game, players somehow always make it their own [altering a rule here or there or skipping a step]. Detroit is already a game. The rules of city structure have long been broken, leaving the landscape and the people to cope accordingly. It is in this thesis that the “game[s]” proposed will develop and implement a new, ever evolving set of “rules” for the city landscape, and allow

people to play; keeping in mind those that are already in place, and taking advantage of their potential for greater impact. The relationships between persons and Detroit are detrimental to a new and improved identity.

Like Detroit, at the suggestion of a game, there is the good, bad, and unknown. Yes, a game is provocative, fun, and positive, but can it really solve anything? After all, it is "just a game". The intention is not to depend solely on the game to fix all the issues at hand, but instead to explore the new and unknown; to suggest a new way to go about starting the conversation and implementing new processes to help better the landscape. There are no set rules, leaving way for endless possibilities as to the function, purpose, and implementation of the game. Rules are made to be broken, so it is important that the game allow for flexibility in all aspects. The game is merely one piece in the big Detroit puzzle.

What could the "game" actually do for Detroit? It has yet to be determined. However it may play out, the overall objective is to engage people in the process of healing. To play the game is to experience and re.identify [with] the Detroit landscape in a new and different way.



Who's playing in Detroit?

...with a population of 713,777 people, anyone can play.

The game is designed with EVERYONE in mind. Detroit is composed of an eclectic group of people, and its' citizens all have circumstances that have shaped their relationship with others and the city. The purpose of the game is not to limit the user, but instead create a unique atmosphere that will blossom new and lasting [and hopefully positive] relationships between users and the city landscape This will allow for a variety of sentiments and stories to work together towards fulfilling the purpose of the game[s]. Statistical facts about Detroiters begin to better identify players, and hint at their needs [which the game may potentially work to provide]. Showing what the player [Detroiter] looks like numerically removes the barriers

of separation and classification of "Detroiter" based on gender, race, or age. For the sake of this thesis, in addition to the Detroiter, there is also the non.Detroiter and architect|designer|planner that are essential active "players" of the game.

Sources:

(1) "City Profile: Detroit, Michigan." Data Driven Detroit. Data Driven Detroit, 2009. Web. <<http://datadrivendetroit.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Detroit-Profile.pdf>>.

(2) "State & County QuickFacts: Detroit, Michigan." U.S. Census Bureau. U.S. Census Bureau, 2011. Web. <<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/26/2622000.html>>.

Images Sources:

Google Search: Combination of words [People, Students, Families, Professionals, Residents, Newlyweds].

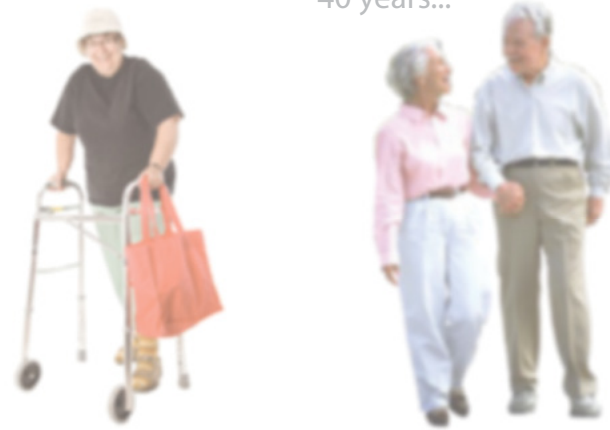
Homeowners rate, 2005-2009: **55.4%**

the growing family... the newlyweds...



Persons 65 years and over: **11.5%**

the senior citizen... the married couple that's been here for 40 years...



Bachelor's degree or higher, pct. of persons age 25+, 2005-2009: **12.1%**

the post.grad... the business partners...



People of all ages in poverty- percent, 2005-2009: **33.2%**

the college room. mates... the single mother...



G.A.M.E.S.

G.A.M.E.S. stand for: Goals, Alignment, Movements, Equipment, and Social Structure. Such actions lend themselves to the "playing" of a "game" in the physical [re]landscaping of Detroit; with potential for the development of a greater "social architecture".

Images Sources:
Google Search: Combination of words (Games, Goals, Alignment, Movement, Environment, Social Structure, Detroit, Play, Architecture, Design, People).

goals

to suggest "games" for the [re]identification | [re]interpretation| revitaliation of Detroit's landscape

alignment

using layers of the current city grid to create the "game board" [suggesting a new movement through|within Detroit]

movements

using walking|riding|driving patterns of the players [Detroit|Metro-Detroit|Commuter|Visitor] as a determinant of current and potential transitional space[s]

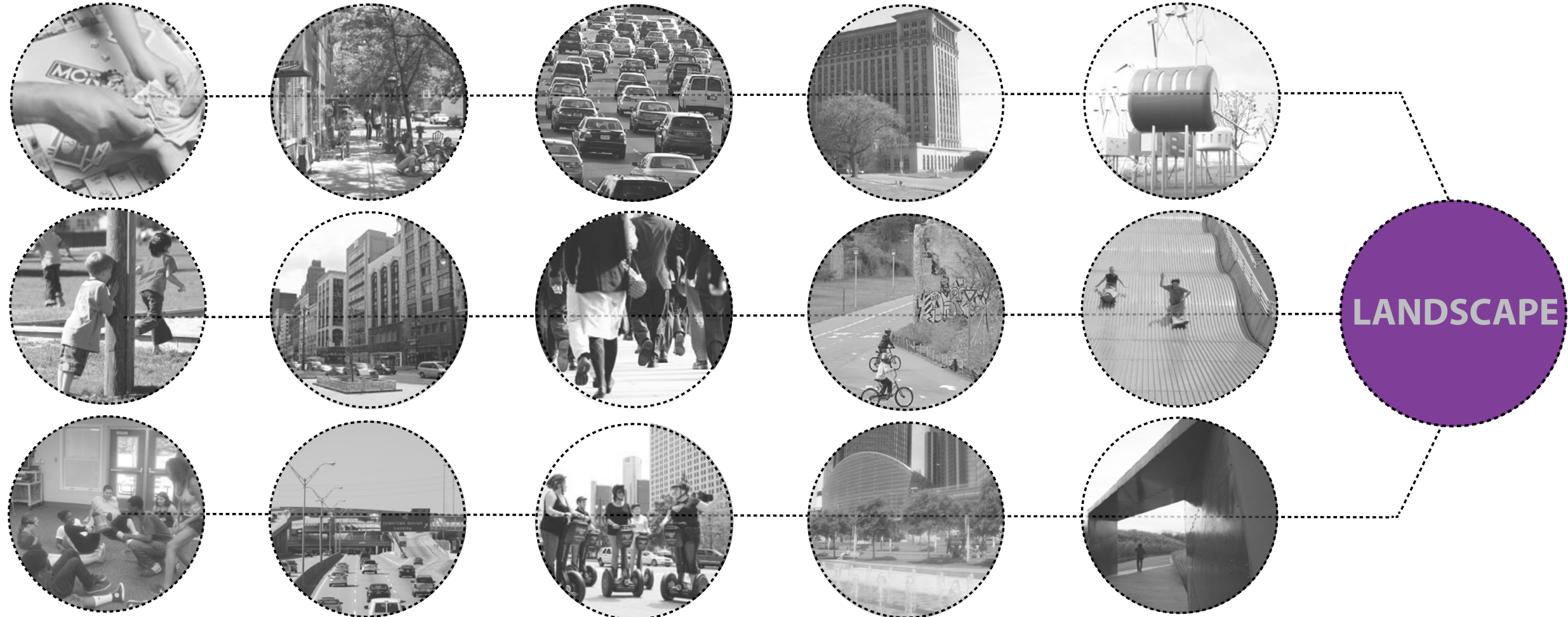
equipment

the pathway|"architecture"|site in which the player "plays"

social.structure

using "gaming" to [re]create new and unique relationships between players and the Detroit landscape

analysis



28

Typologies

When considering “games” as the foundation of this thesis, it was important to categorize them. The following typologies are game “types” that allow for a better understanding of how the game is played, the rules of the game, the level of required physical and/or psychological skill necessary to play successfully, and its potential ending. Each type evokes a series of actions/emotions which ultimately leads to success.

analysis

Scavenger

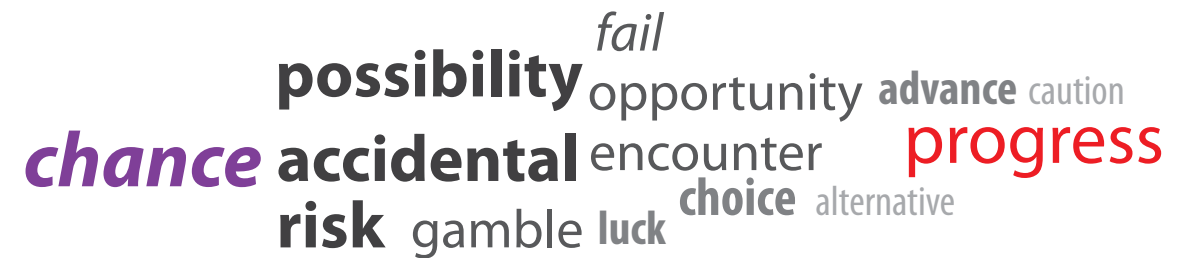
The scavenger game is the act of [a physical] search to discover new and uncharted territories. In the act of such a “game”, one first inquires, hunts, and/or seek to solve essentially, a mystery. This leads to the investigation, request, and/or exploration of the landscape. Through research, planning, then suggestions, experiments reveal the unknown; which are evaluated, [re]evaluated, and concluded [discovered].

30



Chance

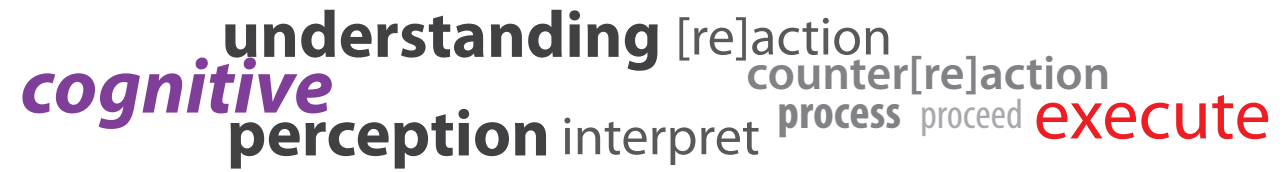
In a game of chance, there is always the unpredictability of the end result; it cannot be calculated, only hoped for in working in one’s favor. The player risks the possibility of advancing or failing. With a hope of luck on one’s side, choices are made cautiously. If given opportunity, the player continues to gamble their fate until progress is made. In some instances, alternatives come up accidentally, and allow for a fresh chance at making a new discovery.



Cognitive

Cognitive games require players to allow their minds to analyze and process information before making a move. By understanding the game and what is necessary to win, one [re]acts in response to their opponent[s]. The process of back and forth allows for a better perception and interpretation in order to make a “good” next move [the execution].

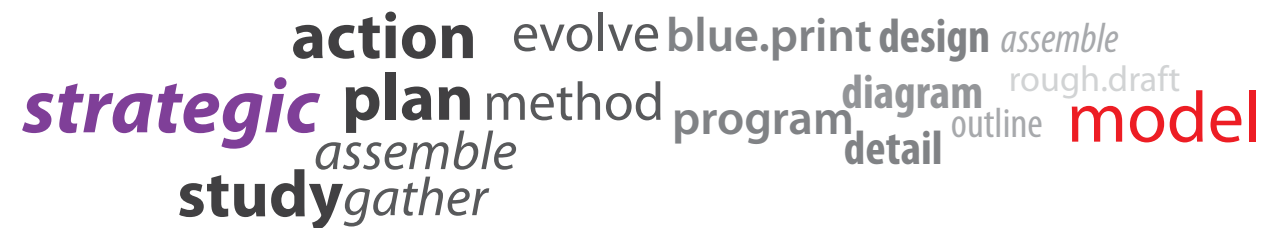
analysis



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Strategic

Formulation of a strategy requires critical thinking. It is no different when playing strategic games. The player must first study the “game board” before coming up with a plan of action. Through trial and error of method applications and making moves, the player’s plan is forever evolving, until a somewhat concrete “design” is created [the model that helps the player ultimately “win” the game].

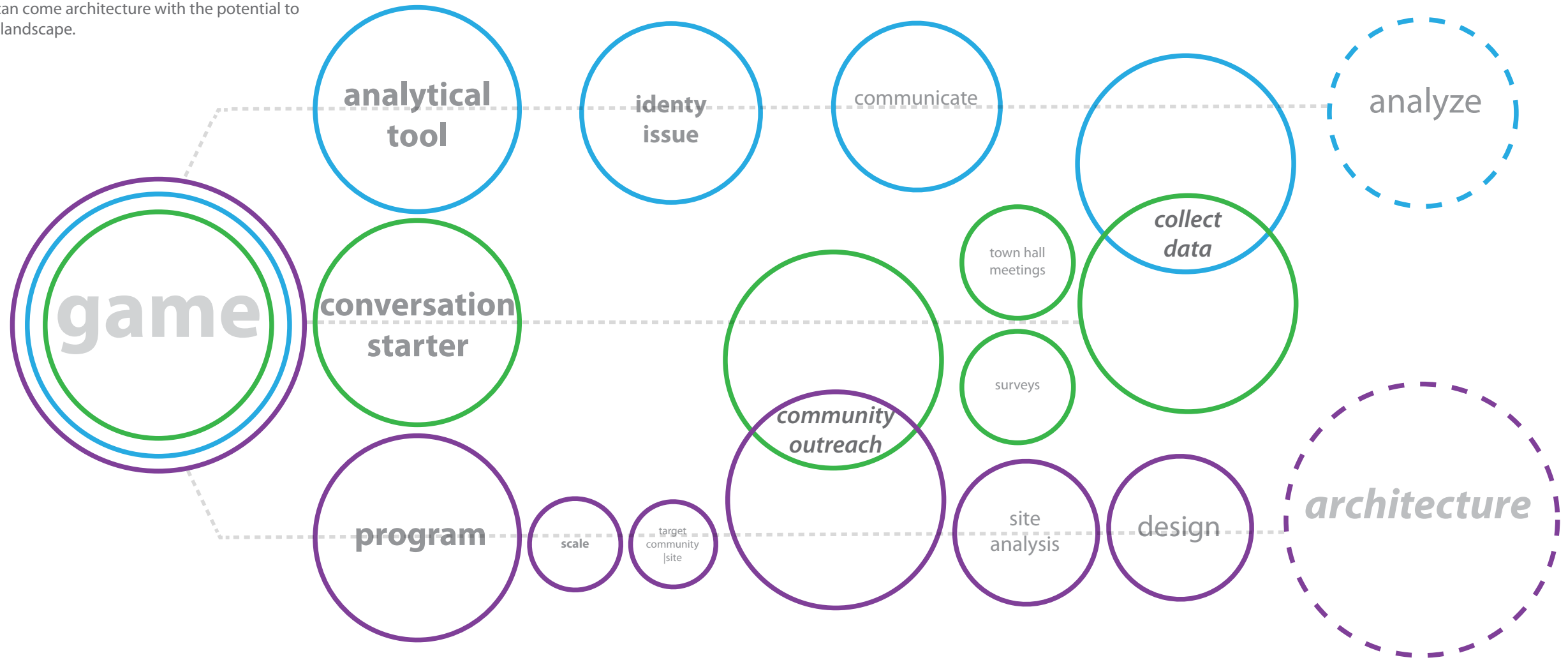


The many ways...

What can a game possibly do for Detroit?

The notion of "playing a game" does not appear ideal when confronted with the many issues of Detroit. However, there is a possibility that something as whimsical and carefree as a game can begin to tackle some of the city's toughest obstacles. It is important for this thesis to explore and make relevant the benefits of "gaming" amidst negativity and adversity; as well as suggest that from gaming can come architecture with the potential to revive the city landscape.

analysis



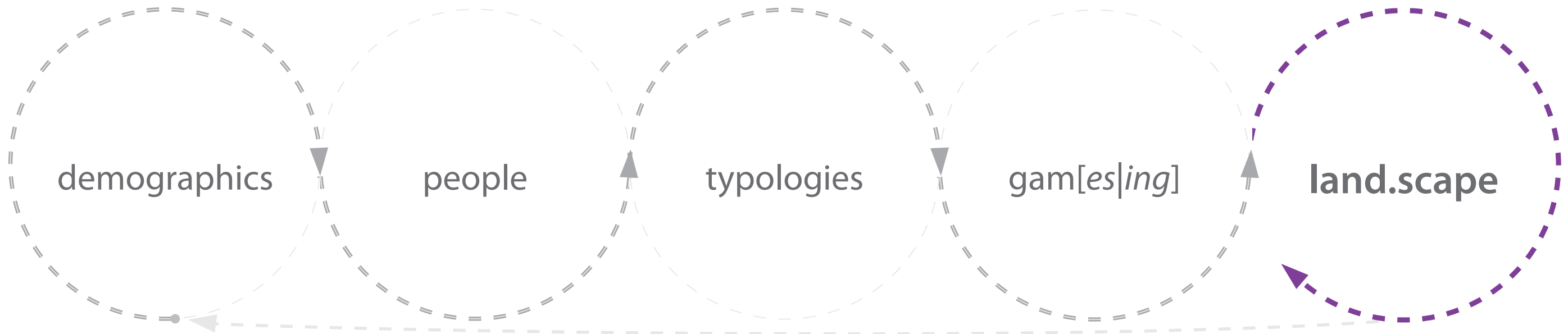
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How it all works...

This thesis has suggested and concluded many “dead-end” processes and methods of exploration thus far. This graph ties all of the integral loose ends together. It reiterates the continuous cycle of influences that ultimately determine how the landscape is inhabited. Demographics of time have affected how people ‘play’ the variety of games of the landscape of Detroit.

analysis

36



Precedent Studies

[1] lightwave|brisbane.australia

Lightwave is an interactive installation driven by human senses. A new way for people to relate to|with things that surround them, the tubes create a space for sitting, passing through, and reflection. The lights essentially “play” with those that experience it by responding to the proximity of the body with how it lights up.

Images Source:
Arch Daily: <http://www.archdaily.com/84670/lightwave-anl-studio/>

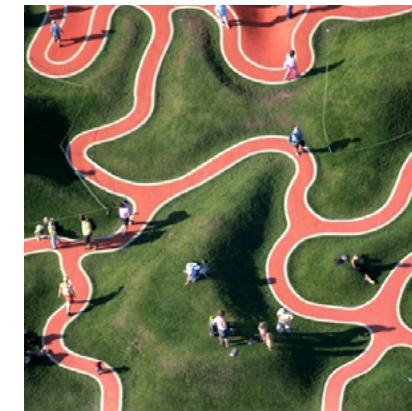
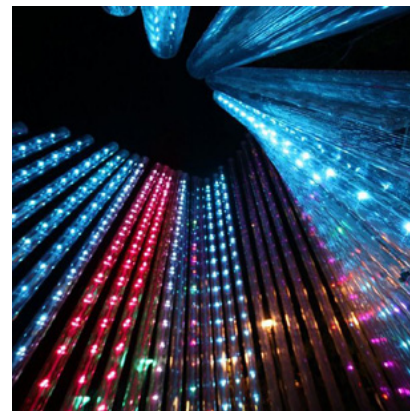
analysis

[2] buga|munich.germany

Buga Park is truly inspired by nature and celebrates the natural landscape. It is made up of multiple types of gardens that allow for different views and types of interaction for users of all ages. The gardens are connected by paths to make it one grand experience| show. The undulating terrain and bright colors remove a need for an actual physical playscape; it becomes the playscape.

Images Sources:
(1) Landezine: <http://www.landezine.com/index.php/2009/07/buga-05-playground/>
(2) Wayfaring Travel Guide: <http://www.wayfaring.info/2011/03/21/buga/>

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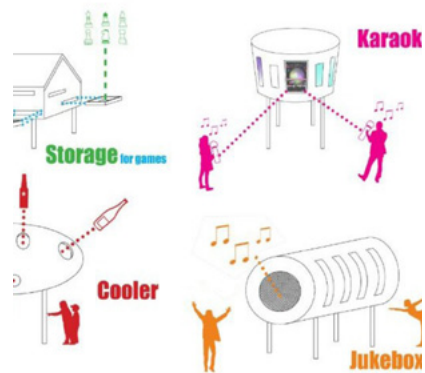


[3] wind.powered.candy.coated.play.house.pavilions.world.expo.2010|shanghai.china

Apart of the World Expo for 2010, the pavilions not only look fun and playful, but are fun and playful also! The pavilions double as activity stations for people to engage with one another. Cited in Bailanjing Park, the pavilions also have wind turbines to collect power for lighting the pavilions at night.

Images Source:
Cool Green Mag: <http://coolgreenmag.com/2011/09/16/wind-powered-pavilions-in-shanghai-are-fun-candy-coated-play-houses/>

analysis



[4] common.play|detroit.michigan

A family from the Woodbridge community turned an open vacant lot into a human-scale game board. With all of the materials made room recycled materials, the field was to become a playscape for children and their parents with slides and swings replicating games like chess, jacks, and pick-up sticks.

Images Source:
Mind The Gap: <http://mindthegapdetroit.blogspot.com/search/label/18.%20Common%20Play>

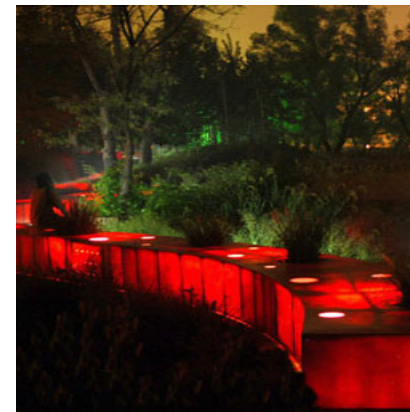
40



[5] TAP.gallery|detroit.michigan

TAP [The Alley Project] Gallery is located in Southwest Detroit. Taking two vacant lots, an available garage, and an ally as a blank canvas, the community [along with Young Nation and the University of Detroit Mercy] converted it into a public forum for self expression through art and legal graffiti to everyone in the community. A studio [previously just a garage] allows for workshops and serves as an indoor gallery space. The vacant lot connects the street to the alley [the gallery of graffiti]. This project not only took something seen as illegal and negative and made it beautiful, but also included every community member throughout the entire process.

Images Source:
TAP (The Alley Project) Gallery Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/tapgallery>



[6] red.ribbon.park|quinhuangdao.china

The Red Ribbon Park is sited along the Tanghe River. A half of a kilometer long, the red steel bench allows for multiple uses besides sitting. The natural setting which gracefully incorporates the bold bench adds an additional level of playfulness.

Images Source:
One Inch Punch: <http://www.oneinchpunch.net/2008/03/28/red-ribbon-in-tanghe-river-park-china/>



TETRIS

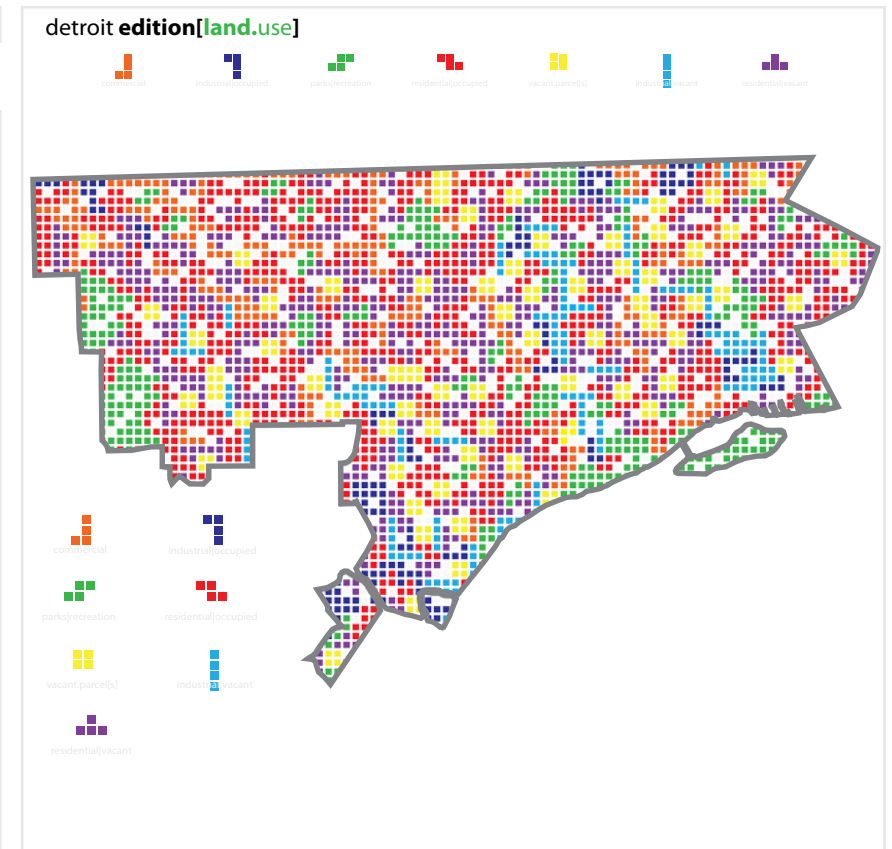
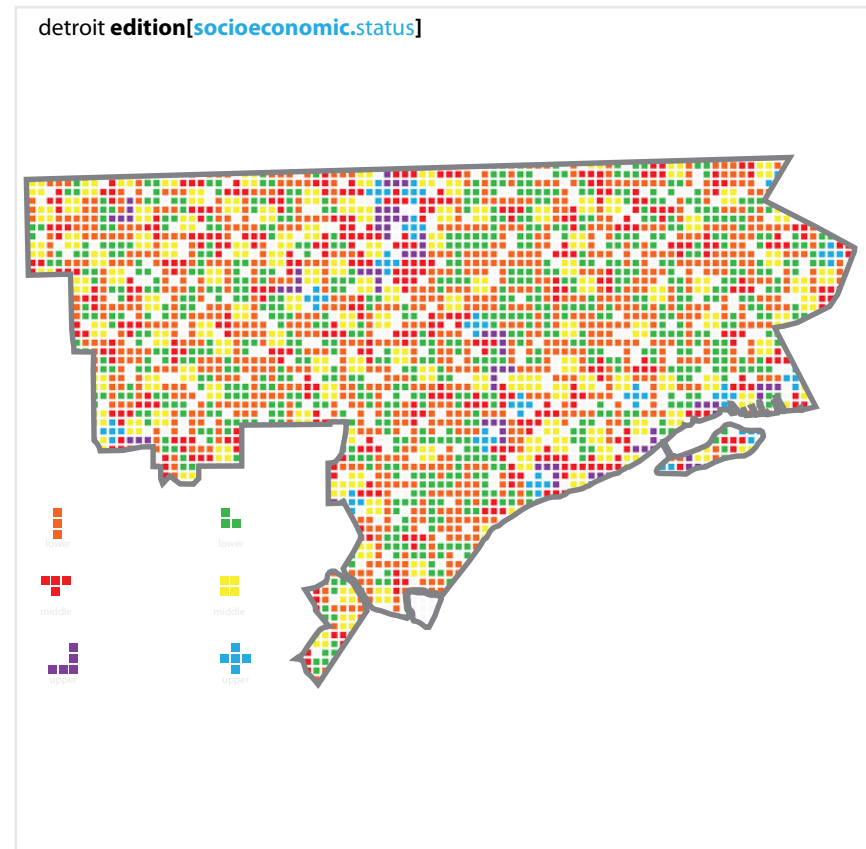
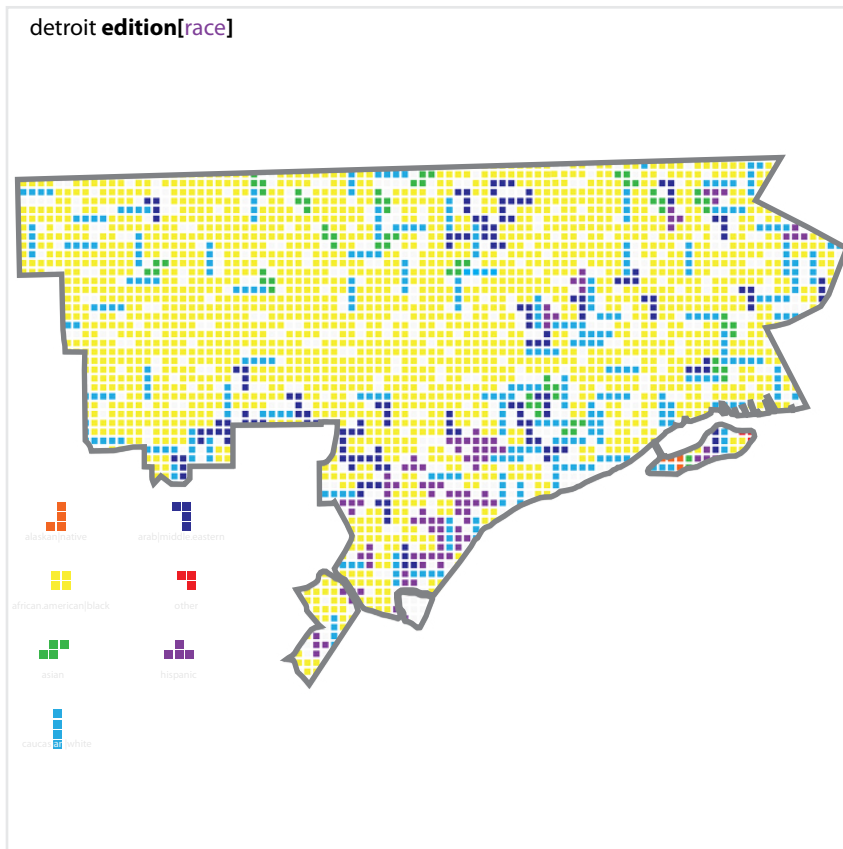
race + socio.economic.status = land.use

When studying maps of Detroit and the hard lines drawn by statistics, it brought to mind an image of many boxes encompassed by one big box [Detroit]. When thinking of how to create a relationship between the statistical maps and the actual landscape that IS Detroit [through my eyes], the game of Tetris immediately came to mind.

On a Tetris board, the arrangements and combinations of a multitude of colored squares make the game. It is the player that attempts [in a timely manner] to control and place the squares to fit in and complete an entire row, in hopes of preventing the squares from reaching the top. However, there are instances where there is no easy way to maneuver the squares, thus leaving an opening in the row, and throwing the game into greater risk of being lost. It is

when the squares touch the top that the game is ended, and the player either tries again or gives up. Detroit's land use is abstractly similar to a Tetris board. Many players of the Detroit community have attempted to eliminate rows and prevent the loss of the game. It is to some extent, that unfortunately, the game has been played to its end, leaving Detroit filled with voids of vacancy, separation, fear, and uncertainty. In this first set of sketches, I two-dimensionally conceptualized [played] Detroit as Tetris, racially and socioeconomically, which are two key factors that have helped craft its' land use [by layering the first two, I was able to play the third]. The sketch problem was to simply introduce the idea of perceiving Detroit through the lense of a familiar game.

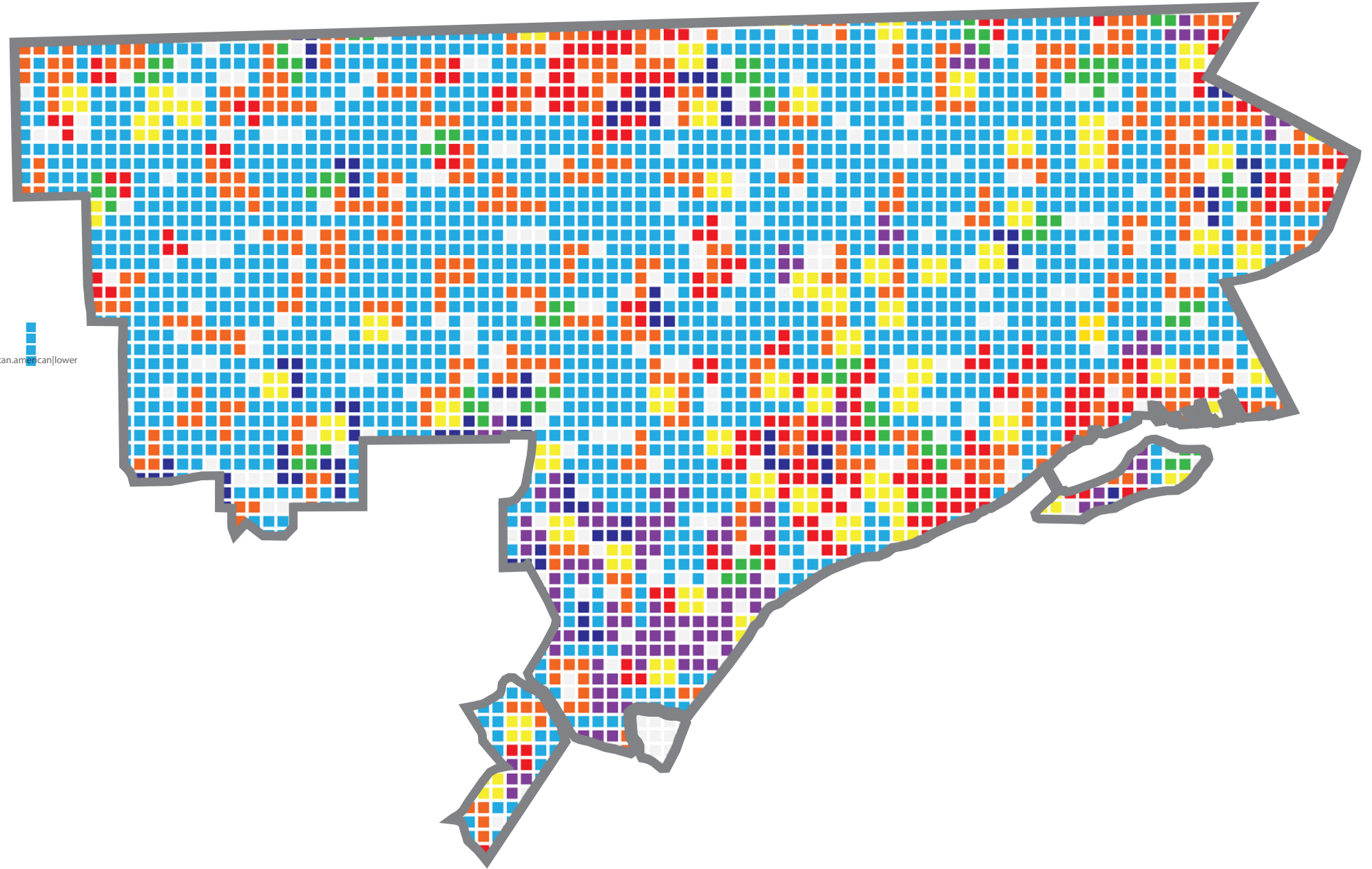
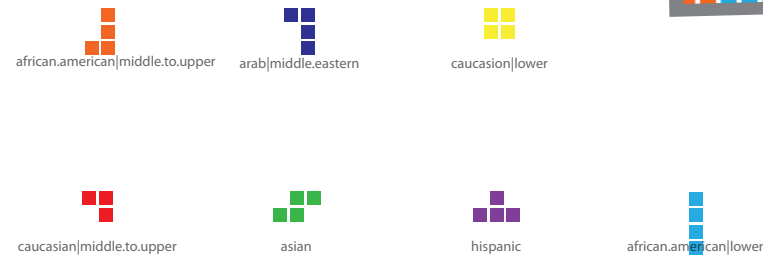
sketch tests



TETRIS

Detroit. Edition

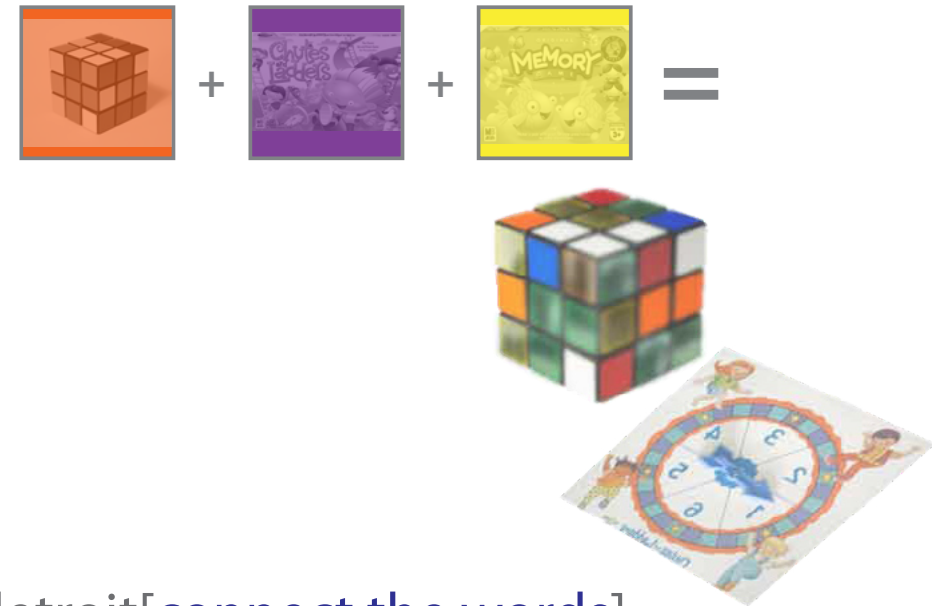
The first set of Tetris sketches only told parts of the story. In an attempt to finalize the idea of Detroit as a Tetris game, I produced one final abstract mapping, which added another layer of complexity with giving greater value to each set of squares played [combining race and socio-economic status]. Land use is implied when considering the social class of the inhabited landscape.



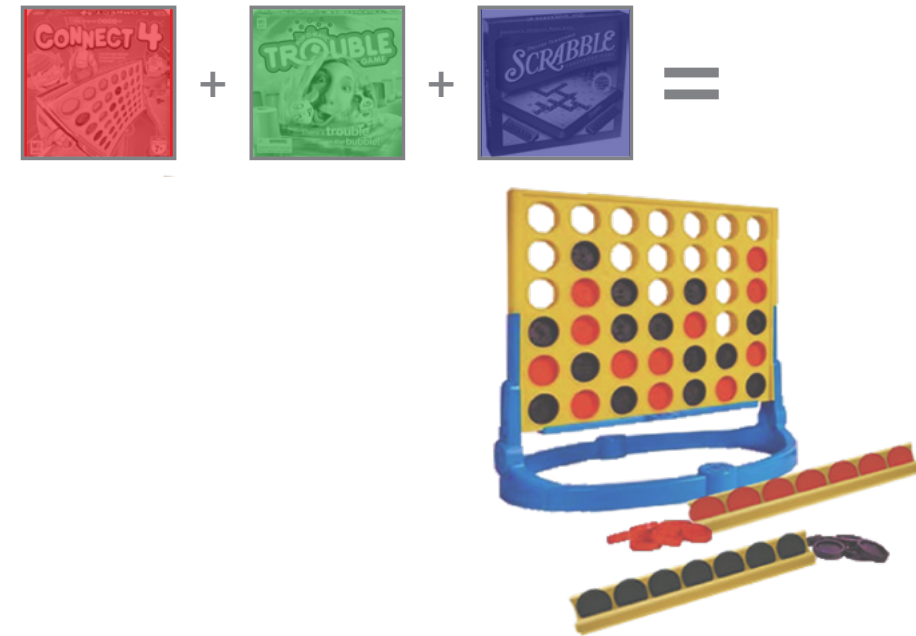
Game [re]Configurations

Excluding the game typology of scavenger, this set of sketches considers ways to combine multiple games [each of a different typology] to create a new game that relates to Detroit. The proposed games' purpose is to simply get players to engage with|in a space|place with|in the city in a fun and positive manner at a more intimate scale.

detroit[**arranged.memory**]
remember & put together before other players

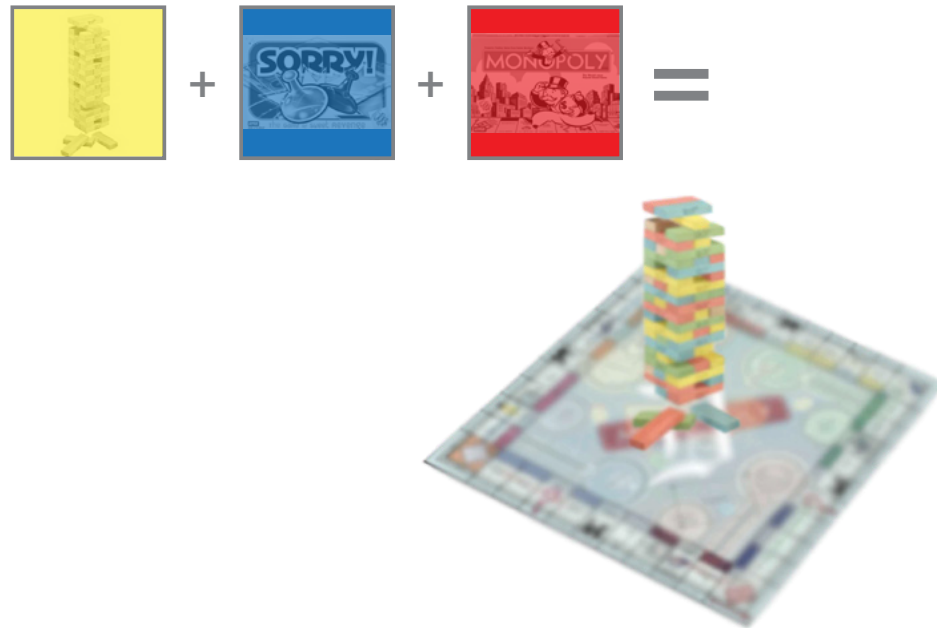


detroit[**connect the words**]
mind your words... look out for trouble



sketch
tests

detroit[**up on top**]
a stacking board game... who'll reach the top first?



Interaction. Connection. Interface.

Interaction.

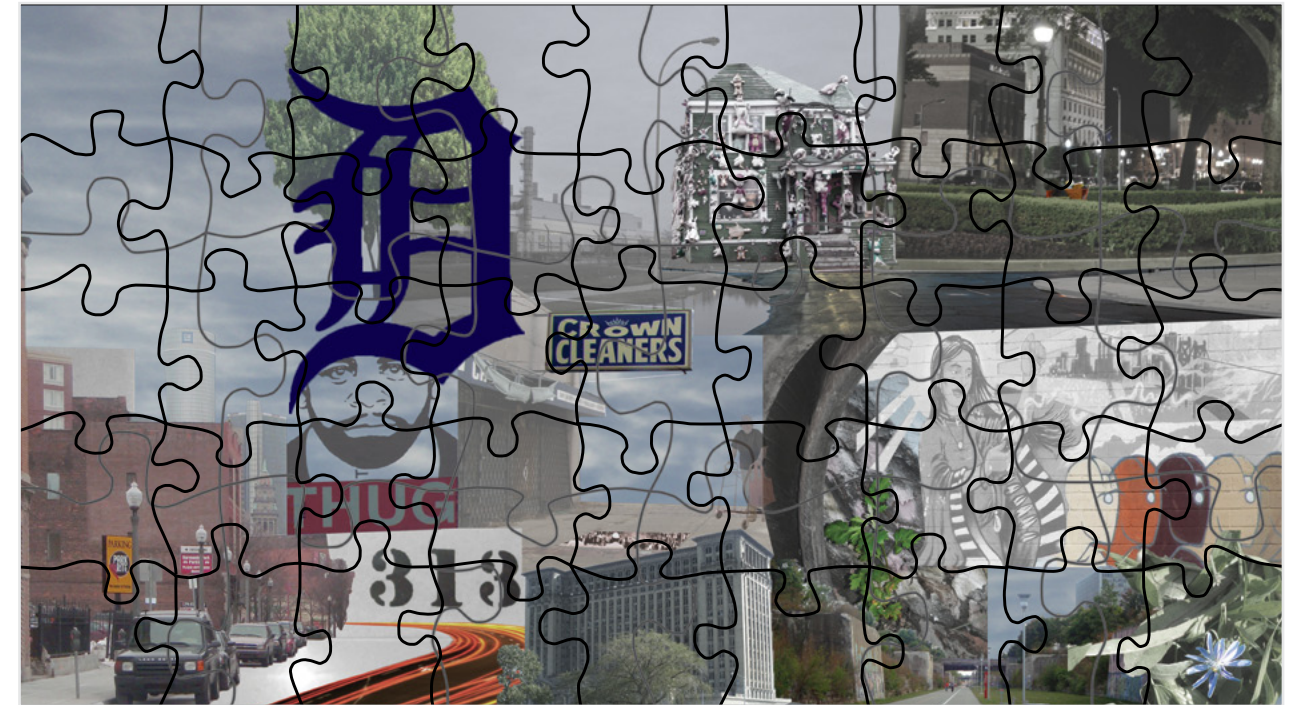
In one last set of sketches, I felt it was necessary to produce something tangible.

During my thought process, I thought of the possibilities of a board game. Essentially, it would take the player through time in Detroit [passing through the landscape of monumental events in time that altered it and learning and discussing them]. Each player would travel through an entire century of history, in hopes of gaining a better understanding as to how Detroit has transpired to the city it is today. The path of the gameboard, itself would potentially be inspired by an abstract outline of the Detroit skyline.

Connection..

A puzzle in a puzzle, this sketch layers the many complexities that make up Detroit. The collage of images represent the icons of perception of the city [graffiti, abandonment, political anarchy, and the like]. Layered beneath a puzzle, and then cut into puzzle pieces further attest the intent of the puzzle [which is to physically abstract the negative perception of Detroit in a more positive, fun way].

sketch
tests

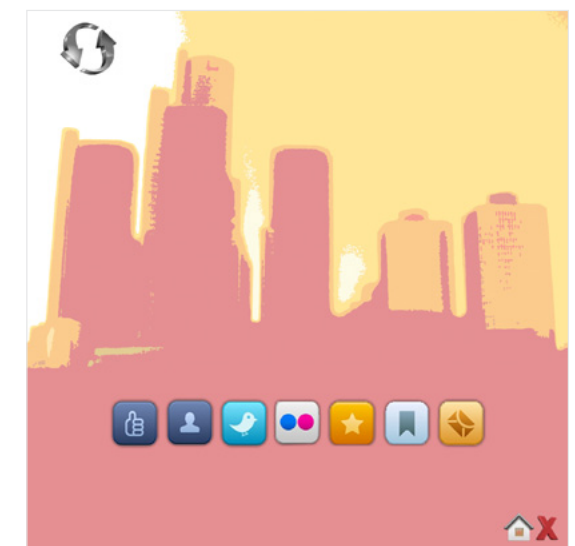
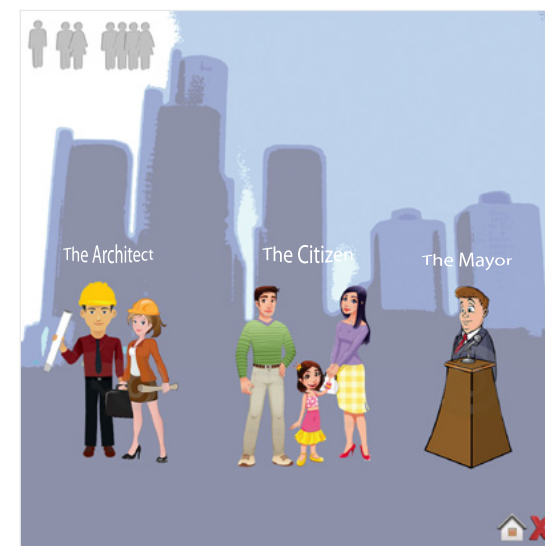
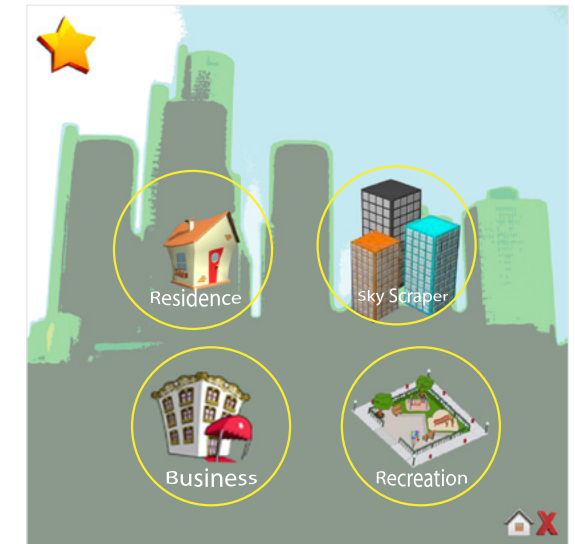
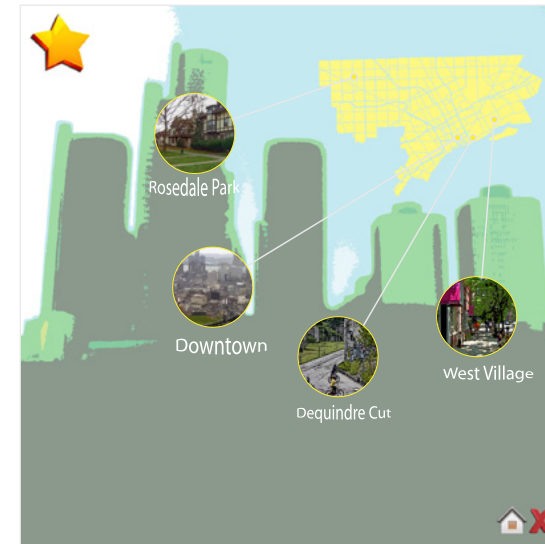


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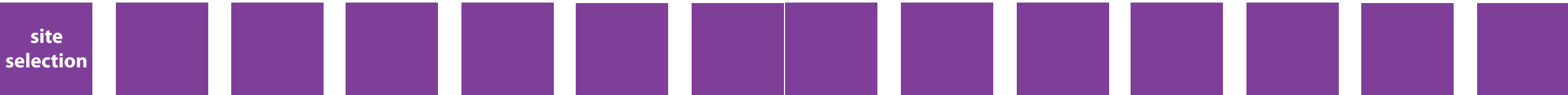
Interface.

In this modern day and age, it is vital to consider ALL mediums of gaming. Taking into consideration the possibility of reaching out to a larger target audience, I felt it necessary to consider a digital game. This sketch suggests that people from all over can partake in providing and sharing their opinions and suggestions as it relates to Detroit. Such a game would act as the most broad way of collecting data [if the game were to go that route] about perception and needs for the city. Though, the Detroider is the key player, it is important to consider the non.Detroit in hopes that they would potentially one day consider the title.

sketch
tests



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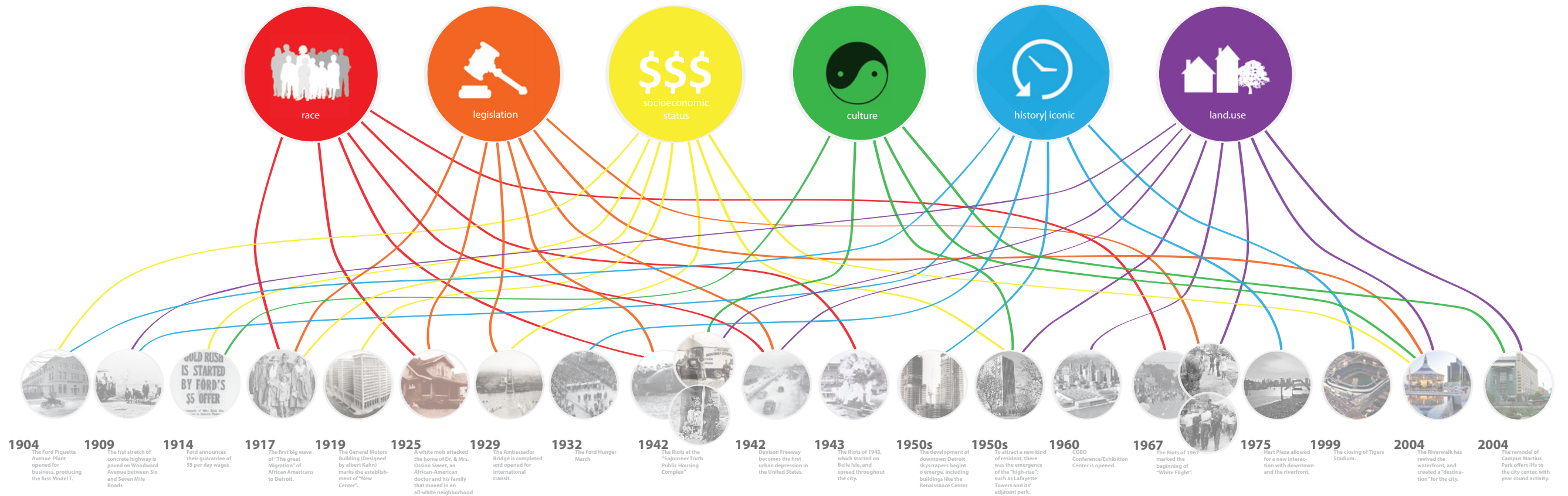


Time & Site

In order to have a better understanding of the current landscape, I felt it necessary to note and map historic events that were integral in altering it. The timeline specifies events from the beginning of the 20th century today which influenced the outcome of [or was influenced by] the pre-noted demographics. Each moment in time has somehow affected how people interact| interpret| relate with the city.

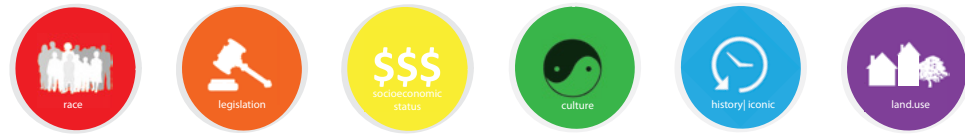
site selection

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Events & Site

After taking a closer look at the moments in history that have had the most impact on the Detroit landscape [both positively and negatively], I chose three sites to explore. Implementing the program of an [inter]active path, I began to sketch how such a path could begin to move people in a new and playful way throughout these communities. Each site offered something unique to the “game”, but lacked one thing; there weren’t many differentiating factors that would attract a new and different dynamic of people.



site selection


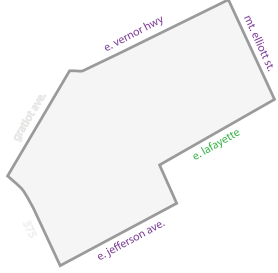
A



1950s

\$\$\$

Lafayette Park
[Draws new type of residents]

B




1909

8 mile rd.

First Electric Street Light at Woodward Ave. and McNichols Rd.


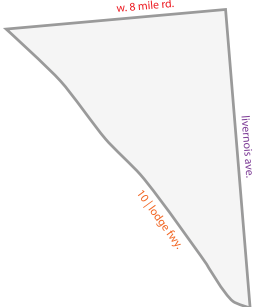



C



1967

Detroit Civil Unrest [Race Riots]

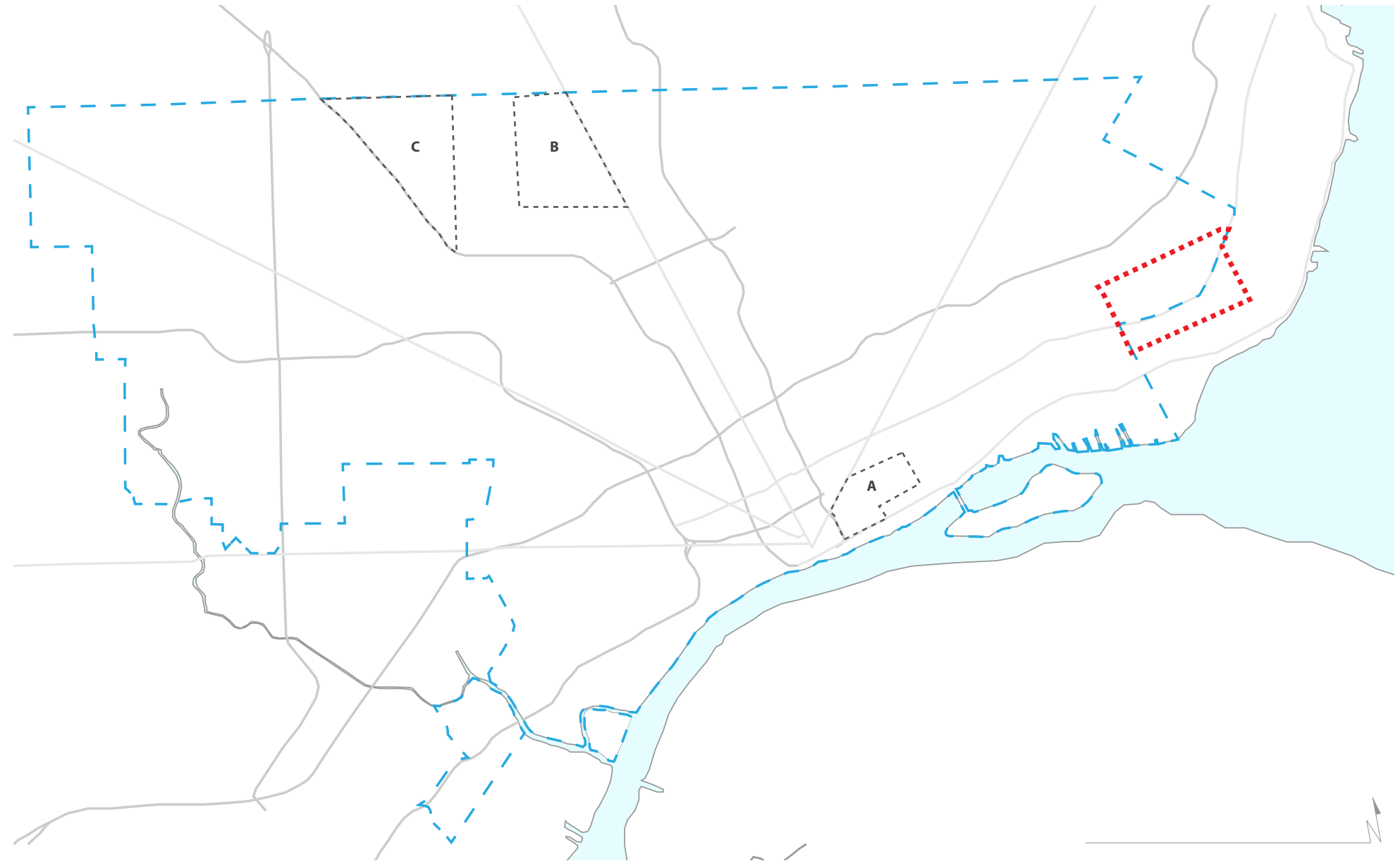
60

Scale: City. Neighborhood[s]. Community

City. Neighborhood[s].

Noting the sites chosen from my study of time and events, I went back to the city map. I wanted a site that offered a very diverse use of the landscape as well as current users|residents|players.

This led me to choose a site on the Northeast side of Detroit [where Detroit meets the Grosse Pointes]. Mack Ave. acts as a spine that divides Detroit from the Pointes [Detroit to the North and the Pointes to the South]. The housing stock is very different on opposite sides in addition to the streetscape [the ratio to occupancy to vacancy between the two cities is drastically noticeable]. By choosing this site, it allows for an opportunity to implement a new program to such a divided landscape. It would be the intention of the physical intervention to get people to explore “the other side of Mack” and create new relationships with the city and a new set of “neighbors”.



site
selection

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Neighborhood[s]. Community

The site is made up of smaller communities. Each community offers its own unique touch to the proposed program [the “game” path]. One thing that rings true throughout all four of them, however, is that no one house|building is the same [though most of the plot sizes are].

Morning Side consists of very dense, single family, somewhat occupied housing with pockets of new, pre-fabricated low-income houses. There are also a lot vacant lots towards the West side of the community.

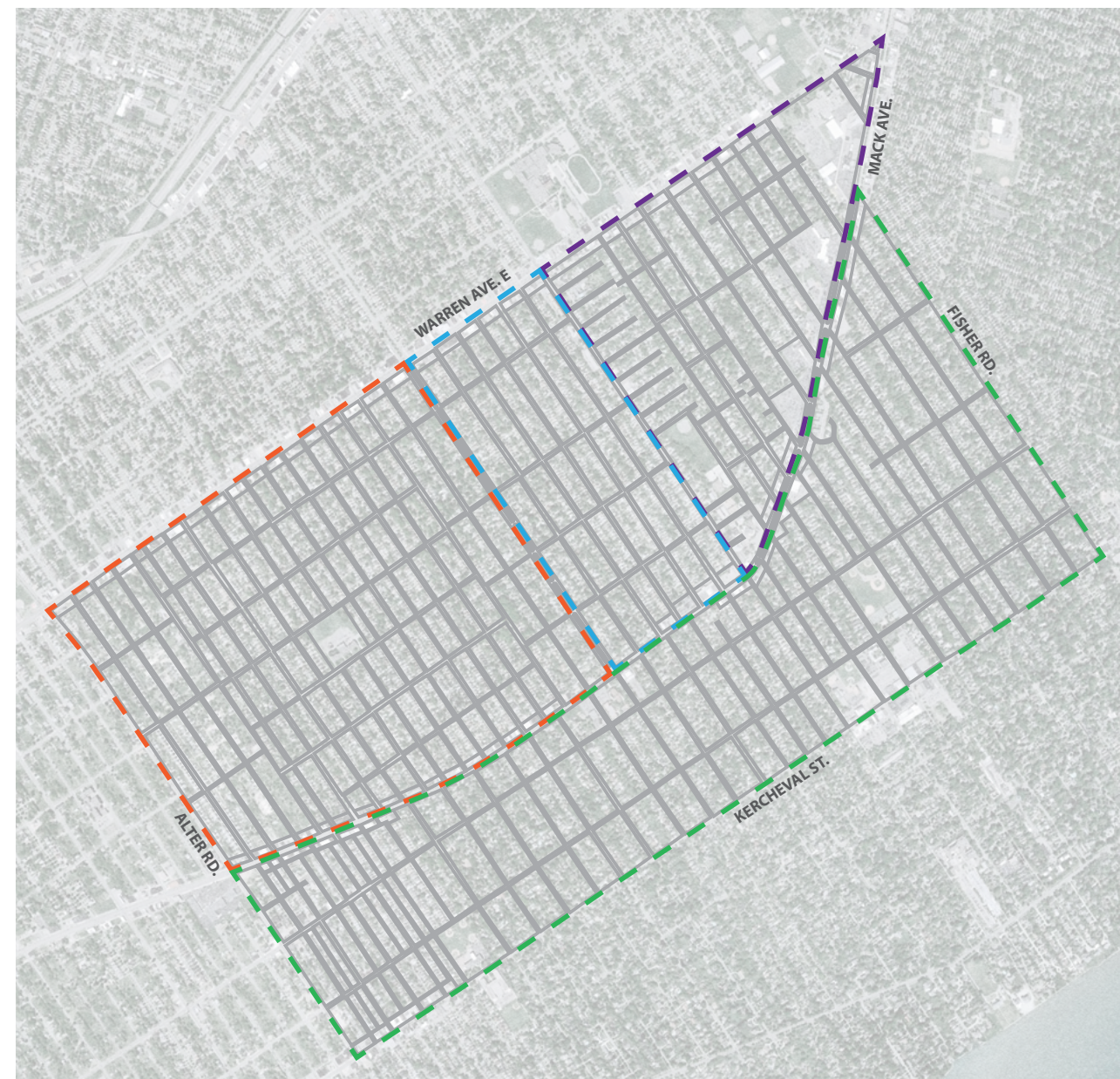
East English Village offer bigger lot sizes and more grand, Tudor-style homes. There are less storefronts along Mack in East English Village [as well as in parts of Grosse Pointe Park where there too are bigger houses].

Grosse Pointe Park is one of the more eclectic Points, with the housing stock ranging from close and narrow two family flats to a large variety of mansion styles.

Detroit that lies Northeast of East English Village is very different from the other communities, with bungalow style, aluminum houses on larger lots. The yards are not as well maintained, and a lot of the properties are abandoned and/or vandalized.

site selection

- Detroit
 - East English Village Community
 - Morning Side Community
 - Grosse Pointe Park
- SCALE: n/a



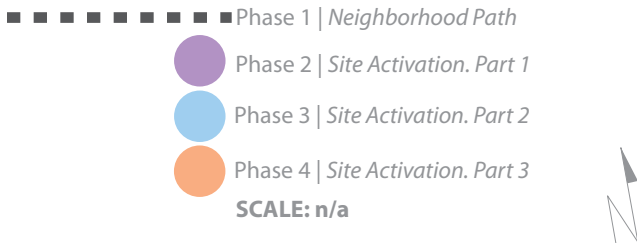


the
game

Intervention | Phases

The game, in this instance, will be the physical path [the design of the path being inspired by “gam[es]ing] as well as some designated space for the possibility of a sort of [inter]active activity [game] that takes place on the site]. The path would be the first physical intervention, with the intention to not have a very harsh impact on the existing landscape [a simple tinted concrete to distinguish the path, and grasscrete where it intersects open land]. The site lends itself to a multitude of options for such an abstract, yet carefully thought out installation. Through phasing, a series of nodes would be developed along the path that would allow for another level of “play”; creating a destination that not only the locals would want to utilize, but also those nearby interested in exploring Detroit. The first phase would include the development of four nodes throughout the communities that the path travels.

the
game

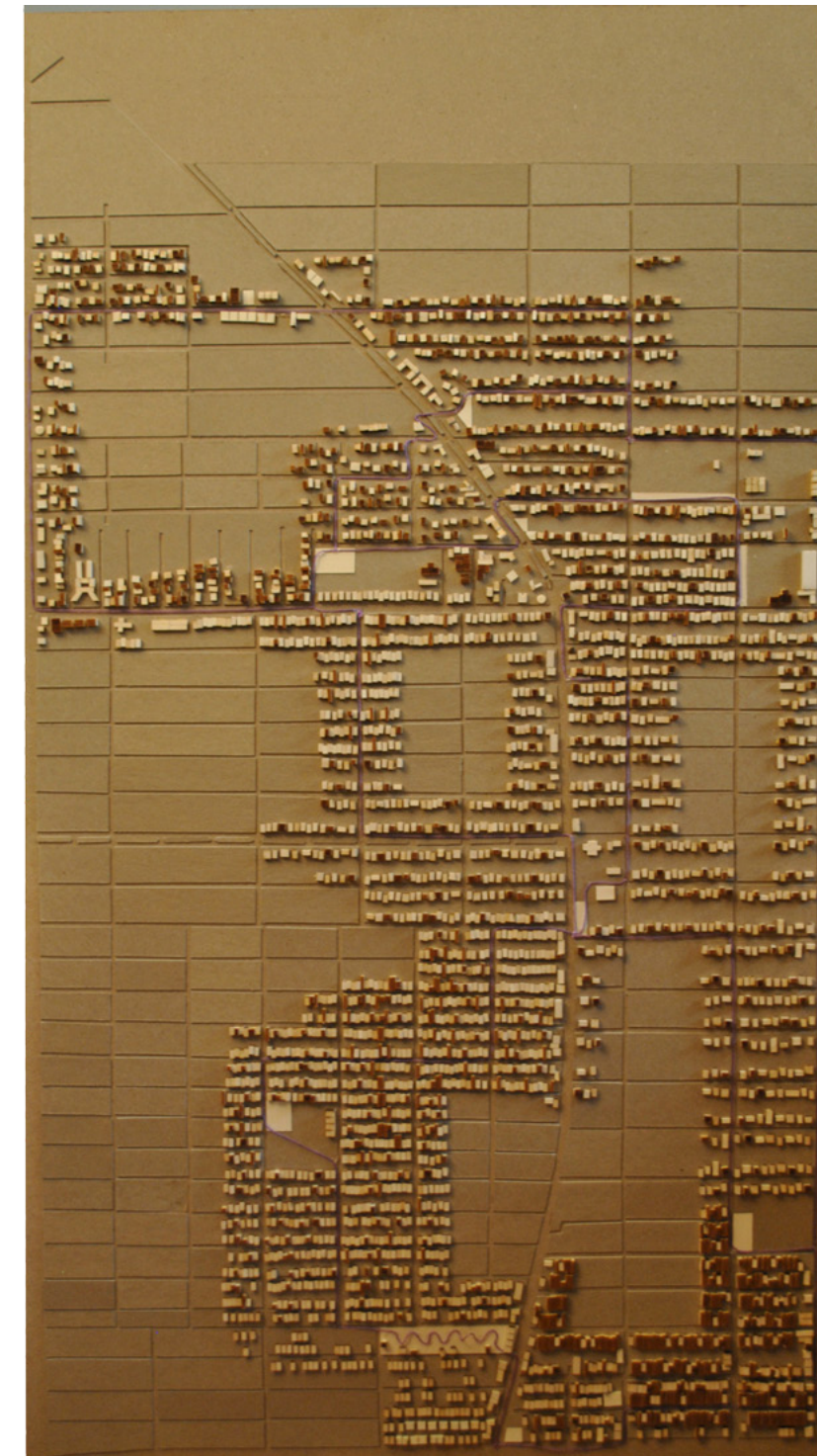


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Phase 1

Granted, the intervention is miniscule, it poses many issues for those that live there. Phase 1 will essentially be the largest phase, however, will allow for the greatest amount of feedback from the community.

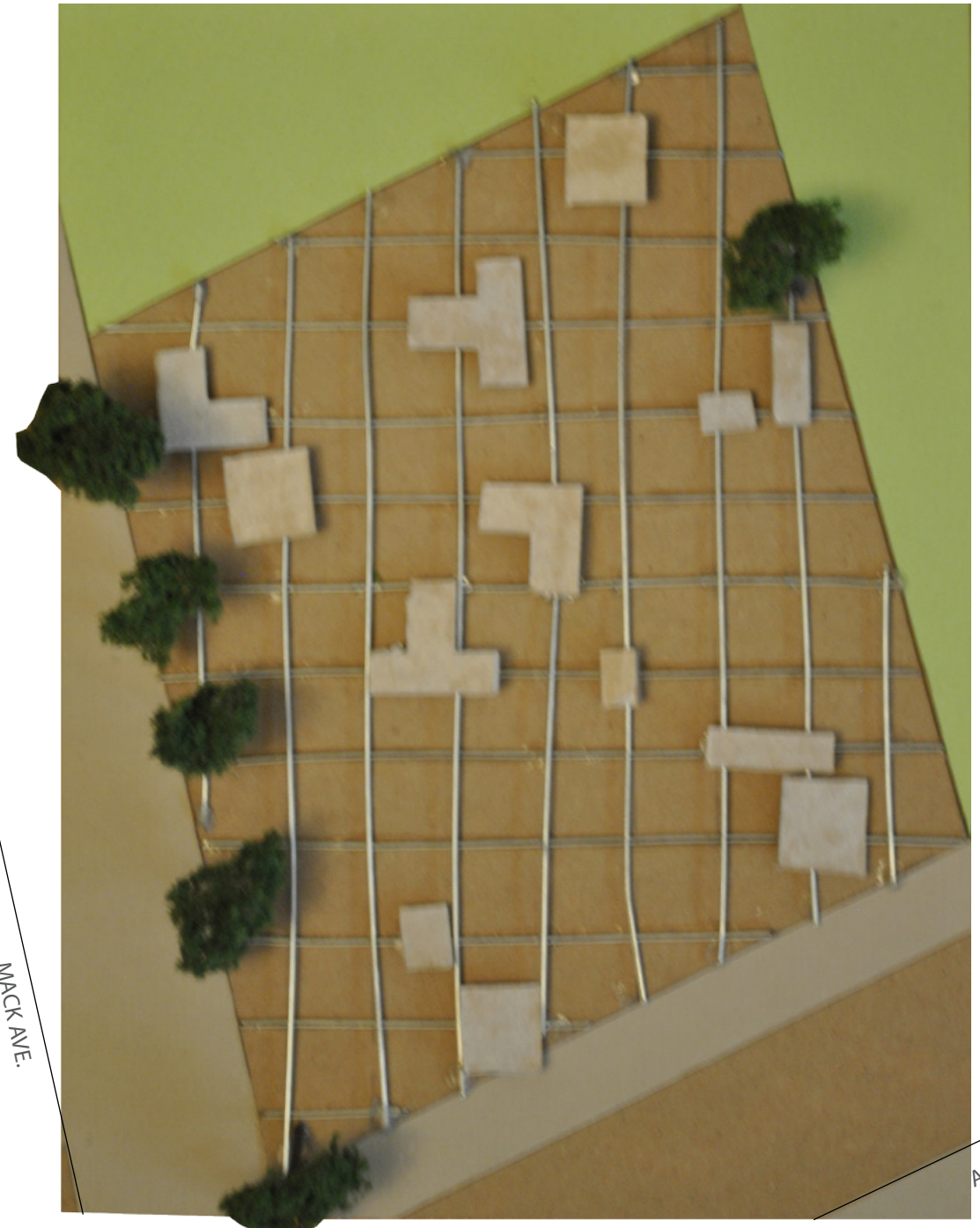
The proposed nodes alongside the [inter]active path are minimal in their design, yet playful in how people engage and move through the space.



Site 1

Site 1 is at the corner of Mack Ave. and Alter Rd. [where Detroit and Grosse Pointe Park meet to the West]. the site is currently vacant, and neighboring fenced.in community gardens.

The proposed design allows for people to determine the "landscape" of the site by moving|shifting|rotating these light.weight blocks on a track system [which could also lend itself to another "gaming" component"].



MACK AVE.

ALTER RD.

SCALE: n/a

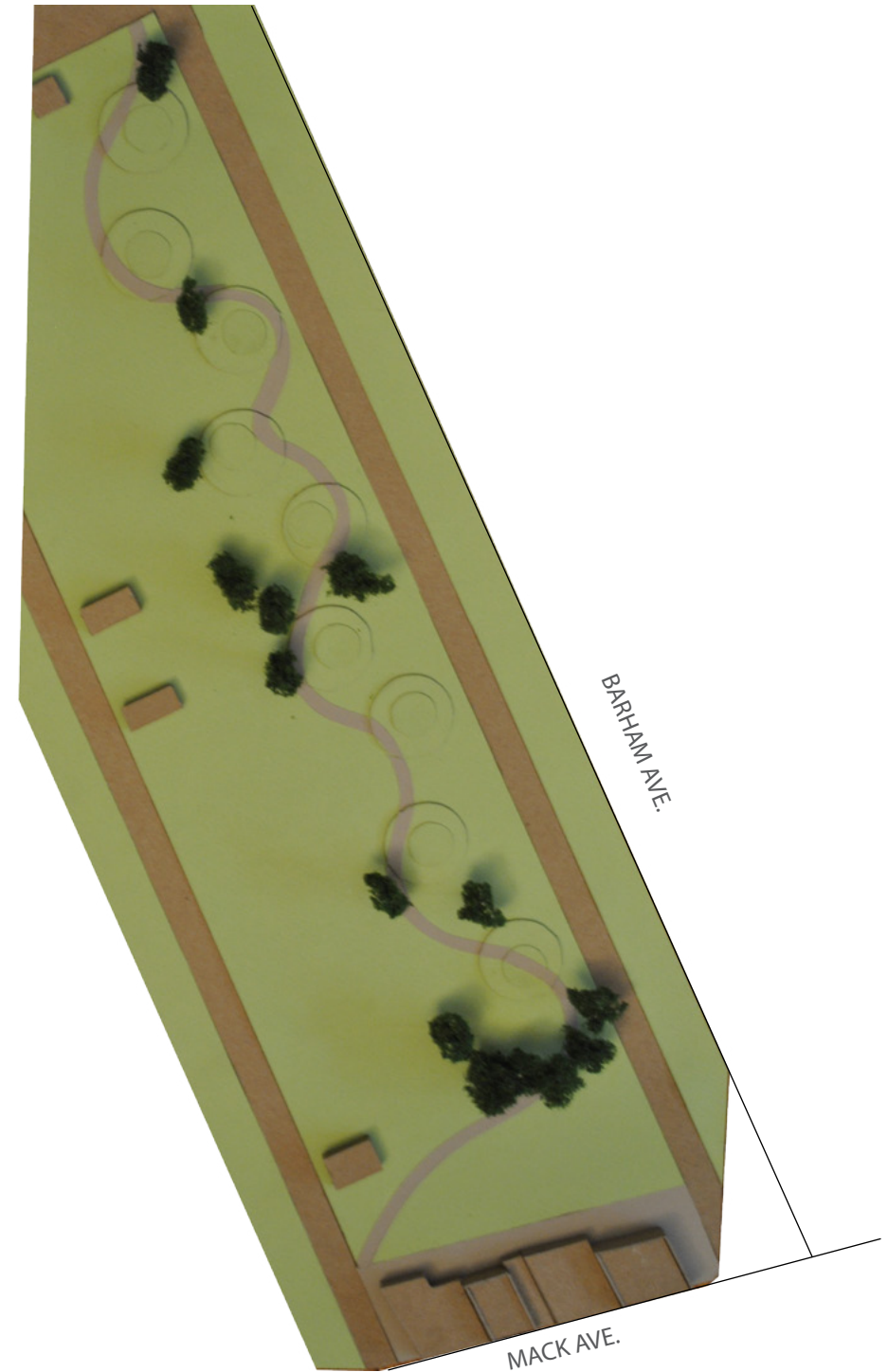
the game

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Site 2

Site 2 is an entire vacant block in the Morning Side Community. On the block directly behind it, there has been some constructing of low-income housing, leaving Site 2 as a dumping ground for the construction.

The design takes advantage of the dirt mounds, shifting it to create a "pattern of hills" and winding the path through them; again a simple, yet playful intervention to the site.



Site 3

Site 3 is the smallest of the first 4 design proposals. It sits at a dead end directly across from a car dealership. The proposed design "divides" the neighborhood from the street through the installation of a wall|maze system. Such a system could potentially lend itself to either games or artistic installation[s].



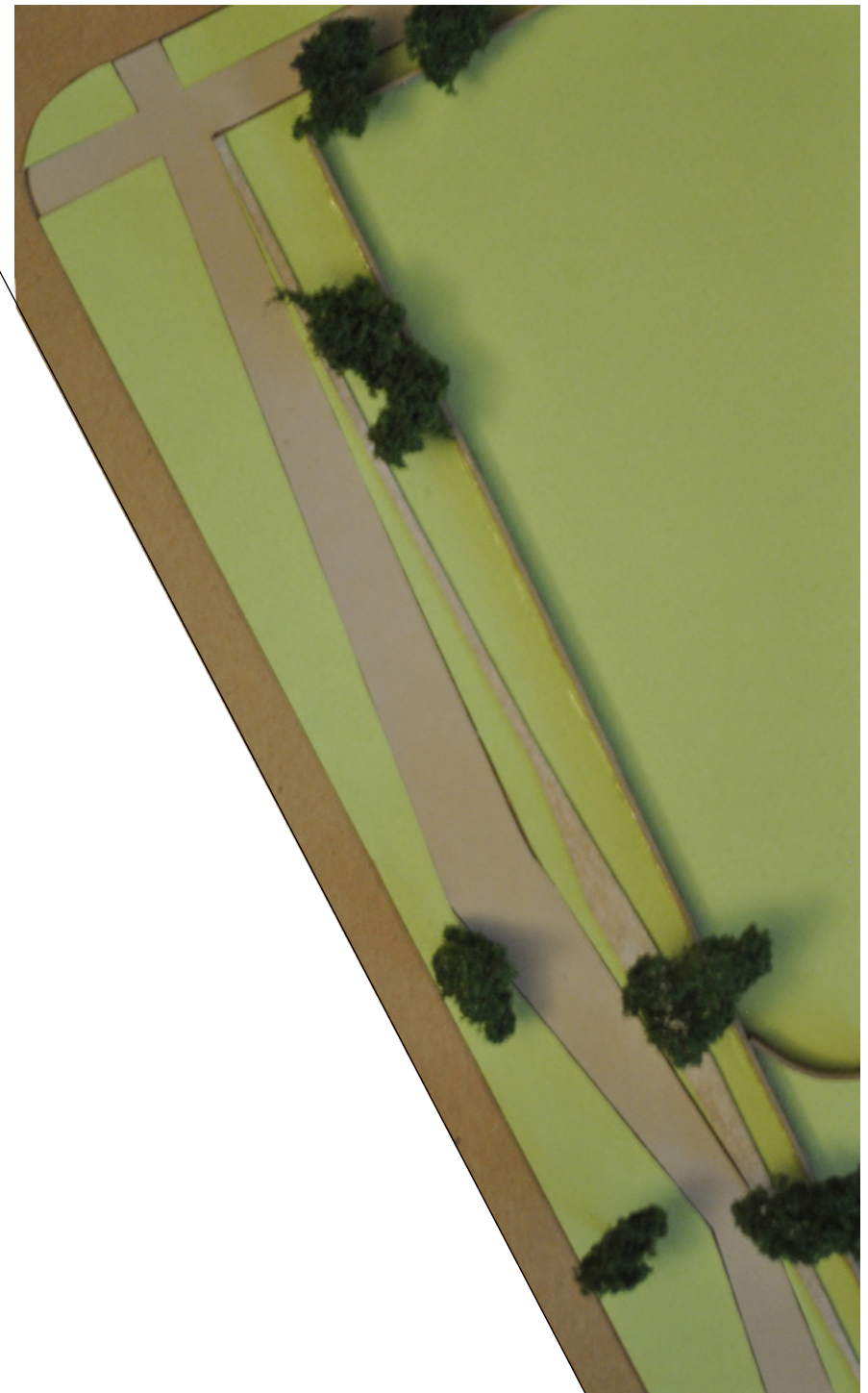
Site 4

Site 4 trails alongside a baseball park in Grosse Pointe Park.

The proposed design alters how people walk next to the park and experience the "game". In addition to altering the path, there would also be the installation of a unique bench that flows with the path for sitting, watching the game, or playing a "game".



ST. CLAIR ST.



the
game

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**final
thoughts**

Final Thoughts

A game can be a variety of things., ranging from something that is played to something that is designed for games to be played. I think that this thesis fulfilled its original intentions of exploring the idea of “game” application to architecture and design. It is the hope that through the implimentation of such a game that it would not only unify these broken neighborhoods throughout Detroit, but that it would also appeal to a new type of resident|player, and that it would allow the city to be [re] inhabited with great intentions. I believe that through “gaming”, we can paint a new landscape and create new and lasting memories and relations as the city continues to progress.

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To **GOD** be the Glory! In ALL things, I thank and praise Him. He is truly worthy, because without Him, none of this would be possible.

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Ja'Nay McClaster
Noelle Adams
Jessica Neely
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Demario Drummand

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