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Residential Square in the 21st Century: Applying a typology to create a new urban morphology

Elizabeth Whittington

Syracuse University

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Residential Square in the 21st Century
Applying a typology to create a new urban morphology

Elizabeth Whittington
Art McDonald
Brendan Moran

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School of Architecture
Syracuse University
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1.1 Summary
As a low-rise high-density mixed-use typology, the reconsideration of the residential square can provide a new urban morphology that densifies residential zones, while providing safe public spaces. In addition, I assert that through its combination of juxtaposed functional uses, unit typology the language of the façade, the historical European residential square, can articulate the identity of residents.

The detached, single-family house on a large lot is not always maintainable by its inhabitants and lacks the sustainable density needed in the evolving city. It is characterized by safe, walkable and active neighborhoods. However, the residential square can exhibit American identity and be adapted from its European counterpart in the acknowledgement of unique neighborhood cultural context and notions of individualism and land ownership.
1.2 Thesis Abstract

“If residential buildings can be said to form a city’s body, then their facades can be called its face.”¹ The “private realm” defines the “civic realm” of the city, and public spaces exist because of the accumulation of private buildings around them.² The historical residential squares in London, Paris and New York provide examples of such an instance in the urban fabric. The aggregation of the historical townhouse around an open, public space can create urban housing that considers its locality and users, while facilitating diversity and growth. Moreover, the historical residential square eliminated the introverted urban block, creating new, open space for civic use.

This typology can be weaved into the urban fabric of American cities to create a housing morphology for current low-income residents that fosters community connectivity and diversity in neighborhoods where blocks are large and common space use does not exist. The residential square provides two types of models, proving that culture plays a significant role in the pairing of private and public spaces within the urban landscape of blocks and districts. The first consideration is the civic role that an open space had in the historical urban fabric. The second consideration is the articulation of the individual, private realm through architectural syntax. This identity is then relayed back to the public.

The potential of this housing typology exists in opposition to the urban conditions created by, what Jane Jacobs calls, “The Radiant Garden City Beautiful” movement of the twentieth century. According to Jacobs, to repair the disabled post-industrial city, such as Syracuse, several factors should be implemented to foster diversity. A re-stitching needs to occur between districts, enabled by an increased mixing of uses and users of street and block.³ Given criticism of the inability of the high-rise tower to foster a sense of community and security among residents, an alternate housing typology is needed. Moreover, the use of the park surrounding the tower was uncontrolled and unconsidered. Because of the self-sufficient nature of the tower, there was a strong segregation between landscape and building; “living in the sky divorced from the ground did not provide a vibrant environment.”⁴ This urban housing model needs to be re-evaluated for a more public and communal use in relation to more individualized dwelling units. The low-rise, but high-density, townhouse typology can be adapted to local demographics to repair the urban block, while defining a public space unique to residents and to the community.

The condition of the urban fabric is essential. Jacobs’ thinking intersects with New Urbanism’s respect for Clarence Stein’s Neighborhood Unit, Eliel Saarinen’s Functional Community and Leon Krier’s Urban Quartier.⁶ These models for a healthy urban fabric are significant because of their ability to create a matrix for social patterns and a community that encourages “ordinary human needs”.⁷ They facilitate sustainable growth, in terms of density, pedestrian walkability, and public infrastructure. This network enables mobility and flow between districts.⁸ The block significantly facilitates the disposition of the private and public realms within the city.⁹ The residential square is part of this pattern and matrix of urban blocks. The public realm is clearly defined through the aggregation of the private realm. The two realms merge in use and language of the square.

The historical juxtapositioning of private and public uses within residential squares creates a dynamic urban community. Through the adjacency of their dwellings to the public square, individuals living in within this block were part of the monumental civic institutions associated with the use of the square. These institutions were determined by the time...
period, those in charge and thus by the culture of the city. For example, the Parisian royal processions and tournaments within Place Royale provided the sense of courtliness and membership that aristocratic residents desired. The tournament was originally a war game, but evolved into an organized event. They were also social events, including pageants and banquets.

Moreover, because each city had its own social qualities, the square’s open space was used differently in London. For example, Covent Garden gained activity over time through the incorporation of the city market at its center. The market was part of a larger public and private network of commercial markets in the city. Its development was over a long period time and was heavily influenced by London’s demographic and physical growth, along with the rising demand of the time period. Furthermore, Fitzroy and Bedford Squares included the English landscape garden in their public space. According to Joan Bassin, the English garden was its own “cultural institution” of the time. By creating a version of wildness within a bounded area, the control of economic and social changes by aesthetic balances within the landscape was attempted. Thus, culture-specific institutional uses were incorporated into the fabric of the square.

The residences around the square formally defined the civic space. The architectural language employed to face the residential units of the square is indicative of each city’s notion of the relationship between the private individual and the public realm. Both Paris and London had strict façade requirements during the development of the square. With Place Royale, King Henri IV dictated the use of brick, a material typical of bourgeois and tradesmen dwellings in Paris, to articulate the face residences. Although finally inhabited by aristocrats, the architectural language and materiality created an association between the previous manufacturing district and the new civic realm. Behind the strictly defined façade, owners could buy and build upon as many plots as desired.

Fitzroy Square in London indicates an evolution in this notion of image making through deployment of architectural language. It dramatizes and triumphs over the illusion of “wildness” bound within the square; it is an image of both a country house and its landscape. Though it appears to be a singular home through the unified façade, individual townhomes exist behind the vertical veil. In Fitzroy Square, the individual owner is no longer articulated within the public square. Thus, the façade demonstrates a tension, either taught or relaxed, between the private and the public realms. In both London and Paris, façades were built before the individual units behind them, which were then sold to individual owners for private development. Although individuals were subordinate to the public use of the open space, this is precisely what attracted them to the square. They were interested in being a part of a larger civic space, which was created either through royal place-making plans or private speculation.

Even though the residential squares in Paris and London were successful based on the fact that residents desired to participate in the collective identity of the square, American squares lacked the clear portrayal of the collective, civic environment. This is not unexpected because of the American regard for individuality and personal freedom. Though its architectural language, Gramercy Square in Manhattan shows that individual enterprise overshadows the collective activation of the public space. Townhouses employ different façade archetypes. Moreover, in terms of its use, the central square’s garden is open only to residents, whereas the squares of both Paris and London were completely part of the public
realm, incorporating space for public play, commerce, and respite.

However, Wooster Square in New Haven shows that the residential square can adapt to change and is able to thrive in contemporary society if given the opportunity. It is composed of different housing typologies, growing from being strictly single-family residences, with private yards and drives, to the inclusion of the townhouse. As established by Michael Dennis, fashions and societal preferences influenced the type of architectural language chosen for the dwellings. Thus, after evolution over time, the syntax of Wooster Square is one of diversity through housing types and their associated use. This indicates that as the culture of the city changed, so did the square and its composition.

Other models show that architectural language can articulate interior complexities and the multiple private identities within a building, while relating them back to the public realm. Individuality is projected onto the vertical surface for public viewing. *A New Civic Art* assesses these facial characteristics of buildings as indicative of the lifestyle of inhabitants. New Urbanism uses the Byker Wall by Ralph Erskine and Canary Wharf by Koetter Kim & Associates to exemplify this idea. The International Building Exposition in Berlin also provides an example of how varied and individual buildings relate back to the urban fabric.

The building is just as influential as the district in presenting the patterns and culture of a society. Historical residential squares prove that through the historical placement of interior, private program in relation to exterior, civic space, a strong sense of community and sanctuary can be fostered. The degree that the individual and private realms are articulated varies according to the city. The residential square is the basis for an urban housing morphology, characterized by activity created by the juxtapositioning of residential and civic space in a defined area. In Syracuse, the current political, economic and social environments of the city define the current culture. This will provide the basis for a block and unit system that can enable cross-pollination between existing, distinct enclaves within the city, dissipating strong boundaries, physical and/or invisible, between them. New types of civic spaces will be created.

The transposition of the residential square will be part of a large-scale strategic plan for the re-development of low-rise low-density neighborhoods on the fringe of the central business district in the post-industrial city. A community garden will be defined by a public housing project. Thus, the neighborhood’s identity will be presented through the physical landscape, building volumes and façade. The project will become part of the system of communal spaces within the city. American individualism will express the civic realm, while creating a secure and connected environment. The new housing block provides a proto-type for an urban morphology that decreases anonymity within a neighborhood, while providing a spectrum of space types. It will also provide an identity that is closely linked with that of the district’s culture, leading to a sense of pride and ownership provided by clear entry sequences and points of access, and enforced through the facade.
Selected Annotated Bibliography

The relationship between the growth of cities and the increase in villas, or country homes.

History of the growth of real estate development in London through "pattern book", a combined economic and architectural guide.


Specific information about the development and history of Place Royale, including floor plans and historical images.

Explanation of the role that gardens played in English society: to bring order and control to a disorderly social and economic environment.

Overview of history of Boston neighborhood, includes historical images.


Survey of the relationship between urban fabric, private realm and public realms. Provides good examples of urban planning precedents and strategies for a new urban environment.


Information about demographics, social influences on and history of Place Royale.

Case studies of contemporary residential architecture, including perspectives on facade and volumes.

Case studies of contemporary urban housing, including degree of density and percentage of residential use.
Fernandez Per, Aurora. *This is hybrid: an analysis of mixed-use buildings by a+t / prologue by Steven Holl; authors*, a+t research group, Aurora Fernández Per, Javier Mozas, Javier Arpa. Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain: a+t architecture publishers, 2011. Case studies of contemporary mixed-use buildings.


1.3 Key terms and concepts
Cultural context
social - demographic
political
economic

Urban fabric
public
semi-public
private

Syntax
individual
collective

Use
Mixed-use
Mixed-occupation

American Dream
Ownership and pride
Personalization
Individual identity

Issues
Security
Legibility
Economy
Connectivity
2.0 Context: Site

2.1 Blocks
2.2 Zoning
2.3 Land use
2.4 Routes
2.5 Walkability
2.6 Square superimposition
(2.7 Site lots)
2.1 Blocks

The combination of negative visible and invisible organizational elements creates a harsh urban environment.

In the Near West Side, there are two opposite street grids that clash, creating a neighborhood that is not evenly developed and easily transversed. Studies in the directionality produced by these grids leads to the conclusion that the north eastern portion of the NWS is more permeable than the south western portion. These two areas are each defined by a separate grid type. The northern area is composed on shorter, smaller blocks, while the south western area is defined by very long and large blocks.

Diagrams by author

Directionality of the Near West Side, east west

Directionality of the Near West Side, north south
Urban context of the Near West Side

Blocks and dimensions

Block dimensions
2.1 Blocks

As a result, block types and dimensions are not consistent across the neighborhood. There are several types of long blocks, while the shorter blocks are more consistent.

Moreover, land vacancy is very high in the Near West Side. It is relegated to strips of land and blocks which are characterized by detached buildings. The only blocks that are fully occupied are those of the public James Geddes Housing Project and school. The Industrial warehouses to the north are also fully occupied by commercial and institutional uses. However, they are related more to the expansion of the CBD and the Near West Side Initiative.
Types of blocks in the Near West Side
2.2 Zoning

Zoning in the Near West Side is very hard edged and there are few areas of mixed-use blocks. The single family and multi-family residential zones are encased within the local business district and industrial and commercial zones. There are some islands of business uses within the residential zones. However, the boundaries of this environment could be pushed further to include mixed-uses within the longer blocks of the south western portion of the NWS.

Diagram by author
Zones within the Near West Side
There are multiple large scale and smaller, block scale parks that exist in the city of Syracuse. In the Near West Side, there are four main green and open spaces. The largest is Skiddy Park, which is sandwiched between the James Geddes Housing Project and the Blodgett School. It includes a baseball field, basketball courts, and picnic areas. One green space is part of the Youth Center and includes a playground. Another is a garden space with seating and plantings.
Points of interest:

- ProLiteracy
- CNY Services
- Hillside Children's Center
- Syracuse Habitat for Humanity
- Syracuse Police Department
- Blodgett School
- Huntington Family Center
- Seymour School
- Rescue Mission
- Youth Center
- Spanish Action League
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Syracuse

Institutional:

- La Casita Cultural Center Project
- North East Technologies
- Mack Brother's Boiler and Sheet

Commercial:

- Top Cat Lounge
- Ultra CleanPulse Fitness Studio
- Kind Coffee
- Syracuse Signal Systems
- Diesel Dick's Truck and Auto
- Clayscapes Pottery
- Family Dollar
- City True Value Hardware
- Recess Coffee
- Welcome Inn
- DiMaria's Groceries
- Key Bank
- Nojaim's Market
- Gomez Mechanical
- PMV Service and Sales
- Geddes Street Tavern
- Geddes Express
- Northeast Surplus and Materials
- King and King
- PEACE inc. Westside Family Resource Center
- WCNY
- Gifford and West Pharmacy

Industrial:

- Dry Cleaners
- ArtWorks

Hospital:

- Westside Family Health Center

Church:

- St. Mary and St. Mina Coptic
- St. Lucy's Food Pantry
- St. Lucy's Church
- St. Lucy's Academy
- Catholic Charities
- Gethsemane Holiness Church

Land use of the Near West Side:

- Onondaga Creekwalk
2.4 Routes

The largest amount of commercial uses are found to the east and north of the neighborhood. They are located along major streets, which are part of the CENTRO system. There are 3 bus stops within the Near West Side and the bus lines only travel halfway down the long block streets. The long blocks are very isolated from the rest of the neighborhood.

The boundaries that surround the Near West Side include the railway that passes to the north of the neighborhood. It divides the district visually and almost physically from the CBD. The bus routes indicate the major streets within the neighborhood, while South Clinton, West Onondaga, and South Geddes streets are the major city streets that border it. These are also the major streets on which crime occurs.
Bus routes and stops

- Gifford and Niagara bus stop
- Wyoming and Gifford bus stop
- Geddes and Gifford bus stop
- Learning Center (St. Lucy’s Academy)
2.5 Walkability

This is a harmful condition, compounded by the fact that it is a residential only area. If there were businesses along the other portion of the long block streets, then the bus would certainly pass down their entire length. This would create a very safe and active street. As it is now, this portion of the neighborhood is inactive both in terms of bus and pedestrian traffic.

As dictated by New Urbanism principles, the best walking distance in a connected neighborhood should be, at a minimum, 1/8 mile or approximately 700 feet. The maximum walking distance is 1/4 mile. At these distances, the walking time should range from 5 - 10 minutes respectively.

The optimal walking radius is shown in the diagram to the right. Currently, residents of the long block streets are not within a 5-10 minute walking radius to bus stops. They do not have the optimal situation for use of public transit and proximity to local businesses. This inhibits the walkability within the Near West Side, relegating it to zones that are composed primarily of commercial uses.

The circulation, street, blocks, and land use environment are not conducive of a well connected and sustainable community.

Diagrams by author

Near West Side vacant lots and buildings
Types of blocks in the Near West Side

points of interest, bus routes and walking radii

Site for concentration
The relationship between the European model and the American importation is not one-to-one, however it evolves to re-present the identity of residents and the neighborhood. Therefore, an understanding of context, both visible and invisible, is key to defining the culture of an individual and of the larger neighborhood. The urban fabric, a network made up of streets, buildings, and blocks that promotes social patterns, defines the visible context. The invisible context is the socio-cultural and geo-political landscapes of a neighborhood as part of a city. Political, economic and social issues arise out of this scene. Both types of context embody the underlying identity of a community.

There is a strong correlation between bus routes and degrees of walkability, along with the block size, type and crime occurrences. Crime occurs readily on the main streets from Syracuse into the Near West Side. These streets are also characterized by long blocks, residential-only land use, and lack of direct bus travel. This creates an inactive and dangerous environment, for residents and for visitors.

Accumulation of open spaces from residential squares in the Near West Side, also showing size relative to the NWS
Conclusion

The residential square proves that the juxtaposition of private residences with public space use is key to an active and secure neighborhood. It can bring sustainable density and organizing techniques for re-developing the low-rise low-density zones of the Near West Side. It is an urban residential typology that is adaptable to the cultural context of this district. Scale of the block is an important factor, in terms of the location of commercial units, access to residential units, and live/work units. The variation of circulation type, block subdivisions and residential density are reflective of subdivisions within the community and are indicative of economic prosperity. Clearly, the Near West Side is suffering from a lack of housing stock that supports its current demographic and city goals relative to individual and fringe communities.
Diagrams showing building density and open spaces provided by accumulation of residential square, also showing size relative to the NWS.
3.0 Context: Culture

3.1 Social context
3.2 Political context
3.3 Economic context
3.1 Social context

Near Westside | Syracuse

Neighborhood characteristics define social issues of the Near Westside. Data includes household size, family size, median household income, employment, housing stock, tenure (length of stay) and occupancy status.

Household
Out of a total population of 7,030 persons, there are 2,424 households and 1,511 are families. The Average household size is approximately 3 people.

Income, median
$14,474. This number is significantly lower than the rest of Syracuse. The median income in Syracuse is $30,075.

Unemployment
14.3% of males are unemployed. 9.1% of females are unemployed.

Housing stock
There are 3,059 units in the Near Westside. They were built in median date of 1943.

Rentership
Out of 3,059 total units, 1,917 of them are renter occupied.

Ownership
There are more renters than owners in the near west side.
16.7% of the population own their homes and 62.7% rent.

**Vacancy**
There is a vacancy rate of 20.7% in the Near Westside. There are 2,427 occupied units and 632 vacant.

**Conclusion**
Social issues of the Near Westside include vacancy rates and unemployment. This is compounded by low-income, affecting the ability of home ownership. As a result, most people rent their homes.

This may lead to problems with security and crime, as well as issues with territoriality, within the neighborhood. Since, most people rent, there is less of a sense of ownership and authority over a block and pride in the neighborhood.

**Key Social Issues of the Near Westside**
- Vacancy
- Low Homeownership, High rentership
- Safety
- *territoriality, “turf”*

**Population Demographics**

**Age**
The median age in the Near West Side is approximately 25 years. In Syracuse it is approximately 31 years.

**Race**
Most people in the Near West Side are Black, Hispanic or Caucasian.

**Citizenship**
Almost 70% of the residents of the Near West Side were born in New York State, while 16.4% were born in another State and 11.2% are native residents, but were born outside of the U.S.

**Language**
A small percent of residents in the neighborhood speak English not very well or not at all, but this amount is higher than the percentage found in Syracuse in general. The Near West side has a higher composition of foreign speaking, latino people then the rest of Syracuse.

**Education**
Approximately 50% of residents have less than a high school level of educational attainment. Approximately 30% of residents have a high school level of education and less than 10% have 1 year
3.1 Social context

Near Westside | Syracuse

or more of an upper, college level education attainment.

Household size
The average household size in the NWS is approximately 3 people, in comparison to Syracuse’s approximate size of 2 people. The average family size is between 3 and 4 members, as compared to Syracuse’s approximate 3 members.

There are more single-mother households than married couple with children families. Approximately 30% of the neighborhood has single mother families and approximately 10% has married couple with children families. Married couple families are approximately 18% of the population of the Near West Side.

Dwelling unit size

Owner
Owned houses typically have 6 rooms. 154 buildings have 6 rooms available. This is also the case in Syracuse.

Renter
Renter-occupied apartments in the Near West Side typically have 3 rooms, a similar occurrence is also found in Syracuse. The second highest amount of renter-occupied apartments have 5 rooms in the Near West Side.

In general, there are more detached owner occupied units than there are renter occupied units in the Near West Side.

Value and Rent
The estimated value of detached houses in the Near West Side is $60,000 less than the value of detached houses in Syracuse.

The value of townhouses or other types of attached units in the Near West Side is approximately $40,000 less than they are in Syracuse.

Rent in the Near West Side is approximately $100 less than it is in Syracuse.

Mode of transport
Most people in the Near West Side drive a car to work. Approximately 30% of residents carpool, with others riding public buses or walking. The fewest amount work at home or ride to work on a bicycle. This shows that although the neighborhood is close to the central business district of Syracuse, people still have to travel a significant distance to work, depending on cars instead of public transit.
 Owners and renters by unit type, showing that there are more detached owner occupied units than renter occupied units.

Chart showing how people get to work. Almost 50% of residents of the Near West Side drive a car; approximately 30% carpool and the rest use public transportation or walk. A few bicycle or work at home.

Statistics showing comparison between values of detached and attached houses and townhouses in the Near West Side and Syracuse.

Statistics showing comparison between household and family size and type in the Near West Side and Syracuse.

- **Average estimated value of detached houses in 2009 (19.6% of all units):**
  - Near Westside: $87,916
  - Syracuse: $141,292

- **Average estimated value of townhouses or other attached units in 2009 (3.5% of all units):**
  - This neighborhood: $32,500
  - City: $77,486

- **Median rent in 2009:**
  - Near Westside: $452
  - Syracuse: $545

- **Average household size:**
  - Near Westside: 2.7 people
  - Syracuse: 2.3 people

- **Average family size:**
  - Near Westside: 3.5 members
  - Syracuse: 3.1 members

- **Percentage of married-couple families (among all households):**
  - Here: 18.2%
  - City: 27.5%

- **Percentage of married-couple families with children (among all households):**
  - Near Westside: 9.9%
  - Syracuse: 11.9%

- **Percentage of single-mother households (among all households):**
  - This neighborhood: 30.8%
  - Syracuse: 14.8%

4.2% of population in other group homes.
3.2 Political context

Community structure includes educational and safety forces in the Nearwest Side. Policies initiated by the Syracuse Police, Syracuse Housing Authority, Syracuse School system, Syracuse Parks Department, along with private institutional involvement, have been and continue to be key in the re-structuring of the neighborhood.

Public law enforcement

“As members of the Syracuse Police Department, our mission is to protect all lives and property and maintain a feeling of security in the community, and to enforce all federal, state and local laws over which the Department has jurisdiction. Our mission is carried out with a commitment to the philosophy and principles of community policing.”

As defined by the U.S. Department of Justice, community policing: “promotes organizational strategies, which support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime.”

“Community policing advocates three key components to pro-actively addressing neighborhood conditions: Community partnerships, organizational methods...
and means available to communities, and problem-solving techniques and processes.3

Syracuse also has a higher crime index than the rest of the U.S. Thus, it is important for both city and community involvement in keeping a neighborhood and its residents safe. The process should be a joint effort between citizens and police. For this reason, police should strive to have a positive relationship with Near Westside current residents. Residents should also endeavor to have an open relationship with police.

Board of Education
The vision of the Syracuse Board of Education states that “the board is dedicated to improving achievement for all students, maintaining a safe, clean, civil and orderly learning environment in every school and using the District’s resources effectively and efficiently.”4

However, despite the idealistic vision that the board of education has proposed for its operations, the Near Westside schools continually perform under state-wide levels. According to the “Near Westside from 2010 Housing Plan”, Fowler High School is on New York State’s list of “Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools” (PLA).

Furthermore, elementary and middle schools are undergoing “Restructuring”, being identified as “in Need of Improvement”.5 Renovations are schedule for the near future. However, in the most recent 2012 listing of PLA schools, Fowler High School was not included. This may mean that some degree of progress was made to improve student learning.

Department of Parks, Recreation, and Youth Programs
“To Cultivate and sustain leisure programming while providing attractive parks that will enrich the quality of life for both residents and visitors, as

NWS crime data, showing street on which event occured Winter 2011; larceny, burglary, aggrevated assault have highest totals. Lowest crime total out of shown three charts. Gifford and S. Clinton Streets have highest larceny occurances.
3.2 Political context

*Near Westside | Syracuse*

well as preserve it for future generations.”

Departments include Special Events, Senior Programs, Aquatics, Adult programs, Ice Rinks, Golf, Youth Programs, and Forestry and Grounds.

Senior programs include fitness recreation, speakers, day trips, bingo, health screening events, holiday parties, legal services, and daily lunches.

Adult programs are centered around athletic activities. Basketball, broomball, lacrosse, volleyball and softball games are all scheduled by the parks department.

Youth recreation programs include, summer sports and learning camps, basketball leagues, sports clinics, and swimming. These programs and events occur at neighborhood community centers and school-based sites.

Group cooking lessons and farmers markets are also offered weekly.

Thus, current community and public programs are centered around group sports activities, exchanging goods, and group learning experiences for all age types. This effort is focused on enabling a healthy, both physically and mentally, community.
current form discourage investment and advance the further deterioration of neighborhoods."\(^6\)

“Urban renewal areas include Washington Square, Northside, Lincoln Hill, Near Eastside, Hawley Green, Prospect Hill, Park Ave, Near Westside, Skunk City, Southwest and Southside”\(^7\)

**Syracuse University**

Syracuse University is part of an ongoing initiative (Near West Side Initiative) to revitalize the Near Westside. “The NWSI involves economic and social recovery of the community through mixed-use and residential developments.”\(^8\)

“The mission of the Near West Side Initiative is to combine the power of **art, technology** and innovation with **neighborhood values and culture** to revitalize Syracuse’s Near West Side neighborhood. NWSI aims to bring new elements into the blighted neighborhood to create new synergies and opportunities—economic, cultural and personal.”\(^9\)

“This new vision focuses on an 11-block area (28 acres) at the northeast corner of the Near West Side that will include **new commercial/residential mixed-use developments and investments in residential properties.**”\(^10\)

NWSI assumes the impact that art and artists have in spurring re-growth. This may or may not lead to gentrification, which is an unplanned process resulting in current residents leaving the neighborhood due to increasing housing values and rents. This occurred in larger cities such as in New York City with neighborhoods like SoHo (1970s) and Chelsea (2000s). As a smaller
3.2 Political context

Near Westside | Syracuse

City, Syracuse has fewer inner city locations for low-income residents to move to if gentrification occurs. Thus, it is imperative that new developments and rehabilitated residences and buildings should respond directly to the existing population, so that it is not necessary for them to leave their neighborhood when the community grows.

Near West Side Initiative

Other entities are involved with the NWSI, such as Syracuse Center of Excellence. “The Initiative also strives to encourage entrepreneurship through art and business related commerce, as well as clearly defined properties with regenerative potential. Such properties include existing industrial/manufacturing buildings, vacant lots, and existing residences. Live/work building opportunities are marketed to both business people and artistic professionals. Environmentally-friendly techniques in rehabilitating buildings are also key elements of the NWSI.”

The Syracuse Center of Excellence emphasizes sustainable neighborhood qualities, as defined by LEED. It is involved with the “technical portion”, as well as construction, of the neighborhood plan. It would like to:

decrease energy use in homes and increase indoor air quality; help find environmentally-friendly solutions to storm water management; promote deconstruction practices; and create green collar jobs."

2012 projects within the initiative domain include:

Live/work warehouse condominium units. This is marketed to people who are interested in home ownership without the increased expenditure and stress of upkeeping a single-family residence and property.

As advertised, the residential “plans are in the works for 20 rough, affordable, live/work units in the former Case Warehouse. This turn-of-the-century structure has great light and ceiling heights, and is located directly across from the Delavan Gallery and Syracuse University’s downtown campus for the visual and performing arts.”

Conclusions

Several entities are involved with policies that encourage re-generation of the Near West Side through recreational, creative and sustainable measures. However, for sustainable growth to occur, attention needs to be placed on current crime and safety issues. If they are not resolved and if trust between police and residents does not
occur, then a strong divide will be created between new developments and existing residential blocks. Regeneration will not be far reaching for the Near West Side.

Oscar Newman provides programmatic and organizational strategies for combating neighborhood crime. Through his approaches to defensible design, Newman argues that territoriality is key to keeping neighborhoods safe. Arrangements of private elements in relation to public streets, external and internal streets is key to self-monitoring within a residential block. Behavior of both residents and non-residents is on display for building occupants through the juxtaposition of circulation and program types and their degrees of privacy.

Key Political Issues
Crime
Civic programming
Renewal
3.3 Economic context

Near Westside | Syracuse

Development initiatives characterize the economic environment of the Nearwest Side.

Economic Recovery Initiative

The Nearwest Side was part of the economic Empowerment and Empire Zone overlays in Syracuse that ended December 2011 and June 2010 respectively. Even though the programs are now over, local business growth and development was recognized and should still be considered in the planning of the neighborhood. Participating businesses are still being positively affected by these economic zoning overlays. Moreover, according to Jane Jacobs, small and neighborhood resident-owned businesses are vital to positive activities on sidewalks and important to streetlife.

Empowerment zone

(new entries ended December 2011)

This program offered “federal tax incentives to companies that operated within specially designated areas.”

“Components of the program included:

Wage-based credits
Employment credit of up to $3,000 per eligible employee
Work opportunity tax credit of up to $2,400 per eligible employee
Investment Incentives
Tax exempt bond financing for major projects
increased section 179 deduction
capital gains exclusion"²

**Empire zone**
*(ended June 2010)*
This program included tax incentives, such as wage tax credit, zone capital credit, New York State sales tax refund, real property tax credit, and tax reduction credit.

**Central Business District**
Syracuse’s Central Business District (CBD) is characterized by both corporate and small businesses, as well as downtown, satellite locations of larger institutions. Syracuse University’s Warehouse and the Museum of Science and Technology are both located in Armory Square, directly adjacent to the Near West Side.

The Warehouse is an example of how **institutional involvement in urban revitalization** can beneficially impact the surrounding community. Before the Warehouse was rehabilitated, the surrounding downtown area was riddled with crime and gang movement. After several years of being at its location, the Warehouse proved that institutional presence positively affected on-goings of the neighborhood.

This same technique is being practiced in the rehabilitation of warehouses and promotion of live/work units in the north-eastern sector of the Near West Side. Although separated by the railroad, these burgeoning businesses will help connect the neighborhood with the armory Square, the Warehouse and the rest of downtown Syracuse. A **cross-pollination** of businesses and mixed-use blocks is already occurring between the CBD and the upper portion (SALT district) of the Near West Side, which are directly adjacent to Armory Square.

**Public open spaces in the CBD include:**
- Armory Square
- Hanover Square
- Clinton Square
- Columbus Circle

**Organizations**
- Habitat for Humanity (nonprofit)
- Near West Side Initiative (partnership)

**Retail**
- Nojaims Market
- Geddes Street corridor
3.3 Economic context

Near Westside | Syracuse

Delavan Art Gallery
Gear Factory
Lipe Art Park

**Businesses**
King + King Architects
WCNY
Lincoln Warehouse

**Institutions**
Syracuse University
Syracuse Center of Excellence

**Conclusions**

Key economic strategies of the Near Westside include promoting existing businesses and encouraging new small businesses owned or run by neighborhood residents. Mixed-use neighborhoods provide safety and activity for a healthy streetlife.

This is further supported by the Near Westside initiative. According to the initiative, an important outreach element is “marketing existing and new developments to the existing and future population”.¹ Its promotion of affordable live/work units is in this same spirit.

¹ ("Near Westside from 2010 Housing Plan" http://www.syracuse.ny.us/syracuse_housing_plan_2010.aspx)
6.0 Program

6.1 Inherent issues
6.2 Contextual Issues and Mission, goals, performance requirements
6.3 Social housing program
6.4 Community garden program
In a community-based, affordable housing project, the key issues to address relate to ownership in terms of territoriality, use and flexibility.

In addition, the relationship between an affordable housing project and the surrounding neighborhood is important to consider so that new boundaries are not created within the community.

“Clearly marked grounds to indicate ownership and use

Sequence or continuum to help transition from public space to private space

Sides of buildings to help create and define different space use: public and private use, special and service use

Flexible layout of units

Flexible layout of project

Differences in unit to reflect location within the site”

Issue terminology from


2 Ibid. Pg 34.

3 Ibid. Pg 34.

4 Ibid. Pg 34.

1 Mixed-use communities

2 Mixed-incomes
Mixing uses within communities, blocks, and projects decreases boundaries between different types of residents. Impoverished individuals and families are not separated from the neighborhood.

In addition, community amenities are available and easily accessed by everyone. According to the Urban Land Institute’s *Affordable Housing, Designing an American Asset*, the benefits of mixed-use communities are two-fold. First of all, residents of affordable housing benefit from this environment because it decreases expenditures on transportation and they benefit in their proximity to multiple uses. Secondly, there are more opportunities for a live/work environment, which further decreases stresses and costs of commuting outside of the district. This is also an environment characteristic of the process of revitalizing urban neighborhoods.

Furthermore, after studying the relationship between the Near West Side and Syracuse, the following sets of contextual issues are reconsidered:

**Social**
- Vacancy
- Safety
- Territoriality, “turf”

**Political**
- Crime
- Civic use
- Renewal

**Economic**
- Streetlife
- Entrepreneurship
MISSION

To create an exceptionally diverse and flexible quality of life for current and future residents by building a physically and psychologically safe and connected environment.

The mission of this project and master plan for the Near West Side is to create a new “neighborhood quarter”, responsive to current political, economic and social issues of the urban environment. The Quarter should respond to the existing neighborhood and its users, as well as to adjacent districts, keeping in mind current urban plans to identify, revitalize and enhance communities of Syracuse. This should create an adaptable and sustainable environment including walkable and active streetscapes and civic spaces. An increase in interaction between residents and users, to encourage a strong sense of place, and to create a secure environment that is naturally surveyed, should result while maintaining the integrity of the private realm of the neighborhood.

ISSUES

1. SECURITY

“protection from unwanted aggression by another person, i.e. assault, robbery, unauthorized entry, vandalism”

a) Safety
b) Territory
c) Personalization
d) Visibility
e) Comfort, psychological

Workers, residents and visitors should feel protected from unwanted aggression and be safe from harm. A strong sense of domain, both public and private, should be established through physical and/or invisible boundaries or transitions. Group and individual ownership of space and use should be clearly visible to provide defined zone for psychological comfort.

2. LEGIBILITY

“quality of environmental domains as clearly readable”

a) Layering
b) Orientation
c) Recognition
d) Sequence
e) Personalization
f) Privacy

The district should be clearly readable as its own entity and its parts (including buildings,
parks and residences) should be associated with this context. Common spaces should be easily recognizable as part of the civic realm, and as part of the larger sequences of urban spaces and infrastructural systems. There should be both larger group space to promote a sense of community and smaller space for the individual to promote privacy.

2a. IMAGE
“how a place look and is interpreted by the observer”, i.e. the visual impression that it creates, leading to an identifiable and unique place

a) Identity
b) Message
c) Ordering and proportion
d) Hierarchy

User and use type should be clearly legible and easily interpreted to promote a strong sense of identity of both the individual within the larger collective context of the neighborhood. Residences should be identifiable as individual and private domains. Orderings and hierarchies should be established to communicate ownership and private spaces.

3. ECONOMY
“the accomplishment of maximum benefits for the minimum means”

a) Elegant means
b) Quality
c) Convenience
d) Durability

Residential buildings and units should be affordable to current inhabitants. This is a reflection of residents’ capacity for rental or mortgage payments, based on current income statistics. Building and unit type should also consider future residents who may be of a different income bracket. Design should be simple and flexible for optimal adaptability and quality over time.

4. CONNECTIVITY in terms of INTERACTION
“a mutual action and interchange: between residents and non-residents (social), live and work (collaboration), businesses (collaboration), districts and among residents (social)”

a) Group participation
b) Social interchange
c) Circulation
d) Convenience
e) Visibility

Group spaces are very important in the creation
of connected buildings and neighborhoods. Common areas, both interior and exterior create an open and social environment, where friendly exchanges can occur. Proximity to these spaces in relation to private, individual spaces is key for the ease of convenience and accessibility, for visibility and surveillance purposes.

Circulation between buildings and districts promotes interaction as well, and infrastructural systems should enhance this flow between individuals and groups within and between zones. Accommodations should be made for easing movement of pedestrians, creating a walkable and active sidewalk environment.

6) ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

a) Inclusion of green space within blocks
b) Roof deck, patio
c) Parks for neighborhood use
d) Proximity to neighborhood amenities
e) Public transit to neighborhood

Civic space should be included as park space as part of city infrastructure. “Park-like” green areas as personal and group space within and without a building should be included.

OTHER SUPPORTING ISSUES

5) FLEXIBILITY of multiple scales

a) Adaptable interior space use
b) Multi-use within district
c) Multi-purpose open, green space

Open space should be provided for adaptable and common use. Some should be permanently programmed for group use and others should be flexible.

GOALS

1. To promote community safety in the Near West Side.

2. To project a legible image of the community and of the private realms.

3. To provide affordable residential alternatives.

4. To stimulate interactions between the Near West Side and Syracuse.
6.2 Contextual issues

Mission, goals, and performance requirements

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS considered for all scales of design

1. To promote community safety in the Near West Side.

(All adapted from Oscar Newman’s *Defensible Space*)

**Unit**

PR 1. Resident-only space for individual or group activity. (Newman, 53)

PR 2. Clear paths to front doors. (Newman, 64)

PR 3. Individual door lights. (Newman, 103)

PR 4. Front entrances directly accessible by street; set-back entry from street. (Newman, 56)

PR 5. Clearly defined lobby through the massing of units and shape of building. (Newman, 83)

PR 6. Juxtapositioning of activity areas within units with exterior public areas, to facilitate visual surveillance from the building interior. (Newman, 109)

**Block**

PR 1. Site design should sub-divide blocks into lots to define zones of particular buildings and units, enabling natural surveillance. (Newman, 53)

PR 2. Symbolic barriers of zones should be included to define hierarchy of increasingly private zones. (Newman, 54)

PR 3. Positioning of non-private areas and access paths inside and outside to facilitate surveillance. (Newman, 91)

PR 4. Non-circuitous access routes for clear and visible paths. (Newman, 56)

PR 5. Clearly defined transition zones to indicate an orderly progression from street to unit(s). (Newman, 63)

PR 6. Public spaces within private areas for natural surveillance. (Newman, 91)
**PR. 7.** Clear and terminating sight lines on and from streets. (Newman, 60)

*Neighborhood*

**PR. 1.** Clear physical boundaries to denote vehicular versus pedestrian circulation zones. (Newman, 56)

**PR. 2.** Street design to restrict and define movement of vehicles; intentional circuitous movement around residential blocks and/or units to promote natural surveillance.

Below, page 40. Block PR 7. Clear and terminating sight lines on and from streets influences the planar organization.

Above, right. PR 5. Clearly defined lobby through the massing of units and shape of building. (Diagrams after Oscar Newman’s of Brownsville Houses, Brooklyn. (page 43, 45))

Above. Block PR 4. Non-circuitous access routes for clear and visible paths.

Unit PR 4. Front entrances directly accessible by street; set-back entry from street; showing hierarchical linearity of zones.
6.2 Contextual issues

Mission, goals, and performance requirements

2. To project a legible image of the community and of the private realms.

Adapted from Oscar Newman’s *Defensible Space*

Unit

PR 1. Grouping of buildings should become prominent visual elements in urban fabric. (Newman, 102)

PR 2. Treatment of façade should include high quality materials and outdoor balconies or protruding elements. (Newman, 105)

PR 3. Class status of 2-3 level townhouse and the lifestyle that it symbolizes. (Newman, 106)

PR 4. All units should have an adjacent piece of ground. (Newman, 106)

PR 5. A decrease in institutional image of project should be accomplished through aesthetics. (Newman,106)

PR 6. The treatment of materiality and fixtures should not be uniform. (Newman, 105)

3. To provide affordable residential alternatives (to current high-rise and rowhouse building typologies).

PR 1. The project should accomplish the design through a simple and elegantly proportioned expression. (Duerk, 234)

PR 2. Clear modules should be used, enabled a wide variety of outcome in unit configuration and external expression.

PR 3. Materials used should be of high quality, ensuring their durability and lasting quality.

PR 4. Optimal layout for units should make the most of available, open space.

Across. near. Optimal layout for units should make the most of available, open space. Service modules can be created to maximize wet system location and open space.

Across. far. The project should accomplish the design through a simple and elegantly proportioned expression. Sketch of perceived open space definition after diagrams in *A New Civic Art*
6.2 Contextual issues

Performance requirements and program requirements

4. To stimulate interactions between the Near West Side and Syracuse.

Block
PR 1. Communal space for residents should be included within the block.

PR 2. Juxtapositioning of functional zones and uses on blocks. (Jacobs, 115)

PR 3. Widening and creating “side-walk parks” can promote active sidewalks.

PR 4. Small and short blocks should be present to increase contact between users, economic prosperity and decrease monotony. (Jacobs, 179)

Neighborhood
PR 1. Existing and “aged buildings” should be left in place for diversity of tenant and user type. (Jacobs, 188)

PR 2. Concentration of people of residences should be a characteristic of the community. (Jacobs, 200)

PR 3. There should be a diverse mixture of uses within the community. (Jacobs, 146)

PR 4. There should be a diversity of income within a neighborhood to incorporate different types of people within a community. (Jacobs, 144)

PR 5. Communal spaces to be used by the community-only should be included within the neighborhood.

PR 6. Civic, public spaces to be used by the city’s public should be included within the neighborhood.

PR 7. Juxtapositioning of functional zones between the Near West Side and other Syracuse districts (Lakefront, CBD).
Left. short blocks According to Jane Jacobs, by having shorter blocks, there are more instances of people crossing each other’s paths and different viewpoints, enabling a more active sidewalk life. Moreover, by including sidewalk parks, there are opportunities for rest and social interchanges along the newly activated sidewalk.

Right. neighborhood-only and civic spaces. Organization of large civic space (green) and smaller, satellite neighborhood spaces can create a new network of public realms.

Below. juxtapositioning of functional zones within neighborhood and blocks can create new types of use areas and “spheres of influence”
Change needs to occur within the community to enhance the uniqueness of its residents while offering stimulating opportunities for potential and future residents. Variety, both visible and invisible, within the neighborhood needs to be clearly articulated for it to develop further. There are programmatic responses to this issue.

By implementing the mixed-use, low-rise high-density residential square, an alternative mixed-use housing typology will be cultivated. Moreover, the lifestyle of current residents will be clearly formulated and articulated within this evolved type. About the house, Christian Norberg-Schulz says that it is “the place where daily life takes place.”[^1] It is a type of “cradle”, supporting us like a familiar ground.[^2] The following question arises:

“Why then do we have to throw ourselves into the world wen we possess the cradle of the house? The answer is simply that the purposes of human life are not found at home; the role of each individual is part of a system of interactions, which takes place in a common world based on shared values. To participate, we have to leave the house and choose a path. When our social task is accomplished, however, we withdraw to our home to recover our personal identity. Personal identity, thus, is the content of private dwelling.”[^3]

Thus it can be argued that private and personal residences exist because of the relationship an individual has with the common space typical of the public realm. Norberg-Schulz also states that, “When the basic types of house are repeated, this background becomes manifest as an extended matric which supports daily life. The repetition… consists of what we have called ‘theme and variations’.”[^4]

Study of the demographic and social context of the Near West Side determined the programmatic choice of social and affordable housing.
Program

massing
townhouse and individual components
artist units and work component

gross square feet (gsf)
exterior face to exterior wall
includes usable storage space and hallways
also includes space occupied by interior walls
6.4 Community garden program

The concept of ownership arises from this relationship between the individual, the house and the city. Thus, the public, community garden offers a second exploration into the identity of the individual within a collective and territorial environment. Ideas of ownership, territory and citizenship provide insight into how democratic practices are being cultivated in community gardens and by the community food-security movement. Through the practice of cultivating the soil, residents become aware of their role in shaping community events and identity, just as much as the land. Moreover, “power, culture, and the economy become clear and where the intersections between food and various other social, economic, and environmental issues are revealed.”

Demographic groups can “both produce and contest space through the assertion of their cultural identity. In the gardens, cultural diversity becomes connected to biodiversity, demonstrating how urban green space is infused with the cultural and political”. The resultant garden landscape is one filled with socio-cultural and geo-political meanings. If each resident can grow their own choice of plant or keep a certain farm animal, then the shared bit of land is a reflection of his or her own background, preferences, and identity. Moreover, the community garden becomes the physical manifestation of the neighborhood identity.

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS and PROGRAM EQUIVALENCY

COMMERCIAL
Small businesses

CIVIC
Parks
Community garden and/or farm

INFRASTRUCTURAL
Bicycle rental and paths
Pedestrian only zones
Public transit (bus) routes

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11 Ibid. Page 323.
12 Ibid. Page 323.
Generation X Community Garden
Red Hook, Brooklyn, NY
Blocks, buildings, and garden plots

- field and beds
- greenhouse
- mower storage
- containers
- buildings
- sidewalk and fence zones
- blocks

- 162 sf
- 84 sf
- 490 sf
- 950 sf
- 160 sf
- 160 sf
- 160 sf
- 160 sf
- 260 ft
- 1645 ft
- 22000 sf
- 30080 sf
- 108500 sf
There are certain programs already in place in the Syracuse Housing Authority that relate to the determined issues of Affordable Housing and of the Near West Side. There are construction work programs for those who seek assistance and townhouse units are available.

Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8)

Allow very low-income families to choose and lease or purchase safe, decent, and affordable privately-owned rental housing.

Any type of private rental housing is eligible. Single family dwellings, duplex units, row houses, high rise buildings and townhouses are eligible.

Section 3

This program helps foster local economic improvement, and individual self sufficiency.

It provides job training, employment opportunities, and/or contracting opportunities for low or very-low income residents in connection with projects and activities in their neighborhoods.

HUD’s Low/very-low income is defined as 80% - 50% respectively of the area’s median income.

Job types include construction related-skills such as labor, painting, installation, electrical,

SHA program information from syracusehousing.org/
SHA properties include:
- family-only residences
- elderly-only residences

SHA properties do not include:
- family and elderly residences, which is an opportunity for interchange between the elderly and youth.

Users to consider include:
- the elderly
- youth
- couple-parent family
- single-parent family

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Its mission is to “create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all”. Its goals include “to strengthen the housing market to bolster the economy and protect consumers; meet the need for quality affordable rental homes; utilize housing as a platform for improving quality of life; build inclusive and sustainable communities free from discrimination”

Programs include
- Community Planning and Development
- Multi-family and elderly housing
- and Public and Indian Housing

(http://www.syracusehousing.org/employment-services)

(http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/hudprograms/)
5.0 Precedents

5.1 Residential Squares
5.2 11th Avenue Townhomes
5.3 Borneo Sporenburg
5.4 Washington Square
5.1 Residential Squares

European residential square
Place Royale | Paris | 1605 - 1612

The combination of the willingness of residents to participate in a collective environment and the prestigious Tournament as functional use make Place Royale a model for articulating the individual identity within a public environment. Here there is no individual identity presented through the facade through political mandates in order to present the collective identity and maintain the civic functional use of the Square.

Cultural Context
functional use and collective identity

Political
Part of Royal urban plan to create more civic open spaces within the condensed and overcrowded medieval city

Economic
Project commissioned by King Henri VI to originally contain a new manufacturing district

Original plans included a silk works factory and worker housing

Square and facade built as part of the Royal budget. Design and development strictly regulated by royally degreed restrictions.

Social
Prestige of the tournament event

Demographics: aristocrats, with 2 units reserved for royal use

The Residential Square is the historical model for the aggregation of the townhouse unit around a public, open space. It is the prime example of how the private realm defines and shapes the public realm of the city.

This public space was determined by the culture in which the square existed. The use of the space, whether strictly for city-wide use or intended for strict use by the surrounding residents, varied according to city and by period.

Moreover, they were influenced not only by social
The combination of the willingness of residents to participate in a collective environment and the institution of the English market as functional use make Covent Garden a model for articulating the individual identity within a public space. Here there is no individual identity presented through the facade as the collective identity and commercial functional use takes precedent. However, Covent Garden also relays that extreme active public use can make residents dissatisfied and feel unsure in their environment. A balance between the public and private uses and users must be achieved.

use, but also by politics and by economics of the time period. They were either built by royal decree, as with Place Royale, or by private speculation, as with Fitzroy Square and Gramercy Square.

Whatever the case, it was necessary for the ruler to make new open, civic spaces available for growing cities with growing populations with growing needs for not only residences and open spaces, but for prestige.

Historically, the residential square that served as model for English and American squares was
5.1 Residential Squares

European residential square
Fitzroy Square | London | 1792 - 1835

The combination of the willingness of residents to participate in a collective environment and the institution of the English Garden as functional use make Fitzroy Square a model for articulating the individual identity within a public space. Here there is no individual identity presented through the facade as the collective identity takes precedent.

Place Royale, in Paris. It was created during a time when the population of Paris was outgrowing the medeival walls and there was a resultant need for open, civic space. Place Royale fulfilled this urban plan and also created an environment of prestige for those who lived in the square. The square was built in the historical manufacturing district but this use decreased and the opportunity arose for the open space of the square to be used by the king for royal events, most notably for tournaments.

This use was just as important to the life within and of the square as were the residents. The
tournament was a historical ceremonial event, which lost its ritual aspects by the time its use was appropriated by the Place. The tournament was a social event, with feasts and theatrical performances and jousting games. Thus, the events occurring within the Place Royale attracted both temporary and permanent "users".

London Squares show similar methods of creating public spaces for both residents and the general public. However, the roles of the "institutions" of the commercial market, the real estate market (and speculation) and of the English garden were significant in the programming and usage of the interior open spaces of the squares.
private realm defined the public realm, however the public realm’s space use was less regal and more market driven. However, the residents of London’s Covent Garden, Bedford Square, and Fitzroy Square were lured to the residential squares by their addresses and subsequent images.

For this reason, the facade of Fitzroy Square is especially interesting for its negation of the individual image in favor of the collective image. Individuals were drawn to the square for the address, but were willing to be hidden behind the squares unified “veil” facade.

Moreover, Fitzroy Square shows the impact of the real estate market on urban growth as well as the cultural role of the garden within in English society. Both define the Square’s appearance and use.

Gramercy Square is investigated as the American couterpoint to the French and English squares. It evolved from the English model, and shows how cultural notions of the individual and collective realms impact development. The townhouse is still present at Gramercy Square, but is not articulated in the same unified manner as it was in Europe. The facades of the houses are of different styles, showing a disconnect between individuals and the public realm. There was no interest for the American owner to help form public space. Furthermore, the central garden of the square is closed off to the public and is only for private use. Interestingly, it provides a natural backdrop for the urban and civic realms, but is unaccessible to the public, except in view. American culture was and is more interested in the idea of ownership associated with the townhouse and open space instead of the type’s relationship with the urban environment.

American cultural identity is heavily based on the notion of private land use for displaying ownership and individuality. The concept of freedom gleaned from this desire has a strong influence on how much the individual (home)owner is willing to go in order to shape the public space around her. The private building has the capacity to display not only its individuality and personal identity, as a reflection of its owner or inhabitant, but to shape the civic realm and aesthetic environment around it.
European and American residential squares

1605 - 1840

Comparisons between European residential squares and American residential squares are defined by the relationship between the public realm and the private realm. The private realm includes residential uses while the public realm contains civic programs, such as ceremonial events, markets, gardens, and parks. Depending on the culture of the city, the public use is either public or private. This indicates that society’s perception of the individual's identity within a collective environment. European residential squares are more accepting of a mixture of civic and private uses, whereas the American example is not lenient. Hierarchies in each culture are presented by the juxtaposition of private with public.

In both Place Royale and Covent Garden, the open air, but covered portico is used to define transition zones between the public functional use and the private zone above.

All residential squares are part of a larger urban planning strategy for the creation of more open space within a crowded or growing city, and for real estate development, for either the government or for private enterprise.

Residential squares in Europe place the public square in the middle of a block surrounded by housing buildings and accessed only by pedestrians. The American square at Gramercy includes the square as part of the city's gridded road network. There is a difference not only who can access the individual open space, but also how.
The 11th Avenue Townhomes in Escondido, California, are an example of how units can be arranged to promote maximum natural surveillance by residents on open, semi-public space within a neighborhood. Through the inclusion of personal pieces of land, clear paths to front doors, clearly defined transition zones, this project promotes community safety.

It also takes into consideration its resident population, which is primarily Latino. This culture tends to socialize on the street or in front yards, instead of in backyards. Thus, the architect included the front stoop, small patio, and bit of ground in front of the units, facing the interior street. There is an involvement and concern for streetlife within the culture and in this aggregation of townhouse units.
Diagram showing perspective down the interior lane with repetitive units creating a strong definition of semi-private space. The alternating massing of the units creates individual pieces of land for residents to use as their own. There are several personalization elements in this project. There are two different types of awnings to define an extension of private space into the public realm of the lane. A small front "yard" containing a planting bed and stone well, as well as steps indicate personal space as well as transition zones. Moreover, the garage is flexible space, to be used for either storage or as work space.

Diagram showing hierarchy of open spaces, from private to public.

Diagram of paths, including interior lane and adjacent gridded streets and boulevard. The dimensions of the interior lane differentiate it from the other roads.
This project by West 8 shows the incorporation of individual units into the larger initiative including infrastructural systems, residential towers and commercial use. It serves as an extension of development outside of the traditional Amsterdam city center.

Each individual units projects a legible image of the variety that occurs with the private realm. Moreover, class status is enforced through the townhouse typology. The townhouse units of the waterfront project at Borneo Spornenburg are evidence of the role that zoning and urban plan restrictions play on residential design as well as how facade can articulate individuality and ownership. The units are privately owned and are market-rate, however they provide an example of dimensions and a potential for the incorporation of open space within private dwellings.

As determined by planning ordinances, each unit has 30-50% of their volume as voids. Space that was previously public domain becomes private within the unit. This provides an opportunity for a variety of interior uses, including interior courtyards, winter gardens, large window protrusions, and roof patios. The inclusion of open space within the unit is mandatory and as a result a wide variety of volumes and associated uses are created. Borneo Spornenburg townhouses provide examples of the variety that can occur within units.
Diagrams of various townhouse units, showing 30-50% void in blue. This is a volumetric module that varies in dimension and use from unit to unit. Townhomes range in height from 1 to 3 stories.

Open space module use includes: garage, roof garden, and interior light atrium (middle module in this diagram)
5.4 Washington Square
Syracuse | New York | 1797

Investigation of:
Syracuse equivalent to a residential square
mixed-use neighborhood
circulation around square

Washington Square was originally part of the village of Salina and the land was bought in 1797.\(^1\) Before it was made a park in 1839, it was used as a cemetery.\(^2\) The Square and park became part of Syracuse in 1847, when the village of Salina was assimilated into Syracuse.\(^3\)

This square is defined by both single family and multi-family residential zones immediately adjacent to the park, while commercial and industrial zones are located around the perimeter. Local businesses are easily accessible to residents. Residences surrounding the square are both single and two story, single and duplex houses.

Moreover, it is a 5 - 10 minute walk to get to the regional transportation center, farmer's market, and stadium. The highway and main city streets keep this walk from being enjoyable.

Main vehicular circulation into the square is one-way. There are two smaller side streets that cut into the northern blocks surrounding the square providing for tertiary access routes to the secondary neighborhood grid streets.

\(^1\)http://www.syracuse.ny.us/parks/washingtonSquarePark.html
\(^2\)Ibid.
\(^3\)Ibid.
Washington Square
Syracuse New York

Square Use Zones

blocks in context

access lines

blocks cut through

blocks general

i-81

park street, from rtc and market

secondary

tertiary
6.0 Appendix

6.1 Near West Side crime charts
6.2 Sanborn maps of the Near West Side
6.3 Zoning map of the Near West Side
6.4 LEED Neighborhood checklist
6.5 New Urbanism transition strategies
Conclusion

The crime charts as prepared by the Syracuse Police Department, show that the main socio-political issue of the Near West Side is crime. This impacts how residents feel in their neighborhood and the degree of security and safety that is present. There is a lack of psychological comfort if there is fear of assault, robbery, larceny, burglary, theft, rape and murder. The Near West Side experiences all of these types of crime. They are most common during the summer months and on long block streets. The areas where crime-types occur indicate zones that can be re-configured through strategic planning.

Streets of concern include the following:
- Gifford Street
- Seymour Street
- Shonnard Street
- South Clinton Street
- West Onondaga Street
### Near Westside

#### 2012

**January - March**

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<th>Murder</th>
<th>Non-Avg Manslaughter</th>
<th>Rape</th>
<th>Robbery</th>
<th>Aggravated Assault</th>
<th>Burglary</th>
<th>Larceny</th>
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### Near Westside

#### 2011

**October - December**

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### 6.1 Near West Side crime charts

**Near Westside**

2011

April - June

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<th>Aggravated Assault</th>
<th>Burglary</th>
<th>Larceny</th>
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### Near Westside
#### January - March 2011

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**Total**               | 1      | 0                    | 2    | 7       | 14                 | 56       | 83      | 4                    | 4                   |
### 6.1 Near West Side crime charts

#### Near Westside

#### 2010

**October - December**

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<tr>
<th>Street Name</th>
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<th>Non-Neg Malslaughter</th>
<th>Rape</th>
<th>Robbery</th>
<th>Aggravated Assault</th>
<th>Burglary</th>
<th>Larceny</th>
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**2016**

**April - June**

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**Data updated by The Onondaga Crime Analysis Center 4/15/2012**

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The cultural issues discovered in the Near West Side of Syracuse reflect the existence of an identity crisis within the neighborhood. After studying the political, social, and economic contexts of the community, it is determined that despite a diverse population with certain language and ethnicity qualities, the infrastructural and architectural response is inadequate to portray the variety found in the Near West Side.

The combination of negative visible and invisible contextual elements, including very long blocks and vacant lots, as well as a lack of educational attainment and low income, creates a harsh and crime-ridden environment and a poor image of the neighborhood. Most homes are old in age and lots are not used to their fullest potential, in terms of density and communal open space use. For this reason, there is an opportunity to re-organize the infrastructure of the neighborhood and create architectural responses that enable a strong sense of place and identity, promoted through concepts of natural surveillance, security and ownership over a defined territory.

The Comprehensive Plan of Syracuse for 2040 includes goals to enhance the ability of residents and visitors to live, work and play in the city. To accomplish this goal, it will be necessary to create liveable neighborhoods within the city-center. A parallel initiative strives to identify and foster growth within the distinct neighborhoods of Syracuse, to which the Near West Side belongs. However, because of its current identity crisis and poor image, this neighborhood will not be able to grow with this future city.

Furthermore, as a re-presentation of culture, this project will adapt the residential square typology to offer a model for low-rise high-density mixed-
use growth for Rust Belt cities such as Syracuse. It will respond to current contextual issues, including those of security, image, legibility, and connectivity. It will strive to cultivate an image of the present identity for the Near West Side, while considering comprehensive plans for the re-development of Syracuse for 2050. The existing context will provide a foundation for the future evolution of the neighborhood and city through the adaptation of an urban housing morphology of the residential square.

**Conclusion**

Previous land use is just as important as current land use in relaying the historical cultural of the Near West Side. It provides a timeline of the development of the current Near West Side culture.

In 1892, there were principally low rise buildings, suggestive of residential use, throughout the neighborhood.

By 1950, however, all of the industrial warehouse buildings are present, but the Geddes Townhouse project did not exist yet.

This shows that there was an urban ecology that supported the significant amount of largely parcelled land with single, detached homes. However, the eco-system of industry and worker housing is no longer existent and is not sustainable in modern day Syracuse.

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6.2 Sanborn maps of the Near West Side

In 1892, there were principally low rise buildings, suggestive of residential use, throughout the neighborhood.

By 1950, however, all of the industrial warehouse buildings are present, but the Geddes Townhouse project did not exist yet.

This shows that there was an urban ecology that supported the significant amount of largely parcelled land with single, detached homes. However, the eco-system of industry and worker housing is no longer existent and is not sustainable in modern day Syracuse.

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1950 Sanborn map
6.3 Zoning map of the Near West Side

The zoning map of the Near West Side provides important information regarding zoning and land use specifications for new developments. There is a spectrum of residential, commercial, and industrial district types. In addition, building lots are provided, indicating specific land ownership lines.
Conclusion

The LEED for neighborhood development provides a contemporary framework of strategies for a connected community.

Categories for consideration include:

**Smart location and linkage**
**Neighborhood pattern and design**
**Green infrastructure and buildings**

Thus, sitting, connections can be established through *walkable streets, compact and dense development*. This in turn creates a connected, open, and diverse community. Mixed-use and mixed-income communities are also highlighted as a *strategy to encourage neighborhood connections and social patterns*. Emphasis is also placed in transit, the street network, and transportation management.

Moreover, the creation of a connected community is dependant upon the availability of civic and public spaces. Community outreach programs also help to involve all members of the neighborhood. LEED provides credit for *local food production*, which helps to foster a sense of *ownership* over the land, while providing a physical manifestation of the diversity within the neighborhood.
### LEED 2009 FOR NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT CHECKLIST

#### Smart Location and Linkage  
27 possible points

- **Prerequisite 1** Smart Location  
  **Required**
- **Prerequisite 2** Imperiled Species and Ecological Communities  
  **Required**
- **Prerequisite 3** Wetland and Water Body Conservation  
  **Required**
- **Prerequisite 4** Agricultural Land Conservation  
  **Required**
- **Prerequisite 5** Floodplain Avoidance  
  **Required**
- **Credit 1** Preferred Locations  
  10
- **Credit 2** Brownfield Redevelopment  
  2
- **Credit 3** Locations with Reduced Automobile Dependence  
  7
- **Credit 4** Bicycle Network and Storage  
  1
- **Credit 5** Housing and Jobs Proximity  
  3
- **Credit 6** Steep Slope Protection  
  1
- **Credit 7** Site Design for Habitat or Wetland and Water Body Conservation  
  1
- **Credit 8** Restoration of Habitat or Wetlands and Water Bodies  
  1
- **Credit 9** Long-Term Conservation Management of Habitat or Wetlands and Water Bodies  
  1

#### Neighborhood Pattern and Design  
44 possible points

- **Prerequisite 1** Walkable Streets  
  **Required**
- **Prerequisite 2** Compact Development  
  **Required**
- **Prerequisite 3** Connected and Open Community  
  **Required**
- **Credit 1** Walkable Streets  
  12
- **Credit 2** Compact Development  
  6
- **Credit 3** Mixed-Use Neighborhood Centers  
  4
- **Credit 4** Mixed-Income Diverse Communities  
  7
- **Credit 5** Reduced Parking Footprint  
  1
- **Credit 6** Street Network  
  2
- **Credit 7** Transit Facilities  
  1
- **Credit 8** Transportation Demand Management  
  2
- **Credit 9** Access to Civic and Public Spaces  
  1
- **Credit 10** Access to Recreation Facilities  
  1
- **Credit 11** Visibility and Universal Design  
  1
- **Credit 12** Community Outreach and Involvement  
  2
- **Credit 13** Local Food Production  
  1
- **Credit 14** Tree-Lined and Shaded Streets  
  2
- **Credit 15** Neighborhood Schools  
  1

#### Green Infrastructure and Buildings  
29 possible points

- **Prerequisite 1** Certified Green Building  
  **Required**
- **Prerequisite 2** Minimum Building Energy Efficiency  
  **Required**
- **Prerequisite 3** Minimum Building Water Efficiency  
  **Required**
- **Prerequisite 4** Construction Activity Pollution Prevention  
  **Required**

### LEED 2009 for Neighborhood Development Certification Levels

- 100 base points plus 6 possible Innovation and Design Process and 4 possible Regional Priority Credit points
- **Certified** 40–49 points
- **Silver** 50–59 points
- **Gold** 60–79 points
- **Platinum** 80 points and above
6.5 New Urbanist transition strategies

Sketch of path, green and building zone transitions by author after Streetscapes in *The New Civic Art*, showing rhythm established through the linear layering of strips of street, sidewalk, grass, trees and buildings.

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