Re-Place the Big Box

Matthew C. Harkin

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REPLACE THE BIG BOX
Retrofitting the suburban big box to incorporate a sense of place
Matt Harkin
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**REFERENCES**
Within the suburban environment of the United States it is not uncommon to see a large big box store, centered upon the landscape without rhyme or reason in relation to the local physical or social attributes. These big box stores are not designed at all. They are cookie cutter buildings, copy and pasted structures that give no regards to their context. The mass is plopped onto the site, and surrounded by parking, roads, and barriers cutting the shopping center off from pedestrian access and its general surroundings. These commercial zones do not hold a sense of place, but rather are devoid of place. In an effort to simplify and ease the design and construction process, these stores have neglected to understand the psychical, social, and environmental context of their surroundings. They deny the public social space for the community, ignore the human scale or the possibility for a walkable environment, and it consumes ever increasing amounts of land for parking, removing components of the natural ecosystem from the environment. There is the one benefit of afford-ability that such an industry provides; however, to do so without integrating or understanding the context, or the current needs and interests of the local residents shows the industry’s disregard for the area over which they have influence.

"Re-Place the Big Box" will introduce a sense of place to the site Walmart on Cobb parkway to create a new communal center. Transforming the big box on the scale of context, site and building to create a destination-based place program focused on developing ties between commercial and social environment in order to benefit the community.
Introduction
The built environment we have developed around cars and retail malls is one that is not suited to the resilience around the site of the great flood in New Orleans. The three levees of daily life can help improve the daily life of the community: providing space to meet and interact, providing opportunity for the development of social capital, and providing space for social and physical contact. In addition, a two thousand dollar increase in rent is reported to be expected during the next five years, and the need to find a better solution to the current situation and to continue to improve the quality of life for the residents.

Method of Inquiry
- The study is conducted in a qualitative manner to gather information on the physical, social, and economic aspects of the community. This information is cross-validated with data from the literature review.
- The study is conducted in a qualitative manner to gather information on the physical, social, and economic aspects of the community. This information is cross-validated with data from the literature review.

Projects/Anticipated Results
- This project focuses on the development of a framework for understanding the community's needs and identifying potential solutions. The framework is developed through a series of interviews with community leaders and local residents.
- The study is conducted in a qualitative manner to gather information on the physical, social, and economic aspects of the community. This information is cross-validated with data from the literature review.

Structure of Literature Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Causes for Suburbia</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
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<td>Job &amp; Housing Shortage</td>
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<td>Push for Consumer Society</td>
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<td>Physical</td>
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<td>Social</td>
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<td>Environmental</td>
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<td>Traditional Neighborhood</td>
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<td>Physical</td>
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Impact/Results
- The study is conducted in a qualitative manner to gather information on the physical, social, and economic aspects of the community. This information is cross-validated with data from the literature review.
- The study is conducted in a qualitative manner to gather information on the physical, social, and economic aspects of the community. This information is cross-validated with data from the literature review.

Reactions
- The study is conducted in a qualitative manner to gather information on the physical, social, and economic aspects of the community. This information is cross-validated with data from the literature review.
- The study is conducted in a qualitative manner to gather information on the physical, social, and economic aspects of the community. This information is cross-validated with data from the literature review.
1.1 Understanding the Origin
In order to better understand the big box store, its elements and the reasoning behind those elements the first thing that had to be broken down was the cause for the big box store, suburbia. This is a crucial step prior to dismantlement the existing typology and re-placing it with something new and more effective at sparking the desired intertwined commercial and social environment.

**Causes For Suburbia**
Since post World War Two the American dream has involved suburbia. The suburban system was developed in a time of both job and home shortage as a means of quick repetitive construction to satisfy the demand. Each home was large enough and separated enough that they had to be furnished to support all the daily needs of the residents in a manner that more closely nit mixed environments would not.

**Development Types**
What makes suburbia suburbia?

**Suburban Sprawl**
However this American Dream came with a number of problems that would only exponentially increase with each passing decade. They consumed land much quicker than denser urban developments would. The strict use of zoning meant that all individuals living in the area would have to commute else where for work and other functions. As time passed this in particular created today’s unbearable traffic that nearly every American must endure on a daily basis.
1.1.2 Suburban Impact & Results

The development of Suburbia has caused a number of key elements that effect our daily lives to have certain characteristics that each carry a different impact on our day to day.

Social
The highly divided and pre-portioned system that the suburban model presents creates not only physical but social divides within its communities. This separation is what forms into social disconnect between an individuals micro-environment and their much larger social environment.

Economic
The suburban model focuses on creating these micro-environments for people, however the problem is this has become such a standard in the US that the single home system causes a larger financial burden on its tenants not only from the less efficient land use-age but also from the requirement of the personal vehicle.

Environmental
From the co2 emissions our cars give off to the removal of ecosystems at a higher rate due to increase in land consumption the suburban model has an impact on the natural environment.

Physical
Probably the most recognizable to the widest variety of individuals on a daily basis the physical characteristics that make up suburbia are often seen as positive however they hold within them a number of elements that cause a wide variety of problems that branch into that of the social, economic and environmental categories.

One of these elements that many think of as a positive is the separation of zoning. This division of land use is often coupled with the creation of barriers that often divide adjacent spaces where this zoning changes blocking off what should be easier access to commercial zones from residential zones thus continuing to perpetuate a number of the other issues particularly through the use of personal motor vehicles.

Big Box Store
Its these elements that most clearly effect what the big box store is today and in order to redefine the big box store these elements must be broken down and redesigned in order to “Re-Place the Big Box”
1.1.3 Reaction

Urban designers have already begun to attempt to redesign the suburban environment and make adjustments to several of the issues that have arisen. However, these strategies must be applied to the residential and the commercial zones of suburbia in order for this to be successful. So what happens when these are applied to the big box store?

Organizing Issues

Taking the elements from the physical and social environments, we can begin to organize them into scalar categories. Here the elements have been organized by the Context, Site, and Building in order to see how best to begin to re-design and connect the big box store to its surroundings in order to improve its accessibility and important piece of both the commercial and social aspects that “Re-Place the Big Box” wishes to help flourish for the sake of improving and bolstering the community and creating place on the site of existing big box stores.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CONTEXT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• DIVIDED ZONING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ACCESS BETWEEN RESIDENTIAL &amp; COMMERCIAL ZONES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• LOW DENSITY HOUSING &amp; LOW POPULATION DENSITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• LACKING PUBLIC GATHERING SPACE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SITE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• BARRIERS SEPARATE SITE FROM SURROUNDINGS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• REDUCED ACCESSIBILITY</td>
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<tr>
<td>• LACKING SAFE WALKING PATHS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• LARGE OPEN GRAY LOTS FROM PARKING REQUIREMENTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>BUILDING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• FAÇADES SERVE AS BARRIERS &amp; DISCONNECT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• NO VISUAL CONNECTION OR SOLAR PENETRATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• LARGE MASS FORMS LARGE SCALE BLOCK SIZE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• LACK OF HUMAN SCALE</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CONTEXT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ISOLATED INDIVIDUALS FROM PROGRAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• INCREASED TIME SPENT DRIVING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SITE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• UNSAFE ENVIRONMENT CREATED FROM PRIORITIZATION OF CARS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ATMOSPHERE OF BUSINESS LOITERING DISCOURAGED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUILDING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• IN &amp; OUT DESIGN PROMOTES RUSHED STRESSFUL ENVIRONMENT AS OPPOSED TO CREATING A REPIEVE</td>
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</table>
Response & Transformation
1.2.1 Response to Suburbia & the Big Box

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<tr>
<th>PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONTEXT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Integrate mixed zoning</td>
<td>• Integrate residential &amp; commercial interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increase access between residential &amp; commercial zones</td>
<td>• Increase walkability to reduce vehicle dependence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increase high density housing &amp; low population density</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SITE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Remove barriers &amp; increase methods of site access</td>
<td>• Reprioritize the people rather than the car (pedestrians &amp; patrons of communal center)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Create safe walking paths</td>
<td>• Create social atmosphere through a sense of place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use infill &amp; parking solutions to reduce under utilized gray lots</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BUILDING</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use methods of facade penetration</td>
<td>• Re-organize program to reduce the rushed in &amp; out attitude to be better attuned to a social experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Break down large masses that dominate site</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Integrate human scale through the use of material &amp; design interventions</td>
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Each issue listed has a desired goal that are the listed contra aspects that are the inverse of the issues. If utilized and implemented properly they could aid in the creation of the new big box store and its desired effect. The question is how to execute each of these so that they create the desired effect to accomplish “Re-Place the Big Box’s” goals.

1.2.2 The Traditional Neighborhood

Looking towards better connecting suburbia and the big box store the traditional neighborhood and its similar elements can be seen as a basic start to isolating different elements that should be further gathered and examined during the case studies.
Case Studies
City Creek Center in Salt Lake City Utah is an enclosed mall with two main levels of commercial retail occupying two parallel sides of a walkway split between an interior atrium. This style of commercial design is geared towards catering directly to the pedestrian with no vehicular through traffic and a main entrance accessed by the block’s sidewalk away from larger sources of parking encouraging patrons to make the trip on foot. With the sidewalks continuing from the exterior of the building to the commercial fronts on the interior we see the sidewalk respond to use, creating a depth akin to the amount of foot traffic for the transition while keeping enough room for window shopping and loitering, the types of facade interaction and engagement with the environment that can encourage the chance encounter. With the mall being interior normally a larger space would lose out on natural light but with the combination of a large class skylight and the atrium which runs down the malls axis City Creek Center get flooded with natural day light on both its two main levels.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONTEXT</strong></td>
<td><strong>INTEGRATES RESIDENCE &amp; COMMERCIAL THROUGH PROXIMITY &amp; ENCOURAGES WALKING</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SITE</strong></td>
<td><strong>BUILDING FRONTS THE EDGE OF THE SITE CREATING MORE DIRECT CONNECTION BETWEEN THE SITE EXTERIOR &amp; INTERIOR</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BUILDING</strong></td>
<td><strong>SOCIAL ATMOSPHERE CREATED THROUGH SENSE OF PLACE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• HIGH ACCESSIBILITY BETWEEN RESIDENTIAL &amp; COMMERCIAL ZONES</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• INCREASED HOUSING &amp; POPULATION DENSITY</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• ACTS AS PUBLIC GATHERING SPACE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• SAFE WALKING PATHS THROUGH SIDEWALKS AND OVERHEAD WALKWAYS</td>
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<tr>
<td>• INCREASED WALKABILITY &amp; PARKING DECK ELIMINATES GRAY LOT PRESENCE</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• OPEN FACADES ALLOW FOR VISUAL &amp; SOLAR PENETRATION INTO SPACE</td>
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<tr>
<td>• LARGE MASS IS BROKEN DOWN THROUGH STRUCTURE &amp; MATERIAL TO INTEGRATE HUMAN SCALE</td>
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City Creek Center is located within a dense urban environment complete with a highly diverse intermixing set of land uses. Due to this setting we see an increased need for the integration of public access to multi-modal transportation. This analysis shows the drastically more interconnected network of both pedestrian pathways and vehicular roads which are a big part in making this primarily pedestrian commercial center a huge success.

With City Creeks denser block structure and street network a unique opportunity arrives when it comes to the interior of the blocks formed by the network. Moving from the major street network to the minor pedestrian network located within the blocks provides the system for strong frontages and an interconnected flow of public spaces and plazas to service the surrounding local residential and adjacent commercial instances.
With an exterior block facade and the interior individual commercial facades creating moments of penetration becomes highly important. With large glass windows on the exterior of the block and an operable skylight that can open to the sky above the interior block has access to large amounts of natural light and fresh air. Using this as a design strategy the interior block becomes a secondary exterior. This system is in a way akin to the traditional mall structure however the degree of penetration along with the landscaping and facade design are what pull this system above the standard mall and turn it into this second exterior.

When it comes to human scale it is important to break down the facade into more relate-able and recognizable pieces. With the City Creek interior commercial strip we can see that a series of cornices help to distinguish the commercial from the residential utilizing moldings and a change in material to denote the change. From there columns are accented and the bays between the columns are further divided using a changing window system. The A B B pattern that can be seen in the facade is what visually breaks down the facade into these more manageable pieces.
### Santana Row

**Location:** San Jose, California  
**Architects:** SB Architects  
**Construction:** 2002-present

Santana Row creates an excellent atmosphere to be used as an example as an integrated land use commercial residential mixed use system. With the primary residential apartments located on the upper floors and the commercial on the ground floor a relaxed balance of life and work is created. With this balance of life and work a day night cycle that is constantly in use occurs. This system makes for a more comfortable environment as all individuals feel possessive over the shared space and the increased number of eyes on the streets helps to deter crime from simple littering to breaking and entering. Transitioning between the commercial frontage formed along the ground landscaping and network creation helps to intertwine these commercial spaces to public spaces and plazas. It is in these public spaces and plazas that events such as local markets and festivals occur that help to form a community from this simple collection of individuals.

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<td><strong>CONTEXT</strong></td>
<td><strong>SITE</strong></td>
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| High accessibility between residential & commercial zones | Safe walking paths  
| Increased housing & population density | Increased walkability |
| **BUILDING**          | **EVENTS**          |
| Open facades allow for visual & solar penetration into space  
| Large mass is broken down through structure & material to integrate human scale | Building fronts the edge of the site creating more direct connection between the site exterior & interior  
| Creates public space for community driven events | Integrates residence & commercial in each building (home above the storefront)  
| Social atmosphere created through sense of place |
Santana Row has a strong network that has multi-modal transportation closely associating both motor vehicle and pedestrian ways to give a high degree of accessibility to both systems. However on occasion certain small more local roads are closed off to hold markets, festivals or other events. With trees and on street parking forming the common pedestrian buffer.

The smaller local pedestrian paths much like City Creek link together a series of plazas although smaller and less varied these plazas cater towards the higher degree of smaller shops and restaurants along the side of the streets.
These shops and restaurants utilize frontages to begin to connect the interior and exterior space. With the addition of facade penetration a very lively communal space is formed. On the ground level and upper levels these penetrations have a number of clear distinctions. Primarily the facades on the ground floor commercial have store front glazing, larger floor to ceiling windows that allow a deeper penetration of natural light into the space. While the residential have smaller windows that allow natural light to penetrate multiple different rooms as opposed to the single open space that the ground floor posses.

Unlike what is shown in City Creek each of these shops is treated as an individual structure that is placed abutting the adjacent structure. This gives each of the commercial shops a unique character and can best be implemented when the adjacent programs are to be seen as separate entities. This strategy also gives an excellent visual cue breaking down the longer facade of the street front forming a much more manageable human scale.
CONCLUSION & DESIGN METHODOLOGY

CONTEXT, SITE & BUILDING
Further boiling down the Contra Aspects and Issues to highlight the most important design elements that have the greatest effect on the Big Box typology and its immediate environment. These Elements need to be examined and studied to find the best way of improving and implementing them into the project. For this a number of case studies and precedent will be examined.
CHAPTER 2: SITE ANALYSIS

COBB PARKWAY MARIETTA SITE

IMAGE CREDIT: GOOGLE MAPS
Walmart on Cobb

Lively Tethers, Walking to America's Salvation
A Walkable Storefront in a Simple Community

COBB PKWY SE
WALMART
SAM'S CLUB
CHICK FIL A
COBB PKWY SE
2.1.1 Orientation

The Walmart on Cobb Parkway in Marietta, Georgia, was selected due to familiarity with the site and its many ins and outs, particularly as accessibility and its surroundings go. With a busy parkway and a large number of disjointed surrounding residential zones, this particular big box was ideal to show the benefits even a semi-lively big box store can gain from this methodology of design.
2.2.1 Access

As we begin a deeper dive into the potential of street networks, the road hierarchy exposes somewhat of a networking within residential spaces, although with a distinct lack of walkability and higher degree of local small barriers.

From the literature review, Understanding the Origin, a number of crucial design elements and methods of analysis were selected along with the creation of the scale of Context, Site and Building at which that analysis and case studies would be conducted. These three scales will be brought through as the three scales that the design is focused on as the site and building are retrofitting and reconnected to the surrounding context influenced by the findings of the analysis and case studies.
With a few strong alignments predominately formed by Cobb Parkway itself and the pipeline formed by cut down trees for the local power lines. The place where major circulation occurs begins to pop out. Primarily this is focused towards the commercial zones while residences have highly isolated instances of radial alignment within their own pockets. It's clear to see that a lack of tightly woven street network exists here.
2.2.2 Connectivity

With these Paths and an understanding of local land use and potential destinations, connections can be formed. Focusing on the surrounding residential, campuses and the Cobb Community center, we can see that pathways are fairly rigid and often require an extensive amount of walking.

Compared against what we see from the connection’s analysis, many of the existing destinations should be within a much shorter walking distance than is listed. This discrepancy within the two times is due to the lack of these aforementioned street networks or larger pedestrian arterial footpaths.
The connections show more often than not could run straighter even with the existing roads however in almost every case a series of barriers stands between the pedestrian and their destination. From physical protruding barriers such as fences to the heavily trafficked connector roads catering to the vehicle centered system.

**Context Barriers:**

- Solid Barrier
- Physical fence
- Soft Barrier
- Busy Traveled Road

**South Residential Zone**

**PHYSICAL & LANDSCAPING BARRIER**

**Back of Walmart & Commercial Zone**
2.2.3 Land Use

With no mixed use in the area local to Cobb parkway, the zoning of the Walmart’s context can be quite clearly seen. Along the main axial alignments long commercial strips made up primarily of automotive and small food chains are clearly held separate from the scattered pockets of residential sectors. This separation shows that without good connectivity these programs will most likely remain highly separated.

Commercial land use in the area clearly form along the main vehicular collector roads. This type of zone creation caters to the motor vehicle based transportation and often makes any other form of transport difficult.

Distinctly different from the commercial land use the residential land use also forms clear zones these however are pocketed in between the commercial strips. These pockets however are far too large and their scale often causes separation to be too much of an obstacle for non motor vehicle based transportation to obtain easy and safe access.
2.2.4 Demographics

- Transportation uses up large sums of both time & income
  - Personal vehicles
  - Gas usage

- Need for low income housing

- The immediate context’s radius walk has the highest degree of poverty and unemployment

- Within the US the most common jobs are office, sales, management jobs
  - Need for more office & retail space

- High rate of young males in the immediate context most likely due to proximity to two predominantly male campuses

- Number of individuals identifying as Hispanic is high in the immediate vicinity quickly decreases moving outward

- Less than half of all individuals eat vegetables or fruit on a daily basis

- Higher degree of Assault and Robbery which can be deterred through higher density and door to door visibility
2.3 Site
2.3.1 Accessibility

With a few strong alignments predominately formed by Cobb Parkway itself and the pipeline formed by cut down trees for the local power lines the site finds itself with a number of possibilities for forming a well woven street network.

Site Entrances

With cars being the primary method of arrival on site there are two main points of entry and two minors. The two major entrances being on the east and west sides, Cobb Parkways and Dobb St SE respectively. Without a southern point of entry residence either have to cut through the Marietta dinner parking lot and make a difficult and often dangerous double left turn or travel all the way around to South Marietta Parkway and around to Cobb when geographically the building should be within walking distance.
With existing sidewalks scattered throughout the residences on the site itself we see that they exist solely to create artificial setback on the masses placed among the large spans of gray lot formed by the parking. These short strips of concrete abruptly end at the end of the mass without continuing on to connect to the residential.

Although the building is geographically within walking distance it is not a reasonable trek. Steep muddy slopes serve as the only possibility tucked between large fences and busy roads creating an often difficult and dangerous scenario for said pedestrians.
2.3.2 Water Shed

With a steep topography to the south and east of the site the bulk of the site’s water run off flows down towards the south west corner of the site. There a large existing bioswale is used for the majority of the water handling on the site. This bioswale is particularly large due to the vast amount of hard-scape from the parking gray lot.
2.4 Building
2.4.1 Mass Analysis

The mass and volume of Walmart itself is quite large. With a bland continuous facade, the building seems to lay inert on the back of the site. Overbearing to the individual. This system even is more tailored towards the vehicle rather than to people.

2.4.2 Façade Penetration

Only located at the front entrances of the building facing the parking the depth of the building prevents any of the light from reaching farther than the entry way, creating an environment heavily reliant on electrical lighting cutting of the patron, employees and the program of the interior from the exterior.
CHAPTER 3: DESIGN

Roanoke Walmart Evacuated
The Extracted Design Elements turn into Crucial Design Elements as the how and why in terms of implementation become clearer from the precedent studied and the context, site and building analysis. These elements are critical for the redesigning process as they directly relate to forming the commercial social atmosphere set forth in the thesis statement for the creation of this communal place.
3.1 Site
3.1.1 Forming Network

In order to begin designing the new Big Box store the site must first be transformed to give better accessibility. This can be done by utilizing the contextual information that was gathered from the chosen sites surroundings. This way when planning the layout and network for the site the surrounding environment, occupants, and live styles better integrate with the site and programs. This is vary important particularly when looking at the current big box form which uses a strategy closer to shoving a pre-existing design into an available lot losing this opportunity to integrate with this facets which its business depends on.

Existing site for re-design

The existing street network is closed off from most of the residential zones

Lack of network creates poor accessibility between existing commercial buildings on site

The Alignments from the southern residential zone turn into the beginning of our new network granting higher accessibility to the local residents

One of these will bisect the existing Walmart and foot print of the future Walmart

Chapter 3: Design  76

SECTION 3.2 Site

ALLOW FAÇADE PENETRATION

FORM CENTRAL PUBLIC SPACE

BREAK DOWN BARRIERS

INTEGRATE SENSE OF HUMAN SCALE

ALLOCATE STREET FRONTAGE

INTEGRATE WALKABLE DESIGN

INCREASE DENSITY
Increasing vehicle access and dividing block size

Bike lanes, vehicle streets and sidewalks and plazas form multi-modal connectivity between the site and surrounding

Two main pedestrian axis on site allow for improved flow across the site

The existing though formless West to East alignment will become our main street

Preserving the two existing strip malls new streets need to be integrated

The north west strip will become a commercial ally with strong frontage facing the street

The south east strip will use the new alignment to create a similar ally with the focus towards the pedestrian experience

Connecting existing roads and points of entry

The existing though formless West to East alignment will become our main street

Preserving the two existing strip malls new streets need to be integrated

The north west strip will become a commercial ally with strong frontage facing the street

The south east strip will use the new alignment to create a similar ally with the focus towards the pedestrian experience

Connecting existing roads and points of entry

Increasing vehicle access and dividing block size

Bike lanes, vehicle streets and sidewalks and plazas form multi-modal connectivity between the site and surrounding

Two main pedestrian axis on site allow for improved flow across the site
**3.1.2 Connecting Blocks**

- Formation of block typologies
- Pedestrian Axis
- Creation of voids to be used for plazas, parks and flow through the site
- Vehicle Axis
- Creation of boulevards
- Avoidance of power lines

**3.1.3 Public Space**

- Gateways targeting increasing pedestrian access through the new site axial alignments allow for entry through all cardinal directions of the site
- Bike lanes, vehicle streets and sidewalks and plazas form multi-modal connectivity between the site and surrounding neighborhoods

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**Sightlines**

Creating visual sight-lines from the main roads to draw in business

**Beacon**

Visual marker from all surroundings of the site

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**Differing plaza and park spaces catering towards different programs and communities lead towards the main central plaza & the new conceptual Walmart**
The bulk of the site masses are divided amongst two land uses and then coupled with some form of additional designated parking deck sized for the expected capacity.

With Commercial and Residential being the two highest types of land use by square footage they are the most closely related in terms of developing the commercial and social environment for the desired communal place.
1. Residential Apartments (64 units)
   Parking Deck (288 spaces)
   Commercial Retail On Ground Floor
2. Refurbished Commercial Strip Mall
   Pedestrian Entry to Site
3. Residential Apartments (52 units)
   Parking Deck (198 spaces)
   This Parking Deck will serve the redesigned Walmart
   Commercial Retail On Ground Floor
4. Redeveloped Walmart (Ground Floor)
   Town Home Development
   Urban Green For Private Gardens
5. Commercial Retail & Restaurants
6. Bioswale Market & Kiosks
7. Hotel (75 units)
   Commercial Retail On Ground Floor
   This retail is focused mainly towards the street on the side of Cobb Parkways and the new sidewalks implemented there
8. Commercial Retail
   Sloping Plaza
   Parking Deck (96 spaces)
9. Residential Apartments (73 units)
   Commercial Retail On Ground Floor
   This retail is focused mainly towards the main central plaza
10. Commercial Retail
    Local Theater/Cinema
    Office Space On Upper Floors
11. Office Space On Upper Floors
    Education Center
    Available Computer Access for general public
    Daycare center for those working in the local offices
12. Residential Apartments (124 Units)
    Parking Deck (142 Spaces)
    Commercial Retail
3.1.5 PLAZA CONNECTION

With the site’s street network and general programming laid out, public spaces had to be integrated at key points in order to form an on-site flow of people pulling them toward the site center where the main plaza would stand as the pinnacle of the commercial and social environment created tailored to the local community providing a space and a place to grow.

Main Street

Acting as the main mode of both pedestrian and vehicular traffic is Main Street forming the East-West axis of the site connecting the western residential space to Cobb Parkway on the eastern side of the site. Transitioning to a zero curb system in the front of the new Big Box, Main Street crosses right alongside the Center Plaza lined with retail stores, residential apartments, eateries and a small theater which feed and support the plaza and get the same in return.

1. Bioswale Market
2. Central Plaza
3. Terraced Events Plaza
4. North Gate

Central Plaza

Main Street Section

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Section 3.2 SITE 85
Sitting in the center of the site the Central plaza is directly adjacent to the new big box store and main street. The pedestrian street that cuts directly through the big box store pours right into the main plaza granting a high degree of accessibility to the southern sides residential zone. The plaza itself grants excellent access to a number of commercial instances with eateries and a small theater sitting right along side the plaza. This space provides place to sit and enjoy the local community on a standard day. The large green can be used for sports or other athletic activities on a day to day basis and easily convert to gather family events or festivals along with the covered canopy market space for the local restaurants/ caterers.
Sitting at the West Gate the Bioswale Market Plaza serves as a place for the community to come and join in the commercial venue by becoming the vendors and by inviting other local vendors to set up shop. With easy visual towards Dobs street and the residents along the west side of the site this plaza is an ideal spot for a local public market. Inviting creators, crafters and more to share their passions with the community and be presented with an opportunity to begin their own business venture.

Covered by a high translucent canopy this installment serves to filter out sun in the harsher summer while creating a unique dappled lighting effect along the underside where the market's primary vendors will be located.
3.1.8 Terraced Events Plaza

The Terraced Events Plaza, designed with the footprints steeper topography in mind terraces down creating the ideal set up for a picnic style terrace seating that allows all individuals present to have a clear view of the bottom green where performances from speeches, music or even an outdoor projector movie night.

With direct connection to the snack shake style window counters (show bottom right) to maintain an outdoor experience keeping any performance or event still in view.

The open path and visual style of this plaza serves as a pivotal point pulling and moving individuals coming in through the North Pedestrian Gate and individuals from the East Gate in towards the center of the site and the central plaza.
3.1.9 North Gate

The North Gate Plaza is meant as a pull to bring in individuals from the east side of Cobb and those along the road. A smaller, simple plaza North Gate hosts a small coffee shop and some outdoor seating that is meant to service the local offices and education center along with the commercial that sits facing Cobb Parkway.
3.2 Building
3.2.1 Re-Placed Big Box

The store is designed with many of the key elements mentioned earlier in mind. With a more accessible design set up in a similar manner to a series of store fronts facing the exterior and pedestrian path, the big box can now have better facade penetration. Each store front with a series of windows and even light wells in the deeper sections of the building the retail floor and its employees will now have access to natural lighting. As with many of the buildings on site the Big Box has its main commercial on the bottom floor and is equip with residential on top. The residential serves as a transitional space from the south single home residential style moving to a more dense town home style and than an apartment style which the majority of the rest of the site now has. Equip with small personal gardens and an enclosed local playground and cook out deck this space serves as the ideal resident community space before transitioning towards the central plaza and the main public community space.
3.2.2 Box Walkway

This central walkway created by dividing the big box and connecting the southern residential zone to the central plaza is key to making this an effective strategy.

By dividing it in this fashion the interior program is open to be reorganized to now face the walkway while exterior programs can now face the surrounding street network. While this walkway divides the big box its pedestrian path and use of kiosks and store fronts turns this from a simple walkway to being part of the store itself.

Human Scale

It is through this walkway that one of the best instances of human scale can be seen. With the division of the commercial and residential made evident and the facade broken down through facade penetration and the use of detailing to highlight the columns the simple continuous mammoth facade of the old big box is no more.

1. Push & pull the existing structure to take the footprint of the new block
2. Create sill resonance at the highest point of the building facing the Central Plaza to be seen from Cobb Parkway
3. Form urban gardens and create ceiling penetration for natural light
4. Add residential transition to the upper floors accessible at the same level as the south residences
5. Form the urban cuts through the site
6. New form for the new Big Box Store
3.2.3 **Program Transformation**

With the walkway creating these new store fronts each of the existing Walmart’s main programs can be taken and re-organized to be given their own store fronts rather than pushing some programs to the back of the store out of the way.

Existing
- Chaotic
- Not all groups have access to store front

Program Organization
1. Clothes
2. Food
3. Cosmetics
4. Pharmacy
5. Storage for unloaded goods
6. Auto-care
7. Crafts
8. Jewelry
9. Electronics
10. Toys
11. Outdoor Goods
12. Landscaping
REPLACE THE BIG BOX
Retrofitting the suburban big box to incorporate a sense of place
4.1.1 References

Written Work


Image Citations


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