



Latino/International District:

Community Empowerment Through Placemaking

Senior Capstone Project
Landscape Architecture
Spring 2017
Andrea Penuela



Latino/International District:



Community Empowerment Through Placemaking

Prepared for:

The Department of Landscape Architecture
University of Florida

Prepared By:

Andrea Penuela
Department of Landscape Architecture
College of Design, Construction and Planning
University of Florida

Faculty Advisor:

Costis Alexakis

Spring 2017

¡gracias!



thanks!

Quisiera agradecer a mis profesores a travez
de los años por todas sus enseñanzas
A Costis por cuestionar mis ideas y empujar
mi proyecto

A Tina por toda su dedicacion al programa,
no se que haríamos sin ti
A mis compañeros por su compañía, no me
puedo imaginar estos años sin ustedes

Tambien quisiera agradecer a mi familia y a
mis amigos, a nivel nacional y internacional,
por su constante apoyo
En particular, a mis padres por siempre creer
en mi y en mis ideas locas

Finalmente, al buen cafe colombiano y el rock
en español
Gracias totales!

I'd like to thank my professors for all of your
teachings throughout the years
Costis, for questioning my ideas and pushing
my project

Tina, for her dedication to the program, I
don't know what we'd do without you
My classmates, for your companionship, I
can't imagine these past years without you

I'd also like to thank my family and friends,
nationally and internationally, for your never
ending support
Particularly, I'd like to thank my parents for
always believing in me and my crazy ideas

Finally, good colombian coffee and 'rock en
español'
Total thanks!



Motivation

**“De pibes la llamabamos la vedera
y a ella le gusto que la quisieramos.
En su lomo sufrido dibujamos
tantas rayuelas**

...

**A mi me toco un día irme muy lejos
pero no me olvide de las vederas
Aqui o alla las siento en los tamangos
como la fiel caricia de mi tierra”**

-Extracto de *Veredas de Buenos Aires*,
Por Julio Cortazar

**“When we were little we called it the
walkside
and it liked the way we loved it
On its suffering back we drew
so many hopscotch squares**

...

**One day my turn came to go far away
but I never forgot the walksides.
Here or there I feel them in my boots
like the faithful touch of my land.”**

-Excerpt from *Sidewalks of Buenos Aires*
By Julio Cortazar,
Translated by Stephen Kessler

When I look at these pages I don't just see plans and sections; I see home. I see imported groceries from Meat Emporium with my mom. I see late night stuffed arepas at the Saman food truck with my sisters. I see catching up with a good friend over a Colombian hamburger with pineapple and chips at Chalo's. This place isn't just a corridor or a project, it's where I found myself, an immigrant at 7 years old, trying to find home in a foreign place. It's where I still find myself, 16 years later, trying to bridge my identities.

In my time in landscape architecture, I learned we tell the stories of the people whose spaces we impact. Yet the more I designed, the more I found myself questioning, who would tell the story of me?

--

I want to dedicate this project to the people who surrounded me during these early years. To the struggling parents hoping to make ends meet in a language they didn't understand. To the friends who taught me how to speak Spanglish. To the little shops and owners who, through their products and music, made home a bit less of a distant concept.

Pa'lante!

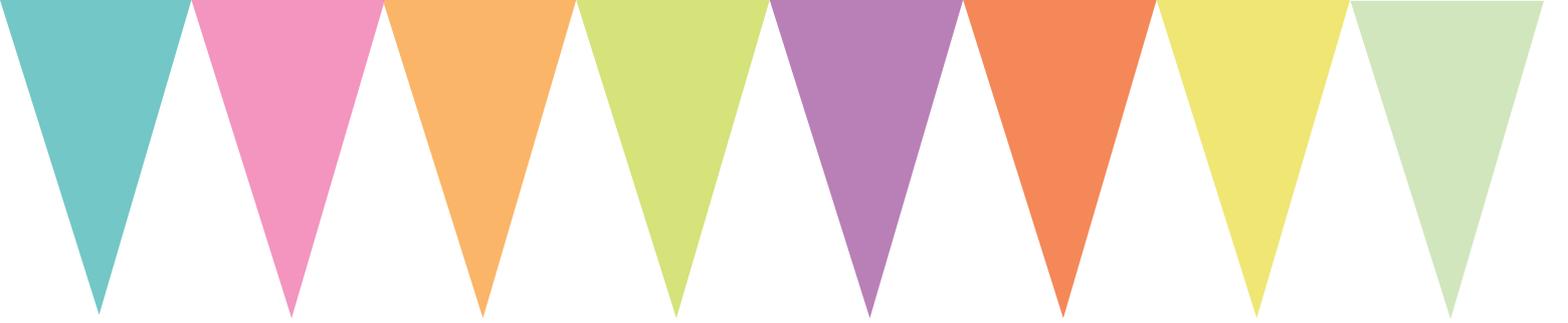
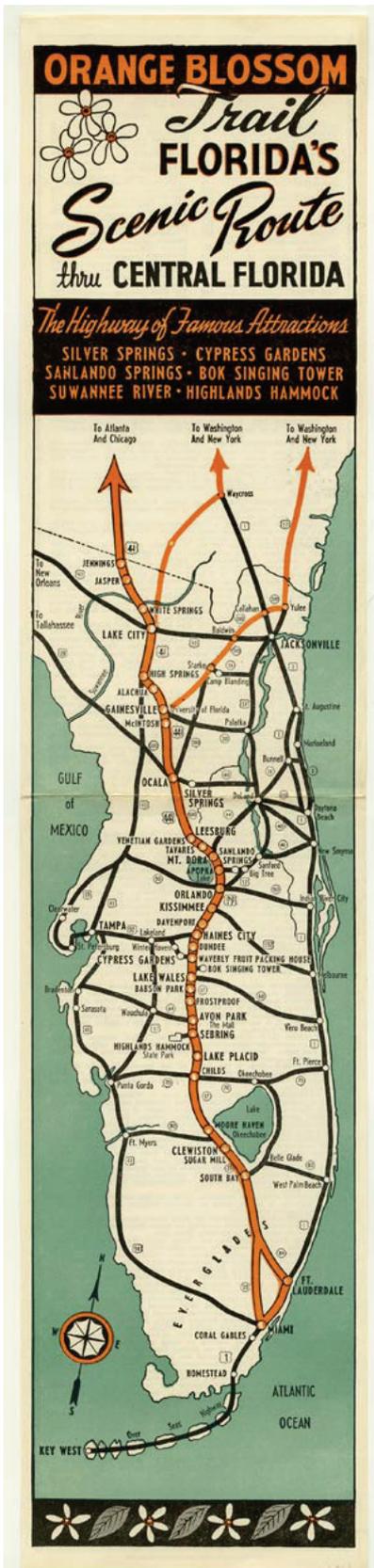


Table of Contents

1. Project Background	8
Past & Present	9
The Study Area	10
The People	12
Goals + Objectives	15
2. Inventory + Analysis	16
Context	17
Study Area	20
Pilot Segment	24
3. Guiding Principles	26
Urban Form	27
Placemaking	29
Latino Urban Typologies	34
4. Case Studies	40
Roadway	41
District	44
Sites	50
5. Conceptual Development	54
Road	55
Urban Form Study	62
6. Vision	68
Pilot Projects	69
Implementation	76
Visions of the Future	80
7. References	84



Project Background



Orange Blossom Trail: Past & Present

The Orange Blossom Trail, running through Orlando, FL, has a negative connotation for any Orlando local. When mentioned, the images conjured up often relate to run down strip malls, homelessness and prostitution. However, that wasn't always the case. Orange Blossom Trail, commonly known as OBT, was once a major tourist destination. Spurred by WWII, OBT led tourists from the north down into Florida, with promises of beautiful views of orange groves leading to major tourist spots such as Silver Springs and Bok Tower. The success around this major vehicular corridor spurred the development of motels and strip malls erasing the orange blossoms from reality to just a name.¹

With the development of highways allowing tourists a quicker trip to Disney, strip malls and motels fell into disrepair. Soon, properties stood vacant. Run down motels became hubs for prostitution and drug use and OBT's name became besmirched. Peaking in the late 70's, drug dealing and sex trade in this corridor have decreased, but the reputation of OBT remains throughout Orlando.²

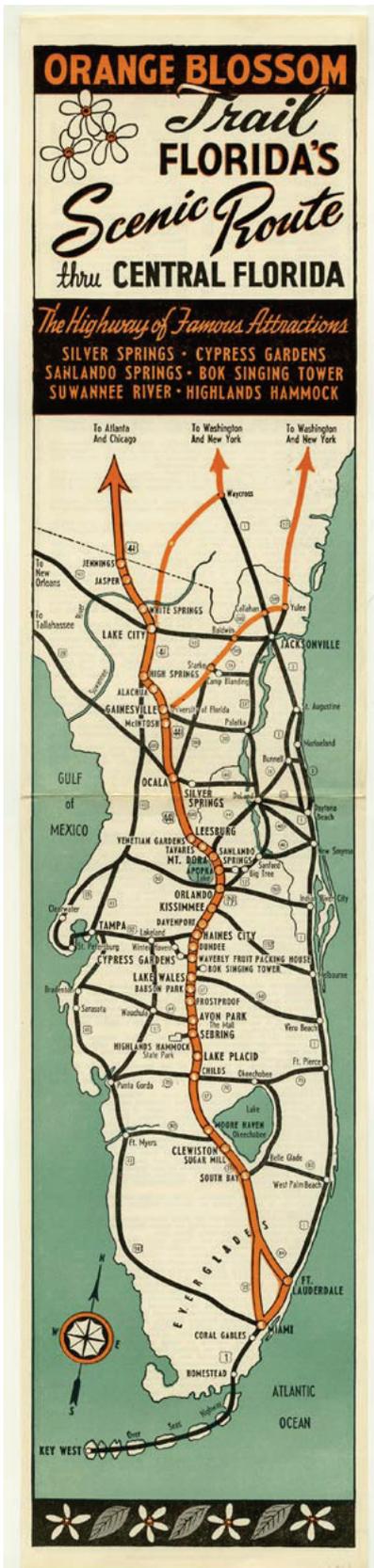
However, not every aspect of this corridor fell into this state of disrepair and criminal activity. Immigrants coming into Orlando throughout the decades, but increasing since the 90s, began to make these strip malls their home. The strip malls, now cheap commercial space, are enticing to many immigrants as inexpensive places to sell imported products, establish ethnic restaurants, and come together as a community. From the outside, this cultural hub looks similar to some of the seedier parts of OBT, but inside these storefronts are communities of immigrants, particularly Latino immigrants, serving immigrants.

This project focuses on one of these immigrant communities, the Latino community of South Orlando, who form a majority in this area and occupy many businesses of this corridor.

◀ [Orange Blossom Trail Assoc. ca. 1950 Marketing material, oldimprints.com](#)

1 Jolly Wallace Dickinson, "Tourist Trail blossomed in era of postwar roadside adventure," [orlandosentinel.com](#), (April 27, 2014)

2 Benjamin Tyler, "Prostitution, drugs and living life on the Trail," [orlando-weekly.com](#), (March 11, 2015)



Orange Blossom Trail: Past & Present

The Orange Blossom Trail, running through Orlando, FL, has a negative connotation for any Orlando local. When mentioned, the images conjured up often relate to run down strip malls, homelessness and prostitution. However, that wasn't always the case. Orange Blossom Trail, commonly known as OBT, was once a major tourist destination. Spurred by WWII, OBT led tourists from the north down into Florida, with promises of beautiful views of orange groves leading to major tourist spots such as Silver Springs and Bok Tower. The success around this major vehicular corridor spurred the development of motels and strip malls erasing the orange blossoms from reality to just a name.¹

With the development of highways allowing tourists a quicker trip to Disney, strip malls and motels fell into disrepair. Soon, properties stood vacant. Run down motels became hubs for prostitution and drug use and OBT's name became besmirched. Peaking in the late 70's, drug dealing and sex trade in this corridor have decreased, but the reputation of OBT remains throughout Orlando.²

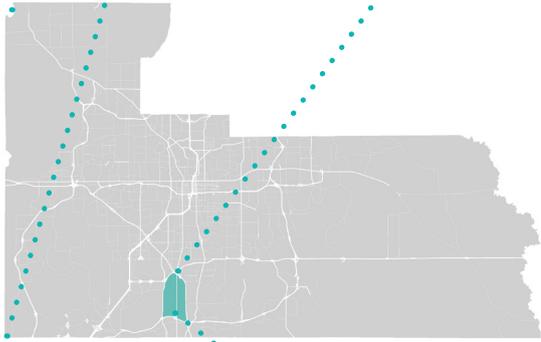
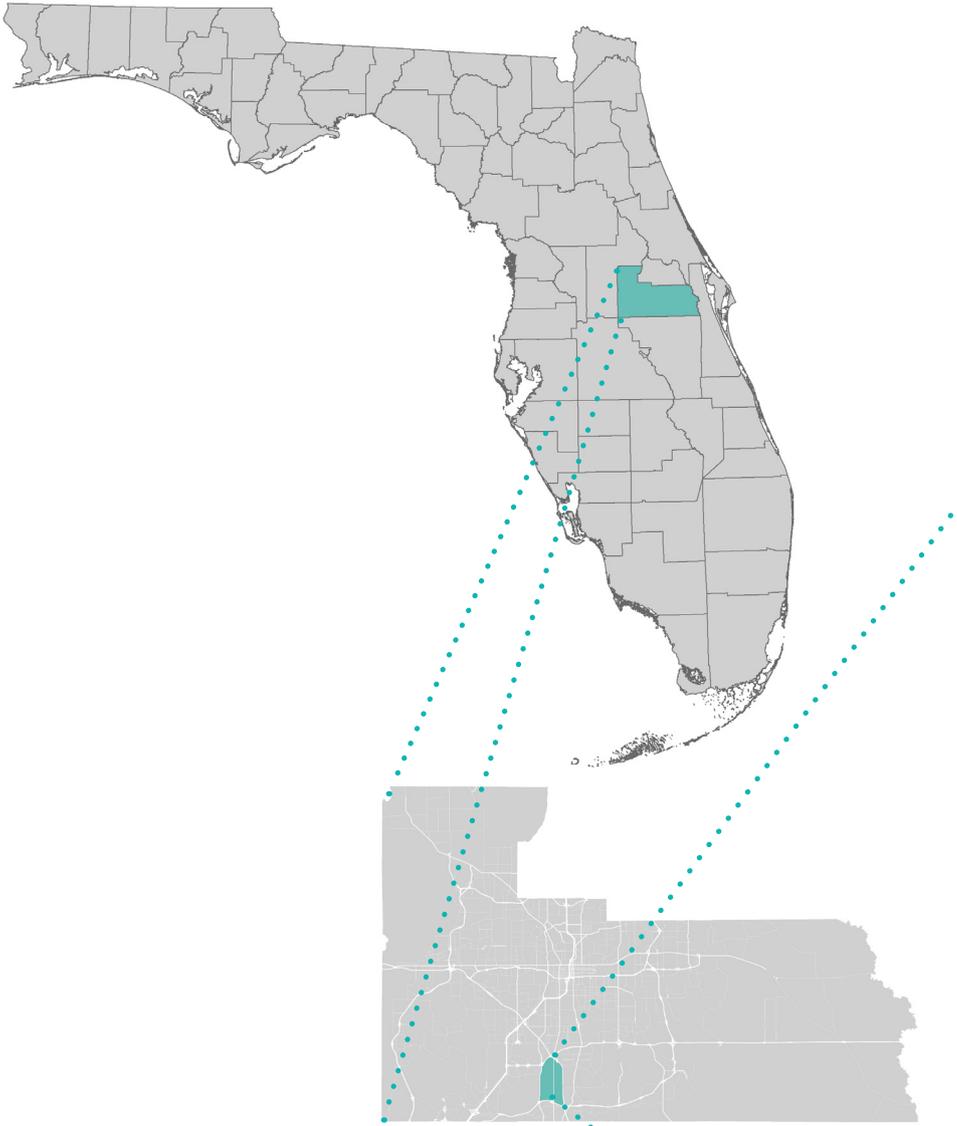
However, not every aspect of this corridor fell into this state of disrepair and criminal activity. Immigrants coming into Orlando throughout the decades, but increasing since the 90s, began to make these strip malls their home. The strip malls, now cheap commercial space, are enticing to many immigrants as inexpensive places to sell imported products, establish ethnic restaurants, and come together as a community. From the outside, this cultural hub looks similar to some of the seedier parts of OBT, but inside these storefronts are communities of immigrants, particularly Latino immigrants, serving immigrants.

This project focuses on one of these immigrant communities, the Latino community of South Orlando, who form a majority in this area and occupy many businesses of this corridor.

◀ [Orange Blossom Trail Assoc. ca. 1950 Marketing material, oldimprints.com](#)

1 Jolly Wallace Dickinson, "Tourist Trail blossomed in era of postwar roadside adventure," [orlandosentinel.com](#), (April 27, 2014)

2 Benjamin Tyler, "Prostitution, drugs and living life on the Trail," [orlando-weekly.com](#), (March 11, 2015)



The Study Area: Project Location

The study area is located in the Orlando Metropolitan Area within Orange County, Florida. It falls under unincorporated Orange County jurisdiction. It's bordered to the north by the Turnpike and to the south by the Central Florida Greenway (417) and is roughly 4 miles long. The boundaries represent both pedestrian boundaries, which prevent pedestrians from easily crossing past these, and by character changes. North of the study area is generic commercial/office development including many large national chains and the Florida Mall. This area is branded through its streetscape and light features as a different space and does not share the same cultural characteristics as the study area. To the south of the study area this commercial corridor ends and becomes primarily single-home residential as well as gated apartment complexes.

Physical Character

The study area focuses around a commercial corridor whose physical corridor relies on two parts: the street/streetscape and the strip malls lining the street.

The street is an arterial road consisting of 6 or 7 lanes with a small concrete median separating the two directions with a posted speed of 55 mph, which is often exceeded by drivers by about 10 mph. A discontinuous painted bike-lane runs through the corridor followed by a sodded swale and a standard 5-foot sidewalk. There are no street trees, street lights are standard vehicular concrete posts and all electrical utilities run above ground.

The urban fabric is composed of strip malls east of the roadway at varying setbacks from the right-of-way (generally 60'+) and shopping centers with outparcels west of the roadway. Architecture varies and is not cohesive through the corridor. The streetfront is dominated by parking lots with no building directly adjacent to the right-of-way.

▼ Existing typical section showing outparcels to west, sparse roadway and strip mall development with industrial uses in the rear to the east



The People:

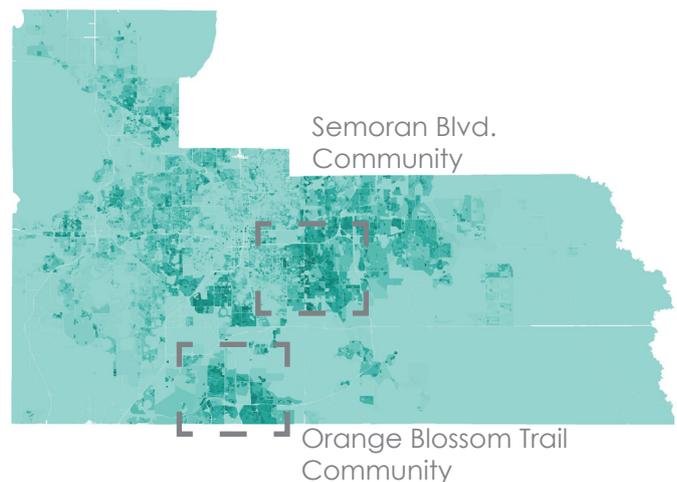
According to an Orlando Sentinel analysis of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Orlando metropolitan area ranks as last in wages in the country with a median annual wage of \$29,781 and ranks No. 1 for jobs paying \$20,000 with a quarter of the wages below \$20,220. At the same time, the city is well known for its large tourism industry. Immigrants, particularly Latino immigrants, are affected by these low wages with a continual cycle of poverty.¹ For this reason, this project focuses on the Latino community of the Orlando Metropolitan Area.

Study Area

In order for this project to be viable and have enough motivation to be enacted, the study area had to comply with 2 basic criteria: an existing high density of latino households to serve as the market for infill Latino businesses, and no current support or attention for its Latino residents.

In Orange Co. there are two concentrations of Latinos: along Semoran Blvd. and along OBT. However, the Semoran Blvd. Community falls within the jurisdiction of the City of Orlando who have an existing Main Streets Program. This area has received this classification and is currently developing a vision called “Gateway Orlando” while the OBT community falls within the unincorporated Orange Co. which does not have this program.

*Percentage density of Latino populations in Orange Co., FL
US Census 2010* ▶



¹ Scott Maxwell, “Orlando: No. 1 in tourism and dead last in wages,” orlandosentinel.com, (September 5, 2015)

Key Findings:

Fastest growing demographic is Puerto Rican, not established Cuban populations

Orlando offers low incomes and primarily blue collar jobs for Latinos

Majority of Latinos are young

Study area is at the center of projected Latino growth

Demographic Trends

Based on Hispanic Federation 2016 report¹

Florida

24% of the population is Latino

3rd largest Latino population in the country

1 in 3 of Puerto Ricans live in Orange and Osceola counties

Florida Future Growth

94% growth of Puerto Ricans between 2000-2014

Puerto Ricans will overtake Cubans by 2020

Orlando Metropolitan Area

47% of Latinos are 18-34

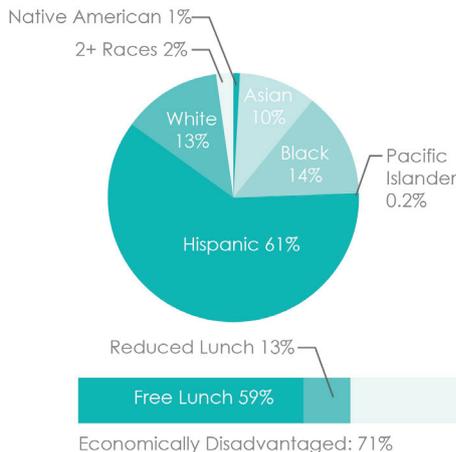
72% of Latino households earn \$50,000 or less

37% of Latinos work blue collar jobs

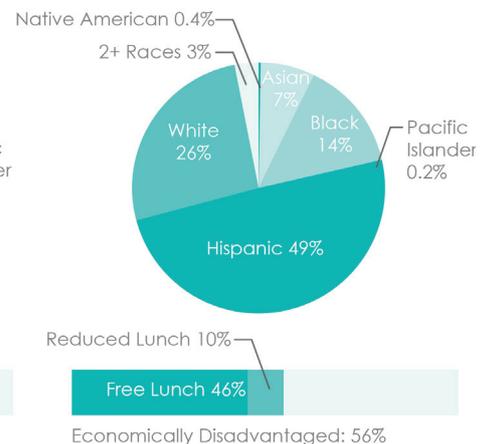
Study Area

In the study area there are two high school zoning areas divided by OBT. To the north is the Cypress Creek High School zone and to the south is the Freedom High School zone. Using these high schools as proxies for demographic data:

Cypress Creek High School



Freedom High School



The data points to a majority minority area with low incomes reflecting the data by the Hispanic Federation. The site is also the stronghold for future Latino growth, bordering Osceola to the south.

¹ “Latinos in Central Florida: The Growing Hispanic Presence in the Sunshine State” (Hispanic Federation, Summer 2016)

Organic Incubators:

Despite economic income pressures, Latinos throughout the USA have developed a method of forming incubators for small businesses through strip malls and food trucks.

Food Trucks

Food trucks have become a trend in the past few years with more of them becoming more focused on gourmet food over the years. Originally, however, food trucks were often associated with Latino cuisines throughout the USA appearing along commercial corridors. In Orlando, the first food trucks appeared along OBT and Semoran Blvd., the two current Latino strongholds. Food trucks point to informal economies that are common throughout Latin America. Where in the USA food trucks might be common, in Latin American cities it is more common to see street vendors in parks, plazas, and street corners. These types of businesses require a lower start-up capital cost allowing businesses to gather patronage and keep costs low before moving to a brick-and-mortar locale.

This has been observed in OBT in businesses such as Chalo's, originally a food truck serving Colombian-style fast food which is now a brick-and-mortar locale, and Saman, a Venezuelan stuffed arepa food truck which has expanded to a brick-and-mortar locale while keeping their food truck. Additionally, Munchies Boricua, a food truck serving Puerto Rican street food out of a red school bus, has expanded to a second red school bus and gained a following throughout the community.

Food trucks on OBT are currently threatened by county ordinances which have become more stringent on music, furniture and hours of operation.

Strip Malls

Strip malls have received special attention lately due to the possible gentrification threats involved in the redevelopment of strip malls. While strip malls may create unwalkable spaces, many of them have become centers for economic boom within minority communities due to their low pricing. Similar to food trucks, strip malls provide the advantage of lower start-up costs than their more walkable counter-parts. Notable of Latino communities is the network of intra-business advertising with many businesses displaying and promoting other Latino businesses in the area.

Goals & Objectives

pedestrian-friendly



1. Create *pedestrian-friendly* infrastructure to foster walkability, cyclist-safety and mass transport use

- a. Improve road cross-section with consideration to safety and walkability best practices
- b. Improve road crossings to promote pedestrian safety
- c. Recommend urban form improvements to enhance walkability and reduce sprawl

economic viability



2. Boost community *economic viability* and endorse social mobility

- a. Provide facade improvement recommendations
- b. Create incubator space for new businesses

unique culture



3. Celebrate *unique culture* and cultivate ownership and pride

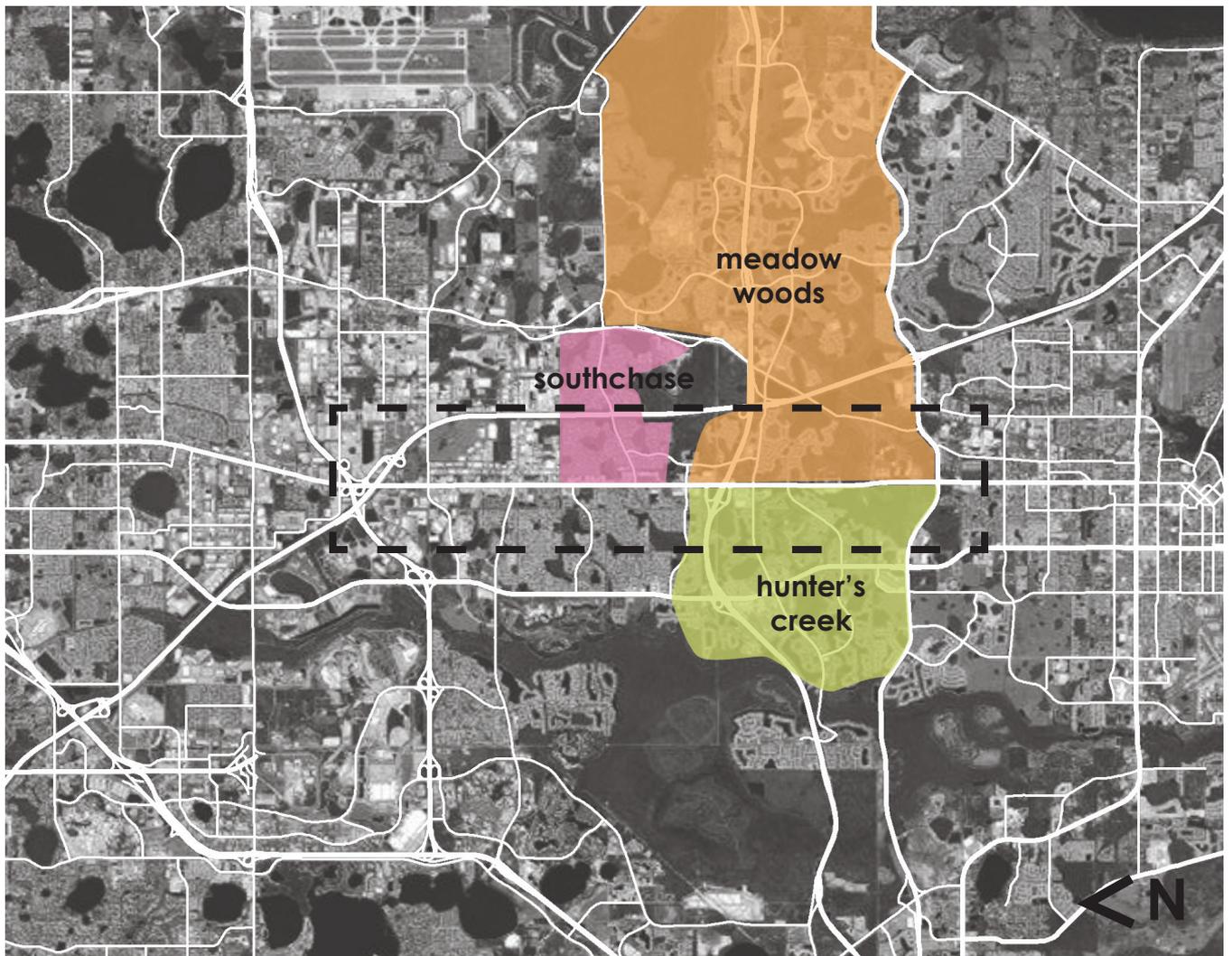
- a. Incorporate cultural motifs throughout streetscape
- b. Recommend arts outreach to connect community to physical space
- c. Provide cultural hubs for performance space and social interaction



Inventory + Analysis

Context: Defined Neighborhoods

While there are multiple subdivisions attached to the study area, in general there are 3 major neighborhoods who act as community stakeholders for this corridor. Southchase is the smallest neighborhood but abuts against the core of the corridor; its community center is the Southchase Village shopping plaza on OBT. Meadow Woods is the largest neighborhood and contains a growing and vocal Latino population. Hunter's Creek is the most affluent of these neighborhoods and is vocal about maintaining a good image for its community.



Cultural Centers and Urban Parks

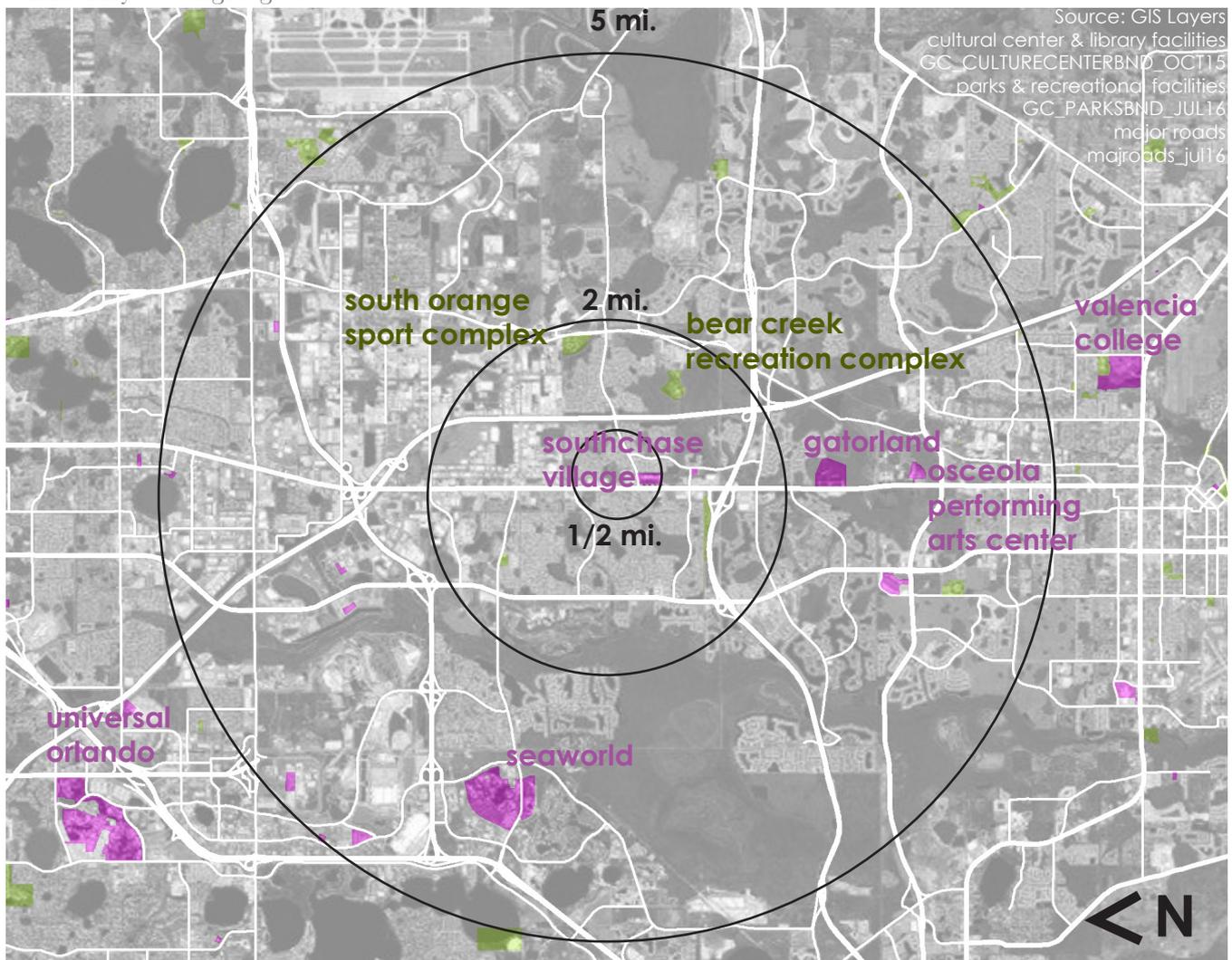
This analysis looks at existing cultural centers and urban parks to determine the availability of cultural activities and spaces available to the community and their accessibility for residents.

Radius Breakdown

- 5 mi. Spread of community including Meadow Woods and Hunter's Creek neighborhoods
- 2 mi. 70% of US car trips are <2 mi.*
- 1/2 mi. 10 min. walk

While the area includes various public urban parks, most require a car for access or are set deep within neighborhoods. Cultural resources focus primarily on tourism with no spaces for the community to congregate

*National Household Travel Survey, 2009



Lynx Bus System



Public Transit

Due to the low incomes in this area, public transit is of special interest. A robust public transit system with better access would provide local residents the ability to move throughout their city without the cost of a car. Currently, 2 bus lines run through OBT in this section.

SunRail South Expansion Radius Breakdown

- 5 mi. Sphere of influence
- 2 mi. 70% of US car trips are <2 mi.*
Bikeable distance

Currently, the SunRail is being expanded south with the Meadow Woods station expanding the study area. This new station would provide connections north for the residents and would be able to bring visitors south into the district. It would also alleviate commuter pressures on OBT allowing for a re-visioning in the road cross section.



Study Area Analysis: Methods

To better understand the 4 mile corridor, it was broken down into 3 different segments, each with a distinct mix of uses and user experience. With this, the different segments could be analyzed more closely for user experience and it could be determined which area was better suited for pilot programs to kickstart the development of the district and the redevelopment of the urban form. Each segment was analyzed with a pedestrian friendliness rubric, taking into account the available infrastructure that would make walkability possible especially around a 55 mph arterial road, as well as observations regarding the mass and void relationships that would spur the desire to walk somewhere. Then each segment was synthesized for opportunities and constraints regarding possibilities for retrofitting, likely trends, and willingness to change.

Pedestrian Friendliness Rubric

x/5 Sidewalk width

High score: Provides comfortable sidewalk 10'+

Low score: No sidewalk or minimal standard sidewalk, <5'

x/5 Sidewalk Buffer

High score: Visual vegetated buffer, min. 3'

Low score: <3' buffer, sod

x/5 Available canopy

High score: Comfortable canopy shades sidewalk

Low score: No canopy, little shade

x/5 Building set-backs

High score: Around 5'-10' from right-of-way

Low score: 60'+ from sidewalk from right-of-way

x/5 Available Bike Lanes

High score: Provides well protected bike lanes with traffic buffer due to high road speeds

Low score: No/intermittent bike lane, just striping, minimal signage

Segment 1

Primarily industrial and commercial

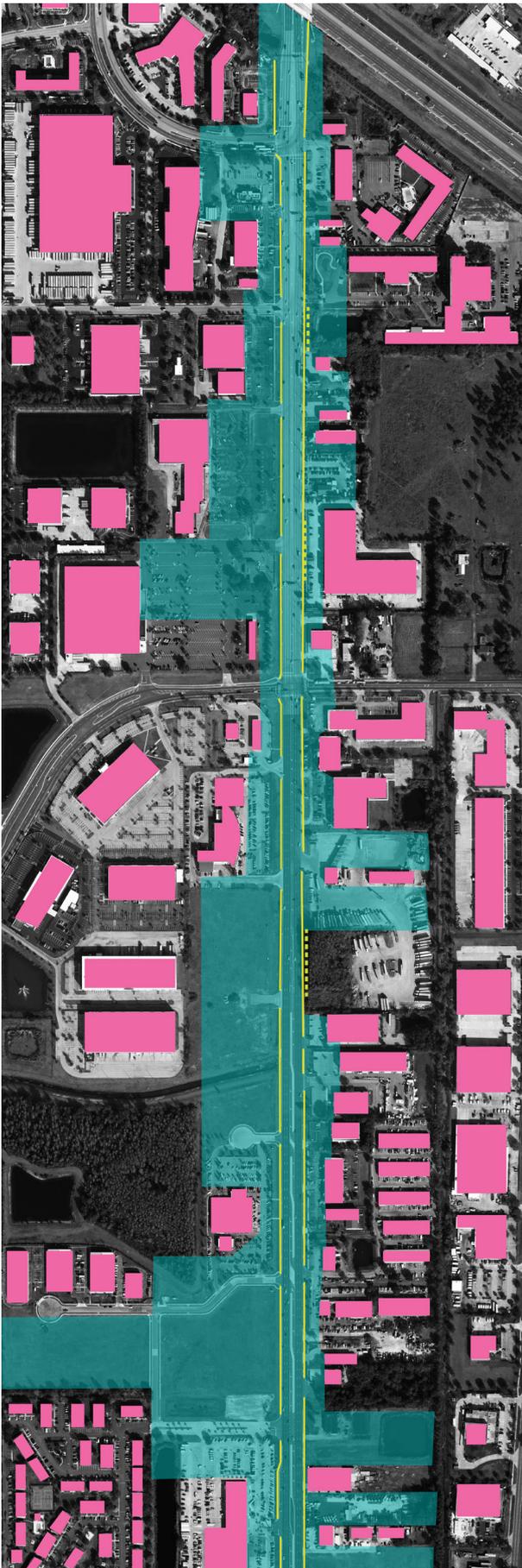
Segment 2

Transitional zone

Segment 3

Sprawl suburbia





Segment 1:

Pedestrian Friendliness Rubric

Score: 6/25 = 24%

3/5 Sidewalk width

Minimum sidewalks provided, 3'-5'

1/5 Sidewalk Buffer

0'-3' buffer, at times sidewalk is directly adjacent to road, otherwise 3' sod strip

2/5 Available canopy

Little to no canopy, some canopy provided by car dealership border trees

0/5 Building set-backs

Large setbacks, multiple car dealerships with large parking lots at frontage

0/5 Available Bike Lanes

No Bike lanes Available

Suitability for Pilot Projects - Medium

Opportunities

Large spaces of open land would be easy to infill

Latino owned repair shops and warehouses serve as a market for Latino products

Constraints

Far away from residential centers, this would mean community would have to drive to reach site

Industrial nature means many large chains, not much existing character to the site

Car dealerships unlikely to redevelop soon



Segment 2:

Pedestrian Friendliness Rubric

Score: 12/25 = 48%

2/5 Sidewalk width

Minimum sidewalks provided, 3'-5'

3/5 Sidewalk Buffer

3' buffer throughout, just a sod strip

2/5 Available canopy

Little to no canopy, some canopy provided by border trees

2/5 Building set-backs

Variable set backs 30'-100'+, small strip malls provide less parking at frontage

3/5 Available Bike Lanes

Some bike lanes although just striped and intermittent

Suitability for Pilot Projects - High

Opportunities

Small strip malls could be retrofitted

Quick solutions could be offered through tactical urbanism

Nearby to both industrial and residential areas

Strip malls currently contain the majority of Latino business

Constraints

Unknown owner opinion on redevelopment

Creeping generic redevelopment from south (Seg. 3)





Segment 3:

Pedestrian Friendliness Rubric

Score: 13/25 = 52%

2/5 Sidewalk width

Minimum sidewalks provided, 3'-5'

4/5 Sidewalk Buffer

3'+ buffer, just sod

Generally 5'-10'

3/5 Available canopy

Sporadic canopy

No street trees but some adjacent from properties or natural areas

2/5 Building set-backs

Variable set-backs, often large due to shopping centers or no street frontage (subdivision)

2/5 Available Bike Lanes

Some bike lanes although just striped and intermittent

Suitability for Pilot Projects - Low

Opportunities

Nearby residential areas could make this into a community center

Basic infrastructure laid out could facilitate quick tactical test runs

Constraints

Shopping centers recently redeveloped, unlikely to be interested in redeveloping again soon

Does not have much existing character since many of these are larger chains

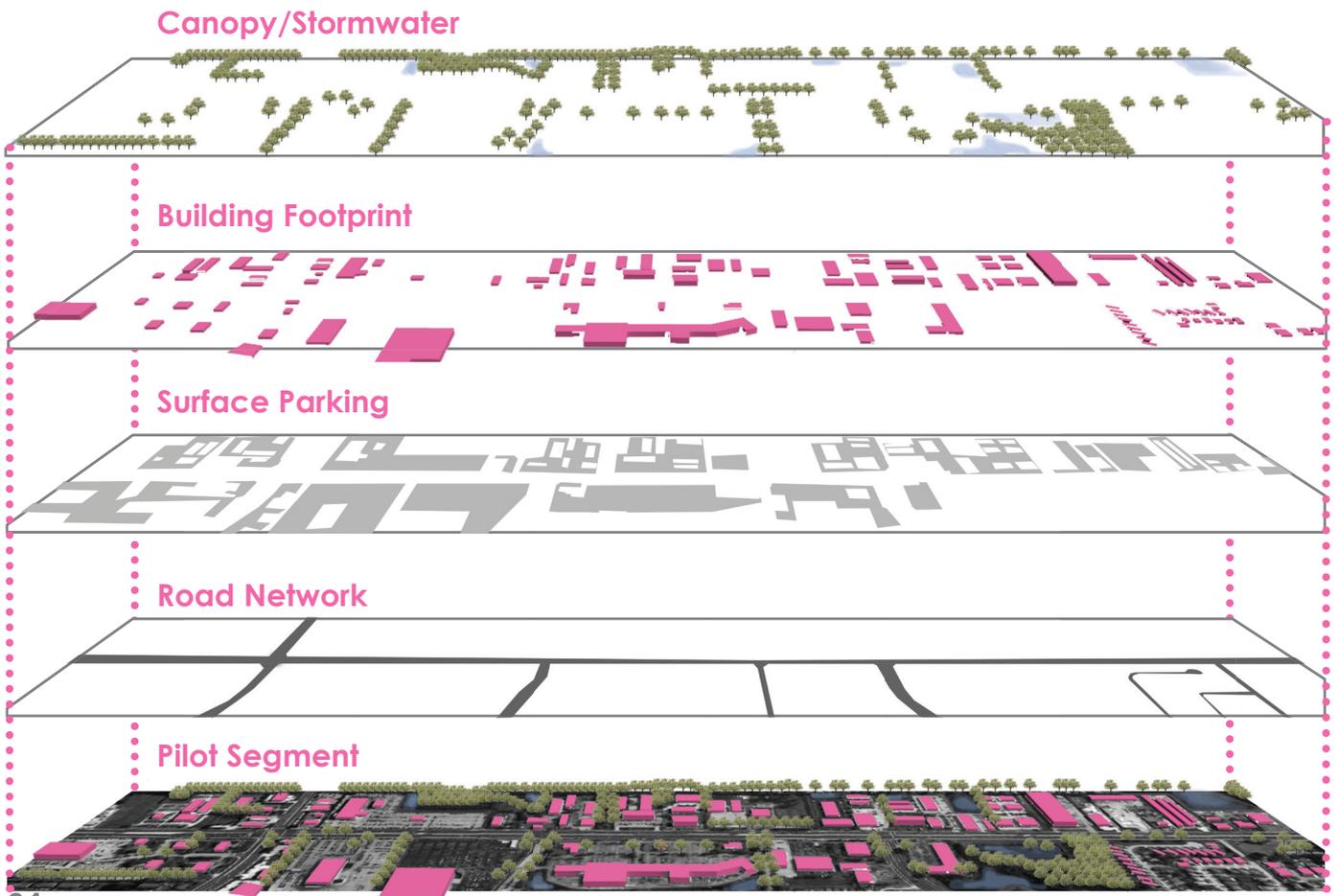
Possible rejection by residents for pilot program, might have to win them over first



Pilot Segment

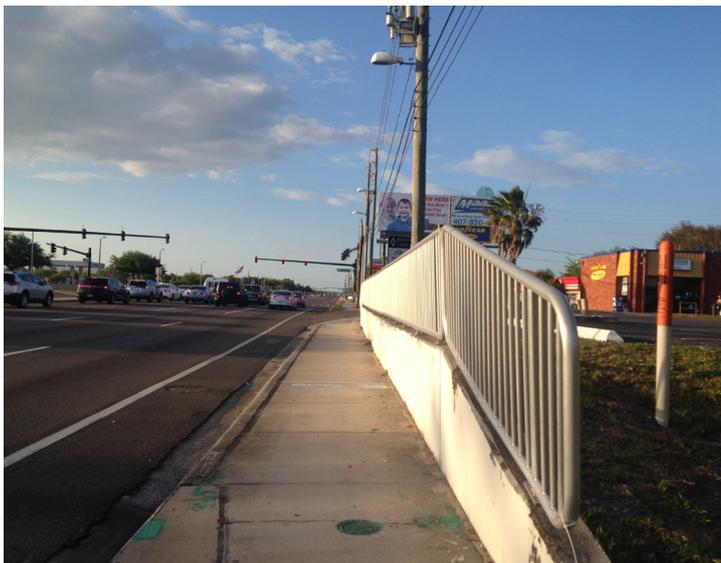
Utilizing Segment 2 as the pilot segment, pilot projects at specific sites can be introduced to test ideas and redevelop this segment as the core of the district. The segment currently displays many of the typologies of the other two segments so that ideas developed on this segment could be translated to other properties on Segment 1 or Segment 3.

Currently the site is composed primarily of strip malls and shopping centers with large parking lots. The road network is simple with large distances between roads inhibiting walkability and connectivity. Canopy is used primarily to delineate properties rather than providing shade or enhancing experience although several natural areas also occur on the segment. Stormwater is focused on the back of commercial properties hidden from view rather than amenitized and will have to be addressed in the final design..



Existing Conditions

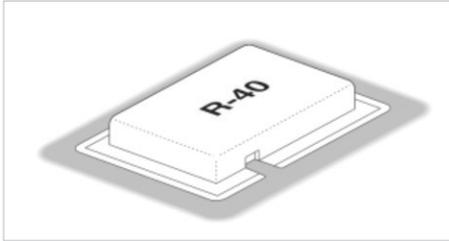
The pilot segment demonstrates car-centric development with a wide roadway at high speeds, large set-backs and minimal pedestrian infrastructure. Streetlights are tall focused on vehicle visibility and electrical lines run on wires overhead. It's composed of shopping centers with large parking lots (west) and strip malls with industrial warehouses behind (east). The roadway is often lined in food trucks utilizing the large set-backs, but these don't provide any amenities. There is no outdoor furniture throughout the site aside from a few bus stop benches..





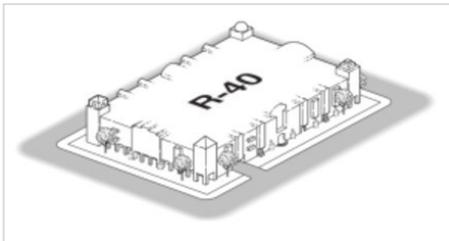
Guiding Principles

Urban Form: Form-Based Code



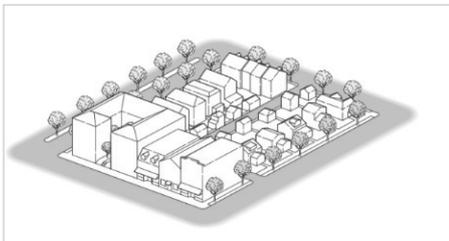
Conventional Zoning

Form-Based Code is defined by the Form Based Code Institute as “a land development regulation that fosters predictable built results and a high quality public realm by using physical form as the organizing principle.”¹ Form-Based Code focuses on the relationship between building masses and the public realm. The regulations and standards are represented by a series of diagrams which correlate to a regulating plan which determines the appropriate placement of a particular form and scale. These create different experiences throughout different areas of a regulating plan.



Zoning Design Guidelines

Conventional zoning plans, on the other hand, focus on the specific uses of a space and use metrics such as dwellings per acre and setbacks. Even when coupled with zoning design guidelines, these plans can be interpreted in many ways resulting in designs which may be incongruous to each other. On the other hand, a Form-Based Code focuses on form rather than specific use and may specify street and building types as well as number of floors and percentage of frontage necessary.



Form-Based Codes
Source: formbasedcodes.org

A Form-Based Code is generally made up of five basic elements with additional elements added as necessary. It includes a regulating plan, public standards, building standards, administration and definitions. For the purpose of this project, public standards and building standards are crucial. Public standards dictate the public realm in terms of sidewalk, travel lanes, and on-street parking. Meanwhile building standards dictate features and configurations of buildings that impact the public realm. Smartcode is a type of Form-Based Code developed by the Center for Applied Transect Studies which utilizes transect studies to determine factors such as building height, type of facades and civic spaces.²

1 “Form Based Codes Defined” <http://formbasedcodes.org/definition/>
2 “Codes & Manuals” <http://transect.org/codes.html>

Sprawl Repair & Suburban Retrofitting

Sprawl Repair is based on transect studies and focuses on transforming single-use car-dominated developments into complete communities for better economic, social and environmental performance.¹At a community scale, sprawl repair is approached as a range of measures to help guide and promote complete communities.

These include:

- Site feasibility
This includes market analyses and demographics analyses as well as ownership structures
- Applying urban design techniques
Including rethinking parking distributions, adding additional building typologies, repairing thoroughfares and defining open and civic spaces
- Introducing regulatory and management techniques
These include form-based codes as well as regulating plans and marketing
- Incentives for implementation
Incentives include attaining grants or tax credits as well as attaining funding for special right-of-way projects which improve the public realm

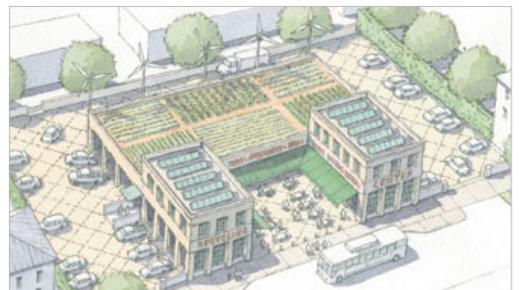
Galina Tachieva’s “Sprawl Repair Manual” goes into specific retrofitting solutions for various urban situations and sites. Most commonly, the addition of liner buildings helps densify otherwise low density sprawl into more livable communities. Several options for different roadway configurations are also given to optimize thoroughfares.

Drive-Through



Source: Sprawl Repair Manual

Strip Center



Source: Sprawl Repair Manual

¹ Galina Tachieva, “Sprawl Repair Manual” (Washington D.C.: Island Press, 2010).



Source: <http://www.confluence-denver.com/>



Source: <http://creativeplacemaking.t4america.org/>



Source: <http://www.artplaceamerica.org/>



Source: <http://www.83degreesmedia.com/>

Placemaking: Creative Placemaking

Creative Placemaking¹ unites public, private, non-profit and community sectors to shape the character of a neighborhoods specifically shaped around arts and culture. This approach fosters economic development by recirculating residents' incomes locally, re-using underutilized land and buildings and creating local jobs.

There a handful of components of successful creative placemaking initiatives. Among them is a creative initiator, usually in the form of either a single person or a small collective generating a placemaking vision. This single originator develops an idea for what a place can become and puts it into place in a particular site. For example, Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs animated a vacant lot with a program creating apprenticeship opportunities for youth with working artists. Additionally, creative placemaking aims to isolate what makes an area unique and design around that distinctiveness. This usually takes the form of creating a cultural center in the form of theater or performance space with various degrees of success. In Phoenix, a large visual arts program was taken on to adorn miles of sound barrier highways to add art onto a sprawling metro. Additionally, the approach must mobilize public will in order to create a champion in the program. Sometimes this occurs in the form of a member of local government whereas sometimes it is more focused on a grassroots citizen pushed support for the idea, however this support is key to the project moving forward. The project must also garner private sector support with the private sector being willing to invest in cultural resources and promote culture in the area. Creative placemaking also relies in engaging the arts community and creating partnerships throughout different levels of interests.

Possible challenges in creative placemaking include the possibilities of gentrification and displacement. To prevent these, affordable housing plans must be set forth from the beginning.

¹ Ann Markusen and Anne Gadwa, "Creative Placemaking" (Washington: National Endowment for the Arts, 2010).

Latino Aesthetics

While Creative Placemaking serves as a foundation for this project, the area does not currently have a strong arts community. For creative placemaking to be incorporated into this project, guest artists would be invited and a combination of community-run and artist-run pieces would be incorporated throughout the spaces. In order to provide a vision of what the site could look like, different aesthetic styles coming from Latin America were compiled. These art forms serve to inform the different types of art that could be incorporated into the project.

Street Art

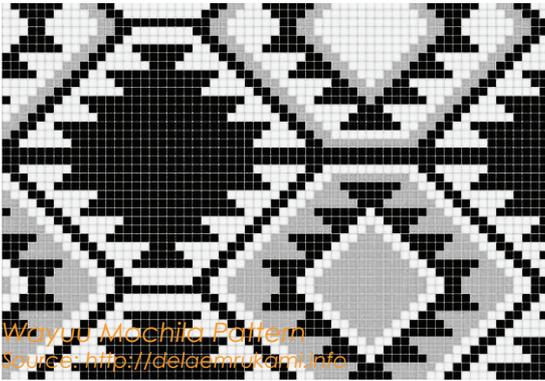
Street art is a growing art form in Latin America with cities like Bogota and Rio de Janeiro decriminalizing street art. Because of this, various artists throughout the world are flocking to these cities to collaborate with local artists on new pieces. The additional decriminalization of street art also allows pieces to be more thoughtful and engaging because the artists are free to spend more time on their work. This particular art form could prove very beneficial in the community turning current vandalizing tags into meaningful murals and exposing youth in the community to careers in design fields.





Folk Art

Folk Art traditions continue to be strong in Latin America with artisanal objects being regularly sold in markets. Some of these are then imported and sold in the shops at the strip malls in the area. These objects could be incorporated into markets while their visuals are incorporated into the redesign and marketing of the new district.



Wayuu Mochila Pattern
Source: <http://delae.mrakami.info>



Taino Beadwork - Puerto Rico
Source: Francisco Gonzalez



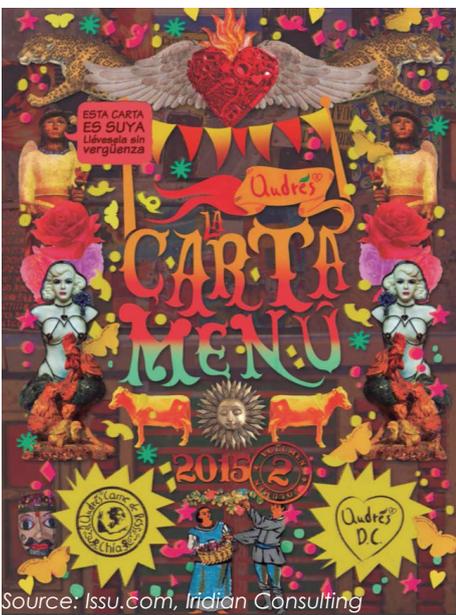
Colombian Molas
Source: joanveronica.blogspot.com



Taino symbols
Source: mbentz art



Huipil - Mexico
Source: flickr.com/KarenEtwell



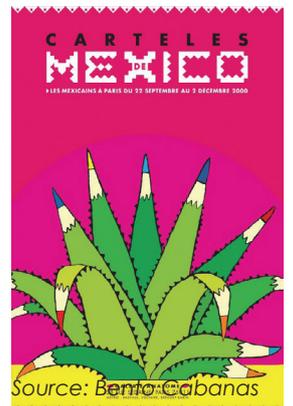
Source: Issu.com, Iridian Consulting

Graphic Design

Modern Latin American graphic design combines clean elements of design with vernacular imagery and traditional folk art. These aesthetics can be applied to the branding of the district as well as specific business branding within the corridor.



Source: Zoveck Estudio



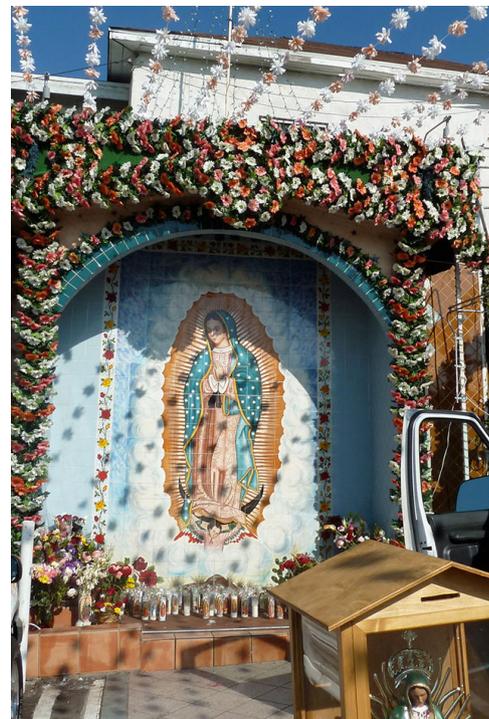
Source: Bemto Cabanas

Latino Urbanism

Latino Urbanism¹ is a term coined by James Rojas in 1991 based on observations of the East L.A. landscape and the vernacular spaces Latinos had carved out for themselves. It was defined by Mendez as “Latinos’ cultural inclinations for social interaction and their adaptive energies...creating a de facto environment that a de facto environment supports compact city and New Urbanist lifestyles.” Latino Urbanism is based on the idea that Latinos culturally operate on a more social scale than Americans. Therefore, Latinos tend to adapt their surroundings to create social type environments that allow for those cultural interactions to take place. Of observations in Los Angeles James Rojas noted “by working, playing, and hanging out in spaces like streets, front yards, and driveways, East L.A. residents create a spontaneous, dynamic and animated landscape that is unlike any other in Los Angeles.”

Latino Urbanism developed from these observations of Latino vernacular spaces in East L.A. into developmental strategies that aim to support Latino placemaking and be responsive to the specific needs and experiences of Latino residents. These take the form primarily of changes in regulations which often limit the more informal character of Latino exchanges. For example, informal businesses like street vendors and food trucks may be common in Latin America and in Latino enclaves in the USA, but are often regulated against in the USA which may negatively impact a Latino community.

Throughout the literature created since 1991, there have been a few topics that the concepts of Latino Urbanism have not yet covered. Primarily, the concepts of Latino Urbanism today focus on long established urban communities who are often various generations deep into their immigration. This means that the communities have had the time to develop their own vernacular styles but also have a distinct Latino culture from first or 1.5-generation immigrants. Secondly, the focus on urban spaces ignores the large populations of Latinos in both rural areas and suburban areas. The latter is of specific interest for this project as current data shows that most Latino population growth is currently occurring in “new gateways” in primarily suburban areas.



¹ Gerardo Francisco Sandoval & Marta Maria Maldonado, “Latino Urbanism revisited: placemaking in new gateways and the urban-rural interface” *Journal of Urbanism: International Research on Placemaking and Urban Sustainability*, 5:2-3, (July 2012) 193-218.

Welcoming and Inclusive Parks - Eugene, OR¹

In spring of 2015, James Rojas came together with the City of Eugene and the University of Oregon to hold a series of workshops and outreach efforts to determine how the city of Eugene might make parks and community centers more welcoming and inclusive for the Latino community. The outreach team interacted with over 350 people in the community to see what they liked about open spaces and what they would change. The team conducted five different public engagement events during existing family events. This approach focused on receiving opinions in family events where Latinos already felt welcomed rather than trying to host a stand alone event focused on public input, like a traditional public meeting. The events also focused on open-ended “play” rather than surveys including asking participants to build their ideal park space using craft supplies and setting large models that participants could engage with; this allowed for a wider and more honest range of participant responses.

The studied showed two main deficiencies in the existing park system. First, Latinos did not feel culturally included in spaces. They found that spaces focused particularly on solitary spaces and did not have spaces for larger family groups and extended families. Additionally, some members expressed feelings of “hypervisibility” or feeling uncomfortable and sticking out because of their heritage. It was recommended that parks include spaces that focused on social events as well as creating spaces that celebrated Latino culture through art as well as naming. Additionally, ensuring that all spaces included both English and Spanish signage. Secondly, Latinos found they preferred “informal” management of spaces. Latinos felt uncomfortable in spaces because they did not know whether they were allowed or not allowed to perform certain activities in spaces. This included not knowing if they had to reserve pavilion space or how to do this as well as whether pick-up soccer games were allowed in different spaces. Recommendations for this issue included ceding control of party permits to the community, easing street vendor permitting or creating special “vendor zones,” and being clearer about how reserving systems work and posting instructions in English and Spanish.

While these results reflect the Eugene community, they also resonate throughout Latino communities in the U.S.A. and their recommendations can be applied throughout.

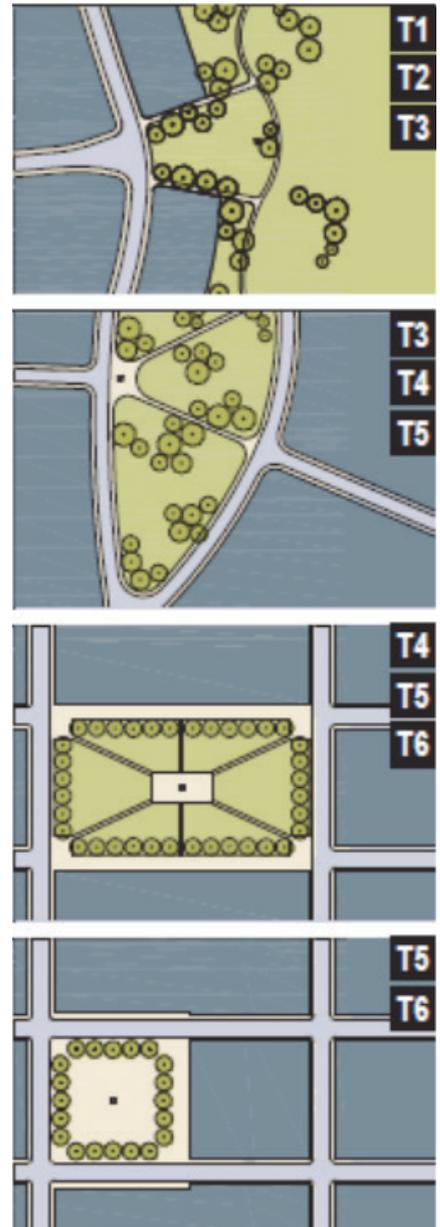
¹ Dr. Dan Platt, “Encouraging Spaces for Latino Community Participation: Creating Welcoming and Inclusive Parks and Community Centers in Eugene, Oregon” (eugene-or.gov)

Latino Urban Typologies

Latino Urbanism serves as a good basis in the approach of the project, however, the approach was developed from a different context from that of this project. Latino urbanism was developed in result of long established communities that had evolved their own typologies throughout various generations as well as existing in far more urban contexts. Therefore, Latino urbanism focuses on improving policies to improve existing spaces rather on creating particular forms.

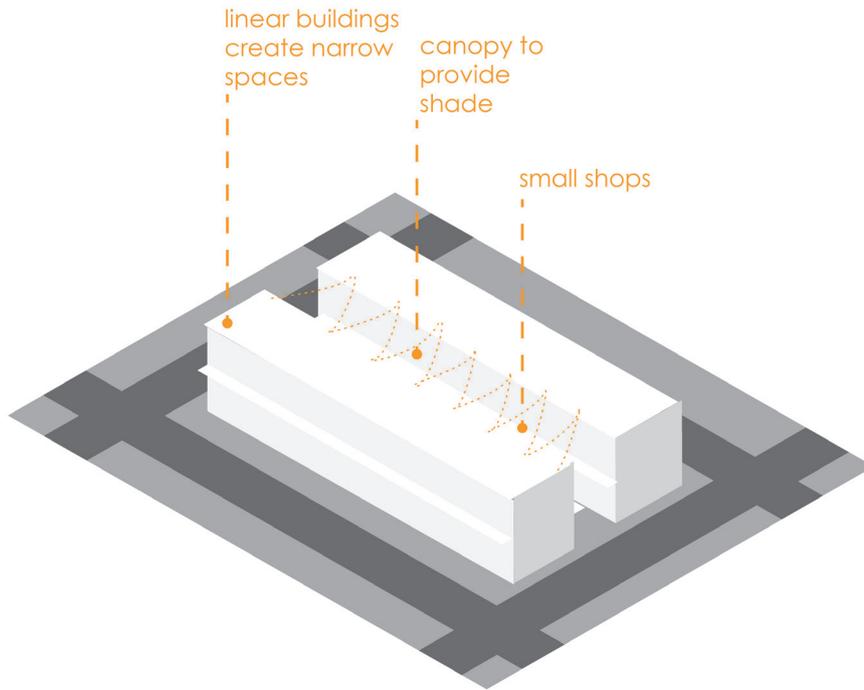
The study site, on the other hand, is inhabited by a fairly recent community with many residents being first or second generation immigrants. There are no existing open spaces and Latino spaces exists within the interiors of buildings rather than outward expressions. Therefore there needed to be a development of typologies for Latino open spaces that fit these communities. Additionally, because this area is a gateway community, or a fairly new community where immigrants first arrive, a stronger tie to existing Latin American forms was necessary.

Smartcode v9.2 currently provides a similar set of typologies, providing particular typologies of open space for communities at different scales and explicitly referencing them in their coding. Using a similar approach, this project developed a set of Latino Urban Typologies based on observations of existing spaces in Latin America, in both coastal areas and interiors as well as cities and small towns. These typologies are recognizable throughout Latin American culture.



Civic Spaces
Source: SmartCode v9.2

The market: linear public/private space for crowds



The market

Market spaces are a narrow typology existing either in interior spaces or in interstitial spaces between building masses. They are composed of micro-businesses selling a variety of products and are generally completely open frontages. These types of shops rely on the display of their goods for business rather than marketing of the individual micro-businesses. However, relationships built by repeat customers and word of mouth create strong customer-merchant relationships. These typologies serve as natural incubators.

These spaces provide a more dense and livable response to strip malls, allowing for low rent spaces and incubator spaces in a more urban context.



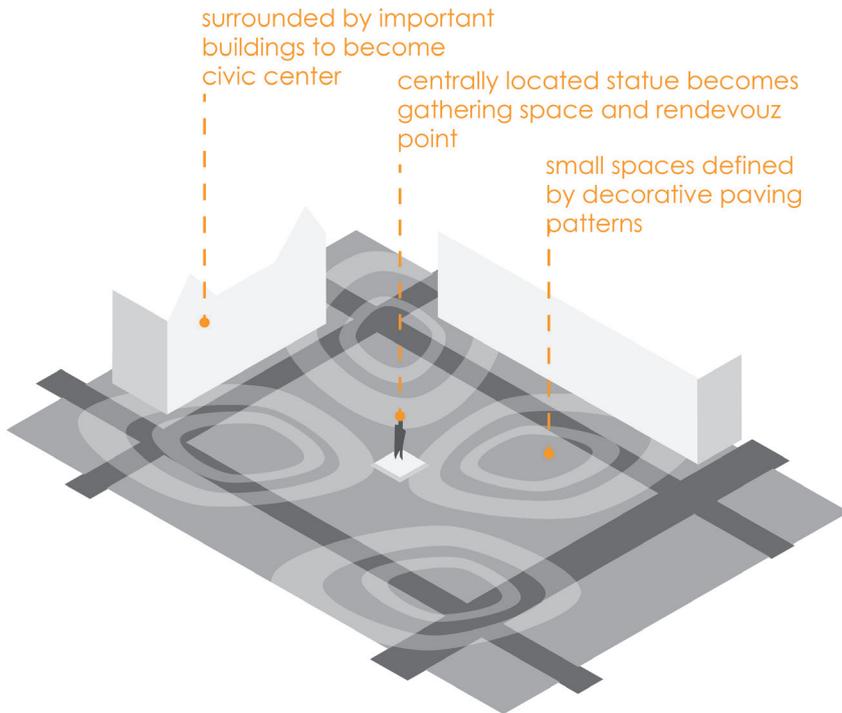
The park

Latin American urban fabrics include public parks similar to those in the U.S.A. These provide natural spaces for urban communities and are more common in larger cities where natural space is more rare than in small towns and rural areas. These spaces provide vegetation but mainly focus on providing canopy with lawns allowing for group activities. In some areas, parks also provide stormwater management.

The park: large public relaxation space



The plaza: large public gathering space



The plaza

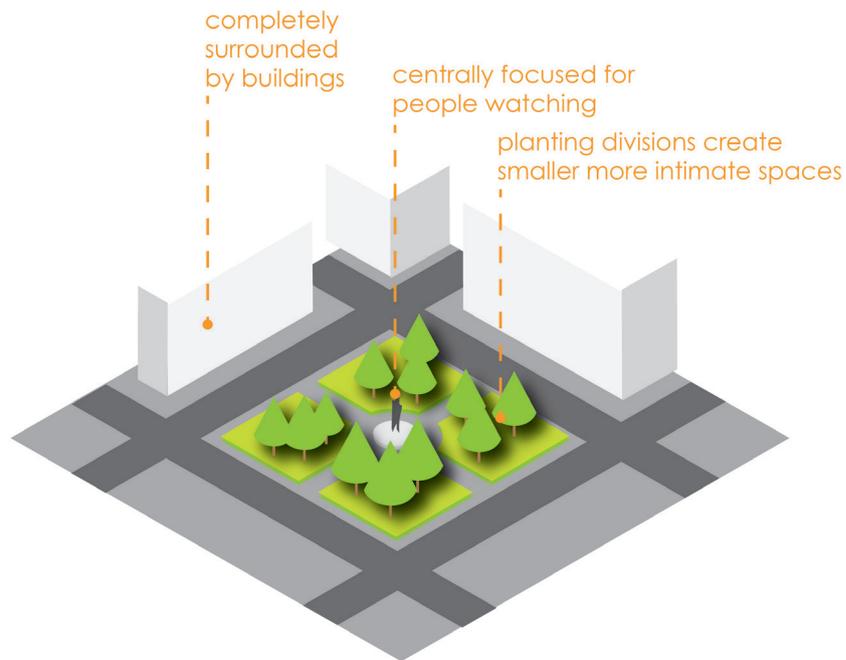
The plaza was brought over by Spanish settlers into the Americas and was placed as the center of a town and are generally surrounded by official uses as well as cathedral and banking institutions. As cities grew, additional plazas would be added throughout the city as community centers. The plaza is sometimes vegetated, but is often sparse and open and serves as the civic center of a town. The site forms the civic voice of the people and often the area where protests take place. It is also a flexible space and can host concerts, theater, festivals and other cultural events.



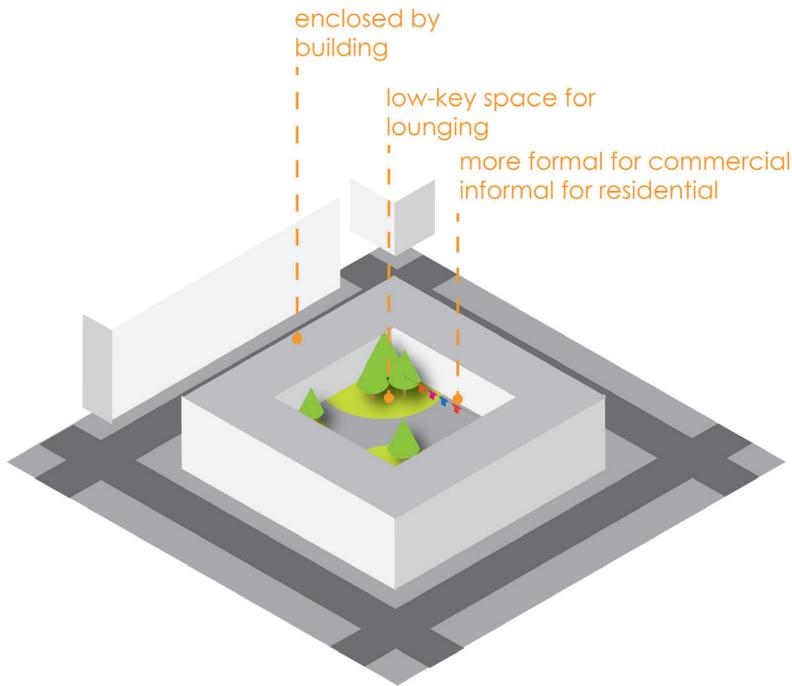
The square

The square is essentially a small plaza space and also serves a civic purpose. It is usually vegetated on the outside creating an inwardly looking space where people come to sit and people watch and gather with friends. The centrally focused space allows for performers to gather in the center for impromptu acts. Street vendors also occupy these spaces selling food or drinks for the people who come to hang out. This space serves an important social function as a meeting point of friends where they can “gossip” or generally exchange important community information and advice. While a plaza may serve as a vocal space of civic expression, the square allows a community to function on a day-to-day basis.

The square: small public gathering space



The courtyard: small private relaxing space



The courtyard

The courtyard serves as an urban typology of a backyard. In Spanish, both a “backyard” and a courtyard are referred to by the word “patio” because both concepts serve essentially the same use. The courtyard is a low-key space for family gathering and is where kids play and laundry is done as well as general relaxing. In larger apartment developments, this may be replaced by an atrium space that brings different tenants of the building together. Events are often held in these courtyards from birthday parties to graduation celebrations. The courtyard serves as a space to create familiar community whether it be in a single-family home or for an entire apartment buildings.



Case Studies

At a glance:

Car-free days on Sundays and Holidays provide 121 km of recreational space

Specific agency allows the project to run smoothly

Program has changed public opinion on cyclists and pedestrians and helped shape policy

Application: provide recreational space, promote alternative transportation

Roadway: CicloVia¹

Bogota, Colombia

In 1974, Bogota, Colombia implemented a car-free program running originally through two streets in the city center. Today the program spans 121 km of roads reserving roads for cyclists, skater and pedestrians. The road closures occur every Sunday as well as holidays and bring out citizens around the city from various ages and social classes. The project provides public open space for citizens while promoting alternative transportation systems and engaging citizens in city programs.

CicloVia began as a small protest held in 1974 advocating for cyclist and pedestrian rights similar to today's Critical Mass cycling events. Just two years later, in 1976, the project had expanded to 40 km, however, the project wasn't formalized until 1995. This was in part due to the creation of the Instituto Distrital de Recreacion y Deporte (District Institute of Sports and Recreation) in 1995. This new agency works in coordination with government agencies as well as private sponsors to run the event on a weekly basis. Before the creation of this agency, the program was inconsistent depending on various political leadership. In 2006, the program was expanded to 121 km connecting various areas of the city. This expansion also included the addition of cultural and recreational events such as yoga, aerobics classes and bike riding classes as well as music performances and various events. While on CicloVia, it is also normal to see informal economies pop up such as various street vendors selling everything from juice to handcrafted clothing and artisanal art.

The program has been successful in changing public opinion regarding the use of cars and socializing a respect for cyclists and pedestrians since more citizens have been out on the streets.

A similar program could be implemented in this program as part of a community outreach effort. Reducing OBT to a car-free system, or at least closing a few lanes for pedestrians, would change the perception of alternative forms of transportation as well as providing provisional recreational space for the community.

¹ "How Ciclovía's Car-Free Days Give Bogota Room to Breathe," Development Asia, development.asia/case-study (May 2016)

CicloVia

Bogota, Colombia



CicloRuta

Bogota, Colombia



At a glance:

Extensive bicycle network:
over 500 km

Increased bike use
especially among lower
social classes

Incorporates cycling traffic
with pedestrian traffic to
separate from vehicular
traffic for safety

Application: safer
alternative connections for
residents

CicloRuta¹

Bogota, Colombia

CicloRuta is an extension of the CicloVia system in Bogota, Colombia and is one of the most extensive bicycle path networks in the world. The system extends over 500 km and connects citizens of all social classes to BRT routes (TransMilenio) as well as parks and community centers. The system runs through a variety of topographies both urban settings and natural features and has been made part of basic infrastructure throughout the city. Bogota's cycling use has increased from 0.2% to 4% due to the installation of these services. Citizens are opting to bike to their destinations rather than wait in traffic and contribute to pollution. This has led to a new sector of economic development with new business ventures focusing around bike parking services, repair shops, app development to the creation of the BiciTaxi that takes advantage of the existing infrastructure to create a taxi system that skips the traffic.

Particularly striking of this system is the way the infrastructure seamlessly blends in with the rest of the infrastructure. Cycling trails form part of many sidewalks with half of the sidewalk devoted to cycling and the other half devoted to pedestrians. While there is a social learning curve associated with the incorporation of this system, having cyclists ride with pedestrians separates them from traffic lanes which in Bogota are very unforgiving. Even in areas where vehicular traffic travels right beside cycling traffic, the raised biking trail provides enough of a buffer for cyclists to feel safer and be separated from traffic. The cycling system also links various destination points serving as a true method of transportation rather than simply a recreational trail. The cycling system has also helped reclaim previously hidden green spaces with trails running alongside parks and wetlands.

While this system is far larger than the scope of this project, the form can be applied here. Buffering of the bike lanes as well as combining them with pedestrian traffic would make for a safer cycling experience rather than a hostile corridor. The system could also connect residential areas to commercial areas and newly incorporated green spaces. Given that 70% of U.S. car trips are less than 2 mi., the incorporation of this system could potentially reduce the amount of cars on OBT while connecting residents to commercial areas and civic spaces.

¹ "Bogota's CicloRuta is One of the Most Comprehensive Cycling Systems in the World," C40 Cities, c40.org/case_studies (November 3, 2011)

Chinatown/ International District

Seattle, WA



At a glance:

Strategic Plan developed in 1999 as a response to growing city

Aimed at capitalizing on Seattle's growth while empowering community

Plan focused on: culture & economics, housing, public spaces and accessibility

Application: District visioning should take these aspects into consideration

District: Chinatown/International District

Seattle, WA

The Chinatown/International District developed vernacularly over time, however, in 1999 a district strategic plan¹ was developed in order to enhance the existing district. The district faced a series of changes coming from the city. Seattle was growing at a faster rate with development projects focusing in neighboring south downtown focused around the development of an 18-hour downtown. The Chinatown/International District was faced with the challenge of wanting to capitalize on the growth of Seattle while also ensuring the viability of their community.

The strategic plan focused on 4 sections: culture and economics, housing, public spaces and accessibility. Cultural and economic vitality focused on marketing the neighborhood through strategies such as facade improvements, night-time programming and business resource centers to aid existing businesses and support job creation in the community. Housing in this context focused primarily on preventing gentrification through preserving affordable housing and upgrading vacant and sub-standard buildings. Critical public spaces were also identified to improve streetscapes, provide additional open spaces and activate existing parks. These improvements also included public art as well as sidewalk vendors. Finally, accessibility aimed on improving transportation networks focusing primarily adding cycling connections into the district as well as improving parking conditions by adding additional on-street parking and creating multi-level parking structures to improve the street level for pedestrians. These approaches all serve to improve conditions within the district.

The study site for this project faces some similar issues, with Orlando growing quickly and becoming a more active community, the district should capitalize on this growth to become a destination within the city while boosting the economic and housing conditions for its existing residents. Although the Chinatown/International District is a far more dense urban fabric, similar approaches can be taken in the study area to address livability, economic viability and cultural visibility.

¹ "Chinatown International Strategic Plan," City of Seattle, seattle.gov (June 15, 1999)

Mission District

San Francisco, CA



At a glance:

Grew vernacularly from influx of Latinos in 1960s

Latino culture is displayed through murals, architectural details and streetscape

Gentrification pressures are heavily impacting this site

Application: Incorporation of murals and design details recall Latino heritage
How do you minimize gentrification?

Mission District

San Francisco, CA

San Francisco's Mission District is a complicated district and provides examples of the creation of community and sense of place while struggling to maintain its character due to growing pressures of gentrification.¹ The Mission District grew vernacularly as a result of white flight in the 1960s which left the previously Irish dominated district in the hands of Latinos from various backgrounds including Mexico, Central America, Cuba and Chile. The diverse backgrounds served to create and develop a Latino community which is evident today in its streets. A series of events pushed the Mission district to become highly involved in activism participating in labor union movements, such as Cesar Chavez's Farmworkers Movement, as well as cultural preservation movements. Due to these strong pressures, the district developed into an activist and artist enclave and murals throughout the area reflect the rich Latino history of the area. The evidence of this culture is seen in the murals, the adaptations on architecture and the streetscape. Currently, the Mission streetscape plans are designed to reflect the Latino heritage of the area.

At the same time, current gentrification pressures are weighing heavily on the community and new organizations are coming together to fight development. Due to its cool vibe and ease of transportation, the Mission district has become the new home of many Silicon Valley entrepreneurs and rents have skyrocketed from \$600 to \$1,800 in very few years. Furthermore, shops are often on a month-by-month rent basis which creates an unstable situation for shopkeepers and accelerates rates of gentrification. Improvements are received in the community cautiously as improvements in safety could also mean gentrification in the area.

The Mission District provides two perspectives on this project. From an aesthetic standpoint, the Mission District provides a look of murals and vibrant street life. Although the Mission District shows the extreme situation of gentrification along the Silicon Valley, it provides the question of how areas of low-income minorities may be developed in order to reduce gentrification while celebrating a culture in rapidly growing city.

¹ Lucy K. Phillips, "Revitalized Streets of San Francisco: A Study of Redevelopment and Gentrification in SoMa and the Mission," Scripps College (2019)

Mills 50

Orlando, FL



At a glance:

Celebrates existing Asian cultures while promoting local artists

Organized through a series of committees in charge of shaping aspects of the district

Utilizes art projects and interventions for placemaking

Application: Art projects create a sense of place
Main streets framework could be successfully copied

Mills 50

Orlando, FL

The Mills 50 District is part of the Orlando “Main Streets” initiative which aims at creating corridors that serve as community centers. The district is at the “intersection of creativity and culture” because it combines its rich cultural background, in the form of a large Vietnamese population and many Vietnamese businesses, and a sprouting artist scene. The district is locally known for its cuisine in the form of various Asian restaurants and its many murals created by the new artist population. It is also a literal intersection of Mills Ave. and Colonial Ave. (SR-50). Currently, the district is composed of older buildings lining both streets with narrow sidewalks along an unsafe road. However, the introduced placemaking has been enough to draw local crowds into this area.

Mills 50 is managed by a board of directors which oversee a series of committees.¹ The Organization committee is in charge of forming cooperations between several groups within the community. A Promotion committee is in charge of marketing while a Business Development committee focus on diversifying and strengthening the economic base. Finally, the Design committee focuses on improving the district’s physical form providing art programs as well as infrastructure.

Jeff Thompson, chair of the Design committee, was interviewed for this capstone regarding his involvement in the creation of the Mills 50 project. The development of the district began in finding the identity in the community in celebrating both its cultural background and its artistic assets. Jeff has been in charge of coordinating various art projects including wall murals, as well as art on dumpsters and electrical boxes. These have been so successful that they have spilled over onto other districts including Orlando’s College Park. There have also been improvements done to improve the conditions for pedestrians including bike racks and bus stops. While this district is still young, it has gained a significant sense of place and has capitalized on its social capital to create jobs and bolster businesses in the area.

For the Latino/International District, Mills 50 shows a model of creative placemaking that could be incorporated into the district. It also provides a framework currently used in the City of Orlando which could be copied in the unincorporated Orange County.

1 “Comittees,” Mills 50, mills50.org

Portland Mercado

Portland, OR



At a glance:

Serves as incubator of Latino businesses through “market” model

Provides strong organizational backing for financial empowerment

Provides cultural space and programming to become the heart of the Latino community

Application: Incorporation of market spaces as natural incubators

Sites:

Portland Mercado

Portland, OR

The Portland Mercado¹ serves as a Latino small business incubator run by the organization Hacienda CDC. It is composed of an outdoor component and an indoor component. Outdoors, a trellis space creates an outdoor dining room that doubles as event space for various festivals. It has permanent food trucks displaying different Latino cuisines and formalizing what is usually an informal activity. Indoors, the space is composed of a market-style series of small businesses which host farmer’s markets as well as cultural events. The space has become a destination for surrounding neighborhoods and has also been successful in improving the perception of Latinos in Portland. Additionally, the space has provided a home to many cultural events drawing together the Latino community in Portland. The Portland Mercado also hosts business classes and seminars which empower the community and provide skills for successful businesses.

The spaces in the Portland Mercado are all owned by Hacienda CDC, a non-profit focused on empowering Latino businesses. This allows for rents to be controlled and accessible serving as an incubator space. In its first year, Hacienda CDC launched 19 businesses. The site has also become the cultural heart of the Latino community in Portland.

A similar private/public space could be developed in the Latino/International district with a market model to help incubate small businesses. Adding event spaces and performance spaces would also benefit this community. Like all other case studies before it, this one demonstrates the importance of a strong organization backing to support the project.

1 “From a Dream to Reality,” Portland Mercado, portlandmercado.org

Artegon

Orlando, FL



At a glance:

Originally a shopping mall transformed into an “anti-mall” market incubator

Assistance provided to shopkeepers

Closed in 2017 and left a hole in the market which could be filled by this project

Application: Market style incubator, market niche could be filled by new development

Artegon

Orlando, FL

Artegon was, for many years, an underutilized shopping mall by the name of Festival Bay. In 2014, it was reopened as Artegon branded as the “Anti-Mall” for its unique focus on small artisanal shops rather than established brands¹. Artegon was originally composed of wire-mesh rows of micro-shops in a market style arrangement but these micro-shops were later re-done as various facades developed as branding for each individual shop. While the shopping center was developed to house artisanal shops, it drew in a variety of immigrant businesses of various origins who imported interesting artistic products from their countries. While the shopping center was growing and due to expand, it was closed in early 2017 (during this capstone) due to managerial decisions. This came to the shock of many Orlando residents as this “anti-mall” had gained a following and served as incubator space for many small businesses. Since its closure many of these shops have had to retreat to online shops or close down entirely.

Artegon was successful in creating and exploiting the opposite of a well known brand, therefore serving as an incubator space. Small shops drew in crowds and were visited through word of mouth as well as their interesting facades, this allowed particularly immigrant businesses to flourish. The shopping center also created a variety of recreational spaces within its walkways adding play spaces and seating areas throughout. The management of the site also provided its tenants with branding consultations allowing for the vibrancy of the shops.

From a market analysis standpoint, the closure of Artegon provides a gap in a possible niche that could be filled by this project. Its market style easily fits within the Latino/International district which could house the displaced immigrant enterprises. Additionally, aspects of its playful open spaces can be imitated to create a sense of place.

1 “The Anti-Ordinary Anti-Mall” Design-Retail Magazine (Aug. 2016)



Conceptual Design

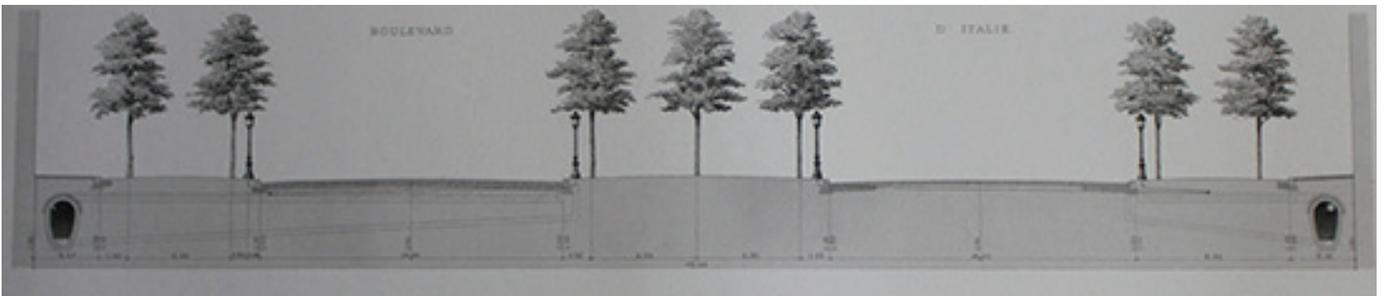


The Roadway: Impacts and Transformation

The existing Orange Blossom Trail is a large obstacle in the retrofit and redevelopment of this area. The current corridor is largely deleterious to the community. In the area, not many people walk or bike from location to location due to the general lack of pedestrian infrastructure and safety standards. Due to the high speeds, strip malls have developed at large setbacks from the road and rely on signage to bring in customers. This type of marketing works in favor of larger chain type businesses who can rely on their name brand alone to bring in customers, but smaller Latino businesses rely on word of mouth for traffic. As such, the market of each business is relatively small, serving primarily local Latinos and being generally undiscovered by the rest of the Orlando population.



However, this same roadway could have a transformative effect on the community. By redeveloping the roadway in a different section configuration, the experience of the space could dramatically change. These ideas come from the principles set forward by the Parisian promenades, such as Champs Elysee, which improve the urban form and experience allowing for comfortable pedestrian spaces and boosting the health and safety of the city.



Existing Conditions

The existing roadway conditions reflect design with a vehicular focus and low safety for pedestrians and cyclists. The current roadway consists of 6 or 7 lanes (depending on turn lanes) at a posted speed of 55 mph, although usually exceeded by a min. of 10 mph. There is no canopy for pedestrians and little/no buffer from the high speeds. Despite these high speeds, bike lanes, where existing, are painted lanes with no safety buffer. These conditions make the corridor very hostile to pedestrians and cyclists.



Pedestrian/Cyclist Experience:

- High speeds with minimal buffer
- Minimal median provides no respite for crossing
- Bike lanes are not protected from high speeds
- Road designs encourage high speeds
- Corridor does not have a sense of place



Option 1: Road Diet

This option is based on the form put forth by Bogota's Ciclovía. Traffic lanes are reduced in order to incorporate wider sidewalks and bike lanes at the level of sidewalks. The roadway abuts a buffer followed by the bike lane and finally the sidewalk so that there is a hierarchy of speeds allowing for safety of each of its components.

This option is the least impactful of all and requires little social change. Everyone just has to respect and remain in their lanes.



Advantages:

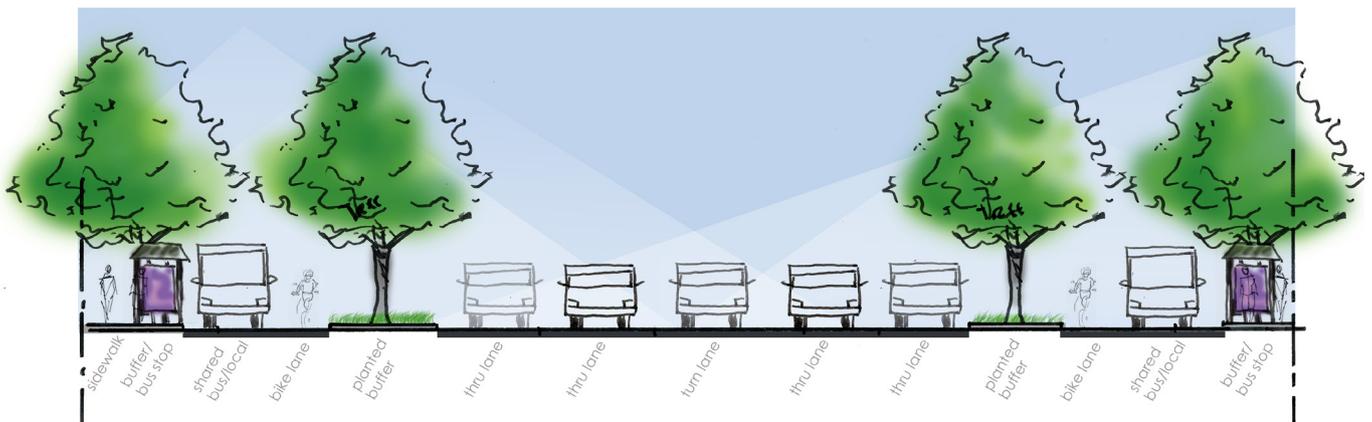
- Increased shade
- Enhances Infrastructure
- Protects each level of transportation
- Minimally Invasive

Disadvantages:

- Provides little impact in a new branding approach

Option 2: Boulevard

This boulevard option recognizes that there are different hierarchies in volumes, with some traffic moving locally while some traffic moves as a thoroughfare. By separating these types of traffic, traffic calming occurs towards the pedestrian areas while adding additional respite and a visual barrier for pedestrians attempting to cross the street. However, this change in flow is concerning in an area where traffic is already aggressive. Some accidents could occur while the new traffic flow is implemented.



Advantages:

- Increased shade
- Improve ease of crossing
- Reduces visual scale of road
- Enhances bus system

Disadvantages:

- Possible danger mixing bus and cycling
- Difficulties in residents adapting to new flow



Option 3: Paseo

This third option, based on Havana's Paseo de el Prado and Barcelona's Ramblas, focuses on creating public space in the middle of the road to account as a pedestrian oasis in the midst of all the traffic. This vision would be very visually impactful and minimally affect the flow of traffic. In the future, the middle strip could potentially be converted to a streetcar system. However, this option also brings the question of if anyone would actually use this space. Most examples of this typology have few lanes on either side.



Advantages:

- Increased shade
- Visually iconic
- Creates additional public space

Disadvantages:

- Large costly renovation
- Pedestrians need to cross several lanes to reach this space
- No inherent draw to use this space

Moving Forward

From these concepts, the option most amenable to an easy transition and creating a sense of place is the option of a road diet which creates a promenade and safe space for cyclists and pedestrians. This new element unites the entire district in a single vision and identity.

This option becomes an economic asset for the businesses abutting it as it shifts the focus from the road and onto the pedestrian activity and cycling. Increased pedestrian activity means a higher chance of incidental purchases and purchases based on the products displayed on the storefronts rather than on brand name. This is an advantage for smaller family-owned shops who do not have the brand name to draw in customers off the road.

The new promenade also provides public active space for the community and creates better connections between the neighborhoods and the commercial areas, allowing smaller trips to be more accessible via cycling or walking. This promenade would take place of some of the local traffic in alternate forms of transportation and allow people to move short distances without turning to their vehicles.

The Promenade



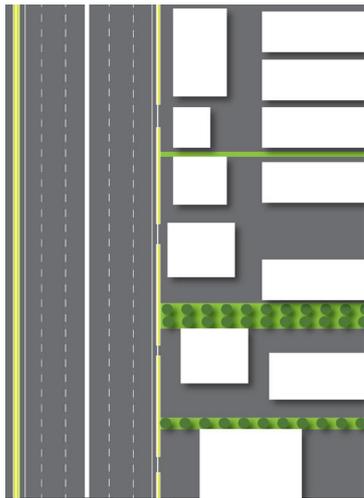
Sense of Place

While the new section for the roadway may provide a sense of place in the form of the new typology, the general result based solely on the section is generic. Finishes which must evoke Latino places. The inclusion of patterns, colorful street fronts, and art is essential to not only making this a great place to move through but an essential aspect of celebrating culture within the community. These finishes speak to the experience of moving through this place and make the corridor a destination rather than a thoroughfare.



Urban Form Study: Methodology

To examine the urban form, the existing urban form was abstracted into a series of footprints representing the various strip malls and warehouses along the corridor. From there a series of concepts were developed exploring what this site could become with various levels of redevelopment. Each concept provides a different response to the urban form and how these Latino urban typologies may be incorporated within them. Consistent with form based code, this approach focuses on density and urban form rather than particular uses.



Abstracted Existing



Concept 1:

Least Invasive



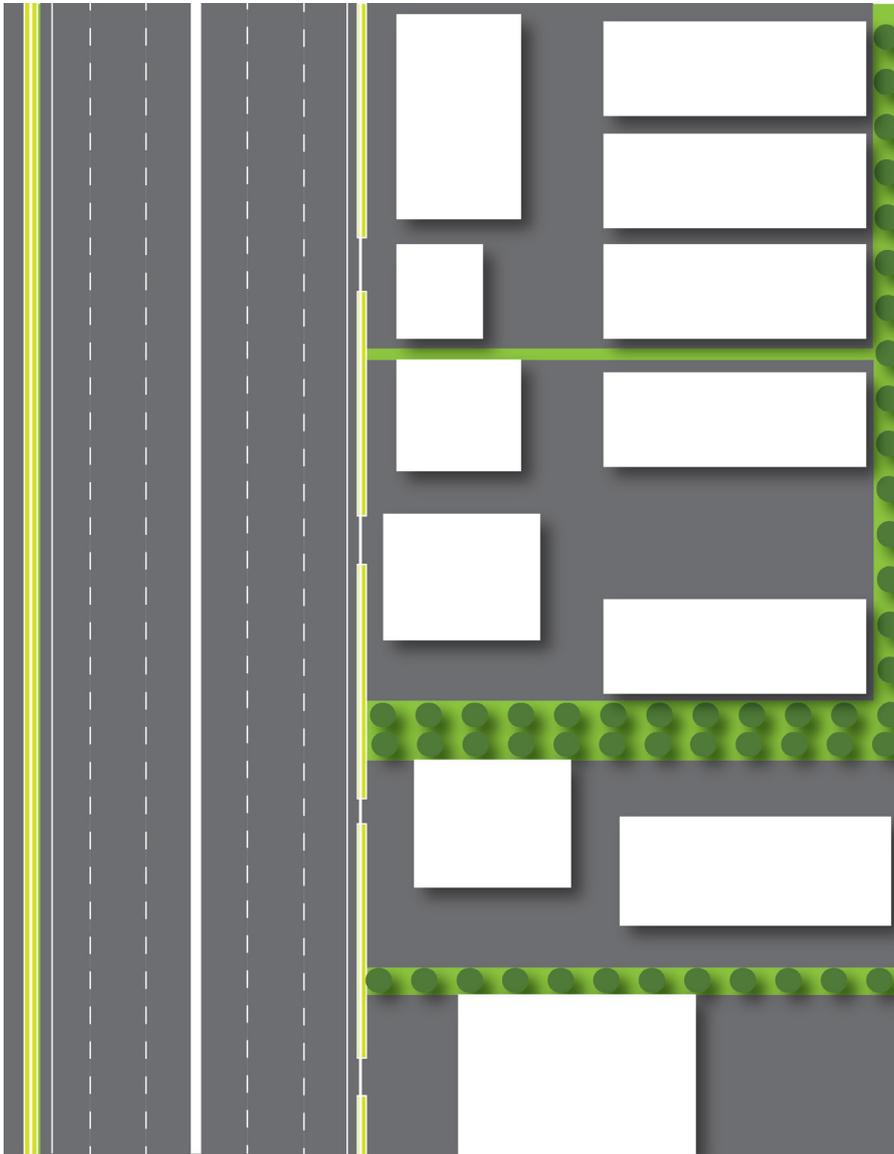
Concept 2:

Renewal & Retrofit



Concept 1:

Blank Slate



Abstracted Existing

The abstracted existing site is based on a compilation of sites primarily to the east of OBT. These sites have strip malls lining the road at variable setbacks with warehouses behind. Upon looking at these sites, the most striking view is the amount of parking in them. Parking exists in front of each strip mall with some strip malls having up to 4 dedicated parking lanes. Parking is also provided for the warehouses and auto repair shops around the back and sidewalks are rare in these developments.

Most of the lots of this typology are not interconnected and rely on vehicles entering and leaving OBT to navigate between shopping centers. Each lot is separated by the next by a planting buffer of some sort, some with trees and others simply bare sod.

Along the corridor, there is no public space or park space.



Concept 1: Least Invasive

This concept focuses on minimizing the amount of changes necessary to make an impact. Liner buildings are added as a retrofit to create better street frontage and provide public spaces. Latino urban typologies are incorporated in the design in the interstitial spaces formed by the new liner buildings and the existing footprints. Typologies focus on creating courtyards and squares to create a pleasant shopping and dining experience.

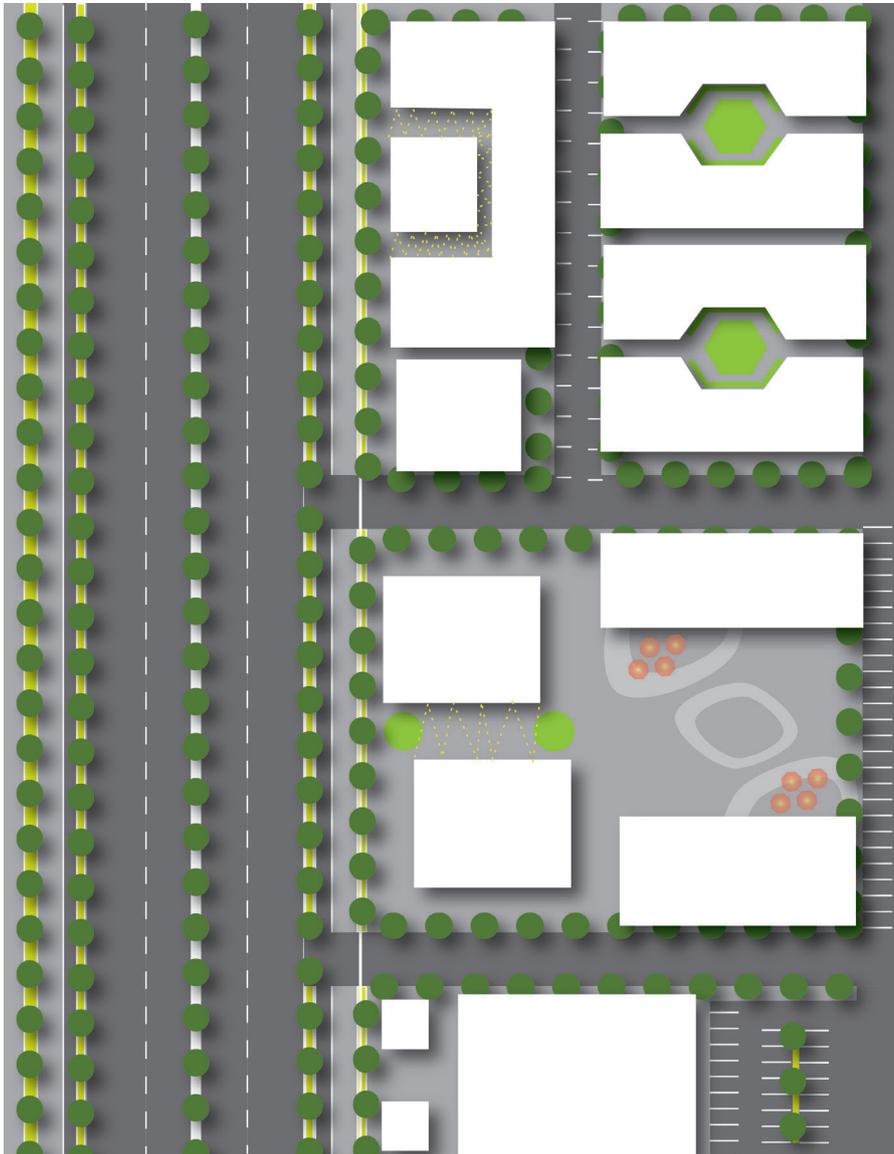
Connectivity is enhanced in this site by placing a road in the rear of the development to alleviate local traffic between shopping centers and revitalize businesses in the back of these developments.

Finally, parking counts are maintained by moving parking to the rear of the development to engage OBT more efficiently.

Application:

This concept may be applied on various sites throughout the study area, but is particularly suitable for sites with difficulties for change. This could be sites with multiple owners owning multiple lots or where cost is prohibitive of a more intense redevelopment.

The basic ideas of this concept may also apply to tactical urbanism practices and liner buildings could take the form of shipping containers or tiny homes while public spaces could be improvised on the existing parking spaces of various strip malls.



Concept 2: Renewal & Retrofit

This iteration focuses on both redevelopment and retrofit of various spaces. The site is focused on development through liner buildings but some additional redevelopment may occur to replace older buildings. Parking is reduced, as alternative forms of transportation are more used, and on-street parking is incorporated while maintaining some traditional parking around the back. The street grid is enhanced through new connecting roads which navigate around the buildings creating additional frontage.

Typologies such as larger plaza space, market streets and courtyards are added to create a sense of destination and draw more people to these businesses.

Application:

Various sites classify to have a similar approach applied, in particular already developed sites which would benefit from densifying practices. For this option to apply, the area must already be developed but have flexibility in redevelopment options. All lots could be owned by the same owner or have a development cooperative which helps oversee that everyone's interests are being met.



Concept 3: Blank Slate

This final iteration focuses on redevelopment keeping a few of the original buildings and adding liner buildings to enhance redevelopment.

As the most urban, parking is focused on on-street parking and parking garages to minimize wasted space of surface parking lots.

Since this site is being more extensively redeveloped, a street grid could be formed to alleviate traffic from OBT and improve connectivity.

The flexibility of this site allows for more latino urban typologies to be incorporated and would be an ideal site for a larger cultural plaza.

Application:

This approach is best suited for large empty sites or parking lots especially those in the big box developments to the west of OBT. The single owner large tract of land allows for a single vision to come forward while densifying these areas would help the unified vision of the district.

Conclusions

Due to the abstraction of the spaces and the approach as a footprint, the solutions tended to be highly generic. The abstraction of the site could lead to misconceptions as to how rigid the building footprints are, when in reality many of them are syncopated with differing setbacks from each other. From these solutions, it is difficult to see how these spaces are particularly Latino besides the application of Latino urban typologies. Additionally, more consideration needs to be taken regarding adjacent current uses to the sites. For example, while some of the sites are adjacent to industrial uses allowing for flexibility in use, some sites to the south are adjacent to single family homes which might require buffering or noise considerations limiting the uses adjacent to these homes.

However, developing these concepts aids in developing a series of recommendations for the sites as well as actionable applications for each typology that could help in approaching each site with the appropriate form and intensity of redevelopment.

Recommendations

Based on these concepts, a series of recommendations was developed for this site:

1. Create a rhythmic series of varied open spaces within short 5 min. walks
2. Intermingle cars and people (albeit, with pedestrian friendly design) to maintain vibrancy
3. Spread public space between private and public spaces
4. Place less of a focus on parking by pushing parking towards the back of lots or providing on-street parking



Vision

Pilot Projects

In order to implement this project a pilot site or sites need to be developed first to be able to examine how the development would function within the spaces and the community in which it is unfolding. This specific pilot project(s) would each ideally function under the supervision of an organization or committee which either owns the property or works closely with the owners of the property to guide the design and development within the vision for the district, because of this, they should develop in line with the ideas set forth by concept #2 in the conceptualization stage. Within each of these sites, it is expected that guidelines for development are followed which function to promote livability of the district (walkability, cyclist safety, etc.) as well as social dynamism in the form of the latino urban typologies. These guidelines come from the development of the previous conceptual design for development and could be further expanded through urban planning codes focusing on form based code emphasizing retrofitting.

A

For the function of this project, it is assumed that the guidelines followed are those developed by the conceptual design and the different pilot projects are possible applications of these guidelines.

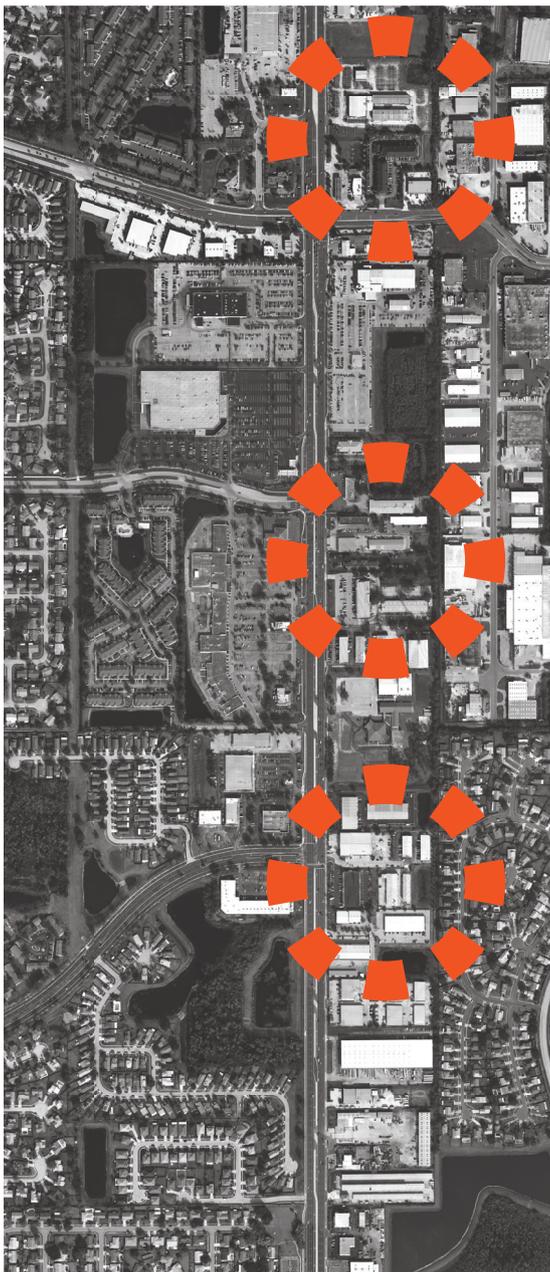
B

Guidelines

1. Retrofit focused on liner buildings enhancing the streetfront property and density
2. Parking options limited to parking towards the back, on-street parking and parking garages to minimize large empty lots towards the street
3. Latino urban typologies need to be incorporated with smaller spaces at short distances from each other and larger spaces at larger distances in order to enhance social activity and create public space usable by Latinos
4. Amenitize stormwater to maximize value of water treatment rather than hiding it towards the back of the lots

C

Pilot Project Location





Key Plan

Existing Site



Pilot Site 1:

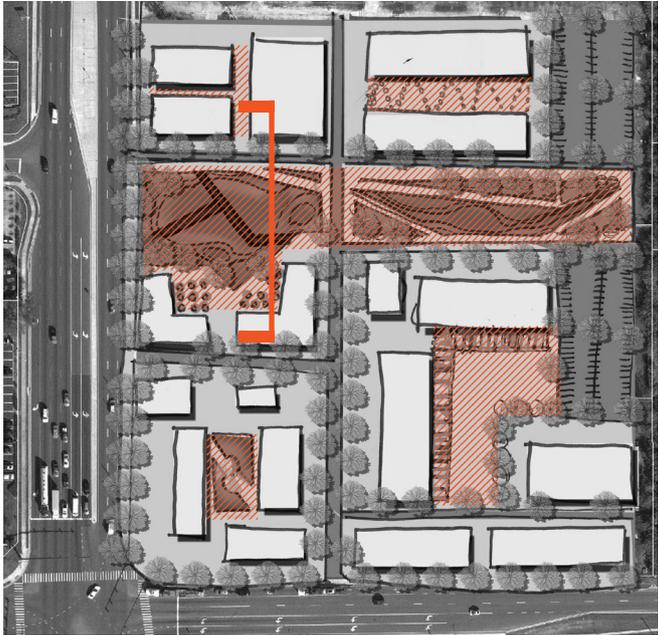
Pilot Site 1 is located towards the north of the pilot segment surrounded primarily by industrial uses. The current site contains a gas station, a car dealership, warehouse showrooms and a weekly motel. Much of the current land is used for parking with stormwater pushed to the back.

The proposed site hopes to re-purpose some of the underutilized land to establish a stormwater park that serves to drain higher densities while providing a social amenity, Parking lots are pushed to the back to maintain accessibility since this area is further from the residential center. Additionally a small plaza, square and a market are proposed on site.

Proposed Site



Latino Urban Typologies



Amenitized Stormwater

While this project focuses on Latino urbanism, it takes place in Florida, which means that in order to attain high densities stormwater planning is necessary. Amenitizing this stormwater into public social spaces similar in typology as the Latino urban typologies provides usable space that responds to the Florida climate. This section, incorporates a park typology, with a small gathering space for picnics or impromptu birthday parties, with a plaza space, connected to commercial uses which would serve as outdoor dining spaces.

Proposed Site



Public Space vs. Semi-Private

Semi-private space in the form of outdoor dining plaza provides revenue for restaurants whereas public space provides economically accessible outdoor space and incurs spending on surrounding businesses.



Pilot Site 2:

Pilot Site 2 is located in the heart of the pilot segment and is composed of a small strip mall, a Goodyear repair shop and a gas station lining OBT with warehouses and auto repair shops around the back. The existing footprints are already somewhat dense creating small spaces, but the interstitial spaces are currently devoted entirely to parking.

The proposed design adds additional building masses to the existing to further densify the areas and creates people spaces. The gas station is transformed into a large plaza while the interstitial space between buildings becomes a vegetated square. Parking is pushed to a central parking lot as well as a parking garage in the northeast and a parking lot south.

Proposed Site



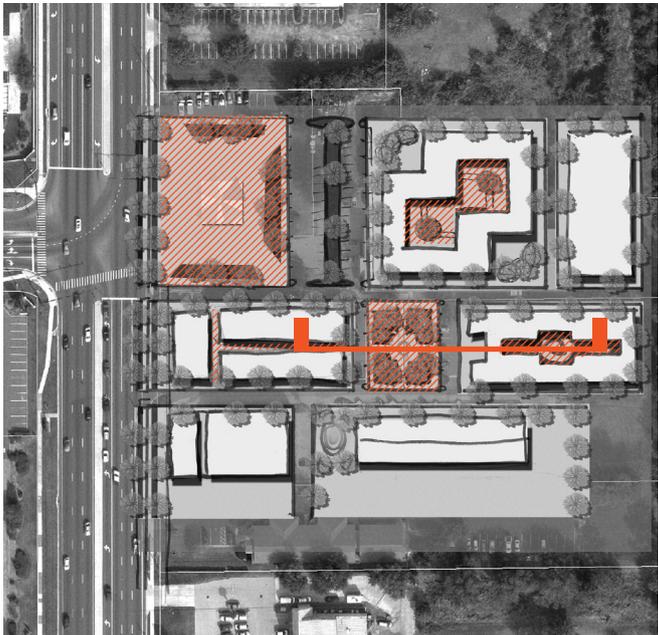
Key Plan



Existing Site



Latino Urban Typologies



Higher Density Residential

Although Pilot Site #2 currently backs onto industrial uses, it is closer to residential uses while not directly backing onto them. This means this area is suitable for higher density residential. This site focuses on placing mixed-use commercial/office space fronting the main roadway, while high density residential spaces are pushed towards the back. The additional residential spaces provide a larger customer base to support the growing business district. The new apartments will also support the growing Latino population in the area as more Latinos move to this gateway city where other family members or friends have already established themselves.

Proposed Site



Vegetated Square

The public vegetated square, designed to also serve as stormwater management, provides a space for shoppers and office workers to relax and people-watch



Apartment Courtyard

The apartment courtyard provides private open space creating a sense of community within the building. The space can be used for family parties or relaxing after hours.



Pilot Site 3:

Pilot Site 3 has a different character than the other two. This site has a strong commercial presence with strip malls lining the roadway. The rear of the site is a combination of small businesses and warehouses. Additionally, the site backs onto already developed single-family homes separated by CMU wall so any development needs to be sensitive to these conditions. In particular, this proposal focuses on developing higher mixed use buildings towards the front and medium-density residential towards the back in order to “step-down” to the existing single-family homes. Open space is spread in the middle creating space for visitors and residents alike. Commercial parking is on-street, with dedicated residential parking in the back.

Proposed Site



Key Plan



Existing Site



Commercial to Residential Transition

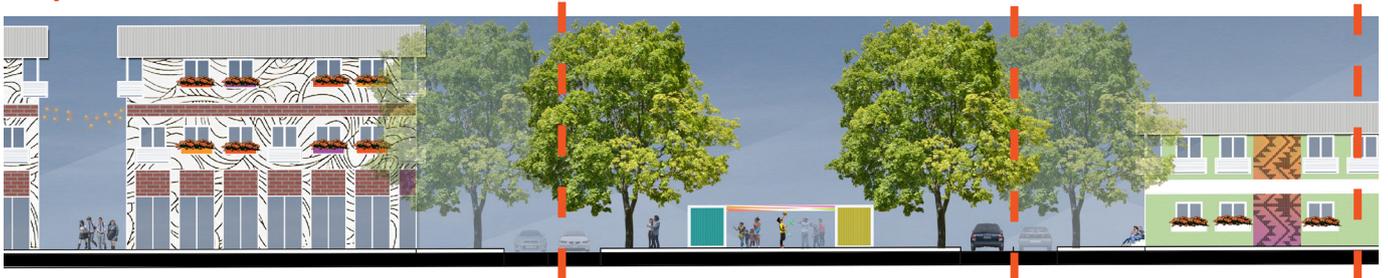
Pilot Site #3 is highly visible since it is close to existing residential areas at an intersection. This makes the site prime for attracting businesses but its proximity to single-family homes means the new development needs to be wary of disturbing existing home owners. Currently, the division of uses is harsh.

Implementing medium density residential provides a less harsh transition between commercial uses and single family homes while allowing the road frontage to grow and maximize their potential based on location.

Latino Urban Typologies



Proposed Site



Open Market

The open market of micro-businesses in containers provide a vibrant space as well as incubator spaces



Townhomes

The townhomes buffer sound from the homes while adding more eyes on the streets



Implementation: Organization

In order to bring this vision to fruition it is recommended that either a formal non-profit organization or a community committee is in charge of making the decisions and backing this project. This entity can serve as the champion throughout the project pushing through possible setbacks at either the administrative end or the community end and pushing the vision to become a reality. This is the case for both the Portland Mercado case study pushed by Hacienda CDC and the Mills 50 case study which functions under a committee over seeing administrative concerns, design concerns and marketing concerns.

The organization would be the liason between the community and the design and include outreach into the community for community involvement including organizing and hosting workshops, charrettes and public meetings. It is recommended that the organization be in touch with the existing businesses and their Hispanic Chamber of Commerce contacts as well as doing outreach through the schools and church groups as well as the events organized through the South Creek Branch of the Orange County Library system.

Creating volunteering opportunities and events in the community should be encouraged to generate a sense of ownership over the changes occurring in the community while the committee should also ensure that developments and retrofits actively seek to house current community business owners.

Community Involvement

The success of this project hinges on its ability to connect to the community, however, in minority communities, like this one, public meetings and other standard methods of community engagement can have low attendance due to variant work hours or lack of transportation. In this community, family events extending throughout various hours with input stations may serve to both create a tighter sense of community and receive feedback. Additionally, all information should be provided in both English and Spanish with options for online feedback also provided.

A possible event option is to host open street events, similar to Bogota's Ciclovía, that provide public space and family time while normalizing alternative transportation and serving as testing grounds. These points can serve as information gathering points allowing for the community to demonstrate what they would like to see in the future.

Additionally, the community should be involved in creation of the site through workshops and community arts programs. Engagement with the local high schools in producing murals as well as guidance and support for local entrepreneurs will help the community claim ownership of the project.



Open Streets Event

Provides testing grounds and community input opportunities

Phasing Plan

This vision should be developed in phases in order to allow the community to adapt to the changes. In the larger sense, the pilot segment should be developed first with a few pilot sites. These first developments should take the form of primarily retrofits concentrated on the strip malls around the roadway and building up street frontage as well as redeveloping the right-of-way. Once the area has grown and garnered more interest, more intensive development can occur in the larger shopping centers and lots towards the back.

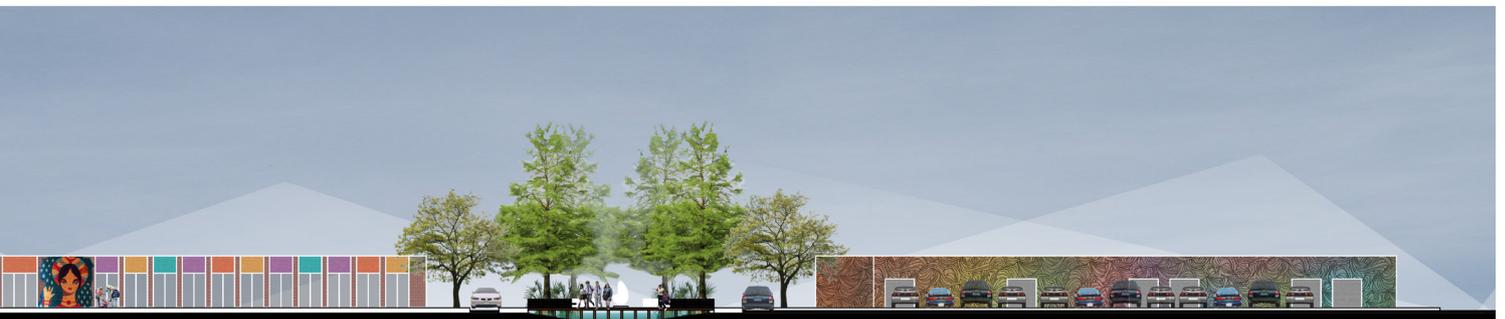


Existing Conditions



Phase I

Provides testing grounds and community input opportunities



Phase II

Provides testing grounds and community input opportunities



Visions: Streetscape

The streetscape improvements focus on additional pedestrian and cyclist space and creating a buffer from traffic. The new space serves as a promenade connecting the district in a single vision while changes in urban form complement the new pedestrian space.

The promenade functions to provide better pedestrian connections while allowing the community to be outside of their cars and homes reconnecting people.

Existing Conditions



Existing Conditions

Markets

Additional liner buildings added to this existing repair shop create interstitial spaces which can be opened up like traditional Latin American markets. These allow for small businesses to sell their wares and convert the area into a destination site. Experience is as important as purchasing and meandering through small shops creates incubator space for new businesses.



Cultural Plaza

The cultural plaza provides the community with a space to gather and celebrate their culture. Performance space allows for cultural showcases and concerts while the perimeter area gives a new home to the food trucks. This space becomes the central festival space for the community and empowers the community in having a space available for them and centered around them.







References

- Ann Markusen and Anne Gadwa, "Creative Placemaking" (Washington: National Endowment for the Arts, 2010).
- Benjamin Tyler, "Prostitution, drugs and living life on the Trail," orlandoweekly.com, (March 11, 2015)
- "Bogota's CicloRuta is One of the Most Comprehensive Cycling Systems in the World," C40 Cities, c40.org/case_studies (November 3, 2011)
- "Chinatown International Strategic Plan," City of Seattle, seattle.gov (June 15, 1999)
- "Codes & Manuals" <http://transect.org/codes.html>
- "Committees," Mills 50, mills50.org
- Dr. Dan Platt, "Encouraging Spaces for Latino Community Participation: Creating Welcoming and Inclusive Parks and Community Centers in Eugene, Oregon" (eugene-or.gov)
- "Form Based Codes Defined" <http://formbasedcodes.org/definition/>
- "From a Dream to Reality," Portland Mercado, portlandmercado.org
- Galina Tachieva, "Sprawl Repair Manual" (Washington D.C.: Island Press, 2010).
- Gerardo Francisco Sandoval & Marta Maria Maldonado, "Latino Urbanism revisited: placemaking in new gateways and the urban-rural interface" *Journal of Urbanism: International Research on Placemaking and Urban Sustainability*, 5:2-3, (July 2012) 193-218.
- "How Ciclovía's Car-Free Days Give Bogota Room to Breathe," Development Asia, development.asia/case-study (May 2016)
- Jolly Wallace Dickinson, "Tourist Trail blossomed in era of postwar roadside adventure," orlandosentinel.com, (April 27, 2014)
- "Latinos in Central Florida: The Growing Hispanic Presence in the Sunshine State" (Hispanic Federation, Summer 2016)
- Lucy K. Phillips, "Revitalized Streets of San Francisco: A Study of Redevelopment and Gentrification in SoMa and the Mission," Scripps College (2012)
- Scott Maxwell, "Orlando: No. 1 in tourism and dead last in wages," orlandosentinel.com, (September 5, 2015)
- "The Anti-Ordinary Anti-Mall" *Design-Retail Magazine* (Aug. 2016)

**“Preservation of one’s culture
does not require contempt or
disrespect for other cultures”**

-Cesar Chavez



The People:

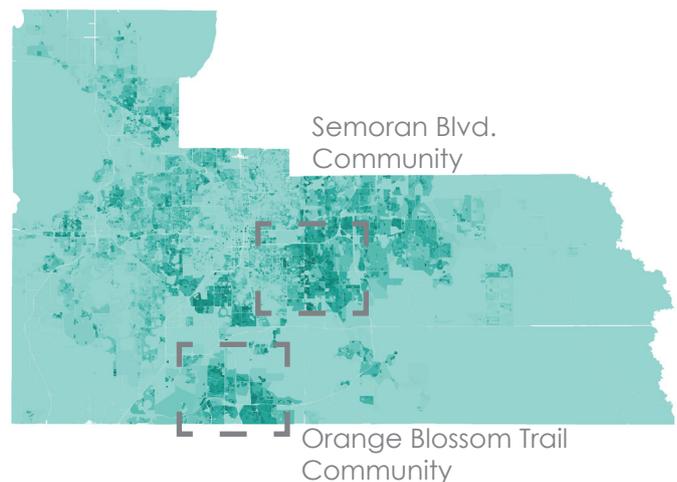
According to an Orlando Sentinel analysis of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Orlando metropolitan area ranks as last in wages in the country with a median annual wage of \$29,781 and ranks No. 1 for jobs paying \$20,000 with a quarter of the wages below \$20,220. At the same time, the city is well known for its large tourism industry. Immigrants, particularly Latino immigrants, are affected by these low wages with a continual cycle of poverty.¹ For this reason, this project focuses on the Latino community of the Orlando Metropolitan Area.

Study Area

In order for this project to be viable and have enough motivation to be enacted, the study area had to comply with 2 basic criteria: an existing high density of latino households to serve as the market for infill Latino businesses, and no current support or attention for its Latino residents.

In Orange Co. there are two concentrations of Latinos: along Semoran Blvd. and along OBT. However, the Semoran Blvd. Community falls within the jurisdiction of the City of Orlando who have an existing Main Streets Program. This area has received this classification and is currently developing a vision called “Gateway Orlando” while the OBT community falls within the unincorporated Orange Co. which does not have this program.

Percentage density of Latino populations in Orange Co., FL
US Census 2010



¹ Scott Maxwell, “Orlando: No. 1 in tourism and dead last in wages,” orlandosentinel.com, (September 5, 2015)

Key Findings:

Fastest growing demographic is Puerto Rican, not established Cuban populations

Orlando offers low incomes and primarily blue collar jobs for Latinos

Majority of Latinos are young

Study area is at the center of projected Latino growth

Demographic Trends

Based on Hispanic Federation 2016 report¹

Florida

24% of the population is Latino

3rd largest Latino population in the country

1 in 3 of Puerto Ricans live in Orange and Osceola counties

Florida Future Growth

94% growth of Puerto Ricans between 2000-2014

Puerto Ricans will overtake Cubans by 2020

Orlando Metropolitan Area

47% of Latinos are 18-34

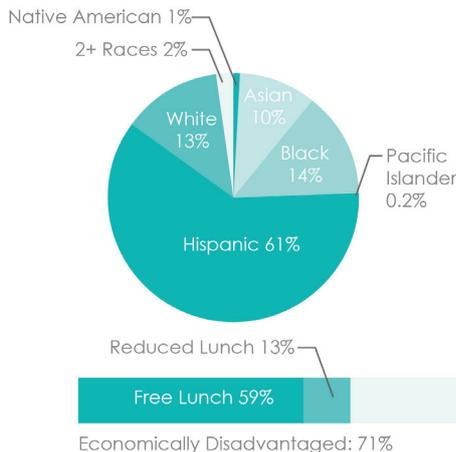
72% of Latino households earn \$50,000 or less

37% of Latinos work blue collar jobs

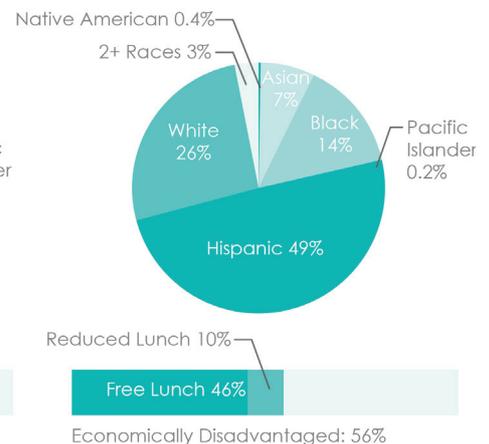
Study Area

In the study area there are two high school zoning areas divided by OBT. To the north is the Cypress Creek High School zone and to the south is the Freedom High School zone. Using these high schools as proxies for demographic data:

Cypress Creek High School



Freedom High School



The data points to a majority minority area with low incomes reflecting the data by the Hispanic Federation. The site is also the stronghold for future Latino growth, bordering Osceola to the south.

¹ “Latinos in Central Florida: The Growing Hispanic Presence in the Sunshine State” (Hispanic Federation, Summer 2016)

Goals & Objectives

pedestrian-friendly



1. Create *pedestrian-friendly* infrastructure to foster walkability, cyclist-safety and mass transport use

- a. Improve road cross-section with consideration to safety and walkability best practices
- b. Improve road crossings to promote pedestrian safety
- c. Recommend urban form improvements to enhance walkability and reduce sprawl

economic viability



2. Boost community *economic viability* and endorse social mobility

- a. Provide facade improvement recommendations
- b. Create incubator space for new businesses

unique culture

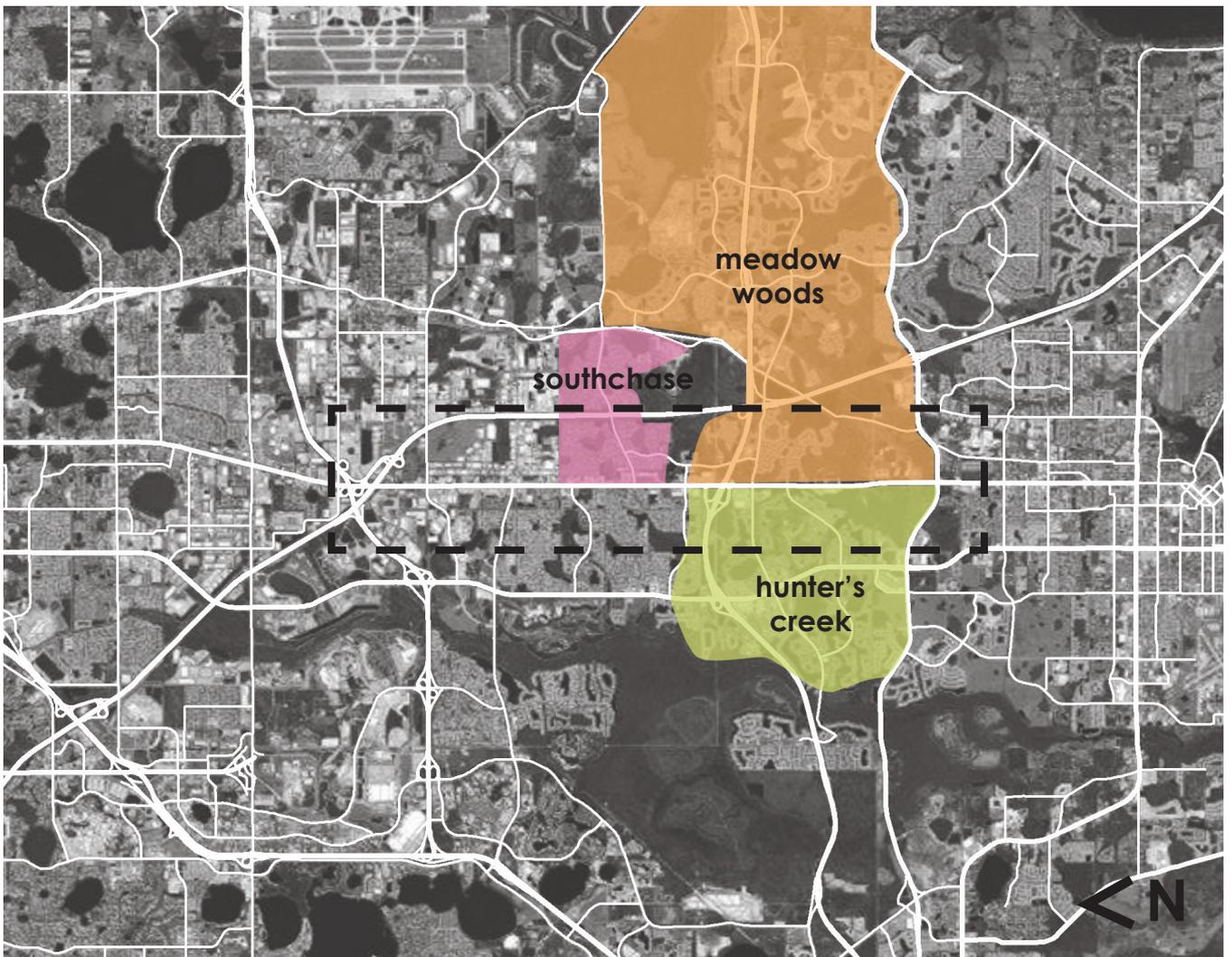


3. Celebrate *unique culture* and cultivate ownership and pride

- a. Incorporate cultural motifs throughout streetscape
- b. Recommend arts outreach to connect community to physical space
- c. Provide cultural hubs for performance space and social interaction

Context: Defined Neighborhoods

While there are multiple subdivisions attached to the study area, in general there are 3 major neighborhoods who act as community stakeholders for this corridor. Southchase is the smallest neighborhood but abuts against the core of the corridor; its community center is the Southchase Village shopping plaza on OBT. Meadow Woods is the largest neighborhood and contains a growing and vocal Latino population. Hunter's Creek is the most affluent of these neighborhoods and is vocal about maintaining a good image for its community.



Cultural Centers and Urban Parks

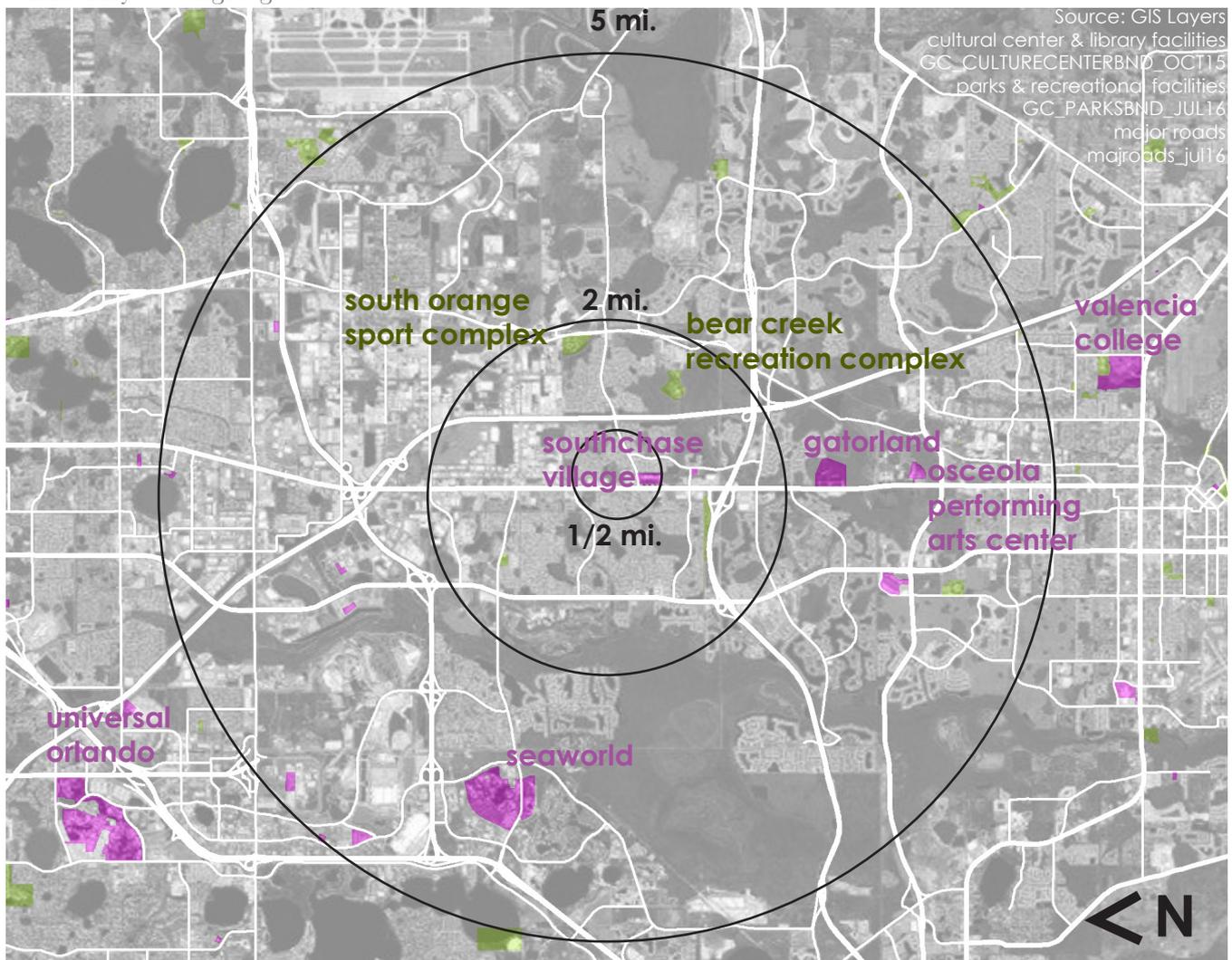
This analysis looks at existing cultural centers and urban parks to determine the availability of cultural activities and spaces available to the community and their accessibility for residents.

Radius Breakdown

- 5 mi. Spread of community including Meadow Woods and Hunter's Creek neighborhoods
- 2 mi. 70% of US car trips are <2 mi.*
- 1/2 mi. 10 min. walk

While the area includes various public urban parks, most require a car for access or are set deep within neighborhoods. Cultural resources focus primarily on tourism with no spaces for the community to congregate

*National Household Travel Survey, 2009



Lynx Bus System



Public Transit

Due to the low incomes in this area, public transit is of special interest. A robust public transit system with better access would provide local residents the ability to move throughout their city without the cost of a car. Currently, 2 bus lines run through OBT in this section.

SunRail South Expansion Radius Breakdown

- 5 mi. Sphere of influence
- 2 mi. 70% of US car trips are <2 mi.*
Bikeable distance

Currently, the SunRail is being expanded south with the Meadow Woods station expanding the study area. This new station would provide connections north for the residents and would be able to bring visitors south into the district. It would also alleviate commuter pressures on OBT allowing for a re-visioning in the road cross section.



Study Area Analysis: Methods

To better understand the 4 mile corridor, it was broken down into 3 different segments, each with a distinct mix of uses and user experience. With this, the different segments could be analyzed more closely for user experience and it could be determined which area was better suited for pilot programs to kickstart the development of the district and the redevelopment of the urban form. Each segment was analyzed with a pedestrian friendliness rubric, taking into account the available infrastructure that would make walkability possible especially around a 55 mph arterial road, as well as observations regarding the mass and void relationships that would spur the desire to walk somewhere. Then each segment was synthesized for opportunities and constraints regarding possibilities for retrofiting, likely trends, and willingness to change.

Pedestrian Friendliness Rubric

x/5 Sidewalk width

High score: Provides comfortable sidewalk 10'+

Low score: No sidewalk or minimal standard sidewalk, <5'

x/5 Sidewalk Buffer

High score: Visual vegetated buffer, min. 3'

Low score: <3' buffer, sod

x/5 Available canopy

High score: Comfortable canopy shades sidewalk

Low score: No canopy, little shade

x/5 Building set-backs

High score: Around 5'-10' from right-of-way

Low score: 60'+ from sidewalk from right-of-way

x/5 Available Bike Lanes

High score: Provides well protected bike lanes with traffic buffer due to high road speeds

Low score: No/intermittent bike lane, just striping, minimal signage

Segment 1

Primarily industrial and commercial

Segment 2

Transitional zone

Segment 3

Sprawl suburbia





Segment 1:

Pedestrian Friendliness Rubric

Score: 6/25 = 24%

3/5 Sidewalk width

Minimum sidewalks provided, 3'-5'

1/5 Sidewalk Buffer

0'-3' buffer, at times sidewalk is directly adjacent to road, otherwise 3' sod strip

2/5 Available canopy

Little to no canopy, some canopy provided by car dealership border trees

0/5 Building set-backs

Large setbacks, multiple car dealerships with large parking lots at frontage

0/5 Available Bike Lanes

No Bike lanes Available

Suitability for Pilot Projects - Medium

Opportunities

Large spaces of open land would be easy to infill

Latino owned repair shops and warehouses serve as a market for Latino products

Constraints

Far away from residential centers, this would mean community would have to drive to reach site

Industrial nature means many large chains, not much existing character to the site

Car dealerships unlikely to redevelop soon



Segment 2:

Pedestrian Friendliness Rubric

Score: 12/25 = 48%

2/5 Sidewalk width

Minimum sidewalks provided, 3'-5'

3/5 Sidewalk Buffer

3' buffer throughout, just a sod strip

2/5 Available canopy

Little to no canopy, some canopy provided by border trees

2/5 Building set-backs

Variable set backs 30'-100'+, small strip malls provide less parking at frontage

3/5 Available Bike Lanes

Some bike lanes although just striped and intermittent

Suitability for Pilot Projects - High

Opportunities

Small strip malls could be retrofitted

Quick solutions could be offered through tactical urbanism

Nearby to both industrial and residential areas

Strip malls currently contain the majority of Latino business

Constraints

Unknown owner opinion on redevelopment

Creeping generic redevelopment from south (Seg. 3)





Segment 3:

Pedestrian Friendliness Rubric

Score: 13/25 = 52%

2/5 Sidewalk width

Minimum sidewalks provided, 3'-5'

4/5 Sidewalk Buffer

3'+ buffer, just sod

Generally 5'-10'

3/5 Available canopy

Sporadic canopy

No street trees but some adjacent from properties or natural areas

2/5 Building set-backs

Variable set-backs, often large due to shopping centers or no street frontage (subdivision)

2/5 Available Bike Lanes

Some bike lanes although just striped and intermittent

Suitability for Pilot Projects - Low

Opportunities

Nearby residential areas could make this into a community center

Basic infrastructure laid out could facilitate quick tactical test runs

Constraints

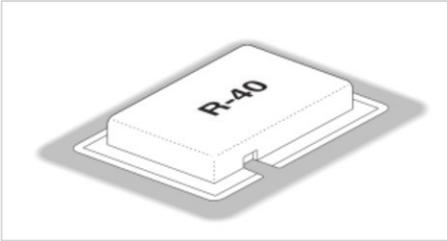
Shopping centers recently redeveloped, unlikely to be interested in redeveloping again soon

Does not have much existing character since many of these are larger chains

Possible rejection by residents for pilot program, might have to win them over first

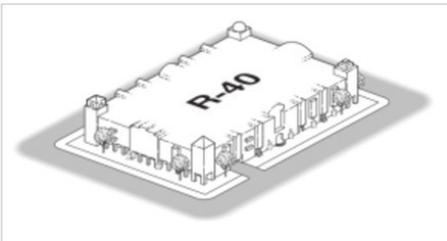


Urban Form: Form-Based Code



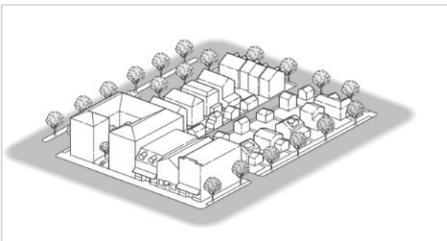
Conventional Zoning

Form-Based Code is defined by the Form Based Code Institute as “a land development regulation that fosters predictable built results and a high quality public realm by using physical form as the organizing principle.”¹ Form-Based Code focuses on the relationship between building masses and the public realm. The regulations and standards are represented by a series of diagrams which correlate to a regulating plan which determines the appropriate placement of a particular form and scale. These create different experiences throughout different areas of a regulating plan.



Zoning Design Guidelines

Conventional zoning plans, on the other hand, focus on the specific uses of a space and use metrics such as dwellings per acre and setbacks. Even when coupled with zoning design guidelines, these plans can be interpreted in many ways resulting in designs which may be incongruous to each other. On the other hand, a Form-Based Code focuses on form rather than specific use and may specify street and building types as well as number of floors and percentage of frontage necessary.



Form-Based Codes
Source: formbasedcodes.org

A Form-Based Code is generally made up of five basic elements with additional elements added as necessary. It includes a regulating plan, public standards, building standards, administration and definitions. For the purpose of this project, public standards and building standards are crucial. Public standards dictate the public realm in terms of sidewalk, travel lanes, and on-street parking. Meanwhile building standards dictate features and configurations of buildings that impact the public realm. Smartcode is a type of Form-Based Code developed by the Center for Applied Transect Studies which utilizes transect studies to determine factors such as building height, type of facades and civic spaces.²

1 “Form Based Codes Defined” <http://formbasedcodes.org/definition/>

2 “Codes & Manuals” <http://transect.org/codes.html>

Sprawl Repair & Suburban Retrofitting

Sprawl Repair is based on transect studies and focuses on transforming single-use car-dominated developments into complete communities for better economic, social and environmental performance.¹At a community scale, sprawl repair is approached as a range of measures to help guide and promote complete communities.

These include:

- Site feasibility
This includes market analyses and demographics analyses as well as ownership structures
- Applying urban design techniques
Including rethinking parking distributions, adding additional building typologies, repairing thoroughfares and defining open and civic spaces
- Introducing regulatory and management techniques
These include form-based codes as well as regulating plans and marketing
- Incentives for implementation
Incentives include attaining grants or tax credits as well as attaining funding for special right-of-way projects which improve the public realm

Galina Tachieva's "Sprawl Repair Manual" goes into specific retrofitting solutions for various urban situations and sites. Most commonly, the addition of liner buildings helps densify otherwise low density sprawl into more livable communities. Several options for different roadway configurations are also given to optimize thoroughfares.

Drive-Through



Source: Sprawl Repair Manual

Strip Center



Source: Sprawl Repair Manual

¹ Galina Tachieva, "Sprawl Repair Manual" (Washington D.C.: Island Press, 2010).



Source: <http://www.confluence-denver.com/>



Source: <http://creativeplacemaking.t4america.org/>



Source: <http://www.artplaceamerica.org/>



Source: <http://www.83degreesmedia.com/>

Placemaking: Creative Placemaking

Creative Placemaking¹ unites public, private, non-profit and community sectors to shape the character of a neighborhoods specifically shaped around arts and culture. This approach fosters economic development by recirculating residents' incomes locally, re-using underutilized land and buildings and creating local jobs.

There a handful of components of successful creative placemaking initiatives. Among them is a creative initiator, usually in the form of either a single person or a small collective generating a placemaking vision. This single originator develops an idea for what a place can become and puts it into place in a particular site. For example, Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs animated a vacant lot with a program creating apprenticeship opportunities for youth with working artists. Additionally, creative placemaking aims to isolate what makes an area unique and design around that distinctiveness. This usually takes the form of creating a cultural center in the form of theater or performance space with various degrees of success. In Phoenix, a large visual arts program was taken on to adorn miles of sound barrier highways to add art onto a sprawling metro. Additionally, the approach must mobilize public will in order to create a champion in the program. Sometimes this occurs in the form of a member of local government whereas sometimes it is more focused on a grassroots citizen pushed support for the idea, however this support is key to the project moving forward. The project must also garner private sector support with the private sector being willing to invest in cultural resources and promote culture in the area. Creative placemaking also relies in engaging the arts community and creating partnerships throughout different levels of interests.

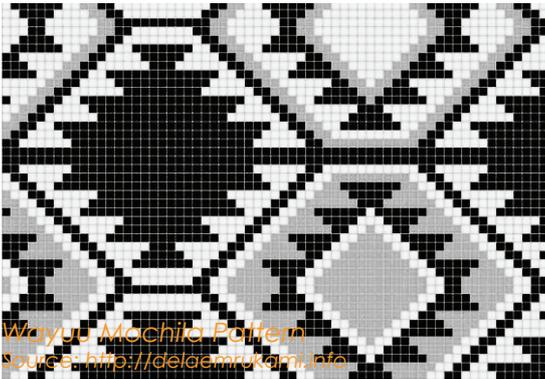
Possible challenges in creative placemaking include the possibilities of gentrification and displacement. To prevent these, affordable housing plans must be set forth from the beginning.

¹ Ann Markusen and Anne Gadwa, "Creative Placemaking" (Washington: National Endowment for the Arts, 2010).



Folk Art

Folk Art traditions continue to be strong in Latin America with artisanal objects being regularly sold in markets. Some of these are then imported and sold in the shops at the strip malls in the area. These objects could be incorporated into markets while their visuals are incorporated into the redesign and marketing of the new district.



Wayuu Mochila Pattern
Source: <http://delae.mrakami.info>



Taino Beadwork - Puerto Rico
Source: Francisco Gonzalez



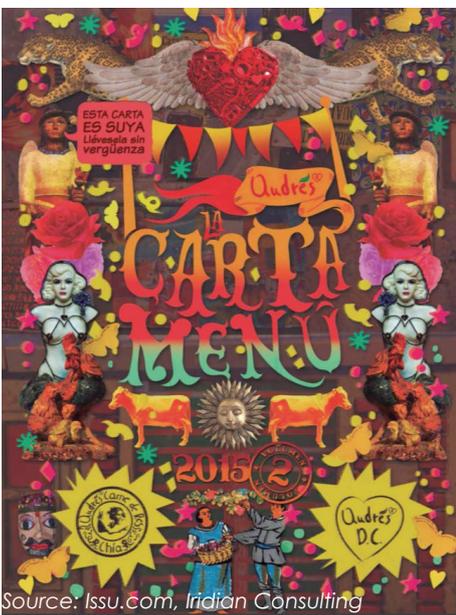
Colombian Molas
Source: joanveronica.blogspot.com



Taino symbols
Source: mbentz art



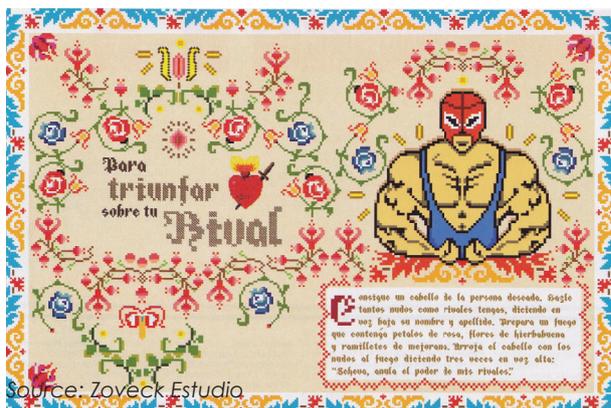
Huiquil - Mexico
Source: flickr.com/KarenEtwell



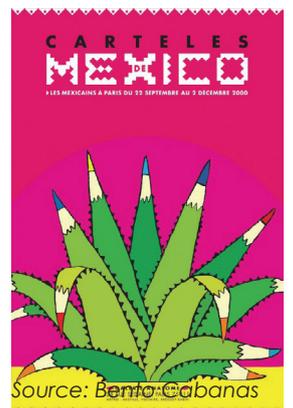
Source: Issu.com, Iridian Consulting

Graphic Design

Modern Latin American graphic design combines clean elements of design with vernacular imagery and traditional folk art. These aesthetics can be applied to the branding of the district as well as specific business branding within the corridor.



Source: Zoveck Estudio



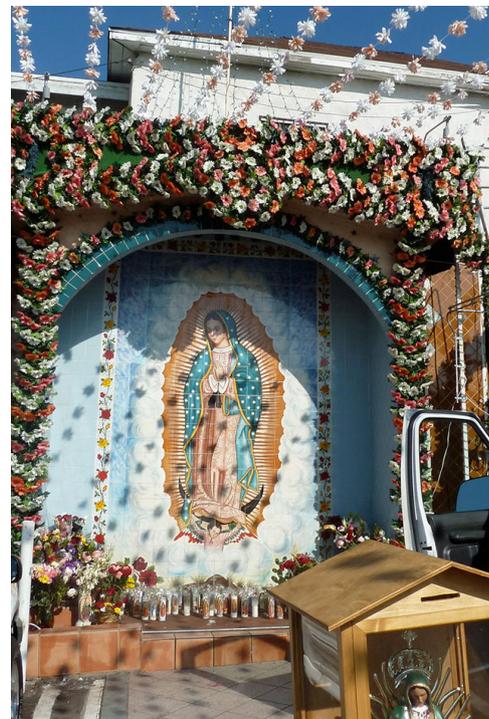
Source: Bemto Cabanas

Latino Urbanism

Latino Urbanism¹ is a term coined by James Rojas in 1991 based on observations of the East L.A. landscape and the vernacular spaces Latinos had carved out for themselves. It was defined by Mendez as “Latinos’ cultural inclinations for social interaction and their adaptive energies...creating a de facto environment that a de facto environment supports compact city and New Urbanist lifestyles.” Latino Urbanism is based on the idea that Latinos culturally operate on a more social scale than Americans. Therefore, Latinos tend to adapt their surroundings to create social type environments that allow for those cultural interactions to take place. Of observations in Los Angeles James Rojas noted “by working, playing, and hanging out in spaces like streets, front yards, and driveways, East L.A. residents create a spontaneous, dynamic and animated landscape that is unlike any other in Los Angeles.”

Latino Urbanism developed from these observations of Latino vernacular spaces in East L.A. into developmental strategies that aim to support Latino placemaking and be responsive to the specific needs and experiences of Latino residents. These take the form primarily of changes in regulations which often limit the more informal character of Latino exchanges. For example, informal businesses like street vendors and food trucks may be common in Latin America and in Latino enclaves in the USA, but are often regulated against in the USA which may negatively impact a Latino community.

Throughout the literature created since 1991, there have been a few topics that the concepts of Latino Urbanism have not yet covered. Primarily, the concepts of Latino Urbanism today focus on long established urban communities who are often various generations deep into their immigration. This means that the communities have had the time to develop their own vernacular styles but also have a distinct Latino culture from first or 1.5-generation immigrants. Secondly, the focus on urban spaces ignores the large populations of Latinos in both rural areas and suburban areas. The latter is of specific interest for this project as current data shows that most Latino population growth is currently occurring in “new gateways” in primarily suburban areas.



¹ Gerardo Francisco Sandoval & Marta Maria Maldonado, “Latino Urbanism revisited: placemaking in new gateways and the urban-rural interface” *Journal of Urbanism: International Research on Placemaking and Urban Sustainability*, 5:2-3, (July 2012) 193-218.

Welcoming and Inclusive Parks - Eugene, OR¹

In spring of 2015, James Rojas came together with the City of Eugene and the University of Oregon to hold a series of workshops and outreach efforts to determine how the city of Eugene might make parks and community centers more welcoming and inclusive for the Latino community. The outreach team interacted with over 350 people in the community to see what they liked about open spaces and what they would change. The team conducted five different public engagement events during existing family events. This approach focused on receiving opinions in family events where Latinos already felt welcomed rather than trying to host a stand alone event focused on public input, like a traditional public meeting. The events also focused on open-ended “play” rather than surveys including asking participants to build their ideal park space using craft supplies and setting large models that participants could engage with; this allowed for a wider and more honest range of participant responses.

The studied showed two main deficiencies in the existing park system. First, Latinos did not feel culturally included in spaces. They found that spaces focused particularly on solitary spaces and did not have spaces for larger family groups and extended families. Additionally, some members expressed feelings of “hypervisibility” or feeling uncomfortable and sticking out because of their heritage. It was recommended that parks include spaces that focused on social events as well as creating spaces that celebrated Latino culture through art as well as naming. Additionally, ensuring that all spaces included both English and Spanish signage. Secondly, Latinos found they preferred “informal” management of spaces. Latinos felt uncomfortable in spaces because they did not know whether they were allowed or not allowed to perform certain activities in spaces. This included not knowing if they had to reserve pavilion space or how to do this as well as whether pick-up soccer games were allowed in different spaces. Recommendations for this issue included ceding control of party permits to the community, easing street vendor permitting or creating special “vendor zones,” and being clearer about how reserving systems work and posting instructions in English and Spanish.

While these results reflect the Eugene community, they also resonate throughout Latino communities in the U.S.A. and their recommendations can be applied throughout.

¹ Dr. Dan Platt, “Encouraging Spaces for Latino Community Participation: Creating Welcoming and Inclusive Parks and Community Centers in Eugene, Oregon” (eugene-or.gov)

At a glance:

Car-free days on Sundays and Holidays provide 121 km of recreational space

Specific agency allows the project to run smoothly

Program has changed public opinion on cyclists and pedestrians and helped shape policy

Application: provide recreational space, promote alternative transportation

Roadway: CicloVia¹

Bogota, Colombia

In 1974, Bogota, Colombia implemented a car-free program running originally through two streets in the city center. Today the program spans 121 km of roads reserving roads for cyclists, skater and pedestrians. The road closures occur every Sunday as well as holidays and bring out citizens around the city from various ages and social classes. The project provides public open space for citizens while promoting alternative transportation systems and engaging citizens in city programs.

CicloVia began as a small protest held in 1974 advocating for cyclist and pedestrian rights similar to today's Critical Mass cycling events. Just two years later, in 1976, the project had expanded to 40 km, however, the project wasn't formalized until 1995. This was in part due to the creation of the Instituto Distrital de Recreacion y Deporte (District Institute of Sports and Recreation) in 1995. This new agency works in coordination with government agencies as well as private sponsors to run the event on a weekly basis. Before the creation of this agency, the program was inconsistent depending on various political leadership. In 2006, the program was expanded to 121 km connecting various areas of the city. This expansion also included the addition of cultural and recreational events such as yoga, aerobics classes and bike riding classes as well as music performances and various events. While on CicloVia, it is also normal to see informal economies pop up such as various street vendors selling everything from juice to handcrafted clothing and artisanal art.

The program has been successful in changing public opinion regarding the use of cars and socializing a respect for cyclists and pedestrians since more citizens have been out on the streets.

A similar program could be implemented in this program as part of a community outreach effort. Reducing OBT to a car-free system, or at least closing a few lanes for pedestrians, would change the perception of alternative forms of transportation as well as providing provisional recreational space for the community.

¹ "How Ciclovía's Car-Free Days Give Bogota Room to Breathe," Development Asia, development.asia/case-study (May 2016)

At a glance:

Extensive bicycle network:
over 500 km

Increased bike use
especially among lower
social classes

Incorporates cycling traffic
with pedestrian traffic to
separate from vehicular
traffic for safety

Application: safer
alternative connections for
residents

CicloRuta¹

Bogota, Colombia

CicloRuta is an extension of the CicloVia system in Bogota, Colombia and is one of the most extensive bicycle path networks in the world. The system extends over 500 km and connects citizens of all social classes to BRT routes (TransMilenio) as well as parks and community centers. The system runs through a variety of topographies both urban settings and natural features and has been made part of basic infrastructure throughout the city. Bogota's cycling use has increased from 0.2% to 4% due to the installation of these services. Citizens are opting to bike to their destinations rather than wait in traffic and contribute to pollution. This has led to a new sector of economic development with new business ventures focusing around bike parking services, repair shops, app development to the creation of the BiciTaxi that takes advantage of the existing infrastructure to create a taxi system that skips the traffic.

Particularly striking of this system is the way the infrastructure seamlessly blends in with the rest of the infrastructure. Cycling trails form part of many sidewalks with half of the sidewalk devoted to cycling and the other half devoted to pedestrians. While there is a social learning curve associated with the incorporation of this system, having cyclists ride with pedestrians separates them from traffic lanes which in Bogota are very unforgiving. Even in areas where vehicular traffic travels right beside cycling traffic, the raised biking trail provides enough of a buffer for cyclists to feel safer and be separated from traffic. The cycling system also links various destination points serving as a true method of transportation rather than simply a recreational trail. The cycling system has also helped reclaim previously hidden green spaces with trails running alongside parks and wetlands.

While this system is far larger than the scope of this project, the form can be applied here. Buffering of the bike lanes as well as combining them with pedestrian traffic would make for a safer cycling experience rather than a hostile corridor. The system could also connect residential areas to commercial areas and newly incorporated green spaces. Given that 70% of U.S. car trips are less than 2 mi., the incorporation of this system could potentially reduce the amount of cars on OBT while connecting residents to commercial areas and civic spaces.

¹ "Bogota's CicloRuta is One of the Most Comprehensive Cycling Systems in the World," C40 Cities, c40.org/case_studies (November 3, 2011)

At a glance:

Strategic Plan developed in 1999 as a response to growing city

Aimed at capitalizing on Seattle's growth while empowering community

Plan focused on: culture & economics, housing, public spaces and accessibility

Application: District visioning should take these aspects into consideration

District: Chinatown/International District

Seattle, WA

The Chinatown/International District developed vernacularly over time, however, in 1999 a district strategic plan¹ was developed in order to enhance the existing district. The district faced a series of changes coming from the city. Seattle was growing at a faster rate with development projects focusing in neighboring south downtown focused around the development of an 18-hour downtown. The Chinatown/International District was faced with the challenge of wanting to capitalize on the growth of Seattle while also ensuring the viability of their community.

The strategic plan focused on 4 sections: culture and economics, housing, public spaces and accessibility. Cultural and economic vitality focused on marketing the neighborhood through strategies such as facade improvements, night-time programming and business resource centers to aid existing businesses and support job creation in the community. Housing in this context focused primarily on preventing gentrification through preserving affordable housing and upgrading vacant and sub-standard buildings. Critical public spaces were also identified to improve streetscapes, provide additional open spaces and activate existing parks. These improvements also included public art as well as sidewalk vendors. Finally, accessibility aimed on improving transportation networks focusing primarily adding cycling connections into the district as well as improving parking conditions by adding additional on-street parking and creating multi-level parking structures to improve the street level for pedestrians. These approaches all serve to improve conditions within the district.

The study site for this project faces some similar issues, with Orlando growing quickly and becoming a more active community, the district should capitalize on this growth to become a destination within the city while boosting the economic and housing conditions for its existing residents. Although the Chinatown/International District is a far more dense urban fabric, similar approaches can be taken in the study area to address livability, economic viability and cultural visibility.

¹ "Chinatown International Strategic Plan," City of Seattle, seattle.gov (June 15, 1999)

At a glance:

Grew vernacularly from influx of Latinos in 1960s

Latino culture is displayed through murals, architectural details and streetscape

Gentrification pressures are heavily impacting this site

Application: Incorporation of murals and design details recall Latino heritage
How do you minimize gentrification?

Mission District

San Francisco, CA

San Francisco's Mission District is a complicated district and provides examples of the creation of community and sense of place while struggling to maintain its character due to growing pressures of gentrification.¹ The Mission District grew vernacularly as a result of white flight in the 1960s which left the previously Irish dominated district in the hands of Latinos from various backgrounds including Mexico, Central America, Cuba and Chile. The diverse backgrounds served to create and develop a Latino community which is evident today in its streets. A series of events pushed the Mission district to become highly involved in activism participating in labor union movements, such as Cesar Chavez's Farmworkers Movement, as well as cultural preservation movements. Due to these strong pressures, the district developed into an activist and artist enclave and murals throughout the area reflect the rich Latino history of the area. The evidence of this culture is seen in the murals, the adaptations on architecture and the streetscape. Currently, the Mission streetscape plans are designed to reflect the Latino heritage of the area.

At the same time, current gentrification pressures are weighing heavily on the community and new organizations are coming together to fight development. Due to its cool vibe and ease of transportation, the Mission district has become the new home of many Silicon Valley entrepreneurs and rents have skyrocketed from \$600 to \$1,800 in very few years. Furthermore, shops are often on a month-by-month rent basis which creates an unstable situation for shopkeepers and accelerates rates of gentrification. Improvements are received in the community cautiously as improvements in safety could also mean gentrification in the area.

The Mission District provides two perspectives on this project. From an aesthetic standpoint, the Mission District provides a look of murals and vibrant street life. Although the Mission District shows the extreme situation of gentrification along the Silicon Valley, it provides the question of how areas of low-income minorities may be developed in order to reduce gentrification while celebrating a culture in rapidly growing city.

1 Lucy K. Phillips, "Revitalized Streets of San Francisco: A Study of Redevelopment and Gentrification in SoMa and the Mission," Scripps College (2019)

At a glance:

Celebrates existing Asian cultures while promoting local artists

Organized through a series of committees in charge of shaping aspects of the district

Utilizes art projects and interventions for placemaking

Application: Art projects create a sense of place
Main streets framework could be successfully copied

Mills 50

Orlando, FL

The Mills 50 District is part of the Orlando “Main Streets” initiative which aims at creating corridors that serve as community centers. The district is at the “intersection of creativity and culture” because it combines its rich cultural background, in the form of a large Vietnamese population and many Vietnamese businesses, and a sprouting artist scene. The district is locally known for its cuisine in the form of various Asian restaurants and its many murals created by the new artist population. It is also a literal intersection of Mills Ave. and Colonial Ave. (SR-50). Currently, the district is composed of older buildings lining both streets with narrow sidewalks along an unsafe road. However, the introduced placemaking has been enough to draw local crowds into this area.

Mills 50 is managed by a board of directors which oversee a series of committees.¹ The Organization committee is in charge of forming cooperations between several groups within the community. A Promotion committee is in charge of marketing while a Business Development committee focus on diversifying and strengthening the economic base. Finally, the Design committee focuses on improving the district’s physical form providing art programs as well as infrastructure.

Jeff Thompson, chair of the Design committee, was interviewed for this capstone regarding his involvement in the creation of the Mills 50 project. The development of the district began in finding the identity in the community in celebrating both its cultural background and its artistic assets. Jeff has been in charge of coordinating various art projects including wall murals, as well as art on dumpsters and electrical boxes. These have been so successful that they have spilled over onto other districts including Orlando’s College Park. There have also been improvements done to improve the conditions for pedestrians including bike racks and bus stops. While this district is still young, it has gained a significant sense of place and has capitalized on its social capital to create jobs and bolster businesses in the area.

For the Latino/International District, Mills 50 shows a model of creative placemaking that could be incorporated into the district. It also provides a framework currently used in the City of Orlando which could be copied in the unincorporated Orange County.

1 “Comittees,” Mills 50, mills50.org

At a glance:

Serves as incubator of Latino businesses through “market” model

Provides strong organizational backing for financial empowerment

Provides cultural space and programming to become the heart of the Latino community

Application: Incorporation of market spaces as natural incubators

Sites:

Portland Mercado

Portland, OR

The Portland Mercado¹ serves as a Latino small business incubator run by the organization Hacienda CDC. It is composed of an outdoor component and an indoor component. Outdoors, a trellis space creates an outdoor dining room that doubles as event space for various festivals. It has permanent food trucks displaying different Latino cuisines and formalizing what is usually an informal activity. Indoors, the space is composed of a market-style series of small businesses which host farmer’s markets as well as cultural events. The space has become a destination for surrounding neighborhoods and has also been successful in improving the perception of Latinos in Portland. Additionally, the space has provided a home to many cultural events drawing together the Latino community in Portland. The Portland Mercado also hosts business classes and seminars which empower the community and provide skills for successful businesses.

The spaces in the Portland Mercado are all owned by Hacienda CDC, a non-profit focused on empowering Latino businesses. This allows for rents to be controlled and accessible serving as an incubator space. In its first year, Hacienda CDC launched 19 businesses. The site has also become the cultural heart of the Latino community in Portland.

A similar private/public space could be developed in the Latino/International district with a market model to help incubate small businesses. Adding event spaces and performance spaces would also benefit this community. Like all other case studies before it, this one demonstrates the importance of a strong organization backing to support the project.

1 “From a Dream to Reality,” Portland Mercado, portlandmercado.org

At a glance:

Originally a shopping mall transformed into an “anti-mall” market incubator

Assistance provided to shopkeepers

Closed in 2017 and left a hole in the market which could be filled by this project

Application: Market style incubator, market niche could be filled by new development

Artegon

Orlando, FL

Artegon was, for many years, an underutilized shopping mall by the name of Festival Bay. In 2014, it was reopened as Artegon branded as the “Anti-Mall” for its unique focus on small artisanal shops rather than established brands¹. Artegon was originally composed of wire-mesh rows of micro-shops in a market style arrangement but these micro-shops were later re-done as various facades developed as branding for each individual shop. While the shopping center was developed to house artisanal shops, it drew in a variety of immigrant businesses of various origins who imported interesting artistic products from their countries. While the shopping center was growing and due to expand, it was closed in early 2017 (during this capstone) due to managerial decisions. This came to the shock of many Orlando residents as this “anti-mall” had gained a following and served as incubator space for many small businesses. Since its closure many of these shops have had to retreat to online shops or close down entirely.

Artegon was successful in creating and exploiting the opposite of a well known brand, therefore serving as an incubator space. Small shops drew in crowds and were visited through word of mouth as well as their interesting facades, this allowed particularly immigrant businesses to flourish. The shopping center also created a variety of recreational spaces within its walkways adding play spaces and seating areas throughout. The management of the site also provided its tenants with branding consultations allowing for the vibrancy of the shops.

From a market analysis standpoint, the closure of Artegon provides a gap in a possible niche that could be filled by this project. Its market style easily fits within the Latino/International district which could house the displaced immigrant enterprises. Additionally, aspects of its playful open spaces can be imitated to create a sense of place.

1 “The Anti-Ordinary Anti-Mall” Design-Retail Magazine (Aug. 2016)