

FROM EDGE TO EDGE: REIMAGINING THE CITY WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

Viktoriya Dalakyan

A THESIS

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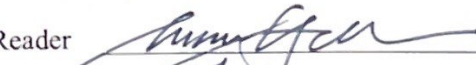
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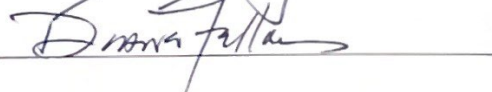
Terry Walker, Reader



Marcia Lopes de Mello, Reader



Diane Fellows, Reader



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ABSTRACT

Physical and juridical separations—such as highways, industrial zones, zoning policies, and socio-political structures—continue to reinforce socio-economic polarization and spatial segregation in contemporary cities. Gated communities represent one of the most explicit manifestations of this condition, operating through both visible barriers and less perceptible systems of exclusion. Expanding beyond their traditional definition, this thesis interprets gated communities as a broader urban phenomenon encompassing physical, economic, administrative, symbolic, social, and biopolitical boundaries. Through a combination of literature review, typological analysis, and case studies—including observations of gated developments in Chicago and boundary conditions in Cincinnati—this research examines how these layered separations shape urban experience and social relations. Particular focus is given to the Village of St. Bernard, understood as a village-scale gated condition embedded within a larger metropolitan context. Fieldwork, visual documentation, and analytical mapping reveal how infrastructural, industrial, and administrative divisions contribute to fragmentation and disconnection. In response, the thesis proposes an alternative design approach that reimagines these boundaries as opportunities for connection rather than division. By introducing a dispersed, non-linear socio-economic corridor through the industrial landscape, the project aims to foster interaction, diversify economic activity, and reconnect isolated communities. Ultimately, this work argues for a shift from exclusionary spatial models toward “gateless” urban environments that prioritize accessibility, integration, and social cohesion.

Keywords: gated community, physical barriers, social polarization, socio-spatial segregation, inclusive community, public spaces, sustainable society, well-being, human-centered design, socio-economic corridors, connectivity.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my husband, Onur, and my daughter, Serin. Your love, patience, and constant support gave me the strength to complete this journey. Thank you for your understanding, encouragement, and for being my foundation throughout this process.

This work is also dedicated to the idea of more inclusive and connected cities—places where boundaries no longer divide, but instead create opportunities for connection, understanding, and shared experience.

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Finally, I am grateful to my friends and peers for their support, discussions, and shared experiences along the way. Their presence made this journey not only manageable but meaningful.

10. INTRODUCTION

In architectural concepts, social inequity can be easily observed due to its direct reflection in the built environment. This separation can be created by physical barriers such as roads, highways, rivers, walls, gates, etc., or by urban planning and zoning codes. In this context, gated communities are one of the most obvious forms of physical and social separation due to their physical and social barriers.

Gated communities have evolved from ancient cities to castles, from military settlements to retirement communities, from country clubs to suburban enclaves, and from walled abbeys to neighborhoods with security guards. Today, gated communities create private, usually secured, walled, and gated areas to separate themselves from others, meaning from everyone who does not belong to the gated community. Depending on the typology, they may provide exclusive public spaces, amenities, staffed guard houses, security patrols, CCTV, and internal roads. These communities can consist of single houses as well as multifamily complexes. The typology differs according to the approach perspective. Scholars such as Edward J. Blakely, Mary Gail Snyder, Matthew Burke, Don Luymes, Jill Grant, and Lindsey Mittelsteadt have made various typology determinations based on criteria such as primary motivations, physical and social features, geographic situation, control and security type, spatial patterns, and other factors (Rafiemanzelat, 2016).

Although the reasons for the existence of gated communities are numerous and varied, the most frequently cited by academics include security, the desire to create a homogeneous community, social

status, and the wish to invest in and control the future. While primary motivations are clear, the outcome of this separation is not as visible as the gates and security patrols.

Gated communities create private areas to separate residents inside the gated community from everyone who does not belong. This separation leads to even more fragmented communities, and segregation often results in higher crime rates. The main reason for this is that these two separated communities have nothing in common. Parks, playgrounds, and other public spaces are inaccessible to outsiders, and people inside the gated community do not use public spaces outside the gates. A lack of social contact leads to exclusionary segmentation, which in turn causes growing divisions between different communities.

Additionally, perceptions of physical structures, such as gates, fences, walls, and security guards, create a sense of otherness among people outside the walls and create unpleasant edges to neighborhoods.

11. METHODOLOGY

Gated communities are connected to many fields and disciplines and have strong effects on society through both their physical and invisible features. The phenomenon is related to various aspects, such as society, the economy, politics, and planning. Understanding their relationship with crime is an important part of the research, as this is one of the main reasons gated communities are in high demand.

To understand the structure of gated communities, the first step is to examine their historical context, their spread, and their typology. This part of the research will benefit from existing data and analyses related to the topic, such as demographic

diversity, crime records, and planning developments. Case studies of existing gated communities are a valuable resource for this part of the research.

Next, understanding the effects of their physical and social barriers on both the environment and social structure is key to discovering the core role of gated communities. To achieve this, gated communities should be analyzed in terms of physical perception and the impact of physical separation. Existing gated communities in Chicago, IL, will be examined and documented, with observations of pedestrian movement and the condition outside the walls. This can be done using a large number of visual resources, such as observation and visual documentation. For the social impact, data analysis is an important method, along with zoning regulations analysis. On the chosen site of intervention, the Village of St. Bernard, assessed physical and social boundaries will be analyzed to test the area's alignment with the gated community phenomenon and to apply a model solution in the form of the built environment. We should not separate the visible and invisible effects of the phenomenon; accordingly, the methods should work jointly.

Finally, analyzing these aspects of the phenomenon and the intervention should help answer the main thesis question: How can the built environment be used to create inclusive public spaces in private developments, such as gated communities, to facilitate connection and interaction, and prevent social polarization?

Understanding the boundaries created by gated community-like parts of our cities and their impact on the broader community should lead to insights on how the phenomenon can be reinterpreted in a way

that benefits the community, guiding us toward the design phase.

Gated communities contain layers of physical, social, cultural, legal, and perceptual dimensions. All of these layers need to be considered. To ensure public benefit and improve the current situation, both qualitative and quantitative sources should be used.

12. LITERATURE REVIEW

A gated community is a phenomenon that has existed for a long time and is rapidly developing all over the world. A lot of research has been done about it, and the research deals with different approaches. This research aims to determine the structure of gated communities and the reason why they are so widespread, to understand their impact on social structure, to analyze their future, and to offer a solution by synthesizing the research done. For this purpose, different sources were examined that analyzed the physical features of gated communities and criticized them in terms of their effects on the social structure. Edward J. Blakely and Mary Gail Snyder (Blakely, 1997), have been the most obvious source for providing a critical perspective on the structure of gated communities in the U.S., understanding their primary motivations, and their impact on social structure. This book provides an important starting point to understand why enclosed communities affect the broader society. Renaud Le Goix (Le Goix, 2008) and Chris J. Webster (Webster, 2002) again take a critical look at gated communities in the context of rising income inequalities and fear in big cities. Additionally, Reihaneh Rafie Manzelat's analysis of typology approaches of scholars gives a broader understanding of

the variety of gated communities (Rafiemanzelat, 2016).

13. DEFINING GATED COMMUNITIES

a type of settlement that is enclosed and secure, usually surrounded by physical barriers with restricted access. Such communities often represent a form of self-segregation from the broader society, aiming to exclude those who are perceived as outsiders.

a. Why People Choose to Be “Voluntary Prisoners”?

This term, “voluntary prisoners”, is used by Rem Koolhaas to represent a highly regulated environment of architectural delights and controlled experiences (Koolhaas et al. 1972). People choose to enter and live within this space, with the promise of a better life. Gated enclosures have the same nature. People gate themselves in those neighborhoods, even if they have to give up on community convenience for safety (Low 2018) or for other reasons.

The demand for gated communities continues to grow. Although the reasons for the existence of gated communities are many and varied, the most frequently mentioned reasons among academics are: fear of crime, desire for prestige, desire to create a sense of community, invest in and control the future, and secure a place in the social ladder. (Low 2018; Blakely and Snyder 1997)

b. Heterotopias in the Form of Gated Communities

Setha Low, a widely published anthropologist and professor in environmental psychology, describes gated communities as heterotopias (Low 2018). Foucault theorized heterotopias as

places with a certain social order broken down, or temporarily suspended, and reconstructed to create new spaces. Same with heterotopias like schools and military camps, gated communities have restricted access to keep people outside (Leach 1997). Gated communities aim to homogenize the neighborhood, to create a sense of security and community. (and I am going to talk a little bit more about how they do that). Low describes gated communities as a (*quote*): “closely resemble the restricted access of Foucault’s examples and create an ‘exclusive inclusion’ or ‘inclusive exclusion’” (Low 2018, 158).

If we look at examples, some forms of heterotopia have buffer areas or even provide part of the service available for the public. Examples for this can be hotels with lobbies and restaurants, museums with publicly accessible free exhibit sections or activity areas, or airports with lobby areas. In gated communities, there are usually only 3 components: inside, barrier, and outside.

c. Perception of physical barriers: Case studies of existing gated communities in Chicago, IL

i. Concentration of Gated Communities in the U.S.

In the United States, the majority of gated communities can be found in metropolitan areas. The map from 1996 (Figure 1) and research (Blakely and Snyder 1997, Low 2003) show that the majority of GCs are located in Sunbelt States (California, Arizona, Texas, Florida) and in other metropolitan areas (New York, Chicago).

Today we can see a similar pattern in those communities, but additionally we can find them in almost every City, and in all States for sure

Chicago is a city with gated communities.

Research on diversity and community concentrated on community and diversity in this area, which has an important impact on the understanding of the demographic texture of the city, and recognizes its relationship with gated enclosures. In his book, Robert J Simpson discovers the impact

of the place on the community in Chicago (Simpson 2012). It is not concentrated on gated communities, but it gives an understanding of the city and perception of the built environment in the different parts of the city.

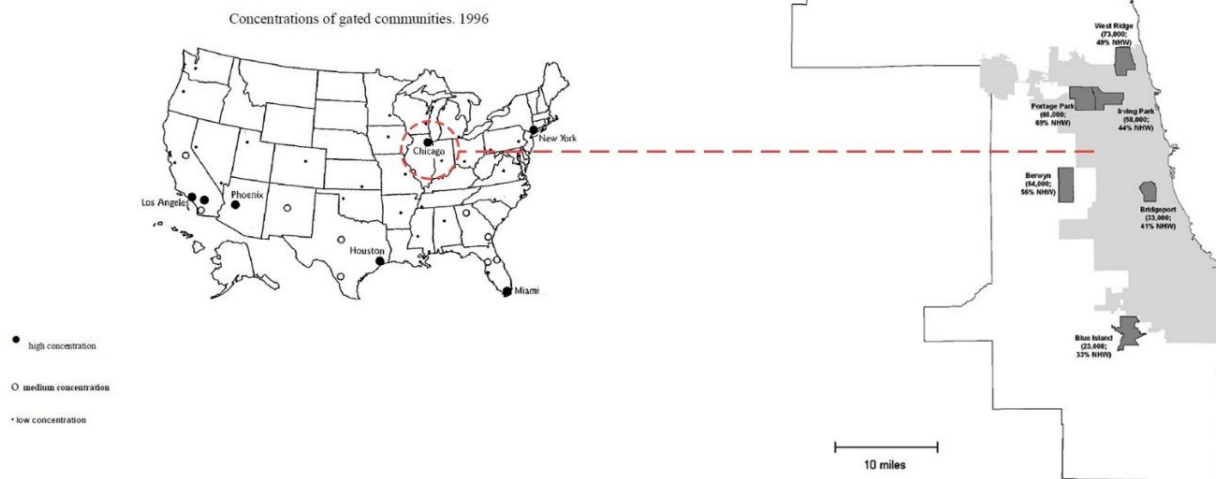


Figure 1: Map of Gated Communities concentration in the U.S. Blakely, Edward J., and Mary Gail Snyder. "Divided we fall: Gated and walled communities in the United States." Architecture of fear 320 (1997). (Left). Highly diverted areas on multiple dimensions in Chicago, IL (Talen 2010) (Right)

ii. Existing Gated Community #1: 1308 North Sutton Place

Built in 1976, those gated condominiums have restricted access to the inner area between buildings protected by a secured entrance (Figure 2) and brick walls

integrated into buildings. This design creates a clean look of the streets that comply with trees (especially in the fall season), but unfortunately, causes a wall effect on the street level, especially for the human scale (Figure 3).



Figure 2: 1308 North Sutton Place entrance (visual: Google Maps)

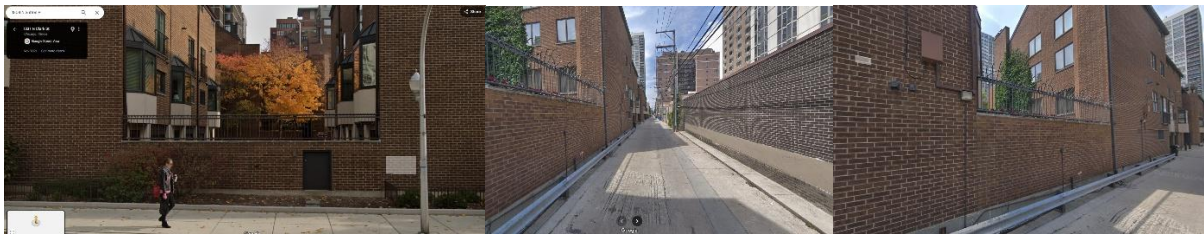


Figure 3: 1308 North Sutton Place view from the street (visuals: Google Maps)

The price for a 3-bedroom condominium is \$1,250,000, and monthly HOA Fees are \$1,185 (Figure 4), while the median household income in Chicago is \$74,474

(Figure 5), and the median gross rent is \$1390.

It shows that because of the price and HOA payment, this building complex is homogenized in terms of class and status.

Facts & Features

MLS® #	12308777	Price	\$1,250,000
Bedrooms	3	Bathrooms	3.00
Full Baths	2	Half Baths	1
Square Footage	2,750	Price per Square Footage	\$454.55
Taxes	\$19,411	HOA Fees	\$1,185
HOA Fees Freq.	Monthly	Acres	0.00
Year Built	1976	Type	Residential
Sub-Type	Attached Single	Status	Active

Figure 4: 1308 North Sutton Place price and fees.

Housing

Financial Characteristics

\$1,391 ± \$21
Median Gross Rent in Chicago city, Illinois
\$1,238 ± \$12
Median Gross Rent in Illinois
DP04 | 2023 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Occupied Units Paying Rent

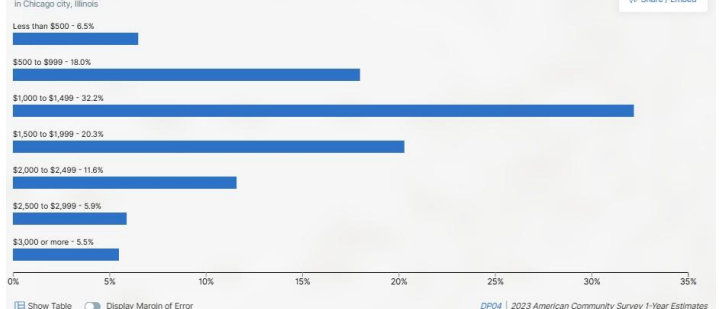


Figure 5: median gross rent in Chicago. IL (Census, 2023)

If one wants to visualize the relationship of the gated community with its surroundings, one has to think about the gated community's barriers. Red lines represent a physical barrier (Figure 6 left), and the surrounding black area represents total disconnection with the surrounding environment (Figure 6 middle). Depends on how the community outside starts to move, the relocation of the existing community evolves to the same type of gated communities (Figure 6, right). That is why

usually gated communities are clustered together, as mentioned in Branic and Kubrin's research in Orange County, CA (Branic and Kubrin 2018). Accordingly, the crime rate becomes lower in those areas, but instead of solving the crime problem in the broader community, they just relocate it. Furthermore, the feeling of otherness created by gated communities causes even bigger polarization between different communities.



Figure 6: Visual representation of the relationship of the gated community with its surroundings (Diagram by the author. Map: Google Maps)

iii. Existing Gated Community #2: Kinzie Park

Another gated enclosure is Kinzie Park, located on the riverside side, including both condominiums and apartment complexes. Residents have secured entrances on the north and south sides, and private access to the riverside walking area on the east. The west side of this housing development is completely walled.

While the private riverside of this neighborhood is a pleasant place for the residences, three other sides are not really improving streets and actually make it unwalkable and unpleasant. The north side especially creates a wall effect on the sidewalk and gives a feeling of otherness (Figure 7). The west side of the development is another high and empty wall, which greatest division with the neighbor site

(Figure 8). At the same time, by gating the access to the riverside, they create a private walk and view for the residents (Figure 9).

The gated neighborhood builds privacy and privilege without considering the outside community.

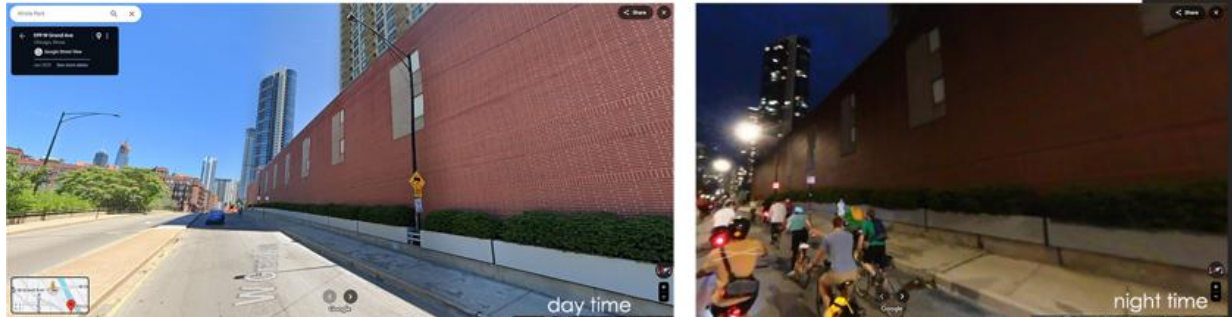


Figure 7: Sidewalk outside the wall, daytime (left) and nighttime (right) (visuals: Google Maps)



Figure 8: West side wall (visual: Google Maps)



Figure 9: The riverside of the Kinzie Park gated community (visuals: Google Maps)

The same visualization of the relationship between the gated community and the surrounding area applies here. Again, red lines represent a physical barrier (Figure 10 left). The difference is that Kinzie Park encloses three sides of the site and the access to the river, while keeping the river access for the residents. This creates the

relationship with the river, while the other three sides remain disconnected from the surroundings (Figure 10, middle). And because of this relationship with the river, the settlement across the river has a visual relationship with the Kinzie Park gated community (Figure 10, right)

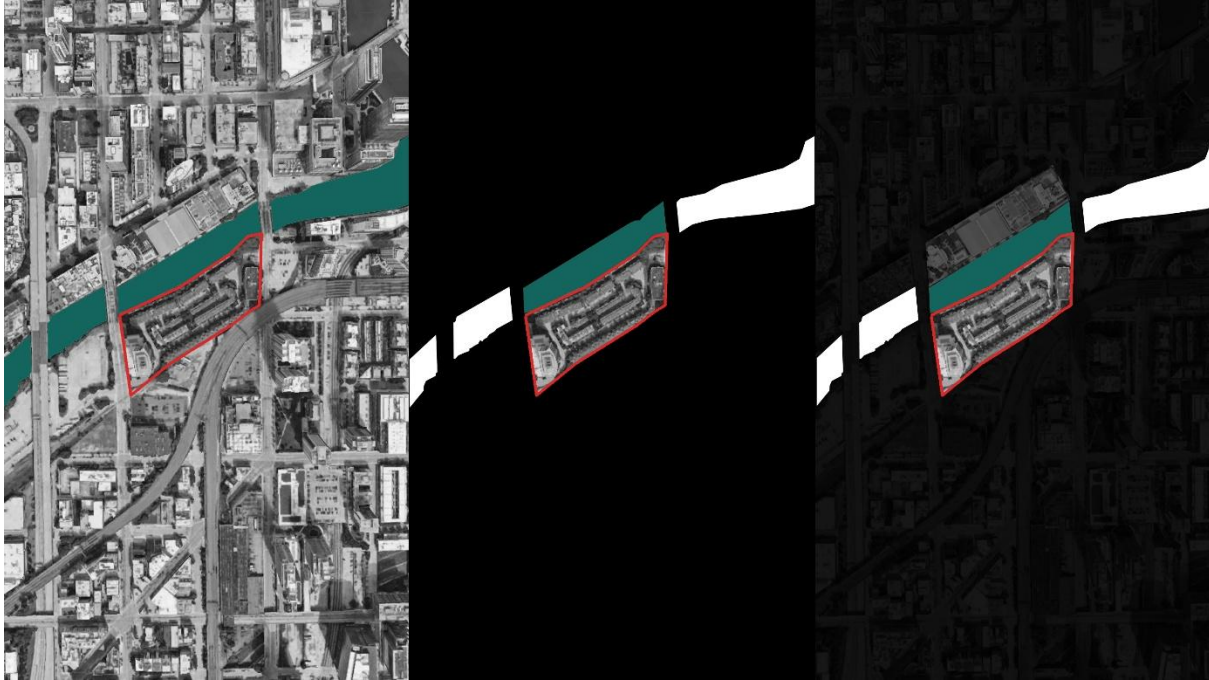


Figure 10: Visual representation of the relationship of the gated community with its surroundings (Diagram by the author. Map: Google Maps)

It is not surprising that we can see this kind of relationship with the broader community, since their main drive is to create those enclosures, and accordingly, the separation between insiders and outsiders.

d. Gated Communities and Crime (Case Study- Orange County, CA)

At this point, it is important to mention that crime has been a central aspect of this phenomenon. Most scholars argue that these formations, when evaluated from a broader perspective, lead to social fragmentation, causing displacement (Le Goix 2008). Others, however, contend in their analyses that they reduce the crime rate in the neighborhoods where they are located (Branic and Kubrin 2018).

In their research paper, Branic and Kubrin, focused on the relationship between crime and gated communities in Orange County, CA, where a large number of gated communities are located. The map they created shows the locations of gated enclosures in this area.

After combining this map with the population data, their findings were that gated communities support the Disorganization Theory (Branic and Kubrin 2018). Disorganization Theory is a theory that says that high socio-economic status, residential stability, and racial/ethnic homogeneity decrease crime. And homogeneity is a common feature of the gated community. They cause prices to increase and displace people with lower incomes.

14. TYPOLOGY OF GATED COMMUNITIES

Sometimes these communities represent not just physical barriers, but also (less visible) economic and socio-political ones. They often operate through socio-economic exclusion, environmental racism, or discriminatory housing policies. To analyze how boundaries are revealed in gated communities, it is important to understand the typology range. For this purpose, a wide typology study was conducted.

iv. **Traditional Gated Communities**

This study was conducted according to the book "Fortress America" by Edward Blakely and Mary Gail Snyder. They classify these developments as an urban trend shaped by fear, economic inequality, and the desire for social homogeneity.

Analyses of traditional gated communities and case studies indicate that boundaries manifest not only through gates and fences but also through preserved natural areas, water bodies, single street access, and privatized streets. It also shows that this phenomenon can apply to residents of various ages, socio-economic levels, or family statuses. However, each gated community typically stands out for its internal homogeneity. (Low 2018; Blakely and Snyder 1997)

1. **LIFESTYLE:** These are gated developments built around shared amenities such as golf courses, marinas, or retirement facilities. The scale can be as big as a whole town.
2. **PRESTIGE:** These communities emphasize social status and exclusivity. The gate functions primarily as a symbol of success, wealth, prestige, and separation from the broader public. In the middle of the slide, you can see examples from the richest down to the middle-class type of development.
3. **SECURITY ZONE:** These developments emerge primarily from fear of crime and social disorder. Separation functions as a defensive mechanism, reflecting a desire for safety and protection. They exist in neighborhoods ranging from the wealthiest to the most poverty-stricken, and in some cases, gates are used to separate social housing without the consent of residents.

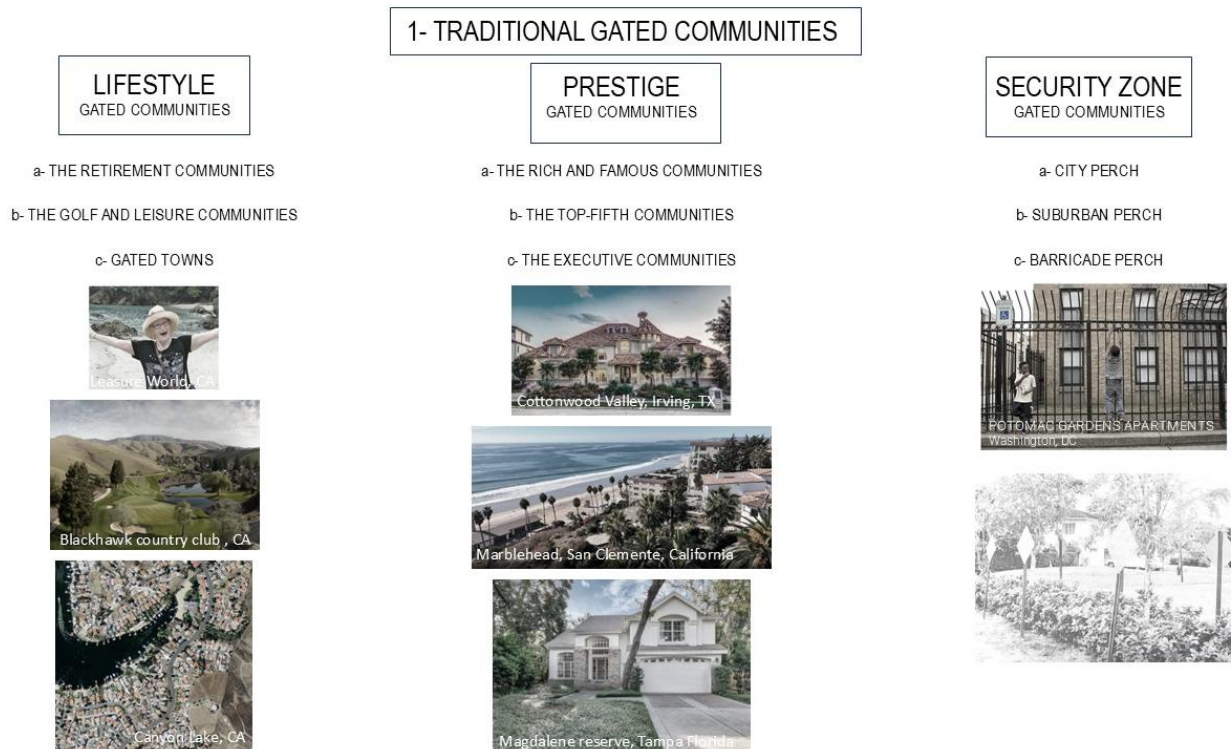


Figure 11: Traditional Gated Communities table. (Full visual credits and image sources are provided in the Bibliography/Citation section at the end of this document.)

v. Broader Manifestations of Gated Community.

This type focuses less on physical boundaries, more on other types of boundaries such as economic, social, and/or political.

This type of phenomenon is divided by the author into five sections. While those types are not generally recognized as gated communities, they can be interpreted as community-like areas.

1. SMART CITIES: This is a type of gated community where, instead of gates and fences, surveillance systems are an active selection mechanism that decides who to accept in and who to keep out. (Baratto, 2019)
2. ECO-ENCLAVES: Those are settlements with people who want to segregate themselves in a healthier environment. For example, "American Refugee Community." Is a group of people who purchase a piece of land and plan to build their own community away from the radiation. (Foundation for Intentional Community, 2024)
3. POLITICAL CITIES: These developments were proposed as privately managed zones, risk deepening inequality by granting economic privileges and political autonomy to select groups, excluding others from decision-making. (Wikipedia contributors, 2026)
4. COMPANY TOWNS: Company towns are historically concentrated power in the

hands of employers who controlled housing, services, and governance—creating dependence and reinforcing class divisions between workers and owners. (Hirsch 2015)

perch from traditional types of phenomena, was pushed to live in certain, usually disadvantaged, areas. One of many examples of this is the Lincoln Heights community in Ohio. (Semuels, 2016)

5. Imposed segregation is a type of community that, similarly to barricade

2- BROADER SOCIAL AND SPATIAL PHENOMENON

SMART CITIES



Smart City in Brazil

ECO-ENCLAVES

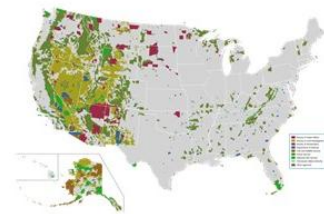
"American Refugee Community" ARC
TBD, Maine, United States



Mission Statement

Exceptional healthy and vibrant living people are actively seeking to connect with other like-minded folks. We are fit, healthy, mentally strong, personally stable, personally responsible, accountable, honest, and above all, are connected to SOURCE/GOD in every decision we choose. Please read carefully and inner stand

POLITICAL CITIES



Freedom Cities - privately governed enclaves free from taxation, regulation, and democratic oversight.

COMPANY TOWNS



Mills and smokestacks in Lowell, Massachusetts

IMPOSED SEGREGATED



Lincoln Heights, OH

Figure 12: Broader Manifestations of Gated Community (Full visual credits and image sources are provided in the Bibliography/Citation section at the end of this document.)

vi. Summary Of Typology Study

Research on typology and case studies shows that gated communities can be interpreted as a phenomenon of creating boundaries to separate people physically, economically, and socially. Each community

that intentionally self-segregates itself and imposes segregation on others is a form of gated community, whether it is a housing complex with gates and fences or a neighborhood that has its own government with the intention to keep "others" out and in certain places.

TYPOLOGY DIAGRAM OF GATED COMMUNITIES

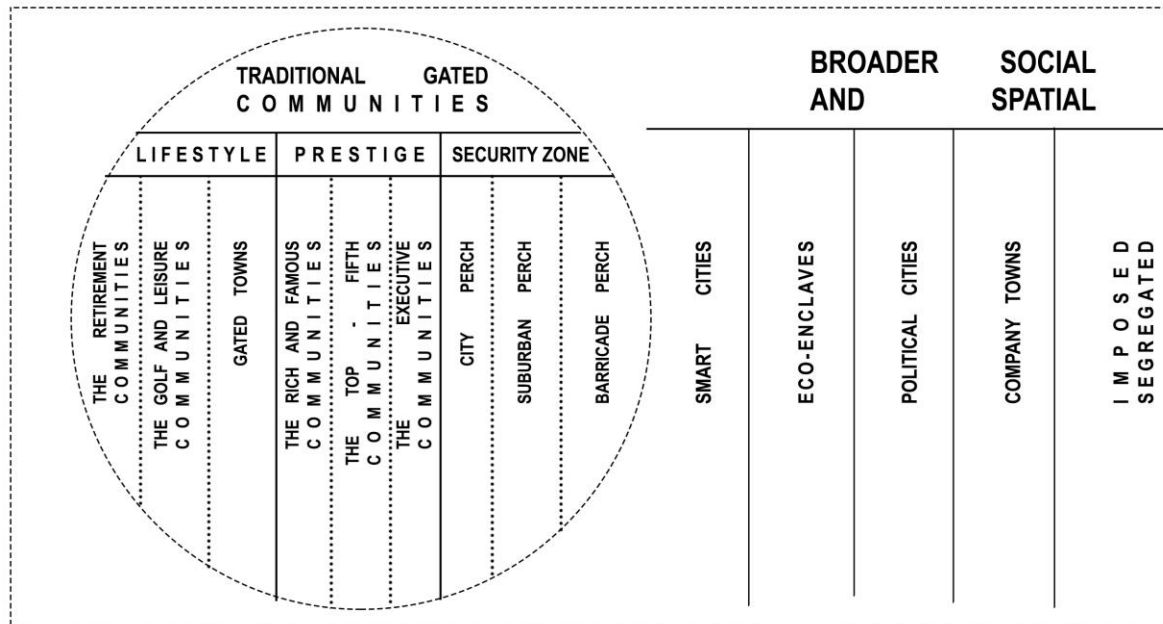


Figure 13: Typology Diagram of Gated Communities. (Diagram by the author)

6. GATED COMMUNITIES AS PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL SEPARATION (VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE BARRIERS).

PHYSICAL BARRIERS: Today, gated communities create private, usually secured, walled, and gated areas to separate themselves from others, meaning from everyone who does not belong to the gated community. Depending on the typology, they may provide exclusive public spaces, amenities, staffed guard houses, security patrols, CCTV, and internal roads.

Perception of those barriers, in the form of gates, fences, walls, and security guards, creates the feeling of otherness to people outside the walls and creates unpleasant edges of neighborhoods.

Those barriers are important to understand the feeling of being outside those walls, but

the other, maybe more powerful separation is created by invisible barriers.

INVISIBLE BARRIERS: Exclusionary zoning/ redlining/ HOAs/ planning language and bureaucracy/lack of transit access. Those are only a few of the barriers that we can consider as invisible barriers. They create homogenous communities and segregate low-income residents or renters not only in the neighborhood itself, but also in the surrounding areas.

To further examine these conditions, a series of case studies of existing gated communities in the Cincinnati, Ohio region and its surrounding areas was analyzed (Figure 14). These case studies focus on the spatial organization, boundary conditions, and socio-economic characteristics of each development. Through mapping, diagrammatic analysis, and visual documentation, the study evaluates key

aspects such as location within the urban fabric, stakeholder composition, entrance typologies, density, and program distribution. Particular attention is given to how boundaries are constructed—whether through physical elements such as gates, fences, and controlled entry points, or through more subtle spatial configurations such as single-access streets, landscape buffers, and internalized amenities. By comparing low-density suburban enclaves

with higher-density urban gated developments, the analysis reveals variations in how separation is produced and maintained across different contexts. These observations highlight that, regardless of scale or form, gated communities consistently reinforce controlled access, spatial isolation, and limited interaction with the surrounding environment, further contributing to broader patterns of urban fragmentation.

EXISTING GATED COMMUNITIES IN THE CINCINNATI, OHIO AREA

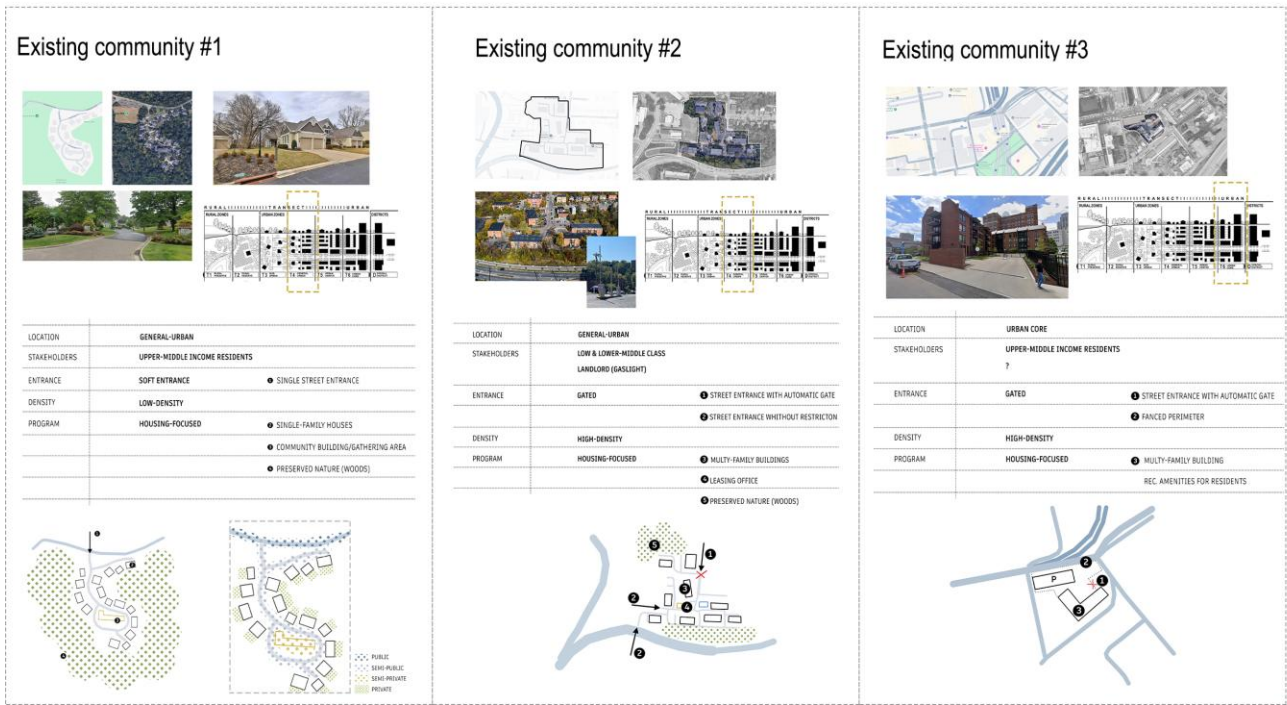


Figure 14: Existing Gated Communities in the Cincinnati, Ohio area (Full visual credits and image sources are provided in the Bibliography/Citation section at the end of this document.)

7. CONCLUSION

This research has demonstrated that gated communities should not be understood solely as enclosed residential developments, but rather as part of a broader system of boundary-making embedded within the urban environment.

Through typological analysis and case studies, six recurring forms of boundaries were identified: physical, economic, administrative, symbolic, social, and biopolitical (Figure 6). These boundaries operate simultaneously, producing layered

conditions of separation that extend beyond visible gates and walls. The study also highlights key challenges in analyzing this phenomenon. The effects of gated conditions—particularly in relation to crime, displacement, and social fragmentation—are difficult to measure at a metropolitan scale due to shifting populations and incomplete data. Additionally, the lack of architectural research on this topic reveals a disciplinary gap, where spatial consequences are often discussed without corresponding design strategies. Despite these challenges, the research establishes a clear direction: understanding

how boundaries are perceived, constructed, and maintained can inform new approaches to urban design. The investigation of St. Bernard illustrates how a community can function as a gated condition without traditional enclosures, shaped instead by infrastructure, governance, and economic dependence. By combining qualitative observations with spatial analysis, this thesis emphasizes the need to address both visible and invisible barriers. This integrated approach enables a more comprehensive understanding of how segregation is produced—and how it might be transformed—through architectural intervention.

IDENTIFYING BOUNDARIES

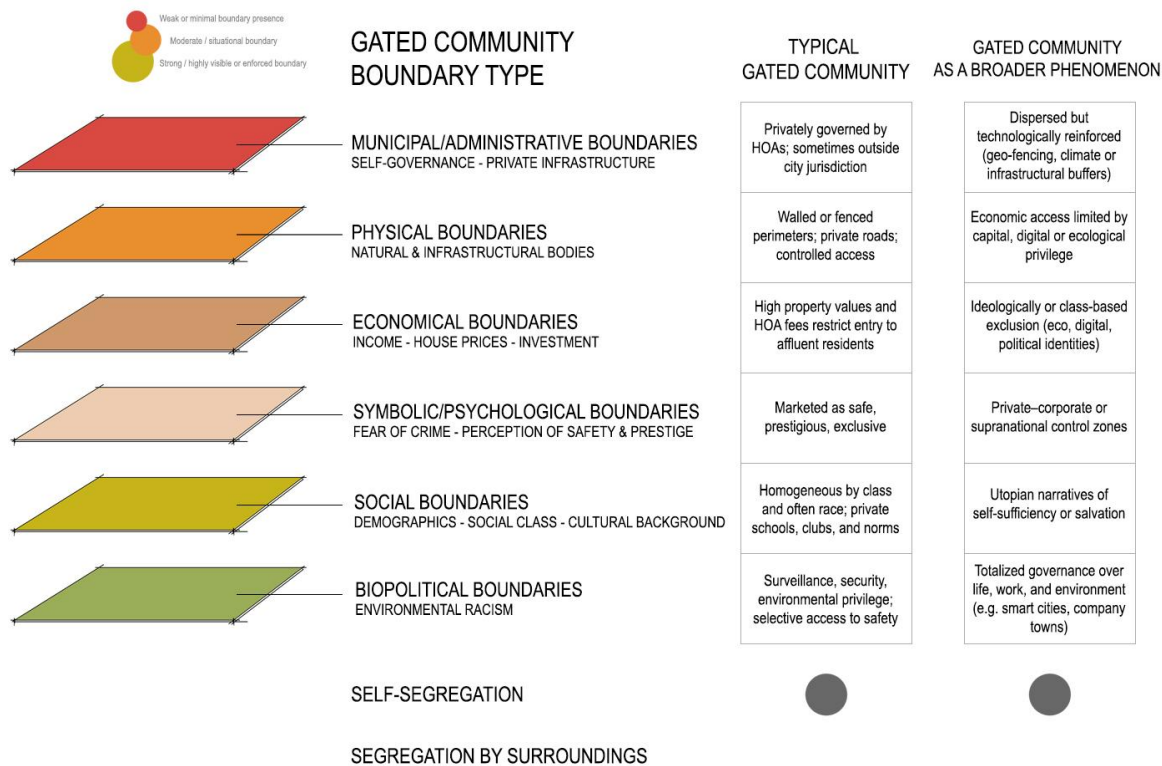


Figure 15: Identified Boundaries (diagram by the author)

THESIS ADDENDUM

Written Thesis to Design Approach

The focus on gated communities is a focus on barriers in general. However, research shows that sometimes these communities represent not just physical barriers, but also (less visible) economic and socio-political ones. They often operate through socio-economic exclusion, environmental racism, or discriminatory housing policies.

After broad research on typology, I identified 6 types of boundaries as typical for gated communities: administrative, physical, economic, symbolic, social, and biopolitical boundaries. Research on typology and case studies shows that gated communities can be interpreted as a phenomenon that creates physical, economic, and social boundaries to separate people.

Site Selection

This approach led to the exploration of broader examples of gated communities. I chose three possible sites of intervention in the Cincinnati area: St. Bernard, Ohio; Lincoln Heights, Ohio; and Lower Price Hill, Cincinnati. Then I layered those identified boundaries to see how those sites are connected to the Gated Community phenomenon.

All of these sites exhibit the influence of all six boundary types. However, the village of St. Bernard demonstrates the strongest tendencies toward self-governance and self-segregation, which establishes its clear connection to the manifestation of the gated community. While Lincoln Heights and Lower Price Hill represent imposed boundaries, they can serve as testing grounds to evaluate whether the approach developed for St. Bernard can be effectively applied in different socio-spatial contexts.

Site Analysis (boundary analysis)

The initial reason for choosing St. Bernard village as a potential area of intervention is the variety of boundaries between the village and its surrounding areas. Therefore, I decided to clearly and in detail apply those six identified barriers to the area. St. Bernard is a village surrounded by Cincinnati but deliberately remains separate. This creates a clear administrative boundary between the village and the rest of Cincinnati.

The village itself is also separated into two parts: the north part of the industrial area (Ivorydale) and the residential part of the village, separated sharply by the I-75 highway.

I visited the site to document existing boundary conditions. On the north, the village boundary follows Mill Creek, which is largely inaccessible, so I traveled along the nearest northern road. I also explored the industrial area, where you can see the site conditions and how the industrial zone directly connects to the residential area in the northwest. On the south edge of the village, there is just a road separating two residential areas, which visually does not represent any clear boundary, and is very different from the northern and industrial conditions.

As a result, St. Bernard acts as a village-scale gated community with visible and invisible boundaries. Conflicts between industrial areas, highways, railroads, Mill Creek, residential zones, and neighboring communities currently limit cohesion.

Concept

The initial broader idea of breaking boundaries in a place where the intention is to keep it enclosed is a challenging approach. The need to “un-gate” a place should be with a strong desire not only from the outside but also from the inside. Intuitively, I saw potential in this desire in St. Bernard. Therefore, I researched potential problems the village is concerned about.

The economy of the village relies on the industrial area, predominantly occupied by P&G. Company towns historically failed because they concentrated economic and social power in the hands of a single employer, leading to vulnerability when the company declined. Similarly, St. Bernard Soap Company was a bar soap manufacturer that permanently closed in March 2024, creating a significant negative economic impact for the village. Additionally, P&G announced a plan to cut 7,000 jobs globally over the next two years, which shows that the company faces challenges from economic uncertainty.

This shows a clear need to open the village to a broader population. Additionally, some recent developments initiated by the village are a desire and trend toward attracting people to St. Bernard.

Therefore, breaking boundaries will create better conditions for the surrounding areas, create an alternative economic base for the village, and foster social connections between the village and the surrounding area. To do that, I propose to create a socio-economic corridor through the industrial area to connect broader communities and to connect residents of the village with the surrounding area through Vine Street. This socio-economic corridor should not be linear, for that linear approach can be another division in the area. Lines sufficient for a modern society and convenient for the infrastructure. However, analysis of the area and other types of separations shows that it is not a healthy approach if the intention is to create an open and welcoming place. Additionally, this area already contains a large number of wide streets, railroads, and river banks. Therefore, instead of a linear corridor, the design I propose is dispersed and formed with various forms and functions.

To create this non-linear approach, I started to examine the area by identifying all sites close to the proposed corridor. A few big sites have a potential for intervention, as well as small public-use sites. Additionally, I consider some small corners of land that belong to industrial plants to be kept as something to give back to society. However, I do not wish to just occupy those big sites with buildings. Thus, I started to think about how I can use those tiny corners, and the solution might be to simply use those small sites to place the feet of a building that runs over roads, railroads, or the creek (all active physical separations in the area). The typology and the program of the building can be various depending on the placement. For example, it can be a combination of residential, commercial, industrial, and public use, a mixed-use program that connects different types of use and can preserve the village’s identity while bringing new people and businesses. This architecture will serve as an omnidirectional tool between separated assets.

On the other hand, big sites can be a potential for creating open recreational spaces, filled with landscape. Additionally, more flexible and modular structures between these completely open spaces and the buildings can be placed to serve as connectors.

Conclusion

“Once, a city was divided in two parts. One part became the Good half, the other part the Bad half.” Rem Koolhaas.

So, we can start to see how our cities have turned into layers of barriers — one on top of another — making it harder and harder for people to truly connect. Each created barrier, each self-segregation leads to imposing segregation on others.

I intend to break down those boundaries in every possible way and direction, and create a common ground where people can understand each other, learn from each other, and, as a result, can create healthier communities.

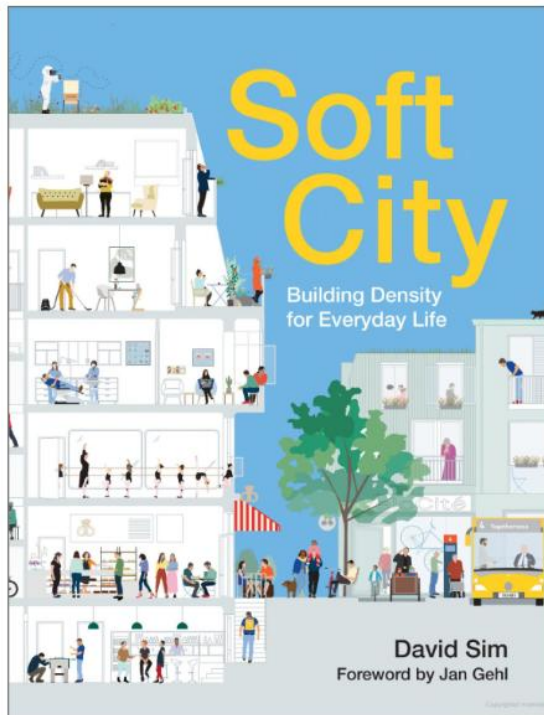
DESIGN PROCESS

PRECEDENTS

1- DISCOURSE BOARD

THINKERS: DISCOURSE  Jan Gehl <i>'Cities for People', urban planning, re-orienting city design, "Life Between Buildings", the city at eye level, human scale.</i>  Riken Yamamoto <i>Balance between public and private dimensions, transparency, in form, material and philosophy</i>  Alejandro Aravena <i>Social responsibility, Participatory design, affordability, flexibility and adaptability, urban integration human-centered design.</i>	THINKERS: ARTISTS  Rem Koolhaas <i>Voluntary Prisoners of Architecture: The Reception Area</i>  Lori Sokoluk <i>Many Arrive Destination Unknown</i>	TOPIC CRAFTING INCLUSIVE NEIGHBORHOOD: <i>Architectural response to gated communities.</i> Key Words: inclusive urban planning and architecture, inclusive neighborhood, social sustainability, eye-level city, public spaces, public/private balance, physically, economically, and culturally accessible to all.
THINKERS: SUBJECT MATTER  Setha Low <i>Gated communities, Anthropology of space & place, Environmental psychology</i>  David Sim <i>Urban environment, 'Soft City', human-centered design.</i>  Nathalie de Vries <i>New building typologies, high-quality public spaces, functionally mixed buildings</i>	CONDITION <i>Residential settlements close to urban area, diverted communities/neighborhoods,</i>	

2- CASE STUDY





David Sim
Creative Director at Gehl | Copenhagen | Denmark

David Sim is Creative Director at Gehl. For more than ten years David has been focusing on Masterplanning Frameworks and urban design, collaborating with other professionals in the planning and building process, applying Jan Gehl's theories to large-scale projects. David is also renowned as an inspiring educator and lecturer, and has taught at architecture and design schools all over the world.

<https://delsipooole.com>

f o in X



"soft city" as a human-centered, people-friendly urban environment, influenced by the work of [Jan Gehl](#), and exemplified by Nordic traditions.

Jan Gehl
Leading Partner & Advisor

Gehl

Our Work | About Us | Knowledge Tools



Bassin 7 public program to foster a vibrant and more connected waterfront



Upholding Google's goal to be a helpful neighbor



Promoting play to improve children's health and well-being in American cities

Urban Design & Masterplanning | Urban Strategy | Place Activation | Urban Strategy | Urban Strategy

WHAT IT IS ABOUT?

Neighborhoods

Density

Community

People

METHODS

Photography

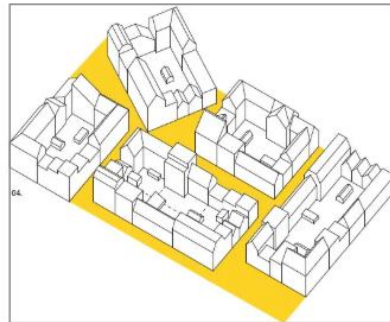
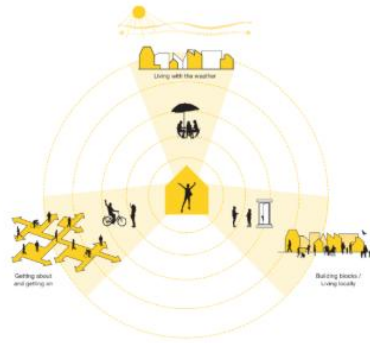
Diagrams/Sections

Colors

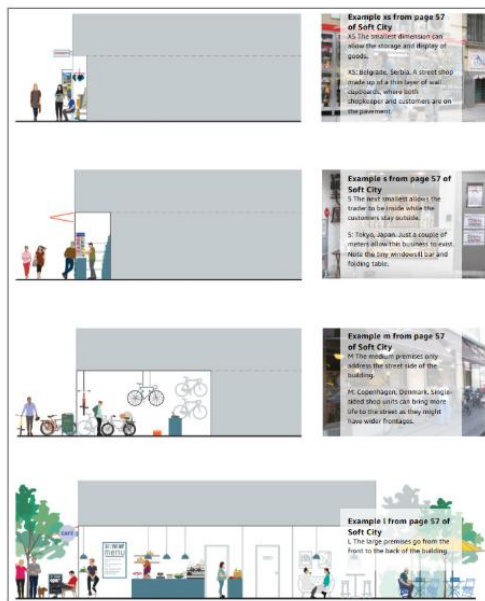
Graphical drawings

Scale diversity: from urban scale to a unit scale

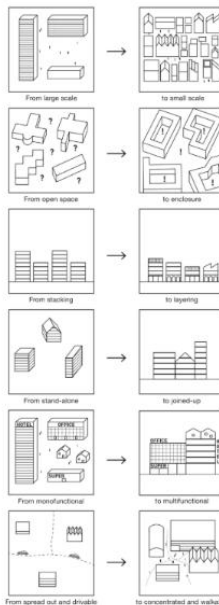
Typology analyse



TYPOLGY ANALYSE



DIAGRAMS

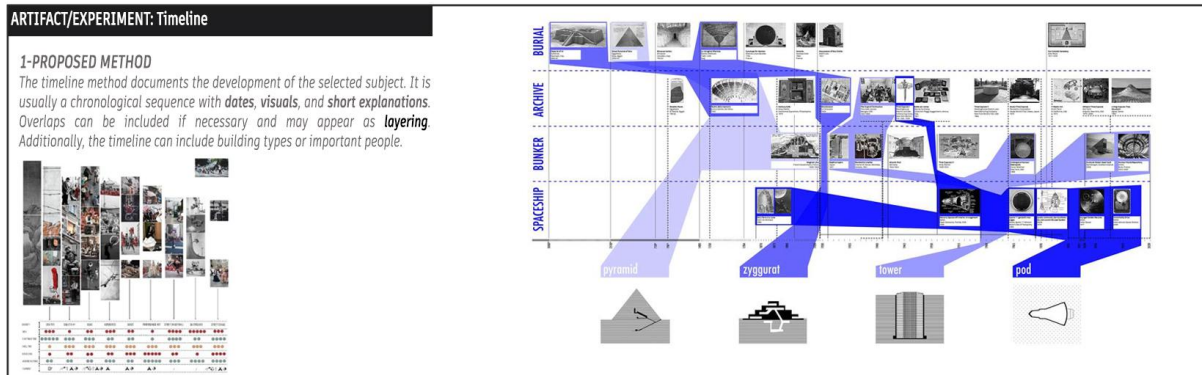


PHOTOGRAPHY



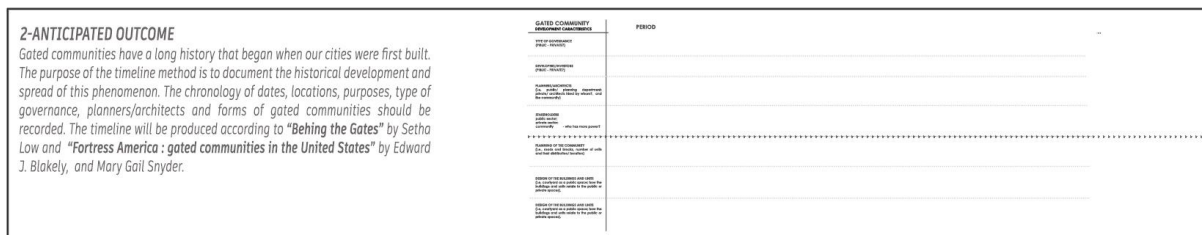
3- ARTIFACTS

ARTIFACT/EXPERIMENT #1: Timeline



EXAMPLE: From UNI Architecture competition "The Empty Space"
(<https://uni.xyz/projects/the-empty-space-desc-empty-spacemeans-em>)

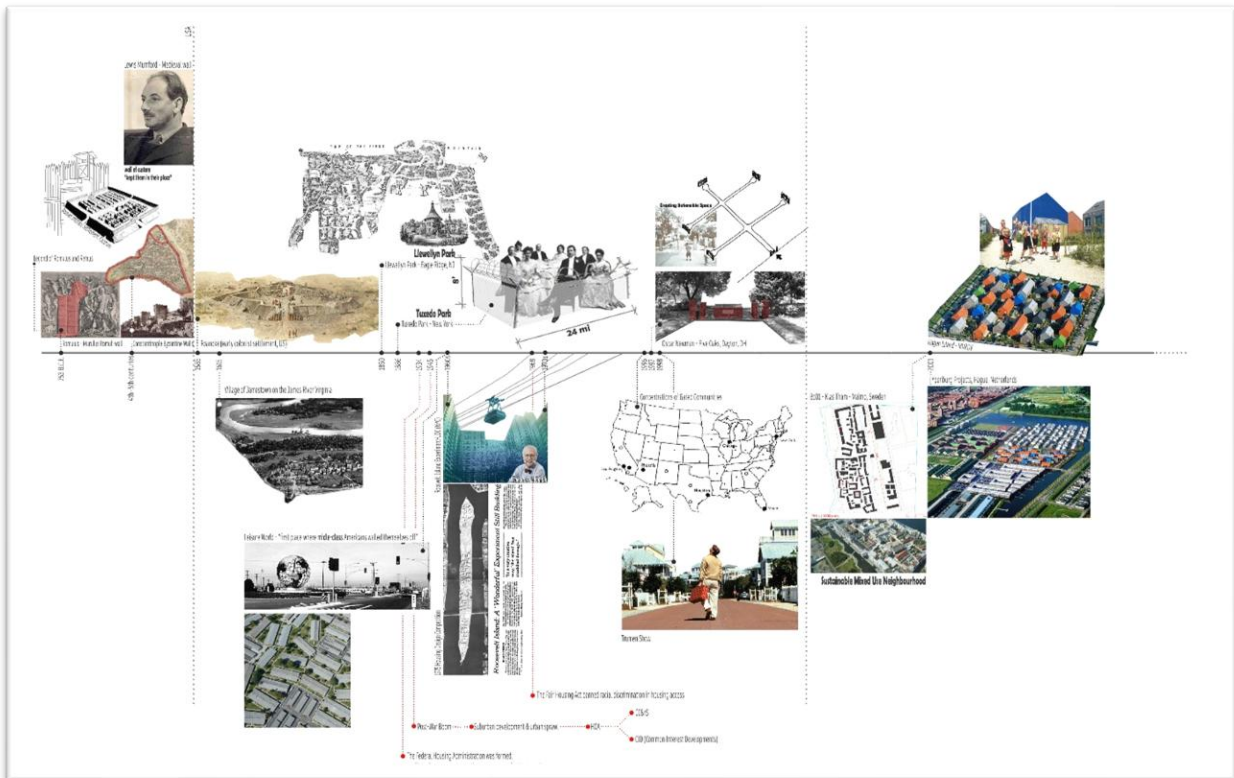
EXAMPLE: From "THE TIME CAPSULE AS A DESIGN-DRIVEN METHOD FOR THE END TIMES" Idea by Gianluca Croce, Mariacristina D'Oria, Valentina Rodani (<https://futurearchitectureplatform.org/projects/461af292-6cbf-4aa7-a46b-31cb4391d2f1/>)



3-THESIS QUESTION: how to create an alternative, more inclusive, "ungated" community with welcoming public spaces, to facilitate connection and interaction, and prevent social polarization

To create an inclusive community as a respond to gated communities, the timeline will help to identify different aspects of gated enclosures through the history.

Gated communities have a long history, dating back to when our cities were first built. The purpose of the timeline method is to document the historical development and spread of this phenomenon. The timeline was produced according to "Behind the Gates" by Setha Low and "Fortress America: gated communities in the United States" by Edward J. Blakely and Mary Gail Snyder. This timeline shows not only examples of enclosed communities but also case studies of more inclusive communities.



Timeline of how the gated community phenomenon evolved through the history of cities. Created by the author.

ARTIFACT/EXPERIMENT #2: Collage

ARTIFACT/EXPERIMENT: Collage

1-PROPOSED METHOD

The collage demonstrates the existing conditions and possibilities for a better place. The example used to explore "What if?"

EXISTING →



POSSIBILITY →



EXAMPLE: From "Journal of Architectural Education". Riddhi Gugale and Laura Miles, "Cooperative Corridor-What If? Collage", Carnegie Mellon University, 2023.

2-ANTICIPATED OUTCOME

Gated communities have a long history that began when our cities were first built. The purpose of the timeline method is to document the historical development and spread of this phenomenon. The chronology of dates, locations, purposes, type of governance, planners/architects and forms of gated communities should be recorded. The timeline will be produced according to "Behing the Gates" by Setha Low and "Fortress America: gated communities in the United States" by Edward J. Blakely, and Mary Gail Snyder.

EXISTING →



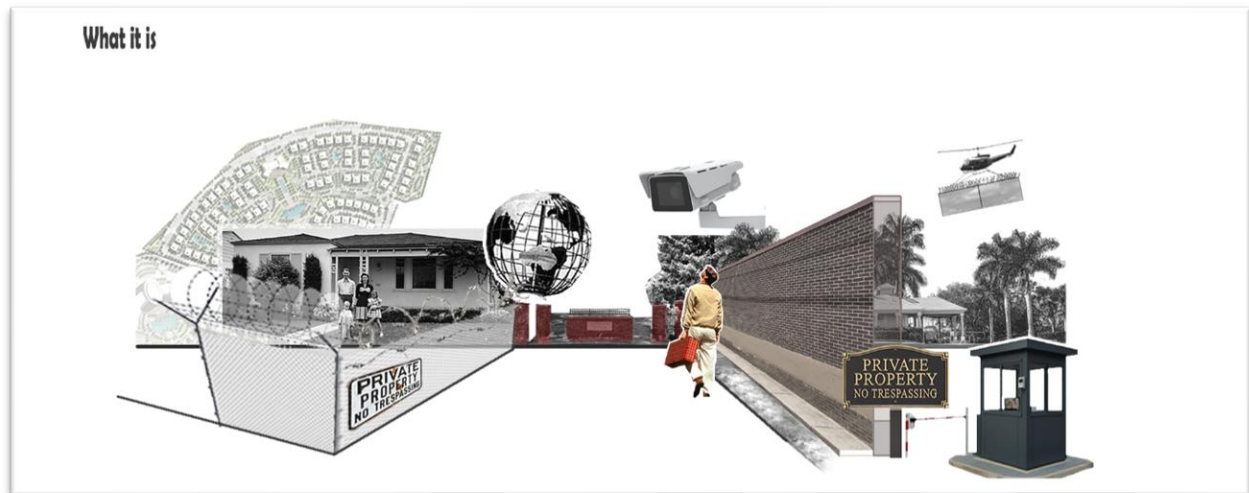
POSSIBILITY →



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To create an inclusive community as a respond to gated communities, the timeline will help to identify different aspects of gated enclosures through the history.

The collage demonstrates the existing conditions of gated communities and possibilities for a better place.



Abstract collage of existing conditions of gated. Created by the author.



Abstract collage imagining the possibilities. Created by the author.

ARTIFACT/EXPERIMENT #3: Conceptual model making

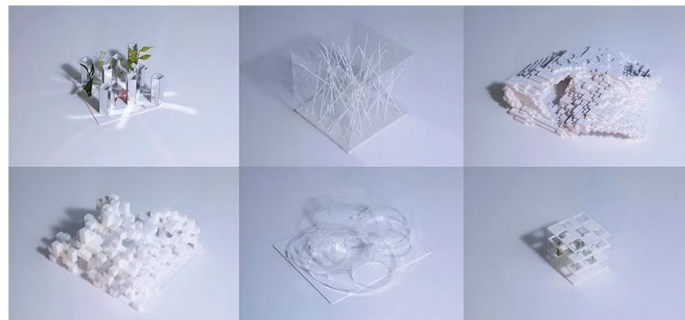
ARTIFACT/EXPERIMENT: Conceptual model making

1-PROPOSED METHOD

The conceptual model-making method is an experiment to explore different types of neighborhoods and their spatial connections with the land. A square or cube of the same size will represent the boundary of a neighborhood. The variables will include: enclosure type, openness, movement, density, height, topography, and landscape.



Concept models for a network of urban playgrounds. Urbanism studio in collaboration with Clara Domange.

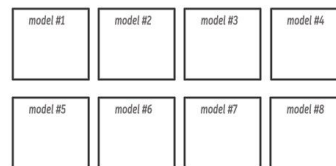


EXAMPLE: Cristina Laura Anastase - M.ArchI Bucharest, Romania
(<https://www.architecture.yale.edu/exhibitions/70-year-end-of-the-world/cristina-laura-a-nastase>)

EXAMPLE: Jack Balderrama Morley "Young Architect Guide: 8 Ways to Make Better Concept Models"
(<https://architizter.com/blog/practice/tools/young-architect-guide-concept-model-inspiration/>)

2-ANTICIPATED OUTCOME

The outcome of these models should visually reveal the differences in the relationship of the neighborhood with its public areas, landscape, and adjacent neighborhoods. It should also indicate patterns of movement within each type of landscape.



3-THESIS QUESTION: how to create an alternative, more inclusive, "ungated" community with welcoming public spaces, to facilitate connection and interaction, and prevent social polarization

This experimental method will lead to a better understanding of the spatial effects of the land and how spatial density, enclosure, or openness affect the way people inhabit the neighborhood.

The conceptual model-making method is an experiment to explore different types of neighborhoods and their spatial connections with the land. A square or cube of the same size will represent the boundary of a neighborhood. The variables will include: enclosure type, openness, movement, density, height, topography, and landscape.

The outcome of these models visually reveals the differences in the relationship of the neighborhood with its public areas, landscape, and adjacent neighborhoods. It also helped to indicate patterns of movement within each type of landscape.



Models. Created by the author.

SITE SELECTION

3 possible sites of intervention were chosen and layered with identified boundaries to see how those sites are connected to the Gated Community phenomenon. All of the possible sites were chosen from Cincinnati, OH, and the surrounding area.

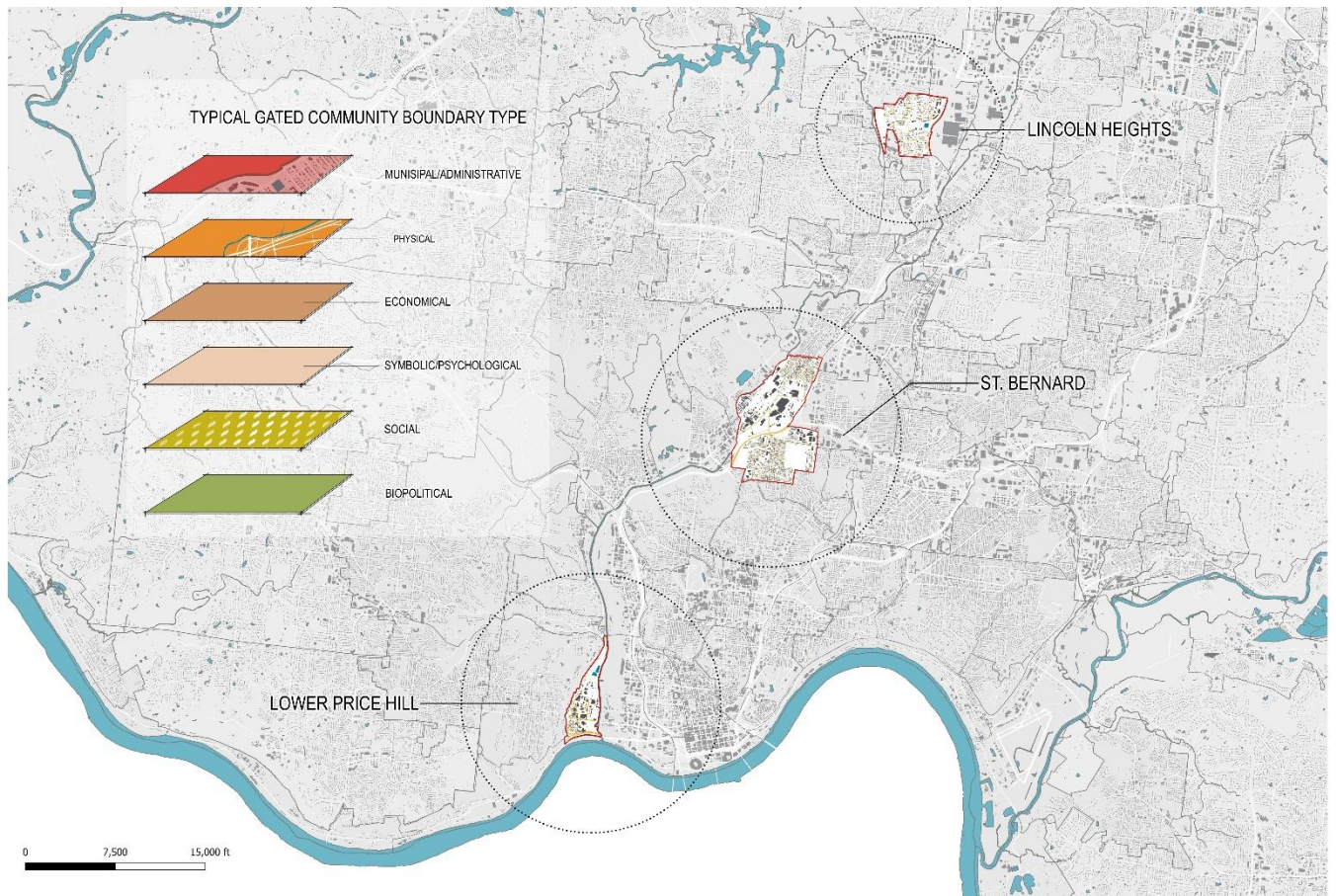
Possible site #1: Lower Price Hill, Cincinnati, OH

Possible site #2: Village of St. Bernard, OH (surrounded by Cincinnati, but is not part of it)

Possible site #3: Lincoln Heights, OH



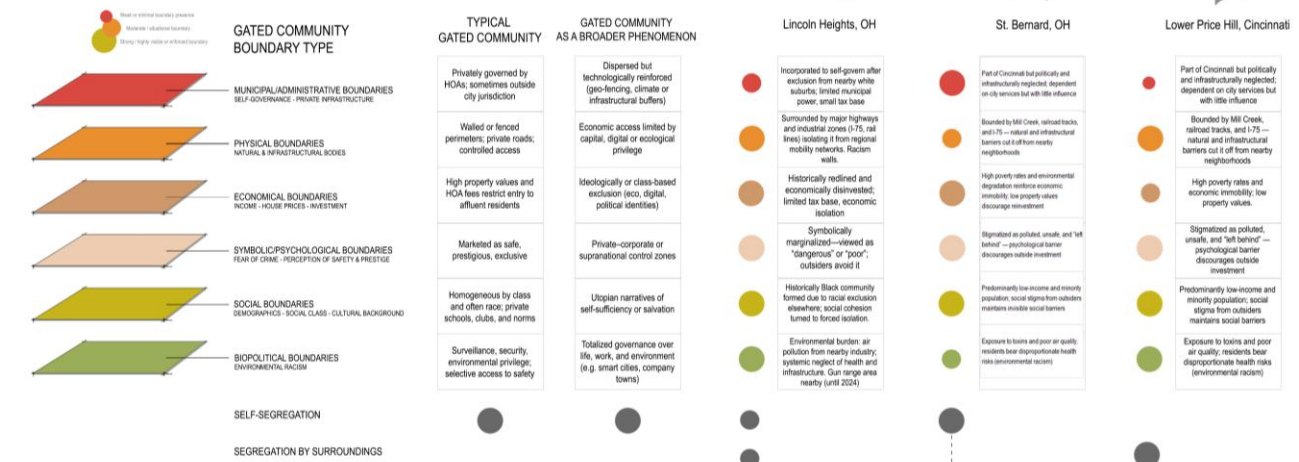
Map of 3 possible sites of intervention in Cincinnati, OH, and the surrounding area. (Map and all diagrams by the author. Map source QGIS).



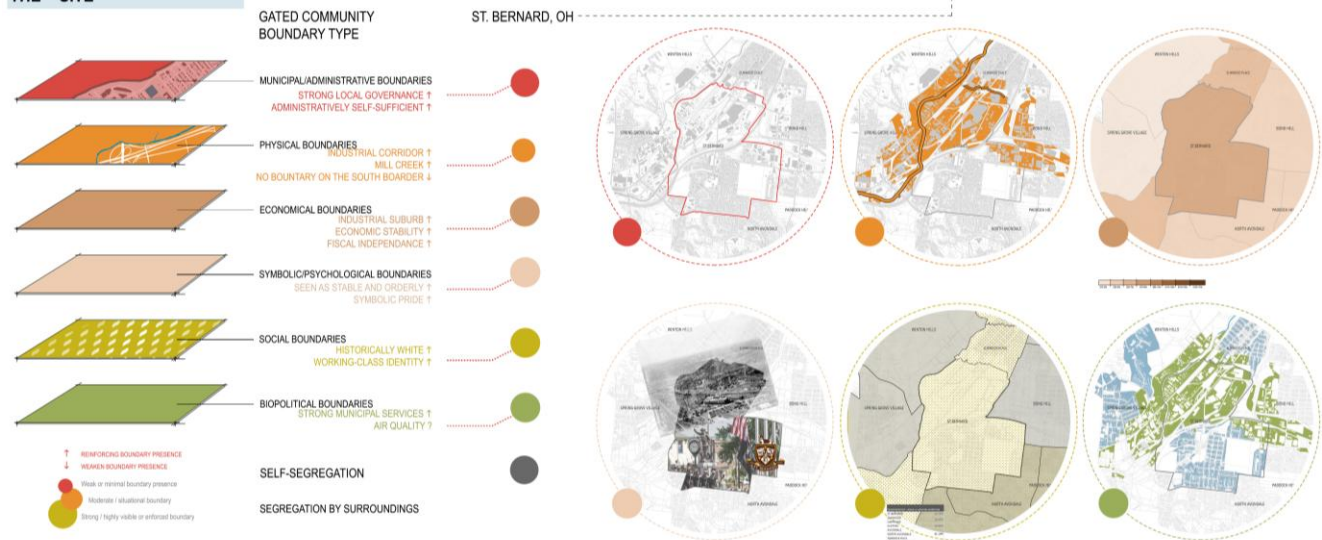
Map of 3 possible sites of intervention and typical gated community boundary types. (Map and all diagrams by the author. Map base: QGIS).

All of these sites exhibit the influence of all six boundary types. However, the village of St. Bernard demonstrates the strongest tendencies toward self-governance and self-segregation, which establishes its clear connection to the manifestation of the gated community. While Lincoln Heights and Lower Price Hill represent imposed boundaries, they can serve as testing grounds to evaluate whether the approach developed for St. Bernard can be effectively applied in different socio-spatial contexts.

IDENTIFYING BOUNDARIES



APPLIED BOUNDARIES ON THE SITE



Identified boundaries of gated communities compared and evaluated with boundary types of possible sites (upper), boundaries applied and evaluated on selected site – St. Bernard, OH (All diagrams by the author).

Physical boundaries, such as Mill Creek and the industrial area, separate the village’s residential zones from the surrounding communities. Economically, the village has a moderate income. Economic boundary created through stability and zoning favoring single-family homes. Symbolic and social boundaries are less visible and can be identified in combination. Stability, symbolic pride in independence from Cincinnati, and being a historically white, working-class identity create those boundaries. Additionally, contrasting demographics and socioeconomic conditions with surrounding areas reinforces social boundaries. Biopolitical boundaries are revealed in the form of benefits from a cleaner environment and stronger municipal services, reflecting spatial privilege.

SITE ANALYSES

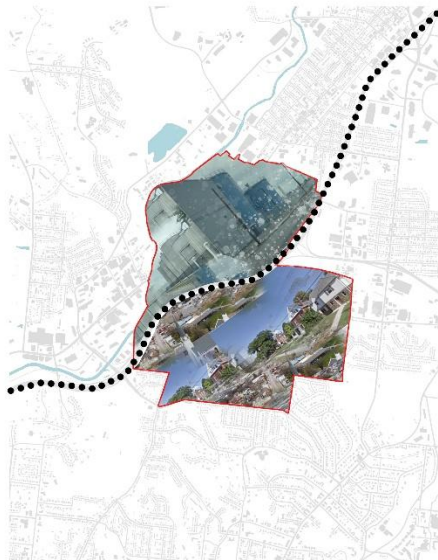
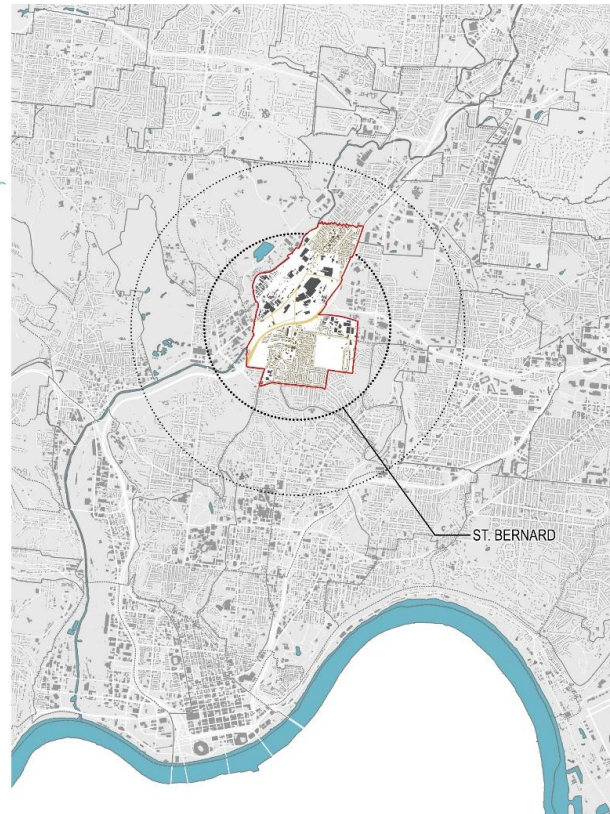
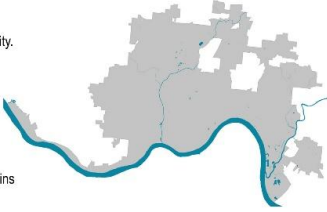
ST. BERNARD, OH

Historically settled by German immigrants in the mid-19th century and has remained a predominantly white community.

The community is administratively and economically self-sufficient, exercising strong local governance, zoning control, and fiscal independence from the nearby city.

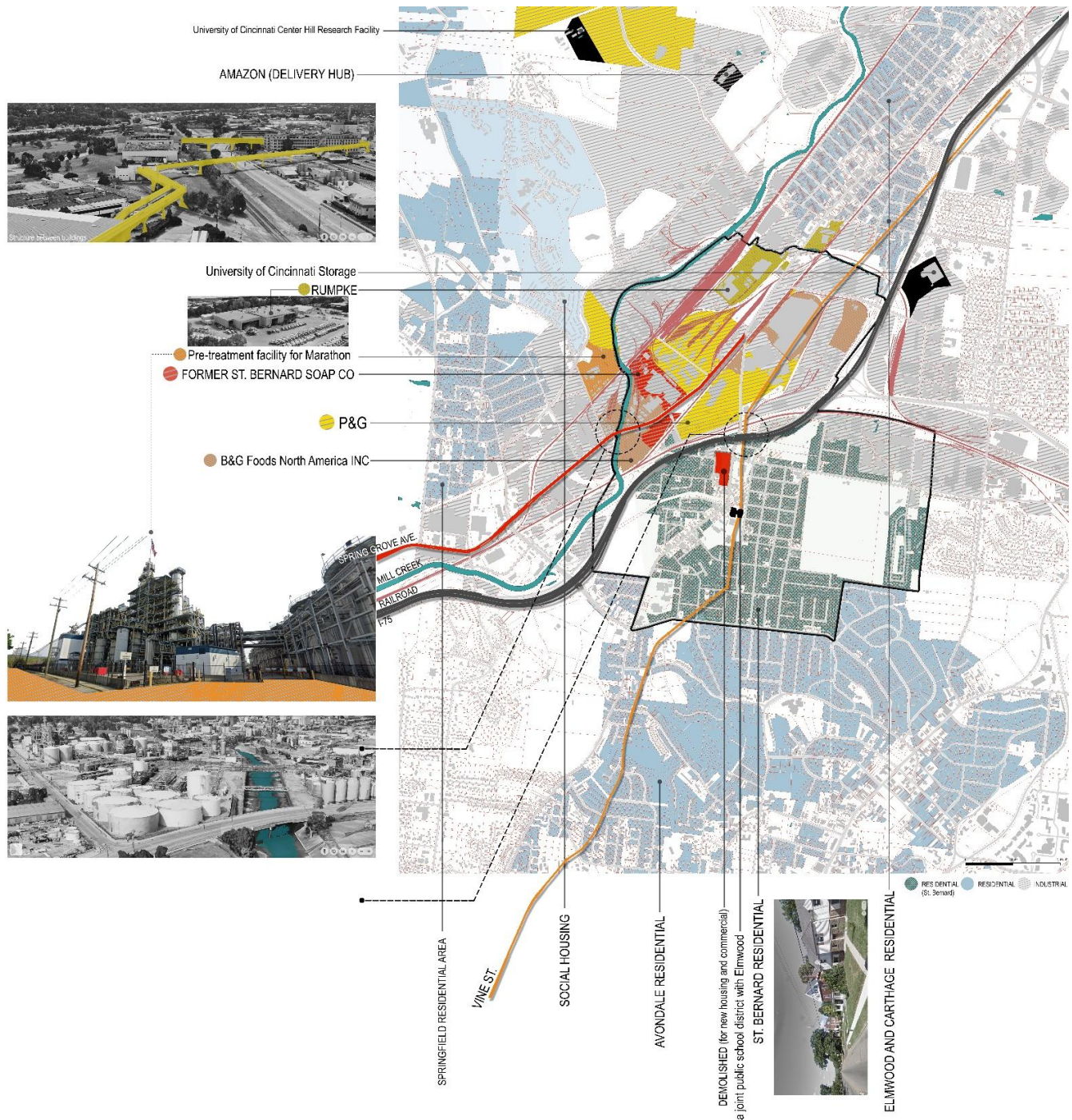
Has its own government, police, services, and tax base.

It's entirely surrounded by Cincinnati but deliberately remains separate.

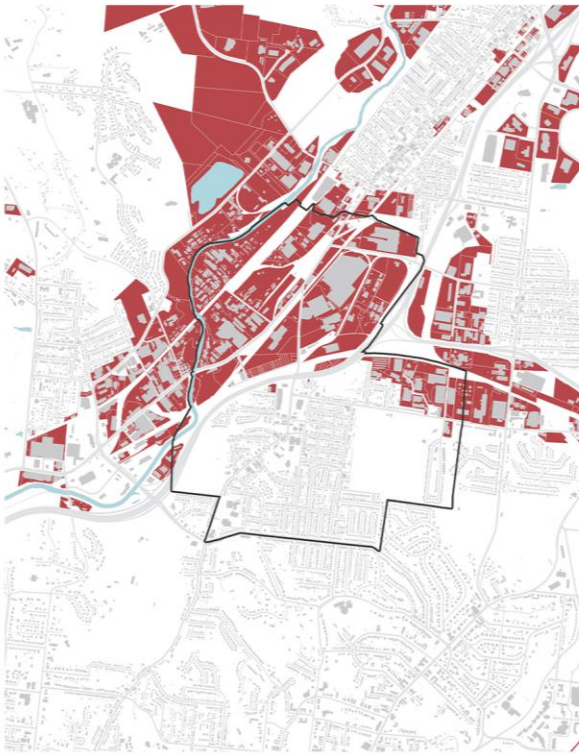


St. Bernard is a village surrounded by Cincinnati but deliberately remains separate. The community is administratively and economically self-sufficient, exercising strong local governance, zoning control, and fiscal independence from the nearby city. Settled by German immigrants in the mid-19th century and has remained a predominantly white community.

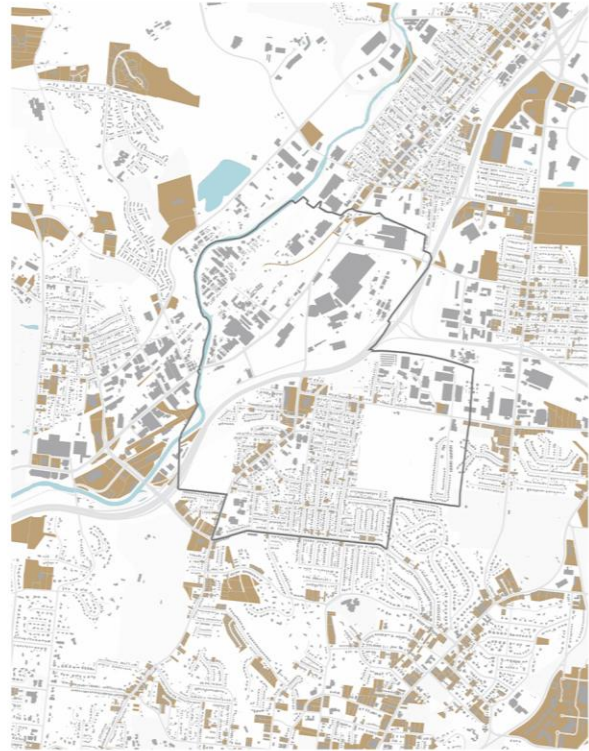
The northern half of the village is dominated by industrial areas, while the southern half is residential, with a highway dividing the two.



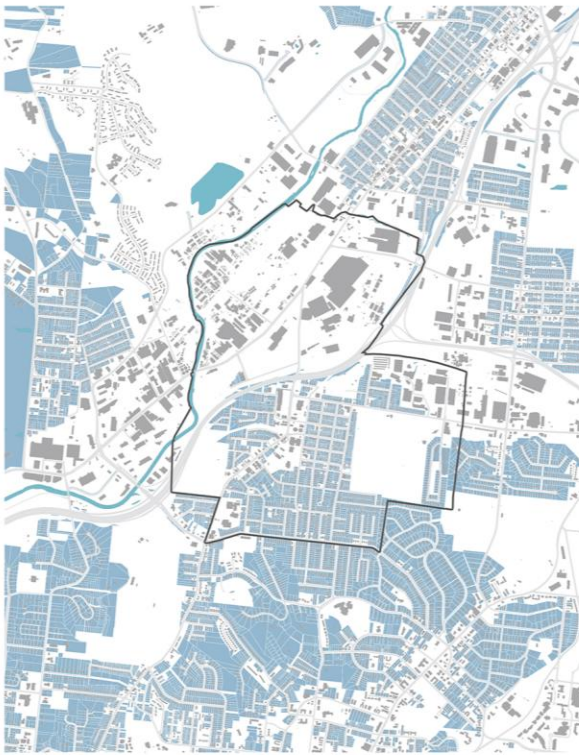
Detailed site analysis. (Map and collages by the author, visuals: Google Maps)



I N D U S T R I A L



C O M M E R C I A L



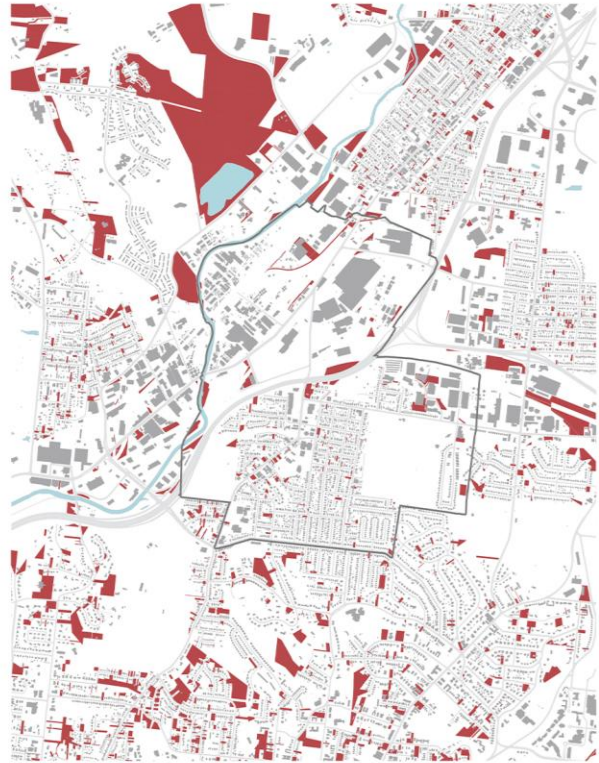
R E S I D E N T I A L



P U B L I C U S E



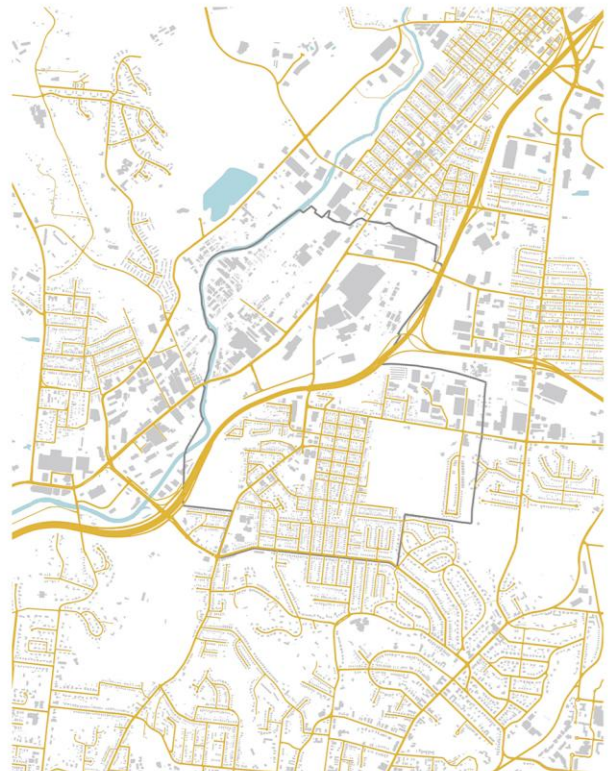
G R E E N S P A C E S



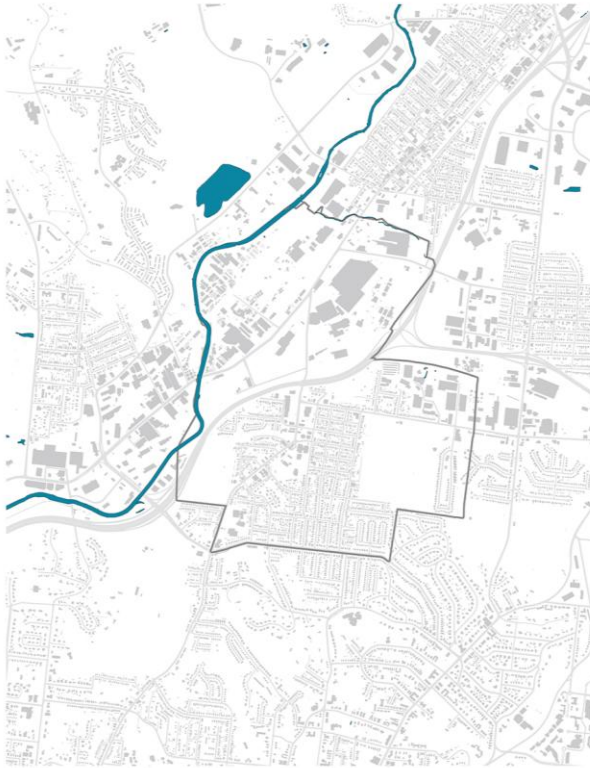
V A C A N C Y



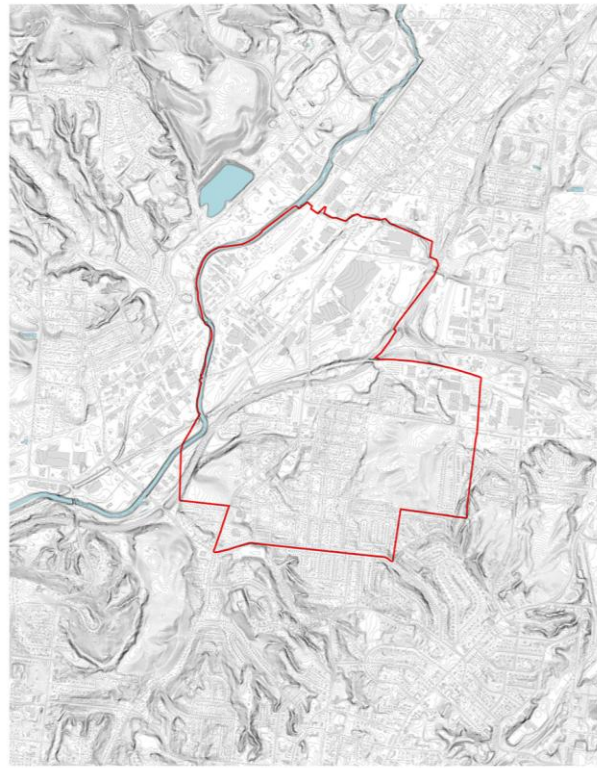
R A I L R O A D S



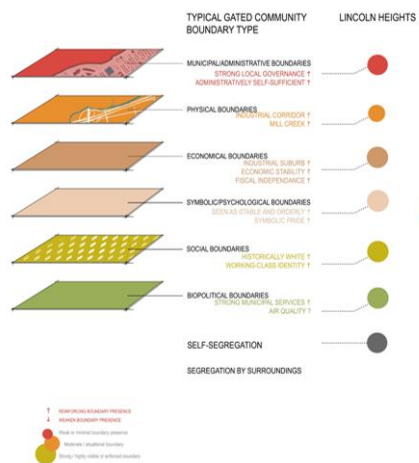
R A D S



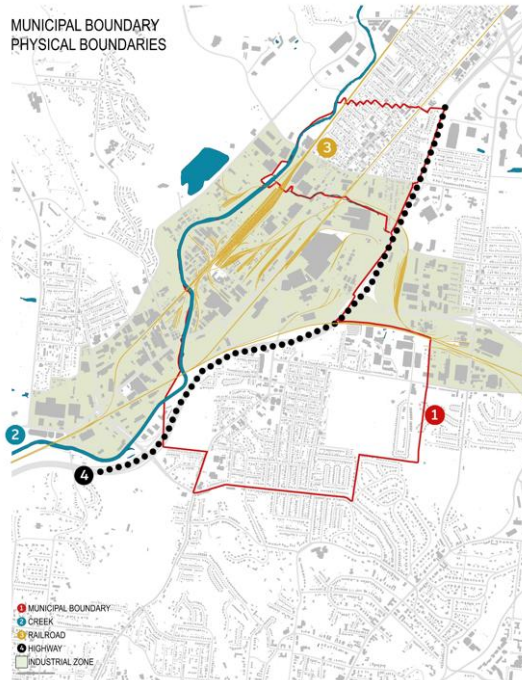
W A T E R



T O P O G R A P H Y



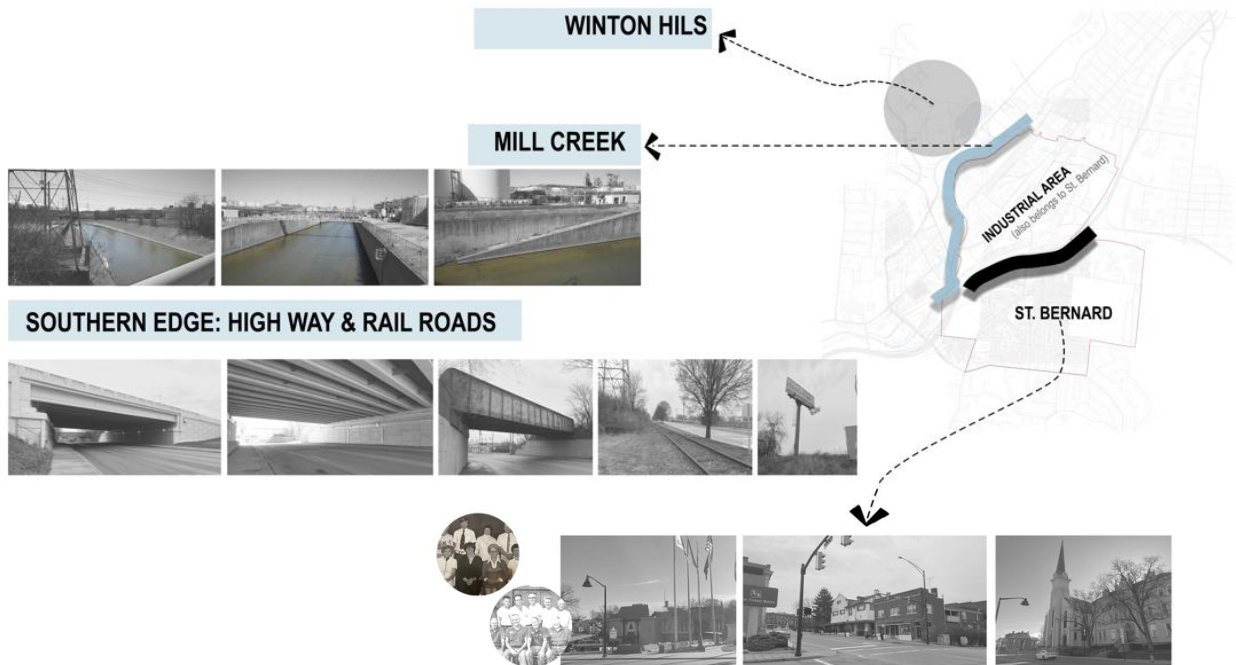
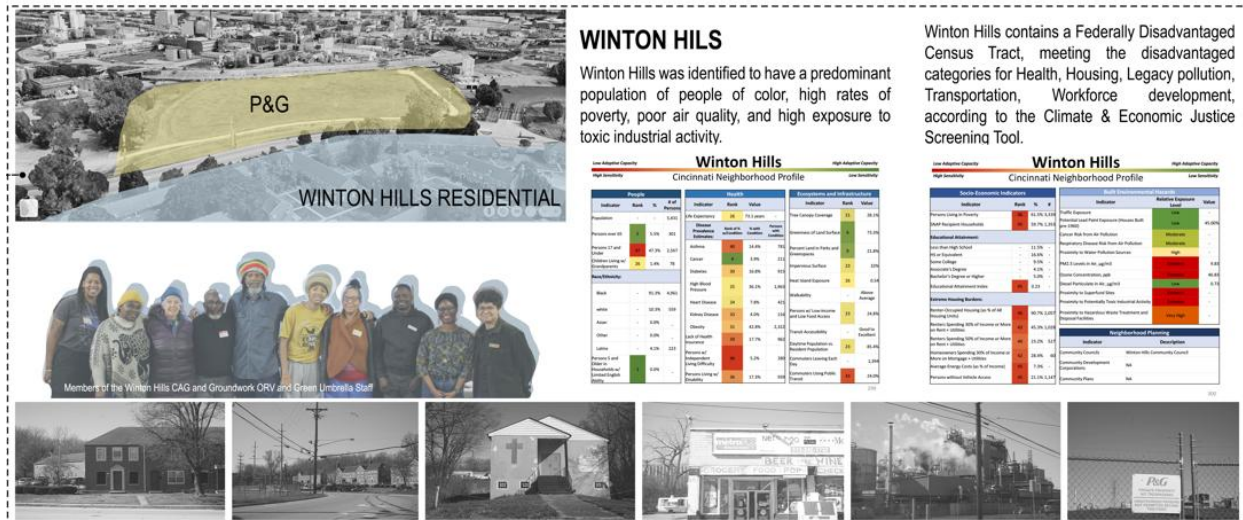
MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY
PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES



Barriers in form of high way (I-75), Mill Creek, industrial area (Ivorydale), railroads, and administrative boundaries. (Diagrams and two upper photos by the author, map base qGis, bottom photo Google Maps panoramic).

WINTON HILLS

St. Bernard is located in the south of Winton Hills. The industrial area, Mill Creek, and administrative differentiations separate St. Bernard from Winton Hills.



(Map, diagrams, and area photos by the author. Winton Hills community photo and demographic analysis:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/360c85b5ad964b9798cb6d1b54ead5de>)

SITE VISITS

The first site visit was conducted to document existing boundary conditions.

On the north, the village boundary follows Mill Creek, which is largely inaccessible, so I traveled along the nearest northern road (video on the left).

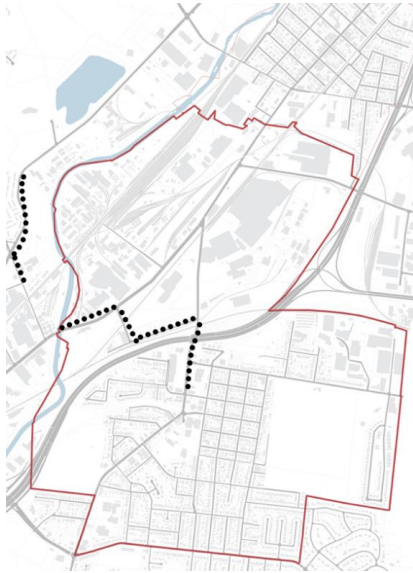
Additionally, the industrial area was explored, where the site conditions and how the industrial zone directly connects to the residential area in the northwest are visible.



Site visit visuals and rote map. (Created by the author).

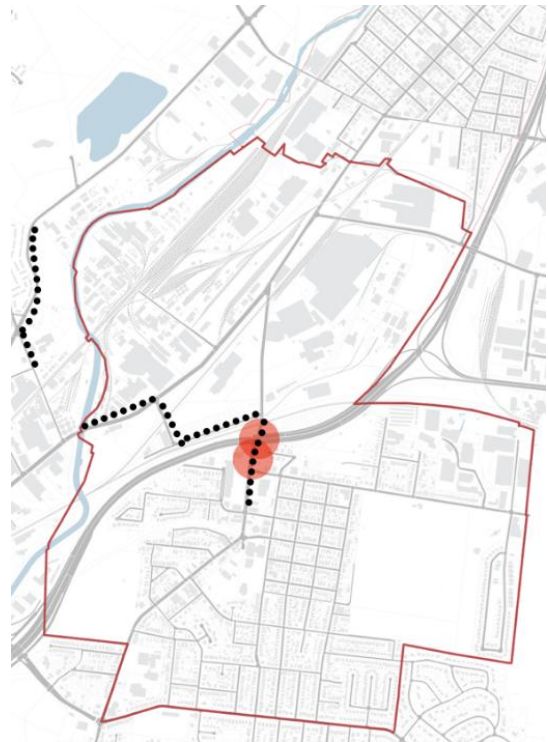
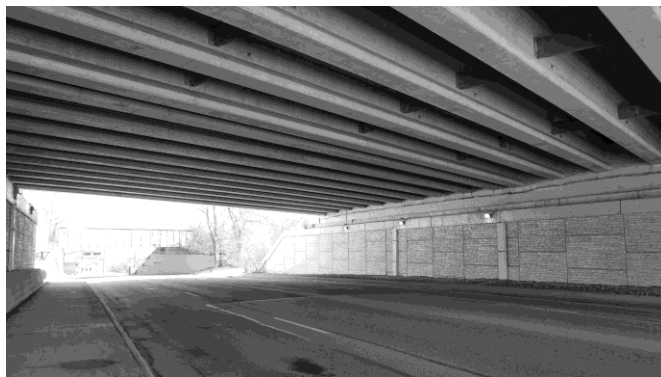


Photos of the area (by the author)

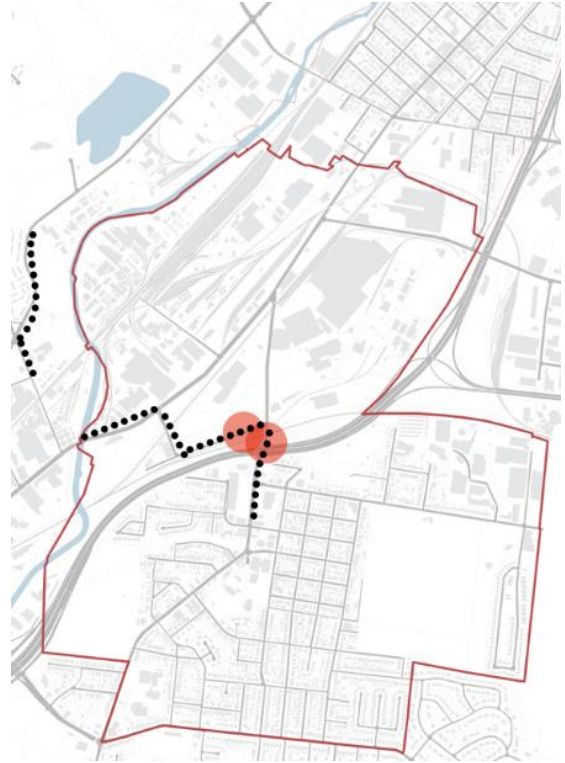


The second site visit was conducted to document and experience a more stable understanding of the site. The site was explored on foot, beginning at the St. Bernard Library, crossing beneath the highway that separates the industrial area from the St. Bernard commercial and residential area, and continuing past the existing P&G building, the railroads, and the former St. Bernard Soap Company, to the point where Spring Grove Avenue Crosses Mill Creek. The northern portion of the industrial site, which also marks the northern end of the project, was explored separately, as there is no road or walkway connecting the former St. Bernard Soap Company factory to Winton Hills.

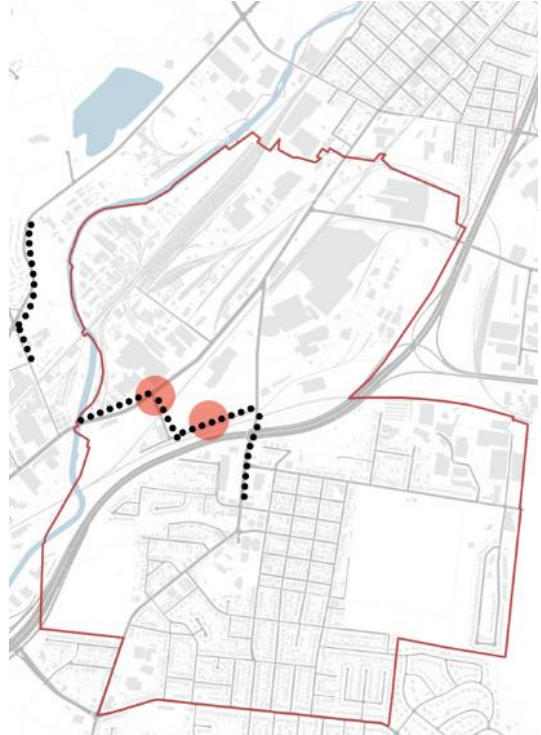
(Map base qGis, diagram by the author)



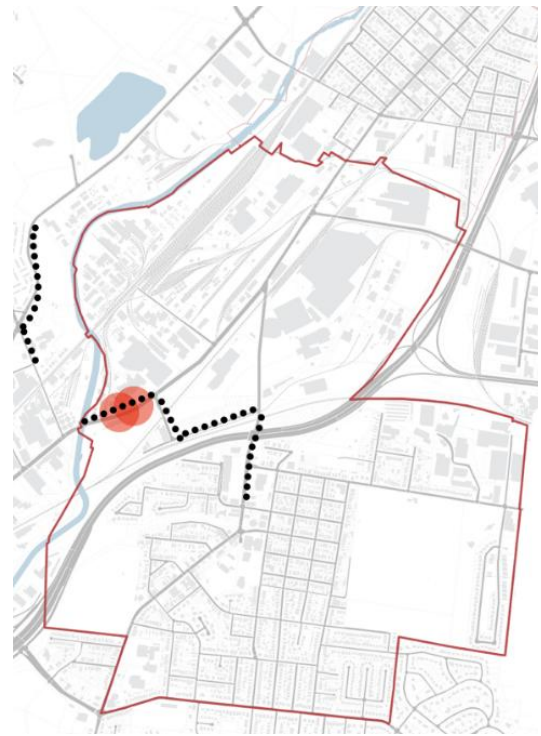
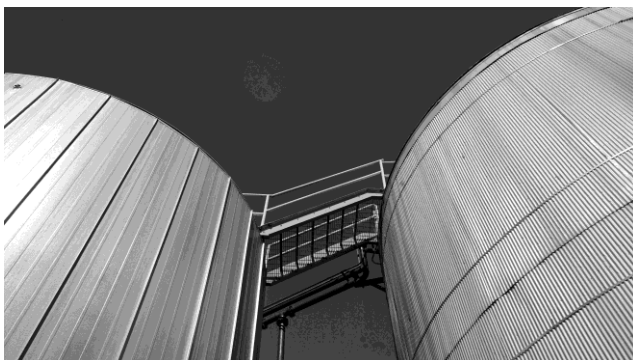
*Crossing under the high way (I-75) from St. Bernard residential/commercial area to industrial area
(Map base qGis, diagram and photos by the author)*



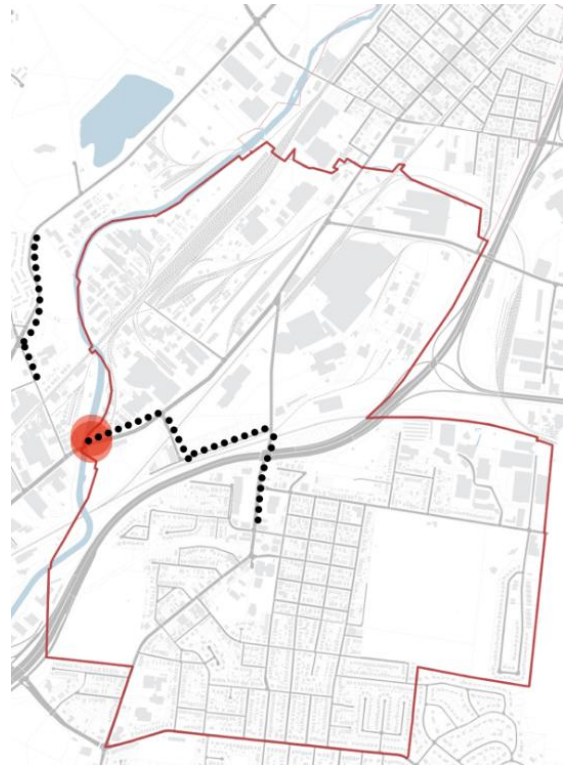
Crossing under the railway from St. Bernard residential/commercial area to industrial area – right after crossing under the high way (upper photo). Railroad parallel to I-75 while going to the west (bottom photo) (Map base qGis, diagram and photos by the author)



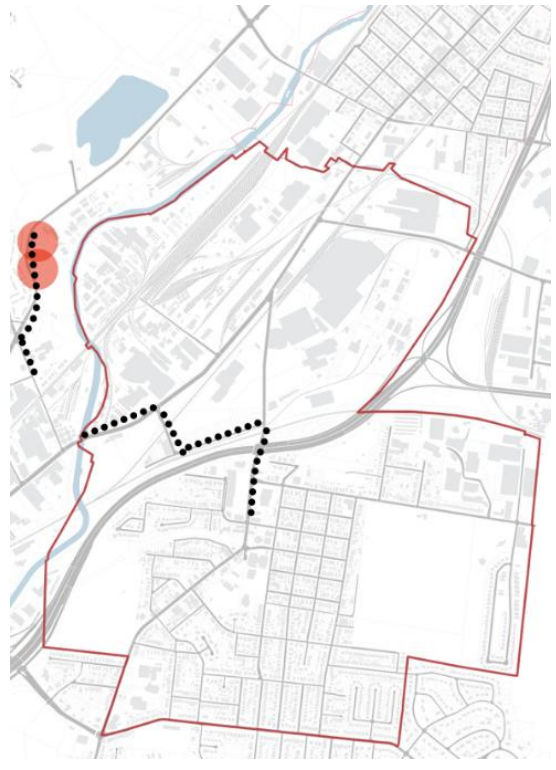
View of former St. Bernard Soap Co. building from Railroad Avenue (upper). View of former St. Bernard Soap Co. building from intersection of Beech St. and Spring Grove Ave. (bottom) (Map base qGis, diagram and photos by the author)



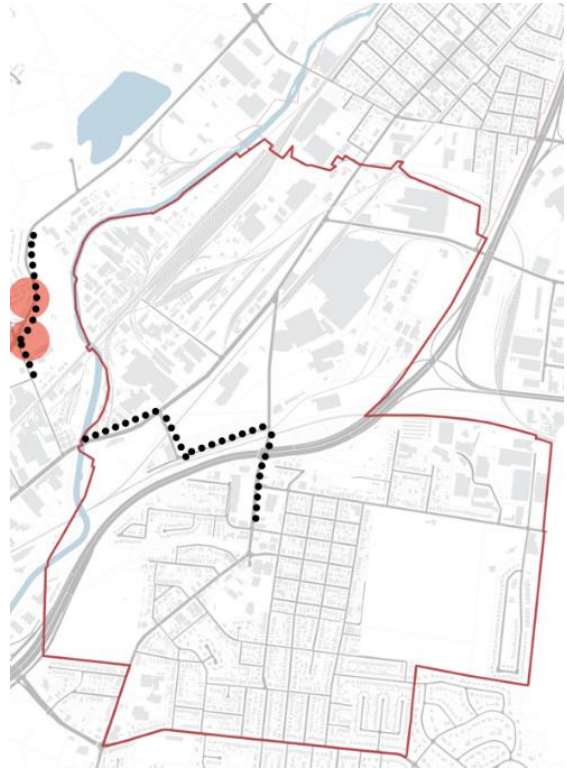
View of industrial tanks on Spring Grove Ave. (Map base qGis, diagram and photos by the author)



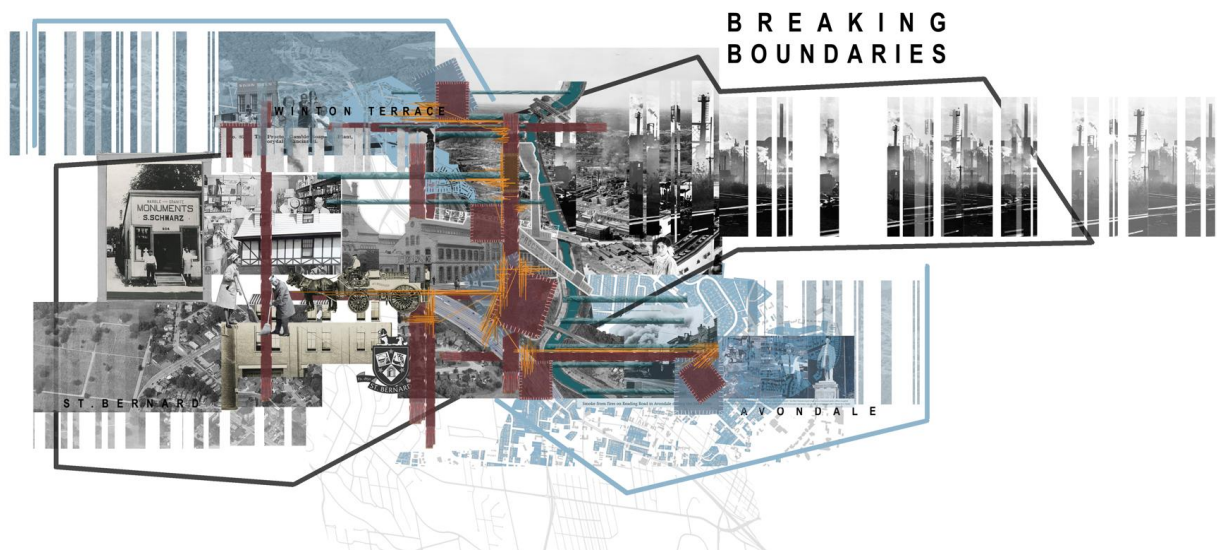
View of Mill Creek on Spring Grove Ave. (Map base qGis, diagram and photos by the author)



View of the Este Ave. between Winton Terrace Public housing and industrial area. (Map base qGis, diagram and photos by the author)



One of Winton Terrace Public housing buildings (upper) and a corner shop on the intersection of Este Ave. and Kings Run Dr (bottom) (Map base qGis, diagram and photos by the author)



Stitching the city collage (Collage by the author).

THE NEED TO BREAK THOSE BOUNDARIES:

The economy of the village relies on the industrial area, predominantly occupied by P&G. Company towns historically failed because they concentrated economic and social power in the hands of a single employer, leading to vulnerability when the company declined.



Old photo of P&G plant in Ivorydale, Cincinnati, OH. (Visual: <https://www.cincinnati.com/gallery/news/2017/05/09/procter--gamble-through-the-years/101473526/>)

Similarly:

- St. Bernard Soap Company was a bar soap manufacturer that permanently closed in March 2024 → creating a significant **negative economic impact** for the village
- P&G announced a plan to cut 7,000 jobs globally over the next two years → which shows that the company faces challenges from economic uncertainty

Therefore, breaking boundaries will

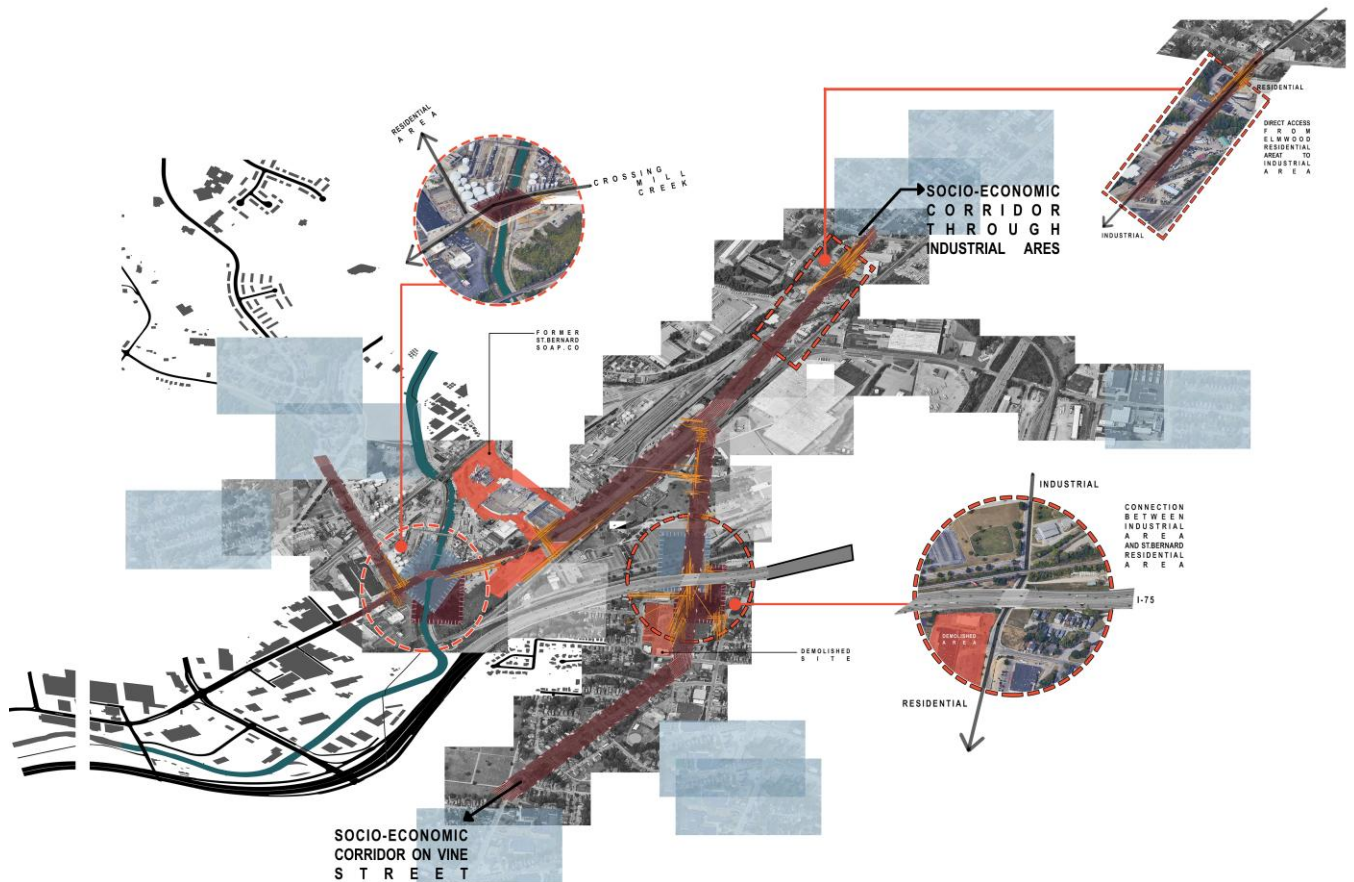
1. Create better conditions for the surrounding areas
2. Create an alternative economic base for the village
3. Foster social connections between the village and the surrounding area.

PROJECT GOALS

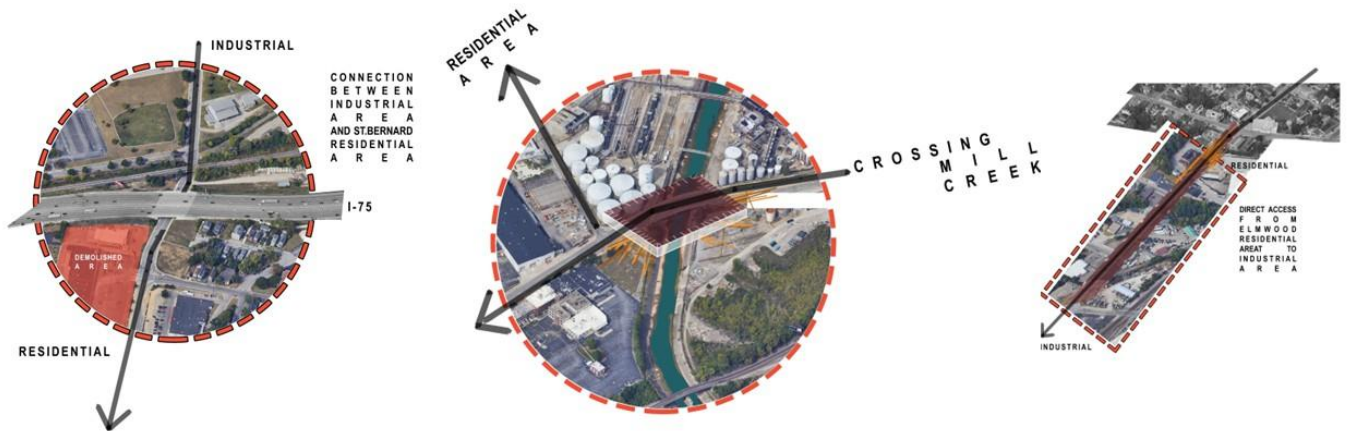
1. Create an alternative income model in the form of socio-economic corridors.
2. Support the village economically as a response to the failure of the industrial town vision.
3. Strengthen the economy and social interaction with surrounding communities.

DESIGN APPROACH

To achieve project goals, this thesis proposes creating a socio-economic corridor through the industrial area to connect broader communities. To prevent further segregation and support the well-being of the broader community, this approach aims to reimagine the city by breaking down boundaries. The intervention on a chosen site intends to design a “gateless” community, with welcoming public corridors and neighborhood edges that foster connection, interaction, and social cohesion.



Stitching the city map/ collage (Collage by the author. Map base Google Maps)



Three important “crossing” points in the area: left – crossing under I-75, middle – crossing Mill Creek, right – transition from residential of Cartage to industrial area. (Collage by the author. Map base Google Maps)

STRATEGIES for creating the socio-economic corridor:

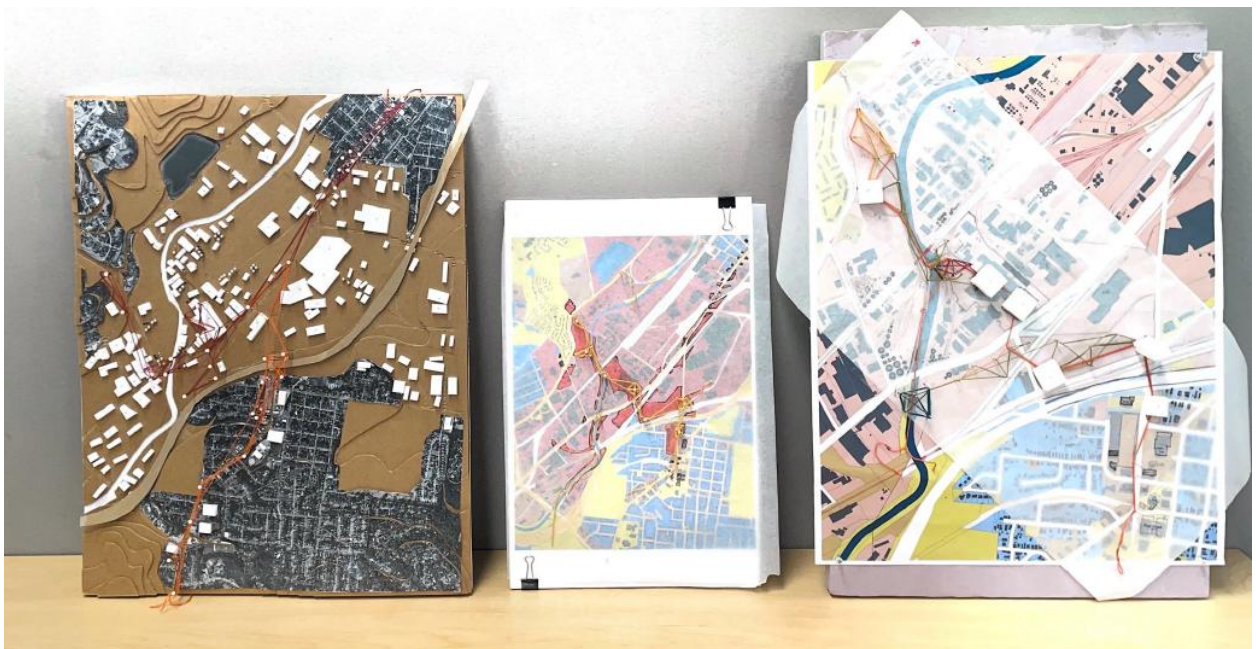
1. **CONNECTING COMMUNITIES:** The vision is to reach both edges to connect St. Bernard and Winton Hills communities.
2. **INDUSTRIAL BEAUTY:** The area is largely defined by industrial buildings and infrastructure. Rather than concealing these elements, the strategy embraces them as landmarks—revealing their character and reframing their perception.
3. **USE NON-LINEAR INTERVENTION:** The risk of using already existing infrastructure is to reinforce existing boundaries. Therefore, the most fragmented approach should be applied.
4. **ACTUALLY REACH EDGES:** The highway (I-75) that divides St. Bernard residents from the industrial area, and Este Avenue, which separates Winton Hills from the industrial area.
5. **NODS AND LINKS:** The strategy of using Nodes as intersections, hubs, stations, and Links as corridors connecting nodes.
(Nodes = intersections, hubs, stations Links = corridors connecting nodes)

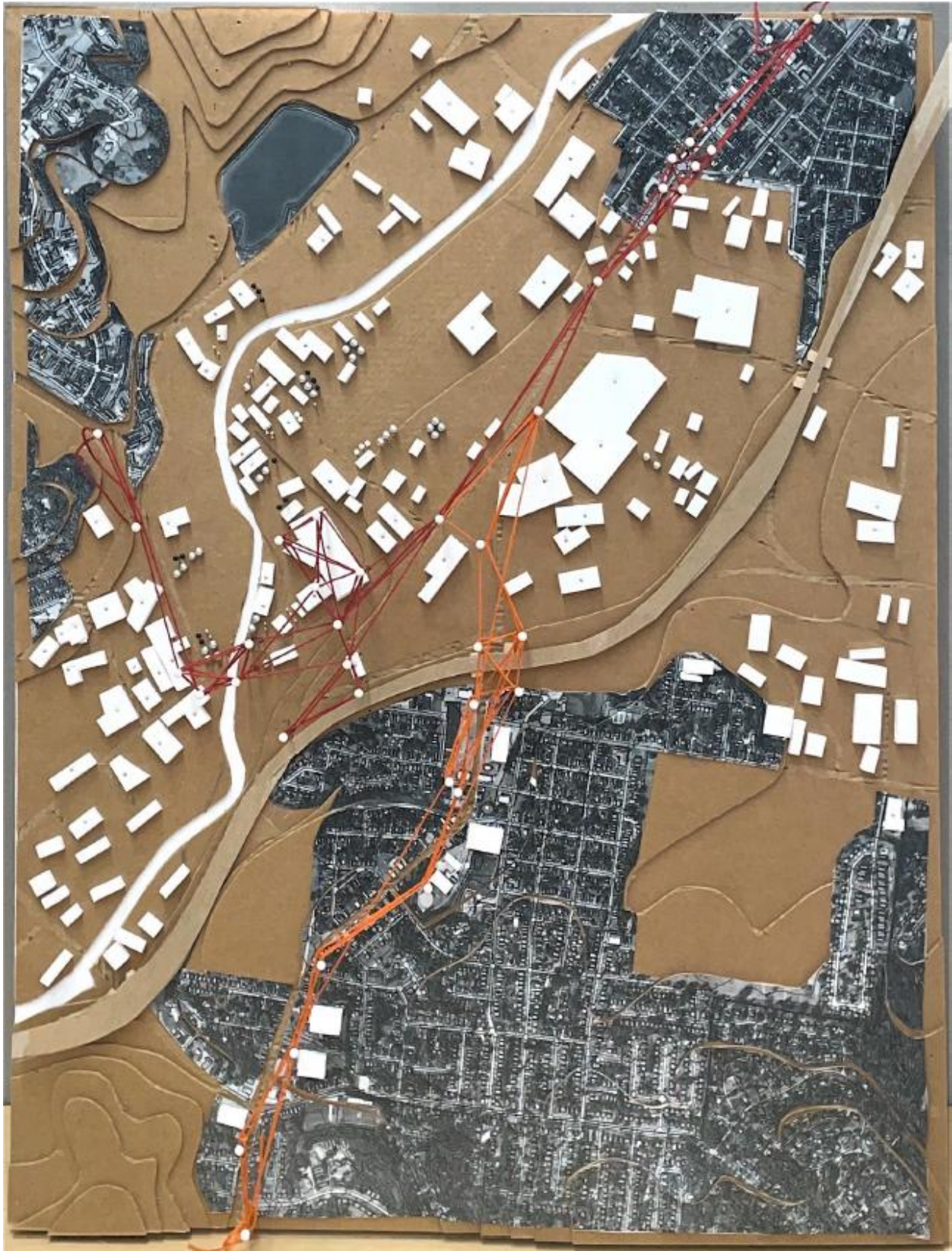


Identifying possibility lands

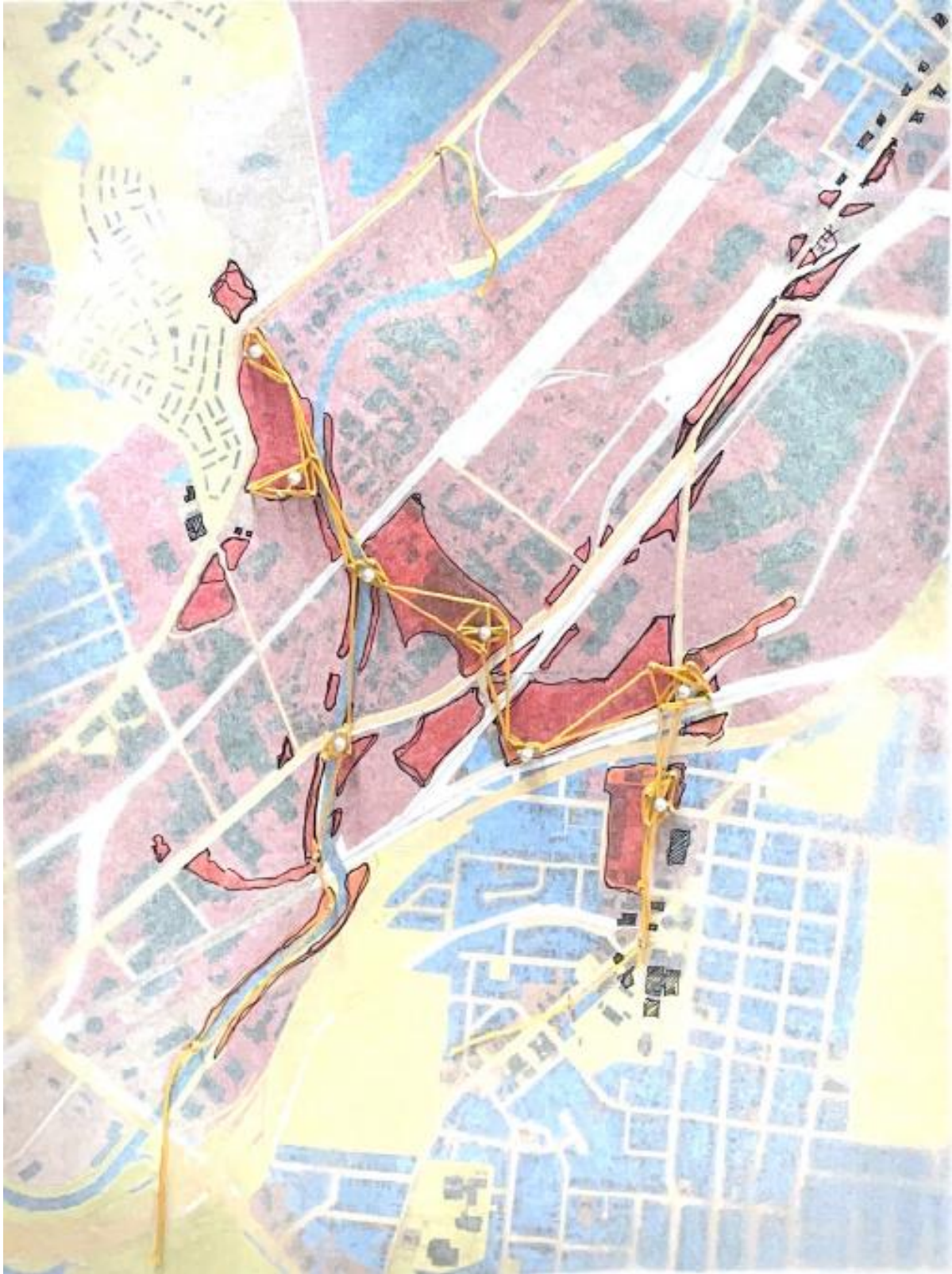
Instead of using the existing infrastructure, a more fragmented approach was developed. The designated lands consist of vacant parcels, the vacant St. Bernard Soap Co. building, publicly used spaces, and portions of land that industrial plants would return to the community to create more humane and improved conditions in the area.

A series of working models was produced to understand the effective approach.

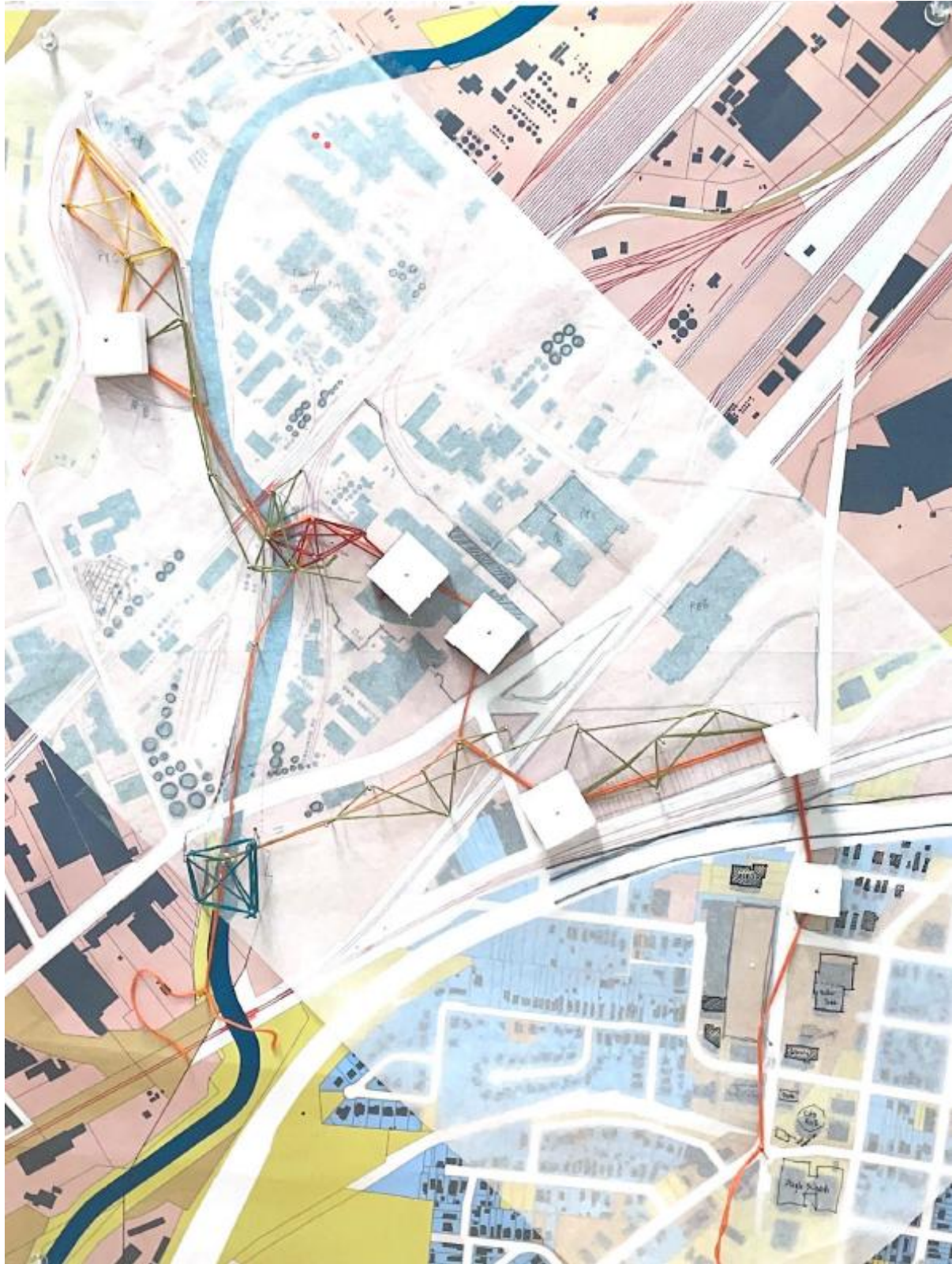




Site model and the first designed socio-economic corridor. Mostly, the existing infrastructure was used. (by the author)



The second socio-economic corridor was designed and applied to the map. “USE NON-LINEAR INTERVENTION” strategy was used instead of the existing infrastructure (by the author)



“NODS AND LINKS” strategy applied to the map, with the consistency of “USE NON-LINEAR INTERVENTION” and “ACTUALLY REACH EDGES” strategies. (by the author)

HUMANIZED INDUSTRIAL PARK

St. Bernard was identified as a village-scale gated-like community with its physical and juridical boundaries and historically self-separated, existing within the Cincinnati area. The vision is to create a destination for the broader population as well as a human-centered experience for residents of St. Bernard and Winton Hills. As a result, this corridor is a connection, a path, an experience, and a welcoming area for people. Below are some examples of vision imagined for this area.



The [Landschaftspark Duisburg-Nord](#) (Landscape Park Duisburg-Nord)



Campus de Belval / Inessa
Hansch Architecte
Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg



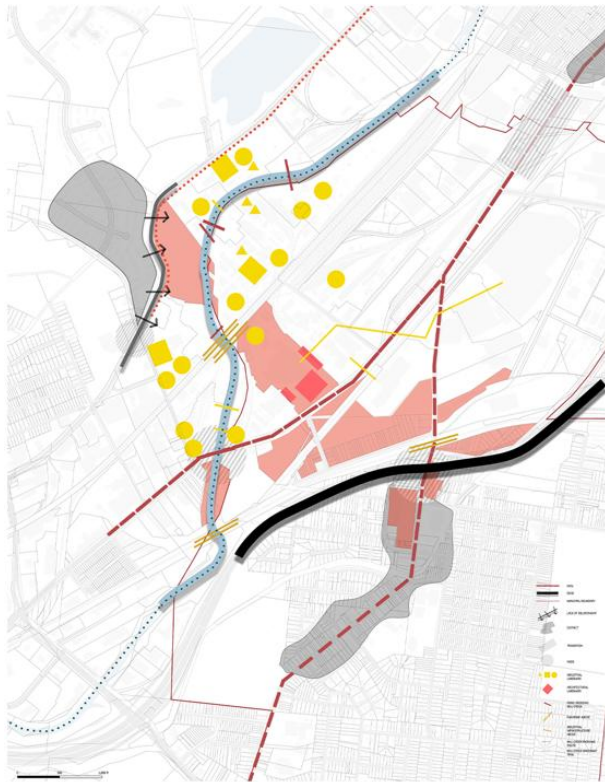
The Levitt Pavilion / WRT -
Wallace Roberts & Todd
Bethlehem, United States



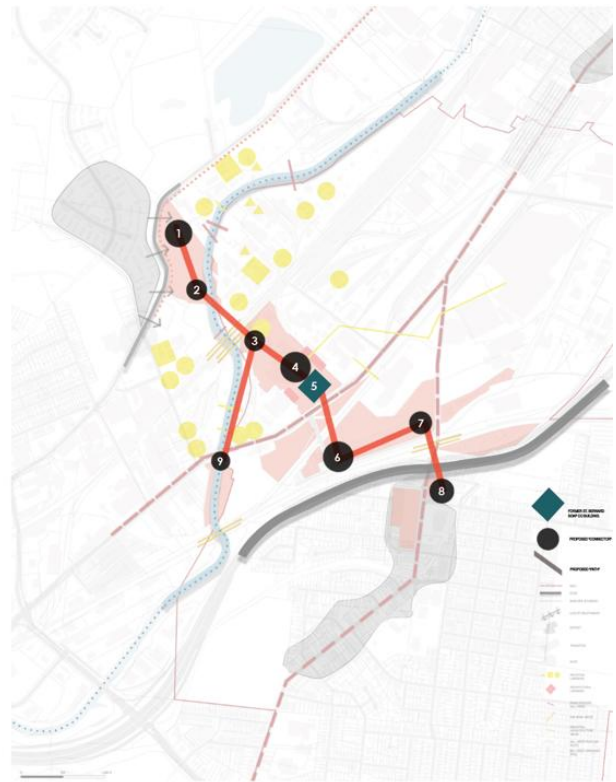
The Landschaftspark
Duisburg-Nord (Landscape Park
Duisburg-Nord)



Zollverein complex in Essen,
Germany

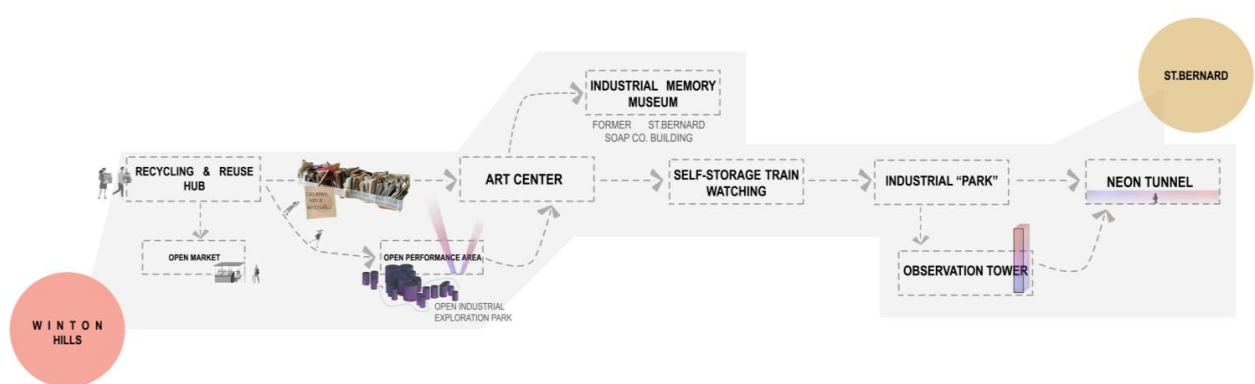


NON LINEAR APPROACH + INDUSTRIAL LANDMARKS AND EDGES



NODS AND LINKS

On the left is a diagrammatic map of the area. While yellow represents the “industrial beauty” of the area, reds are sites that are going to be used for the socio-economic corridor. On the right are applied “nods” and “links”. Nods represent buildings with different functions or concentrated domains. Links, on the other hand, represent paths for several recreational activities such as walking and biking in the open area, community gardens, cafes, resting areas, and other activities. Below is the vision of what function can be brought to the “nods”.





EXISTING SECTION & BOUNDARIES



NODES



LINKS

FROM EDGE TO EDGE

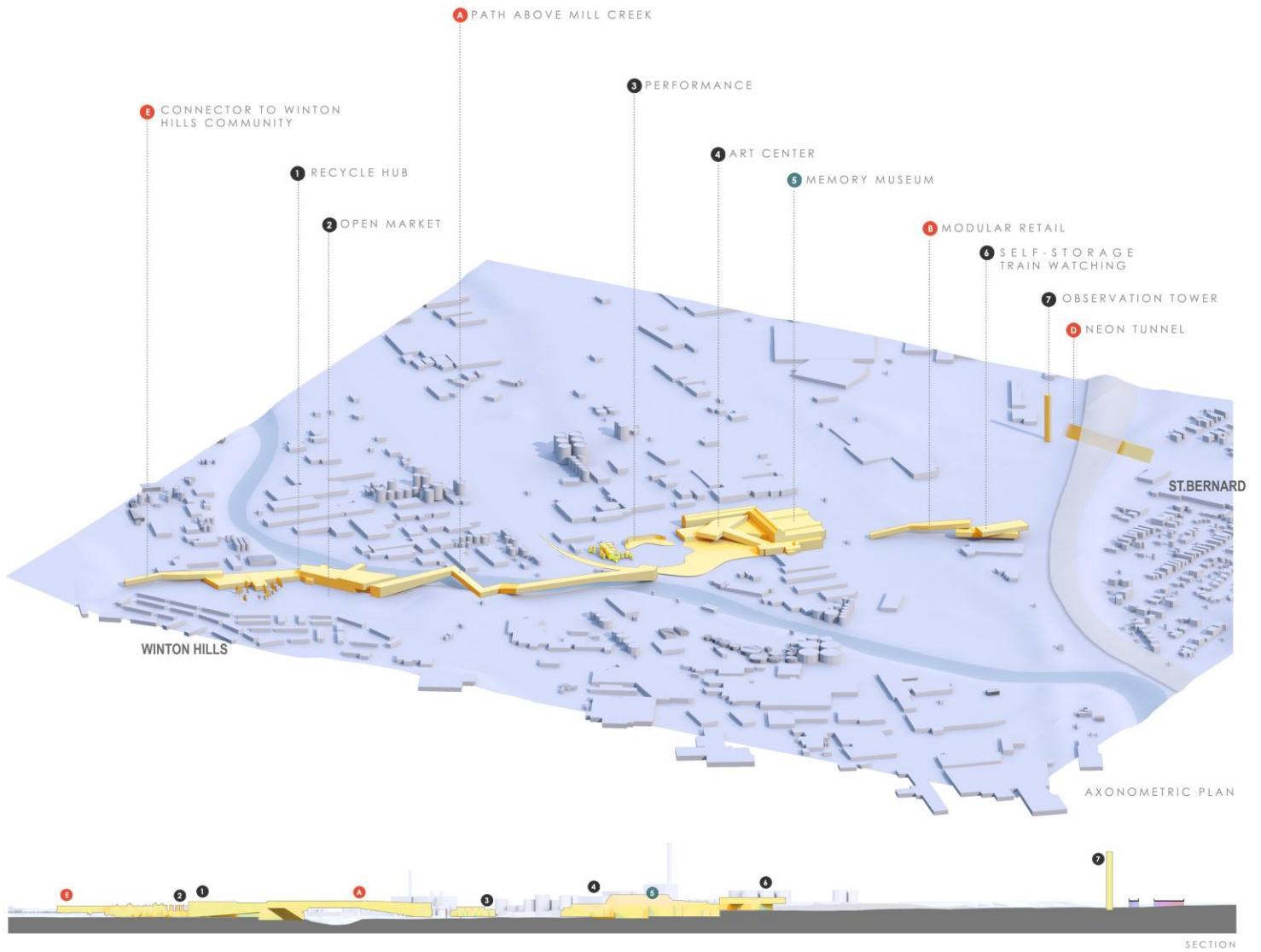
Liminal spaces and how they can be put to use in service of society.



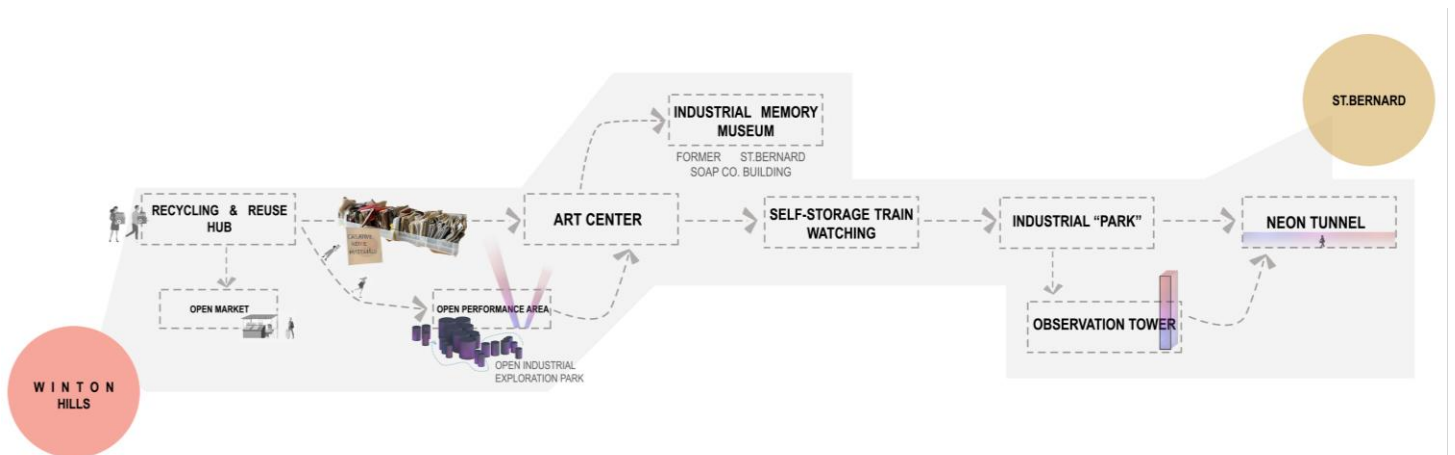
FROM EDGE TO EDGE

Liminal spaces and how they can be put to use in service of society.





3D diagram and section of the “corridor” (by the author)



RECYCLING & REUSE HUB PROGRAM

Instead of designing every piece of the “corridor” Recycling hub, Arch Center, and the “path” between them, a way was designed to give an understanding of the vision and to create a moment to design the rest of the area by other professionals.

LOGISTICS/DROP-OFF ZONE: A high-volume, accessible area for visitors to drop off items ranging from plastics, electronics, and Styrofoam to hazardous household waste.

SORTING & STORAGE AREAS: Large, open-plan spaces, often industrial warehouses, designed for efficiency, sorting, and holding materials before collection by recycling partners.

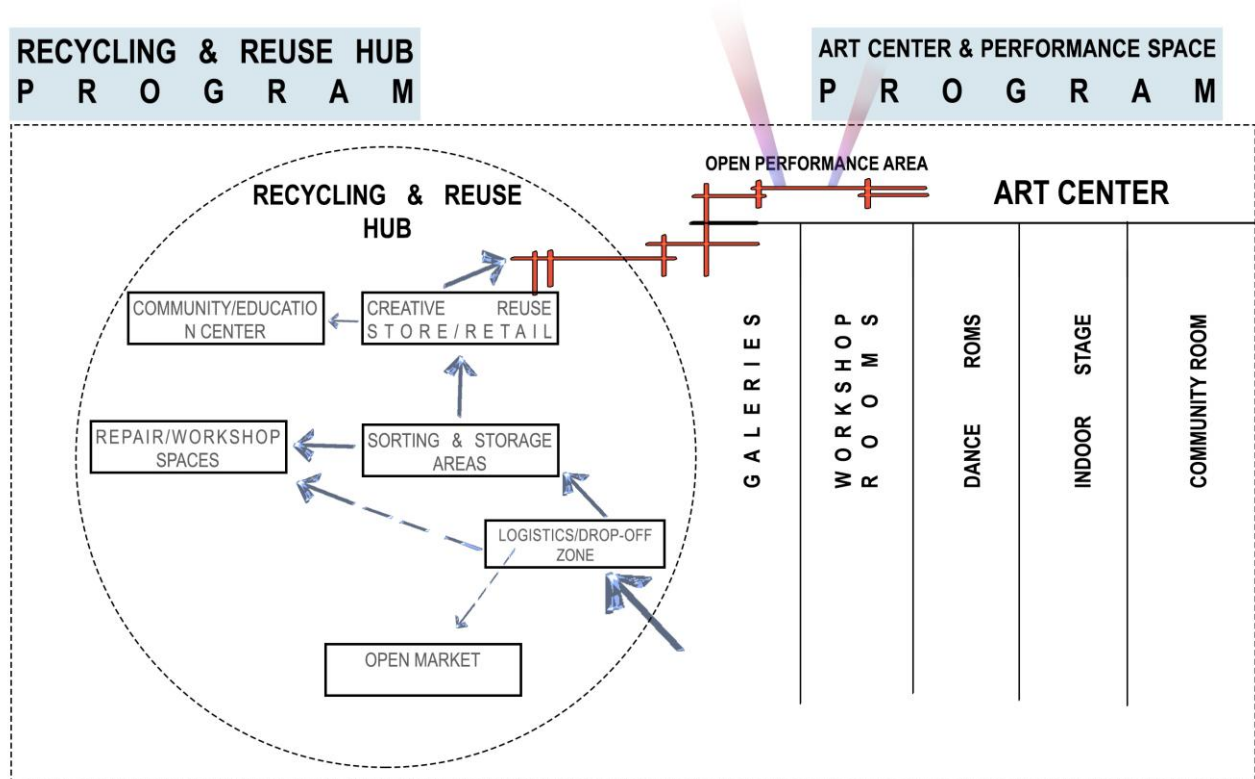
REPAIR/WORKSHOP SPACES: Designated areas for repairing, repurposing, or upcycling items, fostering a "circular economy" approach.

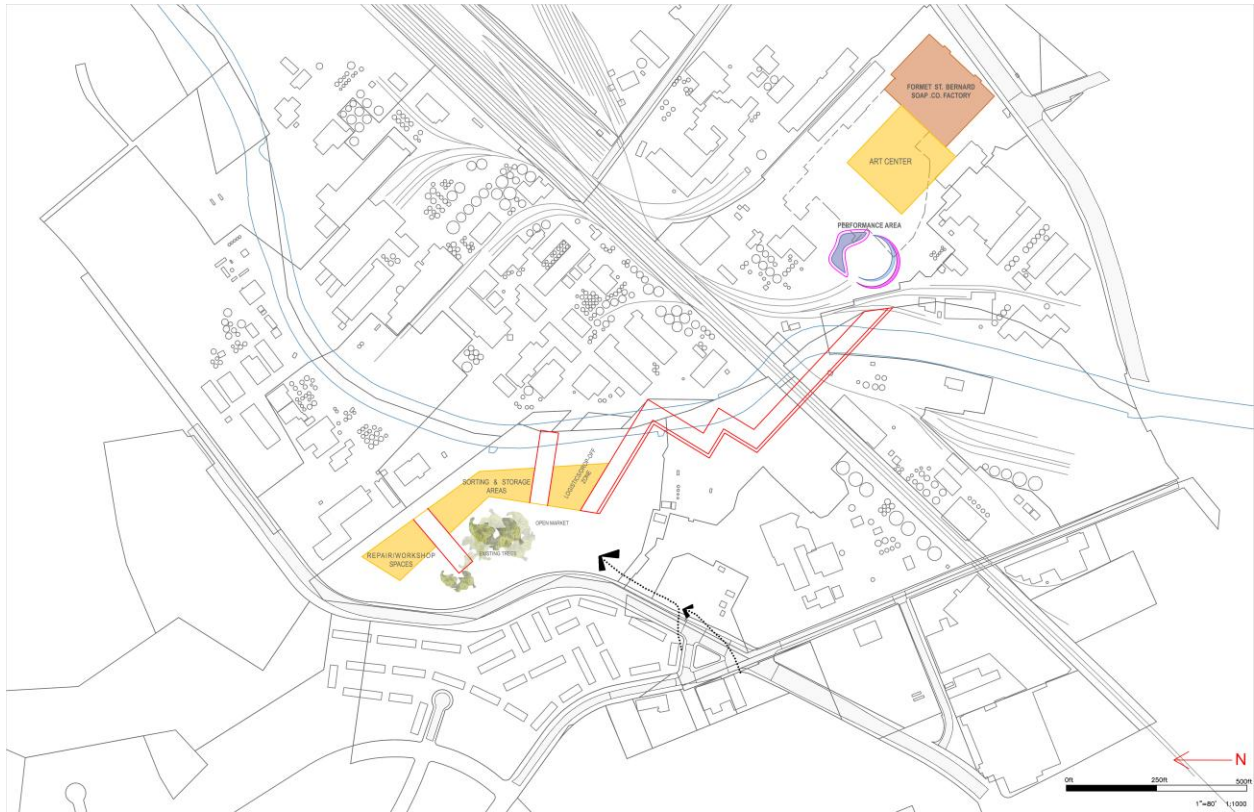
CREATIVE REUSE STORE/RETAIL: An area to display and sell or give away donated materials (fabric, arts-and-crafts, books) to artists, educators, and the community – **CONNECTION TO ART CENTER**

COMMUNITY/EDUCATION CENTER: Meeting rooms or workshop areas for community engagement, volunteer activities, and educational programs on sustainability.

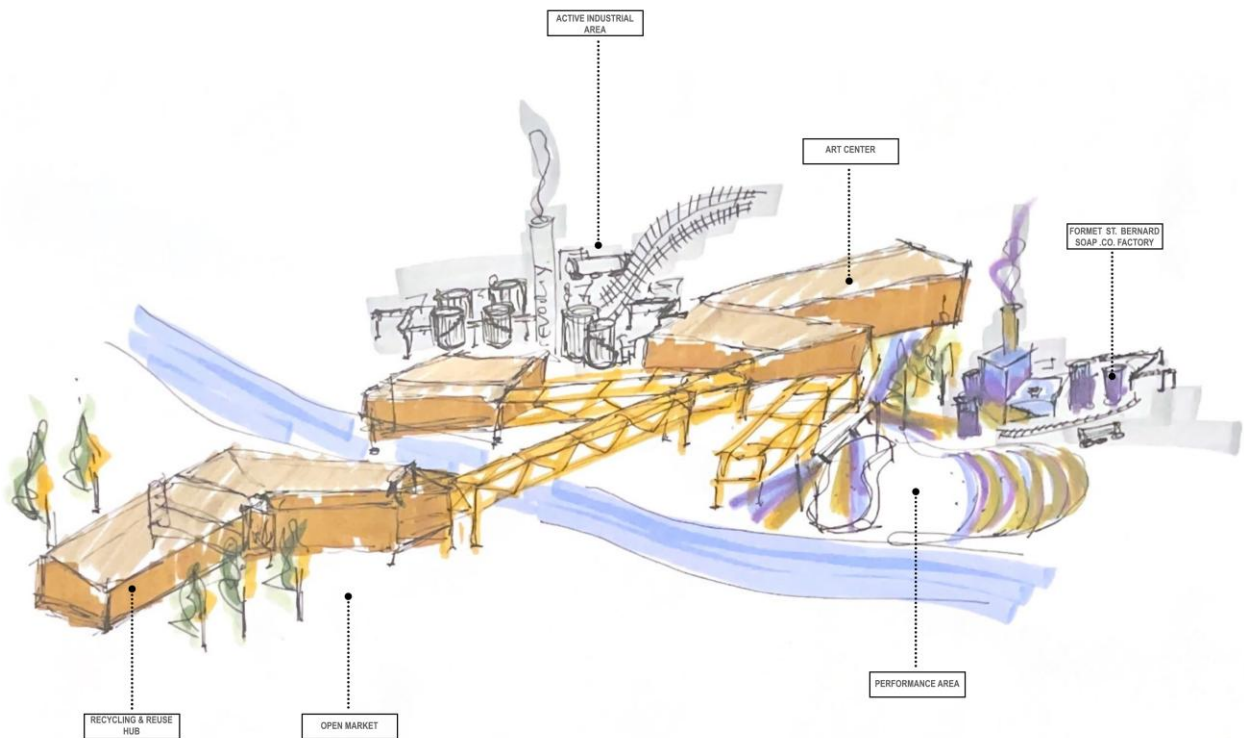
ART CENTER & PERFORMANCE SPACE PROGRAM

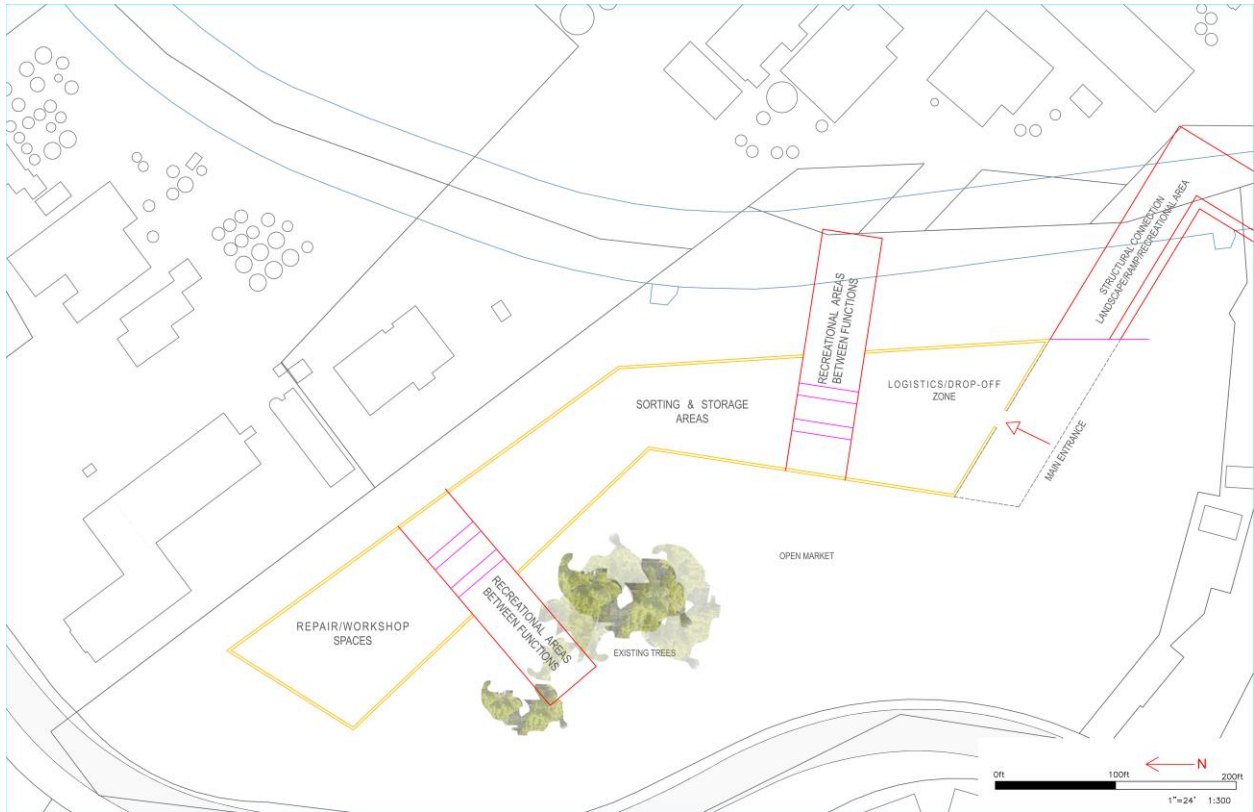
GALERIES - WORKSHOP ROOMS - DANCE ROOMS - INDOOR STAGE - COMMUNITY ROOMS



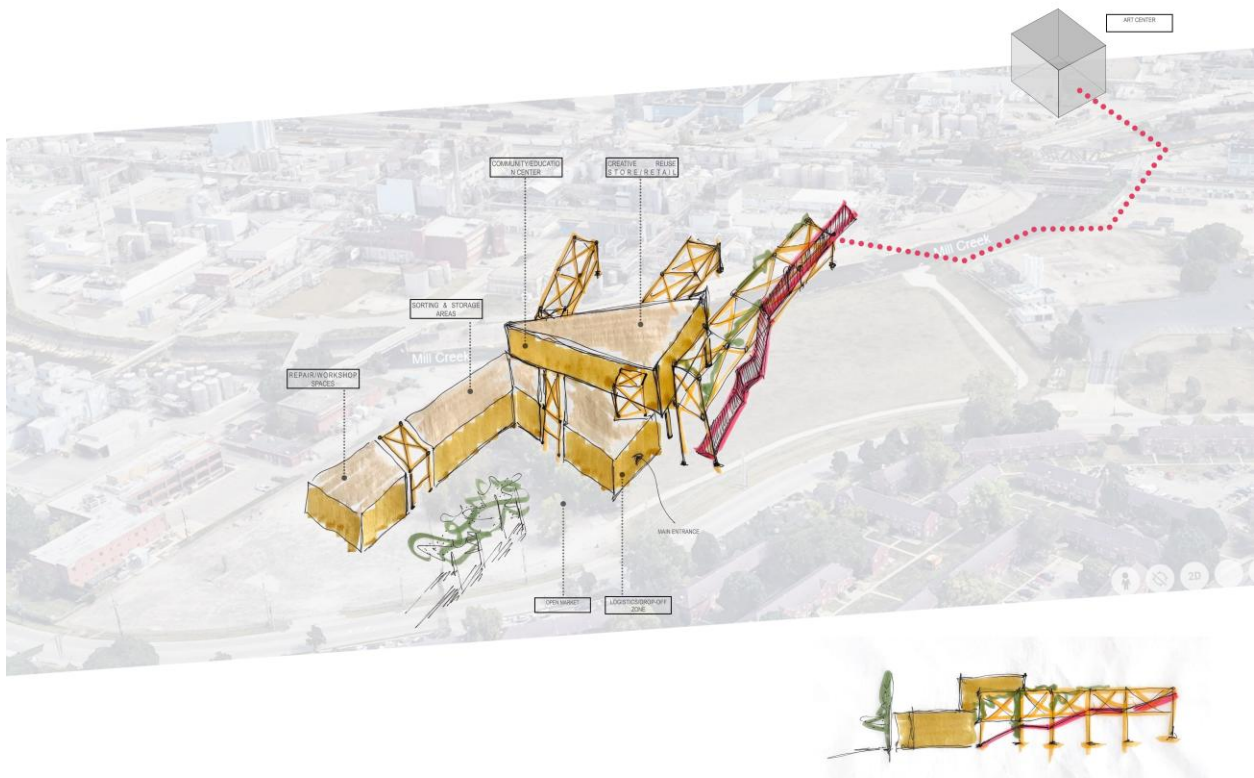


Recycling & Reuse Hub + Art Center & Performance Space Site Plan

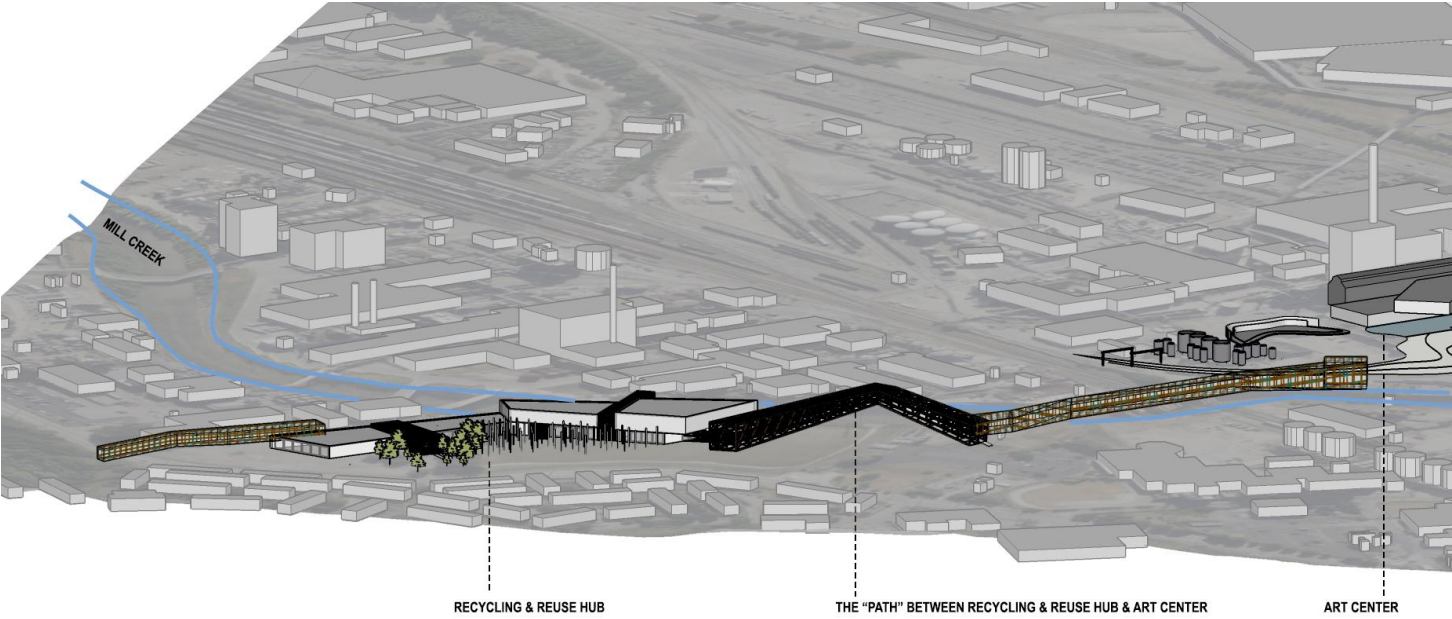




Recycling & Reuse Hub Site Plan



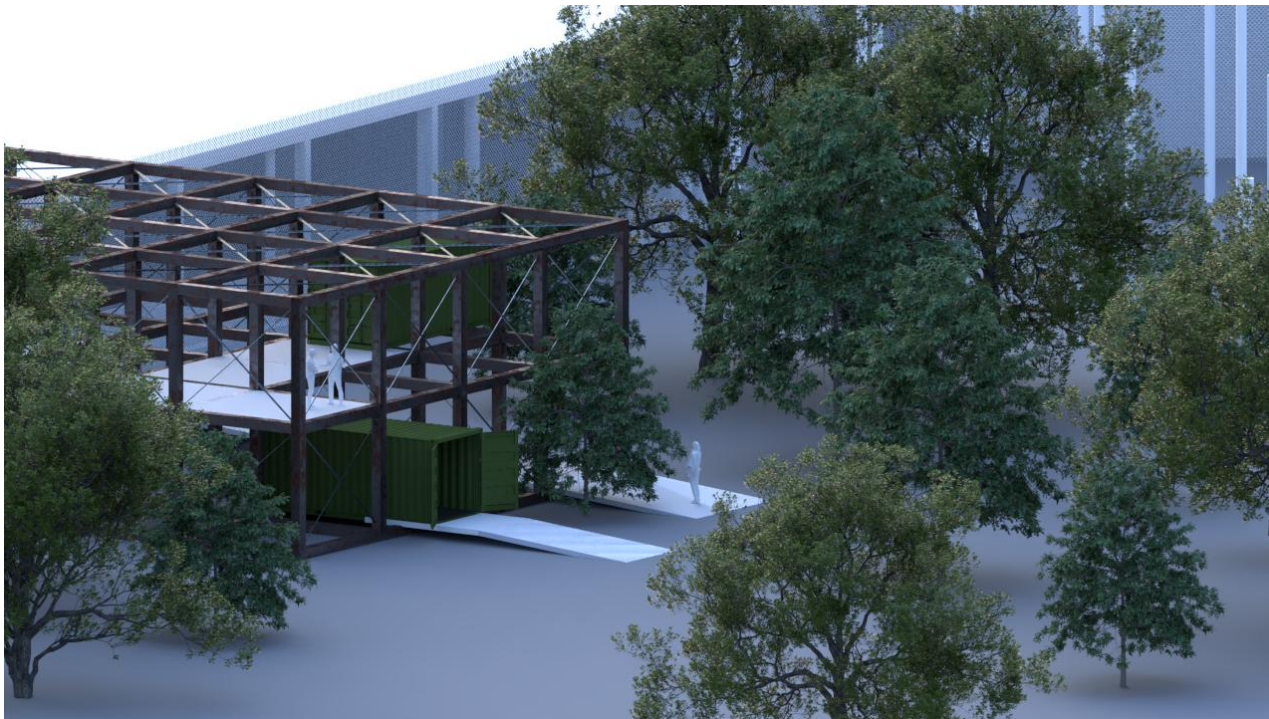
RECYCLING & REUSE HUB + ART CENTER & PERFORMANCE SPACE



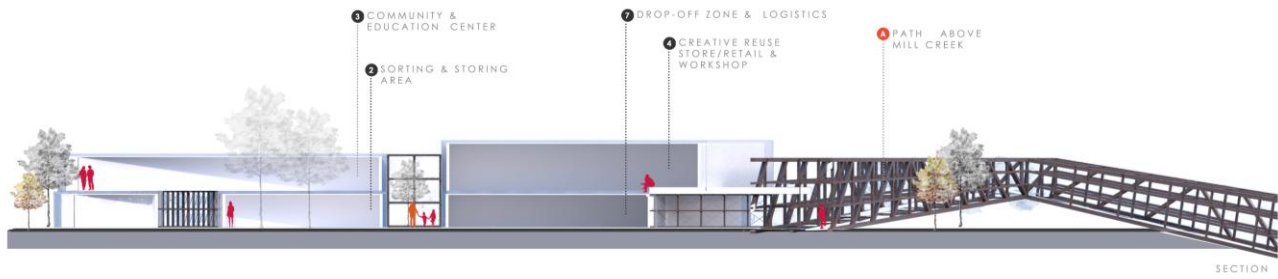
Model of Recycling & Reuse Hub, Art Center & Performance Space, and the “path”. (by the author)



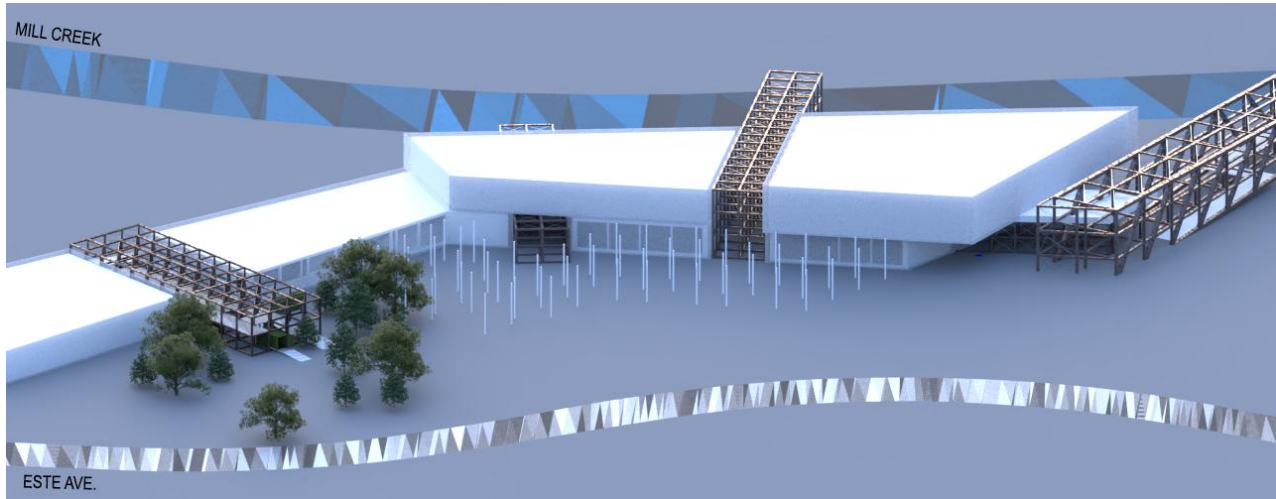
Recycling & Reuse Hub 3D diagram. (by the author)



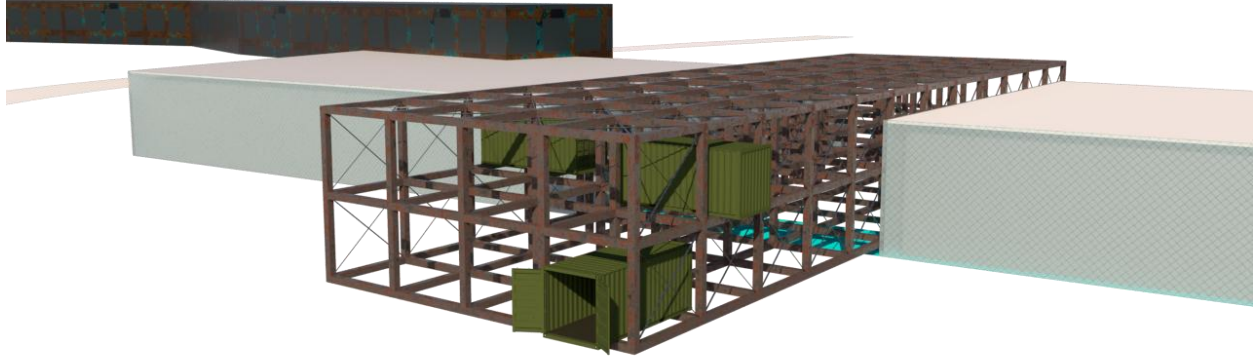
Enclosed "path" in between building functions as a recreational area - 3D (by the author)



Recycling & Reuse Hub section. (by the author)



Enclosed 3D (by the author)



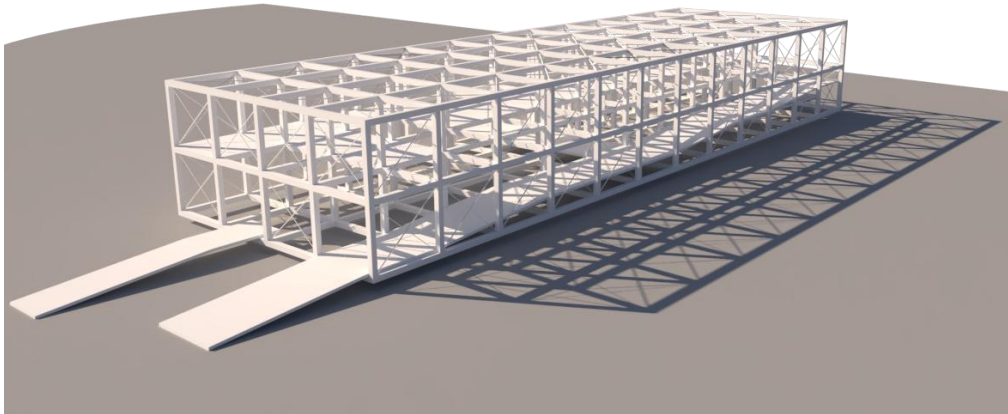
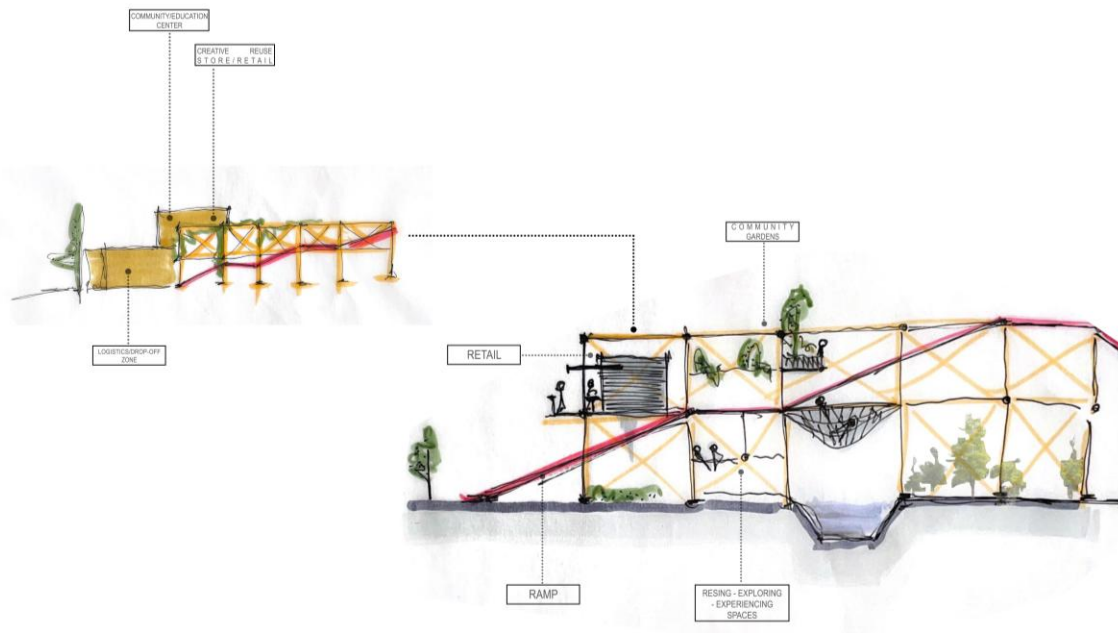
Enclosed 3D of the “path” between buildings (by the author)



Enclosed 3D (by the author)



3D section (by the author)



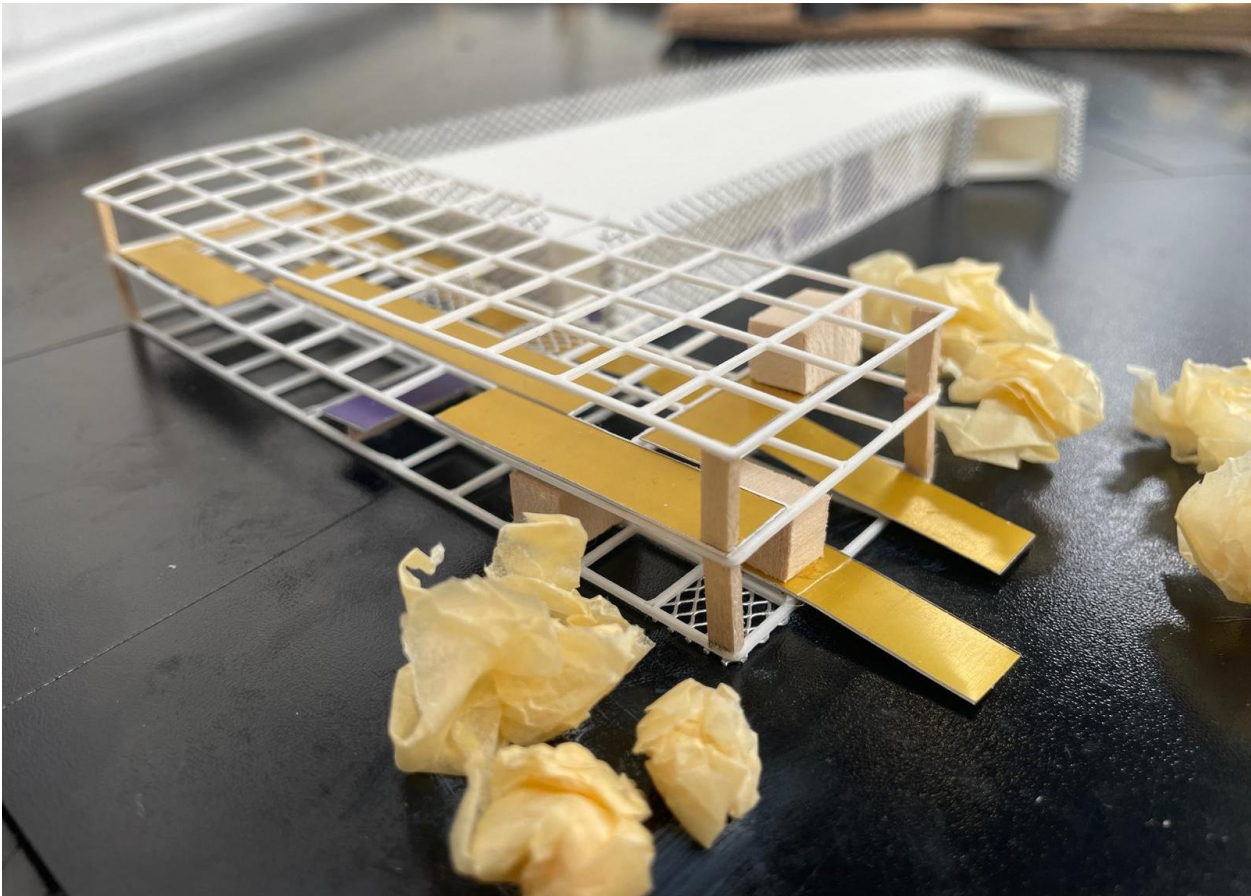
Enclosed 3D of the “path” between buildings (by the author)



Enclosed 3D (by the author)

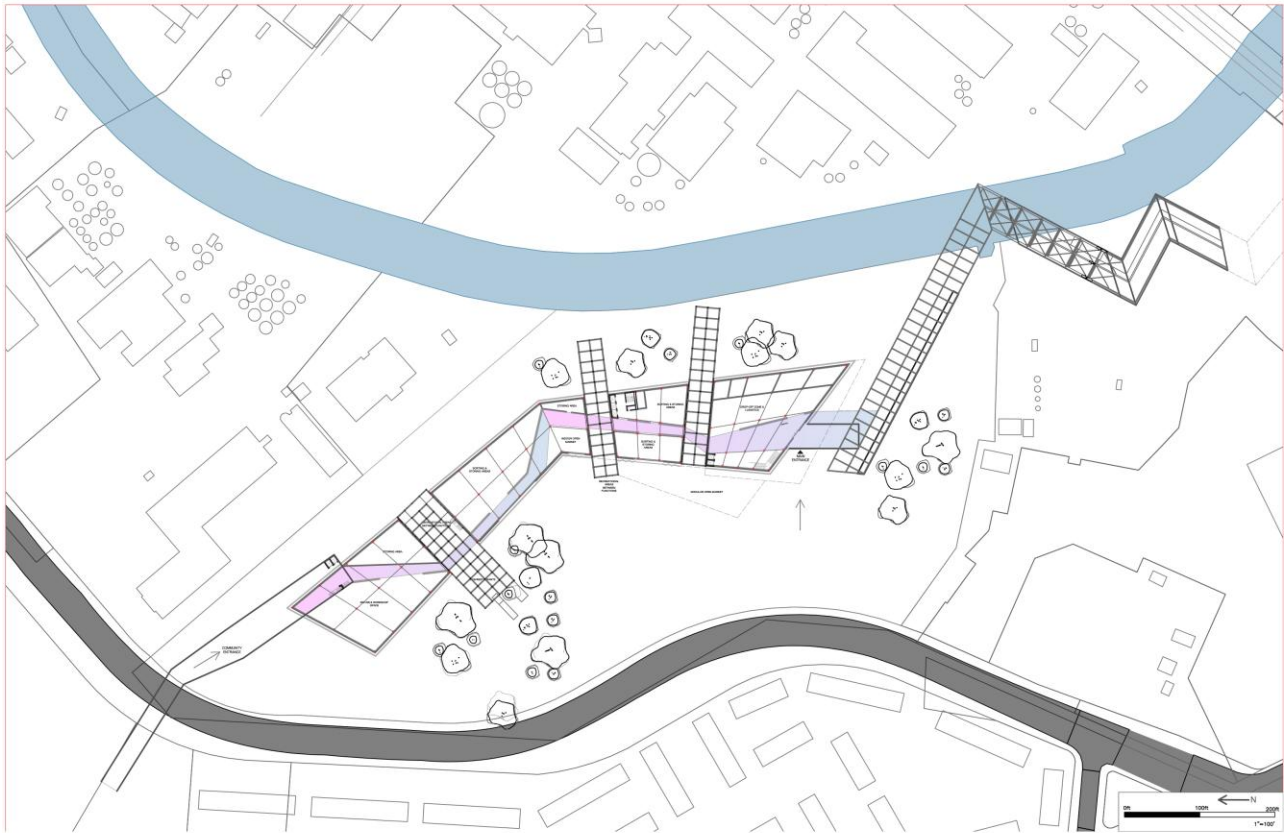


Inside the “path” between buildings (by the author)

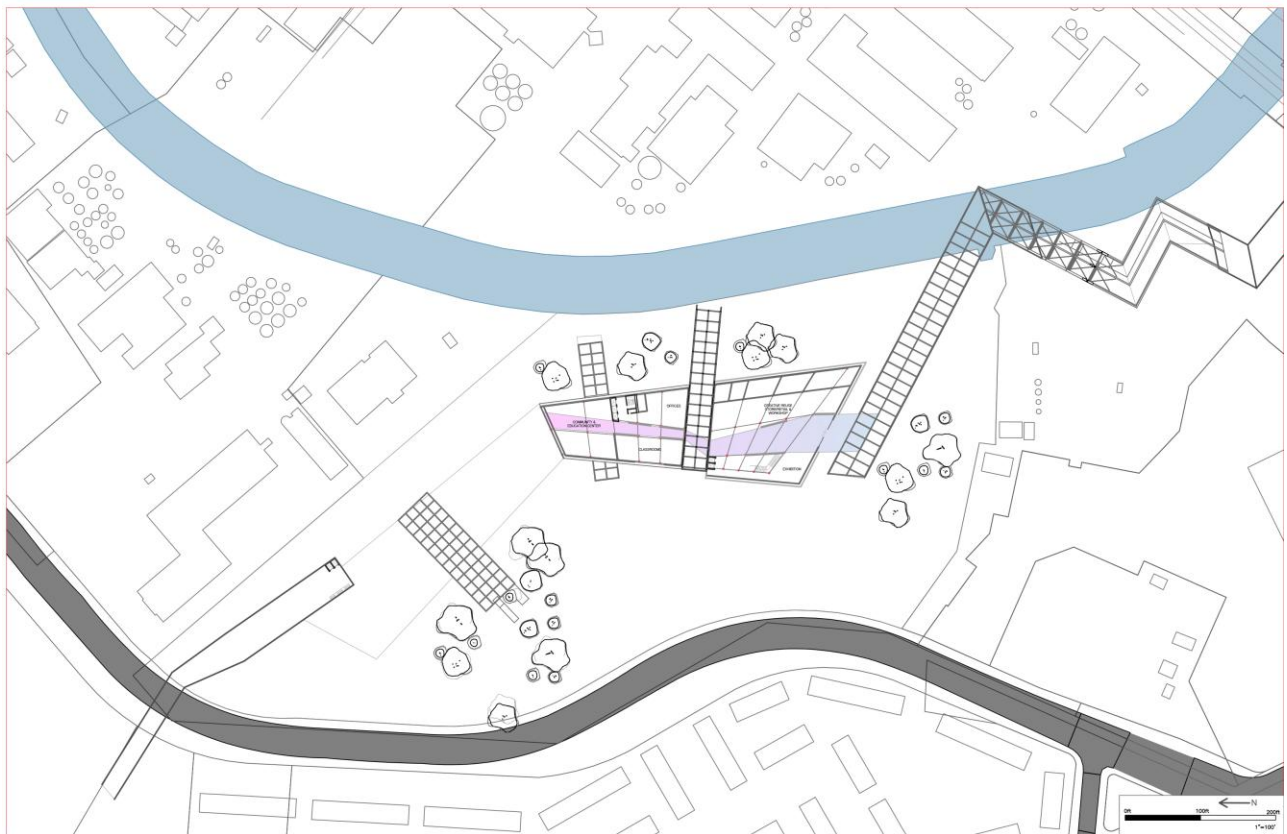


Partial model (by the author)

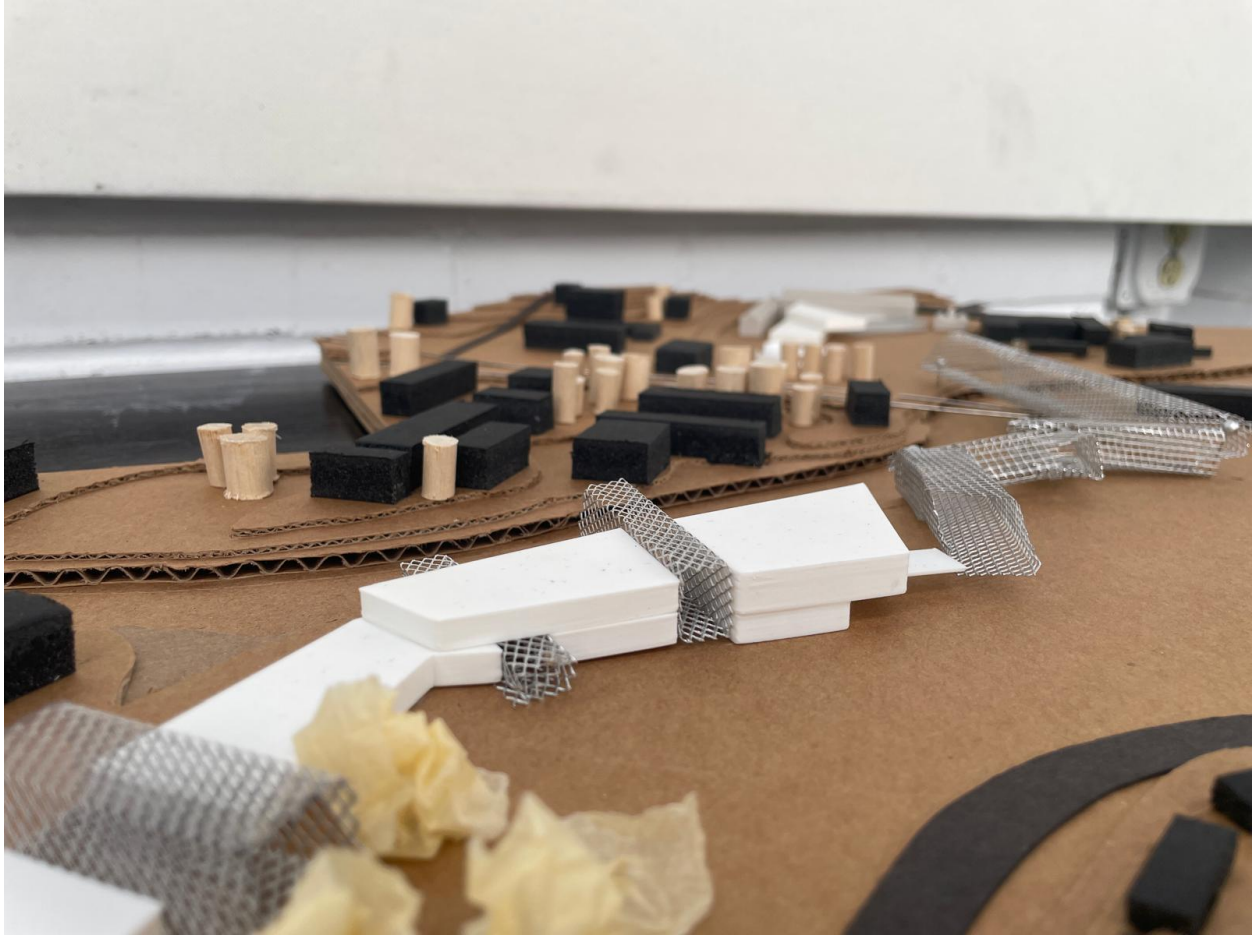
P L A N S



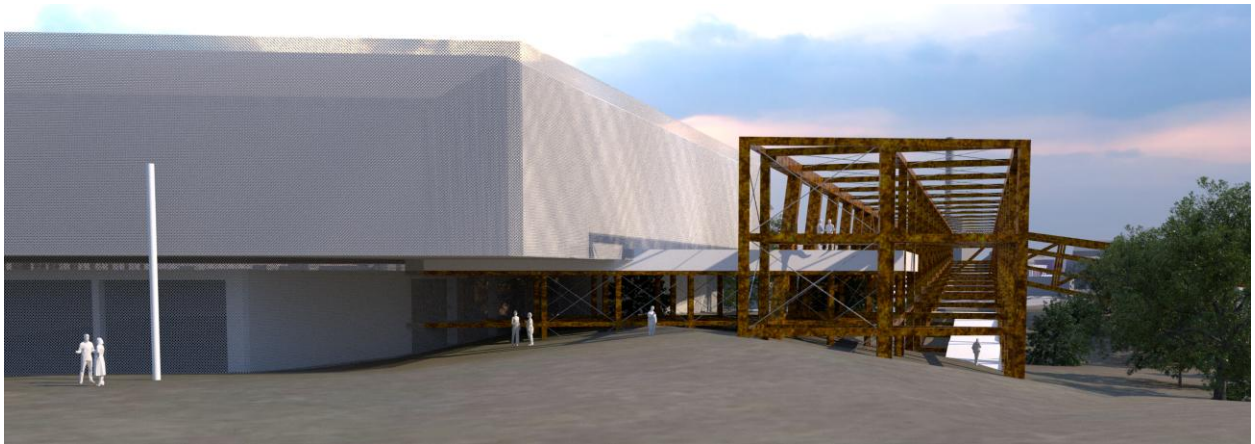
RECYCLING HUB - GROUND FLOOR



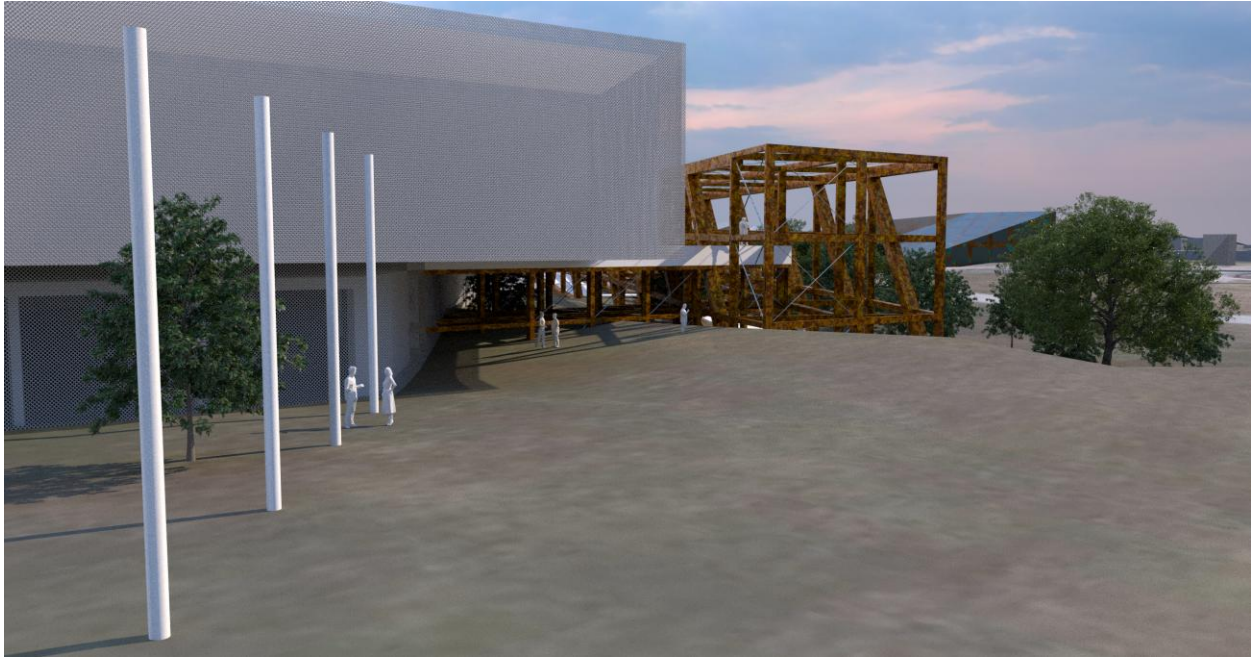
RECYCLING HUB - SECOND FLOOR



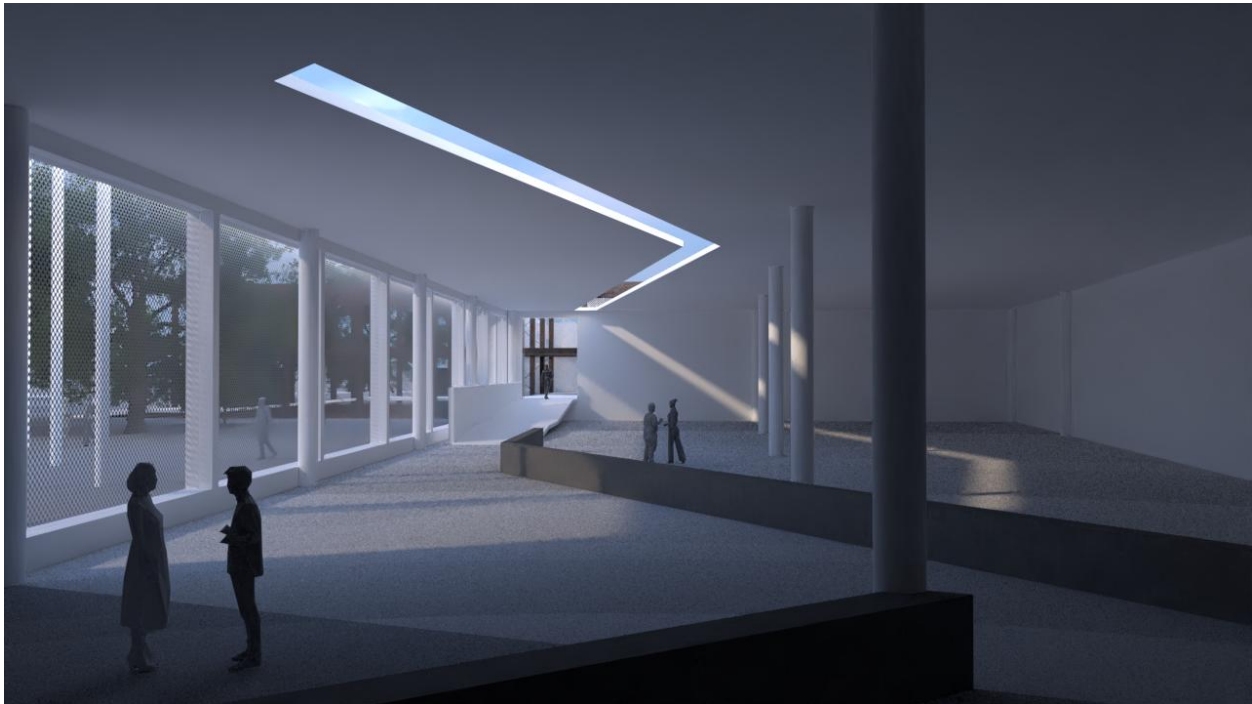
Recycling & Reuse Hub model (by the author)



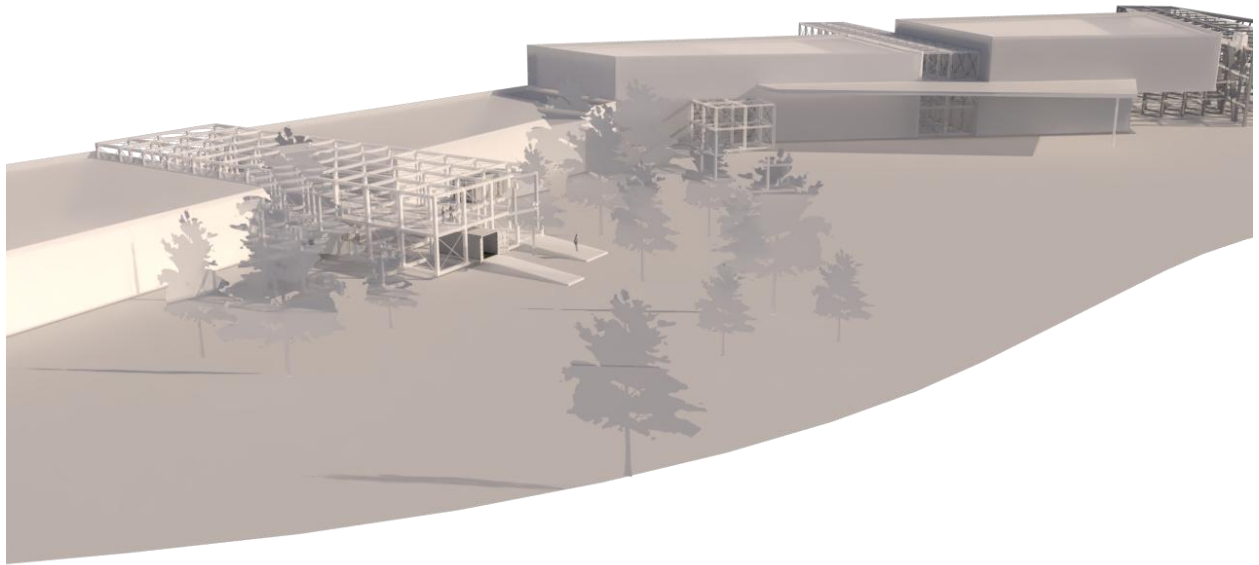
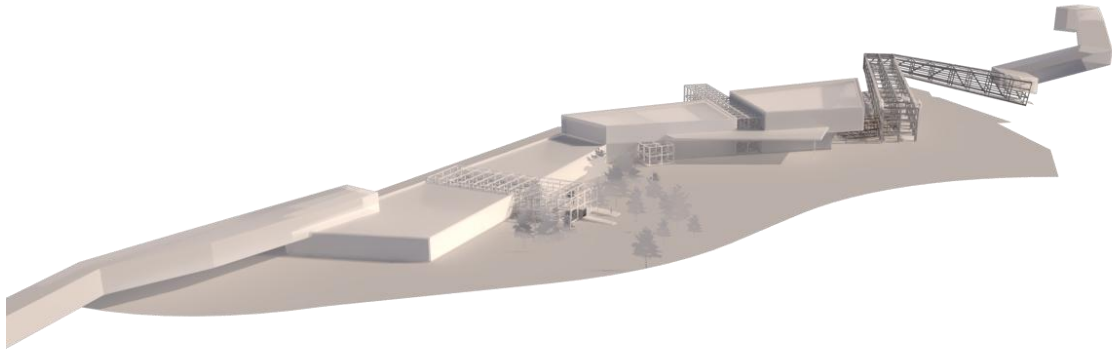
Entrance 3D (by the author)

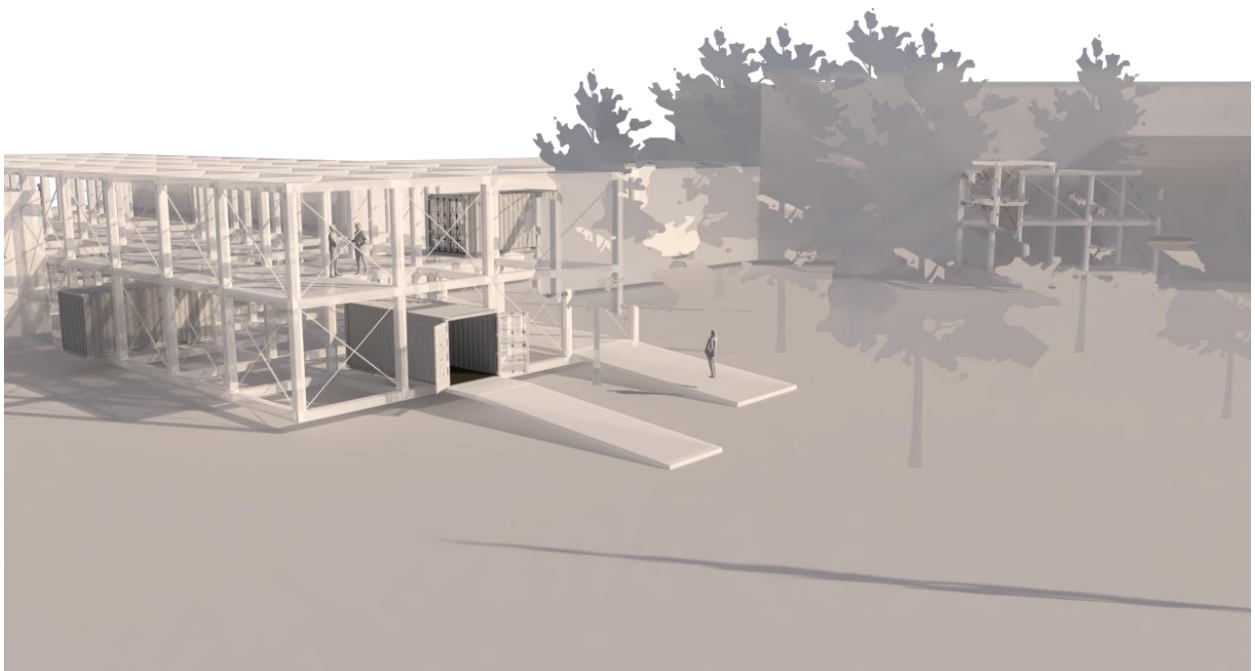
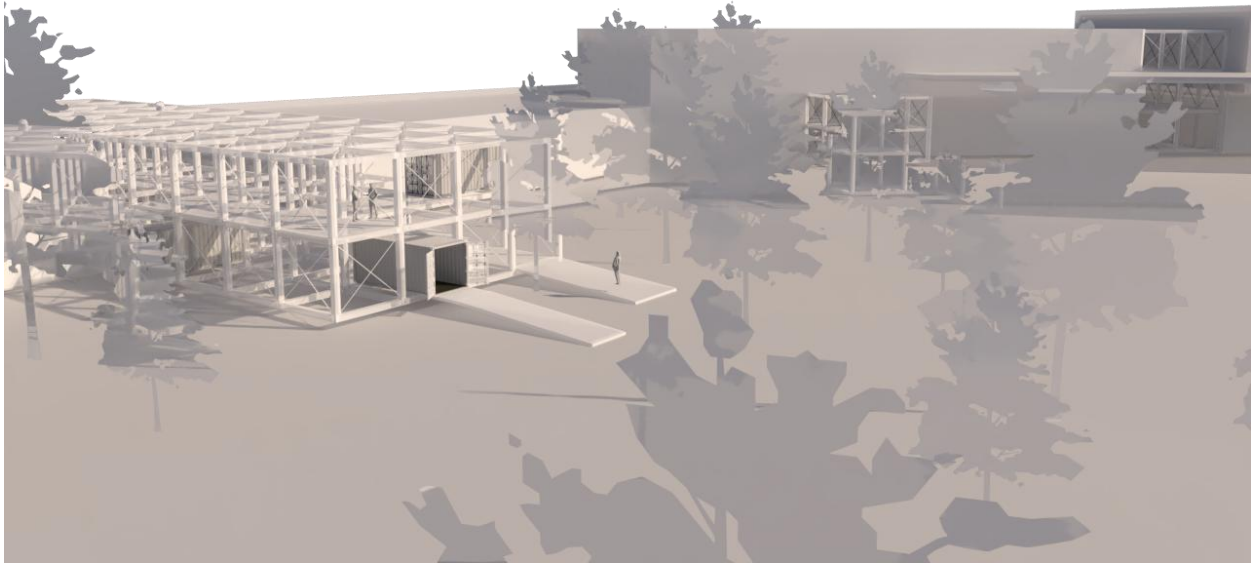


Entrance 3D (by the author)

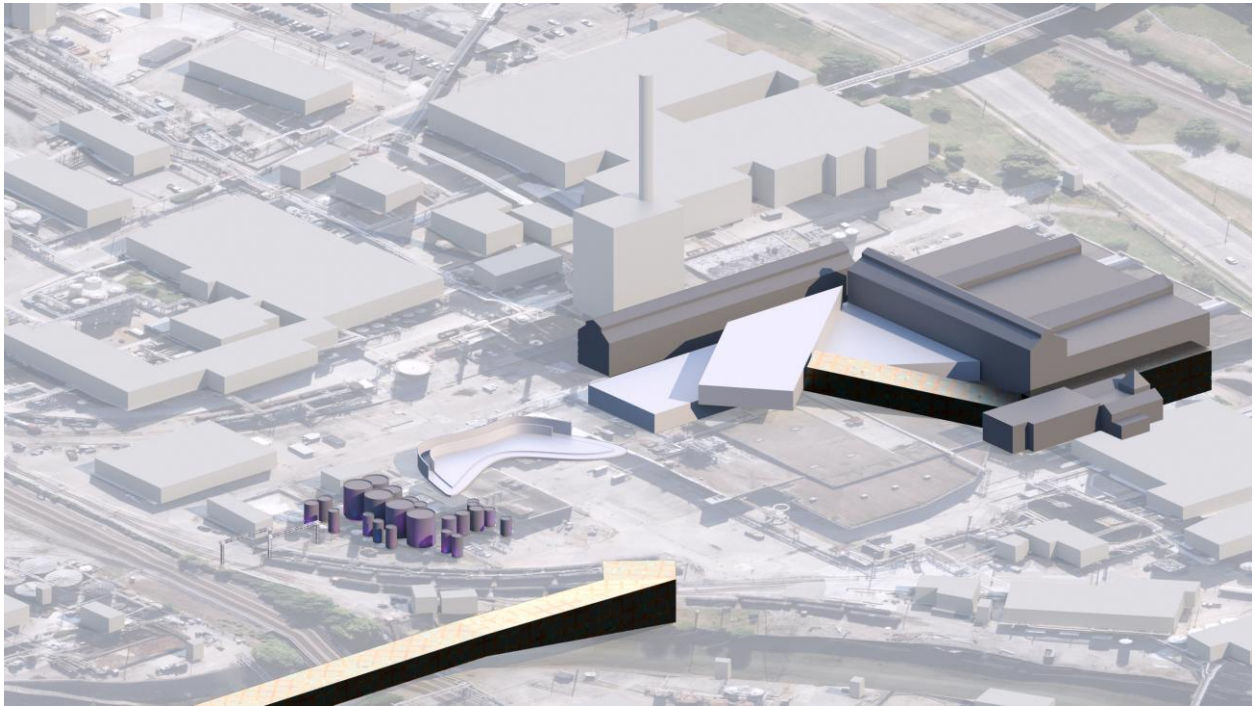


Recycling & Reuse Hub interior (by the author)

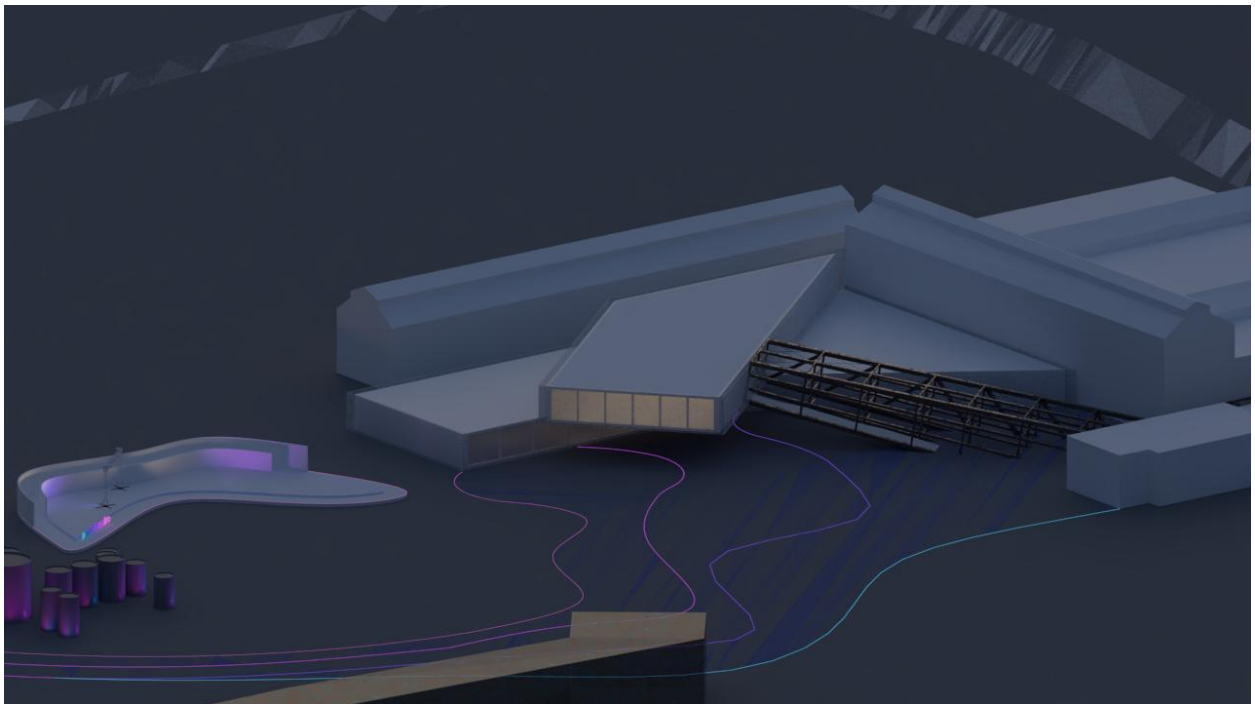




ART CENTER & PERFORMANCE SPACE



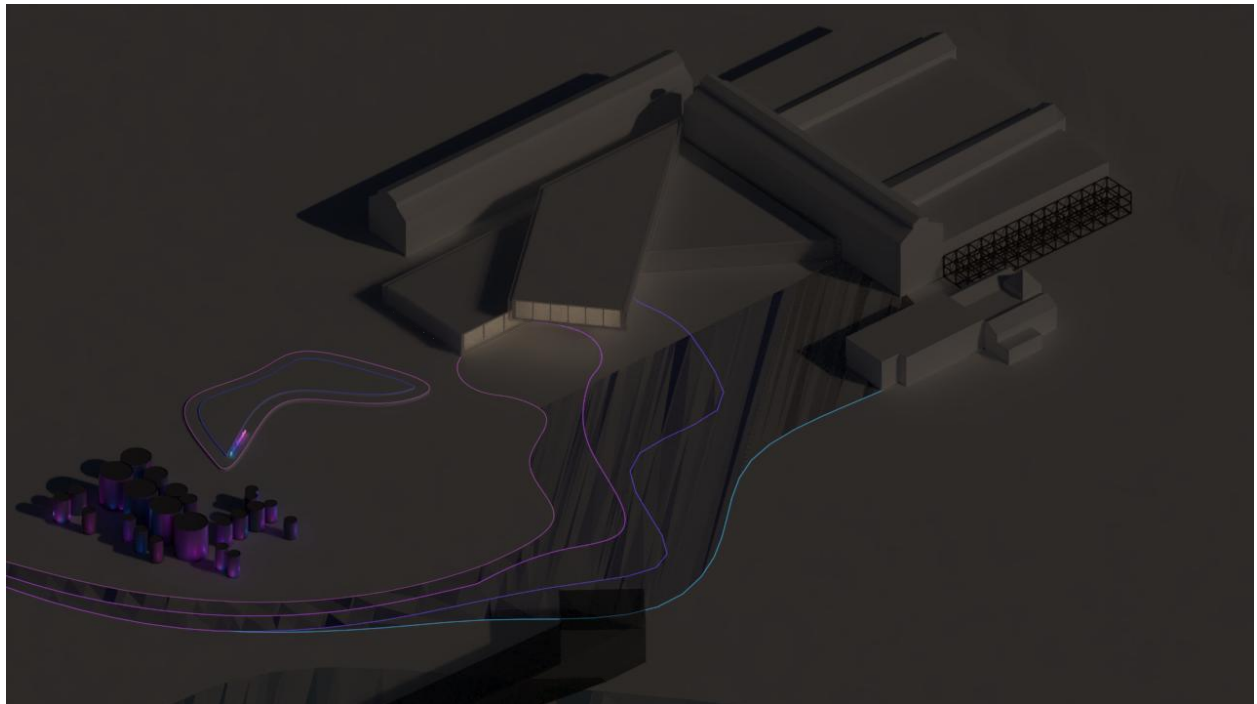
Art center & performance space 3d (by the author)



Art center & performance space 3d – evening time (by the author)



Art center & performance space 3d – evening time (by the author)



Art center & performance space 3d – evening time (by the author)

CONCLUSION

Contemporary cities increasingly operate as layered systems of separation, where physical infrastructure, economic structures, and social dynamics reinforce one another to produce fragmentation. Each boundary—whether visible or invisible—contributes to a broader condition in which communities become isolated, and interaction becomes limited.

This thesis challenges that trajectory by proposing an alternative: not the removal of boundaries altogether, but their transformation into connective systems. Rather than reinforcing divisions, architecture can act as a mediator—bridging gaps between communities, infrastructures, and landscapes.

The proposed intervention in St. Bernard reimagines the industrial corridor as a socio-economic framework that links rather than divides. Through dispersed, non-linear strategies, the project avoids creating new singular edges and instead establishes multiple points of connection across scales. In doing so, it supports economic resilience, encourages social interaction, and repositions existing infrastructures as assets rather than obstacles.

Ultimately, this work argues that designing a “gateless” city is not about eliminating difference, but about enabling exchange. By reshaping how boundaries function, architecture can contribute to more inclusive, adaptive, and connected urban environments—where separation no longer defines the experience of the city.

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FIGURE 11 - TRADITIONAL GATED COMMUNITY ANALYSES & DIAGRAM:

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FIGURE 12 - BROADER MANIFESTATIONS OF GATED COMMUNITY ANALYSES & DIAGRAM:

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FIGURE 14 - EXISTING GATED COMMUNITIES IN THE CINCINNATI, OHIO AREA ANALYSES & DIAGRAM:

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