

## ABSTRACT

Title of Document: REVITALIZING SMALL CITY DOWNTOWN

Timothy McCartney, Masters of Architecture,  
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Directed By: Professor Matthew Bell, Architecture

This thesis explores the proposition that the under-utilized centers of smaller U.S. cities that were once vital but are now struggling due to a loss of industry, jobs, population decentralization and shifts in transit leading to the collapse of their social and business infrastructure, can be revitalized by evidencing, displaying, merchandizing and rebranding their past to become tourist destinations. Adjustments to the urban fabric, at the scale of the city and individual buildings, can awaken ideals of the past that can invigorate decaying city centers. Hagerstown Maryland is selected as a demonstration of this proposition.

REVITALIZING SMALL CITY DOWNTOWNS

By

Timothy McCartney Jr.

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Advisory Committee:  
Professor Matthew Bell, Chair  
Professor Lindley Vann  
Professor Steven Hurtt

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

## Introduction

As the urban fabric of America changed during the 1960's and 70's, the impact on city centers was demoralizing. The Cities that once built this country were suddenly burdened by the fall of industry and "the great suburban land rush."<sup>1</sup> Throughout the U.S. many towns and cities now have underutilized downtowns in various states of abandonment, decay and even demolition. Therefore, there has been a corresponding collapse of the social and business infrastructure.

This thesis postulates that urban planning, architecture and celebrations of the past can ignite revitalization of downtown areas within these small cities. By implementing both walk-ability and human oriented design to attract tourist and diverse populations, improving public connections, and making downtowns multifaceted revitalization is inevitable. Drawing from lessons learned similar small towns, Hagerstown can become a both a historical tourist destination as well as a thriving city.

## The State of Downtowns

"Deindustrialization wrought broad changes to the fabric of America's older industrial cities and had far-reaching consequences for those who

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<sup>1</sup> Leinberger, Christopher B. "Turning Around Downtown: Twelve Steps to Revitalization." The Brookings Institution. March 1, 2005. Accessed October 5, 2014.

lived in these cities. Declining cities have concentrated poverty and decreased opportunities for the urban poor.”<sup>2</sup>

The decline of industry in small towns disrupted the economic patterns of the city. Populations surrounding downtowns became less permanent which in turn affects the city’s ability to support businesses. A city’s economic stability is largely based on the education of the citizens and the interactions between economic classes. The gentrification of large cities, opportunities and stability of the surrounding areas attracts the less wealthy into smaller cities. ”Some evidence also suggest that an economy concentrated in a few big industries is not as adaptable as one that is more diverse...”<sup>3</sup> The diversity of the population and businesses helps a city thrive and grow. Developing a city center that attracts a diverse community is essential to the health, growth and revitalization of the city.

In Hagerstown, the change in transit infrastructure from rail to truck is one reason for the loss of industry and economy. Increased mobility from better access to cars led to an influx in the movement of individuals and businesses away from downtown areas and toward the interstates and new sources of revenue. Downtown streets and spaces became focused on the movement of cars instead of people, which has in turn lead to the deterioration of the urban fabric and made the pedestrian environment less safe. Instead of the pedestrian acting as the basis for urbanization, the car has proved detrimental to the historical and attractive qualities of the downtown. City centers, like Hagerstown’s, have become parking lots that are often

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<sup>2</sup> Wachter, Susan M. “Introduction.” *Revitalizing American Cities*, 2. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014.

<sup>3</sup> Wachter, Susan M. “Cities Decline and Revival.” *Revitalizing American Cities*, 19. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014.

empty giving the impression of a wasteland. Attractions that recapture and rebrand our cities centers must be put in place to help support the urban safety and lifestyles.

City center must play dual roles catering to both the residents and visiting population. A major overhaul is in order regarding the use of the space. It is vital that the space becomes multifaceted in order to cater to the community and tourist as well as to facilitate different activities throughout multiple periods of the day. Small city centers must offer something more than the big shopping centers and big city attractions. Small cities need to attract people with their uniqueness or contributions to the present. A lot of these small cities lost their purpose and thus their reason for population. The downtown buildings and atmosphere now stand frozen in time, representing what once was the grandeur of the once bustling city. Small cities need to use and advertise their connections to the past/history and flaunt their assets to emphasize their uniqueness to attract new residents, businesses and visitors. Cities should build upon the past in order to secure their future.

## Chapter 2: Small City Revitalization

### Contemporary Theory

Contemporary theories of city planning and development all revolve around the ideas of “Walkable Urbanism” and “Livability.”<sup>4</sup> These ideas do not represent a new approach, as they were the defining characteristic of traditional downtowns.

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<sup>4</sup> Leinberger, Christopher B. "Turning Around Downtown: Twelve Steps to Revitalization." The Brookings Institution. March 1, 2005. Accessed October 5, 2014.

Historical downtowns, once the center of activity in a community, were compact and walk-able; comprised of stores, industry, mass transit, parks, and housing within a few blocks of the commercial and institutional core. Contemporary theories grasp at revitalizing ideas that were once evident in small city centers.

### **New Urbanism**

“New urbanism advocates compact, pedestrian and transit oriented development with well-defined public realms of streets, civic spaces, parks, and natural corridors.”<sup>5</sup> New Urbanists believe in combating sprawl and creating density around town centers. They see the existing fabric as the means for new growth: they believe that the existing fabric can be mended and transformed to reflect the qualities that pre-World War II towns and cities possessed. “New Urbanism romanticizes a nostalgic past.”<sup>6</sup> It identifies cities past relevance and focuses on fixing the scars left by automobiles and urban plight. It argues that densely populated centers should be surrounded by a variety of land uses, building types and directly connected to all forms of transit; at the human, vehicular, and mass transit scales.

Transit hubs, built into the fabric of the city, can spur redevelopment and the revitalization of existing cities. An efficient transit hub surrounded by a variety of uses and housing are attractive qualities within a city. Transit-oriented development promotes livability: the idea of a rich mix of choices, pedestrian

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<sup>5</sup> Jerke, Dennis, and Douglas R. Porter. *Urban Design and the Bottom Line: Optimizing the Return on Perception*. Washington, D.C.: ULI-the Urban Land Institute, 2008. 9-14.

<sup>6</sup> Haas, Tigran. *New Urbanism and Beyond: Designing Cities for the Future*. New York: Rizzoli International Publications :, 2008. 44-45.

friendliness and connections to a larger network of amenities.<sup>7</sup> The network of connections to other cities and amenities gives cities the ability to capture outside populations, attract new population and draw in tourism.

“Downtown redevelopment is a critical component of smart growth strategies to preserve open space, create mixed-use neighborhoods, provide a variety of transportation options, and fully use existing infrastructure. – the creative use of vacant or underused land and buildings.”<sup>8</sup> Smart growth focuses on investing public resources and services in the improvement of existing systems and development close to already urbanized areas. It advocates for the recycling and re-use of existing building and spaces to reduce the sprawl of the city. Compact, multiuse centers promote walk-able neighborhoods and streets, thus reducing the overall impact on the environment and natural resources.

Both walk-ability and livability must be integrated into small city center in order for them to survive. Rehabilitation of the existing pedestrian environment should be rethought and rebranded in a way that reflects the city that once was. Attractions and pedestrian connections between them need to be rebuilt to foster growth of population within the city. Density within the population and businesses must return to the city.

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<sup>7</sup> Dittmar, Hank. *The New Transit Town: Best Practices in Transit-oriented Development*. Washington, DC: Island Press, 2004. 20-29.

<sup>8</sup> Wells, Barbara. "Downtown Revitalization in Urban Neighborhoods and Small Cities." *Downtown Revitalization: Rural Information Center*. Accessed October 22, 2014. <http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/downtown.html>.

## **Landscape Urbanism and Green Infrastructure**

Landscape Urbanists focus their design of the urban environment on the horizontal plane and green infrastructure. They argue for an understanding and prioritization of the natural systems as a means to direct urban change and growth. The ground plane is designed so it can accommodate a multitude of urban activities, planned and unplanned, imagined and unimagined, over time with the idea that green infrastructure would aid pedestrian livability and the health of the city. Also, the landscape can mediate both the voids created by vehicular use and the scars of industry.

A proposed project in La Villette, France used, “landscape as the basic framework for an urban transformation of what had been a part of a working city, left derelict by shifts in economies of production and consumption.”<sup>9</sup> The project demonstrated how landscape could be a versatile medium, capable of making connection between the urban infrastructure, public events and features of the post-industrial site.<sup>9</sup> Demonstrating these aspects also shows that landscape urbanism becomes a mediator between the urban, natural and human environments. It is not just a healthy answer to an unhealthy city.

Green infrastructure and landscape urbanism can start to improve spaces within city centers. Green space within the public realm can create opportunities for more interaction between people, landscape and the built environment within the downtown. The use of landscape urbanism principles on brownfields and industrial

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<sup>9</sup> Waldheim, Charles. *The Landscape Urbanism Reader*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2006.

wastelands within the downtown of small cities can refresh once stagnant sites.

### **Main Street Approach**

The Main Street Approach is a smaller scale approach to revitalizing downtowns. This approach is more about the holistic view of approaching downtown revitalization and rebranding. It looks at urban planning as a four-tier system with two main approaches, economical and tangible.<sup>10</sup> Design and Promotion focuses on how people are attracted to the downtown; the livability, the entertainment, the business and the investments. The overall plan envisions how to make the city centers better connected to surrounding amenities and beautify the existing community, attract new people, and make the city center a more energetic space. Economically it takes a lot of time, effort and support from the community to revitalize a city. The Main Street approach encourages community involvement in all decisions throughout the process.

The establishment of a holistic plan, both economically and physically, is the backbone to any city. In order for revitalization to occur a main street like approach must be put in place. Architecture and planning might be the first stepping-stone, but community support will be the driving force.

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<sup>10</sup> "Organizing a Successful Downtown Revitalization Program Using the Main Street Approach." Department of Archeology and Historical Preservation. Accessed October 20, 2014. <http://www.dahp.wa.gov/sites/default/files/styles/Organizing A Successful DT.pdf>.

## **Livable Urbanism**

While each of these theories has its individual emphasis there are several elements that are consistent in all models. City centers must be walk-able and designed for human to interact within the urban fabric, while also promoting a healthy, safe and all-encompassing center for living. Flexibility is key. The downtown must be able to meet the needs of the pedestrian, the community, and the tourist at different periods throughout the day. Attraction is the key, as it is important to entice people to live, work and play downtown. Finally, the rebranding or adaptively reusing the existing fabric and elements of the city to recall, represent and display the past must take place in order to spur revitalization.

### *Downtown Revitalization Strategies*

Revitalization is a controversial planning challenge faced by many small cities. It can be difficult because revitalization strategies are known to fail if the not implemented correctly or continued over a long period of time. A lot of time and investment is needed for city centers to grow and prosper. This section will look at how implementing architectural and planning strategies, both economically and physically, can revitalize cities.

## **City of Attractions**

Some small cities have focused their efforts on establishing the establishment of entertainment and arts districts to foster growth and attract money/investment to

the city. Regularly scheduled events utilizing downtown spaces draw an influx of people and creates revenue for local businesses. These events also make the city center more multifaceted and attractive to potential populations. The use of concert venues and entertainment corridors draw big events to small cities creating revolving revenue for the city as well as entertainment to draw people from the outskirts. Establishing the city as an art-focused center attracts a younger population and promotes tourism. The idea of providing several forms of entertainment boosts the economy and local businesses. These entertainment features become attractions and amenities.

Using a small city's industrial and historical past as a draw can produce a uniqueness not readily found elsewhere thus creating an extensive tourist network. Creating networks of museums that focus on the industry that once built the city and influenced the U.S. economy can draw people into small cities.<sup>11</sup> The ability to allow people to experience or interact with unique features is an asset that post-industrial cities possess. These cities can entice interstate travelers, people with a passion for the subject matter, and the learning population. This concept is about drawing them in and then giving them a reason to stay for a little while, thus using an attraction to bolster the restaurants and shops.

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<sup>11</sup> Otgaar, Alexander H. J. "Towards a Framework." In *Industrial Tourism Opportunities for City and Enterprise*. Farnham, Surrey, England ; Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2010.

## **City of Connections**

Connections are a strong factor in revitalization. How well a city links people with the downtown, mass transit, major movement networks, and surrounding cities aids in the growth of the city. The implementation of these connections in an existing city can create growth and revitalization.

Connections to large cities are important but only help to strengthen the overall revitalization strategies applied to smaller cities. People seek out more cost effective living arrangements that sustain the ability to reap the benefits of the big city. Smaller cities can take advantage of the larger city connections by offering people things that large city does not have, while also giving them direct connection to these cities.

One way to cultivate these connections is through transit networks that reduce the need personal vehicles. Rail transportation was once the leading form of transit across the country and is again a growing entity for expanding metropolitan areas. Transit-oriented development and New Urbanism support the implementation of mass transit connections within the existing fabric of the city to sponsor growth. Mass transit centers create space and place systems within the city creating nodes on an extensive network of connecting tissue and can create an attractive element within the city. Prince Georges County Maryland, outside of Washington D.C., has started developing land surrounding mass transit stops within the county. Mixed-use projects of \$165 million and \$1 billion are underway to use underutilized land around the

mass transit stops. The Largo city officials are proposing a \$645 million regional medical center that will connect to Washington, D.C.'s mass transit system.<sup>12</sup>

However, transforming the way the automobile is accommodated within the city can influence improvement of the city. Turning one-way streets into two-way streets allows people to interact with the city downtown. It directs more people through the town center giving the city more opportunity to capture revenue.

Walk-ability and the connections of the downtown to the community are important. The more connections the community has between amenities, the more satisfying the community is as a place to live. The downtown must contain elements that connect to each group of the population; whether its spaces and elements for kids, parents, older adults, day and night activities or work. Walk-ability also makes streets and communities safer for the pedestrian. Creating movement systems based on the pedestrian and not the car is the ideal scenario for downtown revitalization.

Connections to natural and man-made green infrastructure attracts and strengthen downtowns. Extensive park systems and natural scenery are big draws for both tourism and community living. The idea of green streets and places to interact with nature has become a major driver in both the redevelopment and the health of a community.<sup>13</sup> Downtowns and cities need to be comprised of spaces for kids to play,

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<sup>12</sup> Lazo, Luz. "Prince George's County Pushing Development around Five of Its 15 Metro Stations." Washington Post. March 31, 2014. Accessed November 20, 2014. [http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/trafficandcommuting/prince-georges-county-pushing-development-around-five-of-its-15-metro-stations/2014/03/31/bd29d44e-b6b9-11e3-8cc3-d4bf596577eb\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/trafficandcommuting/prince-georges-county-pushing-development-around-five-of-its-15-metro-stations/2014/03/31/bd29d44e-b6b9-11e3-8cc3-d4bf596577eb_story.html).

<sup>13</sup> Shields, Martin, and Tracey Farrigan. "Welcome Back Downtown: A Guide to Revitalizing Pennsylvania's Small Downtowns." The Center for Rural Pennsylvania. Accessed October 7, 2014. <http://www.rural.palegislature.us/downtown.pdf>.

people to walk, ride bikes, and experience nature. This applies the lesson of landscape urbanism to the existing city. The creation of green infrastructure that not only makes the city healthier, but integrates the urban fabric, the community and nature.

The connectivity of a college or university creates a series of opportunities for city revitalization. Universities and colleges bring well-educated people and young adults into the existing population. A diverse population sponsors growth in cities. The college creates a diverse population of people and needs, while also creating an extensive network of human capital to capture and promote within the city. “In a thorough investigation of the relationship between human capital and city growth across U.S. metropolitan areas, Glaeser and Saiz (2004) conclude that one standard deviation in the share of university graduates in the city workforce at the beginning of a decade is associated with a quarter of a standard deviation of population growth during the decade. Put differently, for an average city, a 1 percentage point higher share of university graduates is associated with around 0.5 percent population growth over the subsequent decade.”<sup>14</sup>

### **City of Investment**

Strategies implementing growth and development are another way to approach revitalization and capture revenue. Investment in human capital and job growth for new and existing populations is an essential economic strategy. Building on the basis of an existing community’s stock of knowledge and promoting

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<sup>14</sup> Wachter, Susan M. “Introduction.” *Revitalizing American Cities*, pg. 24. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014.

investment in population diversity aids in the ability for the city to grow. “The success of older cities in reinventing themselves lies in their capacity to develop their human capital through education and prepare a skilled workforce that will be able to demonstrate the creativity required by the knowledge economy.”<sup>15</sup> Investment in places to work and live within the city are integral to its survival.

The creation of space or land within a city for new development leads to more investment. Allowing underutilized public land to be available to the private sector is a way of promoting investment in the city. Creating incentives and reason for investment raises interest in investment. Over the last 10 years, Wichita Kansas has seen “ private investment of \$411 million outpace the public investment of \$394 million...[but] realize that successful public investments provides the catalyst for private investment, all of which leads to increased property values and additional revenue.”<sup>16</sup> Allowing underutilized public space, industrial wastelands, and surface parking lots to be transformed into urban parks, transit centers, concert venues, museums, housing and new work places etc. creates community and outside investment in the downtowns of small cities.

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<sup>15</sup> Wachter, Susan M. “Introduction.” *Revitalizing American Cities*, pg. 25. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014.

<sup>16</sup> "The Case for Downtown Revitalization." Downtown Crossville Inc. March 1, 2009. Accessed October 7, 2014.  
<http://www.downtowncrossvilleinc.net/Documents/downtownrevitalizationfinal.pdf>.

## **Complimentary City**

A complimentary city should draw from new urbanism, landscape urbanism and precedents of revitalization to create a system of generators which complement each other in a holistic plan for the revitalization of small city downtowns. Integration and creation of movement systems to better establish the connections inside and outside the city is integral to growth. Establishing a sense of place and importance whether historical, art or entertainment base is needed to attract a tourist and permanent population. The creation of a livable and walk-able community is vital to community interactions, tourist interactions, population growth and the safety and health of the overall city. City center should be multifaceted spaces transforming for both day and night activities, as well as tourist/community activities. Finally, connection to natural and responsive elements of the city flaunt the city's natural elements and integrate them within the fabric of the existing city. The town center should be the culmination of all the factors that foster revitalization.

However, a majority of downtown revitalization happens at the level of the community and their support is the key. The overall plan must entice the population and show that this revitalization will benefit the community. Lack of interest and support will stall and eventually kill any revitalization effort. The use of support programs and grants must be in place in order to help facilitate revitalization. The more backing a local government can give to sponsor growth the more growth there will be.

### *Strategies Applied*

## Attraction Cities

Concord California maintains a population of 122,067 and has been undergoing downtown revitalization since the 1990s.<sup>17</sup> The key to their success is the Todos Santos Plaza, which is at the center of their downtown. The plaza is named after the original city and encompasses a whole city block containing a farmers market, concerts/venues, shopping, a park and several types of housing.<sup>18</sup> The preservation of unique shops coupled with the restrictions of large brand name stores has kept the historical character of the plaza intact, creating a tourist destination. The town's connection to mass transit throughout California aids in the amount of visitors and resulting revenue. Transit connections to both San Francisco and Oakland as well as the location of the plaza, aid in reducing the amount of cars and increasing the walk-ability of the downtown. The community enforces regulations and procedures ensuring the growth of the city.

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<sup>17</sup> "City of Concord, California." City of Concord, California. Accessed November 10, 2014. <http://www.ci.concord.ca.us/>.

<sup>18</sup> Best, Mary. "Concord Reinvents Its City Center To Make It a Place to Live, Work and Play | Concord, CA | Livability Best Places to Live." Livability. April 11, 2011. Accessed November 10, 2014. <http://livability.com/ca/concord/business/concord-reinvents-its-city-center-make-it-place-live-work-and-play>.



**Illustration 1 Todos Santos Plaza (Geroma)**

“Maine has a long tradition of downtown public markets. Portland, a city of 62,500 people, proved to be an ideal location for a market to showcase Maine’s produce and food products.”<sup>19</sup> The city has created an extensive plan that would generate growth and revitalization within the city based on this market. They changed an existing rarely used parking lot into the biggest generator of revenue for the city. Portland has used the city’s historical port and a framers market to revitalize the city. The farmers market has used Portland’s Old Port district’s tourism to foster revitalization within the downtown.

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<sup>19</sup> Wells, Barbara. "Downtown Revitalization in Urban Neighborhoods and Small Cities." Downtown Revitalization: Rural Information Center. Accessed October 22, 2014. <http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/downtown.html>.



**Illustration 2 Portland's Farmers Market at Monument Square in downtown  
(Templeton, Corey)**

Easton, Pennsylvania is the birthplace of Crayola crayons. The small post-industrial city has survived by creating an experience based on its industrial past. The city's population is near 27,000 people and Crayola attracts about 450,000 tourists annually.<sup>10</sup> The Crayola experience, which was once a factory tour, has morphed into a huge revenue generator for the city. The experience has been integrated into the downtown, aiding in the growth of the shops and restaurants within the city. The unique historical character, connections to major forms of travel and connections to Lafayette College also draw people into the city. "The vision of Easton's future growth and prosperity is built upon its proud history as a cultural, commercial, and transportation hub. Poised as a destination for tourists, artists, investors, residents and businesses alike, the City Staff is eager to work with you to make Easton your home

or place of business.”<sup>20</sup> The city’s strategies for revitalizing the downtown have led to multiple revitalization efforts.



**Illustration 3 The Crayola Experience in Downtown in Easton, PA (Crayola Experience)**



**Illustration 4 Unique Mural painted on historic buildings downtown ()**

### **Connection Cites**

Savannah, Georgia used the addition of a downtown college to help bolster the revitalization process within one of its degrading neighborhoods. Savannah College of Art and Design reached agreements with the local government to occupy and preserve the historical architecture of the downtown. Campus buildings are

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<sup>20</sup> "City of Easton - Community and Economic Development - About Us." City of Easton. Accessed November 10, 2014. <http://www.easton-pa.com/cedabout.html>.

spread throughout the grid of the historical fabric and are the driving force in the rehabilitation of abandoned and derelict buildings. The school has created extensive arts and community involvement networks within the city. Community events, restoration, and education aided in rejuvenating the existing population in the city.<sup>21</sup>



**Illustration 5 Savannah College of Art and Design's adaptive re-use of abandoned industrial buildings (Luyken, Hermann)**

Frederick Maryland is a growing post-industrial city of 66,000 people. Frederick's revitalization efforts have led to a great deal of improvements within the city. The main driver of change was the Carroll creek. Running through the middle of town it flooded much of the city's downtown in 1976, which led to the rethinking of how the creek would influence the city in the future. The solution led to a linear park system that creates a mixed-use pedestrian main street. The creek connected the east side of the downtown to the city park on the west. The new connection created a great deal of growth within the city. It also, related well to the original identity of the city and its walk-ability. "The \$15 million project brought a \$50 million return on investment to the city, adding 1,500 new jobs and transforming the downtown."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Spracher, Luciana. "Savannah College of Art and Design." *New Georgia Encyclopedia*. May 27, 2005. Accessed November 22, 2014. <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/arts-culture/savannah-college-art-and-design>.

<sup>22</sup> Absetz, Sarah. "Mayor Randy McClement on Facilitating Private Investment." *Smart Growth*

The small private college and government base located within walking distance of downtown creates a large amount of revenue and human capital for the city. Interstates and the Marc train create a connective system for the city to both Baltimore and Washington D.C. The Great Frederick fair generates large amounts of revenue for local business and entertainment for the citizens. Growth within the city has led to adaptive reuse of industrial buildings, renovation of the historical townhomes, a booming main street and a great deal of residential growth. The town of Frederick has benefited greatly from its connections to generators of urban revitalization.



**Illustration 6 Carroll Creek Linear Park at night and during an event Right: (Downtown Frederick Partnership) Left (B., Rich)**

Hempstead, Long Island used its connections to New York as a way to generate revitalization. The city became a major transportation gateway by building new passenger train and bus terminal facilities. “Its Transit Center serves more than 25,000 MTA-Long Island bus riders a day on over 20 routes and the adjacent LIRR Station is the terminus of the electrified Hempstead Branch.”<sup>23</sup> The city’s location and affordable housing captured the effects of gentrification within the larger city.

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America. August 14, 2014. Accessed October 14, 2014. /.

<sup>23</sup> "Long Island Index 2008: Five Case Studies of Downtown Development." Long Island Index. January 1, 2008. Accessed October 22, 2014. <http://www.longislandindex.org/press>.

The transit hub is leading to mix-used development, population growth and interest in the growing city.

### **Investment Cities**

Chicago, Illinois is a city with historical examples of overall city revitalization. A great example is the Chicago World's Fair or the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893. At that time a large event led to the overall revitalization of the city, but today Chicago is taking investment approaches to revitalize specific degraded neighborhoods. The Kenzie Industrial Corridor is a major industrial area that was influenced by the decrease of industry in the 1960s. It was littered with a variety of abandoned and decrepit industrial buildings which led to a rapid decline in population. "Chicago is making a major commitment to bringing good jobs and quality, affordable residential tracts back to the west side – a strategy that includes revitalizing the Kenzie Industrial Corridor area."<sup>24</sup> Large investment in acquiring manufacturing facilities, improving movement infrastructure and investing in new industry has sponsored revitalization. New industry and development started to take over and re-use abandoned sites. The adaptive reuse of the buildings into art facilities also started to draw people to the community. Hope that the community and housing will regenerate is the next stage of the revitalization process.

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<sup>24</sup> Wells, Barbara. "Downtown Revitalization in Urban Neighborhoods and Small Cities." Downtown Revitalization: Rural Information Center. Accessed October 22, 2014. <http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/downtown.html>.



**Illustration 7 Adaptive Re-use of an industrial building in the Kenzie Industrial Corridor into an Arts Center (Lam, Jenny)**

With a population of 117,000 residents, Stamford, Connecticut used its job opportunities and growth in human capital to strengthen its downtown. There are 84,000 people working in the city which serves as the national headquarters for some of the world's most respected financial institutions.<sup>16</sup> The investment in large office towers, hotels and a regional shopping center revitalized the city and sponsored new interest in the growth of residential housing. The city has now shifted its focus to attracting the working population to live within the city. New development and housing is focused on adding more density to the downtown districts. The city's connection to New York City aided in the growth of jobs, residents, and business growth.

Middleton, Connecticut, a town of 43,000 residents, created revitalization by allowing developers to redevelop parts of the fading downtown. "A private developer converted one of the three large department stores downtown into a pedestrian walkway known as Main Street."<sup>25</sup> The walkway allowed for more connection to the

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<sup>25</sup> Wells, Barbara. "Downtown Revitalization in Urban Neighborhoods and Small Cities." Downtown

city center and created opportunities for new shops and restaurants. A 2,000 seat movie theater was added to attract even more people downtown. Laws and regulations mandated that businesses occupy the ground floor and the town center development will consist of commercial, retail, residential and government facilities.<sup>26</sup> An emphasis on pedestrian bridges and connections between main street anchors, the riverfront and subsequent attractions is also a major part of the revitalization. The main reason revitalization happened in the city was allowing private developers to rethink and redevelop unused buildings. The cities connection to Wesleyan University also provides a lot of human capital and a younger population that helps diversify the community.



**Illustration 8 View of Middletown Connecticut's Main Street (Case, Daniel)**

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Revitalization: Rural Information Center. Accessed October 22, 2014.  
<http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/downtown.html>.

<sup>26</sup> Wells, Barbara. "Downtown Revitalization in Urban Neighborhoods and Small Cities." Downtown Revitalization: Rural Information Center. Accessed October 22, 2014.  
<http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/downtown.html>.

## **Complimentary City**

Each example shows that several forms of revitalization can sponsor growth and development within the downtown of a city. Most of them need multiple ways to spur revitalization to aid the process. These cities are built on one major piece of revitalization that was strengthened by other pieces, some that already existed. This shows that revitalization includes a number of tools that must compliment and strengthen one another in order to accomplish the overall goals of the process.

## **Chapter 3: Relevant History of Hagerstown, MD**

Hagerstown, a small city in Western Maryland, is the seat of Washington County and a major hub of transportation for the Western Maryland tri-state area. It is highly influenced by the intersection of two major interstates. Interstate 70 which connects Baltimore, Maryland in the east to Ohio in the west, while Interstate 81 connects the eastern panhandle of West Virginia to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Currently Hagerstown is considered a center for commerce by both vehicle and rail.

### **Building the City**

#### **The Beginning**

On June 5, 1739, Jonathan Hager moved to Maryland and bought a 200 acre piece of marshland.<sup>27</sup> The original plot of land was call Hager's Fancy and is the

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<sup>27</sup> Nelson, John H. *"What God Does Is Well Done": The Jonathan Hager Files*, 7. Hagerstown,

location of his first house. Hagerstown, originally named Elizabethtown, was conceptualized and laid out in 1762. “Capt. Hager laid off the town in about 520 lots of 82 feet front and 240 feet deep, making half an acre each...” and placed a square at the intersection of Potomac and Washington St; the main north/south and east/west streets of the town.<sup>28</sup> Hagerstown remained part of Frederick County until September 5, 1776 when western Maryland was split into two counties. As a result Jonathan Hager Jr. petitioned for Hagerstown to become the seat of the newly formed Washington County and the city has been the seat of the county ever since. By 1813 the town was officially incorporated and named Hagerstown. The first census in 1810 put the population at 2342 people.<sup>4</sup>



**Illustration 9 Hagerstown in 1810 (Bockmiller,pg 1)**

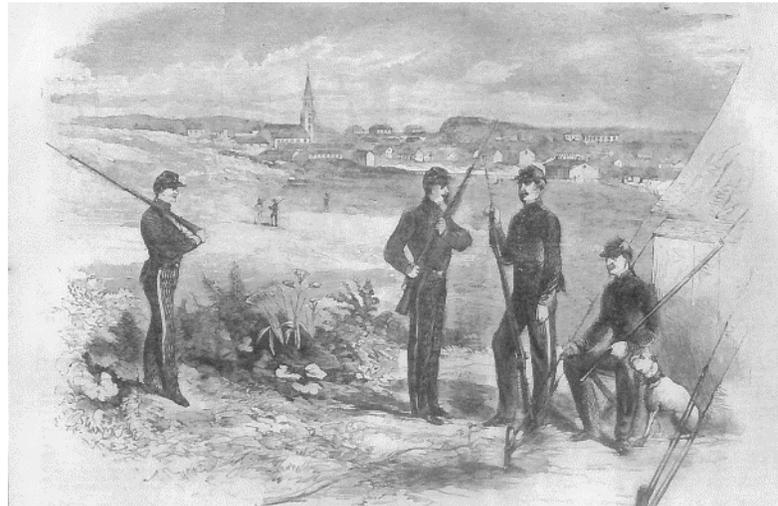
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Md: City of Hagerstown, 1997.

<sup>28</sup> Scharf, J. Thomas. *History of Western Maryland: Being a History of Frederick, Montgomery, Carroll, Washington, Allegany, and Garrett Counties from the Earliest Period to the Present Day; including Biographical Sketches of Their Representative Men*, 1057-61. Baltimore: Regional Pub., 1968.

## The Civil War

The population of Hagerstown grew steadily between 1810 and 1860, reaching approximately 4,132 people at the onset of the Civil War in 1861.<sup>29</sup> During the war Hagerstown became a major staging area for four major campaigns. The city was a stopping point for supplies, medicine and medical care. The battle at Antietam on September 17, 1862, fought eleven miles outside of Hagerstown, became the most influential event in the city during the Civil War. There were an estimated 22,717 casualties and is considered the bloodiest single day battle in American history.<sup>30</sup> The bodies of 2,800 soldiers, who fought at Antietam were transferred from temporary graves to their permanent place in Rose hill cemetery in 1877.<sup>31</sup> In 1864, Hagerstown was captured, held for ransom by the confederate army, and nearly burnt down.



**Illustration 10 Hagerstown in the Civil War (Bockmiller)**

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<sup>29</sup> "State and County Quickfacts: Hagerstown, MD." US Census Bureau. Accessed October 4, 2014

<sup>30</sup> "Antietam: Sharpsburg." Civil War Trust. Accessed October 4, 2014.  
<http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/antietam.html?tab=facts>.

<sup>31</sup> Bockmiller, Stephen R. *Hagerstown in the Civil War*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Pub., 2011.

## **The Railroad, Industry and Growth of the “Hub City”**

The first railroad service into Hagerstown was the Franklin Railroad in 1841. However the railroad only lasted four years and did little to boost growth within the city. The first major railroad reached Hagerstown shortly after the civil war, completely changing the way Hagerstown would grow. Subsequent lines, such as the B&O railroad in 1867, fortified connections for both trade and exploration. The B&O Railroad and its competition with the Western Maryland Railroad cultivated growth of the railroad industry within the city. The B&O railroad came within one block of the town square and offered passenger service to destinations along the route to Baltimore.<sup>32</sup> Over the next 72 years Hagerstown gained connections with four major railroads as well as an extensive trolley network. The Norfolk and Western reached Hagerstown in the 1870s, providing connections to Roanoke Virginia in the south (Shenandoah Valley) and later connections to the north. The Western Maryland Railroad brought the first passenger train in 1872. The ride covered 86 miles, took three hours and twenty minutes and made seven stops between Baltimore and Hagerstown. Platforms for the train were erected in July, 1876 in the town square: one of which connected directly to the court house. The Western Maryland Railroad established the roundhouse in Hagerstown in 1939 officially making it the hub of the Western Maryland railroad service.<sup>33</sup>

On December 1, 1904 the Blue Ridge Trolley was completed linking

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<sup>32</sup> Stover, John F. *History of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad*. West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 1987.

<sup>33</sup> Cook, Roger, and Karl Zimmermann. *The Western Maryland Railway: Fireballs and Black Diamonds*. San Diego, Calif.: Howell-North Books, 1981.

Frederick to Hagerstown and creating a local connection between two growing cities. The trolley was integrated within the fabric of the town and delivered both freight and people. The system grew by buying the trolley systems of surrounding small towns and eventually connecting all of Western Maryland. The trolley system built the western Maryland energy conglomerate, Potomac Edison due to its extensive network of electric rail lines.<sup>34</sup> Finally, the Cumberland Valley Railroad connected with Hagerstown on Feb. 3, 1941.<sup>35</sup> The railroad connected Hagerstown to major cities to the north, specifically Harrisburg and Philadelphia. The railroads were the largest employers in Washington County for more than 50 years.

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<sup>34</sup> Harwood, Herbert H. *Blue Ridge Trolley: The Hagerstown & Frederick Railway*. San Marino, Calif.: Golden West Books, 1970.

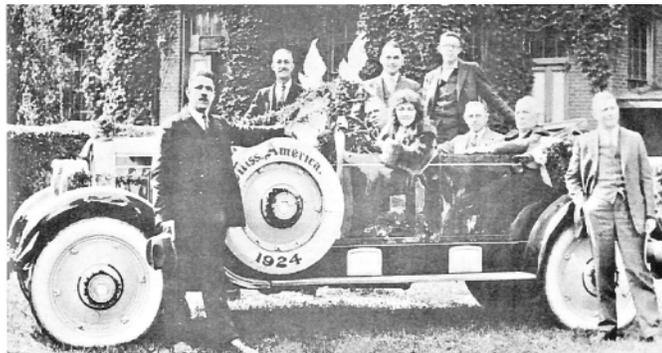
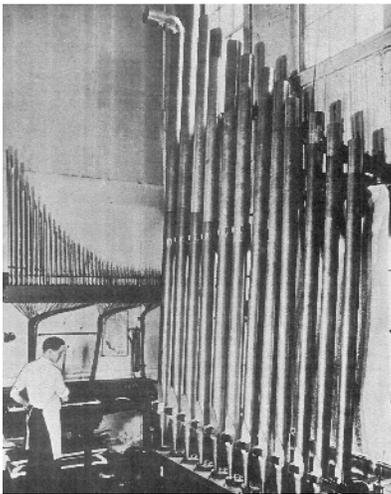
<sup>35</sup> Westhaeffer, Paul J. *History of the Cumberland Valley Railroad*. Ephrata, Pa.: Washington D.C. Chapter, National Railway Historical Society, 1979.



**Illustration 11 Railroads in Hagerstown (Frye)**

With the railroads came industry that would both define and build the population of Hagerstown. Industries such as building supplies, automotive, aviation, pipe organs and sand blasting would shape the form of the city. One of the leading entrepreneurs in Hagerstown was M.P. Moller. Enticed by the developing transportation and industrial hub, M.P. Moller moved his organ company from Chambersburg, Pa. to Hagerstown in 1881. The company made over 11,000

instruments and its organs are displayed in every state in the country. The factory produced nine organs a day after its inception in 1872. The company thrived in Hagerstown until 1992.<sup>36</sup> M.P Moller also became one of the leading characters in Hagerstown's car industry. Crawford automobiles was born in a converted bicycle plant with its first prototype emerging in 1902. With backing from capitalists like M.P Moller the company grew exponentially over the next 20 years. By 1922, M.P. Moller became sole owner of the company that produced cars, taxis and trucks. His signature car was the "Dagmar", a luxury car. The taxis made by the Crawford Automobile Company were used throughout the east coast. At its peak the company employed 1,000 people. But, by 1935 the automobile industry in Hagerstown died due to increased competition with large assembly line companies producing cheaper products.<sup>28</sup>



**Illustration 12 M.P. Moller Pipe Organs and Crawford Automobiles (Frye)**

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<sup>36</sup> Frye, Dennis. *Historic Washington County*. San Antonio, Tx: Historical Publishing Network, 2010.

By 1911 the population of Hagerstown grew to 25,000 people. There were 190 daily train trips, 78 factories and 7 banks.<sup>37</sup> The population between 1910 and 1920 grew 70 % from 16,507 to 28,064 people.<sup>38</sup> The Hagerstown Shoe Company aided in the growth of the city during this time. It employed 450 people and churned out 1,450,000 shoes annually.<sup>37</sup> The bulk of these shoes were either mail order or sold in large chain department stores. During World War II, there was a big increase in production to provide footwear for soldier and troops. But, the company closed in 1984 due to globalization and foreign competition.



**Illustration 13 Hagerstown Shoe Company (Frye)**

Another company that grew out of World War II was Fairchild Aircraft. The company began in a shed owned by Kreider Reisner Aircraft Company in 1923. They were bought by Fairchild in 1929 and became a major employer in Hagerstown during World War II creating two production factories and the “Hagerstown System.” The “Hagerstown system” was a series of industries that gained importance and revenue by manufacturing components of the airplanes. The company closed one

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<sup>37</sup> Weaver, Clarence. "Story of Hagerstown, Maryland Illustrated." WHILBR, Western Maryland's Historical Library. June 1, 1911. Accessed October 4, 2014.

<sup>38</sup> "State and County Quickfacts: Hagerstown, MD." US Census Bureau. Accessed October 4, 2014

factory in 1963 and the other in 1984. However, out of this industry came the creation of the Hagerstown Regional Airport.<sup>39</sup>



**Illustration 14 Fairchild Aircraft (Frye)**

### **The Decline and Exit from the City**

By 1960 most of the industry that built Hagerstown had either moved out of the downtown or gone out of business altogether. The introduction of interstates I-70 and I-81 in the late 1960s shifted the mode of transportation of many goods from rail to truck, leading to the relocation of lighter industries from the downtown and near rail tracks to locations accessible to the interstates.<sup>40</sup> Interstate 81 connected Hagerstown to the north/south and Interstate 70 to the east/west. Initially the interstates were supplemental modes of transporting goods but soon replaced most of the railroads.

These new interstate connections ended rail passenger services and condensed the rail infrastructure. The Cumberland Valley and Blue Ridge trolley

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<sup>39</sup> Frye, Dennis. *Historic Washington County*. San Antonio, Tx: HistoricalPublishing Network, 2010.

<sup>40</sup> "MDRoads: I-70." MDRoads: I-70. Accessed November 10, 2014.

ended passenger service in 1952 and 1954 respectively. The B&O, the last train line to hold out, ended passenger service in 1971. Eventually, the freight train lines changed names and condense. Between 1960 and 1980, Hagerstown saw the first population drop in its history from 36,660 to 34,132, decreasing nearly 7%.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> "State and County Quickfacts: Hagerstown, MD." US Census Bureau. Accessed October 4, 2014

# The Growth of the City

ORIGINAL PLAT OF HAGERSTOWN.

S. WALNUT ST.		N. WALNUT ST.		ST.	
	89	63	47	65	66
	90	68	50	64	63
	91	72	71	61	62
	92	73	74	60	59
	93	76	75	57	58
S. JONATHAN ST.		N. JONATHAN ST.		ST.	
	84	77	78	56	55
	85	80	79	53	59
	96	81	86	52	51
	97	84	83	49	50
	99	85	86	48	47
	100	88	87	45	46
S. POTOMAC ST.		N. POTOMAC ST.		ST.	
	107	106	105	33	34
	108	103	104	32	31
	109	102	101	30	29
	110	100	99	28	27
	111	98	97	26	25
	112	96	95	24	23
	113	94	93	22	21
	114	92	91	20	19
	115	90	89	18	17
	116	88	87	16	15
	117	86	85	14	13
	118	84	83	12	11
	119	82	81	10	9
	120	80	79	8	7
	121	78	77	6	5
	122	76	75	4	3
	123	74	73	2	1

Illustration 15 Original City Plan 1762 (Scharf, pg. 308)

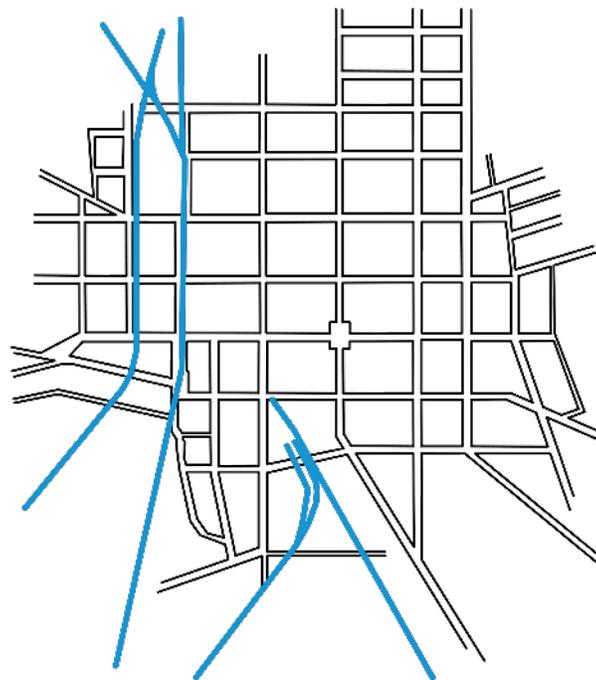
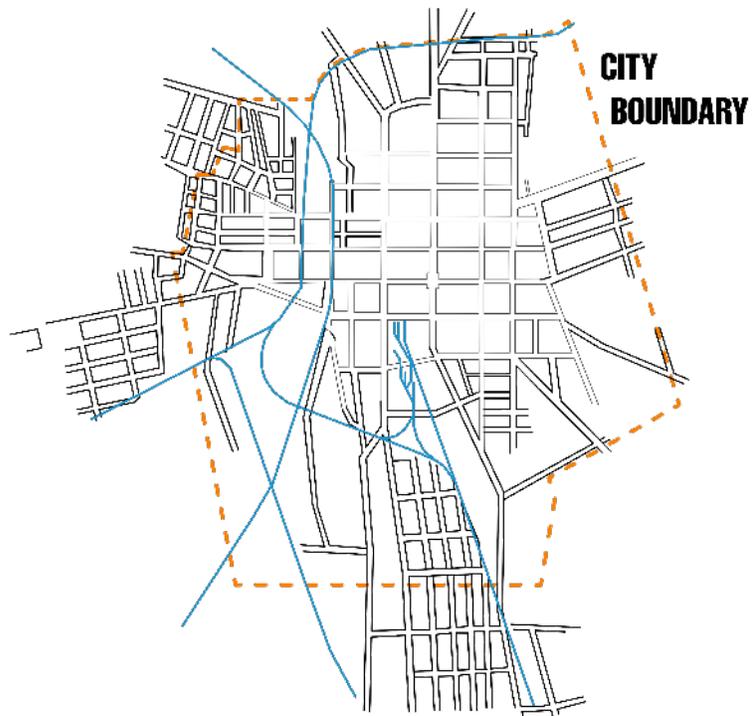
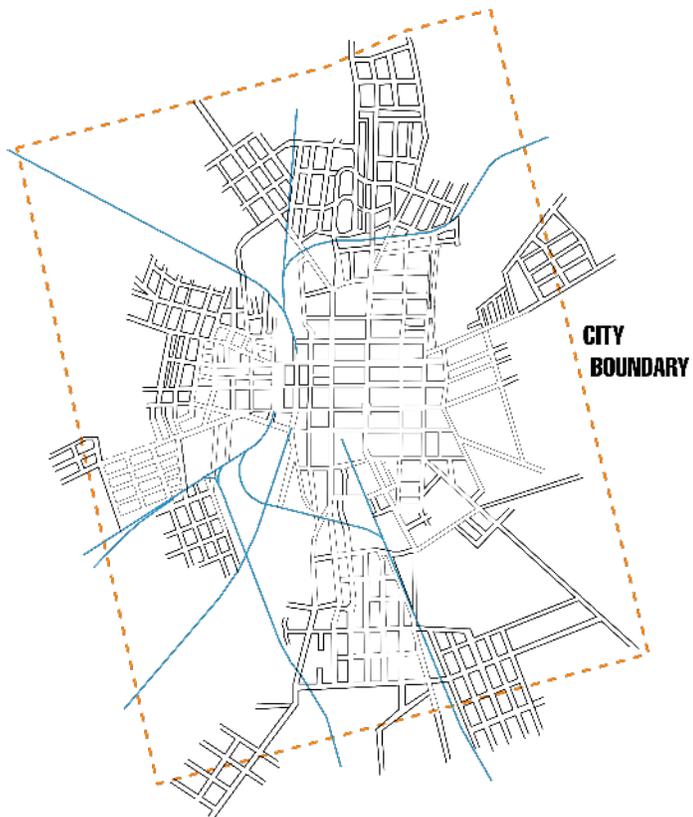


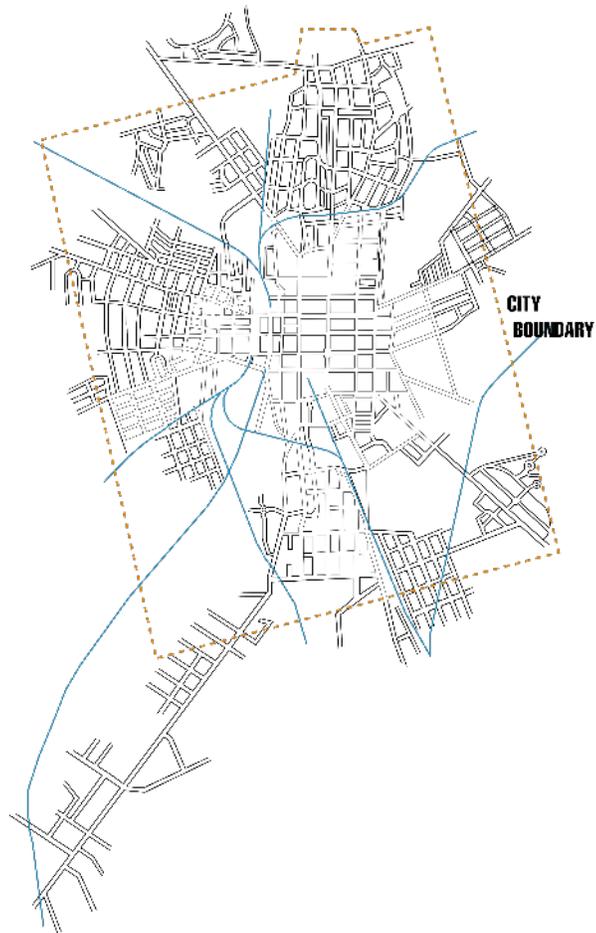
Illustration 16 City Plan in 1887 (by author)



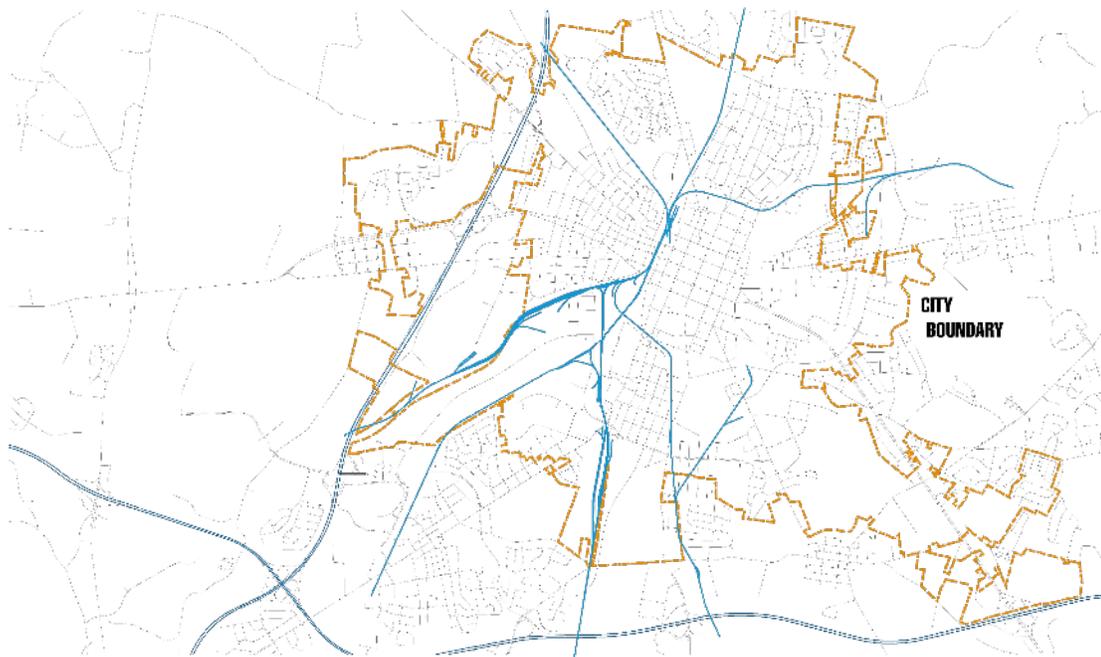
**Illustration 17 City Plan in 1910 (by author)**



**Illustration 18 City Plan in 1918 (by author)**



**Illustration 19 City Plan in 1951 (by author)**



**Illustration 20 City Plan in 2010 (by author)**

## Current Conditions

### **Economically**

Hagerstown is still considered the center for transit and commerce in the Western Maryland region. The city anchors the Maryland-West Virginia Statistical Metropolitan area consisting of 269,140 people.<sup>42</sup> The greater Hagerstown region is considered the fastest-growing metropolitan area in Maryland and one of the fastest in the country. Interstates 81 and 70, the railroad companies CSX, Norfolk Southern, Winchester and Western and Hagerstown Regional Airport form an extensive transportation network for the city. The remaining industry lines the interstates and is focused on building supplies and transportation. The growth of the city since the 1960s has occurred outward, occurring mainly through the expansion of the municipal boundary. Today's population hovers around 40,612 people, a 19% growth since the 1980s.<sup>16</sup>

There are 16,449 households in Hagerstown and 42.6 % are non-family residences. The majority of the overall population is 25 to 64 years old, making up 52.6% of the population. The majority of the remaining population is younger than 18 years of age, around 25.8 %.<sup>43</sup> The 64 years or older population only makes up about 11% of the total population.

The city's downtown shows the problems that Hagerstown has faced since the 1980s. Its population is roughly 10,000 people.<sup>43</sup> The population of downtown

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<sup>42</sup> "State and County Quickfacts: Hagerstown, MD." US Census Bureau. Accessed October 4, 2014

<sup>43</sup> "2010 Census." Hagerstown, MD. Accessed September 15, 2014. [www.hagerstownmd.org/](http://www.hagerstownmd.org/).

Hagerstown is comprised mainly of low-income residences, with middle-income citizens populating the outer neighborhoods. About 24% of the 40,612 person population lives downtown and a majority are renters greater than 75%.<sup>35</sup> Near the downtown, vacancy rates of housing units hover around 15 to 20% with 32% of the mixed-use housing and office buildings partially or completely vacant. The majority of the downtown population is in poverty (30 to 50%), unemployed (13 to 30%) and making less than 30,000 dollars a year. Hagerstown has an overall unemployment rate of 11.3% with 22.1% of the population living in poverty.<sup>44</sup>

The population and the city is struggling. The community is economically homogeneous and unable to sustain local businesses. Name brand and big box stores attract the majority of the population away from the city. A majority of the population living downtown rents leaving no real connection or ties to the area. Buildings in the downtown lack mixed use composition and are either abandoned or unused. The need to create opportunities to diversify and create density within Hagerstown's city center is an essential part of its growth and revitalization.

### **Physically**

Hagerstown's population is growing outward and a majority of the commercial attractions are placed next to the interstate. The city center is the judiciary and economic center of Washington County. The square and main streets are made up of small restaurants, shops and public amenities. Public buildings such as the Washington County Free Library, Barbara Ingram Arts School, Discovery Station,

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<sup>44</sup> "State and County Quickfacts: Hagerstown, MD." US Census Bureau. Accessed October 4, 2014

Maryland Theatre and the University System of Maryland anchor the corners and gateways of the square. The small restaurants/shops occupy the ground floor of the four to eight story mixed-use buildings that line the streets. However, the vacant storefronts and upper units outnumber the small restaurants, shops and residents. The residential streets surrounding the city center are narrow and lined with row type housing. Many of the houses and buildings have degraded and fallen into disrepair. Trees only line the main streets that lead in and out of the city.

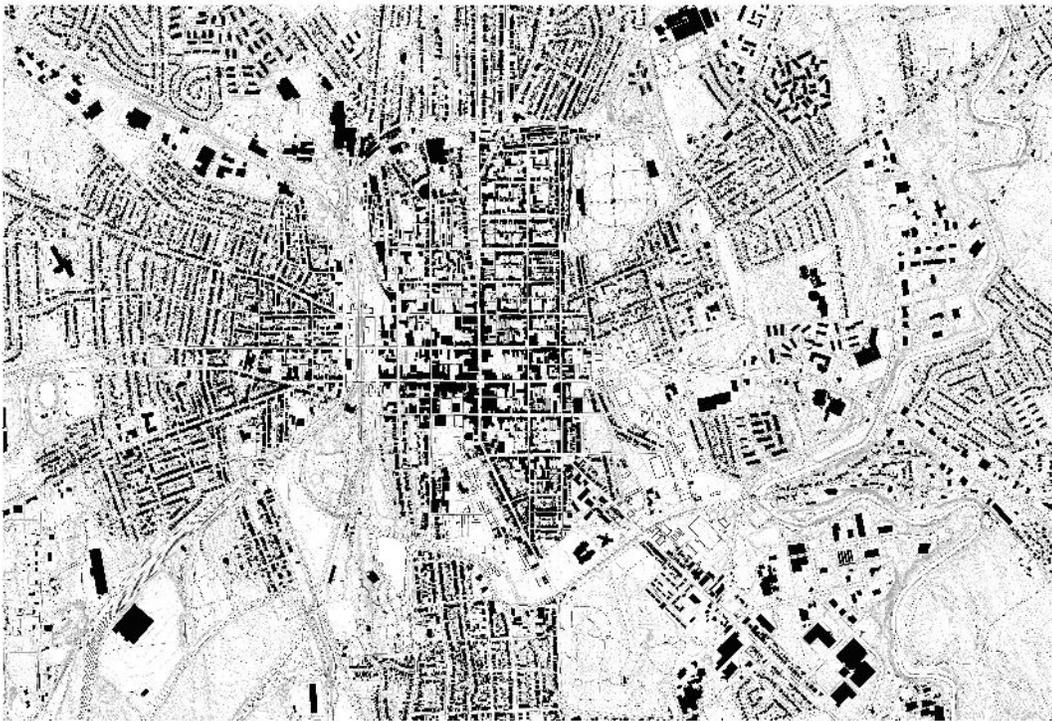
The main entrance to downtown is from interstate I-70 via route 40. It is lined with car dealerships, strip malls, restaurants and eclectic rundown buildings, and is therefore an unattractive entrance into the downtown. Route 40 splits once it hits downtown into two one-way streets forcing the visitor to arrive a block off of the town square. The other main entrance comes off of I-81 via route 40. It brings the visitor in through the west end neighborhoods of Hagerstown and directly into the town center. The other entrances are more residential and have no direct connection to the downtown. These are the roads that many people find themselves on while commuting from the major commercial attractions near the interstates to the center of Hagerstown. The main north/south street that connects to the square is one way and connects the higher income population to the downtown.

Hagerstown lacks clear connections to larger cities, its amenities and attractions to pull people downtown. The gateways to the downtown include a converted historic railroad station at one end and a McDonalds on the other. The urban fabric and visual appeal manifest themselves after this point, but only along the

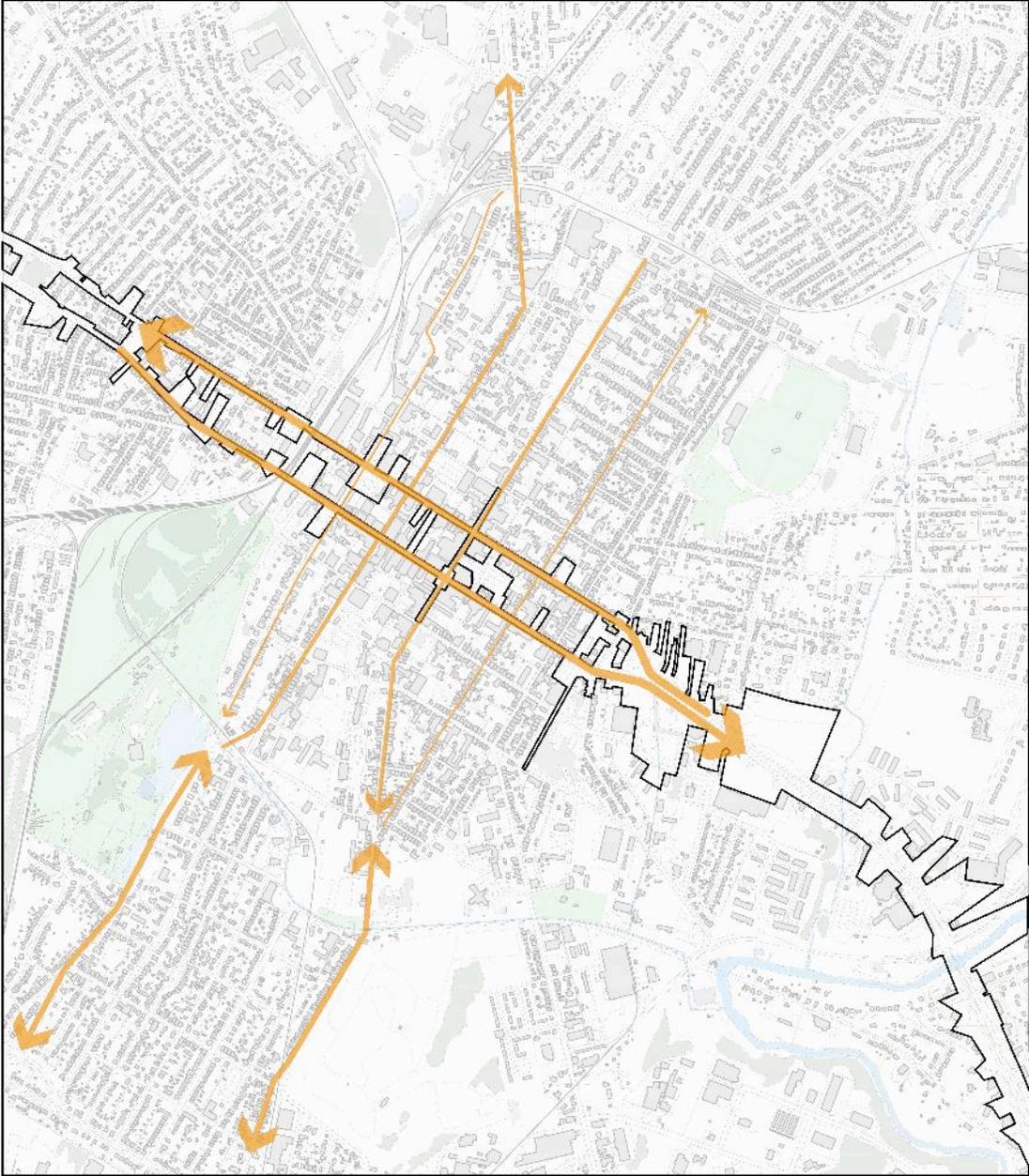
main streets. Street appearances and livability are lacking and must be improved to attract population and create a safer living environment.



**Illustration 21 Left: Washington St. (Main Street) lined with trees and light post (by author)**  
**Middle: Secondary street with small sidewalks and no trees (by author)**  
**Right: Residential street on edge of downtown (by author)**



**Illustration 22 Existing City Figure Ground (by author)**



**Illustration 23 Street Network (by author)**

## Chapter 4: Site Analysis

### Assets and Opportunities

#### **Assets**

Hagerstown is not seizing the advantages of some existing assets. Historical buildings in the downtown are well preserved and represent the unique history of the city providing a good base for revitalization. The downtown is the government and arts center for the whole county. Downtown art and learning attractions include the Maryland Theatre, Maryland Symphony Orchestra, the Discovery Station, the University System of Maryland and the Barbara Ingram's School for the Arts. The city recently built a new library which replaced the older buildings out of date systems and lack of space. The city hall, Washington County District and Circuit courts and law library are a block from the town square.

Hagerstown's connections to industry such as M.P. Moller's pipe organs, automobiles and hotels, Fairchild aircraft, railroads and the shoe company create tourist opportunities. Existing museums such as the roundhouse and aircraft museums, which are located in underutilized areas, could be integrated downtown. Existing industry is another asset for the city. Tourist are not only drawn to the history of old industry, there is a growing market in present day industrial tourism. Hagerstown's assets, such as, Mack Truck (Volvo Powertrain) and Building material companies could produce a big draws of tourism for the city.

The cities existing green infrastructure and connections to larger park systems should also be seen as an asset. The Appalachian Trail lies only ten miles outside of

city and gives the city direct connection to a large national forest. Antietam Battlefield also provides a connection to an extensive park system creating an amenity for the community with numerous bike, walking and hiking trails. It is Hagerstown's most important connection to the Civil War and attracts 205,000 visitors a year. The Potomac River and C&O Canal are nine miles outside the city and are influenced by the Antietam Creek and its watershed. The Antietam Creek informs the layout of various industrial buildings and streets along the south end of downtown Hagerstown. The City Park's lake and day lit stream are part of the Antietam Creek's watershed. City Park and the county fairgrounds create large green spaces for community activities and connections to nature within the city, but lack direct connection to the downtown.

Hagerstown Community College and Meritus Medical Center are 6 miles outside of the downtown. Hagerstown Community College is a small but growing community college with extensive nursing and engineering programs. Meritus Medical center is a newly built hospital connected to an existing medical center. The hospital aids in the nursing program of the community college, which are a half mile apart. The college and medical center do not create very much revenue for the city because of their lack of connections to the downtown. If the city could find a way to capture some of the revenue and human capital of both the medical center and the college it would help with revitalization.

Interstates 81 and 70 encompass the city and an extensive network of railroad lines still exist within it. The interstates encompass the edges of the city and give travelers five connections to downtown Hagerstown. The interstate system also gives

Hagerstown direct connection to Baltimore, MD, Washington D.C., New York City, NY and Winchester, VA; the city is seventy-five miles from both Baltimore and Washington D.C. The rail infrastructure, both used and unused, provides opportunities for the integration of mass transit. The transportation infrastructure creates an extensive network of building supply and transportation industries, as well as large shopping centers and direct connections to larger cities.

### **Opportunities**

The challenge for Hagerstown is to find a way to engross the people and travelers who stop at the shopping centers and amenities along the interstate and bring them downtown. A system is need to link Hagerstown to Antietam Battlefield, the Appalachian Trail, and other amenities. With these attractions already in place and enticing people to stop, Hagerstown has the opportunity to capture some of that revenue by offering attractions that bring those tourists into the downtown.

Entertainment opportunities within the city include a few large, multiday large-scale events and a growing number of smaller events. The events are held in a parking lot near the city square and have recently started to branch out to different places within the downtown. The events are usually music shows such as the Western Maryland BluesFest and Porch Jam attracting 3,000 to 4,000 people a day, with both local and renowned talent showing up to perform.<sup>45</sup> These events bring along with them multiple stages, kid zones, vendors and entertainment for everyone. The town also holds an Augustoberfest, which relates to a historical connection between

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<sup>45</sup> Shok, Hollay. "Downtown House Party Draws Thousands on Third Day of Western Maryland Blues Fest." Herald Mail Media. June 1, 2014. Accessed November 14, 2014.

Hagerstown and its sister city in Wesel, Germany. The event is a two day long festival, attracting about 4,400 people, and generating \$220,000 in revenue.<sup>46</sup>

A fading but still present asset in the community is the minor league baseball team, The Hagerstown Suns. About two years ago, negotiation between the Suns and the city started to fund a new baseball complex or make renovations to the older stadium. The proposed location was downtown in an underutilized parking lot, just a block off of the square. The project was supposed to be a multi-use outdoor sports center used for concerts, community events and baseball.<sup>47</sup> The idea was that this bold move would help to bolster the economy of the downtown and sponsor the attraction of new business. However, competition with Fredericksburg, VA, lack of movement and backing, changes in local government supporters and mixed support from the community led doubts about the success for the project. Consequently, Hagerstown would lose “150 seasonal jobs and about \$700,000 in annual spending.”<sup>34</sup>

The downtown infrastructure is in place and could reap the benefits of revitalization with a great deal of empty space available for new restaurants, retail and residential units. Since the city was built in a compact way, the existing bones of the city will allow for growth within its original buildings. This allows for space within the city to be used to foster revitalization. The existing unused surface parking lots provide opportunities within the downtown core for redevelopment. The historic form

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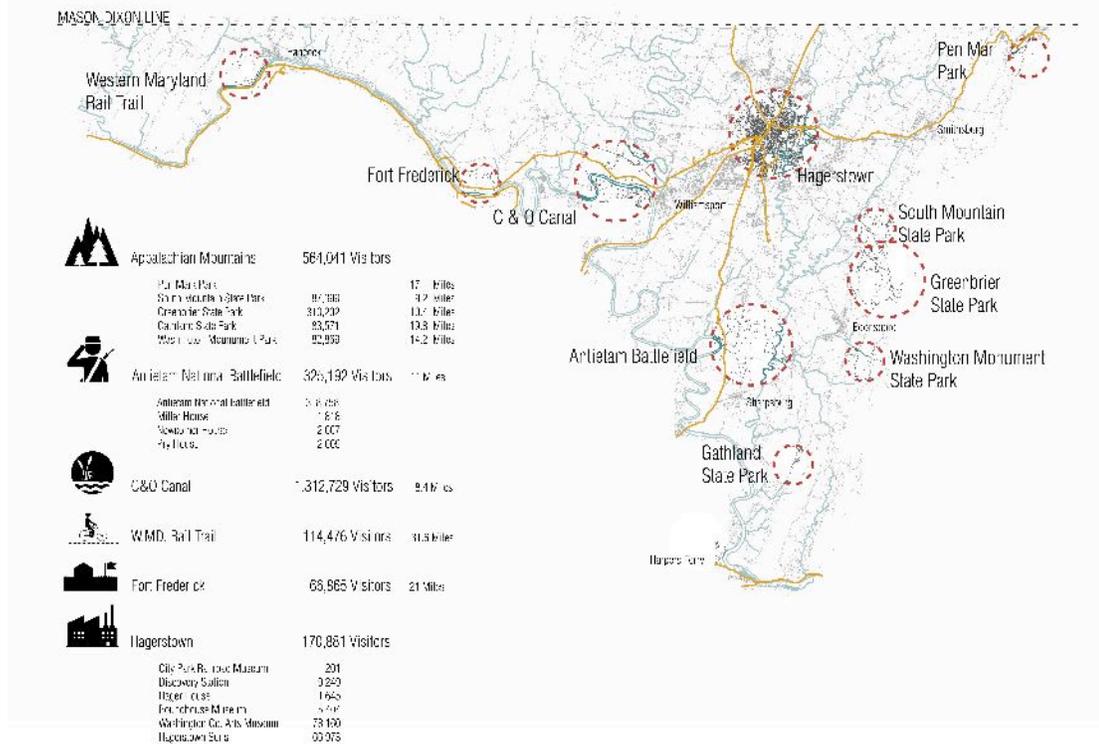
<sup>46</sup> Lovelace, C.J. "Augustoberfest in Hagerstown Drew More than 4,400 People, a Record." Herald Mail Media. October 22, 2013. Accessed November 14, 2014.

<sup>47</sup> "Suns Setting in the West?" Baltimoresun.com. Accessed December 7, 2014.  
<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/opinion/editorial/bs-ed-hagerstown-20130717-story.html>.

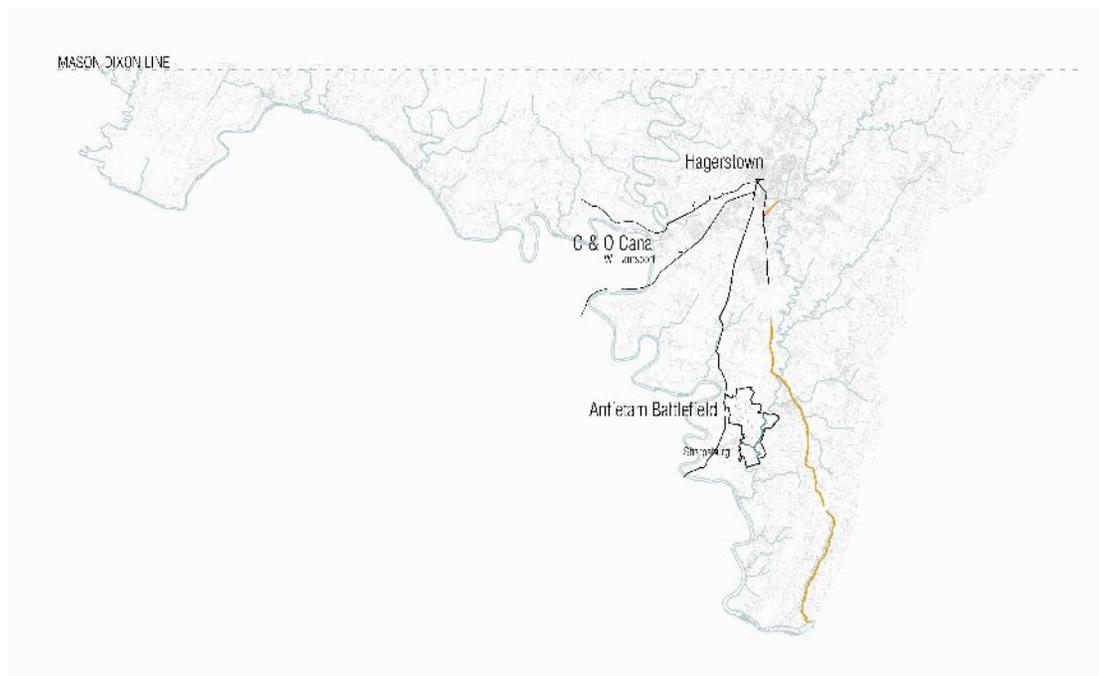
of the city, in culmination with the existing infrastructure are huge assets that could provide the foundation for revitalization.



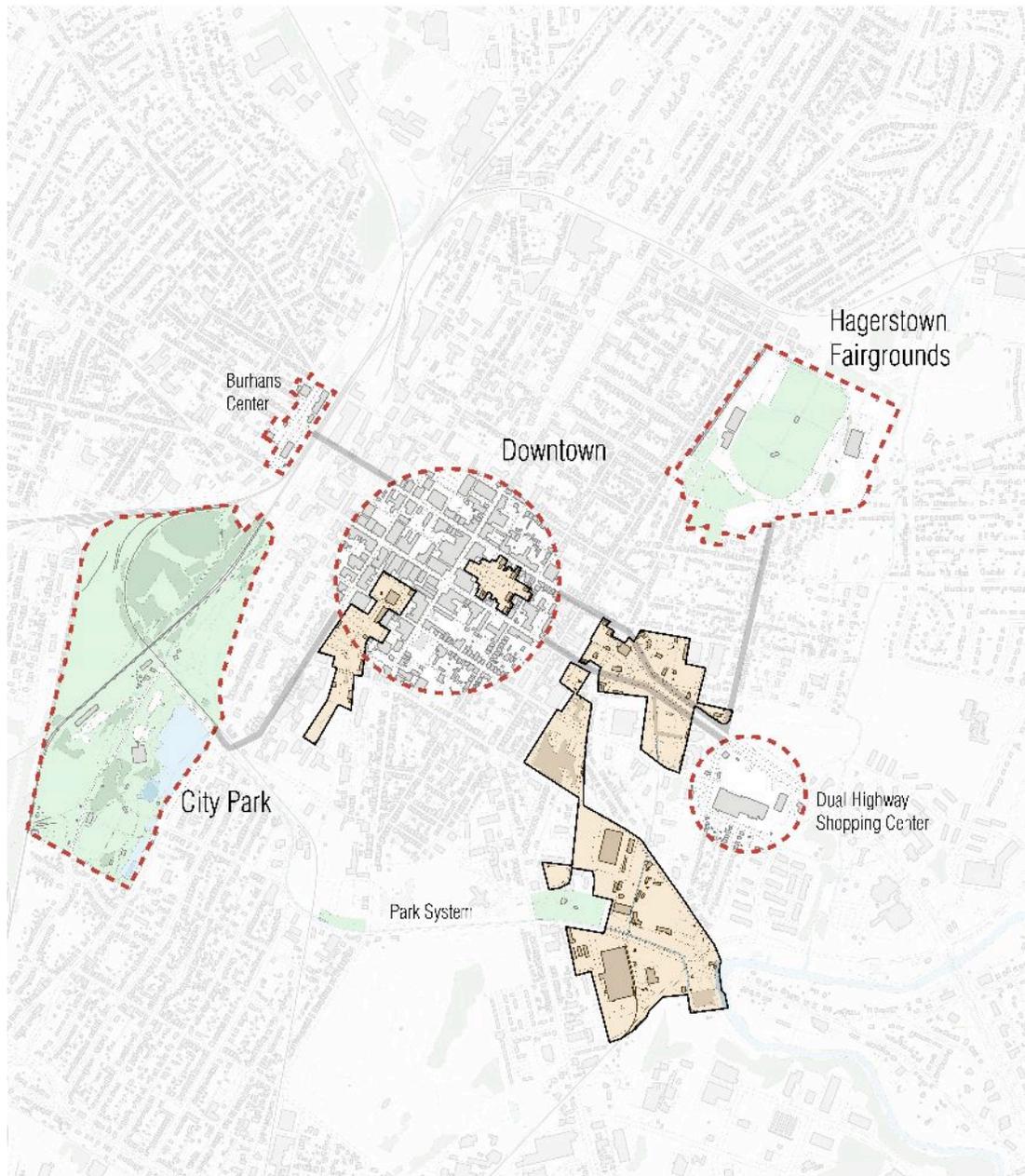
**Illustration 24 Places Diagram of Hagerstown (by author)**



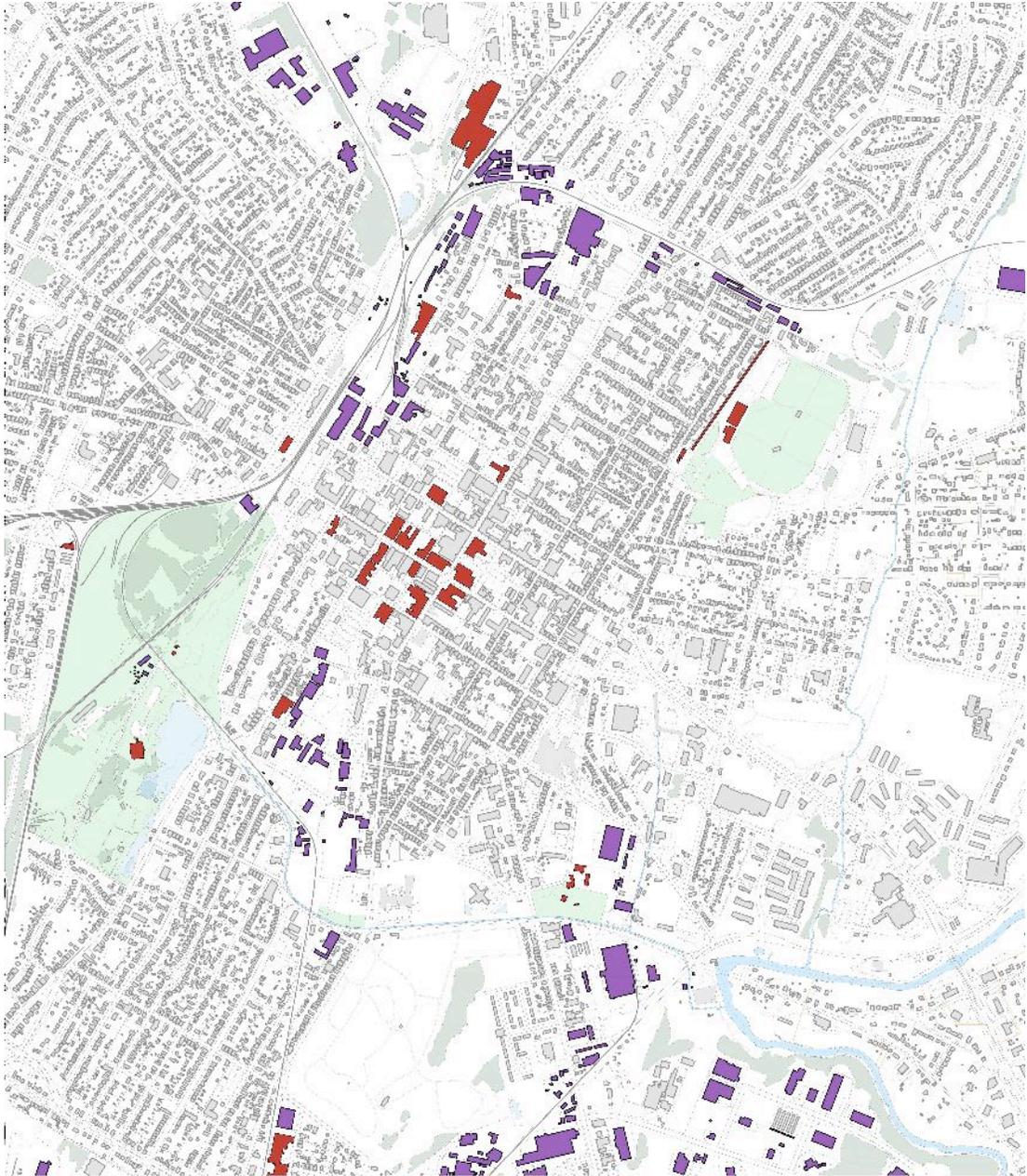
**Illustration 25 Washington County Attractions (by author)**



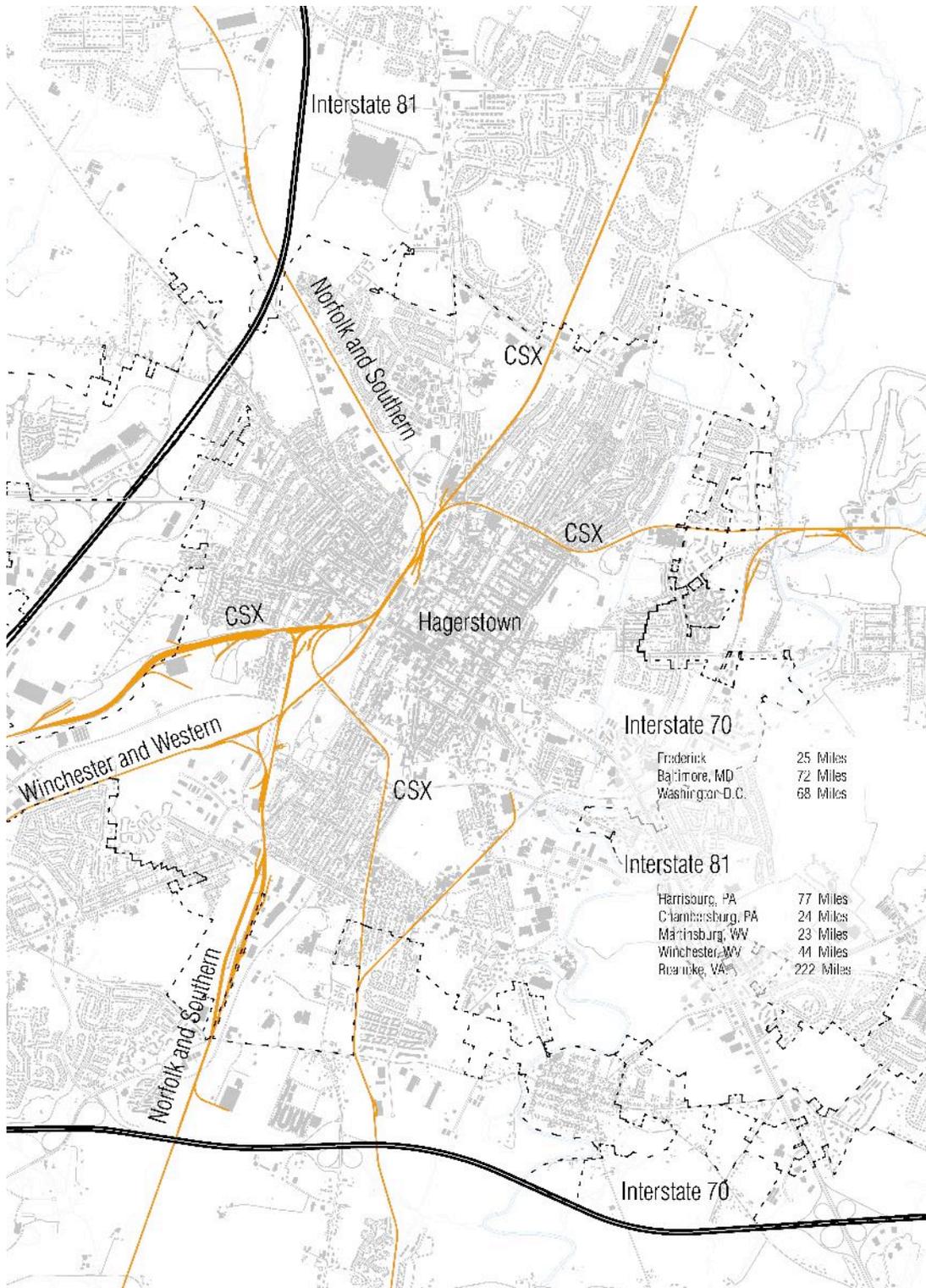
**Illustration 26 Existing Rail Lines and State owned Right-of-Way Connecting to Marc Train**



**Illustration 27 Downtown Places Diagram showing the possible intervention sites (by author)**



**Illustration 28 Historical (red) and Industrial (purple) within the downtown (by author)**



**Illustration 29 Existing Interstate and Railroad Connections for the City (by author)**



**Illustration 30 Character of Downtown (by author)**



**Illustration 31 Historical Downtown Industrial Buildings (by author)**



**Illustration 32 City Park (right) and Hagerstown Fairgrounds (left) (by author)**

## Missed Opportunities and Liabilities

### **Missed Opportunities**

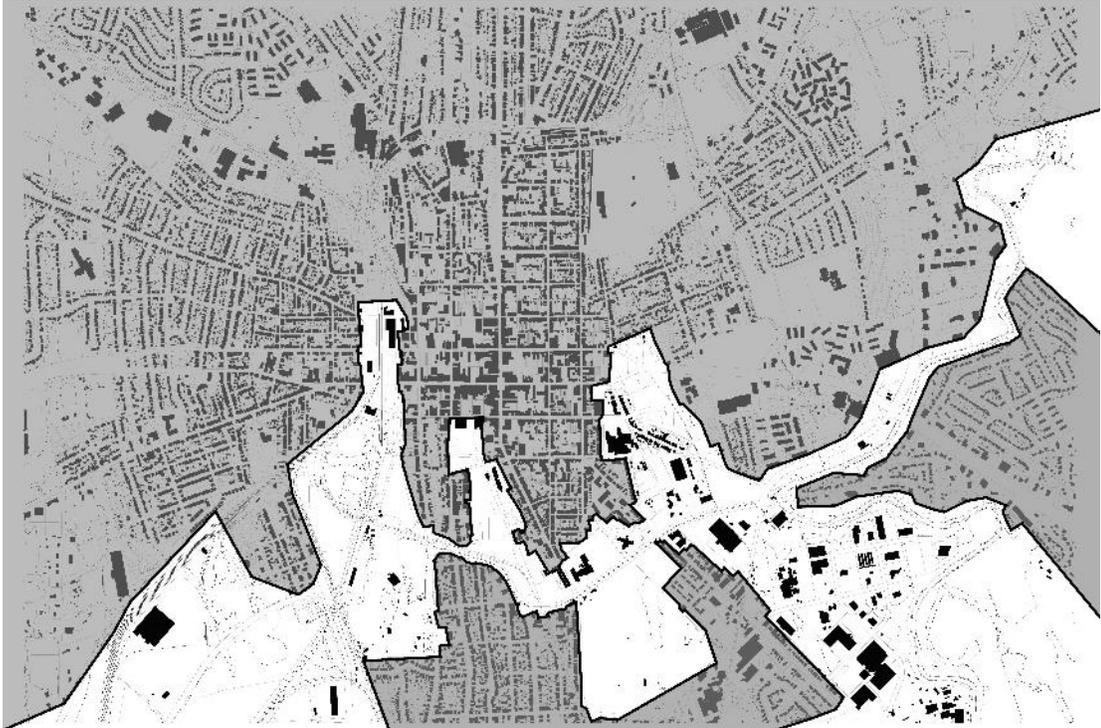
In the past, Hagerstown attempted to sponsor revitalization and growth throughout the city but has largely faltered on many opportunities. One missed opportunity was the creation of a network of interlocking parks throughout the city. The idea was to connect the city park along the day-lit stream running along the east edge of downtown Hagerstown. The project was to connect the historical City Park with new smaller parks reusing brownfield sites, and small historical parks to create a bike and greenway network. The project has yet to be realized as the first park remains uncompleted although its inception was about five years ago. The bike trail has only been established in small stretches between some parks is highly disconnected between segments. The greenway project fails to take full advantage of the Antietam Creek, its connection to Antietam Battlefield or the day lit stream connection toward the inner city. This greenway project lacks the support and execution to help jump start revitalization.

The relocation of the hospital was another missed opportunity by Hagerstown. Allowing the hospital to move from its prominent location in town to the outskirts the city was a failed planning opportunity. If the city had found a way to integrate the new facility within the downtown it would have brought the human capital of the hospitals workers and staff to the downtown. The project would have also kept revenue garnered from the hospital employees within reach of the downtown.

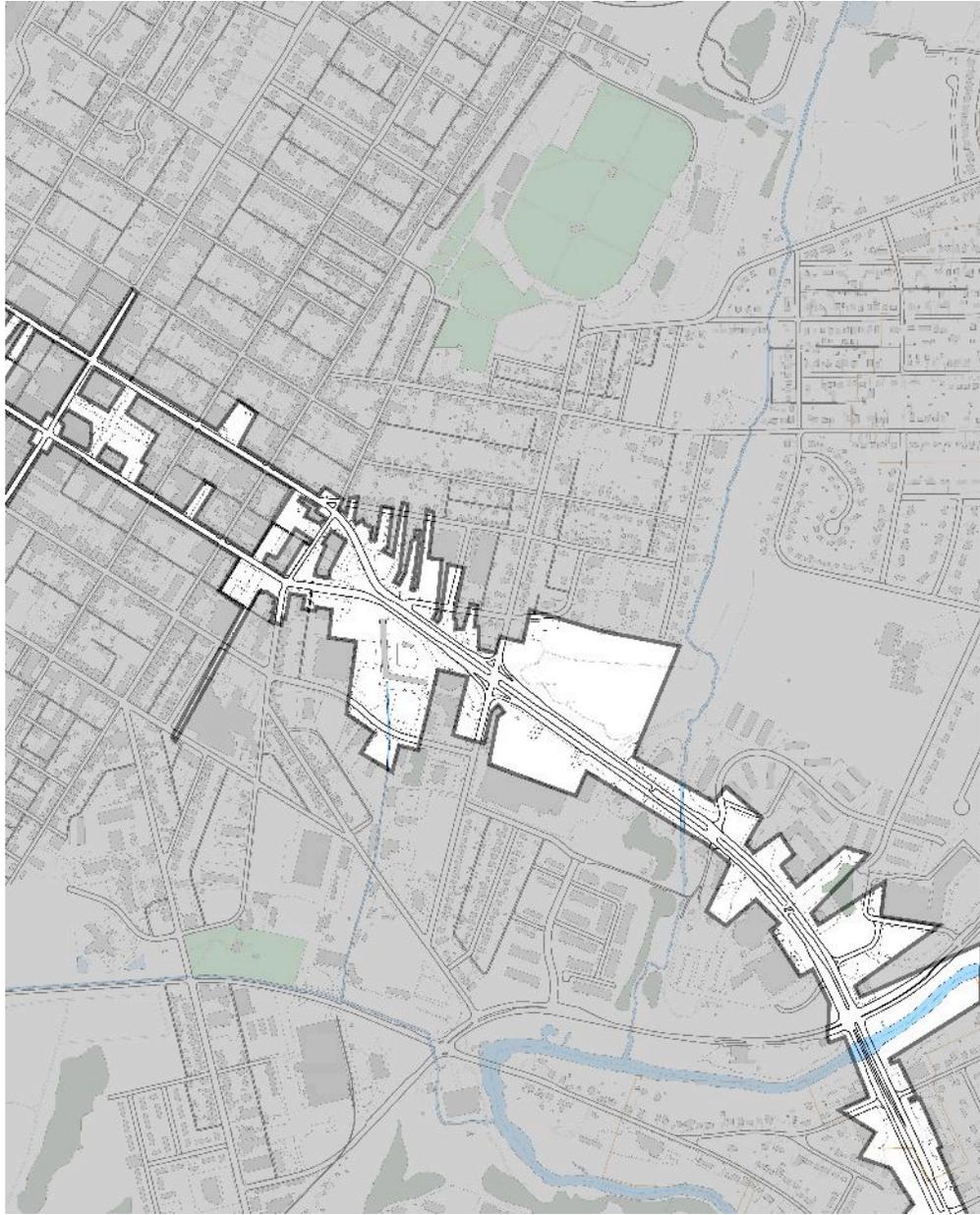
## **Liabilities**

The gateway or entrance to a city is like the front of a book; the first impression is what draws the person in or pushes them away. Hagerstown's entries into the city are lacking a sense of place and a start to the city. There is no clear sense of a city beginning or ceremonial entry into the city. The city fabric reaches the edge of the downtown and falls apart: on the east end it becomes a series of gas stations, liquor stores and fast food restaurants while on the other end there is an abrupt ending of the residential fabric which unfolds into to a large open space.

The implementation of a one-way traffic system in the downtown complicates circulation and restricts the extent to which people passing in cars are exposed to the historical face of the city. The minor streets lack the overall appeal of the main streets, as they do not have trees, walkable dimensions, or enhanced building fabric.



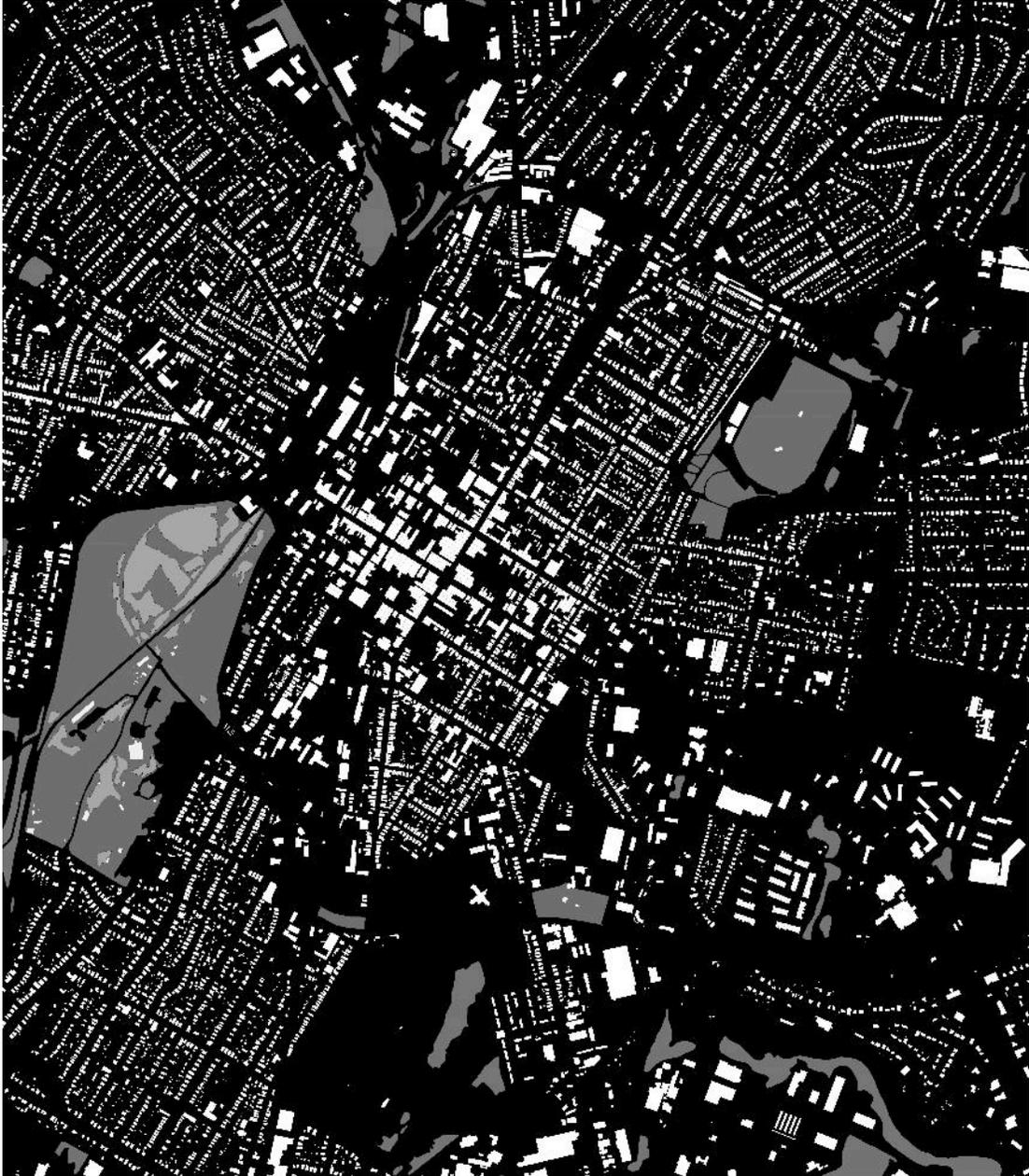
**Illustration 33 Southern Edge of the City Degradation (by author)**



**Illustration 34 Degradation of City Fabric at East Entrance to City (by author)**



**Illustration 35 Entrances: East (top), West (middle), South (End) (by author edited from google)**



**Illustration 36 Reverse Figure ground (by author) Shows the voids in the downtown fabric**



**Illustration 37 Existing Fragmented Park System**

### **What the People Want**

“The best way to plan for downtown is to see how people use it today; to look for its strengths and to exploit and reinforce them. There is no logic that can be superimposed on the city; people make it, and it is to them, not buildings, that we must fit our plans.”<sup>48</sup>

Hagerstown has now initiated a program called Engage Hagerstown which has led to community involvement growth and an understanding of ‘What the People Want.’ The community and government laid out elements that would engage and attract them to the downtown. A majority of the community wants more shops and businesses downtown, which only happens when revitalization occurs. The community wants cleaner, more beautiful streets and better walk-ability of the downtown area. Green spaces should connect the various parks of the city and provide places to play and hold community activities. They want a more livable and safe city. A major reason people do not interact with the city center is due to an increase in violence surrounding the downtown community. Event spaces are main concerns for the public. They want better venues that offer flexibility for a variety of events. Creation of a convention center or indoor event space that would attract the business and community events into the center city is also important. Another concern is how the city can connect to larger cities, where portions of the population tend to work. The city wants to introduce the Marc Train and strengthen the

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<sup>48</sup> Tseng, Nin-Hai. "Downtown Is for People (Fortune Classic, 1958)." *Fortune*. September 18, 2011. Accessed December 1, 2014. <http://fortune.com/2011/09/18/downtown-is-for-people-fortune-classic-1958/>.

connections to larger cities.

## Chapter 5: Approaches

### *Generators of Urban Form*

How can Hagerstown's downtown be revitalized? How can Hagerstown better connect to its surrounding downtown amenities and connections? First there has to be an expanded understanding of the existing urban form and green infrastructure of the city. Existing city fabric is fragmented by its industrial past and growth through annexation. The degradation of the city edge and the shifting of the grid coincide with the introduction of the railroad and industry into the downtown. The buildings that form the degraded edge are derelict and underutilized industrial buildings. The southern end of Hagerstown also lacks connection across both the existing railroad lines and canal, while the northern edge extends the grid over the railroad tracks. Green infrastructure is fragmented throughout the city lacking both connections with the downtown and with each other. Antietam creek and the existing canals seem like forgotten but potential amenities and barriers between the downtown and other districts.

## Grid and Block



**Illustration 38 Block and Grid Studies (by author) Illustrates how the existing blocks can start to inform the shape of the new blocks**

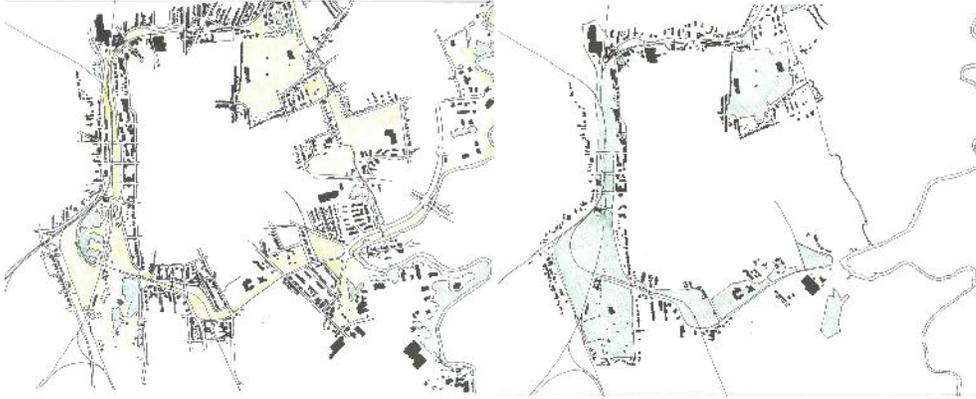


**Illustration 39 Road and Grid Extension (by author) Illustrates how the grid can extend south and start to stitch the existing urban fabric.**

There needs to be a stitching of the urban fabric in a way that corresponds to each fragmented piece but still connects to the historical grid and works within the gestalt. The street network should respect the block sizes of the historical grid, while accounting for walkability and connection, creating a new grid that mediates and compliments the fragmented pieces. New streets should become connective tissue between the downtown and other districts, green infrastructure, and major axis that allow people to interact within the city.

### **Landscape**

Connection between and with the natural amenities of the city can create a stronger pedestrian connection to amenities and nature. Allowing the parks and green infrastructure to influence and interact with the urban fabric will help soften the southern edge of the city and reconcile spaces around rail lines and canals. The green infrastructure can alleviate flooding, introduce sustainable storm water management and increase the health of both the city and Antietam creek. The inner greenway system can also connect or create parks systems that run throughout the extents of the city or the county.



**Illustration 40 Greenway Conception/Schemes (by author) Illustrates how the “Hub” might link together and the buildings that line the green space**



**Illustration 41 Greenway Conception/Schemes (by author) Eastern end of the “Hub”**



**Illustration 42 Greenway Stitching (by author) Illustrates how the old parks become on united park system. Dark green is the addition, light green is the existing**

### Seizing, Placement and Creation of Attractions

#### **Seizing of Attractions**

Hagerstown's attractions need to be pulled toward the downtown to create better connection with the city. Stitching the park system and green infrastructure creates an amenity that encircles Hagerstown, which links its existing amenities together. Allowing this extensive park system to influence the grid and extend from the outer ring into the downtown creates greater access to green space within the city. The incorporation of the green space with the downtown also creates a greater linkage between the City Park, Antietam Creek, fairgrounds and newer attractions that could be added. Also, making connections to countywide aspects such as the Marc train and Antietam Battlefield can create a greater influx of tourists and commuter oriented residents. Allowing these existing attractions to become a part of the green network





**Illustration 44 Park Extensions (by author) Conceptual ideas of how to form the shape of Mill Run Park and the Urban fabric surrounding it**

### **Placement of Attractions**

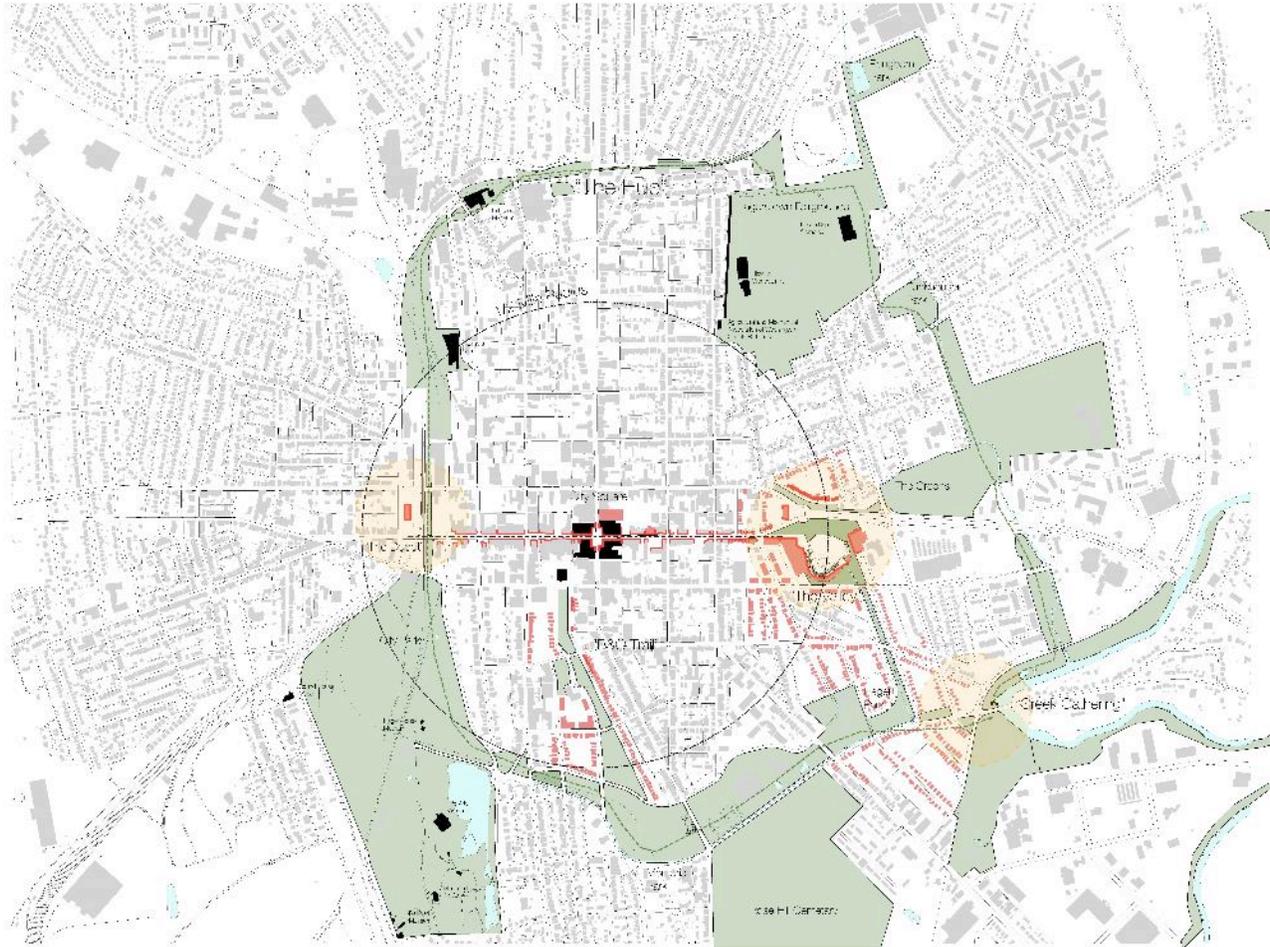
Placement of the new park system and attractions needs to create a network that enhances connections to the downtown and creates improved pedestrian movement throughout the city. The creation of a string of attractions that have axial relationships with the central town square will increase the movement through the along Washington Street. Separation of transportation attractions from other attractions encourages stronger pedestrian movement throughout the downtown. Taking advantage of a series of nodes represented by different attractions and placing them throughout the downtown encourages movement throughout the entire city and particularly the downtown.



**Illustration 43 Marc Train Addition (by author) Shows extension of Marc train into downtown and the reuse of the historical train station**

### **Creation of Attractions**

Finally, the creation of new attractions in underutilized parts of the city allows for revitalization and investments within these sectors. New attractions should be mixed use or be able to perform multiple functions to respond to the scale and building type of a small city. Understanding what the community wants and needs as well as how to attract future population and tourism will fuel the creation of new attractions. Historical ideals and urban typologies will also direct the introduction of new amenities. The implementation of a new node based around the Marc Train can create greater connection to Washington D.C. and attract a commuting population while connecting Hagerstown’s commuter rail past. Introducing a new mixed use stadium complex will save an important amenity, introduce a series of amenities that are lacking in the downtown and draw on the city’s historical baseball past.



**Illustration 44 Overall Places Diagram (by author) Shows the concept of Axial relationship across the downtown between the Marc and stadium. Demonstrates how the “Hub” forms an extensive park network around the downtown.**

## Chapter 6: Design

### The “HUB”

#### **Introduction**



**Illustration 45 The “Hub” Aerial (by author)**

The proposed development consists of adding 40 acres of green space that generates 140 acres of investment within the existing urban fabric of downtown Hagerstown, MD. The master plan introduces a greenway system that stitches the existing park system together and extends it inward into the city, bringing amenities closer to the center of downtown. The design depends on the ability of the green space to connect various new and existing amenities within the downtown. New

amenities address both historical relevancies and present day problems facing the city. The Marc Train and Municipal Park anchor the east and west ends of the city respectively. This creates tension between the two amenities sponsoring movement between along the main commercial street thus instigating revitalization/development particularly in that section of the city. More broadly the project creates 485 single family dwelling units, 15 multi-family/mixed use dwelling units, adaptively re-uses an historical train station, and creates a multi-use complex consisting of a new stadium, movie theater, recreation center, shops, a restaurant and apartments.

### **Connection City**

Hagerstown becomes a connection city by furthering its connection to Washington D.C. and Baltimore with the extension of the Marc train into the downtown. Using the existing right-of-way owned by the state of Maryland, the Marc Train is brought from the south into the greenway and stops just three or four blocks from the downtown. Adaptively reusing the existing historical train station will allow, not only for the building to return to its historical use, but create an axial relationship between the train station, downtown and Moeller Park. Strengthening the connections between Hagerstown and the large cities of Maryland will attract a commuting population.

The existing rail right-of-way can also give Hagerstown a direct connection to over 300,000 visitors a year. The Antietam battlefield is 11 miles outside of Hagerstown and is directly connected to the right-of-way. Creating a trolley system that ran along the Marc line throughout the day or mainly on weekends could entice

part of the tourist population and attract them into Hagerstown. Connecting to this regional amenity could increase pedestrian traffic within the city.

The new park system helps establish a connection to the larger natural environment. The greenway creates connection with amenities in Hagerstown but also establishes a connection to a greater greenway network that can develop around Antietam Creek. The “Hub” takes advantage of Antietam Creek and finally establishes it as an amenity to the city and makes another direct connection to Antietam Battlefield.

### **Attraction City**



**Illustration 46 Master Plan (by author)**

Each element used to connect Hagerstown on the regional scale also adds to Hagerstown’s attractions. The introduction of the new greenway and Marc train, while strengthening connections to Antietam, add to the attraction of Hagerstown.

The master plan for Hagerstown includes many amenities for all ages and types of people. The greenway intertwines green infrastructure and parks with the downtown. There are a variety of playing fields and biking trails that link the various amenities of the town. Introduction of the recreation center, skate-park, and baseball stadium appeals to kids, sports fans, and families.

### **Investment City**

The “Hub” is also a great investment for the city’s future. The introduction of the park creates a lot of investment area facing onto these parks. The project overhauls a lot of underutilized industrial buildings and parking lots creating large areas for more residential population/density. The tension created between the Marc Train, historical center and Moller Park mixed use stadium creates an opportunity to expand investment in mixed use residential along Washington Street.

## Olmstedian Landscape



**Illustration 47 Existing Park System (by author)**

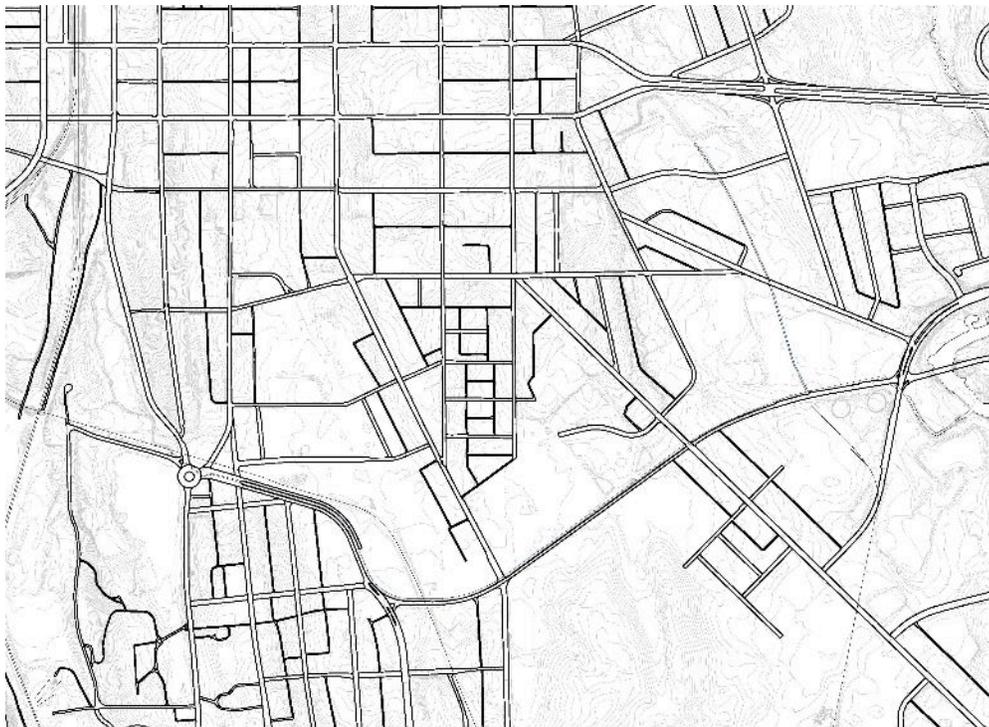


**Illustration 48 New Park System (by author)**

The greenway is created by the connection of the existing parks, the natural and built forms/elements of the city, and the railroads historical and existing influence. The “Hub” park system creates an emerald necklace that encompasses the

city; it connects various parks, cultural centers, the transportation center and entertainment centers. The landscape both influences and reacts to the existing grid of the city. The linear parks that extend inward are positioned in the valleys between the existing ridges of the city and thus also becomes a storm water management elements. In addition, the overall park system reduces impervious area and becomes a storm water catchment for this highly impervious urban environment. The park system not only benefits the community but can eliminate the pollutants that are entering the Antietam Creek. It introduces over 500 new trees into the urban landscape and starts to act as a buffer for the canal that runs to the south of the city. The green way makes the city cleaner as well as beautifies it.

### **New Urbanism**



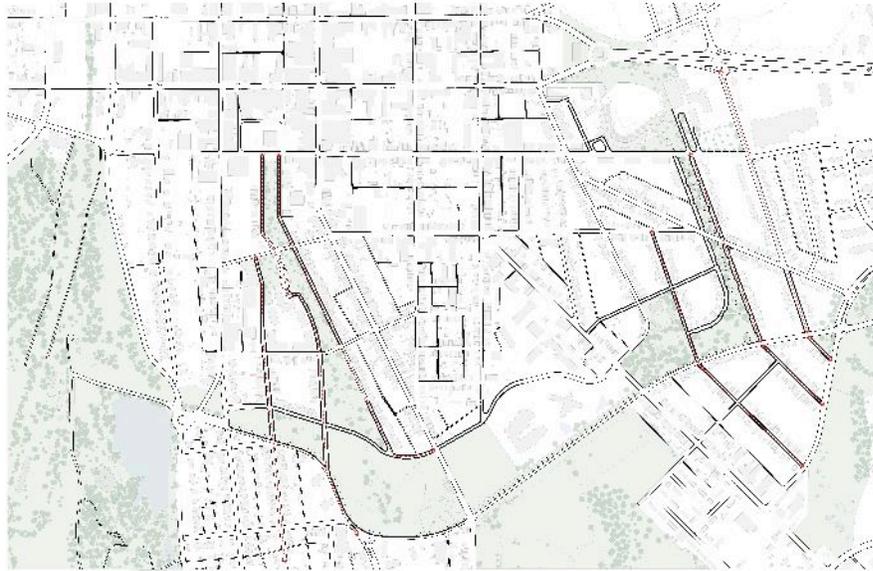
**Illustration 49 Existing Street Grid (by author)**



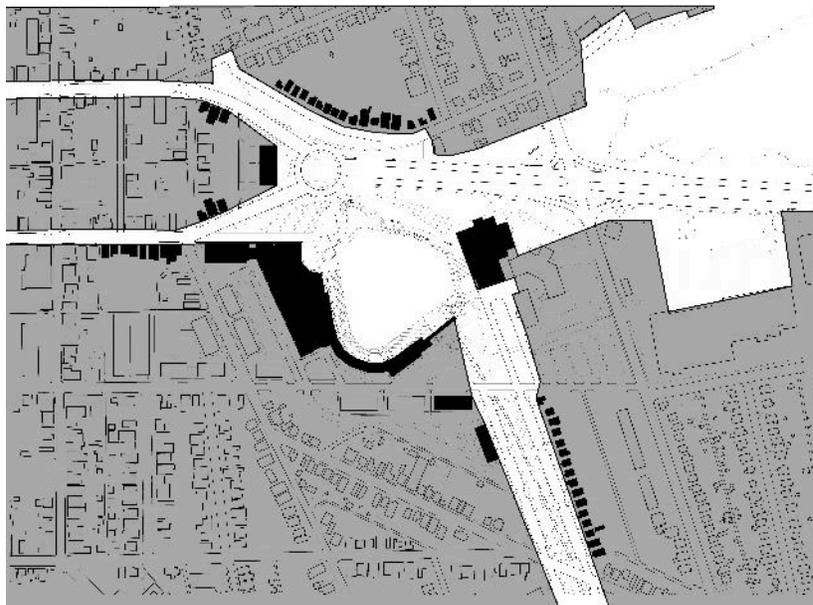
**Illustration 50 New Street Grid (by author)**

The proposed streets and blocks look at building the city inward instead of through annexation of exterior land. The project introduces street grids and blocks that respond to and respect the existing urban fabric. The new street grid continues the existing grid across the proposed Marc line and canal to better connect South Hagerstown to Downtown. The proposed streets allow for better pedestrian and vehicular connection to the greenway and downtown. Newly established streets stitch together the vacant spaces of the downtown creating a softer southern edge and a more unified city. The historical downtown grid, existing fragment communities and proposed greenway are all generators in the new form of the urban fabric.

New block sizes respond to the existing grid and fragment pieces by creating blocks that respond to and stitch the various blocks sizes together. The project creates smaller, but uniform blocks that promote good walk-ability and density.



**Illustration 51 Increased Street Connection (by author)**



**Illustration 52 East Entry Regeneration (by author)**

## Moller Park

### **Introduction**



**Illustration 53 Aerial Moller Park (by author)**

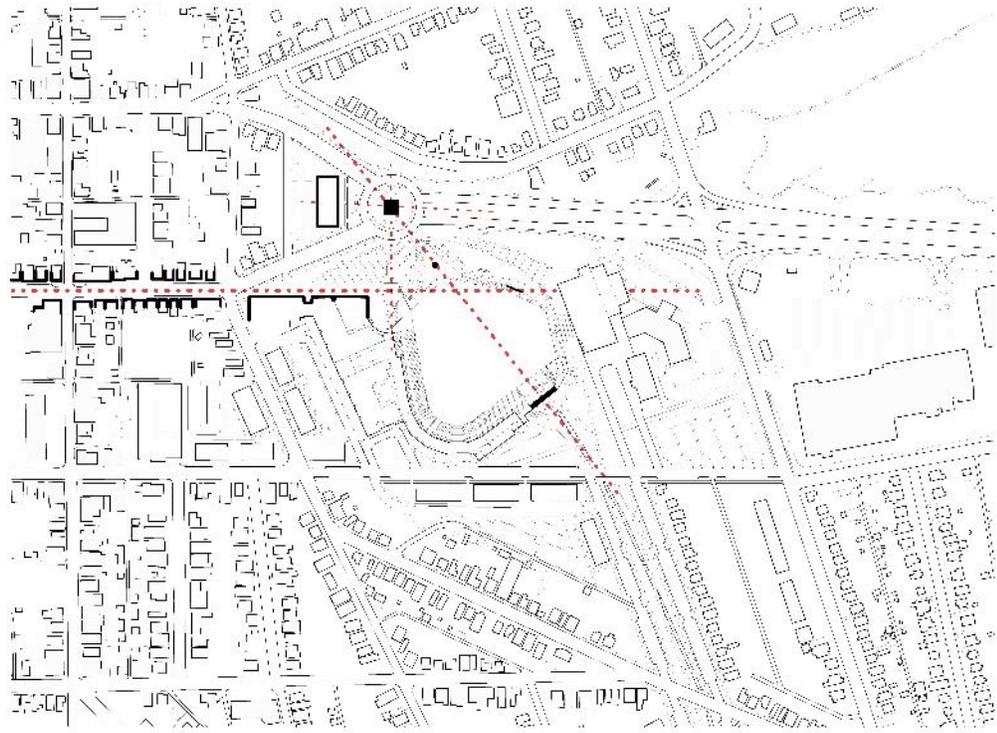
Moller Park becomes the defining element at the east end of the city. It creates a more celebrated entrance that takes its name from the one of the most influential contributors to industrial history in Hagerstown, M.P. Moller. It reshapes the east entry to create a more ceremonial entrance that displays Hagerstown's past and redefines its future. The overall site plan reshapes 60 acres, with 80% currently impervious, and clears out 42 buildings; with a lot of the susceptible buildings being fast food restaurants, liquor stores, car dealerships and underutilized/degrading industrial buildings. The main concept is to bring multiple uses together to create a node of activity for this part of the city. The addition of a mixed-use stadium brings multiple connected attractions to the area to sponsor development and investment

within the site. Moller Park creates an entertainment node that reinvigorates a derelict part of the city.

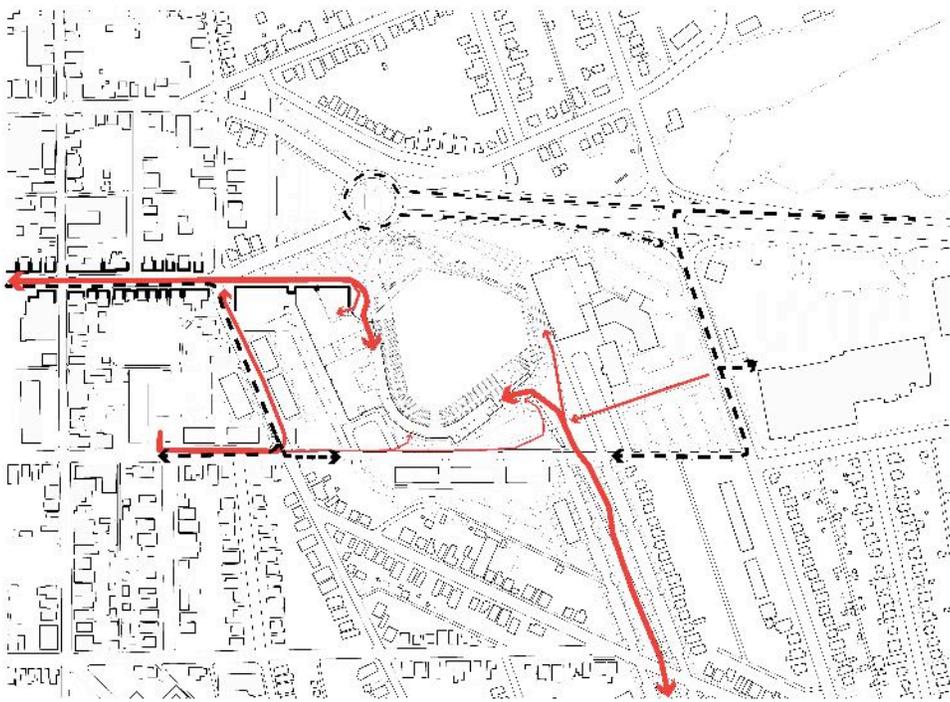
### **Connections**

Moller Park has an axial relationship with the downtown and terminates the Mill Run linear park. The axial relationship formed with Washington Street allows for mixed-use commercial and residential to line the new pedestrian walkway. The event plaza that ends the pedestrian walkway from Washington Street is the culmination point between the main street axis, stadium/movie theater entry and visual connection to a new monument and recreation center. Municipal Stadium becomes the framing element for the new monument from the Mill Run linear park.

The stadium directly connects to the various ways people will arrive. The stadium opens up to the Dual Highway, the city's main entrance from Interstate 70, capturing the passing vehicular traffic. It is axially connected with the Marc Train to capture the people arriving by mass transit and the pedestrians within the city square. Finally, its location close to the downtown and along the greenway will capture the pedestrians using the park and living within the city.



**Illustration 54 Axial Relationships (by author)**



**Illustration 55 Site Circulation (by author)**



**Illustration 56 View from Mill Run Park (by author)**



**Illustration 57 Main Entrance for Stadium and Movie Theater (by author)**

## Attractions, Investment, New Urbanism



**Illustration 58 Moller Park Plan (by author)**

The creation and retention of attractions was important in the overall scheme for Moller Park. Retention of Municipal stadium and its historical identity to the town was the driving force behind the park. The creation of a new 5,700 seat stadium in a location that displays Hagerstown's baseball past, as well as creating a new entertainment venue which will help generate interest and revenue. It will also save a threatened amenity for the city. The addition of an 8 theater movie theater, recreation center and shops will populate the area during off seasons and other times. The recreation center will benefit and compliment the hotel and park system, while promoting a healthier Hagerstown lifestyle. The new shops and their axial location with the town square will sponsor commercial growth along Washington Street.

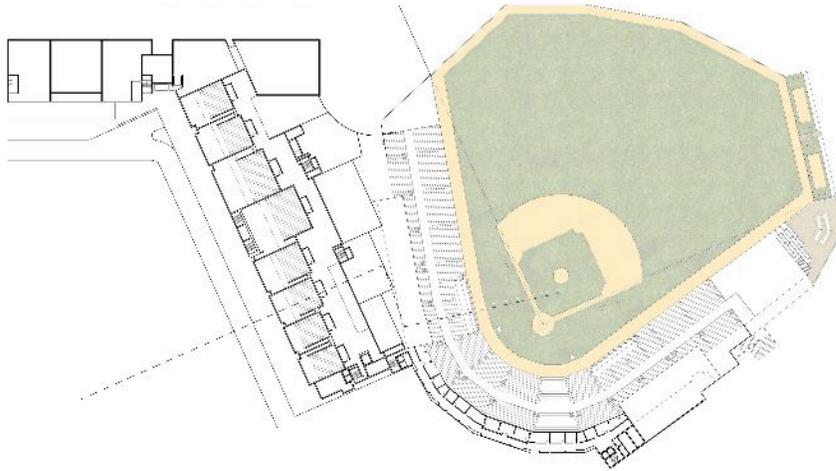
Municipal stadium is the most versatile and multifunctional attraction within the park. The stadium should be viewed as more than just a baseball park. It can hold

events such as concerts, outdoor movie nights, bmx/motocross events, high school rivalry games, and a variety of other events to make the space more versatile during the off seasons and nights. The stadium shares concessions with the movie theater creating the ability to hold joint events between the two different programs. Also, various parts of the park such as the Foul Line, which is the deck that overlooks left field, is directly connected to the entry plaza and can be used for other events that happen within that space. It also ties into Hagerstown's historical baseball past by displaying a statue of Willie Mays, who played his first major league baseball game in the old Municipal Stadium. The Sun Deck can also be rented out for parties and events when games are not being played. Also, the placement of the team store and hall of fame along the south of the stadium will help create some movement on that side when a game is not being played. The whole stadium complex is a multidimensional element that combines shops, restaurants, entertainment and living which represents the character of a small town.

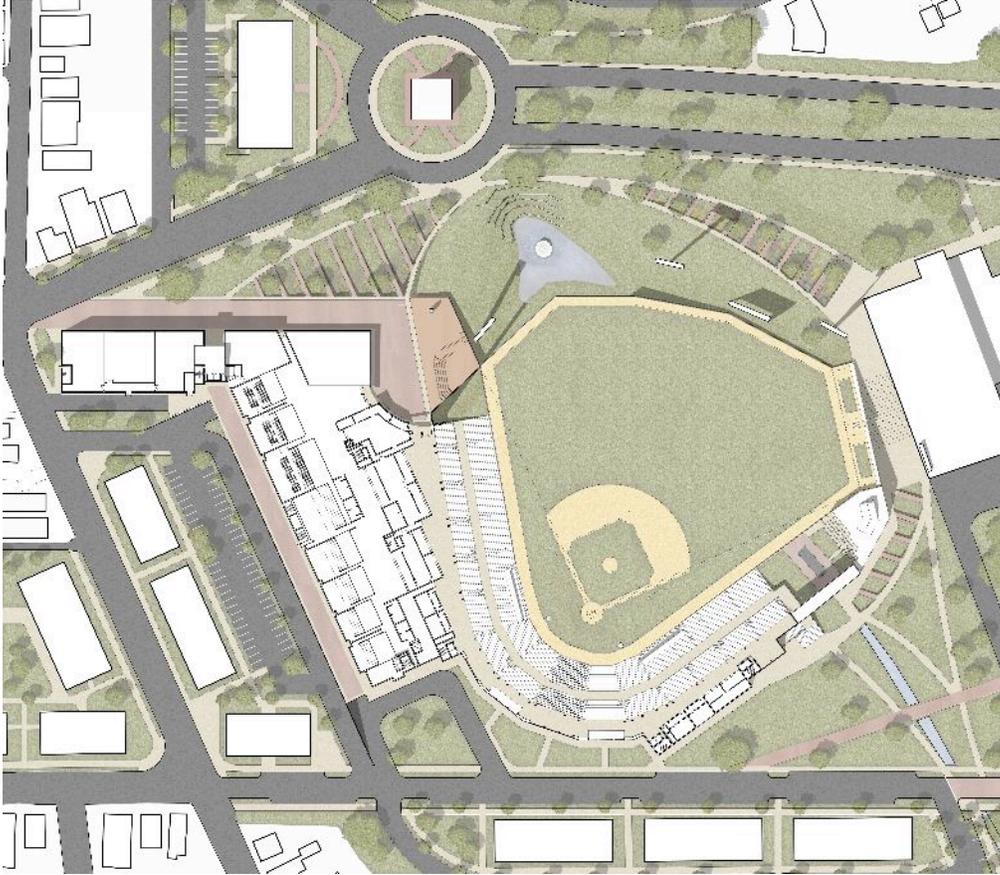
These new amenities create a large amount of residential investment on the 60 acre site. The proposed park generates 12 new multi-family apartment buildings and 115 new homes. The stadium complex has 2 apartment buildings with 132 apartments and its own parking garage. Investment in 833 new parking spaces within and along the park, 200 private and 633 public, fulfills the parking needs for the park. The proposal gives the city the opportunity to invest in a new civic building to anchor the east entry. Finally, the proposal urges investment in green infrastructure to capture and clean the water entering the day lit stream that runs through the site.



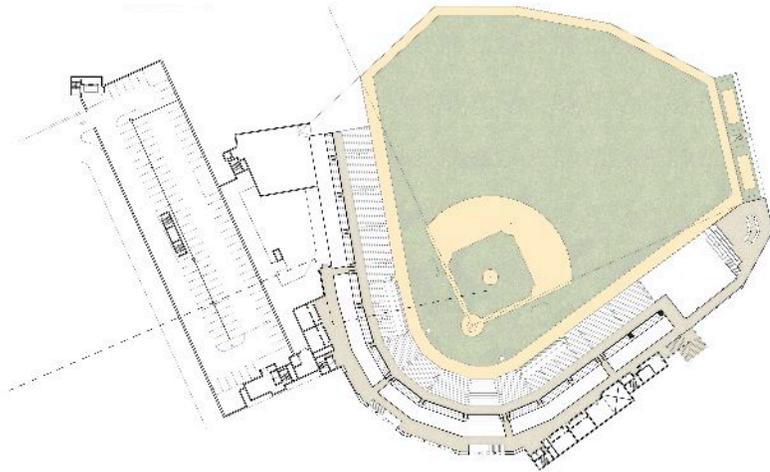
**Illustration 59 Apartment Plan (by author)**



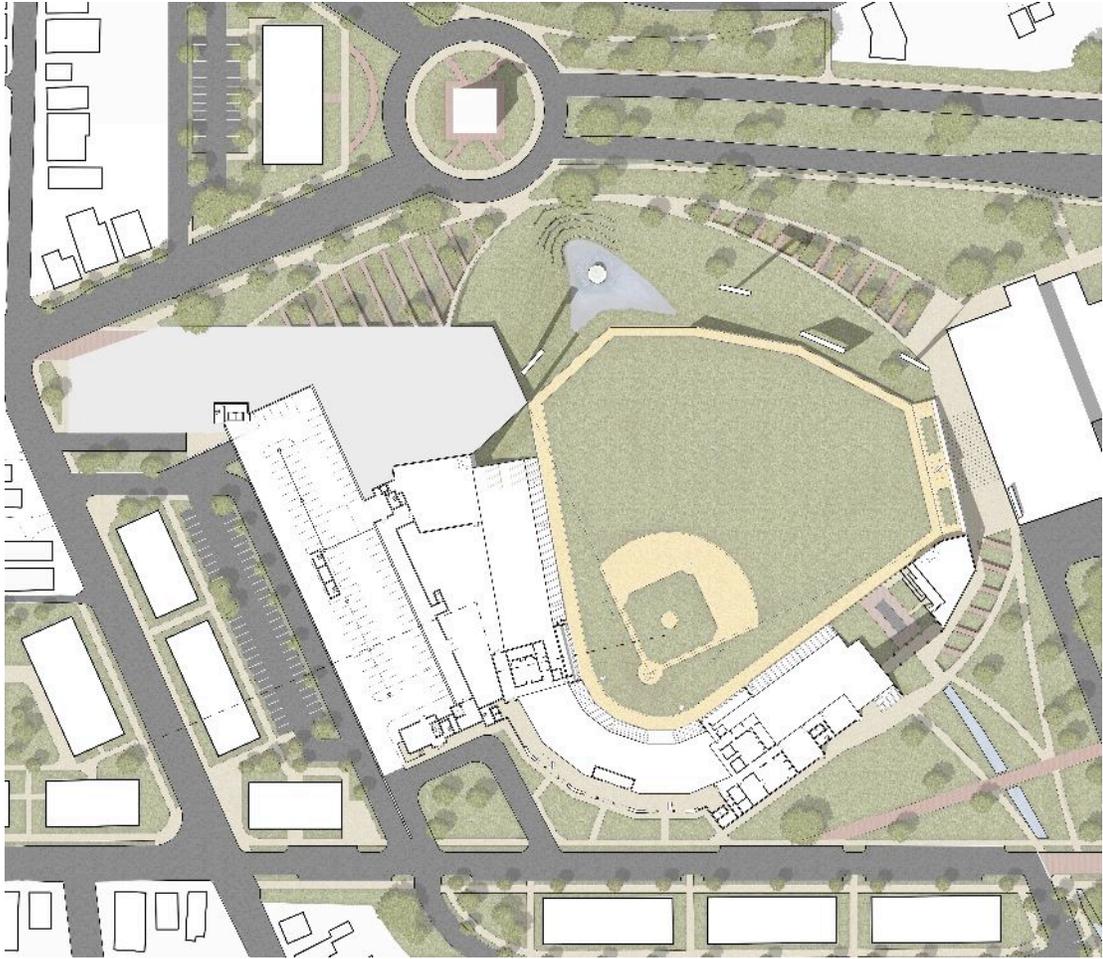
**Illustration 60 Projection Room and Box Offices (by author)**



**Illustration 61 Main Concourse Level (by author)**



**Illustration 62 Mezzanine Level (by author)**



**Illustration 63 Building Ground floor Plan (by author)**



**Illustration 64 View From Stands (by author)**



**Illustration 65 Building Section (by author)**



**Illustration 66 New Parking Additions (by author)**

### **Landscape Urbanism**

Moller Park consist of 8 acres of park with 24,000 sq.ft. designated for bio-retention. The location of the stadium is along a day-lit stream and in the valley between two ridges that run parallel with the north/south grid. The park is designed with bio-retention areas to capture the runoff from the Dual Highway and surrounding imperious surfaces. The bio-retention areas also act to slow down and divert as much water away from the baseball stadium. The pond in left field acts as a water feature

but also a holding basin for excess water and is directly connected to the hydrological systems of the day-lit creek. Greening the day-lit creek and adding the bio-retention areas help clean the water that is ultimately ends up in Antietam Creek. Along Mill Run Park there are also tree trenches to capture as much run-off as possible and filter it back into the ground. The addition of 253 trees will also start to capture the much of the water entering the site.

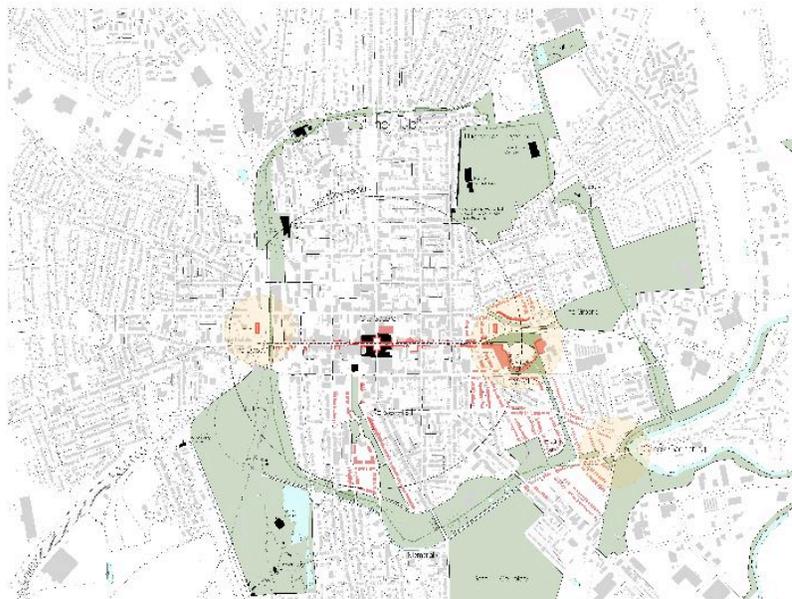


**Illustration 67 Sustainable Features (by author)**



**Illustration 68 Mill Park Section (by author)**

## Chapter 7: Conclusions and Progression



**Illustration 69 Places Diagram (by author)**

## **Summation**

Small City revitalization happens through a series of steps that involve not only looking at the city as one type. Small cities have to be attraction, connection and investment cities all at the same time. They have to be complimentary cities that combine all aspects of each of these types to form a revitalization network. Small cities must take into account the historical nature of a small city and connect the various parts of the city. For Hagerstown this means creating a park system that links the various amenities together, introduces green infrastructure into the city, increases connection to the downtown and promotes better walkability/livability. Also, looking back on the city's past to reestablish connections and attractions in a way that creates more movement within and around the downtown area of the city is important in how the city will attract people to the city. The establishment of entries and amenity relationships is key to revitalization in Hagerstown, Maryland.

## **Criticism and Response**

The thesis itself should be viewed as a success. The strategies I applied to revitalizing Hagerstown could have success if implement correctly. More time could have been spent strategically looking at each park and exactly how they impact the city. Also, how paths and people move through these spaces would also effect the overall shape of the green spaces. Some consideration on taking a less heavy hand approach to the site could lead to a richer outcome on the baseball stadium and the surrounding area. Also, a more detailed look at how the existing site elements could influence the ball park and create unique situations.

Moving forward this could be beneficial to future plans for the city. Allowing the city to see this work and extrapolate parts from it could lead to revitalization of Hagerstown. The proposal could also help save or re-engage talks between the town and the Hagerstown Suns on staying.

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