

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis:

GROWING THE GAME: SOCCER IN AMERICA

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This thesis looks to explore the history and culture of soccer in America, relative to that of the top nations in the sport, in order to design a youth academy to bolster the cultural interest. Soccer, although one of the oldest sports in history, is relatively unpopular in America, compared to the “Big” sports: Football, Baseball and Basketball. Sports play an important part of our daily lives economically, politically and socially. As entertainment they act as a catalyst in developing close-knit communities. The objective is to integrate these pieces of architecture into the city to create a social hub, focused around developing the youth and interest in the sport.

GROWING THE GAME: SOCCER IN AMERICA

by

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My Beautiful Wife

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Chapter 1: Soccer in America

History of Soccer in the United States

The United States has had a remarkably unique history of the sport of soccer, compared to the history in other countries internationally. Until the mid-19th century the most popular team sport in the United States was cricket; the sport drew sizeable numbers, about 400 clubs and 10,000 players, in a time when most sports had yet to solidify rules. By the end of the Civil War, cricket's popularity had sharply declined, and by the early 1900's, the sport hardly existed. The popularity of baseball surged with the decline of cricket. Cricket disappeared from the American sporting landscape because the sport was determined to remain exclusive to middle-class anglophiles, while baseball rapidly permeated through social and economic classes.¹

During the 19th century, football was a game only marginally related to its modern descendant of soccer; rules were undocumented and varied according to occasion. Universities led the way in encouraging and organizing sport. By the end of the late 19th century, schools would compete in sports such as: tennis, polo, lacrosse, cycling, cross-country, fencing, ice hockey, basketball, golf, swimming, gymnastics and water polo. By the 1860's, football had made its way to campuses in an organized manner, although rules were vastly varied. One variation was known as the Boston Game, a somewhat hybrid of modern day rugby and soccer in which players were allowed to run with the ball, but only if chased.²

¹ Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football*, 15-44.

² Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football*, 15-44.

In 1863, the London Football Association made the first attempt to create a set of rules to satisfy English clubs; the rules outlawed running with the ball and deliberate hacking. Those in opposition were led down a path which led to the development of rugby. The deliberation of the London FA helped to homogenize the sport for intercollegiate competition.³

By 1872, Harvard, Yale and Princeton had a codified version of the game. These rules still varied as Harvard had adopted the Boston Game, as opposed to the general preference of the London FA laws. Since Harvard had a different set of rules than most American schools, Harvard relied on McGill University, in Canada, which preferred rugby. Harvard found rugby more to its liking and thus sought out an American opponent. In 1875, Harvard and Yale arranged an exhibition match, allowing the ball to be handled and thrown. From that point on, Yale agreed that the handling game was better and soon gave up on soccer. With two of the most influential universities invested in the handling game, the others were soon to follow. In 1876 Princeton invited Harvard, Yale and Columbia to house a meeting to create a uniform system of rules; the same year an Intercollegiate Association was formed. In the following years, the code agreed upon was subject to numerous amendments, to the point where the colleges had created their own game. 28 years passed before another intercollegiate soccer match. America's strong desire to assert its cultural independence by developing sports of its own, as witnessed by the decline of cricket and rise of baseball, led football to overcome the sport of soccer in America.⁴

³ Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football*, 15-44.

⁴ Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football*, 15-44.

Through the reworking of the rules of rugby, American football had become an incredibly dangerous sport; in 1904 the New York Times reported 21 deaths and about 200 injuries from the season. The violence of American football led some institutions to revert back to the safer rugby, and some to drop the sport completely. Around the same time soccer was beginning to make a slow return to university campuses, starting with Haverford College in Philadelphia. A two-match series between Haverford and Harvard marked the return of intercollegiate play. Within a few years, Columbia, Cornell, Pennsylvania, Haverford and Harvard had formed an Intercollegiate Association Football League. In the following years, the sport was introduced to more universities. European teams which toured North America helped to keep the sport from dropping even farther from the public eye.⁵

Soccer struggled to gain ground in colleges, but grew amongst immigrant communities, which managed to keep the flickering torch of soccer alight. The game developed across the country under different circumstances, but semi-professional leagues began to form largely around immigrant epicenters throughout the country. In 1895, the National Association Foot Ball League was formed in the northern New Jersey and New York area, but the composition of the league fluctuated rigorously. Despite the title, the league was confined to the urban area. Chicago's roots date back to 1893, when the sport was featured at the Columbian Exposition. In 1904, a Chicago Association Football League was formed; in 1909 a cup competition, which later became the state championship, was formed. The first attempt at creating a unified league was made in 1884. A group of British immigrants formed the

⁵ Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football*, 15-44.

American Football Association. Its domain was an area roughly from Boston to Philadelphia. Due to economic depression, the league suspended operations in 1899, but recuperated by 1906. In 1911, the amateur game created its own organization: the Amateur American Football Organization. The AAFA sought recognition as the nation's governing body from the newly born FIFA. The AFA and AAFA had to speak with one voice to be accepted. They returned in a year as the United States Football Association, which barring name changes remains the nation's governing organization.⁶

In 1921, the nation's first attempt at a serious professional league took form under the USFA as the American Soccer League. It featured eight teams from the northeastern coastline, competing in a 28-game season. By the mid-1920's, the general consensus appeared to be that soccer had begun to stake its claim in the American sports culture. However, amidst arguments between the USFA and ASL, the ASL became intransigent, which led to the league's membership being rescinded in 1928. That same year, the USFA secretary announced the formation of the Eastern Soccer League, a rival professional league. Both leagues struggled as attendance squandered amongst fans who struggled to follow teams who were relentlessly relocating between cities and the two leagues. In 1930, reconciliation came in the form of the integrated Atlantic Coast League. Now, attempting to regain ground damaged due to consistent infighting, the league was weakened by outside events, as Wall Street went into free-fall. The Great Depression caused attendance to drop,

⁶ Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football*, 15-44.

which was a heavy blow to a sport still trying to blossom. Clubs began merging and collapsing as the league struggled to stay afloat.⁷

The national team's official debut occurred in Sweden during the First World War. In their tour they lost only one of six matches. The USFA fielded its first Olympic team at the 1924 Paris Games, in which the team was met with a 3-0 defeat at the hands of the eventual gold medalists: Uruguay. With the establishment of the FIFA World Cup, the significance of Olympic soccer fell. The United States participated in the first World Cup in 1930, finishing third, their best finish to date. Of the team's 16 players, six had been born in England or Scotland. The USFA sent a vastly different team to the 1934 World Cup which left disappointed after a 7-1 defeat at the hands of the Italians. Following a 3 match tournament in Mexico in 1937 the US went another 12 years before participating in another full international match. The World Cups did little to capture the interest of the US and the USFA remained close to collapse. European exhibitions on American soil helped to keep the USFA alive. In 1944, the USFA became the United States Soccer Football Association. The 1950 World Cup and subsequent international tournaments made the nation's deficiencies evident. A more advanced professional league would have alleviated most of the deficiencies; the ASL was not doing enough.⁸

In the late 1960's, three groups were competing to create a new professional league sanctioned by the USSFA. In 1967, the USSFA chose to sanction the group, led by Jack Cooke and Bill Cox, who formed an 11-team league: the North American

⁷ Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football*, 45-80.

⁸ Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football*, 81-120.

Professional Soccer League (NASL). The remaining groups quickly merged and formed the unsanctioned National Professional Soccer League (NPSL). The NPSL quickly gained an advantage as it fashioned a long term contract with the CBS network. The NASL resorted to taking complete international teams and rebranding them as American teams in their off-season; the league also rebranded itself as the United Soccer Association (USA) to enforce the league as sanctioned by the governing body of US Soccer, the USSFA. After a disappointing first season by both leagues, the NPSL file a lawsuit against FIFA, the USA, the USSFA and the Canadian FA. Eventually they retired their efforts and agreed to a merger with the USA, taking up the discarded moniker of the North American Soccer League. By the end of the 1969 season, the NASL was left with just four member clubs. By 1970, nearly 500 colleges and universities were playing the game at a varsity level, and high schools were fielding around 2,800 teams. While children began to take an interest in the sport, the league, which had sparked that interest, was dangerously close to the edge.⁹

The league managed to find enough teams to scrape by in the following seasons, but popularity waned. The NASL sought out to bring Pele, the most popular player in the world, at the time, and one of the best players to have ever played the game, out of retirement in order to raise the popularity of the sport. By his retirement in 1977, he seemed to have accomplished this goal, as soccer had never been as popular as it was at that moment.¹⁰ During Pele's time, fans went to a match to watch

⁹ Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football*, 121-150.

¹⁰ Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football*, 151-185.

Pele. After his time, they went to watch soccer. Despite Pele's departure, the NASL was still capable of standing on its own feet, although the backbone of the league was a mixture of foreign signings and untired youths. Although soccer seemed to be at the height of its popularity, the club owners were making next to no money and average attendance was barely increasing, if at all. Again, attendance started dropping and by the end of the 1983 season, the NASL was left with just nine clubs, the fewest since 1973. In the same year, Columbia withdrew as hosts of the 1986 World Cup, which was met with NASL, eagerly wanting to take the place of the Colombians, believing that the opportunity would bolster the clubs' revenues. FIFA rejected the proposal, the first blow of many. By the end of the 1984 NASL season, only two clubs wished to return and the league was finished.¹¹

With the popularity of soccer on the decline in America, the United States looked to the World Cup as a final salvation. The USSF made a bid to host the 1994 World Cup, supported by President Ronald Reagan. In 1988 FIFA announced that the US would indeed host the international tournament. In order to maintain any credibility as hosts for a World Cup, the National team narrowly qualified for the 1990 tournament, their first appearance since 1950. Despite the team's valiant efforts at the 1990 World Cup, the sport continued to wane.¹² Not only did the tournament unify the nation's soccer community, but the 1994 World Cup was home to the largest attendance by that time. 3.5 million of the 3.65 million tickets available for the tournament were sold, two-thirds of them in the US. The tournament was a great

¹¹ Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football*, 186-216.

¹² Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football*, 217-243.

success, bereft of empty stadiums, which helped to lift the standing of soccer in America.¹³

Major League Soccer (MLS) was developed as a result of a pledge to FIFA for the development of a professional soccer league as part of the nation's World Cup bid. Alan Rothenberg, the president of the USSF, was responsible for the beginnings of the league. Money is an important aspect in developing any organization, so Rothenberg learned from the past mistakes of the USSF and America's attempted professional leagues. Rothenberg advocated for a 'single-entity' league in which investors would buy into the MLS as a whole, as opposed to ownership of a single club. While this would limit the autonomy of an owner, it would also deplete the disparities between clubs, since profits would be shared. This method also allowed the league to impose a salary cap. Quickly rising wage costs accelerated the NASL's demise. Less than a year before its first kick-off, the MLS had settled on its first clubs: Colorado, Kansas City, New York, Los Angeles, Tampa, San Jose, Columbus, New England, Dallas and Washington DC. The MLS reverted to the traditional rules of the game, more aligned with the rest of the world, except instead of extra time, American soccer preferred a penalty shootout, so one team was always victorious. Despite his efforts in getting the league off the ground, Rothenberg did not want to head the league. In his place, Doug Logan was chosen as league commissioner. Logan's deputy, Sunil Gulati, was responsible for organizing the rosters of all ten clubs.¹⁴

¹³ Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football*, 244-263.

¹⁴ Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football*, 264-291.

The inaugural season kicked off in April of 1996 in front of a crowd of over 31,000 spectators. Overall, the first MLS season exceeded expectations. Crowds in attendance averaged more than 17,000 for the league; the worst club's season attendance still exceeded 10,000 per game. DC United defeated the LA Galaxy 3-2 to claim the first MLS Cup. DC United claimed the MLS Cup at the end of the second season, again. Despite a marginally lower average attendance, the final drew over 57,000 spectators, an increase of more than thirty percent since the first final. Prior to the third MLS season, the league was joined by two new clubs: Miami and Chicago. Chicago managed to claim the third MLS Cup in its inaugural season, defeating the reigning champs DC United.¹⁵

After 3 years, the league's survival was still in doubt; attendance had continued to drop and TV ratings, though never great, were the worst they had been. By the end of the third MLS season, a survey concluded that 50 million Americans considered themselves soccer-literate, but only 52 percent of them could manage to identify the World Cup as a soccer competition.¹⁶ Going into the fourth MLS season, attendance continued to fall, although almost undetectable, and before the end of the 1999 season Logan resigned from his position. His position was filled by Don Garber. Early in his reign as commissioner, Garber quickly eradicated some of the 'Americanized' rules in order to align the American game with the rest of the world.¹⁷

¹⁵ Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football*, 264-291.

¹⁶ Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football*, 264-291.

¹⁷ Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football*, 291-314.

In 2001, the league garnered its first increase in average attendance. Despite increases in attendance the league disbanded both of the Florida teams, since that region was losing too much money. Regardless of losing two teams, the MLS was still surviving strongly and average attendance continued to grow. For the first time, all of the clubs were averaging more than 10,000 fans. The 2005 season brought an additional two teams to the league, returning the league to 12 teams. Mexican League club Deportivo Guadalajara (Chivas) was granted an MLS franchise, aimed at enticing the Mexican-American fan base, which borrowed the Chivas moniker. Salt Lake City, Utah, was also granted a franchise under the promise to build a soccer specific facility: Real Salt Lake.¹⁸

After the 2005 season the San Jose franchise relocated to Houston and rebranded themselves as the Dynamo. In 2007, the league welcomed the addition of the first Canadian team: Toronto FC. After a two-season hiatus the San Jose Earthquakes were resurrected adding another team to the league. In 2009 the Seattle Sounders joined the league, after Salt Lake narrowly beat for a franchise in 2003. After the 2010 season Philadelphia was awarded a franchise which goes by the Philadelphia Union. The Portland Timbers joined the league for the 2011 season; Vancouver also joined the league in the same year and the Whitecaps became the second Canadian team in the league. A third Canadian team joined the league for the 2012 MLS season as Montreal Impact. The most recent additions to the MLS were New York City FC and Orlando City FC, who both joined for the 2015 season.¹⁹

¹⁸ Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football*, 315-335.

¹⁹ "A Brief History of MLS: Part Two." Total MLS. Accessed January 06, 2017. <http://www.totalmls.net/blog/2016/10/5/a-brief-history-of-mls-part-two>.

Popularity of Soccer in America

Soccer in America is a rapidly growing sport; the number of youth players registered with U.S. Soccer programs grew by 89% between 1990 and 2014.²⁰ Soccer is not the most popular sport in the United States, but it is gaining fans due to youth participation and the influx of immigrants in recent years.²¹ To prove this point, here are ratings from previous World Cups compared to other comparable “finals” in varying sports.

The 1994 World Cup had more than 18 million viewers.²² The 2010 World Cup drew in 24.3 million American viewers, a 41 percent increase over the 2006 World Cup. That year, more people watched the World Cup final between Spain and Portugal than watched the Rose Bowl (24.04 million), the NCAA men’s basketball championship (23.99 million), or the Winter Olympics closing ceremony (21.4 million).²³ The 2014 World Cup final garnered 29.2 million American viewers, more than double of that year’s World Series at 13.5 million.²⁴ In 2014 the World Cup Match between Portugal and the US, not the World Cup final, was the 5th most watched sporting event in United States, behind the Super Bowl, NFC and AFC championship games and the BCS college football championship.²⁵ The USMNT’s final match garnered 16 million views. Comparatively, the 2014 NBA finals averaged

²⁰ Johnson, Alex. NBC News. May 27, 2015. Accessed January 5, 2017. <http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/fifa-corruption-scandal/soccer-numbers-look-game-u-s-n365601>.

²¹ "The big business of Champions League soccer." SmartBrief. May 26, 2016. Accessed January 16, 2017. <http://www.smartbrief.com/original/2013/05/big-business-champions-league-soccer>

²² Bryant, Nick. "The myth that America doesn't like football." BBC News. June 02, 2015. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-32956824>.

²³ Johnson, "Soccer by the Numbers".

²⁴ Bryant, "The Myth".

²⁵ Johnson, "Soccer by the Numbers".

15.5 million viewers.²⁶ American football, baseball, basketball and ice hockey are known as the “Big Four” sports in America, but at this time soccer has overcome hockey to join the “Big Four.”²⁷ Soccer was ranked as the 4th most popular sport to watch on television in the United States in 2015, above ice hockey, auto racing, tennis and golf, but behind football, basketball, and baseball.²⁸ This is evidenced by the increasing numbers of viewers over the years of soccer games. Now is international soccer’s moment in the US.²⁹

We can also track the increasing popularity of soccer through tickets sold to major soccer sporting events. In 1996, when the MLS was first founded, the average attendance was around 17,400. The attendance was in a state of decline until 2002, when it hit its lowest point of 13,800. Since then the MLS attendance has surged and in 2014 the MLS averaged over 19,000 fans a match – a record high.³⁰ In 2014, when 19,148 people attended MLS events on average, the attendance surpassed attendance of both basketball (NBA) and hockey (NHL). Yet, soccer athletes’ names are not household names, like star basketball or hockey players.³¹ While the MLS attendance is by no means the largest, these games are beginning to be competitive in size. The

²⁶ Gaines, Cork. "Soccer Popularity Is On The Rise In The US, But English Football Is Benefiting More Than MLS." Business Insider. July 02, 2014. Accessed December 16, 2016. <http://www.businessinsider.com/soccer-popularity-english-football-mls-2014-7>.

²⁷ Bryant, “The Myth”.

²⁸ Johnson, “Soccer by the Numbers”.

²⁹ "Has soccer passed hockey in America? Colin Cowherd says yes." Yahoo! Sports. Accessed December 16, 2016. <http://sports.yahoo.com/blogs/nhl-puck-daddy/has-soccer-passed-hockey-in-america--colin-cowherd-says-yes-161119548.html>.

³⁰ "Is Soccer Becoming More Popular in America?" The Vista. Accessed January 05, 2017. <http://www.ucentralmedia.com/sports/is-soccer-becoming-more-popular-in-america/>.

³¹ Lewis, Brian. "Soccer’s growth in US measured in the time between World Cups." New York Post. July 14, 2014. Accessed January 16, 2016. <http://nypost.com/2014/07/14/soccers-growth-in-us-measured-in-the-time-between-world-cups/>.

Italian Serie A, largely considered one of the top five soccer leagues in the world drew an average attendance of 22,010³², only slightly more than the MLS.

Another way to track the growing popularity of soccer is through analyzing its fan base. Soccer has caught up to baseball amongst young sports fans. According to an ESPN poll both sports having captured 18 percent of the 12 to 17-year-old fan base; the soccer fan base has been consistently growing while this percentage dropped from 25 to 18 between 2012 and 2014 for baseball.³³ In a 2012 ESPN Poll Soccer was the most popular sport among 12 to 24-year-olds.³⁴ In this country, football is still the number one sport, but for how much longer? When surveyed, nearly a third of Millennials play or have played soccer, compared to only 22% of Gen Xers and 5% of the Baby Boomers. In recent years Americans have been exposed to elite soccer on a regular basis, allowing an appreciation of the sport that we could not before. Millennials are 16% more interested in soccer than other age groups, indicating that the rising popularity is not caused by changing opinions by older generations, rather change brought by the newer generations.³⁵ As citizens of America are becoming more global, with increased facility of traveling to other countries, there is increased interest in popular international sports.

American football fans have the NFL, basketball fans the NBA, and baseball fans the MLB, but for a soccer fan attention is divided among many leagues. When

³² Bryant, "The Myth".

³³ Chayka, Kyle. "Will Soccer Ever Be as Big as Football in the United States?" Pacific Standard. June 11, 2014. Accessed December 28, 2016. <https://psmag.com/will-soccer-ever-be-as-big-as-football-in-the-united-states-ce23287651b8#.fzh72n1te>.

³⁴ Bennett, Roger. "MLS equals MLB in popularity with kids." ESPNFC.com. May 7, 2014. Accessed December 16, 2016. <http://www.espnfc.us/major-league-soccer/story/1740529/mls-catches-mlb-in-popularity-with-kids-says-espn-poll>.

³⁵ <http://thebrief.com/articles/will-millennials-bring-soccer-to-the-mainstream-in-the-us-643>

comparing average viewers for an NBA game (3 to 4 million households), to an MLS game (100,000 to 300,000 households), soccer seems miniscule in relevance.

However, include the 500,000 to 700,000 EPL viewers, and the 800,000 to 1,000,000 LIGA MX viewers, and soccer appears to be at a competitive level with the NBA.³⁶

The popularity of soccer will continue to grow but in a way that MLS fans may not like. The Premier League receives more than \$80 million annually to air on NBC, while the MLS receives \$30 million combined from ESPN, NBC, and Univision. Ratings for the Premier League nearly doubled between 2012 and 2013, while MLS viewers have been relatively flat since 2009, now trailing the EPL.³⁷ The EPL garners more viewers because, at this point, the EPL is a better product than the MLS, bolstered by its much larger history, but, any increase in the interest of professional soccer is good for the MLS.

In his Freakonomics piece, Stephen Dubner doubts soccer becoming as popular as American Football saying,

“Let’s be honest, it probably won’t. Many of the people who are most fanatical about the sport in the US have some kind of tie to Europe or South America or Africa.”

He is suggesting that only those with close ties to foreigners appreciate the sport; the problem is that Dubner is discounting many American inhabitants because they may be first or second-generation immigrants, or may not natively speak English.³⁸ In

³⁶ "Soccer Isn't Popular in the US Because the Wrong People Watch it" Thick Culture. June 12, 2014. Accessed December 16, 2016. <https://thesocietypages.org/thickculture/2014/06/12/soccer-isnt-popular-in-the-us-because-the-wrong-people-watch-it/>.

³⁷ Gaines, "Soccer Popularity is on the Rise".

³⁸ ThickCulture, "Soccer Isn't Popular".

fact, 34% of the MLS viewer base identifies as Hispanic and/or Latino.³⁹ This narrative highlights a troubling perspective that only English-speaking US natives matter in the conversation of what constitutes as popular sport. Soccer is nowhere near as central to American life, as it is to European, or South American Life. The US game is lacking in big-name stars, hardly competing with the big names of other sports. In other countries, children idolize these soccer stars from a young age, but there fewer American soccer celebrities. America is the number one country in the world for youth participation in soccer; more than 3 million children were registered in 2014, a largely significant increase over the 103,432 registered in 1974.⁴⁰ One problem with American youth soccer is that kids frequently switch youth teams, rather it be county teams, travel teams or high school teams. Bouncing between teams is unsettling for development.⁴¹ However, more importantly, soccer in America transcends the gender divide; 48% of the kids playing are girls.⁴² The United States is home to the second largest amount of people who play soccer, 24,472,778, only second to China.⁴³

Why Isn't Soccer More Popular

The problem is not reality, but the perception of the sport. One of the most prevalent theories is that there is too much completion for soccer to garner more attention in the United States; people can't follow every sport, so they choose the

³⁹ Johnson, "Soccer by the Numbers".

⁴⁰ Bryant, "The Myth".

⁴¹ Schaerlaeckens, Leander. "The Future of U.S. Soccer." ESPN. May 11, 2014. Accessed December 28, 2016. http://www.espn.com/sports/soccer/news/_id/6520002/mls-academies-kill-college-game-soccer.

⁴² Bryant, "The Myth".

⁴³ Johnson, "Soccer by the Numbers".

more popular sports, like football or baseball. This theory does not hold up, as other countries also have competition for fandom among a multitude of sports. Japan and Latin America love baseball; Australia and parts of Africa love Rugby. Another argument focuses on the lack of scoring in soccer; low scoring games don't contain the fast, hard-hitting action of the NFL. In contrast, baseball remains a very popular sport in America, despite the low scoring affairs and longer games. The same can be said for the NHL, which has parallels to soccer.⁴⁴ While there is the fact that soccer can be a rather low scoring affair, many games end 2-1 or even 0-0, fans don't have an issue with football games that end 14-7, which is effectively a 2-1 score line.⁴⁵ So, this argument against the popularity of soccer seems mild at best. Regarding action, a soccer game is one of the most active sports, with a rolling clock and rarely any stoppages in the 90 minutes of play. Comparatively there is only about 11 minutes of action, out of the "60 minute" football game.⁴⁶ The narrative that soccer is not popular because it is not American football is nothing more than a "straw man" argument; by this logic, no sport in the United States is popular.⁴⁷

Furthermore, Americans don't like to invest in a sport where they don't excel. They like to win and they like to be the best.⁴⁸ This can be seen by examining the top sports in the US. There is no league in the world that is on same competitive level as

⁴⁴ <http://www.simplercreature.com/2014/06/27/americans-dont-like-soccer/>

⁴⁵ "The Real Reason Soccer Isn't Bigger in the US (and a Realistic Explanation of How That Could All Change Some Day)." Lullaby Pit. January 15, 2010. Accessed January 05, 2017. <https://lullabypit.wordpress.com/2002/06/24/the-real-reason-soccer-isnt-bigger-in-the-us-and-a-realistic-explanation-of-how-that-could-all-change-some-day/>.

⁴⁶ Biderman, David. "11 Minutes of Action." The Wall Street Journal. January 15, 2010. Accessed December 28, 2016.

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748704281204575002852055561406>.

⁴⁷ ThickCulture, "Soccer Isn't Popular".

⁴⁸ Lullaby Pit, "The Real Reason".

the NFL and the United States dominates basketball at the Olympic level. The World Cup may be the biggest sporting event in the world, but there's almost no chance of the US winning, considering the present situation of soccer in the US. If the United States were to become an international powerhouse the interest would undoubtedly boom.⁴⁹ With the largest amount of youth players in the world it is surprising that the US Men's National team can't consistently compete at the same level as the top teams, such as Germany, Spain, and Argentina. It appears, logically, that larger countries with more youth enrolled in soccer programs would mathematically have more great soccer players. There has been an effort to find a correlation between populations and the Soccer Power Index, but for every Brazil, which ranks fifth in population and second in the FIFA world rankings, there is an India, which ranks second in population and 129th in the FIFA world rankings.⁵⁰

America and the World Cup

These facts have shifted the conversation from "soccer isn't popular" to "soccer is only popular every four years".⁵¹ The perception that soccer is "small time" in the US is driven by two key factors: its fragmented popularity and society's marginalization of foreigners.⁵²

The United States participation in the World Cup dates to 1930 when they first featured, finishing the tournament in third place. Since 1930, the US has never

⁴⁹ Lullaby Pit, "The Real Reason".

⁵⁰ Paine, Neil. "Why Isn't the U.S. Men's National Team Better at Soccer?" FiveThirtyEight. June 16, 2014. Accessed January 16, 2017. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/why-isnt-the-u-s-mens-national-team-better-at-soccer/>.

⁵¹ ThickCulture, "Soccer Isn't Popular".

⁵² ThickCulture, "Soccer Isn't Popular".

come as close to a triumphant tournament. One of the challenges for the men's national team is the rest of the world had a sizeable head start over the USMNT.⁵³ The U.S. national soccer organization, Major League Soccer, was founded in 1995, following the 1994 World Cup hosted by the United States.⁵⁴

The United States sits firmly in soccer's middle class as a country confident in its ability to qualify for the World Cup, but far outside from the sports elite, the likes of Argentina, Brazil, and Germany. For these teams anything less than winning is a disappointment.⁵⁵ Americans are accustomed to having the top league in our sports; in soccer they don't.⁵⁶

If the national team gets better, the popularity of the sport will rise, but the United States cannot field a better team unless the sport becomes more popular, and therefore more important, at home.⁵⁷ America doesn't produce as many gifted players as other countries because it lacks the traditions and infrastructure they possess. In Europe, talented youth will be directed towards a training program, and if skilled enough, will be picked up by a professional club.⁵⁸ The mission for soccer in America is to become more relevant between World Cups, as opposed to a quadrennial event.⁵⁹ However, we cannot expect the World Cup to be a catalyst for the growth of

⁵³ Paine, "Why Isn't the US Men's Team".

⁵⁴ Chayka, "Will Soccer Ever be as Big".

⁵⁵ Mandelbaum, Michael. "The World Cup Will Not Change the Status of American Soccer." *The American Interest*. July 3, 2014. Accessed December 20, 2016. <http://www.the-american-interest.com/2014/07/03/the-world-cup-will-not-change-the-status-of-american-soccer/>.

⁵⁶ Lewis, "Soccer's Growth".

⁵⁷ Mandelbaum, "The World Cup".

⁵⁸ Mandelbaum, "The World Cup".

⁵⁹ Lewis, "Soccer's Growth".

soccer in America. It's important to grow the team between the four-year competitions, so Americans will have even more interest in the Cup when it comes.

The Future of Soccer in the United States

Although interest and participation has grown, this growth has not led to much improvement in the United States Men's National Team (USMNT). The team has failed to replicate the dominance shared by other American sports, such as football and basketball, and has even failed to equal their best World Cup run in 1930. The problem lies with how youth development is treated in sport. With around four million children participating in the sport, America is the largest population of youth participation in the world, but fails to develop as many world class players as smaller countries, such as Spain or Germany. If American soccer has a growing fan base, increasing attendance at events and higher television ratings during the World Cup than any other sport, why don't we have the proper training facilities and academies for the soccer athletes of tomorrow?

In America there is an emphasis, from a young age, on winning; size and fitness is valued over technical development. This leads to kick and run soccer, rather than a more tactically sound competition. Part of the problem falls on how the youth are developed; most kids are coached by volunteers, who themselves are new to sport. This continues throughout their development, where most coaches are volunteers. As with most typical sports, soccer player education flows from county leagues, to high school and clubs, to college, to the professional leagues. In the elite soccer nations,

skilled players are scouted as early as kindergarten and enter academies, run by professional clubs, from age seven or eight.⁶⁰

By the 1980's, the English National team was slipping into mediocrity. At this time, the English FA realized that the professional clubs needed to do a better job developing players and imposed mandatory youth development academies and regulations.⁶¹ They realized that there is a direct correlation between developing the youth and a more successful national team; the future of the sport belongs to the youth. Not only does this development benefit the national team, it is a great benefit, tactically and financially, to the clubs developing the players. Youth development is central to creating a successful team, but it is also key in reducing financial risks. By developing their own talent, clubs save money by not having to buy players and can earn money, by selling first team players that may not fit the system. Based on a study by the European Club Association, on average, academies cost clubs about 6% of their annual budget; 60% of clubs consider the academies a source of income rather than cost.⁶² The significance of a youth academy run by a soccer club, lies in the development of the players, but significance to the athletes lies in the fact that is a cost-free system in which the club covers all expenses. The MLS has begun to see the value of academies, as the newest trend. Like most endeavors, privatization tends to lead to higher efficiency. Some benefits are that students would play year-round, free

⁶⁰ Schaerlaeckens, "Future of US Soccer".

⁶¹ "US Youth Training Systems vs. England." USoccer. Accessed December 19, 2016.
http://www.socceru.com/us_youth_soccer_training_vs_england_academy.htm htm

⁶² Jarosz, Olivier, ed. Report on Youth Academies in Europe. Report. August 2012. Accessed December 19, 2016.
<http://www.ecaeurope.com/Research/ECA%20Report%20on%20Youth%20Academies/ECA%20Report%20on%20Youth%20Academies.pdf>.

of charge to the players and offer role models, a professional environment and exposure to a higher level of the game. They offer superior training to players. Costs are covered until the player signs a contract, is dropped, or leaves for college; there is no financial compensation for the academy players, so they can retain NCAA eligibility.⁶³ Academies offer the highest level of youth soccer in the country, a clear path to a professional contract, and access to college scouts.⁶⁴

Currently, college soccer is still the main source of American talent to the MLS, but it is an inefficient way of preparing players for the professional game. By the same age in other countries players are already entering the first team of a professional club. NCAA regulations prevent players from getting enough playing time, via games and practices. In the long-term academies could make college soccer irrelevant as a source of players for the MLS, as players may choose to forgo scholarships to earn a professional contract.⁶⁵

Current Opportunities for American Children

The US Soccer Development Academy is the top tier of youth soccer in America. The league is created from a culmination of youth academies and clubs, from various organizations, such as Major League Soccer, the North American Soccer League, and the United Soccer League. The USDA succeeded the Super Y-Leagues as the premier youth league in the US.⁶⁶

⁶³ Schaerlaeckens, "Future of US Soccer".

⁶⁴ <http://www.dirtysouthsoccer.com/2016/3/24/11295378/a-brief-introduction-into-the-mls-academy-system>

⁶⁵ Schaerlaeckens, "Future of US Soccer".

⁶⁶ "What is the Development Academy Program?" U.S. Soccer Development Academy. Accessed December 16, 2016. <http://www.ussoccerda.com/overview-what-is-da>.

U.S. Soccer created the U.S. Soccer Development Academy in 2007; it houses 150 clubs, comprised of teams across five age groups: U-12, U-13, U-14, U-15/16, and U-17/18. The Development Academy Program is a 10-month program: September to July. During the season each team plays between 25 and 30 games, typically within the clubs' divisions, apart from showcase and playoff games.⁶⁷ "The Development Academy is a partnership between U.S. Soccer and the top youth clubs around the country to provide the best youth players in the U.S. with an everyday environment designed to produce the next generation of National Team players." The organization was created as a partnership between U.S. Soccer and top youth clubs across the country to emphasize training and competitive games instead of overplaying youth players.

Development Academy fees are broken into two categories: what the Academy provides and what the clubs are responsible for. The USSDA covers any Academy event fees, referee fees, and scholarships for need based players, to move away from the pay-to-play model of youth academies. Clubs are responsible for fees associated with registering with the Academy, but the main financial responsibilities include travel, facility, and training costs.⁶⁸

Currently the goal of academies in America is to earn a Division 1 scholarship, although there is movement towards players signing professional contracts earlier. College coaches don't typically scout high school age players

⁶⁷ U.S. Soccer, "What is the Development Academy Program".

⁶⁸ "Program Benefits." U.S. Soccer Development Academy. Accessed December 16, 2016. <http://www.ussoccerda.com/overview-program-benefits>.

outside of the Development Academy league; most MLS teams will try to sign homegrown players who are a mix of academy players and college players.⁶⁹

There are typically three types of academies in the United States: residential, day school, and purely soccer. In a residential academy, players live away from home, five to seven days a week, and attend either a local public school, or education is provided by the academy. This is the ideal situation for player development as training schedules can be more easily developed around players' schooling. However, it is a very demanding proposition for players to move away from their families. For a day school academy, players live at home and attend a school in a local school district. The players have a reduced class schedule to provide a more flexible practice schedule. In a purely soccer academy the training schedule is limited in order work around players' school schedule.⁷⁰

Unlike other soccer leagues around the world the MLS has a draft, similar to that of the NFL or NBA: the MLS SuperDraft. Homegrown players are players signed from the academy; as long as the player has been at the academy for at least one year they can bypass the draft and the club can directly sign them to a professional contract. As a further benefit to clubs, homegrown players don't count towards a team's salary cap and if sold, the team gets a larger share of the transfer fee.⁷¹

In 2010, the MLS launched a new youth development initiative to allow teams to acquire talented players outside of the annual draft. This required clubs to establish

⁶⁹ <http://www.dirtysouthsoccer.com/2016/3/24/11295378/a-brief-introduction-into-the-mls-academy-system>

⁷⁰ <http://www.dirtysouthsoccer.com/2016/3/24/11295378/a-brief-introduction-into-the-mls-academy-system>

⁷¹ <http://www.dirtysouthsoccer.com/2016/3/24/11295378/a-brief-introduction-into-the-mls-academy-system>

a youth program in which youth teams play under the club's colors and are trained under the team's coaching staff.⁷² Players must reside in a team's Home Territory for at least one year before becoming a Homegrown Player. If added as a Homegrown Player before entering college, they maintain their status allowing them to bypass the annual MLS SuperDraft.⁷³ There is no limit to the number of homegrown players a club may sign in a given year.⁷⁴

The youth development initiative was intended to allow clubs to invest resources in scouting and developing talented young players who can ultimately join the first team roster. Teams with a highly developed youth program will reap the rewards by filling their first team roster with homegrown talent. Focusing on local youth development provides opportunities for young American players and better connects clubs to their local communities.⁷⁵

Each MLS club has a specific territory in which it can scout players; this helps to limit instances in which clubs may compete against one another for players. D.C. United's territory encapsulates a 75 mile radius from their training facilities. However, teams are allowed exceptions; in 2014 DCU was allowed to sign 4 players outside of their territory.⁷⁶

⁷² "MLS launches Youth Development Initiative." MLSsoccer.com. January 23, 2010. Accessed December 28, 2016. <http://www.mlssoccer.com/post/2010/01/23/mls-launches-youth-development-initiative>.

⁷³ MLSsoccer.com, "MLS Launches".

⁷⁴ Rupinski, Eugene. "The Homegrown Player Rule - A new visual guide." Brotherly Game. September 03, 2015. Accessed January 05, 2017. <http://www.brotherlygame.com/2015/9/3/9242267/homegrown-player-rule-major-league-soccer-visual-guide>

⁷⁵ MLSsoccer.com, "MLS Launches".

⁷⁶ Rupinski, "The Homegrown Player Rule".

Soccer academies bring in the best players in their respective areas, typically because they are free of cost. It is a large benefit for the parents to not have to pay for their children to participate, and for the players to be trained at the highest level.⁷⁷ Players raised through the academy are the future for the MLS teams, especially for teams that cannot spend significant money to bring in top players. Putting aside an investment in the youth system may negatively impact DCU's ability to continue competing at a top level as the league continues to evolve.⁷⁸

This thesis will look to develop a new youth academy for D.C. United (DCU), a Major League Soccer (MLS) team located in the nation's capital, Washington D.C. In comparison to the other MLS Academies, D.C. United holds the distinction of being the most expensive, non-residency program. Most MLS Academies are cost-free, DCU being one of only two, out of a 20-team league, that is associated with any sort of price. The fee for the U14 team is \$2,500 annually, while the U16 and U18 fee is \$1,500, although financial aid is offered. D.C. United's current residency program is a partnership with the Calverton School with a tuition of \$20,250 annually.⁷⁹

Chapter 2: Site Analysis

The District of Columbia

Washington, D.C. owes much of its current design to Pierre Charles L'Enfant. The Frenchman transformed what was nothing more than a marshland, providing him

⁷⁷ <http://www.dirtysouthsoccer.com/2016/3/24/11295378/a-brief-introduction-into-the-mls-academy-system>

⁷⁸ Bromley, Ben. "D.C. United has the most expensive MLS Academy." Black and Red United. August 8, 2015. Accessed December 19, 2016. <http://www.blackandredunited.com/youth-development/2015/8/5/9096055/dc-united-most-expensive-mls-academy>.

⁷⁹ Bromley, "D.C. United"

a clean slate to lay out a plan for the nation's capital; his vision of a grand capital amalgamated wide avenues, public squares, and inspirational architecture.⁸⁰



Figure 1: Plan of the City of Washington, Pierre Charles L'Enfant, 1791

The District was established in 1790, through means of *The Residence Act*, in which Congress authorized a federal district along the Potomac River to serve as the permanent capital.⁸¹ L'Enfant modeled his plan for the district after European precedents, such as the plans of Versailles and London, while translating these models to align with American ideals, such that the notion behind the design was that every citizen was regarded as equally important. Congress was established on a high point, a spot at the time usually reserved for country's leader, reinforcing the democratic ideals on which the nation was formed.⁸² Thus, Capitol Hill became the center of the city, from which the infamous diagonal avenues radiated, transecting a

⁸⁰ Fletcher, Kenneth. "A Brief History of Pierre L'Enfant and Washington, D.C." Smithsonian. April 30, 2008. Accessed December 19, 2016. <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/a-brief-history-of-pierre-lenfant-and-washington-dc-39487784/?no-ist>.

⁸¹ "Primary Documents in American History" Library of Congress. November 30, 2015. Accessed December 19, 2016. <https://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/Residence.html#American>

⁸² Fletcher, "A Brief History".

gridded street system. These avenues offered views of significant buildings, with public squares and parks distributed at intersections.⁸³

During the nineteenth century, the mall was more of a chaotic space that lacked the clarity intended by L'Enfant.⁸⁴ At the centerpiece of his plan L'Enfant envisioned a "great public walk." In 1901 the McMillan Commission planned an extensive park system based on L'Enfant's framework. Their work led to the creation of the Mall and array of monuments as we know it today.⁸⁵

L'Enfant's stubbornness and refusal to compromise his design eventually led to his dismissal. Subsequent to L'Enfant's dismissal, the city's surveyor, Andrew Ellicott prepared maps with minor changes, the most noteworthy being the realignment of Massachusetts Avenue. Overall the plans were largely based on L'Enfant's design, as have all ensuing plans paid homage to L'Enfant's original framework. Even today the Nation Capital Planning Commission (NCPD) strives to fulfill L'Enfant's vision in meeting the demands of the growing region.⁸⁶

RFK Stadium Site

The District of Columbia is split into four quadrants, divided by North, South, and East Capitol Streets and the National Mall: North West, North East, South West, and South East. The RFK Stadium site falls in the North and South East quadrants, on East Capitol Street along the western bank of the Anacostia River. The site serves as a

⁸³Fletcher, "A Brief History".

⁸⁴Steckelberg, Aaron, Philip Kennicott, Bonnie Berkowitz, and Densie Lu. "A 200-year transformation: How the Mall became what it is today." The Washington Post, August 23, 2016. Accessed December 19, 2016. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/lifestyle/the-evolution-of-the-national-mall/>.

⁸⁵ Fletcher, "A Brief History".

⁸⁶ Worthington, Glen. The Vision of Pierre L'Enfant: A City to Inspire, A Plan to Preserve. Georgetown University, 2005. 9-12.

gateway, from the east, to the city's monumental core; it acts as a direct link between the Capitol Hill neighborhood and the Anacostia western river bank. Development of the site presents an opportunity for cultural and commemorative uses to attract visitors; more importantly it acts as a site which can address the recreational needs of the residents of D.C. The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) envisions a mixture of residential and neighborhood commercial development in this area.⁸⁷

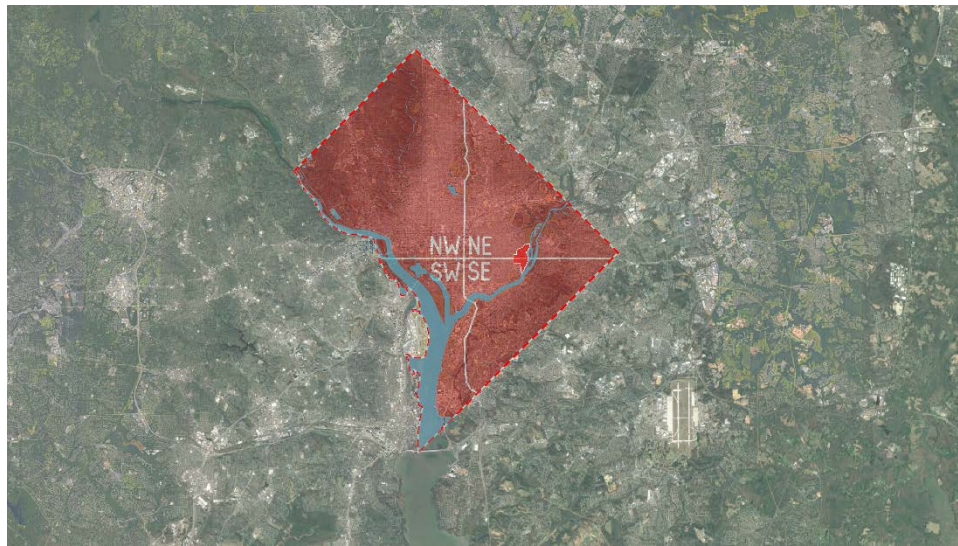


Figure 2: RFK Stadium Site in Relation to D.C. Quadrants (Source: Author)

The RFK Stadium site is about 190 acres on the edge of the city. Currently, the site encompasses RFK Stadium and surrounding federal buildings, such as the D.C. Armory. Between the early 1900's and 1957 the area was primarily used as park and open space; this changed when the construction of the stadium was authorized by Congress. The site is owned by the federal government, so the stadium sits on land leased to D.C. The NCPC has envisioned multiple plans on the site. In 1997, the

⁸⁷ United States. NCPC. December 2006. RFK Stadium Site: Redevelopment Study. 3.

vision was a major memorial surrounded by housing and commercial development. In 2001 site was thought to be a prime location for future commemorative projects. The site sits in a way that makes it an important part of D.C.'s Anacostia Waterfront Initiative (AWI), which is aimed at transforming the Anacostia River into a lively waterfront for the city.⁸⁸

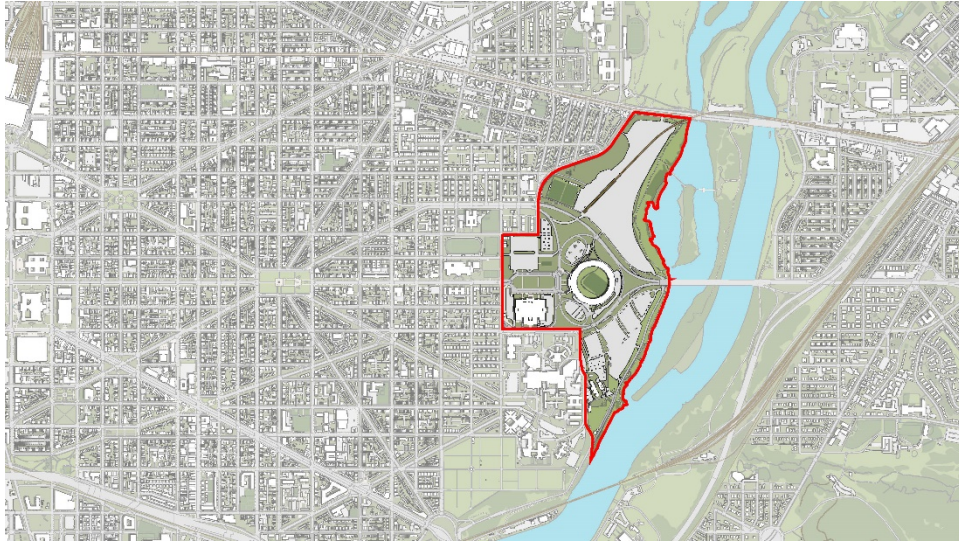


Figure 3: Existing RFK Stadium Site (Source: Author)

Opportunities and Constraints

With the location of the RFK Stadium site come many opportunities and constraints. The site is located on the Western bank of the Anacostia River; due to the topography of the land a portion of the site lies within the 100 and 500-year flood plain. Additionally, the Metrorail line which runs through the site creates another constraint. The northern portion of the site is intersected by the Metrorail, which creates a noise and visual barrier between the two portions of the site, thus limiting development in the area. Furthermore, there are environmental constraints, due to the

⁸⁸ United States. NCP. December 2006. RFK Stadium Site: Redevelopment Study. 4.

close proximity of the river, runoff from the stadium and other impervious areas runs untreated into the river.⁸⁹

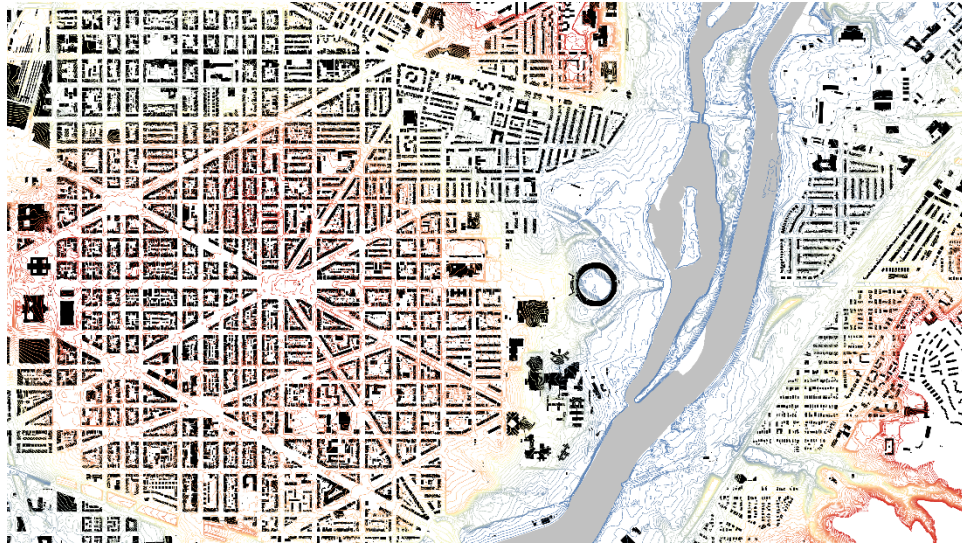


Figure 4: Topography of Site (Source: Author)

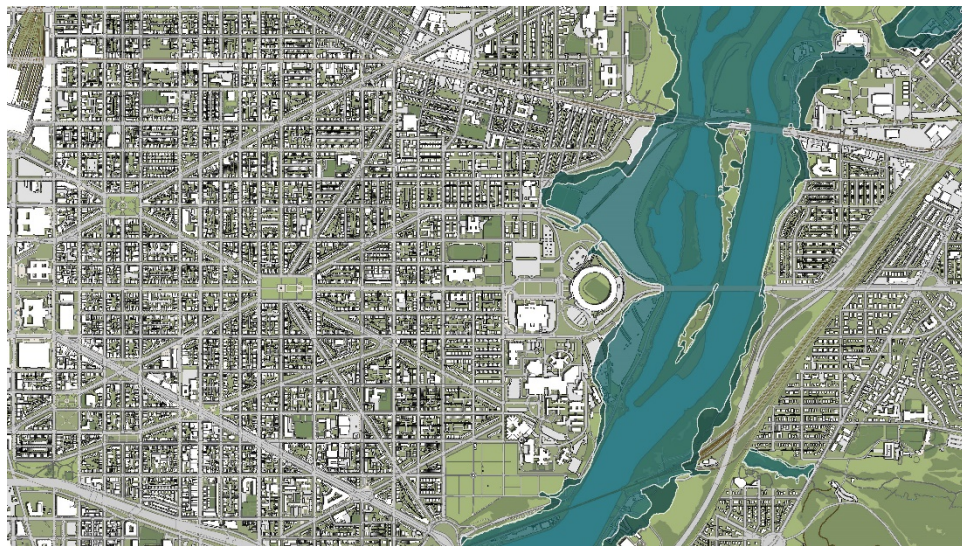


Figure 5: Floodplain (Source: Author)

⁸⁹ United States. NCP. December 2006. RFK Stadium Site: Redevelopment Study. 6.

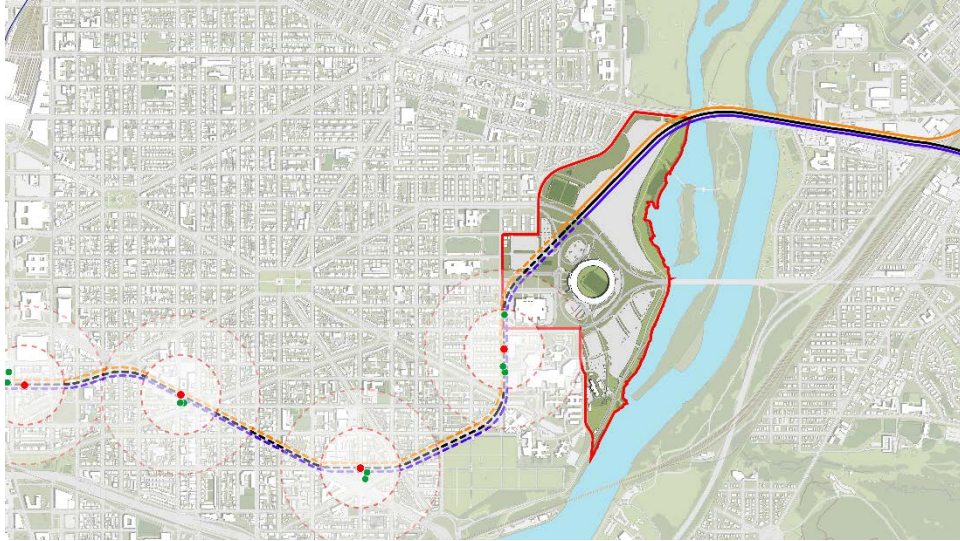


Figure 6: Metro Rail through Site (Source: Author)

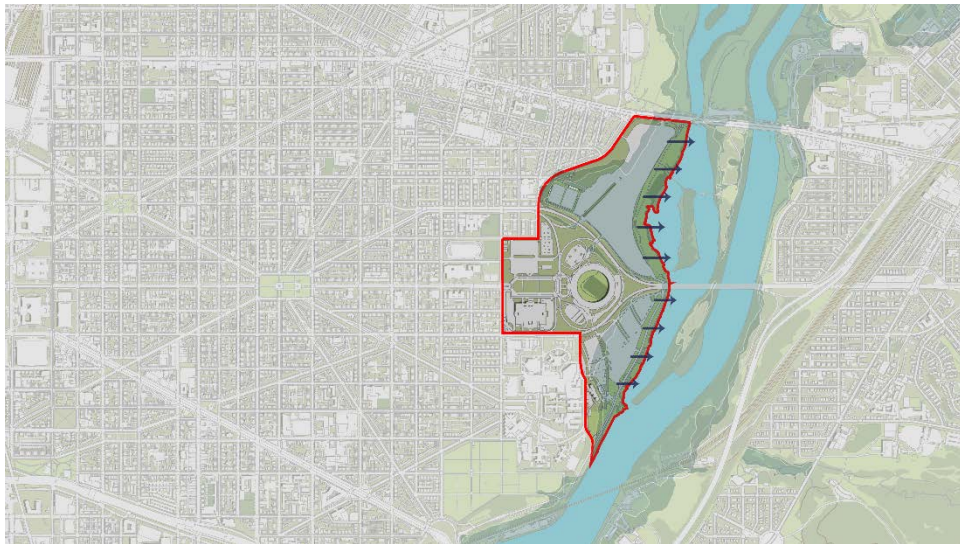


Figure 7: Runoff from Impervious Surfaces (Source: Author)

The site presents the opportunity to redevelop the street network to focus on reallocating traffic into the grid. A restructuring of the transportation system provides an opportunity to redefine Independence and Constitution Avenues and enhance East Capitol Street as a major focal point, emphasizing the eastern gateway at this point between the Anacostia riverbank and the monumental core of the district. In addition,

the location of the site presents an opportunity to create or enhance existing viewsheds towards the river and core of the city.⁹⁰

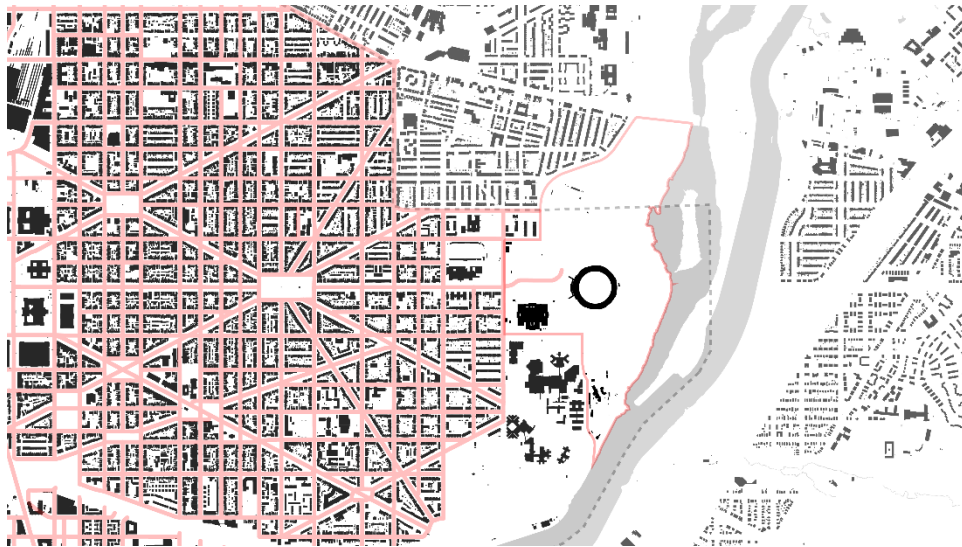


Figure 8: Existing L'Enfant Street Grid (Source: Author)

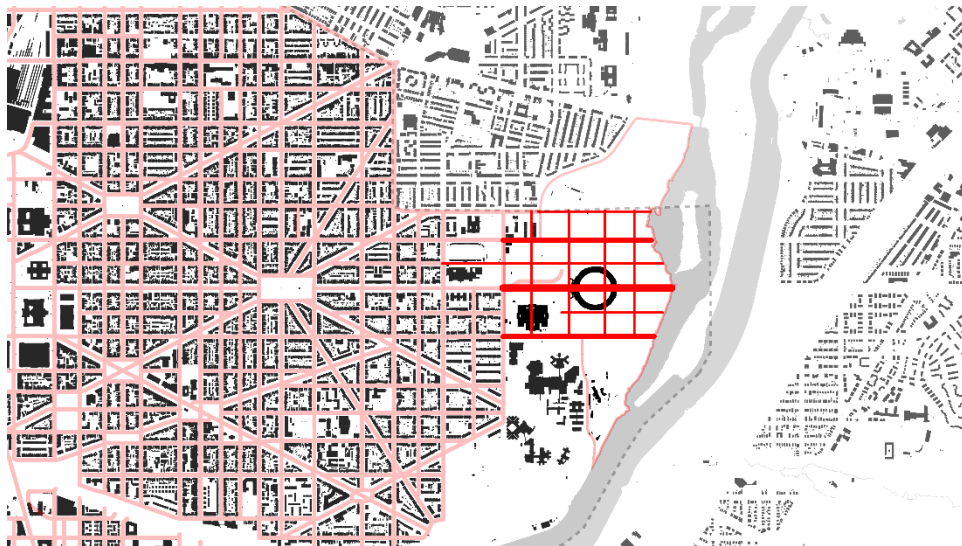


Figure 9: Extension of L'Enfant Street Grid (Source: Author)

NCPC focused on five main goals when analyzing the site. In order to best serve neighboring communities, one goal was to create a recreational area with both

⁹⁰ United States. NCPC. December 2006. RFK Stadium Site: Redevelopment Study. 6.

passive and active sources of recreation. The area currently lacks the appropriate recreational facilities, allowing this project to fulfill those gaps for the community.

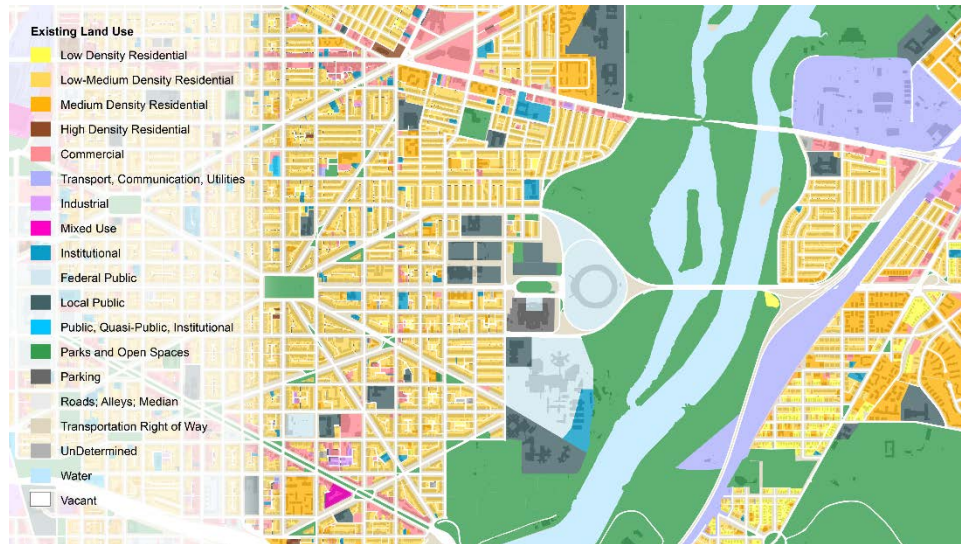


Figure 10: Site Land Use (Source: Author)

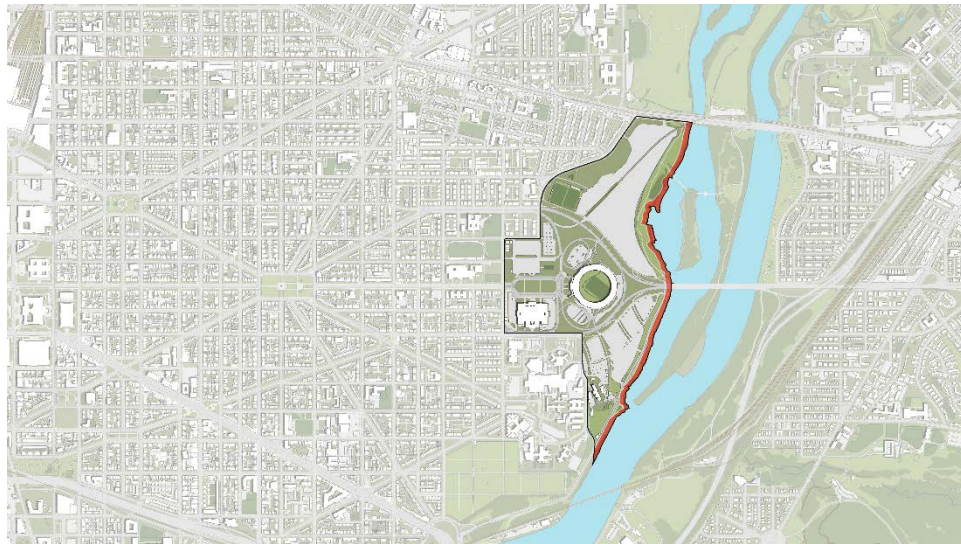


Figure 11: Site Setback (Source: Author)

The second goal was to substantiate the use of the site as the Eastern Gateway, simultaneously providing critical viewsheds. This verification in the plan creates a vision for residential and commercial development in the area, to connect the L'Enfant city and East Capitol Street entrance. The third goal is to set Constitution

Avenue, Independence Avenue and East Capitol Street as symmetric key avenues. This would reconfigure the organization of the street network as Independence Avenue, and C Street NE are currently the main avenues. Another goal is to build on existing AWI principles, creating more public waterfront access, maintaining a 200-foot barrier between the water and construction, a Riverwalk along the Anacostia River and maintaining overall ecologically beneficial construction. The final goal during the analysis of the site was to complement the proposed mixed-use development planned for the adjacent region, Reservation 13; NCPC recommends mixed-use development in the RFK site as well, comprising of residential and neighborhood retail.⁹¹

Chapter 3: Precedent Analysis

The Academy

A soccer youth academy is set up to develop and mold the talent and skills of young players. It is fundamentally a training school, where youth can improve their talents, which in this case is soccer. Academies are youth investment programs in which a team develops and nurtures young talent, hoping to create players talented enough to fill their first team. In contrast to many sports in America, where responsibility for development lies in the hands of volunteer coaches and school teachers, clubs take responsibility for the development of young athletes. Youth development is a key factor in the most successful clubs, such as F.C. Barcelona,

⁹¹ United States. NCPC. December 2006. RFK Stadium Site: Redevelopment Study. 7.

AFC Ajax, and Sporting Clube de Portugal. Being a largely new entity in America, it was advantageous to examine these European precedents, which have proven to be successful over the years.

FC Barcelona - Centro de Formació Oriol Tort

Barcelona is one of the most successful soccer clubs in history, with much of its success often credited to its prolific youth academy, La Masia, producing players such as Lionel Messi and Andres Iniesta. La Masia became a residence for players who lived outside the city in 1979; the original building has since been replaced by the new Masia, Centro de Formació Oriol Tort. The new Masia opened in 2011 at the Sant Joan Despí training ground.⁹²

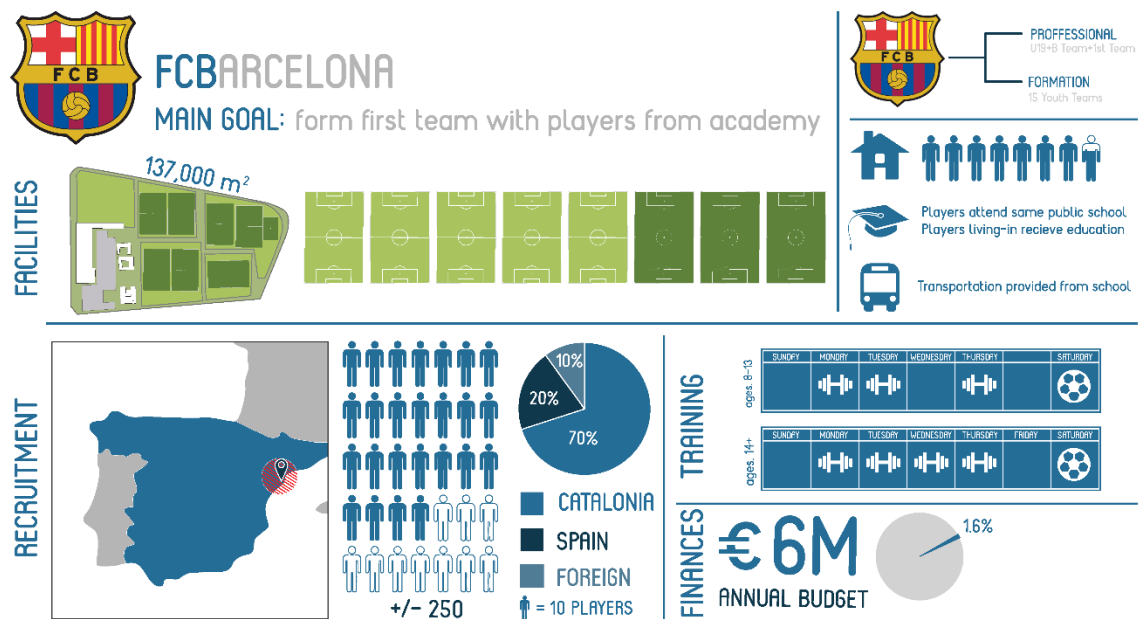


Figure 12: FC Barcelona Overview (Source: Author)

⁹² "La Masia." FCBarcelona. Accessed December 19, 2016.
<https://www.fcbarcelona.com/club/facilities/card/la-masia>.

Barcelona's training ground, Ciutat Esportiva Joan Gamper, sits embedded in the edge of the urban context of the city, relatively close to the first team stadium, Camp Nou. All the training facilities are composed in the same location; the footprint of the grounds encompasses 137,000 m² including: 8 training fields; 5 natural and 3 artificial, a training center which acts as a multisport arena, a grandstand, and the academy building.⁹³ The grounds are surrounded by residential buildings and bounded by the highway to the south. The training grounds are surrounded by walls and fences, which provide privacy for training sessions, but also help to serve as a foundation for manicured fields in a topographically challenged area. Although walled, the youth academy training sessions are allowed spectators, customarily family; the first team, though, requires more isolation from the public.⁹⁴ These barriers also obstruct views to and from the training fields, basically eliminating any visual connection between the team and the public. The buildings on site, on the other hand, rise above these barriers and allow the visual connection in and out of the training grounds. Whatever part of the site that is not covered with field or facility building is covered with parking, although this is little of the site, providing only what is necessary. As a privately-owned site, the training campus does nothing to construct any type of public space; it instead extends to the edge paralleling the street around it.

⁹³ "FC Barcelona, "La Masia".

⁹⁴ Jarosz, Olivier, ed. Report on Youth Academies in Europe, 32-37.



Figure 13: Ciutat Esportiva Joan Gamper Context (Source: Google Maps)



Figure 14: Relationship Camp Nou & Training Ground (Source: Author)

Barcelona's youth academy is comprised of about 250 athletes, between the ages of 8 and 19. Their recruitment focuses on an area within a one-hour radius from the city, as regulations prevent children under 16 from traveling more than an hour to an academy. Thus 70% of the academy make-up is Catalan and 20% Spanish; the remaining players are foreign. The academy only costs the club about six million dollars a year, which makes up only about 1.6% of the entire budget.⁹⁵ Barcelona's

⁹⁵ Jarosz, Olivier, ed. Report on Youth Academies in Europe, 32-37.

Academy building, Centro de Formació Oriol Tort, provides living arrangements and education for the athletes that reside there. The building measures a total of 6,000 m² over five floors; including dining rooms, classrooms, and dorms. The building houses 83 athletes; those athletes receive a soccer-centric education in house. The other players, not living in the academy, all attend the same public school; the club provides transportation from school to training for those players.⁹⁶

Sporting Clube de Portugal – Academia Sporting

Sporting Clube de Portugal, or Sporting for short, is a powerhouse for producing top players, such as Cristiano Ronaldo and Luis Figo; the club has become famous for its renowned youth program. Today, Sporting is often used as a model for other clubs to develop their youth. The current facilities opened in 2002 in the Alcochete municipality of Portugal's capital, Lisbon.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ "FC Barcelona, "La Masia".

⁹⁷ Mahadevan, Maya. "How Sporting CP's youth academy has shaped Portugal." Sportskeeda. July 10, 2016. Accessed December 19, 2016. <http://www.sportskeeda.com/football/how-sporting-cps-youth-academy-has-shaped-portugal>.

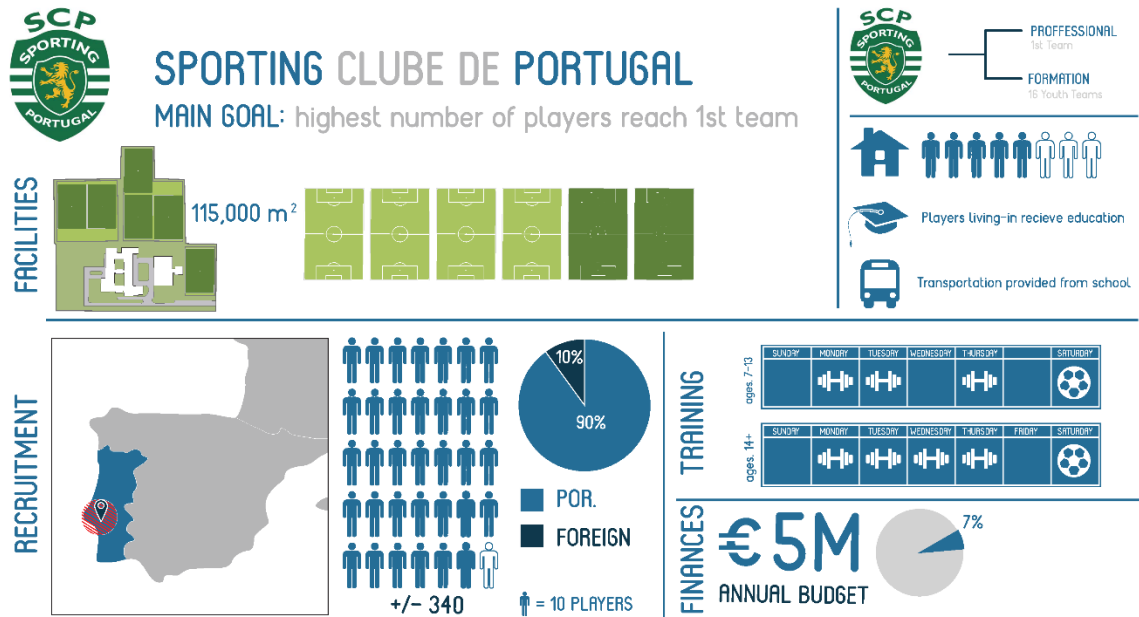


Figure 15: Sporting Clube Overview (Source: Author)

Sporting's training ground, Academia Sporting, sits isolated in the middle of a rural area, bounded by forested land, positioned almost 20 miles away from the first team stadium, across the Rio Tajo. Sporting's grounds are all compacted together to create the smallest footprint at about 100,000 m²; including 6 training fields; 4 natural and 2 artificial, training center, and the academy building. The grounds are completely secluded, 5 miles away from the urban city, in order to have total privacy for training sessions, although family is allowed to visit.



Figure 16: Academia Sporting Context (Source: Google Maps)

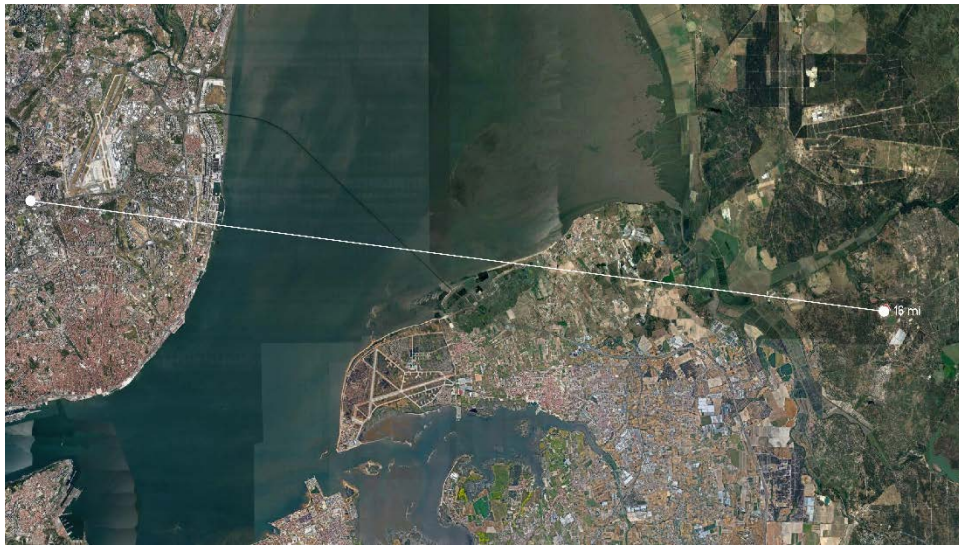


Figure 17: Relationship Estádio José Alvalade & Training Ground (Source: Author)

Sporting's youth academy is comprised of about 340 athletes, between the ages of 8 and 19. Their recruitment focuses on an area within a one-hour radius from the city, as regulations prevent children under 16 from traveling more than an hour to an academy. Thus 90% of the academy make-up is Portuguese and the remaining foreign. The academy only costs the club about five million dollars a year, which makes up only about 5% of the entire budget.⁹⁸ Sporting's academy building provides

⁹⁸ Jarosz, Olivier, ed. Report on Youth Academies in Europe, 74-79.

living arrangements and education for the athletes that reside there. The building measures about 10,000 m²; including dining rooms, classrooms, and dorms. The building houses 50 athletes and those athletes receive a soccer-centric education.⁹⁹

AFC Ajax – De Toekomst

Ajax is the most successful Dutch club; their youth academy is known as the breeding ground of Dutch football, having developed talents such as Johan Crujff and Dennis Bergkamp.¹⁰⁰ In 1934, the club moved into the stadium “De Meer;” it was then that Ajax would begin to develop its prolific youth development system. In 1996 Ajax had outgrown De Meer, thus moving into their modern stadium, Amsterdam Arena. Then, the youth academy received an update moving into De Toekomst, which translates to “The Future” in English.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Jarosz, Olivier, ed. Report on Youth Academies in Europe, 74-79.

¹⁰⁰ Youth Academy." Ajax. Accessed December 19, 2016. <http://english.ajax.nl/youth-academy/youth-academy.htm>.

¹⁰¹ "History." Ajax. Accessed December 19, 2016. <http://english.ajax.nl/the-club/history.htm>.

land.¹⁰² Access to the training grounds is restricted, but spectators are allowed at the training sessions of the youth teams, with the only areas prohibited being the first team area and the indoor performance center.¹⁰³ As a result of the site location and the value of Amsterdam land there is no wastage of space, therefore the grounds maximize the site boundaries, forgoing any type of public space. Although, in its context, there is nothing for a public space to form a connection with.

Ajax's youth academy is comprised of about 200 athletes, between the ages of 7 and 20. Their recruitment focuses on an area within a one-hour radius from the city, as regulations prevent children under 16 from traveling more than an hour to an academy. Thus, 95% of the academy make-up is Dutch. The academy only costs the club about six million dollars a year, which makes up only about 9% of the entire budget.¹⁰⁴ Ajax's academy has a soccer-only focus, so the club provides no living arrangements, or education for the students, although they do provide transportation between school and training. The building measures about 4,000 m²; including dining rooms, classrooms, and dorms.¹⁰⁵

The Ajax academy is a culture of constant improvement in which players fight to survive – they either succeed and advance or are discarded. It is not what most would regard as a child-friendly environment.¹⁰⁶ The academy culture is a tough one, which is why they not only teach football but education. The club is criticized for

¹⁰² McVeigh, Tracy. "The Dutch solution to floods: live with water, don't fight it." *The Guardian*, February 15, 2014. Accessed December 19, 2016. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2014/feb/16/flooding-netherlands>.

¹⁰³ Jarosz, Olivier, ed. *Report on Youth Academies in Europe*, 20-25.

¹⁰⁴ Jarosz, Olivier, ed. *Report on Youth Academies in Europe*, 20-25.

¹⁰⁵ Jarosz, Olivier, ed. *Report on Youth Academies in Europe*, 20-25.

¹⁰⁶ Sokolove, Michael. "How a Soccer Star Is Made." *The New York Times*. June 02, 2010. Accessed December 19, 2016. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/06/magazine/06Soccer-t.html>.

becoming too mercantile and coldblooded. “What made them great, these heroes they create, now go on to stardom so quickly somewhere else.” – John Hackworth – former US youth coach.¹⁰⁷ The purpose of the academy is to develop players and bring the up to the first team as soon as possible. Volunteer scout for Ajax, Ronald de Jong, says

“I am never looking for a result — for example, which boy is scoring the most goals or even who is running the fastest. That may be because of their size and stage of development. I want to notice how a boy runs. Is he on his forefeet, running lightly? Does he have creativity with the ball? Does he seem that he is really loving the game? I think these things are good at predicting how he’ll be when he is older.”

Ajax youth academy does not act as a boarding school; players live within a 35-mile radius of Amsterdam. The academy operates a fleet of buses to shuttle the players halfway through the school day to be met with tutors. The cost is completely covered by the club, save for a 13 euro annual insurance fee. Through age 12, players train only three times a week with one game on the weekend. It is important to allow the kids to maintain their private and family life; playing with their friends on the streets can sometimes be more important. In The Netherlands players can end up with less education than their parents by pursuing professional careers, meaning a less-demanding high-school curriculum than normal.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Sokolove, “How a Soccer Star”.

¹⁰⁸ Sokolove, “How a Soccer Star”.



Figure 19: De Toekomst Context (Source: Google Maps)

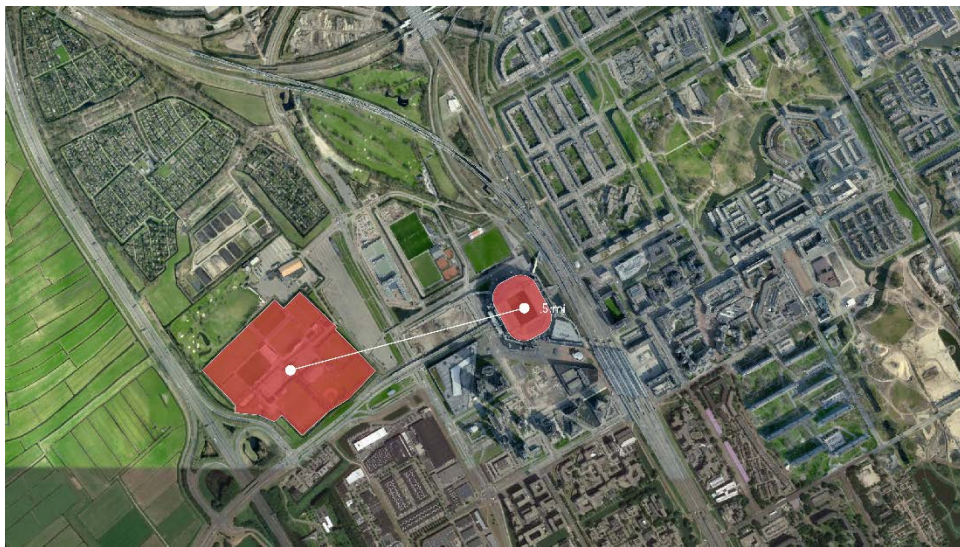


Figure 20: Relationship: Johan Cruijff Arena & Training Ground

“I would feel very bad if I’m not one of them,” Dylan Rooi, a youth player at Ajax, said. “I have tried everything I can do to make it. I haven’t done as much in school as I could. I would feel like I’ve been wasting my time all these years. I would get very depressed.” In an interview, he was asked if some of what he learned at Ajax — focus, perseverance, the ability to perform under pressure — might benefit him no

matter what he ends up doing. “No,” he said, shaking his head. “We’re training for football, not for anything else.”¹⁰⁹

An American Example: Orlando City Youth Program

As a recent addition to the MLS, Orlando City SC took a controlling interest in Florida Soccer Alliance (FSA) in 2012 and transformed it into their official youth academy. Most MLS clubs academies begin training with the U-14 age group. Orlando City has a full youth system which incorporates youth from U-5 through U-18. In the beginning stages of the club’s youth program, the players begin to learn the core fundamentals of the game. At the age of eight they have the opportunity to either audition for the academy program or the recreation program. They are then allowed to change between the programs depending on the level of competitiveness in which they wish to participate.¹¹⁰

In the early stages of development player training focuses on the core fundamentals including: dribbling, passing, and shooting. As players grow into their teen years, they begin to learn how to improve tactically, while also developing their mental and physical toughness.¹¹¹

The US Soccer Development Academy (USSDA) was founded in 2007 to be the highest level of play for youth boys in the Nation. The youth league was created to aid in the development of youth throughout the country and includes three age divisions: U-13/14, U-15/16, and U-17/18. Major League Soccer made USSDA

¹⁰⁹ Sokolove, “How a Soccer Star”.

¹¹⁰ Rollins, Sean. “In Depth | A Look Inside The Academy And Youth Soccer.” Orlando City Soccer Club. February 20, 2015. Accessed January 05, 2017.

<http://www.orlandocitysc.com/post/2015/02/20/depth-look-inside-academy-and-youth-soccer>.

¹¹¹ Rollins, “In Depth”.

membership mandatory for all MLS clubs in 2008, which led most clubs to focus solely on those required age groups; Orlando City's expanded development bracket showcases the clubs dedication to youth development.¹¹²

Elite Clubs National League (ECNL) is the top level of play in the nation for girls. Although Orlando City does not currently offer a professional team for women, the clubs development program still provides young girls with a platform to achieve a college scholarship or potential professional career at a different club.¹¹³

Orlando City's Development Academy Program is the highpoint of the Orlando City youth pyramid; this program is by invitation only. All USSDA Players are fully funded, including: registration, travel and uniform costs.¹¹⁴

Orlando City's youth program is separated into four programs: Little Lions, Recreational, Academy, and Development Academy/ECNL. Little Lions acts as training for children ages 4-7, in which players develop the core technical fundamentals of the game. The Recreational and Academy tiers both train youth ages 8-18. While OCYS's focus is on developing players for the senior team, another goal was to grow the soccer culture in the area. Part of the club's way of doing this was to give all kids access to top level coaching; this is the purpose of Orlando city's recreational program. OCYS's academy teams are an extension of the first team. The Academy teams are tryout based and are split into four levels: purple, white, gold, and black; purple being the most elite squad. The older age groups are narrowed to

¹¹² Rollins, "In Depth".

¹¹³ Rollins, "In Depth".

¹¹⁴ Rollins, Sean. "Inside Orlando City's Youth Soccer Structure." The Mane Land. February 19, 2015. Accessed December 16, 2016. <http://www.themaneland.com/2015/2/19/8064571/a-look-inside-orlando-citys-youth-soccer-structure>.

just two purple level teams. Orlando City's Development Academy teams focus on players age 12-18, and act as the highest level of youth at the club. It is also fully funded by the club.¹¹⁵ (A feat which the club hopes to extend to the younger academy teams in the future) The ECNL teams train girls aged 14-18.

The Little Lions program is an 8-week program. Registration costs \$199, but the uniforms are provided. After completion of the Little Lions program the kids are encouraged to register the Junior or Developmental or Challenge Lions program.¹¹⁶ The Junior Lions, for players 8-11, have a season that lasts 8-9 weeks and registration is \$175. The Developmental Lions, for players 12-14, have a season that lasts 8-9 weeks and registration is also \$175. The challenge Recreational Program is for players aged 8-18 and offers players a competitive platform for players not part of Orlando City's academy teams; team registration is \$550 for fall in spring or \$300 for a single season.¹¹⁷

Academy Team prices range from \$935-\$1105 for U8 – U10 and \$1335-\$1605 for U11-U19.¹¹⁸

DC United Development Academy

The DC United Development Academy is DCU's premier youth program for players in age groups U-12 through U-18. The DCU Academy teams participate in the USSDA league, ten months out of the year. The DCU Academy has produced

¹¹⁵ Rollins, "Inside Orlando City's Youth".

¹¹⁶ "Little Lions." Orlando City Soccer Club. Accessed December 16, 2016.
<http://www.orlandocitysc.com/youth/little-lions>.

¹¹⁷ "Community Soccer Programs." Orlando City Soccer Club. Accessed December 16, 2016.
<http://www.orlandocitysc.com/youth/rec>.

¹¹⁸ "Academy." Orlando City Soccer Club. Accessed December 16, 2016.
<http://www.orlandocitysc.com/youth/academy>.

seven homegrown players for the first team and over 80 collegiate players. Fees for the Academy vary between \$1,500 and \$2,500. Each Academy team has a player pool of 20-25, with game day rosters having just 18 players. The teams train either at the turf fields north of RFK Stadium, Spingarn High School, or indoors at RFK.¹¹⁹

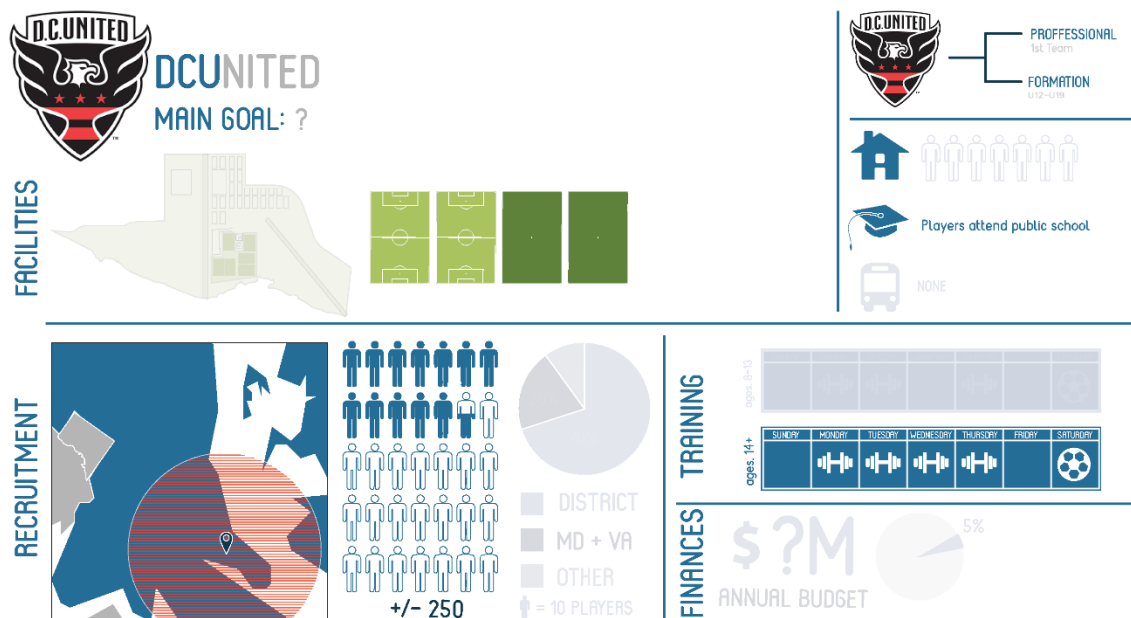


Figure 21: Existing DC United Development Academy Overview (Source: Author)

Their residency program is a partnership between the club and The Calverton School, in Huntingtown, MD. The program provides athletes with elite training from DCU's Academy staff and education from The Calverton School. Local, day students at the school receive the same training. The program is open to local, out of state and international boys and girls in grades 9-12. The residency program offers a five-day and seven-day option for students. This allows flexible schedules for players to train in the morning and afternoon. Players train on school grounds or at the RFK turf

¹¹⁹ "Academy Frequently Asked Questions." D.C. United. Accessed December 19, 2016. <http://www.dcunited.com/academy/faq>.

fields.¹²⁰ The club has several affiliate clubs in the Virginia and Maryland area which scout talent for the DCU Academy program.¹²¹

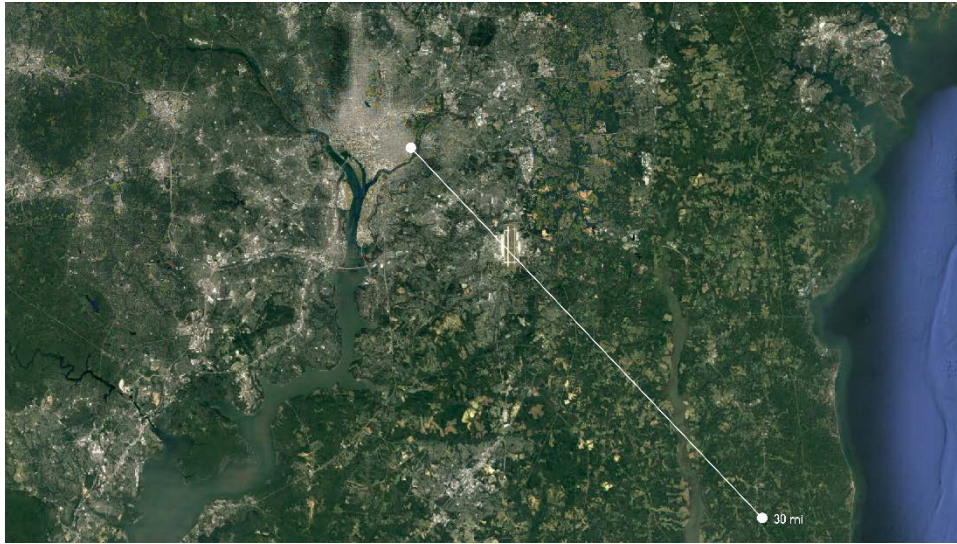


Figure 22: Relationship RFK Stadium & the Calverton School (Source: Author)

The Club entered into a partnership with The Calverton School in 2015 for player's age groups U-14 to U-18. Athletes enroll in classes and live on campus, training under the DCU Academy staff. The initial agreement was a three-year deal. The Calverton School was founded in 1967; it houses around 400 students between kindergarten and 12th grade, located in Huntingtown, MD (35 Miles southeast of RFK Stadium). The current program includes training on the grounds of Calverton in the morning, day classes, and afternoon sessions on RFK grounds with the rest of the Academy. Enrolled at the prep school, players are still responsible for tuition, which amounts to almost \$20,000 annually. DCU underwrites the costs for some players,

¹²⁰ "D.C. United Academy Residency." D.C. United. Accessed December 19, 2016. <http://www.dcunited.com/academy/calverton-residency-program>.

¹²¹ D.C. United, "Academy Frequently Asked Questions".

while others receive partial scholarship. The athletes are also still eligible for financial aid from the club.¹²²

DCU recently announced a development program for players ages 5-8, geared toward developing the principle abilities of the game. In addition to training players participate in non-competitive scrimmages. The Juniors program is an in-house league to create a more defined pathway for identification and placement into the clubs U-9 and U-10, and academy teams.¹²³ The Club also offers training programs (TP) which help to develop players aged 9-13. The TP is a two hour, once a week program that runs for six weeks. The TP is also one of the tools the club uses to identify players for their academy teams.¹²⁴ DCU's Development Training Programs provide supplemental raining to boys aged 8-12. The sessions provide players insight into the Academy's player development curriculum and methodology. The program format features six Wednesday night sessions at RFK turf fields, costing \$365.¹²⁵ DC United's Pre-Academy trains players from 12-15 who are not yet ready for the Development Academy teams. Academy teams participate in the Northeast Premier League. The annual cost is \$2,800 and covers: training gear, coaches, and transportation.¹²⁶

¹²² Goff, Steven. "D.C. United to launch youth academy residency program in Maryland." The Washington Post. February 19, 2015. Accessed December 16, 2016.
https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/soccer-insider/wp/2015/02/19/d-c-united-to-launch-youth-academy-residency-program-in-maryland/?utm_term=.93f38168a690.

¹²³ "D.C. United Juniors." D.C. United. Accessed December 19, 2016.
<http://www.dcunited.com/academy/juniors>.

¹²⁴ D.C. United, "Academy Frequently Asked Questions".

¹²⁵ "Camps and Training Programs." D.C. United. Accessed December 19, 2016.
<http://www.dcunited.com/academy/camps-and-training-programs>.

¹²⁶ D.C. United, "Academy Frequently Asked Questions".

Chapter 4: Program Analysis

Building Scale Program

The primary objective of this thesis is the development of an urban soccer academy, one that becomes integrated within the context of the city. The soccer academy is a relatively new entity in America, but the idea of an academy which is integrated into the urban context is a unique situation, even compared to the European powerhouses of the sport. The main amenities for the training grounds will be: a training center, academy residence, and the training fields. Outside of the immediate buildings, the thesis will examine how the training grounds interact with the Anacostia waterfront and the new urban development in the site. The idea is to create facility that will remain active all year. The facility will exist as both grounds for the club and recreational zones to meet the needs of the immediate community. To meet the needs of the academy, the program will include:

Training Grounds:

- 6 training fields; 4 natural and 2 artificial
- Grandstand & Interior Training Field
- Training facilities
- Academy Residence

Training Facilities:

- Weight room
- Equipment room
- Changing rooms

- Medical rooms
- Offices
- Meeting rooms

Academy Residence:

- Bedrooms
- Dining rooms
- Gymnasium
- Changing rooms
- Kitchens
- Offices
- Equipment storage
- Classrooms
- Leisure rooms
- Study rooms
- Assembly hall

Urban Scale Program

Located at the edge of the monumental core of the district, with D.C. United receiving a new stadium in Southwest D.C., the site has about 190 acres of unoccupied space, given that the RFK stadium and all its components are removed. Therefore, the site solicits new development, to give the academy building context, as well as continuing the grid of the district. Based on their analysis of the site, NCPC developed specific recommendations, which will be the basis for urban development moving forward.

Regarding the street network, NCPC recommends reconnecting Constitution Avenue and Independence Avenue as main streets connecting to the East Capitol Street Bridge. Access would be improved by extending Water Street to reach Constitution Avenue. This growth will lead to increased recreation and cultural opportunities.¹²⁷

There are two areas in this site that could be suitable for cultural works. The first is a 30-acre site at the East Capitol Street terminus, where the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium currently stands. The other site is a 15-acre site across from the Armory. These areas could be developed to be museums, aquariums, memorials or other buildings that improve the community's relationship with art.¹²⁸

Recreation is very important to be established in this site. Eighty acres of land within the floodplain can be transformed into fields suited for sports and various assorted other recreational activities. Some of these activities include tennis courts and basketball courts, as well as recreational centers. These other recreation centers should be in the lot between Oklahoma Avenue and the Metro Line. The permeable recreational surfaces are gathered around the waterfront, while the parking should be nearby but also serve the activities on Heritage and Kingman Islands as well. There must be pedestrian paths between the proposed Riverwalk around the Anacostia River and the recreation areas. Roadways should be used to serve the recreational areas, in a way that avoids further dividing up the area.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ United States. NCPC. December 2006. RFK Stadium Site: Redevelopment Study. 10.

¹²⁸ United States. NCPC. December 2006. RFK Stadium Site: Redevelopment Study. 11.

¹²⁹ United States. NCPC. December 2006. RFK Stadium Site: Redevelopment Study. 12.

The area between the East Capitol Street terminuses along the 22nd Street axis near Constitution Avenue, on the northern part of the site, is available for mixed-use development. The designs in this area will consist of architecture that reflects the unique function of this area, as a gateway. There are 500,000 to 700,000 square feet of available space for development in the larger two blocks, and 100,000 to 300,000 of available square feet in the smaller two blocks. When it is developed, it will have to be designed to complement the existing residential area.¹³⁰

Building heights transition between the proposed development by AWI and the neighboring residential areas to the north of the RFK site. The height of this area must be in between the two heights. NCPC recommends a building height of 70 to 90 feet in height in the East Capitol Street Terminus. 70 feet is recommended in the superblock area and the mixed-use development in the northern part of the site is recommended to be between 40 and 60 feet in height.¹³¹

A redevelopment of the RFK stadium provides a unique opportunity to clean up the environmental conditions of the area. Currently, 52% of the site is covered with concrete and asphalt, which leads to more runoff and pollution in the Anacostia River. The soil shows evidence of contamination of lead, chromium, and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons. To truly treasure the Riverwalk and waterfront available to the public, it is important to improve the environmental conditions of the Anacostia River. Some specific recommendations were made regarding the environment. First, all buildings should carry out LEED standards, especially the use of green roofs

¹³⁰ United States. NCPC. December 2006. RFK Stadium Site: Redevelopment Study. 13.

¹³¹ United States. NCPC. December 2006. RFK Stadium Site: Redevelopment Study. 13.

which provide for storm water management and add green space. Rainwater can be stored in underground cisterns. A beautiful way to filter water is to install rock gardens or tiered wetlands to prevent erosion and scouring. Finally, the barrier between water and development should remain 200 feet.¹³²

Chapter 5: Architectural Response

The Need for an Academy

Despite being a world leader in economy and population, the United States has failed to compete at an international level in soccer. In fact, in 2017, the United States failed to qualify for the World Cup, for the first time since before 1990. With success in other sports, such as basketball and football, there is no reason for the United States to be unable to bring a competitive soccer team to the international level.

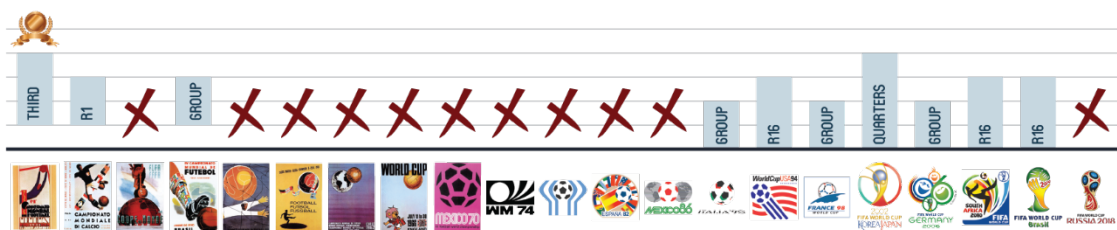


Figure 23: USMNT World Cup Runs (Source: Author)

The main deterrent from creating a top team lies in how players are developed in the United States. Often, players are taught to be athletic rather than skilled by volunteer coaches, who lack the necessary technical skills themselves, to be

¹³² United States. NCP. December 2006. RFK Stadium Site: Redevelopment Study. 14.

successful soccer players. Another unfortunate, but often scenario, is one where the game is made unenjoyable because the coaching focus is on winning games, rather than developing players, leaving some players, with potential, on the bench.

In the past decade, the United States has only been able to produce one international superstar, Christian Pulisic. Although he is an excellent soccer player, much of his fame is due to his origin as an American, playing in Europe. While other nations, such as England, France, or Brazil, are able to consistently produce top-performing players, the United States has produced one.



Figure 24: Young Talent Production (Source: Author)

During the 1980's, the English Football Association realized their national team was no longer developing great players. To resolve this problem, the English FA mandated the creation of youth academies, at the club level, to train players from a young age. Recently, the USSF has come to the same realization, and are now mandating the creation of their own academies, with the goal of developing greater players for the US national team. However, these academies are underdeveloped compared to the European academies due to their recent conception. In order to create a strong national team, the individual MLS teams must first improve. This will be accomplished through youth development academies.

Team Selection

The DC area and surrounding region is one of the most highly interested regions for soccer in the United States. In culmination with the proximity to the nation's capital, DC United would be the perfect zone for redevelopment of the soccer academy. In addition, DC United has one of the only pay-to-play MLS academies in the country, and their program is connected to the Calverton School, which is over 30 miles away from DC. The current academy only accommodates students aged 12 through 18, and only has four fields. Furthermore, DC United is relocating to Audi Stadium in Southwest DC for the 2018 season, leaving the current RFK stadium site vacant.

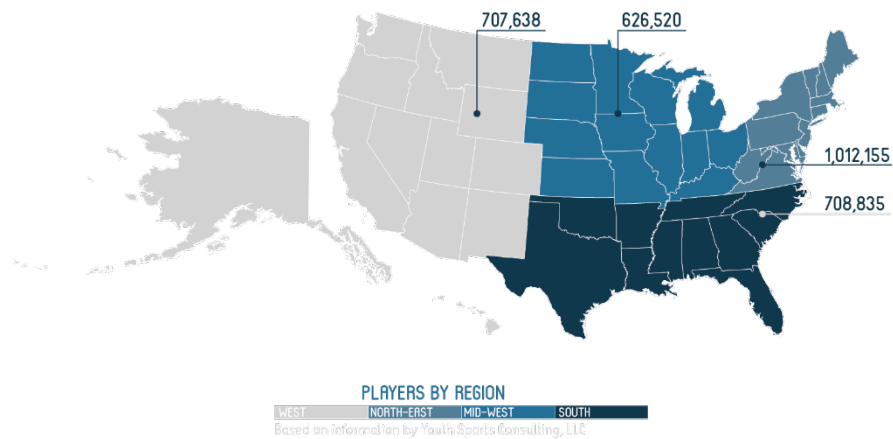


Figure 25: Population of Players by Regions (Source: Author)

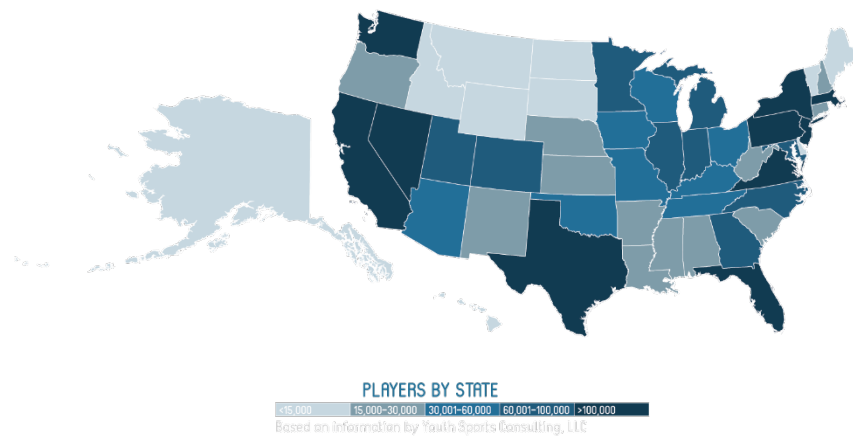


Figure 26: Population of Players by State (Source: Author)

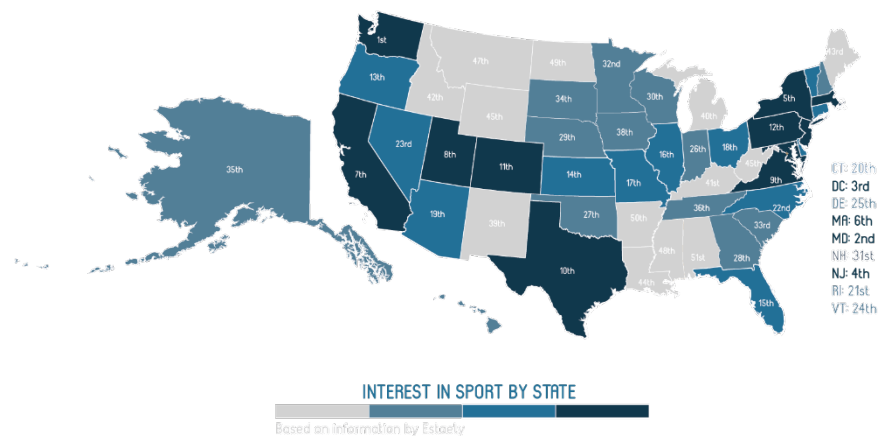


Figure 27: Interest in Sport by State (Source: Author)

Site Design

The main intent of this design is to create a zone for the development of players and interest in the sport. Another goal is to bring the academy closer to the city, incorporated into the urban context to stimulate community interaction and recreation. In addition, the site will be utilized to create public spaces, recreational leagues, clinics, and other recreational activities and cultural opportunities.

The site design of this thesis began by zooming out past the RFK stadium site, to observe how the site fits within the DC context. East Capitol Street acts as the main axis of the monumental core of the city, which terminates at the Lincoln Memorial. The monumental core along this axis is bounded to the north and south by Independence and Constitution avenues. By observing the zone more local to the RFK stadium site, the axis of East Capitol Street can be seen to terminate at the Capitol Building. By dividing the context into zones based on the symmetrical axis along Lincoln Park, the site called for a new cultural building in relationship to the DC Armory to mirror the relationship between the civic buildings to the east of the Capitol Building and leaving the zone to the north of East Capitol Street as a location for the academy program.

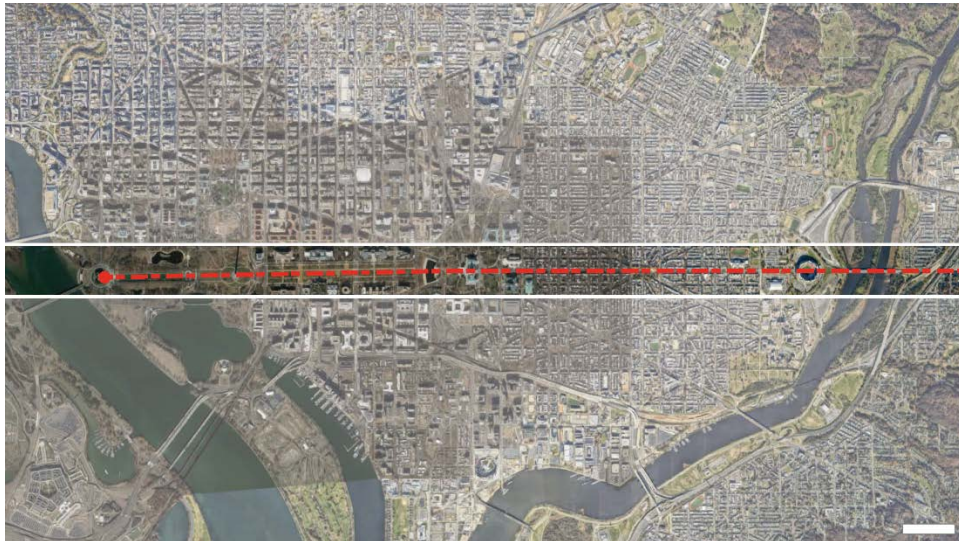


Figure 28: East Capitol Street Axis (Source: Author)

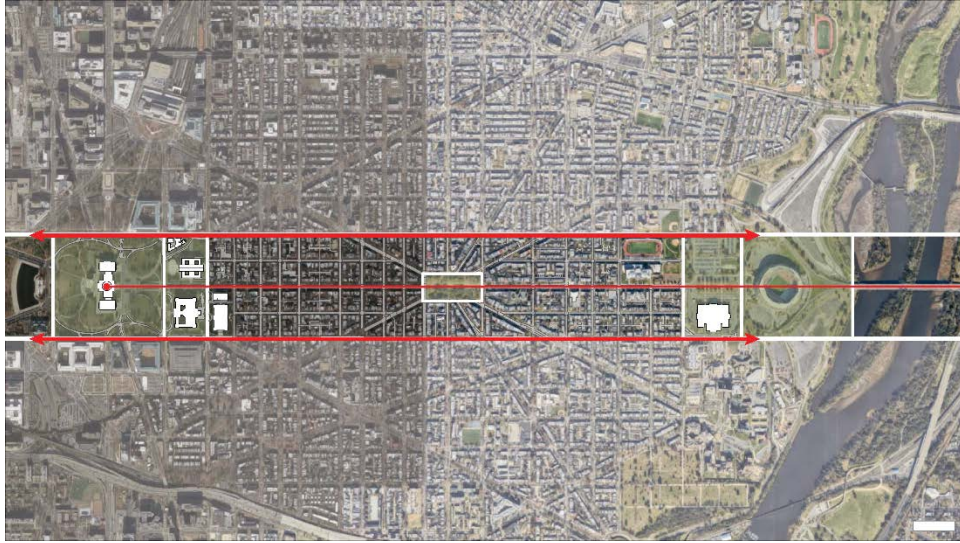


Figure 29: Monumental Core Boundary (Source: Author)

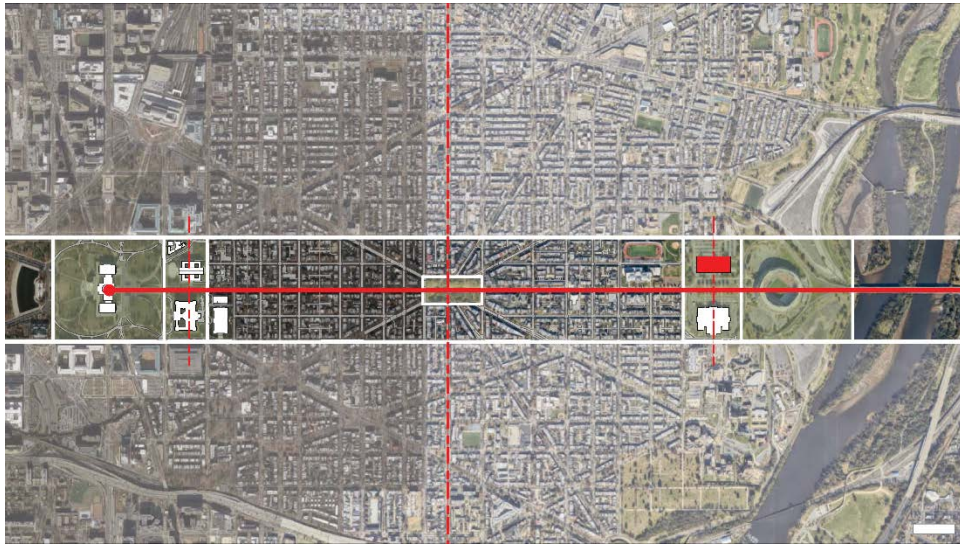


Figure 30: Monumental Corridor Symmetry (Source: Author)

In order to create an academy in which soccer is integrated into the city, the site needed a major development to replace the parking lots and impervious surfaces with new development and recreational zones. The existing site needed to be cleared to make way for the extension of the L'Enfant grid, connecting the city to the waterfront. East Capitol Street maintains to act as the main east-west axis for the city,

but a new street was added to act as the main north-south axis of travel to redirect traffic to Independence and Constitution Avenues.



Figure 31: Existing Site (Source: Author)



Figure 32: Extension of Grid (Source: Author)



Figure 33: New Development

Furthermore, the new street connects the public to the new development in the north of the site and the future development of reservation 13 to the south of the site. These axes were emphasized by creating a corridor of mixed use buildings, designed for commercial use at the pedestrian level. The new development gives the built environment a strong edge, bounding the new recreational zone between the built city and the waterfront. Due to lack of commercial use buildings in the area, the new development is largely new mixed-use development to bring life and activity to the area.

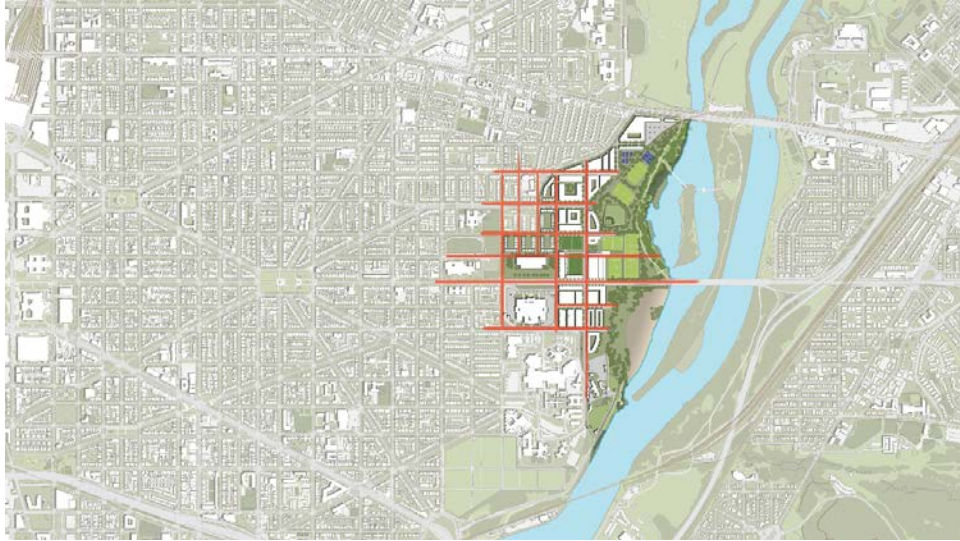


Figure 34: New Development Grid (Source: Author)

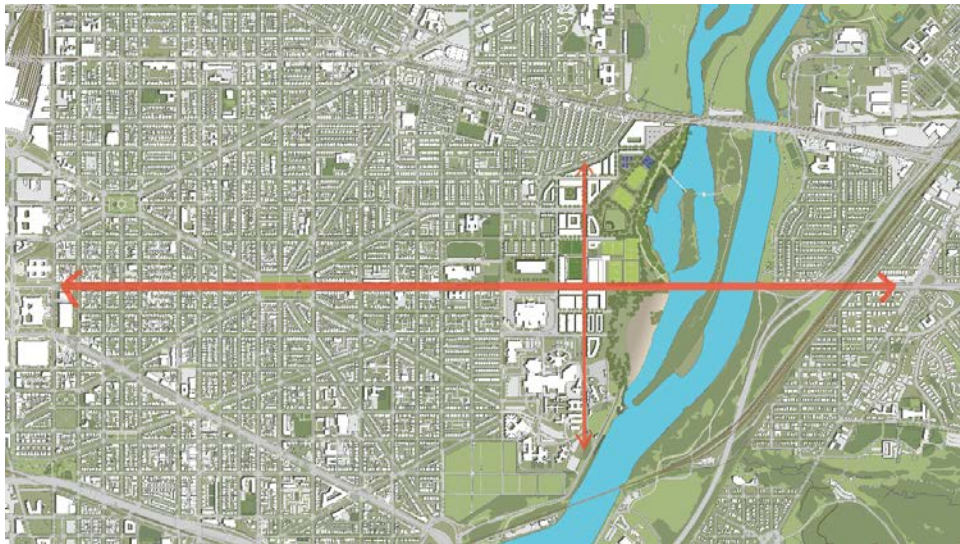


Figure 35: Main Axes (Source: Author)

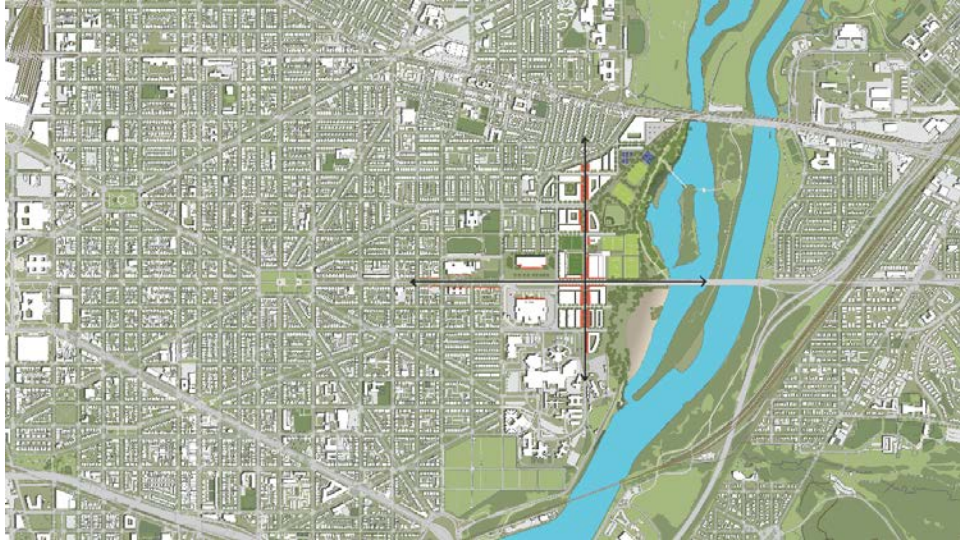


Figure 36: Emphasis of Axes (Source: Author)



Figure 37: Edge Created by New Development

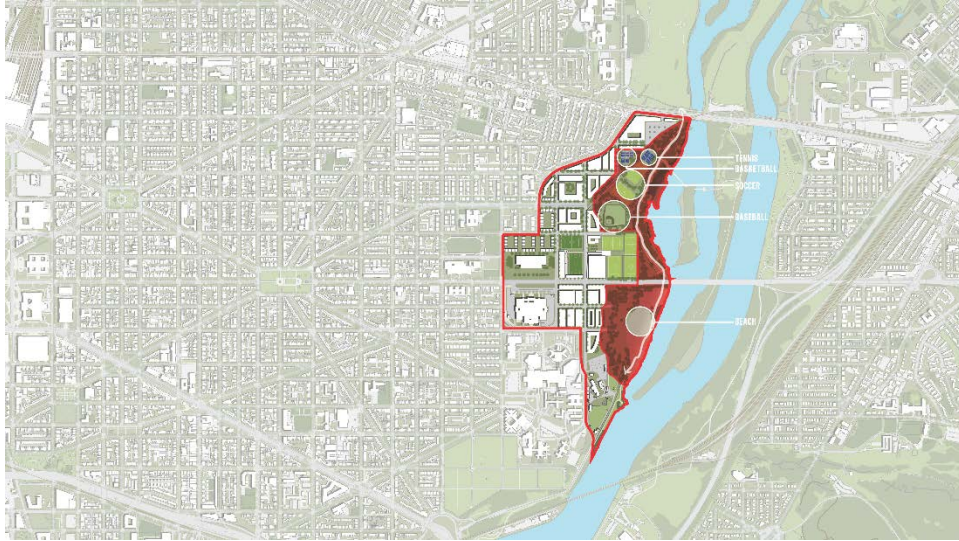


Figure 38: Newly Developed Recreational Zones at Waterfront (Source: Author)

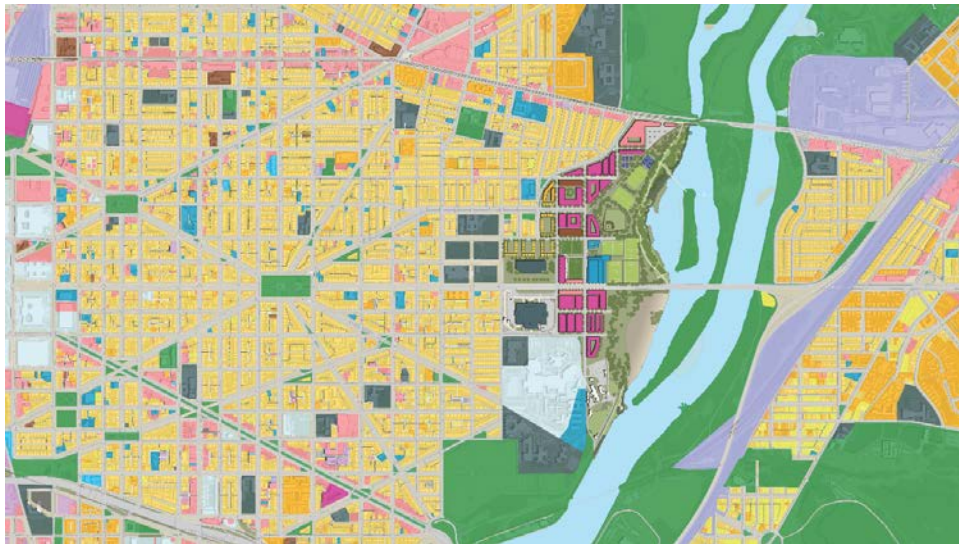


Figure 39: New Site Building Use (Source: Author)

Academy Design

The academy is located at the intersection of the main east-west and north-south axes in order to increase accessibility and visibility for the public. This will create a high level of interaction between the public and the academy. Typically, the space requirement for fields in academies pushes the location of academies to the outside or suburbs of cities. In order to combat this, the site was separated into two

sections to fit the academy program into the newly-created grid. More importantly, this split provides an opportunity to open up recreational fields for public use. By opening a section of the academy program to the public, a dialogue can be formed between the academy and the community, in hopes of forming a stronger tie to the team. These publicly-accessible fields will house recreational soccer leagues for multiple age groups, provided with coaches through the academy. This way, youth outside the academy are given the same type of opportunity, and similar training to their peers. Space can also be used to hold clinics and for open public use.



Figure 40: Boundary of Academy Program (Source: Author)



Figure 41: Division of Public and Private Use Zones (Source: Author)

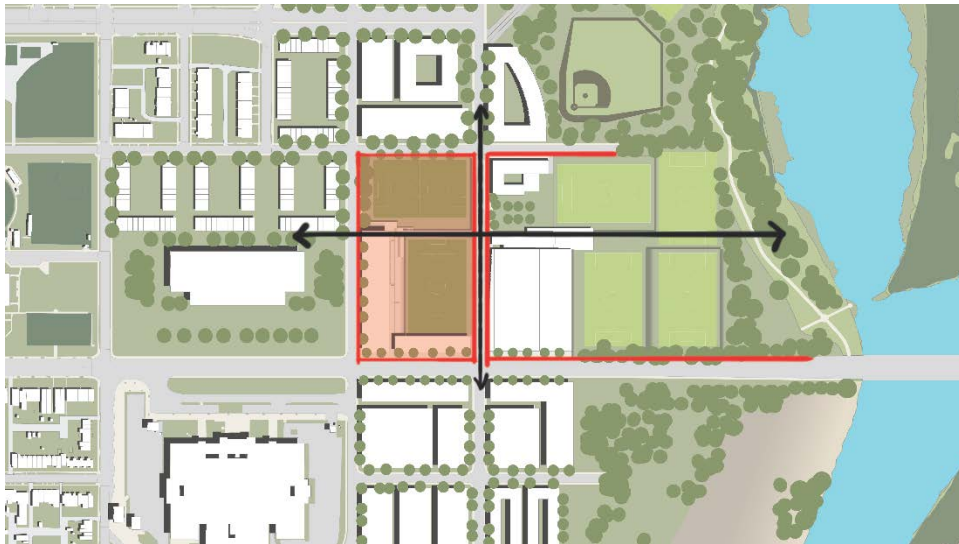


Figure 42: Circulatory Axes of Immediate Site (Source: Author)

The academy is split into three main parts: indoor training field, training facilities building, and academy residence. The residence is located at the northern portion of site in order to merge with the surrounding residential development and to isolate the students from the busyness of East Capitol Street.



Figure 43: Program: Interior Training Field (Source: Author)



Figure 44: Program: Training Facilities Building (Source: Author)



Figure 45: Program: Academy Residence Building (Source: Author)

The U-shaped residence building form creates an edge on both of the streets it faces, while also creating a private courtyard for the academy players who reside. This provides a safe and secluded recreational space for uses other than soccer. The public zone is maintained to the street level, sandwiched between two private sections. The upper levels house the dorms for the academy athletes and the ground floor houses the changing room, dining and player lounge. The ground floor program provides a permeable semi-public zone in which the youth can move between the spaces with the courtyard, formed by the residence, acting as the central hub. The building has two zones of leisure which rise vertically through the building, paralleling the vertical circulation, to connect the different levels of the building.

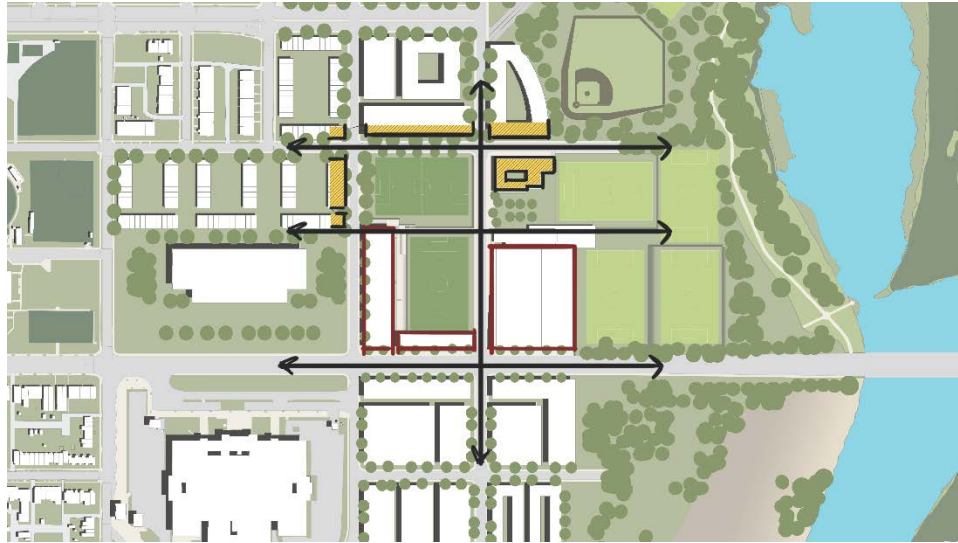


Figure 46: Location of Residence Building (Source: Author)

The edges of the residence building and training facilities building act as boundaries to shape a plaza, which acts a central hub of the site, allowing access to all other areas of the training ground, for players and academy staff. The training facilities building is the main public thoroughfare for the site, moving people from the city to the waterfront. The public promenade begins at the western fields, which are accessible to the public, and continues to the lobby of the training facilities building, which then redirects the public to the main path, open to pedestrians, where visitors can learn about soccer, or view soccer practices and games. The promenade then continues through the remainder of the training facility, providing visual access to the method by which professional athletes train and maintain their physical level. The public is maintained to this path of travel, limiting interaction and providing privacy to the staff and players. There are two levels of offices for the academy staff above the street level.

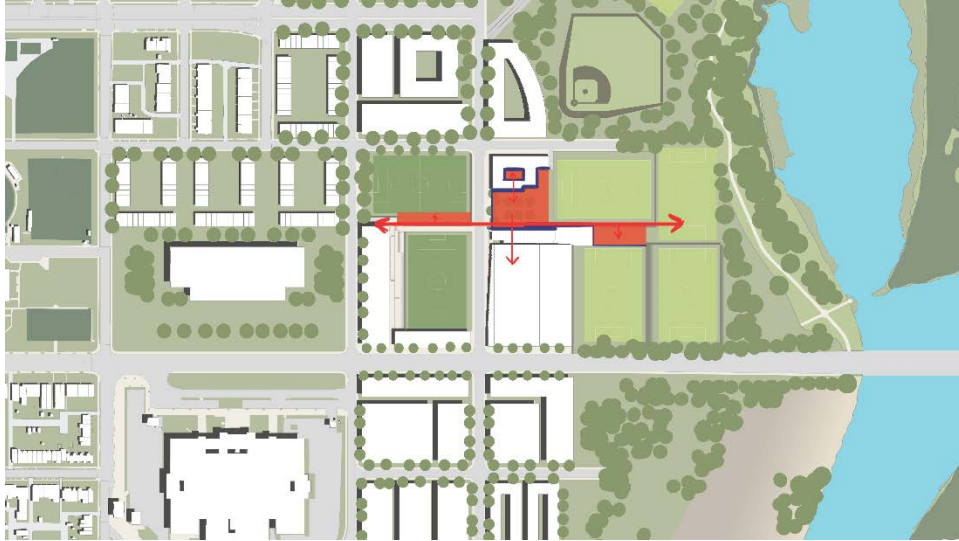


Figure 47: Edge as Boundary for Plaza (Source: Author)



Figure 48: Edge as Boundary for Fields (Source: Author)

The training facilities building is divided into two main masses: the physical training zone and the offices. The public level sits between these two zones, as part of the office building mass. The two zones mirror the terracing of the site in order to reiterate the public promenade from the city to the waterfront. This form also connects the public level to the grandstand by continuing the street level datum. The building contains two main circulation towers, which support trusses, which in turn,

support the lower floors of the building. This allows for column-free layout throughout the building. Lifting the office mass off the ground allows a large opening to denote the entrance into the interior training field and allowing for the transportation of large equipment needed for training and maintenance.

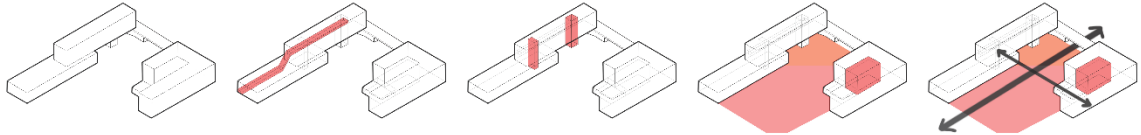


Figure 49: Training Facilities Building Circulation and Edge as Boundary (Source: Author)



Figure 50: Training Facility Building Structural Detail (Source: Author)

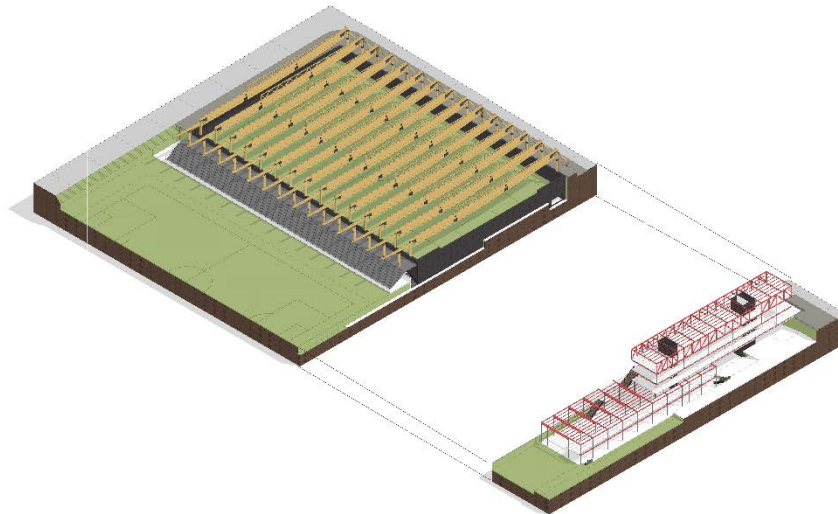


Figure 51: Structural Diagram: Training Facility and Interior Field (Source: Author)

Training fields are located below street level, taking advantage of the crater left behind after the removal of RFK stadium. The fields are terraced from west to

east, descending towards waterfront, emphasizing the linear motion from the city to the water. The terracing creates a distinction between each of the training fields, giving each academy team separation from each other. Separating the fields from the street levels provides a separation of public and private which is necessary for training and provides safety for the youth. It also allows for a safe and free-flowing movement between the different zones of the training grounds, separate from the vehicular traffic at the street.

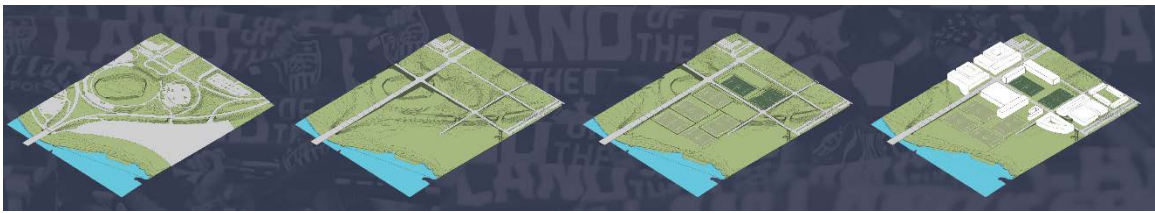


Figure 52: Transformation of Site to Terracing fields (Source: Author)



Figure 53: Section Diagram: Promenade through Training Facility

The indoor field to the south of the site was created for use during inclement weather, but can also be used as an additional site, housing public clinics or training. The terracing of fields on the site allows for one level of parking underneath the indoor field, which can be accessed through the plaza. Furthermore, the indoor field acts as a backdrop for a grandstand to house the academy games. Due to the long span necessary to house indoor training fields, (250 feet), cross-laminated timber beams were used to cross the long span. The beams are built with three parts and

must be assembled on-site with ridged steel connections. A wood structural system was used for the indoor field to provide a more natural aesthetic.

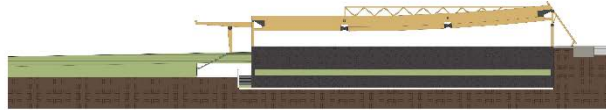


Figure 54: Interior Field Structural Detail (Source: Author)

Conclusion

The method which the United States develops its most promising players is completely opposed to how most elite nations develop players. Americans prefer putting together teams that are focused on getting the win, even at the youth level. The elite nations build individual players with superior skills who later come together to form a successful team. The Europeans build up the talents of the individuals, whereas the Americans under develop the individual to focus on the outcomes.¹³³ Higher value is place on completion over practice and the balance between games and practice becomes skewed, resulting in a stunted development. Over three million boys under the age of 18 participate in organized soccer in the US, but we have yet to produce a group of elite performers able to compete on equal terms with the world's elite.¹³⁴

There are two ways to become an elite player. One is to spend hours in pickup games, in streets and alleyways, the way of many South American children. The other is the academy method: scientific training, attention to detail, and time touching the

¹³³ Sokolove, "How a Soccer Star".

¹³⁴ Sokolove, "How a Soccer Star".html

ball opposed to overplaying organized games. Due to the popularity of the sport, or lack thereof, in America, the latter is the more viable option. Unfortunately, US soccer conforms to neither aforementioned model; our sports leagues are often community-based, run by volunteers rather than professionals. Club financed training would bring some welcome changes; players whose training is paid for by the club would more likely be treated as investments, therefore developed with more care for their physical well-being.¹³⁵

¹³⁵ Sokolove, "How a Soccer Star".

Appendix



Figure 55: Perspective at East Fields (Source: Author)



Figure 56: Perspective from Public Terrace (Source: Author)



Figure 57: Perspective at Training Facility Lobby (Source: Author)



Figure 58: Perspective at Training Facility Hall (Source: Author)



Figure 59 Perspective at Weight Room (Source: Author)



Figure 60: Perspective at Interior Fields (Source: Author)



Figure 61: Perspective at Sidewalk outside Interior Fields (Source: Author)



Figure 62 Perspective at Player Plaza (Source: Author)



Figure 63: Perspective at Training Facility Offices (Source: Author)

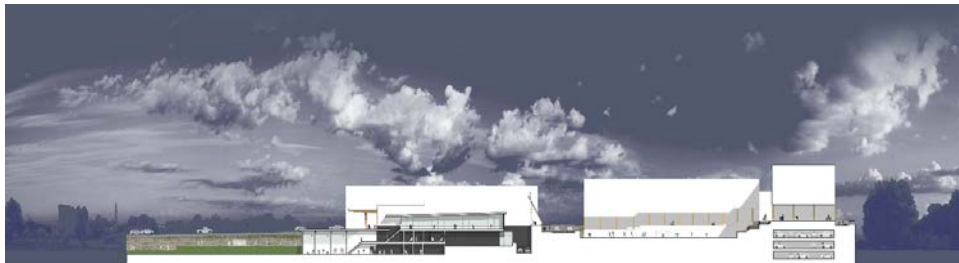


Figure 64: Section through Main Public Promenade (Source: Author)



Figure 65: Section Perspective through Site (Source: Author)



Figure 66: Section through Residence (Source: Author)

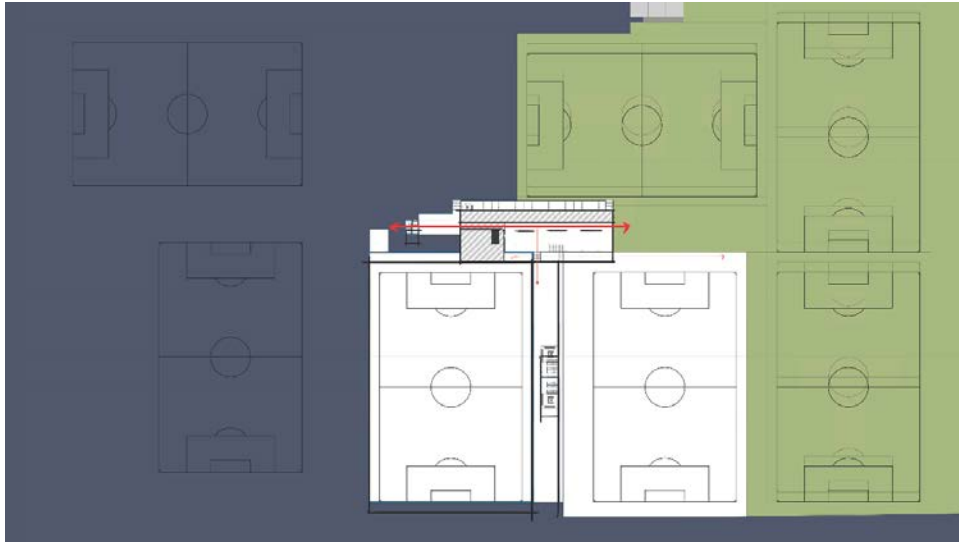


Figure 67: Diagrammatic Plan: Ground Level (Source: Author)



Figure 68: Diagrammatic Plan: First Level (Source: Author)



Figure 69: Diagrammatic Plan: Street Level (Source: Author)

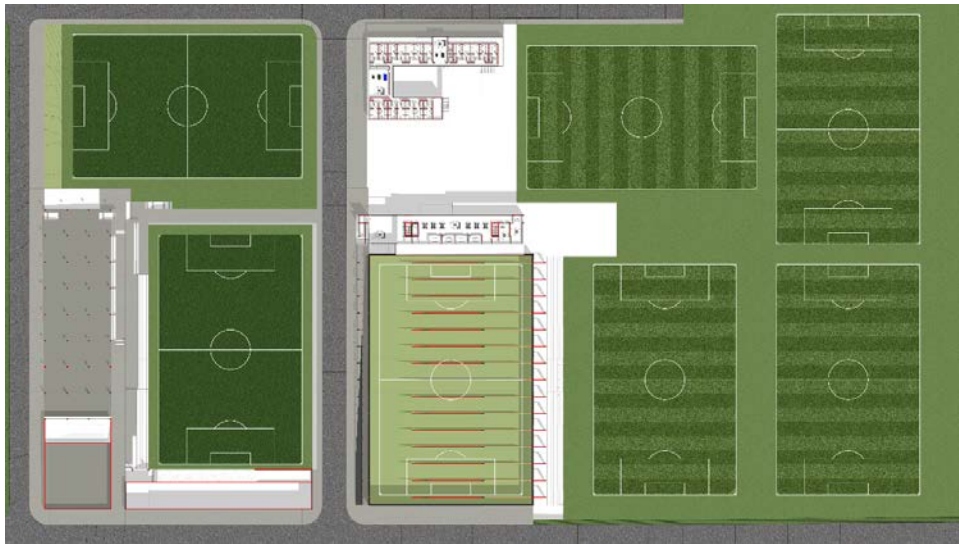


Figure 70: Diagrammatic Plan: Third Level (Source: Author)



Figure 71: Diagrammatic Plan: Fourth Level (Source: Author)

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