Beyond Genius Loci

An Analysis of Architectural Design Strategies of Place

by

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A thesis
presented to the University Of Waterloo
in fulfilment of the
thesis requirement for the degree of
Master of Architecture
in
Engineering

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, 2016

Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners. I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

This thesis explores the contributive role of the *genius locus*, or "spirit of place", in the identity of cities and the production of meaningful places. The research addresses the analysis of *genius loci* as historical phenomenon as well as their modern role within suburban landscapes. This thesis argues that an understanding and response to *genius loci* is vital not only in distinguishing it from concepts such as a sense of place, place-making, and identity, but as a means to further the maturation of suburban design and animate the underlying urban forces that combat generic design. Focusing on the suburban city of Mississauga, urban and architectural failures bring the agency of architecture into question in order to contest architecturally indifferent development. The goal is to offer a design methodology that animates the generative forces of the *genius locus* in order to achieve a distinct, complex, and grounded urban character. The design intervention embodies Mississauga's *genius locus* – an urban simulacrum born from commerce, speculation, and the resistant debris of city growth – into a matrix of architectural and landscape inserts drawn from portions of idealized master plans. It takes into account the role of conscious and unconscious cultural value, collective identity, and environmental influences in order to bridge the gap between the ideal city and the built city.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to Val Rynnimeri, my supervisor, for your insights and guidance throughout this journey, for your endless enthusiasm, and especially for your cynicism. While it butted heads with my default romanticism, your challenges strengthened my project for the better in every way.

Thank you to Mona El Khafif, for your endless encouragement and passion. Your vitality and insistence for excellence are contagious, and I hope to sustain them far beyond the end of this thesis.

Thank you to Andrew Levitt, for your sincerity, your open mind, and your reminders to practice mindfulness and patience in each and every endeavour whether it's designing, dreaming, or eating.

Thank you to Steven Bell of the Planning and Building Department at the City of Mississauga, and Michael Tunney of the Community Services Department at the City of Mississauga for their interest in my work and for the data they provided.

To Neil, Jen, and Christine, thank you for your endless support and warmth, and to all my friends at school and away from home who have helped me be the person I am today. I am lucky to hoard such unwavering friendships and plan to do so indefinitely.

Finally, thank you to my parents. You are prime examples of the kind of success, humility, and confidence I hope to emulate in my life. Thank you for patiently listening to my complaining, for your unchanging belief in my abilities, and most importantly for building a wonderful life for us in Canada.

To Mama and Tata
Ovo je zašto ste me poslali u školu

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01

Genius Loci

Figure 1.1
2014 Aerial of Mississauga City Centre looking West

1.1 Introduction

"There is no 'there' there."
- Gertrude Stein [1]

Mississauga suffers a lack of "there". Its borders compartmentalize a vast landscape of nearly identical single-family houses, stretches of road, and unassuming commercial boxes. An outsider might look on and see nothing worth their time, or worse, see the city as a tiresome obstacle through which traffic squeezes to get to Toronto. It is very easy to disregard the city as another faceless example of a North American suburb. In more than one way, Mississauga lacks a favourable record.

A native, however, sees a different story. One's personal ticky-tacky little box on a hillside[2] is not an anonymous piece of a homogeneous landscape, but home. It is full of subtleties and personal narrative. The generic residential street with its communal mailbox, cut grass, neat curbs, and young trees is the landscape of childhood games, or perhaps the relief of an immigrated parent. The uninspired architecture of the local school, or mall, or office building is of little consequence. The important thing is it is occupied space with attached memory; it is blank space to which the individual applies experience. It is a tradition of architectural indifference, but also the stage for self-renewal. There is no nostalgia for the outdated, and if there is it is a vague pity easily replaced by appreciation for the new – a result of the predominantly immigrant population whose new arrival gives them little attachment to what is old and non-functioning.

With this in mind the question then becomes: what is the problem with the landscape if the natives find solace in its subtleties? Setting aside obvious environmental and economic problems surrounding the dependence on car culture, whose analysis is a thesis in itself, the cultural acceptance of generic space undermines the city's current and future value. While generalized building practices are cost-effective and functionally successful, they offer little in the ways of sensory experience, layered memory, and meaningful spaces. There's seemingly little to attract people away from their cars or private homes and actually *be* in city space rather than move *through* city space. Perhaps this is the privilege of suburbia: the ability to choose to interact with the public or not as a residual effect of the original countryside manor house ideal. However, having a city full of people living in isolation of each other sidesteps the reality of humans as social animals. Social interaction and imprinting personal experience on our environment are inevitable events necessary for our mental health, collective growth, and even economic health. Yet suburbia promotes the exact opposite. It is a struggle to find public places that welcome lingering and informal interaction, and consequently, key pieces of urban identity. It becomes a question if there is an identity at all or, in the case of Mississauga, just a collection of forgotten historic village houses and marginalized creeks. Identity is valuable; such a fact is rarely contested in marketing and branding businesses. Why should it be any different in the production of cities?

If it is accepted that investment into identity is a valuable enterprise, the subsequent course of action becomes an attempt to create a 'sense of place'. Some methods currently in practice in Mississauga include rebranding its city logo, importing icon architecture like the Absolute Towers, advertising its natural features, promoting its cultural mosaic through festivals, and renovating its commercial spaces to reflect contemporary style.

1 Gertrude Stein, Everybody's Autobiography (New York: Random House, 1937) 289.
2 Malvina Reynolds, "Little Boxes" *Sings The Truth* (Columbia, 1967) MP3.

These methods refresh the public and bring higher volumes of people to places like Square One Shopping Centre. While there is value in revitalizing the logo and building design style, it stops short of the real goal. Rebranded images and iconic architecture are not typically objects with which the public can personally interact. Natural trails, parks, and festivals are wonderful tools, but they often exist in the pseudo-private residential deserts. Lastly, renovated commercial areas successfully draw people to the most 'city-like' spaces available, but ultimately they use a generic contemporary style that is not unique to Mississauga and does not acknowledge any sort of social interaction beyond personal shopping. Something beyond facelifts and icons is needed to engage the population.

However, there is an inherent conflict in today's perception of a 'sense of place'. In modern urban settings the concept is a highly manufactured means of alleviating placelessness and offering identity formation. Its precursor was a modest consciousness of places with strong identity, which had developed from a completely unselfconscious sense of rootedness and intimacy with one's environment.[3] A place with rootedness was a product of a generational locality. In contrast today's globalization and massive geographical migration habits have disrupted this pattern and allowed people to become hyper aware of its presence or lack thereof. Place identity has become dependent on consumerism and accessibility. It is treated as a commodity and consequently often viewed as inauthentic.

The challenge is how to encourage identity formation in a manner that is more sincere and rooted than typical place-making strategies. The response of this thesis is to analyze the concept of *genius loci*, or 'spirit of place'. Understood as the foundational generative forces of a place, it is the deep-rooted answer to why any specific site is the way it is. With Mississauga as the chosen site, this thesis attempts to understand its role in a modern suburban setting and how it can be used to identify resistant localisms, but in a way that does not disregard the city's inherent car culture, architectural indifference, isolative social habits, and consumerism. The design proposal focuses on the revitalization of the City Centre Transit Terminal as well as the two adjacent parking lots of Square One Shopping Centre. The approach outlines a design methodology consisting of an alphabet of landscape elements that facilitate the systematic layering of program and material. The result is a matrix of complex adjacencies that enriches the ground plane, embraces the city's history, and animates its existing and underappreciated landscapes.

3 Mahyar Arefi, "Non-place and Placelessness as Narratives of Loss: Rethinking the Notion of Place," Journal of Urban Design 4.2 (1999): 179-193.

1.2 Thesis Structure

Chapter 1: Genius Loci

Beyond Genius Loci is an exploration into how a city's spirit of place can be reinterpreted for a modern suburban setting and how such an interpretation can enrich and revitalize its urban identity. Chapter 1 investigates the etymology, perception, and properties of genius loci. It attempts to answer questions of scale, territory, and identity in order to clarify the challenges in revealing if and where genius loci exist in suburbia.

Chapter 2: Methodologies

Chapter 2 identifies a selection of design methodologies applicable in the expression of genius loci including systematic, iconic, parametric, and ideological design. This section investigates the particular use of these methodologies in a number of architectural precedents as well as a commentary how such methodologies blend together. Furthermore it comments on the role of consciousness in the act of designing for the genius locus.

Chapter 3: Mississauga City Profile

Chapter 3 begins the analysis of the genius locus of Mississauga as the selected suburban city. It outlines the base material from which an understanding of the genius can be drawn, starting with a commentary on the experiential quality of its places, the narrative of its historical growth, and its modern qualities. The majority of this chapter is an in-depth study of the City Centre focusing on its inception, growth, experiential parameters, building patterns, and district networks.

Chapter 4: Genius Locus of Mississauga

Chapter 4 reflects on the gathered material of the previous section and assembles a profile of Mississauga's genius locus as expressions of speculation, urban resistance, and commerce, all of which combine into a framework of artificiality where the genius locus of Mississauga is an urban simulacrum.

Chapter 5: Design Proposal

Chapter 5 compiles all the previously investigated methods of design, city properties, narratives, and material expressions into a two-part design intervention. A set of precedents illustrates the general design goal and design operations. The first portion of the design intervention is a master plan of the City Centre whose role is the expressive backdrop to the strategies of the architectural design. The proposed urban redesign of the City Centre Transit Terminal and its two adjacent parking lots seeks to embody the roots of the city's history and modern experiences by using its elemental forms in a matrix of layered program.

1.3 Literature Review

The literary groundwork of this thesis began with exposure to theories of *genius loci*, or spirit of place, which then blended with reflections on modern urban failures including generic design, placelessness, and stunted experiential values. The topic of genius loci first opened with Aldo Rossi in The Architecture of the City, written in 1982. While he was not the first to theorize, his writings describe how urban artifacts are permanent expressions of the city as the locus of collective memory. This insight reveals the city to be a story of itself. Rossi acknowledges the classical theory that any given site is "governed by the genius loci, the local divinity, an intermediary who presided over all that was to unfold in it".[4] He claims the locus is an active participant and singular artifact determined by its "space and time, by its topographical dimensions and its form, by its being the seat of a succession of ancient and recent events, by its memory".[5] In this way Rossi casts a light on the genius locus as something that is alive and directive, that offers vibrancy and personality, and that opens a window into the soul of urbanity and landscape.

Once this initial question was posed, further literature challenged it through discussions on modern urbanism. The 1995 essay "*Generic City*" by Rem Koolhaas was, by comparison, a provoking invalidation of genius loci in the contemporary world. His description of the Generic City is in many ways the description of suburbia. Its public space is merely a tool of transportation and it functions as a consumerist process of supply and demand. It is repetitive and formed by a transient population, its buildings are shortsighted and its identity is both lacking and constantly changing. The desire for physical history is an obstruction to efficiency and that, regardless of the desire for it, authenticity does not exist as building typologies are renovated and converted to completely unrelated new program, thus muddling formal language and compromising the physical substance necessary for identity. It is a place without '*layers*' of civilization and continuously "perpetuates its own amnesia".[6] Ultimately, the Generic City is a verb rather than a noun. It grows and adapts, and its basic operations are unsympathetic to nostalgia or any deeper meanings.

During the study of the Generic City, supplementary literature including the 1995 book Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity by Marc Augé painted a fuller picture of the problem of modern cities. Augé discusses the subjects of place, non-place, and their respective values and lack thereof. The "anthropological place", as he describes, is an attribute of symbolism and anthropological pregnancy that is missing in non-places. He lists transportation routes, vehicles, airports, hotel chains, leisure parks, large retail outlets, and communication networks as non-places, categorized for their mono-functionalism and as a social mark of society for the preference of accessibility over proximity and anthropological value. These places lack diversity and spontaneity and ultimately generalize the identity of its people as opposed to a population of individuals with clear social obligations.[7] Augé's theories apply directly to the retail outlets of Square One and, as the foundation of Mississauga's City Centre, reveal it to be a place built around a non-place. According to the theories of Koolhaas and Augé, it is a spatial expression of supermodernity that does not and will never contain any historical or anthropological value of consequence.

Now that the depressing proclamation of hopelessness for cities like Mississauga was established, a return to the romanticist theories of Christian Norberg-Schulz coated them with a sense of cynicism and invalidation. Norberg-Schulz, a Norwegian architect and theorist, wrote in his 1986 book, Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture, discussions on the humanistic dimension of places in relation to their symbolic and existential meanings. In particular, he advocates the use of architecture in capturing what he calls the "existential dimension": a spatial element of underlying truth framed by a place's socio-economical context. In this regard architecture is used to inspire and satisfy a deeper human need. It is a means "to visualize the 'genius loci', and the task of the architect is to create meaningful places, whereby he helps man to dwell".[8] At the root of his theories is his belief in the value of nature, namely the natural conditions of a place including its topography, cosmological light conditions, buildings, and the symbolic and existential meanings in the cultural landscapes. It is here, he believed, that any interpretations of the genius should stem. His theories are largely based in romanticism with an integral sympathy towards pre-industrial life. In a modern setting that has long passed that era and searches for maturation in the technological era, these theories may appear invalid, but still act as a reminder of the importance of sensitivity and soulful contemplation throughout the act of city making.

Lastly, the topic of genius loci received another hopeful insight through the words of Joel Garreau in his 1991 book Edge City: Life on the New Frontier. Garreau's description of an edge city applies to Mississauga City Centre's recent past where it hosted over 5,000,000 sq.ft. of leasable office space, over 600,000 sq.ft. of leasable retail space, more jobs than bedrooms, was perceived as one place (a mixed-use end destination point), and was undeveloped rural or residential land 30 years prior.[9] Today Mississauga is an evolved version of the edge city. In the 1990's it would have fit the required characteristics perfectly. Now, however, it has had 25 years to grow towards the next phase. Nonetheless, Garreau's theories still apply as the inevitable progression of how modern daily life functions. These car-centric cities occur mostly along major freeway exchanges and airports as a subsequent development of the suburbanization and "malling" of America in the 1960s and 70s.[10] He sees this landscape as the new frontier of urban life where people escape the problems of dense city life by moving their homes outward, followed by their jobs and markets. The end result is a new kind of city that lacks history, decentralizes urban activity, and whose "adult" state is yet uncertain.[11] Mississauga is a 'Boomer' city – an edge city located on a freeway intersection and around a mall – and as such is unfavourable and lacks any deeper value as per many modern urbanism theorists. Garreau, however, casts optimism upon these cities with the understanding of them as the frontier in the search for quality of life. They are the place where the next city evolvement will take shape and so require a careful and deliberate approach throughout the merging of urban collective memory, the generic nature of supermodernity, the need for existentialism, and the optimism of urban progression.

4 Aldo Rossi and Peter Eisenman, The Architecture of the City (Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1982) 103.
5 Ibid. 107.
6 Rem Koolhaas, Generic City (Sassenheim: Sikkens Foundation, 1995) 329.
7 Marc Augé, Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity (London: Verso, 1995) 89.
8 Christian Norberg-Schulz, Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture (New York: Rizzoli, 1980) 5.
9 Joel Garreau, Edge City: Life on the New Frontier (New York: Doubleday, 1991) 6-7.
10 Ibid. 4.
11 Ibid. 9.

1.4 Definition

Oxford Dictionary defines the Latin term *genius locus* as the "prevailing character or atmosphere of a place" or the "presiding god or spirit of a place".[12] When deconstructed, the etymology of the term *genius* refers to an influential "attendant spirit" of any given place or living thing, which defines or personifies its identifying character[13], while *locus* is defined as "a place, spot, or position".[14] First used in the late 14th century, *genius* originally described an external intellectual or creative power bestowed upon a person by a spirit who guides and protects that individual throughout his or her life. The term also contains the concept of "generative power" or an "inborn nature" due to its Latin root *gene-*, meaning "to beget" or "to produce".[15] Since then, the term *genius* changed in the 1580s to mean a sense of "characteristic disposition"[16], and again in the 1640s as an inborn talent or natural intellect as opposed to something bestowed by an external spirit. In summary, the genius within genius loci is historically understood as an external generative and characteristic influence on a living thing or place, but more contemporarily understood as an intuitive creative ability.

12 "Genius Loci," Oxford Dictionaries, 1 Nov. 2015 <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/genius-loci>.
13 "Genius," Merriam-Webster, 23 Apr. 2015 <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/genius%20loci>.
14 "Locus," Online Etymology Dictionary, 23 Apr. 2015 <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=locus>.
15 "Genius," Online Etymology Dictionary, 23 Apr. 2015 <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=genius>.
16 Ibid.

1.5 Historic Expressions

In ancient Roman religion, genii were intimately connected to mortals as guardians that led every individual through life from the moment of birth to death. Similar but predominant to Roman spirits such as Manes (spirits of the earth), Lares (spirits of dead ancestors), and Penates (household gods) who all protect mortals, genii "are the powers that produce life, and accompany man through it as his second or spiritual self" while the others have no influence until the genii have taken effect.[17]

Greek *daemons*, which predate the Roman genii and are described by Hesiod and Plato, have nearly identical characteristics to the genii. Also acting as protective spirits to mortals from birth through to death, they differ from genii as being ministers of Zeus that relay prayers and gifts between humans and gods, deliver the human soul to Hades at the time of death, and are considered "the souls of righteous men who lived in the golden age".[18]

The historic expressions of genii change per application. In her book Grecian and Roman Mythology, Mary Ann Dwight describes the physical manifestation of a living being's genius as a serpent, which symbolizes renovation or new life. In art it is represented as a winged being *(Fig.1.2)*. In monuments it is a youth clad in a toga holding a patera or cornucopia *(Fig.1.3)*. However the genius of a place, the *genius locus*, is represented as a serpent eating offered fruit.[19] Seen in several frescos at Pompeii *(Fig.1.4 – Fig.1.6)*, the humanoid Lares and Manes within the home and the serpentine *genius locus* at the base illustrate their hierarchical co-existence as well as the relationship between a human's

17 Mary Ann Dwight, Grecian and Roman Mythology (New York: Putnam, 1849) 253-255.
18 Ibid. 255.
19 Ibid. 254.

Figure 1.2
Woman holding a mirror and a tambourine facing a winged genius with a ribbon and a branch with leaves.

Museum of Fine Arts of Lyon
c. 320 BC

Figure 1.3
Genius locus as a young boy holding a cornucopia

Abbey of Sant'Antimo, Montalcino, Siena
c. 813 AD

consciousness with the primal and powerful sub-consciousness of the representative serpent.

In the 1980's theorist Christian Norberg-Schulz described the genius as being the embodiment of a person or place's self truth. As he claimed:

> *According to ancient Roman belief every 'independent' being has its genius, its guardian spirit. This spirit gives life to people and places, accompanies them from birth to death, and determines their character or essence. Even the gods had their genius, a fact which illustrates the fundamental nature of the concept. The genius loci denotes what a thing is, or what it 'wants to be', to use a word of Louis Kahn.* [20]

It is unclear if the genius is something conscious, like an individual unto itself, or simply an embodiment of force, like a magnet that draws the actions of its counterpart. In the way Norberg-Schulz describes this phenomenon, it is a seemingly pre-determined and static state of being to which every action attempts to assimilate. This ambiguity is furthered expressed in the development of the definition of *genius* where, by the time of Roman emperor Augustus, achievements of powerful leaders were associated with a powerful *genius*, thus taking on a derivative association to personal talent and inspiration.[21] Whether as a painted serpent on the walls of Pompeii or the expression of exceptional talent, genii embody how the division between external powers and internal ability is blurred.

20 Christian Norberg-Schulz, Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture (New York: Rizzoli, 1980) 18.
21 P.G.W. Glare, "Genius" Oxford Latin Dictionary (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982) 759.

Figure 1.4
The genius (centre) with two dancing Lares and the genius locus serpent (below).

Lararium of the House of the Vettii, Pompeii.
1st century AD fresco

Figure 1.5
Two Lares on either side of Juno (centre left), the genius (centre right) and the genius locus serpent emerging upwards around the central altar.

Lararium of the House of C. Julius Polybius, Pompeii.
1st century AD fresco

Figure 1.6
Bacchus the God of Wine (left) and the genius locus serpent of Vesuvius.

Lararium of the House of the Centenary, Pompeii.
1st century AD fresco

1.6 Modern Expressions

The definition of genius loci in the modern era is heavily diluted from its original meaning. Instead of a figurative serpent that provides life, it has come to mean a "prevailing character or atmosphere of a place".[22] Having lost its spiritual implications, the validity in the notion of genius loci in contemporary society is questionable. It is likely that modern rationality has completely erased spatial spirituality in favour of accountability and pragmatism. However, it is undeniable that certain places have a quality of attraction which, in the words of J.B. Jackson, "gives us a certain indefinable sense of well-being and which we want to return to, time and again".[23] This inexplicable quality is arguably a remnant of the genius locus. Contemporary urban design practices consistently seek to define 'character areas', create a 'sense of place', and uphold urban 'authenticity'. The meanings of these terms are often interchangeable and unclear, making the difference between genius loci and atmospheric quality – and consequently urban identity – negligible. Christian Norberg-Schulz's theory states that this is incorrect as "the concepts of sense of place and genius loci are distinct and operate at different levels".[24]This becomes clear when the root meaning of the genius locus as a generative force is considered and, consequently, its relative urban identity becomes a surface condition of aggregated momentary images and values seeded from the genius locus. In simpler terms, the genius locus is the generator and the identity is the product. As such, modern perception of the concept of genius loci is often cursory and fails to acknowledge and animate its deeper potentials.

In characteristically strong environments, the perception of genius loci is more pronounced as the urban identity is matured and easier to recognize. Geographer M.R.G. Conzen, known for his urban morphological study of the English town of Alnwick, describes the genius locus as that which characterizes the geographical variations in the city's composition and function, effectively rendering the urban landscape as a palimpsest: a compression of layers containing traces from past layers.[25] According to Conzen, urban transformation is a cyclical process to which the genius locus constantly modifies. This theory of urban aggregates illustrates the significance of time for urban growth to occur in order to mature the expressions of the genius locus. A prime example of this is Rome where centuries of architecture and urbanity co-exist to express a historical mental map that hints the answer to why the city is the way it is. The cultural acceptance of mythology, namely the story of Romulus and Remus, as the historical foundation to the city illustrates a pronounced 'otherness' quality in its overall identity. Its seven founding hills, tufa buildings, characteristic stone pine trees, haphazard streets, and inherent romanticism are all examples of the two-dimensional representative images that make up the city's identity. Ultimately, these pieces of identity only become three-dimensional, and thus illuminate the genius locus, when understood as a seasoned series.

Various architectural and urban planning theories argue the central means of perceiving the genius locus. Some claim that it is dependent on the subjective nature of the individual in response to the visual landscape, making tourists the prime candidates to discover place experience.[26] Instances of this in

22 "Genius Loci," Oxford Dictionaries, 1 Nov. 2015 <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/genius-loci>.
23 J.B Jackson, A Sense of Place, a Sense of Time (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press; 1994) 157-158.
24 Gunila Jiven and Peter J. Larkham, "Sense of Place, Authenticity and Character: A Commentary" Journal of Urban Design 8.1 (2003): 74.
25 Ibid. 72.
26 Gunila Jiven and Peter J. Larkham, "Sense of Place, Authenticity and Character: A Commentary" Journal of Urban Design 8.1 (2003): 69.

Figure 1.7
The Great Wave off Kanagawa

Figure 1.8
Sundai, Edo

Figure 1.9
Inume Pass

Figure 1.10
Ejiri in Suruga Province

popular culture can be seen in the perception of Venice, which is ultimately an urban snapshot of a historic centre of trade. Today it is incorrectly believed to be a product of careful urban planning and has become an icon of itself through its touristic global image. In such a case, it is questionable if the perception of tourists is to be trusted in identifying genius loci or if it can only be seen through the eyes of locals. Others theorists argue that, rather than the visual landscape, it is perceived through the mental capacity of the individual via senses, memory, intellect, and imagination, as well as the embodiment of the emotional lives of its occupants. Norberg-Schulz argued that the symbolic value of nature was the source of meaning in place experience while Lynch studied it through urban form and disregarded symbolic meanings for structure and identity.[27] In essence the argument is a debate on the role of familiarity, whether visual or emotional, in regards to the role of the individual versus the collective.

More concretized expressions of the genius locus can be seen in how places are illustrated through artwork. Due to the nature of art, particularly its limitless imagination, narrative quality, and psychological dimension, it is possible to directly visualize the complexity of the spirit of a place without over simplification or abstraction. For example, the prints of Katsushika Hokusai depict Mount Fuji as a character whose presence sets the tone and narrative of each image *(Fig.1.7 – Fig.1.10)*. Each is an illustration of the dynamic relationship between the force of the land and its people. It makes a point to show the mountain not as an impersonal and static object, but as part of a larger narrative only visible through a series of narratives. Ultimately it portrays Mount Fuji as a spirit that grounds the events and people around it. Similarly, film, literature, and graphic novels often use highly characteristic and vivid expressions of urbanity to ground the narratives that occur within them. The film *Blade Runner* is a highly successful example of how powerful expressive space design can be in promoting cross-cultural acceptance and design inspiration *(Fig.1.11)*. The film's combination of a high tech style with film noir themes, Japanese corporations, cyberpunk, and futurist dystopia creates a unique atmosphere that contextualizes the narrative while its spatial consistency grounds the narrative between scenes. In this way, similar to any given person, a genius locus is complex. It is not single-minded or without personality and it requires illustration and an intricacy of elements.

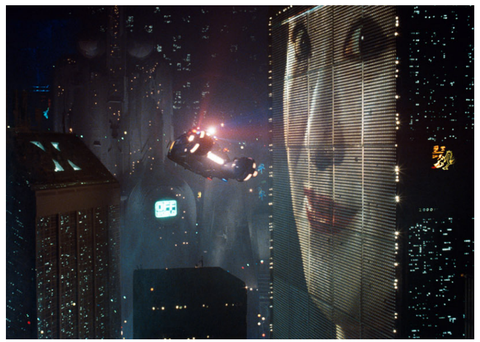


Figure 1.11
Blade Runner Cityscape

27 Gunila Jiven and Peter J. Larkham, "Sense of Place, Authenticity and Character: A Commentary" Journal of Urban Design 8.1 (2003): 69-71.

1.7 Scale & Boundaries

Considering the aforementioned duality of external and internal generative forces of genius loci and their constant adaptation to the palimpsest of urbanity, it is clear that any modern understanding of the concept requires an awareness of it as a highly fluid presence. One of the central reasons for this fluidity in modern society is globalization. With the growing migration of cultural groups and the technological advances of the 20th century, the circle of influence for any given site has stretched beyond historic city walls. Particularly expressive in North America, social and economic boundaries are much more flexible than their older counterparts, and as a result the location-based expressions of genius loci were exposed to a global culture. This stretching of the territory of genius loci further challenges its validity with questions of scale, location, and degree of distinctiveness. Are genius loci all positive spirits or are there also negative spirits? Does the strength of a genius locus depend on the history of occupation on the site, or is it autonomous of human involvement? And if so where does it begin and end? These questions have no definitive answer in modern society, yet they are vital in depicting the variety of interpretation possible for any given site in order to answer the root question of the presence of a spirit of place. This is an important investigative framework for the evaluation of both historic and modern cities in order to understand their identity and generative forces in relation to the global culture.

In deconstructing the characteristics and disparities between the sources of genius loci, it must be noted that the genius varies with every locus and so can exist within a multitude of scales, boundaries, and place types. For instance it is possible to have a genius for the entirety of a city as a political boundary, several genii for areas of topographical and geological distinction, a genius for each of its urban cores as defied by building density and program, one for any particular set of streets and their surroundings, and one for each individual building. In contemporary land division, boundaries are invisible lines between spaces until defined by a road or a fence, but there are also perceived boundaries that link to personal experience of the space. For example, locals might see a private residential street as a set of unique individual spaces due to their personal histories with it, while a foreign group might see it as one encompassing street space with little differentiation between the houses. A child's perception of space will differ vastly from an adult. Even between adults the understanding of space changes with how they use the space and define its beginning and end. As such, the genius is a highly fluid being susceptible to the perceptions of its people, geography, politics, economics, and urbanity.

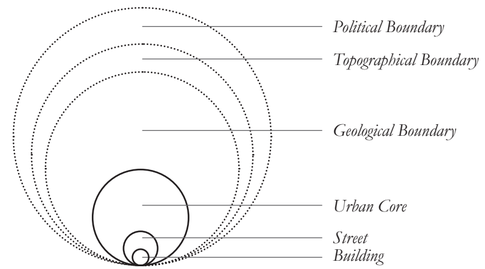


Figure 1.12
Scales Diagram

1.8 Identity Sources

In contemporary cities there is no straightforward answer to the question of where genius loci exist. Norberg-Schulz advocated that nature is the primary source and so in historic contexts the answer would point to a particular physical condition such as a landform or source of water. However today the conditions that spur the birth of a city are far less location-driven. Mississauga's location has little to do with physical presence and more with immaterial forces such as social conditions and economic drivers. It grew from profitability and available land rather than any resource-based industrial or livability value. The influence of the individual, group mentality, and growth patterns of built environments largely dominate the meaning of suburban spaces. As such, the identifying of the genius locus requires a de-layering from its apparent identity. As shown in *Fig.1.13*, the identity of a city is merely the surface elements of the genius, its architecture is the structure upon which the identity clings, but beneath that is the spirit or soul of the city.

The relationship between the social individual and his or her environment defines how the genius locus is translated. As shown in *Fig.1.14*, the resulting embodiments can be recognized through three basic landscape types: *cultural landscapes*, *economic landscapes*, and *environmental landscapes*. Each type has both unique and cross-pollinated modes of expression from which identity can be discerned. The *cultural landscape* consists of the cultural and aesthetic values in the built environment, the ethnicities, traditions, events, and the narratives central to its cultural mosaic. The *economic landscape* depicts the values and ideals that drive economic change, the resource consumption patterns central to industrial change, and the area's industrial specialties. Lastly, the *environmental landscape* consists of the natural conditions of the place including living matter and habitats, geology, key landforms, materials, and the topography to which the built environment must respond. Combined together, these various elements of identity outline the possible areas of analysis required to uncover the genius locus.

Figure 1.13
Relational Metaphor

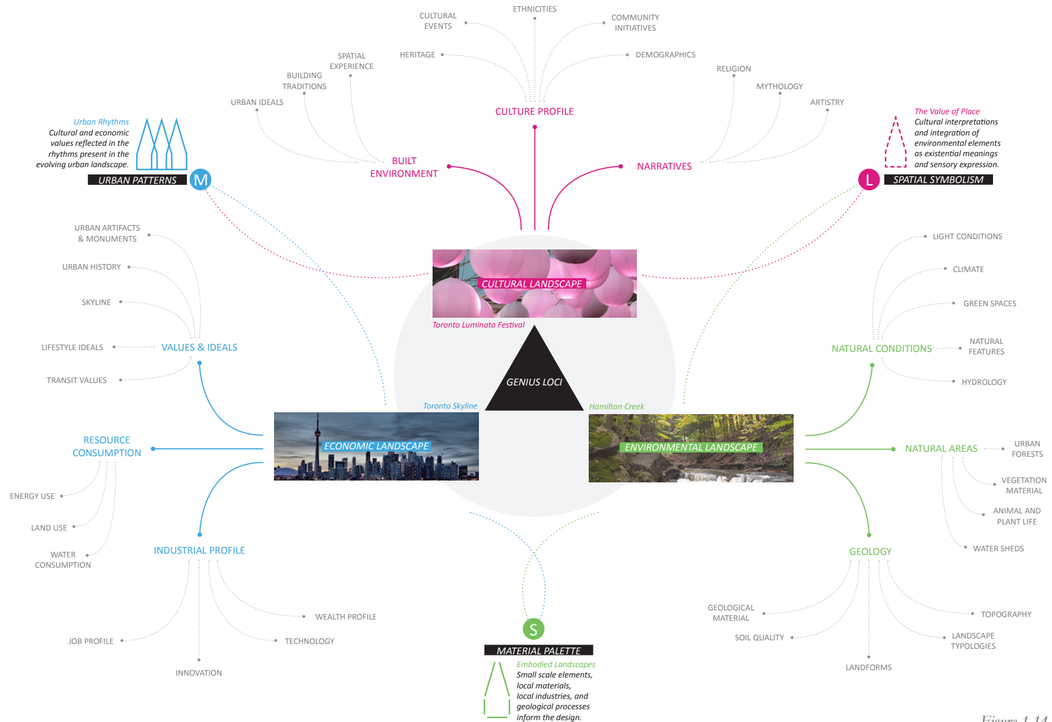


Figure 1.14
Identity Source Map

1.9 Suburbia as Place

North American suburbia is a landscape born from the deep-rooted collective idealism of a pioneer-founded history. Arguably it is the modern frontier of urbanity as the landscape where the collective values of society regarding lifestyle and 'home'-making take form and work to mature.[28] At the heart of North American urban design is a divided relationship with the natural conditions, harbouring both an optimistic desire to embody Eden in the garden city, and a desire to clear the unruly wilderness in search for liberation from the ills of historic city design. In the case of suburban cities these two desires blend into a totalizing design control that gives the masses access to manicured goods of nature, which results in low-density individualized land parcels. However, as a result of such self-reinventions and the rejection of historic urban layers, these generational works-in-progress suffer from an abundance of placelessness and reputations of inauthenticity and sterility. Its chaotic collection of architectural form renders it as a place without soul or identity where nowhereness is rampant in the wake of globalization and commoditization of meaningful places. Fluid and unbound, its politically driven landscapes value accessibility over proximity and have given rise to "communities of interest" rather than communities of place.[29] The quantitative is valued over the qualitative and, consequently, non-places occur in response to the social demand for car-focused accessibility. As such:

> *Cities with more freeways and highways passing through their neighbourhoods and localities are typically associated*

Figure 1.15
Aerial of Mississauga neighbourhood

28 Joel Garreau, Edge City: Life on the New Frontier (New York: Doubleday, 1991) 7.
29 Mahyar Arefi, "Non-place and Placelessness as Narratives of Loss: Rethinking the Notion of Place," Journal of Urban Design 4.2 (1999): 181.

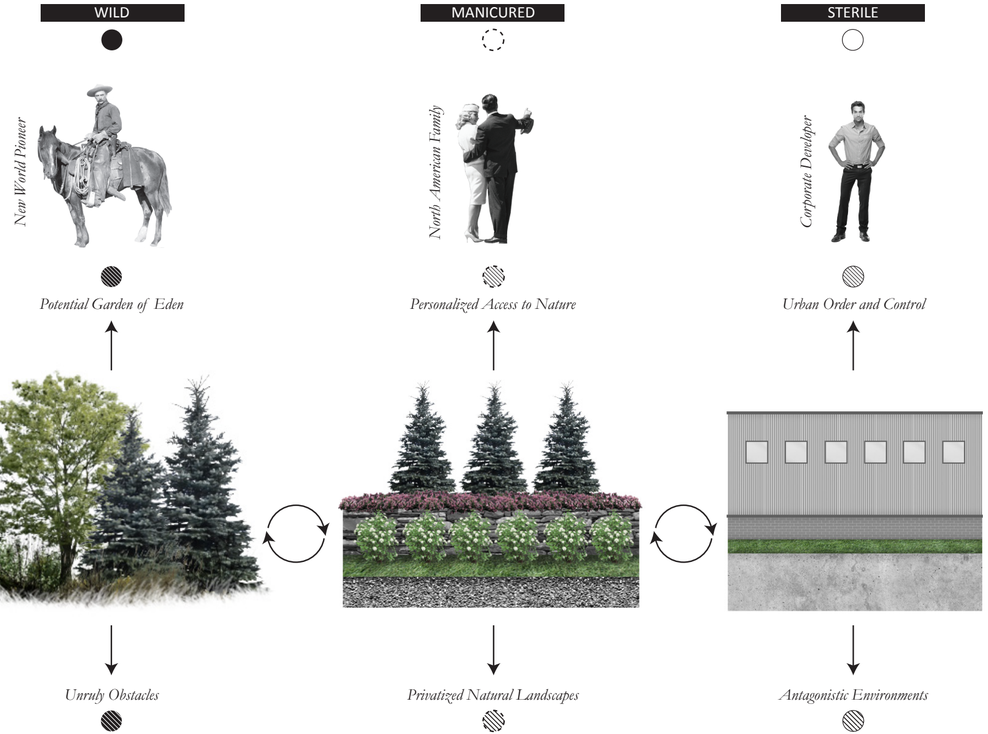


Figure 1.16
Relationships with Nature

with abundance and prosperity. What counts is the number of connections rather than the quality of connections between locations. The number of connections implies more vibrant economies and transactions, better accessibility and future potential for growth.[30]

In this way it is clear that suburbia is simultaneously temporary and permanent. Its underlying assumption of future growth gives it a temporal quality that insinuates its vibrancy, and consequently its spontaneity and particularity, as perpetually in the future rather than the present. Simultaneously, its vast scale, dominance over the landscape, and uncompromising belief in its residential system make the landscape seem wholly permanent, as if no other option is possible. In the end suburbia is seemingly stunted, willing yet unwilling to move forward.

One of the reasons identifying meaningful places within suburban landscapes is difficult is the complex integration of non-places (mono-functional, accessibility-focused spaces with insufficient anthropological value) into everyday life. More so than the dense urban cities from which these edge cities propagate, suburban cities must accommodate non-places into their lifestyle choice as well as the general resistance to seemingly frivolous spending on space design quality. The result is a polarity between social places and material places. These places, as expressions of how genius loci can form identities in landscapes with little original matter, are potential points of study to understand how they arise within the context of the generic city.

A social place is a place of social interaction within the city. It is a place of memory and activity and acts as a building block in the growth of memory layers. It can take on a range of scales, from an entire shopping mall to the corner of two streets. It can be informally valued or formally designed, but it is ultimately the subjective will of the people that create any value. They act as key growth points for the cultural aspect of genius loci and may occur without strong materiality present.

A material place is a physical translation of culture and locus. Grown from the particular history, industries, building materials, and aging of the site, they are the physical architecture of the site designed to create a welcoming atmosphere. Able to embody the cultural, environmental, and economic identity of the city, they have the potential to act as attractors for social interaction. However in suburbia the two place types are not interdependent. A social place may be redesigned with materiality, in which case it is likely its social dimension will flourish. Conversely, a material place is difficult to encourage a social dimension if there is no value already in place. As such, in order for suburban landscapes to develop meaningful places, material interventions must be employed, but only with an awareness of social habits and culture.

30 Mahyar Arefi, "Non-place and Placelessness as Narratives of Loss: Rethinking the Notion of Place," Journal of Urban Design 4.2 (1999): 181.

1.10 Thesis Objectives

The objectives of this thesis are two-fold. They address the following questions as research and design goals:

1. *What is the genius locus of Mississauga?*
2. *What is the design approach for animating its genius locus and why is this approach best?*

The first of these inquiries requires a response to the inherent struggle in identifying something that is invisible and subjective to the whims of the city's many makers. Mississauga's City Centre is, in essence, one giant parking lot surrounding a mall. It is an obvious challenge to try and prove that there is a viable genius locus present in such an environment. With such perceptively one-dimensional spaces defined by sharp boundaries and simplistic program, the analysis of such a place would almost rather submit to the one-word answer of economy as the driver of the city. However, where the answer to the second inquiry begins to take form is taking apart this economic façade and understanding its subtleties, its historical story, and its modern desires. In attempting to understand the genius, the city shows that while it may seem one-dimensional, partly due to its youth and spatial organization, it also hosts accumulated physical and social layers, if few in number. Today, there are enough layers visible to insinuate their continued growth, and thus drive the design approach for the animation of its genius locus. Arguably this may be a false reading where its genius is truly an unsympathetic act of consuming space and resources. However, if such were the case then the rampant placelessness that plagues much of the City Centre would not be an issue. It is the assumption of this thesis that genius loci are not counter-productive entities, but rather trajectories of progress. As such, the answer to the second objective of this thesis must rely on layered entities, the insistence on spatial complexity, and the development of interrelationships to prove the underlying worth of the suburban city. By analyzing Mississauga's narrative and physical elements, this thesis seeks to reveal its under-appreciated genius and animate it through a blending of economic, experiential, and social drivers into a pliable and mobilizing design methodology.

02

Methodologies

2.1 *Methods of Design*

The role of the architect in regards to designing for the genius loci is as an "operator"[31] that produces new geography, here defined as the science of mapping a site's physical, economic, and/or social data. The geographical profile is the baseline or the "natural order"[32] from which the architect extracts, translates, and applies the underlying logics to a new design, thus producing new data. The manner in which this productive act occurs includes hundreds of possible design methodologies, ones both common and crafted per design project. Within the context of this thesis, a particular selection of common methodologies was selected to show how the animation of genius loci begins with careful and deliberate design operations. The methodologies include: *systemic design*, *iconic design*, *parametric design*, and *ideological design*.

Systemic design is typically inward-focused to the boundaries of the site in terms of socio-economic influence. It embodies spatial patterns, such as a site's morphology, materiality, or urban grain, in order to create a framework outlining the set of design operations that are repeated and tailored. An example of this would be the University of Urbino Halls of Residence by Giancarlo De Carlo *(Fig.2.1)*, which emulates the rhythm and style of historic Italian hillside villages.

Iconic design, alternatively, is typically outward-focused from the boundaries of the site. It is more concerned with the image of the design and its role as a social statement or urban catalyst in response to its context. This can include methods such as contrasting the architecture's building systems, material palettes, or morphology to the typical styles found in its surroundings.

31 Vicente Guallart, GeoLogics: Geography, Information, Architecture (Barcelona: Actar, 2008) 5.
32 Ibid. 4.

Figure 2.1
University of Urbino by Giancarlo De Carlo

Figure 2.2
Guggenheim Museum of Bilbao by Frank Gehry

Figure 2.3
Gantenbein Vineyard Façade

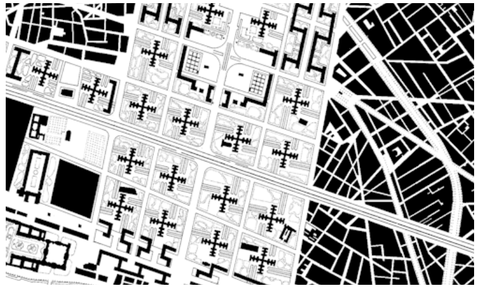


Figure 2.4
Portion of Plan Voisin by Le Corbusier

An example would be Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao by Frank Gehry *(Fig. 2.2)*, which completely contrasts the architectural style of its context in favour of an international style that could transform the reputation of the city.

Parametric design employs measurable factors to define the properties of a system and its operations. A parameter, by definition, is an arbitrary constant whose value characterizes a member of a system. In architectural terms, this can be as simple as the physical dimensions of a brick which, when applied to a complex formal system, can result in designs like façade of the Gantenbein Vineyard in Switzerland by Gramazio & Kohler *(Fig.2.3)*. In contemporary architectural practice, this methodology often assumes a focus on geometrical logics and computational design processes at the scale of an installation, interior design, or building. However, it can also be applied at the urban planning scale where metabolic characteristics of an area can be analyzed and used as design drivers. While the resulting design may still contain modular elements that are most often identified with parametric design, the central goal in relation to city identity is not the modernity of style and efficiency of computer-assisted design processes, but the ability to embed underlying measurable relationships into the experience of the finished project.

Ideological design is a method that uses cultural, social, and/or economic narratives to inform the design process and prioritize the project's intent rather than its productive output. Most often the central driver is a single ideology within the culture and thus contextualizes the design whether it contrasts or complies with the local architecture. For instance, Le Corbusier's 1925 Plan Voisin in Paris *(Fig.2.4)* was an ideological statement that illustrated "a new world rising above the ashes of the old".[33] It was a visionary manifesto of urbanism and a celebration of historical destiny and generalities,[34] expressed via a tabula rasa

of historic Paris to be replaced by an orthogonal grid, park-like space, and high rise towers. *Ideological design* is the underlying motive for the design of a site and is inherently connected to the site's local and global identity and history.

These four methodologies do not occur exclusively. Any particular project may have elements of one or more simultaneously. *Systemic design* and *parametric design* share similarities of modularity and the underlying goal of capturing the essence of an existing site characteristic. However the former lacks the computational measurability of the latter and replaces it with narrative elements that range beyond the singularity of parameter selection. *Iconic design* and *ideological design* share the extroversion of cultural value and are often unconsciously applied within architecture. However they relate to each other as a product to its source where the first is a momentary expression of the longevity in ideological narrative. As well, iconic architecture is more commonly an international effect, while ideological narrative is heavily rooted to national and/or local values. In North America, ideological design is the primary driver for conventional design while the others are largely individual architectural instances. This is a result of the deep-rooted new world idealism inherent to the notion of North America, as well as the vast scale and comparatively low material density in its predominant urban form: suburbia. However, the urban cores are prime with examples of the blending between these design methodologies. For instance, New York City *(Fig.2.5)* is known for its highly competitive architectural market, resulting in its landscape of iconic skyscrapers, each trying to out-do the other. In this case,

33 Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter, "Crisis of the Object: Predicament of Texture" Collage City (Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1978) 72.
34 Ibid. 72.

Figure 2.5
New York City Skyline

Figure 2.6
Beko Masterplan by Zaha Hadid Architects

any single skyscraper will be systemic in that it conforms to the contextual typological framework and social agenda of designing something eye-catching and progressive to match the culture. At the same time, each design seeks to be iconic and stand out from the others in order to create its own identity. Parametric design may occur on a case-by-case basis, while ideologically, the city expresses the ideals of opportunity and fortune. In a more international example, the acclaim for the designs of Zaha Hadid *(Fig.2.6)* illustrates the worldwide intrigue with modernity and technological advances. Her curvaceous designs challenge the historical insistence for efficient orthogonal design and replace it with something that communicates a melding of architecture and landscape. This is a reflection of modern values in landscape and cultural idealism. Whether international or local, these methodologies co-exist to various degrees depending on the location and project. To begin a design that responds to the genius loci, such a balance must be understood to set the objectives of design into motion.

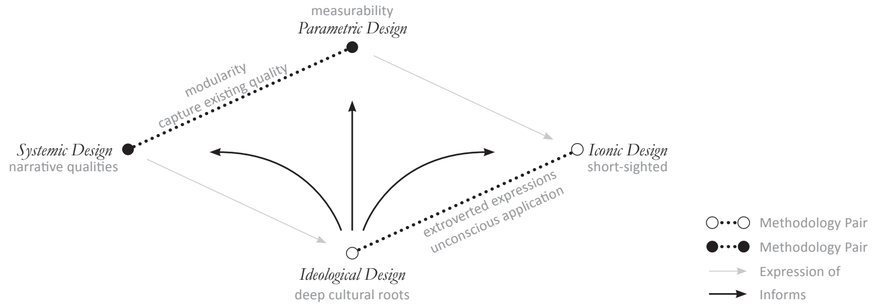


Figure 2.7
Design Methodology Comparison

2.2 *Systemic Design*

Systemic design is a method that employs a system of principles and procedures in an architectural framework. Its central goal is to use the framework as a means of ideological or morphological translation, such as emulating the rhythms of urban form or representing a cultural belief. The Centraal Beheer, a 1972 Dutch Structuralist office building in Apeldoorn, Netherlands designed by Herman Hertzberger, is a prime example of this goal. Structuralism, an architecture movement initiated by Aldo van Eyck and supported by Hertzberger, sought to alleviate the lifelessness and disregard for urban identity of its predecessor, Rationalism.[35] Van Eyck believed in the role of human beings in architecture and that humans and cultures "exhibit archetypal patterns of behaviour".[36] In this way, Structuralism is one type of systemic design that embodies the ideological qualities of its time by designing the human dimension into a rationalistic framework.

Hertzberger's design approach for the Centraal Beheer office headquarters came from his theory of "polyvalent form" that stressed the role of a building's users in "completing the architecture".[37] The Centraal Beheer was made to domesticate the office typology by building an adaptable village of office rooms that collectively create an environment reminiscent of historic urban cores. The building uses a 9m x 9m precast concrete module as the base unit of an ultimately complex environment *(Fig.2.9 – Fig.2.12)*. It is an additive structure where its 56 cubical modules are set on a tartan grid and stretch over

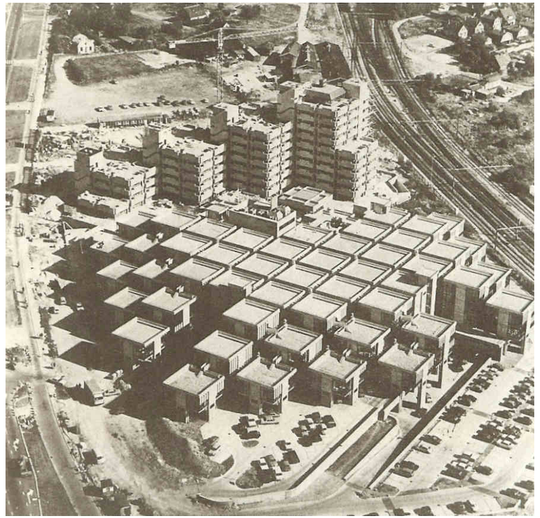


Figure 2.8
Centraal Beheeer Aerial – 1970s

35 Aldo van Eyck, Francis Strauven and Vincent Ligtelijn, "Statement Against Rationalism," Collected Articles and Other Writings 1947-1998 (Amsterdam: SUN, 2008) 42.
36 Richard Weston, Plans, Sections and Elevations: Key Buildings of the Twentieth Century (London: Laurence King Pub., 2004) 164.
37 Ibid.

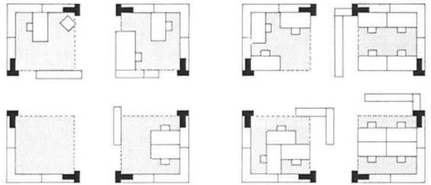


Figure 2.10
Modular System

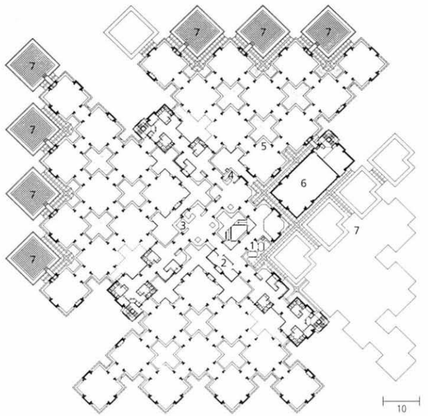


Figure 2.9
Floor Plan - 4th Floor

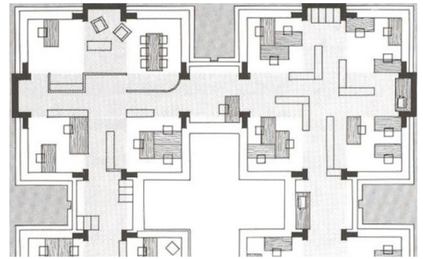


Figure 2.11
Furnished Floor Plan Excerpt

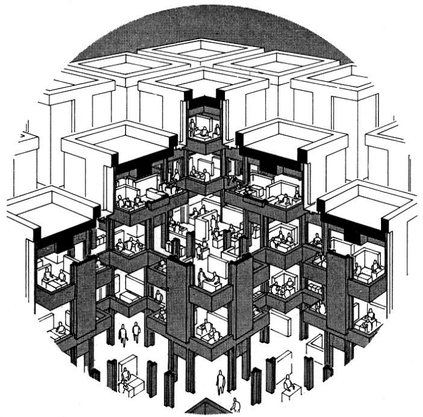


Figure 2.12
Layered spatial complexity

3 floors. Interior streets and bridges create visual connections and a city-like complexity, which is furthered by full-height arcade spaces *(Fig.2.15 – Fig.2.16)* that define the four independent blocks of the building. The main material used in the structure is concrete block *(Fig.2.14)*, which Hertzberger's claimed encourages the humanizing of spaces *(Fig.2.13)* through personalization unlike "more prestigious, do-not-touch materials".[38] In this way Hertzberger advocated neutrality within the architectural framework in order to emphasize the importance of responsibility and interaction between the building and its people.

The Centraal Beheer is a non-hierarchical structure at its core, but more than that it is a systemic framework made to offer its users a unique and rich environment. The communal realm is a central part of its design and function, while the lack of hierarchy trades unsympathetic corporate control for the intimacy and comfort of its employees. Hertzberger states "the idea was to make it a city, and to make it sort of outside. The light coming from above, the material of streets – this has the feeling of a Mediterranean city."[39] He explains during the 1960s, there was an urgent need for people to show their identity, which led to a sense of pride in their spaces and competitiveness in their elaborate decorations.[40] The visual connections encouraged a sense of community as well as more personal relationships. Through its simplistic structure it became a place deeply rooted in the health and social nature of humanity, creating an environment where life could occur and people could grow. The building offers a way to express the genius, but ultimately it is the people that animate it.

38 Richard Weston, Plans, Sections and Elevations: Key Buildings of the Twentieth Century (London: Laurence King Pub., 2004) 164.
39 Herman Hertzberger, Centraal Beheer Building, YouTube, The Secret Life of Buildings, 17 Nov. 2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GKd1a8GI1E8>.
40 Ibid.

Figure 2.13
Office interior

Figure 2.14
Visual Interaction

Figure 2.15
Interior Arcade –1970s

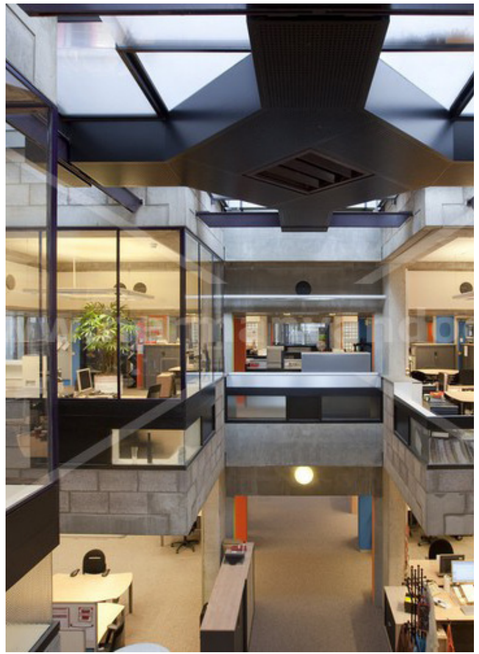


Figure 2.16
Interior Arcade – Today

2.3 *Iconic Design*

Iconic design is a method characterized by the expression of one or more identifying images relating to the project's context or purpose. The Harpa Concert Hall and Conference Centre in Reykjavik, designed by Henning Larsen Architects, is an example of such icon-driven operations as it embraces key features of the landscapes. During a lecture at the University of Waterloo, architect Louis Becker described their desire to resonate the extreme climate of Iceland into the architecture.[41] The firm's approach was to use the abundance of daylight as a design driver and to find a formal language rooted in Icelandic culture.

The extreme conditions of the climate set the stage for highly dynamic relationships between the building, its people, and their surroundings. Throughout the year the hours of daylight in Reykjavik vary significantly. Where the summer sees 21 hours of daylight at its maximum, the winter sees only 4 hours *(Fig.2.19)*. The building takes advantage of this through its complex glass façade that catches the endless variety of coloured light and offers different light settings for its various formal venues. Architect Christian Bundegaard compares the use of glass and daylight with the aura of the church where he says:

> *The oldest trick of the church, once people are inside is exactly not to abandon the ceremonial atmosphere by bringing everything that has carefully been uplifted back down to earth –but to lift it even higher, to a sky seen on television, colourful, changing, inconstant, dependent on light and weather, as life on earth, but at a higher level, so to speak, unimaginably high.*[42]

41 Louis Becker, Louis Becker, People Places & Daylight, YouTube, Waterloo Architecture Arriscraft, 19 Sept. 2014.
42 Christian Bundegaard and Henning Larsen, Harpa and Other Music Venues by Henning Larsen Architects (Germany: Hatje Cantz, 2013) 13.

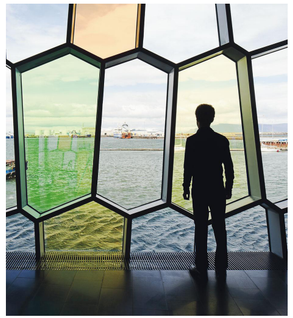


Figure 2.17
Harpa Concert Hall Facade

Figure 2.18
Bessastadir Church, Iceland

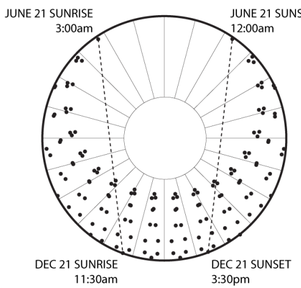


Figure 2.19
Reykjavik Daylight Study

Figure 2.20
Harpa Concert Hall exterior

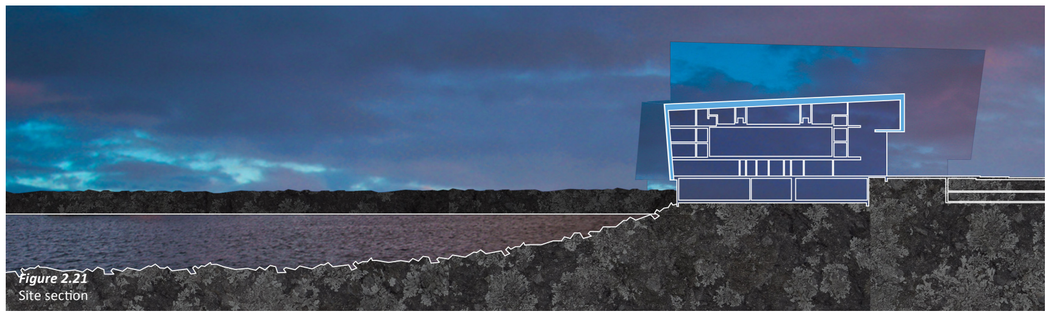


Figure 2.21
Site section

The building is a venue for the activities of the city. Due to the often-inhospitable climate and relatively small economy, different types of internal program needed to co-exist. As such there are different user groups that keep the building active throughout the day and seasons. Simultaneously the building helps reconnect the city with its maritime culture. Situated on the edge of the coast, the main foyer faces the city to encourage interaction, and offers views out to the sea and mountains. At night, the building acts as a beacon out to the sea, illuminating the activity inside and the city beyond. Bundegaard described civilization in this landscape to be "a narrow band between a heavy sky, an endless ocean, and the desolate tundra".[43] Its identifying characteristic is dynamism, expressed most acutely in its light and climatic conditions.

The formal architectural operations that express the identity of the island nation do so by embodying specific Icelandic landscapes in its main halls and façade. The 'quasi-bricks' used on the main facades are an artistic translation of the local basalt rock formations *(Fig.2.22)*. Their aerial geometric pattern is mimicked in the roof pattern and their volumetric elevation is translated into the glass structure. Furthermore, as shown in *Fig.2.23*, the individual halls within the building represent key landforms. The central hall, the red-adorned Eldborg, which means 'Fire Castle',[44] embodies the Icelandic volcanic crater of the same name. The prominence of this hall also indicates the importance of the island's inherent geothermal energy, a feature that drives much of the culture as well as the operation of the building itself. Overall, not only do these formal moves reflect native geological phenomenon in its structure, façade, and interior spaces, but they also create a language that visualizes the genius locus of the city.

43 Christian Bundegaard and Henning Larsen, Harpa and Other Music Venues by Henning Larsen Architects (Germany: Hatje Cantz, 2013) 13.
44 Harpa Concert Hall, "Harpa – Reykjavik's Latest Landmark," Issuu, 23 Nov. 2015 <http://issuu.com/harpafacilities/docs/har_imyndarbaeklingur_050213_sidur/1>.

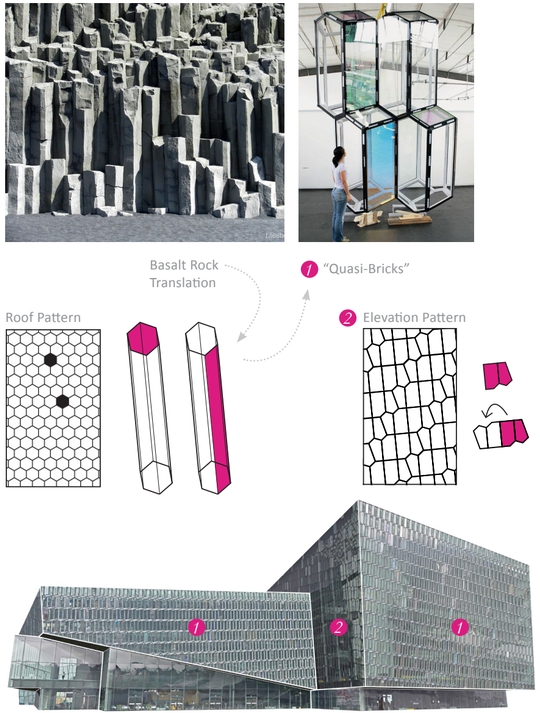
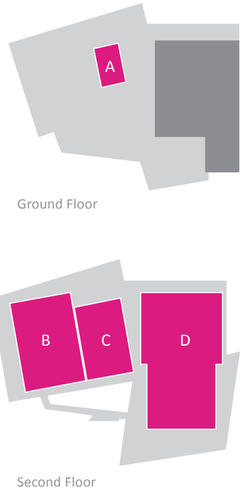


Figure 2.22
Landform Structural Translations



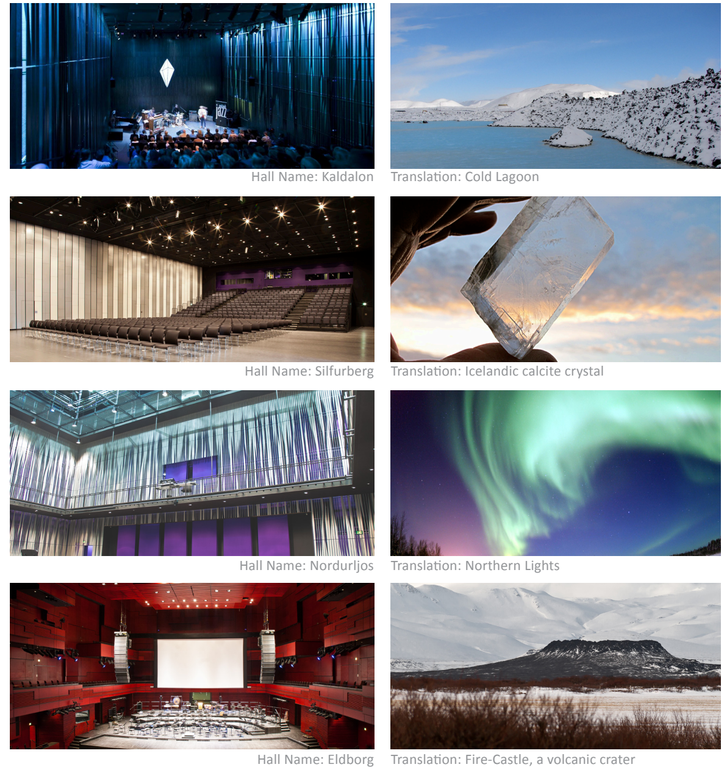


Figure 2.23
Landscape Space Translations

2.4 *Parametric Design*

Parametric design is a method that primarily uses information mapping to identify a site's spatial rhythms and use them to set the design's system and operations. Datascapes – defined as graphic representations of relational data – help identify the site's spatial characteristics and underlying factors often arranged in a hierarchical model, hence the use of the word parameters. This can include forces such as topography, geology, spatial rhythm, program, density, material palettes, green spaces, solar exposure, energy use, and water consumption. Suitable for both urban and natural settings, this data-gathering step is a non-interpretive spatial reading of the site's physical patterns rather than a preemptive favouring or privileging of any specific parameter. This process reveals the site's deeply rooted – yet often imperceptible and influential – conditions. A disregard for this early non-interpretive analysis often results in an image of "fragmented urban landscapes devoid of habitable urban space"[45] and can propagate generic design. Tianjin is a prime example of this where, between 2000 and 2004, the historic city fabric *(Fig.2.24)* was demolished and replaced with Western-style residential high-rise towers *(Fig. 2.25)*. Ten to twelve lanes of vehicular traffic with few pedestrian crossings separate these towers, which arguably isolate the pedestrian and sterilize the public realm. Western ideals and social patterns, namely patterns of U.S. car ownership, were adopted instead of a more local design solution.[46] A potential design could have acknowledged Chinese city fabric patterns where, as Mona El Khafif and Antje Steinmuller indicate:

45 Mona El Khafif and Antje Steinmuller, "MADE FOR CHINA: Transcoding Local Patterns into Ecologically High-performing Urban Prototypes," ACSA Fall Conference (2011): 3.
46 Ibid. 3.

Figure 2.24
Tianjin historic city fabric, 2000

Figure 2.25
Tianjin modern city fabric, 2004

> *Unlike American or European city blocks, [such a] fabric does not include a clear separation between public and private defined through a perimeter condition, but articulates a system of aggregated typologies that allow an internal circulation through alleyways and a mix of building types.*[47]

Through diagrammatic and mapping practices, potential design parameters such as behavioural patterns, the directionality of building types, street layout structures, and programmatic relationships would have illustrated the site as a "field of non-hierarchical patterns with shifted rhythms".[48] A set of density-based statistical mapping layers, such as built space, void space, and green spaces, offers a baseline datascape for a volumetric matrix, while a land use analysis of the same factors reveals the underlying patterns of economic and social interactions necessary for vibrant urban life. Overall prioritizing an unbiased analysis of a site's existing parameters empowers the potential design through intricate awareness of local conditions.

Once the initial non-interpretive spatial reading is complete and the datascapes are clear, the second stage of design interpretation takes place. In the case of Tianjin, in the Wudadao district redesign project *(Fig.2.26 – Fig.2.27)* created as part of an URBANlab study under El Khafif and Steinmuller, a 'pixel' dimension of 10'x45' was identified as the "smallest width of a circulation element internal to the block" and is subsequently used to generate contextual hyper-urbanized housing units and public spaces.[49] This urban grain is part of the area's 'local code'. It is used to establish the micro-communities and offer

47 Ibid. 5.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid.

Figure 2.26
CIDE max Rendering

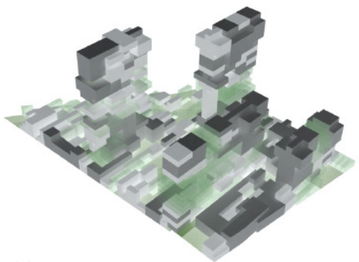


Figure 2.27
Example of Computational Matrixes of Prototypes CIDE max

programmatic flexibility that can be adopted by the locals with a degree of familiarity and potential success. A different theory of design translation is outlined by Vicente Guallart, a Spanish architect renowned for his transformative visions for the city of Barcelona, in his book Geologics: Geography Information Architecture. Guallart describes four basic interpretive design steps present throughout his firm's projects: *geography*, *geometry*, *logic*, and *structure*. '*Geography*' is the aforementioned spatial reading where a set of geographical factors (physical, economic, or social) is selected for study. For example, in the 2006 Vinaròs Microcoasts project *(Fig.2.28)* the physical attributes of the coast act as the base geographical value *(Fig.2.29)*. The second step, '*geometry*', measures this geographical value through diagrammatic mapping. In Vinaròs this geometry is treated as a fractal portion of a larger landscape and creates a hexagonal pattern of the physical coast *(Fig.2.30)* as the base design material. From here, the '*logic*' stage extracts particular geometric patterns and categorizes them into one of four logic groups: environments, reacting, networks, or protocols. Guallart categorized the Microcoasts as a reacting logic of resonance, which is a fractal dimension that "utilizes the same wavelength as the place"[50] whereby it seeks to use microtopography as an artificial structure that conserves the site's natural attributes while allowing for habitability *(Fig.2.31)*. Lastly, the '*structure*' is the mechanism by which the architecture operates (a strategy, tactic, or technique). In the Microcoasts this is the basic pattern of fabricated platforms for occupying the coastline *(Fig.2.32)*. The result is a physical design that pragmatically implements the attributes of its site at every stage of design. In summary, the parametric design method contextualizes the architectural moves through studies of the site's geography, selects one or more, and processes them through a variety of design logics.

Figure 2.28
Vinaròs Microcoasts

50 Vicente Guallart, GeoLogics: Geography, Information, Architecture (Barcelona: Actar, 2008) 53.

Figure 2.29
Vinaròs Microcoasts - Geography

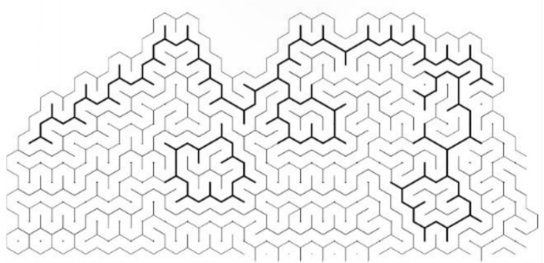


Figure 2.30
Vinaròs Microcoasts - Geometry

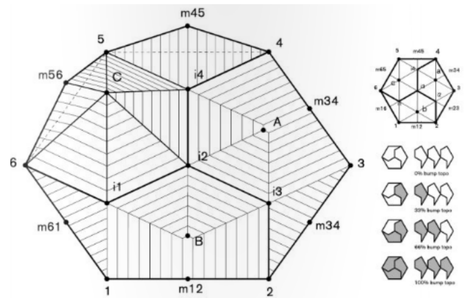


Figure 2.31
Vinaròs Microcoasts - Logic

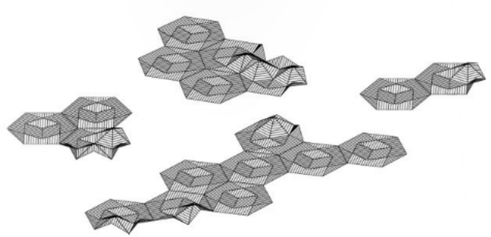


Figure 2.32
Vinaròs Microcoasts - Structure

2.5 Ideological Design

Ideological design is a method that draws from cultural, social, and/or economic narratives in the production of a site's design systems and operations. It often encompasses the previous three methodologies as a means towards an ideological goal. In terms of landscape design, it is comparatively far-sighted and renders the pragmatism in parametric design as one of the many products in the evolution of landscape design. During this evolution, modern ideological structures led to the appropriation of traditional aesthetic ideals into a contemporarily iconographic and data-driven culture. Within the design process, these narrative influences are applied in a way that differs from the more overtly detached rationale of parametric design. Instead of depending on datascapes and their translated logics, this method employs a set of culturally-informed '*policies*' using objects, materials, and geometries that borrow from appropriated cultural narratives and adjust their significances. For instance, the relationship between people and their environment, as previously discussed, is a central ideological narrative within most Western cultures. It can be seen in how the origin of a landscape began as an artistic representation of natural scenery but later became a means of representing human control over the wild. Landscape architecture abandoned the tradition of clustering the city around the church, palace, and square as an expression of importance, and instead began to be the design discipline selected to emphasize political power. This can be seen in spaces such as the expansive geometries of the gardens of Versailles as the locus of the Palace itself *(Fig.2.33)*. As James Corner describes, "the centrality of the palace is reinforced by the park, attended by infinite vistas and limitless domain. Everything receives its place in relation to the royal point of view."[51] In North America, this ideological expression of power shifts to the dominance of economy, as seen in the design of the modern shopping mall *(Fig.2.34)*. Here, each element of its surrounding landscape, namely its parking lots, ring road, wide streets, and mono-functional buildings serve the singular purpose of supporting the profit of the mall, much in the same way the geometry of Versailles indicates the seat of power. Toronto architect Michael Kirkland once quipped during an architectural thesis defense that the Mississauga Square One Centre was just like Versailles, except for the palace and the gardens. In Ontario, the historical design of inland township settlements was a cultural initiative to organize the city by means of an ideal grid system *(Fig.2.35)*. This two-dimensional image rejects natural obstacles, represents an idealized fully man-made structure that symbolizes British imperialism in Canada[52]. It acts as the root of future city design and illustrates cultural the ideals of imperial political control and a disregard for natural conditions. In this case, the road is the primary geographical and geometrical element that controls the landscape. Consequently, sites in North America cannot use the parametric design method outright, but rather must acknowledge how the road, as an ideological icon of control, drives the relationship between people and their material surroundings. The same can be said for other historical landscape elements emerging from this imperial grid such as farmland, woodlots, hedges, tree lines, and fences. Each is a natural element whose identity becomes a product of the cultural narrative of the site through land severance, food

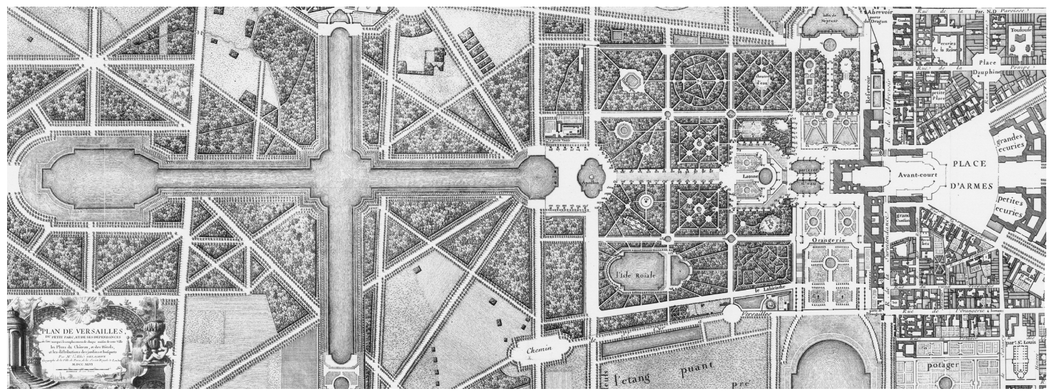


Figure 2.33
Gardens of Versailles

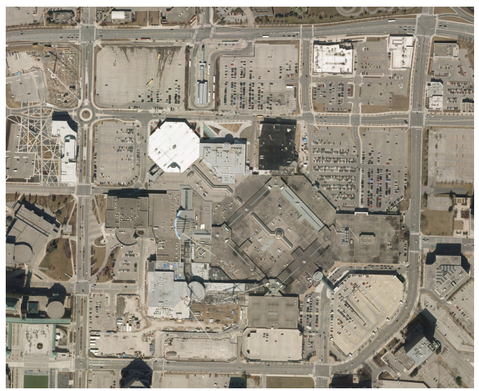


Figure 2.34
Aerial of Mississauga Square One Shopping Centre

51 James Corner and Alison Bick Hirsch, The Landscape Imagination: Collected Essays of James Corner, 1990-2010, (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2014) 61.
52 John Van Nostrand, "Roads and Planning: The Settlement of Ontario's Pickering Township," City Magazine 3.2 (1977): 15.

production, and urbanization. Today, these elements are objects of economy and have predominantly lost their original narratives outside of consumerism. Corner theorized that the faults of contemporary design lies with the excessive rationality present in design processes. As he claims:

> *If humans were truly in accord with the world, with nature, and did not look at things as mere phenomena to be measured and manipulated, then the current ecological and existential crises, focusing on an aggressive technology and supported by an excessively rational thinking, would not arise.*[53]

With this in mind, the previously discussed parametric design as well as the modern economically-driven ideologies can be seen as overly-dependent on rationale and only concerned with short-sighted urban progress. However, if the strengths of parametric design, namely the unbiased spatial reading and vibrant culturally-informed opportunities, are acknowledged alongside the historic ideologies and aesthetics of the site, then neither metaphor nor economy have to suffer in the modern city. The agency of landscape design then becomes more than a series of logical processes used to further an economic identity, but rather it becomes an "innovative cultural agent".[54] Therefore, alongside parametric analyses, the design of cityscapes must include an acknowledgement of the context's ideological narratives and their effects on the material elements of the landscape.

53 James Corner and Alison Bick Hirsch, The Landscape Imagination: Collected Essays of James Corner, 1990-2010, (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2014) 17.
54 Ibid. 19.

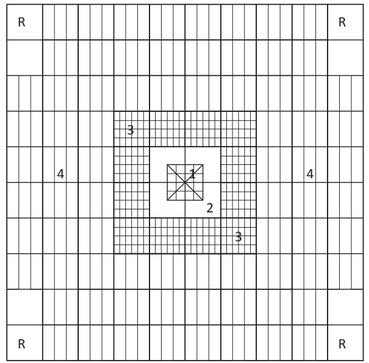


Figure 2.35
Inland Township Plan by Lord Dorchester, 1789

1 - Town Plot
2 - Town Reserve
3 - Town Park
4 - Farm Lots
R - Crown Reserves

2.6 Design Consciousness

The genius locus is an evasive entity. It can exist as a series of small actors, identifiable through parametric analysis and systemic operations, or in the grand gestures of cross-cultural icons and ideologies painted into the landscape. Most often it takes form unconsciously, occurring as a layered effect of collective thought, circumstantial opportunities, speculation, and nostalgia. Such can be easily seen in the attempt to answer the question '*what is the spirit of this place*'. It assumes a desire to comply with such a spirit for the sake of spatial harmony, and often the answer cannot be identified. It is an instinctual answer, expressed through rationalized means. There is ultimately no correct answer to the question, which leads to the ambiguity of the problem and the evasiveness of its nature. However it is clear that genius loci are not controlled by conscious totality of design, but are rather objects of organic growth.

If such is the case and genius loci take form through largely unconscious means, then the goal of designing spaces for a genius locus would appear counter-productive. However, the reality is that *humans* perceive genius loci and, as such, the model of the human mind *(Fig.2.36)* unavoidably controls its perception. Any given genius locus will translate its qualities into the conscious egos and unconscious bodies, dreams, and shadows of its occupants. The rationalistic spatial patterns studied in systemic and parametric methodologies, as well as the cultural narratives of iconic and ideological methodologies are rooted in spatial and social relationships born from the unconscious mind. They are examined in the realm of the ego, but ultimately their sources are instinctual and buried. In the same way that educating the ego to have a relationship with the unconscious is necessary for a healthy mind, the education of society to have a relationship with the unconscious elements of place is necessary for a healthy city.

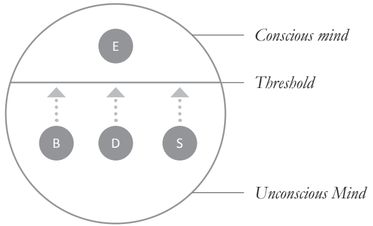


Figure 2.36
Jungian model of the human psyche

03

Mississauga Cities

3.1 *Mississauga as Place*

In the earlier discussion surrounding the definition of *genius locus*, it became clear that the phenomenon has opposing sources: one is an external static spirit to which all growth and actions attempt to assimilate, and the other is an internal creative ability that enables self-creation. When this is applied to a city, the founding question is this: is the genius locus found in its historical landscape as a set of static and unquestionable qualities, or are we continuously creating it through acts of design? In other words, is the genius locus something that is *found*, or something that is *made*? Historically, and often contemporarily, it is assumed to be the former and is something outside of human control. However, in landscapes such as Mississauga, either it has long been erased or has been confused with concepts of a sense of place, place making, and identity. If there is a new genius, it is still relatively young and is a clear product of human interaction. Ultimately there is no decisive answer to this question, except to assume it is a combination of both. As such, an understanding and awareness of both a city's history and its contemporary habits are vital in the propagating of the genius locus's identity-forming effects.

In the case of Mississauga, where the land has undergone a tabula rasa transformation twice over – once to establish farmland, and again to establish suburbia – there is little if any historic content to draw a portrait of a historical genius locus. It is easy to point to this fact as a cause for the city's current placelessness, especially as a suburban city. A traditional city may have gone through similar processes of razing, but in human-scale stages where they were able to maintain a relationship to the natural setting. Suburban cities are larger-than-life developments at a speed and in a style that completely disregards the physical place, instead naming new housing developments after the piece of nature they have replaced. Mississauga has been largely sterilized in this exact way (replacing the indigenous people that once lived here), thus voiding much of the significance of whatever historical presence is left. However, this does not invalidate the sense of perspective that an awareness of its historical narrative can provide. Patterns of development and indications of land control through farm lots-turned road grid are pieces of a historical story, one that echoes in the placement of today's City Centre, and thus the spirit of place. These historical hints may be contemporarily glossed over by visitors and locals alike, but that is simply to say the end result is unreceptive. To the design professions in charge of the city's growth and development, they are still opportunities to enrich and create identity; they are pieces of the puzzle used in the *making* of the genius locus.

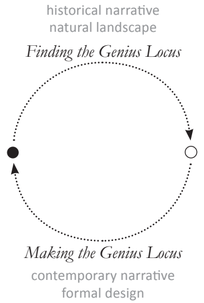


Figure 3.1
Growth cycle of Genius Loci

Figure 3.2
Shopping Cart Romance, 4pm in Summer

The experience of the city, therefore, is a portrait of its internal genius. The uniform street patterns, fields of single-family houses, and manicured parking lots that grew over the pre-existing farmland are the accepted reality of the city, upholding the values of safety, quiet, and personal space. The last 60 years of development have been heavily preoccupied with personal benefit, either on the part of the individual family or the developer that provides the landscape. It is a place where "distance is reduced to abstraction",[55] and the physical realities of space are inconsequential in the eyes of the occupant. Like many other suburbs, Mississauga is simultaneously highly attractive for its material offerings and peaceful neighbourhoods, and yet is also severely lacking in meaningful spaces. As such, its internal genius suffers a disembodiment between its generative ideals (its mental landscape) and its physical form (its bodily landscape). This gap between the city's mind and body indicates that its current internal genius is in poor health, which is not only harmful to its future, but also to its occupants. Its disembodiment is rampant throughout the general environment of the city. While not apparent at the scale of an individual house, whose occupant would strongly contest the claim that it is not a meaningful place, the argument is strongest at the scale of the city as a totality. The City Centre in particular would ideally be exempted from this condition, and it is in part, but the vast majority of it still stuffers from an acute experience of emptiness. Conjoined parking lots, wide roads, and unassuming building façades still fill the majority of the City Centre and cause a strong sense of alienation, sterility, and apathy. Although highly successful urban developments have begun to blossom in the areas surrounding Celebration Square, Sheridan College, and the Square One expansions, the City Centre is still ripe with non-places. While this does not mean such places lack any sort of experiential value – such as the value a group of teenage friends has for a particular street corner where they can linger and talk – in general such places of emptiness are detrimental to the experience and value of the city. Overall the experience of the city is meaningful in the context of a private home, and can extend to its contextual street, but much of the public realm lacks favourable qualities. However, now that the city has undergone a few decades of growth, its internal genius is maturing and hinting at the kind of unique urban vibrancy possible in Mississauga.

55 Charles Montgomery, Happy City, (Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 2011) 46.

Figure 3.3
View from Community Common Park

3.2 Urban History

The name "*Mississauga*" originates from a band of Ojibwa First Nations people first encountered by French traders on the north shore of Lake Huron in the 1600s.[56] By the 1700s the Mississaugas had migrated east to the area between Etobicoke Creek and Burlington Bay, which they referred to as *Minzazahgeeg*, meaning "people living where there are many mouths of rivers".[57] The major river of the area was called *Missinnihe* ("trusting creek")[58] due to the practice of exchanging goods with British and French traders for credit in the following year. These traders began referring to it as Credit River and referred to the First Nations people of the area collectively as the Mississaugas.

In 1805 the British Crown purchased 70,000 acres of what was known as the "Mississauga Tract" *(Fig.3.5)*, a 42km stretch of Mississauga Indian-retained land on the north shore of Lake Ontario.[59] Development had already begun on either side of the tract and thus the First Purchase Treaty allowed the settlers to improve transportation and communication across the province through the establishment of what was then the townships of Nelson, Trafalgar, and Toronto.

By 1820, a series of additional treaties and the Second Purchase surrendered the remaining native-retained land to the British Crown including the 648,000 acres of today's Regions of Peel and Halton and the mile wide strip on either side of the Credit River that had been reserved in the First Purchase. In 1847 the Mississaugas resettled on the New Credit Reserve near Brantford.[60]

During the early 19th century, immigrant farmers gradually settled on the surveyed lots of Toronto Township *(Fig.3.7)*. Numbers exponentially grew after the Second Purchase, but stalled in the second half of the 19th century as the price of wheat dropped and steam engines replaced old mills. Industries migrated closer to markets and neighbouring communities,

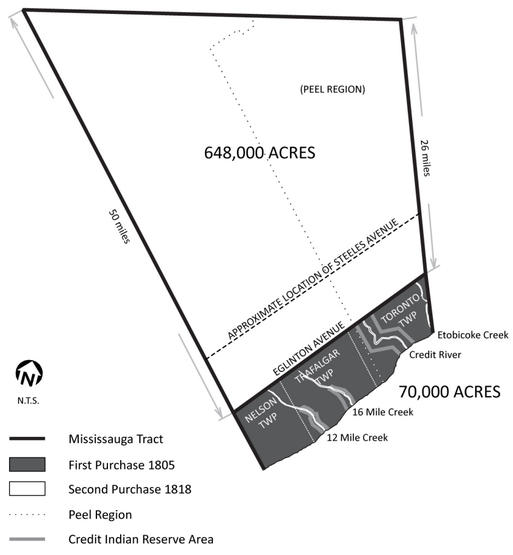
Figure 3.4
Mississaugas at a First Nations Festival, 1994

thus allowing certain villages to thrive while others disappeared entirely *(Fig.3.8)*.

In the 20th century, road improvement and the establishment of the new King's Highway in 1937 *(Fig.3.6)* (today's Queen Elizabeth Way) helped promote large-scale urban development and the decentralization of residents and industries away from railway-dependent cores.[61] The development in the area was largely in reaction to interest in vacation destinations for the wealthy and housing for the working class. In the 1920s army-built wartime housing became the first subdivision development, which expanded significantly as veterans were encouraged to settle. Starch, brick and tile manufacturing industries drew many ethnic groups and encouraged the development of villages like Port Credit and Cooksville. Eventually newer subdivision projects began to replace farms, and by 1950 the township was divided between the northern farmland and the suburban south. As development intensified and roadways expanded, industrial parks, shopping plazas, and affordable housing began to stretch

Figure 3.5 (below)
The Mississauga Tract: First & Second Purchase Boundaries

Figure 3.6 (right)
Cloverleaf, King's Highway, c.1940



across the landscape and draw an increasing number of people to the area. In 1953 the first shopping centre in the township was built: Lorne Park Shopping Centre. It hosted a supermarket, department store, theatre, bowling alley, post office, drugstore, and shops.[62] Towns like Streetsville and Port Credit grew so quickly they continually annexed lands from Toronto Township to support their needs. By 1968 the Toronto Township became the Town of Mississauga, and in 1974 the towns of Mississauga, Port Credit, and Streetsville became incorporated as the City of Mississauga.

56 "History of Mississauga," Heritage Mississauga, 2 Apr. 2015 < http://www5.mississauga.ca/rec&parks/websites/museums/pdfs/history_of_mississauga.pdf>.
57 Donald B. Smith, Sacred Feathers: The Reverend Peter Jones (Kahkewaquonaby) and the Mississauga Indians (Toronto: U of Toronto, 1987) 20.
58 Ibid. 21.
59 "Mississauga: The Evolution of a City," Mississauga Data, The Planning and Building Department of the City of Mississauga (2004): 2.
60 "History of Mississauga," Heritage Mississauga, 2 Apr. 2015 < http://www5.mississauga.ca/rec&parks/websites/museums/pdfs/history_of_mississauga.pdf>.
61 "Mississauga: The Evolution of a City," Mississauga Data, The Planning and Building Department of the City of Mississauga (2004): 7.
62 Ibid. 9.

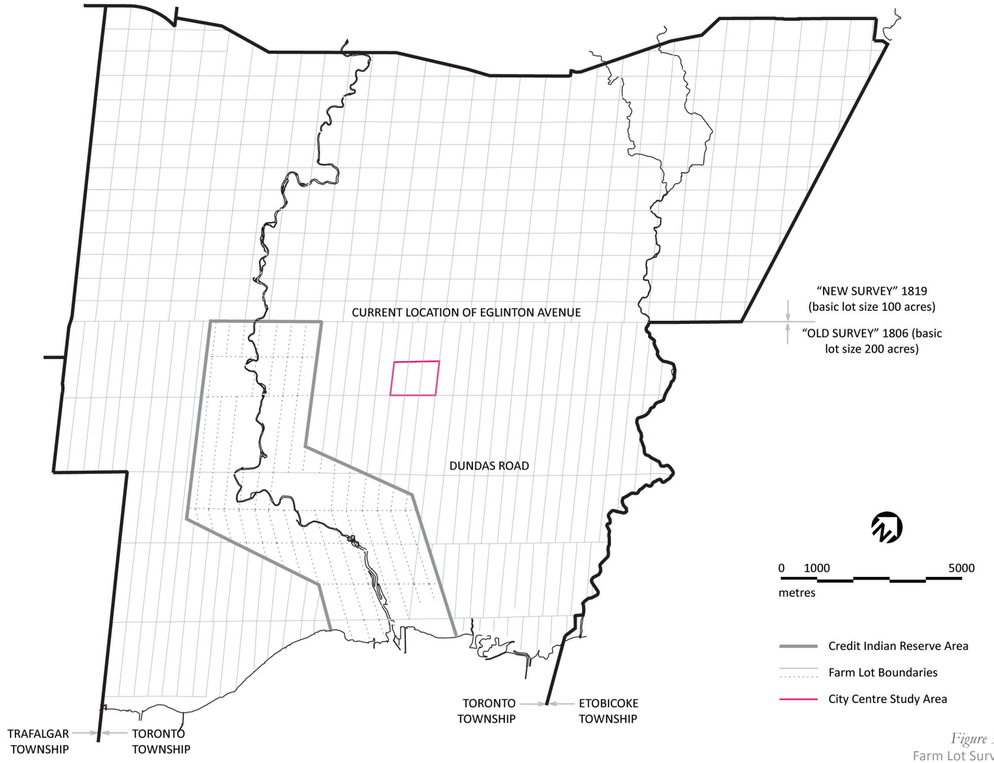


Figure 3.7
Farm Lot Survey

Figure 3.8
Urban Sedimentation & Village Locations

3.3 Modern City

Today Mississauga is the sixth largest city in Canada with an estimated population of 752,000.[63] Having more than tripled its population since its incorporation in 1974 *(Fig.3.9)*, it is still young by any means and rapidly growing. With over half its population born outside of Canada *(Fig.3.10)*, it is a colourful mosaic of cultures. At any time a visitor will be able to see a highly integrated mix of people, especially at places like Square One. Furthermore, the communal culture resulting from this is one of open arms. In the recent rebranding project of the city, a study of what its citizens think of Mississauga resulted in descriptions of it being open and welcoming, an ideal place to raise a family, culturally diverse, and surrounded by natural beauty and open spaces.[64] They also described it as being a "young city on the cusp of something big", signifying the local belief in its future and opportunities to become something unique. Concerns citizens had included the enhancement of transit options, the scope of activities for seniors, the improvement of nightlife and entertainment options, a broader range of affordable housing, and the further development of the downtown.[65]

Festivals and community events are highly valued elements of Mississauga society. In 2014 over twice the city's population attended City-supported events and activities *(Fig.3.11)*. Farmers markets, outdoor fitness events, public film screenings, food festivals, charity events, cultural festivals, sports screenings, and holiday events reach into the hundreds throughout the year. Some of the largest and most successful include Carassauga, a festival of cultures at the Hershey Centre, the Rotary Ribfest at Celebration Square, the Bread and Honey Festival in Streetsville, and the Mississauga Waterfront Festival in Port Credit. As such, public open space is a vital amenity to Mississauga life. Currently most of these festivals occur either in Celebration Square, community centres, or makeshift locations like empty parking lots, schools during off-hours, and street space. Within the downtown such activities rarely extend past Celebration Square, presenting an opportunity to expand its effect to the rest of the area.

63 "Mid-Year Population Forecasts 2011 to 2031," Peel Data Centre, Region of Peel (2011), 12 Dec. 2015 <https://www.peelregion.ca/planning/pdc/data/forecasts/population-2006-2031.htm>.
64 "Our Future Mississauga: Growing Our Brand," Mississauga's Brand Story, The Corporation of the City of Mississauga, 26 Feb. 2014. 9 Dec. 2015 <http://mississaugabrand.ca>.
65 Ibid.

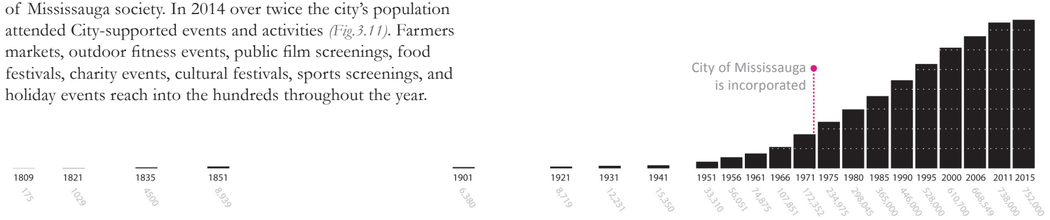
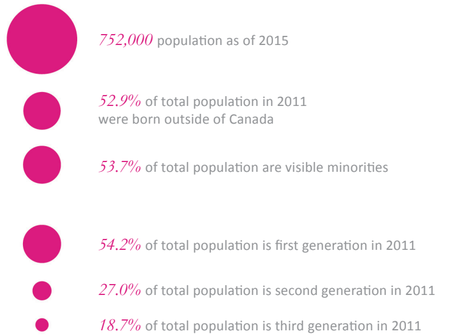


Figure 3.9
Overall City Population Growth



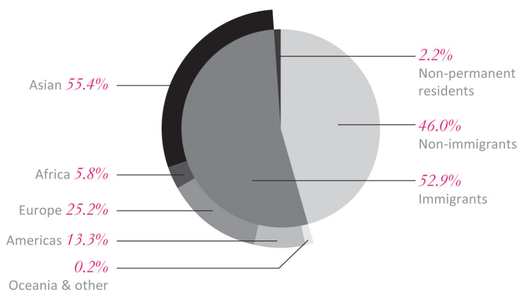


Figure 3.10
Immigrant Population Analysis

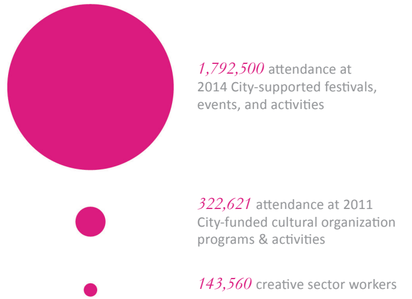


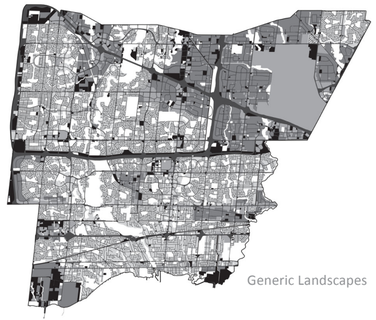
Figure 3.11
Cultural Activity Statistics

Figure 3.12
Mississauga Latin Festival

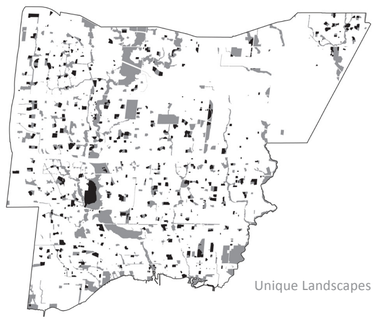
Following the two tabula rasa transformations of the city, today's Mississauga is nearly completely developed with low-density residential and industrial program. With only 3.9% of the city's land vacant for new development *(Fig.3.13)*, its future growth is predicted to slow due to "the depletion of the ground-related supply for housing and a shift to smaller households in higher density units" as well as the trend of increasing "single person and non-family households in a wider age range".[66] The vast majority of city land is taken up by residential development (29.2%) followed by transportation and utility (22.7%), and industry (15.2%). Toronto Pearson Airport, which is situated on the northeast corner of Mississauga, accounts for roughly 6.2% of the total land use (1824 ha out of the total 29,214 ha)[67] and acts as a major source of industry. While the city thrives in economy and multiculturalism, these landscapes are ultimately heavily homogeneous and limit future growth and experiential value. The only reliefs within these '*generic landscapes*' are the objects of the '*unique landscape*'. These include green spaces, farmland, schools, and community amenities, which in total account for 18.3% of the city's land use. Situated far and between, these places are the most traditional instances of '*place*' in terms of social value and investment in its material expression. Valuable '*places*' may still occur within the generic landscapes. However they occur most often in relation to a single person's memory and experiences rather than a multiplicity as part of the community, which is ultimately the means by which historic layers can emerge.

66 Hemson Consulting Ltd., "Mississauga Long-Range Growth Forecasts Population, 2011-2041", Mississauga Data, 2011, 9 Dec. 2015 <http://www5.mississauga.ca/research_catalogue/L_34_Growth_Forecasts_2011_2041_Population.pdf>.

67 "Chapter 14 - Land Use - Part 1," Master Plan 2008-2030, Toronto Pearson International Airport, 2008, 2 Nov. 2014 <http://www.torontopearson.com/en/gtaa/master-plan/#>.



Generic Landscapes



Unique Landscapes

Figure 3.13
Land Use Analysis

3.4 City Centre

At the geographical centre of Mississauga is its heart. The City Centre, which houses the City Hall, Central Library, Celebration Square and, most importantly, Square One, is the civic, commercial, and social centre. It is the most important place of study in understanding the genius locus of the city, closely followed by its various villages including Port Credit, Streetsville, and Cooksville. However unlike these villages, which grew organically and have already pieced together unique identities through layers of history, the City Centre hosts its own genius locus as a representative of the genius of Mississauga as a whole. It is a collector of narratives scattered throughout Mississauga and represents both the best and the worst of it.

Developer Bruce McLaughlin *(Fig.3.14)* was the visionary responsible for Square One. Located on the periphery between the old and new surveys of the 19th century, at the time of its opening it was on the edge between a suburban south and an agricultural north *(Fig.3.15)*. Ron Duquette, a former employee of McLaughlin, described his way of thinking as being "way ahead of everybody else" and that he had "the foresight to see that there would be major growth west of Toronto, mainly because of the airport."[68] One such example was the burying of the mall's utility lines underground, a rare practice at the time, to allow for high-rise office and residential buildings to later replace its parking lots.[69] Furthermore, he cemented the role of the area as the future city centre by taking advantage of an opportunity in 1969 when a fire broke out at the municipal offices in Cooksville, then expected to be the City Centre. The day after the fire he offered the council 10 acres of free land beside Square One for a new city hall, which was built on the corner of Robert Speck Parkway and City Centre Drive. The choice to place it here was heavily deliberated, and ultimately chosen for its quality as a blank slate. John Calvert of the planning department explains that:

Figure 3.14
Bruce McLaughlin, Founder of Square One

> *Everything was brand new and there was lots of vacant land. Cooksville was an older part of the city. Here was a chance to start brand new. Take something like Celebration Square. You wouldn't have got that in Cooksville and you wouldn't get some of the other buildings. The vacant land was key and you wouldn't have had that (opportunity) in Port Credit either.*[70]

The new building functioned as the municipal offices until 1987, after which it was demolished following the completion of today's post-modern City Hall.

Since then a slew of increasingly modern buildings have made their homes around Square One. Over the next three decades an identity grew surrounding the City Hall in the form of oversized city blocks, wide roads, and new towers that outreached the hall's clock tower. Buildings like the Absolute Towers *(Fig.3.16)* began to create a skyline and thus the beginnings of a city brand. Development has taken the form of a wide range of building scales and program including the recently completed Sheridan College, which increased demands for a more vibrant public realm and therefore new opportunities to further develop the city's identity and genius locus.

Ultimately the city is still young and far from being a full-fledged metropolis. Such can be easily seen in comparing its density and urban grid to that of other city cores *(Fig.3.19)*, whose use of space is vastly different in principle to Mississauga and whose identity and layers of history mark them as highly developed expressions of genius loci. As such, while the roots of the city's identity lay in part in its history and modernity, its younger urban history and contemporary status are keys to understanding how Mississauga will grow.

68 John Stewart, "Bruce McLaughlin: The Man Who Built Square One," The Mississauga News, 25 June 2012, 12 Dec. 2015 <http://www.mississauga.com/community-story/3127286-bruce-mclaughlin-the-man-who-built-square-one/>.
69 Ibid.
70 Chris Clay, "How City Hall Helped Shape the Development of Mississauga," The Mississauga News, 27 Oct. 2014, 12 Dec. 2015 <http://www.mississauga.com/news-story/4945798-how-city-hall-helped-shape-the-development-of-mississauga/>.

Figure 3.16
Absolute Condominiums, also known as Marilyn Monroe Towers

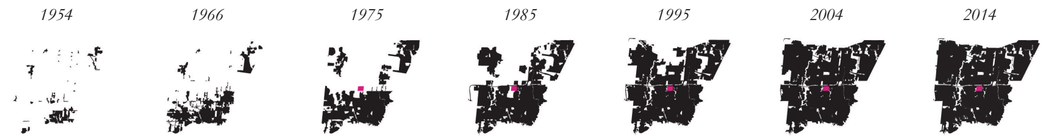


Figure 3.15
City Centre in relation to City Growth

Figure 3.17
Aerial of Square One area, 1973

Figure 3.18
Aerial of Square One area, 2014

Figure 3.19
Urban Scale Comparison

Figure 3.20
City Centre Building Overview

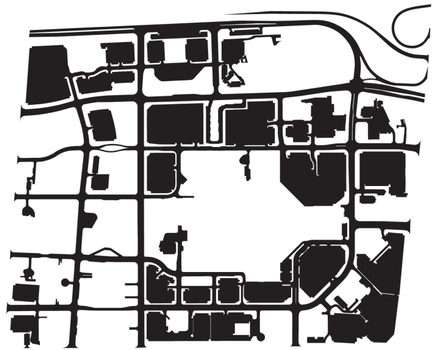
Figure 3.21
Study Areas

Study Area

Architectural Design Area

318 m

Scan 1: Built Space

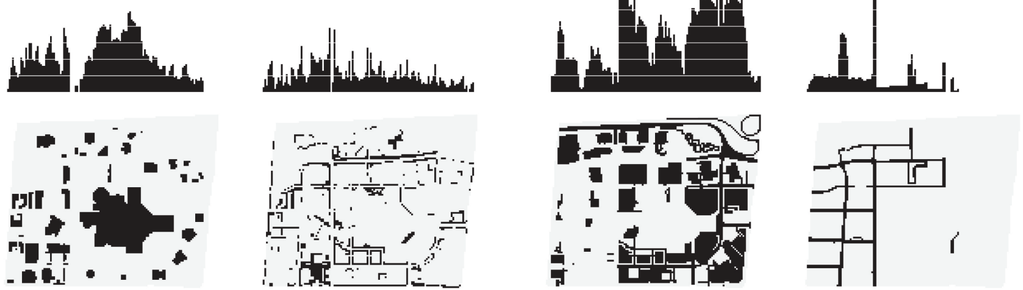


Scan 2: Empty Space

Scan 3: Green Space

Figure 3.22
City Centre Spatial Rhythms

Three scans of spatial rhythms illustrate the dominant space types within the City Centre. The first, *built space*, shows the density of buildings and the public realm when compared to the second scan, *empty space*. This scan includes road space and parking lots, which are either dominated by vehicular traffic or are integrated into streetscapes that were redeveloped to be welcoming and interactive. The predominant feature of the study area is the expanse of parking lots on the north, east, and south sides of Square One Shopping Centre. The last scan, *green space*, illustrates how permeable surfaces function either as vibrant agents of public space, buffers on the edges of built space, or degraded space left vacant or for future development.



BUILDING FOOTPRINTS | PEDESTRIAN REALM | VEHICLE DOMINANT REALM | INTERACTIVE STREETSPACE

VIBRANT GREEN SPACE & PARK LANDS | ROADSIDE LANDSCAPING | DEGRADED GREEN SPACE

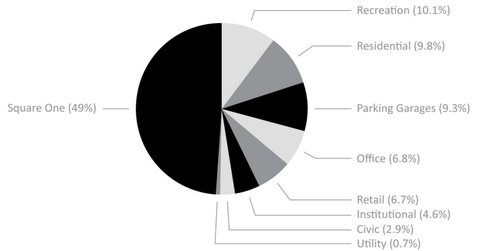


Figure 3.23
City Centre Built Footprint Area Analysis

Figure 3.24 (below)
City Centre Built Footprint Area Comparison

Within the study area, Square One easily dominates all other built forms in terms of scale. This diagram does not break down the mall's individual expansions, but rather uses today's final built area as a singular entity in comparison to its surrounding buildings. The comparison reveals both the large jump in the transition of building size between the mall and the other structures. It also situates the study area buildings (in pink) in relation to those outside the boundary of the study area (in grey). As shown, the majority of the key public buildings, not including Square One, that form the area's identity (the Square One parking garages, Living Arts Centre, City Hall, Famous Players, YMCA, Central Library, Playdium, Sheridan College, and the Transit Terminal) occur as structures of larger size with a footprint average of 6300 sq.m. The smaller built forms act either as support pieces to the larger players or work together with them to create individual spatial identities as part of network districts.

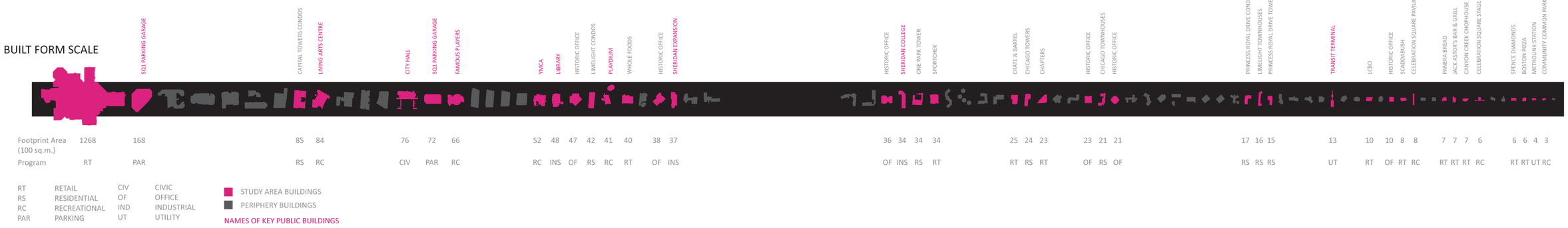


Figure 3.25 (pages 70-71)
City Centre Timeline & Typologies

The social values and building patterns of Mississauga's City Centre can be understood through the analysis of its built form timeline. Following the opening of its largest entity, Square One, the history of the study area's building practice has been largely conflicted in terms of preferred building typology, which switch between object types and podium-tower types every few years.

'Object' typologies are singular and often signature buildings that most often act as key buildings in the identity of the area. *'Podium & Tower'* typologies, most prominent in recent development, are more privatized in terms of social interaction, but still play a major role in forming the city's identity as icons of architectural style, social value, and city growth. *'Public Objects'* are buildings which offer social and place value to the community and act as gathering points for activity and interaction. Lastly, *'Private Objects'* are generally not open to the public and thus tend to lack a strong social place value, but are still representations of more general modern social values. These are dominant by number in comparison to public objects, and thus suggest the cause of such widespread experiential alienation in many of these areas.

Today's most effective public buildings occurred largely throughout the 1990s with subsequent public structures (from 1997-2000) as predominantly singular entertainment or parking programs. More recently the city has been in a phase of smaller scale object typologies, such as Sheridan College, several retail buildings, and the stage and pavilion of Celebration Square. However it is on the cusp of another transition into podium-tower typologies with the planned development of the Parkside Village condominiums slated for post-2016.

BUILT FORM TIMELINE

41 BUILDINGS WITHIN THE CITY CENTRE STUDY AREA
43 PRIVATE OBJECT BUILDINGS ON PERIPHERY
84 TOTAL BUILDINGS STUDIED

OBJECT TYPOLOGY

34 OBJECT BUILDINGS WITHIN THE STUDY AREA
21 OBJECT BUILDINGS ON PERIPHERY

PODIUM & TOWER TYPOLOGY

7 PODIUM TOWERS WITHIN THE STUDY AREA
22 PODIUM TOWERS ON PERIPHERY

PUBLIC OBJECTS

27 PUBLIC BUILDINGS WITHIN THE STUDY AREA
1 PUBLIC BUILDING ON PERIPHERY

PRIVATE OBJECTS

14 PRIVATE BUILDINGS WITHIN THE STUDY AREA
42 PRIVATE BUILDINGS ON PERIPHERY

STUDY AREA BUILDINGS
BUILDING PODIUM
BUILDING TOWER OR SINGULAR BUILDING

Figure 3.25
City Centre Timeline & Typologies

Figure 3.26
City Centre District Overview

A Square One District

B Office District

C Creekside District

D Civic District

E Cityside South District

F Entertainment District

G Cityside West District

Figure 3.27
City Centre District Views

STUDY AREA DISTRICT NETWORKS

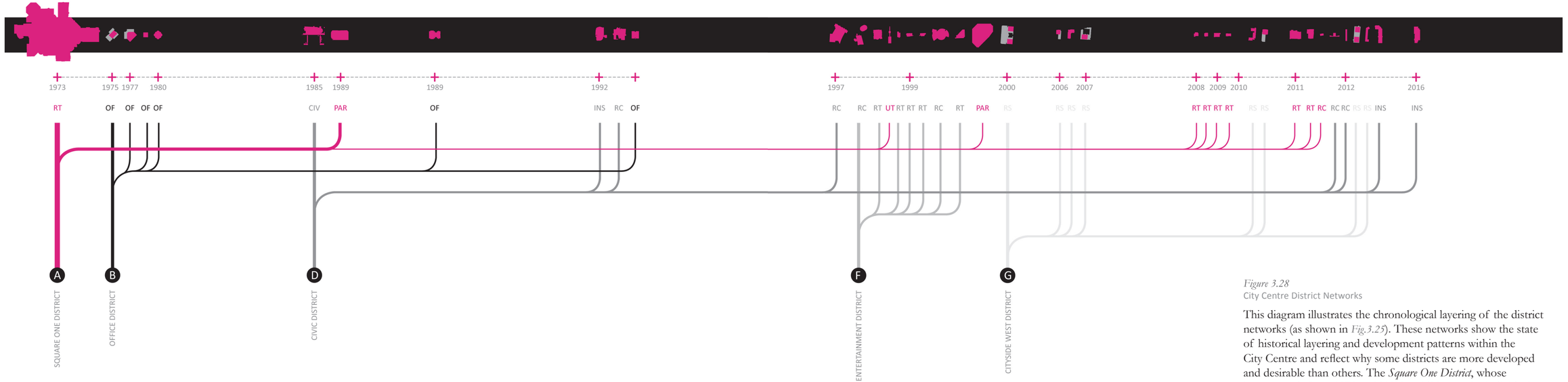


Figure 3.28
City Centre District Networks

This diagram illustrates the chronological layering of the district networks (as shown in *Fig.3.25*). These networks show the state of historical layering and development patterns within the City Centre and reflect why some districts are more developed and desirable than others. The *Square One District*, whose layers stretch from 1973 to 2011 (in addition to the individual expansions of Square One), is highly developed in comparison to the *Entertainment District* to its north, whose time frame is from 1997 and 1999, and the *Office District* to its east and south, whose layering largely stopped past 1992. However the neighbouring *Civic District* has flourished with layers from 1985 to 2015 and beyond as well as the *Cityside West District* whose expansions are reaching beyond the boundary of the study area.

A Square One District

If ever there were an answer to the question '*what is the genius locus of Mississauga*' in the traditional sense of an external embodiment, it would be Square One Shopping Centre. Not only is it the root of existence for the modern City Centre, it exemplifies all the major values of the suburban city: material wealth, open spaces, a focus on car-culture, commerce, and profitable economy. Although the concept of a mall being the root of a city's spirit of place is less than ideal, the reality is that Square One is closely tied to Mississauga's identity and is the most significant place of social activity. While both visitors and locals alike might write it off as a typical mall – identical to the hundreds throughout Canada and the US – in fact it is a primary place of layered memory in the area. Similar to how, according to Rem Koolhaas, airports have become "the most singular, characteristic elements of the Generic City, its strongest vehicle of differentiation"[71] that act as summaries of the city's localisms, malls do the same in relation to everyday urban life. In spite of its dependence on international big box stores and generic architectural styles, it is a major place within the social landscape. If anything the city's architectural indifference reveals commerce as the instigator of the public realm. With 1.7 million sq. ft. of gross leasable area throughout 360 stores, 8,700 parking spaces, and 1,100 seats in the Food Court, it draws in 24 million visitors every year.[72] It is clearly extremely successful in encouraging social gathering, even if it is mostly single-minded shopping as opposed to opportunities for interaction. It is the city itself, having absorbed the activity that would otherwise happen in traditional street space. As well, like a city, Square One grows in increments by annexing more and more land from its surroundings to produce more '*city space*'. This is one act of layering, which offers versions of history to the string of generations and the ability to watch the city mature and grow. In this area this has extended to instances of smaller big-box stores scattered around it as well as the Transit Terminal. In summary, the *Square One District* is definitive in regards to the city's genius locus through its expression of commerce as the source of public space.

Figure 3.29
Square One SE entrance with bridge to parking structure

71 Rem Koolhaas, Generic City, (Sassenheim: Sikkens Foundation, 1995) 317.
72 "Square One Shopping Centre - Building Facts," Square One Shopping Centre Hwy 10 and Hwy 403, Oxford Properties, 14 Dec. 2015 <http://www.oxfordproperties.com/leasing/en/retail/facts/29810>.

Figure 3.30
Square One Interior, 2014

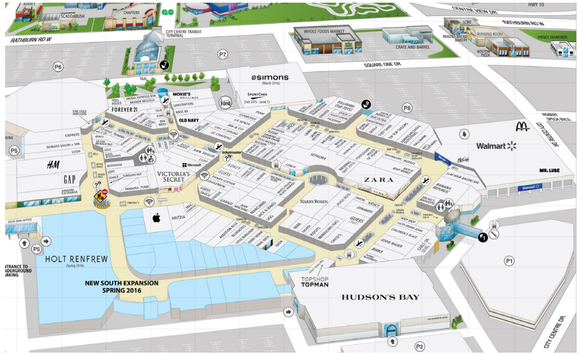
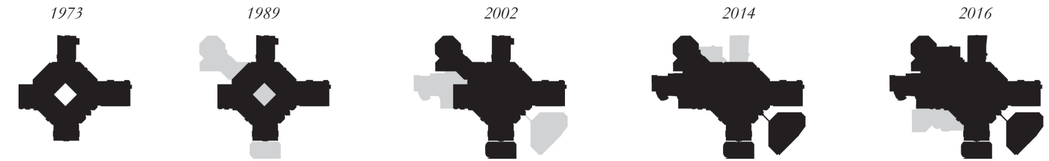


Figure 3.31
Square One Directory, 2014



Square One opened

North Extension, Parking Garage, and Covered Courtyard

Cityside Extension and Parking Garage

North Renovation and Expansion

South Expansion

Figure 3.32
Square One Growth

Ⓓ Civic District

The *Civic District* is currently the most well-developed and enjoyable urban outdoor area of the City Centre. It is comprised of City Hall, Central Library, Celebration Square, YMCA, Living Arts Centre, Scholars Green Park, and Sheridan College (as well as its expansion currently under construction). Within this district the relationship between City Hall, Central Library, and Celebration Square is the most prominent and successful example of a vibrant and layered megastructure, both in terms of history as well as interconnected architectural and landscape elements. Sitting atop an underground parking garage, City Hall is a key historic icon that hosts smaller programs including gardens, performance spaces, and a skating park. Its design is a post-modern interpretation of a farmhouse (the main building), a grain silo (the council chamber), and a windmill (the clock tower), many of which populated the area before its urbanization. Though originally built on a separate urban block from the Central Library to its south, they have since undergone renovations to consolidate into a single thriving urban square. Since the opening of Celebration Square in 2011, over 1.8 million people have attended events hosted there. An additional 100,000 passive visitors use the space each year.[73] It has become an indispensible asset of the city where families can spend the day and as a gathering point for the many cultural initiatives spread throughout the city. It is a place of expression and social gathering, and was sorely needed not only to mobilize the urbanization of this area but as a vital piece of healthy community life. The Living Arts Centre continues this conversation of the relationship between urban space and nature as a signature object situated in a landscape of trees and meadows. Its park connects further north to the Scholars Green, a project created adjacent to the recently built Sheridan College. The college has drawn a younger population to the area and further strengthened the activity and identity of

Figure 3.33
Old Mississauga Logo

Figure 3.34
Rebranded Mississauga Logo

the civic district. It, alongside Scholars Green, is a prime example of modern values and the revitalized brand of Mississauga. Embodying ideals of connectivity and a meshing of urbanism with lush landscapes, it ties into the ideals of Celebration Square and the Living Arts Centre. In summary, the *Civic District* is what Mississauga wants and should become: a vibrant, healthy landscape that is simultaneously urban and suburban.

73 "Culture in the City 2014," Mississauga Data, City of Mississauga Culture Division, 2014, 10 Dec. 2015 <http://www.mississauga.ca/file/COM/CultureDivisionReport_2014.pdf>.

Figure 3.35
City Hall Gardens

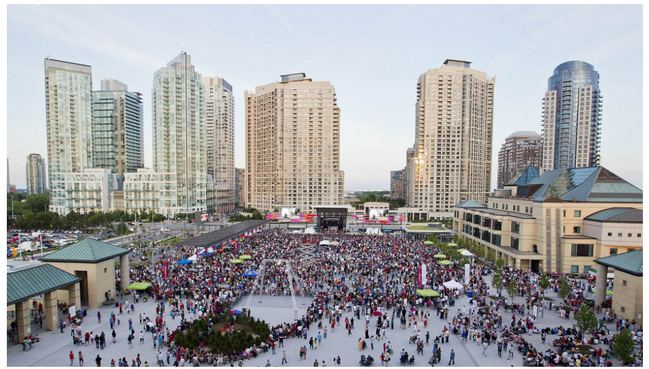


Figure 3.36
Celebration Square view from City Hall

Figure 3.37
Sheridan College and Scholars Green

Figure 3.38
City Hall view from Living Arts Centre

B Office District

Figure 3.39
Parking lot adjacent to 151 City Centre Dr.

On the south and east sides of Square One is the *Office District*, which consists of a small collection of stand-alone office buildings built around the same time as the mall. Largely unchanged throughout the 60 years of development of the City Centre, this area is visually uncharacteristic and stark with its desert of parking lots. Attempts to appease visitors and daily users include a few scattered trees and landscaping elements as well as a few prominent restaurants on the ground floors, most notably Tim Hortons and the Bier Markt. Additionally, outside of the study area to the east are four identical office buildings that flank either side of Cooksville Creek, thereby largely privatizing access to it in that area. Overall this area in particular is in dire need of revitalization if it is to play a part in the maturing of the City Centre.

Figure 3.40
Failte Irish Pub at 201 City Centre Dr.

Figure 3.41
Bier Markt at 55 City Centre Dr.

G Cityside West District

Figure 3.42
Streetscape south of Community Common Park

The majority of ongoing development in the City Centre is taking place to the west of Square One and the Civic District as the *Cityside West District*. This area is populated by a variety of high-quality town houses, public parks, modernist residential towers sitting atop mixed-use podiums, and land slotted for future development of similar projects. Just to the west of the study area is a project known as Parkside Village, which consists of 8 blocks of high-rise towers, 3 parks, and a row of townhouses facing the suburban neighbourhood to the west. Currently the line of townhouses and one block of towers are completed with a second block under construction. This project is a key signifier to the kind of architectural form and urban configuration the city wants. Its streetscape is clearly defined and animated, but still ties into the modernist developer styles already established in neighbouring high-rise developments and parks.

Figure 3.43
View of high-rise condos from existing woodlot block

Figure 3.44
Corner of high-rise condo with highly articulated townhouse podium

F Entertainment District

Figure 3.45
Restaurants on the corner of Rathburn Rd. W. and Duke of York Blvd.

Located the north face of the City Centre, the *Entertainment District* is a network of various amenities and their parking lots including a Cineplex theatre, several small restaurants, Sports Chek and Chapters stores, Playdium, several GO bus stops, and a Metrolinx station currently under construction. The majority of these buildings were constructed around the same time, from 1997-1999, with the Metrolinx as the only major development since. In spite of several of these destinations having significant foot traffic, this area severely lacks any sort of urban continuity or attention. The GO bus area in particular has a high volume of users, but only has access to the Starbucks cafe located inside Chapters and the only alternative being a 10-minute walk to the Food Court in Square One. One of the major challenges of this area is the presence of the 403 to its north, but this does not excuse the lack of progress in taking advantage of the already existing urban activity.

Figure 3.46
South streetview of Playdium from Rathburn Rd. W.

Figure 3.47
Chapters on the corner of Station Gate Rd. and Rathburn Rd. W.

City Centre Summary

By analyzing the City Centre's districts it is clear that a multiplicity of historical layers assists in the creation of positive and meaningful spaces. Square One and Celebration Square are the two major examples as their forms and functions have expanded over the years. They have created opportunities for sedimentary layers born from the ability to attach personal memory to space and the ability to see it physically change through the years *(Fig.3.48)*. However, physical renovations do not equate a meaningful place. For instance the Living Arts Centre has largely remained unchanged since its construction, aside from the growth of its park trees. Meanwhile, buildings from the Office District have undergone comparably more renovations in adding ground level restaurants. In spite of this, the Civic District is thriving while the Office District is not. The difference, besides that the Living Arts Centre is a public institution while the office buildings are private, is that the Living Arts Centre is part of a dynamic network whose collective layers benefit both the network and each individual building. Sheridan College is another example where, although it and the Scholars Green are newly constructed and have not required renovations thus far, it contains sensory landscape layers. The building itself can be considered public to an extent, but the combination of it as a new layer within the civic network and the layer of sensory elements make it a vibrant addition to a growing neighbourhood. The genius locus of the Civic District is being celebrated while the Office District, whose historic buildings have largely resisted change, is stagnant and lacks a positive identity. As such, the genius locus of Mississauga can only be revealed through change. It is not a static pre-determined entity, but exists within the act of imagining and constructing new urban space. In order to alleviate its placelessness it must end its urban and architectural inertia and allow progress to embrace the nature of its genius.

Figure 3.48
City Centre Growth Sediments

04

Genius Locus of Mississauga

4.1 *Genius Locus as Speculation*

Speculation, defined as the forming of an idea or theory in regards to something that is unknown, is a major component of the genius locus of Mississauga. Since the start of its growth, its farmland and eventual parking lots contain an unshakable inherent value as future development opportunities. Even before its society imagines what such future development could be, before any notion of urban style or form or identity begins to take shape, the potency of the unknown future is at the forefront of what Mississauga truly is. In a sense this makes its genius even more ephemeral and immaterial than the core notion of a spirit of place. The genius becomes a ghost of itself as a result of such a vast blank slate phenomenon. With much of the city's original landscape erased and minimal pre-existing notions of urbanity to comply to *(Fig.4.1)*, it gives a sense of total freedom and purity of creative design. With no apparent genius to respond to, speculation is a logical outcome for every new piece of place that does arise. It is evident in every road paved, building erected, and utility line constructed. The end result is a playfulness of vision where series of master plans, optimistic architectural designs, and identities of idealism build a city founded on the act of imagining itself.

This act is most evident in the city's self-advertisement. Soon after the completion of Square One Shopping Centre, advertisements described it as an active downtown core designed through intense planning and that offered bountiful transit access as well as ample office and parking spaces. It was a place that was "exciting and distinctive. Attracting Commerce! Industry! Government! People who want to grow! And it's only the beginning!"[74] In every instance it was hailed a Garden of suburban Eden, offering safety and engagement *(Fig.4.3)*. It speculated itself to be home to the best of the best with as much confidence in its future as is possible. Even today this tradition continues with notions of rejuvenation and adventure, as seen in advertisements posted around the new Square One expansion *(Fig.4.4)*. However, in today's rationality-focused culture that has seen decades of such marketing schemes, these proclamations appear standard and insincere especially in the face of a city filled with non-places. Generalized descriptions of new projects like the Parkside Village that offer "style unlike any other"[75] and "the finest selection of features and finishes for your new home"[76] all trace back to the potential of the blank slate notion. They are a gesture of vague optimism, which understandably encourages cynicism in the search for authenticity in the genius of a City Centre grown around a mall.

74 Ron, Duquette, "Mississauga City Centre – A New Downtown is taking shape," 1970s, Photograph of document, Insauga.com, 6 Aug. 2015 <http://www.insauga.com/when-the-mississauga-city-centre-was-built>.
75 "Model Suite," Life at Parkside, Parkside Village Mississauga, 22 Dec. 2015 <http://www.lifeatparkside.com/communities/view/psv>.
76 "Model Suite," Life at Parkside, Parkside Village Mississauga, 22 Dec. 2015 <http://www.lifeatparkside.com/communities/view/psv>.

Figure 4.1
City Centre prior to construction with original City Hall in the upper left

Figure 4.2
"There's a NEW DIRECTION in shopping...today!"
Sign at the opening of Square One in 1973

Mississauga City Centre—
A vibrant, vital place to be

During lunch, relax and enjoy the sunshine in Square One's beautifully landscaped garden court where the fountain soars, a waterfall tumbles, orchestras and groups perform, and children play in safety. Designed to be enjoyed all seasons, you can even skate during the winter months. After work, take in a movie at one of four cinemas featuring first-run films. And there are fourteen eating places in all—from an elegant, fully-licensed tavern to a casual snackery.

During the summer months, the centre's parking lot becomes a lively open-air farmers market, offering fresh produce at great savings—right downtown.

It's all here! And the time to make the move to Mississauga City Centre is not tomorrow, but today...right now...where a new world is growing in the heart of the City.

Figure 4.3
Description excerpt from 1975 Master Plan Report

Figure 4.4
"A NEW EXPERIENCE STARTS HERE"
Sign outside construction site of Square One's new expansion

Figure 4.5 (above)
Visualization of revitalized Burnhamthorpe Rd. as per the Downtown 21 Master Plan

While such marketing traditions are well intended and are expressions of the genius locus as speculation, their execution is currently another facet to the reason why this city suffers the lack of a concrete identity. This extends to the most recent City Centre master plan, which depicts the area as a quaint and colourful mid-rise town that enjoys the activity of the city without the heavy traffic or dense stimulation of one. Putting aside the fact that this depiction is in direct contrast with the type of developments that are taking place (namely the podium and tower typologies), it also ignores the urban dynamics that have made the area successful. Visionary images such as *Fig.4.5* even go so far as to deny the reality of street space by painting asphalt a warm orange colour, selectively showing only three cars in a city that could not function without them, and illustrating a vibrant urban area not dependent on large-scale retail for the success of its public realm. While this last point is questionable and may occur in some form in the future, in the context of the Square One District it seems unlikely without a deliberate forcing of specific urban policies. In either case, the self-imagination of this master plan appears to heavily deny its own reality in favour of a village identity. Such an act may seem dead-ended, and it likely is, but the speculative exercise is an important part of the area's genius. Whether or not such iterations are logical or even possible *(Fig.4.6)*, they are expressions of the blank slate that helped generate the City Centre and will continue to do so as it matures.

Figure 4.6 (right)
Visualization of different versions of City Centre surrounding Square One

4.2 *Genius Locus as Resistance*

Resistance to speculation is the second major component of Mississauga's genius. The dynamic between these two forces consists of the multitude of offered self-inventions (speculation) and the residual traces of such visions that are actually built (resistance) as hints of a genius not yet realized. This relationship is a type of urbanism similar to that of Pier Vittorio Aureli's "absolute" architecture, which is an architecture that is "resolutely itself after being separated from its other" (the 'other' being the space of the city, its extensive organization, and its government).[77] Aureli uses the example of Berlin as a Green Archipelago by Ungers *(Fig.4.7)* to express the idea of a city within a city, also referred to as islands or micro-cities. While there are obvious differences between the context of Berlin and that of Mississauga, namely Berlin's urban crisis of 1960 that spurred the need for such a rescue project in comparison to Mississauga's thriving and young growth, the resulting urban forces are the same. Ungers proposed the use of the crisis as the engine of the project where the shrinking of the population supports the argument for demolishing the city's abandoned zones in favour of still functioning areas: the green islands. In the case of Mississauga, the "other" as previously mentioned consists of the desserts of private houses, roads, and industries among which the City Centre and its other villages are islands. In both situations architecture is the tool for the absolution of the city and resists the larger moments of turbulence and change that affect the city as a whole. As such:

> *The city within the city is thus not only the literal staging of the city's lost form within the limits of architectural artifacts; it is also, and especially, the possibility of considering architectural form as a point of entry toward the project of the city. In this sense, architecture is not only a physical object; architecture is also what survives the idea of the city.*[78]

Therefore, moments of architectural resistance, whether in the context of a growing or shrinking city, is key in the defining of a rooted identity capable of withstanding larger urban forces.

In Mississauga's City Centre, architecture survives the idea of the city in the form of singular buildings or projects left over from a series of perpetually failing master plans. Since the conception of Square One, four master plans have taken shape (1969, 1975, 1994, and 2010), each one failing almost immediately in the face of what is subsequently being built at the time. The traces that do remain of each respective plan are one of two kinds: either they are buildings set to be built before or during the making of the master plan, in which case they are not necessarily representative traces, or the traces are failures themselves where the plan's original ideal was completed only in part and resulted in a vastly different urban effect than intended. For instance the original 1969 Master Plan sought to give relief to the pedestrian by separating their realm from that of the automobile through the use of elevated walkways and building setbacks. However, the walkways were not built and the setbacks only accented the priority of the vehicle, thus marginalizing public space. The 1975 Master Plan left behind a single office building largely detached from the overarching urban concept of interconnected row houses and courtyard buildings. The traces of 1994 Master Plan do not explicitly match their portrayal in the design, but the plan does correctly depict a few central growth patterns, namely the expansions of Square One. Lastly the 2010 Master Plan, known as Downtown 21, is in denial of the high-rise forms and Square One expansions already taking place in the City Centre. The plan has not yet had time to illustrate what trace of it will remain, and while it will likely fail like its predecessors, its inclusion and probable construction of the Hurontario-Main LRT will be the sole remnant of the plan's desire for improved street life. Overall these traces often have little if any connection to the master plans from which they survived, but instead illustrate the core city-making patterns that define the City Centre.

77 "The Possibility of an Absolute Architecture: Overview," Architectural Maker Lab, 22 Dec. 2015 <http://www-4.unipv.it/aml/bibliotecacondivisa/2007.htm>.
78 Pier Vittorio Aureli, The Possibility of an Absolute Architecture (Cambridge, MA: MIT, 2011) 226-227.

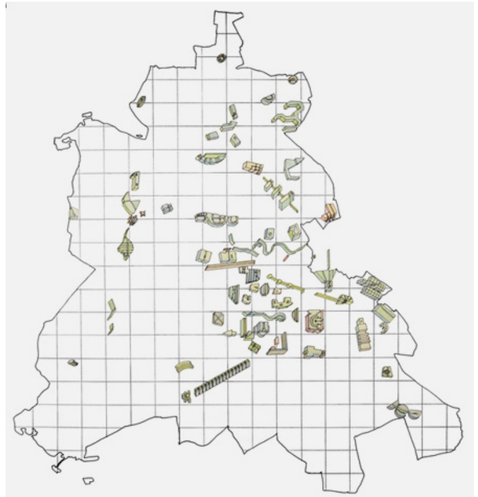


Figure 4.7
Berlin as a Green Archipelago

Figure 4.8
1969 Master Plan

The 1969 Master Plan by the McLaughlin Group focused on Square One Shopping Centre as the heart of the city and proposed a lifestyle where pedestrians are freed from the ills of cars via elevated walkways and towers are situated in lush parks. This highly idyllic and futurist design is a kind of developer modernism that uses a variety of building types and forms to make an attractive playground of architectural and urban possibilities.

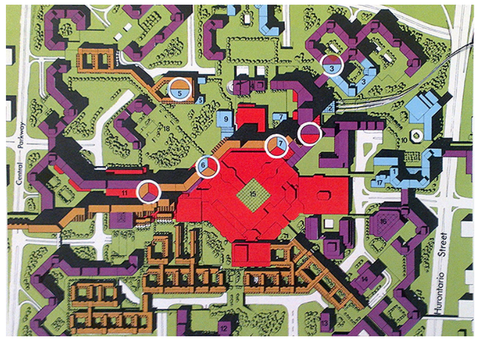


Figure 4.9
1975 Master Plan

The 1975 Master Plan by Zeidler Partnership Architects is the first use of megastructures as an overall urban scheme. It is an expression of architectural fashion that embraces the vibrancy of the mall and seeks to merge it with the low-density residential nature of the suburbs. Reminiscent of suburban cul-de-sacs, long rows of offices (in purple and other program in blue) blend with courtyard housing (orange) to link into the mall while situated in a generous Greenbelt field.

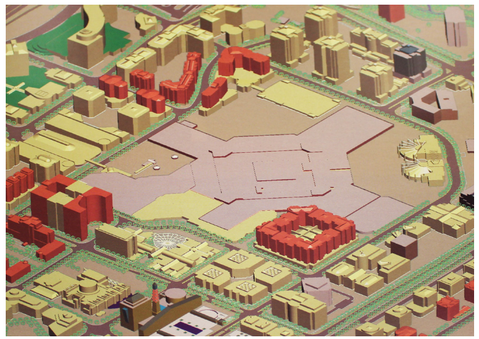


Figure 4.10
1994 Master Plan

The 1994 Master Plan, prepared by the Mississauga Urban Design and Planning Staff, attempts to re-answer the question of what the city's architectural style is. It is an urbanist approach adopted from Toronto, which uses experimentations of courtyard typologies, towers, and European-style block buildings to play with the landscape. This is the model used in most modern depictions of Mississauga.

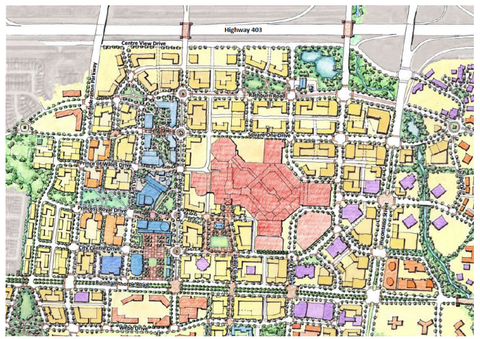


Figure 4.11
2010 Master Plan

The 2010 Master Plan by Florida-firm Glatting Jackson Kercher Anglin Inc. is a new urbanist approach that looks to solidify the formal language of the city with unassuming volumes of low to medium-rise buildings. Its central goal is to create a street presence via mixed-use perimeter buildings on all blocks and co-existing street traffic. Highly nostalgic and optimistic in what it can offer the pedestrian, it seeks to uphold the "village" values of Mississauga.

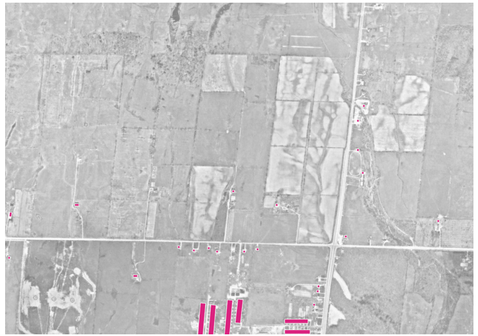


Figure 4.12
1966 City Centre Built Form

At the time of the 1969 plan, the site was on the edge of suburban Mississauga, looking north to vast farmland yet to be developed. Bruce McLaughlin capitalized on the 1969 fire that destroyed the original City Hall in Cooksville (then expected to be the City Centre) by offering free land beside Square One for a new city hall.

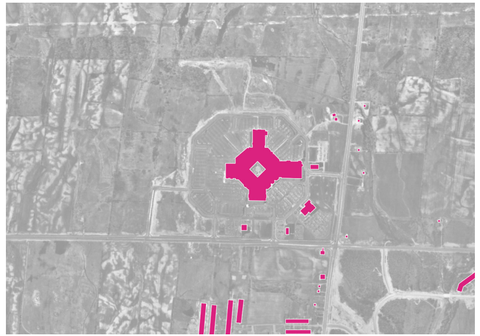


Figure 4.13
1975 City Centre Built Form

As the 1975 plan took form and sought to offer means of freeing the pedestrian from the presence of cars, Square One built vast parking lots around itself with a few offices from which the McLaughlin Group operated.

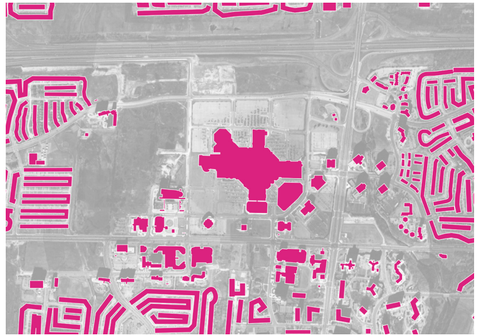


Figure 4.14
1995 City Centre Built Form

By the time of the 1994 plan, the majority of the City Centre's boundary is defined by the 403 and surrounding suburbs. Essentially untouchable, these elements define the territory of the City Centre, which in 1995 includes a few high-rise towers and community amenities like Kariya Park, the YMCA, City Hall, and Central Library.

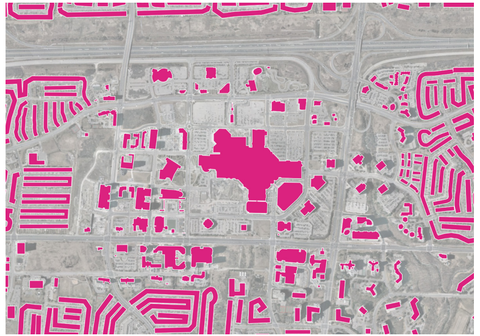


Figure 4.15
2014 City Centre Built Form

In spite of the mid-rise ambitions of the current master plan, development has shown a preference for what is ultimately more similar to the 1969 master plan than any of the others. The developer modernism led the way to the podium and tower typology, which quickly spread through the area, alongside continuous expansions to Square One, in order to reflect modern styles and values.

Figure 4.16
1973 Square One Shopping Centre

Ultimately the 1969 plan's desire for pedestrian freedom resulted in the firm division between the realm of the car and the realm of the pedestrian, with vehicular traffic as the main consideration of city design. What traces of the plan remain include the practice of setting buildings back from the street with minimal greenery lining their perimeters, as well as Square One itself as the centre of city activity, built 4 years after the plan.

Figure 4.17
1977 Office Building at 33 City Centre Drive

While the vast majority of the 1975 plan was never built, one office building depicted in it was added to the Office District collection. 33 City Centre Drive does not uphold most of the objectives of the master plan aside from the general desire to surround the street face of the building with greenery. However the overall conceptual practice of megastructures illustrated in the plan is eventually adopted in the modern city through renovations like Celebration Square.

Figure 4.18
1997 Living Arts Centre

Alongside the Transit Terminal and the expansions of Square One depicted in the 1994 Master Plan, the Living Arts Centre is one of the few remnants that depict both a prediction and a vision for what the city should be. Constructed as a signature object in idyllic meadows, it is a key piece of Mississauga architecture and a hub for cultural expression. The Transit Terminal and Square One expansion, by contrast, are utilitarian and made to keep up with the growth of the city.

Figure 4.19
Hurontario-Main LRT visualization

While it is unclear what will remain of the 2010 master plan, it is likely that the Hurontario-Main Light Rail Transit project will be constructed. This investment into the quality of street space is a central concern of the master plan, and so while the architectural forms of the plan have proven improbable, it is a valuable point of success in the progression of the city.

4.3 Genius Locus as Commerce

Commerce, as the instigator of the public realm in a City Centre built on nothing, is the third major component of Mississauga's genius. It is the inevitable product of a national ideal where personal convenience and equal opportunity is redefined as a low-density urban order that allows for large-scale industry and wealth to thrive. That Square One is the heart of the City Centre and the City Centre is the heart of Mississauga, economically, physically, and culturally, is an unquestionable indication of the importance of shopping in its spirit of place. It would be cynical but correct to compare the parking lots of Square One to the founding hills of Rome *(Fig.4.20)*. They are what today's urban society is built upon, if not literally just yet. It could be said the genius lives within the painted lines and the extent of asphalt designed to accommodate Christmas season parking needs, which in turn affects the urban grain, the experience of the buildings and spaces around them, and ultimately the identity of the city. Max Bacon, a Canadian architect planner of the late 1970s, claimed in regards to development of the time that:

> *Little thought was given to three-dimensional urban form or to landscape architecture. Design emphasis was on well-drained, easily maintained development with a maximum capacity for the free flow of vehicles.*[79]

As such, the role of private vehicles, the transport of material possessions, and the economy of industry are the primary concerns of such a landscape. In this way the genius of commerce is highly rationalized and focuses on the generating of easy accessibility, low costs, and the bounty of choice while avoiding the challenges of dense urban cores like Toronto.

Much of the city is an advertisement. The recent

Figure 4.20
Aerial of Square One, 1973

Figure 4.21
Mural of Mississauga at The Cold Pressery

resurgence of architectural forms beyond that of decorated boxes has only occurred for the sake of marketability. The Absolute Condos are a prime example of this where their curvaceous form was meant to create a refreshed and recognizable skyline as part of a symbiotic relationship with the mall *(Fig.4.21)*. Square One's expansions are another example. Though comparably more subdued in architectural experimentation, its entrances have a consistent form of tall cylindrical volumes *(Fig.4.22)* to convey significance and clarity for the largely architecturally illiterate crowds. Interior arcades mimic the friendly street shops and cafes traditionally found outside *(Fig.4.23)* but in the setting of a climate-controlled clean interior with stylish modern finishes. Recent renovations have increased visibility to the exterior to comfort the customer and help them navigate more easily. The mall is the city itself, translated in terms of commercialism, but still functioning as the primary public realm. Furthermore, the mall as an entity is a negotiation. It is an economic endeavour, but one whose relationship with the city is a balance of space and value. The more successful the mall becomes, the greater the urban success of its surroundings, as is evident in the construction of Celebration Square and similar places. The more successful the city becomes, the more the mall grows into its parking lots. As the parking lots are developed, the need for supplementary parking doubles or more and likely threatens the livelihood of the mall itself, thus presenting the need for a planned balance between urbanity and the dominance of its founding amenity.

79 Provincial Planning Policy Branch and Ontario Growth Secretariat, Planning and Design in Ontario: Then and Now, May 2011, 10 Oct. 2015 <http://www6.mississauga.ca/onlinemaps/planbldg/MUDR/1%20-%20Planning%20and%20Design%20in%20Ontario%20(Province).pdf>.

Figure 4.22
Square One south expansion render

Figure 4.23
Square One interior arcade renovation render

4.4 *Genius Locus as Simulacra*

The genius locus of Mississauga is a simulacrum. It is a hyper-real place where speculation, resistance, and commerce combine together to create representational environments that translate archetypal urban places into a new self-validated suburban language. A simulacrum, by definition, is a representation or image of someone or something and often carries a stigma for its assumed lack of authenticity.[80] In Mississauga the simulacra are so totalistic and integrated into the social and economic landscape that they cease to be artificial in the sense of literal translations based on nostalgic mimicry. Instead these places are validated in their own right and create a new real – a hyper-real – different from the classical image of places. In his book Simulacra and Simulation, Jean Baudrillard refers to Ecclesiastes, which states that a simulacrum is "never that which conceals the truth—it is the truth which conceals that there is none. The simulacrum is true."[81] This denotes the relationship between the authentic and the representation. Similar to the relationship between a natural landscape and the painting of one, the translation of urbanity into a suburban language does not make it is any less "true" or valuable as a place. It may suffer placelessness, homogeneity, and an inherent wanting for authenticity, here understood as the survival of original material,[82] but that is due to its chaotic youth. Mississauga has only recently begun to grow out of this phase and into the start of adulthood. This is shown most clearly in places like the City Centre where the lack of original material combined with its political and economical status make it a major forefront of suburban progress. Here the pretense in literally replicating familiar and idealized place types is most reduced, and so a truly unique identity may grow. The city's application of artificiality is not an attempt to deceive, but rather enables its celebration as the core force of its genius. As such the rejection of the stigma surrounding artificiality is key for the animation, innovation, and progression of Mississauga's unique version of idealism.

The simulacra of Mississauga occur in many forms throughout the City Centre and suburbs. In the City Centre, Square One is the major simulacrum where it is a representation of traditional downtown street shops, translated into a suburban language *(Fig.4.25)*. City Hall is a reinvention of the historic farmhouses it replaced. Celebration Square embodies the ideals of a historic piazza as a vibrant place of gathering and socializing in spite of the fact it is bordered on two sides by open roads rather than being a void in a dense urban carpet. Outside the City Centre, the typical suburban single-family homes that blanket the landscape are mass-produced and downsized versions of countryside manor homes. While the base functionality remains the same, overall the expression of such simulacra are far removed from their origins. Most if not all of the urban rules are broken and thus the end result is something completely different. Furthermore, the more recent condo developments have taken this translation a step further and reject all qualities of its original concept. The Parkside Village project, which labels itself as a "village" *(Fig.4.24)*, is a highly manicured high-rise neighbourhood with none of the architectural forms, historic layers, densities, spatial orders, or organic public spaces of a village. Instead it is based on modern values and calls itself a village largely for marketability and as part of the city's historic identity as a collection of villages.

80 "Simulacrum," Oxford Dictionaries, Dec. 2015 <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/simulacrum>.
81 Jean Baudrillard, Selected Writings, Ed. Mark Poster (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1988) 166-184.
82 Gunila Jiven and Peter J. Larkham, "Sense of Place, Authenticity and Character: A Commentary" Journal of Urban Design 8.1 (2003): 75.

Figure 4.24
"A New Life, A New Village"
Advertisement of the Parkside Village Development

[TOP] Square One North Expansion
[BOTTOM] Toronto street shopping

[TOP] City Hall
[BOTTOM] Ontario Farmhouse

Figure 4.25
Landscape type simulacra

[TOP] Celebration Square
[BOTTOM] Christmas Market in the Piazza del Campo, Siena

[TOP] Typical Mississauga single-family house
[BOTTOM] Cotswold Manor House, UK

Remaining woodlot south of Cineplex parking lot

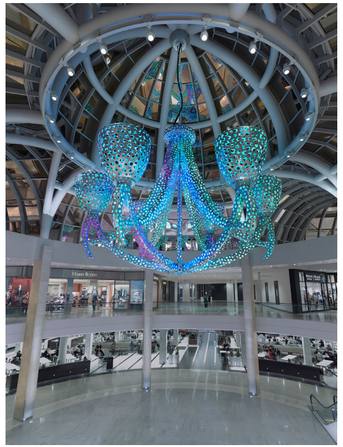
Organic-style meadow park surrounding Living Arts Centre

Artificial hill park west of Living Arts Centre

Highly orchestrated urban park west of Sheridan College

Figure 4.26
Artificiality spectrum of major green spaces

It is useful to note that the integral artificiality that defines the simulacra occurs in a spectrum, most prominently seen in the green spaces of the City Centre *(Fig.4.26)*. For instance, within the study area there exists a single remaining block of untouched land. The woodlot to the south of the Cineplex parking lots was not always a woodlot, but rather grew into a small forest from an original line of trees when the area was all farmland. After the start of development the woodlot grew denser and then was cut down piece by piece as surrounding blocks were defined and developed, leaving the remaining block of forest today. However in comparison to the highly artificial state of today's City Centre, this woodlot is the remaining wild of the area and effectively sits at one end of the artificiality spectrum. Following it is the manufactured and maintained meadow of the Living Arts Centre, which seeks to more literally portray the image of a natural meadow. After this, the Community Common Park is clear in its artificiality through the angular formwork of the hill, its clean boundaries, and maintained lawn. Lastly, the Scholars Green is an explicit blend of park and urbanity where its crisscrossed paths, materiality, and highly organized groves of gridded trees offer the identity and benefits of a park, but without any hint of wildness. Despite its hyper-artificiality, this park is no less enjoyable than an organic forest. On the contrary, these places of simulacra can be just as culturally charged and pleasurable to be in even if the pretence of being organic is abandoned. Experientially all of these places, wild or not, are a breath of fresh air in the face of the grey parking lots surrounding Square One and tie into the highly modernized style of their surroundings. They are new, open, and welcoming, and subsequently very clear embodiments of the culture's underlying idealisms. The result is an uplifting freedom of design where the speculation of simulacra empowers the city to look past its experiential faults and be confident in its eventual revitalization.



1 "Buen Amigo " located beside the Absolute Condominiums
2 "Migration" located south of Celebration Square
3 "Lambent" located at the centre of Square One Food Court
4 "Contemplating Child" located in Community Common Park
5 "The Bearded Ones" located beside the Living Arts Centre

Figure 4.27
City Centre Public Art

Expressions of artificiality are not restricted to the scale of the urban block. Public art at the scale of the human often represent either native animals long displaced or indicators of the area's new identity. *Buen Amigo*, for instance, consists of steel-form horse sculptures that represent the livestock of past farms but also reflect the elegant form and luxury of their host condominiums. *Migration* and *The Bearded Ones* are symbolic reminders of the billions of native migratory passenger pigeons as well as the ancestral musk oxen, respectively. *Lambent* and *Contemplating Child*, however, reflect the modernization of the area where the former is a reaction to the historic dome of Square One and the latter refers to the modern relationship between family and community.[83]

The identifying of simulacra as Mississauga's genius is arguably a common genius for most suburban landscapes both in their typological residential deserts, but also in their downtown cores and intensification zones. As these areas grow, the resulting language of suburbia challenges the identity of the North American city. Mario Gandelsonas, an American architect and theorist, describes such places as "architecturally resistant" X-Urban cities, which are "the latest stage in a process of construction of urban identity that involves the three previous American cities: the gridded city, the city of skyscrapers, and the suburban city."[84] Mississauga's City Centre is an exact example of this evolutionary blending of city types and offers up an evolving suburban city typology that draws its urbanisms closer to its founding ideologies. Furthermore Gandelsonas claims that such cities reject the familiar and classical operations of architecture and thereby require "a previous historization and theorization of their relationship that goes back to the constitutive moments of architecture itself"[85], thus pointing to the role of genius loci. Ultimately, the architecture of Mississauga and similar X-Urban cities is all about "urban buildings, the total abandonment of classical urban space and its replacement with image, and the abandonment of both representation and abstraction and their replacement with simulacra."[86]

83 "Public Art," Culture on the Map - City of Mississauga, City of Mississauga Culture Division, 22 Dec. 2015 <http://www.cultureonthemap.ca/mapcms/com/query.html?idx=5>.
84 Mario Gandelsonas, X-Urbanism: Architecture and the American City (New York: Princeton Architectural, 1999) 43.
85 Ibid. 43.
86 Ibid. 35.

05

Design Proposal

5.1 *Design Operations*

In designing for the genius locus of Mississauga's City Centre, three scales of operations must take place.

L *Ideological Scale*
The first and largest scale is the analysis of Mississauga's urban centre as well as the city as a whole. This stage, which is encompassed by most of chapter 3 and reflected upon in chapter 4, illuminates the genius and its core modes of translation. Social and economic ideologies, experiential narratives, historic narratives, cultural narratives, spatial structures, symbolisms, and urban patterns all contribute to the portrayal of its genius as a multi-dimensional character that begins to hint at how its animation might take form.

M *Urban Scale*
The second scale, which will be outlined in this chapter, is a reflection of the urban patterns and spatial structures analyzed at the ideological scale. It requires an understanding of the local architectural language and proposes their evolution in the form of a master plan of the City Centre. It is noteworthy to state that this master plan is expected to fail, as is the tradition of its predecessors. As such it is not a strict guide, but a contextual example of how the use of typical building forms and a layering of landscape typologies leads to the co-existence of experiential and spatial elements that can create a distinct, complex, and grounded urban character. The master plan's primary use is the backdrop and support system to the smallest scale of design.

S *Architectural Scale*
The smallest and most important scale in the act of animating the genius locus is the architectural dimension. It is the scale which connects the human to his or her urban plan, and thus to the overarching ideological narratives that guide the society and culture as a whole. Here the subtleties affect the experiential value of the space by either sustaining or damaging the underlying genius. Within this thesis the City Centre Transit Terminal and its two adjacent parking lots are the focus of architectural intervention. Its design seeks to emulate the same forces analyzed and illustrated in both the urban scale and the ideological scale.

5.2 *Design Precedents*

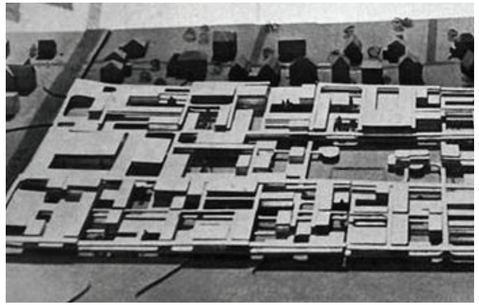


Figure 5.1
Free University of Berlin

Designed by firm Candilis-Josic-Woods in 1967, the Free University of Berlin is an iconic example of how non-hierarchical heterogeneity may be created from porous, multi-level architectural layers. Its systemic design scheme consists of a matrix of volumes and voids that fluctuate via a base grid system, allowing for future program flexibility. Additionally, its relationship to its surrounding suburbs gives it the ideological relationship to the village typology.

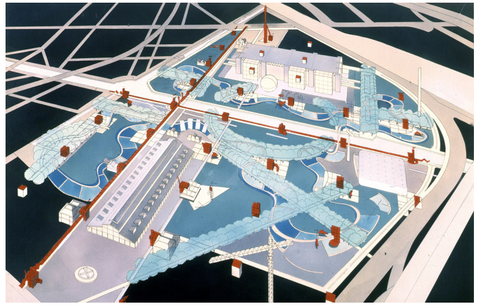


Figure 5.2
Parc de la Villette

Bernard's Tschumi's 1983 design for the Paris park illustrates how artificiality can guide design by emphasizing culture and simulacra instead of replicated nature. His design system uses three architectural principles: *points*, *lines*, and *surfaces*. The *points* are located on a grid system of 35 individually unique red steel "follies", which act as reference points for visitors. The *lines*, constructed from covered walkways, buildings, and promenades, denote movement through the expanse of the park and intersect with various points of interest. The *surfaces* are the 85 acres of green space used for play and gathering. Though originally user-defined, today several of its follies are formal programs such as restaurants, offices, and information centres.[87]

87 Souza, Eduardo, "AD Classics: Parc De La Villette / Bernard Tschumi," ArchDaily, 9 Jan. 2011, 3 Jan. 2016 <http://www.archdaily.com/92321/ad-classics-parc-de-la-villette-bernard-tschumi>.

Figure 5.3
Tietgen Dormitory

The Tietgenkollegiet of Copenhagen, designed by Lundgaard & Tranberg Architects and constructed in 2006, is a modern example of the effect architectural playfulness and the layering of materiality can have on the sense of place. This circular building, whose interior shifting volumes create a visual and social language with its courtyard, uses simple modular dimensions and volumetric rhythms to dictate its experiential relationships. It is one part of an urban development project known as Orestad whose use of architecture as an object is the design machine for defining the city. In this way the Tietgen Dormitory is a self-contained piece of artificial city seeking to create an identity for the area.

Figure 5.4
8 House

Also located in Orestad, though at the opposite end from the Tietgen Dormitory, the 8 House designed by BIG and built in 2010 employs public space as hyper-artificial entities living within the overall architectural system. The building does this with two central moves: first by playing with the connectivity of levels – allowing visitors to access the roof from the ground plane via a sloped roof system – and second through the unapologetically artificial earthwork of its garden hills. The result is a unique urban hybrid of public space and private volumes.

5.3 Urban Design

Designing the genius locus into the urban scale is a difficult task primarily because the genius expresses itself through specificity while master plans require generality. The genius is more easily recognized, absorbed, and responded to at the scale of the human – through individual physical moments in space and matter – as opposed to the totality and abstraction of comprehensive urban plans. It is because of this disparity that master plans often apply a single homogeneous urban concept across its many buildings and spaces as part of a larger ideological and systemic framework. As a result the master plans, especially those of Mississauga, are more like caricatures than a mapping of urban regulations. This is part of the reason why Mississauga's master plans ultimately fail, but is also a key to understanding the relationship between the master plan and the architectural dimension. In conveying the genius locus, the caricature-like nature of the master plan is the backdrop to the strategies and ideals made explicit at the architectural level. This thesis employs such a dynamic in order to encourage the success for the master plan's resistant urban debris: the architectural design.

To begin the process of compiling a master plan, the proposed first step within this thesis is an analysis of the City Centre's existing and future building developments, as shown throughout Chapter 3. By understanding the habits of building typologies, it is possible to predict the extension of such patterns. As shown in *Fig.3.24*, the two major building typologies are object volumes and podium-tower volumes with the former as dominant within the boundaries of the City Centre study area (exhibited at a ratio of approximately 5:1). At the moment most of the podium-tower volumes are located on the periphery of this boundary and are quickly increasing in number. They are proving to be the preferred modern typology due to opportunities for mixed-use program and street life revitalization. In terms of public and private buildings, essentially all public buildings follow the object typology (not inclusive of retail located at grade in podium-tower buildings) while private buildings are evenly split between object and podium-tower typologies within the study area. The result of this analysis indicates that in predicting future building volumes, public buildings will take the form of singular objects while private buildings are flexible. However it is useful to note that the future growth of public object buildings is limited to the number of plausible program that can take root in the City Centre in relation to profitability and proximity to Toronto. For instance, it is unlikely Mississauga will gain a major sports stadium, aquarium, or zoo due to its proximity to equivalent programs in Toronto. It is also unlikely to build a substantial art gallery until the current gallery in City Hall vastly outgrows its space. However, other programs that connect back to the genius of commerce and speculation are plausible. Amenities such as spas, hotels, condo-hotels, conference centres, restaurants, bars, nightclubs, parks, children's gardens, dog parks, and conservatories all assume a certain scale, architectural typology, and profitability that could easily fit within the City Centre. As such, designing the master plan in compliance with the genius not only requires a practical understanding of local building habits, but also the programmatic opportunities for city life.

After understanding what forms the City Centre will adopt, the next question is where they will occur. By analyzing the neighbourhoods and their chosen typologies, the master plan must propose how such patterns will expand. As shown in *Fig.5.5*, this thesis proposes a number of strategies in predicting the placement of specific building types.

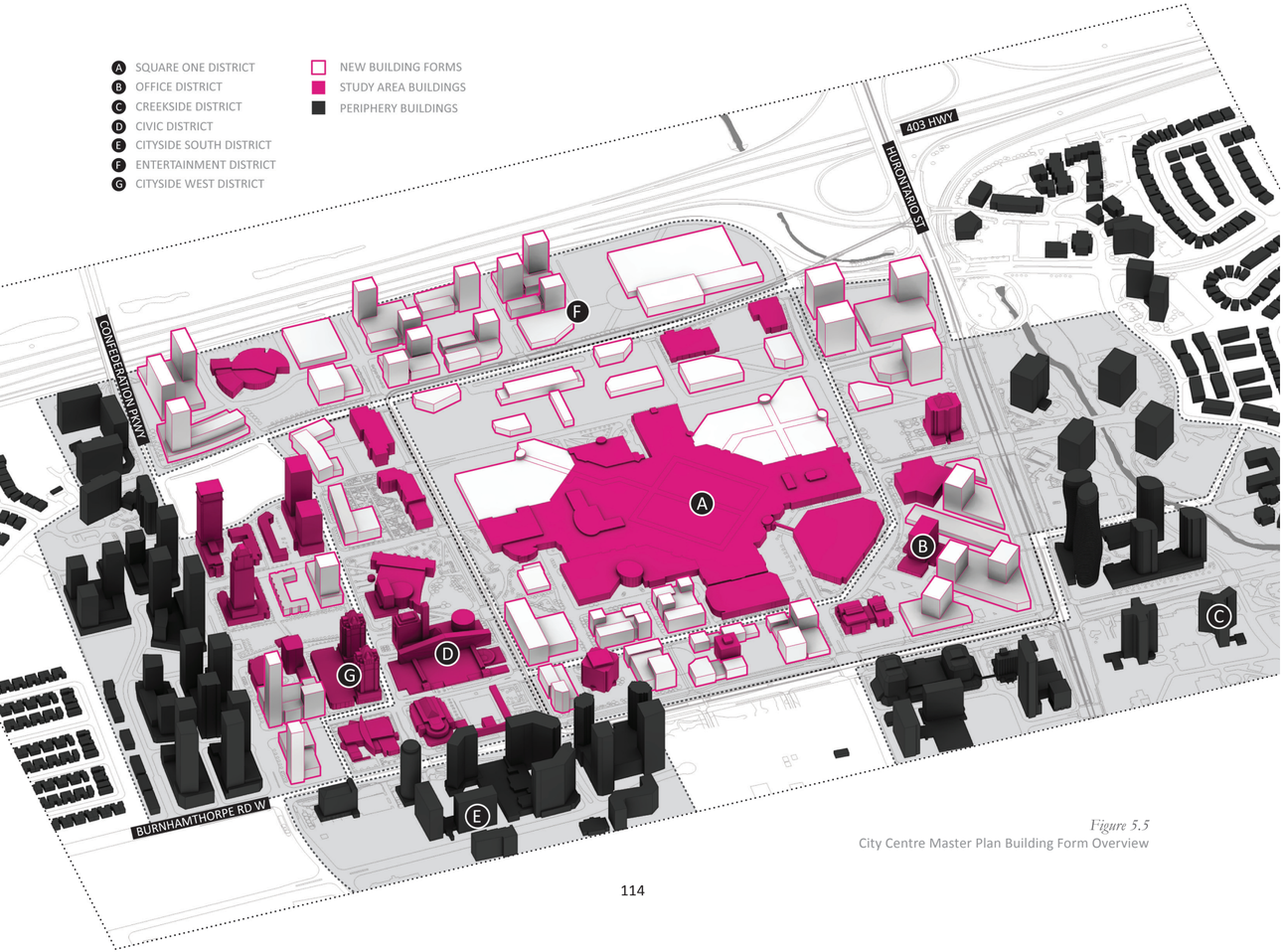


Figure 5.5
City Centre Master Plan Building Form Overview

A Square One District

Square One mall is predicted to expand into its east and west parking lots. The west parking lot in particular offers an opportunity to take advantage of the vacancy at the northwest corner of the mall (previously Target) to connect the mall to the vibrancy of the Civic District along its east border. The predicted expansions of Square One continue the style of using large cylindrical volumes as entrance markers. Their facades take on the style of the most recent expansions and create street edges through a conveyed multiplicity of retail. Furthermore, the mall's growth is predicted to halt after these expansions, though smaller retail masses may grow to the north and south of the mall as buffers to the *Entertainment* and *Office Districts*.

B Office District

The growth of the *Office District* is difficult to predict mainly due to its long standing resistance to change and its location between the mall and largely unchanging *Creekside District*. Here it is shown as a growth that embodies a variety of typologies and dimensions, some creating street edges while others copy the volumes of the historic offices in combination with expansive podiums. Its relationship to the south face of the mall is uncertain and thus the type of retail volumes that will occur there will partly result from the future influence of the *Cityside South District*.

D Civic District

The growth of the *Civic District* will include generally linear forms of both object and podium-tower typologies that adopt the style of surrounding structures. Buildings opposite Sheridan College will either be an expansion of the institution, office buildings, or community amenities due to the proximity to attractive public green space. The building opposite the YMCA will likely follow the pattern of the Parkside Village, and thus be adopted into the *Cityside West District*.

F Entertainment District

The north side of the study area is experientially disadvantaged by the proximity to the noise and pollution of the 403. However it has the advantage of hosting the majority of inter-city transit options and so has the potential for vibrant street life. The volumes here are a combination of the podium-tower types extended from the *Cityside West District*, but also adhere to the low-lying object-like retail of the *Square One District*. It is likely a major parking garage will be located here to support the transit needs and as a suitable program to buffer the space between the highway and the urban core.

G Cityside West District

The podium-tower and slab building typologies of the *Cityside West District* blend with the *Entertainment District*. Although there is reluctance to place residential towers too close to the 403 or Square One, recent construction located at Confederation and the 403 indicates that the profitability is enough to force such forms further north and into the *Entertainment District*. As such, as their forms take advantage of the proximity to transit, with retail, office, and entertainment amenities located at grade. As well, it is likely in the future this district will expand on the north side of the 403 and to the west of Confederation as suburban homes are replaced with profitable high density housing options.

Figure 5.6 (left)
Master Plan

The city is meant to be a dramatic place. The suburban city is no exception, although its execution of such vibrancy is vastly different from the drama of the traditional city. Nevertheless it is a place where buildings, greenery, urban activity, and commerce must be woven together to create a dense environment of sensation and meaning.[88] These elements, which are archetypal in their core conceptions, are "powerful and evolving (primordial) images" that the genius locus uses in its function as a "*spirit of becoming*", a "*spirit of fate*", a "*spirit of development*", and therefore a "*spirit of (primordial) images*".[89] In Mississauga they already exist scattered throughout the city as a whole. The City Centre has the opportunity as a representative of its overall body to combine such elements in the fight to become its ideal self.

Figure 5.7 (right)
Landscape Type Matrix Volumes

88 Gordon Cullen, Townscape (New York: Reinhold Pub., 1961) 9.
89 Paul Bishop, The Archaic: The Past in the Present (Hove, East Sussex, 2012) 87.

Figure 5.8
Existing buildings and future LRT line (in pink)

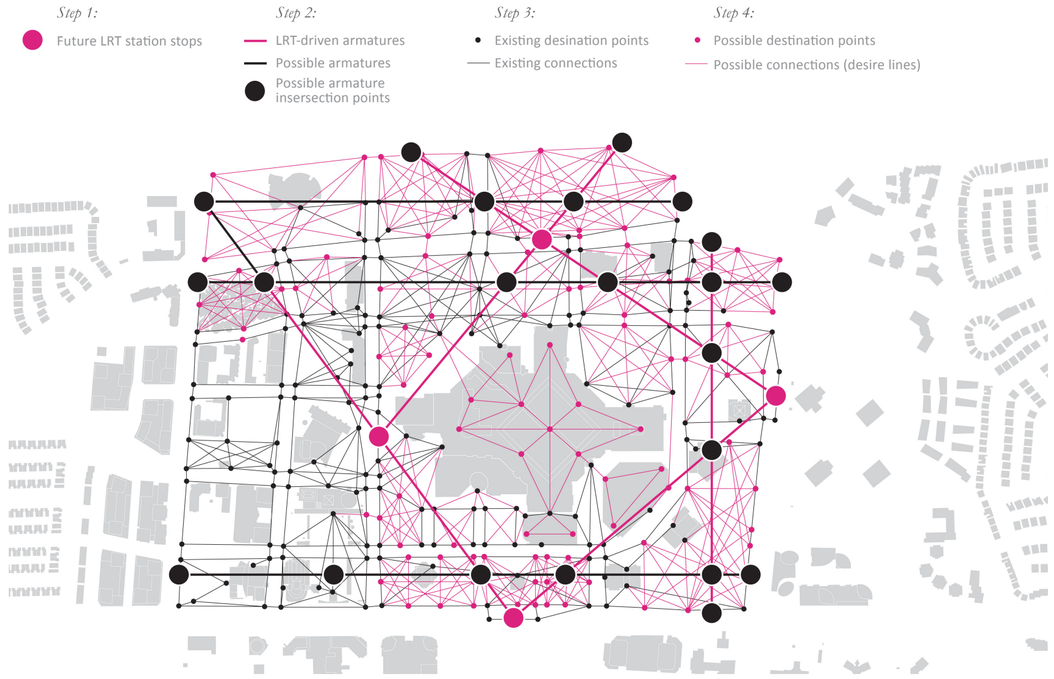


Figure 5.9
Master Plan – Urban armatures (possible future links in pink)

Figure 5.10
Master Plan – Retail & Residential as remnant of carpet layer

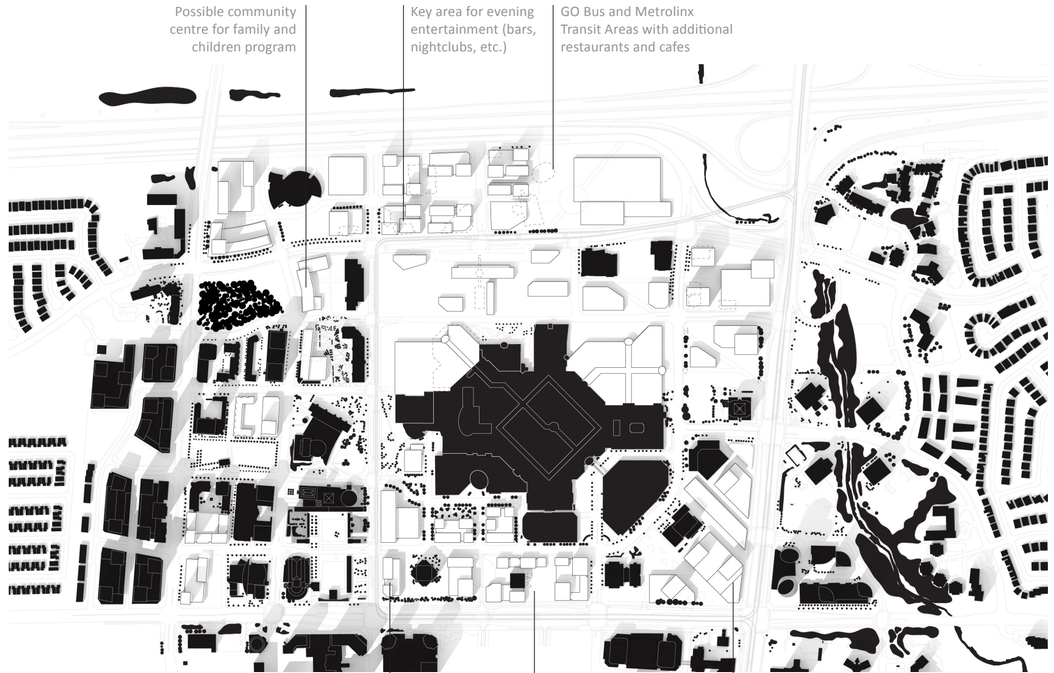


Figure 5.11
Master Plan – Retail & Residential Layer Design

Figure 5.12
Master Plan – Forest & Meadow as remnant of carpet layer

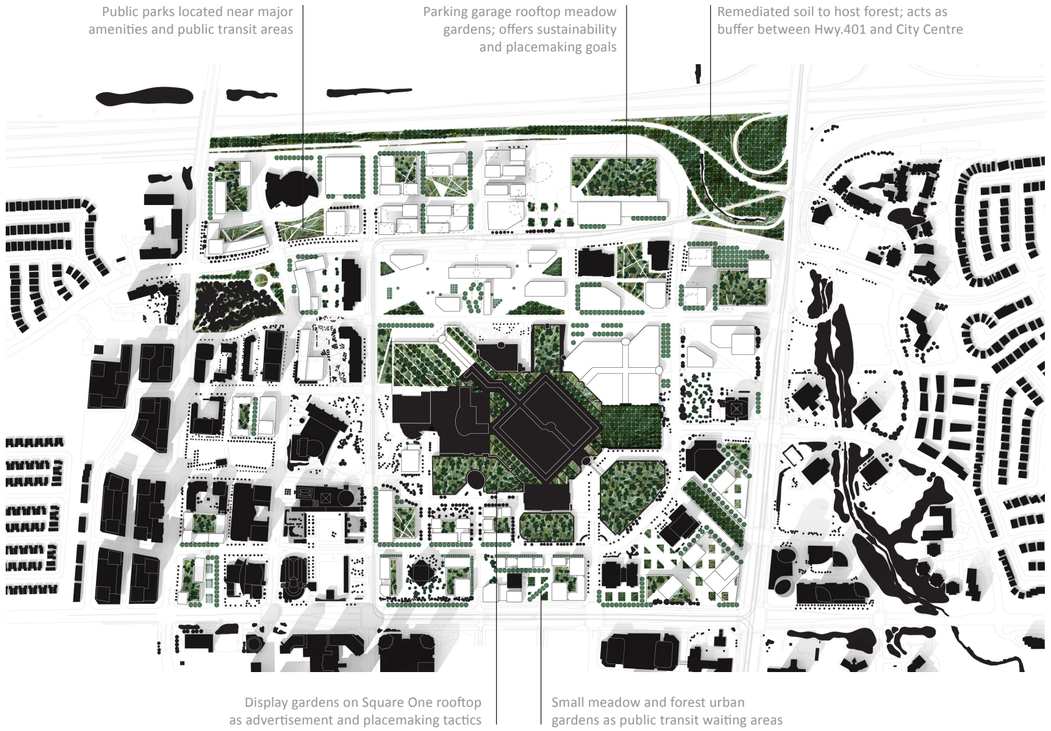


Figure 5.13
Master Plan – Forest & Meadow Layer Design

Figure 5.14
Master Plan – Farmland as remnant of carpet layer

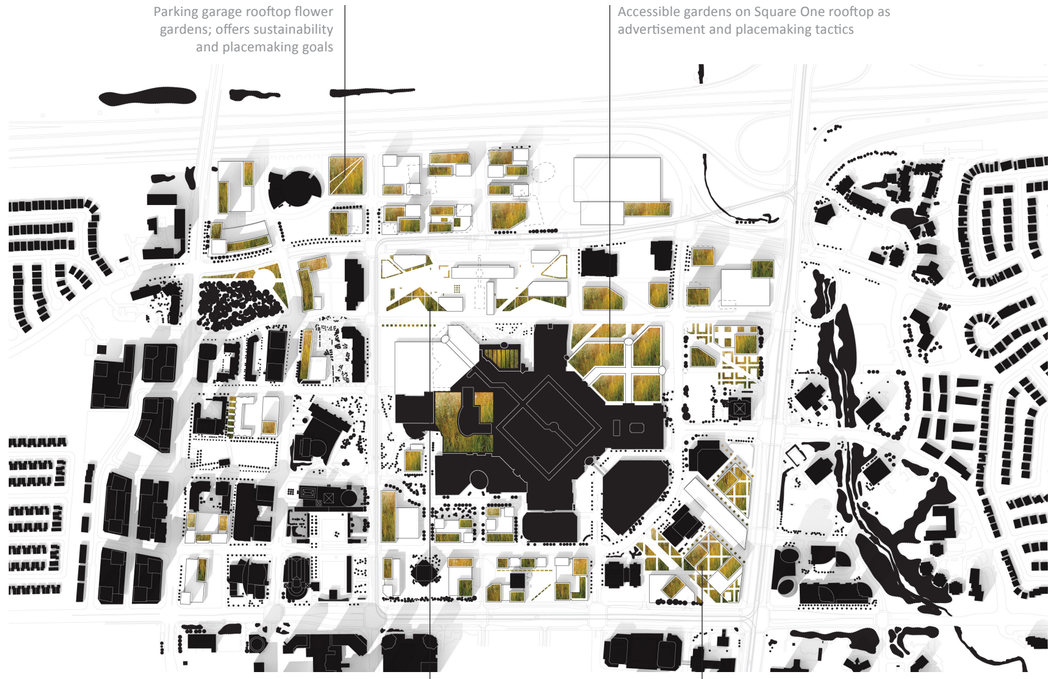


Figure 5.15
Master Plan – Farmland Layer Design

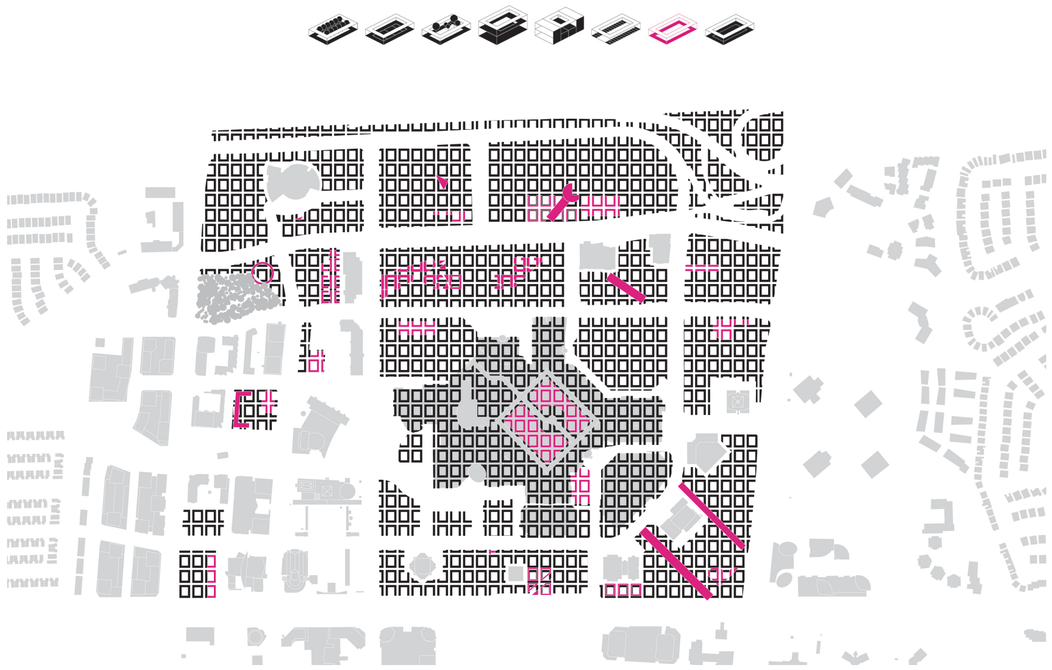


Figure 5.16
Master Plan – Pavilion as remnant of carpet layer

Figure 5.17
Master Plan – Pavilion Layer Design

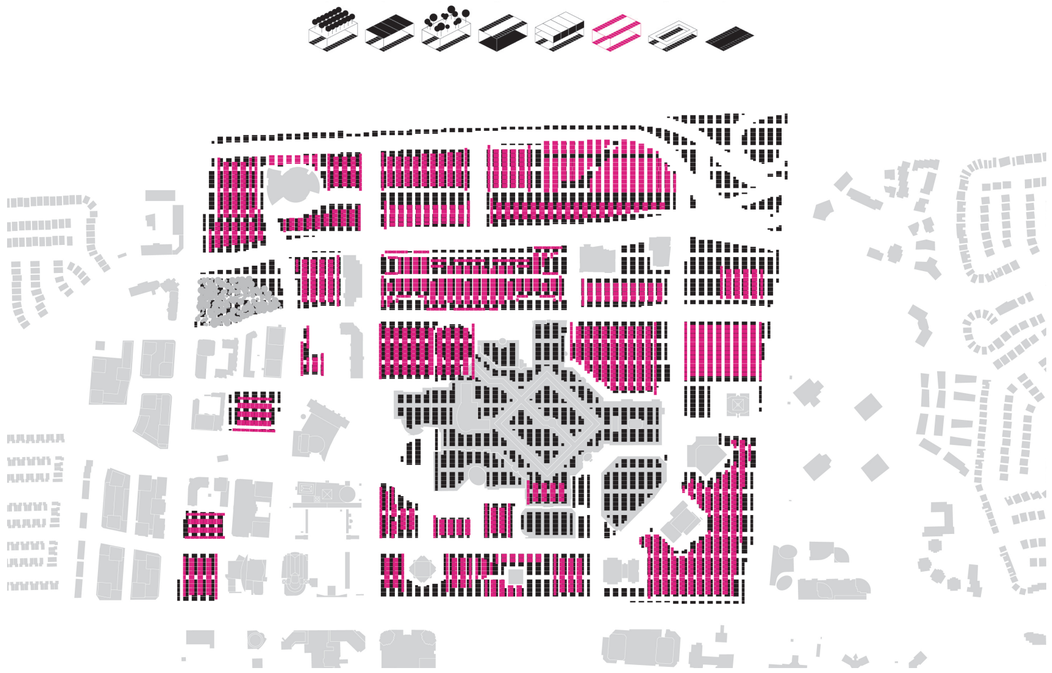


Figure 5.18
Master Plan – Parking as remnant of carpet layer

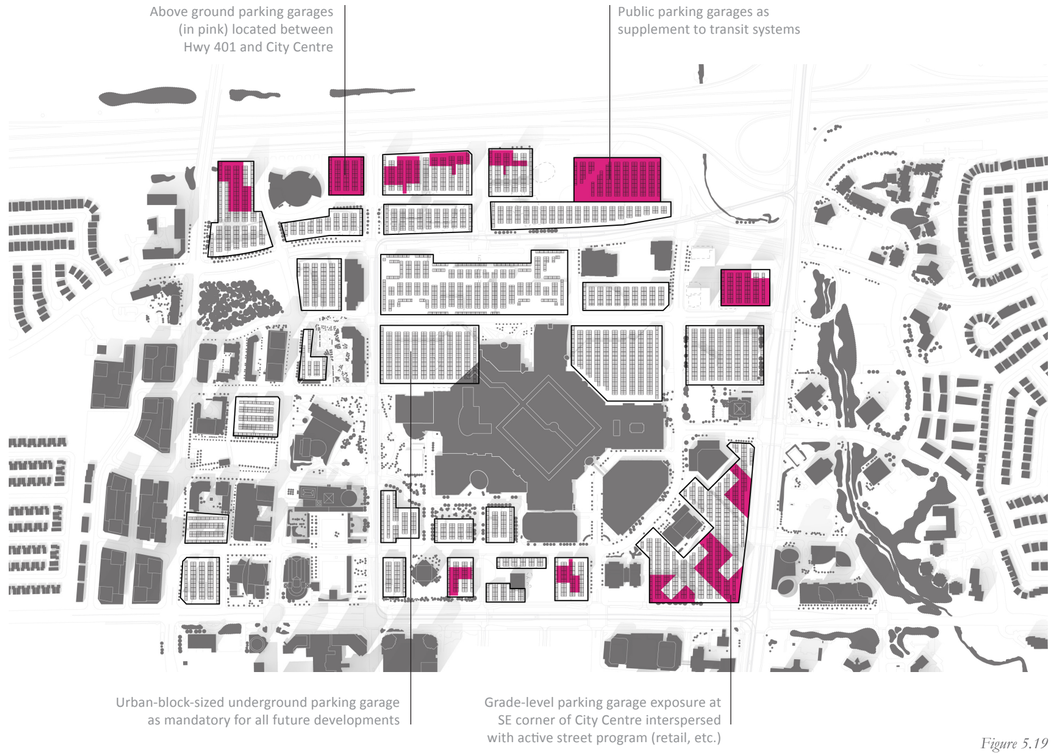


Figure 5.19
Master Plan – Parking Layer Design

5.4 *Architectural Design*

The smallest scale of design, the architectural scale, embodies the master plan's urban operations and ideological content into a language designed for the casual user. Here, the four design methodologies covered in Chapter 2 are animated through specific design strategies and concretized into spatial experiences. As stated previously, the intent of the design at this level is to exemplify how the genius locus can inform such design methodologies and in turn create an effective urban character. Furthermore, understanding the urban patterns, material and social narratives, and cultural ideologies encourages local familiarity with the spatial narratives and thus further reinforces the longevity of the genius.

Ideological design is manifested as a translation of the site's cultural, social, and economic design values. The narrative of these values is encompassed in Mississauga's genius as a simulacrum born from commerce, speculation, and urban resistance. The city analysis as outlined in Chapter 4 dictates commerce as the physical and necessary heart of urban growth within the City Centre. It is the Mount Fuji of Mississauga, present in every rendered image of itself as the object around which urban life operates. As such, at the origin of this architectural design is the farmers market *(Fig.5.20)*. The market has traditionally occupied one of the parking lots surrounding Square One since its completion in 1973, until recently when construction and increased traffic in the City Centre forced it to relocate to the outer edge of the area. Today it is split between Celebration Square and a parking lot across Cooksville Creek. It is a thriving, if displaced, element of the City Centre's genius and is a major representative of both the historical value in local agriculture and the ideological value in the bounty and accessibility of quality produce. It promotes the physical yield value of the land while also illustrating the unquestionable

Figure 5.20
Mississauga City Centre Farmers Market, 1973

importance of commerce as an urban root of Square One. Furthermore, it represents the presence of multiculturalism in Mississauga as both local and immigrant farmers and entrepreneurs offer their work to the community. For it to be displaced from the City Centre is a misstep away from the local qualities of the genius locus towards a generalized identity. The resulting design strategy indicates the need for a permanent structure for the market within the boundary of the City Centre. While a market hall would be most practical as a singular climate-conditioned building that may operate all year long, proximity to Square One, local economic patterns, and the growing urbanity of the area would likely render it as a building to be eventually replaced. As such, in this thesis the farmers market is a central player as the first architectural insert on site, whose redesign retains the temporality of its character as an event within the urban realm rather than an attempt to force its permanence in a defined building. Therefore, the major *ideological design* strategy of this architectural design places the market at the heart of the layering process.

The design's particular architectural style is secondary to the role of commerce, but is still vital as it reinforces the defining of artificiality not as a deception but as a commercial means for progression, innovation, and uncompromised idealism. Today's City Centre attempts to convince itself it is a village with quaint mid-rise buildings *(Fig.5.22)* as part of a larger desire for neo-traditional urbanism. While the goals of this urbanism are honourable they ultimately promote a "borrowed attachment"[90] with invented traditions as opposed to authentic and locally proven traditions. Neo-traditional urbanism seeks to support the presence of people rather than cars in the City Centre and promote local identity, attachment, and compactness rather than gigantism,[91] all of which have merit in the improvement of urban space. In spite of this, gigantism, big-name brands, car-culture, and low-density urbanism are the local traditions of the suburban city core. More human-scaled developments can still be achieved, but the key is to embed social and emotional values into the design as opposed to idealistic notions unrelated to the genius of the city. The risk in place making is the generalization of a set of urban rules, where in reality the historical and theoretical weight of architectural design is necessary in providing authenticity. Therefore, the ideological dimension of architectural design is able to reveal the failures and successes of the city's speculation and growth and tailor further growth to support its localisms.

90 Mahyar Arefi, "Non-place and Placelessness as Narratives of Loss: Rethinking the Notion of Place," Journal of Urban Design 4.2 (1999): 185.
91 Ibid. 187.

Figure 5.21
Site design as part of the Hurontario-Main LRT Streetscape and Urban Design Strategy Plan by DIALOG

Figure 5.22
Site design as part of the Downtown 21 Master Plan

Systemic design is here applied as a system of layers that are compressed to co-exist as a distinct matrix. A set of landscape types is selected from the typology matrix used in the urban scale design, as shown in *Fig.5.7*, and here used as the series of layers from which the design will emerge. For this site, where commerce is the dominant genius and residential program keeps a general perimeter away from Square One, the selected landscape types include *forest* and *meadow*, *farmland*, *pavilion*, *retail*, *parking*, and *urban square* *(Fig.5.23)*. Each of these is applied as a uniform carpet over the entirety of the site before tailored spatial moves occur to determine the remnants of each. Here, due to the long standing freedom of movement over the site on the part of the pedestrian, straight lines referred to as desire lines are drawn from various points across the site, connecting different destinations and the shortest paths from one corner to another. From this selection of trajectories, a set few are chosen as the major desire lines *(Fig.5.24)*, which are then superimposed onto the collection of landscape layers. At this point specific design moves regarding the topography of the site, characteristics of tree species, and sight lines to encourage the visibility of the various architectural and landscape layers together determined the layout of program and the location of buildings. Other objectives include creating better relationships between buildings both on and off site and improving the organization and design of the Transit Terminal while simultaneously setting up opportunities for public space. The end result is a highly tailored matrix of overlapped program and materiality, which emulates the success and vibrancy of other local places including City Hall and Celebration Square.

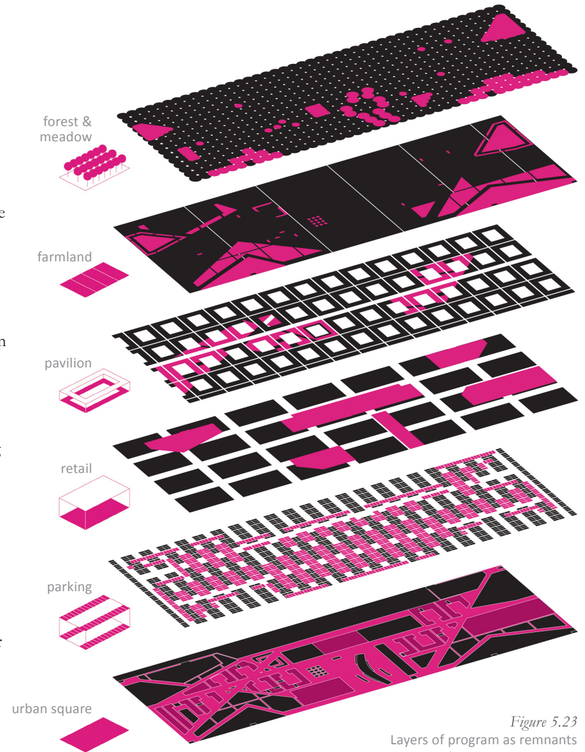


Figure 5.23
Layers of program as remnants
from overlaid carpets

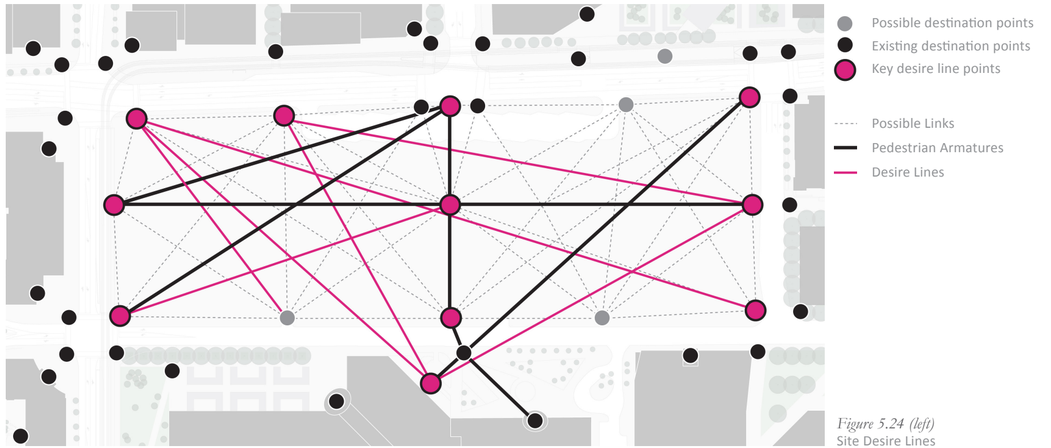


Figure 5.24 (left)
Site Desire Lines

Figure 5.25
Existing Transit Terminal

Figure 5.26
Splashpad in front of Square One entrance

Figure 5.27
View North-West from west parking lot

Parametric design is used in the site as the driver of the grid in two major respects: the parking lots and the dimensions and pattern of the market stalls. For the first, the role of the private car is a major element in the function and design of the Square One area as a whole, and so it cannot be disregarded for the sake of urban design ideals. While experientially it is unfavourable *(Fig.5.27)*, it cannot be ignored. Instead, in this architectural design it acts as a measurable factor that defines how the design takes form by acting as the base 'pixel' that determines the 9m x 9m column grid, which in turn affects the particular dimensions of the buildings and the location of the trees on site. The second manner in which parametric design is used is through the decoding of the farmers market spatial organization. As shown in *Fig.5.37* on *page 142*, the manner in which the stalls organize themselves within an empty and boundless parking lot reveals a set of preferred dimensions and a courtyard style organization. Once this is extracted and redeveloped into a base unit, it can be multiplied throughout the site and embedded into the final design of the permanent market stalls. Not only does this offer a familiar and functional spatial frame for the farmers and the visitors, but it offers opportunities for program flexibility and smaller experiential moments where singular trees are planted in beds the size of a single parking spot in the gaps of the market pattern. Together these parametric methods embody the central method of layering program and materiality, while also bringing their own narratives to site-driven space design.

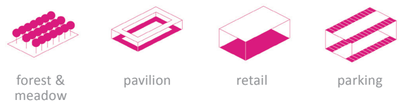


Figure 5.28
Landscape Types affected by parametric elements

Figure 5.29
Credit River in winter

Figure 5.30
Trillium flower

Figure 5.31
Suburban houses near the City Centre

Iconic design is present in the architectural scale through the use of local materials and the translation of key images relating to the identity of the site and the city. The most literal translation of these images is the Credit River *(Fig.5.29)* whose role in the history and name of Mississauga is a clear indication of the importance of creeks and rivers in local identity. In response to this, the central urban space is an artificial rendition of the river as a 3-tiered curved waterfall with low-lying artificial river stones and native grasses and tree species lining its edges. Other translations of wild life include the native plants and trees that make up the various gardens and orchards located throughout the site, particularly the artificial hills of the flower gardens, whose topography was adopted from Mississauga's contours surrounding the Credit River. Furthermore, the trillium flower *(Fig.5.30)*, the official flower of the province of Ontario, is embodied into the formal language of the benches inside the Transit Terminal. They act as a symbol of Mississauga's prominence as a major city in the province and a reminder of the trillium flowers that grow in the shade of its many woodlots.

In terms of materiality and volumetric architectural translations, exposed wood, wood cladding, and brick are used throughout. In the Transit Terminal, steel beams clad in wood recreate the image of typical suburban wood frame construction and whose collection of roof slopes represents the clusters of single-family housing *(Fig.5.31)*. Brick covers the two office buildings on site while wood strapping is used for the retail buildings. Together these materials and translations refer to many qualities and points of narrative within the city and thus not only create familiarity with its locals, but also animate those qualities in the context of renewed city growth.

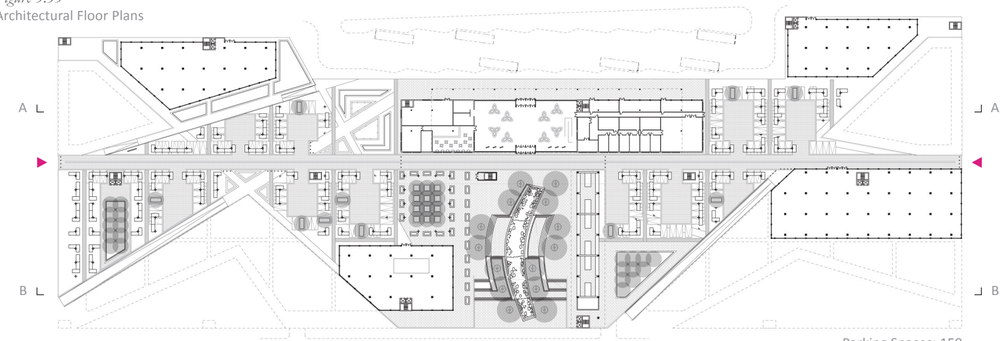
Figure 5.32
Landscape Types affected by iconic elements

Figure 5.33
Site Plan

Parking Spaces: 2,616
Leasable Area: 25,608 sq.m. or 275,642 sq.ft.

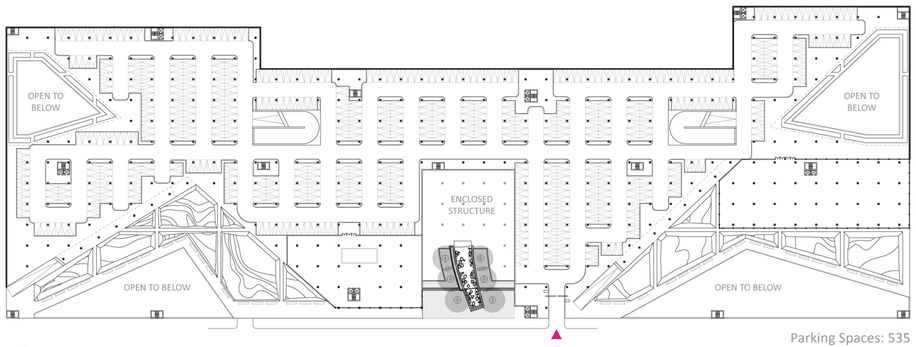
Figure 5.34
Site design aerial

Figure 5.35
Architectural Floor Plans



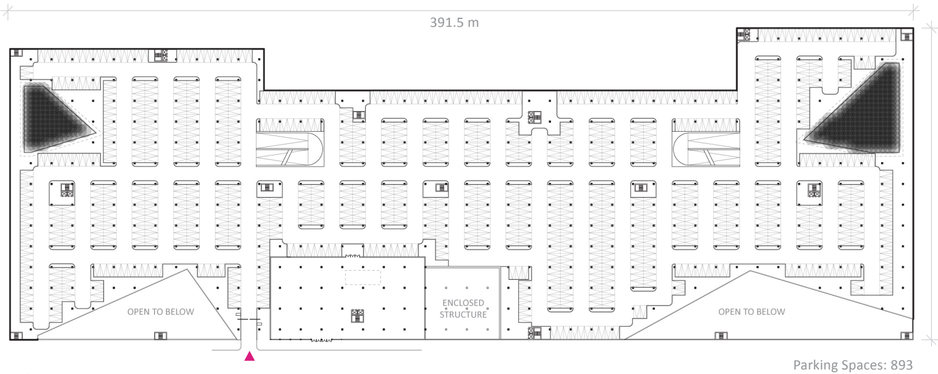
Ground Level – "Market Level" at grade with north-facing Transit Terminal

Parking Spaces: 159
Leasable Area: 6246 sq.m. (ground) & 12,866 sq.m. (office levels)



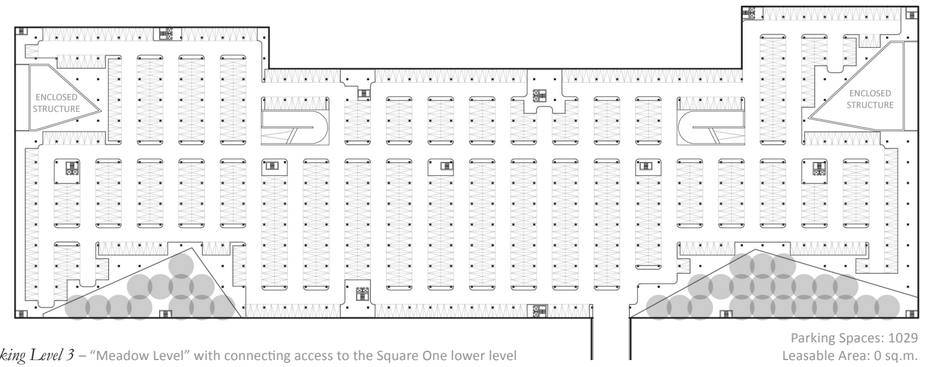
Parking Level 1 – "Farm Level" with central water feature and eastern parking entrance

Parking Spaces: 535
Leasable Area: 4071 sq.m.



Parking Level 2 – "Forest Level" with retail and western parking entrance

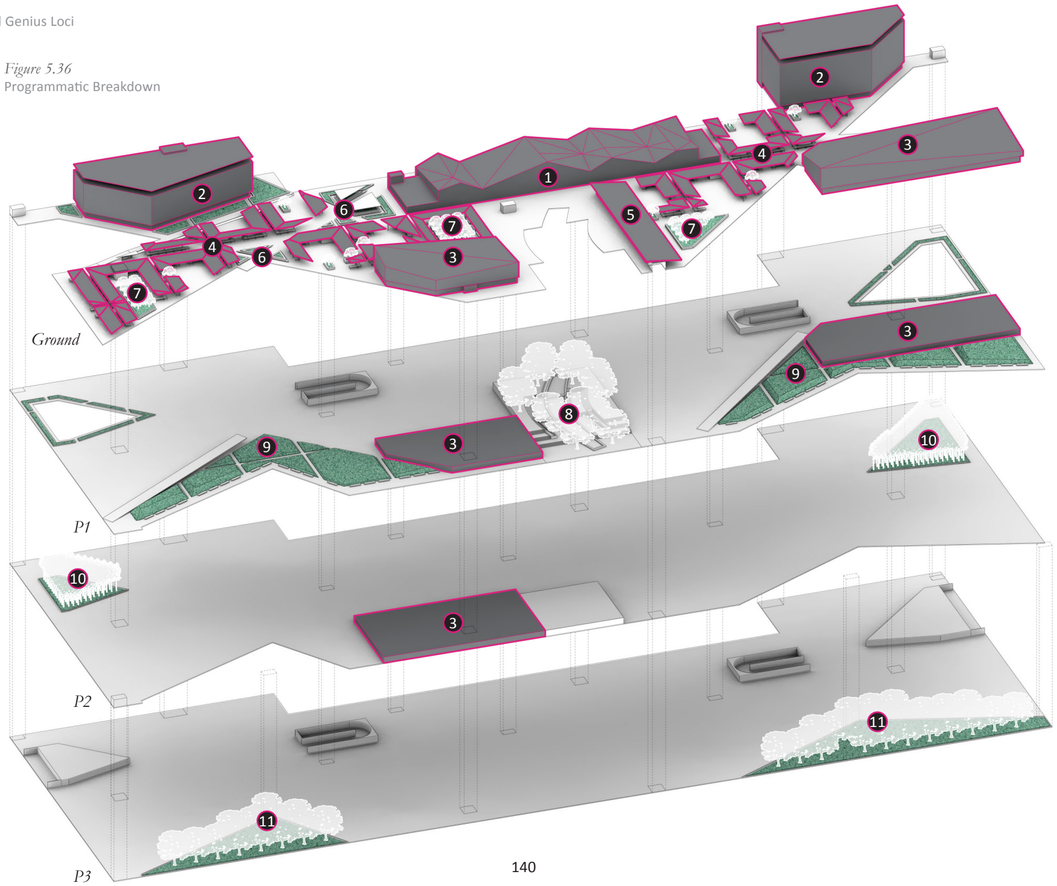
Parking Spaces: 893
Leasable Area: 2425 sq.m.



Parking Level 3 – "Meadow Level" with connecting access to the Square One lower level

Parking Spaces: 1029
Leasable Area: 0 sq.m.

Figure 5.36
Programmatic Breakdown



1 *Transit Terminal*
The architectural form is composed of two single story box volumes that act as administrative offices and a cafe. The space between them is the central terminal space. The roof is a collection of pitched roofs, reminiscent of typical suburban rooftops and clad with wood on the interior as a reflection of typical wood frame construction.

2 *Offices*
The architectural forms were composed of simple rectangular volumes with recessed ground floor perimeters. The volumes are cut at one corner per building to give it an architectural value and as a reaction to the desire lines that form paths through the site. The facades are in a typical modern style in reflection of local architectural indifference, but with adherence to the desire for refreshed marketability.

3 *Retail Stores*
The architectural forms were composed in the same manner as the offices with recessed ground floor perimeters and rectangular volumes cut by the site's desire lines. While the lower levels of these stores are glazed for permeability and advertisement, the upper portions are monolithic volumes with the top corners set at different heights to give it a strong object-like identity, further emphasized by being clad with a single uniform materiality.

4 *Farmers Market/Parking Shelters*
The permanent shelters, whose dimensions are derived from the layout of today's City Centre farmers market, act as shelters for the market vendors in the summer and surface parking for the rest of the year. The forms are interrupted at points where the desire lines move through and at modular gardens of a single dogwood tree in place of a parking spot.

5 *Permanent Farmers Market Stalls*
The permanent market stalls – hosting vendors selling meats, dairy, and baked goods – take the form of a single bar along the east face of the central square connecting the lower level facing Square One with the upper level of the Transit Terminal.

6 *Public Seating/Waiting Areas*
Public benches with small plantings and an overhead shelter are located beside the Transit Terminal and among the permanent market structures.

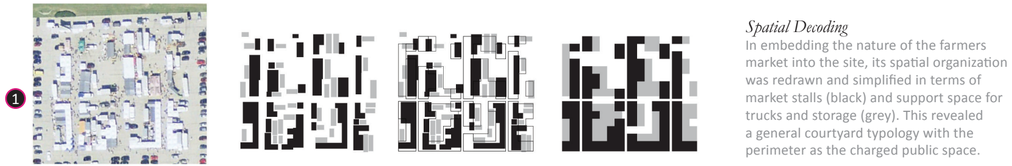
7 *Dogwood Gardens*
Flowering dogwoods are small trees native to southern Ontario that grow between 3-10 m tall and produce large white flowers in the early spring.

8 *Central Water Feature & Public Square*
The water feature connecting the upper and lower levels is a translation of the Credit River, a key character in the identity of Mississauga. Its curved form points to the entrance of the Transit Terminal with three successive waterfalls and artificial river stones dispersed along the waters edge. On either side of the water feature are white oak trees and perimeter flower beds at seating height.

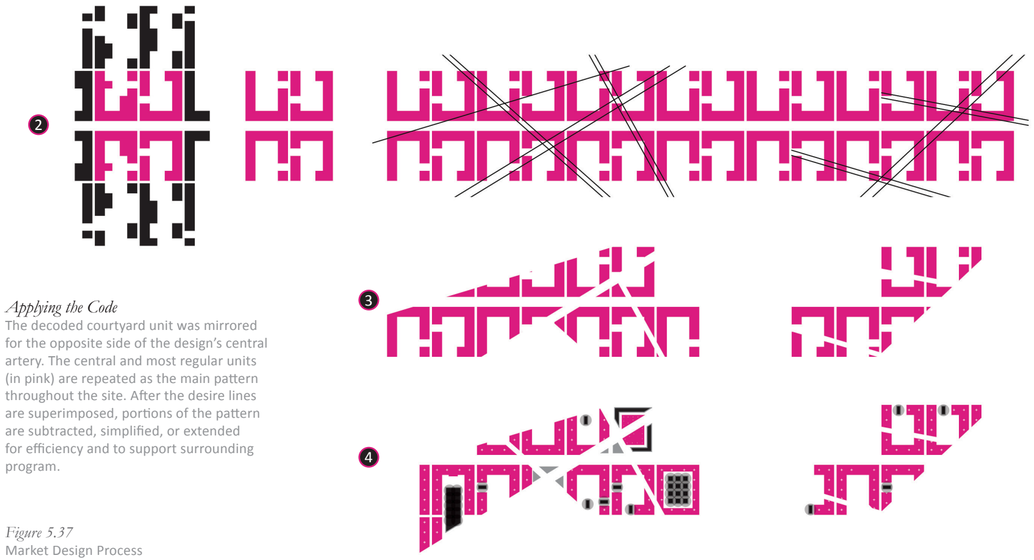
9 *Flower Gardens*
The formwork of the gardens is comprised of a surface topography derived from the contours surrounding the Credit River. The edges are 45 degree slopes that point downwards to the pedestrian level. Benches are located along the southern faces of the gardens.

10 *Trembling Aspen Gardens*
Trembling Aspen are fast-growing cluster trees native to Ontario that grow up to 25 m tall and require full sun.

11 *White Oak Gardens*
White oaks are hardy trees native to southern Ontario that grow up to 20-30 m tall and prefer full sun. They are commonly used in urban settings due to their ability to withstand disease, insects, and heavy traffic.

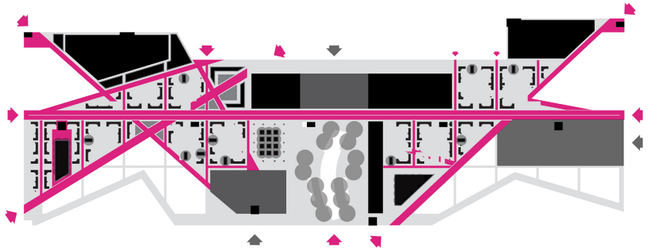


Spatial Decoding
In embedding the nature of the farmers market into the site, its spatial organization was redrawn and simplified in terms of market stalls (black) and support space for trucks and storage (grey). This revealed a general courtyard typology with the perimeter as the charged public space.

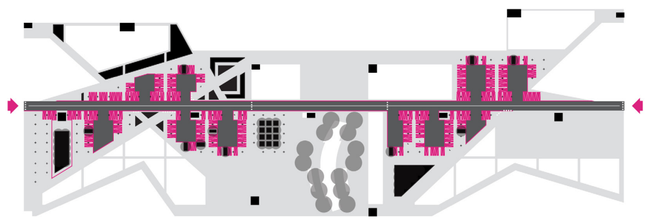


Applying the Code
The decoded courtyard unit was mirrored for the opposite side of the design's central artery. The central and most regular units (in pink) are repeated as the main pattern throughout the site. After the desire lines are superimposed, portions of the pattern are subtracted, simplified, or extended for efficiency and to support surrounding program.

Figure 5.37
Market Design Process

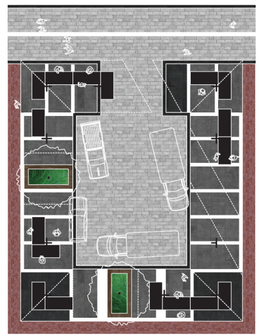


Pedestrian System
When the farmers market is in operation, tables can be assembled beneath the market shelters between the columns. Tables face outwards to pedestrian lanes along the perimeter of the shelter modules, marked by red brick pavers. The farmer's trucks may be parked on the interior of the shelter modules.



Vehicular System
Cars are able to access surface parking via the East and West entrances. Paving materiality marks the vehicular zones and the locations of parking spots beneath the market shelters.

Figure 5.38
Pedestrian and Vehicular Program Flexibility



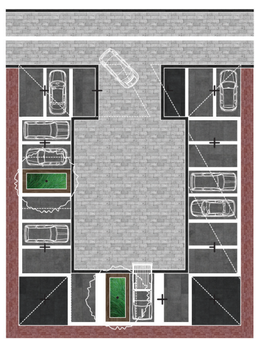


Figure 5.39
View of Transit Terminal interior

Figure 5.40
Section A-A

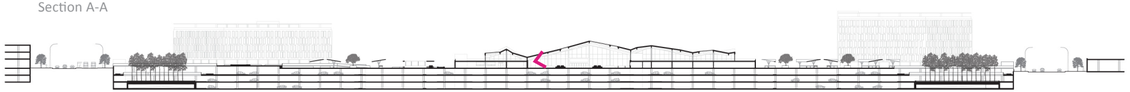


Figure 5.41
View of eastern White Oak Garden and Flower Garden with the Market Level beyond

Figure 5.42
Section B-B

Figure 5.43
View of eastern Trembling Aspen Garden with Transit Terminal beyond

Figure 5.44
Forest Layer

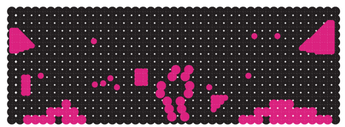


Figure 5.45
View of western Flower Garden from ramp with Square One northern expansion to the right

Figure 5.46
Farm Layer

Figure 5.47
View of western Farmers Market from central walkway

Figure 5.48
Pavilion Layer

Figure 5.49
View of western office building from outdoor transit waiting area

Figure 5.50
Retail Layer

Figure 5.51
View of central water feature facing north to the Transit Terminal

Figure 5.52
Urban Square Layer

Figure 5.53
View of western White Oak Garden from P2 parking level

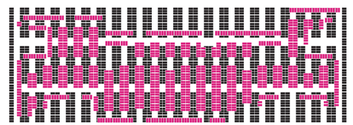


Figure 5.54
Parking Layer

Conclusion

The *genius locus*, the spirit of place, is the foundation upon which meaningful places and city identities form. The genius is like a circle; it is the "most beautiful, since it is most like itself".[92] It is the embodiment of the city's potential and acts as a trajectory for architectural and urban projects as the path towards the most truthful version of itself. This is not to say that a city's state of being is the literal definition of its spirit of place, in part because any single architectural moment might respond to the genius only in part, completely, or not at all. Believing that a city's resulting form is self-validated is a circular argument and would mean not only that a city is the way it is simply because it is the way it is, but also that thoughtfulness in the practice of architectural design is unnecessary. It is the same as saying a person is only the sum of their parts and nothing more, otherwise it would be against nature to desire the redevelopment of Square One's parking desert. As such, dismissing mentalities such as this disregard the potential of the mind and spirit and ultimately lead to meaningless physicality and lackluster identities. Instead, it must be understood that the genius is what the city should and can be, if careful and deliberate design is applied. In contemporary urban growth this requires the understanding that the genius is swayed by and deeply rooted in collective thought. The circumstantial beliefs of its government, industries, and citizens manifest as both a *turbulent surface* (fluctuating images of city identity, architectural style, and public spaces) and a *solid core* (the fundamental drivers of economy, culture, and lifestyle). Researching and reflecting upon these two sources of socio-economic identity helps build the profile of the city's parts. However a step further is required where imagination, sympathy for local narratives and knowledge of day-to-day urban life together help tie the parts together and understand them for more than their sum. Any given city will have a multitude of dimensions, and an acute understanding of them will draw appreciation to the complexity and potential of its genius locus. Ultimately the genius offers the most meaningful framework for design and better enables its designers and citizens in the attainment of its ideal form.

Mississauga City Centre desires densification. This is reasonable considering the area's economic role, popularity, and recent growth, but ultimately it is a misinformed desire. Mississauga is not a traditional city; it is inherently suburban. It does not behave nor have the genetic code of places like Toronto, and consequently the desire to densify is innately difficult. The most obvious indication of this is the fact that Mississauga's City Centre became a place *after* the establishment of the city. It was a conscious effort to build something out of nothing rather than a historic foundation to an outward-growth. Emptiness is its baseline, and so all attempts to densify present a conflict. The City Centre wants to be filled with program and have defined street edges and character, yet it does not want to give up its innate spaciousness, easy economy, and programmatic simplicity. Its master plans advertise an idyllic Toronto-yet-not with brand new village-like heritage to attract nostalgic peace-seekers. However its reality is a network of highly commercialized megastructures that offer clean, safe, and highly simulated experiences whose totality have completely separated it from the identity of Toronto. The hubris of Mississauga is undeniable and does not have the ability to submit to the current desire for quaint privately owned street shops. Such an urban condition can and does exist elsewhere in the city, but not the City Centre. Here, pride in design is strongest, if still largely inactive. What the City Centre needs is a different way of thinking. It needs to relinquish its desires for simplistic and picturesque new urbanism styles and allow the simulacrum to flourish. This thesis is an example of what such a process can be. It is a process of imagination that layers carpets of landscape and architectural elements already familiar to its industries and citizens. It allows for densification, but it is a density of design and material rather than volumetric form. Mississauga desires densification, but its goal is not to urbanize in the traditional sense. It seeks to grow in such a way that upholds the speculation of urbanization as a point of attraction and commerce rather than as an agenda to fill up all possible corners of space. In this way the artificiality of the simulacrum is not a deception or a copy of something made for another city, but something new, localized, and validated in its own right.

Mississauga is by no means a unique condition as a suburban city. In fact it is likely the genius locus outlined in this thesis occurs in many other similar cities throughout Canada and the US. While this seems to undermine the notion of genius loci as being distinct and one of a kind, it is understandable in the context of suburbia as a young urban typology. Similar to biological taxonomy, suburban cities are still of one species and are still in the process of mutating into subspecies. As such Mississauga's inherent identity is chiefly situational. Its particular histories, relationship to Toronto, and cultural make-up are the contextualized mutations to a general suburban genius. One way of punctuating the importance of such a particularization is by comparing the City Centre to other local suburban malls. Erin Mills Town Centre, located in West Mississauga, is of similar size and typology to Square One. In many ways it is the image of a younger Square One. Its ring road has been maintained where the one around Square One has long been absorbed. The territory of Erin Mills is similarly substantial and has the potential for considerable growth and densification. In this way its genius locus may be very similar to that of the City Centre in terms of speculation, commerce, and resistance. However, it lacks the traffic of the City Centre's highway intersection and its location as the geographic centre of Mississauga. Yorkdale Shopping Centre and Fairview Mall of Toronto, on the other hand, are both island conditions and differ greatly from the centric design of Mississauga's malls. Their volumetric forms are more akin to conglomerated streets with clear individual volumes for the stores. Fairview Mall is more similar to Square One than Yorkdale in that it has already developed several high rises around its perimeter. However much of its territory has been claimed and failed to offer any significant urban street life. The residential edges and highway intersection box it in and limit future growth. Yorkdale is similar in this respect, though it still has the industrial park to its west as potential development sites. Recent development has illustrated the mall's strategy of internal densification and connectivity to the city's subway system rather than ground-level outward growth. For that to happen the residential zones around it would have to be replaced with high-density condos due to property value and thus immediately create a skyline. While possible and likely to happen this is a difficult conflict to overcome, as the suburban typology is just as sacred there as it is in Mississauga. As well, the mall is located much closer to the intersection and the western industrial zone lines the highway rather than the perimeter of the mall. It faces conflicts that force certain development strategies, where Mississauga's City Centre is comparably free to develop a highly idyllic situation. Its only real obstacle is the intentions of the corporations and city council rather than any spatial constrictions. This only furthers the strength of its genius as a speculative being and gives favour to its inherent dependence on commerce.

92 Carl A. Huffman, Archytas of Tarentum: Pythagorean, Philosopher, and Mathematician King (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 2005) 527.

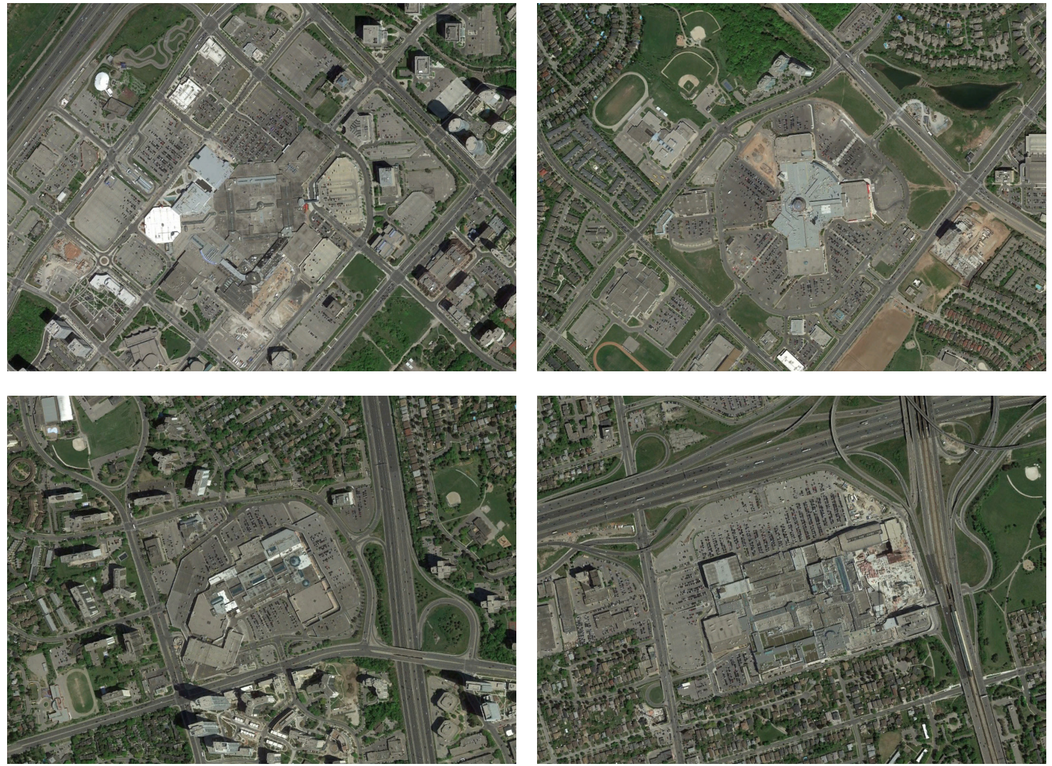


Figure 6.1
Suburban Shopping Mall Aerials

1 Square One Shopping Centre
2 Erin Mills Town Centre
3 Fairview Mall
4 Yorkdale Shopping Centre

Mississauga faces many challenges shared by most mall-centric suburban cities, but it stands out in its situational particularity and its promising territory.

The master plan and architectural design offered in this thesis are proposed responses to the problem of genius loci in suburbia. They seek to satisfy the ideological desire to grow a spirit of place while maintaining a common ground with the profit-driven rationalist process of city growth. The master plan, as previously stated, is more of a caricature and backdrop to the architectural design rather than a strictly practical application of program and spatial organization. It was a process of pattern making and illustrating how different layers of materiality and program can be blended on any one site in the pursuit of complex and distinct urban space. Its purpose was to reflect on the potentials of the site, offer urban armatures, plausible volumetric forms based on neighbouring areas, and animate them through familiar landscape inserts that embody the artificiality of the genius locus. However, parts of it, such as the Square One rooftop gardens and pavilions, while physically possible are largely not probable without considerable renovation and careful planning to encourage traffic and safety. Other moments, like the large parking garage in place of today's Playdium, are very likely as a prediction of required program and site suitability regardless of particular local building volumes. Where the question of practicality in this overall design process comes into play is at the scale of the architectural design. The megastructure offered in this thesis is a complex object where, while likely attractive to developers as a logical design on its own, ownership and management may be difficult to outline. One possible solution is for the parking garage to fall under the jurisdiction of the city, with its retail and office structures as tenants. The Transit Terminal administration would link with the city-owned structure and organize the paid parking and surveillance requirements. Another solution is for Oxford Properties, the owners of Square One, to take control of the parking and lease out the individual buildings, except for the Transit Terminal, which would still fall under city rule. This would offer them a viable reason for investment into such a project and allow them control over parking that would predominantly serve the mall rather than on-site program. However, corporate control over the project might compromise the future integrity of the farmers market as it may lead to their displacement in preference for larger companies to display their goods rather than local farmers. In fairness, this is a possibility whether or not a corporation or the city owns the market stalls and is difficult to predict. Should the city own the market stalls it has a stronger chance to have equal standing with other city-funded initiatives and retain the freedom to use the space as a true farmers market. Furthermore, the particular design of the megastructure results in seemingly leftover spaces as a result of its transversal desire lines and pathways. While this is likely an economical and spatial inefficiency, these line patterns are deeply embedded into the physical behaviour of people. With emptiness existing at the core of the City Centre, its vast parking lots and other spaces force pedestrians to cross them in the most direct line. This is a habit exhibited throughout Mississauga and is inevitable given its genetic code. To embed such behaviour into the design is a nod to its past but turns it into something experientially productive. This is largely the point of this thesis: to trade the negativity of these places and for something attractive and engaging without losing the truth of the place.

Figure 6.2
Children's summer event in Celebration Square

Beyond Genius Loci: An Analysis of Architectural Design Strategies of Place is an attempt to look beyond the territory of historical genius loci and into the modern era where it appears to be superficial or simply nonexistent instead of innately directive. This thesis seeks to offer a process that captures the essence of the city and builds it into palpable, positive, and empowering places. Part of this is a personal agenda to improve Mississauga, but it is also an attempt to illustrate that the negative connotation of the suburbs and the dismissal of non-places as hopeless typologies are not permanent parts of suburbia's identity. While the extensive study of Mississauga as illustrated throughout this thesis is unlikely to be adopted into the general practice of architectural design, mostly due to time constraints, it emphasizes the importance of local input and typological knowledge in the act of design. To understand the generalities and the specificities of any given site empowers both the design team and the end users by offering a library of localized possibilities rather than the singular agenda of the architect or developer. It is an all-encompassing act that acknowledges the responsibility of architecture's agency in the development of desirable and responsible new city forms. It begins by making a single meaningful place and cumulates in the making of a meaningful city.

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