

Envisioning the future of Spring Grove's Cultural & Community Space

Citizens' Institute on Rural Design 2021 - 22
Spring Grove, MN

Citizens'
Institute
on Rural
Design





About

The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) is a leadership initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the Housing Assistance Council. Focusing on communities with populations of 50,000 or less, CIRD's goal is to enhance the quality of life and economic viability of rural America through planning, design, and creative placemaking. CIRD is intended to empower local citizens to capitalize on unique local and regional assets to guide the civic development and future design of their communities. The CIRD program goals include:

- Building design capacity in rural communities to plan comprehensive revitalization strategies;
- Introducing creative placemaking, arts, culture, and design strategies as drivers of economic development in rural America;
- Facilitating a network of rural communities for design idea exchanges and peer learning; and
- Preparing communities to be ready and competitive for arts- and design-related state and federal funding opportunities.

Partners

Established by Congress in 1965, the **National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)** is the independent federal agency whose funding and support give Americans the opportunity to participate in the arts, exercise their imaginations, and develop their creative capacities.

The Housing Assistance Council (HAC) is a national nonprofit that strengthens communities across rural America through investment and assistance with affordable housing and community and economic development. Based in Washington, DC, HAC is actively involved in shaping federal policy and the affordable housing industry with its research, lending, and technical assistance to local organizations that help rural communities prosper.

To Be Done Studio (TBD) is an architecture and design firm based in Washington, DC that harnesses the inherent goodness in people and the power of design to create sustainable solutions to the pressing problems that our world faces. TBD designs and builds spaces that uplift, inspire and support power within the communities they serve. TBD believes that a relevant design practice must be accessible to all rather than a few.



Citizens' Institute on Rural Design Spring Grove, MN Workshop 2022

Description

Spring Grove 2030 initiative formed when several local entities realized they were all having similar conversations about space. These entities includes the mayor's office, school leadership, arts community representatives, and the city's economic development team. The school was working with families toward its goal of being a "one room schoolhouse for the 21st century", including increased space for modern classrooms, arts, and athletics. Local churches and nonprofits had discussions about where to hold gatherings, meetings, and events when it had little or no space of its own. The Economic Development Authority tried to help businesses find space to grow when there were few options available for storefronts and industrial buildings in the community. Leaders from these groups realized they all had the same goal: To create new places for the community to learn, connect, and do business.

During recent years, these groups solidified their vision and recently established themselves as a nonprofit with a mission to support the community of Spring Grove through collaborative initiatives that build on our history, enhance quality of life, and serve as a catalyst for the development of social, financial, and physical capital. Core to this charge, Spring Grove 2030 Task Force would like to take what already makes Spring Grove special and make it even better.

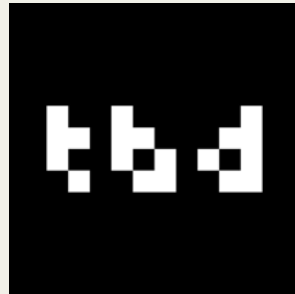
Engagement

Using the Spring Grove 2030 Community Engagement and Visioning Report provided by RSP architects the Citizens' Institute on Rural Design Team launched into a series of virtual and in person community engagement efforts to help solidify the vision of "The Place" identified in the report. The Citizens Institute on Rural Design team met with local residents, businesses and project stakeholders at the local farmers market, school and various other locations to better understand the communities needs and to get specific input on the proposed design.

Deliverables

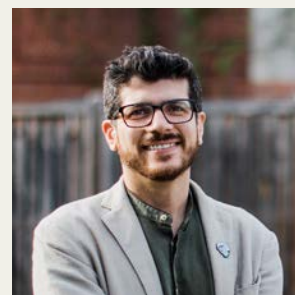
Activities during the workshop led to a conceptual design scheme for "the place" based on community ideas and input, with the primary emphasis being placed on the performing arts, community gathering spaces and library space. Flexible indoor and outdoor space was also incorporated into the design. Designs of "the place" were developed and represented in a range of formats including plans, 3D massing studies, renderings and diagrams.

Design Team



The Citizen's Institute on Rural Design's design efforts are led by To Be Done Studio.

To Be Done Studio harnesses the inherent goodness in people and the power of design to create sustainable solutions to the endemic problems that our world faces. We seek a relevant practice, one which is accessible to all rather than the few. We design and build spaces that uplift, inspire and support power within the communities we work.



Omar Hakeem Project Lead
To Be Done Studio

Omar Hakeem, AIA, is an architect working in the DC area as well as nationally to bring greater social and environmental equality through thoughtful design and planning. His work has been focused on geographical, social cultural frontiers and works to address the systemic poverty, health issues that plague these communities. Through these efforts he has completed award winning affordable housing, rapid response disaster housing prototypes, urban bike and pedestrian infrastructure, regional drainage improvements and community based rural planning initiatives. Omar's passion for design has taken him from the cloud forests of Costa Rica to the ravaged communities of the Gulf Coast and many places in between. Omar was recently named one of Grist's 50 Fixers for his work on climate resilient housing solutions. He is the principal and founder of To Be Done Studio.

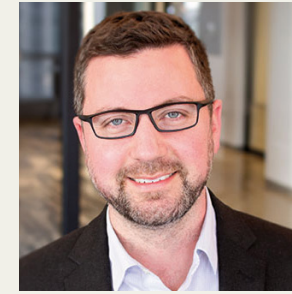


Candace Maloney-Franklin Design Coordinator
To Be Done Studio

Candace was born and raised on the small Caribbean island of St. Christopher (St. Kitts), where the importance of community and looking out for one's neighbor was instilled in her from an early age. From early on in her career, Candace has carried these values into architecture - approaching her work with the deep belief that the input of residents who personally understand the history, assets and challenges of a community is critical to design and that thoughtful design should be accessible to all.

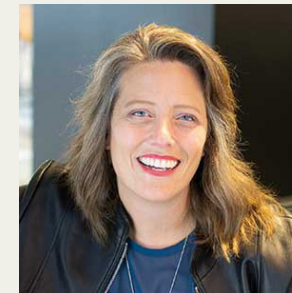
Candace has had the opportunity to work on various project types and scales throughout her ten-year career, ranging from housing and mixed-use developments to education and healthcare. Candace is excited to bring her passion for creating impactful long-term solutions through research and engagement.

Resource Team



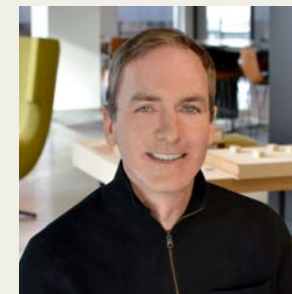
Daniel Yudchitz Resource Team Member
Leo A Daly

Growing up as the son of an architect undoubtedly instilled a passion to create and explore the built environment in Dan Yudchitz. He believes architecture is about allocating resources strategically to achieve maximum impact, which requires meaningful architectural expression within constraints of time and money. The challenge is in the discovery of opportunities for design impact that transcend those limitations. He focuses on creating strategies for aspirational design expressions to reinforce the client's mission and enhance building functionality in a sustainable, economical and impactful manner.



Cindy A McCleary Resource Team Member
Leo A Daly

An expert in visioning and consensus building, Cindy has focused her 20-year career on building an adeptness for guiding and facilitating special interest groups, public sector clients and multiple stakeholders to realize strategically driven results. Her experience as a programmer and planner has earned her a reputation for advanced thinking and strategically-driven design processes. As leader of our Minneapolis studio, Cindy is dedicated to finding new ways to collaborate and empower underrepresented voices, which she believes is key to exceptional design.



Joe Bower Resource Team Member
Leo A Daly

Joe has focused his career on the design, vision and creation of higher learning environments for state and collegiate institutions, as well as performing arts, library and academic research facilities. He brings a passion and talent for transforming buildings through design and planning innovations. Joe is also very experienced in designing for and collaborating with the National Park Service and various state-level historic preservation commissions.



Sarina Otaibi Resource Team Member
Department of Public Transformation

Sarina Otaibi is a rural advocate, old building champion and community leader, shaped by her lived experiences in Saudi Arabia and Granite Falls, Minnesota. From organizing around clean water and energy to working with Minnesota's Main Street communities to establish preservation and arts-based community development approaches, Sarina is driven by her passion for rural community vitality. She holds a master's degree in historic preservation from the University of Maryland, College Park, and a B.B.A. in marketing from Stetson University in Florida.

CIRD Staff



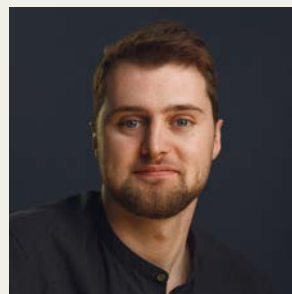
Jennifer Hughes Director
National Endowment for the Arts

Jen Hughes was appointed director of Design and Creative Placemaking for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in April 2018, having served as acting director since June 2017. In this position, she oversees grant portfolios that support the design and creative placemaking fields, as well as leadership initiatives that include the Mayors' Institute on City Design and the Citizens' Institute on Rural Design. Since 2011, Hughes has served in multiple roles as design specialist and community solutions specialist at the NEA, playing a significant role in shaping the agency's creative placemaking and social impact design investments. At the NEA, she has managed federal, philanthropic and local relationships to strategically integrate arts, culture, and design into comprehensive community development plans. A Philadelphia native, she has a bachelors in management from the University of Pennsylvania and a masters in city planning from University of California, Berkeley with a focus on community development and design.



Courtney Spearman Design Specialist
National Endowment for the Arts

Courtney Spearman manages the Design program for the National Endowment for the Arts, overseeing the agency's relationship with and support for the design field nationwide. She also coordinates the Citizens' Institute on Rural Design, working with small-town, rural and tribal community leaders to enhance the quality of life and economic viability of rural America through planning, design, and creative placemaking. Courtney has also worked with arts and design non-profits, in landscape practice, and with a tech startup. Her educational background is in landscape architecture, architectural history, and art history, with degrees from University of Virginia and Rice University.



Matt Khinda Design & Planning Fellow
Harvard Graduate School of Design

Matt Khinda is a Design & Planning Fellow with the Citizen's Institute on Rural Design and the Housing Assistance Council. Previously, he's worked at the New York City Mayor's Office for Economic Opportunity and was awarded a Forefront Fellowship with the Urban Design Forum. He holds an undergraduate design degree from the Rhode Island School of Design, and he is currently pursuing his Master in Urban Planning at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design.



Manda LaPorte Stevenson Center Graduate Fellow
Housing Assistance Council

Manda LaPorte is a graduate student and Paul D. Coverdell fellow in the Applied Community and Economic Development Program at Illinois State University, working towards a master's in Political Science. Since receiving her undergraduate degree in Global Studies from the University of California, Santa Barbara, Manda has worked for various community development organizations. She served as a Peace Corps Volunteer and a Peace Corps Response Volunteer in Nicaragua and Guatemala, respectively. After her service, she worked for Habitat for Humanity in the Greater Charlottesville area in a variety of positions ranging from construction to financial coaching. Through her time at Habitat, Manda has developed a strong passion for working in affordable housing and advocacy. She is excited to be able to continue her professional career with HAC and looks forward to her continued understanding and work in housing, especially within rural America.



Stephen Sugg Special Projects Manager
Housing Assistance Council

Stephen Sugg takes on rural arts, design, and placemaking in a special projects role at the Housing Assistance Council (HAC). Over his career, Sugg has handled government relations at HAC; spent 6 years as a Senior Policy Officer at LISC; and worked as an advisor to a U.S. Senator. He is also an active and published fiction writer. Holding a doctorate degree in education (William & Mary) and a M.S. in rural sociology (Univ. of Missouri), Sugg taught social science at the college level for 5 years. His academic research and subsequent advocacy focus on place-based education, school & community, and the link between arts in schools and student success.

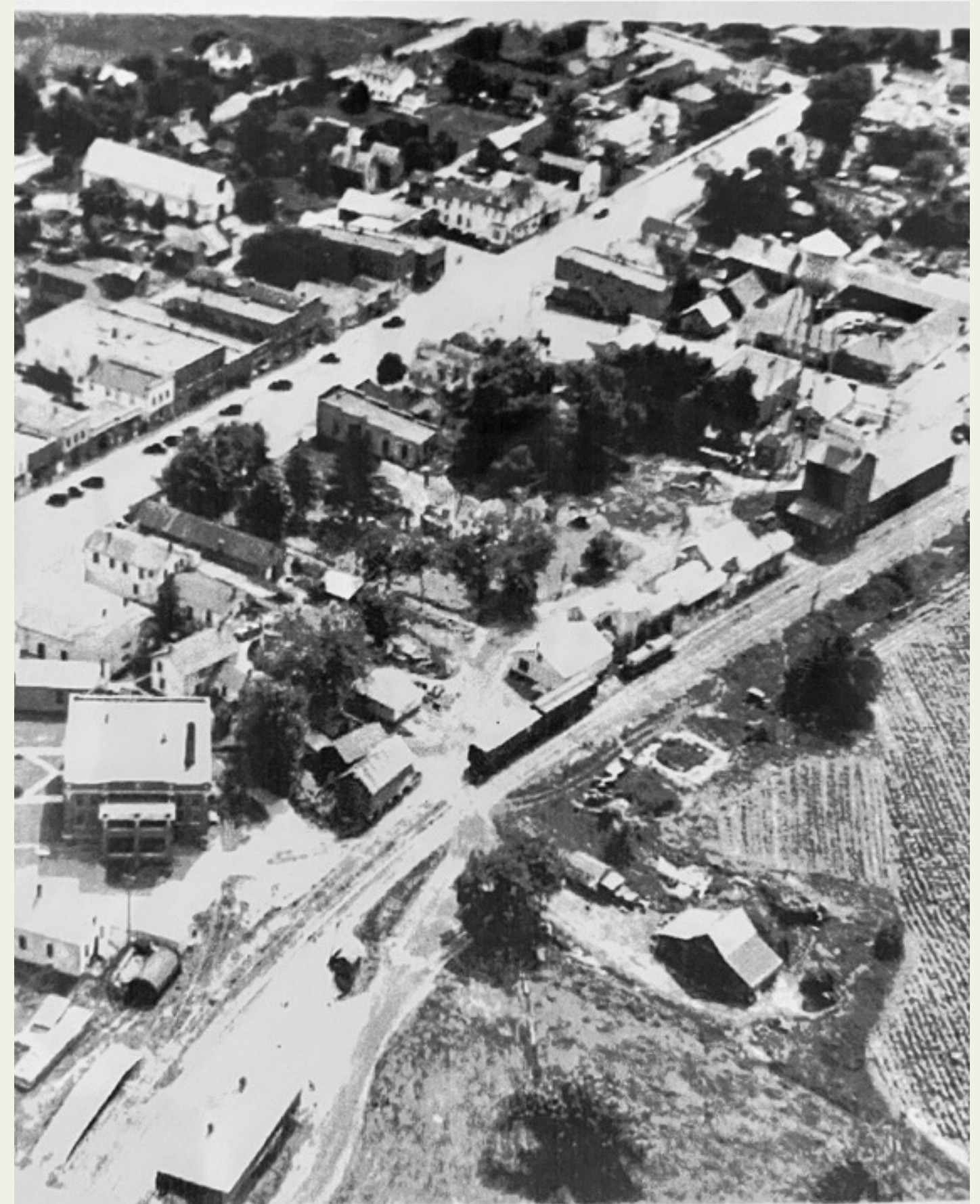
Historical Background/Context

Historical Background

Settled by Norwegians in 1852, Spring Grove has been called “The most thoroughly Norwegian town in the United States”. Norwegian themed celebrations continue to unite the community while linking to its past and garnering national attention. Spring Grove is part of what’s known as the Driftless Region—untouched by glaciers---which spans portions of Minnesota, Iowa, and Wisconsin. Spring Grove sits in the Southwestern corner of Houston County, Minnesota. Notable in Spring Grove is robust school and community partnerships and the community’s deep support for its education, arts, athletics, and cultural institutions. Spring Grove’s population is remarkably stable – defying trends of population shrinkage common to similarly situated communities with agrarian roots across the Midwest. Spring Grove Communications has served as a forward-looking and locally-owned communications infrastructure cooperative for a century. Spring Grove Communications’ early investment in a 100% fiber optic network has fostered economic growth that positions the community well for the post-COVID economy.

Current Context

With a goal and intention of using downtown redevelopment to improve aging infrastructure, better connect the K-12 school and its students with the community, and address a shortage of residential, commercial, and community spaces, there were no lack of ideas for where the CIRD workshop could focus in the downtown area. Narrowing down the possibilities was an initial challenge for the CIRD project. The CIRD workshop utilized the community’s deep support for its education, arts, athletics, and cultural institutions to help initiate the dreaming phase of the design process. While focusing on these established relationships and priorities, the CIRD project generated additional architectural and community preferences that would complement and build on the already distinct and bucolic character of Spring Grove.



Spring Grove, July 4, 1932



Historic image of the Spring Grove Public School under construction



Historic image of the Trinity Center



Historic image of the former Spring Grove School



Historic image of Main Street in Spring Grove



Site Visit





Workshop Engagement

Spring Grove, MN Design Workshop Agenda

Day 1: August 3, 2022

- 11:30pm **Workshop Team Meeting & Lunch**, Big Raven Farm
Design Team arrives and meets with Spring Grove 2030 committee.
- 1:30pm **Site Visit & Walking Tour**, Trinity Center
See Trinity Center site & discuss future plans and possibilities.
- 2:00pm **Site Visit & Walking Tour**, Spring Grove Library
See Spring Grove Library & discuss future plans and possibilities.
- 4:00pm **Community Engagement at the Farmers' Market**, Viking Memorial Park
Engage general public about future cultural center in Spring Grove. Goes until 7pm.

Day 2: August 4, 2022

- 8:00am **Breakfast Debrief**, Big Raven Farm
CIRD team and resource team reviews feedback from previous evening.
- 9:30pm **Site Visit & Walking Tour**, Spring Grove Public School
See school site & discuss future plans and possibilities.
- 4:00pm **Check-In with Spring Grove 2030**, Math Learning Lab at Spring Grove Public School
Discussing possible plans, aspirations, and concerns with the local community.

Day 3: August 5, 2022

- 9:00am **Community Presentation**, Math Learning Lab at Spring Grove Public Schools
Community members are invited to join a reception thanking all those who have participated in the workshop the past week. Hear from the design team and offer feedback on ideas for the Spring Grove community & cultural center. Goes until 11am.



Focus Groups



“We want a place that makes
Spring Grove look like the
[innovative and vibrant]
community we know it is.”

- Local Resident

Virtual Engagement

In preparation for the on-site workshop the design team conducted virtual engagement sessions with the Spring Grove 2030 committee to prioritize potential sites, map out project constraints, and strategize about exciting opportunities. These same activities were then re-used for the broadened in-person engagement sessions to validate, challenge, and supplement what we learned online.

Virtual Engagement Meeting July 12, 2022

1 Goals, Needs & Constraints

Project Values



Project Needs

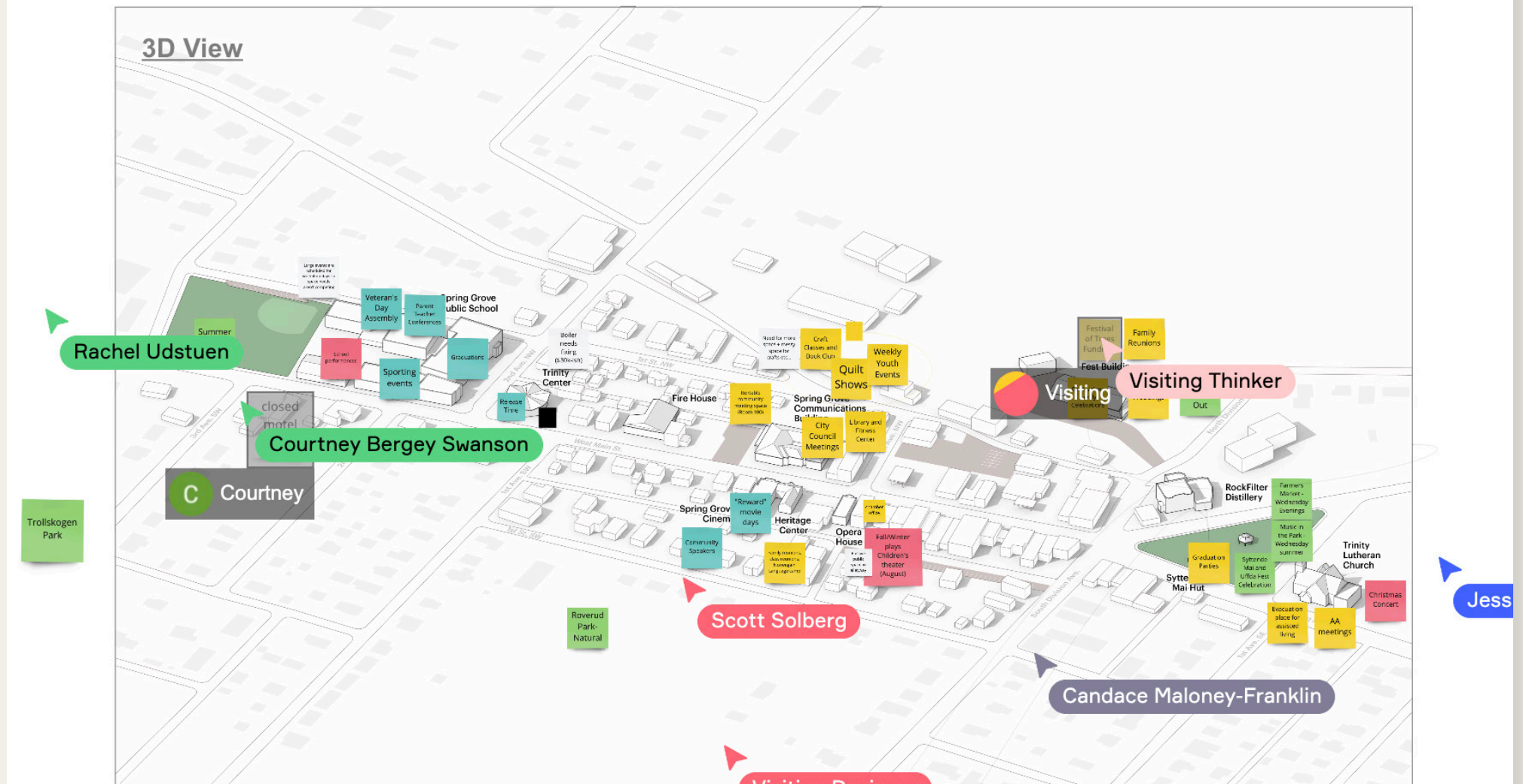


Project Constraints



2 Spring Grove's Cultural Universe

What's already working, and how can this new place support that?



Visual Preference Survey

1. Architectural Style



2. Material

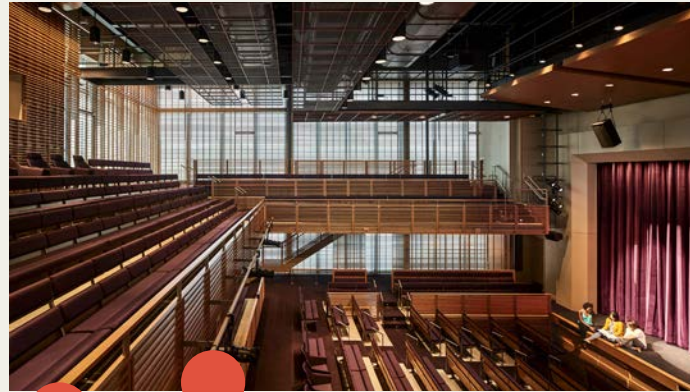
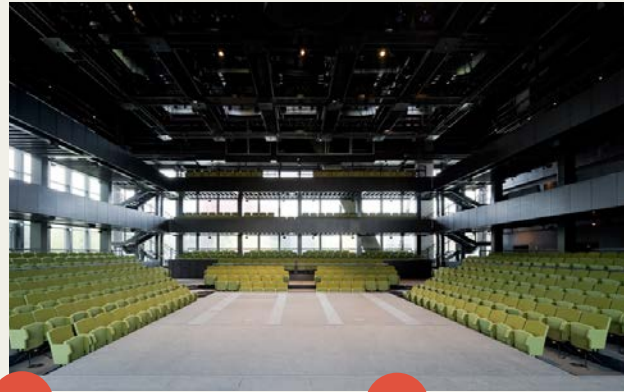


3. Community Space

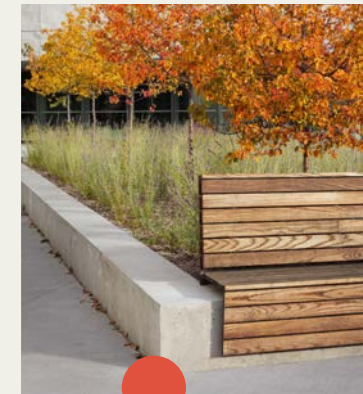


Visual Preference Survey

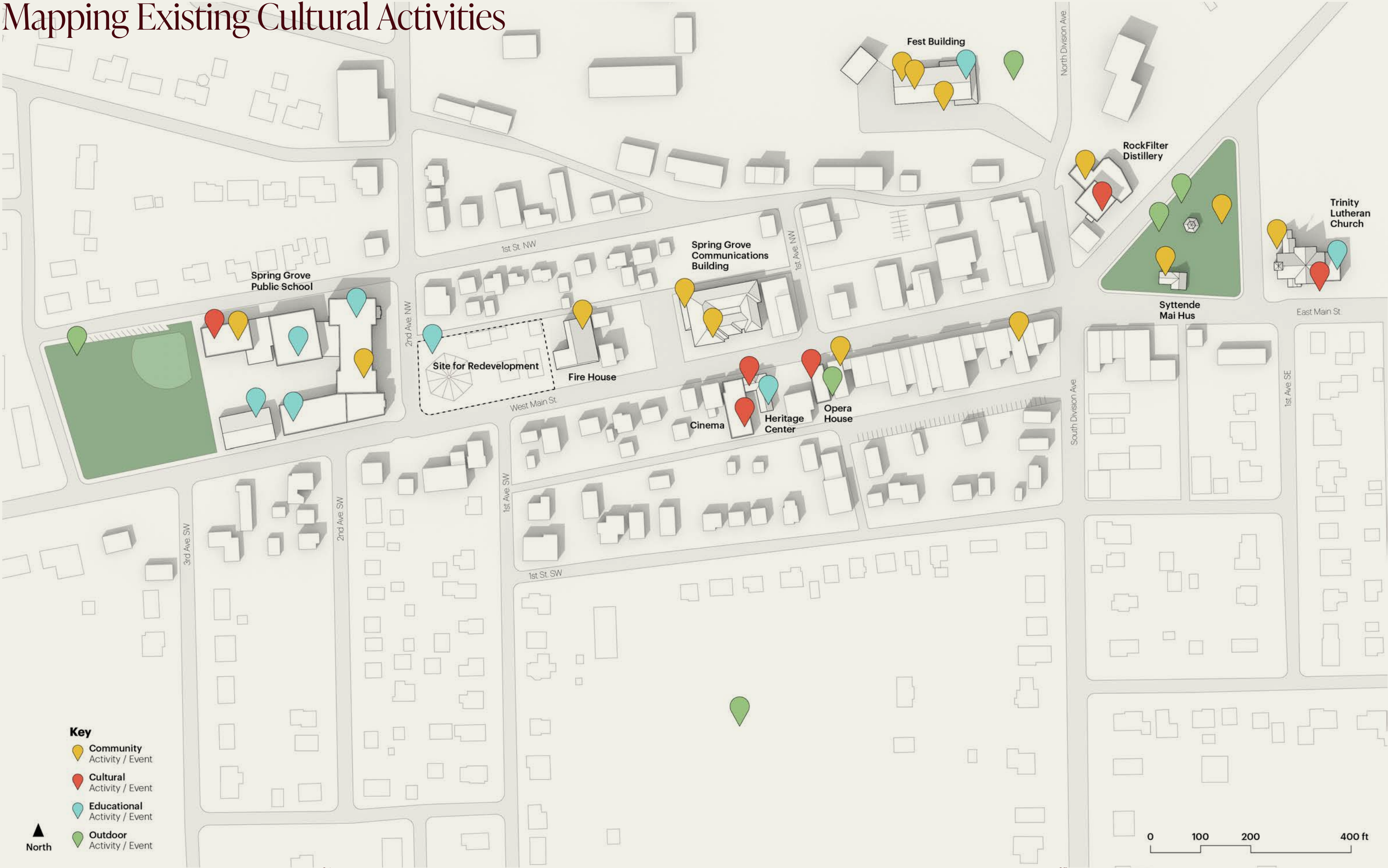
4. Performance Space



5. Open Space



Mapping Existing Cultural Activities



Challenges

Potential parking needs
(existing issues at school for larger events)

Traffic limitations and street needs
(Main Street managed by MNDOT)

Must have proximity and walkability
to school (especially during winter)

Street safety for young children
and senior citizens

Opportunities

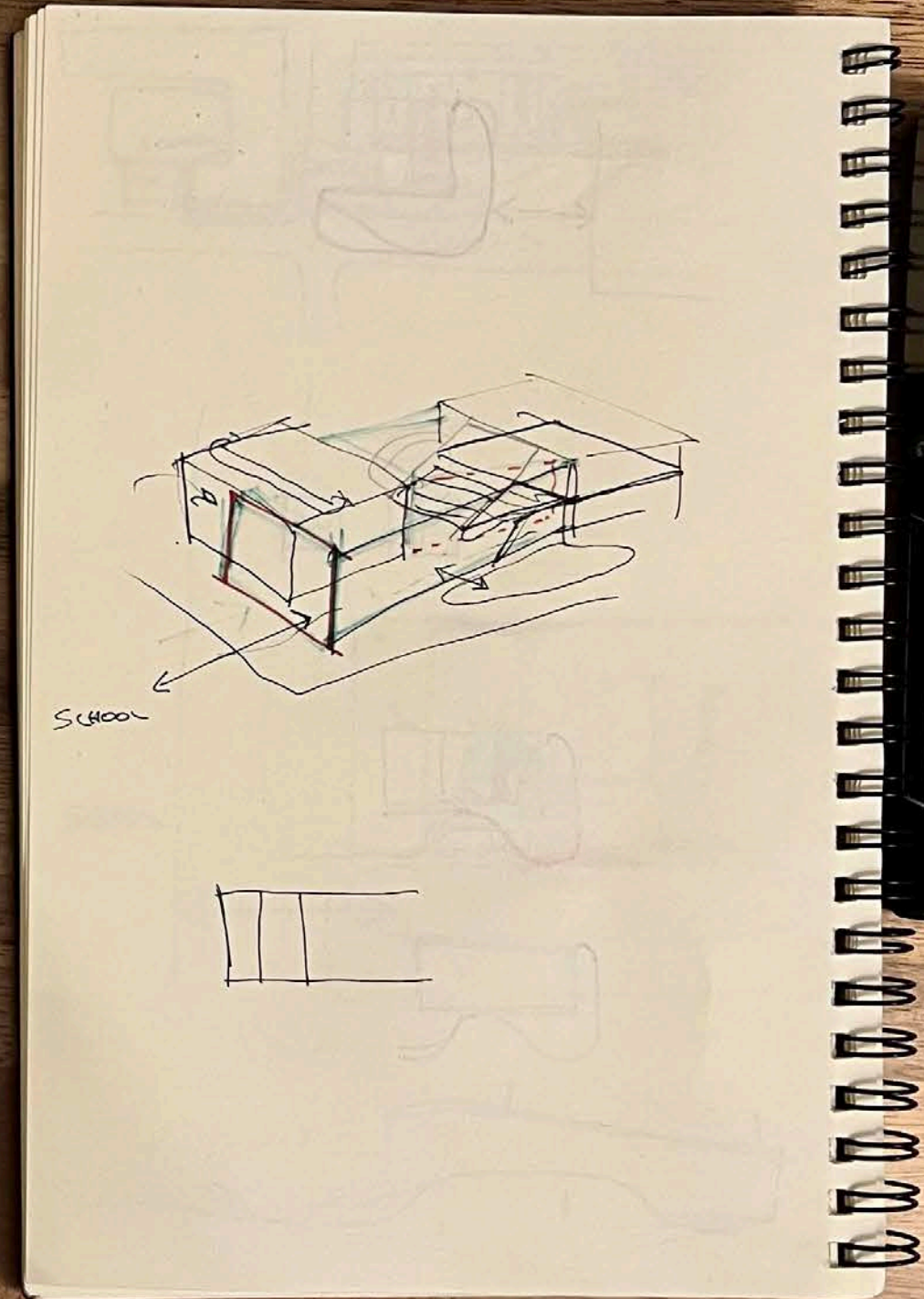
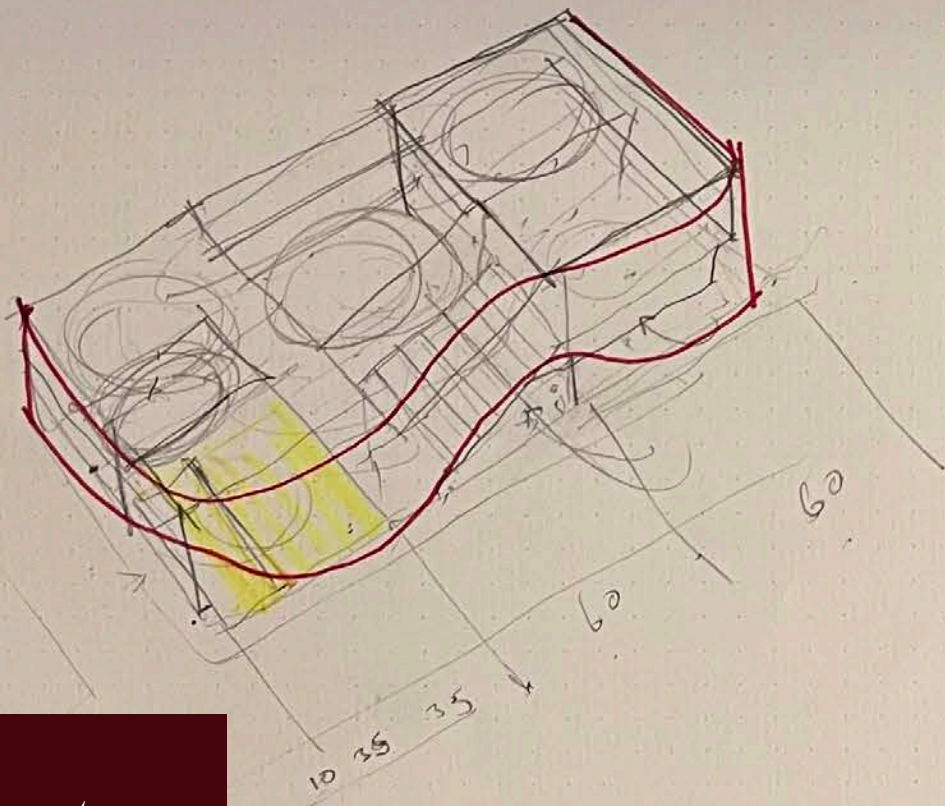
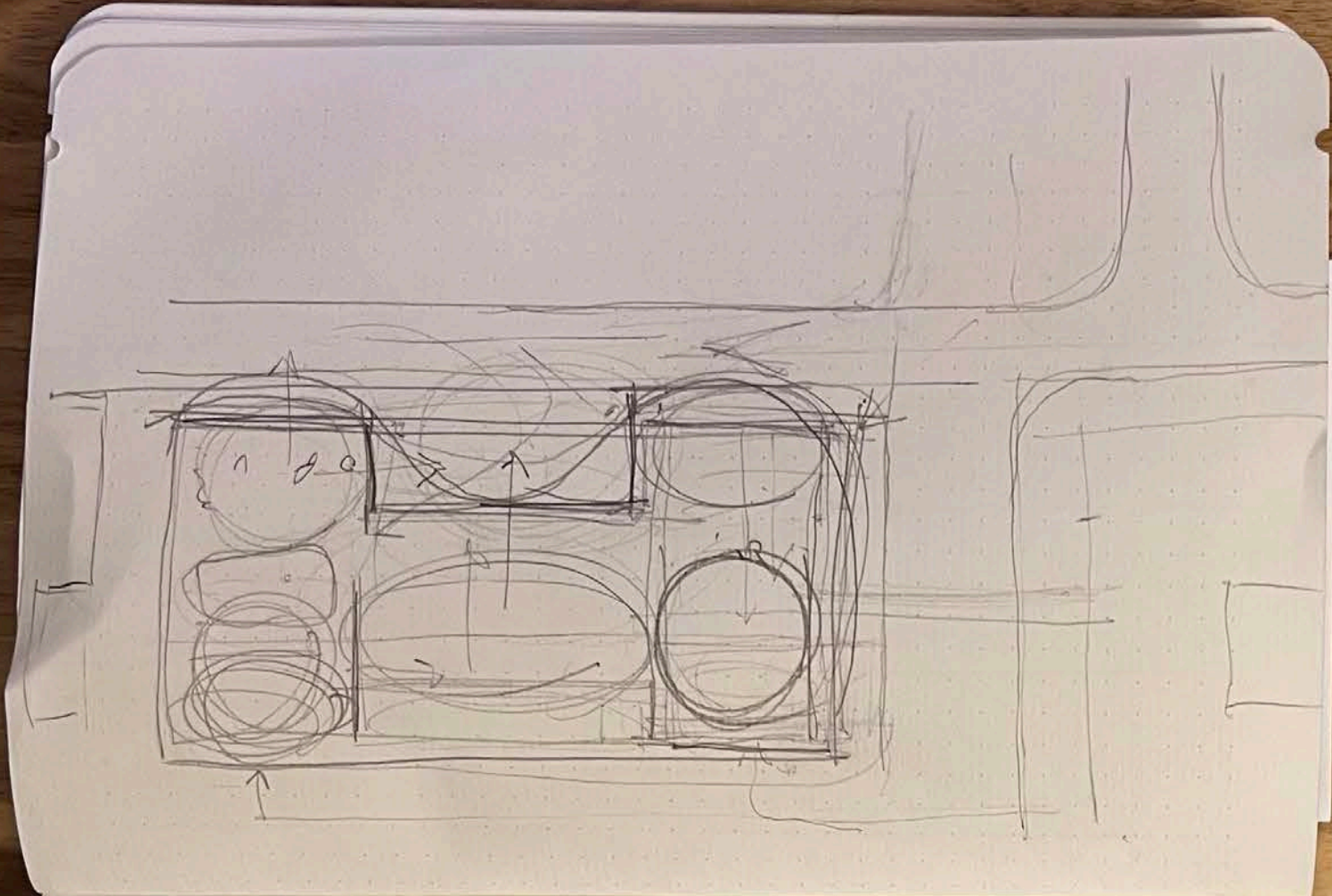
Opportunity to be a
multi-generational Connector

Nod to Spring Grove's Norwegian
history, but not in a tired way

Create spaces for organic cultural
activities and facilitated discussions

Build a relationship between historic
places and more modern amenities

Students deserve more from their spaces



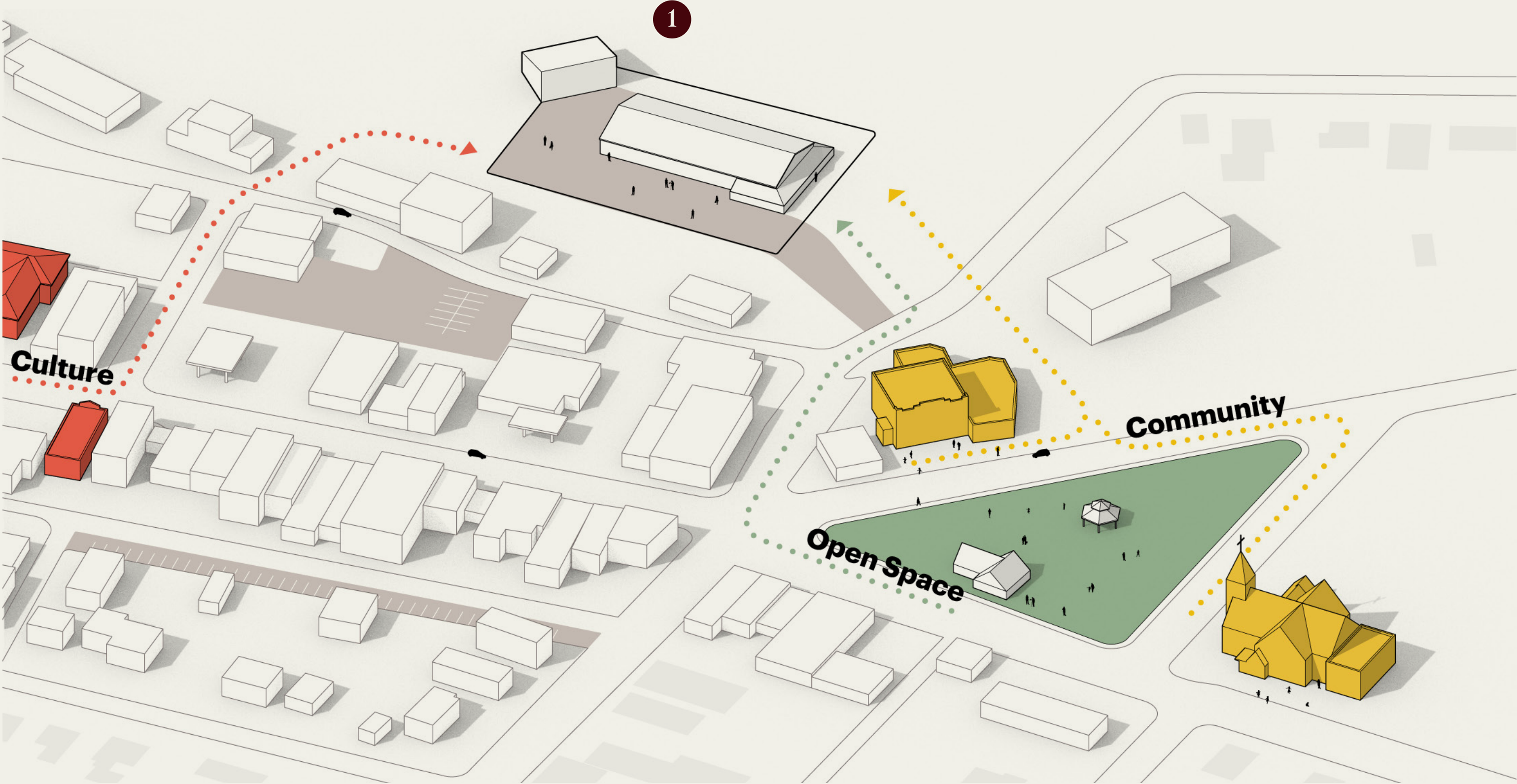
Potential Sites

- 1 – Fest Building (Retrofit / Extension)
- 2 – Main St. Site (Trinity Center)
- 3 – Power Mechanics



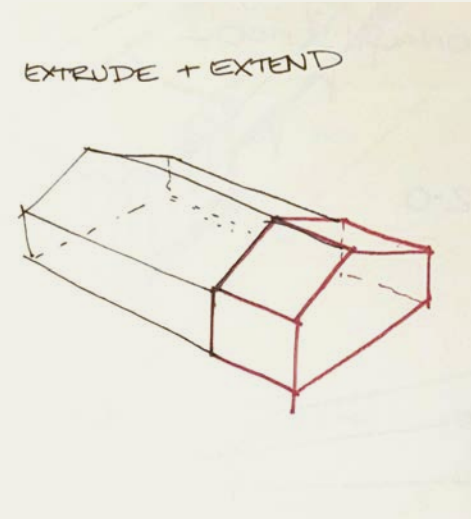
1 – Fest Building

The Fest building already serves an important role in the cultural life of Spring Grove. Supporting the continued success of this longstanding place will be key to Spring Grove’s communal life tomorrow and beyond.



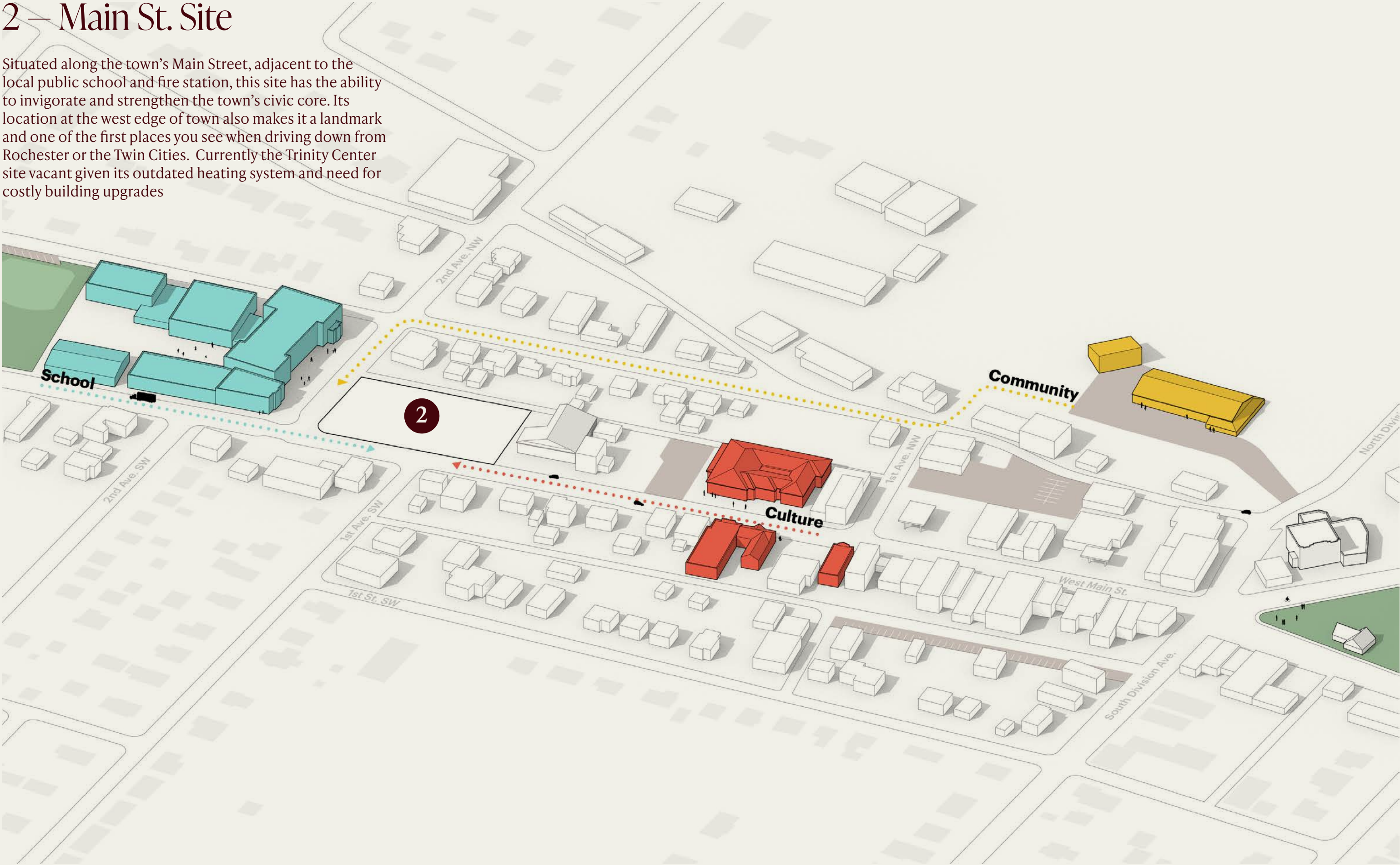
1 – Fest Building

This proposal to retrofit and extend the Fest building focuses on connecting the space with the surrounding landscape and amenities. Adding large windows on the north side, a semi-enclosed play area for children, and more natural materials could all play a meaningful role in giving new life to the already beloved community space.

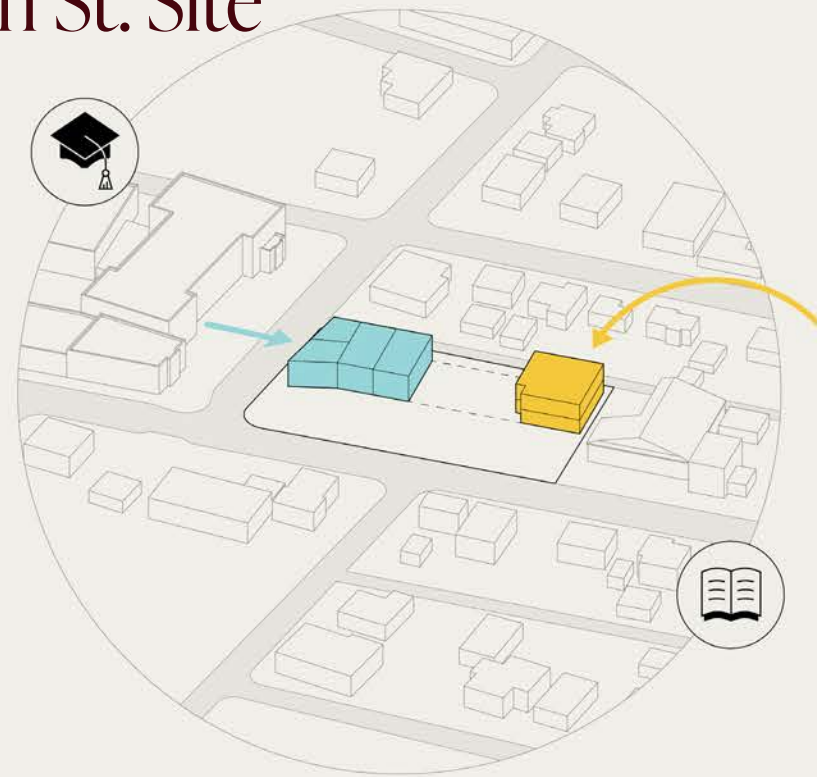


2 — Main St. Site

Situated along the town's Main Street, adjacent to the local public school and fire station, this site has the ability to invigorate and strengthen the town's civic core. Its location at the west edge of town also makes it a landmark and one of the first places you see when driving down from Rochester or the Twin Cities. Currently the Trinity Center site vacant given its outdated heating system and need for costly building upgrades

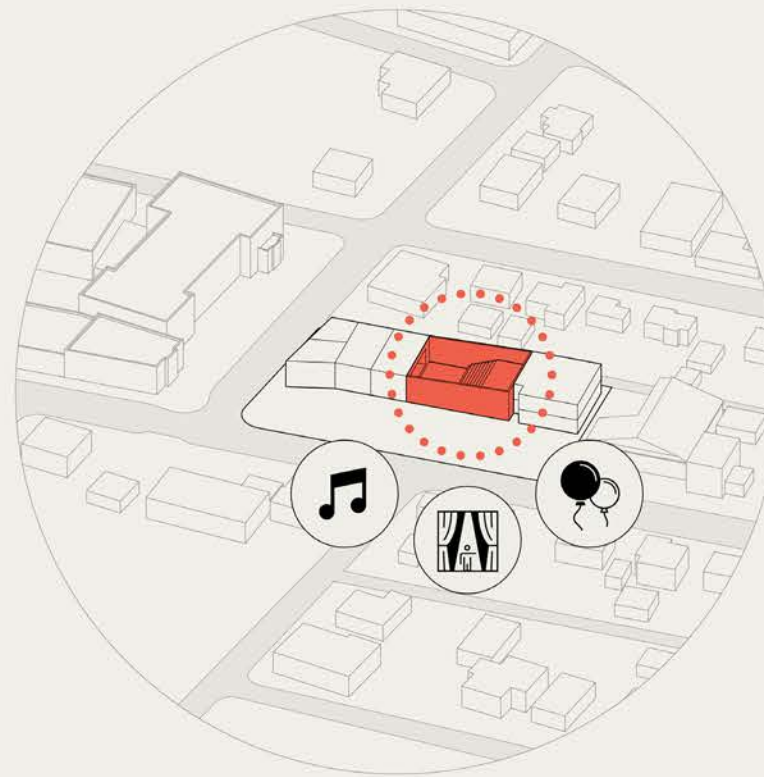


2 – Main St. Site



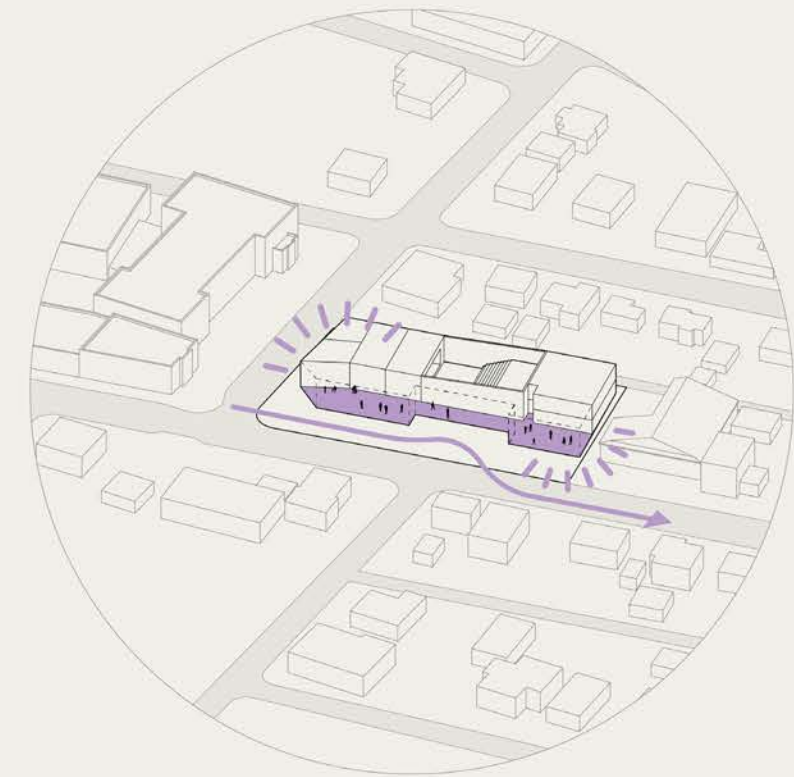
School and Community Services Synergy

Moving some of the current school activities into the new building frees up space in the school, allowing what is there to work better and creates synergy with community programs like the library.



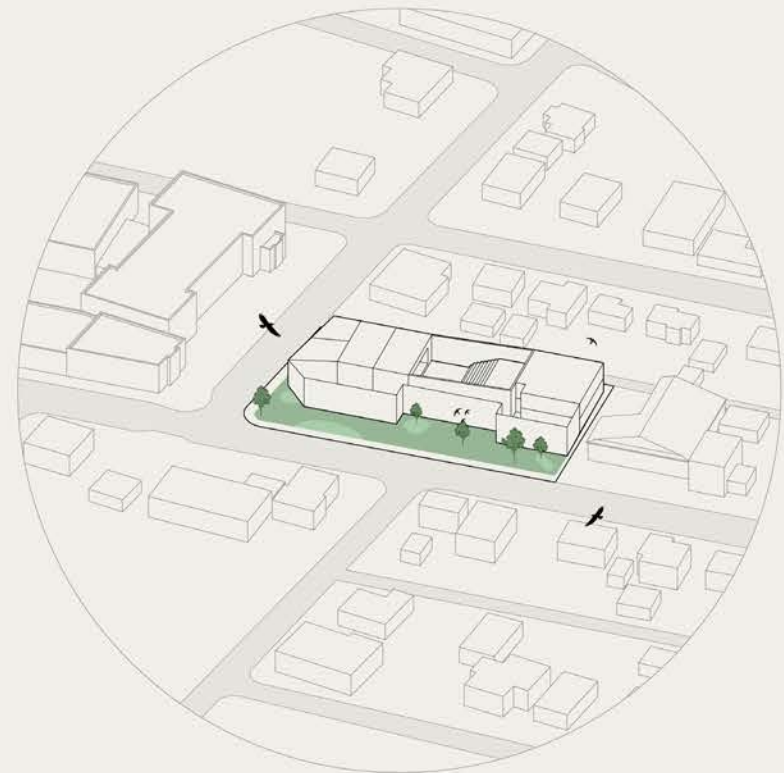
Flexible Spaces to Increase Functionality

A flexible central space increases function for all building uses and will be highly used within the building and by other organizations within Spring Grove.



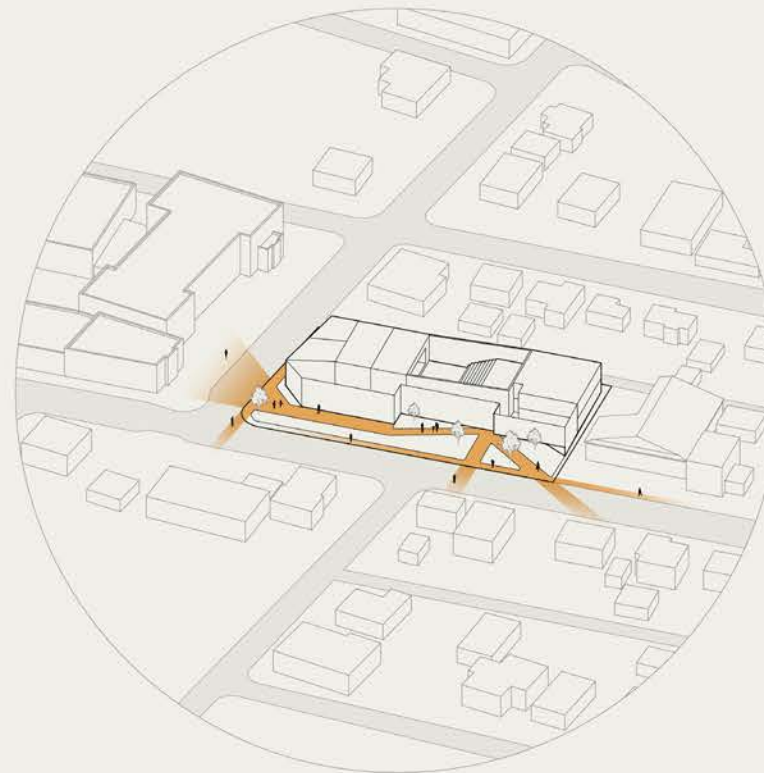
Circulation and Gathering

An internal "Main Street" within the building runs parallel to Main Street and functions as a safe and highly flexible space.



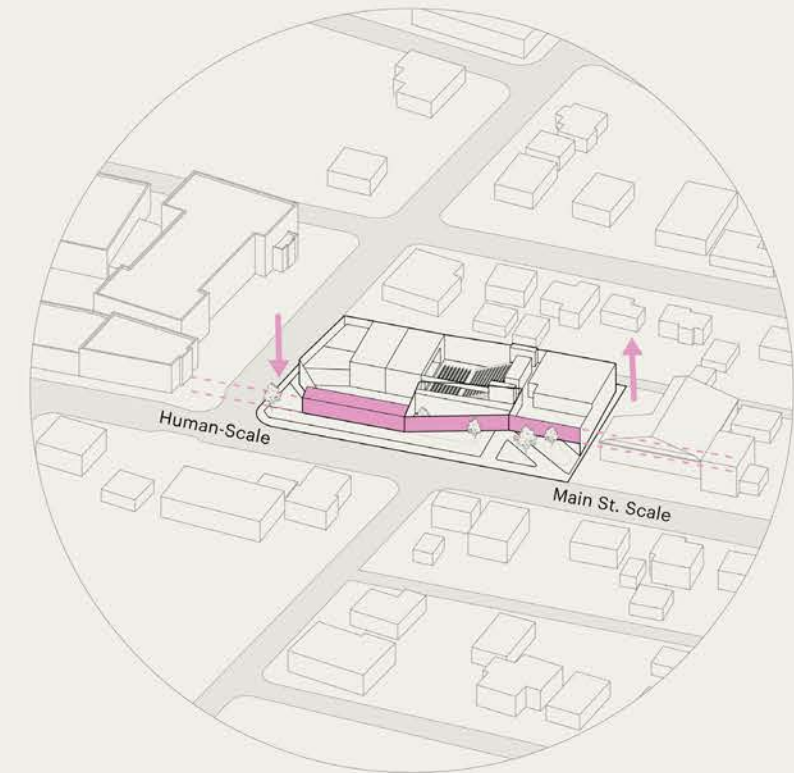
Enhanced Outdoor Space

The building opens up to Main Street and outdoor spaces to allow library, school and community functions to connect to enhanced outdoor space.



School and Community Connections

The building can act as a connector that connects to the school and community.

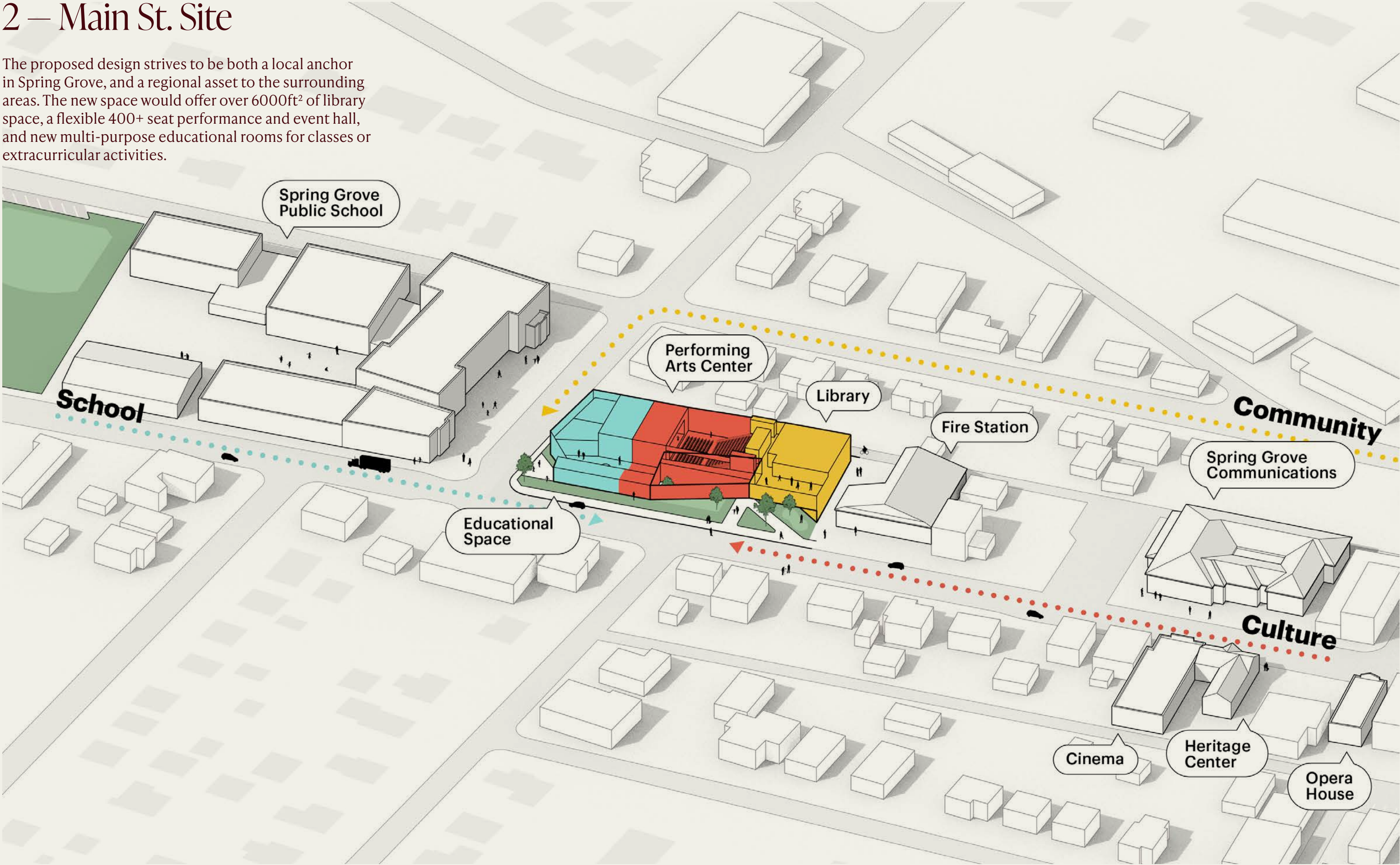


Main Street Presence

The form of the building reflects what is going on inside and helps establish a connection to the school and other community spaces.

2 – Main St. Site

The proposed design strives to be both a local anchor in Spring Grove, and a regional asset to the surrounding areas. The new space would offer over 6000ft² of library space, a flexible 400+ seat performance and event hall, and new multi-purpose educational rooms for classes or extracurricular activities.





SPRING GROVE

West Side (Exterior Street View)

WARM WOOD OR OTHER MATERIAL TO ENCOURAGE ENTRY

STEEP ANGLES ALLUDE TO TRADITIONAL NORDIC ARCHITECTURE

LARGE TRANSPARENT FACADE GIVES GLIMPSE INTO WHAT IS HAPPENING INDOORS

COVERED/PROTECTED SPACE CREATES BUFFER FROM MAIN STREET

SPRING GROVE

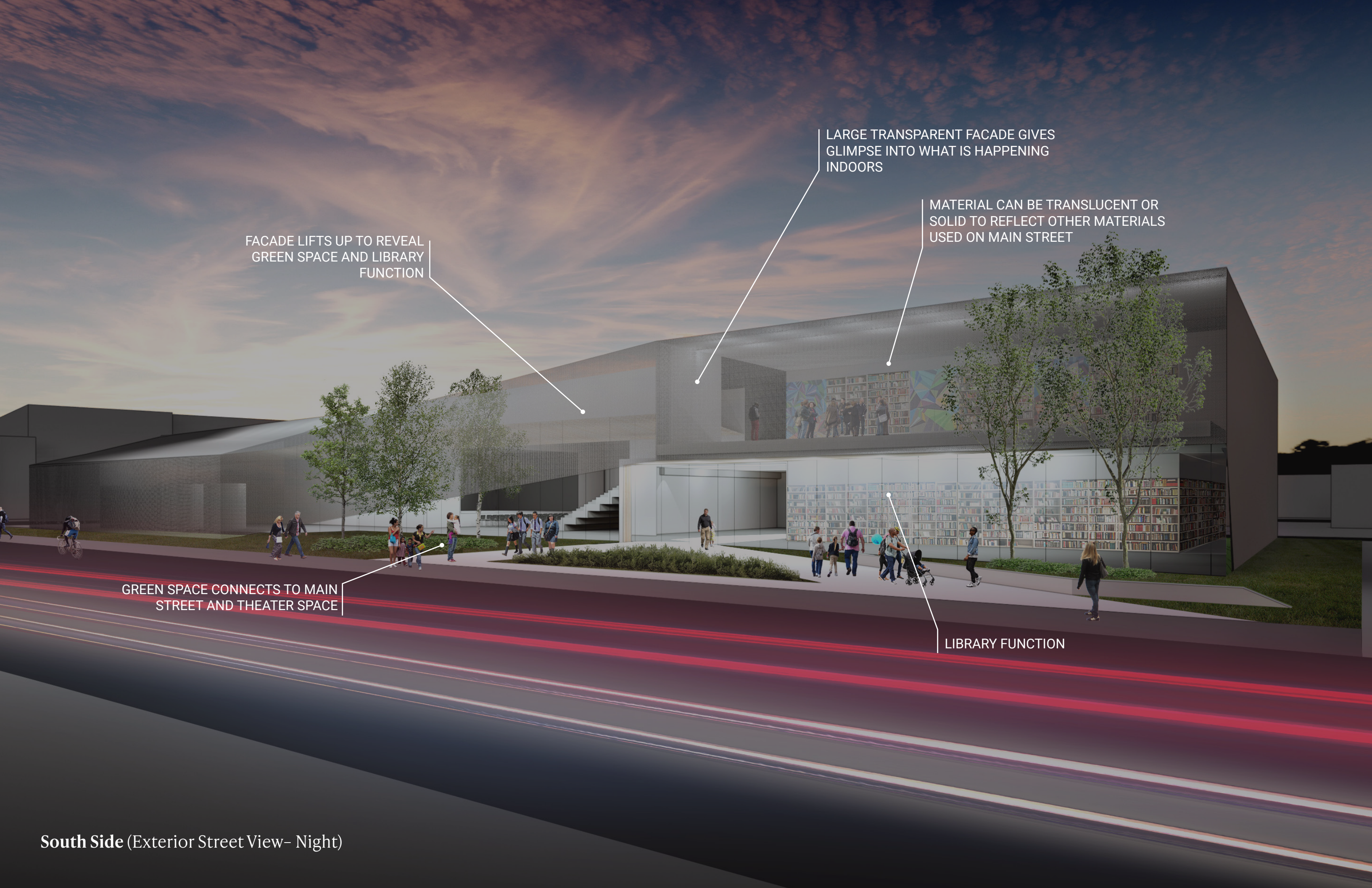
STRONG CONNECTION TO SCHOOL VIA WELL MARKED CROSSWALK AND SPEED TABLE

NATURAL LANDSCAPING CONTRIBUTES TO MAIN STREET APPEARANCE

West Side (Exterior Street View)



South Side (Exterior Street View- Night)



FACADE LIFTS UP TO REVEAL GREEN SPACE AND LIBRARY FUNCTION

LARGE TRANSPARENT FACADE GIVES GLIMPSE INTO WHAT IS HAPPENING INDOORS

MATERIAL CAN BE TRANSLUCENT OR SOLID TO REFLECT OTHER MATERIALS USED ON MAIN STREET

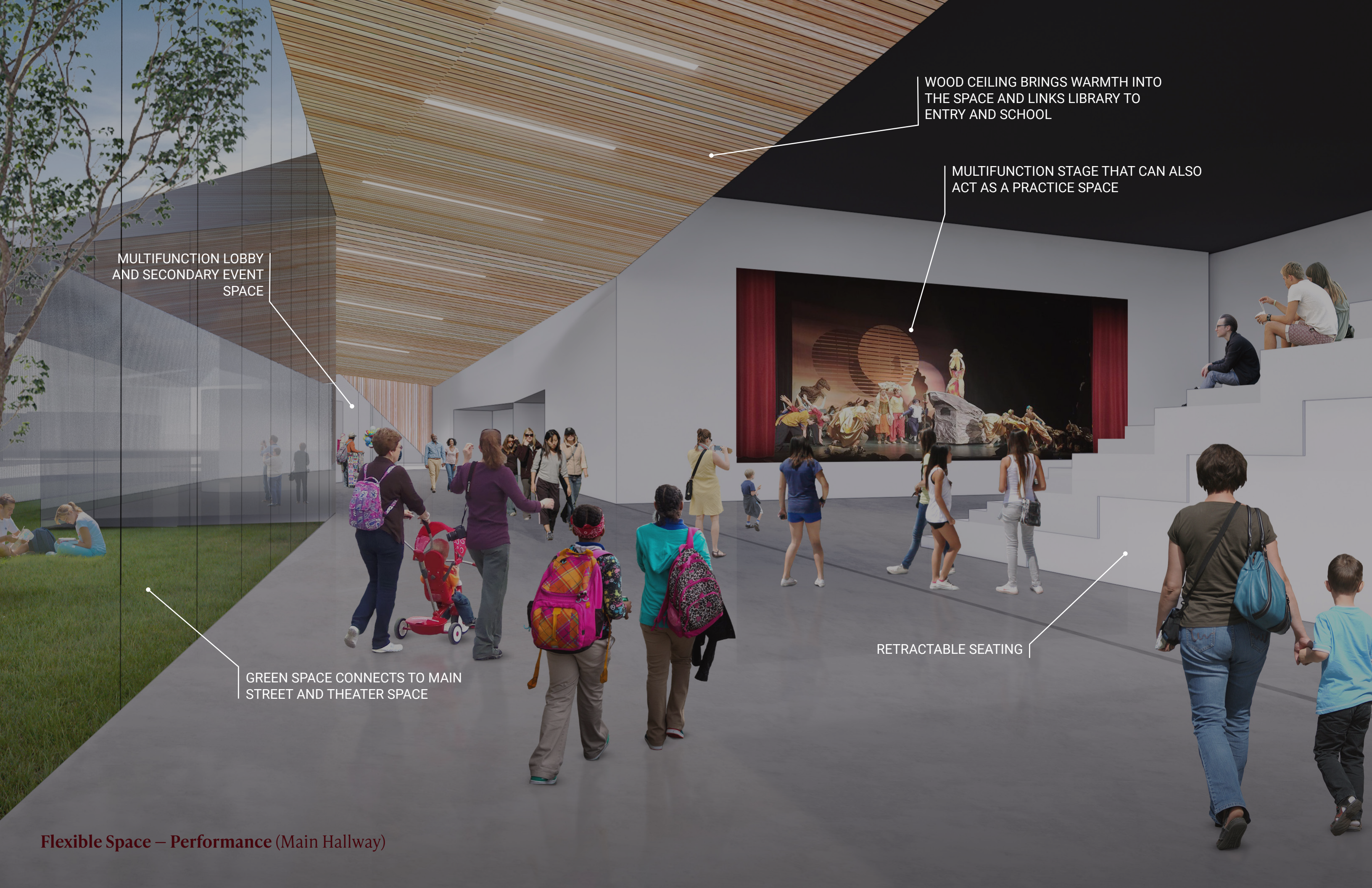
GREEN SPACE CONNECTS TO MAIN STREET AND THEATER SPACE

LIBRARY FUNCTION

South Side (Exterior Street View- Night)



Flexible Space – Performance (Main Hallway)



WOOD CEILING BRINGS WARMTH INTO THE SPACE AND LINKS LIBRARY TO ENTRY AND SCHOOL

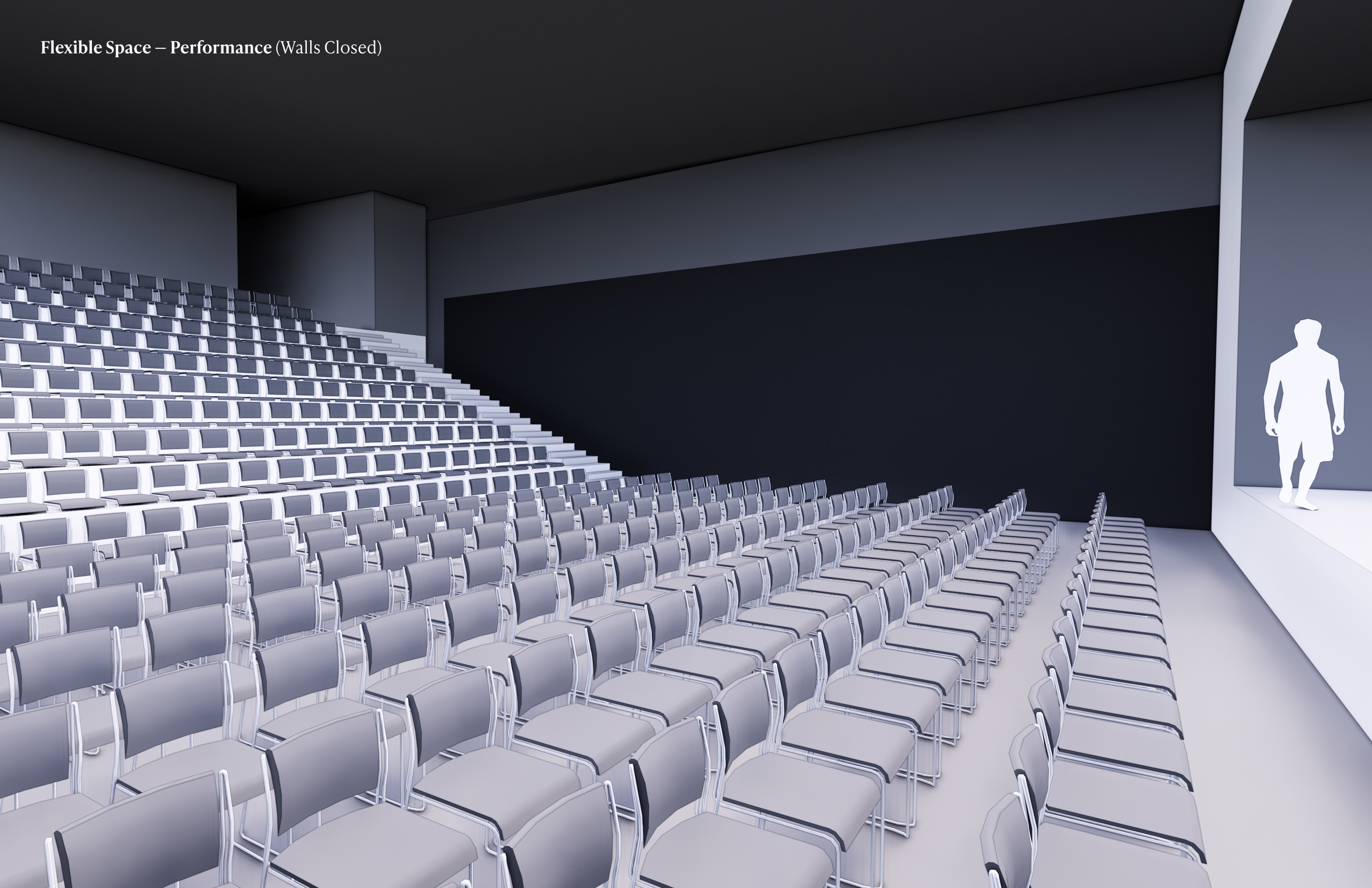
MULTIFUNCTION STAGE THAT CAN ALSO ACT AS A PRACTICE SPACE

MULTIFUNCTION LOBBY AND SECONDARY EVENT SPACE

RETRACTABLE SEATING

GREEN SPACE CONNECTS TO MAIN STREET AND THEATER SPACE

Flexible Space – Performance (Walls Closed)



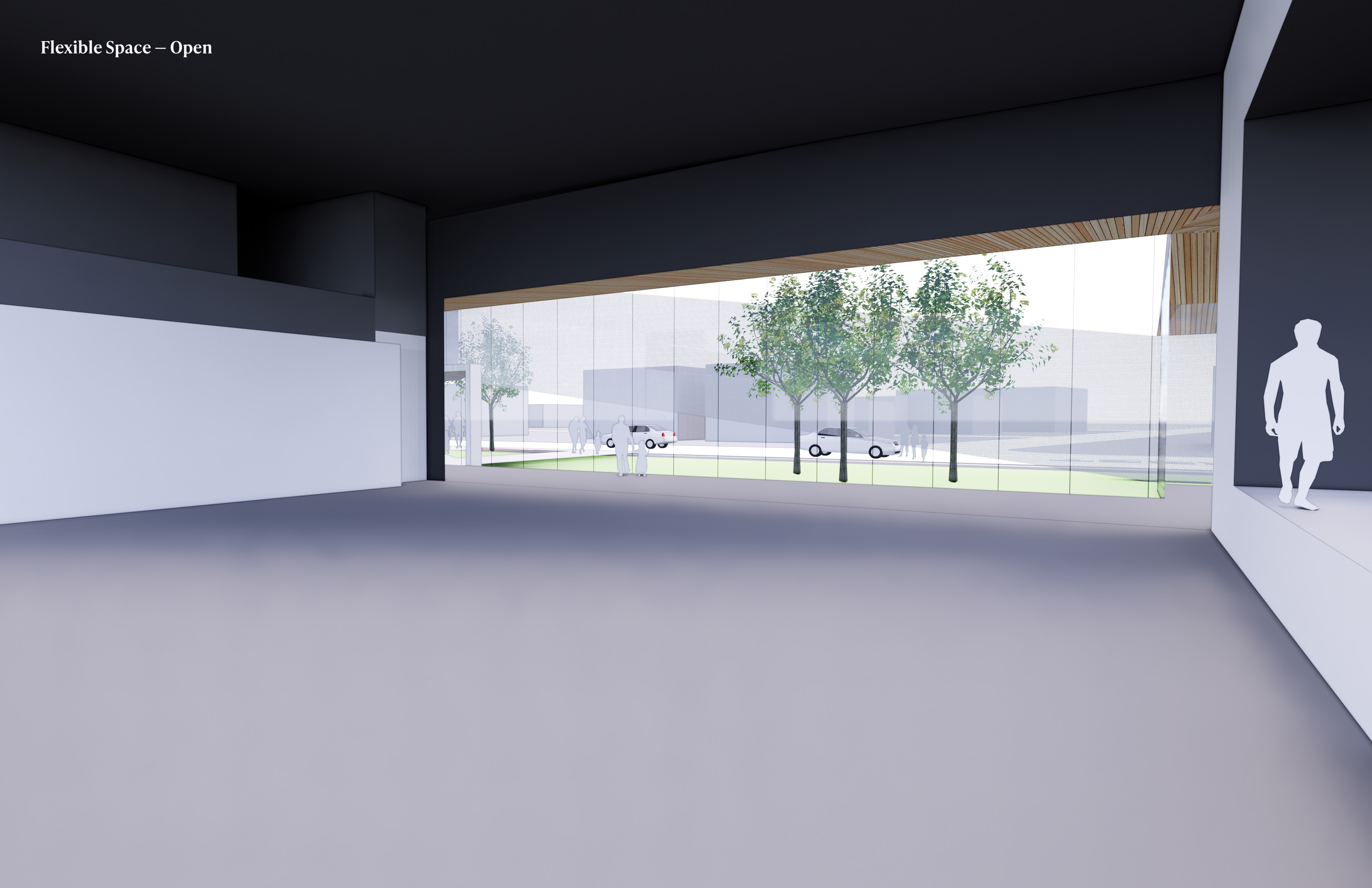
Flexible Space – Performance (Walls Open)



Flexible Space – Wedding Reception (Walls Open)

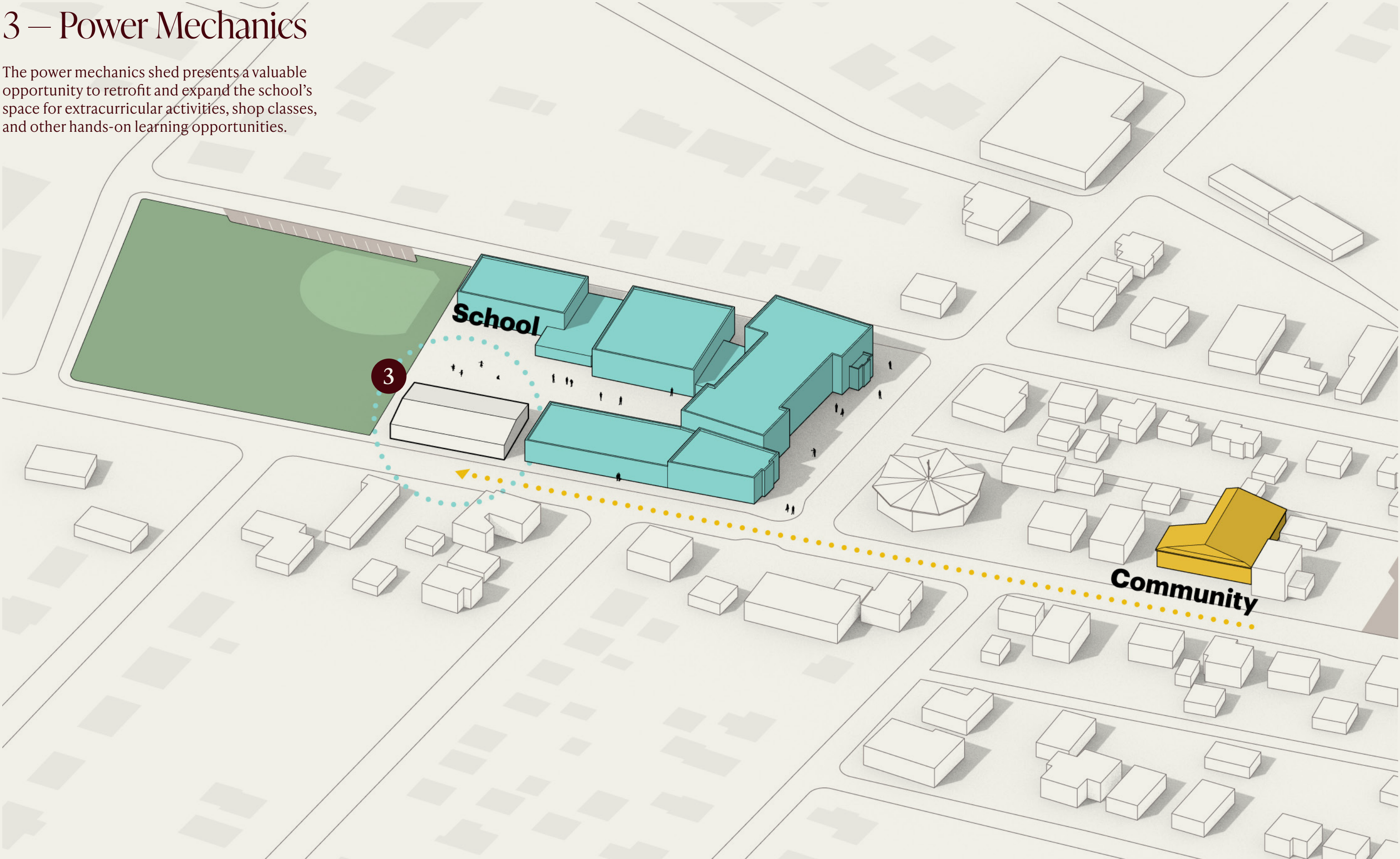


Flexible Space – Open

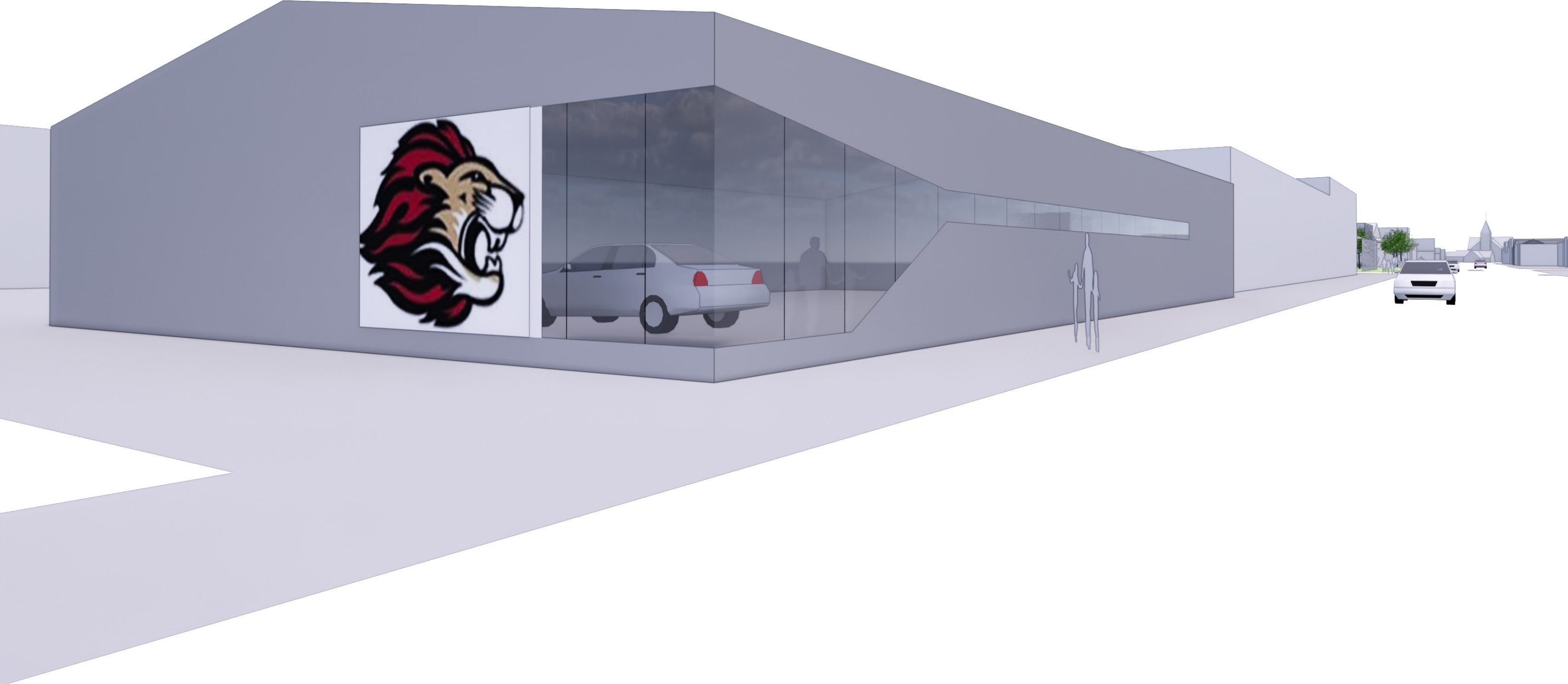


3 – Power Mechanics

The power mechanics shed presents a valuable opportunity to retrofit and expand the school's space for extracurricular activities, shop classes, and other hands-on learning opportunities.



Power Mechanics (Exterior Street View)



Additional Resources

Resource #1:

Creative Placemaking

Creative placemaking is the integration of arts, culture and design into community and economic development. Arts and culture strengthen communities by connecting economic development through partnerships and physical space. Design can add new energy to a community and elevate community assets. The [National Endowment for the Arts \(NEA\)](#) compiled an action-oriented creative placemaking guide, [How to Do Creative Placemaking](#). Resources from the NEA and additional placemaking resources are available in the [appendix](#).

A key component to placemaking in a community is public space. Project for Public Spaces (PPS) created [The Place Diagram](#) which was developed to be a tool for evaluating a community spaces. According to research from PPS, great public spaces have four major qualities: accessibility and linkage, sociability, usage and comfortability. Articles from PPS and other resources for placemaking and public spaces are available in the [appendix](#).



What Makes a Great Place?

Project for Public Spaces

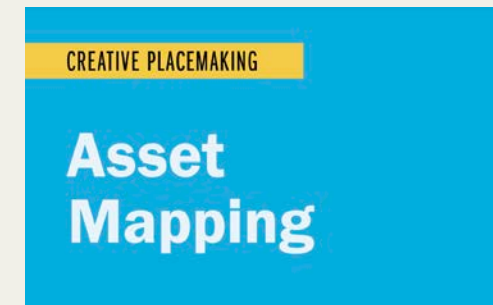


Resource #2:

Arts & Culture Community Development Resources

Asset Mapping

Asset mapping is a strength-based community development tool. The purpose of this tool is to examine the current assets and existing resources in the community. The results include identifying and including the institutions and individuals within a community that can be essential to the community development process. [Local Initiatives Support Corporation \(LISC\)](#) and the [National Endowment for the Arts \(NEA\)](#) have tools and resources to conduct asset mapping in your community. This resource, and other asset mapping resources are included in the [appendix](#).



Power of 10

The Project for Public Spaces developed [The Power of 10+](#) as a placemaking tool. This tool is designed to spark conversation around the human experience in a community. The foundation of the concept is based in the understanding that communities thrive when residents have a range of ten or more, mostly unique, reasons to live in the community. The importance of place is central to analyzing the reasons community members live in the area and why young adults and college graduates may return. The Power of 10+ activity will highlight which areas can be highlighted, improved, or even added to enhance a community. Resources for the Power of 10+ can be found in the [appendix](#).

Cultural Planning

Cultural planning aims to achieve a community vision, address the community's needs, and reflect the community's culture. Cultural plans infuse the community's culture and art through the planning and development process. The Arts & Planning Cultural Planning Toolkit includes an overview of cultural planning, funding suggestions, examples of plans, and best practices for conducting a cultural plan in your community.

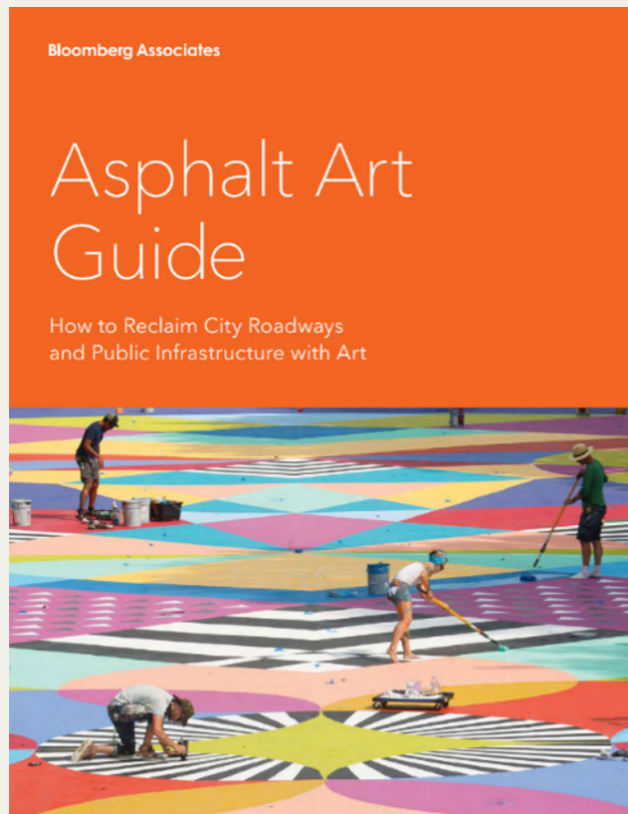


Streetscaping

Streetscaping, implanting art into transportation infrastructure is an effective innovation for shifting how we engage with communities and how people experience those environments. [Bloomberg Associates: Asphalt Art Guide, How to Reclaim City Roadways and Public Infrastructure with Art](#) provide case studies of asphalt art projects with background information, cost, materials, and best practices for implementation. This guide also includes tools for planning a streetscaping project for the community and asphalt artists. Additional guides, case studies and toolkits are included in the [appendix](#).

Pedestrian Safety

Creative placemaking initiatives around the country have taken on the merging of art, design, and pedestrian safety. The following resources include toolkits, blogs, and case studies of streetscaping projects across the country. The City of Kansas City, MO, in collaboration with [Street Smarts, Design + Build](#), installed asphalt art with funding from Bloomberg Philanthropies. Implementation of asphalt art reduced travel speeds at the intersection by approximately 50% which reduced the risk of casualty from a pedestrian-vehicular accident from 90% to 10%. Additional case studies and guides for art and pedestrian safety are included in the [appendix](#).



Article by Stephanie Sowl, Ph.D. Candidate in Higher Education at Iowa State University. Published in The Conversation on March 8th, 2022.

Resource #3:

Returning Rural Incentives and Research

The “rural brain drain”, as coined by sociologists, has been an issue across rural America. Young adults leave their rural communities for post-secondary opportunities and few elect to return home. The term rural brain drain refers to the decreased population of young adults, with a primary focus on college graduates and young families. Research has sought to determine how to retain young adults after the completion of their secondary education. One approach focuses on engaging the youth to make foundational connections to the place and community during their K-12 education that will encourage them to return home. The second approach is implementing incentives to encourage young professionals and young families to move back to the community. Below are examples of each approach. More case studies and examples of rural return home incentives can be found in the [appendix](#).

Approach #1: Engaging Youth

Studies, “[Rural College Graduates: Who Comes Home?](#)” Authored by Stephanie Sowl, Rachel A. Smith, and Michael G. Brown [investigate who returns home and why](#). They look at what communities can do during children’s formative years that will influence them to return home.

Studies have found that tight-knit k-12 school communities, rural areas with natural resources, and motivation to give back to their home communities were top factors in why college graduates returned home.

Approach #2: Encouraging the Return of Young Adults and Young Families with Incentives and Improved Quality of Life

States and rural communities offer incentive opportunities to entice recent college graduates and young adults to relocate to rural areas after graduation. Kansas identified specific counties as [rural opportunity zones \(ROZ\)](#) across the state. College graduates are [offered income tax waivers and student loan repayment assistance](#) up to \$3000 per year. [Kansas](#), like other rural areas, has focused on quality of life factors as an essential foundation to continued development in rural areas. Research has shown that amenities including broadband, childcare, excellent public education, transportation, and even coffee shops, are essential to rural return home efforts.

Resource #4:

Government Resources for Community and Economic Development

Community and economic development strategies including federal programs and resources can support the continued development. Guides for development of infrastructure and the intersection of arts and community development are included in this section and the [appendix](#).

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) release a [resource guide](#) with strategies to boost economic development across rural America. The guide includes resources around four key areas: Planning and technical assistance, Infrastructure and broadband expansion, Entrepreneurship and business assistance, Workforce development and livability. Additional federal resources and guides for community and economic development are included in the [appendix](#).



Resource #5:

Community Ambassador Programs

Communities across the country have implemented a variety of community ambassador programs to create a welcoming and safe environment for residents and visitors. Atlanta implemented an [ambassador program](#) for public safety in the Atlanta Downtown Improvement District. The ambassadors provide foot traffic in the area, help direct visitors, accompany pedestrians to a location, make suggestions for time in the area and are trained in providing medical assistance. Various ambassador programs, including the program in Atlanta, partner with the local police force while others partner with local non-profits. The programs are comprised of volunteers or are supplemented by the local government.

Resource #6:

Grants and Funding Opportunities

- National Endowment for the Arts: Several NEA programs including [Challenge America](#), [Grants for Arts Projects](#), and [Our Town](#) offer funding opportunities. The Challenge America program, though modest in scale, offers avenues of artistic engagement for underserved populations, though underserved communities are funded in all NEA programs.
- [HAC News](#) consolidates funding opportunities and rural development news and resources. HAC News increasingly includes rural arts-linked opportunities.
- [HAC's Loan Fund](#) finances affordable housing across the country. Cognizant of Spring Grove's housing issues, HAC and CIRP are eager to discuss affordable housing resources.



Resources to Locate Grants :

- National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations. [Community Foundation Locator](#).
- [Candid](#)
 - Foundation Directory Online
 - Philanthropy News Digest
 - Guidestar
- [Giving USA | A public service initiative of the Giving Institute](#)
- [Grant Station](#). Your Fast Track to Funding.
- LISC's "[Funding Creative Placemaking](#)" website links to videos, curated lists of funders—public and private, and discusses best practices for bringing dollars to local placemaking work.

Resource #7:

Tools and Support Systems for Older Residents

Community members shared feedback regarding concern for their older residents, whether it be housing support, access to essentials, or overall well-being. Below are resources that address the health and wellbeing of older adults. These resources include links to state and federal opportunities and services that connect seniors to economic assistance, housing resources, and grant opportunities.

Minnesota's Department of Human Services believes that seniors are vital to their communities and is committed to help older generations to live as independently as possible. They provide a [list of services](#) including economic assistance, health care resources, and more. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has a [fact sheet](#) that list resources that the department provides for older citizens. USDA works with state and federal partners to reduce the barriers that older populations experience when accessing their services. The USDA also offers [housing repair loans and grants](#) that assist older homeowners to repair their homes and make them more accessible. Minor home improvements such as ramp installations and support railings can help ensure that older generations can remain in their homes.

Spring Grove Workshop 2022

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