Post-industrial cities are characterized by population, economic, and infrastructure decline. In addition, problems intrinsic to post-industrial cities often contribute to and are compounded by a higher degree of racial and economic segregation. Yet within these cities, there is a sample of stable and diverse communities that are resilient and continue to thrive in the face of these problems. Resilience can be seen as a measure of sustainability, representing a community’s ability to utilize available resources to respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations. Research has pointed to racial and economic inclusion as factors that can contribute to long-term neighborhood stability and vitality. In St. Louis, one of the neighborhoods that has exhibited such resilience, and become a major urban success story over the last 15 years, is Tower Grove South (TGS). Although once an area that struggled with high crime and poverty rates, TGS has become a thriving community that has demonstrated indicators of resilience and remained stable even in a distressed economy. Thus finding ways to cultivate economic and racial diversity must be a part of working towards a resilient, less segregated city.

TGS has all the characteristics of an ideal neighborhood: a stunning park within walking distance, two major commercial districts, fabulous turn-of-the-century architecture and a strong neighborhood association. Today, TGS is not only one of the top three most densely populated neighborhoods in St. Louis, but one that is characterized by racial and economic diversity. Its racial makeup consists of: 55% white, 21% black, 8% Asian, and 4% Hispanic/Latino. In addition, there is a wide spectrum of ages, ranging from young families to people who have lived in the neighborhood for more than 30 years. Additionally, there are 7,308 housing units, that are 86% occupied, with a split of 48% and 42% respectively between owners and renters. The resulting mix of houses and housing as well as price points allows for socio-economic diversity. With a building stock of single family houses, duplexes and quadraplexes dwellings, small businesses, and variety of restaurants specializing in ethnic cuisine, this vibrant community is known as an international hub.

Located in the vicinity of Tower Groves South, The International Institute (IISTL), has helped immigrants and refugees successfully transition to America since 1919. However, it was only in the winter of 1978-79 that a formal refugee resettlement program was created in Missouri. Since then, the IISTL has sponsored a total of 22,000 refugees and serves 7,900 immigrants and refugees annually from approximately 75 countries, which now comprise about 6% of the St. Louis City and County’s 2010 foreign-born population. With a refugee population in flux as conflicts around the world designate new groups with refugee status, the Institute has helped resettle the Vietnamese in the 1970s, Bosnians in the 1990s, and most recently, refugee populations from Bhutan and Myanmar in Asia; Iraq in the Middle East; and Somalia, Ethiopia, and Congo in Africa.

With immigration reform efforts nationwide, the IISTL has collaborated with the St. Louis Mosaic Project to look at ways to ensure a good resettlement process for immigrants and less stressful adjustment to ways of life in a foreign land. IISTL offers resources that range from English as a second language programs to career counseling and employment, and medical and legal services. New research shows that the 40 million immigrants in the United States have created $3.7 trillion in housing wealth. In particular, in post-industrial cities, immigrants can be a catalyst in reversing decline and often contribute to the economy and stabilization of less desirable neighborhoods, helping those areas become viable alternatives for middle- and working-class Americans. This opens up new opportunities for current renters or young people to consider purchasing a home in areas once in decline. The data concludes that while immigration does increase home values in many areas, it is not adding to result in a type of gentrification that pushes the existing residents out of desirable communities.

For this studio, the SFS collaborated with The International Institute of St. Louis in a call for innovative design ideas to re-imagine the former building of the IISTL located at 3664 South Grand Ave. This architectural piece was built in 1930s as a car repair and dealership, with hydraulic elevators that lifted the cars from the repair shop at the lower level to the parking at the rooftop. Later, the building was renovated into doctor’s office space until 1999 when the Institute renovated it for office space use.

The site, at the southeast boundary of TGS, is expected to become a prime location as the international hub continues to expand southwards. With lack of affordable housing in high opportunity areas cited as a primary factor contributing to the ongoing housing apartheid, the question became, how could new approaches to the design and development of mixed housing began to sow seeds that could dismantle segregation and instead cultivate resilient communities? Students were asked to speculate on the future use of the former building located at 3654 South Grand Ave. This architectural piece was built in 1930s as a car repair and dealership, with hydraulic elevators that lifted the cars from the repair shop at the lower level to the parking at the rooftop. Later, the building was renovated into doctor’s office space until 1999 when the Institute renovated it for office space use.

The SFS studio, therefore, asked students to speculate on the future use of the 30,000 sq. ft. of vacant space, and produce a program for the building that included a housing and mixed-use component in response to both the IISTL and to the community overall needs. TGS's demographic changes suggest that a new way of development must be imagined to sustain mixed housing in high opportunity areas cited as a primary factor contributing to the ongoing housing apartheid, the question became, how could new approaches to the design and development of mixed housing began to sow seeds that could dismantle segregation and instead cultivate resilient communities? Students were asked to speculate on the future use of the former building located at 3654 South Grand Ave. This architectural piece was built in 1930s as a car repair and dealership, with hydraulic elevators that lifted the cars from the repair shop at the lower level to the parking at the rooftop. Later, the building was renovated into doctor’s office space until 1999 when the Institute renovated it for office space use.

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In response to the massive influx of political and war refugees of World War I, the International Institute of St. Louis (IISTL) formed in 1919. Since this era, foreign immigration to the United States has continued to shift populations from all over the world to St. Louis. Currently, IISTL is the only refugee resettlement agency in the region. Their purpose is to aid the transition of immigrants both through physical resettlement as well as assistance towards US citizenship. Annually, the program resettles an average of 250 families into rental housing in addition IISTL also provides English classes, translators, job seeking programs, select job training programs, and micro-financing.

In collaboration with the IISTL, the SFS studio researched and reevaluated the use of the Institute’s former location, the Donna Brown Building. Through this endeavor, the SFS studio sets forward seven unique proposals for reinvigorating the use of the vacant building totaling 30,000 Sq.Ft. Each student proposal will set forth an anchoring building program and a housing component. The use proposed derives from a comprehensive research of urban parameters topical to the building site at multiple scales. Additionally, each housing proposal includes low-income, market, and refugee housing. Both the housing and anchoring program seek meaningful connections to the scope of IISTL and to surrounding community.

The proposal should seek historical tax credits, mixed use and affordable housing credits to be a viable option for the IISTL. The following interviews pull together community stakeholders to understand the vision each voice had for the building and how it could affect the surrounding community to address their need and decision as the proposals were developed. In regards to the historic tax credit, each proposal must preserve the integrity of the two front facades, the interior and perimeter structural columns as well as the elevator penthouse original to the building. As it stands now, the Donna Brown building is the third adaptation to what was originally a Buick automobile brand location. In the 1960s the building vacated for a short interim, until it was converted into a medical facility for the remainder of the 20th century. This phase extensively modified the original building envelope and interior space. Under those circumstances the Sam Fox school studio collaborated with the International Institute and the Historical Society of St. Louis Missouri to thoroughly investigate the phases of the building under the different owners and the contributing factors to current state.
"...The International Institute of St. Louis (IISTL) has a resettlement contract through the Department of State. We are the largest resettlement site in the state of Missouri and the only resettlement agency in St. Louis. Through this contract the state mandates we fund housing and set up housing for brand new [immigrant] arrivals. Prior to any arrival we make sure that the housing is safe, complies with local occupancy regulations, is set up and utilities are turned on. IISTL works with roughly about two maybe three hundred private landlords. Many of the landlords - I would say it is about a 50/50 split - have been former refugees themselves. So they understand the process and they want to give back. We do not sign any leases with landlords or property companies or managers or whatnot. We rent the apartments month by month, and if you know anything about housing in St. Louis, the city is typically one-bedroom four-family flats of some sort. There is very few single family housing which is sometimes a problem. For families of two I can get away with one bedroom. Once you go past two, you need two and three maybe even four bedrooms..."

"...If you had asked me that about five months ago I would’ve said the family sizes range from four and under typically. Now we are resettling mostly Congolese and Syrians and family sizes are seven, eight, and more. We do have among the Congolese, especially, unique family compositions. So if you have a family of four you need a two bedroom, unless the children are opposite sex. If the children are a girl and a boy then you are going to need three bedrooms. And now I’m told that sometimes that’s a very lofty standard and that’s something that is not attainable, but that is what we strive for in St. Louis. So for larger families, if we can’t find housing in the city of St. Louis our larger families go out near Washington University, a little bit past Skinker Blvd and Ethel Ave. We call it Hodiamont, because it’s on the street called Hodiamont. Those apartments have three and four bedrooms. Square footage is pretty small, but because they have large number of bedrooms where we can place clients into apartments easier..."

"...When the clients arrive, we go to the airport, meet them, pick them up, and take them to their apartment. Unfortunately in St. Louis most of our arrivals are between 10:00 PM and 2:00 AM, so we tell them to go to sleep. When we come back the next day we do an extensive home orientation. We then will bring them to the Institute for health screenings. The city of St. Louis provides health screens for tuberculosis, hepatitis, HIV, a variety of things, and parasites. Then we will start our orientation...

"...We have three weeks worth of orientation that clients go through. We have job readiness classes that they participate in. We register them for ESL education classes. We register the children for school at the Chapman Academy just up the street from the Institute. That is the school that provides ESL education classes for all of our clients, kindergarten through high school. The classes are taught in English, but they have a language support. Typically they stay there for about a year, depending on how well they are acclimating, and then they will go out to the neighborhood schools that they live in. We try to get them in other ESL classes but not all schools have this kind of program. It is a very structured and very supportive environment for the children...

"...For clients that wish to start a business we work with them to put a business plan together. We determine if it’s feasible enough, and then we assist them in developing their own business. Once there is a business plan, we can provide small business loans. That business can be a taxi driver, a mechanic, a hair braider, whatever. We don’t make the connections for that to happen, we help the client understand what needs to happen. If they are going to be a business owner, then they have to have a level of English where they’re comfortable going out into the business world and getting what they need. Now we help them understand all of the legal criteria. For example, if they want to open a restaurant, we make them aware of what the city is looking for in the health inspections. We assist them. We give them the tools. We do not do it for them..."
"...Our population is about 38% African American and 51% Caucasian and the rest is a mix of just about every nationality under the sun, because we have the International Institute so close. We have a lot of immigrant housing especially down in the southern part which is between Gravois, Chippewa, and Grand. At the same time, it is an area of the ward where we have the highest poverty rates, raised crime levels, and the most vacant houses. So, this challenges us as we move farther north closer toward the business district. We have very little vacant housing nowadays. We’ve gotten to the point where even a lot of our rental housing isn’t there anymore. These houses that used to be duplexes are quickly being converted to two-family town houses so we are seeing a lot of change. We’re also seeing a lot of younger people who have been moving into the area over the last ten years or so, myself being one of them..." 

"...I am not from St. Louis. I moved here about eleven years ago to do the Corps of Fellows Program and decided to stay. So if you’re not familiar with the Corps Fellows Program, basically it’s a post-grad work program in Public Affairs and so you get to spend six-week placements in every sector of society learning how they work together and don’t work together. So I was here for non-profit placement at City Academy. I worked at the Division of Homeless Services for the county, the Plumbers and Pipe Fitters Union, and Great Rivers Greenway. I had to do a group project placement for my perpetration over McCaskill’s first senatorial campaign, for Hillary’s political campaigns, and for a final project you have to find somebody to hire you for six weeks to do a project. I worked with an organization called Civic Tasks. We were looking at some different dynamics within our educational system and how we might be able to use socio-economically integrated education to create transformation in St. Louis..."

"...When I started that I thought I was just coming to St. Louis to do that program and then I would leave, probably go out to the West Coast to go to Law School. However, through that program I just saw such disparity. Growing up I had the option to option to travel a lot. My dad was a university professor and he would often go to conferences in other countries. We would get to go with him and that exposed me to poverty in other countries. I didn’t realize that level of poverty existed in the U.S. until I got to St. Louis and saw how stark of a dividing line there was. I recognized that we still have people that are living this way and the government is to blame for a lot of it, which is one of the main reasons that I stayed and became a teacher in St. Louis. I got in there and was buried, so I decided to start working on my Masters in Education Leadership at St. Louis University (SLU). My undergrad major was Political Science and now I am working on a Doctorate in Educational Policies, because I still think that is one of our biggest issues. After I was a teacher, I ended up being the development director for a homeless shelter. Then I went back to education and started working in early childhood trying to expand access to early childhood education..."

"...Regarding racial justice issues, I think we’ve come a long way in the two years since Michael Brown, but we still have a lot of work to do in terms of our neighborhood organizations: how they operate, we welcome people who are different into our organizations, don’t use coded language, and things that I think a lot of us who are maybe younger and a little bit more social justice oriented get. Then you have the old guard who are very afraid of new people and activists moving into this area and hurting their home values, bringing in some unfavorable elements or whatever. Consequently, we have this constant kind of battle, and then you know what the secondary battle is: we have a lot of crime in our community. As an elected official in a city with very high crime it is difficult to be critical of the police and the way they conduct themselves while wanting to reduce crime..."

"...St. Louis has an increasing problem with homelessness. Ten years ago we made this plan to eliminate chronic homelessness in St. Louis and we did really well for about the first six years. Then the last four years we have gone completely backwards. However, during that time we have had a number of city programs that offered permanent supportive housing go under. We have seen a dramatic decrease in the amount of housing and services for people struggling with addiction. St. Louis has a huge heroin problem and at the moment we have only ten inpatient beds in the entire city. If you are on drugs you might steal something and go to jail, they will lock you up for a couple of weeks, but you will never get any treatment. They don’t give you any services when you are leaving jail, so you go right back into the same cycle. What I see a lot of need for is housing for people who are coming out of jail. A lot of landlords will not rent to you if you have any kind of offense on your record, particularly if it is a drug offense..."
"...I am the Executive Director of the Lutheran Bellman’s Group, which is a non-profit primarily low-income housing developer that uses tax credits to leverage tax credits for the greater good. We are currently working on a charter school expansion of the Arts Center in the Gravois Park neighborhood, and other developments like a restaurant and an incubator that would hire from the immediate community down on Chippewa. Primarily we use tax credits and other incentives for development in areas that would not otherwise have that level of development..."

"...I also own a cafe about two blocks north of here, the Gelateria on South Grand. I have had that business for probably about 10 years now. I live maybe nine blocks north of here just off of South Grand two houses in. My whole life is in South City. I’m involved in the South Grand Improvement District, and I am President of the Board among a variety of things. Sean Spencer and I are working on a coalition of different Community Development Corporations [CDC’s] and other non-profits for the redevelopment of the Gravois corridor, which is just south of here..."

"...We have a project that is called East Fox Homes. It is in Tower Grove Park and Fox Park. Messiah Lutheran, my church, is the owner and sponsor of that. Messiah is at Grand and Pestalozzi, which is also just north of here. Due to our relationship with the Nepalese within the community, we work with them first to see if they were able to be a part of the project. After that, it was open to the broader neighborhood as well. Currently, we are probably about 2 months into a 12 month construction project. The first year has been coming on around the first of the year, and then phasing in over another six months after that. The project consists of 12 buildings, 47 apartments, one commercial space, and it is targeted towards the refugees and immigrants population..."

"...The building is probably around 3,500 to 4,000 Sq. Ft. on one floor. On the first floor, 60% is commercial and 40% residential. Within that commercial space there are two small meeting rooms and one larger classroom, as well as some flex spaces, and workstations for some of the people who would be working there day to day..."

"...The commercial space of 2,000 Sq. Ft. is going to be a co-working space for a variety of non-profits. It is going to be anchored by two community-based non-profits; one being the church. Its purpose being the organization that brings in other groups to do financial literacy and other programs like that. It doesn’t make sense to be overlapping much with programs that the International Institute is doing unless it is somehow restricted there. Therefore, we are working closely together. The other group that we are working with is a group that does after school programming at a couple of local charter schools nearby. They would be doing a summer programming. The after school program will not be there on site. They are going to have a computer lab that can provide access to Wi-Fi, and there will be a classroom space. They will have access to two charter schools: one in Fox Park and one in Tower Grove East..."
"...Gravois Park is a phenomenal neighborhood. I think it is one of the best neighborhoods in the city because we have phenomenal urban assets. When people think of why they want to live in an urban setting, versus a suburban or even countryside, they think of density. With density, you have diversity, walkability, proximity to parks and commercial districts, and things of that nature. Gravois Park has all those. We are the single most densely populated neighborhood in the entire city with around 12,000 residents per square mile. When you look at density a good marker is about 10,000 residents per square mile. We have seventy-eight neighborhoods in the city of St. Louis, but only seven of them have a density of that capacity. Two of those neighborhoods are Dutchtown and Gravois Park. The other neighborhoods in that grouping that are very successful are: Shaw, Skinker DeBaliviere Place, Tower Grove South, all really successful neighborhoods. Gravois Park has the density, but we also have the ability to grow because almost 30% of our housing units are vacant right now. That is both an opportunity and a hurdle. We have hundreds of structurally condemned buildings that are owned by the LRA, as well as privately owned properties that are falling to pieces. When you go through the neighborhoods previously mentioned, one of the most interesting things about Gravois Park in comparison is the diversity of the built environment...

"...Driving around you will see big beautiful three-story homes with six or seven bedrooms next to a four bedroom flat that may have four single bedroom units. That is an inherent built in diversity and can bring socio-economic diversity which is really a huge asset. The asset that people want in their neighborhood you actually see that diversity when you look at the census data. In conclusion there is economic diversity within our neighborhood and there’s also racial diversity which is not very common in St Louis. It’s a tremendous asset...

"...On another note, home ownership is usually an indicator of a stable neighborhood. When you own a property, you are invested in it, you care about it, you will clean up your alley and you are going to be there for a long time. Renters are a different story, usually. If you are a renter you are stereotyped to not be as engaged in the Ward. However, 75% of our housing units are not owner occupied according to assessors data that compares the address and billing address for the owner. If they do not match up they are not an owner occupied unit, and on the other hand if it matches up it is owner occupied...

"...We have a lot of renters. That is innate to our built environment since if you have a four-family flat it is probably not going to be owner occupied. When a developer wants to come in and develop, the Alderman of that specific ward tells them that they are not going to support tax abatement for a project if it is not going to be owner occupied. Consequently, most buildings do not get renovated. I guess the idea would be that you could divide the building in half and make it two condo units; yet that is very difficult in a neighborhood like Gravois Park where the economics do not make that much sense. We saw the housing bubble crash and the hardest hit aspect of that was the condo market. It became very difficult to get financed to buy a condo because the condos almost doubled the foreclosures than the housing market did so the banks became very reluctant to lend...

"...You may have seen that New York Times covered lending practices in St Louis very recently, and in particular the unwillingness on the part of banks to lend specifically to some neighborhoods and zip codes. This is a form of redlining which is illegal. That investigation is ongoing and continues to be done by organizations like EHOC. Redlining has a long history. Going back in time, redlining was basically policies put in place designed to segregate people. This happened all over the country. It happened in St. Louis. The purpose was to segregate people racially and segregate people socioeconomically. For example, if you look at the city of Ladue and how their land use policy works, you will notice that you cannot build a house on any lot less than an acre. Therefore, you cannot build an apartment. The policy is put in place specifically so you are unable to build small housing units. It might not look like segregating policies on the face value, but that was the purpose and that was their design. There are similar policies put in place in other neighborhoods and they are very effective. When you talk about redlining in terms of banks there are effective lending policies that are crafted in a way that have the appearance of following the law, but preclude lending from going into lower-income zip codes such as Gravois Park..."
September 06, 2016 at 3:42pm

"...Originally there were between 35 and 40 Community Development Corporations (CDCs) in the early 1980s. They were community-based development organizations that focused on a myriad of different activities such as youth services, job outreach, technical training, and real estate. Back in the 80s the city of St. Louis received about 35 million to 40 million dollars a year just to put that money back into neighborhoods. Now the amount is about 17 million. However, it is a much more transparent process now to get this type of funding for CDCs. Under those circumstances organizations like ours need to be self-sustaining. This means going out and working in the community to find different ways to generate revenue while also working towards our community goals..."

"...In our case, we were originally called the St. Margaret of Scotland Housing Corporation. We took on the worst of the worst properties, looked at the vacancies, the lighting, and the overall visual appearance of blocks as people came into our neighborhoods. We started making decisions on whether each place was suitable for clients, their families, and their businesses. In the last three years we combined three CDCs to build up our leverage as a developer in the community with a credible asset base. We combined the South Grand Community Corporation, the Shaw Neighborhood Housing Corporation (formerly the St. Margaret of Scotland Housing Corporation), and the Southwest Garden Housing Corporation. Those three neighborhoods are now consolidated into this organization. It is a place-based organization that is not a neighborhood association. It is an non-profit organization that has a small Board of Directors representative of their neighborhoods..."

"...There’s one thing that we call in real estate development the “halo effect”, if one area is doing well, prices tend to go up as people start to look near or around that area. A good example is where this library (Carpenter Library) is located specifically in Tower Grove Heights. This location’s popularity increased just over the last five or ten years. Street-scape enhancements, the lighting improvements, and everything that Rachel Witt has probably spoken to you earlier can happen in other parts of the South Grand area. However, you have to get people that are dedicated to making it work to drive investment. If you look at South Grand in Tower Grove in particular, this is a major commercial thoroughfare that provided incredible services to the residents around it. The area is still densely populated and the services are still needed. With this in mind, people gravitate towards the areas that are a little bit nicer, have more stores with more consistent hours, and more services in one place..."

"...In regards to the state historic and federal tax credits for business you have to be able to meet the expectations of the Board members that are reviewing your project. You may not be able to do all the things with the building that you are thinking about. You might have to keep the front if it is divided up in a certain way or certain windows in certain places. All of those things are going to have to be reviewed. However, there are some ways to get around some of that, but that would be a determining factor on whether you could get the credits. The historic state and federal tax credit program is an incentive. We often hear that it is the single reason that city neighborhoods have come back, because the developer collects 25 cents for every dollar spent on eligible expenses. Such expenses are basically the entire building envelope excluding anything that you put in that could be removed. Appliances, washers, dryers, and refrigerators are examples of what is not eligible under that credit. Everything else from drywall to paint to subflooring, roofing, kitchen cabinets or counters, and bathrooms are eligible. That is the economic driver or incentive that is being used in city neighborhoods right now..."

"...Our project on Manchester Rd, right next to Layla’s restaurant, is a more modern infill. We used the nearby buildings on the street as a datum for the maximum developing height. That would be one consideration for the studio. There are limitations to everything, so you have to look at it one way. The incentives are there but not if you want to develop it for something different. Ask what is the best use previously given to the building? What could be the best use now? You do not have to get too out of the box. Just say you know this has been a learning institution for the last 20 years and that is probably the best use. We look at a lot of schools for redevelopment; some are great for residential conversions but some are better just as schools..."
"...I worked in non-profit for a few years and then went to Widener University, outside of Philadelphia in Pennsylvania, for my masters. I received a Masters in Public Administration, emphasizing in Local Government and Economic Development. It is very interesting that I can use all my background degrees for my job at South Grand Community Improvement District. I have been with the District now for over ten years and since I started here, a lot of changes have occurred...

...Being a Community Improvement District [CID] we are a political subdivision of the state of Missouri. The reason why CID is a governmental entity of the state is because a third of our budget comes from state sales tax. Half a cent of every dollar spent in the district stays in the district. Two-thirds of our budget come from the property owners. They pay a certain assessment rate on their property tax bill based on square footage of their property so that money is used to employ me full-time. We have an office on South Grand. We do audits, insurance policies, along with a lot of administrative stuff. However, what we mostly focus on is maintenance, safety, and capital projects. For example, we've put LED's on all the buildings in South Grand so at night the whole district lights up. We are in charge of all the cleanliness, and for this we hire our own street sweeping company. They clean the street, the parking lots, the sidewalks, then empty both the cigarette urns and trash cans. We even have a company that power washes the sidewalk and vacuums the pervious concrete areas...

...I describe the pervious concrete as rice krispie treats as when it rains it's like a sponge. It absorbs. The water soaks directly into the ground instead of going to the stormwater, which helps MSD with stormwater runoff issues. We have our own landscaping company. We do not allow the city to trim the trees so we have our own arborists who trim the trees every December or so. We have an irrigation company that manages the irrigation system and the fountain at the Ritz Park. So, we maintain all that. The city doesn't do anything within South Grand CID...

...I like to describe my job as the a cover of a book. That is to make sure that cover looks as pretty as possible for you to want to open that book. The local businesses are the pages in the book. So, it's my job to get people along South Grand and it is their job to get them in the door. We design a brochure, we have a web site, and we are on social media...

...As a community improvement district we cannot apply for grants because we are a governmental entity. For this reason we formed a non-profit arm called the South Grand Cultural Alliance. The Board of Directors consists of local residents and business owners. In any community you have to keep up with the changes in the times. So right now, our concentration is creating focus groups in South Grand and the surrounding neighborhoods. Why do you live here now? Why did you move here? We want to make sure one day when we do an entry marker to the district, that it reflects the history and the people in the community. We want our community identity to leave a legacy and be part of the history of St. Louis...

...Many of the property owners are Bosnian and they are part of the Bosnian Chamber of Commerce. They are talking with each other knowing we need to do something to improve the business district and get more people here. They have that communication. Yet when you try to form a taxing district a community no one is talking to each other. It's kind of difficult but part of my job. At the moment we are trying to develop north we need 51% approval but we are at 33% right now. We are just going to see eventually if we can get the signatures we need to make it happen. Specifically whether we decide to go north or south. I just think that they need a forum or a business association to foster the community to get together, talk to each other and get to know each other. The community board could decide and oversee how the local money is spent. However, if they're not even talking to each other or telling us what their needs are, how are we to go in and tell them what they need to do? It's paramount to determine what do they want and what does the community want around the neighborhood?

...We had so much vacant property being rehabbed. So, I think for the IISTL's particular site on South Grand we need to think more about commercial and job opportunities. Again, Gravois Park is a dense neighborhood. I think you need to do something related to creating jobs for the people in the neighborhood. There are a lot of other developments happening around the adjacent neighborhood..."
"...Four and a half years ago I decided to start a business. I’ve always been very interested in social change and social enterprise, a way in which you can earn a living and yet get something good in whatever capacity you can. So I was fortunate enough to connect with a non-profit organization based in St. Louis called Partners for Just Trade (PJT). PJT is a member of the Fair Trade Federation.

I did a lot of volunteer work with them, so I learned a ton about Fair trade a ton about social enterprise change...

"...I wanted to launch a Fair trade business. Like anyone living in the US knows, funding is everything. So I got $1,000 out of our savings account and I went to buy a few pieces from Fair Trade suppliers. I wanted to try selling them at an event and see what happened. To my surprise, almost half of the table was gone by the end of the day. So I invested back into the business by buying more items. Before I knew it, two and a half years later I had built a business that was probably $20,000 worth of inventory and a yearly revenue close to a $100,000. This was just on a part-time basis because I was still full-time employed. I had a family and I just finished my MBA, so it was very clear at that point - two years into this - that in order to continue to grow the next logical step would be opening a bricks and mortar store...

"...The community around here is just super supportive and the Zee Bee Market was a great alternative for those looking for good quality, hand-crafted products from around the world that also happened to serve a social cause. So it was like the perfect scenario. There’s not a lot of competition in terms of gifts because there are mostly restaurants around here...

"...So when I started with $1,000 investment it was a little bit of ‘let’s see if this works’. I had to try to be very diverse in terms of the content, so I bought a selection of housewares, jewelry, handbags, and kids product to sell. There was a little bit of everything. To my surprise, a pleasant surprise I have to say, almost everything sold well. I did not go for a model that was super low and cheap in terms of price. I wanted to do something in the middle of the road or higher, because I wanted to sell the experience of Fair Trade which is quality and uniqueness. Customers did not hesitate to pay $30 or $40 for an item such as jewelry that was exquisitely made. So that was a good lesson and as I continued on this mobile retail mode, every time I would bring products I had to test them. For example, you had let’s say 100 units, you could tell which retail the customers gravitated towards. So then you buy more of what they want and less of what they don’t want...

"...As a partner of PJT, you have to bank on a minimum of 90% of your inventory to be sourced from Fair Trade Federation suppliers. This means that the bulk of the inventory should be handcrafted by artists from around the world. With the remaining 10% the business owner can choose to support anyone whom he or she feels is appropriate; artists that fit within your business model or your mission. I have been approached by some artisans who have come to the US as refugees, who are very talented, and he or she would like to create products. The piece that we need to work on as a for-profit business is to make sure that if I pay X amount of dollars for what somebody has created, that first it is “fair”, and second it is something that can be a good fit for the store. Whatever cost I pay I translate it into a retail equivalent and then I ask, ‘Is this a price that my customer is willing to pay?’...

"...Before I started and decided to launch Zee Bee Market as a fair trade business I was toying with all these ideas. I had hoped to start a business that would employ homeless or prison convicts who have left the system or people who were just desperately wanting to find jobs and could not. I was hoping to put these folks into spaces where they could create things. Whether their skill is in ceramics, in working, welding, or whatever ability they have to offer a sort of training space to create beautiful things that can be eventually sold. Not because I wanted to give anybody a handout, but to give them chance to rejoin society, to get dignified work, and earn a living.

Julio Zegarra-Ballon
Zee Bee Market Owner

September 06, 2016 at 3:48pm
Officially established in 1764, St. Louis was developed as a trading post on the west bank of the Mississippi. The city was a pivotal anchor along the river as it was the midpoint marker for French settlers migrating southward from Illinois and Canada. For the west, St. Louis was a necessary development as the fur trade in the west was thriving while the ability to trade cross-country had previously been greatly inhibited due to lack of trade routes and posts. Throughout this era St. Louis remained a secular settlement consistently growing in size into the next century. An atypical model compared to the coastal cities at the time that developed the church as the public anchor.

The Louisiana Purchase in 1803 marked the end of the French Colonialist era in St. Louis and the dawn of the new settlers vying for the valuable and unclaimed land the mid-west offered to the east coast. Consequently, the city sprawled both north and south along the river. It was not until a surge of Irish and German immigrants in the 1840s, the largest flux of migrants St. Louis had experienced yet, that the city began to condense. Renovations and additions onto existing infrastructure accommodated the newest populations.

Gravois Park was the first land set aside for park space. However it remained too far outside of the city limits for most residents to enjoy at the time. It was not until the "Gilded Age" from 1869 to the turn-of-the-century that development around Tower Grove Park and Gravois Park peaked due to the increasing industrialization of St. Louis. As immigrant populations from Italy, South Eastern Europe and Germans crowded the city seeking work in a booming city, the need for natural public spaces for leisure and recreation drove the city to dedicate space for more parks. In fact, the majority of St. Louis’s public parks were established in the Gilded Age. Tower Grove Park, for instance, was the first public driving park specifically meant for all social classes.
ST. LOUIS TIMELINE

600-1400
Cahokia Mound Builders settle close to the Mississippi River

1822
St. Louis is incorporated as city

1854
Washington University in St. Louis is founded

1804
Lewis & Clark Expedition departs from St. Louis

1890s
Large immigrant population increase

1874
Eads Bridge is completed

1804
First automobile in St. Louis is fabricated by Henry F. Borsbin

1898
St. Louis Museum Carriage Company is formed

1911
U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants is formed

1919
First International May Festival is held [later the Festival of Nations]

1920
First International May Festival is held [later the Festival of Nations]

1920
International Institute is established

1968
Gateway Arch is dedicated

1993
MetroLink opens

1950-60
Over 50 car manufacturers start in St. Louis

1968
St. Louis Motor Carriage Company is formed

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1993
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1950-60
Over 50 car manufacturers start in St. Louis

2014
Metamorphic Cities Option Design Studio is offered at Washington University in St. Louis

2016
Inclusion & Neighborhood Resilience Option Studio is offered at Washington University in St. Louis
During the 16th through 18th centuries, European nations are engaged in a global race to discover and claim new territories. The French founded the town of St. Louis in 1764. During this period there was a relatively low degree of social stratification. In French Colonial St. Louis, wealthy landowners lived alongside merchants, bankers, farmers, and many others. At this time, St. Louis had a tight and healthy mix of residential, commercial and industrial enterprises in proximity to each other.

In 1803, with the signing of the Louisiana Purchase, St. Louis along with most of the American West fell firmly under the control of the United States. Jeffersonian ideals of Manifest Destiny, American Exceptionalism and National Romanticism spread throughout the nation, as thousands of immigrants flooded across the Mississippi River into St. Louis - the gateway to the American Frontier.

By 1816 St. Louis population density could no longer be supported by the 3 x 18 block layout originally prescribed. Consequently the city experienced its first physical land extension (westward and northward). During this expansion, wealthier citizens moved west, further stratifying the urban layout, and laying ruin to the neighborhood synergy that existed in French Colonial times.

Between 1840 and 1855 St. Louis was the primary distributing point for commercial goods in the American West; everything from grain, iron, coal and clothing were shipped and transported through St. Louis. During this time, the population of St. Louis increased from 16,469 to 77,860. By 1860, the population reached 160,000 as a result of the significant influx of Irish and German immigrants.

Industrial production boomed during the later decades of the 19th and early 20th century. Major corporations were established (e.g. Anheuser-Busch & Lemp Brewery - produced 1.5 million barrels of beer in 1900) & Ralston-Purina. In addition vast infrastructural improvements were made to improve and construct new levees to alleviate the watershed and flooding.
Gravois Park is a historic neighborhood of St. Louis, Missouri. Roughly bounded by Jefferson Ave, Chippewa St, Grand Blvd, and Cherokee Street, the Gravois Park neighborhood is a diverse mix of homeowners, renters, and businesses.

Gravois Park is one of the original common grants of 1812 which was made possible by the US government. It was praised for its beauty in the 19th century and was part of a walking tour of the city meant to show off the City Plan Commission’s idealized view of the city in 1814.

Ordinance Year: 1812
Size 282 acres
Area: 0.442 sq. miles
Population Density: 13,866 people per sq. mile
Alderwoman: Cara Spencer (15th Ward)

The majority of Tower Grove Park was built following the extension of streetcar lines from downtown St. Louis. Commercial development in the neighborhood was concentrated on Grand Blvd. in the east and Morganford Rd. in the west.

From the 1990s through the present, the neighborhood has been reversing a slow decline with the widespread rehabilitation of residential, commercial, and mixed use structures. The South Grand Business District on the eastern flank of the neighborhood was the first urban business district to see rehabilitation and new pedestrian scale construction.

Ordinance Year: 1928
Size 953 acres
Area: 1.49 sq. miles
Population Density: 9,306 people per sq. mile
Alderwoman: Megan Green (20th Ward)
South Grand Blvd. is known as the international community of St. Louis, because of its diverse population and wide offering of ethnic restaurants. It contains unique retail opportunities while serving as a destination for visitors and locals. A nationally recognized historic district, Tower Grove Heights anchors this promising commercial district that is located near Tower Grove Park and the Missouri Botanical Gardens.

In 2009, South Grand Blvd. was selected as one of four Great Streets Initiative pilot projects. Since 2006, East-West Gateway Council of Governments (EWG) has been helping communities in the St. Louis region expand the way they think about streets. Local leaders and citizens are encouraged to think beyond the curb to understand how transportation decisions affect the total built environment. South Grand Blvd. benefited from this program beautifying the streetscape along the commercial district.
SOUTH GRAND BLVD STREET SECTIONS

- Pestalozzi St.
- Arsenal St.
- Hartford St.
- Humphrey St.
- Utah St.
- Potomac St.
- Gravois St.
- Miami St.
- Winnebago St.
ST. LOUIS HISTORICAL AUTO BUILDINGS

Dorris Motor Car Company 1916
Weber Auto Company 1919
Brahm-Mitchellette Motor Car Company 1927
More Auto Company 1929

Structural Bays
Materiality
Facade Organization

Weber Auto Company 1919
Ford Plant 1948
Car Elevator Section
### ST. LOUIS IMMIGRANT HISTORY

**1919**
The St. Louis International Institute is formally dedicated.

**1920**
First International May Festival is organized.

**1930**
The only Citizenship classes in St. Louis are offered at the Institute.

**1933**
A Young Women’s Group is organized for foreign-born wives of American servicemen.

**1938**
English classes for Japanese wives of American servicemen are offered. The Institute staff organized foreign students from colleges and universities in the area for social events.

**1945**
A Hungarian refugee program is conducted at the agency.

**1946**
A Young Women’s Group is organized for foreign-born wives of American servicemen.

**1950**
The St. Louis International Institute is relocated to 3800 Park Ave.

**1953**
The Institute staff organized foreign students from colleges and universities in the area for social events.

**1956-58**
A Hungarian refugee program is conducted at the agency.

**1960/75**
The Share Plan For Intercultural Education is launched in 1969.

**1963**
Intercultural Education is launched in.

**1969**
The Institute resettled what became the largest Bosnian community in America.

**1970s**
Laos, Thailand, and Vietnamese WWII Refugees are resettled.

**1973**
A $2.5 million capital campaign is completed and the IISTL is relocated to a newly renovated facility at 3654 S. Grand Blvd.

**1978**
Anna Peterson Crosslin is hired as the agency’s Executive Director.

**1982**
The Institute is relocated to 3800 Park Ave.

**1987**
The Institute’s 90th Anniversary is celebrated with the dedication of the William K. Y. Tao Refugee Resettlement Fund.

**1993**
The Institute resettled what became the largest Bosnian community in America.

**1999**
Anna Peterson Crosslin is hired as the agency’s Executive Director.

**2001**
Intercultural Education is launched in.

**2007**
The International Institute Community Development Corporation is launched to help immigrant entrepreneurs get loans and start small businesses.

**2009**
The International Institute of St. Louis is relocated to 3401 Arsenal St. previously the St. Elizabeth Academy.

**2009**
The Institute’s 90th Anniversary is celebrated with the dedication of the William K. Y. Tao Refugee Resettlement Fund.

**2009**
The International Institute Community Development Corporation is launched to help immigrant entrepreneurs get loans and start small businesses.

**2013**
The Institute resettled what became the largest Bosnian community in America.

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**18TH CENTURY**

- **THE CATHOLIC WAVE**
  - Circa 1840s: Irish, and Germans
  - Circa 1870s: Irish, Germans, Czech, and Slovenians
  - Circa 1890s: Italians

**20TH CENTURY**

- **WWII REFUGEES**
  - Circa 1970s: 508 Pax Jewish Germans
  - Circa 1970s: Laos, Thailand, and Vietnamese

- **S.E.A.**
  - Circa 1970s: Largest community outside Bosnia

**21ST CENTURY**

- **THE NEW WAVE**
  - Circa 1990s: Myanmar, Cuba, Congo, and the Middle East
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE ARRIVAL PROCESS

**24 HOURS**
- Furnish apartment
- Collect donations
- Turn on utilities
- Pick up from airport
- Conduct second home visit
- Enroll TANF
- Begin IOM loan payment
- Counseling services
- Elderly Services

**1 WEEK**
- Housing orientation
- Health screenings
- Groceries
- Social Security Card
- Enroll in school
- Job readiness classes
- Cultural Orientation
- Secure housing
- Food Stamp application
- Small Business Program
- Apply U.S. citizenship
- Financial Literacy

**30 DAYS**
- Disperse final R&P funds
- Job Skills Training
- Apply for Green Card (PRA)
- Find full-time job
- Immigration Services
- Enroll in language classes
- Refugee Medical Assistance

**90 DAYS**
- Inclusion & Neighborhood Resilience
- Food Stamps Program
- Elderly Services
- Immigration Services
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE DEMOGRAPHICS

21.3 Million refugees are displaced worldwide each year

1000 Refugees are sponsored by the International Institute of St. Louis yearly

250 Houses are identified and rented for refugee families yearly

Syria 4.8 Million
Afghanistan 2.7 Million
Somalia 1.1 Million

DR Congo  
Cuba

Iraq  
Burma  
Bhutan

English Classes at INSTL
Filmography Classes at INSTL
Citizenship Class 1953 at INSTL
This urban analysis was a critical step to informing how the proposals would respond to not only the historical conditions of the site, but to today’s built environment and its corresponding economic population demographics. The site is located at the edge of Gravois Park, on South Grand Blvd, in proximity to the intersection of four adjacent neighborhoods; Gravois Park, Tower Grove South, Tower Grove East, and Benton Park. A mapping exercise and archival data analysis conclude that at the city scale Gravois Park is the most densely populated and retains the highest socioeconomic diversity among these five neighborhoods.

The analysis was divided into three different scales: St. Louis city, Gravois Park neighborhood, and the building’s neighborhood. With each jump in scale, a new set of issues were tackled. Broader issues like density, ethnicity, and income were analyzed at the city scale. From there, the scope was narrowed down to neighborhood accessibility and convenience by gauging walking time with distance among other issues. The exercise showed that Gravois Park neighborhood offers a range of retail, business, and restaurants however it lacks an art institution fit for the scale of the Gravois Park community. At best, there are a few niche galleries which appeal to a highly selective population. The smallest scale identified a set of key resources intimate to the site of intervention, such as proximity to nearby bus stops of varying public bus lines.

In another set of analysis, a series of sections delineate the pedestrian experience at the street scale. This was a pivotal exercise to understand the successes and flaws of urban planning in proximity to the IITSL site. Consecutive sections along the North/South axis of South Grand Blvd were drawn progressing from Tower Grove Park to the IITSL’s Donna Brown Building. By doing so, the viewer sees that initially the street environment of South Grand is very welcoming and accessible to the pedestrian traffic. This is a direct result of the Tower Grove improvement district’s initiative to “street diet” South Grand. South of this, the sections reveal another condition, the one typically found in suburban sprawl. These sections depict a far more derelict experience to the pedestrian; less vegetation, wider streets that appeal to vehicular traffic over foot traffic, big box out parcels, and parking lots placed prime to the street rather than storefronts.
Median Age

About 90% of the figure, in MO: 38.4%
About 90% of the figure in U.S: 37.8%

Population by Age Range

35

Localized Minority
Secondary Majority
Localized Majority

Number of People
30 - 100
100 - 500
500 - 1,000
1,000 - 1,500
1,500 - 2,500
2,500 - 3,500
3,500 - 5,500

St. Louis City
Gravois Park
Tower Grove Park

Female
52%
Male
51.1%
Male
52%

Inclusion & Neighborhood Resilience
Since the recession in 2008, transit ridership has been on a steady recovery. From January 2014 to January 2015 the Metro has increased passenger ridership trips by 1%.

**ANNUAL RIDERSHIP Metro Bus & Link**

- Pre Recession 2008: 58 Million
- January 2015: 47 million

MetroLink ridership decreased in 2014 by 200,000 riders annually.

**PROS:** Reduced pollution, reduced energy use, reduced congestion on roads, accessible for all ages.
TOTAL CRIME DISTRIBUTION

CRIME DISTRIBUTION

Drug Sale/Possession
Assault
Auto Thefts
Burglaries
Homocide
Larceny
YOUTH ARREST RATE [AGE 14-24]

Arrests per 1,000
- 5.5 - 15.0
- 17.1 - 21.9
- 26.0 - 34.1
- 35.7 - 162.1

EARLY EDUCATION CENTERS

- Daycares
- Early Head Start Programs

Inclusion & Neighborhood Resilience
Observation:
This map reveals a sharp contrast between the neighborhood on proximity to Tower Grove Park and the rest of the neighborhoods. Property values range between $40,000 and $90,000 in Gravois Park. However, it is important to highlight the site is located in the area where the appraisal of property values is the highest.
Observation:
The fabric of the neighborhood suggests a mix of approximately 50% single-family and 50% multi-family units in each neighborhood, with a greater percentage of multi-family housing in Gravois Park than in Tower Grove South. While vacancy in Tower Grove South remains below Gravois Park, the latter one shows only 30% of the land/property as vacant. This shows an opportunity especially considering the lack of vacancy in the surrounding neighborhoods.
RESIDENTIAL VACANCY

Currently Vacant

Previously Vacant (Previous Decade)
Observation:
There are a number of bus lines that connect the neighborhood north/south and east/west with the city. In addition, the Grand MetroLink Station is 2.8 miles north on Grand Ave. and connects the neighborhood to the broader St. Louis. Additionally, Grand Ave. connects car users to I-64 and I-44 to the north.
BUS ROUTES

Route #70

Connects to:
Grand Metrolink Station
North Broadway MetroBus Center

Route #11

Connects to:
Shrewsbury MetroBus Center
Union Station MetroBus Center

Route #10

Connects to:
Central West End MetroBus Center
Union Station MetroBus Center
Gravois-Hampton MetroBus Center
Observation:
There is a number of options in terms of restaurants, giving different flavor and price options when eating out. Restaurants vary from the cheaper chain drive-thru, such as Taco Bell at Grand Blvd. and Gravois Ave., to more formal sit-down dining, such as Brasilia at Grand Blvd. and Humphry St.
The neighborhood offers a variety of retail opportunities. However, it is important to highlight the uniqueness of some of the international stores located in the neighborhood due to its large international population. The Zee Bee Market, which sells Fair Trade products, and Parsimony Vintage are two examples of such stores.
Observations:
The area caters to different economic brackets with many groceries and markets that cater to the international population of the neighborhood. Jay International offers food from many countries, but there are also markets specific to nationalities that have a large population in the neighborhood, such as the Grand Chinese Grocery Inc. There are also more common chains such as Aldi, Schnucks, and Shop 'n Save.
Observations:
Historically St. Louis was one of the top three auto manufacturing cities in the country. Clearly that rich past is reflected in the diversity and density of auto industry and services within this area of study. The concentration of these businesses tend to arrange along main corridors, such as Gravois Ave, as shown in this map.
Observations:

Pockets of healthcare services form along commercial strips, the closest being at the intersection of Gravois Ave. and S. Grand Blvd. Most of these services consist of established physicians that have been working in the neighborhood for years. Physicians such as Lucas Optometry were present during the renovation of S. Grand Ave.
Observations:
Places for worship tend to distribute fairly evenly among the area of study. While houses of faith are located in sites accessible to their congregation, they also maintain certain distance to one another. While place of worship for the Christian faith are most predominant, there are a number of other places of worship including mosques and temples.
Observations:
This map shows each of the educational facilities within the neighborhood ranging from daycare centers to technical schools. There are 5 high schools that range greatly in their graduation rates with Carnahan High School having a graduation rate of 91% while Roosevelt High School only 46%.
Observations:
Parking becomes a key consideration in analyzing the urban fabric; on this map parking lots or structures holding fifty or more parking spaces highlights the potential for a dense concentration of incoming commuters and visitors to the programs in the area. Along Grand Blvd., there is street parking, though there are some larger commercial parking lots as well as more parking lots specially dedicated for visitors to the South Grand Business District.
Healthy communities need access to green space or open space for leisure and recreational activities. The site shows close proximity to a few large parks, such as Tower Grove Park and Gravois Park, as well as a handful of medium size parks within a descent walking distance.
Southside Tower
Forever Young Beauty Supply
Tower Grove South neighborhood

Southside Tower

Former International Institute
Gravois Park neighborhood

East/West sectional study across S. Grand Blvd.
In 1930 Southside Automobile established Buick dealership at 3654 South Grand Boulevard. At the time, the St. Louis automobile industry was peaking. The location was optimal for an automobile business because it was along the axis of a trolley line securing plenty of foot traffic. According to the Sanbourne maps, at the time of 3654 South Grand’s edification, the automobile industry was prolific in this particular area of St. Louis: automobile repair shops, pop-up dealerships, public parks made for driving, among other things.

The original construction was an ornate Spanish Colonial style building: large arched windows optimal for daylighting the interior, an iconic tower feature at the southwest corner, curving details accenting the south and west facades. A freight elevator located at the north east corner of the building could hoist cars from the ground level to the roof. Rounded columns two foot in diameter on the ground floor supported the incredible loads on the building. At two floors, the building grossed 30,000 Sq.Ft.

The building would vacate in 1959 due to the automobile industry waning, and the neighborhood decline due to white flight. After three years of vacancy, the building was sold and renovated into a medical facility that would remain at the 3654 South Grand location for the remainder of the century. In comparison to the original building, the Medical Building’s renovation featured an upper level curtain wall, partially closed archways, and diminished windows. The exterior was again revised under new ownership in 2001, when the International Institute of St. Louis bought the building. With funding from the Donna Brown grant, the International Institute gutted the interior of the building. Exterior updates changed the building significantly by infilling all exterior windows and relocating the front entry to the side parking lot.
**Building History**

- **Southside Buick Auto Center**
  - **Construction**: 1923

- **Vacant**
  - **Years**: 1959-1961
  - Description: The building sits vacant for 2 years between a formal and programmatic transition; away from vehicles and towards office/medical uses.

- **Dana Brown Building**
  - **Present**: 2001-2008
  - Description: International Institute Dana Brown Building is established.

- **Present**

- **Andy Burger Motor Autos**
  - **Years**: 1944-1958
  - Description: A second use of the building houses an automobile workshop.

- **Medical Building**
  - **Years**: 1961-1999
  - Description: A new program use in the building also brings on a new formal dynamic. The first reduction in the amount of exterior openings and the introduction of new materials to the facade.

- **Ronald S Lefors BS Co.**
  - **Years**: 2000-2001
South Side Buick Co.

Original State of Building

Square Footage: 30,000 sq. ft.
Stories: 2
Owner: Paul Lanson
Built: 1926
Function: Buick Service Station
Material: Concrete, Steel, Stone

The South Side Buick Company was originally a service center for Buick cars in the St. Louis area. Thanks to the innovation in the use of the concrete as a structural system and the introduction of a large freight elevator in the northeast corner of the building, the building was capable of lifting and storing cars temporarily on the roof and second floor. The facade had Spanish colonial aesthetic with ornate details accenting the west and south facades and the arcade of windows. A tower as tall as three stories anchored the southwest corner, marking the company’s presence along S. Grand Blvd.
MEDICAL OFFICE BUILDING

Square Footage: 30,000 sq. ft.
Stories: 2
Owner: Private
Renovated: 1993
Function: Medical Offices
Material: Concrete, Steel, Stucco, Aluminum

In 1993 the building was renovated as a medical office facility. By then, many of its ornate details had been missing as well as the iconic southwest tower, while the windows were reduced in response to the new use. It is unknown when the tower disappeared and if it was removed for structural reasons. It is speculated that the new use led to the reduction of the window size, and the cladding of the building's second floor.
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ST. LOUIS

Current State of Building

Square Footage: 30,000 sq. ft.
Stories: 2
Owner: International Institute of St. Louis
Renovated: 1993
Function: Offices, Gathering Space, Learning Center
Material: Concrete, Steel, Stucco

In the early 2000s the International Institute moved into the building after the exterior and interior were extensively renovated. The exterior was completely closed off by infilling the arcade windows at ground level and covering with a layer of stucco. The upper level curtain wall and windows were also completely covered over with a layer of sheet metal, with a grand and monochromatic cornice added. The International Institute has since moved out in 2014 to its current location on Arsenal St. Although the building is still owned by the IISTL, it currently sits vacant.
PEDESTRIAN VIEWS

Northwest Corner

Southeast Corner

Southwest Corner

Northeast Corner
NEIGHBORHOOD VIEWS
To qualify for listing under Criterion A (Commerce) or C (Architectural), the resource must retain both integrity of design and association. Under Criterion A the resource must have a significant association with one particular automobile company, even if only for a short period of time and should also have associations with the historical context discussed in Section E. Integrity concerns under Criterion A would not be as stringent as under Criterion C, but the basic form, exterior wall cladding and roof forms visible from the exterior (such as elevator penthouses) should be intact, although some details may have changed, such as parapet caps or loss of skylights. In addition, it must still retain enough of its unique characteristics to distinguish the building from a simple warehouse, such as automotive ramps or auto freight elevator shafts. In addition, most window openings, whether in the original showroom area or upstairs must retain their original openings, even if boarded over or the windows replaced, providing a sense of the original fenestration patterns. On the interior, it is expected that distributorship buildings qualifying under Criterion A will at least retain much of its open floor plates, but not necessarily the showroom features.

Our research shows that Southside Automobile Company was a very prominent company during the 1920s-1940s, displaying possibility for the building to qualify under Criterion A, Commerce. Since the building was greatly altered a great deal, qualifying under Criterion C, Architectural, would not be possible.
BUILDING STRUCTURE

Ground Floor Slab

Ground Floor 26" O Concrete Columns

Second Floor Slab

Second Floor 18" O Concrete Columns

Roof Slab

Renovated Facade

Exterior Concrete Wall Column

Concrete Interior Column

Steel Base for Shear Forces
To better inform our understanding of resiliency, the SFS studio investigated seven adaptive reuse precedents. There are three basic reasons for adapting an existing building: a new building is not affordable or it is inconceivable to due density; a building has a landmark status and hence may not be demolished; or the existing structure is altered in lieu of demolishing it, because the attractive land use ratio of the existing building would no longer be permitted for a new one.

Just as an organization’s ability to survive hinges on their ability to adapt to changing environment conditions, a building’s survival depends on the ability to assume new purpose. The truest sense of an adaptive reuse is to transform an existing space to suit an entirely new occupant type and program.

In the Donna Brown Building, the renovation can be proposed as an addition to the existing building from the top, side, or back to increase program as well as rethinking of the possibilities of extending or adding stories, optimizing enclosure or digging beneath the existing infrastructure. This reveals the broad range the design explorations can encompass. The goal could also rely on aesthetic transformation to increase foot traffic and property value.

In St. Louis in particular, the existing building stock has allowed for adaptive reuse to be a viable option, therefore the renovation of existing buildings has contributed to the renewed success of different communities. Often these buildings have become obsolete or vacant through neighborhood decline but have revived under different parameters that adapt to current neighborhood trends. The renovation of existing buildings has become a source of projects to local firms and developers who have sought economic mobility of the projects through the use of tax incentives such as historic preservation, low income housing and/or mixed use development.
OLD SALEM JAIL
Salem, Massachusetts

Stories: 4
Renovated: 2009-2010
Function: Residential, Restaurant, Museum
Area: 30,800 sq. ft.

This development encompasses a diverse mix of amenities for residents and the overall community. Old Salem Jail has contributed to the boost in vitality of the downtown area of Salem, Massachusetts. It has a total of 23 apartment units, including an affordable housing unit. A restaurant, as well as a museum component to commemorate the jail’s historic past, are located in the main building. This redevelopment and its success symbolize the City of Salem’s commitment to preserving its historic heritage while promoting housing density in the downtown district. Salem continues to invest in supporting developments that improve the quality of life for its residents. The Old Salem Jail is a testament to the strong market niche in Salem and the city’s vision to create diverse residential options for its residents.
Housed in the former Mediodia Power Station, CaxiaForum Arts Center includes galleries, offices, a restaurant, and an auditorium below ground. The project is often described as a "mass detached from the ground in apparent defiance of the laws of gravity drawing the visitors inside." The brick walls are the only remaining indicators of the former Power Station while the new addition on top is encased in oxidized cast iron. The existing walls were suspended and maintained in their original position throughout the renovation by setting the walls with poured concrete. By removing the base, the plaza slips underneath the building giving it the appearance that it is floating. This separation of the structure from the ground creates two experiences; one above the surface and a second one below. The auditorium and service spaces are formed below the floating volume while the gallery spaces are placed above.
FORD ASSEMBLY PLANT
Richmond, California

Architect: Marcy Wong Donn Logan Architects
Renovated: 2008
Function: Mixed Use Entertainment, Dining, Office, Visitor Center
Area: 500,000 sq. ft.

Previously abandoned, the Ford Assembly Plant was transformed in 2009 into a contemporary multi-use facility. The structure houses programs ranging from a visitor center, dining, offices and entertainment. Designed and built in 1930 by Albert Kahn, the building was originally conceived as the Ford Motor Company’s assembly plant. Grossing almost 500,000 sq. ft., Kahn utilized the large and prolific windows throughout the façade to daylight the massive space. The plant has historical significance due to the era in which it was built and architectural significance due to being the work of a renowned architect. During World War II, the plant housed wartime production for the US military. Today its program is mainly comprised of a National Park visitor center and the Craneway Pavillion event space which hosts a variety of performances.
LESZCZYSKI ANTONINY MANOR
Jano Ostrorogo, Poland
Architect: Na No Wa Architecki
Reovated: 2015
Function: Hotel
Area: 96,100 sq. ft.

This building complex includes a rehabilitation center which provides care and medical services. The rehabilitation center is supported by a hotel, catering facilities, cultural events, and underground parking. The entire complex grosses a net area of 96,100 sq. ft. and a net volume of 1,035,249 cubic ft. Due to the structural system, ceiling construction, condition of the existing century stables, and the century granary the building was not able to be directly adapted for its new functions. Therefore, they needed to be subjected to reconstruction and expansion.
OPERA DE LYON
Lyon, France

Architect: Jean Nouvel
Renovated: 1990
Function: Opera
Area: 180,000 sq. ft.

Originally constructed in 1756, the Opera de Lyon is a stand-alone theater located just a block inward from the Rhone river. The theater was modeled in an Italian style, where the audience seats and viewing boxes form a horseshoe towards the stage. In 1985, the French architect Jean Nouvel was commissioned by the city to renovate and expand the existing theater. Nouvel’s design tripled the space by digging below the existing foundation, gutting out the core, and stacking program on top. Only the exterior walls and the foyer remain from the original theater. The firm explains, “By retaining the older façades, Nouvel linked the building to the surrounding official buildings, such as the adjacent 19th century Hotel de Ville, the Town Hall, Mayor’s Office for the city, and the nearby City Museum, housed in the 19th-century Palais de Saint Pierre.” The expansion includes opera seats, new rehearsal facilities, a restaurant, a fly loft, administration, and workshops. The most visually striking addition to the Opera is the arched steel and glass volume that emerges from the existing building to create a fly over effect resulting in a harmonious connection between old and new.
A series of late 19th century viaduct arches in Zurich, Switzerland were refurbished into a street market for the city by Swiss design firm EM2N and Zulauf Seippel Schweingruber Landscape Architecture. Beneath the arches a series of contemporary art galleries, shops, and restaurants infill the archways to preserve the integrity of the viaduct remains. The primary structure inserted under the 36 viaduct arches is steel clad; a restrained and minimalist material strategy to keep focus on the existing arched and exposed masonry. “The viaduct is more than just a bridge,” writes EM2N, “like a mountain chain erected by human hand it appears in the town with a scale derived from the landscape and topography.”
THE WATERHOUSE AT SOUTH BUND
Huangpu District, Shanghai

Architect: Neri & Hu Design and Research Office
Renovated: 2010
Function: Hotel
Area: 30,000 sq. ft.

Located by the new Cool Docks development on the South Bund District of Shanghai, the Waterhouse is a four-story, 19 room boutique hotel built into an existing three-story Japanese Army headquarters building from the 1930s. The boutique hotel fronts the Huangpu River and looks across at the gleaming Pudong skyline. The architectural concept behind Neri&Hu’s renovation rests on a clear contrast of what is old and new. The original concrete building was restored while a new addition in COR-TEN steel was built over it, reflecting the industrial past of this working dock by the Huangpu River. Neri & Hu’s structural addition, on the fourth floor, resonates with the industrial nature of the ships which pass through the river, providing an analogous contextual link to both history and local culture.

The public spaces allow the visitor to peek into private rooms while the private spaces invite the visitor to look out at the public arenas. Visual connections of unexpected spaces not only bring an element of surprise, but also force the hotel guests to confront the local Shanghai urban condition, where visual corridors and adjacencies define the unique spatial flavor of the city.
Each student project culminates the set of issues researched by the Inclusion & Neighborhood Resilience Studio throughout the semester into one conclusive design proposal. By rethinking and redeveloping the previous site of The International Institute, students had to contend with existing adjacencies, increased parking demands, the optimal location for the housing component among others... The process began with the search for a viable program for the climate of Gravois Park Community that could take advantage of the existing structure. The special-use program proposed by students ranges from small business incubators, early Head Start Education Centers, trade schools, after-school programs, and more.

In conjunction to the special-use program, each proposal incorporates a minimum of 40 apartment units into the site to be occupied by all members of the community ranging from refugees, to low income, and middle income residents. This was done either by annexing off the existing building, expanding stories above, or through an out parcel to the Northern, Northeastern, or Eastern sides of the site. By doing so, other factors such as access, circulation, and daylighting were evaluated. The following six proposals depict how design can respond proactively to adaptive reuse through meaningful redevelopment of the existing site, its building, and the building’s intended purpose.
Solutions born from an understanding of community strengths ensures deeper roots and an ability to address a variety of problematic areas. Programs and design need a focus on assets rather than just the problems, in order to help the community.

The site’s direct connection to S. Grand Blvd. and the existing building itself became the fabric on which program, design and intent were concentrated. The building presented for adaptive reuse was originally the South Buick Auto Center, a structure capable of vehicle occupation on each floor, including the roof. The elevated rate of Youth crime and the lack of activity space in the community brought about an idea for an alternative to re-incarceration of previous youth criminals, low employment rates and low educational and economic mobility for those individuals convicted of crimes between the ages of 17-25. Social Sustenance proposes a food truck incubator catered to previously incarcerated youths, at risk youths in the area as well as those interested in creating, owning or working in the developing food truck business. This program provides support to a variety of areas and allows for increased economic mobility, connection to the other parts of the city and the creation of an anchor for the immediate neighborhoods.

The residential component of the project engages the educational component through the exterior space, while maintaining an individual and private existence and identity within itself. Units are comprised of three socioeconomic typologies, market rate, low-income and refugee housing for either transitional living or long-term integration into the community. The structural system of the residential buildings, vertical concrete shear walls, creates a rigid and dimensional system within which a more flexible plan for the units can be optimized. This allows for a malleable organization prepared to shift from low-income to market rate, or convert a three-bedroom into a four bedroom through minimum change. The main purpose for this flexibility however, is the uncertainty of the size requirements or family dynamics of future refugees. The amount of refugees received by the International Institute of St. Louis fluctuate year by year based on cultural, regional and global issues, resulting in a fluctuating need for apartment sizes, quantities and types. Formally, both rigid systems of the adapted building and the residential component are softened and connected with the groundscape and interior walls.

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**Social Sustenance**

**Nurturing Change**

Daniel Aguilera
TRADE(in) SPACE
INTERNATIONAL INCUBATOR

Lindsley Etienne

Immigrants and refugees come into the United States with vast amount of skills and traits, but are not always granted the opportunity to showcase them. The International Business Incubator creates the opportunity for incoming refugees and immigrants to have a space that allows them to startup their own businesses. Incubation is defined as something that develops or produces or hatches. The space proposed is experienced through physical and visual connections that provide the guest with the ability to witness the production. The Incubator provides a series of spaces that our linked to classrooms, where guest can come learn how to make what is sold at the market, therefore, creating the ultimate interaction experience.

Diversity & Accessibility Study

Population & Demographics in Gravois Park

White [Non-Hispanic]: 2,112,625
Hispanic: 76,611
Black: 514,706
Asian or Pacific Islander: 64,873
American Indian: 5,966
Two or more races: 45,907

Diversity in Gravois Park

Vietnamese Community
African Diaspora
Bosnian Chamber of Commerce

Highway
Metro Link
Bus Stops
Learn
Business Incubator

Ground Floor Plan

Section A–A
THE THIRD SPACE
CREATING A COMMUNITY ANCHOR

Suzannah Grasel

Third Space is a civic space that proposes journalism as a programmatic outlet for the Gravois Park and immigrant communities of St. Louis. Throughout history, journalism has been an invaluable platform and voice for marginalized communities through Foreign Correspondents clubs (FCC). FCCs are hubs where journalists, correspondents, diplomats, and citizens convene within the community. In these spaces community and club members can create periodicals, host forums and exhibitions, network with fellow members, learn about topical issues, reference libraries, and generally engage with their community in a meaningful way. Third Space provides these resources concurrently with a digital library to the Gravois Park community and the greater network of St. Louis cultural societies and newspapers.

The lower floor is the digital library which consists of an exhibition space, a cafe, a classroom, and digital archives in conjunction to technological resources such as audiovisual studios, a green screen room, and computer lab. Here community members and local schools can benefit from access to state-of-the-art technology, see exhibitions on local issues presented by journalists and artists, and screenings of movies hosted by Third Space. A town hall space to the northern side of the Third Space building provides a much needed venue for community interaction and activism since the current venue is too small to hold all the constituents. The upper floor is occupied by a Foreign Correspondents Club for journalists to network with St. Louis’ cultural and ethnic societies. An urban park provides a buffer between the community building and the housing units that frames the northern side of the lot. The housing complex totals 42 units that range from: four-bedroom units with balconies prioritized to large refugee families, and a mix of market rate and low-income three, two with balconies, and single bedroom units. In total, there are 6 1Bed/1Bath units, 13 2Bed/2Bath, 13 3Bed/2Bath, and 10 4Bed/2Bath units.
INTERACTIVE EDUCATION

Savannah Hecker

The building was constructed in 1926 as the Southside Automobile Company’s service center. The automotive industry has been an integral part of St. Louis’ history and precedents along Grand Blvd. Through my research which included a vast network of automotive buildings, historic and current. My intention is to transform the building back to the historic use bringing the lively nature of the automotive industry back to this area of Grand. The automotive service in St. Louis is still thriving and within the St. Louis area, and I propose a Trade School for Automotive Service. The School will have a service learning so parents and students will be able to work during their training. There are many businesses that can collaborate with the school to offer employment to the students during their education and after graduation. The program will aim to train students in servicing cars, while also work in conjunction with a local school to help students finish high school while in training. In interviews conducted with personnel from the International Institute, I came to learn that refugees aged 17 to 21 have a hard time finishing school in the US, and consequently, finding jobs to help provide for their typically large families is very different from the rate from.

The Gravois neighborhood is a struggling neighborhood with children that have a low graduating high school and is plagued with high crime rates. While the graduation rates of St. Louis waver around 63% whereas Central VPA High School, a technical school for performing arts has a graduation rate of 93%. This is an indication of the need for technical programs as vital to the success of high schoolers in not only this neighborhood but the whole city. By creating more programs around the city that activate young minds, the crime rates is expected to decrease.

The proposed program is catered this specific demographic as well as those students in the neighborhood and other neighborhoods that have difficulties in graduating from school and are interested in a skill training and educational program. As a part of the building strategy, I intend to create transparency through the building to allow for visual connection between the program within the building and the street, as well as between spaces within the two levels of the building.
West Elevation
North Elevation
East Elevation
South Elevation

Second Floor Plan
Third Floor Plan

View from residential units
View from S. Grand Blvd.
View of training center

Inclusion & Neighborhood Resilience
EARLY BEGINNINGS
INCLUSIVE EARLY HEAD START PROGRAM

Amanda Malone

Gravois Park is a unique neighborhood for its density and diversity, yet it is troubled with issues of economic disparity and crime at a rate similar to north St. Louis. Research shows that low income and education lead into crime. Gravois Park confirms this by showing the lowest education levels of degrees attained within the city of St. Louis along with some of the highest high school drop out rates for the public schools, in addition to the high rates of single mothers. School readiness, particularly among poor children, may help prevent the cascade of consequences of early academic failure and school behavioral problems. Specifically, the years before a child reaches kindergarten are among the most critical in his or her life to influence learning. Head Start programs to combat these issues are scattered throughout St. Louis, although are generally concentrated in the north side of the city. These Head Start programs are limited to those who are at or below the poverty line. They are 80% federally funded, while the remaining 20% must be generated from the community, whether that be by donations or volunteering. Therefore the neighborhood of Gravois Park could benefit with the addition of an Early Head Start program, along with a prenatal education program, that will be inclusive to people above the poverty line in order to cover the 20% while promoting socioeconomic diversity. This early educational gain attempt to increase students motivation and performance in subsequent years, ultimately leading to higher educational attainment and reduced drop-out rates.

As part of their development children need greater exposure to sunlight. The building at 3664 S. Grand though receives none on the interior since all of its window have been in-filled and plastered over. As part of the historical preservation strategy, the arched windows along the west and south sides will be restored. In addition, the north side of the building is carved out to allow the penetration of light in the interior. The classrooms for the children will be situated around these voids in order to light the classrooms with natural light while also the day while also giving direct access to the outdoor play area. The indoor play area is located along the south side arched windows to incentivise play. The residential is placed along the east side will also be carved out with voids to create communal outdoor spaces. Some will create interaction among the adjacent residents units, while others of the entire floor, meanwhile the roof of the Head Start program will be available for all of the residents.
The proposal for the reuse of the Donna Brown Building was the result of the analysis of the public space layout in S. Grand Ave. This included an understanding of the qualities of the promenade created in the S. Grand Commercial District through a "street diet", and the beautification of the streetscape. I was in particular interested in studying parking as it clearly affects walkability and circulation. Though a series of studies in plan and section, I was able to look at the different parking typologies that existed along Grand. It was apparent in this study that as a pedestrian moved from north to south the appearance of the retail typology of the “box” changes completely the walkability and perception of safety. Therefore the neighborhood became less pedestrian friendly and connected to the commercial strip. As a result, the ability to appeal to those customers that are attracted to South Grand for its urban appeal increasingly diminished once you pass Utah Blvd.

Therefore, it was important to make the site a destination that could provide those customers an incentive to cross Gravois Ave. As a result, a courtyard surrounded by retail and a space for center for children from inside and outside the neighborhood to play was a vital piece in this proposal. The urban promenade continues from the courtyard to the roof garden, where ample views of the city are offered to the visitor.

Since more than half of the refugee children are under 14 year old and the Gravois Park’s demographic showed the existence of single mothers and households with your children, it was important to respond to the needs of these young households. Hence, an after care facility that could not only provide a safe environment for kids to play and work on their homeworks, but also the space for their parents to work on their cv, business plans, or just enjoy a coffee among other things. The adults and kids would be visually connected through the space. The housing program frames the courtyard and roof garden as well as it shape responds to specific views of the city.
Inclusion & Neighborhood Resilience Studio - Final Review

Photo by Stan Strembicki