UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI

Date: 5-Apr-2010

I, Michael R. Kocher, hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of:

Master of Architecture

in Architecture (Master of)

It is entitled:

Architecture As Infrastructure: Exposing Identity within the Generic in

Indianapolis

Student Signature: Michael R. Kocher

This work and its defense approved by:

Committee Chair: Aarati Kanekar, PhD

Michael McInturf, MARCH
Architecture as Infrastructure: 
Expressing Identity Within the Generic 
in Indianapolis

A thesis submitted to the 
Graduate School 
of the University of Cincinnati 
in partial fulfillment of the 
requirements for the degree of 
Master of Architecture 
in the Department of Architecture 
of the College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning 
by 
Michael R. Kocher 
B.S.Arch. University of Cincinnati, 2008 
June 11, 2010 
Committee Chair: Aarati Kanekar, Ph.D.
Architecture preserves a specific economic, political, and social identity relating to a specific time period. However, these qualities quickly become out-dated within a shifting and mutable environment. While some cities attempt to preserve specific forms of architecture in an effort to prevent nostalgic memories and identities from fading into oblivion, other cities reinvent themselves, adapting with the newest trends in an effort to stay economically relevant. Rem Koolhaas, in his essay The Generic City, pigeonholes these cities as bland, ubiquitous and having no identity. He suggests that this has resulted from a relentless urban expansion subsuming the historical city. This thesis contends that while generic cities are easy to typecast because of their visual appearance, a specific identity still exists. For centuries, the nature of differences and local identity rested solely within architecture. This thesis argues that a city’s true identity is found within the way we perceive and construct architecture locally in response to external macro forces. In effect, every city is a generic city operating within a larger system, and the level to which it adheres or rejects that system expresses the city’s identity. While structures in a generic city may seem interchangeable, Jean Attali suggests in The Roman System, or the Generic in All Times and Tenses that it is the local conditional rules dictating their systematic assemblage through evolution that is different and unique. Using the city of Indianapolis as a case study, this thesis expresses the city through both the Koolhaas and Attali lens, exhibiting simultaneously its generic nature and its identity through its evolutionary place within the American Operating System. This thesis counters Koolhaas’s myopic stance, and suggests that architecture should act as a vehicle exhibiting the changes within the environment. Prepped with a basic kit of parts, the structure’s growth and development will express an identity for a particular local condition and act as a living entity or infrastructure for changing lifestyles and building uses. In this way, it is not the architecture that creates a singular identity, but it is the manner at which the architecture operates within a variety of identities that helps define a local condition. By allowing architecture to visually and functionally express the mutation of its own components in relationship to its surrounding context, it will act as a datum line for which the environment and identity can be perceived and weighed.
List of Illustrations and Credits

All images are the author’s unless otherwise indicated.

12-13 Indianapolis Department of Transportation
19 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
43 Office of Coop Himmelblau. Image retrieved from www.coop-himmelblau.at/
73 Koolhaas, Rem, Stefano Boeri, and Sanford Kwinter. Mutations. Barcelona (Espagne):
ACTAR, 2001. 20
74 Koolhaas, Mutations. 20
84 Knox, Paul L., and Linda McCarthy. Urbanization: An Introduction to Urban Geography. Upper
90-91 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
92-93 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
98-99 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
102-103 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
108-109 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
110-111 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
112-123 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
124-125 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
130 Knox, Urbanization: An Introduction to Urban Geography. 78
131 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
132 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
133 (top) Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
(bottom) Indianapolis Postcard Collection. Indianapolis Marion County Public Library
Online. http://digitallibrary.imcpl.org/postcardSearch
134-135 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
136 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
137 Indianapolis Postcard Collection. Indianapolis Marion County Public Library
Online. http://digitallibrary.imcpl.org/postcardSearch
140-141 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
143 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
151 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
153 (top) Indianapolis Postcard Collection. Indianapolis Marion County Public Library
Online. http://digitallibrary.imcpl.org/postcardSearch
(bottom) Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
155 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
156 http://www.content.zdnet.com
159 MacLean, Alex S. Designs on the Land: Exploring America from the Air.
New York: Thames & Hudson, 2003. 120
160-161 www.flickr.com/photos/kt/110302394
162 "Speedie Cup." http://www.retroplanet.com
164-165 MacLean, Alex S.
166 Wolten, Peter, and Joe Kerr. Autopia Cars and Culture. New York: Reaktion Books,
2004. 317
169 *Remix Mies.* http://www.eikonography.com/?p=111
173 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
174 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
175 (top) Indianapolis Postcard Collection. Indianapolis Marion County Public Library
Online. http://digitallibrary.imcpl.org/postcardSearch
176 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
178-179 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
180-181 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
184 MacLean, Alex S. Designs on the Land: Exploring America from the Air. 54
190-191 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
192-193 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
194 http://www.cartophilia.com/fullinterstatemap.jpg
195 Indianapolis Department of Transportation
198 Wolten, Peter, and Joe Kerr. Autopia Cars and Culture. New York: Reaktion Books,
2004. 239
200 (top) "Population Map." http://www.usgcrp.gov/usgcrp
202 Indianapolis Department of Transportation
205 Indianapolis Department of Transportation
210 Koolhaas, Mutations. 508
213 http://www.life.com/southdale
217 (bottom images) http://www.flickr.com/photos/emamonford
228-229 Koolhaas, Mutations. 536
231 Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
232 Koolhaas, Mutations. 518
238 Koolhaas, Mutations. 540
240 (top) http://www.flickr.com/photos/hamo's world
(bottom) Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
240 (bottom) http://www.our2012sb.com
251 (top images) Indianapolis Super Bowl Bid Video - Freeze-frames created by author
253 http://www.flickr.com/photos/annmarittai
254-255 http://www.flickr.com/photos/hamo's world
256 (top) Indianapolis Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library
(bottom) http://www.flickr.com/photos/coltsfan317
257 Indianapolis Postcard Collection. Indianapolis Marion County Public Library
Online. http://digitallibrary.imcpl.org/postcardSearch
258 (top) http://www.turkishvillas.com/mausoleum.htm
(bottom) http://www.flickr.com/photos/annmarittai
265 http://www.flickr.com/photos/28018468N06-270-137075
List of Illustrations and Credits (continued)

All images are the author’s unless otherwise indicated.

276  (top left) http://www.vacationsupersearch.com
(top right) http://www.skyscrapercity.com/newhotel
(bottom left) http://www.vacationsupersearch.com
(bottom right) http://www.skyscrapercity.com/newhotel

277  Indianapolis Postcard Collection. Indianapolis Marion County Public Library
Online. http://digitallibrary.imcpl.org/postcardSearch


whitehouse.gov/blog/09/04/16/a-vision-for-high-speed-rail/>.


314  Indiana Historical Society Collections Digital Image Library

316  http://www.aboveallphoto.com/lucas_oil_stadium_stock.html

317  (left images) Channel8 NewsIndianapolisCoverage


336-337 Bittner, Regina, Wilfried Hackenbroch, and Kai Vöckler. Transiträume = Transit Spaces:

338-339 Bittner, Regina, Wilfried Hackenbroch, and Kai Vöckler. Transiträume = Transit Spaces:

340-341 Bittner, Regina, Wilfried Hackenbroch, and Kai Vöckler. Transiträume = Transit Spaces:

344-345 http://www.rex-ny.com/work/low2no/

346-347 Cesarz, Michael, Manina Ferreira-Erlenbach, Murat Pulat, and Cornelia Tomerius. Meydan
Shopping Square: Ein Neuer Prototype Von FOA = A New Prototype by FOA; a Metro Group

348  http://en.nai.nl/mmbase/images/505438/0608_lille_maajpg


350-351 Office of CoopHimmelb(l)au. Image retrieved from www.coop-himmelblau.at/


362-365 (image modified by author) Mau, Bruce, Bart Testa, and Kyo Maclear. LifeStyle. London:
Phaidon, 2000. 372-373
History is invisible; it can be made visible by means of the monument. The 19th century was the great age of monuments. The young nations of that time, the Italy of the Risorgimento, the Swiss Confederation, the German Reich fixed their history, or their version of history, with monuments: Victor Emmanuel I the founder, William Tell the saviour of liberty, etc. The premise for this was a certain unity of interpretation... Today, most of these miracles of marble and bronze stand rather obliquely in the environment of the modern city and the desire of politicians to erect others generally ends in disputes and conflicts. Not even an event as clear-cut as the Holocaust was an exception. For the purposes of commemoration, as the efficiency of the monument decreases, so the importance of the natural environment increases; that of the cultural and historical landscape, whether urban or rural. The concept of eternal monuments corresponds to our desire to defend the environment in its current state, our fear of any change in this great collective memory, of the transformation of the cultural landscape.

But all of our defense of the current state of the environment, all of our attempts to protect sites do not prevent transformations. Every time we return to our favorite places, in Rome, by the sea, in the Alps, something has changed, a building demolished another built, and we observe that the place has become ugly, almost destroyed. Why? Because we are always seeking the eternal ‘grandma’s village’, with the farmer leading the ox and the postman arriving on horseback. Yet the environment changes; and it changes on three levels, which we must consider: 1) the real place changes. The origins of the change may be natural or anthropogenic; 2) the climate changes, production techniques, means of transport, construction methods are developed; and if nothing changes, there is always decadence and ruin; 3) the perception of the environment and its meaning changes.

The history of the Romans can be commemorated in the Roman countryside, or else the more ancient history of the Etruscans, or the Medieval brigands, who transformed the aqueducts into the castles, or Dutch painters such as Asselijn, or the German ones of the 19th century, etc. The preparation, the presentation of the environment changes according to the fashion of perception and interpretation. The protection of monuments and sites places the accent on just one period, one memory. In the Swiss Alps, the great hotels of the 19th century, Righi-Cima, Furca, etc., have been destroyed over the years—all for the sake of the dignity of the landscape. Those that are left, Hotel Giessbach, for example, are now protected with the same justification. In the Ruhr, after demolishing most of the industrial structures of the iron and coal industries, now the remains are protected, especially the extraction towers that were erected between the wars.

I wanted to talk about the commemoration of history in a visible and concrete form, that is, as cultural landscape. The cultural landscape conveys the idea of history, both heroic and everyday. But we are used to seeing this landscape in a stable, or rather eternal form; yet this is impossible: our idea of ‘grandma’s eternal village’ is not a valid one. I would like to begin the reflection on the unstable historical monument, on the cultural landscape as a process to be designed, to be directed. And on the need to leave to our descendants the freedom to make their own history and their own interpretation.
A NEW LANDSCAPE

[ INTRODUCTION ]
EXPRESSING IDENTITY WITHIN THE GENERIC

The urban landscape changes, and as Gino Finizio suggests in his book *Architecture and Mobility*, the speed of this change makes it nearly impossible to interpret it. Over the past 15 to 20 years, Rem Koolhaas and others have attempted to predict or even design for these rapid urban changes to prevent new design from simply becoming another economic mechanism within a specific window of time. Following the Modern Movement, designers attempted to replicate the Fordist mass production techniques in architecture by applying concepts of the grid, simplistic hierarchies, low densities, zoning, large-scale engineering, a severance with history and tradition, high technology construction and mechanization. The end result? A global movement rapidly eradicating tradition, individualism, and identity in places. As Edward Relph stated, the reason identity and more importantly, the recognition of ‘place,’ is so critical to our environment and cities is mainly because it is the fundamental expression of man’s involvement in the world. If identity is continually stripped from environments, what is left? Where is the human deposit within the environment?

Today, the city organized by a mixture of economic, land use, and zoning plans, and development appears to be governed not by urban masterplans but rather chaos. The city is composed of mediocre and often generic buildings whose form and appearance are based on proven experiences and tested methods. These structures, striving to satisfy client user needs, turn its back on the city by creating large internal spaces and limiting access from the exterior, thus demoting the street as the public realm of the city. To make matters worse, in between these buildings are large spaces of abandoned agricultural or industrial land, car parks and lots, chain restaurants, interstate interchanges, and waste disposal sites, all typologies replicated similarly in a variety of locations throughout the United States and even the world. This mixture creates the image of the modern metropolis. Pedestrians feel an absence within their route or walk. Traditional European cities are comprised of buildings subservient to town halls, churches, and domes that act to gradually build up and increasingly fill a route with additional information, which add to the surprise and impact of the destination. On the contrary, forms of urbanization in the United States, still adhering to the Modernist ideals of the early twentieth century, do not create significant new routes to approach architecture. They are liberated. Each building creates its own presence, attempting to be seen and stand apart from its context.

The question this thesis proposes is, if each new building continues to take this pretentious, ‘approved’ approach, what and where is the context for architects legitimately attempting to add to the identity of an urban space? When each building program has a prescribed construction and aesthetic solution, and at times certain aesthetics can be applied to a variety of building programs and functions, how do places stand apart? The city has been transformed from a summation of certainties into an accumulation of mysteries. Facades no longer reveal what happens inside; interior and exterior architectures become separate projects; and as proposed spaces allow maximum flexibility where ‘anything’ can happen, both character and precision are put in jeopardy. As Rem Koolhaas suggests, entity is accepted at the price of identity.

As urban areas increasingly become multi-focal, with different functions locating their ‘centers’
here and there: a stadium, a department store, a mall, a civic building, the city can no longer be read as a fabric, but rather a spotty mix of residential and commercial parcels once only found exclusively in suburbia. The city is merely “a coexistence, a place of relations between objects without visual or formal articulation, and a place no longer captured by architectural connections.” In summary, cities are increasingly becoming overwhelmingly generic, predetermined, and accompanying high levels of expectation. The rate at which identity, which Koolhaas states is derived from physical substance, history, and context, evaporates is roughly equal to the rate at which cities adapt and reinvent themselves. Some places can adapt within their identity, such as New York whose identity is only heightened by international monopoly, capitalism and globalization. But other cities, especially in the Midwestern United States, continually fight to stay economically afloat, each decade evolving from one economy to another or from a number of economies to singular as they tackle recessions or economic uncertainties.

Explained in the following chapters, Jean Attali in his essay “The Roman System, or the Generic in All Times and Tenses,” suggests that the generic city is born out of its relations within a larger network or system. The level that cities adhere to that system directly impacts the ‘genericness’ of its urban spaces and buildings. Cities who fight specific trends or flows that the system dictates, are able to preserve a level of identity by maintaining its history. In “The Generic City” Rem Koolhaas, uses wit and irony to describe the blandness of the contemporary city, but to truly understand the generic city, one must apply Koolhaas’s blunt observations within Attali’s model as he is simply providing a criticism for one time period within the generic city’s evolution. This thesis contends that with improved knowledge of the nature of a place - its adaptive and generic qualities - architects, planners, and designers can contribute to the maintenance and manipulation of existing places and the creation of new places. Today’s new urban form does not prevent people from appreciating its spectacular aspects - consumer driven or not. Instead it suggests new methods of travel between buildings and other forms of interest. There is now a new medium of perception and a new route visitors and residents must follow. As cities explore a postmodern, New Urbanist approach in the attempt of creating identity in cities, architects and planners need to counter this movement and develop new methods of creating identity. A nostalgic identity is not relevant today. Today’s economy is not the same; people are less restricted, more mobile, and fragmented.

As the histories of places continue to evaporate and the aesthetic of urban areas continues to become increasingly generic, architecture needs to find new methods of inspiration. In the following chapter, images of the city of Indianapolis are applied to many of the statements Rem Koolhaas makes about “The Generic City.” This commentary expresses the myopic stance many architects might take when visiting an overly banal city, which only furthers the notion of the generic city as new structures do not ground themselves within an identity. The chapters following this commentary demonstrate how appearance is not the indicator of the a city’s identity. Koolhaas portrays the current condition as a some cosmic set of common realities that overpowers the environment. However, Jean Attali provides a second method, one suggesting evolution and adaptation within systems and networks. By dissecting and understanding the basic components of a generic city and understanding its process of coming to being using the model Attali lays out, this thesis argues that architecture will have a greater understanding of how to manifest relatively hidden, non-tangible forms of identity that define cities. Using Indianapolis as a case study, tracking its urban morphology in relation to not only American urbanization but also changing architectural philosophies, this thesis will shed light on common urban or architectural threads impacting the generic city in every stage of its development, so as to propose a method for using that thread to stream identity.

In the concluding section, this mutable, generic environment is given definition and an identity through an architecture that adapts with the city. Understanding the impact infrastructure has on the built environment, it is suggested that in order to create identity, architecture must act like infrastructure. By laying out a series of spaces acting as urban infill, this thesis proposes a hybrid between a building and a development strategy - using ideas of framework, montage, spatial microstructure, flexibility, contingency, and programmatic assemblage. Capable of being ‘tuned’ to meet the specific and changing needs of its surrounding context, the project will allow for a variability of scale and construction methods that absorb a diverse mix of uses—some temporary, some permanent—such as restaurants, galleries, gyms, theaters, and supermarkets. Should all the urban infill not be initially developed, interim public functions can anticipate amenities planned for Indianapolis’s new development areas, such as a farmer’s market or community center. These strategies, increasing the lifecycle of the building by allowing for change, does not impose a specialized discipline or function which may only be validated at the time of design. In reducing programmatic permanence of an assumed worth, this project creates an opportunity for society not only to reassess such worth but to establish a new order of priorities related to the social and economic lifestyles of a specific time.

Instead of applying specialization to program, this project proposes to create a hierarchy of public spaces framing views of the surrounding context. Through this system of views connecting the new project with the city, a visual infrastructure will be created allowing separate but interdependent functions to develop. As users within the architecture will be able to see changes in the city, residents, workers, and visitors in the city will be able to see changes in the infill of the architecture as programs either correspond to or reject surrounding city trends. In this way, a dialogue will be created between the adaptation of the city and the adaptation of architecture. By creating a relationship between changing building uses and changing urban landscapes, users will be able to perceive the mutations taking place in their local environment on a micro and macro level. Through this method, identity is not created by a specific architectural style, but through a better understanding of the specifics dictating the city’s nature of evolution.
1 Problem
**polis, n. (pä-ləs)**
: a central Greek city-state; **broadly:** a state or society characterized by a sense of community.⁲

**Indianapolis, geographical place.**
( in-dē-ə-ˈnə-pə-lis )
: the central city-community of the State of Indiana.³

“The Indianapolis story is anything but an isolated incident - it is the story of the American city.”
- Mayor Steven Goldsmith
“Close your eyes and imagine an explosion of beige. At its epicenter splashes the color of metallic-matte aubergine, khaki-tobacco, dusty pumpkin; all cars on their way to bridal whiteness.”
The Generic City began in America. Is it so profoundly unoriginal that it can only be imported? The Generic City now exists in Asia, Europe, Australia, and Africa. The move away from the countryside, from agriculture, to the city is not a move to the city as we knew it. It is a move to the Generic City, the city so pervasive that it has come to the country.
"The Generic City is liberated from the captivity of center. It breaks with this destructive cycle of dependency; it is nothing but a reflection of present need and present ability. It is superficial, like a Hollywood studio lot, it can produce a new identity every Monday morning."
“There is an evacuation of the public realm as the urban plane now only accommodates necessary movement, fundamentally the car. Highways are a superior version of boulevards and plazas, taking more and more space; their design, seemingly aiming for automotive efficiency, is in fact surprisingly sensual, a utilitarian pretense entering the domain of smooth space.”
There is a communal insistence on the presence of a ‘center,’ the core of value and meaning, even though there is no such place. This creates a downtown that has to be the ‘most important place.’ To be The place, the city has to be the most old and the most new, the most fixed and the most dynamic at the same time. To achieve this, it undergoes the most intense and constant adaptation, i.e., modernized."
“From the grafting of more or less discreet traffic arteries, bypasses, underground tunnels, the construction of ever more tangentes, to the routine transformation of housing into offices, warehouses into lofts, abandoned churches into nightclubs, from the serial bankruptcies and subsequent reopenings of specific units in more and more expensive shopping precincts to the relentless conversion of utilitarian space into “public” space, pedestrianization, the creation of new parks, planting, bridging, exposing, the systematic restoring of historic mediocrity, all authenticity is relentlessly eliminated.”

pedestrianization
Changes are made on the spot. Things are improved. Cultures flourish, decay, revive, disappear, are sacked, invaded, humiliated, raped, triumph, are reborn, have golden ages, fall suddenly silent—all on the same site. It is equally exciting, or unexciting, everywhere. It is easy. It does not need maintenance. If it gets too small it just expands. If it gets old it just self-destructs and renews.
In spite of its absence, history is the major preoccupation, even industry, of the Generic City. On the liberated grounds, around the restored hovels, still more hotels are constructed to receive additional tourists in direct proportion to the erasure of the past. A city is a plane inhabited in the most efficient way by people and processes, and in most cases, the presence of history only drags down its performance...”
“Is there a connection between the predominance of mirror in the Generic City and the “gifts” that, for centuries, were supposed to be the most popular, efficient present for savages? Is it to 

**celebrate nothingness**

through its multiplication or a desperate effort to capture essences on their way to evaporation?” 12
Compared to the classical city, the Generic City is sedated, usually perceived from a sedentary position. Instead of concentration—simultaneous presence—in the Generic City individual “moments” are spaced far apart to create a trance of almost unnoticeable aesthetic experiences. Like Japanese food, the sensations can be reconstituted and intensified in the mind, or not—they may simply be ignored. This pervasive lack of urgency and insistence acts like a potent drug; it induces a hallucination of the normal.
“The Generic City, like a sketch which is never elaborated, is not improved but abandoned. The idea of layering, intensification, completion are alien to it: it has no layers. Its next layer takes place somewhere else, either next door—that can be the size of a country—or even elsewhere altogether.” 14
“Hotels are the building blocks of the Generic City.”
"The apparently solid substance of the Generic City is misleading. 51% of its volume consists of atrium. The atrium is a diabolical device in its ability to substantiate the insubstantial. Paradoxically, its hollowness insures its very physicality, the pumping up of the volume the only pretext for its physical manifestation. The more complete and repetitive its interiors, the less their essential repetition is noticed."
“Air conditioning has launched the endless building.

Continuity is the essence of the Generic City. It is always interior, so extensive that you rarely perceive limits. Its buildings are now the work of generations of space planners, repairmen and fixers, like in the Middle Ages. Conditioning mimic inside the building the climatic conditions that once happened outside.”
“The use of ever more effective adhesives and sealants turn each building into a mixture of straitjacket and oxygen tent. The use of silicone —"we are stretching the facade as far as it will go"—has flattened all facades, glued glass to stone to steel to concrete in a space-age impurity—a triumph of glue over the integrity of materials. The angle of the facades is the only reliable index of architectural genius:

3 points for sloping backward, 12 points for sloping forward, 2-point penalty for setbacks (too nostalgic)." 18
“Offices are still there, in ever greater numbers, in fact. People say they are no longer necessary. In five to ten years we will all work at home. But then we will need bigger homes, big enough to use for meetings. Offices will have to be converted to homes. Since you can work at home, the office inspires to be domestic; because you still need a life, it simulates the city. Desks become sculptures; the work surface is lit by intimate downlights; a Post-It universe ensures “team memory” and “information persistence,” both futile attempts against universal forgetting of the unmemorable.” 19
"Over the past millennium as architects and planners have worked in favor of permanence, axialities, relationships, and proportion, the program of generic architecture is escalation. Instead of development, it offers entropy." 20
“The architecture of the Generic City is by definition beautiful. Built at incredible speed, and conceived at even more incredible pace, there is an average of 27 aborted versions for every realized structure.”
“They are prepared in the 10,000 architectural offices nobody has ever heard of, each vibrant with fresh inspiration. Presumably more modest than their well-known colleagues, these offices are bonded by a collective awareness that something is wrong with architecture that can only be rectified through their efforts. They assemble from 1,001 sources, with savage precision, more riches than any genius ever could.” 22
“23% have been laundered at American Ivy League universities, where they have been exposed - admittedly for very short periods - to the well-paid elite of the other, ‘official’ profession. It follows that a combined total investment of 300 billion dollars ($300,000,000,000) worth of architectural education ($30,000 [average cost] x 100 [average number of workers per office] x 100,000 [number of worldwide offices]) is working in and producing Generic Cities at any moment.” 23
“It is a space of collision, a container of atoms, busy, not dense... There is a special way of moving in its architecture, at the same time aimless and purposeful.

It is an acquired culture.” 24
“The best definition of the aesthetic of the Generic City is free style.”

How to describe it? Imagine an open space, a clearing in the forest, a leveled city. There are three elements: roads, buildings, and nature; they coexist in flexible relationships, seemingly without reason, in spectacular organizational diversity. Any one of the three may dominate: sometimes the “road” is lost—to be found meandering on an incomprehensible detour; sometimes you see no building, only nature; then, equally unpredictably, you are surrounded only by building."
“What if we are witnessing a global liberation movement: “down with character!” What is left after identity is stripped? To the extent that identity is derived from physical substance, from the historical, from context, from the real, we somehow cannot imagine that anything contemporary—made by us—contributes to it. To make up for this, there is a calculated redundancy in the iconography that the Generic City adopts. If it is water-facing, then water-based symbols are distributed over its entire territory. If it is a port, then ships and cranes will appear far inland. If it has a mountain, each brochure, menu, ticket, billboard will insist on the hill, as if nothing less than a seamless tautology will convince.

Its identity is like a mantra.
Its identity is malleable, visible only in display cases and plaques, giving reverence to the past and flaunting its visible growth. “However, the fact that human growth is exponential implies that the past will at some point become too “small” to be inhabited and shared by those alive. Society will exhaust it. To the extent that history finds its deposit in architecture, present human quantities will inevitably burst and deplete previous substance.”
Embracing the media and many of the contradictions found in architecture and urbanism today, Rem Koolhaas has been just as, if not more, influential in theory than in what he designs and actually builds. His unconventional and poetic perceptions of the urban environment, that at times contradict each other, all play into the persona of the architect. In some essays he appears extreme, absolute, and monolithic, while in others he takes on a more journalistic approach observing his surroundings and making generalizations in the attempt to uncover underlying truths. His writing seems to directly aim at the typical American service and delivery architecture firms that act as facilitators servile to the forces of capitalism. Witnessing over the past decade that the business of architecture has greatly outweighed the creativity of the profession, he attempts to express how economic planning strategies have become a remedy for all of the firms financial and design issues and problems. This inevitably led to the formation of a management bureaucracy that has become an end in itself, what he suggests is the ‘Generic City.’

As architecture today struggles to maintain its material honesty, carefully designed meaning, and humanist scale in a rapidly globalized world that pushes for an increasingly dominant social and economic environment based on machine scale, Koolhaas has found inspiration creating a new niche for architects - one as a collector of data and projector of images.

He believes that through manipulation of images and projected graphics cataloging the current chaotic environment, a ‘post-urban’ situation of the 21st century metropolis can be reached. In his publication, S,M,L,XL a 1300 page, 6 lb. book containing an inventory of meditations and analysis of the images of the contemporary city, Koolhaas uses many articles, such as *Bigness or the Problem at Large*, *Atlanta, Programmatic Lava*, and a more recent article titled *Junkspace*, to bring attention to the contemporary urban appearance.

In *Bigness or the Problem at Large*, Koolhaas successfully argues the shift in architecture from ‘old’ architectural principles of composition, scale, proportion, and detail that no longer apply since urbanism is dead, which will be discussed in more depth later. He states that the megastructure, an
all-embracing space where anything can happen, is all that exists. ‘Bigness,’ as Koolhaas usually refers to this development, ultimately eliminated character and precision in architecture. To fully understand this concept, one simply has to look toward a city’s periphery where hypermarkets and shopping malls enable ultimate adaptability for compliant retail outlets at minimal costs. Here, architecture, as many know it, is non-existent. Instead, it appears as a consumable entity like any other business that is a result of an environment dominated by the goals of a capitalist economy. Because of this, every city within that economy begins to look the same. There are prescribed methods for attacking each urban problem with a minimum expense, cost-benefiting measure that will quickly act as short-term solutions.

Similarly, Atlanta expresses Koolhaas’s methodology for analyzing Koolhaas’s ‘Generic City’ on a large scale. Here he gives a bullet point analysis of what Atlanta currently is and not what it should be. He makes the point, similar to other writers such as David Kolb, that urban theorists should not hasten to measure cities by traditional examples and definitions of urbanism. Cities such as Atlanta have new forms, or lack thereof, new modes of unity, and new kinds of connection. Koolhaas expresses how a ‘real’ city, like Atlanta, was an exception to the urban crisis in America in the 70’s. Where many downtown cores were in states of disrepair with crime, rotting infrastructures, and eroding tax bases, cities like Atlanta prevailed and even grew. “Block by block, downtown was being recovered and rebuilt. Atlanta was the test case for an American renaissance, for the rebirth of the American city.” This urban renewal that took place allowed the ‘Generic City’ to become increasingly visible.

Programmatic Lava, which documents the work on one of OMA’s competition entries, is used as a platform for Koolhaas to elaborate on his solution for this growing generic quality within cities. In a trip to Yokohama, Japan, where a handful of architects were invited to envision new ideas for abandoned territories along the port’s harbor, he noticed that a relatively new city next to the designated competition site was actually considered to be one of the many ‘subcenters’ the Japanese were trying to create around Tokyo. Observing that this city was rather small to contain expected future densities, he found that this development expressed new ideas about building typologies, primarily ones whose main purpose is to accommodate a handful of daily processes in completely inarticulate containers. By taking readers through this competition, he creatively
argues that an assemblage of programs and not the buildings appearance seeks to reclaim the maximum possibility of interaction within today's urban environments.

Lastly, *Junkspace* expands on his ideas of urban spaces today. Through his long-winded, single paragraph approach, readers wander through this rather formless space of infinite potential and gratification that inhabits his notion of the ‘Generic City.’ His agenda is to emphasize the fallouts of ‘modernization.’ He suggests that this architecture is all that is left after traditional identities have dissolved. He suggests that ‘junkspace’ is a mutating organism that survives on the services of escalation and air-conditioning. He states that spaces in ‘junkspace’ are endless and many of its defining characteristics and boundaries are invisible to the naked eye. He again contributes this to society’s current rate of consumption. “We presently consume and regurgitate at a much faster rate than ever before. It takes us little time to discard things that seem to be inconsistent with our lifestyles, be it a common recliner or our buildings.”

Although there are many valid criticisms of Koolhaas’s writing and article *The Generic City*, it is necessary to understand that without a critical eye bringing attention to this current condition or phenomenon, however myopic or naive it may be, further arguments and solutions proving or disproving his thoughts would not arise. His text cannot simply be read as an image that can be projected onto physical cities, but rather it serves to describe the core essence of every city within a capitalist economy. Koolhaas’s ‘Generic City’ should be read as a model to which each city can judge its own process of its identity’s decimation. As he states, “the Generic City is the product of the residual.” It is inferred that this is slowly made increasingly visible as exterior layers, exhibiting identity and character in the traditional sense, erode. These layers might include 1) ‘historic’ structures used as the life support for the past; 2) local traditions and regional differences calling for local resistance against other geographies, terrains, locations, and climates, evoked by example by Kenneth Frampton with his concept of critical regionalism but often implemented in a thematic sense; 3) cultural conventions which are found in the laws and regulations of the land as well as in religious and ceremonial practices; 4) historic event sites that commemorate ‘the last concert of Elvis Presley’ or the ‘house that Paul Revere lived in’ that feeds tourism and increases the demand for new hotels that seem to be constructed in direct
Koolhaas, using a variety of facts and images, suggests a new privatized and media-centric society where the traditional sense of urbanism is dead. While many would argue against this idea, as it is hard to imagine urbanism is gone in cities like New York, Boston, and San Francisco, it is more important to understand that these cities do maintain the traditional sense of urbanism because their generic core is coated with a corresponding variety of preserved architecture and visible histories that allowed that past form of urbanism to be visible. However, in time, these past infrastructures and histories will become too small and their density will no longer satisfy new social trends. In the 'Generic City,' traditional urbanism is no longer visible. Its urban core has not had time to develop a history. These are what he believes are the 'real' cities where all that is left after the traditional idea of urbanism has evaporated is architecture. Because of this, Koolhaas suggests that a programmatically driven method of architectural urbanism is all that is left for the city, whereby a variety of informal interactions are created in a building offering multiple functions.

However, while Koolhaas suggests urbanism is gone, other author's such as David Kolb simply...
suggest that urbanism is different. Instead of using architecture to create the nostalgic form of urbanism, why not create a new form of architecture highlighting the newest form of urbanism?

“Next to Norman Foster’s Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank building in Hong Kong is a park filled with customers, busy executives, messengers, and trucks delivering supplies or money or data, tourists off the ferry, and other players in Hong Kong’s business life. But on the weekends the area fills with migrant laborers, mostly from the Philippines. They redivide and redefine the park. The plaza’s physical features function in new ways: linear plantings along which business lunch-goers had set up many small temporary conversation places now define a few larger areas where groups listen to preachers or dance to recorded music. The division and the definition of the place changes.”

Just in this example, it is clear that the spaces within the city support many parallel, overlapping, and intersecting networks with their own individual layers and social norms. This is quite difficult to observe mainly because there is no clear hierarchical relation between activities today. Currently, urbanism, once appearing as a lattice structure, now takes on an amorphous form. Kolb goes on to explain how these activities even occur in so called ‘non-places’ as in the American suburbs. He makes a case through similar examples how multiple but interpenetrating enclaves composed of archipelagos of residences, roads, and institutions allow multiple ways of life within the seemingly homogeneous sprawl.

This thesis is not proposing to solve the problems Rem Koolhaas points out in his essay The Generic City. Rather, it is simply proposing that as our environment becomes an easy target with its generic, simple, and expected appearance, architects cannot overlook the context of process and urban morphology. Architecture is a visual field and architects inevitably work from intuition and site observations. In a bland, expected
environment, what can an architect's intuition work from? The only legitimate visual local precedents are those structures, or monuments, that residents have insisted not be torn down as it represents its history's identity. The problem with this notion is that even today it is still accepted as the current generations identity. In this globalized, fragmented, and virtual world, the identity of places has obviously changed. Today, architecture needs to find new methods of creating identity within the business-centered profession. As will be discussed in the following chapters, the city's logistical complexity represents the true identity and culture of a place. In a ubiquitous retail and service oriented environment, specific architectural moments of identity are often overlooked because their are so few of them today, and people are so busy being distracted by the activities and expectations within places that architectural objects become trivial nuances within day-to-day journeys. By turning attention to the much larger scale - the city - architects will better understand a specific local context, moments of identity will be revealed in unexpected ways, and an identity within a historical context will better ground the architect within the systematic processes that occurred over time. This will allow the architect to design within the system and respond to a specific local condition.

“Every object incorporates other objects just as it is itself incorporated within other systems. The [simple] object must always be considered in its manifold relationships to its milieu. Failure to account for this embeddedness cuts the object off from the events it generates and from the events that generated it.” 32
Endnotes

2. www.merriam-webster.com/
3. www.merriam-webster.com/
23. Koolhaas, S M L XL, 1248 - 1264
24. Koolhaas, Junkspace, 867
Research
Koolhaas's essay on the Generic City, as stated in the previous chapter, presented a reflection or condition of the contemporary city. As will be expressed in this chapter, Jean Attali's model explained in his work *The Roman System, or the Generic in All Times and Tenses* and his *Theory of 200%*, offers to provide a framework to better understand what a generic city is. Attali states that any synthetic or artificial city is created to fit within a larger system, to satisfy specific needs of a local situation, and to proliferate as it interacts with other cities within the system. Attali defines a detailed inventory of a generic city within the Imperial period - the Roman System - so as to suggest that genericness is not only a product of the current global transcultural system, as described by Koolhaas, but a "result of colonization, union, transference, growth, and settlement," which is directly comparable to the standardization of building typology, planning strategies, and infrastructures of today. His model expresses that although there are varying forms of 'system' within the history of urban environments, every city is unified under some single rule - democratic or monarchic. Described in this way, every city begins as a generic city. It is simply how it operates within the larger system that defines the level of genericness it assumes.

Attali suggests, "There is no original or copy of a generic city." Again making a comparison to the Roman System during the Imperial period, "the center of Rome is everywhere and nowhere. Aristides writes, one must travel months and years before reaching its ramparts. Interaction is a principle of variation, which tends to annul (or reverse) the relation between center and colonies. Could a given city become more beautiful, more richly adorned than Rome itself? In any event, the competition of all has become the rule for each. Rivalry is merely the expression of a self-organizing tension, and the principle that defines the emergence of a double quality: every city is 100% generic and 100% specific. It never assumes nor overcomes contradictions of ‘global’ and ‘local,’ it incorporates its own continuous variations (it is the entire city in each place where it is built, because it is born of the relations between all the flows that traverse it and its own generic armature)."

On the following page is an outlined method by the Harvard Project on the City Studio of the four basic elements that are necessary to understand for the building, proliferation and networking of a city.
1. The city is comprised of standardized parts arranged on a matrix. These parts are the standard equipment included in the container of each city and are easily identifiable.

2. The city is organized according to a series of general principles which are socially, culturally, and politically determined, and in most cases are manifested in clear architectural and urban examples.

3. The city is the relationship of constantly changing flows superimposed onto a generic template.

4. The city will be customized according to local topographical, climatic, or cultural conditions.

Attali states, the generic model is an “articulated system of movements in all directions, and its buildings, spread across the inhabited universe, are but the vessels of this system. It is like a prefiguration of the atlases of cyberspace.”\textsuperscript{5} This generic model is able to succeed or fail based not only on the availability or quantity of macro-infrastructures connecting it within the network, but through a variety of procedures allowing for these vessels to adhere to those infrastructures.

As an example in the Roman System, its basic armature would grow, deconstruct, or alter its kit of parts as a new network infrastructure were adopted. In the case below, two new vessels were created after the construction of a road connecting the small Roman city to other trade areas.
Imperial Roman System (R/OS) Jean Attali Model:

**Program:**
- arcus
- columna
- basilica
- cardo et decumanus
- capitolium
- forum
- aquae ductus
- limites
- viae
- templia
- centuration
- theatrum
- thermae
- materia
- argentus

**Network 360 AD:**

Is a specific Roman city any more or less Roman than Rome itself?
Global System (G/OS) Koolhaas Model:

Program:
- hotels
- event spaces
- parking garages
- "junkspace"
- retail / service
- corporate headquarters
- education
- government
- residents
- historic preservation
- monuments
- greenspace
- main street
- center / periphery
- freeway

Network:

Global urbanism is the product of a common set of transcultural ingredients.
Koolhaas believes that architects need to stop looking for a glue to hold cities together due to globalization, which continually reduces the need for physical space. As cities continually become increasingly fragmented and spread out, the traditional definition of urbanism begins to disappear. Koolhaas suggests that this removal occurs at the moment of general urbanization. To Koolhaas, this happened because urbanism could not keep up with the growing ‘bigness’ demanded by urban growth and demographic change. His suggestion is for architects to put away their melancholic notions of past urban spaces and accept the current architectural demand which is for taste and aesthetics. However, this mindset assumes that society needs to continue along with the generic process - accept Bigness, accept Junkspace, accept aspatiality.

Yet society today, at least in America, is enamored with the nostalgic.

A whole field within architecture seeks to preserve and protect buildings, objects, landscapes or other artifacts of historic significance. The U.S. government has even issued rehabilitation tax credits that apply to the costs one incurs for restoration or reconstruction of certain buildings. For rehabilitating buildings in service before 1936, the building owner receives 10% back as credit. For certified historic structures, 20% is credited. Further, planning departments still reference past public spaces as ‘town square,’ previous major thoroughfares as ‘main street,’ and a shrinking central greenspace as ‘the park.’ None of these references match today’s social structure, yet residents and the government continually make it economic and a source of revenue. Today, these past references simply drive tourism. However, as will be discussed later, tourism only acts to allow places to become yet another service, being consumed at an even greater rate as locals dress, act, and build anticipating business for their ‘identity.’ The historic is becoming one of those banal elements, but is still considered by tourists and residents to be the icons of communities and structures that give a place identity.

At this juncture, architects are in a dilemma. Striving to discover innovative methods for designing within specific contexts, those same contexts are in the process of being sanitized and wiped clean by ‘modernization,’ the business-cycle, and new forms of commodity-driven banalization. Either attempting to create an icon to instantly create an identity or confronting the dilemma with a methodology insistent on short-term lifespans, architecture today is either making
a visual statement or increasingly becoming a mechanism for the current economic condition. This chapter attempts to document and understand the mutations of urban form in relation to macro-trends and cycles; point out major architectural and urban vessels or relay-points that facilitate each new flow; and document the speed at which this construction and adaptation occurs in order to better understand the ‘local condition.’ Using the American city of Indianapolis as a case study to apply this generic model to, the following chapter will document the interface between Indianapolis and the American system.

By looking at the city’s history not as a singular snapshot, but as a series of histories or snapshots, different urban forms and speeds of urbanization will be identified with respect to these cycles.

Why it is difficult to identify the local condition today in a generic city is due to its interface with infrastructure at the macro-level rather than the micro-level. The macro-level includes infrastructure, public services, and urban armatures that connect multiple cities. Changes in this infrastructure develop national trends. On the other hand, the micro-level infrastructure, the tangible and intangible cultural identities developed between a person or a community within the built environment, once gave local communities definition and character. By adapting with national trends and not internal needs and customs, a place starts to appear like every other place. The goal of the following chapter intends to understand this interface of a city and the national macro-level infrastructure. The goal of this research is to grasp specific intensities of local adaptation with respect to external national or global flows, which will render the level of genericness in a place. Using this research, a method will be developed for an architecture that allows for these specificities to be expressed. In doing so, a new conceptual framework for architecture within this generic phenomena will be reached, as it currently is rather difficult to describe the generic condition in terms of traditional categories of architecture and urban design.

As will be exhibited throughout the rest of the chapter, the city of Indianapolis, in an effort to stay economically competitive, would exemplify the mutations and customizing operations Attali suggested were characteristic of generic cities. From facilitating national flows by implementing new modes of transportation or constructing new sets of buildings to facilitate those infrastructures, the changes in Indianapolis have coincided with national demands and trends in the U.S. since 1825, when the city plan was implemented.
PHASE 1: 1825

INITIAL URBANIZATION
MACRO INFRASTRUCTURE
In the United States, urbanization evolved in step with the economy. Since the seventeenth century, cities have been crucial to the development from a dependent, preindustrial economy to the advanced form of capitalism where cities operate as functional nodes in a global economic system. “During each major phase of evolution, new resources, technologies, and business organizations were developed and cities changed to accommodate the new economic order. In some cities these changes occurred sequentially and the outcomes were superimposed on the other, while in others the new economic system was not always appropriate or profitable.”

Although the beginnings of the American urban system can be traced back to frontier urbanization, relations to major trading posts along the eastern seaboard, and mercantile trade, the beginnings of the Generic City gained its roots with industrial expansion. In the early 1840’s, the transition from a trading economy to a mature agricultural and industrial economy was largely attributed to the arrival of new technologies and the introduction of new methods of industrial and commercial organization. With the improvement of agricultural productivity by means of mechanization, less labor was needed on farms, and the rural-to-urban migration rapidly increased which led to expanded urban centers. As new industrial technologies began to emerge, proximity to raw materials became a factor; therefore, towns and cities near specific resources grew extremely rapidly.

This growth in relation to raw materials was one of the leading factors in the development of what Knox and McCarthy categorize as the four newcomers of the American urban system. These categories were the basic foundations for an urbanization shaped by proximity to suppliers and markets. Knox and McCarthy state that many cities became either power sites, where industries that consumed significant quantities of energy could flourish; mining towns, where the introduction of coal-fired steam technology transformed many small Appalachian settlements into instant urbanized locales; and heavy manufacturing towns whose dependence on large volumes of raw materials dictated their productivity and development.

This specialization of towns inevitably led to the creation of a mobile network due to the demand of resources necessary for continual growth. To increase capital and accumulate greater profits, mining, power, and manufacturing towns eventually became interdependent as their specializations became commodified during the Industrial Revolution. This dependence led to the fourth newcomer of the American urban system, transportation centers. These industrial sites laid the groundwork in America for a system of movement, commerce, and expansion unrivaled by other developed countries. The development of steam-powered riverboats and the growth of the railroad system were central to the evolution of the new industrial economy and its new urban system. This relation between transportation technologies and economic urban development was critical in laying the foundation and the culture for future ‘generic’ growth.

With the railroad network extending to the Pacific by 1875, the ‘iron horse’ epoch had catapulted urbanization on a continental scale casting the remnants and memory of past frontier and mercantile development to oblivion. “The significance for economic development (and therefore for urbanization) was enormous. The railroad allowed divergent regional economies to develop into a national economy within which American enterprise could fully exploit the commercial advantages and economies of scale of a huge market and an apparently unlimited resource base.”
THE ARTIFICIAL CITY

[APPLICATION: INDIANAPOLIS]

1825 THE RALSTON PLAN
MICRO INFRASTRUCTURE
In comparison to the majority of towns across the U.S. that began as a transportation center, the founding of Indianapolis proved quite different. As most began at a node of transit confluence, a crossroad, river, or natural barrier, their economic development was due to an increase in commerce and in the number of settlers on the nearby transportation routes. They did not start as cities. They grew as a handful of people needed to stop moving. The settlements offered security and ready access to supplies. Towns evolved as more families discovered the advantages offered by centralized location and as an alternative to an agricultural occupation.

Indianapolis, in contrast, grew from the need for a state capital. It was an artificial city planted in the direct center of the state, virtually inaccessible either by land or river. It had a city plan forced upon nature. Its first settlers, confronting a malaria-ridden, muddy forest area, adopted an open plan, designed by an assistant to French architect Pierre L’Enfant, mimicking the basic conceptual premises for that of the nation’s capital 30 years prior. Accompanying the plan from the eastern seaboard included an American armature, mainly in the form of the Federal Style, which included civic structures and central monuments. These structure’s style, with its lofty Grecian and Roman aspirations, were the basic architectural infrastructures necessary to provide the hardware to communicate with other cities in the U.S.

As in any town and city in the early Republic, the founding generation consciously chose to associate the nation with the ancient democracies of Greece and the republican values of Rome. Similarly, the plan for Indianapolis called for 100, 12-lot blocks bounded by broad streets in a 1-square-mile grid system. Four intersecting diagonal avenues were then superimposed over this system to create a radial street pattern around the large central circular square located at the cardo et decumanus. Using Roman architectural vocabulary, this point was at the major perpendicular axes of the city defining the geographical and spiritual center of the city based on solar orientation. Drawing further from the Roman system, a revised plan issued for the city in the late nineteenth century called for a prominent columna, or monument used to commemorate a military or legislative victory, to be placed on the circular commons for civic ceremonies and celebrations.
Ralston remarked after laying out the city plan that if it was ever built, Indianapolis would be a beautiful American city. The image, depicting the city in 1871, suggests that the city not only became a reality, but rapidly expanded beyond the square mile Ralston planned. Indianapolis was "successfully installed" and "proliferation" began.
PHASE 2: 1830-1839
CANAL SYSTEM
MACRO INFRASTRUCTURE
THE CANAL SYSTEM

[ APPLICATION: INDIANAPOLIS ]

1830 THE CANAL SYSTEM

MICRO INFRASTRUCTURE
The Canal Building Craze

With economic successes and population surges in New York City, Buffalo, and many other towns on the western part of New York State following the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825, a canal building boom occurred elsewhere in the United States, especially in the Midwest. With more than $3.5 million dollars allocated for the completion of the Central Canal of Indiana alone, this major public investment was anticipating greater ease of transport between cities and towns in the American Operating System.
With Ralston and others expressing optimism for the future of Indianapolis, city leaders were empowered to raise the city's national reputation. Situated at the confluence of Fall Creek and the White River, the city was expected to be located on a major thoroughfare north from the Ohio River. Within the first week, the river proved to be hardly navigable after several vessels more sophisticated than rafts and flatboats grounded on their way north from the Ohio. To make up for this failure, the state invested its money on water transport improvement projects.

**Seeing the successes of the Erie Canal, the Indiana General Assembly put forth their first major piece of legislation for an internal improvement program.** Allocating $10 million for a canal system, the city, with no natural landforms acting as boundaries or constraints against design strategies, used their unlimited space for this new development. With no major body of water or natural resource for the city to tap into, it had to extend plans from the Erie Canal to the Ohio River to have any success. While cities with matured economies, like Buffalo and New York City, found success with the completion of the Erie Canal, the new city of Indianapolis had little room for failure, mainly because the project was funded internally.

Following the Panic of 1837, the State of Indiana financially collapsed. Barely avoiding bankruptcy by handing the project over to creditors, the project ended in total disaster for the state. Of the 400 miles planned for the system, only nine miles of canal were built and put into local operation. Just two years into use, the canal was completely abandoned.

This failure was an early indicator of the cities genetic ‘generic’ makeup. Although the city took precedent from the Erie Canal, its 400 mile goal would have created an extremely unique condition in the United States, as most other cities water infrastructures did not have to span distances as far as the proposed model put forth by the city of Indianapolis. However, since the project was funded internally and the city had no financial or infrastructural foundation to begin with other than an urban plan, it failed.

The generic city can not physically create internally unique conditions. It is dependent on its operating system, in this case the American Operating System.

Using this initial attempt as precedent, the city would begin a long process of adherence to this larger system and because of this, it would always adapt to the most successful and pervasive infrastructural network.
In 1902, what was left of the canal project was still visible on the west side of the city.
PHASE 3: 1837-1839
NATIONAL ROAD
MACRO INFRASTRUCTURE
THE NATIONAL ROAD

APPLICATION: INDIANAPOLIS

1837 THE NATIONAL ROAD
MICRO INFRASTRUCTURE
Remaining a small village almost impossible to get to or get out of, the ‘corduroy’ of the National Road reached Indianapolis by 1845 bringing travelers and considerable trade to the still undeveloped city from the prosperous Ohio Valley. As the first federally funded road planned across the United States, it was designed to run east-west to **connect the capitals of the Midwestern states to Washington**. These and other roads in the city at the time, however, were little more than marked trails through the countryside, especially after the railroad was introduced. As the image suggests, it proved to be a major growth corridor at the beginning of the twentieth century with the introduction of the automobile.
Capitol Building
1831 - 1877

In 1831, the Indiana General Assembly approved construction of its first statehouse, a structure constructed in every American state capital. Funded by the sale of the Ralston planned lots of land in Indianapolis, a city commission offered a $150 prize to the architect who could design the best statehouse. Drawing from the Greek Parthenon and the U.S. Capitol Building in D.C., this assemblage pictured above was the winning design and construction was completed by 1835. Although popular after its completion, by the 1860s this Greek Revival architecture had already fallen out style, and was already seeing signs of disrepair. Condemned in 1876, the government abandoned the building in the mid-1880s, using basic office space in the city to operate until the completion of the new capitol building constructed in the renaissance revival style in 1888 as pictured to the right.
PHASE 4: 1853-1920
RAIL SYSTEM
MACRO INFRASTRUCTURE
American expansion in relation to other developed countries of the time was unique in that the regularity and consistency of spacing between sizable cities with large populations were in much closer proximity than many large cities in Europe. In the United Kingdom, London was almost 7 times the size of the next largest city in the country, and all cultural and national expression was drawn from London because of this disproportionate distribution of population. However, the diversity of resources and the explosion of transportation towns and service centers aiding the penetration of new railroad lines in the early 1900’s tied together the loose-knit collection of specialized towns of manufacturing, mining, and power. A uniform urban spatial pattern had been created as a result of technological capabilities and industrial development. Towns evolved to match the distances that could be covered by river and rail. Numerous smaller settlements offering limited services were evenly distributed across the landscape, while larger cities offering a greater variety of services had greater distances of separation.

The impact of a continually expanding national economy was the hierarchical development of a growing marketplace. Small, large, and intermediate sized towns were born based on service range. “Walter Christaller, a German geographer, observed this spatial patterning in the United States and postulated a uniform topographic landscape, uninterrupted by rivers, roads, or canals. He observed that accessibility was a direct function of distance, in any direction, and that the American urban system was solely based on elementary principles concerning the range and threshold of goods and services.” The diagram to the right exhibits the urban geographical central place theory. Each dot representing a central place, or city, and the surrounding hexagonal radius being their market. Initially, geographers circumscribed the central place in a circle, but what became immediately apparent was the gaps between circles which portrayed areas that were either underserved in model one or overserviced in model two. Since that array was unrealistic, the theoretical diagram expressing the idealized geometry of the urban system was adjusted to account for these areas. Now the boundaries between markets suggested a competitive service zone.

The creation of such patterning based on rail and water transportation would inevitably allow future technological advances in the technology and engineering sector, specifically the car and the highway, to expand and contract markets based on their ability to adapt to an evolving marketplace. From today’s perspective, this theory seems to be quite static as it is unresponsive to changes in population densities, consumer spending power, transportation technologies, or communications systems. Each purchase made in this global economy is the result of a “complex geography of international specialization and trade involving vast quantities of products whose origins range from makeshift kitchen workshops in the less developed countries to giant electronics factories in South Korea and the perfumeries of Grasse in France.” However, in the context of the physical realm, what Knox and McCarthy failed to recognize is that this global impact still has an impact within the initial spatial quilted interlock and aids in the new construction of synthetic environments.

This initial model is one of the major reasons for the development of the American landscape. By creating a vast uniform hierarchical spatial patterning based on mobility and linkage, a faster form of transit, specifically the automobile, was able to shrink distances between cities, towns, and villages consolidating the market and allowing a new service and retail sector to develop in the latter part of the twentieth century. The success of this new market was dependent on the initial rail and water industrial patterning, however once it became the primary sector of the economy, a rippling in the patterning took place creating a ubiquitous yet fluctuating urban model.
SPATIAL PATTERNS

APPLICATION: INDIANAPOLIS

1853 "RAILROAD CITY"

MICRO INFRASTRUCTURE
Lösch found evidence of this spatial theory around the cities of Indianapolis and Toledo. Many of Lösch's early studies were concerned with consumer welfare and specialized markets. Expanding on Christaller's work in his book *The Spatial Organization of the Economy*, Lösch began with a system of lowest-order (self-sufficient) farms common in the state of Indiana in the early 1850s. Indianapolis was able to develop into a center of commerce and transportation in the Midwest as 10 of the major rail lines passed through the city center. However, with a sharp increase in railroad mileage within the state, allowed it to function initially as a distribution center for agricultural products. The increased central location activity, Lösch mathematically derived several central-place systems, including the three systems of Christaller's. Lösch's systems of central places allowed for specialized places. He also illustrated how some central places develop into richer areas than others. Indianapolis' central location and central location in a triangular-hexagonal pattern. From this smallest scale of economic activity, the three systems of Christaller's. Later, in the nineteenth century, which were regularly distributed in Indianapalos in the way to new western development.
As Lösch demonstrates in his network market model, the corridors from Indianapolis to these secondary towns received greater attention and economic activity thus allowing a highly concentric pattern of city-rich and city-poor areas spread out in wedges around Indianapolis. This simple formula, along with an ideal center-to-town market model, exhibits the level to which Indianapolis acted in accordance with the prevailing urban development standards. Built just south of a high-order national city, Chicago, Indianapolis and its surrounding towns grew customarily as a second-tier regional center, specializing in facilitating movement between its own peripheral towns and surrounding regional centers. Indianapolis’ high level of conformity to early American urban place theories allowed it to become a popular destination for urban geographers and market testing for the greater part of the twentieth century.

Brian J. Berry and John B. Pen conducted a study of central places in the southwest quadrant of Iowa in 1988. Although they note a five-level hierarchy within market areas, the diagrams highlight only regional capitals, cities, and towns. As western expansion rapidly accelerated in the late 1800s, rail lines characteristically would extend westerly in horizontal patterns as can be seen in the diagram below. However, market areas still maintained concentricity to a regional center, highlighting the power of the American economic system on urbanization and the level of conformity of large and small populaces to the national urban hierarchy. Secondly, this hierarchy also ensures that larger cities and populations will be centers of innovation as a steady stream of workers and residents suggest less economic variability and greater consistency. Thus, smaller cities and towns must depend more on adopting innovations that diffuse from other larger centers. It is this dependence that initiated widespread mimicry and adoption of regional center blueprints for economic success.
Railroads had been discussed in Indiana since the 1820s and several companies were chartered by the state legislature in 1832 and afterwards; however, no lines were completed until the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad reached Indianapolis in late 1847. Thereafter, railroads connected the young state capital to the rest of the nation. Seven separate lines entered the city from all directions, connecting the city to other major markets including Terre Haute, Richmond, Peru, Lafayette, and even Cincinnati, Ohio. Like the canal system, Indianapolis quickly modified itself in accordance with the external demands of its local condition. Due to a strong demand of proprietors, the city’s ample land, flat terrain, and central location in the Midwest, early railroad companies worked together to build a union station, the first of its kind, in 1853. This new ‘relay-point’ or vessel connected the lines with each other for greater ease and safety in freight and passenger interchange. This allowed lines coming from each direction to connect in a singular five-line station. Over the next decade, cities mimicked this innovation, but its early success in Indianapolis quickly allowed it to become the nation’s fifth largest railroad hub and network.
This new movement and mobility facilitated by the city brought new populations and a booming economy. By 1880, at least a dozen rail lines radiated from the city. Just eight years later, when the new Union Station, a Romanesque Revival structure, was ready for use, 80 passenger trains a day from 16 different railroads arrived at the station. By 1900, after earning the mantra “Railroad City,” city leaders took advantage of added traffic by constructing a Belt Railroad that would link all major lines entering the city. Once constructed, the number of trains daily entering Indianapolis increased to 150. One city official proclaimed “our city will be girt about with a cordon of industries like the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, telling us the angel of prosperity is going before us and leading us on.”

The map shows Indianapolis as a steam railroad and interurban center. By 1900, 43 independent lines entered the city: 18 steam, 25 interurban. 495 passenger trains entered the union station daily. A belt railroad surrounded the city, expediting shipments and furnishing factory sites. One-fourth of the population of the United States was within a radius of 300 miles of Indianapolis. Even though the facility supported unprecedented numbers of trains upon its completion, its use started to dwindle in the mid-twentieth century. The city hoping to preserve its identity as a rail hub, placed the building under historic preservation in 1980 and converted it into a festival marketplace. Just 10 years later after financial trouble, the city converted the space once again, using it currently as a banquet hall.
With an expanse of land and an efficient and pervasive transport and communication network, industrial capitalism in America in the early 1900’s continued to gain vitality. Through the simple replacement of iron with steel rails on major corridors, the initial advantage of allowing quicker transport and heavier loads led to a greater concentration of industry in larger cities and the beginnings of a standardized process in handling the railroad network. It was at this point in American urbanization that a national uniform mindset and spatial arrangement had a firm grasp on the landscape and culture. The natural removal process of exclusive frontier and mercantile settlements with their own unique methods of commercial, administrative, religious, and military functions was being replaced by an egalitarian national identity. This observable process created a framework of conformity that disregarded small niches and locales of cultural heritage. Many cities, especially those in the Manufacturing Belt, saw increased urban growth and development due to improvements in sanitation and public health. These advances were a direct result of greater mobility and increased dialogue and communication nationally. Metropolitan centers and their surrounding market towns and villages became settings of highly specialized and profitable manufacturing industries. This success was in part due to the initial advantage principle, whereby businesses have advantages in larger cities because of the availability of labor, larger and more affluent markets, and external economies. However, this principle applies more to European cities where towns and villages surrounding a city such as London conform to trends and methods most successful in the city. On the contrary, American conformity was on more of a regional scale and not between a metropolitan center and its own surrounding towns. The level of conformity in America could be observed based on a city’s economic success. If cities were profitable, there was a certain level of technological and economic advancement. Methods and trends from center to center were replicated. "Local specialization became geared to national markets rather than local markets, and this increased specialization provided the basis for increased commodity flows between the towns and cities of the Manufacturing Belt, thus binding the region more tightly together."  

Similar to today’s economy and the saturation of the market by mega-chains and corporations, the success of the Manufacturing Belt began to stifle economic growth in other regions of the nation that could not compete with the level of industrialization, linkage, and expertise. Instead of retreating to a more submissive, dependent state within the regional economy, a modification process took place. New industries and methods of production, especially in the agricultural industry, took place in local areas as the growth of population in core areas demanded more goods. Smaller locale companies also began adopting core production methods mimicking trends in the core to create their own economy as a method of conformity. These economic strategies opened up new corridors and cities not yet tied down by investment, transportation, and other existing infrastructural and external economic costs associated with central location in metropolitan areas. As a result, there was continual economic fluctuation between city centers and their peripheral growth. As newer industries began growing on the periphery, the pervasiveness and availability of the rail network and the spatial proximities of towns and villages to regional centers allowed a deindustrialization to take place due to new investments outside the core. As cores lost business, they too modified their techniques and practices to conform to new standards. It was this geographic seesaw movement in response to a deprivation of capital in one place and success in another that kept the American urban system in a continual updating and conforming process.
ECONOMIC FLUX

APPLICATION: INDIANAPOLIS

1853 “RAILROAD CITY”

MICRO INFRASTRUCTURE
The successful completion of the much anticipated railroad touched off a railroad-building boom within the city and the state. To facilitate new influxes of travelers and provide an attractive form of settlement, from 1850 through 1900 when rail corridors became the dominant infrastructure within the landscape, major public social spaces, theatres, and storefronts defined the physical character of the city. As was typical for many cities in the late nineteenth century, construction and planning was oriented toward classic examples. Structures were built to address the public realm. Monuments and civic buildings expressed power and hierarchy and their landscape flaunted this notion similar to the Renaissance piazzas, Roman processional streets, and Parisian squares. Places of ritual drew from the Greek temple precinct or the medieval cathedral square. Because of this mindset, many of the structures built often would mimic many of these classical styles, given titles preceded or followed by Neo- or Revival, hinting toward origination: Neoclassical, Renaissance Revival, Gothic Revival, etc. However, what gave America a unique style in comparison to Europe was the juxtaposition of these classical examples against the newest trends of industrialization. In 1910, the southside of Indianapolis could be considered an Archetypal landscape for urban-industrial development.
Soldiers & Sailors Monument 1902 - Current

Indianapolis, though much smaller than many other American cities at the time, was able to set up its own traditional, classic armature. By the end of the nineteenth century, the city devised plans for a central icon to replace the abandoned Governor's Mansion on Monument Circle. Completed in 1902, a 284 foot neoclassical oolitic, limestone, and bronze Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument was erected to honor veterans of war. As suggested above, this structure, just 21 feet shorter than the Statue of Liberty, provided a simple, straightforward relationship between centrality and surrounding geographic entities. Before the rise of telecommunications and the growth of the global economy, similar formal spaces and monuments as is typical in many European cities created a hierarchical center providing a sense of reassurance, location, and unification within many American cities. For the majority of the following century, these ceremonial centers would serve to anchor and provide a greater sense of identity within Indianapolis and many other cities. Their grandeur and monumentality provided a convincing physical signal within cities, inviting increasing influxes of visitors to the city daily due to greater use of the national railroad infrastructure.

Washington Street “Main Street” 1900 - 1970

New stores with window displays began sprouting within the city. Indianapolis became the place to shop for much of the growing population of central Indiana. New banks appeared in the 1850’s providing a financial base for economic growth. With a strong push from the Board of Trade to attract distant manufacturers, businessmen passing through town on route to western land found promise in the city with its superior rail connections, low cost of living, and central location. Soon enough, industrialization became the driving force in the city’s economic development. Jobs attracted newcomers, and by 1880, nearly 10,000 industrial workers produced $27 million worth of goods, making the city the leading industrial center of the state and 20th in the nation.

Postcard 1910: European Transfer
Identity portrayed using European icons
Claypool Court Hotel
Accommodation
1890 - 1965

Seeing opportunity for providing housing accommodations for transients en route west. One early Indianapolis businessman constructed the Claypool Hotel on the northwest corner of Washington and Illinois streets and renovated the Columbia Club as seen to the left. Decorated in Victorian style, these ‘posh’ inns were completed in 1890 at a cost of $75,000.00. Its cost of $2.00 for one room per day, including meals, proved attractive to travelers, but was denounced by the National Hotelman’s Association for pampering the public. Increased construction in the city revolved around this concept of accommodation as large public gatherings, including national conventions, were anticipated.
As the city became increasingly prosperous, the construction of the Marion County Courthouse in 1876 was intended to express the optimism of the city. With a statuary carved of “cartouches, elaborate iron cresting, finials, and central clock tower, the ornate building cost roughly $1.4 million.”

Like many U.S. state institutions in the late nineteenth century, the style of choice was Second Empire—a mixture of French Gothic Revival and Italianate architectures. Indianapolis was no different. This style was pervasive in many commercial buildings, especially psychiatric hospitals due to the style's adaptability to their size and functions. Courthouses built in this style before Indianapolis' construction were found in Baltimore, Maryland; Hillsdale, Michigan; Rockport, Texas; Hannibal, Missouri; New York; New York; Boston, Massachusetts; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Washington D.C.; Des Moines, Iowa; Chicago, Illinois; and Berkeley, California. Combining a large central tower with a steep mansard roof, the City-County Courthouse in Indianapolis was a clear expression of decorative features, but it was also an expression of the common American city image. Like any structure built with these ornate qualities, the structure was intended to appear expensive, grand, and impose power. This investment, while fulfilling at the time, failed to last a century due to changing attitudes and a lack of space for government offices.
English Opera House
Theater / Opera
1880 - 1948

Becoming a central location for east-coast entrepreneurial expansion west, one particular New York banker, real estate agent and politician, William English, brought one of the greatest amenities of large cities to Indianapolis in 1880 - the stage. Coupled with a variety of new hotels, his English Opera House, modeled after the Grand Opera House in New York, spanned the entire northwest quadrant of the downtown Circle just north of Union Station, and became the clearest expression of the cities newest definition as a town of passing and accommodation.
The English Opera House, Theater & Opera (1880-1948), with its plush leather seats, gas-chandeliers, marble staircase, and carved woodwork, was the largest stage in the city. Not only did it attract city residents but also new influxes of troops, business entrepreneurs, and immigrants. The public realm was injected with a fresh dynamic as the industrial and manufacturing economic driver of the city was complemented with a more posh and trendy form of entertainment. The four-story high structure provided a variety of commercial spaces on the ground level and comforting upper level rooms with wide windows and exterior balconies that allowed famous actors, politicians, and U.S. Presidents to appear before crowds on the Circle below. Many actors from New York, such as Lawrence Olivier, Sarah Bernhardt, and George M. Cohan, performed regularly in what was viewed as a growing western market.
Not only did Indianapolis adhere and act as a major hub for the American rail infrastructure, it also adhered to the prevailing classical and federal architectural styles and monuments as demonstrated on the previous pages. However, the display of architecture did not end there. The Indiana War Memorial Plaza Historic District, as pictured to the right, with its 24 acres of parks and recreational spaces, also contained a variety museums, monuments, statues, sculptures, and fountains, making the Indiana State capital second only to Washington D.C. in acreage and number of monuments dedicated to veterans.

Memorial Plaza
Greenspace, Memorial, Courthouse, Library
1890 - Current

Successfully luring, the congress chartered American Legion from New York City at the beginning of the twentieth century. The mall, or Veteran’s Plaza, was constructed as the city’s memorial grounds and acted dually as a major social and public area within the urban fabric, just north of the central monument. Bound by the city library (neoclassical), War Memorial (modeled after the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus), federal building (neoclassical), and a variety of other monuments including the Pro Patria, which was the largest sculptured bronze casting ever made in America in 1929, the mall was constructed to promote patriotism and national security, similar to the national mall in D.C., as well as provide commitment to Americans who have served in the armed forces.
As industry located along the belt line south and west of the city, more factories, more workers, and industrial suburbs sprung up. As suggested in previous images, specific generic relay-points (urban spaces) and generic vessels (structures) were constructed to better facilitate the rail network. Because a generic city, like Indianapolis, adhered to prevailing macro infrastructures (rail system) with such conviction, urban shifts, fluctuations, and issues that arose because of the railroad system were ever more present and noticeable. Since interurbans allowed for greater expansion of the city, larger numbers of workers and visitors arrived and left the city on a consistent basis. The city’s economy needed to adjust in order to not only compete in the national manufacturing industry but also with the growing peripheral mass. This led to new forms of service and accommodation at a variety of scales. With more theaters, pubs, and restaurants infiltrating the city and complementing that of the English Opera House and Claypool Hotel, a diversified economy was born. No single firm or industry dominated the city’s economy, and as a result, no unforeseen downswings to one industry or company would wreak havoc on the entire city. Their strategic planning was preventative. The city was able to insulate itself from many minor economic events, thus reducing the impact of major fluctuations. Trading innovative and flashy qualities for proven conditions presented to them, the city was able to gain greater economic security than other surrounding cities with specialized markets. This proved not only beneficial from an economic standpoint but it would also prove to attract many Americans looking for a small city lifestyle but with all of the benefits of the big city activities - manufacturing, retail, and service. This diversified economy would prove to greatly impact the city as it progressed, as it was shaped by a pattern of growth that would be relatively moderate, rather than radical or abrupt. Its pace of mutation, like many generic American cities, would prove to enable its people to adjust and accommodate change. It was convenient, proven, accepted, and comfortable.

City leaders, understanding how important the railroad was to its growth, consciously accepted the most current macro infrastructures or external economic proposals that would continue to bring the city attention and prosperity.
PHASE 5: 1920 -1985
AUTOMOBILE & INTERSTATE
MACRO INFRASTRUCTURE
“The whole world knows a lot,” was his answer.

It was characteristic. For many weeks the new model had seemingly been completed; but in spite of performances which made his associates impatient to begin production, Mr. Ford himself held back. It was not that any pet scheme of his had

“If a car is to serve its purpose,” he added, “it must be low-priced—not cheap, but low-priced. If it isn’t, you can’t sell a lot of them; and if you can’t sell a lot of them, you can’t manufacture them at lowest cost. In order to set the lowest possible price, you must have the greatest possible production; and in order to assure
The pattern of diversified manufacturing prevailed into 1900 and solidified Indianapolis as a major manufacturing and transportation center. With the development of the interurban system, a new mode of transportation allowed Indianapolis to expand, tying the city to its outlying neighborhoods. However, just as quickly as rail movement took its place in metropolitan movement and national trade, the automotive industry came to the scene and the city instantaneously began converting old mills and factories for auto manufacturing. As a major rail hub and checkpoint for entrepreneurial ventures out west, Indianapolis seemed to find ways of not only attracting visitors but also keeping them. Several entrepreneurs and craftsmen in the early twentieth century began experimenting with automobiles in 1890, producing a handful of vehicles, powered by battery and limited in range.

Arthur Newby and Charles Test, originally successful bicycle manufacturers, created the National Motor Car Company in 1900, introducing gasoline-powered cars in 1904, but continued to market electric cars until 1911. The company exemplified car manufacturing in Indianapolis, as they deliberately concentrated efforts on high-quality, expensive cars, never trying to mass produce. With an auto industry content on producing elegant cars, they needed a location to test their new cars as the rutty, underdeveloped public roads were inadequate for testing an automobiles performance. Many company's came together to design the first large American auto track for both private testing and occasional racing between manufacturers in the city. Carl Fisher, a pioneer in the business of selling automobiles in Indianapolis, believed that the success on the track would translate into showroom sales.
This concept proved to not only become a success but an icon for the city. Opening in 1909, a 2.5 mile track was laid out on farmland five miles northwest of the city center. Fisher, formed the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Company, and invested his original sales earnings to create a racing/testing track surface made of 3,200,000 ten-pound paving bricks to prevent auto accidents.

Dubbed “The Greatest Spectacle in Racing” in the early 1990s, the continued success of the track eventually led to the development of a new town, Speedway. Together with Indianapolis, the general populace benefited from ideal labor conditions and high proportions of incoming American-born residents. Unions played no role in the business vision of Indianapolis and it quickly became the fourth largest automobile manufacturing city in the nation, following Detroit, Toledo, and Cleveland. Three of America’s most elegant cars were produced in Indianapolis - the Marmon, Stutz, and Duesenberg models. In 1920, Indianapolis led the nation in the manufacturing luxury, high-powered automobiles. These ‘Indy’ cars, given the nickname as the ‘Indy 500’ garnered much attention, were regarded like ‘yachts - elegant playthings whose price did not matter.”
As suggested by Attali in *The Roman System, or the Generic in All Times and Tenses*, and again by Koolhaas in his writing *The Generic City*, the city can reconstruct itself and abandon what does not work. “Born of the relations between all of the flows that traverse it and its own generic armature,” Indianapolis could not continue its relatively unique market as an automobile industry. By choosing not to adopt Henry Ford’s mass production techniques, its auto production dwindled into nothing. The most successful car coming from the Indianapolis area was the Duesenberg and its business failed after unprofitable efforts in the early twenties. It was at this point in time that Indianapolis knew it could not stand alone. Reverting to Ford in 1915, as part of Henry Ford’s plan to build branch plants to avoid freight charges to local markets, the company was able to produce 25,000 cars per year overwhelming and crushing any remaining competitors in the Indianapolis area. Detroit did not have any advantage in location, engineering, or skilled labor, but it offered superior financial support and it rapidly surpassed Indianapolis. However, what did last was the automobile and the subsequent mass consumption, commodity-driven culture that came with it.
Henry Ford's vision of mass production, coupled with mass consumption, was realized in the automotive industry and later by the consumer industry. Made possible by a combination of lower prices and higher wages, automobile ownership became a greater possibility for many middle and lower-class Americans in the early 1900s. This increase allowed for greater infill in the suburbs between the streetcar corridors and the railroad periphery towns. By 1925, Ford's factories were producing 9,000 cars each working day, or one every 10 seconds. 

The arrival of the automobile, a landmark achievement of mass production, not only transformed the way Americans lived, but it created a mobile society increasingly dependent on a skyrocketing demand of mass-produced consumer goods. Since mass production required mass consumption, the introduction of advertising in American culture aided an even greater transformation of social norms and expectations. Advertising, greatly bolstered during World War II in an effort to reduce automotive use to create a greater supply for troops, gained success in the years following the war in a weakened economy. To quickly turn around the economic scene, automobile production was encouraged and promoted, however this tactic created a new integrated process through which companies would create value for customers and build strong customer relationships in order to capture value from customers in return. Companies would manufacture problems just to sell solutions. All these factors combined, made the American consumer over-reliant on pre-packaged experiences. Year after year, American's wanted the up-to-date 'stuff' that superficially defined their personality and needs. Materialism, opportunism, selfishness, hedonism, and narcissism eventually led to expendability and abandonment.

Fordism's demise in 1970's was accompanied by the slow growth in Western economies, rising inflation, and a growing unemployment, but the significant means of production were never eradicated. Mass-production and standardization made an impact far beyond the immediate economic imperatives of individual producers: "mass production set in motion a train of events that were to have profound consequences throughout modern society and transform not only the economic sector itself, but also the entire way of social and cultural life over the following decades." 27

Today, the spatial impact of a mass consumption economy is visible in almost every corner of the American urban environment. Goods and 'pre-packaged experiences' American's bought yesterday becomes tomorrows trash, and the environment — natural and built — is what is most effected by this consumerist attitude. Waste becomes a land use in and of itself and it is handled uniformly throughout the country. Objects large and small are pushed into the waste stream to be either recycled or channeled to a permanent resting place. This is true on a much larger scale with housing that is no longer habitable, manufacturing facilities left idle, and agricultural fields reverted to forests or deserts. "Abandonment is the key marker of, and often an early indicator of shifting cultural, technological, spatial, and economic forces over decades." 28 It was these large urban and rural spaces that truly characterized the American culture in the late twentieth century. The shift created by society from the over-use of objects to their abandonment demonstrated how quickly lifestyle patterns and value sets had changed from that of the previous century.
Ford Dealership Commodityization 1914 - Current

According to the Department of Transportation, there were 4 motor vehicles in use in the United States in 1894; 16 in 1896; 8,000 in 1900; almost 470,000 in 1910; over 9 million in 1920; and nearly 27 million in 1930. Today, the United States is home to the largest passenger vehicle market of any country in the world. As of 2006, there were an estimated 500 million passenger vehicles registered in the US. To facilitate higher volumes of sales, dealerships like the one pictured below spread across the nation. The Ford dealership network developed quickly and soon thereafter other auto manufacturers created their own networks making dealerships an industry standard. In 1914 the Ford company alone spread its vehicles to 7,000 dealers. By 1970 almost 31,000 new car dealerships were operating. As of 2009, roughly 400,000 Ford dealerships are located within the United States.

Junkyard Commodityization 1914 - Current

On a daily average, automotive recycling plants typically process between 150 to 200 cars per day. Currently, the automobile is the country’s most highly recycled consumer product, having an average lifespan of 13 years. This suggests that the newest automobile trends and styles are present on the road once every decade. The automobile recycling industry recycles almost 11 million cars each year. Roughly 75% of each car is recyclable, while the other 25% is left to waste. The infrastructure supporting this process includes not only the last vehicle owner, but the dismantling facility, the local metal shredder and steel mill, as well as the large expanse of landfill. There are currently more than 8,000 facilities nationwide certified to dispose of used cars.
Consumer Products
Commoditization
1914 - Current

The mass production and consumption environment spread into every corner of the American market. The Coca-Cola Company alone impacted the domestic environment by advertising its way into the homes of almost every American. In a 2004 study, the average person living in the United States drank more than 3,000 ounces, or 412 8-ounce drinks, of Coca-Cola per year. This roughly equates to a production of 125 billion cans per year to serve the U.S. alone. Taking into account other large Coca-Cola markets in the countries of Great Britain, Canada, Romania, Brazil, Spain, Argentina, and Australia, an estimated 100 billion more cans were sold.
After the introduction of its Speedee Service in 1948, the fast food restaurant spread rapidly across the U.S. Currently there are 31,000 McDonald’s outlets worldwide, operating in more than 119 countries on six continents. More recently, this global empire opened a location on the Piazza della Rotonda in Rome, Italy. That location is on axis and faces the entrance to the historic Pantheon built roughly 1,800 years ago. In place of the monuments classical planners and artists erected to celebrate local values, commercial and corporate structures fill market niches and quickly multiply as market segmentation accelerates. To increase sales, McDonald’s multiplies locations. With a brand recognition, the golden arches provide reassurance to customers, thus encouraging sales - different location, different context, same place.
Translation: architecture as commodity

The Marxist Theory, used to describe transformations of once unique products, not considered in economic terms, into a market that can be bought and sold due to increased competition, is integral in defining the transformation of urban environments in the twentieth century. As will be discussed, the impact of the American Interstate System with progressive Modernist ideologies attempting to mimic the successes of the automobile with architecture allowed a generic visual purity to define many American urban spaces and facilitate a standardized consumerist routine. As architecture increasingly became a game for profit, the once monopolistic competitive market, implemented in cities to provide a civic identity, was being substituted for similar products and aesthetics at lower costs.
As new interstate networks were being devised to seize full potential from the creation of the automobile, restaurants like McDonald’s were adopting Ford’s production-line mentality to create its Speedee Service System which was meant not only to serve its customers faster but also to allow it to be replicated across America, and soon the world. No differently, architects too were adjusting their styles and techniques to adapt with the industrial mentality as well. With new possibilities to cover more ground than ever conceived before with the railroad, the built environment was quickly becoming a blur as small pedestrian commercial and social spaces were reached at a more rapid pace. As it became the only form of movement, the advent of Modern Movement in architecture increasingly tore space away from localized places by fostering relations between ‘absent’ others, locationally distant from any given situation of face-to-face interaction. ‘In conditions of modernity, place becomes increasingly phantasmagoric: that is to say, locales are thoroughly penetrated by and shaped in terms of social influences quite distant from them’.

As Kenneth Frampton suggested, ‘instead of applying the industrial mode of production and machine imagery toward producing universally satisfactory urban design which would house a more egalitarian society, these landscapes had become synonymous with inhumanity, desolation, and devastation. Modernism wanted to liberate mankind by creating a new environment to live in, but eventually it was transformed into a giant enterprise for the degradation of the human habitat.’

The creation of such a place can only be contributed to the pioneers of Modernism, specifically Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Walter Gropius, and Le Corbusier and their relentless intent on establishing a new architectural style that could represent modern times just as Classical and Gothic did for their own eras. This intention is the reason the built environment lacks any sense of local identity. The acceptance of a mass-produced, mass-marketed, mass-consumed object as the fundamental icon defining a society and a time, led to an architecture lacking ornament and hand-made detail. In Le Corbusier’s The City of To-morrow and Its Planning, his fascination with the automobile is quite evident and a clear indicator of his personal reflection of the early twentieth century. His journal-like entry reads as follows:

In the early evening twilight on the Champs-Elysees, it was if the world had suddenly gone mad. After the emptiness of the summer, the traffic was more furious than ever. Day by day the fury of the traffic grew. To leave your house meant that once you had crossed your threshold you were a possible sacrifice to death in the shape of innumerable motors… Motors in all directions, going at all speeds. I was overwhelmed, and enthusiastic rapture filled me. Not the rapture of the shining coachwork under the gleaming lights, but the rapture of power. The simple and ingenious pleasure of being in the centre of so much power. We are a part of it. We are part of that race whose dawn is just awakening. We have confidence in this new society, which will in the end arrive at a magnificent expression of its power. We believe in it.

A clear relationship exists between the automobile and architecture as architects and planners from Europe and America began confronting, and continue to confront, the challenge of accommodating and designing for the car within the built environment. The advent of Modernism brought about a design method that focused on society as a whole versus perceived meticulous and exhaustive differences beyond specific sites, cultures,
and locales. Le Corbusier used the period to investigate appropriate relationships between humans and their machines and in that effort he effectively sought to explode pre-existing urban forms and diagrams to articulate the new order of the modern industrial city.

From his Citroen House which was intended to be a 'house like a car' to his idealized Radiant City, Corbusier attempted to implement the Taylorist principles and systems of managing production similar to Henry Ford. Although this relationship would predominantly stay in a more symbolic or theoretical form as few of Le Corbusier's later designs were actually made in this way, these concepts were important in fueling one of the central tenants of Modernism – mass-produced architecture.

This fascination of Corbusier could be seen in many of the photographs as he often carefully placed an automobile in the foreground so that the architecture could possibly assume the car's qualities by close association. Despite the architect's best efforts, the static nature of architecture would never quite match the dynamic nature of the automobile. It did however prove far more possible for the automobile to provide a direct influence on the design process. The dimensions of Le Corbusier's iconic Villa Savoye of 1930 were determined by the turning circle of the motorcar in which the inhabitants would arrive, a gesture that was analogous to the way in which classical architects had derived their system of proportion from the human body in the pre-industrial era. Saarinen also attempted to make this connection in his design for the GM Technical Center. On a huge site, he attempted to develop an architectural aesthetic at a scale appropriate for a car-based society and could only be comprehended when traveling around the site in an automobile. He furthered the design by implementing neoprene gaskets to hold in place the infill elements in the curtain walls to express the auto company's focus on metal-working, precision, and mass-production. Saarinen stated, "like the automobile itself, the buildings are essentially put together as on an assembly line, out of mass-produced units," he wrote. "Down to the smallest detail, we tried to give the architecture the precise, well-made look which is a proud characteristic of industrial America."

In Learning From Las Vegas, and in projects such as Fire Station No.4 in Columbus, Indiana designed in 1967, Venturi explicitly sought to draw lessons from an urbanism that was designed to be consumed from inside a moving car. Largely under the influence of these progressive architects, what is now considered the ‘kitsch trash’ of the American roadside was once widely accepted not only by Americans but also within the high culture of architecture. As is easily identifiable today, this architecture is considered the American modern vernacular.

American architectural responses to the car were therefore always more likely to be rooted in practical considerations of how to accommodate it than in theoretical concerns about the future it might produce. Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House of 1909 is famous for articulating a symbolic relationship between the dwelling and the automobile. The relationship was also relevant because it suggested that house design during the twentieth century made provisions for a central car court or covered garage or parking area. This was clearly the route by which the owners and their guests expected to arrive and depart, and the apparent 'front door' became little more than a hidden service entrance around the far side of the house.

Ultimately, it was the shift in urban scale caused by the car that altered the pre-industrial human environment. As many traditional city's architecture was place-bound and linked to a condition of experience and traversal - mainly the horse and pedestrian - under industrialization such cities had become unmanageable as the machine demanded an urbanism of rigid geometry planned to facilitate workflows, improve productivity, and open the ground plane to increase park space. Although these parks planned by Corbusier ultimately became space for parking and driveways, the ideals of clarity and simplicity balanced against the implied freedom of an open space did. As shown below in a proposal sketch by Mies van der Rohe for Alexanderplatz in Berlin, the architecture became a drastic shift from a humanizing scale and traditional planning styles to one of an abstracted form that would begin to bring new articulation to external spaces.
THE MODERN MOVEMENT

[ APPLICATION : INDIANAPOLIS ]

1920 “CROSSROADS OF AMERICA”

MICRO INFRASTRUCTURE
With mass-production in full swing and a variety of other service oriented businesses on the rise, like many other city in the U.S. a commercial architecture arrived in cities such as Boston, New York, Cincinnati, and Philadelphia. Daniel Burnham and Louis Sullivan were gaining a respected, well-known reputation for leading a small American architectural movement known as the Chicago School or Commercial Style. Closely paralleling the time period of the early Modern Movement in Europe, the architecture took a different turn than that of the Modernists, mimicking the qualities of the classical column - first floor acting as a base, the middle floors as the shaft with little ornament and detail, and the upper floors acting as the capital with a variety of ornament and capped with a cornice. Promoting the new technologies of steel-frame construction in commercial buildings, this architecture, which was adopted by most cities at the turn of the twentieth century, was not adopted by Indianapolis until the late 1920s. At this point, it had matured from its early stages of innovation and Burnham was on to larger, more respectable projects. Looking to make profits, many working in the office of Daniel Burnham took on commissions in Indianapolis. These architects, giving the city a taste of what the construction industry had achieved in the early twentieth century, simply regurgitated completed projects and implemented once contextual specific details in a variety of places, including Indianapolis.
State Office Building
Office & Parking Lot
1961 - 1993

Juxtaposing the capitol building, the new state office building represented one of the earliest forms of the Modern Movement in Indianapolis. As part of the expansion project for the capitol building, many abandoned factories were demolished. This new structure, transforming the appearance of the west side of the city from industrial to modern, housed a variety of new functions, including additional courtroom space. A tunnel, running beneath the new parking lots supporting the government buildings, provided smooth transitions between buildings during cold climates.

Monument Circle
Commercialism
1920 - 1970

By 1920, the downtown city urban sphere of the city and circle had been transformed its central node. As seen in the postcard, the city was not quite ready to depart from its previous identity, found within monuments, axiality, and classical references.
Critical to the development of Indianapolis in the mid-twentieth century was the rise of the banking industry. Increasingly necessary as the surpluses in the agricultural economy became marketable, the banks were able to finance new businesses, whose newly constructed buildings began adding density to the city. This quickly gave rise to and a diversified economy. More banks, department stores, and other businesses thrived. L.S. Ayers and Company, the William H. Block Company, L. Strauss, and Charles Mayer were among the largest department stores to invest in this new central Midwestern hub. These stores and businesses were important not only because they represented a matured business economy, but mainly because the products, fashions, and methods were unprecedented in the city and the nation.

The proliferation of these new establishments gave footing to a growing commodified environment.
The accumulation of industrial pollution and health concerns; and the modernist obsession with fresh air, large windows, and open balconies provided an alternative to the old ways of building. Insistent on dissolving of the barrier between indoor and outdoor, architects, acting as society’s physician, learned from the automobile and mass production that efficacy could be achieved if the urban plane could be wiped clean. Modernist architecture took on a left-wing, social-engineering ideal which was concerned with improving the living conditions of the working classes. Construction took on a language of health. Previous styles and places were, by implication, unhealthy and primitive. As buses acted as the major form of public transportation in the early twentieth century, many of the traditional urban spaces could still be used as intended - a coexistence of a wide variety of people and functions. Americans used to express a talent for creating these public multi-purpose spaces; however as the automobile became increasingly popular, the economics of retail shifted, and the new healthy, transformative society ensued. Spaces became single-minded and excluded the openness of public space.
A J.C. Penney Company building replaced the English Hotel/Opera House in 1951. Nathaniel Owings, born in Indianapolis and partner of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, designed one of the first city buildings that was a clear expression of the modern movement. S.O.M. was heralded at the time as one of the best American architectural firms to help popularize the International style during the postwar period. During a 1957 visit, famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright commented, “Indianapolis, like every big city is doomed. The only good building I saw downtown is the one used by J.C. Penney’s downtown, which is a little radical. It probably was designed by some out-of-town man.”
“By the 1950s, both the Marion County Courthouse, a massive and ornate Second-Empire style building, and the Indianapolis City Hall, a massive and more subtly ornate Neoclassical style building, were filled to the rafters with political officeholders and bureaucrats. In an early consolidation move, the city and county decided to construct one office building to hold both municipal and county employees.”

The City / County Building's International Style - modern, tall, and boxy as shown in the image - was a typical American architectural adjustment replacing much of the Second-Empire architecture that predated it. The new building, reminiscent of many federal buildings of the 1960s with its high-rise tower, juxtaposed against shorter, more human-scaled wings and adjacent outdoor plaza, was a fairly common layout used across the U.S. in the Kennedy and Johnson eras. By 1975, fifteen years after the old courthouse’s demolition making way for the new City/County Building, the New York Times architecture critic, Ada Louise Huxtable, wrote in praise of the former’s “rusticated walls and Renaissance orders with carved pediments and statuary, elaborately mansarded and crested.” In equal measure she condemned the new City/County building, claiming its “consummate dullness is almost a negative achievement.”
Although life on the road fueled the American spirit and defined the American Dream, the consistency of the urban fabric was slowly on the decline. In the 1940s, the federal government launched its massive road-building program for the nationwide Interstate Highway System. Motivated by the needs of military defense in the event of nuclear attack and the desire to foster economic growth, the new system was linked to the urban centers of the nation. The Interstate System, creating a need for a complex network of secondary roads supplementing the highway, quickly began to destroy the high streets and nostalgic avenues that were once the locales of social meaning and identity of the metropolitan cores. To further promote these initiatives, city planners were rarely up against opposition. Public land was seen as empty and free. The water’s edge was cheap, parks had no owners to do battle for them, and freeways would give new contours to city waterfronts with impunity. All of a sudden, highways seemed to be clearing urban and rural land in a nonchalant fashion. Thousands were forced to relocate. Where there was potential for auto movement, no urban or suburban land would stand in the way, the most direct path was accepted.

As Jane Jacobs states, the ‘combustion engine, as it came on the scene, was potentially an excellent instrument for abetting city intensity and at the same time for liberating cities from one of their noxious liabilities - the horse-and-buggy....Automobiles offered places railroads could not go, and for jobs railroads could not do....[Where we went] awry was the replacement of each horse on the crowded streets with half a dozen mechanized vehicles, instead of using one mechanized vehicle to replace half a dozen or so horses.’

In a Gestalt figure-ground relationship, whereby the highway is the figure, the ground would consist of all services associated - the roads, arterials, gas stations, oil companies, parking lots, repair shops, dealerships, warehouses etc.- as well as a complete restructuring of the American business and social environment. These acted as the vessels within the generic model. Instead of major civic buildings acting as a generic armature, service-oriented structures and spaces began sprouting up within the city to support a new commodity-driven lifestyle. When Jacobs describes many of these urban consequences created by the automobile, it is rather the ground she is referring. When most people look at the automobile, they are looking at surface qualities - color, body, speed, engine - however, only incidental attention is ever paid to its service environment and its infrastructural network. When the car was created, it never occurred to buyers or sellers that this new luxury might generate a larger ground than anticipated.

The street, which was once considered a multipurpose space within the city, was becoming, in effect, extinct as institutions and high-density residential areas within the city began to move to the surrounding cheaper land found outside the city. When the institutions left, so did the retailers and local business owners as foot-traffic no longer fed their economic vitality as it did in the 1920s and 1930s. As medical, social, and other services moved out of town, advertising and the city newspaper also began to lose business. Consequently, the twentieth century city became a graveyard of the auto age, while new suburban tracts increasingly gained popularity.

This graveyard was primarily represented by large quantities of parking lots and garages. 'In 1946, only 70 cities had parking requirements in their zoning plans. A decade later, there were only a handful of American cities without parking requirements. In addition, roads were widened, and one-third of America's cities were hard topped to house the car.
It’s no wonder the downtown property fell by one-quarter in the thirteen largest metropolises. Parking lots and roads made gap-toothed wastelands of historic neighborhoods. Downtown hotels were slowly edged out by motels and picture palaces by drive-in movies; historic neighborhoods succumbed to wind-whipped high-rises and cities became cadavers. Domino by domino, demolition took over the nation’s cores. The urban carnage devoured America. Simultaneously, rail traffic was on the decline — passenger cars were deteriorating and its terminals becoming uninhabitable. Rails diminished role in urban mobility had a strong effect on older suburbs, common in early twentieth century American cities. They became areas of urban blight, creating large gaps between the city center and the newly formed suburbs. Making matters worse, these older suburbs were also the designated zones for interstate implementation. As ring roads and other large infrastructure blasted through these neighborhoods, a large sector encircling the city became the quintessential example of anti-space or non-place as described by Marc Auge. When these areas could no longer attract tenants, they became parking lots. Suddenly, a belt of parking lots and highways created by urban renewal surrounded the high-rise core. Traversing space now mattered more than creating place.

The signing of the 1956 Interstate Highway Act, coupled with a rising economy, officially killed rail in America. With more than 42,500 miles of four-lane divided highway, urban expansion ensued. By 1970, an average of a million new houses and two million new cars were bought each year. The city and the national government decidedly moved in a new direction. No longer was street interaction and local business success a necessity. The automobile had become the city and the city the automobile. Eisenhower’s decision to invest in highways, promised a never-ending stream of roadways and economic dependence overseas. By 1958, rail’s passenger and freight traffic was less than half of what it was in 1920. As each interstate was completed, thousands stopped using rail. It also gave rise to the trucking industry. By the early 1960’s, trucks were hauling the same cargo that was once carried by train. Automobiles and their urban integration effectively broke all ties to the traditional European city. America had created a new urban environment, and the automobile was its center of attention. By 2000, there were approximately 4 million miles of public road in the United States.
HIGHWAY NETWORK
[ APPLICATION: INDIANAPOLIS ]
1920 "CROSSROADS OF AMERICA"
MICRO INFRASTRUCTURE
To further the implementation of a new machine aesthetic, the landscape with which these buildings were constructed was also drastically being altered. Entering the mid-twentieth century, the Indianapolis streetscape was wiping clean the remnants of the interurban system. Once a thriving infrastructure throughout Indiana, comprised of more than 600 miles of track and 300-plus rolling stock connecting the city to much of the surrounding Indiana markets, it began its decline in 1930 and eventually was completely abandoned by 1941 due to its inability to compete with the automobile, its planned interstate system, and the Depression. Arterial roads to interstates were widened, and tracks once located in the middle of the city streets were covered with pavement to allow for six lanes of auto traffic. In the early 1940s, this width of road was unmatched by any other city in the nation; this was mainly due to state financing trying to keep that nostalgic street identity, which included public transportation and the pedestrian friendly high streets, intact.
From the beginning of the twentieth century through the completion of the inner loop of the interstate system in 1976, Indianapolis underwent a tremendous spatial reorganization in an effort to better embrace society’s dominant form of transportation. Much of the downtown core had been flattened and turned into parking lots. As the image to the right suggests, the city in the late 1950’s, still without much vertical growth, seemed little more than a scattering of buildings. Before the city even had a chance to mature, more than a third of the population had already moved to the periphery. What was left was a network of streets, alleys, and parking lots. The image below expresses the city’s ready capacity to serve the auto-centric lifestyle as Veteran’s Plaza was paved to make room for more parking.

Parking Lots 1948 - 1991

“Traffic arteries, along with parking lots, filling stations, and drive-in movies, are powerful and insistent instruments of city destruction. To accommodate them, city streets are broken down into loose sprawls, incoherent and vacuous for anyone afoot. Downtowns and other neighborhoods that are marvels of close-grained intricacy and compact mutual support are casually disemboweled. Landmarks are crumbled or are so sundered from their contexts in the city life as to become irrelevant trivialities. City character is blurred until every place becomes more like every other place, all adding up to Noplace.”

43
The signing of the 1956 Interstate Highway Act coupled with a rising economy, officially killed rail in America. With more than 42,500 miles of four-lane divided highway, urban expansion ensued. By 1970, an average of a million new houses and two million new cars were bought each year. The city and the national government decidedly moved in a new direction. No longer was street interaction and local business success a necessity. The automobile had become the city and the city the automobile. Eisenhower’s decision to invest in highways, promised a never-ending stream of roadways and economic dependence overseas. By 1958, rail’s passenger and freight traffic was less than half of what it was in 1920. As each interstate was completed, thousands stopped using rail. It also gave rise to the trucking industry. By the early 1960’s, trucks were hauling the same cargo that was once carried by train. Automobiles and their urban integration effectively broke all ties to the traditional European city. America had created a new urban environment, and the automobile was its center of attention. By 2000, there were approximately 4 million miles of public road in the United States.
Earning the mantra, “Crossroads of America” in the mid-70s, the city fully accepted its new identity as auto sales skyrocketed and an auto-dependent society ensued. By 1976, seven interstate “spokes” radiated from the city of Indianapolis (an eighth planned to be constructed in 2011). This number is more than any other state in the U.S. The plan, appearing as a ‘hub-and-spoke,’ exemplified the ideal layout for interstate design as traffic was filtered into a circumferential 55 mile long highway known as I-465 that was constructed in less than three years to allow for smooth transitions for travelers. This system of ‘crossroads’ created an alternative to that of the railroad, speeding movement from Indianapolis to other major cities within close proximity - Chicago, Detroit, Cincinnati, Louisville, and Dayton.

With such a central position within the U.S. and relatively easy access, the city became a distribution and logistics hub for national trucking companies and auto travel. According to the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, more than 50% of the U.S. and Canadian populations lie within a day’s truck drive (12 hours) of Indianapolis, and roughly 75% within a day and a half (18 hours). The Indianapolis region ranked first among metro areas in interstate access and it quickly became home to a variety of transportation industries and because of this, air travel also saw increased activity in Indianapolis during this time.
US Population and Growth Trends
Change in county population, 1970-2030

Each block on the map illustrates one county in the US. The height of each block is proportional to that county’s population density in the year 2000; so the volume of the block is proportional to the county’s total population. The color of each block shows the county’s projected change in population between 1970 and 2030, with shades of orange denoting increases and blue denoting decreases. The patterns of recent population change, with growth concentrated along the coasts, in cities, and in the South and West, are projected to continue.

Interstate Access Network
1976 - 1991

Indianapolis is intersected by more segments of interstate and U.S. highways than any other metro area: I-69, I-70, I-74, I-65, I-465, I-865, US 40 and State Roads 37, 67, 36, 136, 421, 135, 31, 431 and 52. Like many cities located in the Midwest, good interstate access will allow for easy access to a large majority of the U.S. population. Indianapolis is located within a twelve hour drive of 50% of the U.S. population as demonstrated in color in the diagram to the left. Because of this, the city became a major hub for shipping services. Although Indianapolis is the largest metropolitan area not located near a large body of water in the United States, it is still a major transportation center due to its geographical location. With four railroads still in operation for freight services, seven interstate highways, and the eighth largest cargo airport in North America, Indianapolis is able to offer shipping costs among the lowest in the nation. Because of these costs, the global corporate logistics and courier giant, FedEx, located their second-largest hub in Indianapolis.
The Fletcher Place Neighborhood District, a predominant location for Irish and German immigrants in the late nineteenth-century, began its decline with industrial encroachment in the late-1800s, early 1900s, but saw its most dramatic deterioration with the implementation of the Interstate 65/70 corridor on the east side of the central business district in 1976. Expressing the uncontrollable reality of interstate construction in the United States, and especially Indianapolis which seemed to care more about adhering to the plans and layouts of interstate design instead of protecting legitimate urban neighborhoods, a large organization was formed just one year after the construction of the interstate to prevent similar acts from occurring in the future. Taking a large majority of land and houses in the area, an organization was created to revive the fragmented neighborhood. Community leaders got their way as the neighborhood was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982. Today residents still receive tax credits for restoring and reviving this district of the urban core.
By 1960 car ownership skyrocketed in the city. Every middle class family had a car. Traffic led to the widening of streets, creation of even more designated parking areas and structures, and development of new building types for fuel, service, food, and lodging. Gasoline stations, restaurants, and auto courts lined the 465 loop luring customers by distinctive lighted signage. Even the growing number of skyscrapers in the downtown core that had formerly identified themselves with painted signs resorted to new, bright roof-top lights.

The new roads and interstates diverted long-distance travel and freight from the clogged, pedestrian city streets, however it also fed a suburban growth leading to decentralization. After the completion of the interstate highway system, Indianapolis proved to be virtually unproductive without federal funding. Continually jump-started and redefined, first by the railroad and second by the automobile, its economic successes were a direct result of geographic location, as both of these transit networks brought people and resources to the city.
PHASE 6: 1970 - [ ]
EVENT CITY
CITY AS DESTINATION
MACRO INFRASTRUCTURE
The introduction of the internal combustion engine and Fordism brought decisive changes to the balance of forces that governed economic urban development in the early 1920s. In *The Machine that Changed the World*, Womack, Jones, and Roos state that in the early twentieth century, the auto industry transformed the fundamentals of how 'we make things.' Elaborating, the authors concluded that the way we created goods inevitably 'shaped the way we bought, the way we thought, and the way we lived.' The first transformation was from craft production to mass production. The historical importance of Ford to capitalist methods lay in the manner upon which he built upon Taylorism and mechanization. He formed a market based on economies of scale and scope, and eventually gave rise to giant organizations built upon functional specialization and minute divisions of labor. By spreading fixed expenses over larger volumes of output and creating a distinct division of labor within the corporation, unit costs were effectively reduced and it allowed for the production of several products rather than a single specialized one. It was this simple economic principle created by mass production that led to Ford's hallmark innovation of standardization, allowing a relatively easy exchange of components and processes to expedite the manufacturing, repair, and interchange of parts.

With these increased levels of economic integration and organization, there came major visible implications on patterns in urban development and social geography. The massive influx of automobiles and similar mass production markets began competing with existing systems, specifically rail, initiating a second phase of expansion impacting the city periphery. Suburbs and infill surrounding cores became the new option in urban living, transforming social patterns and movement in the city. Not only did this impact urban environments, but it also had a strong impact on the agricultural sector as tractors and greater mechanization of the farming process increased farm sizes and put many rural workers out of work. The formation of ghettos were created by the migration of black southern farm workers to industrial cities, and as competition not only between these new workers, immigrants, and existing workers for jobs intensified, competition between companies increased as well. Economic integration and corporate economic ideologies addressing the masses created a process of company mergers. Companies would buy out smaller competitors or their external input companies. The development of the economic sector into larger corporations grew to the point that mergers would take place between companies unrelated in market and simply for profitable gains. By the early 1920's, "1 percent of all companies accounted for nearly 1/2 of the country's productive capacity."

In conclusion, advances in capitalism and its manufacturing processes brought with it a profound reconstruction of urban spaces. Increased decentralization of jobs and population within the urban system, away from the core and towards centers on the periphery, led to metropolitan consolidation of only the strongest companies. 'Headquarter offices and research and development laboratories tended to become increasingly localized in metropolitan areas - a result of corporate reorganization following mergers and acquisitions'. This change in the pattern of cities, becoming characterized as control centers with a high proportion of corporate headquarters changed to reflect the growth of cities like Atlanta, Houston, Los Angeles, and Dallas - an increasing permanence of corporate headquarters and a decreasing local identity sent to the periphery.'
As cores lost business, they too modified their techniques and practices to conform to new standards. It was this geographic seesaw movement in response to a deprivation of capital in one place and success in another that kept the American urban system in a continual updating and conforming process. Within each decade, urban areas would have to reinvent themselves to adjust with external pressures. This industrial development fueled by capitalism allowed the introduction of the automobile, Fordism, and suburban infill to take advantage of the existing proximities and markets and begin a process of reorganization and adaptation over even greater areas.

What was produced in the United States was a motorized, free-moving, democratic, consumption-driven society. The sprawl of the freeway eventually led to the proliferation of the second aspect of the American dream - single-family home with a front yard for the public and a backyard for more private affairs such as cookouts. The automobile quickly transformed the notion of the city from a place for progression and the good life, to the place of only economic activity. The 'good life' was now on the road and in the once rural lands surrounding the city. The city and its hinterlands, service areas, and freeways now could be viewed as a text for the American lifestyle. Social norms and expectations were manifested in the infrastructural and development patterns created by the freeway.

The effects of the automobile on architecture are not only found in modernism, but also in the architecture of the suburbs. In the 1940s, the predominant method of addressing the outward spreading of low-density, auto-dependent developments was the commercial strip. Acting as the façade of the street, these service-oriented self-contained shopping plazas, typically designed as a collection or row of joined buildings sharing a large common parking lot, faced major traffic arterials and rarely addressed the surrounding communities or neighborhoods. Their sole function was to provide easy access for accelerated lifestyles.

By the mid-twentieth century, one could literally travel any distance and pass by a suburban commercial strip. Facilitating sprawl by creating greater convenience for ‘out-of-towners’ or those who commute into town for work, and encouraging an artificially similar to the consumer products, or commodities, stocked on every shelf in almost every store, architects abhorred this ubiquitous typology with its endless seductions and banal repetitions and have for generations fought to bring individuality back to the built environment. Similarly, the strip developers have also perfected their art at lower costs and with little resistance. They built on plots assigned to them, used the cheapest materials, and produce flexible structures, compared to the overly specialized ones the ‘real’ architects were producing. By 1980, the commercial strip had arrogated itself over more land and with greater vitality for growth than the total output of the generations of architects who expressed such a distaste for them.

“...The degrading facade of suburbia, the shameful introduction to our cities, the scourge of the metropolis. Subcityscape consists of elements which cling like leeches to all our roads, accompanying them far out to where there was, once upon a time, something called a landscape; subcityscape – consisting of gas stations, shacks, shanties, car lots, posters, billboards, roadside stands, rubbish, dirt, and trash…spread their tentacles in all directions, overgrown regions, states, and country.”

Wanting to address these issues Gruen designed America’s first centralized shopping centers. Although he was only able to complete a few of his proposals before a halt in construction...
due to World War II, it was during the postwar period where his design was fully realized and manipulated across the U.S. in an effort to supply shopping and services to a growing suburban development.

Initially modeled as a "dumbbell" mall – department stores anchored by an outdoor pedestrian mall – Gruen was hoping to create better planned downtowns, offering a centralized element within dispersed suburban subdivisions. Gruen in particular found the mall as an opportunity to re-urbanize the new peripheral growth. Like Le Corbusier, Gruen thought he had solutions for our new automobile dominant society. His solution would 'counteract the phenomenon of alienation, isolation, and loneliness," he wrote. Ironically, his solution would become known for increasing that withdrawal as it created single-function centers in which their one and only purpose was to encourage people to buy. The design of his Southdale Center near Minneapolis, which opened in 1956, the first covered, climate-controlled space, replacing that of the open-air, dumbbell approach initially designed, was believed by Gruen to become the automobile age's most celebrated architecture.

As these new structures defined the peripheral growth, it was the urban center that became disenfranchised and abandoned. As the auto-based society continued to create vast pockets of surface parking lots, the one-time urban center was now nothing more than a scattering of corporate building stock. Once considered a place by many sociologists, or a space that encouraged multiple activities, some commercial, some recreational, metropolitan areas were reduced to single-function structures similar to the periphery. While the more traditional form of urbanism was created because of the diverse set of activities in one place, Koolhaas proclaims that urbanism is dead because of its loss. One could no longer register themselves in a collective environment. Place and identity was reduced to corporations and branding.
GEOGRAPHIC SEESAW

[APPLICATION: INDIANAPOLIS]
1970 "AMATEUR SPORTS CAPITAL OF THE WORLD"
MICRO INFRASTRUCTURE
Indianapolis, destined for sprawl as it attracted people who wanted suburban living, saw its metropolitan area’s population double from roughly 400,000 to 800,000 since 1970. Further, from 1970 to 2000, the population relatively stayed the same in the downtown metropolitan core but its statistical area, which includes surrounding towns, quadrupled the cities population as the greater Indianapolis areas population is estimated at nearly 2.1 million residents making it the 14th largest city in the U.S. and the third largest city in the Midwest behind Chicago and Detroit. With the prospect of better schools and housing, the tax base developed rapidly as developers bought up farm land and found ways to deal with the restrictions environmental groups were trying to impose for the sake of water and local habitat. The result was miles of land carpeted with houses. Cul-de-sacs, a variety of speed limit and zoning requirements, a nonexistent public transportation system, and few sidewalks characterized this development. With the private vehicle facilitating all forms of movement between work, the store, and home, roads grew wider, highways were continually planned, built, and elevated to minimize congestion at all costs. *Older residents bemoaned the loss of country living. Newer residents kept arriving for new inexpensive living alternatives. No one was happy with local stores closing and the traditional landscape disappearing, but they enjoyed the conveniences.*
Indianapolis saw increased suburbanization in the 1950s. As shown in the diagram to the right, which actually reflects today’s current spatial organization, the red dots indicate the first four malls to be constructed in the Indianapolis area. All of these malls were created before the I-465 loop was finished in the late 1980’s began to divert retail business from the downtown core. These malls geographic orientation gravitated toward cardinal points of the expanded residential environment and on average just 6 miles from the center of the city. At the start of 1950, “downtown department stores accounted for 90 percent of sales in the city. By 1972, downtown sales had dropped to 18 percent.”

The success of shopping malls in Indianapolis is best expressed by the success of mall developer Melvin Simon and Associates. Recently renamed to Simon Property Group, Inc., Melvin and Herb Simon, both born in Indianapolis, began buying and renovating malls in the 1960s in Indianapolis to make them a more profitable retail and entertainment centers. They had so much success between the 70s and 80s in Indianapolis that the now S&P 500 company is the largest public U.S. real estate company employing more than 5,000 people worldwide.
The company currently operates from a variety retail real estate platforms using Indianapolis as its testing grounds and has been the top shopping center developer in the United States since 1985. “It currently owns or has an interest in 387 properties, comprising 263 million square feet of gross leasable area in North America, Europe and Asia.”
“Dancing in the streets of Paris...”

...dancing in Southdale Center, near Minneapolis.”
GRUEN’S PLAN: re-urbanize
Recreate community and the nostalgic public realm found in pre-industrial cities by allowing for an interplay of programs, varying spatial transformations, and an emphasis on window displays.
In a small town outside of Chicago in 1916, architect Arthur Aldis designed the first business district to be laid out specifically to accommodate motor vehicles. What inevitably became known as the strip, this building typology scattered across the landscape servicing a growing peripheral mass. As shown in one of the previous diagrams, roughly 1 million of Indianapolis’ population (statistical area) is accounted for in the metropolitan core and surrounding towns. This suggests that of the total 2.1 million (2010), more than half, 1.1 million, live in what Sze Tsung Leong defines as ‘Control Space,’ or space that is ‘calibrated, assessed, predicted, optimized,’ depending on an area’s lifestyle, market area, and income. This area is functional, convenient, and one of the most common facilities in the American landscape.

Typically ranging in size from 90,000 to 200,000 square feet, big box stores, or ‘value retailers,’ derive their profits from high sales volumes rather than price mark-ups. These large windowless, rectangular single-story buildings, with their standardized facades and acres of parking, usually locate near highway interchanges. They aid the time deprived society by offering low prices and great convenience. However, this building typology—like older malls—and then from other recently built shopping centers and big box stores is continually in a state of alteration and adaptation. Between 1990 and 2005, the amount of store space in the United States doubled. Retail space will be sitting vacant, according to some estimates. That’s about 1.4 billion square feet, or 50 square miles, of empty store space, ringed by roughly 150 square miles of useless parking lot.
As the traditional city core continually dwindled into a mirage of its previous self, the city planning department in 1965 began to devise new plans to attract people back into the downtown core.

**Question:** How do you attract people away from the conveniences of the periphery?

**Answer:** Bring the successes of the periphery to the metropolitan core to create a hyper shopping/entertainment hybrid.
in the mid-twentieth century, the television transformed nearly every physical condition—work, school, culture, etc.—into an abstract ‘nervous-based condition.’ The dominance of the television in postwar America effectively mediated one’s experience within their environment. Just as a culture grew out of the infiltration and prevalence of the automobile, so too did one for watching television. In 1947, there were 4,000 televisions produced. Just six years later, there were 14 million. This jump drastically altered the way data and information was communicated and consequently left the physical environment dependent on what the television was able to transmit. Many sources of knowledge transfer were now completely digital.

Starting in the mid-1970s, downtowns again found themselves adjusting to a market dictated by transparent virtual technologies—email, faxes, cell phones. Struggling to meet the needs of yet another invasive cultural fad, cities understood that these new digital technologies reduced many urbanites to merely spectators. As people were able to watch live spectacles through a feed that would allow them to stay within the comforts of their home, suddenly being at the event or game was unnecessary. The success of event city was not in its ability to host events, but in its ability to mesh the real and the synthetic. It was the integration and merging of the digital and physical that perpetuated a lifestyle that screamed for a balance of the intangible—media—with the tangible—activity and event.

Finding vitally reconstructing themselves as entertainment centers staging the ‘real’ events found on television, however insulting it may be, the concession to that of the spectacle made the cities approach much like that of the Disney theme parks of late 1970s. Disney’s concept was to create an ‘ever-changing destination committed to keeping the experiences exciting and new.’ This strategy was given a more formal name of urban renewal, but what was most important was that it expressed that cities had finally recognized their peripheries as a critical mass and the only method of competing or drawing people back to the center was to adopt similar spatial luxuries which originally lured people out of the urban cores. Becoming a trend in the 1980s, the city began to import the movie theater complexes, shopping malls, and the luxurious sports stadiums in an effort to create a compact center of activity. Using the current financial crisis as a gauge, the cities that remained relatively economically unaffected were those who adopted this mentality.

Cincinnati in particular, one of America’s first big inland cities rivaling the larger coastal cities in size and wealth in the early twentieth century, became home to many large historic districts and Italianate architecture. Because the city was so successful, it was viewed as one of the first pure American cities as it did not import European influence as did many prior cities on the coasts. However, at the turn of the twenty-first century, its growth had slowed considerably, mainly because of all the cultural and historical districts it had hoped to maintain. Unlike generic cities, when the interstate system came through Cincinnati, entrance and exit ramps had to mold within specific restrictions. In generic cities, the interstates dictated new growth. Secondly, when the urban renewal strategy was pitched to the city, one of the major suggestions was to incorporate shopping malls in the downtown area to bring people back into the Central Business District. Due to the numerous legislative restrictions, mainly in the form of zoning ordinances, impacting the retail environment to prevent the Larry Flynts of the world from corrupting the downtown environment, retailers withdrew their interest and found open arms on the periphery. More recently, without enough high-end department stores willing to adhere to the cities staunch requirements, many of the downtown malls,
especially Tower Place, are nearly empty. Of the 70,000 square-feet in the center, half of the retail spaces are vacant and another quarter are near closing. The city effectively lost a lot of business because of their preservation constraints. Understanding its mistake, the city has tried to lure in Macys and Saks Fifth Avenue through a variety of subsidies and just agreed to build a permanent casino near the downtown core that will consume roughly 20 acres – both decisions putting the city in even greater financial risk. Since demand drives generic cities, they never have to worry about preservation or financial risk. The strategy chosen had been proven. It was simply a matter of import.

The old infrastructures - water, rail, auto - were all physical, materially concentrated projects creating a civic visibility and presence. This newest infrastructure - Image and Information - is built on systems, alliances, standards all to aid in the equity of a visual signature. Even though most of the inner workings of this infrastructure are calibrated and networked digitally through the internet, it still has a physical impact on the city and the built environment. In the case of the American Operating System, it has led to massive decentralization and dispersion. As a society, humans are resembling the primitive nomadic tribes of the past, whereby specific activities and behaviors were not fixed to their physical settings. The city, now a center competing with a variety of other centers in its periphery, has had to brand itself through sporting teams, major events, and entertainment to stay alive and relevant. In effect, every city is in the business of not only making itself, but marketing itself.
EVENT CITY
CITY AS DESTINATION

[ APPLICATION : INDIANAPOLIS ]

1970 "AMATEUR SPORTS CAPITAL OF THE WORLD"
MICRO INFRASTRUCTURE
While many cities had to construct their professional sport venues on the far edge of town in an effort to preserve desired urban qualities due to the sheer size of their construction,
Indianapolis used or created open space in its core.

Sporting Events
Event Spaces
1974 - [ ]

Market square arena (left) was constructed in 1974 as the first attempt of the city to revitalize the downtown core. At the time of construction, it was the fifth largest arena in the U.S. and was the largest swedler dome ever constructed. Finding success with their new NBA franchise, the Indiana Pacers, the city constructed the Hoosier Dome (bottom left) in 1984 in an attempt to lure an NFL franchise, as American Football was increasingly becoming more popular. Bringing the Baltimore Colts to town in 1985, the stadium with its luxury suites, state of the art communication system, and 60,500 permanent seats also began hosting religious conventions, the Pan American Games, the NCAA men’s basketball and indoor track and field finals, High School Basketball Finals, and the World Gymnastics Championships. The Indiana Tennis Center, constructed in 1979, has hosted world-class athletes, such as John McEnroe and Pete Sampras, at the RCA Championships since 1988.
M-F : 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Business as usual.

6 p.m.: Transformed by spectacle.
6 city blocks closed for pedestrian access only.
Since 1977, Indianapolis has zoned more hotels, museums, restaurants and stadiums within walking distance of each other than any other metropolitan area in the United States, in downtown Indianapolis. Because of this, the city has molded itself into an ‘event city’ or as the Indianapolis Department of Commerce suggests, “The Amateur Sports Capital of the World” hosting more than 400 national and international sporting events, attracting 4.53 million spectators, 215,000 participants, and $2 billion dollars in revenue from 1977 to 1991.

Spectacles fuse communities instantly. Nothing succeeds like excess.

– Oscar Wilde
Mark S. Rosentraub, Professor of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University, has studied how downtown sports arenas have helped revitalize the central core in cities like Indianapolis, Los Angeles and San Diego. Finding special interest in Indianapolis, he states,

“From an economic impact standpoint, having the Indianapolis 500, the Brickyard 400 and the Formula One races are like having multiple Super Bowls every year, an impact larger than any city in the United States enjoys from a sports venue by far.”
In addition to the NCAA, which is the largest organization in the city, the following national governing bodies are also headquartered in Indianapolis: USA Gymnastics, USA Track & Field, USA Diving, and U.S. Synchronized Swimming. The National Federation of High School Athletic Association (NFHS), Black Coaches & Administrators (BCA), Indiana Swimming, the Circle City Classic, Horizon League and the Great Lakes Valley Conference also are headquartered in Indianapolis. A study by the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University revealed that $64 million in expenditures were spent in Indianapolis by these organizations between 2000 and 2004.
In 2008, it was announced that Super Bowl XLVI on February 5, 2012, will be hosted in Indianapolis. The game is expected to generate over $220 million for the local economy. In an effort to market themselves for future Super Bowls, the city devised plans to create a 20 block NFL Experience Party. This would include a transformation of the downtown core and the area surrounding the venue. The images above, posted on the city sponsored website (www.our2012sb.com), have been used to increase interest for the upcoming event. The webpage is also used as a platform for community involvement in the preparation and execution of the game and festivities.
However, by conceding to spectacle, architecture becomes a commodity. Everything is an event, part of the endless experience.

Beginning in the early 60’s, approximately 200 volunteer union electricians gather every year in early November on the Circle to transform the monument into the “World’s Largest Christmas Tree.” Strung with 6 miles of garland and lights and accompanied by 26 larger-than-life toy soldiers and peppermint sticks, this event, called Circle of Lights, has become a tradition within the city as more than 100,000 coverage on the city circle each year to be a part of the lighting ceremony.” As seen in the image to the left, the Indianapolis Power and Light Company uses internal lights in their downtown building to portray symbols or logos during specific events or games.
From 1977 through 1991, the amateur sports movement pumped $1.05 billion into the local economy. Under the title of ‘urban renewal,’ the city was able to lure in large corporations who wanted a cheap location for their headquarters or company offices. Already securing the American Legion, FedEx, and Simon Properties Group prior to 1975, the city was also able to make deals with the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association); a multitude of insurance companies and banks including Anthem, Inc. and Bank One (now Chase); and one of the largest global pharmaceutical companies, Eli Lilly and Company. From 1980 through 1993, the city skyline, as seen today, was created with funds generated by this sporting movement.
Banalization cannot be used to describe the result of Indianapolis’ current skyline image. That suggests process.

The skyline pictured below was constructed in a 14 year span, starting in 1980. Before 1980, there was no skyline. The city was sprawling before its core had any vertical mass.
When it did come time to grow vertically, the city continued to look to Washington D.C. for reference. Their design precedents were definitely proven. This generic city is now in a fourth generation of precedent.
To facilitate this new event-driven urban center, support facilities not only needed to ensure easy access to and from the event facilities, but also account for a large variety of functions as the character and size of events were always changing. To make this possible, the architecture had to be large enough for anticipated events and flexible enough to meet demands for various organizations.

It was not until the 1960’s that the Modernists early intentions, while optimistic and ground-breaking at the time, found their niche in the American landscape. A small group called the Metabolists carried out a mutated, large-scale form of what many of the Modernist architects preached. In 1964, Fumihiko Maki began designing what he called ‘megastructures.’ The Metabolists believed that in order to provide for mass society, cities of the future needed to adapt from the traditional methods of construction centered around fixed form and function to one that is characterized by large-scale, flexible, and expandable structures representing processes of organic growth. With many designers during this time period looking to North America, as it not only had a variety of perceived problems large enough to require visionary solutions, but it also had the greatest technological resources for dealing with them. Since many believed the solution to America’s autocentric urban problems was a lack of planning on a national scale, architects believed large structures could begin to solve continental issues. Although the scheme pictured to the left would never actually be constructed, it is necessary to understand that this kind of concept was in style and considered innovative in the late 1960s. Inevitably leading to the idea of self-containment, these early propositions enabled the proliferation of large autonomous structures. The difference between these new megastructures and the skyscrapers that created the derelict corporate-driven downtowns was the incorporation of multiple functions in a facility versus the previous modernist single function centers that necessitated an event-driven urban landscape.

These structures did have precedent in the early twentieth century. Le Corbusier and his plan for the Radiant City (1920) called for utopian skyscrapers establishing a power of efficiency and order, and were often referred to as the ‘brains’ of the city in many of his drawings. Made possible by advances in construction techniques and megascale engineering methods – large spans, space frames, light skin structures, prestressed concrete – Corbusier’s unbuilt plan suddenly came to fruition as built-forms grew exceedingly larger, taller, and wider. Construction of the facilities, though started in Japan, were given their foundation in America in the effort to inject new life in urban environments. As cities invested in new entertainment venues, it was the job of the megastructure to tie these venues together. As Rem Koolhaas suggests, shopping is/was the last remaining form of public activity and it was observable in the American city in the 1980s. Using retail as the bait to draw people through under utilized buildings again, shopping arcades and department stores stretched their program throughout a variety of buildings. Starting in the late 1950s and early 1960s in the post-war building boom with an abundance of new engineering possibilities, this new building paradigm within the architectural field allowed for mini prototype cities to be created under one or multiple roofs. The benefit of this modular architecture was not only for the concentration of a variety of functions and programs, but it also became a legitimate method of composing several independent systems that could expand and contract.

A concept spawning from the megastructure was that of the ‘non-plan.’ In 1969, Cedric Price stated that architects needed to anticipate future changes and allow people the freedom to control and shape their own environment. He believed that all buildings should allow for obsolescence and complete changes of use. While the megastructure was able to effectively create a habitat for mass society, the non-plan enabled the immediacy of space and permitted an attitude of continual change and adaptation to new functions, thus increasing the validity of continuous redevelopment and spatial availability in response to an ever more amortizable environment.
The one great benefit of this system was that under one large frame, utility, concentration, and particularization of occupation were achieved. This would allow businesses using office spaces, restaurants, retail outlets, residential units, etc. to locate where demand is highest at a specific time. This type of architecture not only lends itself to an unconscious system of urban planning, a lack of order, and visual ‘chaos’ but also a predictable and calculated system based on a variety of market factors – trade area, competition, demographics, etc. While this is a direct response to the demands of a city’s success within a global economy, it does prevent society from naturally being able to reassess their social priorities. At this current place in time, a freedom of plan to maximize economic lifespans prohibits long collective human processes in favor of an architecture that dictates a very time specific set of norms. In some respects, today’s democratic market freedom represented in a technocratic architecture actually prohibits human participation.

Starting in the early 1980s, megastructures started appearing in the urban cores of American cities in the form of convention centers. This large, multi-purpose adaptability allowed for large conference and trade show venues to not only take place in downtown areas, but to generate new industries such as tourism and services targeted at the new urban habitation, the non-local (the visitor). One of the first American convention centers exemplifying this new built megastream was in Washington D.C. which initially occupied one city block. Construction on the center began in 1980, and it opened in 1983. At 800,000 gross square feet it was, at the time, the fourth largest facility in the United States. However, during the 1980s and 1990s, numerous larger and more modern facilities were constructed around the country, and by 1997 the Washington Convention Center had become the 30th largest facility. As these structures were designed to address current needs and spatial requirements, their lifespans rarely exceeded twenty years. In the case of the Washington center, it was imploded after being replaced by the new Walter E. Washington Convention Center, a 2.3 million square foot center designed by an Atlanta-based architecture firm.

Just five years later, the center, exemplifying the organic growth the Metabolists once suggested, was expanded to include 75,000 extra square feet, a new hotel with 1,500 rooms, and an additional 100,000 square feet of ballroom space. As E.C. Relph suggests, “the nineteenth-century street was based on store-front units of 20 or 30 feet; the megastructural street has units of 200 or 300 feet.” Since Relph’s analysis was published in 1987, it is easy to argue that this megastructural unit has jumped somewhere between 400 and 500 feet in many places in the United States today, creating large swaths of blank, visually unexciting environments.

In 1994, Rem Koolhaas stated in his book, S.M.L.XL, that John Portman was “responsible for single-handedly perfecting the device known as the megastructure by ensuring its propagation from Atlanta to the rest of America, and from America to the rest of the world. He had re-invented the atrium. Since the Romans, the atrium had been a courtyard in a house or a building that injects light and air into the outside. In the center, in Portman’s hands it became the opposite: a container of artificiality that allows its occupants to avoid daylight forever – a hermetic interior, sealed against the real.” Koolhaas goes on to suggest that this central void mimics the strategy of the Panopticon, whose design acted as a metaphor for modern disciplinary societies and their pervasive inclination to observe and normalize. The space acting to promote a neutral, democratic interior central space was another device instituted into the megastructures, especially hotels, allowing the building to become autonomous within its context and minimizing the gravitational quality of past urban spaces – squares, piazzas, and courtyards. The complementary aspect of downtown urban cores was erased with this simple invention. Architecture in a sense became a mini-center, stealing the show away from the larger downtown whole. It could be anywhere. Urban ubiquity started with the atrium, and because of this invention the architecture started exploding from the center toward the periphery where the buildings could be built on cheaper land and would have easier access. This move was American. It expressed freedom. But it also began to diminish the role of physical infrastructures – railroad corridors and the interstate system. In a sense, business
strategies created the destination, and urban infrastructures had to adapt. The infrastructure that held the
city together was now digital, atomized, fragmented, and calculated – globalization. Malls, office parks, and
residential towers were placed, the city was extended; and depending on their economic success, others
would be built in a similar area. Market areas, once a geographic zone large enough to be cities or towns
in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, soon shrank to areas defined by one or two miles at
the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Contemporary critiques, especially from Rem Koolhaas, suggests that these types of expansion, growth,
and addition feed what he calls ‘junkspace.’ As he writes, “continuity is the essence of Junkspace; it
exploits any invention that enables expansion, deploys the infrastructure of seamlessness: escalator, air
conditioning, sprinkler, fire shutter, hot-air curtain…It is always interior, so extensive that you rarely perceive
limits; it promotes disorientation by any means (mirror, polish,echo). Junkspace is sealed, held together
not by structure, but by skin, like a bubble…it fuses high and low, public and private, straight and bent,
bloated and starved to offer a seamless patchwork of the permanently disjointed. Seemingly an apotheosis,
spatially grandiose, the effect of its richness is a terminal hollowness, a vicious parody of ambition that
systematically erodes the credibility of building, possibly forever….”

The sheer size of these multi-purpose
complexes not only advocates and intensifies the flight from the street and the public realm ushered in
by the automobile, but it also ‘reduces the permanence of the assumed worth of past uses of space by
avoiding their very reinforcement.’

When built in specific cities, these large facilities, closely connected
to the ground due to their continuous horizontal form, are surprisingly notorious for having few street
level entrances and minimal detail. Architectural context is rarely ever taken into account as standardized
building codes and other construction requirements are all that is necessary to adhere to.

In effect, the construction of these facilities has not only drastically altered the scale of cities but how people
use them. In a time where people demand an expected level of comfort and accommodation, architecture
has allowed for this by bringing city life indoors. The city in many ways is engulfed within Koolhaas's
junkspace - or a system of terminally dull interiors. Since temperature and precipitation are relatively
unpredictable, the proliferation of the fully-covered, weather-proof, air-conditioned junkspace allowed for
city functions to take place in perfectly predictable climates at any time of the year in any place. This current
achievement has allowed cities to participate in a large variety of functions and events that were previously
denied to them. With new forms of organization and technology, geographic dispersal has made it necessary
for annual, monthly, or weekly gatherings to take place for unified and collective functions. With the need
for large conference and conventions to gather members of giant enterprises or corporations, house large
sporting events, shopping centers, or airline terminals, cities continually construct these megastructures to
stay competitive within their markets and allow for the specific moments of gathering that centrality once
provided. Heavily dependent on large numbers of anticipated guests, these structures come and go and
shift from place to place without hesitation. In the case of the Washington D.C. convention center, once it
became the 30th largest facility, certain conventions and trade-shows once generating business in D.C.
had made new deals with cities who had just built larger more luxurious facilities that would better suit their
current needs. If Washington D.C. decided not to update, it would lose tremendous amounts of money, not
only for the convention center, but other surrounding external economies dependent on the influxes of new
people in town for conventions.

The short-term life spans of these structures are apparent in their construction. Appearing flimsy with
their polished, shiny cladding concealing injustices, there is no integrity to the structure. Its construction
suggests impermanence and cheapness. Even though in theory we as a society push for continuity, the
only gauge of longevity in today's society is profit. As long as there is profit and capital flow because of
physical presence, buildings will remain on the landscape. Since spatial demands are almost impossible
to predict for future uses, architecture's only success is to build well for short-term purposes and turn its
back on prolonged existence.
In an effort to protect citizens from the inhospitable and unpredictable environment of the outdoor environment, the megastructure is not only apparent in single structures scattered throughout the urban fabric, but rather the city itself acts like a megastructure through the vast systems of skywalks that now connect event venues with the once autonomous offices, convention centers, and hotels. Bred from the same technologies that made the modern American shopping center a success — air conditioning and the escalator — these systems now allow the downtown to compete in the retail sector with the suburban malls. Although it has proven successful in some cities, it has literally killed all street life in others - once the identity of the American city.
Visitors to the city will be able to roam as much as 3/4 of a mile to the Indiana Convention Center, Lucas Oil Stadium, Circle Centre Mall, and even the Statehouse without ever stepping outside. Plans have been made for the future to expand this system another 1/4 mile to connect with Conseco Fieldhouse, home to professional and collegiate basketball events.

**The Indiana Convention Center & Lucas Oil Stadium are physically connected via skywalks to more hotel rooms (4,700) than any convention center in the U.S.**

Not only providing convenience for downtown office workers, Indianapolis views the skywalks as convention amenities as the protected hotel connections is a huge marketing factor for a convention destination in a cold-weather city. While the old ‘main street’ - Washington Street - is now mostly lined with government buildings, hotel complexes and parking garages and the high street notion has completely dissolved, the skywalk system has kept the city as a strong retail attraction. While cities like Cincinnati tried to move retail to the same level as its skywalks to increase retail sales, Indianapolis created a retail hub with its Circle Centre Mall, which included 760,000 sq.ft. of retail space and parking garages for 4,000 cars, upon its completion in 1995. Gaining inspiration from the Columbus City Center, constructed just 200 miles
east of Indianapolis in 1988, the city followed as similar path. With three anchor department stores, which each consume 3 floors - an upper level, skywalk level, and ground level - and by incorporating existing and planned restaurants and movie complexes with the construction of the three-and-a-half city block shopping center in the heart of the city, specific program was designated for the street and other for the skywalk system. The goal of this system was to promote a balance and seamless transitions between skywalks, the street, parking garages, and hotel rooms minimizing the negative effects on street life. From 1989 through 1995, three historic facades were preserved while a 8 others were completely demolished and gutted for the implementation of the $300 million Circle Centre Mall. Including the new restaurants, parking garages, and movie complex that were included in this project, roughly 9 city blocks were effected through the 6 years of construction either through renovation or demolition.

While the Columbus City Center was demolished in October of 2009 due to years of economic decline and growing competition on the city's periphery, Indianapolis's Circle Center Mall is still in operation. Many cities like Columbus, Ohio in the 1980s attempted to bring business back into the downtown core using retail alone. Indianapolis on the other hand complemented its downtown mall with a variety of other event spaces in close proximity. Allowing the stadiums to be built so close to the urban center, the mall was able to gain visitors before and after sporting events, concerts, or conferences. With the skywalk system plugging the mall into the network, it acted as a space of passing and leisure en route to daily activities and events just as retail acted in previous eras.
Hotels ‘The Generic Building Block’

1970 - [ ]

Making the decision to achieve economic prosperity through sports, Indianapolis quadrupled its tourism trade and doubled its hotel space during the period 1984–1991. Since 1984, Indianapolis has built 27 new hotels in the downtown area near the stadiums and convention center. With 4 more slated to be completed by 2011, the city was able to win its bid to host Super Bowl XLVI.
As would be expected, the continual updating and renovating that takes place to bring in additional tourists and guests of the city, the continual construction of these structures is not only proving the success of the event city, but is also creating a set of building blocks that have expected outcomes, spatial sequences, and layouts. Each hotel is built to be a complete sealed container of all needs. Connected via skywalk, the hotel competes with the city with its own restaurants, meeting spaces, and activities. Using the Hyatt Regency Hotel (1977) as an example, it includes: Indoor heated pool, jacuzzi, 24-hour StayFit gym, cardio studio, sauna, massage services, tennis and golf facilities, 24 hour business center, valet parking, Wi-Fi, gift shops, concierge services, an award-winning revolving restaurant on the roof, a large ‘public’ atrium, 35,000+ sq. ft. of function space, and a 8,226 sq. ft. ballroom.

Competition between hotels began shortly after the completion of this hotel in 1977. As the city anticipates to have 40 hotels in 2011, they all will be competing with the new JW Marriott Hotel, which will be the largest Marriott hotel in the world when completed. With more than 1,600 rooms, the complex will boast its own 100,000 square feet of meeting and event space, including a 40,500 square foot grand ballroom - the largest hotel ballroom in the Midwest. City hoteliers believe the construction of this hotel will allow Indianapolis to compete for and win bigger and better events, such as a national political convention. Indianapolis lost a bid for the 2000 GOP convention to Philadelphia, in part because it didn’t have enough top-notch hotel rooms. Within a few years, this national competition will begin to put many of the city’s older hotels into extinction as it will be nearly impossible to compete with the larger, more contemporary hotels. This process will only further the notion of the generic city as it suggests the continual demolition of what is considered ‘old’ and the erection of its ‘trendy’ replacement.
As this event-driven landscape has driven the Indianapolis economy for nearly 30 years, the city has passed on Washington as its precedent city and rightly turned their attention to the “The Entertainment Capital of the World” - Las Vegas.
Arguably one of the most important generic vessels of the event city is the convention center. With its most recent expansion project it will become the 16th largest facility in the United States, allowing Indianapolis to offer 3.4 million square feet of exhibit and meeting space to more adequately compete for national events throughout the country. This competition for events, translating into 4 different expansion projects since 1972, best expresses the organic growth suggested by the Metabolists in the 1960s.

However this growth has now allowed a singular building and its bland aesthetic to consume and characterize 6 city blocks.
Endnotes

2. Attali, Mutations, 25
3. Attali, Mutations, 18
5. Attali, Mutations, 23
12. Knox, Urbanization: An Introduction to Urban Geography, 53
13. Knox, Urbanization: An Introduction to Urban Geography, 68
14. Knox, Urbanization: An Introduction to Urban Geography, 68
16. Bodenhamer, The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis, 63
18. Knox, Urbanization: An Introduction to Urban Geography, 71
24. Bodenhamer, The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis, 277
25. Bodenhamer, The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis, 278
26. Attali, Mutations, 23
35. Wollen, Autopia Cars and Culture, 318
36. Wollen, Autopia Cars and Culture, 318
41. Wollen, Autopia Cars and Culture, 216
42. Wollen, Autopia Cars and Culture, 275
44. Bodenhamer, The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis, 275
48. Knox, Urbanization: An Introduction to Urban Geography, 80
51. Bodenhamer, The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis, 1258
55. Koolhaas, Rem, Stefano Boeri, and Sanford Kwinter. Mutations, 512
56. Koolhaas, Rem, Stefano Boeri, and Sanford Kwinter. Mutations, 513
3 Methodology

Identity
Although the Modern Movement began at the turn of the twentieth century, its true impact on cities became apparent seemingly overnight. From a distance or passing along a freeway, the city appeared as a floating mass of solid isolated structures surrounded by a punctuated array of open spaces—mostly parking lots and roadways—separated from the surrounding residential areas by an identifiable ring of lost space. Within a relatively short period of time, the city had been transformed from a hierarchical-driven series of spatial intricacies correlated with differentiated social norms to an autonomous corporate urban landscape feeding on the short-term efficiencies of agility, turnover, and scale. As David Kolb suggests, “the streets and squares of the Piazza Navona District in Rome were carved out of the building mass, giving direction and continuity to urban life and creating physical connections, meaningful places.”

A typical pattern of forming in most American cities in the latter half of the twentieth century reflected one of emerging new forms and new kinds of order that reflected the increasingly pluralistic and afocal structure of changing social relationships. What many missed were the straightforward qualities of clearly demarcated centrality, of, as David Kolb states, “a reassuring sense of being settled and located convincingly.” The city center had effectively been removed as a central place of political, economic, social, and symbolic presence, and its replacement was a functional landscape of scientific and pragmatic decision-making, of standardization, and of placelessness, or loss of human scale and interaction. Since there was a remembrance of the traditional European-esque urban fabrics of the pre-modern era, a general dissatisfaction easily ensued in the 70s and 80s.

Although many theorists and architects tried to respond to this situation by returning to more romantic architectural ideals drawing from site, social contexts, and interpretation of the past, the desire for the familiar—a “uniformity, generality, calculated simplicity, and reduction of living phenomena to common denominators”—eventually prevailed. Nan Ellin stated in his postmodern critique of the modern movement that ‘instead of applying the industrial mode of production and machine imagery toward producing universally satisfactory urban design which would house a more egalitarian society, these landscapes had become synonymous with inhumanity, desolation, and devastation. Modernism wanted to liberate mankind by creating a new environment to live in, but was transformed into a giant enterprise for the degradation of the human habita’ One of these postmodern theorists and architects, Leon Krier in particular, suggested a complete reconstructing of the street, square, and quarter—a restructuring of the city into a complex system of parts, cities within the city, and into quarters which integrate all the functions of urban life. Krier believed that it was more beneficial for architects to reference or imitate something ‘old’ and proven, versus something new which is accompanied by high risk. “Knowledge gained through centuries carries a certain conviction that should not go unnoticed.” Post-modernists subscribed to the idea that, in less than two hundred years, industrial production eradicated the qualities of human labor, intelligence, and culture. By imitating the best pre-industrial examples in their proportions, dimensions, and traditional materials and craftsmanship, they believed would allow for more formal responses to existing conditions and begin to create ‘whole’ once again. Krier’s most significant statement ‘Forward comrades, we must go back!’ effectively represented the core ideas of the postmodern movement.

However, the postmodern urbanism approach did reveal how even the mindset of the world’s most innovative architects had succumbed to an ideology similar to that of the modernists, which was to ‘re-everything—rehabilitate, revitalize, restore, renew, redevelop, recycle, renaissance, etc.’ Krier’s ideas, while pleasing to many ears as a rejection of modernism, simply referenced a
nostalgic model that was no longer credible. It did not reflect contemporary conditions. Although postmodernism thought intended to bring together various strands of thought – values, tradition, roots – with concerns for preserving pre-industrial urban fabrics and a return of human scale to urban environments, the solution did not address the major issues of ‘wiping clean and starting new,’ which is the foundation of modernism and the essential causation of generic environments. The postmodern method essentially brought back traditional environments with a kitschy, thematic consumer-driven twist, championed by the New Urbanists and viewed as the end all solution of most American city planners.

In American cities, similar nostalgic images of the vernacular architecture began to play a role in decision making in the late 1980s as the images of social disorder were associated with the city. Historic neighborhoods, their Main Streets, the heroic rural America, and the suburban life idealized in the 1950s all categorized the preservation movement that developed in response to both the big-city urban renewal and the ubiquitous suburban development. This urban design movement, titled New Urbanism, has been prominent since the 1990s and the American landscape has continually been influenced by these romantic planning and design decisions. Even the new cloverleaf patterns of interstates, isolated clustered housing developments, and office parks located within cul-de-sacs continue to suggest “the pull of memory and history as we gather to park and shop. A desire for continuity and familiarity continues to shape our ideals and the design of our environment” 6.

The architecture of New Urbanism developments aims to bring a neotraditional feel of the historic America by requiring design codes, height restrictions, landscaping, porches, etc. to maintain conformity of certain patterns. It is believed that if design and planning act in past fashions, people will again occupy their front porch, gather for community activities in the town square, and maintain a visible identity. Many residents of these communities enjoy these qualities as it ensures a harmony of design, however many argue against this development because residents are simply reverting to a past social structure. With all of the technological advances currently in place in the new image infrastructure, this reference is simply a production and the architecture associated with it is its stage. This built environment is much like Disneyland or Las Vegas who idealize urban spaces and structures in replicas. In this fashion, the design is predicated on the idea that a utopia is achieved on the terrain of the familiar.
The city of Indianapolis, as will be expressed on the following diagram, has completed its downtown urban renewal (blue) but now has turned its attention to the surrounding residential neighborhoods that are prime examples of urban blight - housing vacancy, parking lots, crime. In the late 1990’s the city made great efforts placing the historic preservation tag on many well preserved neighborhoods (yellow) offering great tax incentives for residents willing to rehabilitate, but now the planning department, teamed with a local university, are presenting new proposals for urban districts each with their own distinctive and unfortunately kitschy character.

Their sketches, complete with historic rooftop water towers, community arched gateways, clock towers, and outdoor cafes, exhibit clear New Urbanist city visions.

On the east side of the city is the planned Market District, which is a new residential zone with more than 2,000 new apartment units expected by 2020. To the south is the River District, a corporate and entertainment complex. New stadiums and fields are planned as well as a variety of office parks. The Northwest District, teamed with the IUPUI campus is looking to create a new manufacturing hub for science and technology. The city is expecting to transform the northside into a large Biotech research campus starting in 2020.
In late January 2010, President Obama announced 13 high-speed rail projects nationwide worth an estimated $8 billion. Coined his “Eisenhower moment,” these projects have the potential to move the US into a new phase of transportation modernization.

This thesis argues that the generic city needs to continue its process. As seen with the city of Indianapolis, if it chose to maintain or revert to an identity that was not set in place by the corresponding trend or infrastructure, it would have failed. The city used the rail, auto, and event-driven infrastructures to stay economically successful. This new rail plan which will be connecting Chicago to Cincinnati through Indianapolis, with the potential of expanding beyond, will be the next infrastructure. Because of this, Indianapolis will facilitate those plans. As seen on the following pages, since 2007 the discussion of a new rail hub and light rail options have been on the boards in an attempt to create an internal infrastructure connecting new peripheral centers with its downtown core. Currently looking to reuse existing corridors, the Planning Organization has attempted to define new commuter rail lines for the city of Indianapolis. With a low budget, the city has explored options including buying old Amtrack intercity trains from Chicago for discounted prices. However, these plans have failed mainly because of a lack of funding.

By comparing these newest initiatives to the model Indianapolis has followed in the past, there is a strong chance Indianapolis becomes a major node within the American landscape bringing further prosperity to the city in a variety of new ways. This thesis suggests that if identity is to be created it needs come through the newest infrastructure. As architecture has always been a vessel to assist in the progress of the newest infrastructure, the architecture built for the newest infrastructure
Metro+State

He’s a man of many talents
T. Wyatt Watkins is a pastor, published author, and trained musician.

DOWNTOWN TRANSPORTATION CENTER

IndyGo seeks home for centralized hub

CONSULTANT HIRED TO LOOK AT SITES

Leaders’ trip out West can jump-start mass transit

Roland Dorson

INDYSTAR.COM

June 12, 2008

Northeast Corridor rail line could cost $160 million
needs to play a larger role in creating identity. By reverting to old architectural styles with the New Urbanist visions as a method for creating identity, the city will simply be masking its true character with a nostalgic representation. In 1961 Jesse Reichek claimed

"the elements used in the design of the physical city such as the square, the closed vista, and the greenbelt may have matched prior social orders and fit prior conceptions of order; but they are compatible neither with contemporary social processes nor with modern conceptions of order. Within older systems of thought, afocality was a sign of disorder. But today, many of the signs that are frequently mistaken for 'urban chaos' are, instead the marks of emerging new forms, new kinds of order that reflect the increasingly pluralistic and afocal structure of changing social relationships."

The context for a place's social structure is apparent in a place's local architecture. Suggested in the following chapter, Indianapolis's local architecture was the national / global architecture allowing it to be categorized as generic. Does this mean that the social structure in Indianapolis is generic? This thesis suggests that it is not. Although cities like Paris, Rome, and London are perceived as having a rich identity with all of their iconic buildings and monuments, one must ask themselves if those buildings really portray the social structure of those places today. In many cases these historic structures do not. However, there are a few cases in particular that would suggest otherwise.

In particular, the Pantheon in Rome originally built as a temple for all the pagan gods, has been inhabited many times through its existence with different identities to satisfy current trends.

Yes the structure would not appear to be easily adaptable with its authoritative design, huge granite Corinthian columns, and concrete dome, but over time it has been home to a church, museum, tomb, and now a tourist attraction. This suggests that normative social characteristics of a place are not
identical to the styles of buildings.

Where identity rests is in the dialogue created between design and human interaction.

The powerful spatial and geometrical qualities with its cosmic and historical associations of the Pantheon were overlaid with current norms. This overlay might not always be compatible, but this suggests that people are still able to interpret and reinterpret architecture to accommodate new social patterns.

Relating to the city, Jean Attali suggests that the generic city is born out of its relations within a larger network or system. In Indianapolis's case, the level to which it adhered to the larger system, the American Operating System, directly impacted the genericness of its urban spaces and buildings. Cities like Boston and Cincinnati were able to preserve that perceived identity by maintaining its history. In this sense, it is the level of rejection or acceptance of the larger system that truly begins to define a local identity.

“The nature of differences and our means of perceiving and therefore constructing them is difference embodied in the physical elements of the city, or in the local conditional rules that dictate their systematic assemblage.”

The city is now at such a large scale with such a variety of subcenters that these differences (identity) are impossible to interpret and perceive. In this way, architecture, with its rich scale of comprehensibility, has a new responsibility to not create identity through iconography, but by unfolding and embodying historical and future processes. In this way, specificity will be revealed. By perceiving these local shifts: size, scale, and speed of its mutation through a variety of micro identities. These characteristics cause changes in public social life because of the interaction between man-made formation and lifestyles of the people.

By better representing these shifts, architecture will define the identity of its system. In doing so, a healthy dialogue is created in the generic city. Local interpretation keeps normative structures flexible, and external networks dictating new trends keep local interpretation from closing in on itself.
Learning from the adaptations that took place in Indianapolis, it was not the preservation of history and past architectural styles that gave the city the ‘layers’ necessary to form an identity within its physical elements. Rather it was the strength at which the city adhered to the American Operating System that defined its identity.

From “Railroad City” to the “Crossroads of America” to “The Amateur Sports Capital of the World,” i.e. Event City, the city has followed the trends of American urban morphology, and because of this it was successful. Avoiding it would only lead to years, possibly decades, of economic decline. Economic success came at the price of culture, and the generic city always chooses economic success. The city's identity continually changed to match national trends, and because of this, residents were unable to physically express themselves or their community. As Attali suggests, universal urbanization is the terminal end to the idea of polis. People as a collective no longer control the outcome of their environment. However what can be controlled is the extent to which that environment is used, perceived, and manipulated. As the history of Indianapolis suggests, the city as a whole, filled with the vessels and relay points of its corresponding urban era, was able to create an identity as a strong follower of the generic model. Only few other cities were able to adhere and modify themselves within the American system to the extent Indianapolis could. By building and maintaining the infrastructures that came its way, the city was able to create a sense of stability by a lack of specialization and a dependence on larger systems.

As will be explored in the following chapter, for identity to be expressed in architecture, architecture must play a larger role within its context. Taking precedent from the generic and from the hierarchy of infrastructures created within, how might architecture play a greater role in helping facilitate trends? How could adaptations become showcased within architecture? This would allow for the strength of adherence to the national system to be more easily perceived and recognizable within the city.

In essence, could architecture become a datum line for which the generic cities variability can be weighed?
As stated, to become a ‘generic city,’ cities must continually adapt to external forces in order to stay economically successful within a greater hierarchical system. In the United States, cities throughout history have rebuilt several times in order to stay relevant. At each point of reconstruction, the new architecture adheres to whatever “regime of urban accumulation or pattern of spatial organization of the specific urban economy prevailing at that time.”

As generic cities continually absorb influences, particularly borrowing from the tenants of modernism and utilizing key technological innovations to produce new variations of existing themes, the generic city or ‘pop city’ is easily relatable to that of the music genre developed in the mid-1950s. With an aim of appealing to a general audience, rather than to a particular sub-culture or ideology, putting an emphasis on craftsmanship rather than formal “artistic” qualities, and recording, producing, and mimicking proven success elsewhere instead of producing its own ‘live performance,’ the city like that of the music genre has the tendency to reflect existing trends rather than progressive developments.

As the architecture of the generic city is increasingly consumer-driven, it has entered into what Guy Debord calls the “society of the spectacle.” Through mass media marketing, commodity images have proliferated around the globe which has led to this current global image infrastructure. Architecture, yielding to consumerist display and exchanging historically relevant ideas, aims, and ambitions for enthusiasm, enjoyment, and notoriety reflects the demand for yet another specific need or want (product) at a specific time. As Rem Koolhaas suggested in 1994, ‘Architecture really exists, like Coca-Cola: Though coated with ideology, it is a real production, falsely satisfying a falsified need. Urbanism is comparable to the advertising propagated around Coca-Cola - pure spectacular ideology. Modern capitalism which organized the reduction of all social life to a spectacle, is incapable of presenting any spectacle other than that of our own alienation. Its urbanistic dream is its masterpiece.”

The urban accumulation of the city in the late twentieth century reflected the need to stay within the bounds of popular appeal so as to create an expected and sellable product. Like pop music, urban environments also held similar characteristics such as a focus on individual elements rather than whole, general rather than specific, the artificial versus real, etc., all stressing that the generic city in the age of globalization became no more than a conglomeration of expendable, temporary hits or successes. A large reason why generic cities concede to popular culture is mainly to create a healthy brand image – one that allows a large number of people to access their individual memory banks and make some type of emotional connection or resonance within the environment. This inevitably helps create a sense of place and comfort within these cities; however, by trying to address or target such a large number of people and memories, the city’s lofty aspirations are materialized in a modest architecture – something that everyone has seen and has been “approved” by collective developments. This suggests an abundance of what Relph calls the ‘counterlocales,’ or the elements entering cities that are “monitored and controlled so as to reduce the possibility of discomforting, annoying, or threatening interactions.”

The dispersal and relative ease of instant communication diminished architecture to a fragmentary arrangement of what can be considered atoms and bits. Once a strong urban element that retained the imprints of the past and resisted fluctuating external conditions threatening continuity, architecture in the mid-to-late-twentieth century entered a new realm on the verge of completely dissolving into those conditions. Today, the majority of architecture is arguably nothing more than a consumer product. As mass retailing continues to drive a tertiary service industry, ubiquitous construction to
house these businesses, franchises, and chains infiltrates and shapes nearly every corner of the American landscape. In essence, this commodification of the urban areas caused mainly by the global media has created a “universal place that digests local particularity and transforms it into lifestyle products.”

In today’s competitive society where people always try to edge the next closest person, company, or city to gain a competitive edge, owners and CEOs simply look to those around them as precedent. It seems that within a matter of years, this corporate mentality has leveled once distinctive places. The global market spreads identical products, architecture, and tools at a speed that no longer allows reassessment. Franchises and chains span over national boundaries. As seen in Las Vegas, the most successful attractions become themselves commodities and are reproduced around the world dispersing local and regional distinctiveness. This decreases travel time in a period where people physically move around the world with more ease. “One can step out of Boston into an intermediate zone with its own flowing rhythm of similar terminals and planes, then from that flow step into Paris.”

Since every airport adheres to the same level of neutrality and code and is complete with its own tax-free shopping, lifestyle centers, tourism offices, and dining options, this intermediate ‘check-in’ zone simply acts as yet another comfortable, consumer-friendly stepping stone to our next destination.

“The modern movement in architecture sought globally valid standards for a short list of functions that all buildings were to follow at the expense of local functions and norms. Those standards, combined with the efficiencies of modern construction techniques, produced buildings and cities that more and more resemble one another...The world looks more and more like a gray totality of efficient production and consumption covered over by a multicolored screen of artificiality, intensified salable localities, fads, and identities. A heartless universal offers rootless freedom to resentful locality.”

As communication has allowed people and cities to connect and reach far-flung networks and in effect jump their own geographical regions to another that once could only be reached through an intense traversal of various different cultures, architectures, and places, today’s global city allows every person to plug into a network connecting an array of scattered locations. “In the network world, the link between cooperative action and spatial proximity has been broken. Mobility, decentralization, and networks have undermined older hierarchical arrangements. What surrounds cities takes on new functions and achieves new kinds of density across links rather than through immediate spatial proximity. This changes cities, which no longer monopolize innovation and production, and it changes urban peripheries, which are no longer so tightly bound to nearby cities for jobs and finance.” Since moments of identity and local particularity are so few and far between in this spread out urban field, the bland ubiquitous landscape is all that is common and expected. Its’ domination is the major reason cities and residents are pushing for the nostalgic past.
“The revolutions in data management and flexible transport systems introduced by boxstore pioneer, Walmart Corp., have made it the largest retailer and private employer in the world (1.14 million employees) – greater than the entire American postal system. Today, Walmart’s information infrastructure is second in size only to that of the Pentagon, and they own and manage more bits of data than is represented by the entire Internet worldwide.” \(^{18}\)
“The Gap Inc., controller of the most ubiquitous clothing franchises in America, currently spends more than $1 million per month on internet advertising alone. They have over 3,400 stores in America, and open new locations at a rate of 600 stores (or 20%) per year. Home Depot, the number three retailer in America, adds a new store, on average, every 52 hours.” 19
“In 1999, American cities saw at least 41 new and renovated sports facilities with another 34 such projects slated for the following 3 years. “New” stadiums are frequently declared obsolete and are torn down, in favor of yet newer ones, in as little as 7 years. The brutal, perpetual migration of sports teams to ever-newer facilities, however, can increase their own yearly income by as much as $40 million.”

Pictured to the left is the $1.3 billion stadium in Dallas, TX. Including its designated standing room, the stadium’s capacity is 100,000.
Similar to the adaptations of the city, the retail environment exhibits this change at a much faster pace (the hyper-generic), leading it to be one of the dominant elements of a generic city. As requirements of customers change over time, the product offered has to change accordingly. What is the fashion today may be out of market within a few weeks. Thus, continuous innovation is required.
DEPARTMENT STORE - 1948 - 1991

OPERATIONS HEADQUARTERS - 1991 - CURRENT
In April 2005, a $900 million financing bill was passed for the creation of a new, multi-purpose stadium and expanded convention center. This would keep the city’s NFL team, the Colts, in town for another 20 years, and would allow the city to begin to compete for larger national conventions and events. As seen in the images on the following page, demolition and construction sporting venues is occurring at a much faster pace in Indianapolis due to its sporting image. In the top sequence, Market Square Arena, built in 1974 at a cost of $23 million, was destructed and replaced in 1999 by Conseco Fieldhouse. Seating just 3,000 more spectators than the city’s previous facility, the arena cost roughly $160 million more - the price of branding an image. Similarly, the new Lucas Oil Stadium built in 2008 with a seating capacity of 70,000 cost roughly $720 million dollars with its large retractable roof and sliding window to the city. It replaced that 1984 Hoosier Dome which was initially constructed for $28 million and seated 57,980. This venue once one of the largest in the country, lured the Baltimore Colts NFL franchise to Indianapolis in 1985.
Decline

preserve history = preserve old product

Plateau

Revitalization

update = new product

Product Lifecycle Curve
Identity as Business Strategy

Example: Cincinnati, OH

Example: Indianapolis, IN

Example: Boston, MA
To counter changes in lifestyle trends, McDonald’s has continuously introduced new products and amenities, and has phased out the old ones which were at the decline stage of their PLC. Their success is found in the time of their introduction, as it is timed such that the new product does not cannibalize the product already in the maturity of its growth stage. Thus, the secret lies in getting profits with different products in the different stages of the PLC.
If the generic city operates similar to the periphery, then there is no center. Without center, there is no periphery. The city is everywhere.
Since we as a society insist on center, the inadequacies of the periphery are emphasized. By recognizing the ‘periphery’ as a critical mass, the architecture of the ‘center’ should be more adaptive to future mutations so as to not become an “overblown mirage on its way to implosion,” as Rem Koolhaas suggests.
If the generic city is to create an identity within its architecture, the architecture needs to account for these adaptations and act as a container of experiences, rather than the single-function centers currently monopolizing the city.
“However, the fact that human growth is exponential implies that the past will at some point become too ‘small’ to be inhabited and shared by those alive. Society will exhaust it. To the extent that history finds its deposit in architecture, present human quantities will inevitably burst and deplete previous substance.”

To live in the same surroundings that one recalls from earliest memories is a satisfaction denied to most Americans today. Historic preservation, focused as it is on the classic past, moves people only momentarily, at a point remote from their vital concerns. It is impersonal as well as ancient. Near continuity is emotionally more important than remote time. This is why we should focus on the near past and allow for the erasure of the distant. A humane environment commemorates recent events quickly and allows people to mark out their own growth. At this moment, identity is pulled from history. Our environment acknowledges this and preserves what is believed to be worthy. While specific monumental or iconographic architecture is preserving past forms of urbanism, new forms of urbanism are created everyday by the proliferation of the generic.

In a hyper-mobile population with its constant fluctuations of information, products, and media-driven consumerist anxiety, new forms of architecture simply cannot compete. It simply dissolves either into the generic or the historic.

The malleability of the generic metropolis, calls for an open architecture than can better adapt to change. Not only should spaces become less specialized, more generic, for ultimate flexibility, they also need to start addressing the public call for identity - the reason for the preservation of the historic.

In an environment that is continually adapting how can architects create a more suitable stage for short-term identities to be showcased? By creating an architecture of duration, identity in a contemporary form can be achieved by acknowledging, even signaling, the change surrounding. In thinking of architecture as infrastructure, we as architects should act as centrists between the poles, allowing for adaptation and greater flexibility, but also find new ways to keep a constant or datum line within the design to maintain persistence and a stabilizing quality to place where surrounding changes can be weighed.
The image infrastructure now regulates almost every square foot on this planet. Logo and image define our lifestyles, which continually adhere to the systems, alliances, and standards brought forth by bureaucratic corporations and governmental bodies. Architecture is designed to better facilitate the tracking, capturing, quantifying, buying, and selling of attention. An accumulation of this architecture creates cities that act as a product or business that makes, remakes, and markets itself continually. One time visual landmarks that used to act as reference points are continually melting before the city's eyes. The design of the physical environment, long traded for the global image economy, is now in many ways a dissolving entity whose own image or identity is trivial.

Designer's first instinct is to fight this commodification, but as Bruce Mau suggests, “unless we can come to terms with the global economy and the way it permeates the things we make and see, we are doomed to a life of decorating and redecorating.” However, what Mau is unfortunately not accounting for is that design solutions addressing this global image economy will soon dissolve into trivialities as well. While the infrastructures in America molding the generic city were mostly physical in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries — water, rail, interstate — it is this transfer to the economic, non-physical, event and consumer-driven set of standards that define today's environment, whose fundamental dependencies on mass-consumption make it easily associable with the generic. Those cities within the generic model, whereby their economic success is completely dependent on its larger operating systems and its infrastructures, need architecture that acts as an active field and not a classical object that follows a linear model. As a city incorporates architectural objects to create a system, this thesis suggests that architecture within the generic city should incorporate multiple objects so that can become a system. If identity is to be achieved, and the local social differentiations to be expressed through architecture, then it is up to architecture to act like an infrastructure: Architecture as Infrastructure. Rather than passively receiving, accepting, and enduring external forces like floating currency, architecture needs to address one of the most important realities of cities: space.

Mark Gilbert suggests, “the urban remains an essentially spatial state of being. The urban (as well as the rural, the nomadic, or any other form of social occupation and appropriation of the landscape) is a spatially conditioned and expressed social practice; thus much of identity is tied up in the space that the social group uses. In the end, I would even argue that space might be more important for identity than the objects and artifacts that populate and thereby give definition to that space.” It is by creating space through an architectural infrastructure that the nature of differences — identity — can be revealed. Just as an infrastructure like the interstate begins to give definition to larger territories, if shrunken and applied to architecture, differences between these territories would be more easily recognizable. Localities are moments in process — they never dissolve, but are also never autonomous. However Attali suggests, the nature of differences is not present in the actual architecture but in the local perception and methods used to construct it. The systematic processes of a place's assemblage is impacted by external forces, but its implementation fits within a specific situation and is designed by local interpretation.

By allowing architecture to act like an infrastructure, it will suggest less isolation, more connection and mediation, and more intertwined self-relations. As Stan Allen suggests, “Architecture and places are lived without direct attention to their qualities because people are rightly distracted from the architectural object when they concentrate on their goals.
and activities in the place. If we first stipulate the predominance of distraction and, second, recognize that this implies a model of reception other than the linguistic. . . the radical gesture today is not to unmask the simulacrum as a lie, but rather to require the simulacrum, against expectation, to function as the real.* 23

By thinking of a given site as a platform by which the architectural infrastructure can begin to organize its parts, the architecture, through a variety of procedures, could begin to allow the generic to operate at its full potential (possibly creating a hyper-generic space within the city) to better explain the adaptations that not only take place within the city but also on the site. The infrastructure should create a hierarchy of public space that the city could sell to developers or builders. This delegation would allow space to be sold to individual owners under a strata form of ownership like that of condominiums. By minimizing central control, other than that of the architectural infrastructure itself, a wide variety of retail, commercial, or event programs, by their presence or absence, would prove highly responsive to the changing local tastes and needs. The armatures of the architecture, which would assume a continuous ‘holding together’ morphology, would frame these ‘for-sale’ spaces. The architecture would then begin to act as a datum line for the site so that citizens could reference the adaptations of the site usage over time.

Shaping large zones on the site with the new infrastructure would suggest the possibility of macro programs on the site, such as health clubs, hotels, performing arts centers, movie complexes, galleries, housing, etc. By allowing the architecture to act as the mediator between zones, it would create intermediate, smaller zones, or micro programs, that would be directly impacted by the nearest macro program at the time. These juxtapositions would allow the site as a whole to assume a variable nature, with the architectural infrastructure being the one fixed element for this variability to be measured.

This active field would create a very visible network where moments of prosperity or decay would evolve in relation to each other. It would accept programmatic encounters, interruptions of specific views or expected spatial sequences, and successes or failures of design practice. The infrastructure would begin to act as a documentary portrait of the culture of the local situation, expressing identity through the lens of the pace at which it adapts and changes by the external forces it comes in contact with. As many cities are generic cities, Indianapolis has proven to express an extremely strong adherence to the American Operating System. From the proposed 400 miles of canal; to the first union station and belt railway; to a trucking and auto hub created by the most interstate connections in the country; to an event-driven landscape holding some of the largest events in the world, the city of Indianapolis has proven to be timely and effective in their delivery within the American System. However, there is currently no physical/architectural method for expressing this effectiveness. In the case of Indianapolis, its generic quality is the reason for success. For this reason, the generic needs to continue. The city is a product. Architecture as infrastructure would add value to this product, or at least in parts of the city, as it would begin to capture its energy so that the adaptations over time could be converted into equity – clarifying, expressing, and giving it future direction. It is through this amplification of coming and going where the quality of the city may be weighed.
The generic metropolis, planned and supported by infrastructure, has systematically been laid out according to progressive ideals - first through efficient movement (rail and automobile) and secondly through image (city as 'event'; city as 'destination'). Each of these infrastructures, though very different, all operate on similar principles. Using the auto infrastructure as an example, macro and micro armatures are easily identifiable in each. Between cities, the freeway (macro infrastructure) implements variations of the standard interchange (micro infrastructure) along its route. However, each interchange, though similar, are expressed differently when implemented within existing local systems.
At specific junctures, the micro infrastructure molds to address programmatic weaknesses within the local area. Addressing these weaknesses, the micro infrastructure takes on a unique pattern dictated by local customs.
Although those programs are generic, it is how people use them and interact within the set infrastructures that creates uniqueness and identity.
In 1970, the city's Chamber of Commerce suggested that Indianapolis had no image. The start of the image infrastructure began in Indianapolis centered around sports. As a destination, the city had little attraction. Visitors described the city as 'IndianaNOplace.' Although it was able to create an image as the 'Amateur Sports Capitol of the World' in the 80s and 90s, what issue still persisted within this generic city was the lack of a stabilizing persistence of place. Although city leaders felt like an identity had been created, it had only successfully plugged into the generic model - the American Operating System - once again.

With structures coming and going to support this new image, the only persistence was found in that of its previous infrastructures - rail and interstate. The residual of abandoned rail networks were so extensive that they were impossible to eradicate. At some point in the distant future, the interstate too will become obsolete and abandoned. Due to its widespread acceptance, its presence simply creates a generic residual.

By exploring the idea of architecture as infrastructure, built solutions will not be as widespread as that of the interstate or the rail system. This solution would allow architecture become less transient, take on a local particularity, and possibly dictate surrounding architectural conditions. However, the architecture still needs to operate in a generic fashion, heeding external flows and not becoming overly specialized so as to insulate itself from many minor economic events that would otherwise call for the structures demise. It too needs to incorporate macro and micro infrastructures organizing the spaces and events that take place within the structure.

The following pages will bring attention to a variety of projects that have expressed this infrastructural notion.
LOW2NO
REX
2010 Helsinki, Finland

In this project, REX implemented a variety of programs into the structure that were perceived as weaknesses in the city within which it was constructed. As Helsinki is currently going through a variety of urban changes, REX proposed creating ‘urban rooms’ that could act as infill for changing programmatic needs over time. By designing a fixed program, residential and conference center, above this variable lower level zone, the structure would portray a consistent urban image through form, but also allow for the necessary flexibility to accommodate future needs.

FLEXIBILITY
Meydan Shopping Square
FOA
2006 Istanbul, Turkey

As Istanbul is exploring ideas about polycentric development, FOA found promise in the given site next to a Real hypermarket and IKEA as a future urban center. Attempting to create a new urban space between the highway exchange and the proliferating residential buildings – a goal reminiscent of Victor Gruen – FOA wanted to propose the next step in the evolution of the out-of-town mall into that of an urban city center for growing metropolises. FOA planned 3 programmatic blocks. At the joints of those blocks, the FOA constructed detachable, lightweight steel segments that could be removed if neighbors of the growing communities surrounding show interest in the future and wish to create new streets which extend into the square. In this way, the design complex looks like a completed project at the access point, but contains potential in its basic structure that extends far beyond the complex.

CONTINGENCY
Euralille
OMA
1994 Lille, France
In 1994, OMA led the masterplan for a new city center in Lille, France. With the forthcoming TGV link, OMA proposed projects on specific sites but kept them ambiguous, only defining levels, sections, relationships, and interfaces. The architecture of the projects was left to a variety of other architects to create a visual montage. This variety within the complex avoided a level of artificiality by allowing various building ideologies to be present. By implementing multiple programs, the superimposition of building could restore both density and continuity – what OMA states is the sign of the urban.
Cultural Center Zarautz  
Coop Himmelb(l)au  
2012 Zarautz, Spain

Including mixed uses in this new cultural center, the design of separate programs under one ‘campus roof’; this cultural center by Coop Himmelb(l)au, would allow for a variety of functions to complement each other by creating a larger platform for which to draw a diverse user base. By creating longer hours of activity on the site by staggering the busy periods of each function throughout the day to create at least 18 hours of coverage, this new facility will offer a rich choice of cultural events. By juxtaposing various building forms for the main spaces of the new building - cone as lobby; box as main auditorium; landscape as outdoor stage; service bar as administration spaces, and a curved structure as music school - unique intermediate spaces are created for informal interactions between users.

SPATIAL MICROSTRUCTURE
Within the Euralille complex, OMA’s second architectural intervention along with that of the Congreexpo, is considered not an addition but a subtraction. At a unique point of infrastructural density, OMA designed a Piranesian space that cut into the landscape allowing the highway, railway, three levels of parking, and the metro to be expressed as an overall intense urban moment. Through this OMA revealed surrounding city forces.

VISUALIZING COMPLEXITY

Piranesian Space
OMA
1994 Lille, France

EXPLODED AXON MAJOR COMPONENTS

1 VIEW TO THE CITY
2 TGV LINE
3 HIGHWAY UNDERPASS
4 LOCAL METRO
5 PARKING
6 PUBLIC SQUARE

CONCEPT SKETCH COMPLEX ENSEMBLE
Spiroid Sectors
Steven Holl
1989 Dallas-Fort Worth

In the expanding urban condition of the Dallas-Fort Worth area, Steven Holl has proposed structures across the landscape that would act to organize new activities of future developments. The building composed primarily of residential spaces, would begin to frame larger spaces and smaller spaces and they would act to create space for macro programs and micro programs respectively. The looping armatures contain a hybrid of various programs, including public transit stations, health clubs, cinemas, and galleries. The smaller spaces contained mostly domestic activities.

FRAMEWORK
The most important element in all of these precedents is the concept of programmatic assemblage. By accommodating a variety of programs, informal and formal interactions take place throughout the day and encourage a multitude of complementary events. However, when thinking about architecture as infrastructure, this assemblage cannot be overly specialized because it would again lead to the structures demolition and replacement.

By treating the assemblage in a generic fashion, similar to the interstate interchange diagrams on the previous pages, spaces can be considered more as infill for new generic programs accommodating new trends. Therefore, the architecture will actually act in accordance with the generic city model.

The difference though, is that these adaptations will occur in much closer proximity, rendering their arrival and exit in a more comprehensible manner. Through the coming and going of program dictated by the development and redevelopment of the urban spaces and infrastructures surrounding, the architecture would begin to define its local condition within the city. In relation to Dee Hock’s theory of the Chaordic System, this system will bring order to the perceived visual chaos of the mutating generic city.

Through the overlap of various building uses, the adaptation of individual parts against the backdrop of other events and activities within the building system will begin to hint at the express the rapid changes within the generic city. The speed, size of change, and operational use would embody the operational rules dictated by the local conditional situation. As a graphic designer, Bruce Mau studied this idea of overlap with typographic transitions as seen on the following page. By averaging four distinct but different fonts, space is explored between existing moments of typographic stability. The result of these overlays creates a form that is the fixed entity.

Relating to the generic city and Indianapolis, what is the fixed entity for a variety of separate but overlapping identities is the historical events and recurring systematic rituals. Communal events make the tie to place. Can architecture house the communal event of mutation? The project of this thesis attempts to achieve this.
Incorporations
Incorporations
Incorporations
By using the ideas of framework, montage, spatial microstructure, flexibility, contingency, and programmatic assemblage, the project will be able to express the infrastructural notion of network and operation. Unfortunately, this notion will not act successfully if it is not grounded within the city is some fashion. To achieve this I will explore the use of views as a method of perceiving urban changes.

By directing views to specific areas of rapid change or stability, users within the architecture would ground themselves within the city and better recognize the city’s systematic assemblage as it adheres to future infrastructures. The zoning of the city, while condemned for its single-minded approach, has allowed for new structures with similar functions to replace their older counterparts. Using this quality as a benefit, views can be directed toward zones or landscapes categorized as residential, event, corporate, or technology. By doing so, users will better understand the urban fluctuations occurring in each categorical zone.

Through this system of views connecting the new project with the city, a visual infrastructure will be created allowing separate but interdependent functions to develop. As users within the architecture will be able to see changes in the city, residents, workers, and visitors in the city will be able to see changes in the new architecture as programs either correspond to or reject surrounding city trends. In this way, a dialogue will be created between the adaptation of the city and the adaptation of architecture as infrastructure.

The new project will act as a platform for which the generic can be showcased.

To conclude, it is the interaction between views and the adapting programmatic assemblage that creates an architecture as infrastructure. In effect, the method for achieving identity is to create a sequence of events, programs, views, and spaces that hold ongoing memories and anticipations. In doing so, the structure and the city will be intertwined and experienced together.
EVENT

PERFORMANCE

Internal space coordinates with macro program framed in view.

CORPORATE

MEETING SPACE

Internal space adapts to again coordinate with new macro program framed in view.
Internal space continues as meeting space. The framed view is not compatible. A new dialogue is created.

Internal space adapts to again coordinate with new macro program framed in view.
There are currently three vacant city blocks located just four blocks from the city center. On axis with the central Soldiers and Sailors Monument located on the circle, and the Indiana Statehouse in the distance, any new structure will be visible from various areas and buildings throughout the metropolitan area. This site is one of the most critical in all of downtown, as it currently acts as a dead zone between the metropolitan core and a growing residential district. Also, the site is bisected by Market Street, which is the road leading to the on and off ramp for traffic coming or going to the interstate. This site has recently been designated by the Department of Transportation as one of four downtown new rail stops (yellow) as the city is currently considering a light rail system connecting the downtown area with its expanding urban periphery. (The orange dotted line is an existing rail corridor also being considered for reuse to minimize congestion and auto dependence) This site needs to be capable of bridging these two civic zones, as well as accept anticipated rail traffic. In order to make the most of these possibilities, the Department of Planning has requested that any new structure to be constructed on this site should also utilize surrounding sites, including the adjacent City Market, for additional cultural or transit facilities. The city hopes to use this area to explore new contemporary urban projects that could address increased pedestrian (green), rail, and auto traffic (purple) in hopes to revive not only the east side of the city center but also the subsidized city market which has continued to lose revenue annually.
Through a variety of sketch models, an initial attempt was made to create a datum through colliding bars nodding toward specific buildings in the city. Through this gesture, the intention was to create an architecture that would force surrounding context to enter into a dialogue with the new structure. This dialogue could be the continuation of the building form or a rejection and denial of a specific viewable landscape. Either way, the project would act as a catalyst for surrounding context.

From these studies, a series of sketch models started exploring how urban growth could be monitored or curated on the 3 block site alone, leaving changes in more distant parts of the city to be comprehended through site lines and views.
1. SITE 3 CITY BLOCKS

2. URBAN FORCES FUTURE GROWTH

3. CREATE ZONES LANDSCAPES

4. CIVIC ZONE LIBRARY, CITY MARKET, AND COURTHOUSE

5. GOVERNMENT ZONE CITY-COUNTY BUILDING, CITY SERVICES

6. RESIDENTIAL ZONE 2,000 NEW UNITS BY 2020

7. FRAME LANDSCAPE MERGE EXTERNAL ZONES

8. ZONES EVENT, GOVERNMENT, CIVIC, RESIDENTIAL
9. LANDSCAPE WATER FEATURE DIVIDES SITE

10. FRAMES VIEWS CONE OF VISION

11. 1ST LEVEL OF HIERARCHY GROUND PLANE

12. 2ND LEVEL OF HIERARCHY VIEW LINES TO SPECIFIC CONTEXT
1. CITY AS SEQUENCE OF VIEWS
2. FORM CREATED BY VIEWS
3. NET LEASABLE AREA GROUND PLANE AVAILABLE FOR GROWTH
4. CIRCULATION MOVE THROUGH BUILDING AND VIEWS

Sketch Model 2/23/2010
Urban Gesture: Sequence of Views

Architecture as Mediator between Programs:
Micro - Macro Programs
Morphology of Leasable Area (Red: Residential, Green: Civic, Yellow: Gov't, Blue: Event, Magenta & Gray: Future Site Uses)
This urban gesture creates a hierarchy of views. At ground level, specific points of the city are revealed. After traversing through a variety of micro and macro programs accompanying those views, citizens can escalate up the towers providing panoramic views of the city. This spatial sequence forces users to confront ground level activity before absorbing the ‘whole picture.’ This allows for better comprehension of surrounding urban mutations.
Endnotes

2. Kolb, *Sprawling Places,* 10
15. Kolb, *Sprawling Places,* 82
17. Kolb, *Sprawling Places,* 150
18. Koolhaas, Rem, Stefano Boeri, and Sanford Kwinter. Mutations, 535
19. Koolhaas, Rem, Stefano Boeri, and Sanford Kwinter. Mutations, 536-537
20. Koolhaas, Rem, Stefano Boeri, and Sanford Kwinter. Mutations, 542-543
23. Kolb, *Sprawling Places,* 104
Bibliography

33. Puri, Siddharth. Specifying the generic; [electronic resource]; / A Theoretical Unpacking of Rem Koolhaas’s ‘Generic City’; Published by Cincinnati, Ohio : University of Cincinnati, 2007.