An intervention in Story City, Iowa

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An intervention in Story City, Iowa

by

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This is to certify that the master’s thesis of

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Signatures have been redacted for privacy
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Introduction

During my educational process at Iowa State University, in addition to exposure to the material portion of architecture, much effort has been paid to the transmission of the ideas and theories of architecture to the student. The “why” of architecture has been addressed through courses known as history, theory, and criticism. In this exposure to the “why” of architecture, its relationship to the urban context is a recurrent theme. The concept of an ideal or utopian urban architecture is presented throughout history by architects and others each in turn with their own visions as to what such forms it should take. By ideal I am to mean “existing as a patterning or archetypical idea,” and of a conceptual nature.¹ These academic exercises became fascinating to me. What could be done with analyzing an existing city or town under this tradition and proposing some intervention to augment any existing idealized moments already expressed in that urban center?

Under this tradition sometimes the intellectual production of the architect was merely an academic exercise; in other instances it was being used as a sales pitch. At times the sales pitch was bought into, or the academic exercise was so influential that actual interventions into the urban fabric were applied. Whether it remained an academic exercise or not the vision was packaged from within a tradition; that being architects looking at urban topics, and then representing their concept of it to others. Some specific idealized form of expression of any intervention would, in keeping with the theme of idealization would be proper. To find this form of representation, one that is idealistic, I will look at what has been used in representing new urban areas to people. As such, the United States of America, and its cities, as a result of its colonization by European powers became a place for experimenting with the urban composition using planned communities.² Americans later formed and applied their own ideals growing out of this same tradition in the frontier.³ The act of the creation of a city out of “nothing” is itself an idealistic or utopian idea. What is in

³ Ibid., 317.
fact represented to people who may wish to purchase land in the new entity is an ideal. It is, however, not what they end up with. The ideal is represented and purchased, but reality is what is received in exchange for purchase.

An ideal is proposed and then represented in both cases. It is the blending of these two traditions I seek. I will use the tradition of architecture as an academic exercise in the analysis of an existing community and then overlaying into this town an intervention. I will then represent it using the idealistic vision offered by those selling the various planned communities of the United States in its historic frontier.

This thesis shows the use of the prospect painting as presented within the works of John W. Reps to represent an urban intervention in an actual city. To accomplish this I will examine the idealistic urban works of Claude-Nicholas Ledoux, Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier, and Ludwig Hilberseimer. Using information from this I will next examine the actual idealistic communities of the Amana Colonies, and Maharishi Vedic city. Next I will examine from John W. Reps what a prospect painting can present. Lastly I will apply the information obtained from this research to generate and represent an intervention into Story City, Iowa in the form of a prospect picture.
Study of Theoretical Intervention and Idealized Design

To create an understanding for approaching an idealist urban architectural intervention I have looked at several prominent architects of differing time periods and their related projects. I used this research to familiarize myself with this tradition and also to where possible to apply what I have learned to my project. An important note about the cases presented here is that all are products of their times, some are more documented than others; some are merely intuitive in their underpinnings, this is in fact part of the tradition. These cases are a blend of research, reason, art, intuition, and emotive argumentation. They are of a tradition, and some of these schemes have influenced real urban interventions. A scheme used here is a system designed to produce an urban societal system that fits within the worldview of the person positing it as a perceived remedy to the ills of an age. As a result these schemes are important when looking at an urban setting through an idealistic lens. I will examine pertinent projects by Claude-Nicholas Ledoux, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Le Corbusier, and Ludwig Hilberseimer.

Claude-Nicholas Ledoux

Ledoux tried to find within a classical framework a wholly modern system of public architecture. Although Ledoux did design many things that were built, the salt works he designed were his inspiration. Ideal cities became a fascination. Ledoux invested an immense amount of time into his ideal city which began development from a salt works project. In reality the placement of a salt works in the newly annexed Franche-Comte province was to open the area up for development for France. His second set of designs for his city however became more abstracted. Buildings became themed by the inhabitant or function producing wild designs by modern standards.

As time passed, the original project of a salt works became more abstracted and utopian in nature. The project went from the real economic opening of an underdeveloped

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4 Anthony Vidler, Claude-Nicholas Ledoux: Architecture and Social Reform at the End of the Ancien Regime. (Mass: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1990.), 140.
5 Ibid., 255.
6 Ibid. 267.
section of France to industry. Instead the project became an idealistic somewhat conflicted
and unresolved vision of social change with the architecture to support it. When something
is based upon a mutation of the subject or its functional use results can be unique. The
idealized pieces of architecture presented by Ledoux from the ideal city of Chaux are
mutations of the function of the building, or its ideal role in a social program. Most are his
own mutations although some appear to be variations on a theme such as Cemetery of Chaux
which has many similarities to Boulee’s Cenotaph for Newton. It is possible that he also
chose the sphere as a sort of ultimate form of a dome. Of which the dome has the
architectural signification (at least among the masons) to correspond with that of the
heavens.

Figure 1. Cemetery of Chaux by Claude-Nicholas, Ledoux 1785. Anthony Vidler, Claude-Nicholas,
Ledoux: Architecture and Social Reform at the End of the Ancien Regime. (Mass: Massachusetts
Institute of Technology, 1990.), 273.

Ledoux presents a rendering for an immense cemetery scheme. The classical respect
of geometry and symmetry are observed (figure 1). The build-ability of this scheme is moot.
It is a construct architectural in format designed to carry out an imaginary idealized social
scheme. It is perfect (at least in Ledoux’s scheme).

7 Ibid.
In the cooper’s house and workshop, (figure 2) concentric circles make up the primary vertical design and spatial feature of the structure. This is derived from the nature of what a cooper does daily by working with hoops that fit snuggly around bowed wood planks in order to make barrels. It is perhaps idealistic in its desire to be fitting to a personal need of its inhabitant. Ledoux, through these buildings, was attempting to influence the social sphere using institutional architecture.

The town is designed for walking and use of horse and carriage. There is by estimation, enough distance that use of horses would be preferable to walking. It should be noted that what was considered reasonable distance to travel by foot probably was a greater in the past than now. I can discern no secondary or service network of roads. Perspective views show properties to be sharing fenced walls that meet on all but one side. The City of Chaux exists in a radial oval plan in each of its three versions. The first version has a main cross axis. Located prominently on this axis is a law court and the church. Public greens exist in the innermost section of the oval. Out from this innermost location are institutional

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10 Ibid.
buildings and the barracks. A ring road runs around and serves private residences. A second version of the plan is more of an English picturesque landscape and garden tradition.\textsuperscript{11} This version is more open and less fortified. The even distribution of housing is now meandered within various other building types. The third version is oval again and includes sixteen radiating streets and alle\textsuperscript{e}'s that expand into the countryside.\textsuperscript{12} The city by Ledoux is tied to the circle claiming its purity and constant presence in nature.\textsuperscript{13} It represented the seed and growing influence (Ledoux hoped) of his city upon the countryside.

Socially it appears that being of a circular form, other than the most prominent who reside nearer to the center all things initially were equal. In later schemes this is not so and class distinction becomes more important. Some occupations he deems undesirable are relegated to the countryside. Social spaces are considered to be primarily within actual structures many of which are specifically designed for a particular social activity. Gardens are provided for outdoor socialization.

Spatially the ovoid form dictates the cities method of carving up of property and provides class distinction. The inner circle is where, as mentioned before, the important civil functions reside, as well as the more important individuals. Roads radiate outward with circular, or ovoid, roads bisecting them. As a result the individual standing at the outside of the perimeter can see to the inner circle of the town. The individual structures originally were set apart in an apparent planned distance depending on how far out from the center of the city and at what density level the particular had been desired by Ledoux as designer. As mentioned earlier, later versions were more park-like and followed a visual presentation based on or similar to, the English picturesque landscape tradition. In this version equally spaced distances between properties and structures, were removed from the plan in favor of an aesthetically pleasing landscape under tastes of the time. As a result over time Ledoux's city became less rigid in its geometry within the oval that is the city. Absolute order and its repetition around the scheme gave way to a system of composition where blocks had a mix of building types at varied distances. Spatially this situation results in going from repeated

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{12} This particular type of circulation corridor is an allee', this is not an alley. An allee' is an ornamented or visually pleasing thoroughfare. Unlike an alley its placement is not as a service corridor, or to the rear of structures. It is instead simply a visually pleasing route of travel.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
assured distances between structures of similar typology to different building typologies mixed together at distances which are not assured to be equal. More is memorable with variation and areas can have their own character despite being a particular distance from the city center.

In relation to prospect paintings, renderings of the city are tight and clean. Nothing is out of place and Chaux’s plan is well understood. Nothing in particular about the city of Chaux is pointed out in renderings of it. This is the case except where a number is placed over a structure which is then described elsewhere. No side illustrations point out any particular features of the city other than its general form. City wide renderings simply show the city as a collection of sculptural buildings with routes of travel between them. Only in separate illustrations is anything unique about the city other than its organization as an oval shape pointed out. If rendered as a prospect painting the city would supply many buildings of interest. The social interests of its designer could take the form of insets and be shown in relation to the city as a whole. This stressing of these unique structures could better explain Chaux than a simple perspective rendering.

Figure 3. Map of Chaux. Anthony Vidler, Claude-Nicholas, Ledoux: Architecture and Social Reform at the End of the Ancien Regime. (Mass: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1990.), 262.

14 Ibid.
Frank Lloyd Wright

Frank Lloyd Wright had an idealistic proposal that, over time, evolved and existed under several names including “The Living City,” and “Broadacre City.” The whole process began with Wright’s submission in a competition sponsored by the Chicago City Club. This competition asked for a new design to help with Chicago’s urban development. Essentially Wright originally extended and pin-wheeled the grid of the city of Chicago to give it order and yet reduce the monotony of repetition.15 Into this he then integrated parkways, services, utilities, shopping, and all the functions essential to a town of any size.16 The plan produced by Wright over time became Broadacre City. The idea of having all needed things integrated well into the society’s built fabric (planned into rather than simply zoned for) allowed for careful consideration of interaction of needs and eliminated potential redundancy.

Figure 4. Model Quarter Section for City Residential Land Development by Frank Lloyd Wright 1913. Robert McCarter, Frank Lloyd Wright (London: Phaidon Press Limited 1997), 239.

Wright’s plan looks like a modern park-like suburban setting except that it is based on a modified grid. When Wright develops it further, and the automobile becomes a more influential factor, we end up with something very much like a modern suburb. This idealized

16 Ibid.
city scheme became a non-existent utopian landscape as a repository into which Wright over
time would place every major typology or building which he created. This even included his
plans for a “mile high skyscraper.” Unfortunately, this giant utopian skyscraper befouls the
very essence of the idea behind Broadacre City, which is designed as a system of reasonable
density for all residents.  

Broadacre City as a plan was a derivation of the Jeffersonian grid repeated on a
magnitude that carried itself completely across the continent as one giant fully integrated
city. The “Jeffersonian grid” is the method of surveying the whole of the United States.
The grid is derived from Thomas Jefferson’s original proposition as to what units of
measurement to use when surveying the American frontier, with his concept of a mile
initially being set at a unit very close to one nautical mile. Jefferson’s original proposal
was then redefined by Congress with a mile being 5280 feet under the Land Ordinance of
1785 while he was away in Paris. Despite it not being Jefferson’s exact proposal this is
how the standardization of townships became set at 36 miles on a side as a square or grid
system. Towns and land are then further divided off of this grid. It is a relatively easy
system to subdivide and is often made use of by designers such as Wright. Frontier towns in
the Midwest and Western United States often used a simple grid subdivided off of this
scheme. Seeking to have land distributed ideally in proportion to the needs of families
Wright made use of this basic unit in his subdivision of the Jeffersonian grid. The
Jeffersonian grid was a handy unit of measure based on a defined and ideally legal set form
of division. That he carved it up not in equal squares shows his desire to not act merely as a
developer, but more as a guarantor of reasonable amounts of space for all owners.

Wright does have a structural strategy in terms of socialization. Public social spaces
are parks. The individual land plots where the housing resides are proportional to the needs
of the individual families and generously so. As a result the only real direct social outlet is
the street. There are no supporting circulations to create an active edge to the properties.

17 Ibid., 201
18 Ibid., 243
20 Ibid.
Each property is its own secluded refuge. Socialization is only by those invited into the property, or those who go to the parks.

This proposed ideal development was on one hand quite American, while on the other hand something else. It is derived from law as a standard. How the land is distributed is not completely described. It is merely described as being in proportion to the size of a family and its needs. Capitalism is not introduced into this. When capitalism is introduced the system becomes something much more like the existing American suburb. With the greater distribution of the automobile among American families the scheme and its distances works better. The introduction of the automobile allowed people easily travel the distances required in this suburban scheme. The design was not without impact; it merely needed developers to apply it in a capitalistic manner. When this occurs, we do end up with grid version of the American suburb.

Representations of this particular ideal city are not immediately addressable in terms of prospect paintings as the most common method of representation used by Wright is a model. A model due to scale and construction carries with it its own types of abstraction. As a result there is some similarity to prospect pictures which are idealistic presentations of a location. Lack of similarity exists in that three dimensional models have no system immediately available to call attention to specific parts of the city scheme. If placed into a prospect picture, the pin-wheeling of the Jeffersonian grid may be better explained. Also an emphasis might be placed on how structures are distributed. Individual insets could describe each typology in the city. These insets could simply be renderings taken from Wrights catalog as he places generic versions of his buildings throughout Broadacre City.

*Le Corbusier*

Le Corbusier had as his inspiration for his scheme the experience of life in a crowded, unsanitary, and an ultimately archaic Paris, France. The streets could not, due to their

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21 This scheme does allow for mass transit but it is in the background. The assumption is that most families will have automobiles available as transit. This may not have been the case when it was first introduced but over time it became part of the scheme as automobiles became more common and Wright continued to expand his scheme with his new designs being placed within its framework.

development from meandering non-axial paths, serve the traffic loads required of them.\footnote{Corbusier, \textit{The City of Tomorrow and its Planning} (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Inc. 1987.) 5. In fact the term Corbusier uses is “the pack donkey’s way”. This becomes a central theme for Corbusier throughout his attempts at explaining the difference between the planned way and something that just happened. Plus this plays up the conscious will of those who seek to change for the better by agreeing with him rather than those who simply make do with what remains at hand. What remains at hand is this congested un-purposeful route designed, or at least implied as designed by, something as stupid as a pack animal. This is great use of symbolism. Also some of the streets probably were animal routes at one time. The fact that humans may have led these animals from time to time is lost in the use of symbolism.} Corbusier wished to increase the density of cities to make travel distances shorter and serve a growing population.\footnote{Ibid., 167} The wholesale leveling of Paris would be required. In order to do this he desired that park space be increased to ensure a supply of fresh air for the human nervous system to be able to regenerate. This is a recurrent theme in these idealized urban schemes sometimes referred to as “the lungs of the city.”\footnote{Ibid.} Travel was by “tube station” and bus stops at 400 foot intervals based on the 400 foot grid system of his contemporary city with the station of each transportation system in the middle of each of these 40 acre sections.\footnote{Ibid., 169} The main hub would encompass all methods of transport, including “aero-taxis”. This hub would be located naturally and conveniently in the heart of the city. Out from this center rise great skyscrapers whose feet are surrounded by parks, and in these parks cafes and other commerce would abound.\footnote{Ibid. 171} Further out from this are the warehouses, industrial parks, and other such developments of industry.\footnote{Ibid.} Surrounding the whole affair would be a forested park and further out garden cities (which by description take the place of suburbs but are of higher density) where the commuters live.\footnote{Ibid.}
Corbusier’s designs for the forms in this city were in his mind designed to relieve the pressures of daily life in the city. Aside from the massive transportation hub he spends much time addressing the needs of housing in terms of apartments. Unfortunately, while Corbusier finds repetition quieting for the soul and by his own descriptions perhaps even beautiful this may not in practice be so.

We do complain about the repetitive nature of modern urban, suburban, and x-urban, housing developments, and strip malls, but by far and wide the variability seems staggering in comparison to what Corbusier proposed. Figure 6 is an example of one of Corbusier’s garden apartment buildings, garden apartments via a multi-tiered set of skywalks. Take the garden apartment and repeat it several times and you have an idea of what the garden suburb might look like.

Socialization amongst the individuals residing in these cities can occur within Corbusier’s “modern” apartments, the parks which make up the “lungs of the city,” or within the plazas of the garden apartments in the suburbs of the city. As Corbusier essentially takes

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30 Even if at times this variability is limited to the types of vestigial shudders one neighbor has mounted on his house in comparison to his next door neighbor, or that the strip mall across the street from another strip mall has differing brick patterns. Distinctive signage helps breakdown the monotony in reality even though most people find constant commercial advertisements detrimental to the general beauty of the cityscape a good many have become entertaining and arguably works of art. Las Vegas owes much to them. I did not see this aspect of cities dealt with in Le Corbusier’s work but it could actually help in some of his arguments.
the population and places its density into a vertical framework, more area is left open for both his all important city circulation, and parks. While the massive parks surrounding the city are for a supply of fresh oxygen, and although it is unspoken, it seems as if Corbusier is suggesting that individuals go to the parks to recharge and to access that supply of oxygen. It is almost as if Corbusier is creating a habitat for humans or at the very least a refuge, away from the machine age. On a level more localized to the residences, the issue of socialization for the inhabitants of the skyscrapers, at city center, is not addressed. It is possible that these individuals merely need to board the subway and go to the nearest park or plaza. As these inhabitants are closest to the massive central transportation hub this may be the reason for not addressing the socialization of these individuals. Outward from the city center the garden apartments live up to their name by including gardens, which by illustrations appear to be parks that are quite similar in theme to New York City’s central park. As for socializing in one’s own apartment, this would be dependent upon space. Although at this date, modern electronic media centers can pump out increasingly greater levels of sound which may render this kind of dwelling quite uncomfortable for one’s neighbors.


This city is derived from a worship of the machine as a device of efficiency. That we as a society should seek to mimic the efficiency of the mechanical devices which have come to increasingly govern our daily lives is quite optimistic. Considering the cramped and
ancient Paris with which a rather elite architect was confronted with daily, this desire for order and believing in it as a liberator, is perhaps reasonable. Unfortunately this scheme removes character and even markers from the horizon by making everything similar, almost like many modern non-places such as airports. Signs are the only way to find where you are going. Corbusier does as mentioned attempt to make life more bearable by including parks and green spaces to recharge the human nervous system. This appears to be his token effort of goodwill toward the organic nature of humans. It is an acknowledgement, that in this effort at creating a city of order, we can be messy and are probably out of our element in his design without it.

As the city is based on a worship of the machine and its efficiency, order, and throughput became the spatial ordering device. Population density is moved vertical instead of spread out in the Paris which Corbusier is using as his anti-model. By moving the population up and off of the land Corbusier not only achieves taking care of his particular cleanliness fetish, but also moves population out of the way. Doing this, allows for the rapid travel among structures by individuals through an increasing amount of ways. Taxis, tube stations, busses, aero-taxis, and others are all mentioned. Streets can be broad since population is no longer in the way. This is not a pedestrian scale. Blocks as mentioned are on a 400 foot system so travel is likely not on foot unless it is within a building. Each building is a repeated item in this grid. As a result the citiescape is from a street level more of the same visually from wherever you stand. You as an individual within the scheme are spatially in a massive non-place. Differentiation is not important in a modern mass-produced system. Interchangeable parts are. As a result one space is not discernable from another.

Renderings used by Corbusier are made using perspective to create an understanding of just how immense buildings are in this scheme. As a result the majority of pictures show only a single unit within the city (figure 6) or parts of buildings (figure 5). The size of the buildings and lack of ornamentation result in repetitive shapes with only thin lines to represent the details of the building (such as windows). The mass of his version of Paris would, due to its size and lack of variation, become tedious even as a prospect painting. The only visibly defined elements within such a rendering would likely be the skyscrapers. Insets could however be used to document those unique items amongst the repetition such as the
transport hub at the city center. Other possibilities include use of insets to describe each typology.

**Ludwig Hilberseimer**

L. Hilberseimer, was a modernist allied with Mies van der Rohe. In his projects, his concerns are population distribution and geometrical order. Driving factors in his design are concerns largely based on protection from aerial bombardment from radiological weapons. Being of the World War II “duck and cover era” this concern as a driving factor in design is unavoidable.

Among his key points, Hilberseimer analyzes and compares several economic systems, their societies, and how they approach population. These systems are the ancient Roman, industrial British, early 20th century American, and ancient Peruvian. He then contrasts these systems, and couples them with his concerns about radiological attack on an urban system.

According to Hilberseimer, the Peruvian system is an agricultural based system, where land is frequently re-distributed although technically held in common by the people as a whole.31 The government is largely a manager of this distribution designed to support a certain number of individuals in a family per allotment of land with built in safe guards against the conglomeration of land under any one group or family.32 Hilberseimer considers this system both idyllic and not plausible in modern times.33

The Roman system of consumption without production is found by Hilberseimer to not be viable.34 Mere consumption and service of consumption leads to ruin. Rome failed, aside from being sacked barbarians and socially by adoption of Christianity, because it contributed nothing in production and as a result received nothing in payment.35 It created infrastructure, for itself and others, but within its “homeland” it effectively ceased to furnish

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32 Ibid., 27.
33 Ibid., 27.
34 Ibid., 18.
35 Ibid.
for itself anything other than service. Rome shopped out its material needs and ran out of money to pay for them.\textsuperscript{36}

According to Hilberseimer the British system of transformation of raw inputs into finished product only works while the other party (actual empire or otherwise) is devoid or significantly handicapped in regard to intellectual capital and generally lower in technological development.\textsuperscript{37} Technology can be obtained; it is learned, created, taught, bought, or stolen. The situation is only a semi-permanent one. The British system fails when the trading partner figures out how to use its own resources or develops its own technologies.

The American system, by Hilberseimer’s observation requires that diversification is what is needed to exist as a healthy nation. A nation must produce both raw materials and finished products.\textsuperscript{38} The American system is of an empire within itself, and the ability to produce nearly all things needed from raw material to finished product internally, is unique and dependent to some extent on a frontier. This is dependent on careful management of resources and trade balances.

Using the contrast of these differing systems Hilberseimer wishes to remake cities into one of several designs, geometrical and largely symmetrical on one or several axis. The actual geometry of these cities although well planned in terms of broad streets and ease of movement is not well explained. The zoning of residency and industry are largely based on wind patterns, although he does not completely state where this ends and begins. Regularity and pattern rule in much the same way Corbusier’s Radiant City only perhaps more so. Hilberseimer intersperses houses, industry, and heavy industry much like Wright’s Broadacre City, only industry appears more significant in this scheme than agriculture. Many spaces, parks, and open areas appear backing the “lungs of the city” concept.

Hilberseimer’s wind pattern studies keep pollutants away from the wind stream of less polluting structures allowing for industry to reside with the residential concerns of any population. Doing so, he addresses beyond that simple articulation of an ideal solution for city building, Hilberseimer essentially takes a city and suggests leveling it and re-building it according to a logical pattern (of geometry). Chicago for example is rearranged into a city

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., 52.
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.
composed of what I will term “citylets” complete with skyscrapers that resemble the ones
designed for Paris by Le Corbusier. For Hilberseimer, this is not considered not to be a
utopian or overly idealistic undertaking, just an immense undertaking.\(^3\)
The uprooting of
people en masse is an absolute; destruction of history is totally ignored.

Related to his wind pattern studies, are examinations of the fallout from various types
of radiological weapons of different sizes. Most notably he does this near Chicago.\(^4\)
As a
result of these fallout studies Hilberseimer is compelled to move even more people.

Hilberseimer wants to move population within city “A”, to city “B”, “C” and “D”. How to
entice people to move is not addressed. The idea being that if the population is spread out at
distances directed by his studies less people will die when a strike actually occurs.

Biological and chemical weapons are not included in Hilberseimer’s analysis even though the
collective memory of World War I with the use of mustard gas, World War II with the use of
nerve agents by the Nazi’s attempting their horrific final solution should have been present.

As the land is distributed in a similar fashion as Corbusier’s scheme, although not tied
to the grid, mass transit and automobiles would be necessary for daily travel. This is
magnified by the idea that dispersion is the key of the system. Further, the land distribution,
and who owns what is never clearly defined. Hilberseimer’s system is as mentioned a
scheme of the “duck and cover era”. It is a cold war version of Corbusier’s radiant city. Due
to the indefensible nature of a city form aerial attack Hilberseimer’s scheme is a flight
response instead of a fight response to an attack. With older cities the citizenry come into the
city center or the city’s fortress and wait out the attack. In Hilberseimer’s scheme the city
has already fled and spread out almost like herd animals attacked by carnivores. Fewer
citizens are injured in an attack. Hilberseimer is trying to persuade citizens to feel better by
knowing that they would lose less people in an attack. This scheme is the Radiant City but
with its projects and apartments placed farther apart.

Hilberseimer could make use of the prospect drawing format, and skip its illustrative
style. Hilberseimer’s streamlined icons which represent buildings could take the place of the
small detailed representations which inhabit prospect drawings. Insets could then explain

\(^4\) Ibid., 283.
organization of his building groups and how they relate to wind patterns. Hilberseimer's use of plan based drawings is illustrative, but a prospect picture could have been used to better sell his ideas to individuals outside of his own academic sphere.

**Comparative Discussion of the Selected Architects Schemes**

All idealistic cities have or imply, an architectural connection, even should this be only spatially so. As urban schemes these idealistic suggestions from architects can (mostly) be instituted and actually built. The results would likely be different than intended but each would certainly have social impact. After learning about the proposed schemes I have come to some conclusions regarding them which I will use to frame my discussion of an actual urban system, and later the creation of a gesture.

Ledoux through his Utopian scheme of the city of Chaux broke free from pure classical forms and instead managed to reference them and use the forms of other cultures. Most of the shapes are simple polygons that in their composition are used to allude to function. Furthermore, those shapes are part of a whole composition. Within the ideal city of Chaux there is a planned system with buildings that exist as typologies. A designer would need to repeat these typologies as needed to fulfill the requirements of the community. Here we have a system pinned to typology. The "lungs of the city" concept is also addressed as the city is somewhat laid out as a formal garden.

With Frank Lloyd Wright's Broadacre City the complications created by our suburbs taken and multiplied to that extreme size would be amazing. In theory the situation could be partially self-solving as in the scheme everything is distributed so well as to be nearby. Unfortunately most people do not choose their jobs. People have jobs based on availability. What is available may not be in your nearby section of Broadacre City. Wright emphasizes personal property ownership, capitalism, and in an odd sort of way after paving the continent, wide-open spaces. He uses typologies much in the same way that Ledoux does only his typologies are more flexible being based off of his own actual creations. They are not repeated units precisely, instead they are repeated styles. Broadacre City is a product of the machine age. By my interpretation it exists only with faith in technology to solve problems without creating new ones. It does show an earnest need to integrate the economic system
into the landscape. I could not, however, derive how this distribution of business, residential and agricultural land was to be facilitated. Our current suburbs are essentially a manifestation of Wright’s system as it really would exist under a capitalistic society. Wright does put forth a system where a grid is utopian in contrast to our current suburbs where streets are often far from aligned on a grid.

Corbusier takes the concept of repetition of typology and mass produces it. Not only are individual residences mass produced, whole high rise apartments are. In fact there are no freestanding individual residences. Apartments and skyscrapers rule his vision. In this system order becomes the most important factor. Other stress is placed on the “lungs of the city” concept wherein a park system is used to recharge the air is the single most important difference for this system. It is paramount to the functioning of an ordered system. It supports the whole city, as the city can not exist without its exchange of air. This system is dense, yet requires mass transit to navigate, and by its density allows for mass transit to exist.

Hilberseimer looks to institute a mix of industry and business. Productivity, the movement of individuals within a city system, and direction of pollution away from residents are the primary keys to his system. On a larger scale his system suggests redistribution of populations for the purpose of spreading them out for their safety. Numerous dense pockets of population are the key to his system. This is in opposition to Wright’s system, which is a continuous spread out city, or Corbusier’s system which is a super dense megalopolis surrounded by dense “garden” cities. Hilberseimer’s way is dense pockets spread out in a field.

Each scheme proposes its own typology. In Ledoux’s scheme it is a classically derived yet function specific form. Wright merely places into the framework his own designs and uses them as typologies, even where arguably incompatible. Corbusier creates whole schemes with levels of living based on how elite you really are. Skyscrapers at the center are for the captains of industry, lower buildings (yet still quite high in elevation) house those next down the line in the elitism. Hilberseimer uses similar housing to that of Corbusier and goes down to a smaller density with plans for housing of single families but at a high density per acre.
Even though idealistic in proposal the social aspect is left open and only lightly discussed in most of these schemes. The exception is Ledoux’s scheme wherein whole institutions are created for every kind of social function from church to coming of age. Wrights scheme assumes people will function socially throughout its scheme, and in its parks. Due to the distribution of land and how housing is laid out having people to your property is the best way to socialize. For Corbusier’s scheme it would appear that all socialization occurs in parks, or in the businesses that spring up at the lower levels of these housing units.

Each architect has used a preferred method of representing their projects. All could benefit from the use of a prospect painting to sell their ideas. A two dimensional idealization that sums up what a urban center is about could allow for a quick conveyance of the general importance of each scheme just as it did for actual towns. Although some come closer to the prospect form of representation this particular mode of visualization is not put to use.

Through this study I have learned of some of the ideas architects have regarding urban spaces. The intellectual products of these architects show intent to provide new ways of looking at how human life exists within the built environment. Each of these schemes is tied to the concerns of the individuals within the times to which they were bound and are illustrative of a tradition of addressing social concerns within architecture through idealized thought. To get at our needs we have to look at actual composed and instituted schemes, draw from them, and use our architect’s schemes to help interpret them.
Idealist Communities in Iowa

In searching for an urban target to overlay an idealistic intervention, gesture, or system onto I decided to choose examples with some level of personal familiarity and looked to the Midwest. As a resident of Iowa I know that the state has played host to many idealistic communities. I considered it best to look at some of these before picking and addressing a municipality designed perhaps precisely as an ideal, but not as a utopia. Settlers in the state of Iowa produced such communities as Amana colonies, Icarian settlements, and others. The Amana colonies were themselves one of the most successful attempts at a real an idealistic society in the United States. As such, there is a historical tie to Iowa, Iowans, and the concept of urban idealism. It would also give me an opportunity to see if these idealistic communities held any concerns in common with the architectural tradition of ideal communities.

This tradition is not dead. “Ideal” as a built and planned form for a society reveals itself once again. Recently a new community was born in Jefferson County Iowa just outside of Fairfield. This utopian community, named Vedic City, is an outgrowth of the principles, adhered to by the followers of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. The principles although fed through a filter or one particular guru are based off of Indian Vedic philosophies. All buildings within that settlement follow the principles of Sthapatyaveda a Vedic based building system with direct codified links to a utopian strain of thought.

Amana Colonies

The Amana Colonies are a collection of seven interconnected settlements located about twenty five miles west of Iowa City, Iowa. The towns survive today both as tourist destinations and as a center for the Amana line of appliances. Its founders were members of a German group of Christian mystics known as The Community of True Inspiration led by Christian Metz.41 The Amanas are in fact the second settlement by this group in the United States.

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States, the first being at Ebenezer outside of Buffalo, New York. The already successful Ebenezer settlement was sold for profit due to the spreading out of Buffalo, New York. Amana itself was founded in 1855 after scouts from the Ebenezer settlement found a useful section of land that was available. Each village was connected by roads and a canal that was used for transport of grain and other items. A small neighboring village was bought outright because it had a rail terminal.

All things were held in common and the colonies operated as a commune. Meals were communal and life was focused and pious. Entertainment was limited and deemed distracting from living a life centered on God. The Amanas were rare in that as a long term communistic society it was prosperous and wealthy. In fact the society continued as an economic concern even after voting itself out of existence in 1932 forming into a modern corporation.


Architecturally and spatially as an urban design there are no landmark buildings. In reality the uniformity of buildings built before 1932 are the primary reason for its status as a

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42 Ibid
43 Ibid.
national landmark.\textsuperscript{44} In fact the use of uniformity continues even in death where each plot and head stone is of the same dimension.\textsuperscript{45} Other features that bind the townscape together include plantings (nearly every spare piece of land had beneficial food producing plantings), types of sidewalks, rhythm and spacing between buildings, and lantern types.\textsuperscript{46} A distinctive feature is that exterior wood, except at the doors, is not (before 1932) painted and merely replaced over time.\textsuperscript{47}

The layout of villages was not connected to any specific grid or defining system. As all things were held in common it was originally distributed per need. Alleys were more pathways used to move items into or out of businesses and houses, but were not very prominent. Almost all spaces that were between structures as mentioned earlier were planted with food producing species.\textsuperscript{48}

![Figure 8](Platt of the village of Amana, IA. Retig, Lawrence. \textit{Amana Today: A History of the Amana Colonies From 1932 to the Present}. (South Amana: Amana Society, 1975.), 159.)

Entertainment was discouraged; the major social outlet was to be found in the Church, the communal kitchens and dining system. Socialization in short was not a function

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., 34.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., 5.
of the villages. Connection with God was. There was an aligning philosophy adhered to by all members of the society, all though one could leave. The whole of the village was deigned for providing food and connection with God for a people. That is essentially the social goal of this system.

**Maharishi Vedic City**

Vedic City founded on July 25, 2001 became the state of Iowa’s 950th city. The city now has changed its name to be Maharishi Vedic City. Important to this paper it is the first city in the world founded and designed to function within the concepts of ancient Vedic architectural design as focused through the lens of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Not surprisingly there is a Hindu connection here.

Before beginning, it is important to note a few important key items. First, I am personally familiar with Vedic City, having been a resident in its “parent town” of Fairfield, IA. Second, the intent is to lay out a basic and rough understanding of the functional tonality of the incorporated city and to some extent why it is designed the way it is, and where it is going. Third, it must be mentioned that although a direct and distinct connection exists between the philosophy governing the city and Hinduism via the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, the practitioners and the functional organs of the movement hold no claim to be a “religion”, and in fact seek to combat that notion by preferring to operate as a “science.”

The actual resident’s own religious affiliation is in theory their own choice. Some do place themselves with some particular religious affiliation.

When something as complex as Maharishi Vedic City comes into being it must be asked why it is located where it is. First we must look at the parent city of Maharishi Vedic City. During the early nineteen seventies in Fairfield, Iowa (the parent city of Maharishi Vedic City) a small private college failed. The campus was then purchased by the Mahrishi Mahesh Yogi. Accreditation requirements were met and the college was then re-christened

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Maraharishi International University (MIU). Currently MIU is now known as Maharishi University of Management (MUM) due to a name and marketing identity change. Over time it became reasonably successful. Students attending the college come from all quarters of the world. Many of these students stay in Fairfield after attending classes. Fairfield benefits with new cultural outlets, a myriad of ethnic restaurants, new jobs, a synagogue, and a Hindu temple. In turn the local businesses do what they can to cater to the market created by a population of vegetarians that prefer organic food.

Eventually a desire among those connected with the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi to found a city based on his ideals increased, and it was planned. Everything in the city is designed to function for the benefit of the inhabitants to increase their tranquility, promote health, and promote peace. The sum of the many parts, even though controlled by a group of various developers, is designed within the scope of a body of Vedic knowledge to function and amplify what we will consider to be “good vibrations.” This body of Vedic knowledge covers many topics ranging from cooking, to architecture, to city design, and so on. Under the philosophy espoused by the followers of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi certain parameters, if interpreted properly, and in turn implemented properly, would be beneficial in any number of ways.

One of the major tenants of this particular scheme is that of meditation (particularly the Transcendental Meditation® also known as TM® as taught by the Maharishi), which yields benefits for the practitioner. According to followers and trainers, the science is meticulously researched and the benefits have been scientifically recorded for all to see by various parties. As mentioned earlier this is part of the science aspect of marketing this philosophy. Calming of the mind, relief from physical ailments, and improvement of the

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53 Ibid.
54 Ibid.
55 Ibid.
individual's general well-being are to be expected. In fact the practice of TM® may benefit all society and even those who do not practice it.  

The basic concept of TM® as a benefit to society, which is explained in terms of quantum physics and harmonic fields for both practitioners and non-practitioners, can be better summed up in simple terms adequate to our needs here. Although this explanation will miss some of the subtleties of the quantum explanation, it is a working, functional, albeit un-trained (I have not gone through the classes needed to learn the TM method of meditation). The system all fits within a cosmological scheme. In this scheme the world is all created of energy/matter. Of this “stuff”, some of it is shared by all. A field if you will, of energy/matter. You yourself are an encapsulation of some of that shared “stuff”. What you do/feel and your for lack of a better term, “karma” is broadcasted across this interconnected medium as a vibration. This then reaches other encapsulations of the field within the medium much like a radio and receiver and in turn impacts that persons own personal state of being. Meditation helps create beneficial waves traveling across the medium. These waves much like others can be constructive or destructive. Opposing vibes create disharmony, while focused ones like waves increase in amplitude and effectiveness.

Better yet, the beneficial response improves health and could possibly result in world peace. A key idea is that if enough meditators could be grouped together into one spot, the basic logic follows: that a critical mass might be achieved, and world peace could come into being as a side effect. As per this argument, not only is the city designed to be a haven for TM® practitioners, but it is also to provide housing for specially trained “Sidhas”, essentially super-meditators. The more meditators focusing toward a particular goal the greater the impact much like waves behaving constructively in physics.

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58 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
61 Ibid.
In addition to providing for a pool of meditators, there is a body of knowledge, again Vedic, and through the lens of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, that concerns buildings and architecture. Roughly analogous to the feng-shui of Chinese origin this architecture channels energies and handles these energies in a beneficial manner working with meditation to help focus them. Among the physical features associated with this kind of architecture is a central daylit room which reaches from the top of the building down to the floor level, with distinctive Indian-derived cupolas. Also prominent, is a reliance on symmetry and axes that to western eyes is often quite Palladian in form.

The city design is itself an extension of this (In fact the Maharishi Foundation International offers city design and planning). The city is one big mandala. A mandala being a meditative, contemplative graphical device, in some cases a stylized version of the cosmos. Each individual neighborhood is its own mandala. These neighborhoods as mandalas are components that form another mandala which is a district within the city. These districts as mandalas in turn group together on the landscape to form another mandala which is the city. Perhaps that way as things expand if not everything is equal at least each individual neighborhood is. Basically each part, from a person, to the cityscape is a component in the promotion of world peace through constructive good vibrations.

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62 Ibid.
Figure 9. A Small Vedic Ranch Style Home in Vedic City, Iowa, Photo by Dan Buttery, 2004.

Figure 10. A Vedic Office Building Structure Near Vedic City, Iowa, photo by Dan Buttery, 2004.
As a functioning scheme it has a unifying set of principles laid out that can be followed by a steering committee, the council and mayor. It could function, with its desire for self-sufficiency as a reasonable model for what the future may hold for us. This is after discounting the pseudo-religious philosophical underpinnings that bind the resident individuals. It works now. How it will fare in the future is unknown.

Discussion about the Idealist Communities of Iowa

Both the Amanas and Vedic city are systematic in their scope. Both impose control over the aesthetics of the urban landscape. Both have utilized an underlying philosophy that binds the residents together. The fostering of social ties to maintain and grow a community is one of the key implied concerns in the real idealistic communities surveyed here. The binding agent in the case of the Amanas has over time fallen to the side in favor of adopting the cultures of their neighbors. Provision for and fostering of social interconnectedness appears to be a primal desire in idealist designed communities in Iowa. Unlike the un-built examples of idealistic urban systems designed by architects both the Amanas, and Vedic City invoke God.\textsuperscript{65}

Circulation within each is very different. In the Amanas roads largely conform to the terrain. The presence of a canal for distribution of grains and heavy material was the only

\textsuperscript{65} Although in its underpinnings Vedic City may dispute that it is invoking any deity it does look to a cosmologically defined force.
true service corridor aside from streets internal to the colonies. In Vedic City, despite its uniqueness, distribution of anything from people to products is very somewhat, at first glance similar to many suburbs. Everything appears to be arranged by a normal street system. This is however, not so. The streets are aligned according to a Vedic planning system where directional orientation is very important. In a system based on Sthapatya Veda the streets are to be aligned with the compass points north, south, east, and west. The same streets as with all buildings are to be set into the city also in accordance with the lay of the land. After exiting the street system personal entrance into any structure is to be located on the east side of buildings. What may appear normal at first glance gives into a subtle rhythm of repeated themes constructed within a system upon a second glance.\textsuperscript{66}

Neither the Amana Colonies nor Maharishi Vedic City have a prospect picture attached to them which I was able to locate. The Amana Colonies are in fact a closely grouped collection of connected villages. Close enough that a prospect picture could be made of the whole system. Insets could have been made relating important structures within the collected villages. Maharishi Vedic City being a still developing town could use the prospect format to represent its intended route of development while using insets to show what is unique about it. The architecture alone could make for interesting and attention getting insets.

Idealized Representations of Cities in America

With the schemes investigated all require some form of representation to show what was important with regard to each design. Ledoux made use of drawings and perspectives. With Wight’s submission to the Chicago City Club the form in which it took happened to be a model. Corbusier made use of both drawings and the written word for presenting his schemes. Hilberseimer followed Corbusier’s lead in use of the written word, but made his drawings and models much more stylized by using streamlined icons. All had to use some method to relay their information to others. Due to this, and also because I am going to be working with a real city that I am not intending to destroy in total and re-create, I decided to look at how cities have been represented ideally in the past particularly within the United States to arrive at a form in which to package my own urban intervention.

The United States has been a nation with the luxury of a frontier to develop. Where there is room for expansion in a capitalistic society there is room for speculation. As I mentioned before there is something almost utopian in the ability to plan out, even if it is on paper, an entire city. In doing so historically speculators would then portray to potential buyers an idealistic image of the community they were selling. Because this is in turn an idealistic portrayal of an urban design I feel it is a relevant course of study for presenting an intervention into an urban environment. Furthermore, while these representations were primarily fantasy they did contain some truths, such as how the city grid was laid out, or what was unique about the community. They portray the relevant fantasy of the urban center represented in a fairly clear manner. Here I present three examples of such representations. These three cities are Omaha, Las Vegas, and San Francisco. Omaha, Nebraska was chosen primarily because it is a result of the conflux of speculation and the influence of railroad routes. Las Vegas, Nevada was chosen due to the fact that it took advantage its location and again was able to draw a railroad to its location and as a result became an urban center. San Francisco, California is a bit of a contrast. While Omaha and Las Vegas as settlements were largely dependent upon the railroad to spur growth, San Francisco had no need of a railroad as a draw. It was conveniently located with a bay and situated near the heart of one of the
gold rushes. Also, while reasons for settlement are differing all make use of a grid. While not being of the same scale as the city selected to be the subject of study they will have similarities to it.

**Omaha, Nebraska**

In figure 12, Omaha city is shown here as plotted out in 1868. As a city of grids it looks uninteresting. As it is a grid based system it essentially ignores the landscape into which it is placed. Its portrayal as a vibrant community is another matter. In figure 13 it is shown in an idyllic manner, portrayed booming and bustling while in reality that same year speculators who had carved up farmland and shipped in prefabricated structures awaited the arrival of the railroad and the projected business and people it would bring.\(^{67}\) The pictured ideal precedes the expected development.

![Figure 12. Map of Omaha, Nebraska 1868.](image)

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As a representation it is an advertisement. This advertisement that makes use of perspective without one single set of vanishing points, and is highly stylized, yet casually looks accurate. It is a pure fantasy allowing the speculator to show economic vitality when in reality that vitality is what the city is hoping for. It represents pure opportunity even though Omaha was in plan virtually indistinguishable from any other speculative city on the Missouri river in Nebraska, of which there were many. The city itself is as mentioned a disinteresting grid. This grid is overlaid upon a landscape that is ignored. While Nebraska is noted for being flat the edge near the Missouri river has changes in elevation which the city as shown ignores or avoids. The most easily developable and flattest land is the area platted and shown in figures 12 and 13. Also shown in figure 13 are several insets. These show several prominent, and perhaps more importantly large buildings located in the city along with the capital of the

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Nebraska territory. The reason for the large buildings being shown is to confirm the solidity of investments in the city and increase perception of the achievement of the city as an economic power. The reason for showing the territorial capital is to explain that here is, in this city, the location of that which is important and key to the settlement of this new territory. Where there is government there is business and opportunity. These insets seek to confirm the visual argument of opportunity presented in the idealized main body of the prospect picture as a sort of graphic footnote supporting the document.

*Las Vegas, Nevada*

The actual location of Las Vegas places it in one of the more inhospitable arid stretches of the American west. The presence of water ensured its existence but like Omaha its early success is the result of the arrival of a railroad. Note while there is in fact a spring located there, the springs shown as an inset is overstated (figure 14). The current dancing fountains of Bellagio are an example of this fascination with water and an oasis in the desert and the modern realization of the overstated fountain. Again multiple vanishing points are utilized, and actual structures are interspersed with a generic, yet vibrant, idealized cityscape. According to the representation this is one city, blooming and taming the brutal empty landscape of the desert wasteland used in the backdrop of the rendering. The inset of the fountain-spring is the key to the drawing. Nothing else is shown in an inset. No large buildings are shown as in the Omaha example. The presence of large buildings to show opportunity is not needed for this arid environment. Water has to be represented, or in this case overrepresented. Water is the key to potential growth here and as such is given a rather prominent location in the composition of the picture. Unlike in the Omaha example where the insets are located across the bottom, the Las Vegas representation places its inset in the middle left hand portion of the picture. To further stress the importance of water the inset is large relative to the entire picture.  

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69 The inset is approximately 1/15th of the entire picture surface area.
San Francisco, California

San Francisco is not a railroad boom town but instead is the result of a boom in speculations related to the gold rush. The city is the imposition of a grid system on a landscape that works completely against it. Hills work against the grid system making the resulting streets a difficult grade to traverse. Our construction of a civilization is imposed on the natural order of the terrain completely ignoring it and placing into it an unforgiving rigid grid system. The result of the grid meeting the hills is however played up in representations, which again are largely fantasy (figure 15). The composition is idyllic and scenic. It is designed to be a picturesque representation of the city to entice individuals and provide pride for the municipality. In this representation of a city there are no insets. This boom town instead places in its harbor all manner of craft. These are oversized and dwarf

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71 One street in San Francisco, Lombard Street, ignores the grid and snakes down the steep grade. It has, due to this exception to the grid become a tourist photo opportunity.
the city and in fact operate as the graphic footnotes that were insets in other examples. In their prominence these ships glide about representing commerce and prosperity.


As a base line each of these pictures (figures 13-15) communicates the general organization of the city. In fact they show that there is indeed an organization in place. Buildings, streets, and plots of land are not located on the basis of whim but instead take their place within a reasoned scheme. Order has been imposed and the representation is there to show this. Infrastructure and by extension transportation routes have a valid ordered look to them. They show direction and purpose. Where the streets lead to in the representations are at least in appearance knowable by the viewer of the picture. Furthermore, how this scheme of order relates to the natural form of the landscape (even if it ignores it) is generally conveyed. In each case the paintings used to illustrate the city to potential land buyers are designed not only to sell land but something more. They sell an opportunity and promise of prosperity. They are a continuation of the American dream of self reliance and social
movement. This ideal is then backed up by graphical elements which then act or stand in almost as footnotes do for a research paper. These elements help sell the idea being conveyed by the main body of the picture, and although even these elements may be distortions themselves, they exist to assure the viewer of the idea being conveyed. Although the city is presented as pre-existing it is still only an idealized picture. What is bought is reality when an individual buys into this and not the representation. What the paintings sell instead is the opportunity to create something similar to it.
Story City

Story City, Iowa was chosen for the subject of an intervention as it was not, nor ever was intended to be an ideal city, in that it was simply an opportunity for settlers to make a livelihood primarily through farming and any activities that support agriculture. That said, it does exhibit some unique attributes that are idealized in composition when placed under our lens and put into a historical context. Story City is also a railroad town and went through its own boom similar, although quite smaller than those of Omaha, Nebraska or Las Vegas, Nevada. Story City does have some common ground with the two and it makes sense to represent it in a similar matter. Also much like Omaha it is not located amidst of any particular scenery that is considered overly unique, or desirable.

Location and Physical Attributes

Story City is located in the United States of America, in the state of Iowa, in Story County, in the Lafayette Township. Lafayette Township was organized in 1853. Lafayette Township was organized out of congressional township 85-23 and the western half of 85-24 which were designations based on the Jeffersonian grid system. The later was to become part of Howard County over time. Currently Story City’s location is eleven miles north of Ames, Iowa which is in turn slightly less than fifty miles north of Des Moines, Iowa the state capital. Interstate I-35 is on the city’s eastern border and has an exit to Story City’s Broad Street and I-35 providing a transportation corridor to Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota to the north, and Des Moines, Iowa and St. Louis, Missouri to the South. The Union Pacific Railroad runs through the city’s western border where grain storage and processing facilities exist.

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Story City has a direct relationship to the Skunk River which bisects the town. The flow of the Skunk River is slow, prone to flooding, and modified by human industry. Story City is for all purposes flat, except where the river flows through it which is primarily a park and recreation area. Even at the river location elevation change is not dramatic. City water is provided by artesian wells and not from the Sunk River.

Like most of Iowa the soil is flat and fertile. All valuable species of trees useful in lumber production were harvested by 1905 both for building material and for creation of crop land. The bulk of the surrounding land not developed for town use is farmed in the production of corn and soybeans. Summers are hot and humid. The combination of soil and climate is conducive to the growing of the aforementioned crops. Winters are cold and snow is common.

Story City is for a small rural Iowa town, by outward appearances relatively stable in economic terms, with new housing being built during my visits. Much of this is probably due to proximity to Ames, Iowa which has recently gained the status of a metropolis by

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73 Ibid. 3,
74 Ibid.
population standards of federal law. Ames is the location of Iowa State University a successful land grant college and the location of a diverse business community.

Retail business falls into two main districts. One district is on Broad Street and began its life in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. The other retail district borders along I-35. Small businesses are located on Broad Street, while franchises and larger business are located bordering on interstate-35. The retail business climate supports one grocery store, several banks, a few restaurants, a historic hardware store, an outlet mall, services, and an automobile dealer.

Streets are predominantly laid out on a grid system. The grid is interrupted at various locations along the Skunk River and in areas where subdivision developments have favored the street design aesthetic common after 1960. Many of the older streets are quite broad while more recent ones are more the standard found throughout rural Iowa ranging from narrow, of poor finish, and without storm drains, to more standard streets you could find anywhere else.

Figure 17. Figure/Ground Map of Story City, IA. Brian Buttery 2003.
History

Story County was legally defined in 1846 and named after a jurist, Joseph Story. The first settlement in the area was in spring of 1852. Story City was originally platted by D.M. Brown, George S. Prime, and George W. Sowers, who were its promoters. At the time of its original settlement it was known as Fairview. Despite the poor surveying Fairview continued its existence without a proper grid and much litigation over property questions.

![Figure 18. Fairview. Paul A. Olson, Story City Golden Jubilee Book. Ames: Paul A. Olson, 1931), 5.](image)

Eventually this surveying, conducted by a man listed as “French” was fixed and the city was re-platted by an advance man for the coming railroad listed as “Mr. Blair”, who was responsible for the unique broad streets of the city. The focus of the city was moved west

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75 Ibid.
76 Ibid.
77 Ibid.
78 Ibid.
79 Ibid., 8.
away from the Skunk River to a point where the railroad would agree to pass through. The city received its first post office in 1857 and was incorporated in 1881 as Story City.\textsuperscript{80}

Story City’s first real outlet to the wider world was through the narrow gauge Des Moines and Minnesota railroad in 1878.\textsuperscript{81} This railroad carried both produce and people. A connection between it and the Chicago and Northwestern existed at Ames, IA. This connection essentially allowed for access to anywhere also on a rail line in the United States. Previous to the railroad crops were transported by wagon to Muscatine or Iowa City for sale and further processing.\textsuperscript{82}

\textbf{Figure 19. The Railroad was the First Corridor of Transportation Into or Out of Story City. Paul A. Olson, Story City Golden Jubilee Book. Ames: Paul A. Olson, 1931), 14.}

Early businesses included several sawmills. The first steam powered one was located where the current city park is and produced three to five thousand feet per day of lumber from 1857 – 1865.\textsuperscript{83} After 1865 the mill was sold, carted up, and transported to another location. In 1895 Scandia Publishing was founded, printing in English, Norwegian, and Swedish.\textsuperscript{84} This was one of the largest printers in the state of Iowa and contributed to a population increase.\textsuperscript{85} Other businesses included general stores, clothiers, various grain elevators, and banks. Everyday business concerns of small town commercial life came and went with the rise and fall of population and the economy.

\textsuperscript{80} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{81} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{82} Ibid., 6.
\textsuperscript{83} Ibid., 8.
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid.
The cultural makeup of Story City is predominantly of northern European extraction. Initial settlers were from Norway via a brief stay in Pennsylvania and New York. After this initial wave settlers were Dutch and German coming directly from Europe. A final wave of Norwegian immigration followed this directly from Europe.

*The City in Maps*

Figure 20. Map of Story City, *The Kenyon Company Standard Atlas of Story County, IA.* (Des Moines: The Kenyon Company Map Makers, 1918), 45.

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86 Ibid., 3.
87 Ibid.
88 Ibid.
Figure 21. A 1918 Map of Story City on a 2004 map.

Story City has grown by expanding toward the interstate system and now is located on both sides of the Skunk River (figure 17). A green belt park goes along the river which now bisects the expanded city.

Figure 22. Current Property Lines in Story City, IA, by Brian Buttery 2004.
The original core has changed little with consolidation of properties being the most common change (figures 20-22). Additionally, one railroad has been removed and the area reconfigured into more of a grid system. Looking at more neighborhood sized portions of the city core shows examples of the resiliency of the core.

Figure 23. Residential Section of Story City Showing Block Changes Over Time (left to right) in 1918, 1932, and 2004., The Kenyon Company Standard Atlas of Story County, IA. (Des Moines: The Kenyon Company Map Makers, 1918), 45., Sanborn. “Story City”. Iowa State Historical Society [Collection]. 1932, Figure/ground map showing streets, Brian Buttery, 2004. Respectively.

Figure 24. Industrial and retail section of Story City Showing Block and Changes Over Time (left to right) in 1918, 1932, and 2004., The Kenyon Company Standard Atlas of Story County, IA. (Des Moines: The Kenyon Company Map Makers, 1918), 45., Sanborn. “Story City”. Iowa State Historical Society [Collection]. 1932, Figure/ground map showing streets, Brian Buttery, 2004. Respectively.
The following figures illustrate what may be considered to be the “program” of Story City in 2004 starting with figure 25 and continuing through figure 44.

Figure 25. Color Key for Figures 24-41

Figure 26. Locations of Single Family Residences.

Figure 26 shows the locations of single family dwellings. This map excludes multi-family dwellings such as apartment houses and senior citizen housing. Long term care is included with the map on medical services. Single family dwellings are spread out through all quarters of the city. Many even exist very close to light and heavy industry. The only locations where single family dwellings are not located with frequency are the two major retail sections (figure 27).
Figure 27 shows locations of retail businesses in Story City. Two clusters are easily identifiable. One retail center is located nearer to the railroad line in the city core and is the older of the two. This retail center is inhabited by small businesses and older local businesses. Ample parking exists along the aptly named Broad Street (it is 100 feet in width) and the side streets which feature parking in their centers. The eastern retail center is a result of the trend away from rail lines as the lifeblood of cities. The tight railroad centered retail section can not serve the “big-box” and the automobile centered society we have become in their method of doing business. Services requiring that kind of support moved closer to interstate 35 and represent the new lifeblood of the city. That cluster contains all “big-box” stores; (in this case an outlet mall and car dealership) and most if not all franchises located in Story City.

![Figure 27. Retail Business Locations.](image)

As a result Skunk River becomes a dividing line with small and local businesses existing almost chiefly on the western side of the river, while chains and franchises such as McDonalds, and even the Subway franchise which seems capable of inhabiting nearly any kind of structure reside on the eastern side of Skunk River. An exception to this arrangement
is a Dollar General store located one block north of Broad Street. The distance between the two receive different daily average traffic loads as well (figure 43).

Figure 28 describes locations for purchasing food for human use. This includes both restaurants and the city's only grocery store. Restaurants are located near the interstate and are a mix of franchise and local establishments. The city's only full service grocery is located near to the railroad, one block away from the central street. This is not a prominent location. The grocery is small and does not offer many of the services available in larger markets located in nearby Ames, Iowa.

![Figure 28. Food Retail Locations.](image)

Figure 29 shows agricultural related structures, these include both storage and processing of grain. Many of these facilities are located near the railroad line. This is likely due to a historic link between railroads and agriculture. Railroads provide the capability to move large amounts of agricultural products to market. As a result the rail system still plays a part in the economy of the city even though it is no longer a personal transportation device.
Figure 30 shows locations for apartments in the city. They are distributed within the city evenly. As the apartments are not excluded from any particular area this lends adaptability to prospective citizens by creating options in available residences. In relation to the other structures in town these apartments are too small to emphasize in the prospect picture. Apartments, like single family dwellings, serve a similar function and can be thought of at this scale in much the same manner visually. As a result apartments will have to take their place with the other residences in the visual mass of Story City.
Figure 31 locates Story City’s only cemetery within city borders. Its placement near to the city park almost acts as an extension of that system. It keeps this memorial park within the relaxed central green area that bisects the city. In the prospect picture it will be rendered as an open area.
Figure 32 shows placement of educational structure in the city. This includes both city sponsored facilities and private educational facilities. One facility, the high school, takes up a large portion of the original town location of Fairview. The high school overlooks the main park system of the city. The elementary and middle school is positioned north of it between the cemetery and the park. A daycare exists inside the warehouse section located to the north along the rail line. Due to size the school system will stand out even though at the center of any prospect painting. A slight over sizing of height can call attention to them.
The city golf course is located almost as an addition to the city park and is centrally located (figure 33). This acts as a continuation of the park and borders on the Skunk River. In a prospect painting this green corridor will make an interesting border contrasting the two sections of the city which it bisects.
Heavy industry, and anything that requires actual manufacture or processing, instead of assembly or small scale fabrication is located primarily along the rail line (figure 34). Light industry and fabrication is located near to the railroad as well (figure 35). Although not as picturesque (most of these buildings are industrial corrugated metal clad buildings) these are important and call attention to the wealth and opportunity of the city. As a result of the importance of these buildings they need to be featured prominently in the prospect rendering of the city. However, as these buildings are not part of the intervention they will not merit being included as an inset.

Figure 35. Light Industry.
Hotels are where the traveler will be, which is no longer near the railroad since rail passenger service no longer exists. As a result hotels are located near to the interstate (figure 36). This allows travelers to enter, sleep, awaken, and leave without seeing the city at all. This in addition to the importance of the industrial section suggests another reason to place emphasis on the portion of town near the rail line. By placing the emphasis at this location, travelers could see, if the prospect picture was displayed on a wall in the hotel what else exists in and is interesting about the city.
Figure 37 locates the various medical facilities in Story City. Story city has maintained a medical presence. Not all cities of this size can say they have the facilities of this particular community. Unfortunately they are located to the center of the city. This is a good location for the community, but a bad location for representation. As a result these buildings will have to be best represented by size and distinct flat roof lines.
Figure 38 locates municipal structures. These include city units such as town hall, police, fire, the library, identifiable related outbuildings, and also park buildings. Story City has no central town square with a collection of civic buildings surrounding it. This may be due to the fact that the county seat of Story County is not in Story City, but instead in Nevada, Iowa. In fact the town hall and most of the city services are located in the retail section nearest the rail line. These buildings are indistinguishable from the retail buildings in the area. Since the city service buildings are indistinguishable from the retail units, and are not set apart from them, they will be rendered the same as the retail section.

Figure 39. Parks.

Figure 39 describes location of the city parks. Although there are several parks, the primary one has enough size in relation to the whole of the city that the open break between the two halves of the city will allow for a transitioning device between the differing sections of the city. I want this to be part of the city and visible but emphasis through any insets in the prospect picture will still be placed on the intervention. The smaller parks will likely be visible only as open areas amongst the crowded surrounding sections of the older part of the city.
Figure 40. Religious Structures.

Figure 40 shows where religious structures are located. Most are in the city core; however, one is in the industrial section.

Figure 41. Storage.

Figure 41 shows the locations of warehouses and mini-storage units. These are located along the rail corridor. The industrial generators of wealth which are light and heavy industry in the city are important and will be emphasized. Warehouses are necessary parts of
industrialization. Industrial storage banks of this type are not as important to show. The opportunity lies in creation, or processing of products, not in storing them. Many of these warehouse buildings are low, and narrow, deemphasizing them will not be difficult.

Figure 42. Water.

Location of water is described by figure 42. The Skunk River bisects the city into two halves. This division will be used as a visual cue. To do this the river will be rendered quite dark. It will stand out in the rendering and further emphasize the distinction between the railroad influenced western half of the city and the more recently built-up eastern side of the city. The other bodies of water after inspecting them appear not to be of interest to the city for any recreational or other social use. As a result they will receive a slightly lighter tone of gray and will not be as emphasized.
Figure 43 shows traffic flow as a daily average during 1999. Most of the traffic is nearest to I-35. This bolsters my observations of that side of the city being more dependent upon automobile traffic. It also indicates that linkages in this section, many of which do not have sidewalks, could benefit from some pedestrian friendly intervention to aid in connection with other residents in the area. On the rail influenced western side of Story City traffic averages are smaller yet remain high in the industrial areas at the edge of town. Again, this is another possible reason to emphasize this end of town in the prospect picture. The prospect picture should show the more industrial side of town to make it more familiar. Additionally the “big-box” unit located in the eastern portion of town is large enough to be visible at a distance. Slightly over sizing its height would make it “pop out” and retain its importance.
Figure 44. Composite Map.

Figure 44 is a composite of all the maps except for the one represented in figure 43. This composite helps bring all the functions into one map to describe where the various functions of the city exist in relation to one another.

The “program” that is Story City has evolved over time. The analysis of the various components of this “program” has helped to determine how to create the body of a prospect picture. By analysis small levels of emphasis can be placed on items in the cityscape that although deemed not important enough for an inset picture can be made more visible to the observer of the picture. To do so, as suggested in my analysis, I can use slight over sizing or different tone levels.

These maps were also used as part of my study to determine how the city is distributed in terms of locating various types of services. In the ideal schemes presented by the architects whose schemes I studied, the majority were concerned about distribution of such services. The ability to move effortlessly to these goods, services, and by extension employment seems to be one of the key goals. Le Corbusier provided “tube stations” (subways), Hilberseimer used a mix of transportation devices, Wright largely assumed possession of an automobile. Due to the size of Story City movement is not overly complex. As noted, Story City is spreading and is now more of a car based city. Furthermore, even in
the older section which largely follows a grid system, blocks tend to be deep as they extend outward from Broad Street. More recent additions are placed on the side of the river bordering on the interstate system.

**Existing Idealized Elements**

As stated there is no mass-transit system available. Support of such a system in a city of this size is unlikely. The distances to be traversed in the city to reach various services are great when placed on a pedestrian scale. Anything on the opposite bank of the Skunk River is cause for a great deal of walking. Someone living in the newer section of town nearer to the interstate, or even just across the bank from the older section of town, would have a long trip if walking to anything located in the older retail center. As mentioned earlier the only grocery in town (figure 28, lower right hand corner) is located near the railway and some of the newer apartments (figure 30) are quite a distance from this. Story City’s historic scale, one designed for walking or riding a horse no longer functions. Wright, Hilberseimer, and Corbusier would have difficulty with this as all their systems are based on machine power of some sort or mass transit as a method of movement. Applied to a city of this scale it is just impractical. Re-conceiving the scale of transit and spatial relationships of people within a city may however, be key to the intervention.

Unlike the two case studies of Amana and Vedic City there is no underlying uniform architectural tradition. The nineteenth century retail section does tend to have buildings of brick that use well crafted interesting patterns. Uniformity of type however, needs to be imposed at inception, or at least by city quarter. The uniqueness that is Story City must be found somewhere else. As mentioned in the general description of Story City the advance man for the railroad created what can only be termed “broad streets” in fact the one street which travels from one end of the city to the other is named “Broad Street.” These streets, laid out before the planning concerns created by automobiles are up to 100 feet in width. Many streets traveling north and south have a green strip running down the middle of considerable width. These streets provide parking spaces, and places for planting trees. In some cases playground equipment is located on them.
As similar design features are present in the City Beautiful movement, which is a city planning system, an investigation was carried out to find out if the re-platting of the city for the coming of railroad was a City Beautiful scheme. It was determined that although there is a presence of broad streets and parks do exist in abundance it lacks the certain defining characteristics of the City Beautiful movement which include a collection of sculptural civic buildings grouped together as a coherent composition.\(^89\) Furthermore as a city planning movement the City Beautiful movement did not truly become launched until the 1880’s and at that point was mostly located in the Mid-Atlantic States.\(^90\) The City Beautiful movement as a nationwide affair began with the 1893 Columbian exposition in Chicago.\(^91\) Instead the design of the city appears to be more of a western settlement style like Omaha, Nebraska generated with railroad concern in mind.

While Story City is not in a crowded or a desolate setting, this certainly brings into the city a certain amount of idealized design. The reason for the lavishing of space into circulation is not documented. Mr. Blair’s reasons are as unknown as his first name. The concept of the “lungs of the city” falls into place here. No town of this small size would have needed to create such a system, but did so, and benefits greatly where it has been retained due to its picturesque nature. In fact, where trees are planted a benefit from noise reduction could be achieved. Distances between houses across the street would also receive less noise than those across from each other in a more standard block setting.

\(^{91}\) Ibid., 53.
Figure 45 Examples of Green Strips are grayed out in this Section of the Map of Story City.

As mentioned the city also has a relatively large park bisecting it. The ideal of a garden or park like city is well followed as an idealized theme in Story City. Previous to the changing of focus from railroad to automobile this park area would have been the back side of the town.

The city also retains the remnants of an alley way system. An alley is \textit{“a thoroughfare through the middle of a square or block giving access to the rear of lots or buildings.”}\footnote{Neilson, William Allan. [ed.] Webster’s New International Dictionary of the English Language. [Unabridged] (Springfield, MA: G. & C. Merriam Company, Publishers, 1961.), 69.} These are used for hiding the servicing of buildings and residences. As a service street alleys originally fit into a hierarchy of streets beginning from medieval times where it was found to be a street of approximately six feet in width.\footnote{Michael Martin. “The Question of Alleys, Revisited.” \textit{Urban Design International}. Vol 6. (2001): 80} The concept of a service corridor for properties was then transferred to the Americas with settlers from Europe. Many examples of plans abound and prove that alleys do not need be set into a grid system, as in \textit{“Olmsteadian”} examples, and other cities such as Detroit, Michigan and Circleville, Ohio.\footnote{Ibid., 80.} Besides an ability to provide a service corridor, according to research conducted by Michael Martin an Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture at Iowa State University, alleys also bring with them a social and cultural landscape.\footnote{Ibid., 90.} Thus properties
with a bordering alley are provided with an additional active edge. These service streets then run behind, or between, properties in a town system.

In some cities the alley systems are a meeting space for neighbors. Furthermore the alley system provides a secondary means of circulation. In Story City this system still exists. Although largely only as a remnant, it is most prominent in the late nineteenth century era business district bordering on Broad Street. In the residential system it is present at times but is non-existent in any later additions or areas that do not follow a grid system. An alley system or the reconstitution and re-arrangement of it would serve as an ideal intervention in Story City and would help the broad streets to remain as park like strips of green and divert automobile storage away from the streets themselves.

**Intervention**

In creating circulation for an urban system, even a secondary circulation network, I had to decide what is being circulated in Story City. This being the early twenty first century my assumption is that an alley should be able to at least handle an automobile. Other possible uses are pedestrian and bicycle traffic. As such the minimum realistic surface for the new alleys would be gravel. Next I looked at existing property lines and those of a map from 1918 where applicable to determine where land plots would indicate alleys previously existed. The alleys appeared to be 16 feet in width as an average from the samples taken. As this was the recurring width I determined that it would be suitable to use as an extension and rebuilding of the alley network. I envision these operating like existing alleys do being low speed, essentially one lane paths of travel. This does not allow for two way travel of automobiles.

After this was determined I needed to decide what to do with areas where there are no alleys. I decided to follow the general placement as in historic maps of Story City where alleys are placed at the rear of or the sides of properties. This also falls in line with the definition of the word “alley” as stated earlier. Where there is not a grid system in place I still tried to follow that rule of placing the alley at the rear of properties. Where there was not a property located to the rear of a property and it appeared to be a developable area, I

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96 Fairfield, Iowa of where I am originally from is an example of this in locations where it retains alleys.
placed the alley in a location at the rear of the existing property and in a path where it may also in the future be located at the rear of new development. One further rule was followed: no matter how contorted the path of travel of an alley inside a block, I entered the majority of the alleys onto streets perpendicularly.

Figure 46 shows the city’s existing maintained alley system. This system is in a gravel or occasionally concrete surfaced form. Maintained alleys mostly exist around the core of the city and are primarily in locations near or linked to the older business section. Their maintenance allows the older buildings, to exist and continue to be used.
Figure 47. Existing Alleys with Refurbished Alleys.

Figure 48. Alleys, Existing, Refurbished, and Newly Added.
As figure 47 illustrates I found many locations, by looking at property lines and by traveling the city where an alley at one time existed. Placing an alley route at these locations was not difficult. Most structures were not in the optimal route and these areas are still city property. Figure 48 represents the expansion of the alley system into territory where alleys had never existed before. These expansions exist to serve properties not previously connected to this system. An active edge allowing easy socialization between the inhabitants of two structures for the first time is created. In other cases where properties do not share a back border with other properties some of the effects gained by two properties sharing an alley will not be gained until the property on the other side of that alley is developed. When this occurs an active edge that will be conducive to social space using the alley as a spatial organizing form will achieve its potential. Figure 49 removes the property lines to show how one could move around the city using primarily the alley system. In terms of transit and social space the new alley system acts as an additional urban connective system for the city.

The alley system also produces other effects. It provides a visibly defined edge of interaction between parties and their properties. This network, although useable by all is still
fairly localized to the block which it serves. Likelihood of contact among more neighbors on a block is probable as the rear of the property becomes more active. Oddly the act of dissecting a city block by placing a low speed conduit into it aids in the connection of it to people and that of the bordering properties. Circulation is placed connecting the properties in a manner that is local to that block. Internally this circulation allows connection of the various properties as a unit rather than only an exterior connection from a main thoroughfare. Contiguous properties within a block now have a circulation device amongst themselves that in turn leads to the larger pathways of the standard city street. This in turn sets up a hierarchy wherein connections occur internally rather than by interrupting the street system with the blocks own personal automobiles allowing the broad streets, and even the lesser street systems, to maintain more of an idyllic park-like setting.

As a result of the combination of these traditions, and in order to represent the intervention in Story City, Iowa in a manner to compliment the research, the prospect style was used. The rendering of Story City, as in the renderings of Omaha, San Francisco, and Las Vegas, shows the city in an idyllic manner. What is set forth is not the actual city but instead an idealistic representation of it. Insets are used in the prospect pictures studied here denoting the importance of the alley system and its social spaces much in the same way as Las Vegas’s spring (figure 14), or San Francisco’s harbor of ships (figure 15).
Conclusion

In using the idealistic representations put forward by the various traditions, taking that analysis, and applying it to Story City the creation of a network of new idealistic alleys can be created. In my analysis I have come to view an alleyway to be a potentially vital part of an urban setting both in terms of circulation and as a spatial construct. From the intervention I have noticed the following "conditions" of which some work well and others do not.

![Figure 50. A City Block with New Alleys.](image)

In this condition (figure 50) installation of an alley would require demolishing a storage shed. Aside from that it is a unique and meandering set of paths. The goal of using alleys to create a better flow inside a block is achieved but not with any particular finesse.
The situation in figure 51 while interesting will be more useful as other bocks or subdivisions are developed alongside its edges. The same is true for the situation in figure 52.

Other results proved more interesting. The block in figure 53 is the result of applying the rules for placement of alleys. The properties that existed at this location include a centralized vacant lot. In theory the lot has a rear edge to it that is opposite of the outlet it has to the street. This narrow outlet is one which I presume to be the location of a future drive. When
the rules are applied an alley ends up running entirely around the vacant lot. A green island surrounded by built properties, and their internal circulation arrangement is produced.

Figure 53. The New Alleys Create an Island Property in the Middle of a Block.

If this intervention was to be carried and streamlined a mass condemnation of buildings and property would result in achieving more straightforward internal block routes. Alleys are tight and the tack was taken to have these be reduced speed routes, meandering without blind corners would make for a better suggestion than pure streamlining. Also, despite the way that gravel roads wear over time a stance would be taken that alleys, in residential sections remain gravel instead of undergoing a process defined by Michael Martin as “hardening.” “Hardening,” is the conversion of an alley from dirt, gravel or other “soft” material to one of paving.\textsuperscript{97} This “hardening” by paving turns the alley from an active social edge into more of a standardized street allowing for a higher amount of traffic.\textsuperscript{98} Where children once were able to play safely the alley then become just another thoroughfare by allowing greater speed of travel.

Like all modifications to a landscape and its relationship to residences complications will result. However, as simplistic as inserting a new alley system into an existing city may seem it is an attempt at addressing some of the concerns of our day. The idealistic schemes

\textsuperscript{98} Ibid.
created by Ledoux, Wright, Corbusier, and Hilberseimer were all attempts at addressing within an urban framework the perceived needs of their day. The existing idealized city schemes of the Amana Society and Maharishi Vedic City are also attempts at addressing the perceived needs of a time period. One strove for religious freedom, the other for world peace through coherence. The idealized representations of cities such as Las Vegas, San Francisco, and Omaha the extension of trying to show or sell the idea of a vision of a good life and the opportunity to create it. This is backed up with inlaid documentation. In this vein the following is a set of postcards and a prospect picture showing in a style relating to the idealized prospect pictures of yesterday Story City, Iowa and its ideal setting incorporating the newly instituted alley ways.
Story City, Iowa each property has alley access to the rear of the lot to provide extra circulation between properties inside the block and within the city. You have increased access to city services. City services such as the Fire Department also have better access to properties.

Figure 54. Postcard Showing and Explaining a Circulation Benefit with an Alley System.
Story City, Iowa

One of our unique alleys where a field of green makes for a great community space. The active edge provided by the alleys results in interaction between neighboring properties.

Figure 55. A Location Where the Institution of the Alley System Created a Field That Can be Used as a Park by the Neighborhood.
Story City, Iowa convenient access to your house and the community through our handy modern alleys. In this block access to the city is increased. So are connections between other properties within the block. Cars are tucked away from the street increasing the visual appeal of those thoroughfares.

Figure 56. An Example of Convenient Access to Lots for the Owners Stressing Connection Between Properties and the Community.
Story City, Iowa

By providing an active edge socialization within blocks is increased. Our alleys have sidewalks and are park-like spaces making great trails for jogging and walking. Due to the added connectivity you can use them to go anywhere in the city.

Figure 57. A Postcard Representing the alleys of Story City, Iowa as a Park Area that is Great for Active Uses.
Story City, Iowa

our alleys are great for the community with green canopies of trees and are a casual place for neighbors to meet. By making alleys common to the city we have a network that is not only infrastructure, but also social.

Figure 58. A Postcard Representing the Potential for Neighborhood Interaction Resulting From the Alley as an Active Edge.
Story City, Iowa neighbors greet each other in our alleys and while taking pleasant strolls on an early summer evening. Using our alley network they can easily meet others and use our alleys to go to city businesses, churches, and parks. This feature of the active edge provided by the alleys makes travel more interesting.

Figure 59. A Postcard Representing the Use of Story City’s Alleys as a Space for Socialization, Recreation, and Circulation.
Story City, Iowa
Come visit us and our pleasant network of alleys. We have miles of great hiking within our city alone. Our alleys provide connections to friends, neighbors, parks, and city services.

Figure 60. A Postcard Made From the Prospect Picture of Story City, Iowa: A Convenient Way to Send What Makes Story City, Iowa and its Alley System Unique to Other Individuals.
Figure 61. The Prospect Picture.
The first three postcards (figures 54, 55, 56) are primarily concerned with helping an individual to visualize the functionality and connectedness provided by an alley system at a city block level. These do so through an aerial viewpoint and in a similar format to the prospect picture format only do so without use of insets. Figures (57, 58, 59) are more concerned with visually describing in a first person point of view the social aspects and uses of the alleys of Story City created in the intervention. These do so through the presentation of alleys as a park-like setting or as trails for use by individuals. The final postcard (figure 60) is a miniaturization of the prospect painting for Story City. It is put into this format for portability and the ability to send it to other individuals.

The prospect picture itself represents the city in an idealized format similar to that of Omaha, Las Vegas, and San Francisco (figures 13, 14, 15). Prominent inclusion of the alley system in the picture shows its network as whole throughout the city. This allows people to see its relationship to the city in its entirety. The insets as graphical footnotes, instead of stressing buildings, springs, or ships, stress the usefulness and social spaces created by the alley intervention. These footnotes then act as back up to the presentation of the city and its alleys as a whole.

As a result of the examination of the idealistic urban works of Ledoux, Wright, Corbusier, and Hilberseimer, examination of the Amana Colonies and Maharishi Vedic city, and information from John W. Reps on prospect paintings I was able to apply this research to Story City, Iowa. This thesis shows the use of the prospect painting as presented within the works of John W. Reps to represent an urban intervention into an actual city through the form of a prospect picture.


