

The West Street Corridor Master Plan

Creating a Balanced Right-of-Way



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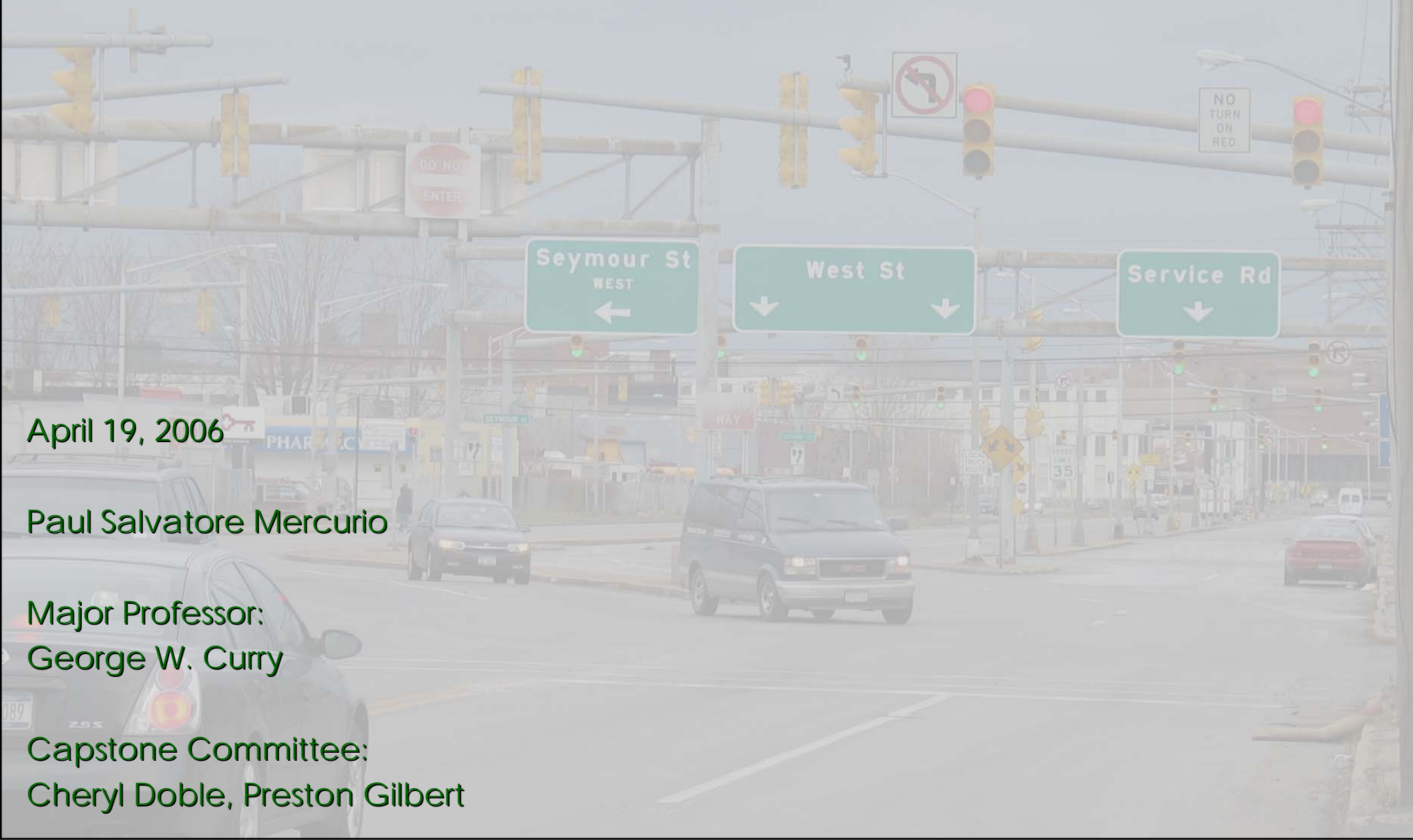
Creating a Balanced Right-of-Way

April 19, 2006

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Major Professor:
George W. Curry

Capstone Committee:
Cheryl Doble, Preston Gilbert



Presentation Outline

- Overview
 - Location
 - Walk-Through
- History
 - 1834
 - 1892
 - 1911
 - 1953
 - 1970
 - 2003
- Inventory
 - Economics
 - Transportation
 - Spatial Form
 - Safety / Sense of Place
- Master Plan Design
 - Mass / Space Diagram
 - Concept Areas
 - Corridor Treatment
 - Park Avenue Gateway
 - Plan View
 - Circulation
 - Sections
 - Armory Square Gateway
 - Plan View
 - Circulation
 - Sections
- Conclusions

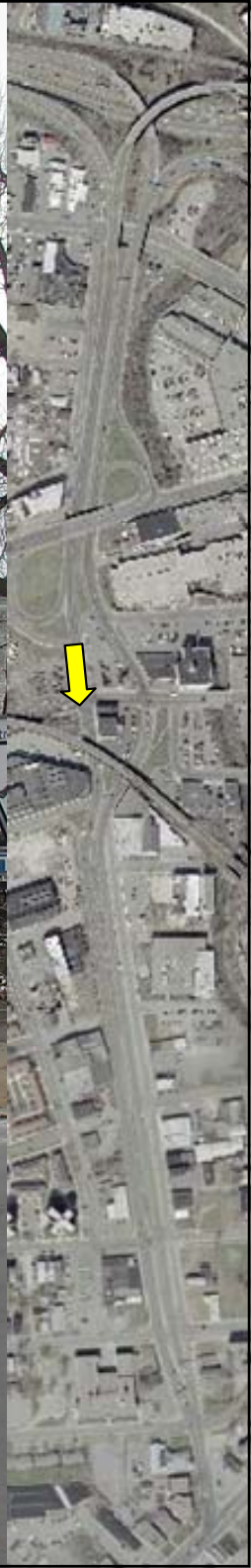


OVERVIEW















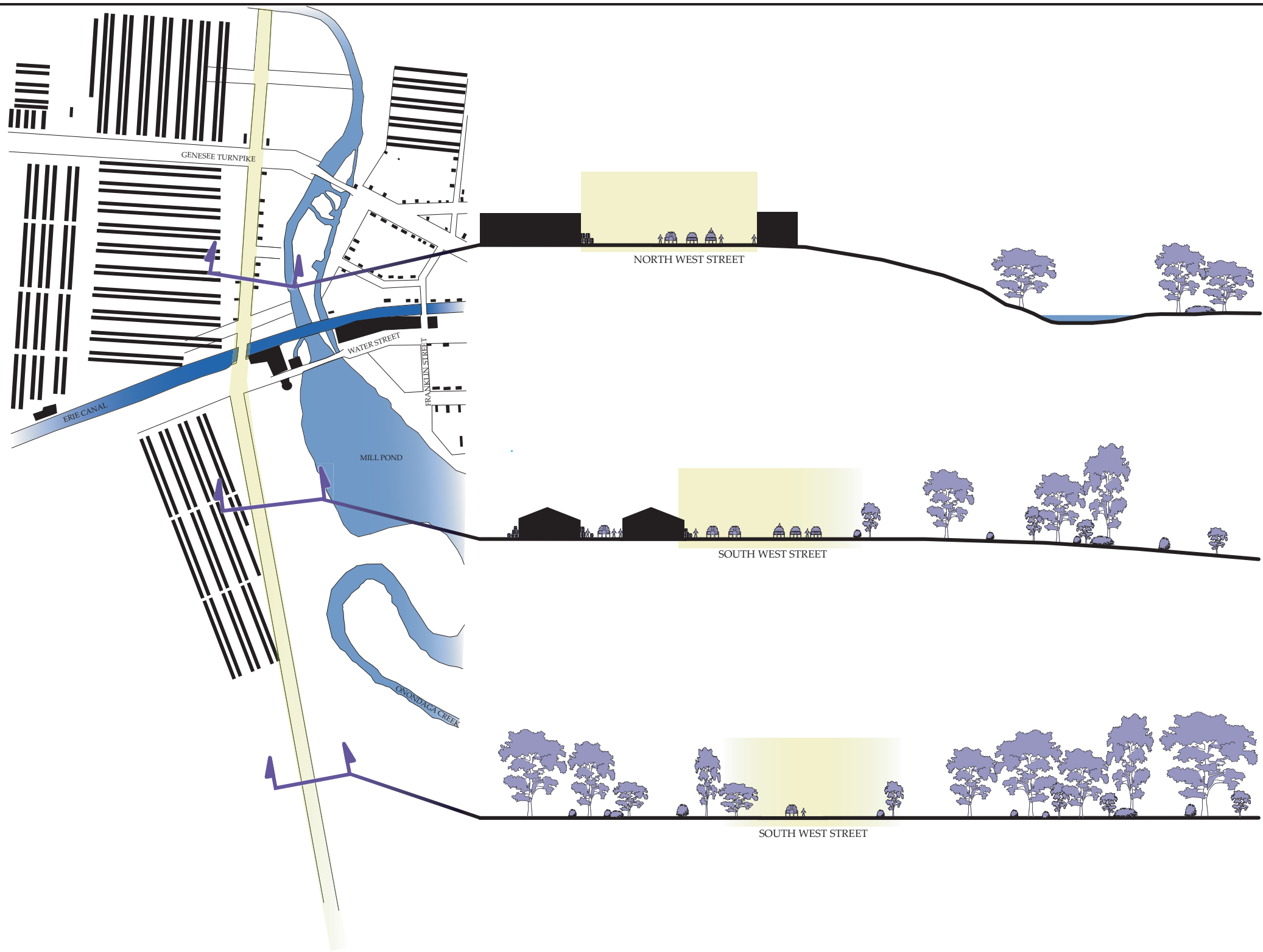


HISTORY

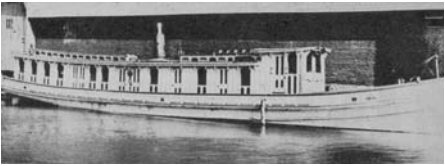
The tale of West Street's beginnings is similar to the City of Syracuse. Salt production and geographic location were both the cause of West Street's early growth. These factors also started West Street as an industrial corridor.

West Street began as an industrial corridor for the production of salt. As salt production grew, large areas of flat land were needed to lay out the boiler houses and solar beds. The area west of West Street contained some of the earliest large scale salt production. These salt houses defined the spatial character of this street to the west and set in motion its presence as an industrial corridor. The area east of West Street was bounded by the swamps of Onondaga Creek and the Mill Pond. Some of Syracuse's first mills were located here to access the water power.

West Street was bounded to the north by Onondaga Creek, with the Genesee Turnpike intersection holding nearby prominence. Early on West Street did not have a southern edge. However, the corridor eventually extended to, and was bounded by, West Onondaga Street.



Map Source: "Map of Syracuse 1834" Onondaga Historical Association Museum, Archives Division
Folder: Syracuse Maps. Syracuse, NY.
Notes: Drawn with AutoCAD, Photoshop and Illustrator



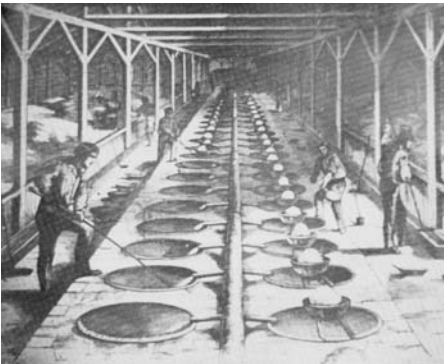
Example of an Erie Canal Barge: John Greenway's Yacht.
Source: Will H. Olmstead Collection. Onondaga Historical Association Museum, Archives Division.
Industries Folder: Breweries. Syracuse, NY.



Wheel Barrows of Salt in Syracuse, 18...
Source: "Erie Canal Museum: Photos from the Collection"
Erie Canal Museum. Syracuse, NY. 1989.



Syracuse Salt Sheds and Solar Evaporation, 18...
Source: "Erie Canal Museum: Photos from the Collection"
Erie Canal Museum. Syracuse, NY. 1989.



Salt Boiler Shed in Syracuse, Woodcut.
Source: Schramm, Henry W. and William F. Roseboom
"Syracuse: from Salt to Satellite"
Windsor Publications Inc. Woodlawn Hills, CA 1979.



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WEST STREET CORRIDOR: 1834

FIGURE 3.1

In the late 1800s, West Street's industrial corridor grew from the presence of railroads. The area of West Street from Tracy Street south to Otisco Street contained much of this industrial presence. Buildings here took up entire blocks with open spaces utilized for material storage.

West Street also functioned as a residential street. The areas bordering the industrial core held many two-story houses densely spaced together, likely working housing. Two posh residential districts were found along West Street during this time as well. Mansions lined both West Genesee Street and West Onondaga Street, as seen by the large building footprints, with spacious separation between structures.

During this period railroads had become the predominant form of freight transportation. The industrial core of West Street capitalized on this with its large railyard to the south of the canal. Here goods were exchanged between rail lines as well as the Erie Canal.

Trolleys were becoming the main form of personal transportation. Six trolley lines cross along West Street at this time, connecting neighborhoods to the west with the jobs located along the canal or in Downtown Syracuse.

Syracuse and Auburn Railroad built along Washington Street which later becomes New York Central Railroad

Syracuse, Binghamton and New York Railroad (SBNYR) built as a north to south line.

SBNYR bought by the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Rail (DLW).

New York State consolidates trolley services.

1830 1840 1850 1860 1870 1880 1890

0' 200' 600'

NORTH



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WEST STREET CORRIDOR: 1892

FIGURE 3.2

Map Source: 1892 Sanborn Maps. Vol. 1 & 2. Sheets 15 - 17, 28, 37, 46, 54, 55, and 109 - 111. Onondaga Historical Association Museum, Archives Division Syracuse, NY.

Notes: Drawn with AutoCAD, Photoshop and Illustrator



General Store in Syracuse, circa 1880.
Source: "Erie Canal Museum: Photos from the Collection" Erie Canal Museum. Syracuse, NY. 1989.



Onondaga Creek, looking south from West Genesee Street.
Source: Smith, H.P. "Syracuse and Its Surrounds" Black Dome Press Corp. Hensonville, NY. 2002.



West Jefferson Street Train Station.
Source: Smith, H.P. "Syracuse and Its Surrounds" Black Dome Press Corp. Hensonville, NY. 2002.



Trolley Lines at Gifford St and South West Street Looking West, circa 1938.
Source: Onondaga Historical Association Museum, Archives Division. Folder: Block 245. Syracuse, NY.



During the early part of the Twentieth Century, Syracuse's industrial structure had changed from being reliant on salt to other industries. West Street flourished in this industrial climate. Railroad and trolley lines kept expanding. Industrial and residential structures grew in size and density as well.

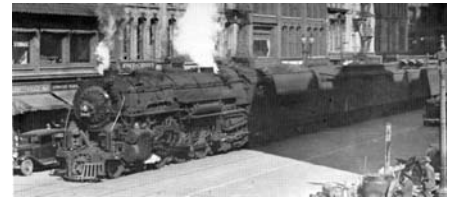
While the expansion of railroads was a sign of a successful city, they created problems for Syracuse residents. Trains ran through Syracuse at a slow 15 mph and blocked north-south traffic many times a day. The entire central zone of West Street had tracks crossing the street multiple times in a given block.

In the northern portion of West Street, industrial structures from the Franklin Square area began expanding along West Belden Avenue. The mansions along West Genesee Street had become more dense, with smaller (though still sizeable) lots.

The residential buildings in the southern part of West Street began to be replaced with multistory buildings during these years. These larger buildings housed apartments as well as many small businesses. During these years, West Street was becoming known as a local shopping area for nearby residents.



Map Source: 1911 Sanborn Maps. Vol. 2 & 3. Sheets 151, 153, 155, 157, 172, 178, 182, 188, 301, 302, 304, 309 and 313. Onondaga Historical Association Museum, Archives Division. Syracuse, NY.
Notes: Drawn with AutoCAD, Photoshop and Illustrator



Empire State Express at Washington Street, 19__.
Source: Onondaga Historical Association Museum, Archives Division. Transportation Folder: Trains Syracuse, NY.



Looking Southwest at West Fayette Street and South West Street, circa 1938.
Source: Onondaga Historical Association Museum, Archives Division. Ward Two Folder: Photography Syracuse, NY.



Looking North at South West Street and Walton Street, circa 1938.
Source: Onondaga Historical Association Museum, Archives Division. Ward Two Folder: Photography Syracuse, NY.



Greenway Brewery at Water Street and Franklin Streets Looking West, circa 1875.
Source: Onondaga Historical Association Museum, Archives Division. Industries Folder: Breweries Syracuse, NY.

Syracuse breweries produce more 300,000 barrels a year. Bartel and Greenway Breweries located at West Street.

H. H. Franklin Manufacturing Company founded, one of the nation's first auto makers.

Cigar making 10th largest industry in Syracuse.

Syracuse the "Manufacturing Powerhouse," including candlemaking, steel processing, toolmaking and electric engineering industries.



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WEST STREET CORRIDOR: 1911

FIGURE 3.3

The West Street Corridor was on the decline in the 1950s. Alterations to the transit structure removed West Street was its former industrial prominence. Federal housing policies also encouraged urban residents to leave their neighborhoods and buy homes in the suburbs. As demographics shifted, businesses along West Street changed as well.

The Erie Canal was filled through Syracuse in 1925. Then in 1936 the New York Central Railroad was elevated and removed from the West Street Corridor. Soon after the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Rail was elevated as well. The DLW remained along West Street, but the elevated bridge divided the streetscape.

The removed transit meant that West Street was no longer a central manufacturing zone. Since there was little interest in adaptive reuse of the industrial structures, the buildings began to be razed for parking lots. Car dealers starting moving into West Genesee Street and altering the character of that street. Cars were also using West Street heavily. Traffic and accidents were becoming frequent.

Finally, the businesses along West Street began to falter as people left for the suburbs. The local grocers and restaurants began to be replaced with adult businesses. West Street was becoming seen as a “red light” district.



Map Source: 1953 Sanborn Maps. Vol. 1A & 2. Sheets 27A, 29A, 31A, 33A - 35A, 43A, 44A, 51A, 55A, 172, 178, 182, and 188. Onondaga Historical Association Museum, Archives Division. Syracuse, NY.
Notes: Drawn with AutoCAD, Photoshop and Illustrator



Erie Canal Becomes Erie Boulevard, circa 1930.
Source: Schramm, Henry W. "Central New York: A Pictorial History." The Downing Company. Norfolk, VA. 1987.



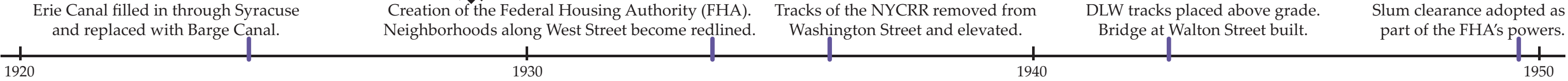
Looking North at the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Rail Bridge
Source: Author, 2005.



Industrial Fabric. Looking West at South West Street and Marcellus Street, circa 1950s.
Source: Onondaga Historical Association Museum, Archives Division. Block 242 Folder: Photography Syracuse, NY.



Elevating the DLW Line Through Syracuse, circa 1940.
Source: Schramm, Henry W. and William F. Roseboom "Syracuse from Salt to Satellite." Windsor Publications Inc. Woodlawn Hills, CA. 1979.



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While the housing practices of this country were being revised, another group of people sought to revise the regional transit system. A highway system was conceived that would connect the continent, allowing for economic growth as well as military movement. In cities, the creation of highways doubled as acts of slum clearance. This was particularly true of West Street.

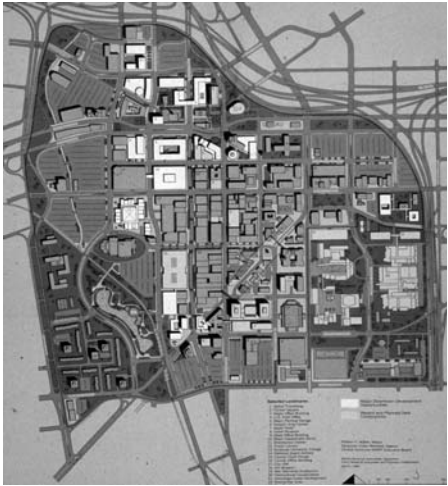
West Street was an ideal candidate to become a highway arterial. It had abandoned industrial structures in the center and a redlight district to the south, many of these structures were old and in aparent disrepair. The northern end had many of its older structures already razed. The corridor was also just outside Downtown Syracuse and could function as part of a inner-loop around the Downtown. The rest of this inner-loop would consist of Interstate 81, Route 690 and Adams Street.

Constructing West Street removed 130 structures. The northern zone was divorced from the urban fabric, while in the southern zone West Street remained at grade. Here the cross streets were simply truncated to speed travel times. However, this action cut off mobility for residents living near West Street. The central area acts as a barrier as well because the two flows of traffic split, creating a hostile pedestrian environment.



Map Source: 1953 Sanborn Maps. Vol. 1A & 2. Sheets 27A, 29A, 31A, 33A - 35A, 43A, 44A, 51A, 55A, 172, 178, 182, and 188. Onondaga Historical Association Museum, Archives Division. Syracuse, NY.

Notes: Drawn with AutoCAD, Photoshop and Illustrator



Syracuse Urban Renewal Plan
Source: George W. Curry Slide Collection. Urban Renewal Set. SUNY - College of Environmental Science and Forestry. Syracuse, NY. Accessed 2006.



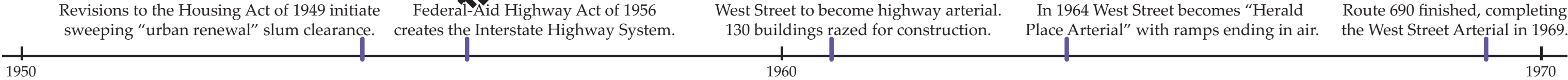
Off-Ramp of West Street During Rush Hour in 1966,
Source: Syracuse Post Standard. June 6, 1966. Courtesy of Onondaga Historical Association. Transportation Folder: West Street Arterial.



Construction of West Street Arterial at West Genesee Street
Source: Onondaga Historical Association Museum, Archives Division. Folder: Block 66. Syracuse, NY



Construction of South West Street Arterial.
Source: Syracuse Herald Journal. November 30, 1962. Courtesy of Onondaga Historical Association. Transportation Folder: West Street Arterial.



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The urban renewal program ended in 1974 and the Interstate Highway system was declared complete in 1991. In the wake of these far reaching Twentieth Century policies West Street has suffered. The arterial has never had the levels of automotive flow for which it was designed. Instead it has acted as a barrier, separating the nearby residents from the downtown.

Some redevelopment effort have happened along the central area, with developers adaptively reusing the industrial buildings as artist gallery space or as boutique shops. Unfortunately, this development has largely been curtailed by the large scale intrusion of the West Street Arterial onto the urban fabric. The arrival of the Rescue Mission to the southern zone has helped stabilize some areas, but many vacant lots remain along the corridor.

Many pedestrians still use this corridor to cross into Downtown. Unfortunately the arterial design has created many blind spots, and speeding cars only compound the issue.

Many options exist for the future of this corridor. Other cities has healed similar divides and many cultural and historic resources remain. With proper design, the West Street corridor could go from cultural divide to a cultural gateway.



Map Source: 2003 Aerial Photography. New York State GIS Clearing House.

Notes: Drawn with AutoCAD, Photoshop and Illustrator



North West Street, Looking North from Erie Boulevard. Source: Author, 2005.



South West Street, Looking South at DLW Rail Bridge. Source: Author, 2005.



Cyclist Crossing South West Street, Looking North at Fabius Street Intersection. Source: Author, 2005.



Pedestrian Path and Traffic, South West Street Looking North at Gifford Street Intersection. Source: Author, 2005.

End of urban renewal. CDBGs and Section 8 Housing created.

The Rescue Mission moves to Gifford Street near the West Street.

Historic rehabilitation begun in Armory Square.

Interstate Highway System declared complete, Congress adopts new legislation embracing multi-modal transit.

Transportation engineers and designers codify "Context Sensitive Solutions"

1970

1980

1990

2000

0' 200' 600'

NORTH



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WEST STREET CORRIDOR: 2003

FIGURE 3.6



INVENTORY

PROBLEMS:

- People cross in unsafe locations.
- Few sidewalks and crosswalks exist for pedestrians.

Not mapped:

- Drivers cannot easily turn around on West Street.
- Traffic moves too quickly along West Street.
- East-west movement is impeded across West Street.

OPPORTUNITIES:

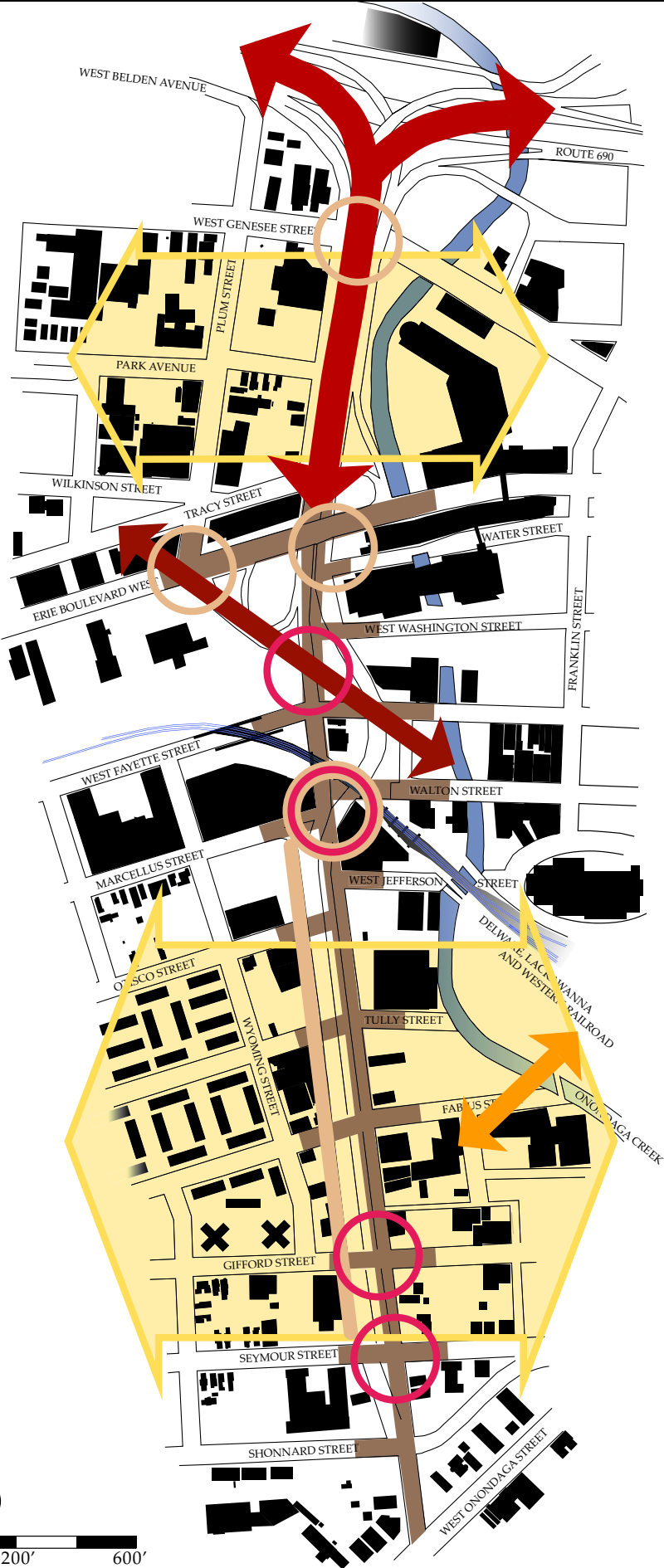
- ✚ West Steet could return to historic street alignments south of Erie Boulevard West.
- ↔ Park Avenue neighborhood wishes to connect with Armory Square.
- ↔ People wish to connect across Onondaga Creek.
- ↔ Nearby neighborhoods wish to be connected with Downtown.

Not mapped:

- West Street easy for giving directions.
- Many pedestrains cross / utilize West Street.

CONSTRAINTS:

- Y High volumes of traffic in North West Street prohibits many traffic calming options from being viable.



High volumes of traffic in North West Street restrict redesign options.
Source: Author, 2006



Few sidewalks and crosswalks exist for pedestrians.
Source: Author, 2005



Unsafe pedestrian crossing at West Street.
Source: Author, 2005



South West Street could return to a historic street alignment.
Source: Onondaga Historic Association Museum. Folder: Ward 2 Photography. Accessed , 2005



Traffic moves too quickly along West Street.
Source: Author, 2006



Safe pedestrian crossing at West Street.
Source: Author, 2005

Map Source: 2003 Aerial Photography. New York State GIS Clearing House.
Notes: Drawn with AutoCAD, Photoshop and Illustrator

PROBLEMS:

- Many vacant properties and exist in West Street area.
- Large spaces dedicated to surface parking.
- Fifty percent of people in the Westside Neighborhood are below poverty.
- Percieved lack of economic vitality in western neighborhoods.
- West Street acts as an economic barrier.

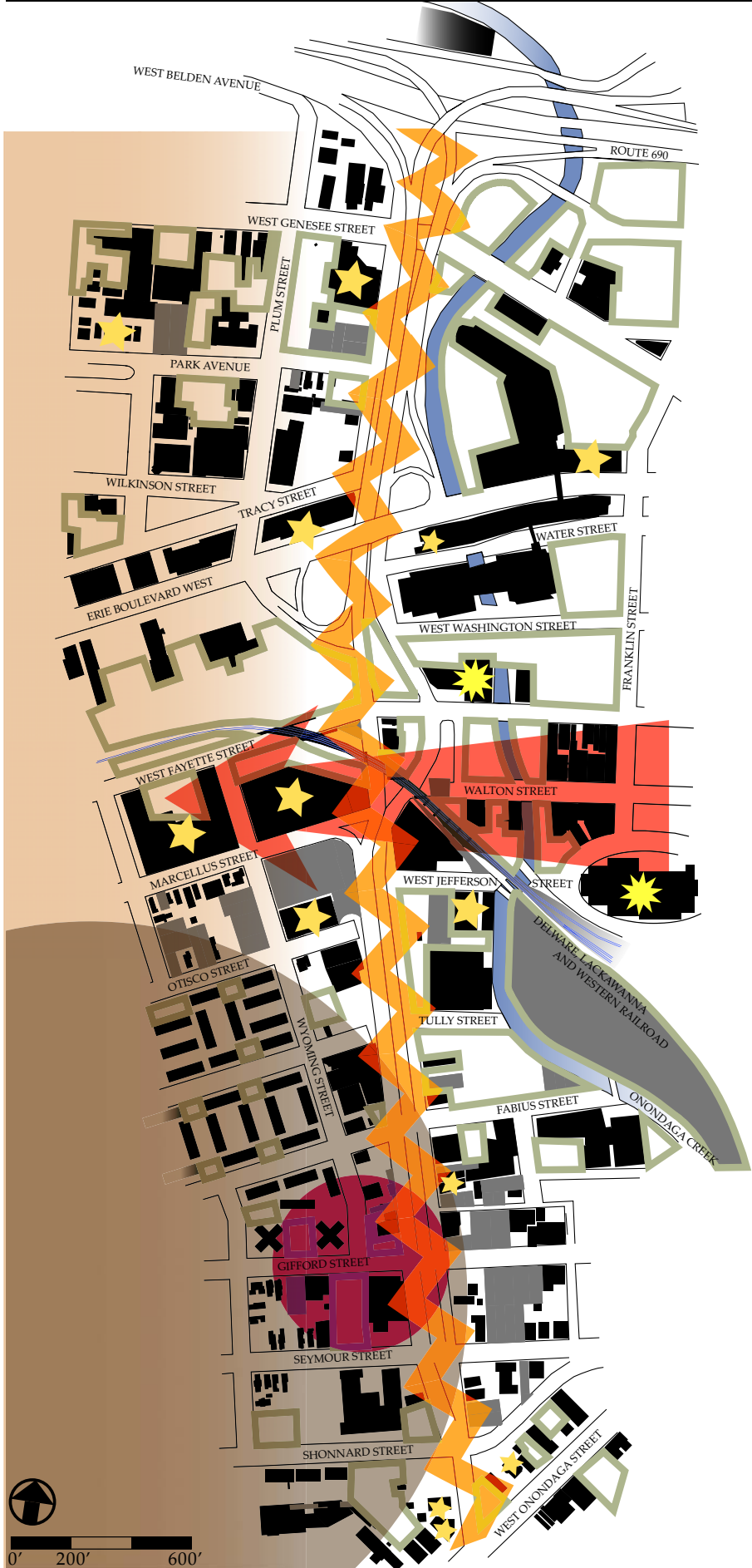
OPPORTUNITIES:

- Strong commercial area at Gifford and West Streets.
- Armory Square could extend west into similar industrial buildings.
- Continuous vacant properties may provide catalytic redevelopment.
- Historic architecture can provide creative redevelopment spaces.
- Economic generators exist along West Street corridor.

Not mapped:

Empire and Empowerment Zones exist along all of West Street except National Grid and some 900 Block properties on South West Street.

Syracuse zoning allows for many types of land uses.



West Street acts as an economic barrier.
Source: Author, 2005



Vacant properties are both a problem and an opportunity for West Street.
Source: Author, 2006



Much of the land around West Street is dedicated to surface parking.
Source: Author, 2006



Historic architecture along West Street may be creatively redeveloped.
Source: Author, 2006



Trash along West Street contributes to a perceived lack of economic vitality.
Source: Author, 2005



The Museum of Science and Technology acts as an economic generator.
Source: Author, 2006



Syracuse University's Warehouse acts as an economic generator.
Source: Author, 2006

Map Source: 2003 Aerial Photography. New York State GIS Clearing House.
Notes: Drawn with AutoCAD, Photoshop and Illustrator

THE WEST STREET CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN: CREATING A BALANCED RIGHT OF WAY

SYNTHESIS: ECONOMICS

PROBLEMS:

- West Street is above and below the street level north of Water Street.
- Houses along 100 Block of Park Avenue are incompatible with zoning.
- Partial clover-leaf pattern is inappropriate for urban setting.

Not mapped:

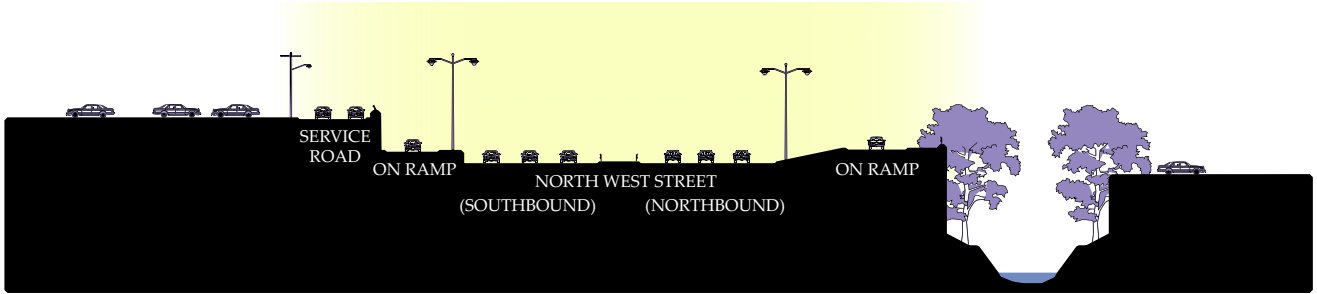
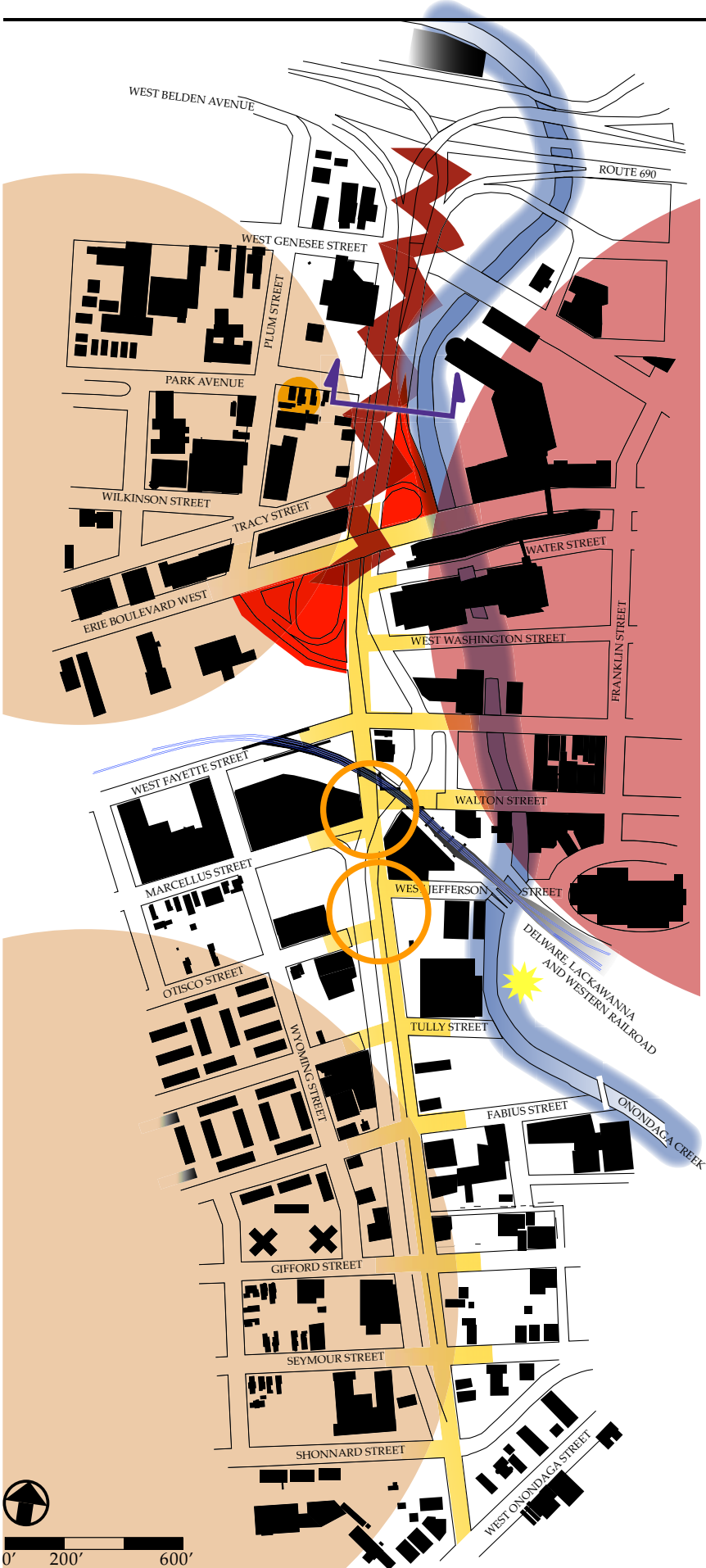
- West Street has a highway character in a neighborhood area.
- Little greenery or canopy cover exist along West Street.
- Empty spaces / urban voids exist along much of West Street.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Dynamic urban spaces occur when two separate grid patterns intersect.
- West Street is near to Downtown.
- Extant communities have retained spatial character.
- West Street is near Onondaga Creek.

CONSTRAINTS:

- County is proposing a regional sewage treatment facility next to Armory Square and Onondaga Creek.



West Street has a highway character in a neighborhood area.



West Street is above and below the street north of Water Street.

Source: Author, 2005



Little greenery or canopy cover exists along West Street.

Source: Author, 2005



Extant communities have retained spatial character.

Source: Author, 2005



Partial clover-leaf pattern is inappropriate for urban setting.

Source: Author, 2006



Empty spaces / urban voids exist along much of West Street.

Source: Author, 2006



West Street is near a hidden Onondaga Creek.

Source: Author, 2005

Map Source: 2003 Aerial Photography. New York State GIS Clearing House.
Notes: Drawn with AutoCAD, Photoshop and Illustrator

SENSE OF PLACE PROBLEMS:

- Excessive signage throughout West Street.
- West Street and DL&W Bridge act as psychological barriers.

Not mapped:

- Unpleasant pedestrian experience crossing West Street.
- West Street is often overlooked and non-memorable.
- Poor aesthetics along West Street from trash and low maintenance.

SENSE OF PLACE OPPORTUNITIES:

- Strong sense of community in local neighborhoods.
- Many older structures contain interesting architecture.

Not mapped:

- Industrial nature of elevated rail bridge could be celebrated.

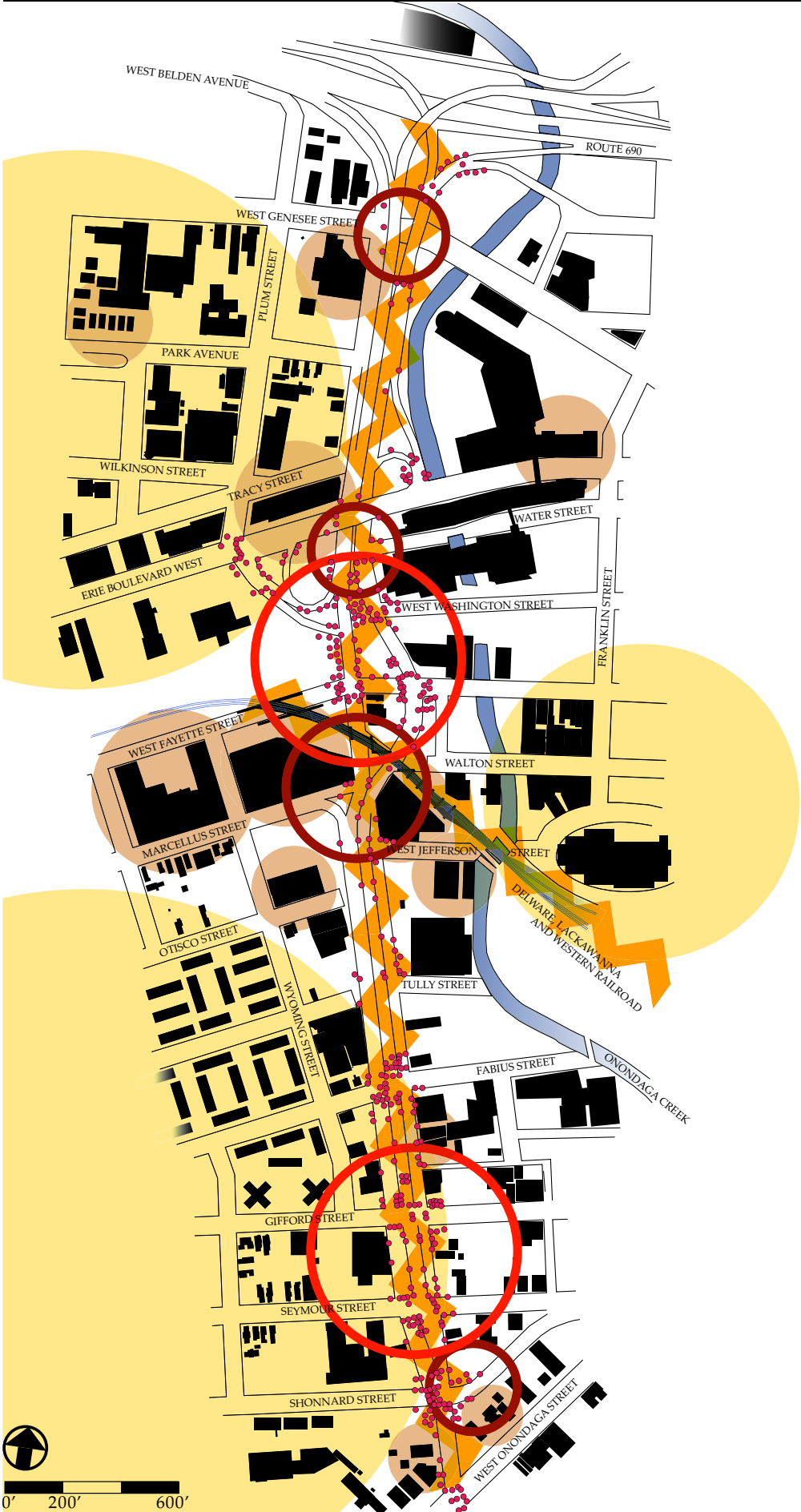
SAFETY PROBLEMS:

- Frequent accidents occur along West Street.
- Blind corners exist along West Street.

SAFETY OPPORTUNITIES:

(Not mapped)

- The speed of West Street can be reduced.
- The number of lanes on West Street can be lowered.
- Pedestrian amenities can be added.



Map Source: 2003 Aerial Photography. New York State GIS Clearing House.
Notes: Drawn with AutoCAD, Photoshop and Illustrator



The number of lanes on West Street can be lowered.

Source: Author, 2005



Unpleasant pedestrian experience crossing West Street.

Source: Author, 2006



Excessive signage throughout West Street.

Source: Author, 2005



Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Bridge acts as a psychological barrier.

Source: Author, 2006



Many older structures contain interesting architecture.

Source: Author, 2006



Poor aesthetics along West Street from trash and low maintenance.

Source: Author, 2006



Blind corners exist along West Street.

Source: Author, 2006

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SYNTHESIS: SAFETY / SENSE OF PLACE



MASTER PLAN DESIGN

LEGEND

- Existing Building
- Proposed Building
- Onondaga Creekwalk Trail
- West Street Extension of Onondaga Creekwalk
- Onondaga Creekwalk Nodal Point
- Proposed Location of Regional Sewage Treatment Facility

CONCEPT AREAS

- Route 690 Interchange
- Park Avenue Gateway
- Armory Square Gateway
- Hanford / Tully Street Interchange
- Cultural Heritage Gateway
- West Onondaga Street Historic Gateway



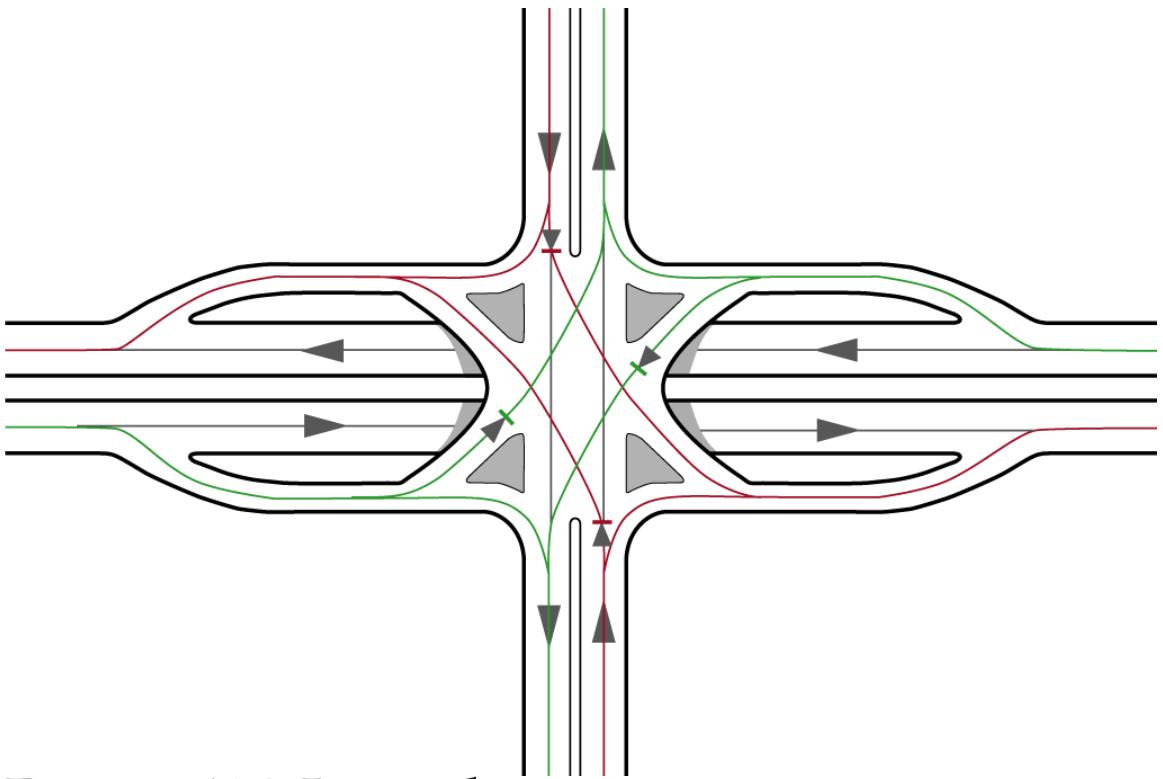
Map Source: 2003 Aerial Photography. New York State GIS Clearing House.
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CONCEPT AREAS:

1. ROUTE 690 INTERCHANGE
2. PARK AVENUE GATEWAY
3. ARMORY SQUARE GATEWAY
4. HANFORD / TULLY STREET GATEWAY
5. CULTURAL HERITAGE GATEWAY
6. WEST ONONDAGA STREET GATEWAY



Route 690 Interchange
Source: Wikipedia.com, 2006



Park Avenue Gateway
Source: Author, 2005



Armory Square Gateway
Source: Author, 2005



Hanford / Tully Street Gateway
Source: Author, 2005



Cultural Heritage Gateway
Source: Author, 2005

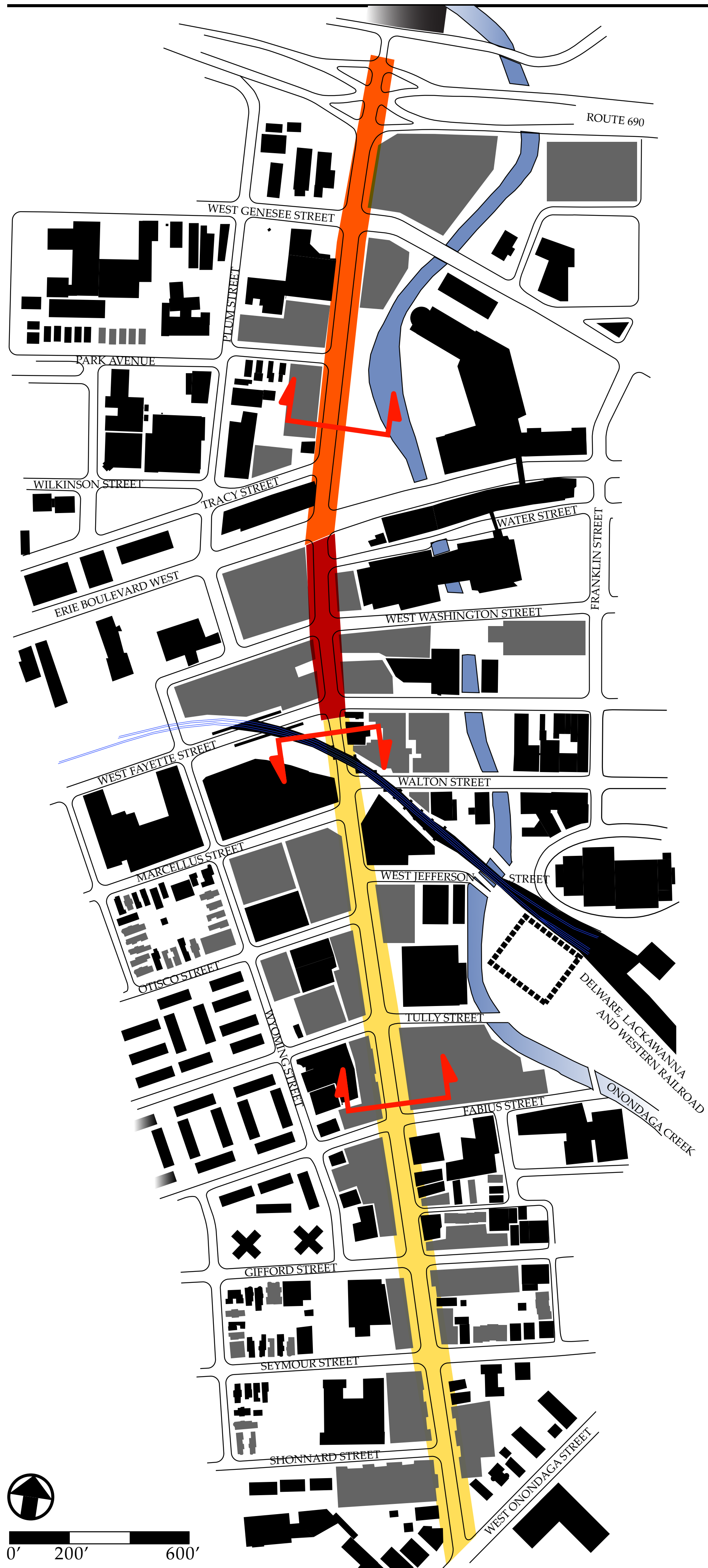


West Onondaga Street Gateway
Source: Author, 2005

DESIGN: MASS / SPACE PLAN

LEGEND

- Existing Building
- Proposed Building
- Proposed Location of Regional Sewage Treatment Facility
- Boulevard Treatment (Four Lanes + Turning)
- Five Lane Treatment
- Three Lane Treatment



Map Source: 2003 Aerial Photography. New York State GIS Clearing House.
Notes: Drawn with AutoCAD, Photoshop and Illustrator.



DESIGN: WEST STREET SECTIONS

PARK AVENUE GATEWAY
DESIGN OBJECTIVES

- Create a focal point marking the terminus of Park Avenue.
- Restrict parking areas to facilitate movement of vehicles.
- Capitalize upon the proximity to the Onondaga Creekwalk.
- Provide mixed-use buildings with a residential component.
- Reference past structures and spatial forms of the site.



Map Source: "West Street - Herald Place Arterial"
New York State Department of Transportation,
Region Three. 1961.
Scale: 1" = 40'

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PARK AVENUE: GATEWAY PLAN

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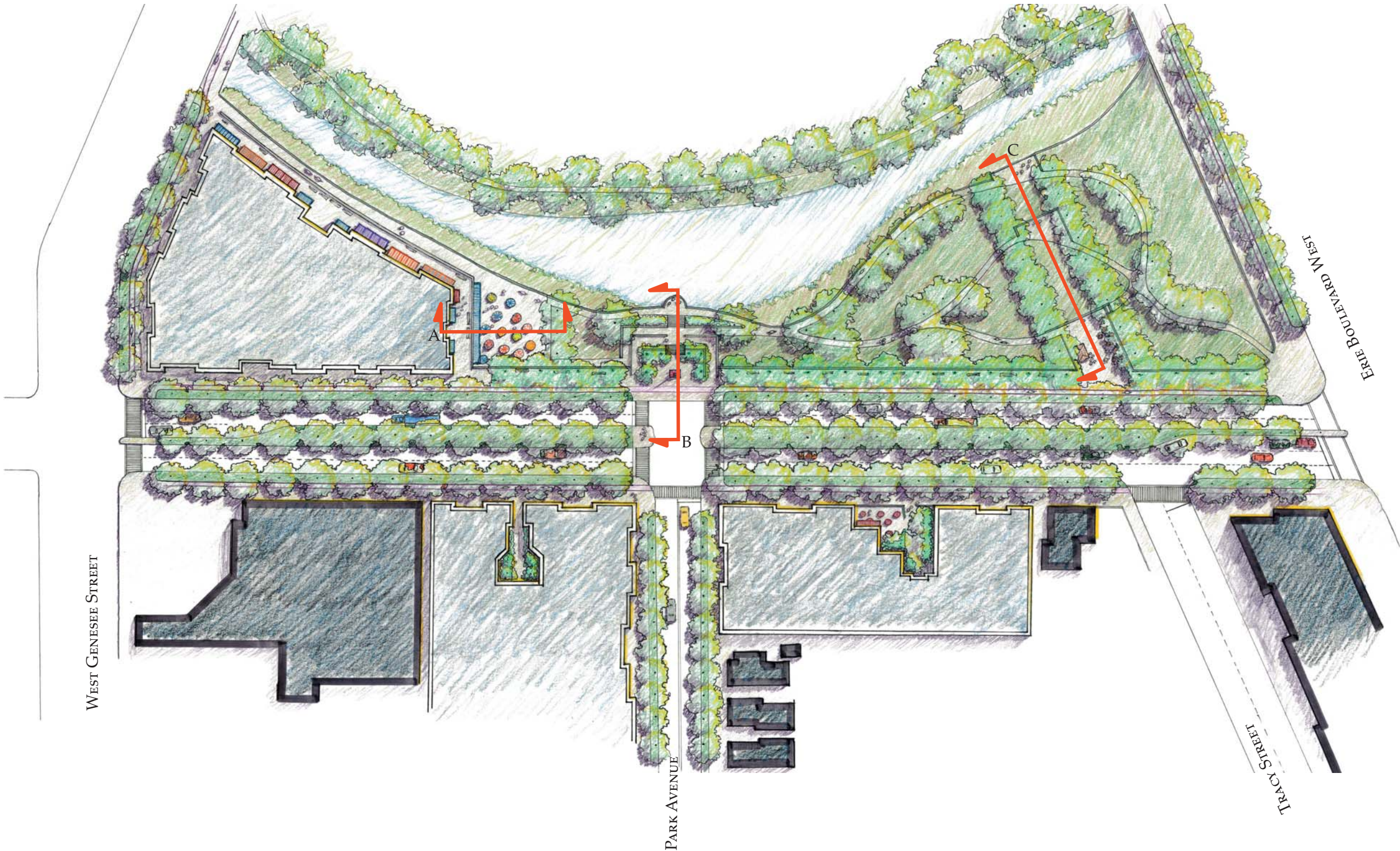


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- Reference past structures and spatial forms of the site.

DESIGN FEATURES

- Form a linear park to compliment the Onondaga Creekwalk.
- Widen Onondaga Creek to promote aesthetics and ecology.
- Utilize boulevard pattern to facilitate all movement patterns.
- Terrace Tracy Street's abandoned right-of-way and instal historic features to provide a link with the site's past.



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Section A: Lower Plaza
Scale: 1" = 20'
Indoor / outdoor dining enlivens a space and provides a destination point.



Section B: Park Avenue Terminus
Scale: 1" = 20'
Small, formal plaza creates an elegant focal point to Park Avenue and also provides access to West Branch of the Creekwalk

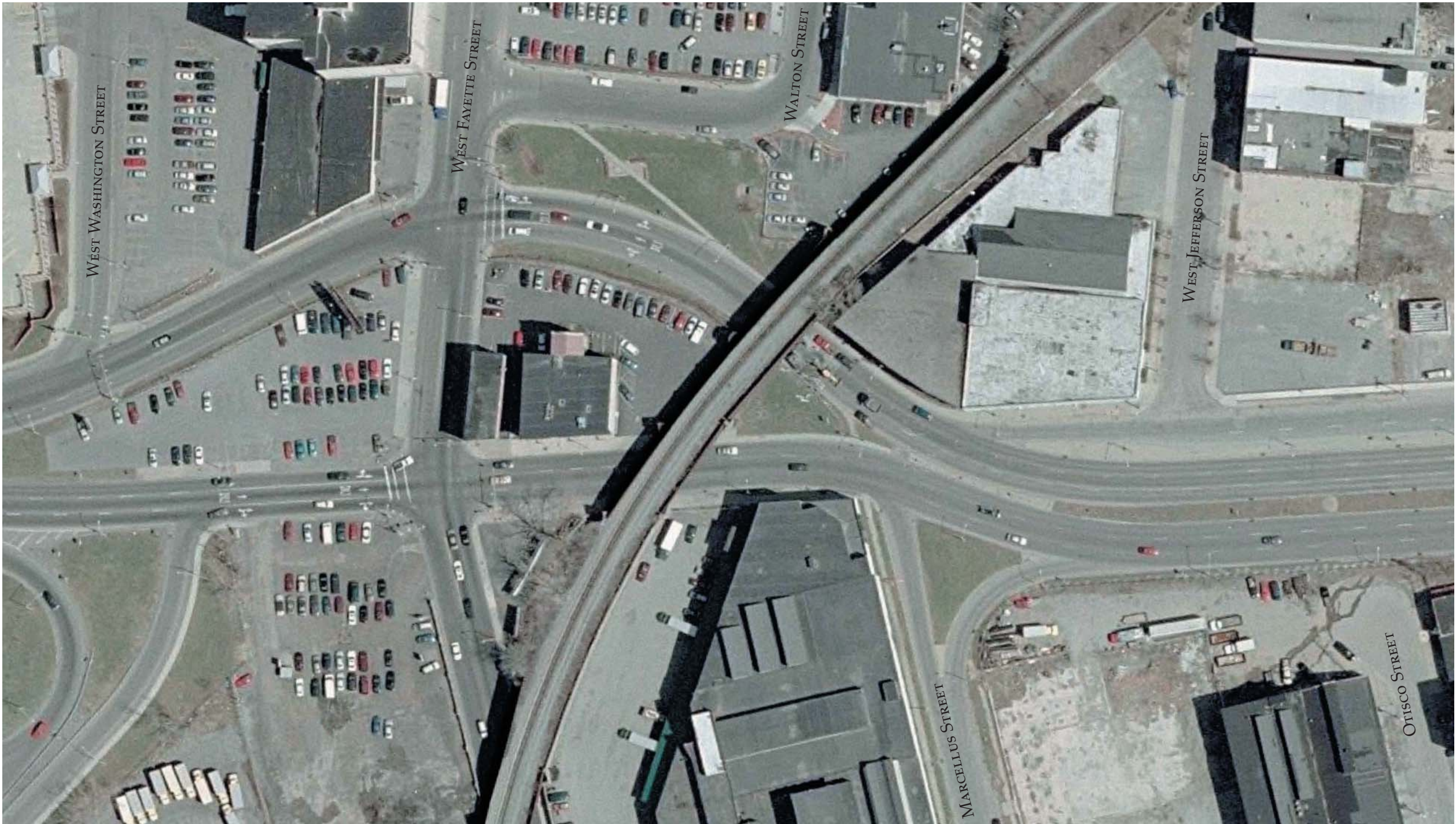


Section C: Tracy Street Extension
Scale: 1" = 20'
Series of platforms refer to historic alignment of Tracy Street while creating gathering and viewing areas.

Map Source: "West Street - Herald Place Arterial"
New York State Department of Transportation,
Region Three. 1961.
Scale: As Shown

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

- Integrate the automotive circulation system with the urban grid.
- Capitalize upon open space created by reduction of West Street.
- Expand the economic vitality and architectural vernacular of Armory Square.
- Incorporate Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Rail Bridge into pedestrian circulation patterns.
- Reference past structures and spatial forms of the site.

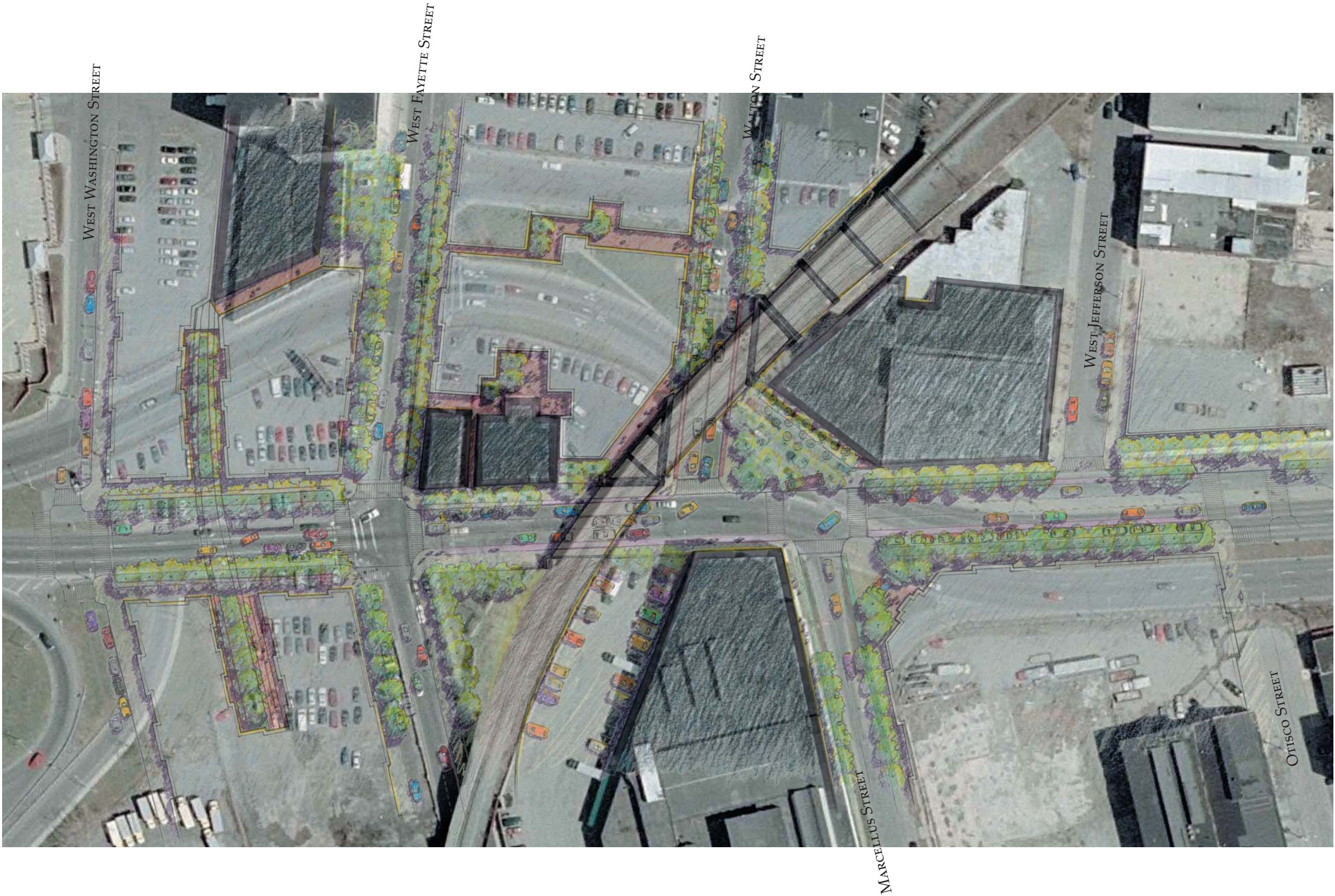


Map Source: "West Street - Herald Place Arterial"
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Region Three. 1961.
Scale: 1" = 40'



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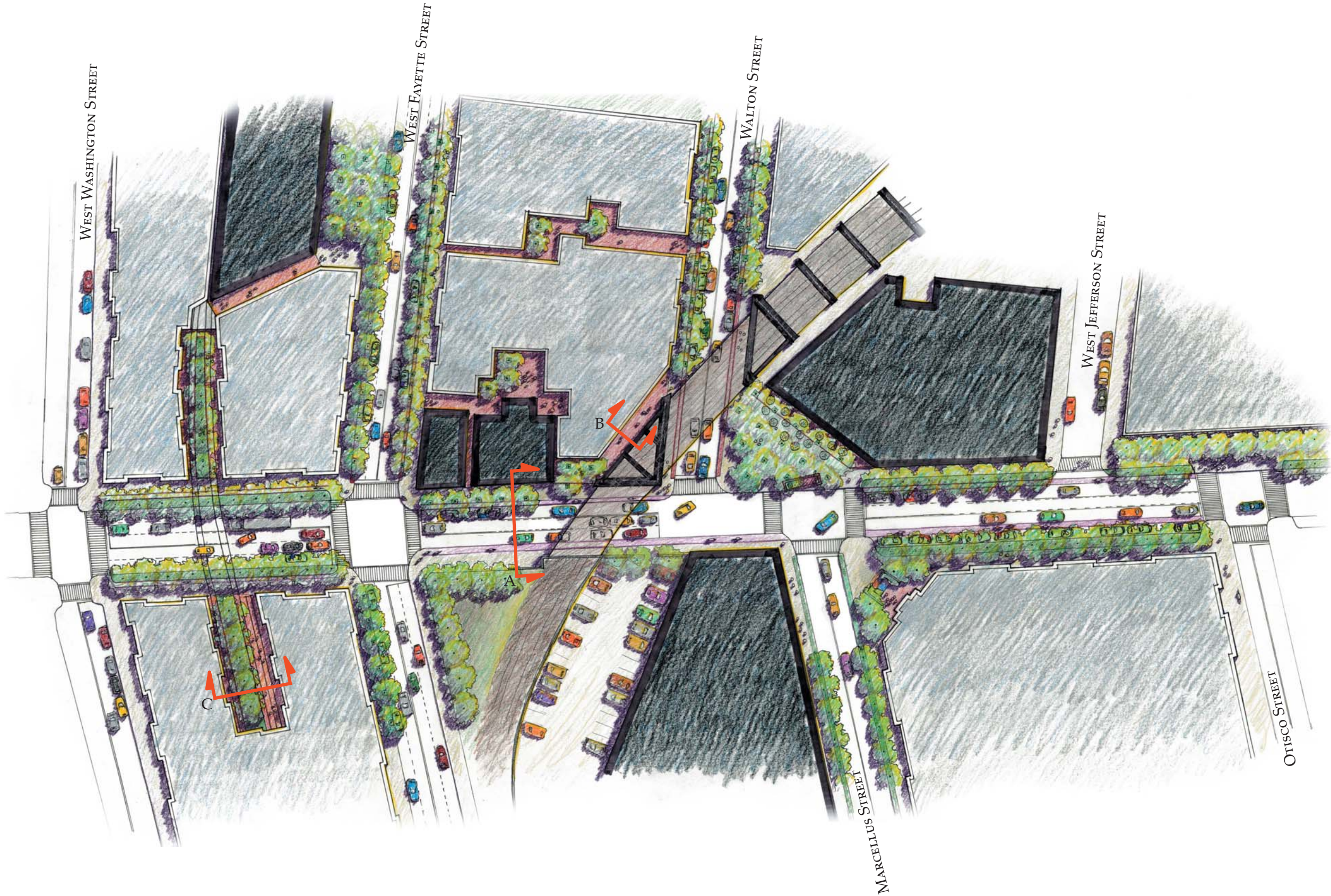


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DESIGN FEATURES

- Create brick alleys to simulate Walton Courts experience and provide alternative pedestrian movement.
- Restore three rail tracks between West Fayette Street and West Washington Street to calm traffic and reveal history.
- Align Walton Street to its pre-1960 configuration and utilize the new intersection at a gateway to Armory Square.



Map Source: "West Street - Herald Place Arterial"
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Scale: 1" = 40'



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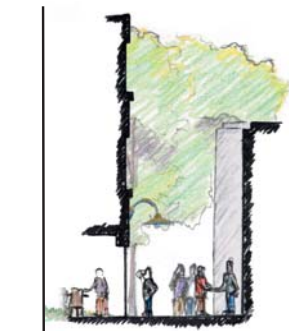
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Section A: Rail Bridge
Scale: 1" = 20'
Traffic calming helps create a more pedestrian friendly underpass at Walton Street and West Fayette Street.



Section B: Brick Alley
Scale: 1" = 20'
Intimate spaces are created by dynamic building footprints and provide additional corridors of interest to pedestrians.



Section C: Railroad Courtyard
Scale: 1" = 20'
Train rails imbedded in the ground plane offer pedestrians a glimpse of Syracuse's past.



Courtyard space provided here as West Street reduces.
Source: Author, 2005



Walton Street to return to original orientation.
Source: Author, 2005



Armory Square texture to extend west.
Source: Author, 2005



Developable land created as West Street is redesigned.
Source: Author, 2005



New gateway into Armory Square established.
Source: Author, 2005



Pedestrian movement across West Street to be facilitated.
Source: Author, 2005

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Scale: As Shown



QUESTIONS?

COMMENTS?