

The Transformation of the Ideal Wilderness: A Case Study of Springfield, Missouri and the Mid-Size American City

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Bachelor of Architecture
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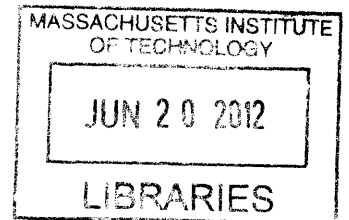
Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning and the Department of Architecture in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master in City Planning and Master of Science in Architecture Studies

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Abstract

This thesis explores the mid-size American city and examines the deeply nuanced relationship between city form, landscape and culture. Using Springfield Missouri as a representative case study, the city is viewed as a process of transformation, a reading which is used to build a layered spatial comprehension, interpreting the terrain as a set of limits, cultural production, and space of collective desire; and the city as a negotiation between global economic development and local specificity. The thesis is comprised of two parallel inquiries, one into a city type—the mid-size American city, the second about methods of observation and analysis as tools for city planning and urban design.

Springfield, Missouri is a typical low density, poly-centered American city. Incorporated in 1838, it has never been a big city—instead Springfield has spent the past 174 years slowly transitioning from rural to urban, weaving broad stages of American urbanity with the Ozark plateaus and hills. The present city is experienced as heightened contrasts between strips, open fields, tranquil gardens, and the open space of the periphery, magnifying the ironic, poetic, bittersweet, and exhilarating state of the American town's transition to new metropolis—the beauty of the ideal wilderness has been paired with the strips and squares of a generic city. It is the type of city which rests uncomfortably within normative planning/design ideals—not traditional or with a large downtown, it is often relegated to sprawl, geographically and economically it functions as a metropolitan region, but with considerably less density; it has accumulated gradually overtime, a piecemeal process that is the result of many contributors, with the informal guide of the survey grid, and the market economy. Springfield shares with other American cities the suburban motivations of everyday life centered around access, jobs, home ownership, school systems, and affordability). It faces the economic challenges of de-industrialization, the conundrum of the downtown and how to view form—how to define the collective identity of the expanded polycentric metropolis and how to grow in the future. In response this thesis suggests that In Springfield, the wilderness offers an identity more powerful and resilient than that of the downtown or a commercial shopping center, that to understand the city's form (and its future), its spatial terms must be re-conceptualized to consider form and terrain as interrelated systems that are associated with collective meaning and cultural function.

The following thesis is structured as a layered dialogue between modes of inquiry exploring Springfield and the transformation of the ideal wilderness as a historical, theoretical, experiential, and spatial process. And each section explores the concept of wilderness as both a physical and psychological/cultural space, and each imparts an insight as to the spatial structure of the city. The goal of this succession has been to generate a layering of spatial comprehension that synthesizes across scales, using drawings to project abstract concepts and empirical data into concrete representations of space. The drawings are presented as both exploratory and revelations, each one considering the relationship between city form and terrain as an ongoing dialogue. Simultaneously these representations project a method for reading the mid-size city and how we might begin to view its form, not as a centralized polarity, but as a connective net that is ordered by the concrete fact and cultural ideal of the wilderness.

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To the numerous people in Springfield, friends, family, and new acquaintances who thoughtfully shared their knowledge of the region—their experiences were invaluable to my research and for expanding my perspective. Especially the Ashley, Pomeranke, Sauer, Baron, Skahan and Kahlil families for their time, knowledge, ongoing generosity and friendship—I can only hope this project does justice to their experiences and hopes for Springfield.

To my own family for their constant encouragement and their instrumental role during the field documentation: Connor for braving the winter temperatures and traversing the strips and neighborhoods of Springfield, my mom for instilling in me her adventurous spirit and accompanying me on the many paths across the region, and to my father for numerous conversations about his experiences in rural communities. For the many conversations of encouragement during this project throughout graduate school and the years of studio beforehand, I could not have done this without your unwavering support.

To Doug who has sustained me throughout.

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PROLOGUE

Springfield, Missouri is a typical low density, poly-centered American city. Incorporated in 1838, it has never been a big city—instead Springfield has spent the past 174 years slowly transitioning from rural to urban, weaving broad stages of American urbanity with the lush agrarian slopes of the Ozark sub-tropics. Springfield is a grid city, however, not rigidly so, like Savannah or New York. It does not have numbered streets, or remarkably small lots, but it does loosely follow the lines of the Public Land Survey, inscribed with hierarchy through infrastructure, natural features, and market driven economic patterns, which over time have transformed the (ideal) wilderness. Within this loose spatial frame the city has gradually expanded across the plateau in approximate 1 mile modules from its modest town center to the boundaries imposed by the Ozarks' hills and streams.

Springfield's trajectory is one familiar in American history. The plateau once home to the Osage Indians and migrating buffalo, during the early 19th century became a site for small townships founded by new American immigrants. Lead mining and timber harvesting prompted railroads to extend their reach connecting the region to the growing national economy. With streetcars and paved roads the city has stretched outwards; the public square and main street have been traded for the ever-growing footprints of contemporary strips, boxes, and shopping malls, their generic forms tempered by the near presence of open country roads, streams, parks, and lakes. In Springfield these stages of growth have been nuanced by the terrain, which has produced differentiation amongst social structures and city forms—plateaus of modernity and hills of resilience.¹

The plateaus, more accessible and easily settled have responded less critically to the land, while the shaping of the ancient Precambrian hills has constituted the region's most enduring spatial and cultural acts. Settlement on the plateaus is a careless and yet compelling urbanity that draws subtle complexities from nature that exists in the city imperfectly, a kind of garden of tranquil domesticity that offsets the detached, non-traditional, "non-planned" public realm. One only has to glance at a satellite image to sense the contrast between infrastructure, commercial strips, neighborhoods, and countryside. The resulting metropolis is an alternation between uneven pockets of railroads, black paving, and strip centers through lush fields and tree lined streets, linked by highways, laced with power lines, and pasted with commercial signage—images exhibiting the process of industrialization and the lack of consistently scenic urbanity associated with sprawling American cities. Conversely, the interior green gardens flow seamlessly into a perimeter of rolling hills, limestone cliffs, lakes, and rivers. For most parts of the year the city is dense, thick, saturated with water, consumed in vibrant greenery, permeated by the viscous green atmosphere of lightning storms, the sounds of crickets, and the dark night of brilliant stars.

These spatial contrasts magnify the ironic, poetic, bittersweet, and exhilarating state of the American town's transition to new metropolis—the beauty of the ideal wilderness has been paired with the strips and squares of a generic city.

¹ Phyllis Rossiter describes this cultural tension as the desire of the Ozarks culture "to be both modern and traditional, the best of both worlds." She also makes specific reference to the Springfield plateau as the regional site of modernity. *A Living History of the Ozarks* (Gretna: Pelican Publishing Company, 1992), 32, 89. Other regional historians, Kevin McNeil, Robert Gilmore, and Robert Flanders posit similar descriptions in their texts (ref bibliography).

FIG 0.1 Aerial of Springfield, MO. *The aerial image shows both the dominance of the land and the contrast of the commercial pockets. Springfield's area is 73.8 square miles, 2,048 square miles in the 5 county periphery area (this includes Green, Polk, Dallas, Webster, and Christian Counties); Springfield's population 159,498; Regional population 436,712*



Plateaus of Modernity, Hills of Resilience: The Generic Specificity of the American City

Not only does the familiar story of the American city begin with the land, but the process of transformation itself conveys both a global position and a local specificity. In Springfield the wilderness has retained particular strength, and its presence has not been superseded, but has continued to dominate. Recounting the limits of the terrain provides an overview of the region and begins to underscore a reading of Springfield, as a complex pastoral design.

The Ozarks sit west of the Mississippi River on the eastern edge of the Great Plains—once an island amidst a prehistoric sea, today it is a cavernous mass of dolomite and limestone, filled with water, trees, wildlife, and people.² The mountains do not rise from the land; rather they are carved from the plateau, their presence veiled by the strike of the horizon, and the expansive stretch of the high ground of rolling hills and streams. Unlike the flat plains of Kansas even the flattest ground in the Ozarks should be questioned, for the volumetric complexity of the hills is not lost on the plateau, but replaced with thousands of springs, caves, and sink holes which puncture a thick chert mantle and emerge through the scrim of red rocks and grass that drape themselves over the karst geology.³ The pretense of fertile earth has long been known to farmers who plow the rocky soils finding, if they are lucky, 2-3 feet before they encounter bedrock, making the soils ornery, better suited for the casual grazing of cattle than the invasive tillage of corn.

For these reasons farming never exploded on the plateau. The resources of the mountains provided more unique fodder for economy, sending pioneers and immigrants into the hills to log, mine, hunt, and trap. However, the mineral riches and material resources of the hills were quickly expended and in the absence of excessive coal and lead deposits, the hills were marginally exploited rather than decimated, unlike the Alleghenies of Pennsylvania or Appalachia, discouraging the demand for intensive regional access.⁴ Instead it was the human suited abundance of the hills which enticed early settlers to stay and live off of the land offering shelter, fuel, wildlife, and water. And it is these same hills which have in the 20th century, offered new value, re-shaped by dams, lakes, and highways prompting the slow transformation of towns to cities. Rather than extracting, the hills have been submerged and filled, the vernacular hill culture confronted with the modern economy of the 20th century, while the plateaus have continued along the migrations of the present gradually mixing entrenched local culture with new comers from the United States and abroad.⁵

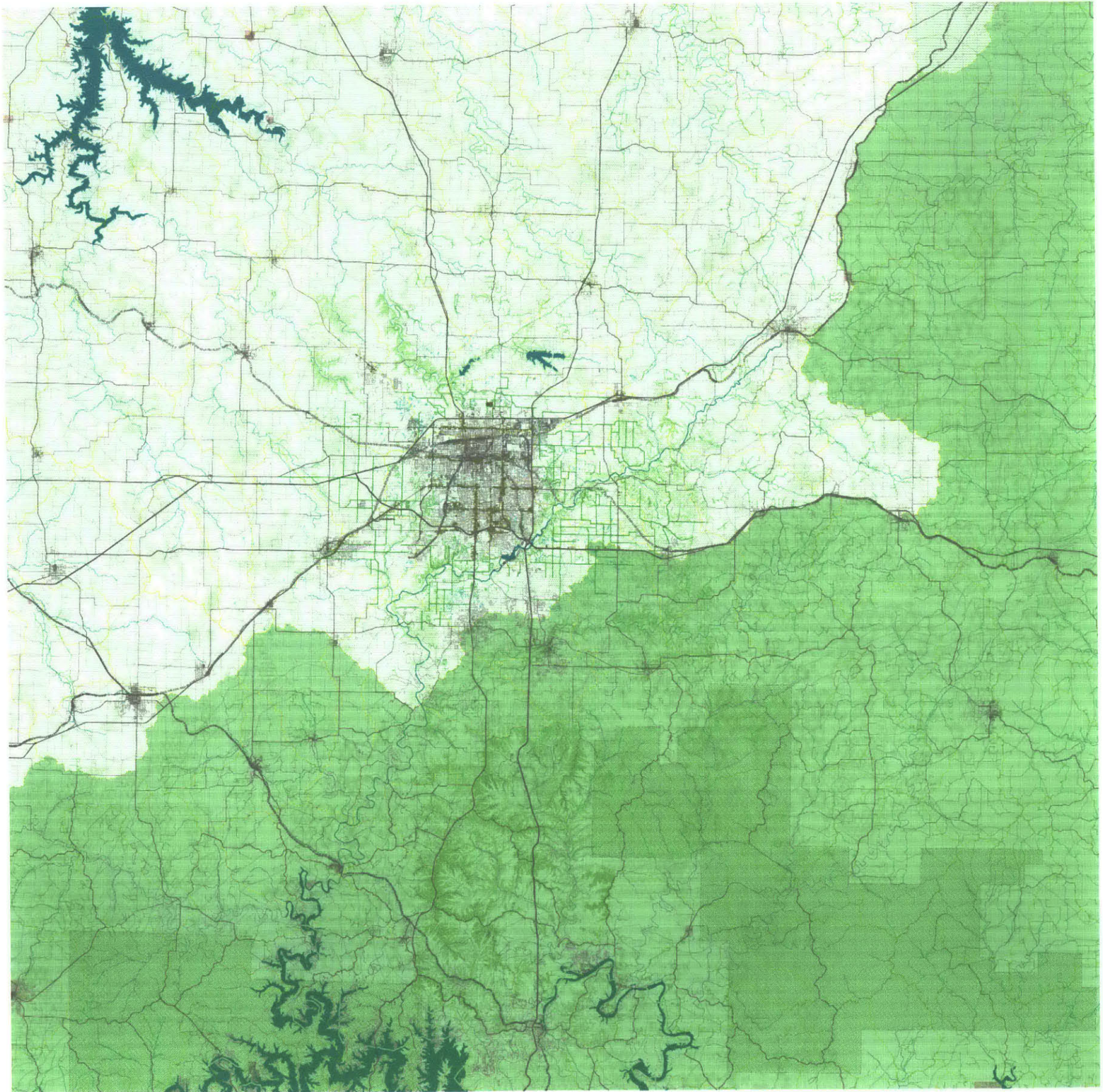
² The population in the Springfield City limits is 159,498; metropolitan area 436,712, US Census Bureau, 2010.

³ Chert is geologic mantle layer deposited as layers of dolomite dissolve. "Rainwater tends to be trapped in this mantle and rather than moving laterally as surface runoff, percolates downward through the clay and chert residue into cracks and crevices of the underlying carbonate rocks to act as a dissolving agent and to feed springs. As a result, many of the smaller Ozark streams do not have surface flow except during times of heavy rains and much of the water moves either within the chert mantle or in openings in the underlying bedrock. This chert mantle undoubtedly is a factor in filtering the water and assuring the clear springs which, in turn, feed clear streams" that emerge in the terrain elsewhere as springs, caves, or into above ground streams. There are an estimated 7,463 Caves in Missouri. Tome Beveridge, *Tom Beveridge's Ozarks*. <http://www.rollanet.org/~conorw/ozarks/ch4.htm> (accessed January, 15 2012)

⁴ Robert Gilmore, *Ozark Baptizings, Hangings, and Other Diversions: Theatrical Folkways of Rural Missouri, 1855-1910* (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984), xi.

⁵ The population of Springfield has grown on average 5%-10% every 10 years since 1838, which the exception of 1870, 1890, where population doubled due to the annexing of North Springfield and industrialization; and 1960 during post World War II growth. Over the past 20 years, the population of Springfield has gradually diversified, although compared to coastal mixes it remains homogenous. 91.6% white, 3.27% African American; 2.31% Hispanic. However, regionally the Hispanic population increased 200%-400% between 1990-2000. Other recent trends include migrants from California and other larger cities that have become unattractive because of commuting, cost of living, and public education. *Office of Social and Economic Data Analysis* (Uni-

FIG 0.2 Ozarks Region, Scale 1:550,000
Springfield sits at the high point of the plateau, which erodes into deep mountains towards the south, and rolling hills to the immediate north. The old wire road follows one of the highest ridges in the Ozarks, stretching to St. Louis and southwest towards Oklahoma and Arkansas. It began as nearly all roads in the region did as Buffalo paths and Osage trails. As immigrants began to settle the region these ridges in conjunction with rivers and springs became siting logic for early towns, generating what remains the dominant urban structure of the region.



1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes that proper record-keeping is essential for transparency and accountability, particularly in the context of public administration or financial reporting. The text suggests that without reliable records, it becomes difficult to track progress, identify issues, and ensure that resources are being used effectively.

2. The second part of the document addresses the challenges associated with data collection and analysis. It notes that while technology offers powerful tools for gathering and processing information, the quality and consistency of the data are often problematic. Incomplete or outdated information can lead to flawed conclusions and poor decision-making. The author advocates for a systematic approach to data management, including regular updates and thorough verification of sources.

3. The third part of the document focuses on the role of communication in achieving organizational goals. It argues that clear and consistent communication is vital for aligning team members, sharing information, and resolving conflicts. The text highlights the importance of both internal communication (within the organization) and external communication (with stakeholders and the public). Effective communication strategies can foster a sense of purpose and collaboration, ultimately leading to better performance and outcomes.

The high narrow ridge of the Springfield plateau has been the hierarchical spine of the region, the culmination point of a meandering web of ridges and valleys running deep into the hills and connecting with the high ridge running from St. Louis to Oklahoma and Texas. It is the canvas on which the processes of American city building have run their course with least resistance, and perhaps the least imagination. The flat plateau pairs well with the systematic urban forms common amongst American settlement—the easy replication of the survey grid, the serial patterns of railroad towns, Ozarks the Scotch-Irish town squares, or the contemporary logic of commercial centers which prefer the constructible ease of high ground receptive to their standard configurations. Despite the tendency towards generic forms, the land is constantly setting limits with geologic underlay, so one is never far from a stream, a sinkhole, or cave. Even the commercial strip is punctuated with the raw patches of overgrown sinkholes, the occasional limestone outcropping, and the native fescue that rampantly grows between cracked paving. Caves render large tracts of land undevelopable or become industrial storage, and the boundary of easy, pliant settlement is imposed by the geologic rim of the hills and beyond limited to settlements along the ridge or the valley, and the occasional flat hilltop in between.

So from the outset the terrain has directed the way in which meaning and city form has been ordered in the region. The accessibility of the plateaus has bred a fertile middle landscape offering the amenity of springs and streams and suitability for access and economic connectivity, while the hills have provided resource and wilderness, both serene and howling. For the past 100 years living on the plateau has meant being within the reaches of modern amenity—viewing and engaging the beauty of the land at will while the hills have required the patience of its permanent settlers to know its terrain, to know its resource, developing a lifestyle around the river valleys, the seasonal march of wild game, and the particularity of the Ozark soil.

Broad stages of American development have inserted themselves into these spaces, bringing with them lasting ideals and cycles of growth and decline that have defined the historical trajectory of the nation at large, while the land has set limits, and slowly graduated from a wilderness of untouched ideal beauty to the inhabited wilderness of the present, transformed by infrastructure, industry, and settlement, the land continues to provide the medium where collective human activity unfolds and new ways of life are invented.

1 OBSERVATIONS

This section outlines the intentions and structure of the thesis and summarizes the personal observations collected during 5 weeks of field observations which guide the subsequent research. These observations take three themes in relation to the wilderness: (1) Collective Experience (2) Scale and Historical Process (3) Pastoralism.

Springfield, Wilderness, and the Mid-Size American City

Springfield is the city where I grew up, it is also the city I have been away from for many years—while my fascination with it is somewhat personal, it is part of a much larger inquiry into the open ended form of the typical mid-sized American city and the quality of everyday life which attracts and keeps people in places like Springfield. Springfield (and the mid-west) has a cultural disposition I have been informally observing since my family moved to Springfield from California in 1993 and has continued even after I left home living abroad and visiting yearly. What was always striking (and has remained so) upon my return was the consistency of the town, its slow steady growth, the apparent content of the people with their lives despite the absence of a bustling big city or obviously cosmopolitan atmosphere. That's not to say there is a complete lack of sophistication—maybe even more notable is that sophistication exists alongside a, slower paced way of life.

The other important spatial and experiential observation is that of the ideal wilderness paired with the generic city. Traveling across the mid-west there are many cities which share a similar experience with Springfield, moving from a vast open landscape only to enter the loose frame of a town, which may have a few obvious pockets of interest, but without knowing the place is often alienating or un-interesting.⁶ This is a phenomenon that after awhile becomes almost invisible, just the typical American experience of driving on the interstate highway, an experience not limited to the towns of the mid-west, but descriptive of nationwide urbanity—what Frank Lloyd Wright predicted as the “the city that is nowhere unless everywhere,” anticipating the dispersion that would propel the suburban desires and city form of the second half of the century. My own experience is no less than inhabiting the massive extent of contemporary urbanity, the new metropolis, “the familiar decentralized world of highways and tract houses, shopping malls, and office parks that Americans have built for themselves since 1945.”⁷

And yet to limit the city to a description of infrastructure and new commercial development is inadequate—living in Springfield, it is impossible to separate the experience and form of the city from the land (i.e. “the new movie theater at the bottom of the hill,” or “just after you cross the river turn left.”) This is true of nearly any city, but Springfield and other mid-size cities offer a particular American version of landscape that reflects their scale, gradual rate of growth, and cultural desires, where the wilderness—the *other*— has retained a dominant presence.

Accreting slowly over time, Springfield has gradually reached out into the land, internalizing jagged edges, holes, and pockets of raw nature which allude to a settlement process slow and steady; never a dominant pattern of boom or decline, never a rigorously planned or designed city. Thus the form and architecture of the mid-size city does not exude extravagant economic or cultural desires, rather it is has been driven by the desires associated with the everyday. It did not succeed in becoming the center of the universe during the industrial

6 Other examples of cities sharing a similar relationship with the land (in my experience): Bentonville, AR; Wichita, KS; Topeka, KS; Tulsa, OK; Lincoln, NE; Denver, CO

7 Robert Fischman among others discusses the emergence of something new in the American Scene. *The new city of the 20th century* is not some fantastic city of towers out of Fritz Lang's celluloid *Metropolis* (1926) or the visionary architect Paoli Soleri's honeycombed Arcology. (Soleri's plan for a new city in the Arizona desert captivated futurists during the 1960s; the stunted model city that resulted is now a bizarre tourist attraction.) It is, rather, the familiar decentralized world of highways and tract houses, shopping malls, and office parks that Americans have built for themselves since 1945. From coast to coast, the symbol of this new city is not the jagged skyscraper skyline of the 1920s metropolis but the network of superhighways as seen from the air, crowded in all directions, uniting a whole region into a vast super-city." "Megalopolis Unbound," *In the Middle of the Edge: From the Suburb to Sprawl to the Regional City* (Wuppertal, Germany: Mueller and Busmann, 2004), 141.

revolution, as did Chicago or New York, nor did it explode into suburban megalopolis during the mid-century as Los Angeles, Houston, or the North Eastern Sea Board, and it has avoided the extreme real estate bubbles of sunbelt cities such as Phoenix. It is not a suburban extension but, the central urban concentration of a region. Experientially these cities are distinct because they retain a remarkable proximity to the open land (the wilderness), which over time has implicitly acted as a force of resilience and variety—a foil to economic standardization—resulting in a city that is both a product of systematic urban form and the nuanced specificity of the landscape. It is a city that identifies closely with pastoral themes, associating dreams, escape, and a simple life with the beauty of the open land (wilderness)—achieving what is a uniquely American possibility of living within (what some consider) an ideal landscape. However, Springfield and other Mid-size American towns are not simply picturesque utopias. In Springfield the wilderness is a concrete reality and natural form that serves as a deep rooted cultural symbol and the foundation for a way of life that continues to be transformed by its spatial relationship with the land.

It is a type of city that rests uncomfortably within normative design ideals (maybe because it is not a city of built extremes?). It is no longer a traditional compact village, nor does it possess a large downtown and therefore is often interpreted as sprawl. It does not have the widespread density of a megalopolitan region, although Springfield functions geographically and economically, at a similar scale. It lacks the multi-cultural diversity of a coastal city and is often considered only as backwards and conservative.⁸

Rather, it has accumulated gradually overtime, a piecemeal process that is the result of many contributors, with the informal guide of the survey grid, and the market economy. Springfield shares with other American cities the suburban motivations of everyday life centered around access, jobs, home ownership, school systems, and affordability. It faces the economic challenges of de-industrialization, the conundrum of the downtown and how to view its city form—how to define the collective identity of the expanded polycentric metropolis and how to grow in the future. Springfield grapples with the desires of its citizens to retain simple values which are increasingly challenged and accompanied by the desire for a cosmopolitan city that more actively embraces diversity and economic expansion. But what form should this new metropolis assume, and how will it grow without relinquishing its values?

Design ideals and solutions are predictably in concert with broad planning and economic issues, focusing primarily on the downtown, industrial reclamation, nature conservation, and infrastructural efficiency. These efforts have had varying degrees of success, particularly infrastructure, which is highly coordinated and usually very effective, as is nature conservation. Curiously, the wilderness although it is a dominant spatial element in Springfield, (perhaps because it too has attained universal meaning/omnipresence in the American scene), lacks clear intentionality and is perceived merely as a weak/haphazard spatial principle.

In assuming a casual stance Springfield straddles a precarious line between 'OK', inspired, and nostalgically picturesque, relying on the citizen for the final judgment of their experience. For some the wilderness is simply a beautiful escape, for others it constitutes a deep fundamental reality, associated with the ebb and flow of their own life: an existence they have always known and lived amidst during trials and happiness, a source of economic vitality

⁸ After meeting with planning staff I actually felt more vindicated to take an approach that was more conceptual than overtly pragmatic. Springfield has many forward thinking strategic action plans in place to address education, poverty, and work force in addition to an active chamber of commerce successfully recruiting business and industry to the area. The thing that people continue to struggle with, despite all the reasons that are great to live there, is why Springfield still lacks that ineffable other thing, the myth and symbolism which seems to go along with the image of a "great " city.

and sustenance, or it may be a resigned fate and circumstance. Whatever the position, the land is not simply a nice view—living amongst the wilderness does not guarantee perfection or absolve the realities of daily life—Springfield is driven by the desires of everyday life which incorporate the land, in many ways draw on its openness for stability and optimism, for an existence that does not change “to far, or too fast.”⁹ Here in Springfield, presents its own vein of complex American pastoralism—the land does not make a utopian existence, yet its nearness enables the serious proposition of a middle landscape.

What would a more critical reading of the wilderness offer for Springfield, and the mid-size American city? The wilderness inherently offers space and conceptual magnetism compelling and already present in the consciousness of Springfieldians and Americans at large. The wilderness is presence in absence, it is an imaginative space that is both a collective image and individual secret, it is based on qualities that Springfield still possesses which many other cities don’t—low population density and open land. The wilderness is as much a part of Springfield’s everyday city form as the elements we typically associate with urban—roads, buildings, civic institutions, public spaces—here these civilizing elements are situated amongst the land, which provides at the largest scale a hierarchy in relation to the terrain, on a daily basis is perceived as a particular sensory quality, and at a meta-scale functions in parallel with traditional notions of public space; although because of its scale, omnipresent atmosphere, and lack of normative civil expectations, I argue the wilderness is better described as a collective experience—**that the wilderness offers an identity more powerful and resilient than that of the downtown or a commercial shopping center, that to understand the city’s form (and its future), its spatial terms must be re-conceptualized to consider form and terrain as interrelated systems that are associated with collective meaning and cultural function.**

Beginning from this premise, the intent of the thesis is to re-read Springfield’s city form as a dialogue between wilderness and city—to understand the form as a complex pastoral design which has transpired overtime time, and is the product of successive spatial transformations, each reinventing what constitutes the ideal wilderness, by responding to changes in infrastructure, economy, and mobility. In exploring the wilderness as the dominant guiding concept of Springfield’s form and culture this thesis seeks to project a future that embodies the next process of transformation of the ideal wilderness.

In response, throughout my analysis I grapple with the highly nuanced existence of Springfield, teetering between the banal homogeneity of strips, roadways, and mail-order houses, and the always near presence of the open land, seeping in between loosely scattered buildings, lots, and expansive roadways. The thesis documents the resulting dynamic which has produced its own particular kind of “cityness”, born from the duality of modern life, the presence of the open land (wilderness), and the acts and desires of everyday life, where citizens freely move between dualities to constantly assemble and re-assemble their city. It is in this measure where the land excels (and offers a great capacity), graduating from the inspiring possibility of its openness to the intimate materialization and the collective experience of everyday life.

⁹ “Go ahead, but not too far, not too fast,” is a well known saying of the native Ozark culture that captures the discerning attitude towards rapid change. Rossiter, *A Living History of the Ozarks*, 15.

Methods and Representation

This thesis in looking at a typical city type, asks a second question about design and about methods for understanding a place—how can urban design respond to a place beyond a traditional ideal of a good city (a town square, or a tree lined street)—what methods will allow one to enter into a place, to understand its deep structure as a foundation for a projective city vision that extends and reinvents its own process?

Accordingly one of the earliest challenges/decisions in the thesis process was to find a multi-faceted methodology that could synthesize research, theory, field observations, and spatial analysis (drawing) to generate a non-conventional reading of city form. My intention has been not only to academically research or to read every comprehensive action plan for Springfield, as a way of understanding, but to explore firsthand the sensory phenomena that I have started to describe as the contrast between the ideal wilderness and the generic city—believing that the experience of the place, both its scale and terrain offer an essential dimension to the way of life, revealing a vitality just as valid as a large sophisticated metropolis, one that fits into the larger mythic trajectory of the typical American city and the life of the everyday citizen.¹⁰

The following sections are structured as a layered dialogue between modes of inquiry exploring Springfield and the transformation of the ideal wilderness as a historical, theoretical, experiential, and spatial process. Each section explores the concept of wilderness as both a physical and psychological/cultural space, and each imparts an insight as to the spatial structure of the city. The goal of this succession has been to generate a layering of spatial comprehension that synthesizes across scales, using drawings to project abstract concepts and empirical data into concrete representations of space.

Thesis Outline

The investigation has been organized into five parts: 1 Observations, 2 Ideals, 3 Paths, 4 Transformations, 5 Projections.

1 Observations outlines the key findings from my field research that have guided my analysis and representation. Although going into the field research I had hypothesized about Springfield, that it struggles to define itself in the face of normative planning theory, that its identity could be read more closely associated with the wilderness and proximity to the open land, I had also started from the premise that to understand the city a more diverse set of methods, including field observations, was required. Accordingly I gathered insights during January that influenced my views and informed the subsequent structure of my thesis inquiry. These have been organized into three themes:

- (1) **Collective Experience:** Here I summarize my observations and people's current views, concluding that Springfield, although has many positive qualities at the community and individual level, lacks a distinctive city form and collective identity—the wilderness on the other hand is pervasive, the space which serves as the informal collective identity regardless of a city. These are perceptually and socially oriented observations that document how people respond and view their own city

¹⁰ I speak more specifically about my analytical framework in Part 4 "transformation", but one of the early guiding ideas to taking a diverse perspective on city form has been Kevin Lynch who holds that "in order to understand sensory quality, it is necessary to understand the specific landscape, its settlement, its history, the inhabitant, their culture and economy." *Managing the Sense of a Region* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1984), 62.

FIG 1.1 Field Observation Paths
Scale 1:550,000

Path Legend

Periphery/Remote/Grid (car)



Broadacres/Borderlands/
Suburban Towns (car)

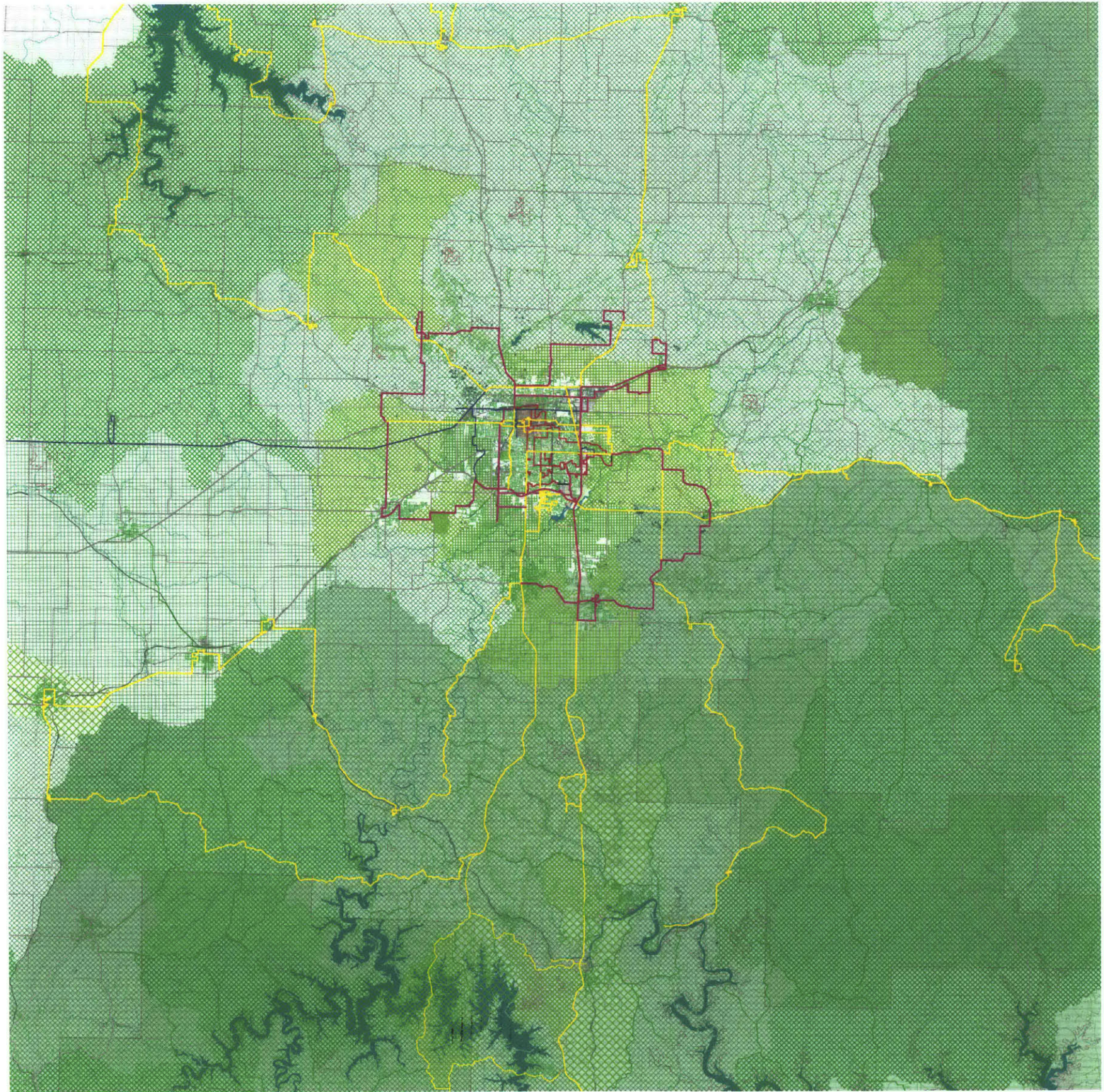


Interior Grid (walking)



Interior Grid (biking)





- (2) Scale and Historical Process: slow incremental growth is both the product of cultural values, terrain, and economy, producing a city form that is a condensation of American urbanism interwoven with the land.
- (3) Pastoralism: Springfield is distinct because successive wilderness ideals have not been superseded by explosive growth or density. Instead the city continues to offer iterations the American pastoral ideal, and whether explicit or not, this ideal has propelled the conventions that have influenced the city's spatial structure, which although appears disorderly or casual is remarkably logical and clear. I am building an argument that a design capacity lies in understanding the spatial manifestation of these motives—that a future ideal should build on the process of transformation.

2 Ideals is composed of four short essays. *Each examines* the historic transformation of the wilderness and how meaning has been ordered in the landscape in response to changes in infrastructure, economy, and mobility throughout American history. Specifically how has the relationship between city form and the land been altered? How has the concept and experience of wilderness been transformed in relationship to the larger process of urbanization and what has this meant in Springfield and the Ozark Region? The section positions Springfield within city theory and doubles as an abbreviated history of Springfield's growth. A body of ideals and values are gathered and overlaid onto the experience of the paths in part 3 and used to interpret the variety of spaces that exist in Springfield. Agents and scales of transformation are also established, infrastructure, survey grid, and housing which build a thematic spatial structure for analysis in Part 4.

3 Paths, describes my field documentation occurring for a month in January and a week in March, where I traversed and recorded (with photos, notes) numerous paths to document the sensory qualities of the city and region, in an attempt to discern vitality and function in terms not merely pragmatic, but terms also oriented to human perception, adaptation, and ultimately desire. These paths included car driven roads throughout the region, hiking excursions through the city, biking on designated and undesignated trails, and multiple conversations with people met along the way in combination with staged interviews and questionnaires and my own life experiences from growing up and recent visits and impressions. Here I distinguish three identifiable scales and sensory qualities of the landscape: Wilderness 1 Terrain/infrastructure; Wilderness 2 Domestic Gardens; Wilderness 3 Strips/Squares (City)

4 Transformations is composed of analytical spatial explorations which are a synthesis of theory and observation. The intention is to generate a spatial comprehension of Springfield's city form and to interpret it as a spatial dialogue between wilderness and city. Four series of drawings are presented—Grid, Wilderness, Collective Function, and Resilience—each documenting/representing the transformation of the landscape in Springfield. Each series explores a single theme across the three “wilderness” scales and concludes with a fourth landscape, which is the product of multi-scalar interactions.

5 Projections offers a 5th drawing series that reflects on the future of Springfield's city form and the value offered by the layered methodology of the thesis.



Strips/Squares/Malls



Institutions/Infrastructure



Roads/Recreation



Neighborhoods

FIG 1.2 Questionnaire Imagery

These Images are from part of a questionnaire given to 25 residents of Springfield. The responses were varied in relation to peoples everyday life, however a few generalities emerged. Most people responded negatively or blankly to the strip landscape, and most reacted positively to images of the land. Ref. Appendix A for a more detailed summary



Periphery

Collective Experience *Springfieldians and the city "a la Carte"*

My month of field observations was consistently filled with strong responses to the collective experience of both the land and the city, some of which I had anticipated, others which were illuminating and unexpected. Overall my observations affirmed, much of my early hypothesis: that the wilderness offers the a powerful and shared collective experience; the city is variable and interest based, generally viewed with disinterest by its citizens as practical, functional and convenient, but not a real city—even the downtown cannot make up for this because it is not the economic heart; these sentiments reflect the common problem of the modern metropolis and suburban life, but also reflect an inadequacy of considering the city as a centralized core.

In general Springfield is a city for living, but their responses to the city can be grouped into three social scales: Individual, Community, and Collective. At the individual/Family level most people's first comment is on the ease and desirability of their day to day life, and on where and how they can live, people felt satisfied that their daily needs were met in terms of housing, cost, jobs, education, daily amenities. The everyday environment offers a consistency and stability that offers people comfort; At the community level Springfield was also cited as satisfying; people felt they were able to find cultural connections through activities of interest, ranging from religious, education, to recreation. Often cited as one of the best parts of Springfield were the deep rooted friendships or being near family. The collective citywide level is where the most dissatisfaction was expressed primarily towards the city form and culture: lack of diversity, lack of cultural events, lack of interesting places to go, lack of formal legibility, places to walk, or beauty. Especially for new comers, there is discontent with the city's spatial legibility and larger collective experience. Springfield, is a great "city for living", for an everyday life of ease and convenience—little traffic, affordable housing, a good school system, a steady economy. However, all of these items are worthy of trading for the lack of intangible cityness, limited cultural events, and the lack of social diversity. In contrast people spoke with excitement about spending weekends at the lake, their love of fishing or biking, or going on drives to view the fall colors.¹¹ These trades are synonymous with suburban motives of the 20th century, affirming the land, the wilderness, as the powerful medium for everyday and collective life.

For some these collective shortcomings are mostly balanced by living near or within the beauty of the open land. Popularly phrased, Springfield offers the best of city and country. In more complex terms, appreciating Springfield and the land can be a gradual process of personal growth, where the city and the wilderness express a deeper internal analogy. As eloquently stated during an interview, "Springfield is kind of like that Mark Twain quote, it has meant something different to me at different ages—when I was young I delighted endlessly in the creeks, fields, and streams, as I grew older I began to look down on Springfield's lack of urban sophistication, after leaving for 12 years, I returned and have never wanted to leave."¹²

¹¹ People's ratio of content to discontent had varying levels, however in general many of the young people I spoke with who stay or move to Springfield are optimistic about the city's future. It appears that people who are choosing to stay or move to Springfield are in fact choosing, not settling out of pure circumstance. In the peripheral towns choice is more limited to circumstance. Poverty, drug abuse, welfare states limit mobility and are more concentrated and isolated. Springfield, like most cities does confront these issues but they are balanced by the majority of the population who are "stable". A study into social capital done by Dr. Mike Stout, Dr. John Harms, and Larua Voss at Missouri State University also confirms the conclusions from my interviews as a more general condition of the population. "Measuring Social Capital and Building Community in the Ozarks" *Contexts* 10 (2011) 1: accessed May 16, 2012

¹² The Original Mark Twain Quote: "When I was fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have him around. When I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years. See

More complicated however, were people's reactions to the city, their likes, dislikes, and their ideals. I learned it is not a lack of interest in the city, but a lack of clarity in what the city could be, and the inevitable tension that exists between the desire for change and the maintaining of old ways. Some people want easy urbanism—the clear legibility of the downtown or a shopping center—an archetypal city which is comfortable, familiar, nostalgic. (Easy urbanism also seems to be associated with aesthetics which are traditionally beautiful, neat, tidy, orderly, secure, and safe feeling.) Others persevere or have no need for a “real” city—they go out, find, and make their own, finding spaces and experiences amongst the ordinary. Both viewpoints substantiate a deeper cultural and spatial condition. As Frank Lloyd Wright forecasted, the new city *is a la carte*. (“families will be able to create their own cities out of destinations they can reach in a reasonable length of time”)—a prescient outline of what is means to be a Springfieldian. The city *a la cart* is not necessarily bad, in fact it delivers diversity and freedom of experience as Wright optimistically imagined, however on its own, the curated city is also a duplicitous one. Because it is highly personalized it may at times be homogenous, exclusionary, or isolated¹³ Although it is easy to live in Springfield, convenient etc. there is limited spatial articulation as to socialness or publicness. You will not feel connected by simply driving down the street or hanging out in the square. Rather connection is generated from social contact or from frequenting a path or a place. The collective landscape is primarily comprised of small community institutions and interest based activities that cultivate spatially invisible identities. Thus collective space tends to be highly personalized-or tactical, fleeting and operating with open circumstantial logic.

I had entered the interviews and the project hypothesizing that spatial legibility was a flaw in Springfield, but that its (capacity for legibility) was influenced by expectations of what a good city should be: small compact, and with a thriving downtown center where all citizens feel welcome. In Springfield, I have always been perplexed by the persistent attitude that a good city is a good downtown. A lot of hope rides on the image of the downtown square as a spiritual heart, although the actual space of the square is a fraction of the city. By sheer proportion it is not difficult to argue that the downtown is simply a smaller part of a larger whole—granted a significant one home to the government seat, and college universities, however, most of life (the life of ease and ownership so appealing) takes place in the other 70 square miles of residential neighborhoods and strips (Springfield is 73.8 sq miles) and out amongst the 2,048 square miles of the periphery. The description of Springfield as a wilderness metropolis is geographically and experientially more appropriate. In its current form the activities of modern life unfold amidst space which is more open ended, less confined, dominated by the presence of expanse more than the sense of enclosure—for it has yet to overpower the land as its coastal counterparts have.

What I took away was a need not for spatial order in the pragmatic sense—Springfield is laid out on a well functioning grid and regionally connected by new uncongested highways—but a need for hierarchy, legibility, and a spatial concept that could guide the growth of the city without compromising its domestic heart and the flexibility of its current form. That the open-ended city is an exhilarating but tenuous proposition, fulfilling the desire for independence and mobility, but undirected its (potentially compelling) logic is masked by its sensory and

what happens when you “know it all”, at any stage of life? Farther down the track you may see clearly how certain personal opinions, held onto too tightly, could be fogging up the view, and providing incorrect insight.” Reference Appendix A for more detailed interview summaries.

¹³ Wright in his exuberance for the time warping capacity of the automobile did not anticipate the outcome of a place that does not offer diversity of destinations, a legible city form of ordered dispersion, a path with little architectural merit, or the potential future not based around the automobile (but such is the nature of responding to the time, Wright would imaginably propose another variation of Broadacres if confronted with the city of 2012).

material informality. That its form if it is to inspire diversity, not only in a programmatic sense, but to convey and encourage cultural and experiential multiplicity, must be inhabited and sensed as open and inclusive, but differentiated enough to order meaning. Springfield is compelling because of its scale, because it lacks normative public space and the hyper development of lifestyle centers (the downtown even has transcended the ideal of a quaint town forum, now home for marginalized teenagers by day and college kids by night) to encompass a notion more appropriate to its culture and form one embodying collective experience, "a civic sphere more flexible than normative, more heterogeneous than consensus based, more animated than fixed."¹⁴ The notion of collective experience, prominent during the mid-century amongst modern architecture and veins of city planning (particularly Kevin Lynch) was in response to the desire to define a public sphere representative of post World War II American democracy, a period which begins to grapple with the form of the dispersed new city of mobility and independence. There is a proposition for a public sphere which transcends collective definition that offers valuable guidance and insight into Springfield and the capacity of the land.

At the center of Lynch's argument is that the city if is nothing else, is the wishes and desires of the people and firmly promotes that a good city and good policy should incorporate both the passions of utopian ideals emanating from the citizenry and the practical consideration of implementation. Moving into the next parts of the thesis, the field documentation, analytical representation, and projections, the conceptual approach of Lynch is significant—my field research is an excursion of documenting in the spirit of Lynch's conviction that to understand city form one must also understand the people and how they use and perceive the place. From my own experience, interviews, and research, the land, the wilderness is a space which implicitly functions in an open collective capacity—the wilderness as a symbolic space is a palimpsest, a repository of a collective desires providing in Springfield a powerful agent of cultural convention that in relation to city form, could if more carefully studied, provide the underlay for the design of a more complex and yet more clarified city. Thus the ideal wilderness provides a way to read both human desire and space together (ideal is the human desire, the wilderness is a form and quality of space) The reading itself, text, images, and drawings offer a method for representation that are an underlay for speculations on the future.

Scale and Historic Process

Historic process offers a link to global history of the American town and aids in reading Springfield and understanding its growth, exhibiting the unique scale of the mid-size city amongst the broad descriptions of sprawl and low density.

Springfield is the adapted trajectory of Jefferson's democratic ideal—the small town amongst the land, now graduating to new metropolis. The systematic clarity of Jefferson's town square, hierarchically organizing church, government, and town common in many ways has not been lost; it has merely transitioned scales and its program transformed by modern economics, mobility, and infrastructure.¹⁵ If Downtown Springfield possesses the spatial clarity of a single township, then the new city, post 1900's possesses the clarity of order instilled by successive attitudes in city planning and development: city beautiful parks, ideal neighborhood units (residence, school, church, nearness to amenities), polycentric commercial strips corresponding to population density and car standards. The edge is gradually becoming the melding of attitudes towards the environmental conservation land, preservation of natural systems, and the intersection of large scale infrastructures that provide new civic space.

¹⁴ Sarah Whitting, "The Jungle in the Clearing" (PhD diss., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2001), 41.

¹⁵ Part 2, discusses this economic cycle in more detail.

Time orientation is significant here, both because of the sense conveyed by materiality, age, tectonics, and massing, also because the process of construction generates territories with legible relation to the super structure of the city. The resulting city is experienced as loose pockets and layers composed of wilderness and the transformative agents of historic process (infrastructure, survey grid, residential blocks, civic buildings), generating a close association between the sense and grain of the landscape and historical time. Significantly, for anything disagreeable about “sprawl—alienating, placeless, non-diverse, exclusionary, and wasteful— its scale here is such that it is conceivably human, rather than a massive force like Houston or Atlanta.

As a method, Historical process and scale conceptually underscore the framework for reading and interpreting the city as a process of transformations. Part two “ideals” takes a broad historical perspective, identifying period of growth and large scale agents of transformation that have been fundamental in American urban history (survey grid, railroads, highway); 3 paths identifies three scales of “wilderness” that compose the primary identity and spatial experience of Springfield and the region. These scales and agents of transformation are the foundation for the 4th section of spatial analysis and representation—by separating three scales of terrain and built form, each is able to be read as internally specific their own historic process then cross related to produce new readings (a 4th landscape) of Springfield’s city form.

Pastoralism *Wilderness and the American City*

Pastoralism offers concept to read the city and the wilderness with a critical lens that goes beyond sentimental and picturesque, to transcend a superficial reading of a glib suburbia, to get at the root of the ideal wilderness, its capacity, and its diverse range of meaning.

One of the ongoing struggles throughout the thesis has been to conceptually reconcile the image of pastoral beauty with the reality of conflict that inevitably exists—to not go so far with utopian imagery that Springfield is not placed within the realities of the modern world. In the United States this conflict can be conceptualized as transformations within a pastoral design which contends with the duality between two ways of life: one a utopia symbolized by unspoiled wilderness and simple life free from oppression and conflict, the other reality, represented by a variety of sources, often the city, foreign power, and technology. Leo Marx traces the American design of this conflict in *The Machine and the Garden*, examining the relationship between literature and pastoralism. He begins with Shakespeare’s tragic comedy, “The Tempest” to illustrate the spatial and aesthetic archetypes of utopia (wilderness/garden) and reality (hideous wilderness/city), and to distinguish between complex and sentimental pastoral ideals. The wilderness an ideal unspoiled world, reality the source of power and conflict from which one has journeyed—the tempest he says is powerful because it inserts reality into fantasy, and arrives at a state of resolution affirming a middle landscape of human production, or art which negotiates reality and nature.

This three part metaphorical scheme, wilderness (utopia/nature), city (reality/machine), and middle landscape (reconciliation/art) are projected onto the American experience, where Marx argues, their pastoral design has blurred the line between literature and reality and has permeated political, social, and technological consciousness. Sentimental pastoralism found in popular culture is often nostalgic “a vestige of the once dominant image of an undefiled, green republic, a quiet land of forests, villages, and farms dedicated to the pursuit of happiness.”¹⁶ Here the bucolic image of the countryside is symbolic of a desire to escape the pressures of the external world. On the other hand, complex pastoralism which

¹⁶ Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden*, 6.

Marx traces in American literature as a response to external changes, uses natural facts to metaphorically convey something about the human situation. While there may be a level of generalization within Marx's argument, it clarifies, and has helped to position a response to Springfield within universal human values, but more importantly to place the process of the American city into a larger historical and metaphorical context which remains ongoing (that of the opportunity of the wilderness, the reality of industry and economy, the seeking of a reconciliation between the two). It has also provided a conceptual frame to shape a diverse symbolic trajectory around the mythical aspect of Springfield and other mid-size cities who maintain a close proximity to the open land even as they have become metropolitan: they have maintained a great range of pastoral iterations and archetypal citizens and in place of an ideal city, they offer versions of an ideal wilderness (replete with their own realistic counter-forces).

What is enthralling about the current landscape of Springfield is that the notions of city and wilderness have become increasingly intermingled and compressed. The new middle-landscape is positioned, perhaps more closely than ever, with the combination of technology, scale, and infrastructure, to achieve a more fine grained middle ground opening up almost simultaneously two distinct worlds of city and country and a residue of their interactions in between. This fragmented, variegated texture is becoming the metropolitan disposition of Springfield. During my month of observation I encountered a gradually densifying accumulation of single family houses and apartments, incorporating a periphery where incarnations of Jeffersonian and Transcendental pastoralism persist. A peripheral wilderness where vitality is derived from self-sufficiency and joy of living on the land more than power and exchange, and an interior wilderness of domestic gardens, parks, sinkholes, and lots where a range of vitalities are interjected between moments of city. In its most utopian form the wilderness is a transcendental existence, in its realistic sentimental manifestation it is picturesque and a space for vernacular commoditization, and at its most jarring it is a space of rural poverty and isolation. Gradients of these variations exist throughout the metropolitan region. Thus the concept of wilderness invokes a diverse set of meanings, ranging from sentimental to complex, which vary in relation to the viewers own position and life views. Regardless of the individual predilection, the imagery and the sensory quality of the land provide a powerful cultural space of complex meaning and desire.

Tracing the transformation of the ideal wilderness (the void) as a pastoral design alongside the archetypal figure who inhabits the ideal parameter of the everyday imparts a metaphorical logic by which to understand the typical mid-sized American city, in this case, Springfield. In doing so a lens is produced, revealing a peculiar diversity of enduring fragments, failed propositions, and a reading of where a modern interpretation of pastoralism locates reality, the imaginary, and the powers of the everyday person. The following section explores the key theoretical concepts that inform the both the field observations and spatial analysis, outlining the metaphorical conflict of not only space, but a way of life, introducing a cast of citizen archetypes and city forms that I encountered in Springfield. These conceptual themes are foundational for the terms of the textual and representational analysis : middle landscape, wilderness, terrain vague, and collective function, while introducing modes and mechanisms of transformation that have relocated, enabled, and obliterated the image of the ideal wilderness. Throughout the archetypal citizen figure provides a link to ephemeral desires, to new spatial interactions invented around changes in policy, economy, infrastructure, and mobility.

2 IDEALS

Ideals is composed of four short essays and doubles as an abbreviated history of the Ozarks. Each part examines the historic transformation of the wilderness and how meaning has been ordered in the landscape in response to changes in infrastructure, economy, and mobility throughout American history. The Chapter begins with a series of 5 drawings conveying the historic regional transformation of infrastructure, land, and city form.

Regional Transformation

The following series of regional drawings document the relationship between infrastructure, land and city form, the systems which at the largest scale have ordered meaning and transformed the ideal wilderness. Four time periods have been selected as markers of significant stages of growth and change: 1890, 1960, 1980, 2012 (present). These years reflect nationwide cycles of economic growth and development (described in more detail in the 4th essay, on landscape theory): the concentrated industrial City; The Post-Fordist decentralized City of national distribution; Logistics Landscape of decentralization and international distribution.¹ Similar to the theory essays which convey Springfield's relationship to both a global and a local history, mapping regional growth conveys the predictable settlement forms that have occurred in concert with the American economy and how these global patterns have been nuanced by the specificity of the landscape. In Springfield the presence of the wilderness has dominated.

¹ Alan Berger and Charles Waldheim. "Logistics Landscape."

1890 The Ozarks, Regional Form + Density FIG 2.1

Springfield's Population: 19,587; Five County Population: 23,400; 75% change from 1860

By 1886 the railroads has entered the region spurred by the timber economy and lead mining. The mountains were entered sparingly, by two continuous ridges: one stemming from the old wire road crossing the James River which served as a valuable downstream conduit to the white river, and ultimately the Mississippi; the second extending South from Springfield to the eastern branch of the White and the small towns of Forsyth and Branson. The culture of the hills and small towns is discussed in more depth in part 2 the Ozark Transcendentalist" and Part 3 "Squares and Periphery."

Wilderness/Access/Density

Grid/Town
High connectivity
500-2000

Periphery
moderate road access
26-100 people per sq mile

Remote
Limited road access
0-25 people per sq mile



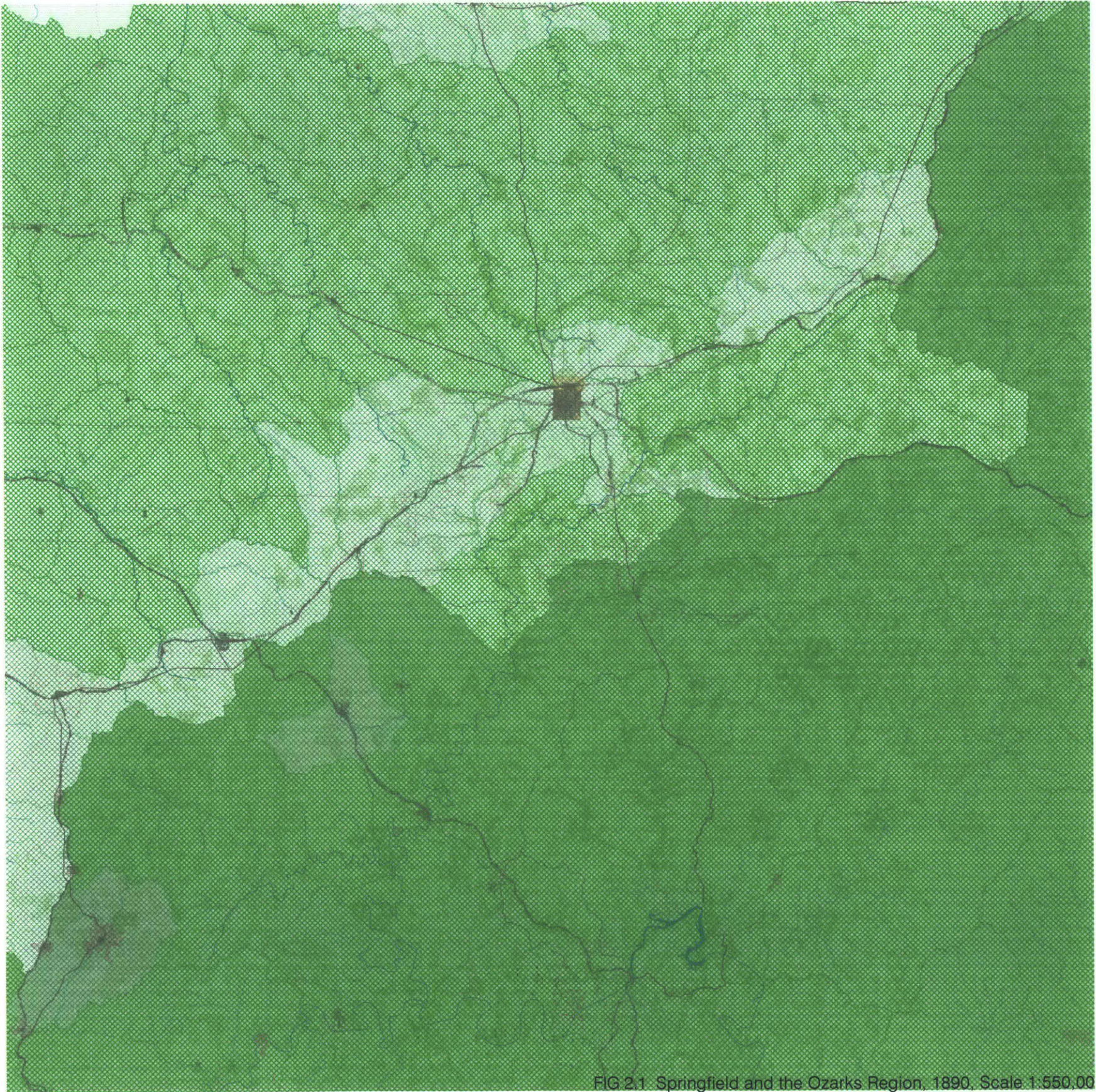


FIG. 2.1. Springfield and the Ozarks Region, 1890, Scale 1:550,00

1955 The Ozarks, Regional Form + Density FIG 2.2

Springfield's Population: 64,839; Five County Population: 158,800; 29% change from 1890

Although Springfield has always possessed good infrastructural access the majority of the region was still traveled by dirt or gravel roads in 1955. Taneycomo was the only lake in the southern region linked to Springfield by a windy and lengthy two lane road through the mountains, which remained sparsely settled with little need for major infrastructural access after the mining and timber industries had all but gone (which happened before the great depression). Route 66 which had passed through Springfield was experiencing its last heyday, before late 1950's when I-44 would shift economic vitality outward from the downtown. The shift of roadways and vitality is a common story amongst the Ozark towns—prior to the highway systems the main routes passed directly through the town squares reflecting an older pattern of settlement, exchange, and mobility. Until the past 15 20 years the majority of the roads in the region were two-lanes.

Wilderness/Access/Density

Grid/Town

High connectivity

500-2000

Periphery

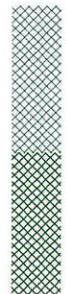
moderate road access

26-100 people per sq mile

Remote

Limited road access

0-25 people per sq mile



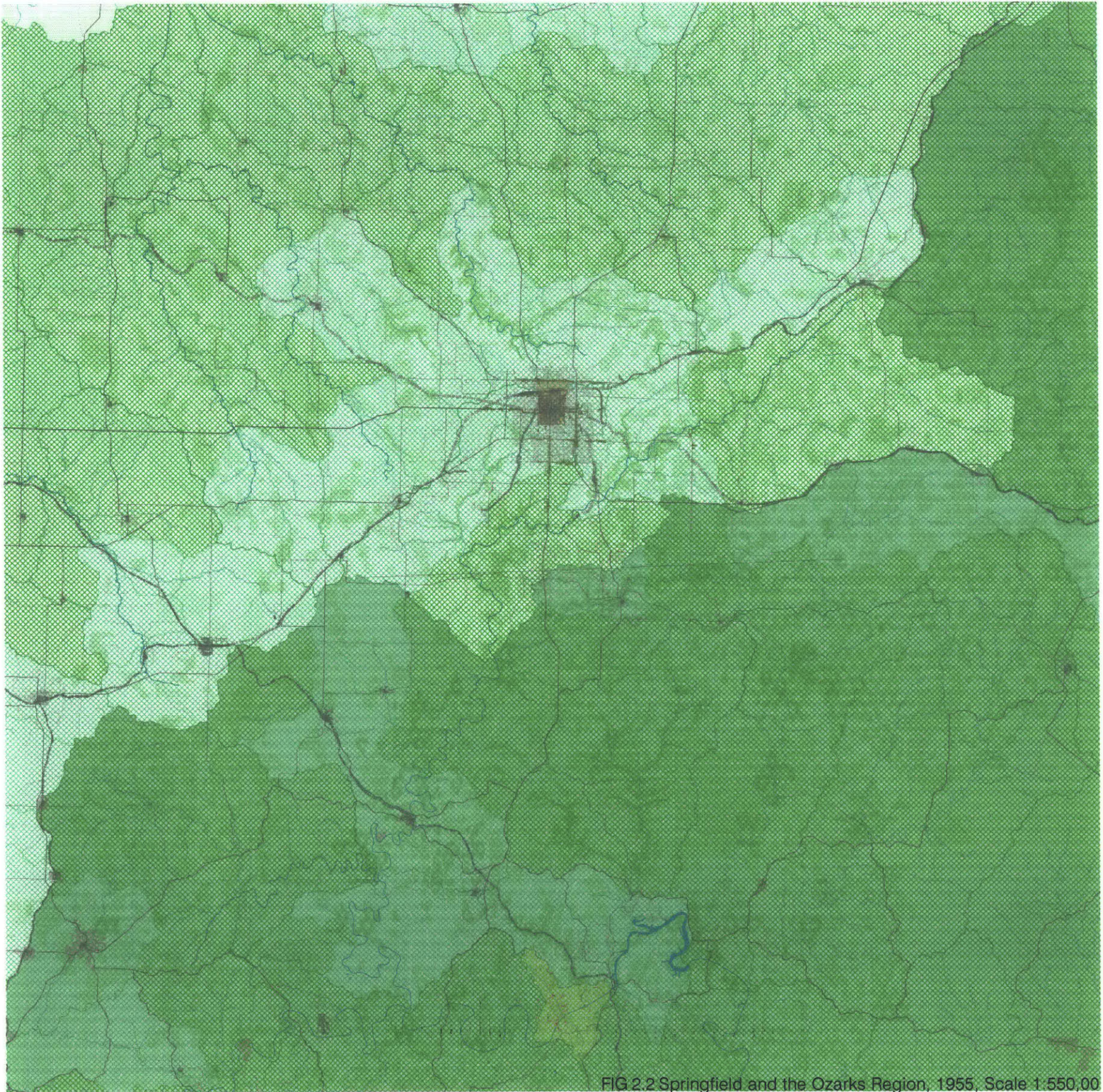


FIG 2.2 Springfield and the Ozarks Region, 1955, Scale 1:550,00

1980 The Ozarks, Regional Form + Density FIG 2.3

Springfield's Population: 128,436; Regional Population: 260,900; 58% change from 1950

By 1980 The wilderness had fully transitioned from remote other to accessible terrain. Springfield had embraced personal mobility and adapted the patterns of a decentralized city and national economy. Trucking companies and other large scale operations such as 3M, Hines, and Kraft, were attracted by the city's central location, low cost of living, and capacity for natural refrigeration found in underground caves and old limestone quarries. These businesses located on the old northeastern city edge, near the railway line and the new interstate highway. By 1980 the roads in the region were nearly all paved, with the exception of outer lying farm roads and the city had begun the process of suburbanization and settling the periphery—creating an informal "Broadacre City". The outer lying towns however often struggled to integrate into the new economy, particularly if not situated on a major road.





FIG 2.3 Springfield and the Ozarks Region, 1980, Scale 1:550,000

2012 The Ozarks, Regional Form + Density FIG 2.4

Springfield's Population: 159,498; Regional Population: 436,712; 60% change from 1980

Springfield has continued on its 1980's industrial trajectory, strengthening its tourism economy with the development of the region and improved highway connectivity and significance as a regional healthcare center. Although the city has expanded outwards much of the metropolitan area still remains sparsely populated, less than 25 people per square mile. The identity of the wilderness of "other" has remained intact, adding to its milieu a new metropolitan variety derived from improved access, where small towns have become remote commuter suburbs, and Springfieldians and travelers from other regions migrate seasonally with greater ease to the lake (in 1990 the trip from Springfield to Table rock was 1 to 1.5 hours on a 2 lane road, today its 35 minutes on 4 lanes). begins with a series of 5 drawings conveying the historic transformation of infrastructure, land, and city form.



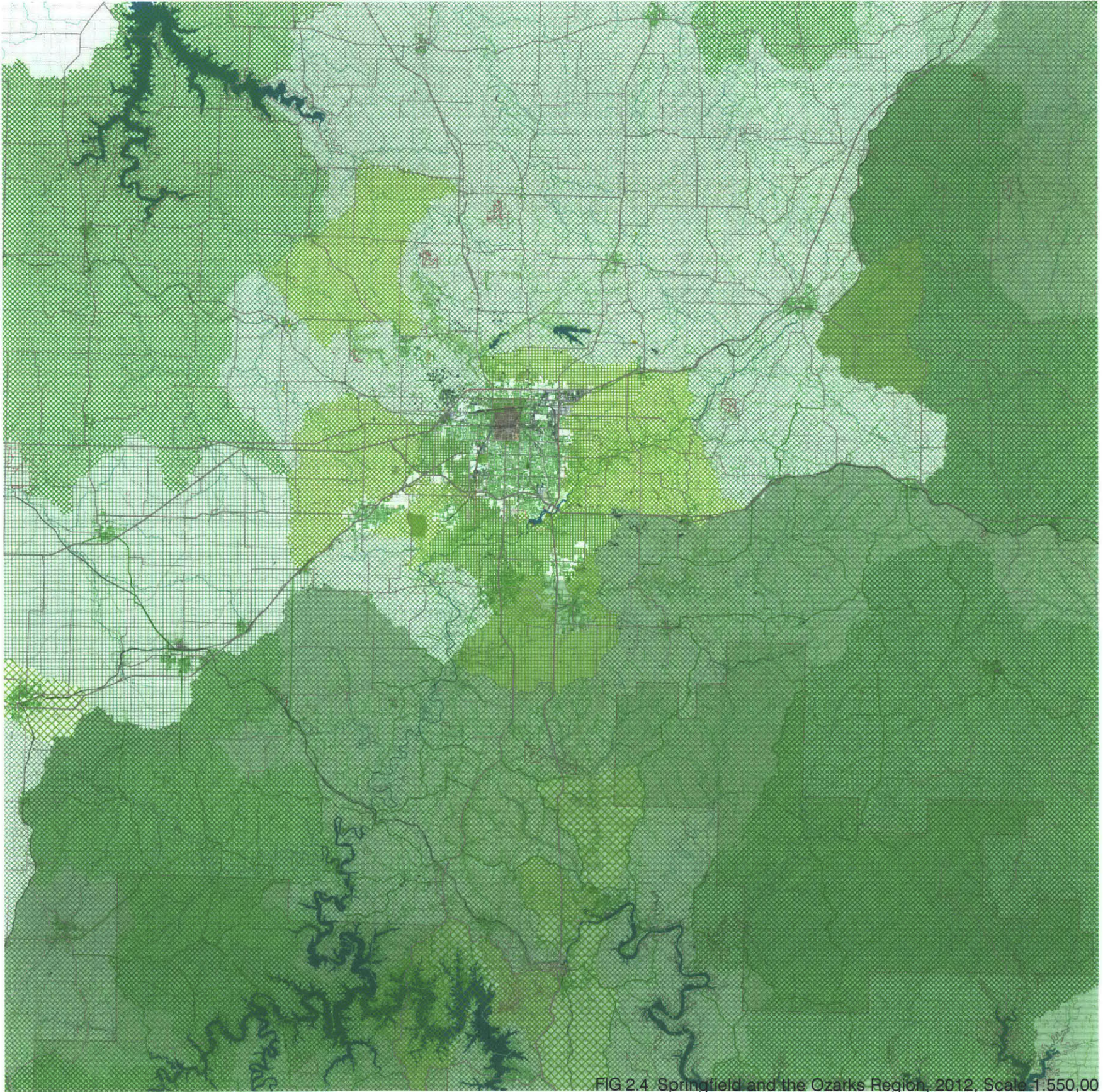
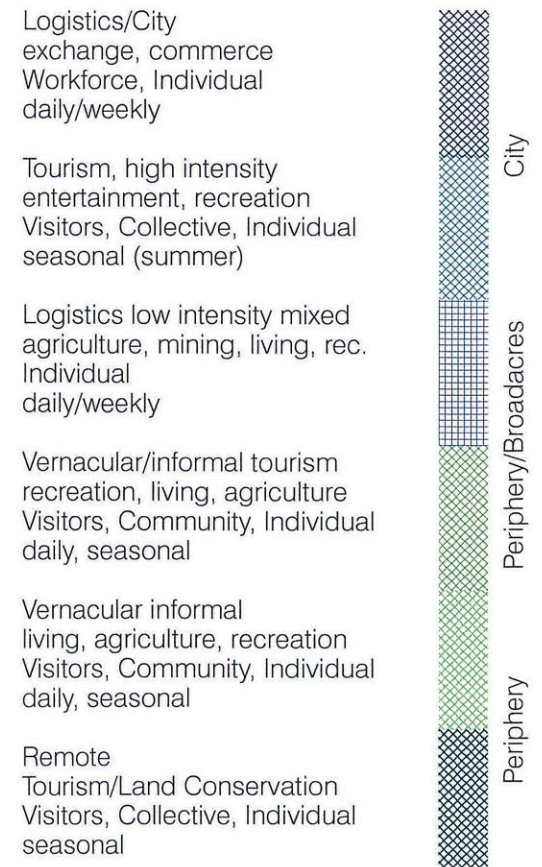


FIG 2.4 Springfield and the Ozarks Region, 2012, Scale 1:550,00

2012 The Ozarks, Regional Use, Function, and Economy FIG 2.5

The region is currently a mix of logistics, tourism, agriculture, cities, and small towns. The adjacent drawing shows broadly how these activities are dispersed, the intensity and formality of their activity. In general the hills have transitioned their vernacular culture to a tourism and recreation economy, or have remained agrarian, while the towns which have maintained economic vitality are located along primary highways. Economic Statistics of the Region:



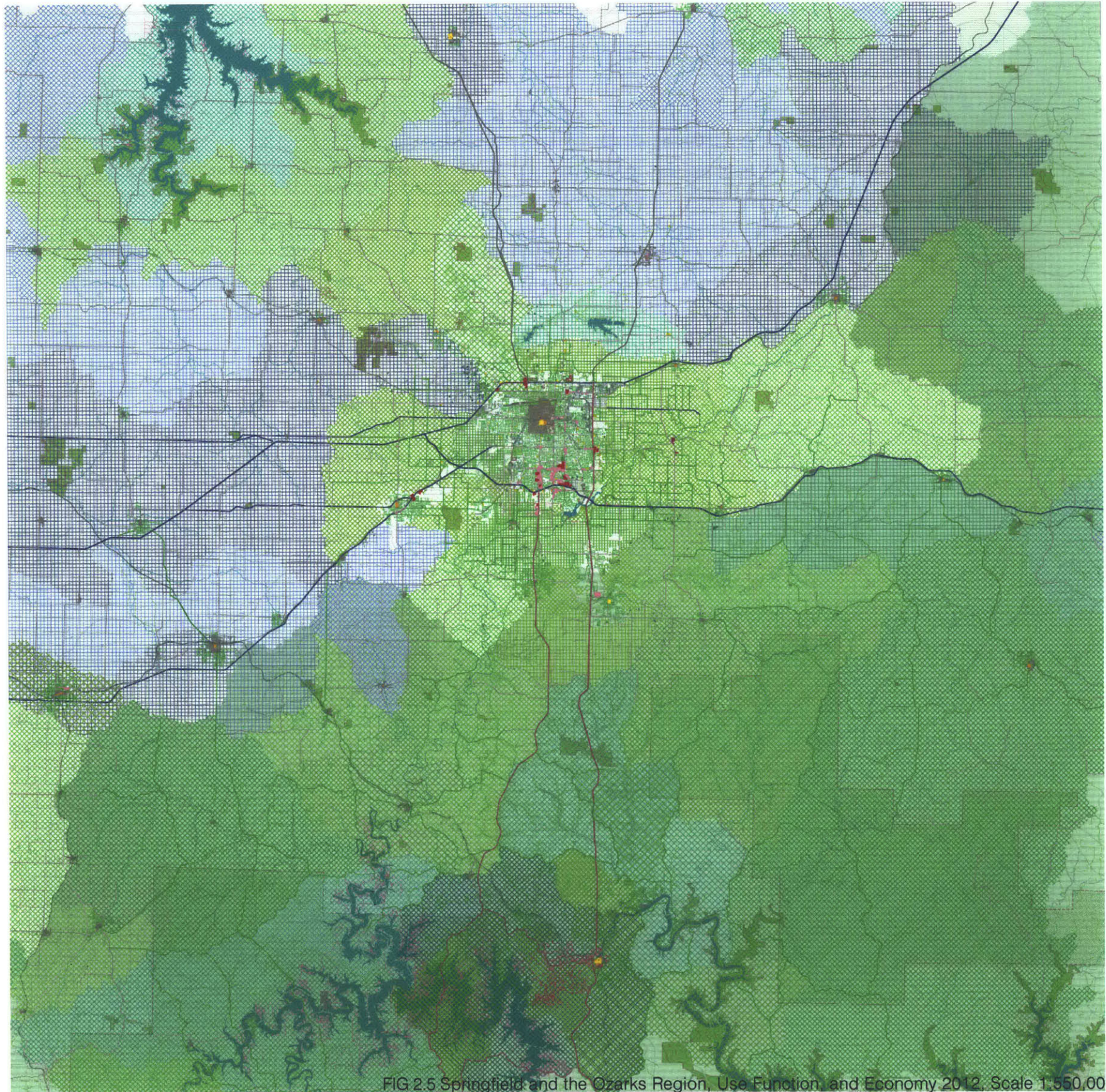


FIG 2.5 Springfield and the Ozarks Region, Use Function, and Economy 2012, Scale 1:550,00

Those who have traveled by air across the American West have undoubtedly noticed the rectangular pattern inscribed across the land, expanding and contracting over city and countryside. At first glance, the pixilation appears abstract and surreal—a massive geographic canvas imposed with abstract rectilinear forms. Intersected by the flowing lines of rivers, mountains, and highways, the pattern emerges more clearly the farther one travels west. In 1937 Gertrude Stein described, this view with fitting candor as, “quarter sections that make a picture and going over America like that made anyone know why the post-cubist painting was what it was.”¹⁷ Art, and ideal, practicality and force, these qualities describe the rectangular grid survey blanketing the United States, defining physical boundaries and cultural ethic, it reveals itself most clearly from the air, from the aerial perspective afforded by our ever advancing technology. Orthogonal human traces are everywhere, contrasting the fluid natural forms, their juxtaposition visually indicates the willful struggle between humans and the environment. In Springfield such tensions are revealed in the boundaries between nature and physical construction: the dams and mega-lakes along the White River, the herculean blasts of mountain passages along the highways, the triumphant spans of bridges and repetitive grid of farm roads and small towns across the ridges and plateaus. The expanded view introduces us to the broad process of the American landscape, particularly the American west and mid-west.

The urbanization of the American west has been theorized as many things, from spontaneous utopia, to a more pragmatic explanation as an economic urban phenomenon of interdependence between country and city.¹⁸ Both offer their own lasting cultural truths, and have been facilitated by stages of infrastructure, economy, and policy, beginning with the Land Ordinance of 1785, continuing with railroads, highways, power lines, and dams. By 1890 the basic matrix of towns and cities in the United States had been cast and by 1970 of the urban areas with pop. 200,000 or more, all but one had not been founded by 1890.¹⁹ This pattern is clearly exhibited in Springfield and the Ozarks Region, with few exceptions (mostly the Southern lakes, which were formed in 1970's, prompting town settlement that previously did not exist) the network of small towns emerged from 1830-1890.

Viewed within landscape theory, we are observing a process of hybridization of, described by JB Jackson as two landscape types, the vernacular and the renaissance, that have produced a third American landscape.²⁰ The vernacular, based on mobility, movement, and overlapping territories that engage the land and lack a totalizing government or infrastructure; the renaissance, preoccupied with drawing boundaries defining clear political jurisdiction and land ownership. The former views the entire landscape as a space of interaction, the latter draws distinction between town and periphery, marking defined limits of territory. The melding of the two is the establishment of “permanent forms and spaces in the community”, such as property or infrastructure, however, it is the vernacular that usually determines how these forms and spaces are used. Jackson insists “what gives the vernacular way of life its vitality and persistence is its ability to adjust to circumstances, to external factors beyond its control, provided somewhere in the environment there is some institution identified with permanence and long range purpose.”²¹ Most of the history of the Ozarks region is that of hybridization, the insertion of permanence into localized uses of space.

17 Alexander Linklater, *Measuring America* (New York: Walker & Co., 2002) 15.

18 In *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1921), Frederick Jackson Turner theorized the West as a spontaneous Frontier Utopia, a concept which has been criticized and largely disproven by modern urban and landscape theorists. In particular, John Reps in *The Making of Urban America*, and Bill Hubbard in *American Boundaries*.

19 John Reps, *The Making of Urban America*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 20.

20 JB Jackson, *Discovering The Vernacular Landscape* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 148-153.

21 JB Jackson, “Urban: Circumstances,” *Design Quarterly* (128: 1985), 8-10.

The landscape of Springfield persists on this very duality, and in part 3 “Paths” a tour of the landscape illustrates firsthand the hybrid condition of permanence and flexibility, which has taken the fragments of prior ways of living and settlement form and reorganized them into the new spaces of a metropolitan fabric. Infrastructure and City/county sovereignty generate permanence, along with social institutions of church, school, and family, marking points among the landscape—the wilderness provides ritual space, daily living environments, and agricultural economy, and people organize their activities around their preferences of each.

For the past 200 years the core of reinvention in Springfield and the region has been the negotiation of the thin veil of modernity (infrastructure) which in the absence of fast growth or high density has melded modern conditions with wilderness, generating habitats and interactions particular to the time and the place. As outlined in the Prologue, the limits of the terrain have historically influenced the speed and type of the regions transformation, allowing the land to remain open and sparsely settled, embedding the cultural pattern of a sophisticated wilderness, that has gradually if not disparately, accepted the 20th century. These living environments offer a way of relating a present condition with larger transformation of the landscape, linking macro effects of infrastructure and economy with a way of life and evolution of the regions imageability, physical structure, and time orientation.²²

Springfield in its current form is a sort of “wilderness metropolis” where the activities of modern life unfold amidst space which is more open ended, less confined, dominated by the presence of expanse more than the sense of enclosure—for it has yet to overpower the land as its coastal counterparts have—therefore the wilderness so to speak has by economic default, because of increased mobility and infrastructure and slow regional growth, been incorporated into the metropolitan fabric, generating a partial permutation of the city that is “everywhere and nowhere,” part the product of a democratic structure of ideal agrarian townships, part infrastructure and resource driven industrial towns, part resembling a migratory vernacular culture centered around ritual and territory.

While the land and the concept of the wilderness has assumed the meaning of both economic commodity and opportunity it has continued, as conveyed in the discussion around pastoralism, to hold a particular mystique and mythology throughout American history. In the United States the wilderness has offered a “real” utopia that has been a constantly evolving image and space of desire. The symbolism of the wilderness, the pastoral tradition in America, has had the unique privilege or ability to graduate from imaginary to possible reality. Marx argues that the “image of the unspoiled landscape in America allowed the idea of it as a promised land to be taken seriously”, projecting an immense burden of hope onto the land and eliciting “new descriptions of space where the sublime emerges”.²³

Much of the urban evolution of the United States has been captured within this blurry space, between imaginary and real, prompting a lineage of spatial ideas and forms that have re-ordered meaning within the landscape.²⁴ The process of urban growth itself has been an ongoing exchange between optimism, disenchantment, and a constant search for reinvention. Urban visions have presented collective images of ideal space, but have also captivated the public with the creation of an ideal figure that inhabits a re-visioned reality. These figures are conceived as heroes embodying a new way of life, achieving versions of reconciliation or

²² Imageability is a Term used by Kevin Lynch in *The Image of the City*. He also speaks specifically of time Orientation in *What Time is This Place?* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1976), ch. 3, exploring concepts of packaging time, as seasonal, daily or yearly, as sensory perception, or as near and distant pasts.

²³ Marx, *The Machine in the Garden*, 91,74.

²⁴ Marx himself begins the Machine and the Garden using suburbanization as an example of sentimental pastoralism.

escape from reality. From Jefferson's Husbandman, to Emerson's young American radical or Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian, and more recently the new urban and everyday citizens have inhabited spaces within an adapted mode of a pastoral design to achieve personal balance and rejuvenation.

This chapter explores infrastructure and the physical transformation of the land in association with a deeper set of cultural values, which has also influenced the field of urban design and city planning.

Each of these visions acknowledges that the once ideal wilderness has transcended the singular aspect of its natural beauty, and attempts to reposition the American dream—or reinvent it amongst the new landscape, in response to transitioning ways of life prompted by shifts in mobility and infrastructure, that have restructured the time and scale of space.

- (1) **Survey Grid and Townships:** *Thomas Jefferson, the Middle Landscape, and the Husbandman* discusses the early period of American pastoralism and the utopian vision of Thomas Jefferson's ideal wilderness is the cultivated middle landscape of green gardens, free from the political turmoil and industrial servitude of the "continent" anchored by towns which exemplify new democracy of civic engagement, self sufficiency, and community.
- (2) **Railroads and Ozarks Transcendentalism:** *Wilderness, Suburbs, and Industrialization*, examines the early transition of small American towns from independent to co-dependent commuter suburbs, a process occurring in larger American cities between 1830-1900, but in the Ozarks remains ongoing. Transcendentalism offers a theoretical context for discussing the reverence for the wilderness which permeates the Ozarks culture.
- (3) **Highways and Broadacre City:** *The Dispersed Middle Landscape* Frank Lloyd Wright's vision of the dispersed city returns to a Jeffersonian ideal of the land, and predicted the outcome of the modern city and ideals rooted in personal space, home ownership, and community.
- (4) **Logistics Landscape and Terrain Vague:** *Infrastructure, Modernity, and Industrial Process* Considers the applicability of Landscape Urbanism its view of the modern city as an ongoing historical, industrial, and economic process.

Survey Grid and Townships: Thomas Jefferson, the Middle Landscape, and the Husbandman

Thomas Jefferson offers a historic beginning, but is equally compelling in that his body of theory and policy, as well as his own individual life embodies the essence of the American pastoral theme. Jefferson's Ideal wilderness is a portrait of early Virginia—one of unspoiled beauty, civilized cultivation and land ownership, inhabited by the husbandman whose vitality is drawn from self sufficiency and beauty of the land which offers a simple life sheltered from the conflicts of political power. The transformative mechanism here is the possibility of land ownership in the new country, as well as the seemingly endless amount of land to be settled, and the physical detachment from the European history and political turmoil. The human struggle within these ideals towards the wilderness is perhaps most evident in Jefferson himself, who ultimately acknowledges the inability to achieve this version utopia, but refuses to concede defeat to reality, constantly seeking an ever-changing middle ground. His desire to fulfill the vision of the husbandman is only matched by his desire to engage in society and to resolve the inequities of reality. Thus over the course of his life Jefferson's own ideals are constantly being revised to adapt to the growing need for economic independence from Europe and the urban form industrialization brought alongside the agrarian life on the land. Herein we find the ambition and ideal which propels this study and what I propose is the ongoing transformation of the American town:

"The controlling principle of Jefferson's politics is not to be found in any fixed image of society. Rather it is dialectical. It lies in his recognition of the constant need to redefine the middle landscape ideal, pushing it ahead in an unknown future to adjust it to ever-changing circumstances."

-Leo Marx, The Machine in the Garden

The majestic survey grid of the Land Ordinance of 1785 itself is a microcosm of Jefferson's conflict, the spatial capitulation of the tension between idealism (property/happiness) and reality (real estate/profit). The need for the survey was prompted by the stark reality of post-Revolution debt and a nation which possessed little in the form of real currency, but did possess access to and ownership of "unsettled" land.²⁵ For Jefferson this was a practical need which could be solved both pragmatically and with the strong guidance of rational principles manifested within a social and spatial ideal. The land survey was both a massive endeavor of land apportionment and sales, driven by the urgency of monetary needs, but it was also the implementation of an ideologically motivated spatial net, driven by the intent to be fair and to create a self propelling system which would not favor anyone in particular^{1,26} Jefferson conceived a plan surveying the country into 1 mile squares, grouped into 6 mile townships—a home, for the husbandman and civic democracy—that could be distributed non-hieratically according to divisions of latitude, thus un-manipulatable to the interests of anyone".²⁷ However, impressive, Jefferson's own ideological projection into the plan has not been the common reading, but it has persisted as an enduring mark of what JB Jackson describes as the last epoch of renaissance planning invoking clear boundaries and political power, that established a nearly immutable structure of towns and property ownership that continue to persist.²⁸ In this regard the grid has undoubtedly left an indelible mark on the American landscape—the metaphysical imprint of Jefferson's utopian ideal and the unreal-

²⁵ I say "unsettled" in quotations because it is well known and accepted that the Americans were highly unjust in their treatment of native Americans. The scope of this topic is another project within itself.

²⁶ Bill Hubbard, *American Boundaries* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009)

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*, 153.

ized nation of the husbandman.

Jefferson's ideal wilderness instead became a negotiation between the reality of economics, human desire, and the enduring symbolism of the wilderness and the undeveloped land. The American west was not driven purely by an image of land which fulfilled a desire for happiness or self sufficiency, but by the opportunity that the wilderness represented.²⁹ The pattern that emerges from an early date is one of economic hierarchy and co-dependence between city and country galvanized by the location of connective infrastructure—the city a place of concentration and exchange, the land ranging in function as a source of personal vitality and self sufficiency, to farming for economic profit and larger scale the exploitation of natural resources producing economic vitality. The specificity of the land in this manor regardless of the neutrality of the grid, has imposed limits, spurred and hindered growth, generating nuance in both culture and city form.

In the Ozarks a range of these ideals exists, but peculiarly and in relation to the plateaus and hills. Because of relative infrastructural isolation until the 1930's the region cultivated an attitude of self-sufficiency for much longer than other areas, which in some parts continues.

So the transformation of the wilderness from the outset has been reciprocal, an ongoing process between human actions, and environmental specificity. The property structure of the grid and political autonomy of townships has provided a global structure and long range purpose in combination with the human ability to adjust to circumstance and external factors beyond its control producing locality and a vernacular culture—one might argue that the emergence of vernacular culture becomes an ad-hoc middle ground, encapsulated by a definition of landscape itself that is “not a static utopia dedicated to ecological or social or religious principles, but [as] an environment where permanence and change have struck a balance.”³⁰

²⁹ This observation is made by a variety of sources, including Alexis de Toqville, *Democracy in America*, Leo Marx, John Reys, JB Jackson, John Stilgoe, and Bill Hubbard
³⁰ Jackson. *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*, 148.

Railroads and Ozarks Transcendentalism: Wilderness, Suburbs, and Industrialization

The Young American Radical:

"they are lonely..they shun general society; they incline to shut themselves in their chamber in the house, to live in the country rather than in the town, and to find their tasks and amusements in solitude."³¹

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

Traits of Ozarks natives, still true today:

- (1) *Suspicious: reserved and cautious with strangers or a new idea*
 - *Matched by openness and generosity towards friends or strangers in need*

- (2) *Independent: to rely too much on others is to be in debt*
 - *Being neighbor means more than proximity, helping at harvest etc*
 - *Being part of a community is a joy and a pride to participate*

- (3) *cherishing solitude and right to be alone*
 - *Can still hear neighbor's ax over the ridgeline*
 - *Seize opportunities to see friends and for social activity, "loneliness is hurtful; companionship refreshing."³²*

-Robert Flanders

The widespread advent of the railroad in the mid 1800's (1881 in Springfield region), and the landscape of small civic towns begins an economic restructuring process. Concurrently there is an attempt to reconcile city and country, machine and nature throughout American culture. During the 1830's Emerson's image of the young American radical becomes the rearticulating of the modern husbandman who seeks a middle ground between nature and machine, resolving that the city is for understanding and nature for reason. As stated by Emerson in *Nature*:

"The city delights the understanding. It is made up of finites; short, sharp, mathematical lines, all calculable. It is full of varieties, of successions, of contrivances. The country, on the contrary, offers an unbroken horizon, the monotony of an endless road, of vast uniform plains, of distant mountains...the objects on the road are few and worthless, the eye is invited ever to the horizon and the clouds. It is the School of Reason."³³

³¹ Emerson, "The Transcendentalist," in *Nature, Addresses, and Lectures*, 208.

³² Robert Flanders Introduction, *Ozarks Baptizings, Hangings, and Other Diversions*, xxi.

³³ Emerson, *Nature, Addresses, and Lecture*, 10.

Emerson was in part responding to the suburbanization of Concord, the loss of the true wilderness, not unlike the process that is occurring much later and much slower in the Ozarks. Emerson does not draw a plan but outlines a suburban concept for living that incorporates the idea of commuting, surmising that the best of both worlds is advisable with neither too much city nor too much country, but a healthy balance of each.³⁴ Although the wilderness offers an essential “tonic” the conflict between utopia and reality is resolved by celebrating the psychological power of the human; The universal soul who cannot be confined to time or place, and must engage in the reality of everyday things, “the meal in the firkin; the milk in the pan; the ballad in the street. . . . endless litanies of unsung, everyday events that stand ready to be converted into metaphors for the poet’s truth.”³⁵

Henry David Thoreau is often cited as the exemplary representative of the new radical generation—he not only writes about the utopia of a simple life in the woods removed from society, but he lives his own experiment for two years at Walden Pond. His audacity positions Thoreau within the pastoral design, taking a literary idea and attempting to translate it into reality by living the ideal itself. The sheer possibility of the experiment embodies a specifically American pastoralism, where the blurry line between reality and fantasy is able to be crossed. Ultimately Thoreau is confronted with the realization that he cannot escape society in earnest, not as long as the rumbling of the railroad is near, or the knowledge that civilization lies a short 20 minutes away. And he cannot deny his own craving for civilization, even amidst pristine nature one cannot escape reality, but only seek rejuvenation. Thoreau’s conclusion is similar to Emerson, finding that “meaning and value do not reside in natural fact or in social institutions, but in consciousness.”³⁶

During a similar but more extended time period 1830s-1930, the values of the everyday, of humor to be found in the common plight, in the magic that is offered by both by nature and dreams from afar was been uniquely entrenched within Ozark culture. Unlike the world of Emerson and Thoreau (because of its relative isolation, and moderate natural resources) the transformation of time and scale brought by infrastructure and industry occurred later and more gradually. Historian Robert Flanders describes the period between 1885-1910 as gradual transformation and exuberant coexistence between old and modern, when much of the new technology and infrastructure of modernity moved in, but the old ways, the old farms, roads and buildings and people were not overwhelmed at once.³⁷ The exuberant coexistence sounds much like a description of Emerson’s Concord. Contrary to the stereotype of backwardness in the region, Flanders argues that the Ozarks was as aware of modern issue as the rest of the nation. The Ozarks shared America’s hopes dreams and concerns, alongside the vernacular ways of life in the hills, where spatial isolation due to poor roads and undeveloped infrastructure compelled the inhabitants to be inventive with their cultural pastimes.

Customs such as the papering of interior walls of cabins with images from magazines and newspapers allowed for interest and entertainment on rainy days, “by moving the lamp or carrying a lighted pin splinter around the room the beholder could travel in dreams beyond the mountains to another world. No story was ever complete. The end, the middle or the be-

34 Robert Gross. “Transcendentalism and Urbanism: Concord, Boston, and the Wider World.” (*Journal of American Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (Dec., 1984)

35 Wesley Mott. “From Natural Religion to Transcendentalism: An Edition of Emerson’s Sermon No. 43.” *Studies in the American Renaissance* (Vol. ii, 1985)

36 Thoreau with the encouragement of Emerson engages the pastoral design in a completely American way—he not only discusses nature as a utopia, but actually lives it for two years, attempting to experience the values he preaches. Marx, *The Machine and the Garden*, 266.

37 Flanders, *Ozarks Baptizings, Hangings, and Other Diversions*, xiv.

ginning had to be filled in by the imagination of the reader or its incompleteness ignored."³⁸ Other social events familiar amongst American towns included a range of activities in relation to work: barn raisings, apple peelings, corn husking, and log rollings. Others such as Friday night literaries exhibit the adaptation of civil culture amidst a remote wilderness, where a thin veil of modernity allowed small doses of globalism to be infused into vernacular society.

Conclusions from literaries included issues about personal matters between neighbors, to matters of religion and God, "Resolved: That nature proves the existence of God more conclusively than does the Bible."³⁹ It is this last resolution which best alludes to the enduring tradition of the hills, especially amongst Ozark natives: a regard for the land as a refuge and a source of important values.⁴⁰ The wilderness for some continues to be as a sacred space of spiritual vitality, a resource for subsistence, and a cultural activity. Although we will continue to encounter variations of this reverie, sentimental and complex, ideal and realistic, remarkably amongst the periphery and the hills, the deep respect for the land and the desire for self-sufficiency has remained with some exceptions, intact. In the contemporary metropolis this reverence is challenged by mining and logging which continue minimally in the region, and in urban concentrations economically thriving on vernacular tourism and the commoditization of natural beauty. The former is difficult to contend with in the face of the need for economic adaptation, the later has begun to oscillate between a continuation of reverent appreciation and the sale of scenic views.

The Ozark Transcendentalist

As the introductory quote from Robert Flanders tells, in the Ozarks there is a peculiar vernacular transcendentalist, who lives in the country and rarely travels to town, who in fact shuns the town for the fact that despite a desire for complete self sufficiency, the economic system is such that he cannot avoid the merchant who must sell his goods. Since the 1830's the Ozarks have been structured by small towns filled in between by a periphery of remote farmsteads, unincorporated settlements, and hill people who live in the hollows and river bottoms "separated from the city physically, spiritually, and economically."⁴¹ In 1890 less than 19% of the population lived in incorporated towns, and if Springfield is excluded then this ratio drops to 9%.⁴² Presently these small towns and people who live in-between have become part of a metropolitan fabric enabled by road infrastructure, particularly within the orbit of Springfield these quasi-rural borderlands have become the new metropolitan fabric of the city.

Springfield however, differs from a typical city country relationship in an important way. The low population density and existence of cheap open land has allowed the region to avoid what is a major critique of Emerson's suburban middle ground, the conundrum of the Borderlands, as historian as John Stilgoe has written, is that the desire for the country is wrought with the duality of pastoralism. The stipulation of a country life that is civilized often precludes a certain lower class of people and the fact that many in the working class cannot afford to travel or move outside of the city into a bucolic setting. Similarly the urges of city planning during the city beautiful movement are accosted by this paradox—the beauty they seek as healing and uplifting in higher density situations becomes an exclusionary act.

In Springfield we find pristine gardens and the haphazard co-mingling of bucolic fields and with deteriorating sheds and trailers. We can be sure that nature does not necessarily grant moral virtue that is the choice and preference of the person and the device of reality, how-

³⁸ Ibid, 24.

³⁹ Ibid, 32.

⁴⁰ Kevin McNiel. *Ozark Country* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1995), 20.

⁴¹ Flanders, *Ozarks Baptizings, and Hangings*, 10.

⁴² Ibid, 10.

ever, what exists and remains in Springfield is at the very least access. A more equitable nature, in that it is not a delight only for those who can travel to the periphery, but it exists throughout the interior of the city, its immediate borders and the now metropolitan periphery, obliterating the boundary between the traditional separation between city and country. The generally unspoiled terrain continues to resemble some iteration of the Jeffersonian ideal, Emerson's balanced doses of city and country, or later the city that is nowhere except everywhere projected by Frank Lloyd Wright.

Springfield does not offer the thrill of a large cosmopolitan city, but for the same reasons possesses an equitable wilderness that shares the reality of income disparities and poverty. Springfield's present middle ground then is something of a bittersweet tour of the American dream—always mostly but never completely realized. Even omnipresent beauty and nature cannot completely erase the contrast between wealth and of poverty or suffice for city life, and yet maybe this is its most poetic moment, where the natural material softens the blow imparting its own vitality amidst imperfection. Melville maybe best sums up the inability of the romantic pastoral ideal to suffice for reality and attacks the mistake of projecting fantasy on the universe, "it is dangerous to put too much trust into nature—the image of green fields is meaningful but only as far as it is joined to the opposite."⁴³ Springfield in many ways is an American middle ground.

Highways and Broadacre City: *The Dispersed Middle Landscape*

"The future awakened civilians of Usonia will be naturally modern; or else all be failures, because life itself is a changing insistence upon modernity! Life is always modern."⁴⁴

-Frank Lloyd Wright

Sixty years later Frank Lloyd Wright fuses Jeffersonian association of democracy with land and the transcendental state of being in the spatial proposition of Broadacre City, populated by an incarnation of the Shepherd, Husbandman, and young American, the Usonian, who is perpetually modern.

Whereas Jefferson's vision was enabled by the revolutionary concept of land ownership for all, Emerson's reconciliation of city and country re-purposed the railroad and industrialization to create a suburban way of life that re-affirmed the power of the wilderness as both a place and a state of mind, 100 years later Frank Lloyd Wright in response to the scale altering affects of technology proposes a new model of city, Broadacres in the ideal nation of Usonia (an analogy for the United States). He like Emerson and Jefferson grapples with an internal conflict between the desire for the civilized culture offered by the city and the purity and simplicity offered by the land. Broadacres is his proposal for a new middle landscape, recognizing that "most people in the city were oppressed, and sought a solution by searching for new dial of city, not abandoning it."⁴⁵ ⁴⁶ Wright's mechanisms of transformation are technology and infrastructure, offering mobility which he deemed one of the leading factors of modernity. Particularly the automobile, which he sees as empowering, rather than enslaving machine

⁴³ Marx, *The Machine in the Garden*, 313. Taken from Melville's correspondence with Nathaniel Hawthorne on the topic of Goethe and European romantics.

⁴⁴ Frank Lloyd Wright, *The Living City*, 105.

⁴⁵ Lionel March, *The Phoenix Papers* (Arizona State University Press, 1995)

⁴⁶ The content of this observation is also in parallel with the emergence of city planning and the city beautiful movement which Wright detested—I explore Wright more thoroughly because his vision is more applicable and prescient of the type of city Springfield has become

of the 19th century, as well as the availability of energy delivered by the expanded electric grid, the emergence of refrigeration and communication technologies allowed this vision to be imaginably attained.⁴⁷ Technology set against the primal desires satisfied by the beauty and availability of the land for Wright, offered tremendous hope and possibility.

"We can go forward with all that science has provided us, going forward intelligently to the new free forms which must be made for the accommodation of life so that is may live more generously, more spaciously and more fully, we shall be dealing--practically--with the problem now on our hands...Broadacre city is the country itself come alive as a truly great city."⁴⁸

Rather than the thickening of the city spurred by industrialization, these new technologies enabled dispersal or as Wright coined in the 1920's "the disappearing of the city." He predicted a poly-centered city where congestion was eliminated, where access to goods and services would never be more than 10 minutes away, the "city that is nowhere unless everywhere."⁴⁹

Like Jefferson, Wright places vitality and happiness in self sufficiency, and democracy (trust in government) by providing a living for oneself. He believes in the land as the fundamental right of democracy, of America, and promotes respect between building and land, proposing the terrain as a never ending source of natural variety and delight. He promotes a theory of organic architecture for the great new society that guided by the skilled architect will respond to the materials and technology of the times.

The contemporary form of the American city (Springfield included) attests to Wright's prescience in anticipating the downfall of the old city brought by the modernization of infrastructure and ultimately economy.⁵⁰ Although the orderly utopian imagery Wright presents at first glance obscures his foresight as a failure, (the impossibility of achieving architecture perfection has proved unrealistic), what Wright saw and understood was some part of a deeper American desire echoing back to Jefferson's husbandman, and the young radical, for land, for simplicity, for escape from the evils of the congested city.

While there is much we can critique for being narrow in Broadacres: the empowered master architect, ineffective infrastructure costs, separated land uses, placelessness and the pastoral yearning for an unattainable simpler time, there remains important conceptual and spatial principles directed towards the concept of a middle landscape and the ideal relationship between city and wilderness. Max Underwood outlines Wright's legacy in five points: (1) not a city but a concept; (2) Insight through exaggerated analysis; (3) The city is a process in permanent transition, not a form; (4) The transitional landscape is a void of opportunity and control (empty space is a departure for regeneration); (5) multiple relationships and nested infrastructures.⁵¹

Springfield has much in common with Wright's vision, not only the open land, but for greater democracy through of civic engagement, self reliance, and familial desires within the community that appears to drive many of the inhabitants.⁵² Unlike Sunbelt cities such as Phoenix,

47 Thomas Hughes, *Networks of Power: Electrification in Western Society, 1880-1930* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1993)

48 Frank Lloyd Wright. *The Living City*, 105.

49 Ibid.

50 Robert Fischman. "Megalopolis Unbound," 2.

51 "Five Legacies for the Contemporary City." *The Phoenix Papers*, 142.

52 Often the first response when describing Springfield was that, it's "a great place to raise a family."

which have been critiqued as “the wish for a personal backyard in the sunshine, a place not to grow vegetables for sale but just to sit and play.”⁵³ Springfield has been built around a different dream. One that is very real on the one hand, represented by working, familial joys and struggles, poverty, education, community, church, and dreams of far away places more sophisticated and cosmopolitan; on the other hand it is consumed in a wilderness of opportunity and beauty, land undeveloped, open space and the feeling of the city not being settled just yet—the symbolic void of constant transition and possibility which Wright sought to attain. Only in Springfield (to Wright’s dismay?) this has not been the result of highly structured planning, but a reflection of the market and the culture built piecemeal by millions of uncoordinated decisions made by government, citizens, and developers.⁵⁴ Herein lies Wright’s insight and shortcoming, he understood and internalized much of the American people’s desire, but his solution never graduated from sentimental to complex, and he did not propose a spatially implementable plan for its more orderly or beautiful direction.

Springfield is exemplary of an imperfect piecemeal growth process, achieving many of the spatial and economic desires Wright outlined for his Usonian: spacious outdoor gardens, the home as a modern sanctuary, the city that is a la cart, mobile freedom of the automobile, small local establishments that play to the slow incremental pace of the community. However, for each of these ideals there is a counterforce: land speculation and environmental insensitivity, lack of diversity and exclusion, social isolation, auto dependence that becomes mono-experiential and affects health, global commercialism enabled by hyper connectivity of highways and computing technology. Broadacres recognizes the power of technology to enhance the individual experience and control over their environment, it recognizes that the form of the city need not be limited to the compact model of the 19th century or a strict opposition between suburb, country, and town, that the city is the people, and it will go where they go.⁵⁵ He places the open land and road infrastructure as the ideal symbol of civilization and modernity, in place of dense city cores of sky scrapers which have come to represent power, and a finite notion of what is “urban”. Wright provides a way for us to view the validity of a city such as Springfield that is non-compact and motivated by desires tied to openness, choice, family, and small local scale. However, he does not provide us with a vision for a hybrid between concentration and dispersion, where the old city and the new can be joined.

Logistics Landscape and Terrain Vague: *Infrastructure, Modernity, and Industrial Process*

Throughout the recent literature of landscape and urbanism there is a desire to confront, understand, and theorize the relations between time, space, economy, infrastructure, modernity, and desires. This is a broad palette of topics, which strives to understand the realities of the urban process and frame it in fundamental relation to the land. While there is no determinate physical vision of a new utopia achieved there is a proposition for a new set of values in approaching urban design and cities that is founded on the deep understanding of historical and natural process. While the graphics suggest an avant-garde aesthetic reminiscent of modernism, throughout the text there is a sense of realism, of an urgent need to transcend the fixed visions of utopia and to embrace the chaos of the modern world, to harness and use it productively. Such desires resonate with Frank Lloyd Wright’s conceptual ideas for Broadacres which frame the city as a process. There are clear tones for seeking a middle landscape, for confronting a reality that constantly changes and demands new ideals. Even Jackson’s definition of landscape serves as a precursor to an ongoing interaction between

⁵³ John Sergeant. “Broadacre City: Looking Backwards 1991-1935” *The Phoenix Papers*, 123.

⁵⁴ Robert Fischman, “Megaopolis Unbound,” 4.

⁵⁵ Frank Lloyd Wright. *The Living City*, 82.

humans and the land, seeking a balance between permanence and change.

While there is not one concrete formal vision offered by landscape urbanists, the literature offers theory for understanding historical transformation of the city and the wilderness that are enlightening in the context of Springfield and explanatory within the pastoral frame.

Logistics Landscape

In "Logistics Landscape" Alan Berger and Charles Waldheim outline the form of the modern city and the social ramifications as the historical product of economy and infrastructure. The Industrial city which produced a concentration of wealth and migration of rural population to urban centers also produced an anonymity that has been associated with modern life in contrast to the social dynamics of small towns (this is the city Emerson and Wright responded to). The Post-Fordist city based on communication and education, and service economy has brought an era of competition between cities for population "not through industrial employment, but through the delivery of services, experience, and quality of life."⁵⁶ Berger and Waldheim argue that the contemporary urban response has been to produce reliable branding and stable city image, themed districts, and commoditized experience. Additionally a new emergent landscape, the nearly unrecognizable city form of logistics is outlined in three types: Distribution and Delivery, Consumption and Convenience, Accommodation and Disposal.

Throughout the industrial account of the new city, the notion of entropy and waste are provided as an inevitable product of growth, but in a pragmatic attitude towards utopia, entropy is considered for its possible opportunity and reinvention. The power of the void is maintained and associated with the land even in a less than bucolic state. Embedded in the social reading of the new post-industrial logistical city is the emergence of a new wilderness, one of waste, of spaces that are external to the everyday workings of society—the terrain vague, as termed by Ignasi de Sola Morales. Terrain Vague is described as spaces that possess a "relationship between absence of use, of activity, and the sense of freedom, of expectancy," imagery and desires that are essential to understanding an evocative new potential that has emerged as part of the modern city in recent years. Empty, unoccupied, yet also free available, unengaged, evoking the sense of intermediate, imprecise, blurred, uncertain.⁵⁷

Thus ruins and liminal space are projected as a new imaginative wilderness, circumscribing again the possibility of escape from reality (the bustle of a city) but here into spaces of non-traditional beauty, rehabilitating/repurposing the industrial image. This new image of desire is imparted by free roving through space, the possibility of escaping one's own "strangeness", or the alternative of possibility, utopia, and the future.⁵⁸ Within this space another mythical figure, the modern flaneur or sorts is conjured.⁵⁹ Instead of drifting between cafes and city streets, this new figure moves through milieu of old rail yards, abandoned lots, vacant industrial zones overrun with new ecosystems of grass and weeds, neighborhoods that are run down and ravaged from economic instability, whose age and form are engulfed in the foliage of trees and grass between paving. These images are infused with a new natural ideal in relation to human, industrial, and ecological process; they have become poetic much like the image of a the pasture or an open road through a field or the desert.

⁵⁶ Alan Berger and Charles Waldheim, "Logistics Landscape," *Landscape Journal* (Vol 27: February 2008), 219-246, 220.

⁵⁷ Ignasi de Sola Morales, "Terrain Vague" (Anyplace, 1995), 4.

⁵⁸ Morales, "Terrain Vague," 6.

⁵⁹ Lars Lerup describes this position in the Postscript of *Drossscape*. He also literally assumes this position in his exploration of the Middle Ground in *After the City*

In Springfield we will encounter a variety of terrain vagues, from the old industrial city of rail yards and empty space, to modest neighborhoods from industrial expansion that are over run with trees and broken asphalt, to the wide expansive lots of strip centers and their back roads. But we will also encounter terrain vague's utopian counterpart—the pastoral enclave engulfed within the city. Terrain vague offers a reading of the contemporary city as a new type of wilderness, one that maintains the psychological connection between desires for utopian escape, for removal from everyday life—a condition which may exist in the city as easily as it may be on its periphery.

Infrastructure and Modernity

Infrastructure as the bearer of process is fundamental within the process of urbanization and is responsible for creating the new wilderness, the new city, acting as the bearer of spatial and social modernity. As a physical object within city form it provides access, and collapses time and in turn the occupation of space. Paul Edwards discusses infrastructure's temporal role in relation to modernity as one that simultaneously shaped by and reshapes the conditions of modernity, "By linking macro, meso, and micro scales of time, space, and social organization, therefore the stable foundation of modern social worlds."⁶⁰ Thus, Infrastructure is a primary element of transformation and bearer of scale and time. In Springfield this will be a significant point—the modernization of its infrastructure, particularly highways and dams have occurred later in its growth which attribute to a slower economic pace and culture which has maintained "older" sets of values alongside modernity.

Within the rhetoric of utopia, reality, and middle ground infrastructure plays an essential role. Modernity which is usually associated with progress (and progress with utopia), delivers a multiplicity of meaning, ranging from an enhanced quality of life due to improved service and access. It has also provided the object of shifting notions of wilderness and city. As Emerson and Wright grapple with finding a balance between city and country afforded by new infrastructure that offers the possibility of both. It is the possibility of both which continues to drive much urban growth today, and has altered the physical landscape of Springfield.

Conceptually this is the relationship we have been tracing throughout—the recent contribution of landscape urbanism is to place the terms landscape and infrastructure as explicitly co-dependent, calling on the authority of early visionaries such as Frederick Law Olmsted who employed nature as both a utility and cultural device of beauty and social well-being. As society is heading into new phase of growth and development, the emerging field argues that it is imperative to, "redefine the conventional meaning of modern infrastructure by amplifying the biophysical landscape that it has historically suppressed, and to reformulate landscape as a sophisticated, instrumental system of essential resources, services, and agents that generate and support urban economies."⁶¹ In Springfield and the Ozark region the terrain, the plateaus and the hills have undoubtedly presented their own resistance and limits, directing the pace of growth in the region and distinctions in culture: plateaus of modernity, and hills of resilience.

⁶⁰ Paul Edwards. "Infrastructure and Modernity." In *Modernity and Technology* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003), 20.

⁶¹ Pierre Belanger. "Landscape as Infrastructure." *Landscape Journal* (28(1), pp. 79-95. 2009), .79.

3 Paths

Paths describes my field documentation (occurring for a month in January and a week in March), where I traversed and recorded (with photos and notes numerous paths to document the sensory and formal qualities of the city and region, in an attempt to discern vitality and function in terms not merely pragmatic, but terms also oriented to human perception, adaptation, and ultimately desire. Here I distinguish three identifiable scales and sensory qualities of the landscape: Wilderness 1 Terrain/infrastructure; Wilderness 2 Domestic Gardens; Wilderness 3 Strips/Squares (City)

The paths and field documentation provide an important link between academic research and place—engaging the matter of perceptual quality and human values the field research also provides a concrete foundation for understanding the contemporary sense, grain, texture, and space of Springfield. If a framework is to be developed that interprets the transformation of the ideal wilderness, it is necessary to document the wilderness of the present.

When you grow up in a city or a town, chances are that your world is limited or in close relation to your own daily activities—as Kevin Lynch describes this is a mental map or image of a place, and the frequency that we inhabit the space allows us to project varying degrees of meaning or association. My experience growing up was no different, and I admittedly know some parts of Springfield better than others. During January I was attempting to at least balance whatever bias I might have, exploring all areas of the city equally—this was an adventure in itself, in the process affirming to me, that for every complaint about an ugly parking lot, or big box store, there was a foil of equal intensity in the meandering fabric of the neighborhoods, a park, or a farm road. These excursions opened up the city to me in a way that I could not have anticipated, and the city and the region were reactivated from my academic knowledge and beyond the reserves of my own memories. The nuanced texture and the grain of the city became ever more apparent after drives walks and bike rides. Specifically I develop a body of observations describing the sensory qualities of space: terrain, massing, tectonic, human function, temporal activity; the modality of the path and quality of movement and sequence (inherent to the experience) and the formality of use are also touched on, as well as local perspectives and reactions. These qualities shape nuanced readings and scales of wilderness, drawing from the pastoral metaphor of escape(utopia), reality, and middle ground.

The documentation from the field analysis is presented here as text, photographs, and drawings, where I have attempted to reconstruct representative pieces of the metropolitan experience and describe the Wilderness of the present in relation to an ongoing transformation of ideals and desires enmeshed within the city. The outline of the chapter headings read doubly as a conceptual/analytical structure, sorting path observations into three scales informing the spatial analysis in part 4, Transformations. Each sub category is a reference to a spatial ideal related to the wilderness (some are new observations, but some are directly related—each title responds to the first differentiation of fabric types in the drawings which refer to meaning and order between city and country). The paths do not follow a strict historical time, rather at each scale parallels are drawn between the formal and sensory qualities being observed and the pastoral ideals and spatial systems discussed in Part 2. Inherent within each landscape are links to historic process and transformation.

Interpreting Wilderness *A Spatial and Cultural Reading*

Here the Wilderness is expanded as a bridging conceptual category that links identifiable sensory qualities of space (grain, texture, density) with cultural (collective function) and psychological meaning. These categories are a set of complex meanings and warrant a more detailed explanation which follows.

During January three broad qualities of wilderness became noticeable: (1) Pristine: well kept, orderly and inviting; (2) Saturated: sheltered, unrestrained, and elastic; (3) Liminal: empty, vast (overrun), and forgotten. The foil to these intense sensory environments is the generic, which unlike the multi-faceted wilderness fades into homogeneity and normalcy. Within these spaces Springfield resumes it's non-descript identity as a typical American

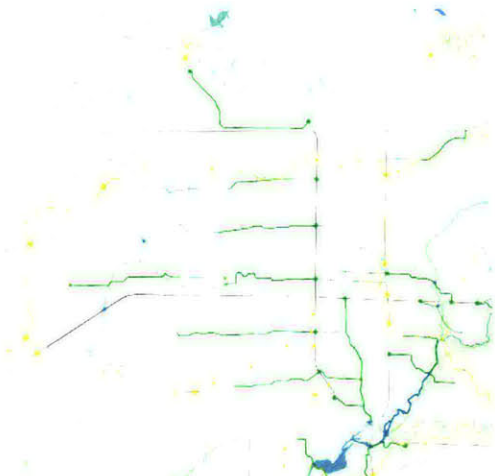


FIG 3.1 Wilderness 1: Terrain Roads, Infrastructure, and Natural Systems



FIG 3.2 Wilderness 2: Domestic Gardens

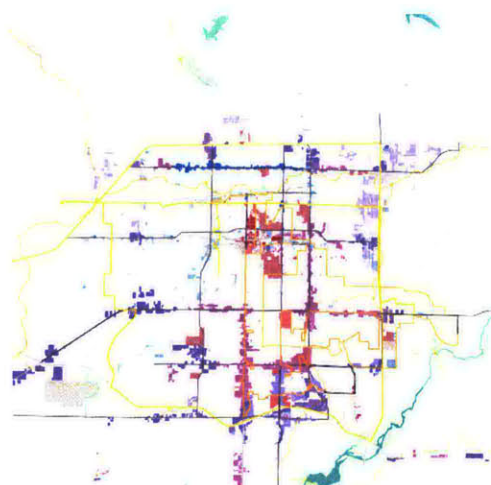


FIG 3.3 Wilderness 3: Strips/Squares (City)

WILDERNESS 1 Terrain/Infrastructure

Paradise and Opportunity *An Early Middle landscape*

Monuments + Drift *The Modern Metropolis*

Informal Vernaculars *Detours on Highway 65*

Squares *Ridges, Valleys, and the Elasticity of Time*

WILDERNESS 2 Domestic Gardens

Broadacres *The Pristine Orderly Countryside*

Saturation *Gardens of the Mid-Century*

Old City *The Ideal American Town*

Terrain Vague *Liminality*

Passageways *Civic Terrain, Borderlands, and Suburbs*

The Dominant Landscape

WILDERNESS 3 Strips/Squares (City)

Traversing the Strip Landscape *Elastic, Reformed, Forgotten*

Elastic/Generic *1955-1970's*

Old Peripheries, Sink Holes, and Buildings *Evidence of Process*

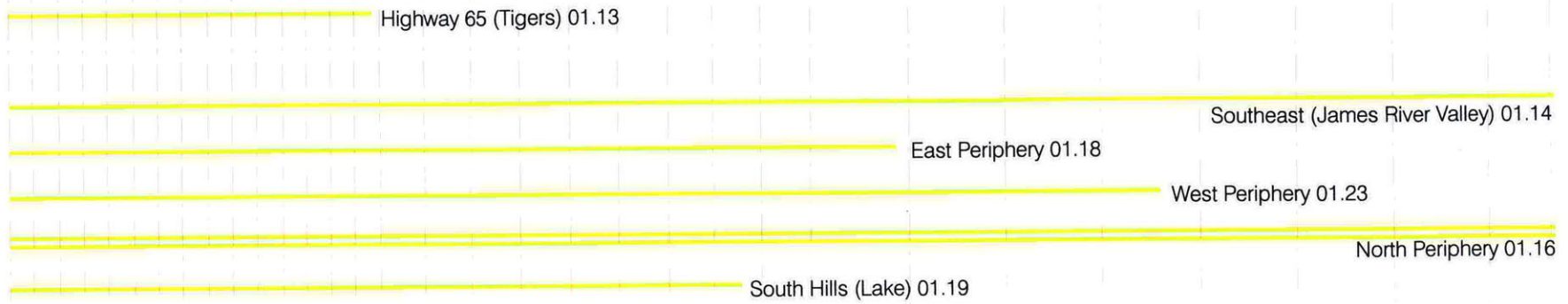
The Battlefield Mall *New City*

Strip Terrain *Fragments*

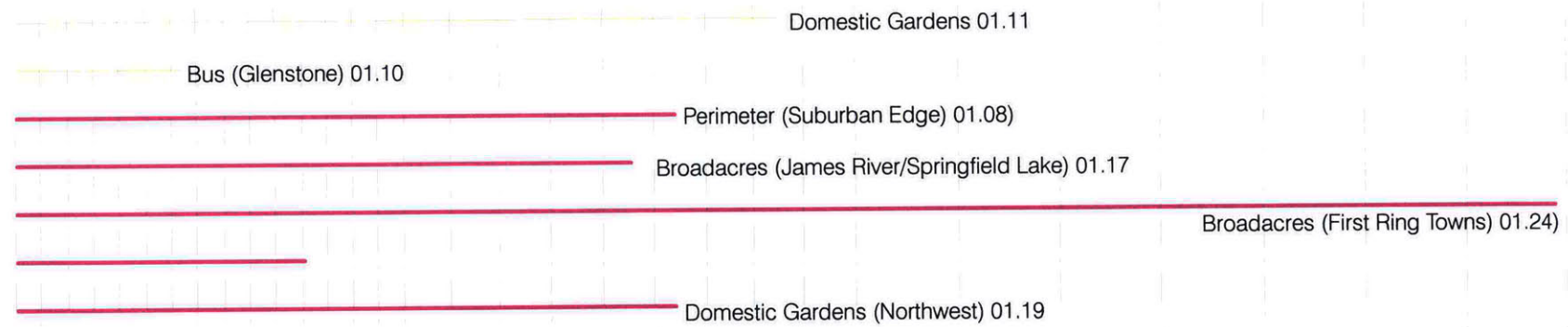
Each sub category is a reference to a spatial ideal related to the wilderness discussed in the prior chapter (some are new observations, but some are directly related—each title responds to the first differentiation of fabric types in the drawings which refer to meaning and order between city and country)



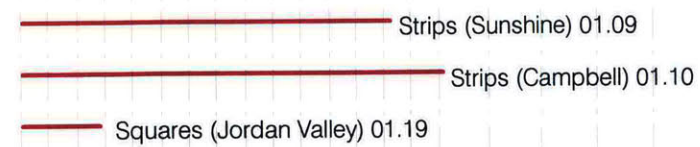
FIG. 3.4 Scale 1:550,000



Wilderness 1 Terrain/Infrastructure



Wilderness 2 Domestic Gardens



Wilderness 3 Strips/Squares (city)

1 miles 10 20 30

50 FIG 3.5 Path Mode and Scale

town bearing only a global DNA that is detached from the nuance of the terrain and the culture. The contrasting textures correspond to the specifically American pastoral scheme, where the imaginary graduates to possible reality and the wilderness doubles as both an escape and an attainable middle ground. To some extent we might say these correspond to the pastoral scheme, the Pristine is utopia/escape/difficult to attain, Saturated, a middle ground of attainability and opportunity, liminal the reality of the tension between everyday and modern life. However, the generic which presumably would represent reality cannot be so easily placed. Is the generic always near the pristine ever relegated to reality, or does its proximity to an ideal alter its meaning

Sense: Density and Grain

(1) Orderly, Well kept, and (bounded-defined) inviting; Pristine (land); Reformed (strips)

(2) Elastic, unrestrained, and sheltered; Saturated (land); Generic (strips)

(3) Empty, overrun, and removed. Liminal (land); Forgotten (strips)

The first term refers to a formal quality of space which relates to massing/ configuration/ organization and density

The second terms refers to the evidence of the human relation or control of the space, (maintenance) and the use it implies—

Third refers to a relationship between spatial quality/enclosure and relation to society/culture/ or city (sheltered is not removed but separated or shielded from chaos/reality this summarizes a relation to temporal activity.

The fourth term varies by fabric/wilderness type, and is specifically qualitative, a term which summarizes the prior outlined spatial qualities while encompassing a broader meaning in relation to the scale (of the wilderness category) perception of the form/space—it builds on a deeper cultural reading of form in relation to history, economics, and pastoralism. It also builds an observation of spatial dichotomy (with opposite meanings) for instance the elastic unrestrained land is described as saturated, whereas in the strip landscape it is a generic condition.

(1) Orderly/Well Kept/Inviting

-orderly: well ordered with defined edges and boundaries, which links it to a well cultivated human environment. In pastoral terms this is symbolic of the middle landscape of early American history well ordered, picturesque and ideal.¹ On the periphery this embodies a picturesque past that most Americans envision of the early republic; in the built environment this is transferred to populist architectural styles or the rehabilitation of an old town square.

-well kept describes the evidence of human care and maintenance which can be associated with a thriving environment, or an environment possessing human and/or economic vitality. The well kept landscape is also the ideal middle ground, between isolated wilderness and city—the ideal transformation of the middle ground into inhabited countryside (also a nearly unattainable goal, it it can be either a fixed immutable utopia or a void of possibility)

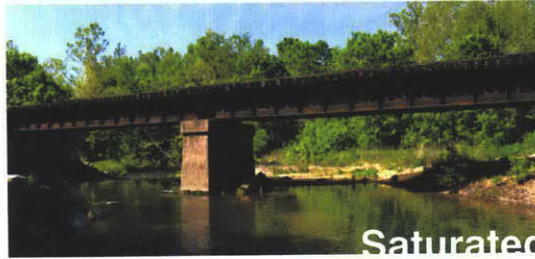
-inviting: the image that is comfortable, familiar, and inviting, its ideal beauty inviting the possibility of escape or a dream

FIG 3.6 Interpreting Wilderness shows a sampling of images that represent a diverse concept of wilderness.

¹ JB Jackson, *The Necessity of Ruins*, 117; Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden*, 6.



Pristine



Saturated



Liminal

Wilderness 1 Terrain/Infrastructure



Pristine



Generic



Saturated



Liminal

Wilderness 2 Domestic Gardens



Reformed



Rehabilitated



Elastic/Generic



Forgotten

Wilderness 3 Strips/Squares (city)

(2) Elastic/unrestrained/Sheltered

-elastic form has little visible order and because it does not have clearly defined boundaries takes on in part the qualities of a terrain vague “intermediate, imprecise, blurred, uncertain”—space that can be expanded or contracted. The resulting meaning of the space is more ambiguous and variable on the specific environment, the density of the terrain or the built form, its tectonic and so on.

-unrestrained, implies again the ambiguous relationship to human use and condition—there is not finite evidence of human care and interaction, therefore the line between city and country, reality and escape is blurred, producing a more nuanced middle landscape, a corollary to the pristine middle ground that is well ordered, the unrestrained landscape presents a middle-ground that is not ideal and orderly or conclusive of human perfection—it is a middle ground of reality rather than a middle ground of the picturesque ideal. This raw/generic middle ground embodies the bittersweet complexity of the American town, where the unrestrained land either tempers or offers itself freely, not as an ideally ordered space, but as a ubiquitous surface and density accessible to poor and rich, or just a mere by product incorporated into the generic city (example swales of strip malls).

-sheltered refers to a relationship with the city or society that is not detached or forgotten from view, but slightly apart—autonomous enough to read separately, but this is not necessarily *purely negative*, but rather the absence of limit “this almost oceanic sentiment, to use Freud’s expression, is precisely the message which contains the expectations of mobility, vagrant roving, free time, liberty.”²

These spaces are not linked to a past time per se, because they are not deteriorating, nor are they shiny and new, they tend to reside in the emotions of the near present (the middle ground)—comprising a momentary reprise from the reality everyday life.

(3) Overrun/empty/removed

-overrun describes the deteriorated quality of material and maintenance, which has either been left to the process of the landscape which grows rampantly and/or material decay. The limits, if there were any, are now being dissolved.

-empty space which is absent of habitation, here the void of possibility requires perhaps more imagination (in contrast to the optimism of the exterior void of pristine natural beauty), however, this does not preclude the promise of encounter or future re-appropriation.

-Removed describes another facet of the terrain vague concept, where a space is internal to the city, but external to its everyday use. “in these forgotten places, the memory of the past seems to predominate over the present...external places, strange places left outside the city’s effective circuits and productive structures.”³

There is an important concept of time here, one that bridges between the memory of a past, and the possibility of a future.

² Sola Morales, “*Terrain Vague*,” 5.

³ *Ibid*, 5.

**A brief note about how the images in each section are arranged. Wilderness 1 gives an overview by mile and road type and the subsequent narrative path is accompanied by selected miles of imagery. Each page width is the equivalent of a mile and the arrangement of images responds to time and mode of travel. For instance along the highway paths more images are included as there is more activity;*

Wilderness 2 Domestic Gardens, the residential paths are treated similarly, corresponding to the mode of travel (bike).

The strip photos are evenly presented by direction, North, South, East and West, which is a function of how the path was conducted (by foot). For more notes on field observations reference Appendix B.

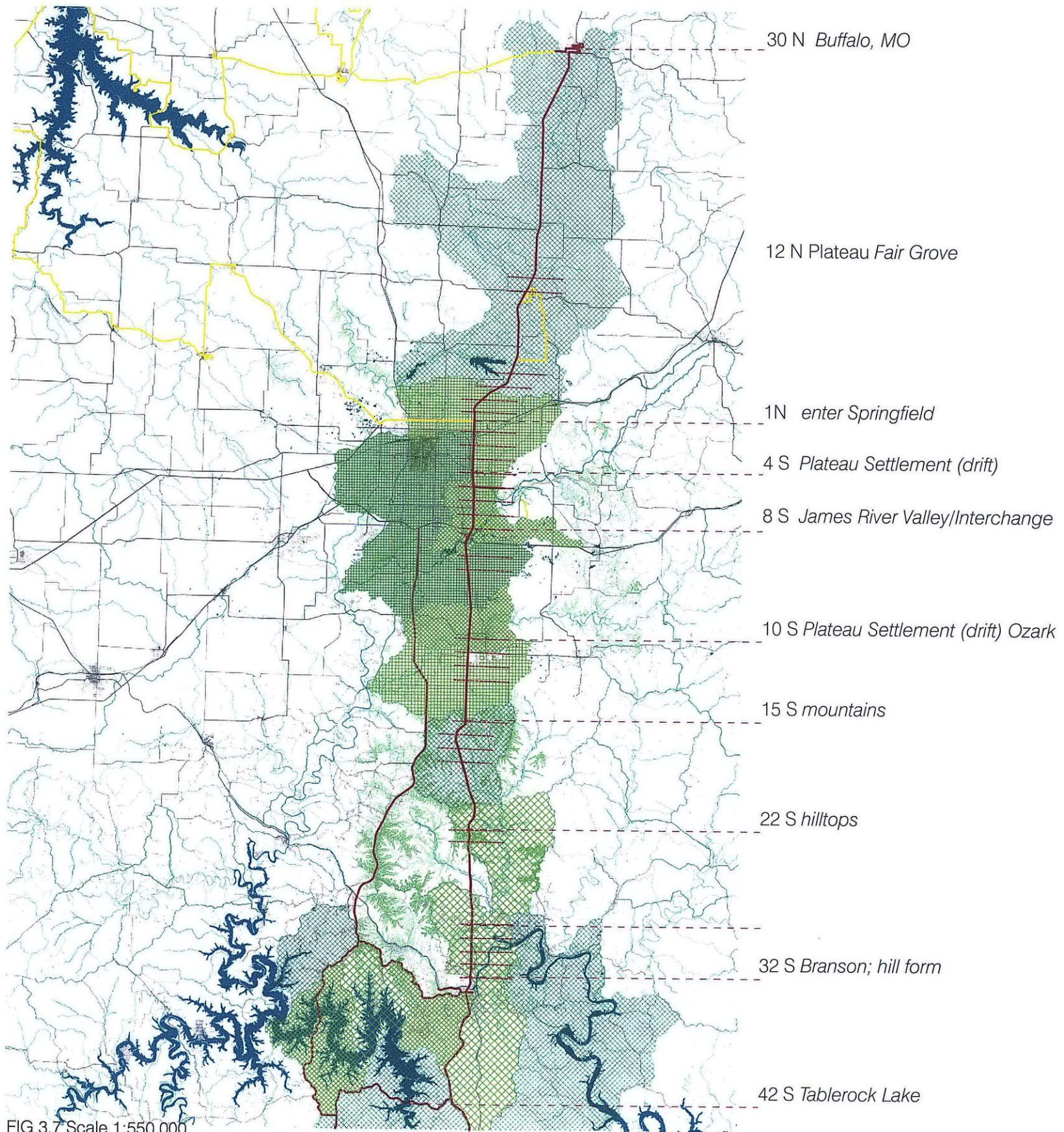


FIG 3.7 Scale 1:550,000



1 mile

Red text indicates miles which are documented in more detail in the following Chapter

FIG 3.8 Highway 65 Image Legend



Paradise and Opportunity *An Early Middle landscape*

Observations of the future site Springfield, 1819

The prairies, which commence at the distance of a mile west of this river, are the most extensive, rich, and beautiful, of any which I have ever seen west of the Mississippi river. They are covered by a coarse wild grass, which attains so great a height that it completely hides a man on horseback in riding through it. The deer and elk abound in this quarter, and the buffalo is occasionally seen in droves upon the prairies, and in the open highland woods. Along the margin of the river, and to a width of from one to two miles each way, is found a vigorous growth of forest trees, some of which attain an almost incredible size.

A country thus situated, cannot fail to present a scene of great beauty in the season of verdure, and even now, in the depth of winter, wears a pleasing aspect. It is a mixture of forest and plain, of hills and long sloping valleys, where the tall oak forms a striking contrast with the rich foliage of the evergreen cane, or the waving field prairie grass. It is an assemblage of beautiful groves, and level prairies, of river alluvion, and high-land precipice, diversified by the devious course of the river, and the distant promontory, forming a scene so novel, yet so harmonious, as to strike the beholder with admiration; and the effect must be greatly heightened, when viewed under the influence of a mild clear atmosphere, and an invigorating sun, such as is said to characterize this region during the spring and summer.

Taking these circumstances into view, with the fertility and extent of soil, its advantages for water carriage, and other objects, among which its mines deserve to be noticed, it offers great attractions to enterprising emigrants, and particularly to such as may consider great prospective advantages an equivalent for the dangers and privations of a frontier settlement.

-Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, 1819⁴

When Henry Rowe Schoolcraft explored the Ozarks and the Springfield Plateau, on foot, he like other explorers was taken with the natural beauty, conjuring a vision of a new paradise. Prior to exploring the rolling prairies, he followed the James River valley into northern Arkansas moving through the hills as one only could in the early days of settlement, by canoe through the river valleys or along the buffalo paths following the ridge tops. Had he taken the journey 30 years later he likely would have traveled through the freshly incorporated towns dotting the ridges and rivers, moving from square to square instead of clearing to clearing. By 1900 he may have bypassed road travel altogether and arrived by rail, likely lamenting or at least observing the raw contrast of rail road steam and the serenity of the pastoral land—much like Leo Marx’s account of Nathaniel Hawthorne’s reflections on industrialization in the New England Woods.⁵ However, in the Ozarks there is an important distinction. Hawthorn was near the industrial agglomeration of Boston, near to concentrated civilization and consistent access to goods, affording a different luxury of security and view of nature. The Ozarks, the hills and plateaus that are to become the Springfield metropolis, would wait many years, until after 1950 for the construction of sturdy roads and dams that would no longer render its wilderness remote, and even now by population measures much of the area

⁴ From the Journal of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft.

⁵ Marx, *The Machine in the Garden*, 15.

still is.⁶ During the interim 100 years the region would exist somewhere between reverie and exploitation.

Schoolcraft's studied description of the landscape belies both a sentimental and pragmatic view of the land common of early European and American explorers—in describing the beauty and abundance of the terrain Schoolcraft's impressions of the Ozarks reflects versions of the American experience in 2 general ways—the first characteristic of westward expansion, land speculation, and city building. As exhibited in the reality of the survey grid, the American view of the wilderness was seldom wholeheartedly reverent, but as de Toquville observed, love of wilderness for the opportunity it presented.⁷ The second more rare or particular to the region is the land as an abundant resource. Schoolcraft notes the water, game, and mildness of the climate, a paradise for living, unlike the images of the hideous wilderness of the New England shores recorded by early pilgrims. Here the land offered a possibility closer to Jefferson's vision of independent civic communities drawing happiness from their freedom, government, and nature, which was to become a vernacular hill culture predicated on community, self sufficiency, and living off of the land which continued to persist in some form even today. Because the region remained fairly remote, especially in the early days, to be an Ozarker did not mean a purely intellectual pondering of beauty safe from within the middle landscape; it meant living off the land, within the land, revering the land almost as if it were a religion and social structure unto itself. Removed from near proximity to civilization the hills for a time were a utopian wilderness realized unspoiled and remote countered by the daily struggle to survive. The unsettled hills (with little modern infrastructure) required their settlers to be resourceful, to live off the land and to subsist on values other than money, to accept an existence of struggle and with few material things.⁸ Bartering crops for services, food for clothes—practices which remain amongst the old hill culture.

It is only more recently since the 1950's that the city of Springfield has accumulated to the extent that there is a sharper sense of difference between city and wilderness. Not due only to the frequency at which one encounters other people, or settlements, or the increased road coverage and road paving. The emptiness of the peripheral wilderness is magnified by the increasing ease with which one may move between the two. The relatively recent modernization is significant. Pasts usually distant and bygone, remain in some areas fresher, or at least more raw—it is here we see more jarring evidence of time comingling to generate peculiar diversity amongst the "wilderness metropolis".

Monuments + Drift *The Modern Metropolis*

Revisiting the same terrain, in its present condition, we enter the space of the hills by highway, separated from the ground traversing the land at a quicker velocity and larger scale we observe both the land and the present settlement patterns of the American city—our new mode of expansive observation lends itself to quick impressions erasing the subtle nuances of the plateau and magnifying the beauty of the hills. This may be why highway 65 is a favored highway in the region. Unlike I-44 and US-60 which follow a flat east west ridge, 65 moves from north to south, staying on the plateau for a time, and then diving headlong into the rolling motion of the hills.

It would be dishonest pretend that this admiration is at surface value indulgently rooted in a sentimental image of picturesque beauty, but to leave my thoughts here would be a dis-

6 Much of the region possess a density of 1-25 people per square mile

7 Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*.

8 This persisted into the Great Depression. A Phyllis Rositter discusses, in a *Living History*, people in the Ozarks didn't realize they were poor until the government came in and told them they were.



Each vertical dashed line represents 6.6 seconds

mile #

FIG 3.9 Highway 65 North: Plateau Wilderness



Images taken 01.16.12, 9AM

service to the deeper value of the road and the region. Viewed as a complex metaphor, 65 is an outline of the ancient Precambrian landscape, a chronicle of 200 years of continuous American settlement, and it is the spatial mechanism that enables us to engage with the near and distant pasts of the plateaus and hills.⁹

A 60 mile drive across the landscape offers a visual comprehension and typical experience of modern settlement in relation to the terrain, imparting a broad regional understanding of one experience of the “new” city, in contrast to the old city following the meandering Route 13 and the winding roads of the James River valley. The addition and subtraction of the hills plays throughout the space of Highway 65—strung together by interludes of city pieces drifting across the vast plateau space ranging in densities of settlement from solidity to disintegration.

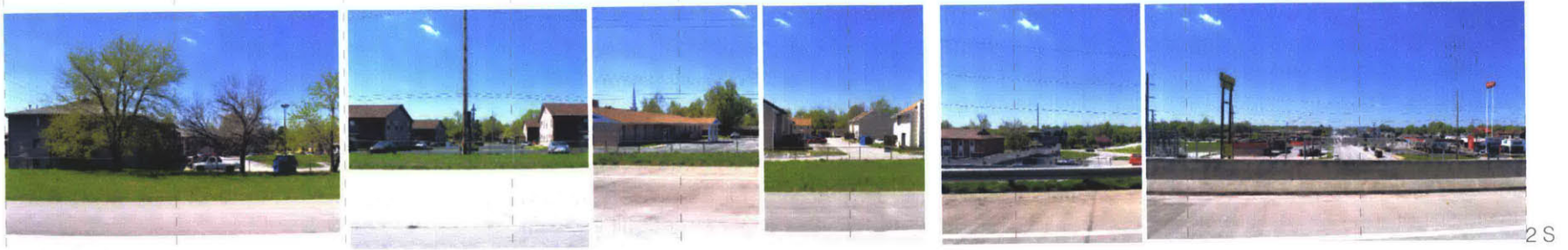
The Modern Metropolis

Although the terrain north of Springfield is less spectacularly mountainous, in many areas it is no less remote or intimate than the southern heart of the hills. Here the void of the wilderness is perceived as a vast open space, subtly interwoven with unexpected shallow valleys in place of deep voluminous river hollows. However, from the highway, the intimacy of plains is masked.

Starting from the small town of Buffalo (pop. 3084), our first encounter is the compression of old and new city, an agglomeration not more than 2 miles across: a declining town square, grain mills, shotgun houses, and tiny bungalows, then out to the highway lined with a thin strand of strip developments and industrial warehouses. Continuing south there is a long sparsely populated stretch, 30 miles or so of open rolling hills, pastures, and cattle ranches. If it is sunny the scene appears bucolic with an endless horizon of white clouds dotting a blue sky, but if a storm is approaching one is faced with a tumultuous wall of gray. The curious observer may take note of the low rolling hills, occasionally incised by the road revealing layers of creamy limestone, hinting at the ancient geology; but after awhile the flatness of the landscape dissolves into generic Midwestern scenery.

Along the highway past the signs for the small town of Fair Grove (pop. 1,393) there is the slightest perception of increasing density—not any kind of real solidity, but scattered industrial pieces along the side of the road: a grain mill, a limestone quarry, the barn of a horse ranch, the occasional billboard, cell phone towers, and power transformers crisscrossing with bridges over creeks offering views into shallow wooded valleys. As Springfield nears these pieces string more closely together, the terrain levels, more cars appear on the road—and for the 8 miles of passage through Springfield’s eastern edge it is easy to forget where you are. At the northern perimeter where 65 intersects Interstate-44 sits the modern logistics landscape of truck yards and factories, the glistening metal striations of office parks, and lots of auto dealers. Sailing along deeper, around mile 4, the westward vista opens to long projections of strip lined streets filled with signs for Waffle House, McDonalds, and Hampton Inns, interspersed with small clues to the subverted nature of the plateau: an open expanse of fields, a distant grove of trees, small clusters of orangey red rock formations—textures which are in stark contrast to the new barriers of grey concrete sound walls, and the dismal backsides of wooden fences belonging to houses that were never meant to face onto a freeway.

⁹ Marx discusses in chapter 1 of *The Machine in the Garden*, the difference between two kinds of pastoralism: (1) popular and sentimental, found in suburban flight, local politics, outdoor leisure activities, nostalgic veil of a green democratic republic removed from the external world (2) imaginative and complex emerges when the landscape is used to convey something larger about the human condition, examined by Marx as a theme in American Literature since the 1840’s



2 S



3 S



4 S



5 S
Springfield

FIG 3.10 Highway 65: Generic/Plateau Form



Plateau Form

North Logistics Landscape

City Transition

North Wilderness

Images taken 03.24.12, 2:00 PM

From this vantage point the city is flat, the settling of the plateau unspecific, a repository of generic American urbanity, spaces that are dematerialized save the practical leftovers of civil engineering—giant grassy swales, rocks, and bridges. This is the image of sprawl that is troubling, criticized by designers, and disliked by the city inhabitants. From the vantage of the highway its ugly, generic, monotonous—but it is the fabric of the new city that has persisted and grown, functional, practical, and economical, evidence that for space outside of domestic life, people seem to prefer parking over quaint town streets. Or as proven by new urbanism or the city of consumption, even if the scenery of a quaint town street still is desirable, people prefer a parking lot to be nearby. It is the new city of strips that since the 1950's has swallowed the extents of the old grid, its 30 year boundary a characteristic highway ring-road, it new limits the natural features of the terrain. Here the highway view puts into focus quite clearly the sense and scale typical of the midsize city. The transition between wilderness and city is sharp with little mediation or announcement other than signs. One does not approach a distant pinnacle of sky scrapers, or enter into congested traffic arteries 10 lanes across. Here there are 4 lanes, with the exception of a recent widening at Sunshine Street (there are 6 lanes for a brief 1 mile) and the city is announced by a sign counting the exits (“Springfield, Next 8 Exits”). The brevity the experience and the scale give pause. Springfield is not continuous sprawl out of control, rather it is limited, brief, contained for now within the solidity of highways or clinging to the exterior edges of the fluid concrete cores.

Mile 7 marks the first transition from plateau to hills—rounding the bend after the Battlefield Road exit, the land parts into the James River Valley the pavement begins to drop and clings to a hill slowly rising on the western edge, providing a one sided frame to the flat river bottom. Emerging into the valley, the River is graced with the fresh, soaring ramps of the 60-65 interchange, which somehow despite its massive scale is light enough, porous enough as to not obliterate the horizon, instead filling the space of the hills, and matching their scale. It is one of those rare occasions where infrastructural siting enhances and engages the natural features, and after asking many residents about it, even if they are ambivalent about a “big city” interchange, they are certain about its impressive beauty.¹⁰

The interchange marks either the beginning or end of the official city limits of Springfield, but the breadth of the new city continues, prolonged by the flat plateau, home to what are now “first ring” towns of Nixa and Ozark which gradually creep southward, rehashing the familiar pattern of signs, and boxes, only their setting is less compact, nor is it contained within highways. Instead the sprawl here drifts with more alacrity, for its scale can never compete with the vastness of the sky—it is the beginning of the land overtaking settlement, whereas in Springfield the settlement has overtaken the land.

The Ancient Hills

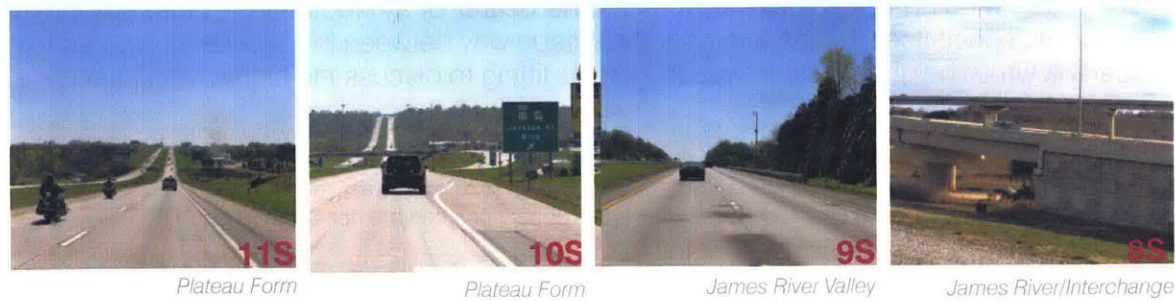
Ten minutes past the town of Ozark, 2 minutes beyond the Highlandville exit, the plateau gives way, plunging into the mountains. This is the second encounter with the hills, made more surprising because they sneak up on you—carved from the high ground of the plateau, the highway catapults the viewer into a space closer to wild beauty—a partly preserved wilderness reminiscent of a past land viewed by Schoolcraft, untouched and unsettled. Perhaps it is the rocks which convey a primordial nature; they overpower the modern intervention of the road, even when it is the very intervention which has made them evident. The carving of highway 65 is a modern dominance over the land, made fantastic by the majesty

¹⁰ The interchange was not specifically sited here per se, but functionally occurred at the crossing of two roads following their respective ridges—the construction of the new interchange is far more elaborate than the old, reflecting what seems to be an emerging consciousness in civil engineering about the aesthetic impact of highways on the city.



Each vertical dashed line represents 6.6 seconds

FIG 3.11 Highway 65: Plateau/Hills



Images taken 03.24.12, 2:15 PM

of revealing the hill's ancient geology.¹¹ Vertical pleats of dynamite fuses and drops of subterranean streams wash the layers of stones which have existed no less than 1.4 billion years, hailing from the Precambrian period where the Ozarks were an island amidst the sea stretching across what are now the great plains.¹² Unlike the flat bottomed plains, the dome of the Ozarks highlands were left untouched by glacier shearing, left to gradually accumulate and erode into an intricate network of limestone, streams, caves, and rivers that have been magnified by the infrastructure of the 20st century.

This is not a road that could have been built by the pioneers. They prudently traveled south on the well trodden trails of the buffalo (now highway 13) to reach the white river and its myriad of tributaries, to hunt, fish, float, and vacation long before the damming of the river and construction of Tablerock Lake. Construction of the modern route 65 was prompted during the late 70's by Tablerock and Branson, to improve mobility and facilitate a growing tourism industry that had become well established during the mid-century. The recent improvement of the highway (finished 3 years ago) speaks of the significance of the lakes both for tourism and as a local way of life, it also represents the changing economy of the hills, of the vernacular town landscape which if it has been able to survive has usually done so through vernacular tourism or by commuting to jobs provided by the regional economic base.

Further south the hills become deeper, the cuts through the stones more elaborate, until you reach the ridges of Branson, where you are greeted by a new Home Depot on a hilltop—illustrating the immutability of big box development. Even in the hills the template has been altered little, accept for the spectacular views from the parking lot overlooking a valley. A few miles further you may be enticed to drive down the ridge of the old 76 strip, and granted occasional mountain views in between the Americana montage of neon lights and country music theaters or you may travel into the valley of Branson west along ramps of limestone carved into the backside of the hills. And eventually you will find the intricate, freshly settled shores of Tablerock Lake in the flooded valleys of the Ozark hills.

The lake is yet a newer reinvention of the unspoiled wilderness terrain, alluded to in patches during the journey down 65, which conveys the contrast between infrastructure, settlement, and nature, and the ease with which they have now all been connected. It is not difficult to sense the permanence of the highway, especially within the hills, but the highway exhibits, or rather unleashes a profound experience of the geography, repositioning the human vantage point—much like Kevin Lynch and Donald Appleyard observed in *A View From the Road*—the automobile provides a new capacity in which to experience and sense the city. In this case it is melding of settlement and infrastructure with terrain that provides a new spatial legibility and comprehension of historical time. To argue that the majestic beauty of the hills offsets or outweighs the reality of the sprawl of the plateaus is a stretch. To argue that the highway serves as a compelling link between the less beautiful reality of modern settlement with the wilderness's grandeur would be fair—and to go one step further is to assert that the beauty of the hills is made more poignant by the contrast of the sprawl, in fact it is strengthened by the lack of beauty from which one journeys. The road itself is a realistic and fantastic experience, a long winding portal that functions as the bearer of a middle landscape, not as an actual static space itself, but as a temporal passage way between two worlds it provides the critical link which heightens the transition. It feels fitting to discuss the highway first because

¹¹ Although I am not directly engaging the issue here, the question of responsible environmental development is not unwarranted. The construction of the highway and the lakes undoubtedly affect the natural ecosystems of the area. The conservation department of Missouri, since the 1970's have actively managed the waterways and continuously monitors and sets limits. The intricacies of conservation are not within my scope, however, they of course are significant parameters of the area.

¹² Phyllis Rossiter, *A Living History of the Ozarks*, 20.



FIG 3.12 Highway 65: Pristine, Hills



Images taken 03.24.12, 2:45 PM

it is a prominent mode of modern life, also because it exhibits the manipulation of time and the importance of the process of movement, of the sequence of a path.

65 also speaks of fundamental transformation of vitality, economic transitions conditioned by the terrain. The flat plateaus near road and highway access have from the outset of the region formed the economic spine, linking into the national logistics network. The hills, in particular the lake towns Branson and Hollister, where their mining resources have proven limited have transitioned their vernacular culture into an economy of tourism and recreation—based on seasonal migration by both locals and visitors. The development of nostalgic vernacular tourism is well beyond a yearning to restore a simpler time and way of small town living, it is blatant simulacrum of a past way of life, clearly meant for entertainment. There are no disguised utopias doubling as reality here—this is pure momentary escapism from everyday life, and it is clearly, on the strip or in the theater, for entertainment. The line between simpler times and reality becomes more blurred as one travels into the periphery and into the wilderness, where the contrast of reality becomes more difficult to find. Rather than people pretending to live a simpler way of life, it at least appears that they actually do—here the reality is the knowledge that civilization is imminent, and that these are vestiges of a genuine existence that are increasingly endangered, threatened with becoming a mere fantasy, rather than a n existing way of life. It is difficult to determine when that line is crossed, but for the time being, or until the region has to actively and legally conserve its patterns, it continues to remain somewhat genuine.

Informal Vernaculars *Detours on Highway 65*

In 1993 highway 65 between Springfield and Branson was a two lane road with a passing lane on the up-hill side—if you got caught behind a slow car, you just had to drive slowly and wait it out. Since 65's major widening between Ozark and Branson, which started in the late 90's and was finished 2003, there have been notable changes in growth patterns and a concentration of investment along the corridor. Already from the road changes were visible in January: there were towers popping up for amazon-like ziplines adventures, Improved state parks, Saddlebrook an entirely new town built midway between Springfield and Branson, and other random items like the opening of the first legal moonshine distillery since prohibition, a tiger sanctuary, and rumors of a giant new concrete replica of the Biltmore somewhere near Highlandville.

Prior to January I had never ventured off the highway between Springfield and Branson, but given my research, I decided it was time to explore. Our first object was to find the behemoth new mansion—it was easy to spot. Perched on a hill a valley or two back from the highway, it is truly massive. So we turned down the narrow valley road, that could not have been more than 12' wide to commence our search (when I say turn, I mean literally turn, even though highway 65 is bigger now, there are still direct left and right hand turns between Ozark and Branson). We were not however, ever able to find the driveway, or more accurately, the gates were locked shut, but we did discover a beautiful valley, a winding stream, a cattle ranch, and a small reservoir with a lookout gazebo. We encountered a few modest homes, and giant rock advertizing a new subdivision, "Grand Terraces", which turns out for now are empty platted lots on a ridge overlooking the valley. There is a comingling here of what becomes the hallmark of the periphery, that blurry line between fantasy and reality. The valley is serene, bucolic, the ranch well kept, the cows lazily grazing along the creek with the sleek golden manes of horses nearby—but the subdivision plats are clues that the city is coming, the new Chevy truck in the ranchers driveway hints that this is likely a person of means, who chooses to live in the valley. But occasionally there is still the clapboard shack, the stone trunk of an old chimney or a stretch of gravel road. Prior to the improvement of

highway 65, the notion of a subdivision in the hills didn't exist—back then it was still just the periphery. Now it has become a metropolitan periphery (reminiscent of Broadacres or what Emerson argued for) of attainable opportunity.

The rest of our trip was filled with some predictable encounters, Saddlebrook, which is a large new development in the Bull Creek Valley, will take years to fully build, but there is a vision for a modern suburban “mountain” community. The houses are well sited along ridges, the stream has been converted into a natural looking community park. Right now it still feels a bit isolated for the type of upper scale development it is, but it seems probable that the other ends of urbanity will catch up. Busik state park, where there is a new and dramatic incision into the hillside, and unexpectedly we found a tiger sanctuary. We learned it was new, only since February—we were treated to a tour of exotic Siberian tigers, panthers, bob cats, and a lion all penned along a meandering Ozark ridge. Somehow these huge ferocious animals looked at home in the unkempt Ozark setting, as opposed to the city zoo.

Our tour that day was limited to a mile or two at most from 65, a zone where there is an emerging informal industry of entertainment and recreation slipping into the few occupiable areas near the road, signified only by word of mouth or the casual signage of the highway. Unlike Branson, whose size is larger, and whose economic interests are more concentrated, and diverse (both local and national) the south corridor of 65 still possesses a comingling of old and new, of (mostly) unspoiled pristine beauty, with fragments referencing the present. The ideal wilderness here continues to hold its early magic—that of the empty void of possibility and retreat in proximity to civilization. At least visually, the south corridor remains sparse, and except for roads and occasional power lines, raw and informal, without major planning efforts or development outside of the intensive construction of the highway, any further intervention will have to face the limits of the Ozarks hills.

Squares *Ridges, Valleys, and the Elasticity of Time*

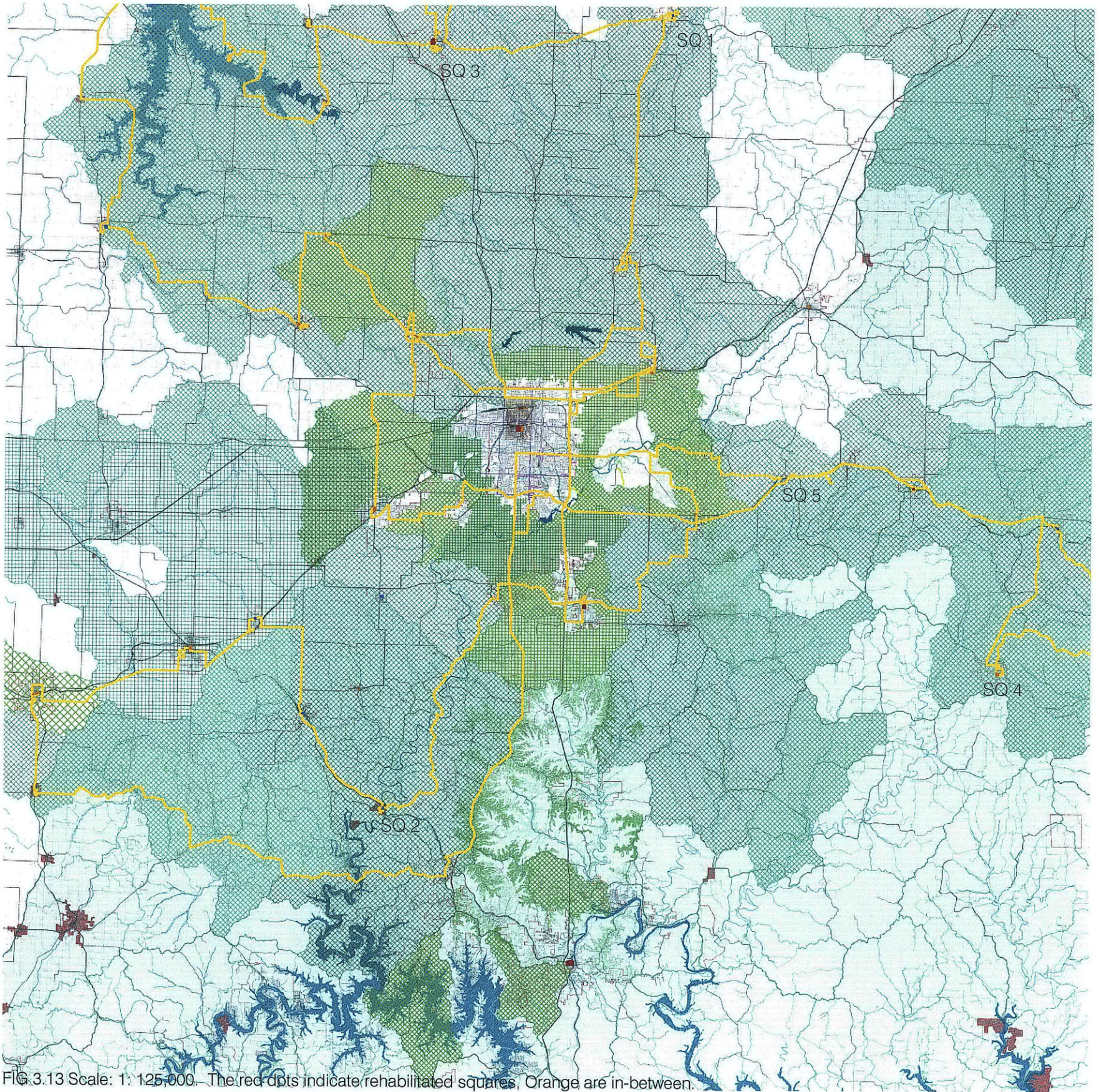


FIG. 3.13 Scale: 1: 125,000. The red dots indicate rehabilitated squares, Orange are in-between.



SQ1



SQ2



SQ3



SQ4



SQ4

This Column shows the icon, or monument of the squares and strips, which range from water towers, grain mills, civic buildings, and filling stations

These images capture the squares and adjacent strips that are common amongst the regional towns. With the exception of Square 3, Bolivar, these places struggle to maintain economic vitality.

SQ1 Buffalo, MO
 SQ2, Galena, MO
 SQ3, Bolivar, MO
 SQ4, Ava, MO
 SQ5, Fordland, MO

FIG 3.14 Squares

the deep interior of the periphery, entering a fabric of valleys interspersed with the vestiges of Jeffersonian towns. Just as the city grid becomes a known space of expectations, of traffic lights, of a straight line, of a shortcut, the periphery is no different, except its sequence belongs to the terrain, rather than the logic of concentrated settlement. The roads change course, following the inherent continuities of the land, the ridgeline and river bottoms (much like the route of Schoolcraft). If you do this for many miles you may begin to connect with the mountains in a peculiar, visceral way, engaging the terrain as only technology will allow. The road fluid beneath the wheels of the car is a sensation only possible because of the velocity of movement and the vision of liquid black elegantly tracing the ancient hilltops. Looking down, the passengers eyes are engulfed with an endless hillside of spindly trees and leaves sliding down the red soil to an invisible bottom—while the driver's eyes are locked to an endless yellow line for fear of the next weaving edge. The pattern of small trailers and cottages along the ridge becomes noticeable, and despite their modesty they are situated on the most beautiful and precarious sites of the region. Teetering on the edge of the plunging valley, clinging to the paved road is the only explicit clue to their link with the metropolis.

After many miles of driving, the valleys become more distinct as the home of either a river or a stream. You can tell from the width and flatness, and from the size of the winding canyons how soon you will trickle to the wide valley bottom and just as soon past the glimpse of the large river, as the road heads upward again traversing the slope, to glide along the next ridgeline. Scattered in the distance are water towers, power lines, cell phone towers—in the immediate foreground are barbed wire fences and white gates full of cattle and horses. As the water tower becomes larger you know a town is near and are left a few moments to guess if you will find ghosts or the breath of the living. Red Caboose, stone buildings, Gazebos, main street, elm street, college street, cherry—rail road depots, flags, and the haunting vapors of wind chimes, stovepipe chimneys silver and puffing smoke, mountains composed of layers of sunlight and the soft strike of trees on the horizon. The repetition of long smooth steel tracks, the stones of a family cemetery overrun by wild flowers, and the roofs and windmills of old barns and new. These elements are continuous and consistent, ugly and beautiful, convincing evidence of a life before and a hesitant co-existence with modern times.

All of these small towns have turned away from their original squares and main streets which have been reserved for civic government. If a town has no governing seat and a flailing economy the center fails. For instance Galena is the Stone County seat so its square has some new government development a judicial center, the stone county library, and the University of Missouri extension program. Although there are some small business its hard to tell if they are thriving (most look closed). In general the square is better kept compared to Marionville or Reeds Spring, neither of which have government seats—their squares are ghostly, with hardly a person around now. All of the economic vitality has moved outward to the larger highway, taken up by the standard building blocks, sonic et. al leaving the tiny centers empty and black, an old memory of a time gone by. Following the trajectory outlined by logistics landscape, of which the towns themselves are a part. Even at the smallest scale the downtown has been deserted, not because of massive city growth, or racial blight, or white flight, but as a result of roving economic and industrial patterns that have changed their desires and parameters, leaving these relics in exchange for another dream.

Most of the towns in the region were plotted out by immigrants from Scotland, Germany etc. seeking a better life in the new world based around the ideal of an agrarian society, not only living off the land, but owning land (the earliest incarnation of the American dream, property ownership—as a form of establishing larger personal and civic identity, but more significantly property ownership as representative of a new American way of life (Hubbard). These boundaries have provided the permanent anchor of settlement, however, the lifestyle, and the town

role within the larger economic structure has evolved and it is these towns and especially the periphery where modernity (and vitality) is stretched most thin. On the plateaus some of these towns have been able to expand and adapt to the new logistics economy where the highway has run parallel to original road and subsequently the railroad—these towns adapt with new city fabric, strips, subdivisions, or homesteads in the countryside. Some towns, particularly in the hills have struggled more to remain vital because the re-routing of roads, or their mining or timbering economy has long since evaporated. Some of these places are able to transition to a vernacular tourism economy playing on the old time nostalgia of the past, while others exist as impoverished welfare states. Some of these towns if they are in the near orbit of Springfield, about 15-30 miles, become commuter suburbs, relying on the economy of Springfield for employment—evidenced by Springfield's daytime population which doubles to 300,000 from 158,000. And all towns even if they do not rely on Springfield for jobs, travel inward for health care, shopping, major cultural events.

Conceptually the economic functions of the metropolis are nothing new. Rather it is the lifestyle, or locality from which people travel that generates a unique regional dynamic, a larger “wilderness fabric” of sorts. For instance a Springfield resident may work in a peripheral area and be in regular contact with small town adaptations and old ways of life. On the light hearted end of this spectrum are vernacular adaptations of global culture, for instance instead of casual Fridays, you might find “camo day”. Conversely there are cultures of welfare, poverty, and conservatism where discrimination and domestic violence are more common. Back in these hills live farmers, ranchers, and other locals who live from their backyard gardens, and the game they catch hunting, fishing and trapping. Amongst these people you find those who are anti-government, anti-society, those who just prefer solitude and don't care for modern life (I once met one of these people at a hospital, a rancher who at the time was complaining about having to travel into Springfield, it was just too big city for him—he preferred his own property with a do not trespass sign and the security of his shotgun). Many people just plainly prefer country living to the city, taking up the spirit of the solitary Ozarker because they can be self sufficient, remaining wary of the city, of traffic congestion, and higher costs of living. These days such sentiments range from old time culture to the ex-urbanite or farmer living in a solar powered house detached from the grid.

Others seem to have a more broad view of their position as Ozarkers in the modern world, taking a reflective stance on life and nature and the new mobility. Local writer and native Meredith Cisco for instance, talks about the nuances of ordering seeds for her garden, making spring tonic from local Sassafras root, musing at the irony of pairing back and the new interest of growing your own garden—which natives have been doing for years already—but also compares the hospitality of the Ozark folk with her travels in Europe and in New York City.¹⁴ There is a sense of realism throughout her narratives, especially because Cisco's traveling lately has been from her involvement with the film *Winter's Bone*, which depicts the tragic conditions of methamphetamine addiction and rural poverty that is common amongst small peripheral towns.¹⁵

Visiting these small towns, seeing the ageing homes, and boarded up windows its difficult to come away with optimism. Again it is the bittersweet middle ground, which has become realities face. In the Springfield Metropolis the ideal wilderness is also the hideous desert of reality. Natural beauty does not immunize the region from poverty, rather it is fractured

¹⁴ Meredith Cisco, “A Dram of Spring Tonic” part of *These Ozark Hills*, KSMU, Ozarks Public Radio

¹⁵ The film does so in the genre of modern Ozark folklore, where instead of speaking directly of the tragedy, the story is told through its effects on the community. The literary structure itself reveals a social value placed on the vitality of the immediate community. While many natives are proud of this film as a contribution of sophisticated culture from the region, locals of Forsythe tend to be wary of its success—they feel it unfairly portrays the town as backwards, conservative, and sorrowful. This was expressed by several anonymous residents of Forsythe.

across the periphery, masked to some degree by the old ideal of the romantic sentimental picturesque so famously coined by authors such as, Wadsworth and ...idealizing the small cottages of the British countryside.¹⁶

Then there are commuters who live their life between town and country (Emerson would approve), pointing to a new pattern of suburbanization in the region, much like that of New England during the 1840's. The collapse of time and scale delivered by new highway construction has given many of these towns new life. Rather than being physically isolated, they have now been re-integrated into the economic network. Nowhere was the contrast between adapted network and isolated town more evident than between the interior of the James River Valley and the Southwest spine of highway 60.

Terrain and the Elasticity of Time

Late in the day after driving through the James River valley we came into the small town square of Marionville. While I was snapping some pictures a pair of locals came out to ask what I was doing (coincidentally one of them happened to be involved in the city government). We talked for a bit about the town, how it had been growing, why he decided to run for office (to be more involved with his children's education), the construction of the new school, and why he lived there—because he like small town living, knowing his neighbors and being involved. His wife works in a neighboring town and he commutes to Springfield, which since the improvement of highway 60 is just under 30 minutes (it used to be 45 at least). Driving back to Springfield that day on 60 the contrast in my own experience was remarkable. I had not realized the proximity of Marionville to Springfield—entering we had driven through meandering valleys and ridges of the James river, through Pleasant Grove, Hootentown, Galena, and Crane. It had easily taken almost 2 hours to drive this way and when we originally emerged into town it felt like a remote satellite in a distant wilderness.

The contrast brings attention to the modality of the path, the quality of the road, and the quality of the time. In the heart of the valley time expands because you are moving slowly, it seems to still because the land is open and unsettled there is much of the same terrain to see and it appears to be never ending. As opposed to the excursion down 65 or though the city where buildings and roads are like flashes, quick glimpses into another world, the valley path is like a portal, except it is not a dark nameless journey—the roads transparently impede your movement because they wind, they are narrow, or you may stop to enjoy a view. Its not the kind of road you take for efficiency, but for pleasure, and the region as I discovered possess these roads in multitudes.

Squares and the Resilient Suburban Town

That day I learned something else about small towns. Standing in the middle of what I would describe as a declining town square, I asked how concerned the town was about it. While the response I got was not of dis-concern, it was not one of alarm either. There were some efforts, to establish a farmers market, but it was what it was, the town had decided to invest in their school system instead. Maybe in the small town the dream of a central heart is less important that in a bigger city like Springfield. Maybe because people are there for the community and the remote setting their outlook on decay is different, or they have just come to accept it as their reality or there are other more concerning issues in their lives. I'm not sure exactly, but it's a good moment to check oneself with grand ideas, and notions of a quaint rejuvenated town. Even if the New Urbanists came in and renovated the entire square, I'm not sure if the locals would approve—it would draw people to the town for the wrong rea-

¹⁶ John Stilgoe, *Borderlands*, 32.

sons, for an image of an ideal, quaint life that doesn't get at the root of what it means to live there. These people believe deeply in the sanctity of their community, in the power of the activism as citizens, and while this may verge on conservatism or a pastoralism that is discriminating or not willing to confront the reality of change, here there is a peculiar combination of real and ideal.¹⁷ These towns are resisting conversion into a fantasy and in the face of modernization they are adapting only as much as they must, by commuting.

¹⁷ In a later conversation, it was at least partly revealed that small towns are not necessarily exclusionary; in fact they can be just the opposite. Talking with a family who used to live in a small agrarian based town, they shared their rich experience of community life—everything and everyone was in close proximity, the wealthy, middle class, and the impoverished lived within the same square mile, shopped at the same grocery stores, and attended the same high school. Because of the proximity people were forced to confront and accept each other, unlike a larger city where enclaves are more easily sought.

Wilderness 2 Domestic Gardens

The periphery generally ends about 5 to 10 miles from the city limits of Springfield, transitioning to Broadacres (or quasi-rural), borderlands, and then to suburban tracts and the interior grid of the city. The interior grid is a mix of single family houses, scattered apartments, and commercial areas whose grain and texture (massing, material, and lot size) correspond to their historic period, and after awhile become recognizable territories and fragments of a related whole. These domestic gardens are notable because they are the majority of Springfield's fabric reflecting the ongoing suburban urge of American settlement. Tactical, and experientially intricate, they embody the evolving meaning of the wilderness, not as a purely remote physical environment, but as a psychological space in relation to sensory and vital quality. Here, there is the possibility of finding immediate retreat rather than physical remoteness. Expanding on the concept of terrain vague of internal externality, I encountered a corollary of sorts, the internal interior—not gated or exclusive, but deep interior spaces, tranquil domestic gardens spread across the city.

Although we walked through a fair amount of neighborhoods, and drove through an even greater number, I have chosen here to use our bike ride as the path of description. Biking illustrates the variety of residential environments, and also speaks of alternate paths through the city that one is compelled to find if they wish to ride, (the major roads are too busy to really feel safe on a bike) and illustrate the scale of the city which is surprisingly navigable and diverse. The route (30 miles) began from the eastern Broadacres territory, then moved through layers of the interior grid, passing through downtown briefly, then mid-city (the old suburban area), and towards the new city, the southeast suburban fabric, ending at the interchange of the James river and 65 freeway.

FIG 3.15 Garden Paths, *This drawing shows the garden fabric of Springfield. The Yellow lines denote the Paths.*

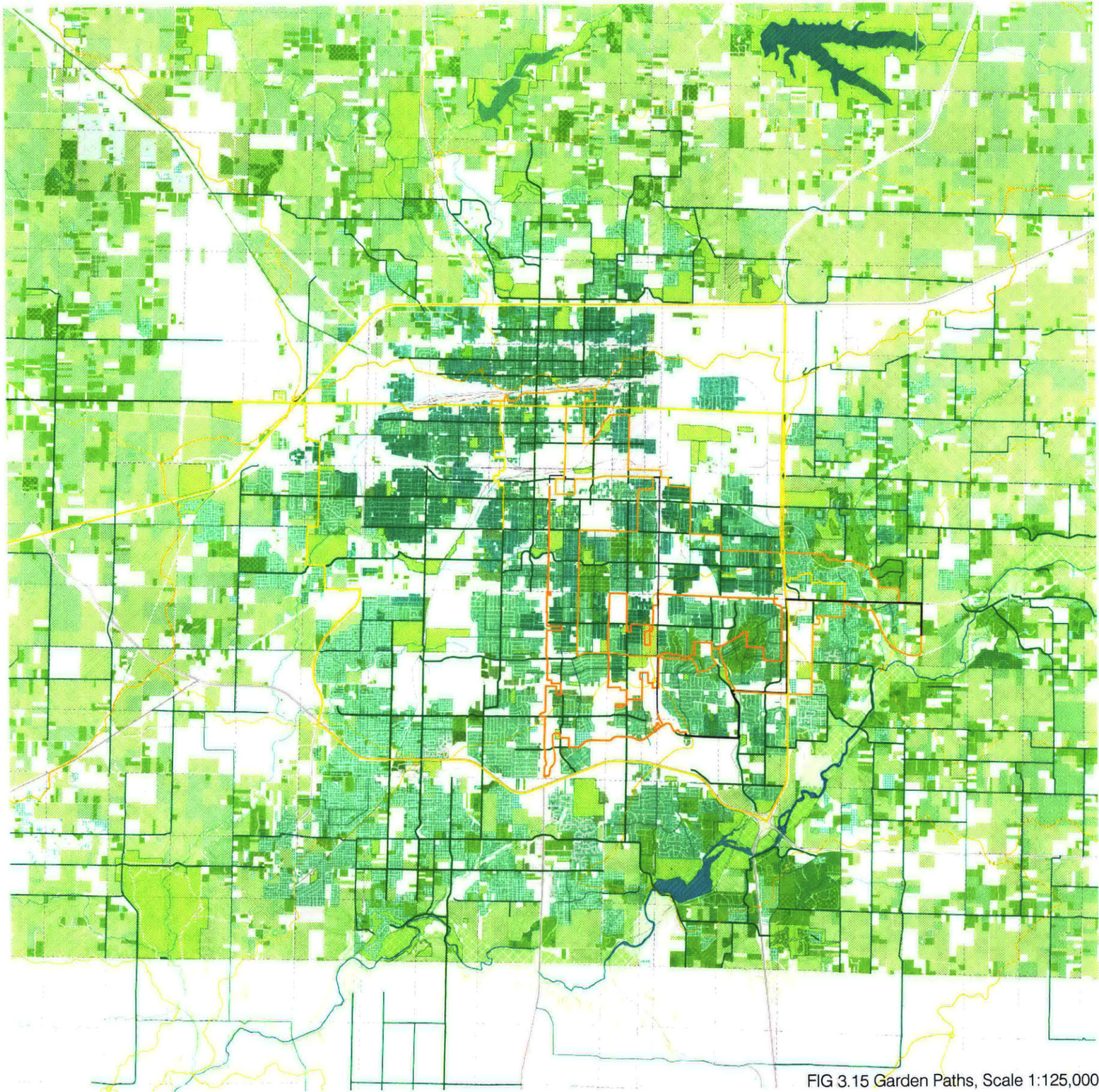


FIG 3.15 Garden Paths, Scale 1:125,000

Broadacres *The Pristine Orderly Countryside*

Springfield's Broadacre city wraps almost continuously around the exterior edge of the highway ring. You know you are there when the roads narrow, the subdivisions disappear, along with the formality of curbs and sidewalks, and when the grid of streets thins to 1 mile increments and are numbered ("farm road 205"). Here the city is composed of well tended acreages, streams, cow pastures, churches, and corn fields. I had ridden out on the farm roads before, but usually away from the city, not as a mode of transportation within it. On the east side of town there is a network of such roads well known amongst the residents and the biking community, to the extent that on a nice weekend day you will pass a fellow biker or two out for an afternoon ride. I am told (and can see) that biking is becoming more popular as automobiles are viewed with more caution, and as health and sustainability have entered the minds of popular culture, Springfield is not immune from starting to "think green." This is a timely reflection for this path, not literally, because the neighborhoods are green and filled with trees, but because the texture and fabric of the residential environment lends itself to human travel and activity often with no other improvement than people deciding to go outside and use the existing road.

So for the first time riding into the city, we started early, 8:00 glimpsing the end of commuting traffic, and the fleet of school buses taking children to school. Our route into the city was to be Catalpa Street, which begins as a winding lane in a small valley next to Pearson's Creek, passing everything from McMansions to cattle fields, old stone farmsteads, and a small church before our ascent to the city. Because the road follows the stream it is the natural gathering point of the valley, the houses situate themselves on the hill but the roads feed to the continuous bottom, where often there are small clearings and ponds within the flat grassy flood plains. The valley, in contrast to the more orderly fields of the farm road grid is wooded and dense with vegetation. On Catalpa the foliage alternates between maintained and overgrown, with the latter often prevailing—an important distinction of Broadacres, a sensitively cultivated landscape, whereas in the periphery the cultivation occurs only to make way for infrastructure, cutting back trees for power lines, or mowing the edge swales of a road.

For 2 miles or so the road remained in the valley, then began a gradual transition to the city, beginning with a slow ascent up to the plateau, (enough to be noticeable and out of breath at the end) which I imagine must happen at all the edges. As we neared the hilltop there was an imperceptible increase in density, the faint sounds of whirring engines on the highway, houses plotted more frequently, and we were finally passed by a car or two. At the crown of the hill the city finally came into resolution—we crossed the peripheral railroad tracks, into a frontage of wooden subdivision fences, the gray concrete bed of the highway now clearly on the horizon. Much like the approach on highway 65, the line between city and country is gradual, more a sense than a finite form. Similarly it is the solidity of the road which marks a clear threshold and on the ground the highway's function is no different, except it alternates between threshold and barrier. Catalpa is one of the few streets offering continuous passage.



Each vertical dashed line represents 6.6 seconds

FIG 3.16 Gardens: Pristine/Broadacres



Broadacres



65 Crossing



Terrain Road



Farm Road

Saturation *Gardens of the Mid-Century*

One of the things about riding was the way it accentuated the topography—I had noticed the hill up to the city before, but had never taken too much note, but riding you mark your time differently, more attuned to the length and spacing of roads, the number of stop lights and busy intersections. In Springfield this sequence is cadenced by the grid and a pattern of road hierarchy. Every mile or two is a major commercial artery, every half mile in between is a secondary road that is mostly residential or home to a park, school, or church. When you ride or walk its best to take the half mile road or even the quarter miles depending. If you go by the quarter mile you really start to enter (depending on the part of town) a fabric that is saturated, and loose, what I can only describe as an urban wilderness.

After passing beneath the highway, Catalpa is a spine for the eastern cluster (a similar pattern occurs on the west side of town as well) of saturated blocks lined with small to mid size houses from the 50's to the 70's. The housing is, "classic" or typical of American town settlement, and suburban growth that occurred post World War II, modest, affordable, mail order, and produced in mass. These homes are absent of the orderly frills of suburbia, there are few sidewalks or perfectly manicured lawns with fences and curbs. The roads are asphalt, and they die into the dirt and grass of the yards—the effect of no curb is subtle but the ground feels very fluid, the whole environment more casual. You could drive over or through the yard if you wanted, for the distinction between yard spaces is less spatially prominent, although property lines do exist. The trees here are older and sometimes overgrown—but the yards are cut harnessing wild fescue with an imperfect mix of weeds. Its informal, elastic, not run-down, but not dressed up. Everywhere there are traces of childhood play, dirt paths cutting through backyards, the bent rungs of fences that have been hopped, tree houses and swings in the groves of trees, and somehow here it feels a little more real, not contrived or staged, but just the way it is, if nothing else but out of simple necessity or because this neighborhood has been this way for 80 years.

In this neighborhood (and there are many others like it) we encounter a particular experience of the term density. The space is undeniably dense or mass filled, not derived from the number of people, or solidity of the housing, but from the canopy of trees and the thickness of vegetation, the chatter of birds, and the almost complete absence of cars, replaced by a thickness of the air. And yet half a mile away is a giant Kraft foods plant, and the largest hospital in the region and Sunshine street which experiences 200,000 cars a day. But in this ½ mile square it is quiet, a deep interior, bearing momentary resemblance to a distant retreat.

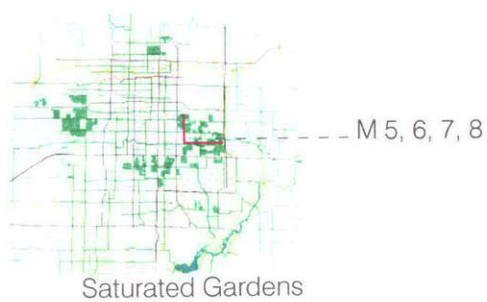
I cannot say for sure because I don't know who lives here, what their lives are like, if they are content or fraught with turmoil, and I suppose that makes me a little hesitant to think that these neighborhoods are ideal—at some point it seems there is a line we cannot cross into other people's lives, however at the most visceral level we can sense the materiality of the space itself, at a practical level we can research and relate to history. The houses are modest and affordable, their access to the city is immediate, and their loose spatial structure invites the possibility of the open void. These neighborhoods are not picturesque or free from economic reality, but perhaps here a middle ground achieved.



Each vertical dashed line represents 6.6 seconds

mile #

FIG 3.17 Gardens: Saturated/Mid-Century Gardens



Interior Road



Interior Road

Old City *The Ideal American Town*

Many of the older neighborhoods in Springfield are like the ones on Catalpa, and as we biked north through the city our saturated interiors were interspersed more frequently with industrial pockets, passing under rail bridges, by old brick machine shops, vacant fields, and an occasional gas station or corner store. Heading north on Freemont we approached the civic perimeter of Drury university and Ozarks Technical Community College (OTC) where we began to find civic fragments, pieces of partly completed bike trails along streams that were recently uncovered and rehabilitated with new parks and playgrounds—places where the blemishes of the 19th century industrial city have begun to be remedied and converted into public uses. The housing around the streams maintains the saturated quality, the open informality, but gradually around the old perimeter of the 1900's city the houses are platted more closely, narrow sidewalks begin to appear (as well as formal curbs) as we moved into the old city of working-middle class (now interspersed with students) into the landscape of the old city so idealized in American imagery. The roads are still just as empty, the lawns and front gardens are shallow and more formal, more contained even if they are overgrown. Parks begin to appear as large squares where houses circle. Everything about the form here is “ideal” within a compact city model (especially according to new urbanism), except the lack of thriving economic vitality, which has located to the south, east, and west sides of town.

This area offers another middle ground of sorts and I struggle here with a few points of view—I'm not sure if I am saddened about this area not being what it once was. In place of wealthy merchants and pristinely maintained blocks of the past live blue collar families and new immigrants in neighborhoods around well kept and well used parks often with civic institutions such as churches and schools adjacent.¹⁸ The mix here is of more affordable houses, which slowly as people think about returning downtown change the affordability of the market. These neighborhoods have tended to be resilient not solely because of the dense platting of lots, but because of their close proximity to stable institutions such as the university and the government civic center. Nearby a balance is struck around the areas of the universities in particular, where otherwise declining housing stock is stabilized by the university and the students who are seeking affordable off campus places to live.

Terrain Vague *Liminality*

Not far away is Commercial Street, which marks the boundary of these rehabilitated old city neighborhoods—it is the old main street of north Springfield following the line of old commerce along the railroad tracks. For a time between Freemont and Campbell there are signs of re-vitalization, facade repairs, new sidewalks and street lights, however, the road is still empty enough to be comfortable for biking in the street. Soon after Campbell the path dies into the dusty beds of de-commissioned grain elevators and auto-body shops—our first encounter with the liminal industrial wilderness. The terrain here is flat and open at the industrial edge running along the Jordan valley river bottom—these are overrun spaces, where ecology becomes a healing salve for the industrial imprint, vicariously entering into the plots of modest homes, which are more densely spaced and with fewer trees. To call the houses adjacent to these vacant spaces, tranquil or gardens is a stretch—better put, they are apparitions of tranquil domestic gardens past. Unlike the homes near the university these blocks have not been materially rehabilitated or continuously maintained, as the old strip has died and industry and vitality have moved south, these areas are forgotten and home to the poor or working class.

¹⁸ Speaking with a recent immigrant to Springfield, she relayed the significance of the church, and living near a park, which formed the core of her families community life



Each vertical dashed line represents 6.6 seconds

FIG 3.18 Gardens: Liminal/Old City



Industrial Pocket



Residential Street

Riding through the residential interiors we found road edges lined with basketball hoops, appropriating the street in the absence of garages and large driveways and occasionally a boarded window or a caving roof. Sporadically the old housing had been replaced with a newer version of mid-century mail-order homes or haphazardly patched and repaired. Generally the homes were maintained, their lack of decorum the result of age and the limited income of their owners. The interiors held numerous small congregations, formal parks, open lots between houses with a playhouse or a trampoline—small frequent civic fragments of varying formality, interspersed with the backside of makeshift fences between industrial yards, and occasional graffiti. Reality is inescapable here, although not as extreme as an overcrowded slum or severe poverty, these aging homes, the structure of the old city are evidence of a past ideal that has aged and thus the people here exist in a state in between, an unstable middle ground. Dusty lots, cracked gray roads, and mossy shingles interspersed with overgrown trees and gnarled chain link fence—the liminality of the materials themselves embody the hardships of daily life and the difficulties of an uncertain existence

Passageways *Civic Terrain, Borderlands, and Suburbs*

Returning from the Northwest Industrial fabric, our bike tour eventually led us through Southwest Missouri State University, down Holland street and into a stretch of the city between Grand and Sunshine built on the city fringe between the 1890's-1920's. The contrast between the industrial area could not have been more stark given our particular sequence. The now mid-city area was an early borderland occupied primarily by residents of status and wealth who sought the ideal existence between the beauty of the country and proximity of the city (in Springfield the separation was only a mere mile or 2). With the expansion of the city to Battlefield Road in 1955, these areas have since been swallowed by the city, but have maintained their value and picturesque beauty.

Holland is a small road bisecting the area that alternates between street and alleyway, which has the effect of a secret passageway. Entering from Grand street Holland is narrow and cuts through a layer of compact single family houses with gravel alleyways shaded by overgrown tree canopies and fences lined with dandelions. Briefly within these several blocks the prior experience of the houses saturated with foliage and informality is relived, and just as soon the road widened into rows of pristine manicured tree lined streets, renovated homes, with the historic Phelps grove park at its center (this was an encampment site during the civil war). The park is city beautiful era, with stone bridges, commemorative plaques, a small art museum, connected downstream to another series of open spaces, a cemetery and a high school. The sequence is easily reminiscent of Olmsted's connective vision for the Emerald necklace or the parks of Buffalo, except the scale here is modest. In Springfield this is one of the few carefully planned civic corridors, however, rather than announcing itself through dominant spatial hierarchy, it relies on local knowledge, and provides a notable point of activity to residents city wide.

The park for the biker is either a fleeting moment, or a welcome detour—we kept going on Holland street up the small embankment of a hill (the stream valley) and towards the newly constructed bike path on Sunset street near the Battlefield mall. This section in particular we encountered a number of joggers and bikers (actually running into an old acquaintance—Springfield is still small enough where this happens fairly often). Crossing over Sunshine (the 1920 city limit) we exited the borderlands and re-entered the space of saturated gardens, of modest housing and lush trees, marked every half mile with churches and schools which in the mid-city appeared to more explicitly double as informal neighborhood parks and squares. A few detours down the side streets revealed a shift to more solid ranch style housing, but still few formal sidewalks or fences. The malleable space here was only to be



13 W

14 W

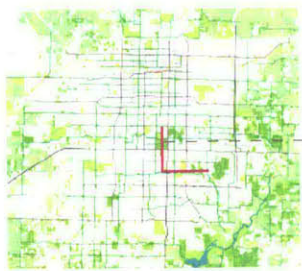
3 W

4 W

mile #

Each vertical dashed line represents 6.6 seconds

FIG 3.19 Gardens: Pristine/Civic Terrain, Borderlands



— Borderlands/Civic Parks

Pristine Gardens



Park Road



Mid-City Road

found around the perimeters of the schools and large church parking lots.

Finding the cross path at Sunset street we traveled back towards Battlefield and briefly through a world of paving, curbs, irregular sidewalks, large swales and grassy berms, traffic lights, and racing cars. We carefully crossed through this interruption in the tranquil gardens. We found respite amongst the open lots of half use, and even a narrow sidewalk or two—but even these were not nearly as adequate as the wide, little traveled, paved roads and alleys of the northern interiors. Riding through the city of strips it was apparent that there has been a clear reversal of navigation. Whereas in a car one typically seeks the fluid, quick moving path, the neighborhoods are an impediment to speed and travel, on bike the neighborhoods were a welcome space—the strips were the disruptions amongst the large sea of tranquil domesticity.

Lone Pine, James River, and Springfield Lake

From the mall parking lot we followed Sunset, through a second layer of 1970's borderlands, although more modest and ranch style. Taking the back way to our next designated trail, the greenway path on Lone Pine, we cut through the woods and the back lot of a large church, where we emerged into an expansive green field (technically this is a park, but it feels more like a nature preserve). Here we traveled down a small embankment to the bike path, a rail trail which parallels Galloway creek and Lone Pine Avenue.

Lone Pine is a distinct road, reading like a slice of Broadacres, into the city interior—it is an informal piecemeal counterpart to the formality of the Phelps grove park sequence. The western edge of the road follows the continuous hillside, where the valley (like Catalpa) offers a natural gathering point and surges of vegetation encroach the roads edge and soak the dense interior of the adjacent neighborhoods. The proximity and connectivity of Lone Pine make it more legible than Phelps grove. It is an important linking road between two visible and well traveled areas of the city, Battlefield and Sunshine, eventually bisecting the farm road that becomes Republic road and ends at the James River Highway 65 intersection. It has multi-layered paths of circulation, and the terrain provides a continuous enclosure, whether or not the person explicitly reads the continuity, it is easily sensed.

Heading South on the greenway within a mile we approached battlefield road passing the backsides of a new "reformed" strip and the massive retaining wall of a CVS. The trail dips below Battlefield, and continues to the well used Sequoia park situated at the valley crevice against a hill of caves that have been incorporated into the park landscape along with a pond filled by wild ducks and geese. (from this juncture we could have turned west and climbed back into the city, but we chose to go straight). Soon after the path cross crossed the decommissioned tracks, and followed the edge of a giant limestone quarry, which offers a blank view to a large embankment of red earth and distant towers of the quarry mill—in the winter the air was crisp, but from past experience this area on a hot summer day smells of quarry dust until the path dips into the next grove of trees. At republic road is the old Galloway station, formerly its own township. The depot has been converted into a restaurant bar, popular amongst families by day, locals by evening, and college students by late night. From here the path winds around a hill (on the other side of this hill is highway 65) occupied by rows of typical suburban plats facing the non-freeway side of the hill. Just after a small pet cemetery the path connects with the James River valley where one can venture below the concrete pylons of the freeway and cross to either the well kept paths of the nature center, or continue to the narrow trails along the James and eventually Springfield Lake.

We didn't make it all the way to Springfield lake that day, although I visited by car on sev-



22



26



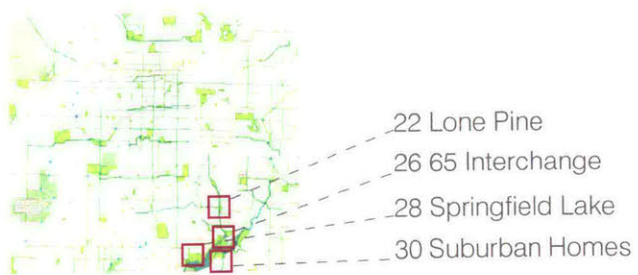
28



30

mile #

FIG 3.20 Gardens: Pristine/Terrain, Generic/Suburbs



Park Path



River Road

eral other occasions. It is worth discussing here a little about the South Eastern suburban fabric, or gardens, because they are prominently form the new city edge. Adjacent are the territories such as Lone Pine and Springfield Lake which provide rearticulated civic space, or version of ideal wilderness, less geometrically formal and more responsive to the large scale natural systems with which it contends. In contrast the quality of the interior suburban gardens remains new, the trees aren't fully grown in, the roads are more formal, with shiny white curbs, and brick mailboxes. The line between city and country is more distinct, marked by the sharp edge of a fence or the clear line between landscaped and open field. Interspersed between new developments are the newer borderlands fabric, with larger lots and attention to the limits of the terrain—they offer welcome breaks amongst the homogeneity of the suburban tracts, returning to the land to sense of openness and flexibility. Where formal preserves do not exist informal uses of the periphery emerge. These new suburban areas are on the edge of the pristine wilderness, endless space on the other side of the cul-de sac or just around the corner. The recreation spaces are implied and/or found spaces of the locality. For the adventurous citizen this is indeed the best of both worlds, between city and country.

The Dominant Landscape

As we have seen, the city—the spaces of artificiality in Springfield are thin pockets external to the dominance of the terrain. Conceived in this frame, the strips are external to the macro scale of the land, the domestic are internalized by it—in this reading the dominance of the land, of the wilderness is never overcome by the materiality of the city, it merely carves its space into a vast network of continuity.

Broadacres called for the integration between form and land, foreseeing an endless variety imparted by the terrain, although Wright's vision did not call for platted streets, but open 1 acre plots. The spirit of the capacity of the environment embedded in Broadacres design is not lost in Springfield despite patches of density. If we pay attention, it is the comingling of historical process and natural features which produces a dynamic—produces continuous and identifiable territories across the city. A layered sequence of old peripheries marking transitions between the fabric of gardens, as if the city is constantly shedding its layers reaching to a next point of equilibrium. It would be a mistake to suppose that each suburban tract is alike, even if the houses are similar, their location is not. In Springfield these nuances are occasionally drawn out, but the underlay of the terrain has not been a critical source of form or order for the city. Often it is an accident, or the efforts of reclamation. While in the interior, rehabilitation is the imaginable future, the exterior, the new periphery poses a new opportunity.

The paved interlude belies a larger cultural irony in the expectations of residential and commercial space. There is not a neighborhood without a tree, or nearness to greenery. The residential environment is a coveted space of the city infused with an ideal about where a house should be (near a school), how it should look (pitched roofs with yards and porches), the quality of the space should feel (secure). These values are not explicitly stated, but accepted as a social norm, and in Springfield, appear as the baseline expectation implicitly driving the piecemeal decision making process. People until more recently have placed few if any of these demands on their public environment, which raises a question, how can a culture so fastidious and clear in their expectations of one environment have so few expectations of the other? What can we make of the thin presence of a generic city of strips that is external to the heart of the city?

FIG 3.21 “*The Dominant Landscape*”
The drawing opposite shows the dominance of the residential landscape in comparison to the white areas which represent the commercial strips and downtown square.

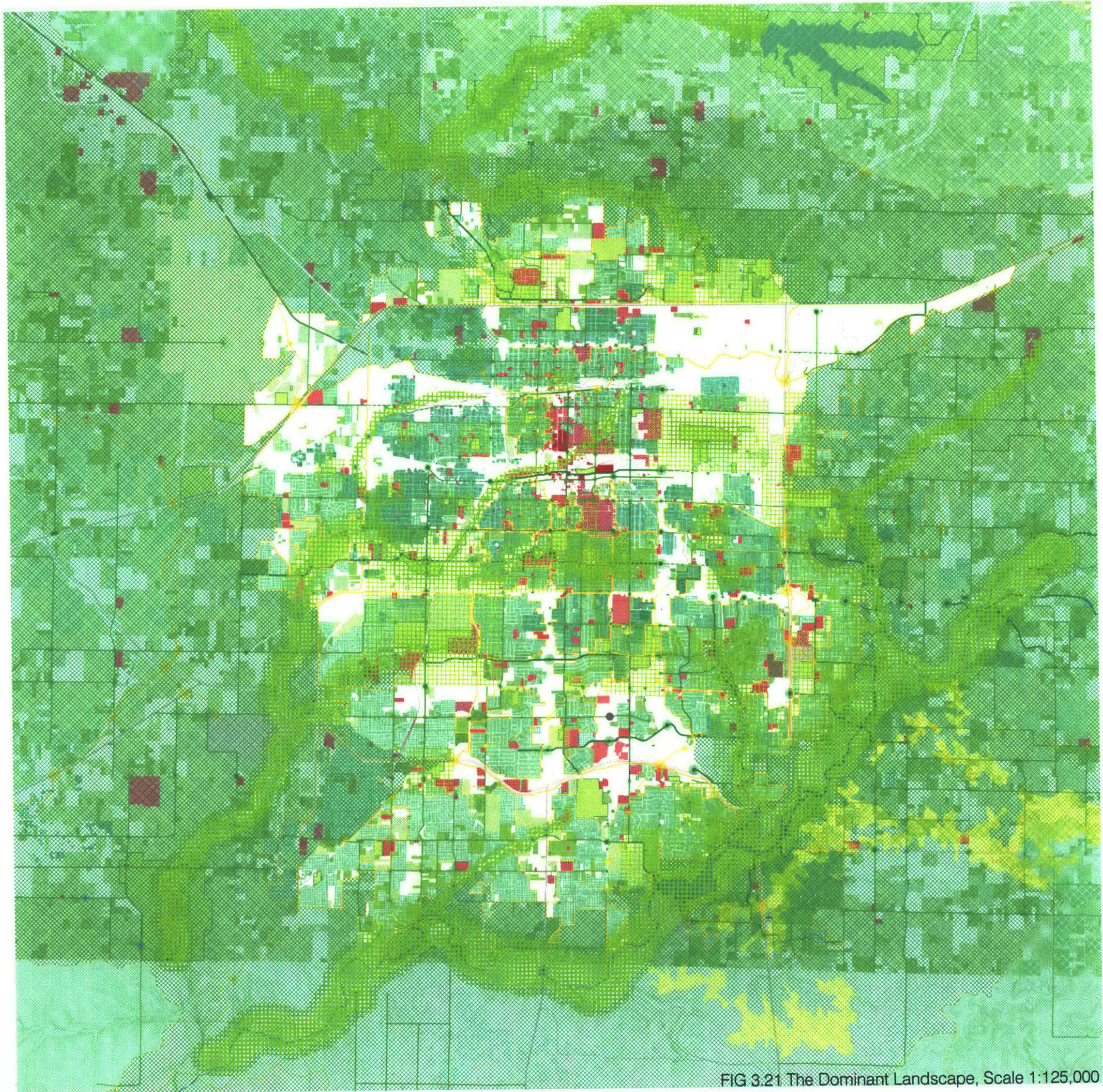


FIG 3.21 The Dominant Landscape, Scale 1:125,000

Wilderness 3 STRIPS

Most people drive down the strip, with a destination in mind—with the exception of high schoolers cruising on a Saturday night (which seems to happen less and less)—they park their car, run hurriedly inside focused on the task at hand. It is a mission of function until you enter the front door, at which point the experience of the task dominates. From being in a car on the road (a car adjusted to your preferences), to a brief interlude in the parking lot, to the interior you might simply be grocery shopping, grabbing lunch, or dropping off the dry cleaning, or you may be entering a 4 star restaurant, a night club, the DMV, or a church. The strip for all its banality and practicality is very probably the most creative/imaginative space in Springfield, except for the fact that aesthetically and physically it is also the most generic. Despite the aesthetic complaints, where else is there such freedom of program, and use? Where else is there such little demand on what the right form/aesthetic of a building is—in failing to please the measure of enduring beauty, the strip is allowed the license of constant reinvention, constant improvement and reinterpretation, fluctuation of the real-estate market (the strip is different than big-box development), the vernacular aesthetic whims of the country and the region. We don't love the strip so we have no problems modifying it—this is valuable inventive space, a foil to the desired stability of home, the real estate equivalent to skyscraper. Thus the interior of the strip is a portal, drawing people in and out, detaching itself from the material reality of its environs. Functionally there is little wrong with this oft criticized typology.

So it is not the interior or use that is the cause of criticism, it is the exterior experience, or lack of exterior experience that often bothers, at most dressed up by façade decoration and a transition in parking pavers around the building—but for people who want a charming piazza filled with activity they won't find it outside. However, they might when they go in. The contrast between interior and exterior, never ceases to surprise, and during my observations on several occasions I walked from open desolation into a bustling café, the activity of a nursing center, or into a tranquil courtyard.

The strips are external to the dominant landscape of the city, the tranquil gardens of domesticity and the open land of the periphery, and yet as a legible environment, they comprise a significant collective experience, defining of living in Springfield. Like the residential fabric of the city, the strips are their own continuous landscape and possess their own qualities akin to those of wilderness, and similarly the strip environment can be read as territories that correspond to historic process. Unlike the residential fabric it is difficult here to find a pristine well ordered landscape. Usually we are left with the saturated, elastic environment of a paved space filled with boxes and signs, or the liminal expanse of paved lots, service alleys, and truck loading docks. When we do find an attempt at the picturesque it is often in the form of architectural style—the popular French Chateau, the Monticello, or the rustic post-and beam, and a parking lot that has been improved with medians, tree planting, and old time street lights.

Aside from the orderly tree decoration, even at its most diminutive state unkempt nature finds ways to emerge. This nuancing is the ulterior capacity of the generic city—it stealthy engages. The tactical space of open lots, sidewalks(?), overhangs, and drive through are interwoven with the creep of trees, sinkholes, swales, and grass which offer unlikely spaces for collective habitation—the fragmented wilderness—the other to the generic box. Surface and foliage exert power over the artificial (homogeneity) in varying degrees and in doing so open crevices for use and personalization. It is easy to be lost adrift amidst the field of replicated buildings and rows of cars—imagery of the general suburban complaint, the zone described by Margaret Crawford as the ubiquitous invisible public space, or as placeless by

FIG 3.22 “Strip Proximity” shows the strip landscape, the grey nets are .5 mile catchments.

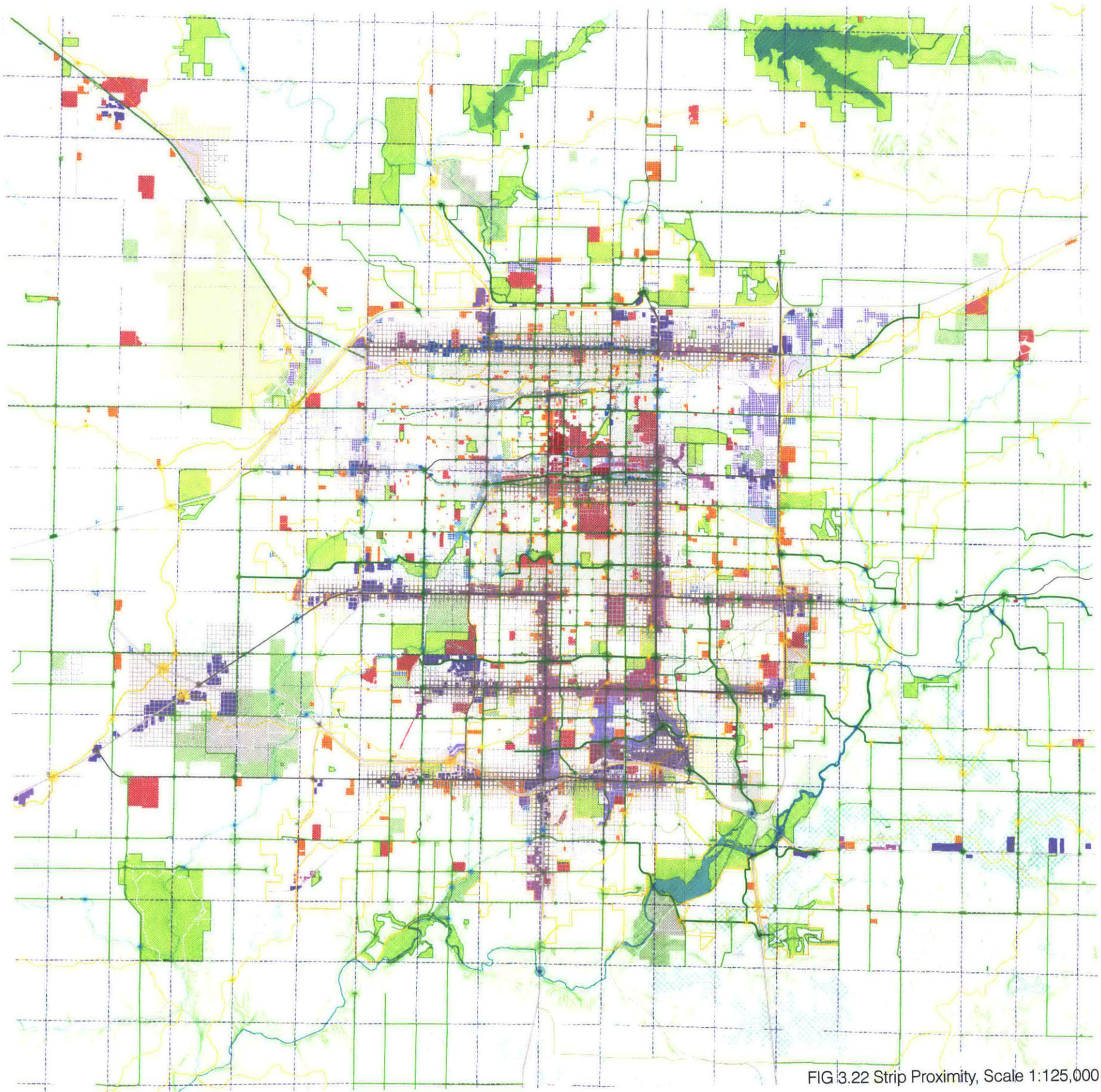


FIG 3.22 Strip Proximity, Scale 1:125,000

the new urbanists. It is indeed the action of drifting itself which defines and disorients, swimming in a sea of space people wade through—it is the choice of paths which makes their city and it is the objects of activity which they seek that draws them through. In a sea of space it is not the continuity of enclosure but the continuity or sequence of destination. In a sea of space a person seeks a point of clarity but often forgets the journey by which they arrive.

Traversing the Strip Landscape

I have suspected for some time that the banality of the strip environment is partly a matter of perception, part lifestyle choice (its hard to get people to walk anywhere), and partly true. During January I made some observations/inquiries, further confirming my suspicions and expanding the explanation for why these places work. A 24 mile trek through the generic fabric of city strips perceptually confirms the existence of an entirely new reality/landscape composed of fleeting spaces where raw nature seeps through in the form of sinkholes; swales, or the interlude of the residential groves of trees; a catchment analysis reveals that 50% of people leave within a ½ mile of a commercial strip node, 75% live within a mile (perfectly walkable distances); and yes truth be told, driving down the strip it is hard to claim there is beauty and charm in the perceived similarity of the lot spaces and appliqué facades, however, I am beginning to think the banality is balanced or offset with the creativity of the interior/exterior duality.

It is the actual event of the “trek” that I would like to focus on most, for it revealed several illuminating observations. Viewing the evolution of the strip and the commercial road is viewing an evolution of cultural convention, self critique, and normative traps (similar in fabric types as well). the wide, median-less, sidewalk-less roads of the mid-century are now (sometimes) reformed boulevards of the millennium with planted lawn and sidewalks, responding to a demand for a better ordered environment that accounts for human activity. Similar to the grouping of age and form types the strips have their own conceptual permutations: Generic (1950-1980), reformed (1980-2012) and forgotten (1920-1950).

Each is nuanced by the terrain, the massing, the temporal activity, and their own time orientations generated from materiality, location, and function. Conceptually as wilderness, these spaces reference the concepts of pristine, saturated, and liminal, which take their own sense and form relative to the strip function.

Walking in Springfield?

Sunday night I was planning a driving survey of Springfield’s strip/commercial fabric when it occurred to me that if I was in a “normal” city making field observations, I would of course go out for long walks, sit and sketch, take thoughtful photographs. Why not walk here? Usually in Springfield I am outside recreationally running or biking, or at home sitting on the front porch, and as a kid playing in the yard. In the city maybe if I’m downtown, or at a particular sporting event but I’ve never actually walked through a commercial area continuously, even my own prejudice is illustrative of a perception of life style possibility. Planning the route, we were concerned about major intersection crossings, although my brother assured me that at all the major intersections had new crosswalks and pedestrian lights had been installed over the past few years—and we figured if there was a section of road with no strip frontage we could always just cut through a neighborhood.

FIG 3.23 *The red line shows the paths that were explored by walking. Nearly 20 miles of the strip landscape was covered by foot.*

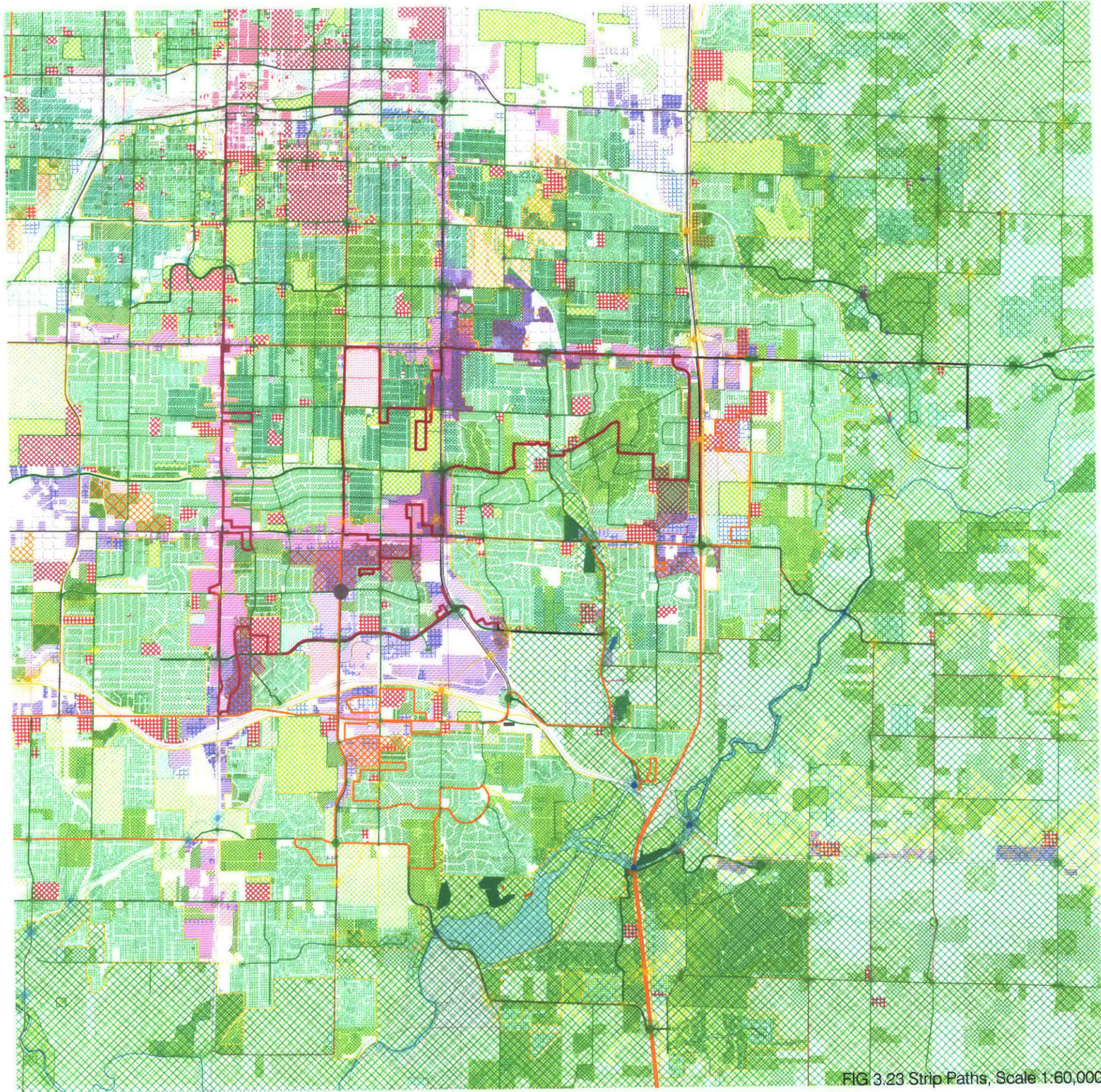


FIG 3.23 Strip Paths, Scale 1:60,000

Elastic Generic 1955-1970's

The next day we set out, walking west on Sunshine street, making sure to start after driving under highway 65—which on Sunshine is nearly insurmountable to anyone not in a vehicle. Luckily for us it was a fairly warm January day (35-45 degrees), sunny and blue skies, a saturated backdrop where even a power line begins to take on its own elegance. We started at an old Video-Update leaving our car in the vacant lot. Although there were few sidewalks, there was plenty of space to walk, the fronts of the parking lots were mostly empty, because people had parked closer to the building if they could, sometimes a wide grassy berm or swale. These surfaces were never continuous, there was always a curb dividing properties, or a change in the age or type of surface (the difference between new and old asphalt is quite distinct, one is deep oily black, the other gray and weathered with black veins of patch running across the surface. Patched together the walk was down a makeshift boulevard of sorts. Boulevard because it was wide, with strips of green lawn at the edges, cars and the activity of people entering and exiting the parking lots. Other moments the boulevard was empty after the wave of traffic released from the stop light—a sort of ebb and flow of activity became noticeable after a time, more pronounced at the intersection and thin or non-existent down the stretch, to visible emptiness looking down the long quite residential streets.

But sheltered by the berms and the front edges of the lots the traffic (when it emerged) faded into the background receding in an out of the silence and the wind—we found our own unhindered space somewhere in between the road and the strip. I say space here, which is significant, we did not travel along the prescribed line of a sidewalk (which if it existed was 3-4' wide at best) in between building edge and street, but moved much more freely within an area of 6'-20' sometimes climbing up the gentle slope of a berm to walk on its ridge, or into the folds of a swale 4' below street level, or simply stepping over a curb from asphalt lot to asphalt. We occupied the spaces that informally employ natural material, mostly out of function and availability, rarely as a manicured landscape—it was this informal intrusion of nature which generated a peculiar variety, from its casual predictability. Like the buildings of the strip itself, no one cares enough about these spaces to make them traditionally or predictably beautiful—they are functional/tactical spaces of transition, where the advantages and availability of the land lends a subdued seed of creativity. It became evident after a mile, that what we were really doing (by traveling on foot), was traversing an entirely new landscape—the unexplored pedestrian landscape of the Springfield strip.

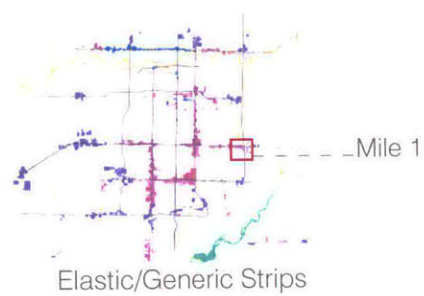
Old Peripheries, Sink Holes, and Buildings *Evidence of Process*

Similar to biking the half and quarter miles bore new significance by foot, graduating from breaks every 30 seconds to 3-5 minute increments, producing more spatial variety than one might guess, and the time to pay attention to small clues. For instance, I had always noticed, on Sunshine, Campbell, National, or Glenstone, the cities major thoroughfares, when you start at the edge, of the countryside, move into the “high intensity strip”, then somewhere after Sunshine a little around battlefield the strip's intensity starts to lull, houses face onto the street and the continuity of the strip is broken by groves of trees. With some study these changes are explainable by understanding the cities pattern of growth and expansion, each commercial strip marking the edge of the old periphery, usually around this area you either find things that seem out of place in the middle of town, like the national cemetery, or a large power transformer on the corner of Glenstone and Battlefield—one of the cities busiest commercial intersections. Glenstone is the only anomaly, the worst strip if you will because it feels like a highway (by car, and even more so on foot)—but in fact it used to be the old space of highway 65. On foot these nuances become more pronounced, no longer split second visual shifts in experience, but minutes long changes in physical space, where you

A note about the image arrangement. ; the strip images are presented by mile and in four directions North, South, East, West. The images on the bottom right corner show “fragments” which are referred to in the Path text. A drawing legend locates the strip type across the city.



FIG 3.24 Mile 1: Elastic Strips



Lot Edge



Sidewalk Fragment



Sinkhole/Billboard

actually experience or legibly comprehend the ways in which the environment seeps in, to even the most dematerialized/desensitized part of the city.

As we continued down sunshine another mystery was solved—occasionally in the middle of the high intensity strip raw patches are just left open and undeveloped—this condition is more pronounced on the strip because of the contrast, but the same pattern occurs across the city. Why? These patches are actually sinkholes, undevelopable, unstable land. If you walk instead of drive you start to see the clues. First you can always tell a sinkhole by its round shape, typically fenced in with silver chain link with a warning sign. In a few locations billboards have been added around the perimeter in an attempt to mask, or make economic use of the land, but usually these spaces are just open. Walking down sunshine and the next day on Campbell we encountered many of these spaces, next to movie theaters, office parks, and freeway intersections—these are almost like the aesthetic foil to the easily appealing layers of limestone rock—gnarly groves spread across the city.

Two miles into our trek we finally reached the sunshine Glenstone intersection, where we had our first encounter with another pedestrian (who we actually saw later again that day—not many people were out walking). The intersection is one of the busier in the city, nearby St. Johns hospital which employs 7,000 people, and home the 10 story plaza office towers, there is a steady flow of four lane traffic and 6 across at the intersection. After running across the street (there are pedestrian lights, but it's a little nerve racking to walk across what feels like a freeway—on the other hand it did have a tinge of adventurousness). We stopped for a coffee at a new place we'd been hearing about, and after learning a few odd facts about the coffee culture of Springfield and the mid-west (apparently the mid-west is becoming a coffee roasting mecca, and the state wide barista competitions Springfield regularly beats St. Louis and Kansas City) we walked towards aunt Martha's pancake house. Since the 1950's this small red farmhouse structure has served as a local spot from the Jubilee days¹⁹—even the plot it sits on feels weathered. The surface is gravel, no curbs, with two mature trees sitting well in front of the small restaurant. The informality of the ground, much like the saturated residential areas is characteristic of this period of development from the 1950's to the 70's. This is significant because the quality of these spaces, their texture and grain is distinct. They tend to be saturated, not by nature, but by haphazard artificiality, telephone poles and power lines, signs, sale banners, and flag poles. They are the original vernacular strip, what Jackson describes as flexible and temporary, anchored only by the permanence of the road.²⁰ The structures are low, casual, with now aged material, often wood painted, or maybe redone in stucco. Their parking lots are grossly oversized with cracked aging paving, often without any lines for parking drawn at all. The curbs are few, and the landscaping consists of swales impressed into the ground, rather than built up by a curb. The effect of the level surface is expansive, the experience of openness sometimes alienating, but sometimes unexpectedly serene.

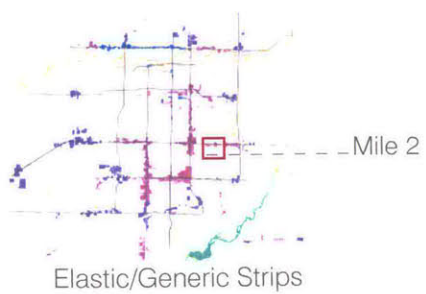
Behind the Pancake House we encountered one such cluster of wide expansive lots and swales, and a small road—what we began to refer to as sneaky streets, nearly invisible roads behind a strip development where small businesses and offices locate—essentially a mediating space between the strip and the domestic gardens. From the backside of the lot you could see the traffic of Glenstone, but you could not sense it. Instead we were enveloped into a space within a space, a quiet sliver with few people and the sounds of birds, maybe a few idling cars in the distance—I wouldn't call it a terrain vague per se, because it

¹⁹ Much of its myth comes from the influx of country music musicians to perform on the "Country Music Jubilee" which aired between 1950's-70's. It is rumored that singers such as Willie Nelson who got rejected worked there as a dishwasher to make the fare for the greyhound.

²⁰ Jackson. Vernacular Landscape.



FIG 3.25 Mile 2: Elastic Strips/Old Peripheries



Informal Path



Sinkhole

is not a declining or obviously industrial, but I would describe it as an internal space that is external to the city, only it is somewhere between ideal beauty and liminality, its relation to a wilderness is one of serenity and one of scale.

On axis with this particular road was the national cemetery. Neither of us had ever been inside, we had only seen the stone walls from Glenstone and the Battlefield mall. Entering we found the epitome of our prior experience, the contrast of the quiet rows of white grave-stones, with the distant view of billboards and strip signage beyond the wall.

The Battlefield Mall *New City*

Our walk continued around the new campus of Saint John's and south on National, to the intersection of battlefield road where the strip begins to gradually transition from a casual high intensity, to a larger scale of casual regional commerce. In every direction there is a density of structures preceded by the drift of lot spaces. The road is heavily trafficked, there is a strong sense here of activity and unlike the earlier part of our walk, and we had to watch for cars turning in and out of driveways and down side streets. Facades range from rehabilitated main street, to older stucco or textured concrete, to newer bases of stacked stone and wooden paneling. On battlefield you get the whole range of strip legacy, a kind of pluralism if you will, even if my architectural training can find little here of design significance, it is a montage of how pop-culture has manifested in Springfield. If there were a time square in the city, this would be it. Only there are no large bill boards or big crowds, or live broadcasts. Instead there are bench advertisement, a broken sidewalk, revolving billboards, and rows of parked cars. But entering inside of any one of these eateries, or the mall there is the unmistakable buzz of activity, people waiting for a table at Panera, the Macaroni Grill, or a local Vietnamese café and the McDonalds Playland always seems to be full.

We made our way through battlefield, checking now behind the buildings for the sneaky roads—which we found here and at much greater depth and better articulated. The pattern by now was clear, commercial in front, office in back, and at the offices trees were introduced and treated more like a residential street, soft, comfortable, and secluded.

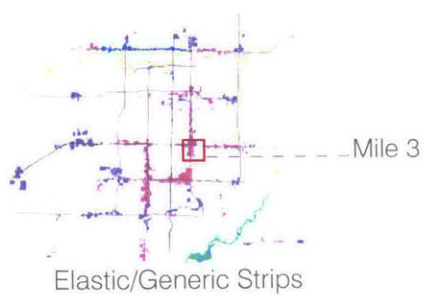
Eventually we confronted the mall. As a driver the mall parking lot is already overwhelming. As a pedestrian it is an equal traverse, its outer edges open empty, and vacuous. Standing in the middle of the lot is much like standing in an open field with the activity of the city in the distance. The mall is easily the largest building in the city, and luckily for Springfield it is not dead or abandoned but thriving and now marks the mid-point of the city

Strip Terrain *Fragments*

By the second day of walking there were several things for which we now looked: sink holes, sidewalk fragments, sneaky streets, and drainage elements (swales, berms, large ditches, the new Springfield public works stamps). While these are fairly banal items, however, they were new found objects that by car were unnoticed, but also offered clues to the functionality of the environment. The sidewalks too close to the road were actually more uncomfortable than walking in the lot space because at the street edge we were too close to traffic; the drainage elements offered an interesting place to sit or climb and often took strange textures and when empty were like passage ways through the city. Sneaky streets were everywhere, as were these transitions between strips and neighborhoods—they were often empty quiet spaces in view of the active city. The sidewalk fragments expanded to include fragments of public gestures. For instance plazas around buildings that died into parking lots, lone pedestrian bridges, benches placed in awkward and little frequented places, strange courtyards carved into strip centers.



FIG 3.26 Mile 3: Elastic Strips/Transitions



Open Lot Space



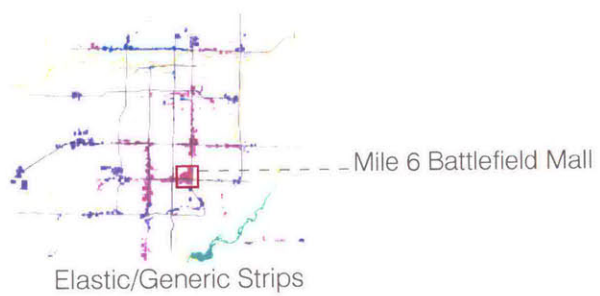
Transitional Road/Commercial

These gestures all indicated some interest in creating a public realm, but equally visible was the inadequacy of traditional tactics. The issue of scale alone is enough to dwarf the 4' sidewalk, let alone the prohibitive cost of retrofitting the entire city. (or maintaining a sidewalk for a more limited density of people—the trade for the lower density of city and country is also a trade of public services and demand cost ratio—intensive expenditures are simply not warranted everywhere, investments go to roads, basic infrastructures, and education, before the long term maintenance of sidewalks, hence a strong reliance on public private partnerships). But privately held there was no shortage of paving and continuous surface—even the problem of the floating plaza was intriguing. Imaginably people go to movies in the summer and sit outside here, despite the fact that it faces out into space, it still provides a need, a place to congregate in the city near an activity (and in this light it seems a shame that the commercial environment is does not have the same demands of the interior civic programs—why is it that a park is only appropriate next to a house?). If anything the zone of the building is not lost amidst the loose strip fabric, in fact it becomes more significant. The strip is filled with objects of activity, places people frequent on a regular basis, places around which people organize their time. In some cases such as eating, movies, or a coffee shop people are looking to linger, other visits are practical, such as grocery shopping or dry cleaning. Parking is well served for the practical user, the environment for lingering is questionable, and an environment for walking is generally taboo, unless walking from your parked car.

The latter two points are most perplexing. Going back to the earlier knowledge gained from interviews, where people felt Springfield lacked an exhilarating cityness, lacks a diversity of places to go, or places to go and walk around besides the downtown, lacks an urban clarity or legibility. If I had learned anything from my experiences walking and biking, it was that the sequence of circulation was typically detached from the street edge and the building, it was often non-linear and interspersed with secluded nature paths, and that places which appeared disconnected were often in close proximity, but not perceptibly— and gradually continuities of fragments after some frequency begin to create legibility of terrain, historic process, and informal activities. While these were personal and circumstantial discoveries in direct relation to my specific path, I would venture that my experience in general, of fragments or surprising continuities is typical of living in Springfield and contributes to a lack of collective legibility or an active understanding of spatial proximity. However, the sharp contrast between types of space—the greenery of the domestic gardens, against the teetering poles of power lines and the asphalt of the strips offered a peculiar texture and granular composition, ranging from fine to course and. At its best this was an ability to move from lake to park to best buy to Movie Theater, and right back to the periphery at its worst it is the mental separation of the northern and southern parts of town. That in Springfield these layers were in such proximity as to impart variety rather than banality or diversity rather than separation, but they lacked clear links or legible relationships. If anything from my paths I had learned that the idea of a path itself in Springfield appeared to be either limited or missing—and thus so was the fine grained experience of the city.



FIG 3.27 Mile 6: Battlefield Mall



Parking Lot, Spring

4 Transformations

Transformations is composed of analytical spatial explorations which are a synthesis of theory and observation. The intention is to generate a critical understanding of Springfield's city form and to interpret it as a spatial dialogue between wilderness and city. Four series of drawings are presented each exploring a single theme across the three "wilderness" scales and concludes with a fourth landscape, which is the product of multi-scalar interactions.

The following section presents four series of drawings which are spatial investigations and synthesis of field observations, research, and theory. Each series contains four drawings, separated by “wilderness” type previously established and observed in Part 3. Here a 4th landscape is added that superimposes the three scales to generate a composite reading of form and spatial relations. These drawings are both exploratory and revelations, each one uncovering a spatial principle that is manifested in the city form and considering the continuity of their relation “Transformations” is primarily graphic and aims to generate a more detailed and projective spatial comprehension of Springfield by layering field observations, research, and theory which build on the prior chapters. Each drawing series examines four scales, beginning with the three wildernesses identified in paths: 1 Terrain/Infrastructure; 2 Domestic Gardens; 3 Strips/Squares (city), generating a 4th landscape which is the product of their interactions, a composite or superimposition of three scales.

These drawings are both exploratory and revelations, each one considering the relationship between city form and terrain as an ongoing dialogue. By separating and analyzing the city at 4 different scales, the series convey both the internal logic of each landscape and their interrelations as a whole. A multi-scalar spatial comprehension is developed articulating historical process and the interactions of in the current city. Simultaneously these drawings project a method for reading the mid-size city and how we might begin to view its form, not as a centralized polarity, but as a connective net that is ordered by the concrete fact and cultural ideal of the wilderness.

Wilderness 1 *Terrain/Infrastructure*; (most closely associated with the unspoiled pastoral ideal); addresses large scale systems applying conceptual insight from the multi-scalar approach of landscape and urbanism and landscape theory which is attentive to the interrelations between historic, economic, and natural process.

Wilderness 2 *Domestic Gardens* intermediate scale of domestic gardens—the grain at which people live and associate with the middle landscape, closely associated with individual human desires and city form—the location where someone chooses to reside reflects their desired relationship to family, community, city, beauty.

Wilderness 3 *Strips/Squares (City)* the scale of concentrated city development, external to the natural landscape, associated with reality, modernity, and economy

Below is a summary of the drawing series, on the page opposite is a summary of the 3 wilderness types.

Series 1: Grid *provides a reading of the cities connective super-structure, articulating the large scale relationships between infrastructure, roads, and terrain.*

- 1 The Wilderness Grid
- 2 Undulating Garden Grid
- 3 Plateau/Strip Grid
- 4 Alternating Wilderness Grid

Series 2: Wilderness *develops ideas for considering massing, terrain, texture, and density as physical qualities with cultural meaning*

- 1 Pristine/Saturated/Liminal
- 2 Generic
- 3 Reformed/Elastic/Forgotten
- 4 Transitions

Series 3: Collective Function *locates points of collective hierarchy, generates understanding of how and where these uses are organized across the city*

- 1 Civic Terrain
- 2 Institutional Gardens
- 3 Collective Grids
- 4 Collective Grains

Series 4: Resilience *interprets the flexibility and connectivity of space, associating spatial capacity with ownership and control*

- 1 Temporal Ridges and Valleys
- 2 Passages and Barriers
- 3 Permanence and Elasticity
- 4 Flexibility

Series 1: Grid

Each of these drawings explores the spatial relationships between the terrain and the Grid. Wilderness 1, “Wilderness Grid” draws the relationship between terrain and infrastructure revealing the resilience and continuity of the land, and how at the largest scale it has structured Springfield’s city form; Wilderness 2 “Undulating Garden Grid” shows the interior structure of the residential fabric that traverses the terrain or occupies the plateau/ridge; Wilderness 3 Plateau/Strip Grid draws the 1 mile strip grid and reveals underlying commercial logic of the 19th and 20th centuries.

The primary components of the terrain can be simply identified as topographical features, Plateaus, Hills, Ridges, Valleys, rivers, and sinkholes, but can also be conceptualized by their function—the ways in which they provide limits and continuities of settlement form. The plateaus and ridges are connective, valleys and hills provide continuity, enclosure, and limits. Sinkholes and caves are barriers and offer peculiar links to the subterranean complexity of the Ozarks. Responding to the terrain is not remarkable in and of itself, it is pragmatic, a concrete fact of city building anywhere, which can range from respectful to obtuse. In Springfield the city form is an alternation between survey grid and terrain(valley) roads—or in topographical terms an alternation between shallow ridges and valleys originating from the plateau which become more deeply eroded hills towards the south.

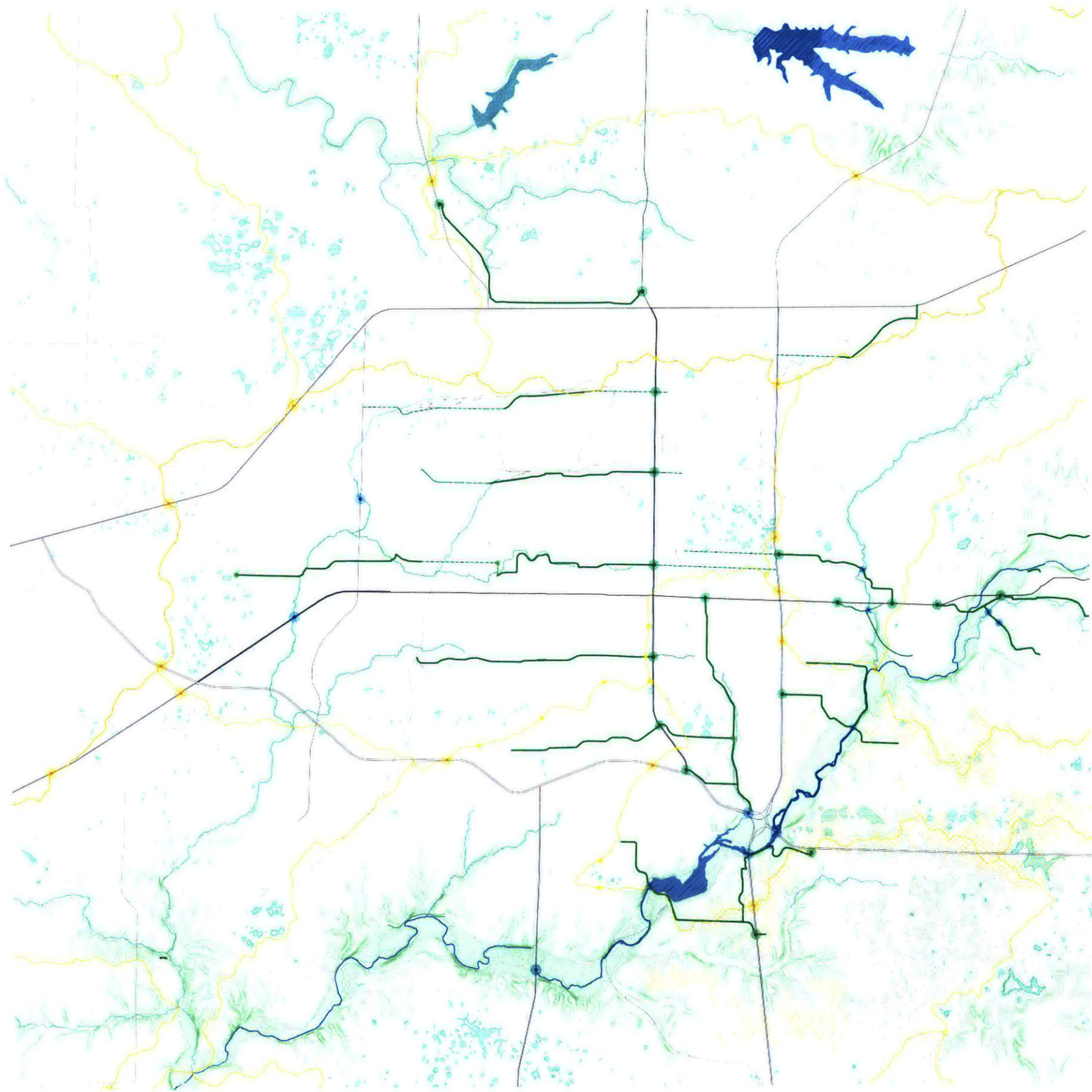
The resulting city form, a grid which appears clear but loose is in fact not loose at all, but responsive to the wilderness grid on which it sits, incorporating the terrain into an orthogonal system that provides subtle diversity—the grid offers a universal organization of space, however, the process of city building offers a variety of attitudes towards negotiating terrain, each ordering the meaning of the landscape through specific uses, materials, and sensory experience. The intersection of the three grids generates a fourth landscape of transitions, exchange, and overlapping continuities and is perhaps unwittingly poetic—a series of woven strands alternating between wilderness and city. Formally the terrain is the dominant structure, experientially this is easily missed, confused by the powerful spatial autonomy of the strips and the universal flatness of the plateau and the road.

1 Terrain/Infrastructure: The Wilderness Grid FIG 4.1

The wilderness grid of Springfield is a microcosm of the American attitude towards infrastructure, logistics, and the land.

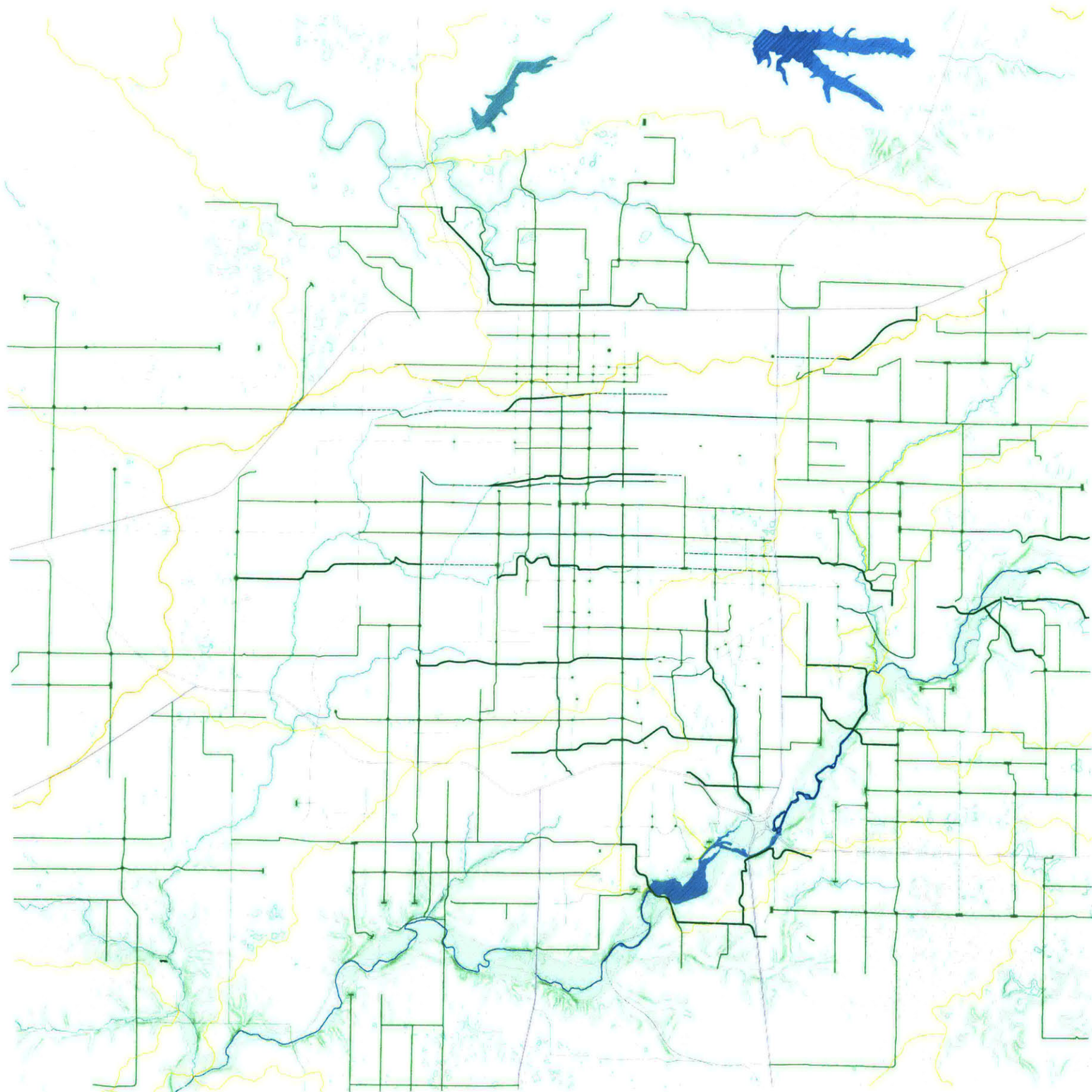
Springfield is located on a geographical spine, infrastructurally connecting Springfield to a national and regional web of logistics. I-44 spans from California to New York; US 60 from Springfield to Mississippi; US 65 Columbia, Missouri to Arkansas. At the city scale the connectivity of the terrain is a reproduction of its larger geography. The plateau generates a spine of development from which the city extends. The "terrain" roads begin from the ridge and follow the shallow valleys, mimicking the orderly systematic logic of the hills, bridging the larger James River valley sparingly. The age and directionality of the city is in clear relation to the plateau, extending on the flat ground to the southeast, only recently confronting the deeper valleys.

*All drawings are scale 1:125,000 unless
otherwise noted*



2 Undulating Garden Grid FIG 4.2

The intermediate garden grid is most flexible and diverse negotiating between terrain, orthogonal grid, city, community, and individual scale. Because the roads are multi-scalar in use and connectivity, they offer variable legibility and meanings—comingling the wilderness more directly with personal values and experience. The order of circulation hierarchy is in direct relation to proximity, continuity and terrain. $\frac{1}{2}$ mile roads extend the length of the plateau and/or the city—they gain hierarchy through spacing and continuous length. $\frac{1}{4}$ mile roads respond to terrain but also to local city features, providing internal links rather than city wide movement. Early to midcentury fabric is gridded and connective, the suburban fabric winding and full of cul-de-sacs, islands, and reservoirs.



3 Plateau/Strip Grid FIG 4.3

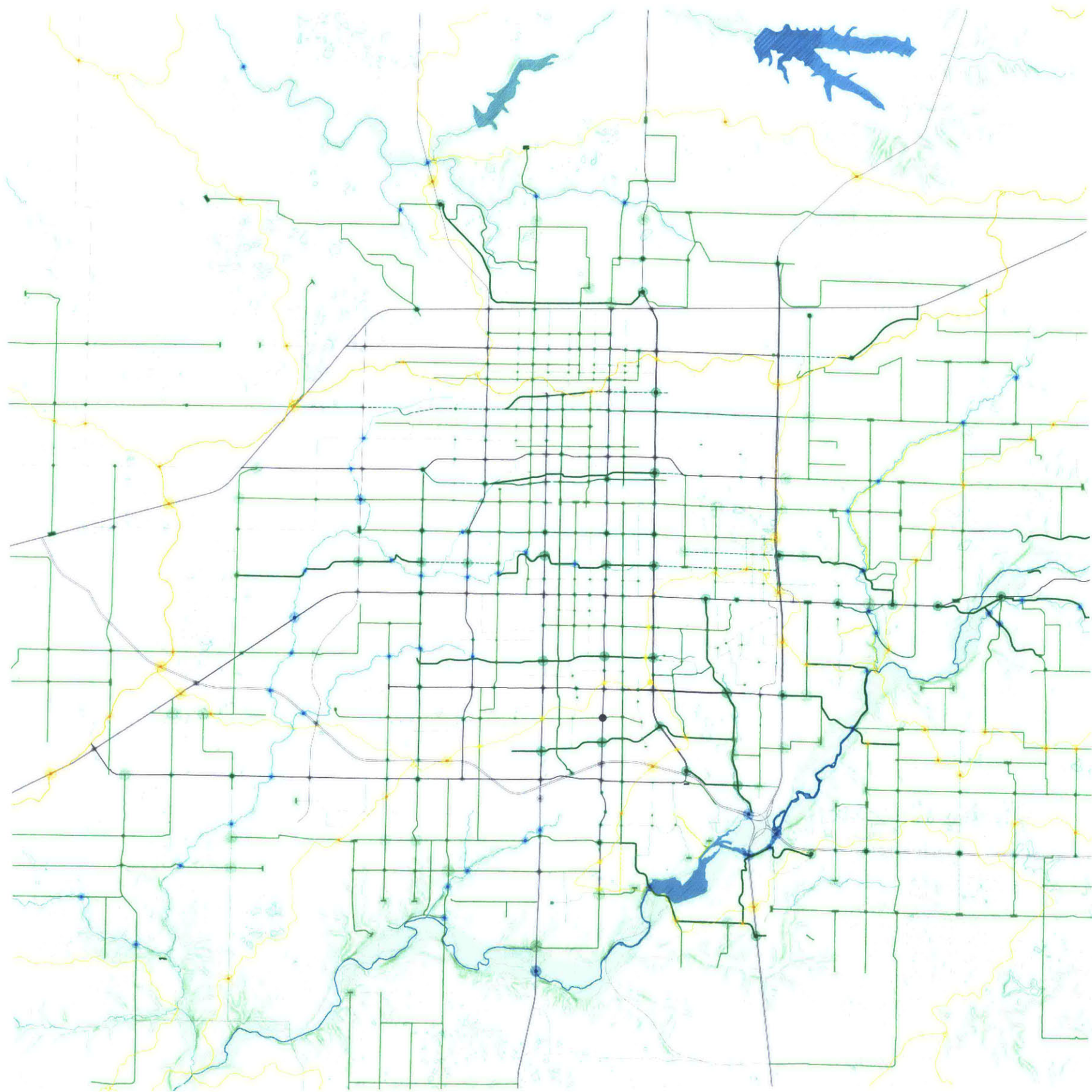
The early analogy, plateaus of modernity, hills of resilience, is exhibited most practically and clearly in the Plateau/Strip Grid. The siting of commercial centers has been an exercise of logic between flat high ground, market catchment of 1 to 2 mile modules, and proximity to large connective infrastructure. The downtown was sited on the hill adjacent to the railway filled Jordan Valley; Glenstone (the original highway 65), National, Campbell, and Kansas Expressway follow the north/south ridge creating spines for orderly commercial development. East west crossings are shorter and fewer contending with the hills more immediately—after I-44, Sunshine is the dominant access bisecting the city. Each Plateau/Strip road marks the boundary of the old city edge, which has expanded from ridge to ridge in both whole and incremental pieces. The dominant commercial nodes are located at these formerly new intersections occupying large tracts of once cheap and plentiful land, waiting for the city to grow up to the new edge and envelop the fields beyond.



4 Alternating Wilderness Grid FIG 4.4

The superimposition of grids generates a tension of hierarchies and a variety of multi-scalar transitions between grid and terrain. The experiential reading of spatial hierarchy is related to the scale and texture of the adjacent city fabric. The plateau/strip grid is vast, wide, and open—although the space is linear it reads more as a limitless expanse at each transition bleeding axially into each other. In contrast the terrain roads (with the exception of Primrose) are sheltered and dense given shape and enclosure by both the topography and vegetation or the parcelized grain of homes and canopies of trees. In the city the natural continuity is partly obscured by settlement and becomes an experience of points—parks along a stream, or the continuity is exploited and used as recreational trails in addition to parks and conservation—these areas read as slices of wilderness into the city, mostly unspoiled or dominated by land rather than settlement. The variety of the terrain roads obscures their larger systemic order, masking the strength of Springfield's plateau/valley grid, and the underlying order of the wilderness. It is not until the periphery that the land begins to dominate and settlement unravels—at these edges the superimposition of grid over natural features generates nodes/gathering points amidst the large open field, where the terrain is almost the only feature which provides enclosure.

The logic and collective function of the wilderness grid does not change from city interior to the periphery, however, the legibility of its function and clarity of its form is altered by the surrounding city, for the fabric in close proximity, what were once loose peripheral points are shaped into spaces of collective civic meaning, but the once fluid, communicative experience between plateau and valley is lost, filled in with city offering only a fragmented experience of an orderly network.



Series 2: Wilderness

The alternating wilderness grid of Springfield as a connective network is inextricable from the fabric—the roads themselves are defined not only by their connectivity, but also by the density and grain they engage. Here the density and texture of the city are parsed into their pastoral design, where the concept of wilderness embodies both sensory quality and a psychological space. The first reading shows areas of wilderness, areas where landscape dominates settlement to create a world away from the city—both positively and negatively oriented. Time orientation is significant here, both because of the sense conveyed by materiality and age, and tectonics, and massing, also because the process of construction generates territories with legible relation to the super structure of the city, read and experienced as pockets or layers that have accreted outwards, in their wake leaving holes, pockets, gaps of terrain and industry—points of collision, or transition where the continuity of the fabric momentarily breaks and disintegrates leaving the imprint of spaces which are causal unintentional, unstable, elastic, and have the peculiar vantage of looking in between. Unlike the nodal clarity of an intersection these spaces range in scale from 300' foot swaths between strips and homes, to valleys of acreages between the suburban edge and the ridges of the James river valley. It is difficult to place these spaces within anyone wilderness ideal—they inhabit a rare space between imaginary and reality, where both are visible at once. These are the transitional voids of opportunity that are precariously between the possibility of their emptiness and the imminent prospect of their future.

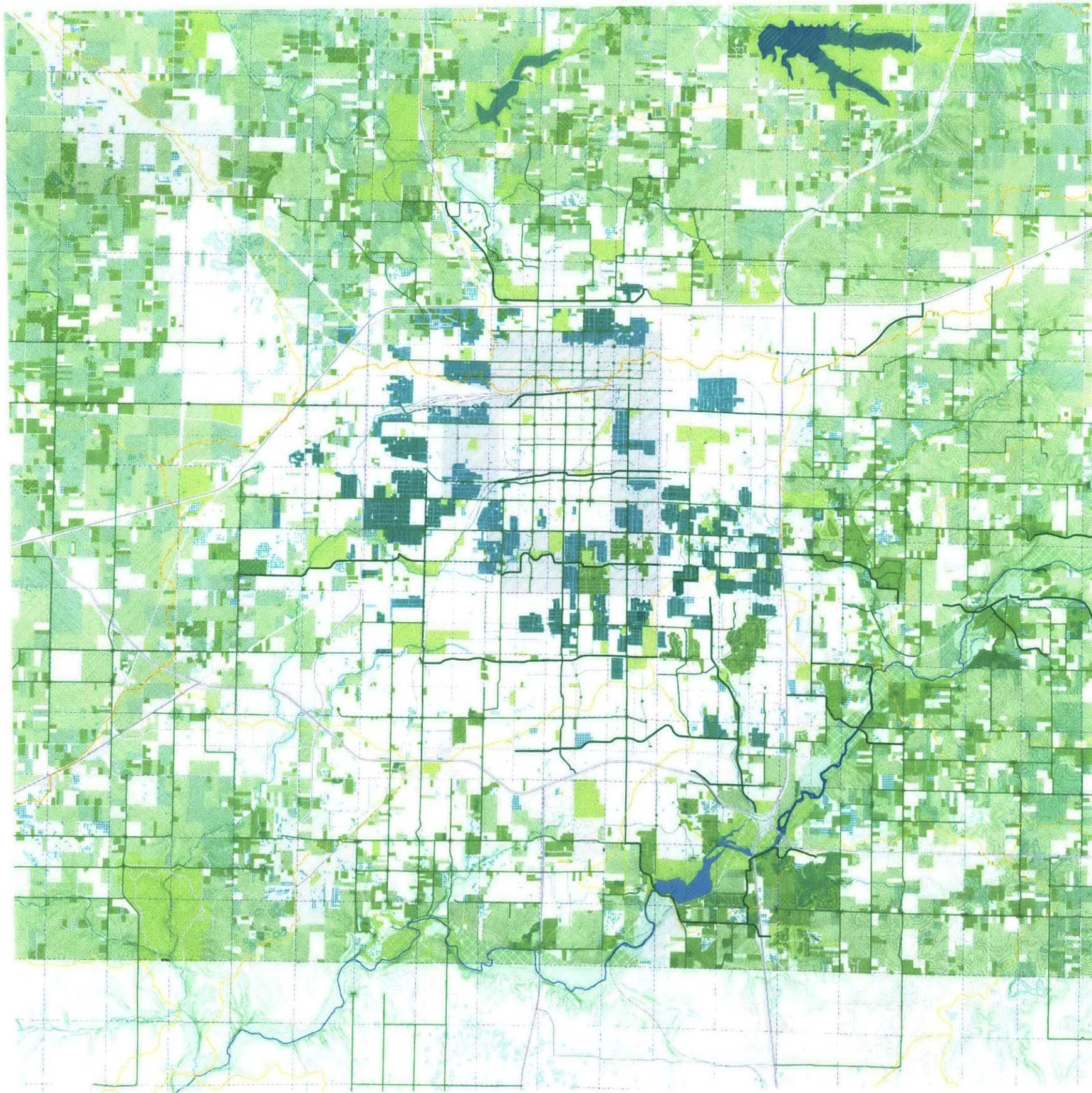
1 Pristine/Saturated/Liminal FIG 4.5

Pristine/Orderly (Broadacres) low density development that is a mix of acreages, farmland, and the occasional civic program, such as a church. The houses, unlike the generic suburban tracts are typically responsive to the terrain, cultivating the site. This type of settlement is typical of the areas surrounding Springfield. It is not until one enters the hills or travel 10 miles from the city limits that they enter a periphery of sparse population.

Pristine/Orderly (Borderlands) “Picturesque, half rural, half wild” the borderlands are distinct from Broadacres in that they are more obviously cultivated and picturesque, straddling between the platted form of the city and the openness of the country, they are also exclusively grouped together and form either subtle or explicit enclaves (much like the early borderlands, only available to the wealthy). Because these areas are monetarily entrenched they are also more inflexible or intolerant of change.

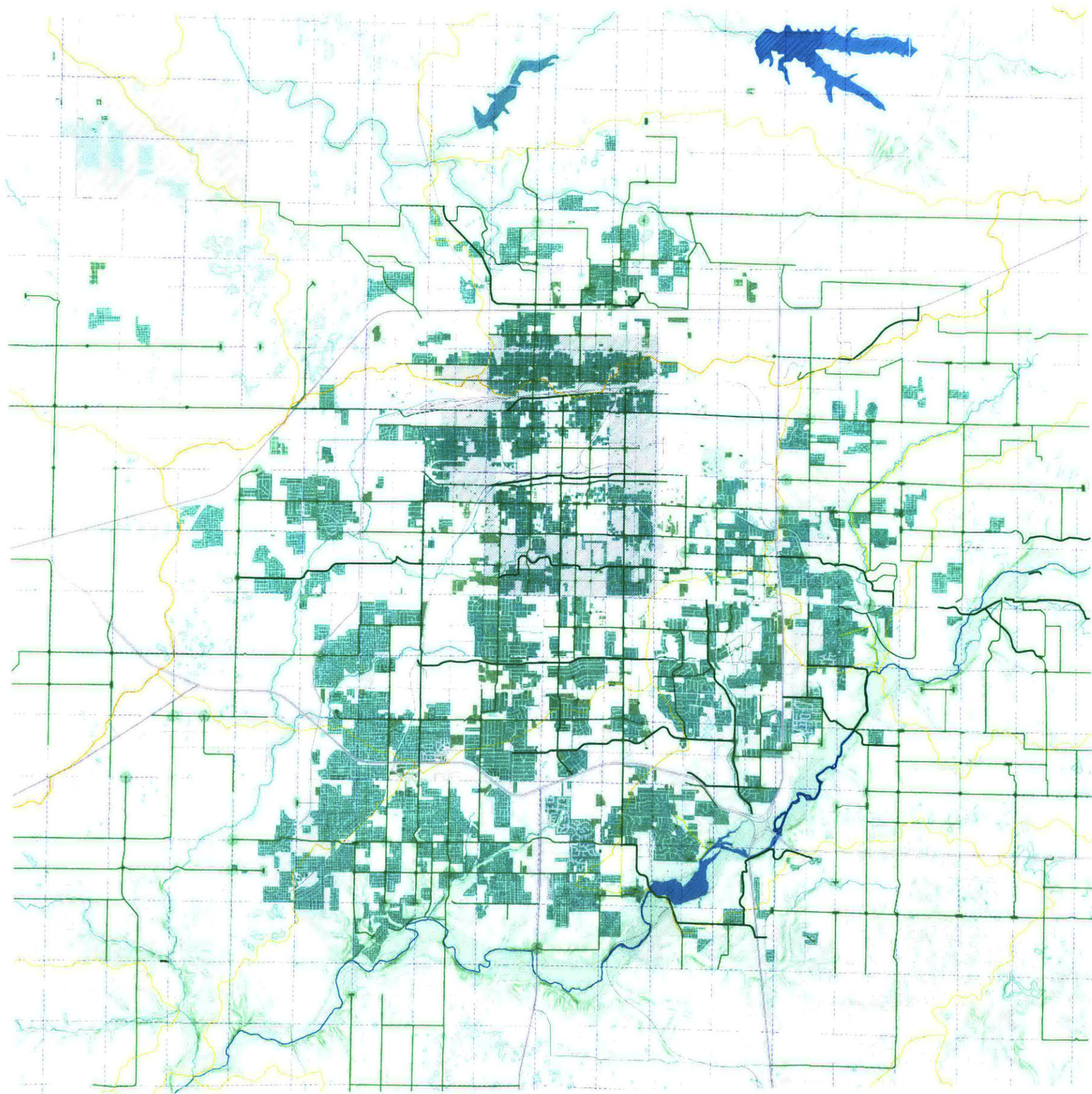
Saturated/Elastic describes the terrain and density of both the domestic landscape of wilderness 3 and the valleys and tree groves of wilderness 1—the spaces which appear unrestrained and elastic are often dense with vegetation, nearly overrun but not forgotten. The density and topography of the terrain provide shelter and immediate escape from the hard surfaces of the city, which are often just over a hilltop or a short turn away.

Liminal The liminal residential landscape is one of vacancy, abandonment, or poverty. This occurs in the older areas of Springfield, the fabric of the industrial city, but also in the periphery with small homesteads, and trailers. This condition emphasizes the complex meaning of the landscape—where the periphery of pristine beauty is also the periphery of fractured poverty, jarring any ideal reading of the utopian open land back to the reality of economic cycle and the schism between modernity and vernacular culture, which in the Ozarks has struggled or resisted adaptation to new ways of life.



2 Generic FIG 4.6

Generic (suburban)/Orderly: New suburban housing is both orderly and well kept, typified by the replication of housing type and shape common across the United States. The boundary here is of most interest. Amidst the interior these often cul-de sac developments create interior islands, barriers to passage, and micro-enclaves. On the edge of the city the boundary of fence line and open land clearly marks the perimeter of the city and the contrast between densely highly ordered homes is jarring. The generic quality of the housing is blurred here, because of the proximity to open land and pristine beauty.



3 Reformed/Generic/Apparition FIG 4.7

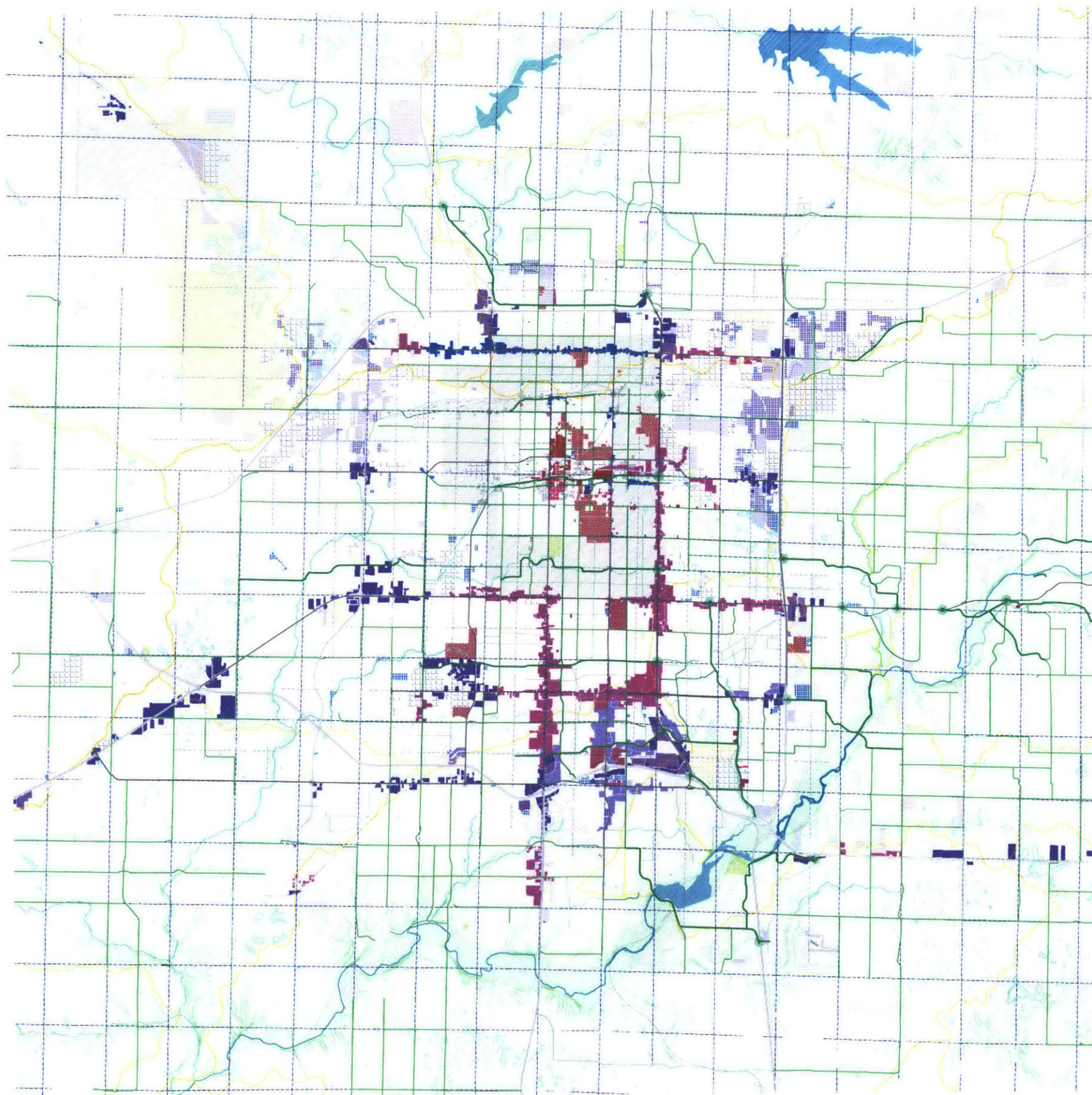
Reformed/Orderly: These strips are newly developed, learning from the “mistakes” of the mid-century vernacular by readjusting the ratio of lot to building. Deep lot spaces (6 rows of parking) have been exchanged for shallow bays which include an orderly landscape of curbs, lawn, trees, and sometimes a path leading to the building. The architecture itself often plays on a pluralist populist nostalgia, ranging from “the Monticello”, French Country, Post and Beam, or at the lesser extreme streamlined brick and stucco boxes.

Generic/Elastic: “The strip vernacular is “short lived, anxious to please, dependent on public, structurally, aesthetically, economically insecure sided along a statement of long range purpose and determination: the highway.”¹ Unrestrained elastic form is the dominant reading of the strip typology in Springfield and at large. The land in the strip context is fragmented into generic pieces observed during the paths, into large swales, concrete drains, or peculiar gutters, or large gravel percolation pits. These elements are interspersed with the flimsy, but strangely sheltered form of the strips (especially of the mid-century), where the ratio of parking lot to mass not only provides a reading of expansive elastic space, but the buildings themselves are nearly swallowed by the oversized lots, sheltered from the road, with back-sides that often bleed into the informal road of the 1/8th mile, that engages the transitional 4th landscape between strips and gardens.

Apparitions/Depositions/Overrun The paths recounted the declined condition of many of the small Scotch Irish squares in the region, which have become apparitions of a past ideal and depositions of the industrial process.² The early strips prior to 1950, are generally forgotten as well. They occur on roads which are near the downtown with good connectivity; however, with the exception of Kearney Street, they are no longer on primary routes. For instance, route 66 is now a deteriorating road outside of downtown, whose primacy has been replaced by I-44 and Chestnut expressway. The materiality and age are expectedly historical, but have declined as interest in the route has been lost. As a collective element, route 66 is an apparition of a time gone by begging for either nostalgic restoration, or reinvention.

1 JB Jackson, “The Urban Condition.” 25.

2 These towns reference the industrial process discussed by Waldheim and Berger. “Logistics Landscape.”

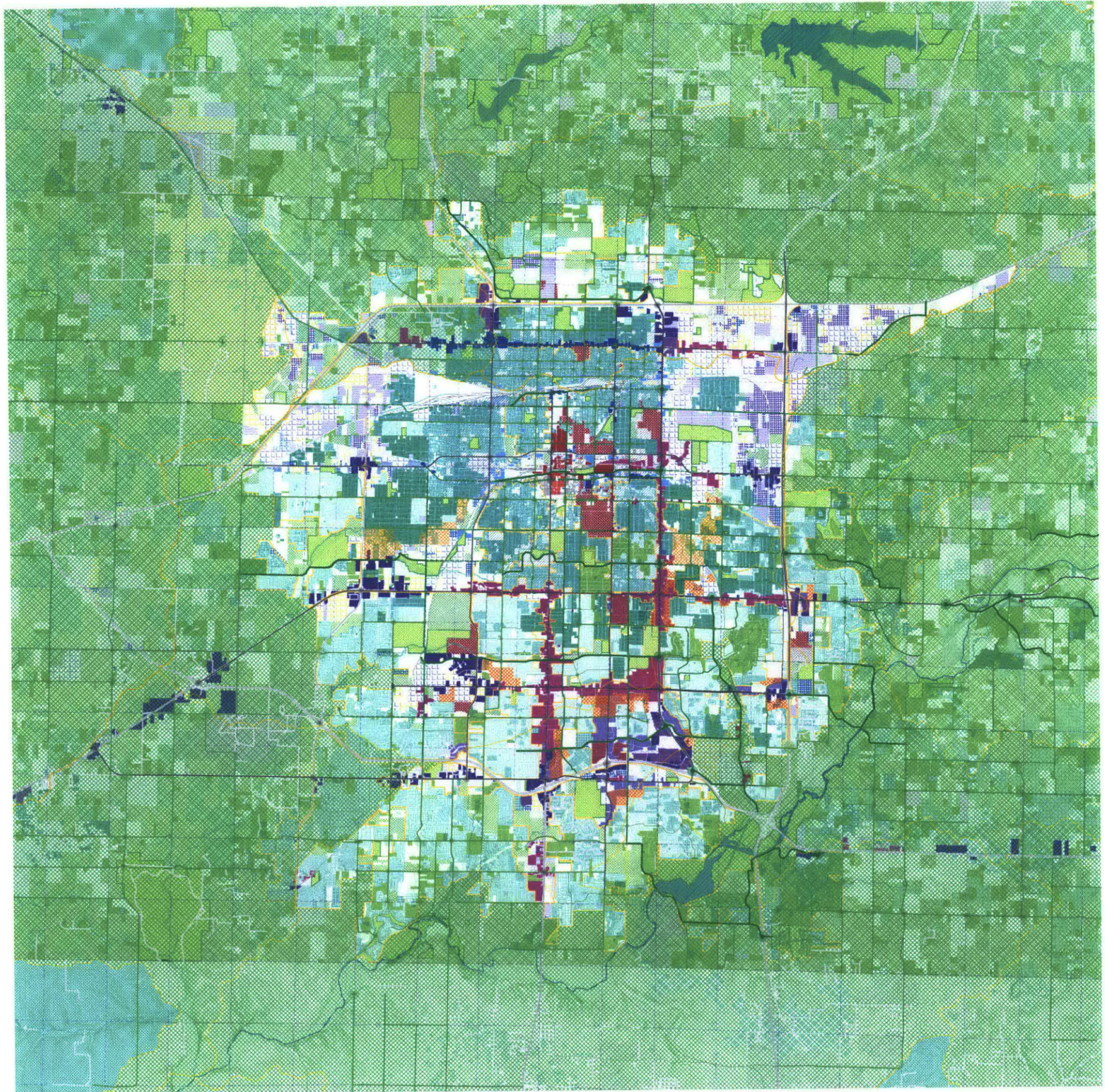


4 Transitions FIG 4.8

Strip Residential: The loose transition space between the gardens and the strips, typically these are 1/8" mile roads that go between commercial, office, open lots, and open grassy areas. These spaces have the peculiar position of looking in between the busy roadway of the strip and the tranquil vista of the residential street.

Residential/Industrial: there are few pockets in the city which enter the "gardens", the strips maintain a fairly linear line, but at points along the old periphery and railways industrial pockets traverse inwards. some of these spaces are still in use, others are overrun, nearing the end of their use, and occasionally have begun to be re-purposed.

Residential/Periphery-Terrain: the entire perimeter of the city collides with the open land. the southern edge in particular exhibits the most contrast between subdivision lines and open fields. the extent of these spaces is marked by the ridges and valleys which become informal collective spaces along the cities edge



Series 3: Collective Function

This series focuses on objects and spaces of activity, their collective function, formal organization, and proximity. Wilderness 1 civic terrain shows the relationship between terrain roads, creeks, and park systems; 2 Institutional Gardens describes the orderly distribution of civic institutions (schools, churches) primarily amongst the residential landscape; 3 Collective Grid studies the locations and uses of city wide commercial and civic spaces. The analysis aims to explain the configuration of collective space across the city and reveals its orderly distribution—once again at odds with the informal experience—concluding with a 4th landscape that produces a reading of collective grain, expanding the concept of the alternating grid to alternating collective wilderness.

Three levels of collective function are conveyed through each landscape scale: individual, community, and collective, which respond to the early observation about a lack of collective space and legibility in Springfield.

1 Civic Terrain FIG 4.9

The interior Terrain roads exhibit a response to the land as a resource and civic space, some realized, others future sites whose development is not yet determined. These roads tend to follow water ways and creeks, however, on the periphery nearly every road becomes an informal public space, the terrain roads overlap with creeks and informal gathering sites, the grid of farm roads on the plateaus are used as biking routes and running trails.

A survey of the terrain roads is a chronology of American attitudes towards infrastructure, nature, and civic space (in order from North to South) in Springfield these unfold in 1-2 mile modules with the terrain:

Commercial Street: Railroad town (North Springfield founded 1854)

East Trafficway: Railroad town/Industrial City, land as infrastructure/commodity (Springfield 1838)

Catalpa: Farm Road

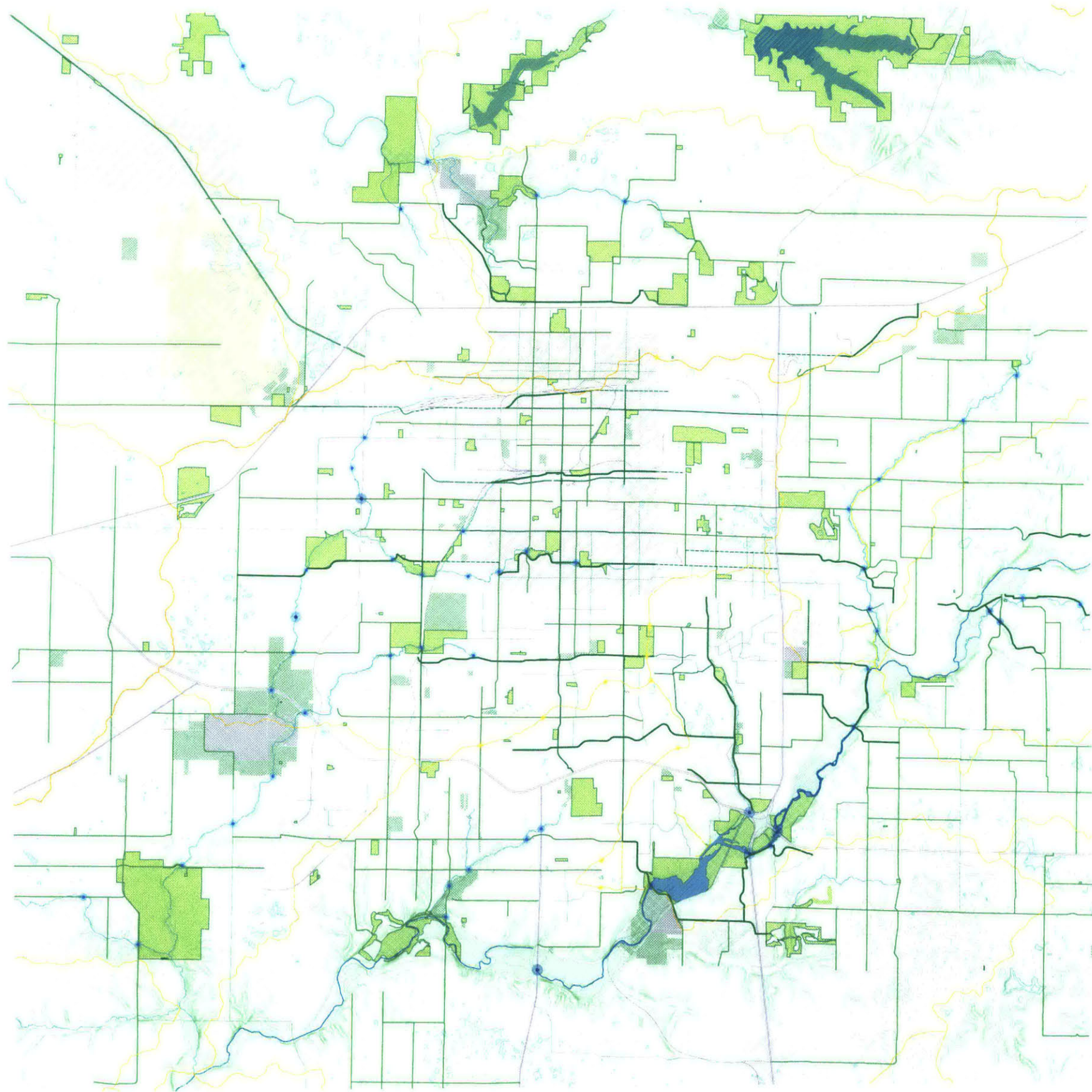
Bennett Street: City Beautiful civic parks, picturesque land (Springfield 1900)

Sunset: Concrete Ecology, (1960's)

Primrose: Suburban Office Park

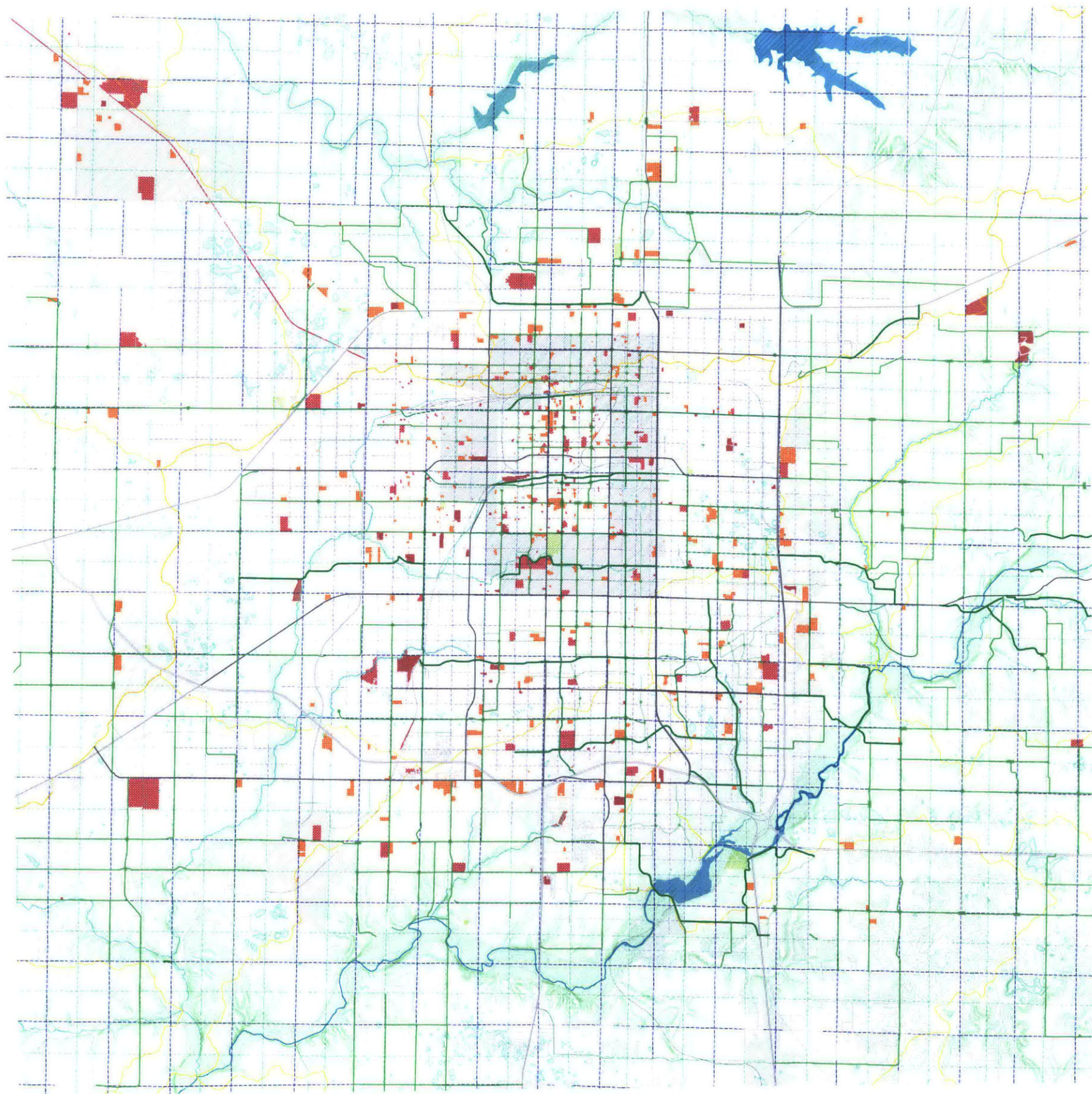
James River/65/60: Regional Monument

Lone Pine: railroad depot



2 Institutional Gardens FIG 4.10

The domestic gardens are filled with an orderly network of schools, churches, and libraries, following the undulating grid of $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ mile increments and occasionally intersecting with the parks and creeks. These are the modules of redistributed civic logic—no longer placed on a single town square, the church, the school the library are embedded into the coveted and resilient domestic landscape indirectly citing the ideal setting of the Jeffersonian town. These institutions are the social anchors of the community providing the foundations of what people expect of their everyday experience—their even distribution echoes what have become conventional values.



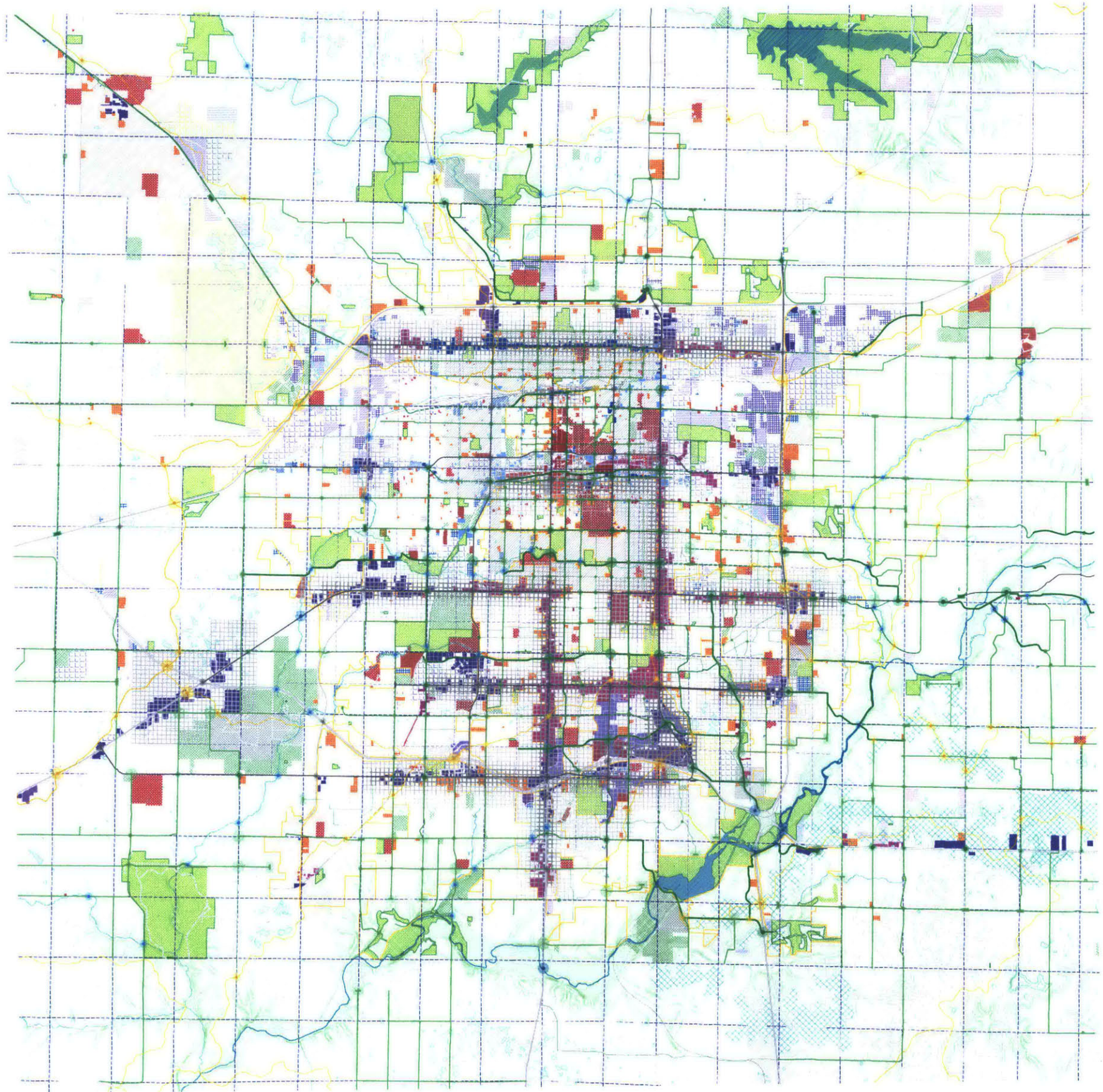
3 Collective Grid (*Strips + Squares*) FIG 4.11

The collective function of the strips and squares is as the commercial (and civic) centers of the city and vital (or formerly vital) economic engines.

The strips and squares form a collective grid of economic engines, civic nodes, and lost vitality. In terms of wilderness defined in the prior mapping it is a collective experience of drifting objects, orderly store fronts, and past ideals tied together by the flat continuity of the plateau grid.

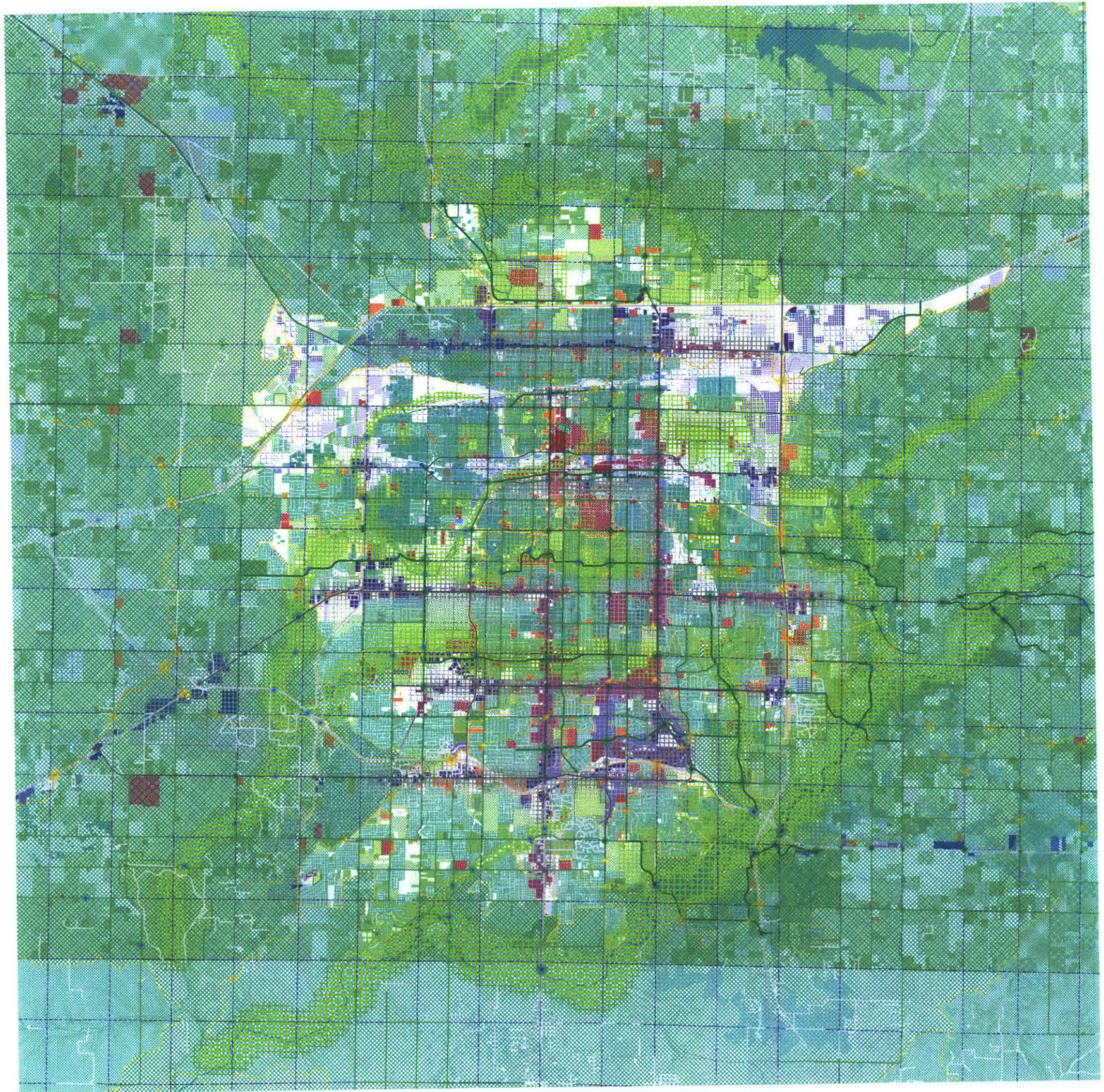
The spaces of economic vitality occur in the strip nodes along Glenstone Avenue (the ridge line), and freeway intersections at 1-2 mile intervals. Along the mid strip locally oriented program is situated: grocery stores, banks, dry cleaning etc. coinciding with the garden grid. The even distribution of program across the city mirrors the concerns of access and proximity to everyday needs (and to some extent zoning)—even the large commercial nodes are fairly frequent, with the exception of the northern industrial core. Back to the early observation made in part 3, the strips are functional and practical, but experientially they are detached from the core of the city, the terrain and the gardens.

The northern edge of Springfield has recently attracted modern strip and box developments, while the Square once a space of global commercialism has been rehabilitated for local culture, and is home to the independent and the marginal population. While it no longer serves as the functional center of the city, it serves an ongoing desire for variety and as a link to the past economically stabilizing itself through city government and universities. The rehabilitated square is the social home of college students, local independent restaurants and boutiques.



4 Collective Grains FIG 4.12

The extended net of each civic space begins to suggest a concept for interlocking, the net itself is meant to insinuate the possibility of expansion and contraction of the cities grain, useful for an object level of intervention



Series 4: Resilience

Resilience explores the flexibility and rigidity of Springfield's, city form and is a second reading of the spatial capacity and tendencies of the wilderness—of all the drawing series it translates most directly to identifying areas for design and intervention. Here the wilderness begins to generate cross associations between landscape scales and users, identifying open blank spaces, connective passage ways, and barriers, associating a factor of human control with the resilience of space. 1 “Temporal Ridges and Valleys” records the volatility of the open land at the urban rural edge and differentiates uses along Terrain Roads; 2 “Passages and Barriers” examines the wilderness of possibility composed of open vacant spaces or loose massing, as well as resilience as a function of control and complex entrenched ownership; 3 “Permanence and Elasticity” identifies resilience at the collective level amongst strips and squares. The 4th landscape “Flexibility” views the flexible areas, the interior and exterior wilderness of the city as a system of malleable open spaces and continuities.

The resilient landscape in Springfield, (after the terrain) is undoubtedly the home. Thus, the space which offers the greatest degree of control and tactical movement is also the space that is least mutable (this observation is contingent on a stable city economy, which has been the case in Springfield). Whereas the commercial nodes, including the rigid, permanent form of the downtown square, have meanings which are volatile and subject to economy and shifting mobility. The dominant landscape, the gardens and the wilderness beyond, present us with a duality of meaning—the home represents a continuity of individual values rooted in past present, and future, the void the possibility of the undefined.

1 Temporal Ridges and Valleys FIG 4.13

Terrain Roads: The internal terrain roads possess a diverse range of interests, from civic parks and greenway trails, to industrial centers, and new office parks. The roads embedded within the residential fabric have greater resilience because home ownership is at stake, whereas commercial spaces have responded to market force—however the shared trait amongst these roads is often their direct relationship to interests of the community, even Primrose and Trafficway (non-civic park corridors) are employment or healthcare centers, vital parts of Springfield's economy, thus these spaces are more resilient than their strip counterparts, over which the citizens have less control.

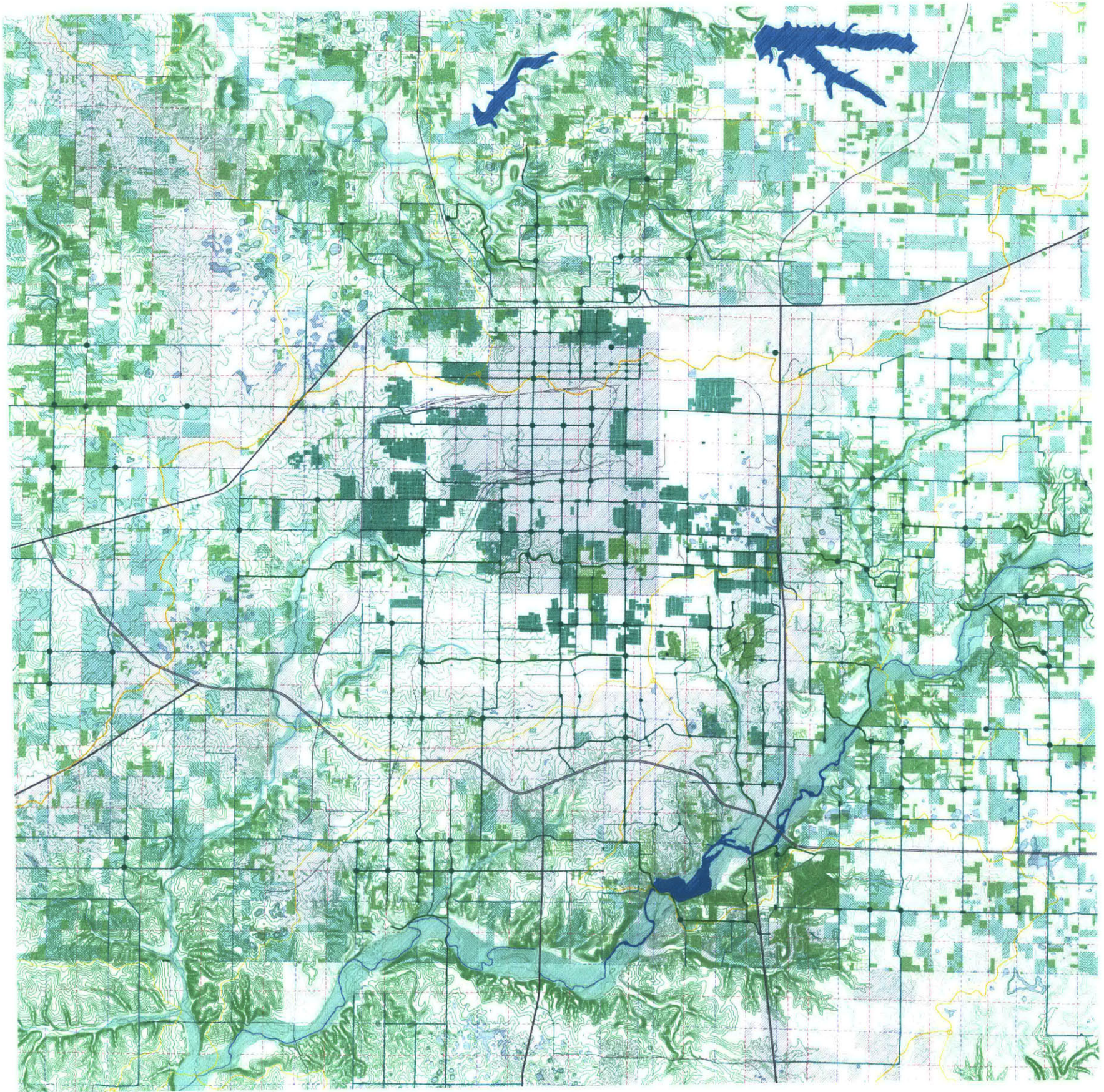
Ridges and Valleys: The drawing marks points of experiential transition, from city road to farm road, and topographical transitions, streams and ridges. The ridges double as probable future increments of expansion and growth (the city has grown from ridge to ridge), cumulatively outlining a temporal zone of volatility.

Suburban Edge: As the paths conveyed, the suburban edge is sharp, and formally closed to the periphery with the exception of connective roadways. These tracts are solid, new, and largely immutable from the interior. The most recent wave of suburban developments stops at the hill top, and the slopes are left to larger acreages.

Agricultural Land: beyond the suburban edge lie orderly agricultural fields interspersed with houses on 3-10 acre plots of land. While the soil in the area does not lend itself to mass farming, it is amenable to cattle grazing and horse ranching. The land 2 miles from the city remains affordable, particularly at the northern edge, whereas values on the southeast edge have doubled over the past 20 years.

Acreages parcels of 3-40 acres with single houses, often amongst the hill slopes—these ownership patterns are entrenched, but the abundance of open land leaves them volatile or open to change

James River: The James River at the southeast edge is most volatile, situated at major freeway intersection, it possesses good access and remains open and sparsely developed, partly preserved as conservation land—the river itself as a connective feature remains an elusive experience in the city. Unlike the fluid terrain roads of the interior city, the valley is traversed, engaging the volumetric undulation of the hills and experienced as fragmented points by car, only glimpsed briefly as a continuous valley.



2 Passages and Barriers FIG 4.14

The resilience of the residential fabric is related to its age, massing, ownership, and adjacencies, and has been associated with qualities of wilderness from series 2.

Liminal/Voids: there is a limited but existent vacancy landscape in Springfield occurring primarily near the older commercial and industrial areas.

Saturated/Voids and Passages: these saturated blocks are primarily from the mid century, where massing is loose, road building casual (without curbs), with a block structure that follows the connective grid of the industrial city. These saturated patches occur near industrial pockets and old edges which have become strips. Implicitly they are connective passageways between the city and the interior gardens, often with pockets of undeveloped spaces interspersed.

Pristine Passages and Barriers: the majority of the pristine wilderness is immutable, densely parcel zed, or protected by owner interests, left for interaction as passageways. At the mid-city these areas are connective, at the suburban edge they become meandering interiors, not enclaves per se, but secluded blocks within the city. On the outermost fringe, are the modern borderlands—golf course communities—which are barriers to public entry.

Generic/Passages and Barriers: The new suburban fabric is filled with barriers and reservoirs, generating the intricate patterns that are often frustrating for navigation. These areas are highly resilient, densely parcelized, and new.

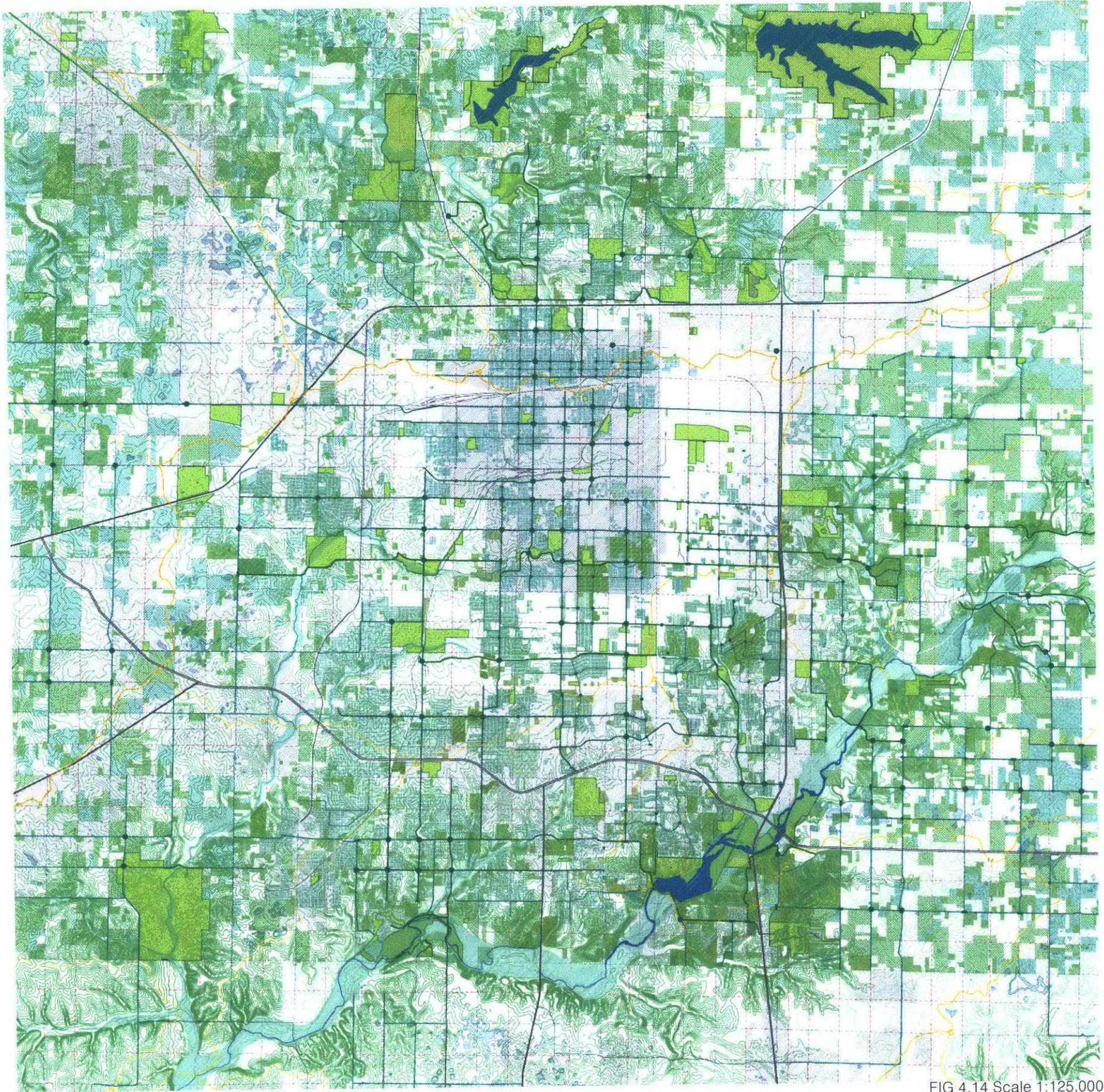
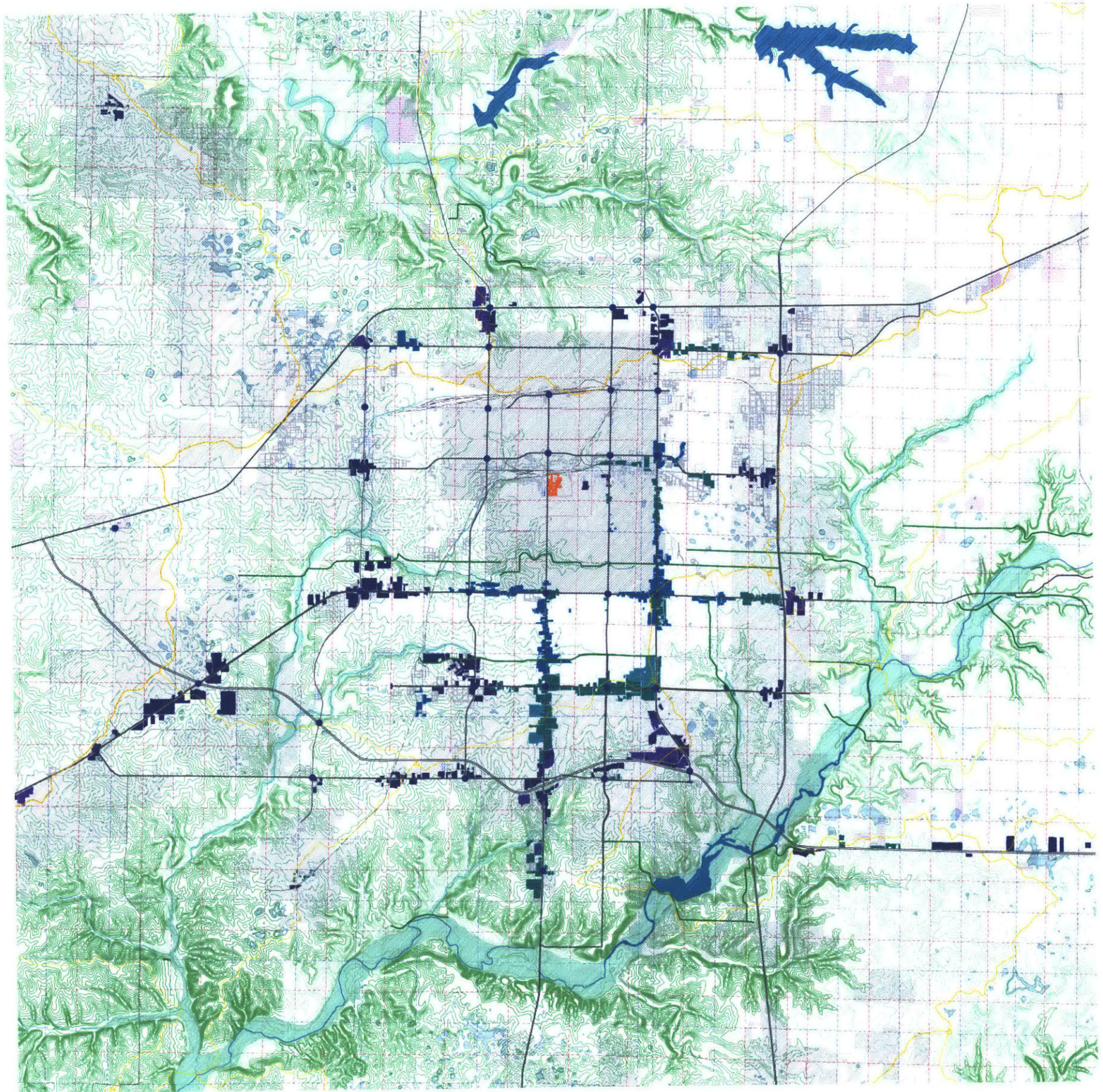


FIG 4.14 Scale 1:125,000

3 Permanence and Elasticity FIG 4.15

The collective grid is comprised of primarily Elastic spaces, in flux between the garden edges and ridges. Regardless of the classification as reformed, generic, or forgotten, the space here is fluid, and therefore possesses flexibility and opportunity to varying degrees. These open spaces are primarily composed of open lots, back alleys, and small hidden 1/8th mile roads. Within each strip the wilderness and grain can be further interpreted into is a variety of space types each with their own range of opportunity and uses. The complexity of these spaces on their own, while compelling, become latent opportunities when considered with their adjacent context—the wilderness grid.

These spaces diverge in their control, imbuing the strips and squares with different capacities and motives. The strips are private enterprising responding to the global economy; the square/downtown represents a substantial civic and educational investment. Civic investment outside of the downtown is generally limited to parks and roads.

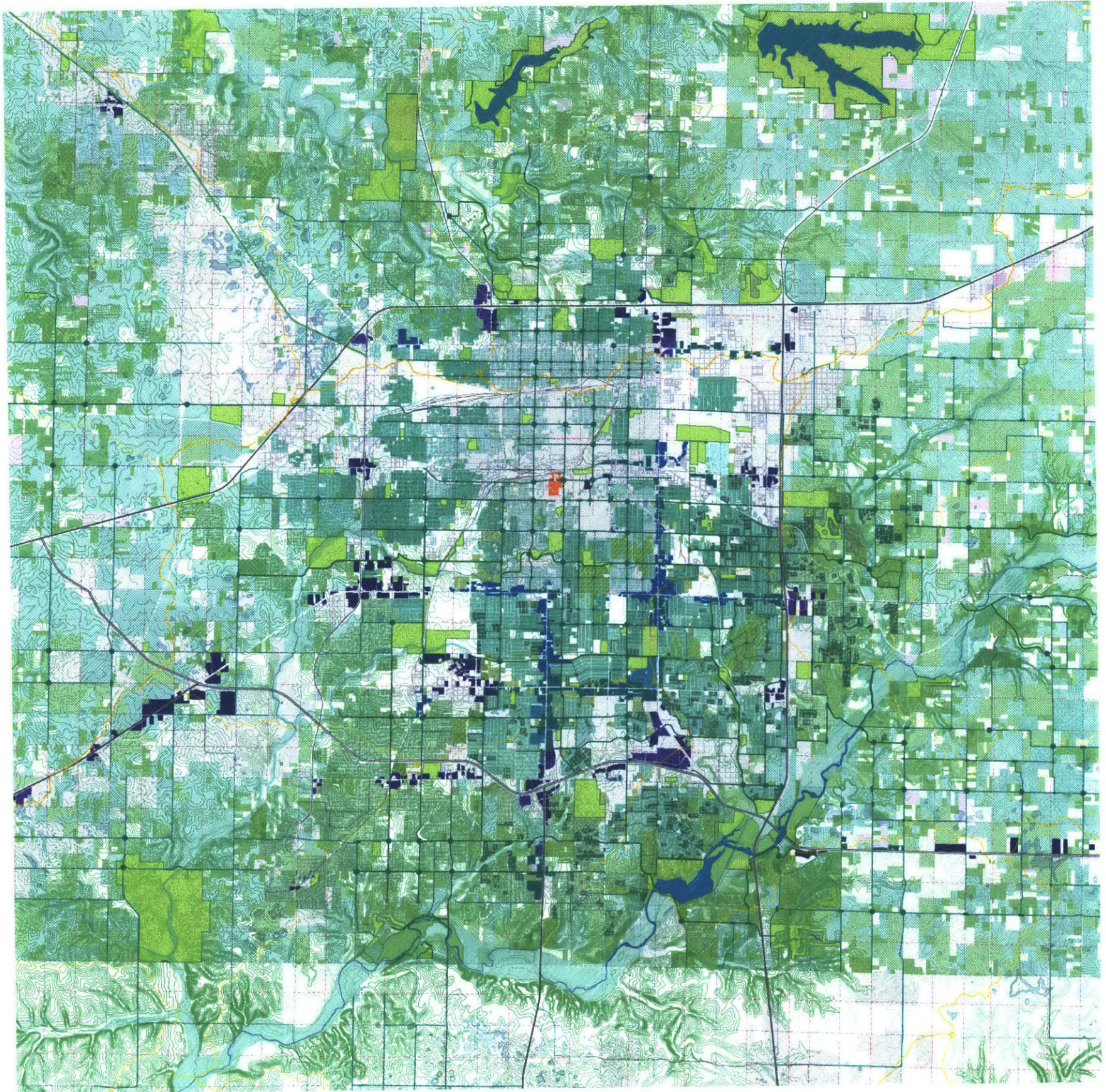


4 Flexibility FIG 4.16

The collapsing of open spaces, connective patches, barriers, and a fluctuating edge produce a reading of continuity across wilderness spaces. As an entire system of movement a network which weaves between plateau grid and terrain road emerges—the project that of engaging the wilderness at a multiplicity of scales, experiences, and collective uses.

Simultaneously a time frame and method for design can be extracted. Open volatile areas are undergoing immediate flux, on the edge the spaces are soon to be developed, on the city interior these spaces are either forgotten, left over or invisible.

The residential passageways are not spaces for elaborate intervention, but conceptual zones of movement, thresholds to spaces beyond, or to a point of activity. These areas are closed to modification by private interests, but open to modification by community.



5 Projections

Projections offers a 5th drawing series that reflects on the future of Springfield's city form and the value offered by the layered methodology of the thesis.

This thesis has offered methods for reading the city and a conceptual framework for understanding its form and developing a spatial comprehension that is projective of the city's identity. The city is viewed as a net of overlapping systems, its form in dialogue with global forces and the specificity of the terrain, ideas which are explored further here in a 5th series of projective drawings.

The 5th series offers the opportunity to reflect on the value of each prior drawing series, how it contributes to our knowledge of the city and how it can be used as a tool for design, in addition to their larger implications for the mid-size American city as a conceptual whole. Finally the method of generating spatial comprehension and how to represent and understand a place leaves a rich series of questions in regards to methods for planning and urban design.

Series 5 Continuity

Series 5, continuity, begins to explore and collapse the prior 4 series, to consider the possible interactions between grids, how they may begin to structure each other and where they can interlock to generate hybrid identities. Thus these are speculations on how this method of reading the city could begin to inform a conceptual strategy for design and planning for Springfield's future.

Each drawing in series 5 uses the prior four series to build ideas that explore continuity. Thus the 5th series begins with a summary of the contribution of the prior four series, expanding on what each one tells us about the city, how we can use them to think about form and space.

1 Expanded Wilderness Grid

2 Gardens

3 Exchange

4 Interlocking Grids

Series 1 Grid: The grid series provides a reading of the cities structure, articulating the large scale relationships between infrastructure, roads, and terrain. Each “grid” describes a topographical relationship and programmatic use oriented towards roadways, movement, and infrastructure. Thus, adding to the grid or re-orienting its structure would begin by assessing the implication within the larger whole. For instance series 5 conveys a concept for strengthening each grid system, in particular the wilderness grid to develop across scales, not limited to the scale of infrastructure and terrain, but permeating the intermediate garden scale and interlocking with the plateau/strip grid. The spatial effect of this gesture would generate a new clarity or continuity of relationships among the city, articulating plateau, and valley as a connected interweaving system.

At the macro scale the grid is valuable in providing legibility to Springfield's form, for directing large scale actions that involve infrastructural investments, land acquisitions, or negotiation of large natural features. At the intermediate or object scale the pairing of terrain with grid form suggest a site response that is specific to the topographic conditions (this could be the form or the building, the shape of the parcel, type of road, the positioning of a sidewalk, or path adjacent or detached from the street), for instance traversing undulating roads may have different program and massing and paths of pedestrian travel than flat plateau spaces because they are less buildable—for instance if the valleys become more identifiable as a point of civic convergence.

Series 2 Wilderness: identifies space as both a sensory quality/grain, texture, also identifies the spatial function of fabric types, connective passageways or barriers, as transitional spaces links uses—moves beyond typical land use zoning, which does not speak of spatial relations in terms of movement, use, or configuration. Simultaneously introduces an idea about pairing form/ massing/density with terrain, to generate a reading of city form that is specific to the local condition, while addressing universal measures and concerns.

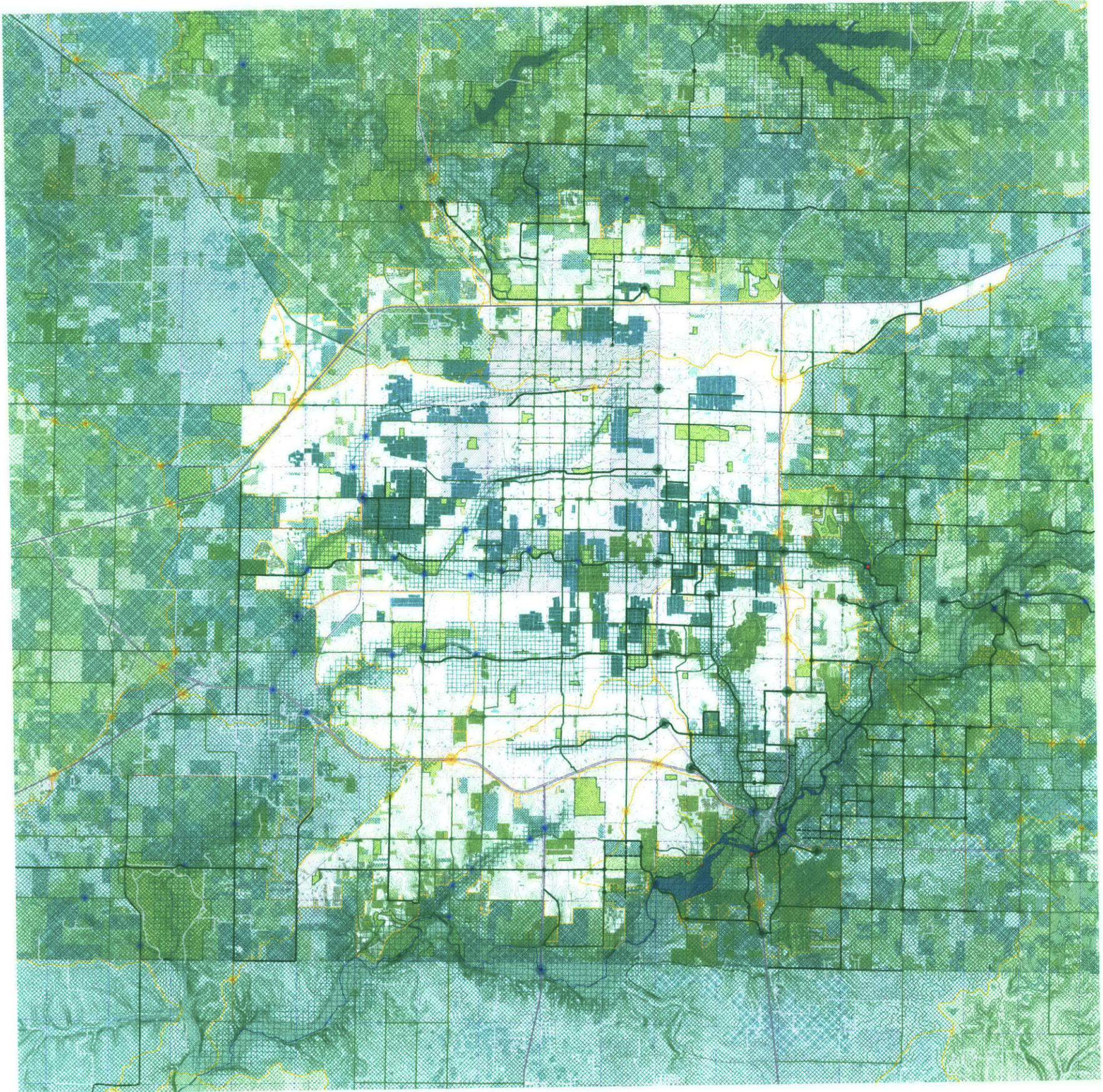
Series 3 Collective function: Organization of spaces—considers the gathering points and objects of activity as a network of space, and considers their grain, their net of influence and proximity to one another. There is a suggestion that the urban object extends beyond its own physical boundaries influencing spaces in its immediate proximity. The 5th series considers the hybridization of landscapes, where wilderness and strip intersect and become part of a shared collective space, rather than constantly separated experiences. The collective function of the wilderness grid is to more actively organize the superstructure of the city, to connect terrain with grid form, and generate legible cross relationships between terrain roads and plateau/strip grid.

Series 4 Resilience: identifies areas of flexibility, is a tool for capturing the city's immediate process, form in terms of rigidity and flexibility. By understanding where action is possible, what form it takes, the city emerges from its own process, which can be developed with further sensitivity towards time and phasing. The 5th series identifies the wilderness grid, which are also spaces of flexibility insofar they are open and possess some amount of un-defined loosely structured space. Conceptually the wilderness could be interpreted as space of flexibility, resistance, or reserve.

1 Expanded Wilderness Grid FIG 5.1

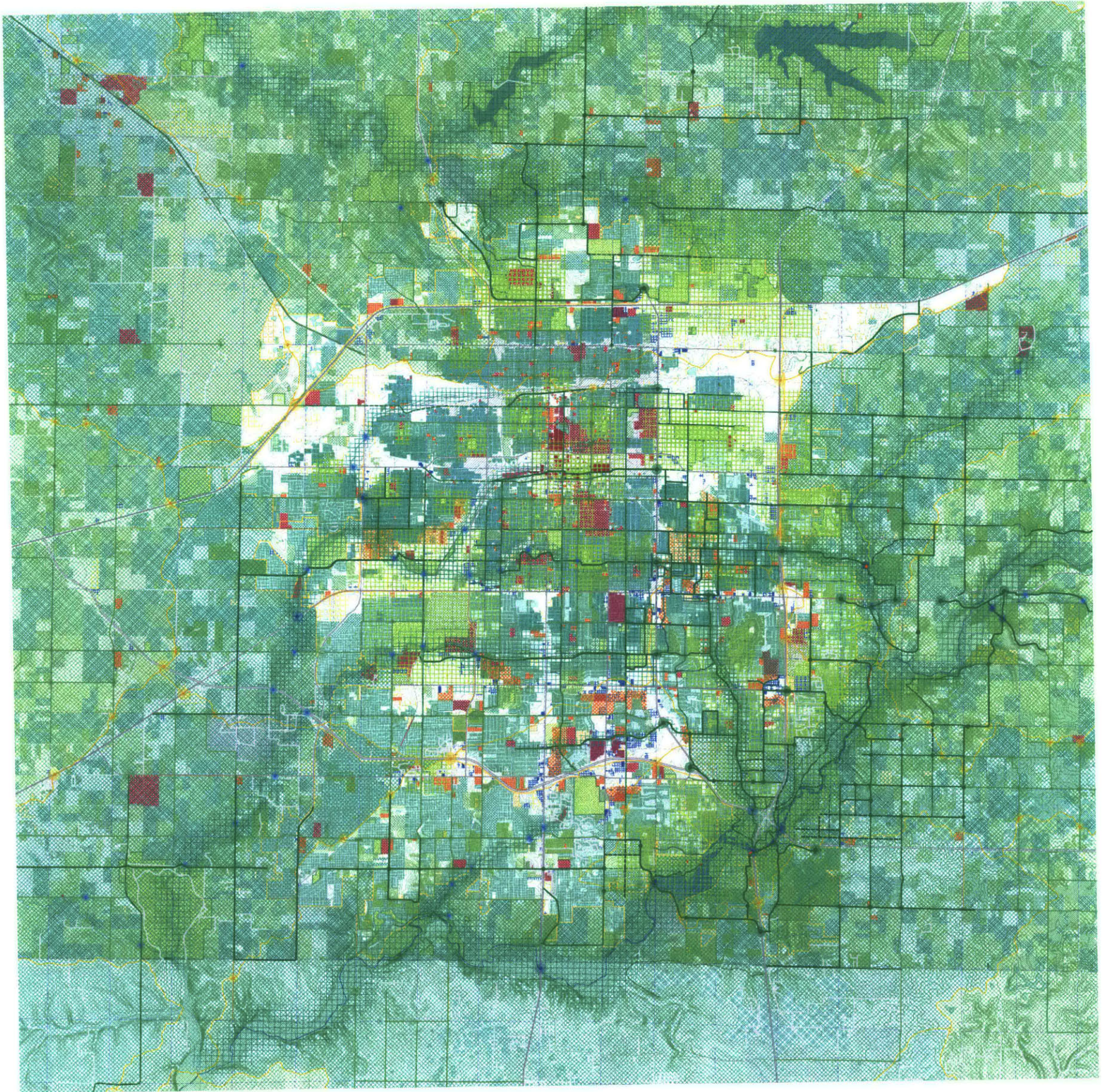
The wilderness across scales is collapsed to produce an expanded wilderness grid, which interweaves terrain roads and plateau grids, with natural systems and civic points of gathering. Conceived as the superstructure of the city it re-orient the experience of the grid and the perception of the land as intertwined and primary experiences of Springfield. The spine of the terrain roads assumes a more explicit role in structuring the form of the city, and becomes the fluid core which relates directly to the residential fabric adjacent, and the plateau/strip roads—as a civic terrain these spaces bridge between public and private interests, between commerce and home life (this is a role they already assume for Springfieldian's, but are not perceived as a fundamental formal structure).

The terrain structure of the interior city is largely established, on the perimeter there is more speculation or uncertainty as to the form development should assume. The James River valley in particular is a culmination point because of its infrastructural access and proximity to first ring towns such as Ozark, Nixa, and Rogersville. As the first major valley the city encounters as part of the city, it is both a clear break and clear path of continuity, forming a connective band along the southeastern quadrant.



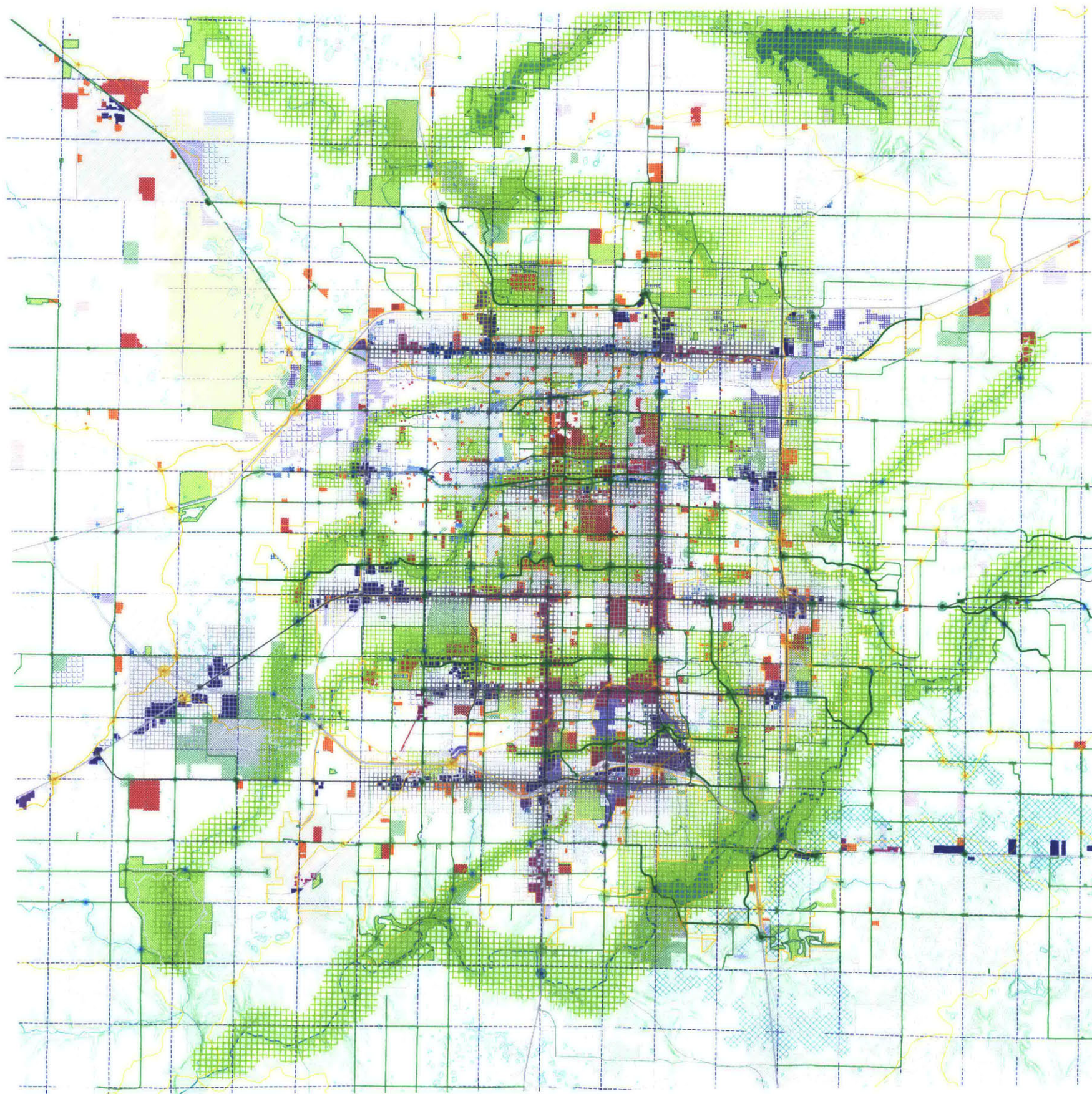
2 Gardens FIG 5.2

The patterning of these wilderness spaces occurs in the 1950's belt, and interface with the strip landscape from a similar period, which itself is slowly transformed and updated. This drawing considers the integration of the loose flexible domestic gardens into the larger grid superstructure of drawing 1. The sense of wilderness becomes powerful in these areas, the vegetation density thickens allowing for the temporary removal from the city. As a concept for sense of a neighborhood this can be a valuable model. Many of these neighborhoods because of their age will probably be reconsidered for improvements soon, and rather than outfitting with new curbs and tidy plots it could be a space to experiment with slight road widening, meandering pedestrian zones, or changes in paving—but to allow the surface to remain continuous—also to consider the platting, where there are large parcels available, other massing such as courtyards could be considered in more efficient arrangements. Alternatively if the road must be improved, interior courts or spaces could be maintained as they are now, offering an alternative passage and informal community space. Conversely these spaces could be left open and overrun by the terrain activated by the grid of roads which become increasingly remote feeling paths, Leaving these parts of the city for the time being to the land, a distant spatial reserve for the future.



3 Exchange FIG 5.3

The open flexibility of the strips is engaged at the transitional edges between residence and periphery (4th landscape of series 2), introducing a more formal articulation of the 1/8 mile grid road that occupies the in-between and generates new continuity between residential, terrain, and strip scales. FIG 5.4 looks more closely at the strip landscape, developing terms for considering the variety of spaces, their use, and spatial function.



3.2 Strip Landscape FIG 5.4

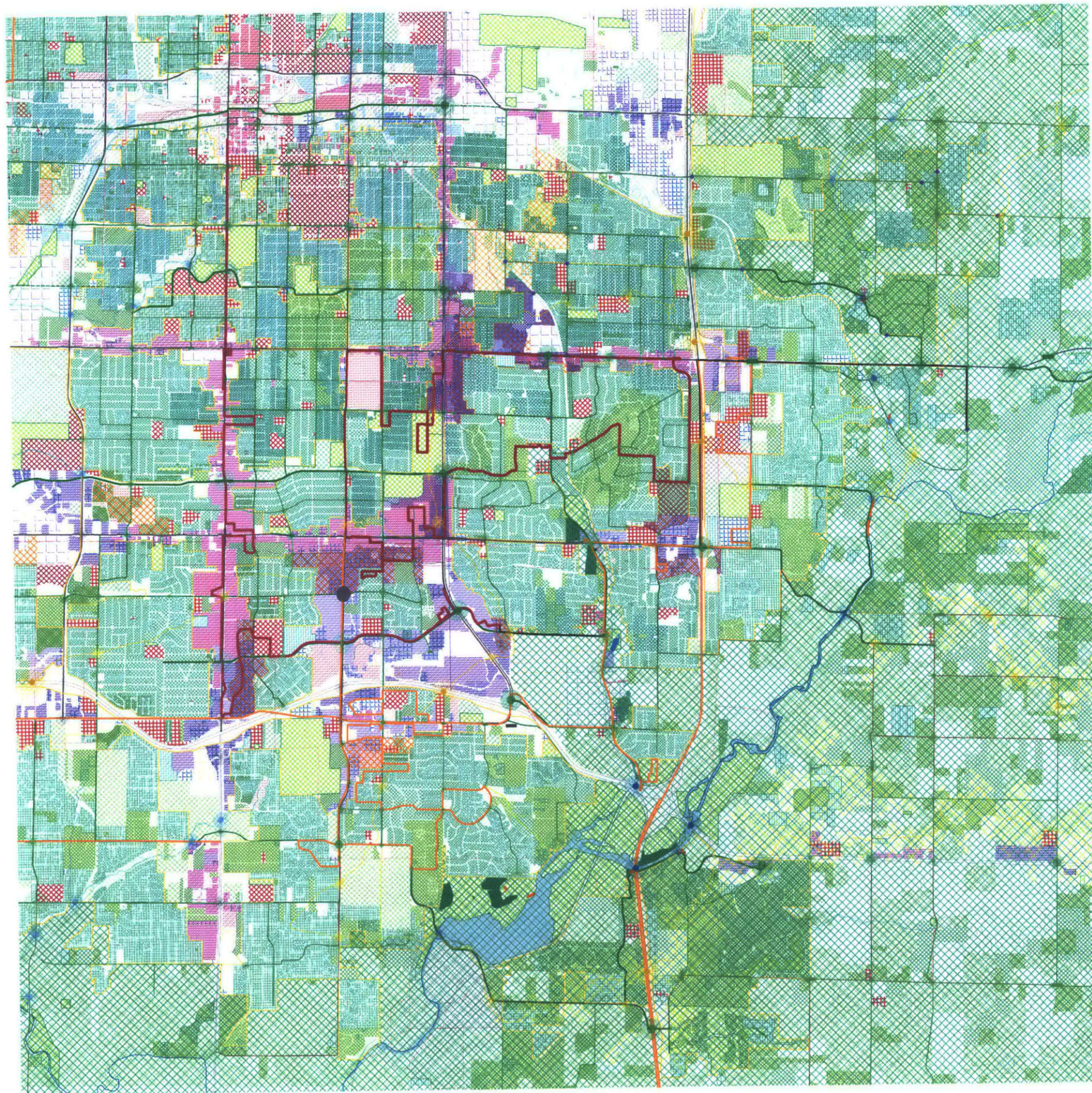
Active parking lot/active building interiors

Empty parking lot: area used solely for longer term parking with little activity

Transitional road-edge: unoccupied, sheltered from traffic and parking activity

Transitional residential: sheltered space, not used for parking or otherwise, a space of potential intervention

Loose Density: small scattered buildings with abnormal spaces in between, perceived as a pocket of solidity in the landscape in contrast to the open expanse of the road or fields.

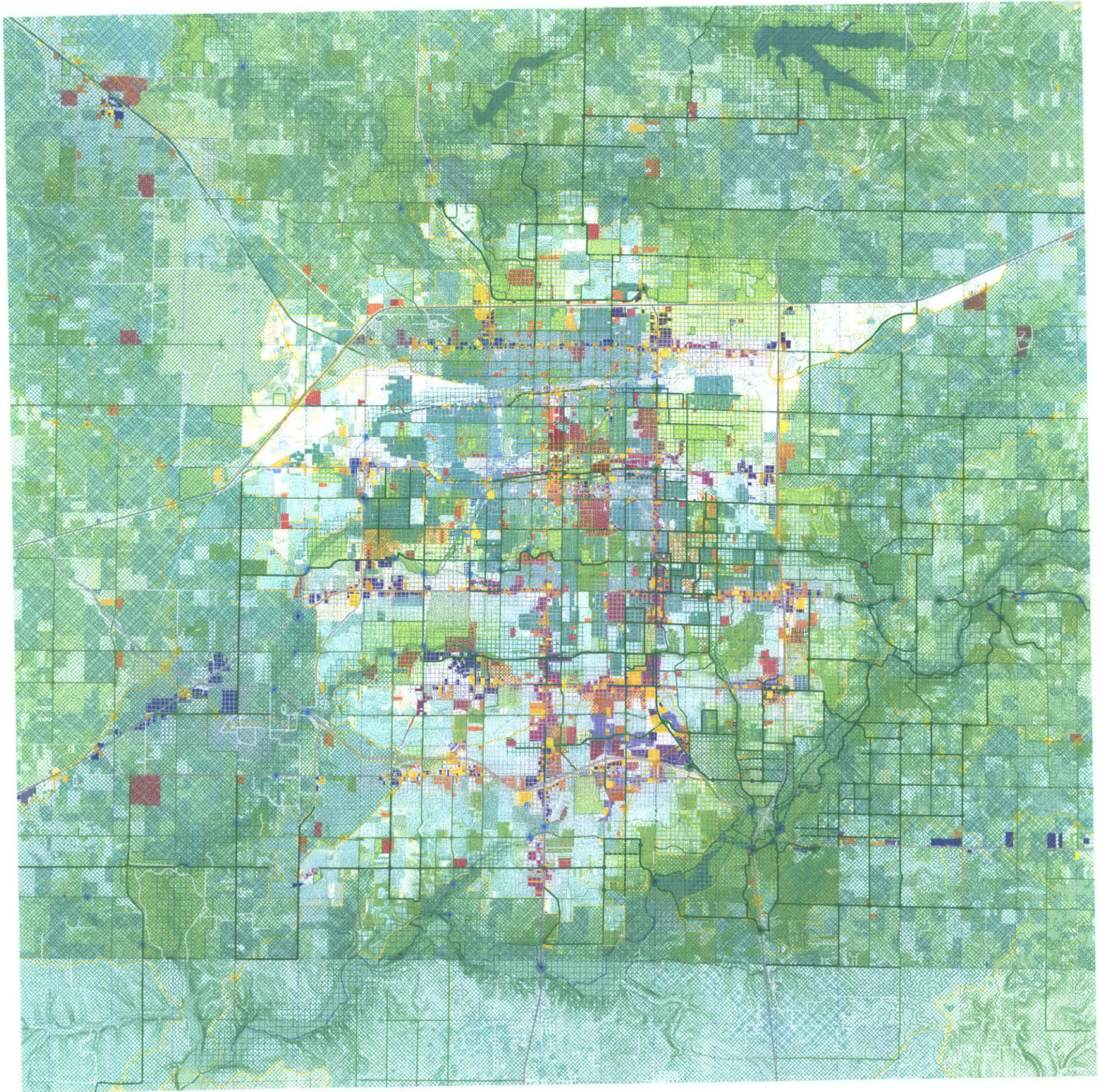


4 Interlocking Grids FIG 5.5

Reading Springfield as an ongoing relationship between terrain and city form offers a spatial concept which transcends a downtown edge city polarity. By viewing both new and old city as part of a continuous system, the wilderness, new and old centers are placed within a common frame, and a lens for reading a cohesive network of diverse systems is offered. The terrain provides a resilient underlay for future growth and expansion—by relating to the terrain all the parts of the city relate to each other.

The future development of these grids is receptive to both density and dispersion—Springfield appears to be on a trajectory of slow steady growth which will continue into the foreseeable future. Concerns of environment, sustainability, and rising energy cost are also globally imminent—viewing the city as a “wilderness grid” offers a clear structure around which to grow, also identifies areas of volatility, opportunity, and transition, therefore the wilderness grid could offer spaces of density, or voids of organization around which higher densities are organized. The way in which spaces have been considered, transitional, linking, barrier, is significant it associates a spatial function with form, beyond that of land use, by considering space as a medium of movement and exchange that are in relation to a larger whole.

At a metropolitan scale a similar method of spatial analysis can be extended to the constellation of towns which are now a part of the metropolis. Already the connectivity of the highway has economically galvanized the region; however, from the perspective of design, the highway represents only a fraction of the terrain. As the path observations alluded, the region is an amalgam of increasingly diverse environments that are linked and connected through the intricate web of valleys, mountains, and ridges. The experience of the terrain itself offers variety, diversity of space, texture, and materiality. The regional terrain if viewed with similar sensitivity as the analysis presented for Springfield, could expand the beyond the fixed space of the town center, the entire path of linkage between squares viewed as a more active regional dialogue between wilderness and grid.



Projections

The following are a brief concluding thoughts and reflections on the thesis.

Wilderness

The wilderness throughout this thesis has been interpreted beyond a traditional definition “area remote from human settlement”. Rather it has been viewed as both a psychological condition and to describe the qualities of the terrain as the transformation of an ideal that has been altered by cultural attitudes responding to changes in time and space. The notion of transformation acknowledges the dynamism of the human condition, that neither the city nor its inhabitant are fixed in time, but continue to grow and change. Taking a conceptual and metaphorical view of the term has enabled an alternate interpretation of the city that links both space and human desires with a larger historical trajectory, and has enabled a reading of the city’s form that is non-traditional, but not un-applicable. It is meant to be an example of reading a local condition through a global lens.

The Mid-Size American City and Critical Regionalism

It is unrealistic to think Springfield will deviate from global trends or economic patterns (for instance modern commercialism of the big box), but it can more actively consider their negotiation at the local scale. In paring generic form with specific terrain this thesis interprets a trajectory of critical regionalism that is at play, revealing the subtle nuances of the local condition suggesting the concept of the wilderness as both a global ideal and a form with specificity in the region. Universal form when paired with specific form of the wilderness generates an entire spatial vocabulary for interpreting and further developing a more critical regional approach. For instance, the plateau strip grid paired a specific terrain with universal typology, or the suburban home takes on a new dimension in relation to its access to civic spaces and position along the “undulating garden grid”.

The mid-size city as a type could conceivably share in a method or concept for approaching city form as a direct relationship between form and terrain that is particularly appropriate for city types which are loose and open—a way to consider sprawl and low density, as well as strategies for increasing density that do not rely on a centralized model. These cities because they are looser and less dense have the opportunity to take non-traditional shapes, and are linked by the infrastructure and economy of global culture that generate a shared spatial process: the grid, infrastructure, technology, and so on. Specifically in the Mid-West these cities are largely defined by the relationship between orthogonal grid and topography, as a conceptual design project these are a larger regional vernacular of sorts. As these mid-size towns continue to grow they are looking for ways to improve their civic life, improve economic capacity while maintaining their quality of life and the environment, they also have the opportunity to reconsider their city form.

Representation and Collective Identity

This project provides expanded methods for approaching documentation and observation, an alternative way of analyzing and representing the city that is both general and specific. In re-representing the city, re-reading its form we are reminded that the city is a concrete space and real experience, as well as the product of its representation. The scalar categories of analysis offer an alternative to traditional methods of representation and content in the comprehensive plan, in that they do not attempt impartiality or technological neutrality, nor are these print-outs of formulaic information. Each drawing intentionally conveys a series of spatial relationships that link city form to the terrain, reinforcing that for Springfield and the mid-size American city, the representation of the city form should not be disconnected from the land—that the wilderness is a link to concrete reality, a portal into cultural desires and imagination, and the enduring symbol of the region that will continue to persist as it has for many years before.

Thus the act of reading the city form in dialogue with the land is the first act of design and the decisions made about how to represent and classify space become a conceptually projective medium for considering and engaging city. This premise reinforces that the city is not a-spatial, even at its most generic moment it is tied to a physical reality and that to draw the city is to draw its identity. In Springfield the collective experience cannot be captured solely by the street grid or the central downtown—or a single image of the mountains or the lake, but rather is experienced and should be drawn as the ongoing relationship with the wilderness, the process of the city's growth and transformation in relation to the terrain. Thus the drawn plan transcends a merely pragmatic instructional tool. It becomes a powerful spatial medium that embodies the concrete reality of space and is a statement of cultural values, historical process, and a collective projection of past, present, and future.

Reference Appendix B for more details on drawing sources and GIS data

Prologue

FIG 0.1 Aerial Image of Springfield, www.earth.google.com

FIG 0.2 Regional Map of the Ozarks

Drawing by author

1 Observations

FIG 1.1 Field Observations, Paths

Drawing by author

FIG 1.2 Questionnaire Imagery

Photos by author

2 Ideals

All historic references for the regional transformation series (except FIG 2.5) were taken from Missouri Highway Map Archive. Reference Appendix B for details

FIG 2.1 Springfield and the Ozarks Region, 1890

Drawing by author

FIG 2.2 Springfield and the Ozarks Region, 1955

Drawing by author

FIG 2.3 Springfield and the Ozarks Region, 1980

Drawing by author

FIG 2.4 Springfield and the Ozarks Region, 2012

Drawing by author

FIG 2.5 Springfield and the Ozarks Region, Use, Function, and Economy
2012

Drawing by author

3 Paths

FIG 3.1 Wilderness 1: Terrain Roads, Infrastructure, and Natural Systems

Drawing by author

FIG 3.2 Wilderness 2: Domestic Gardens

Drawing by author

FIG 3.3 Wilderness 3: Strips/Squares (City)

Drawing by author

FIG 3.4 Paths, Regional Map

Drawing by author

FIG 3.5 Paths, Mode and Scale

Graphic by author

- FIG 3.6 Interpreting Wilderness
All Photos by author except Wilderness 1 and 2" Saturated" taken by Nancy Dahlberg
- FIG 3.7 Paths, Wilderness 1 Highway 65
Drawing by author
- FIG 3.8 Paths, Highway 65 Image Legend
Photos by author
- FIG 3.9 Highway 65 North: Plateau/Wilderness
Photos by author
- FIG 3.10 Highway 65: Generic/Plateau Form
Photos by author
- FIG 3.11 Highway 65: Plateau/Hills
Photos by author
- FIG 3.12 Highway 65: Pristine/Hills
Photos by author
- FIG 3.13 Paths: Regional Towns
Drawing by author
- FIG 3.14 Squares
Photos by author
- FIG 3.15 Garden Paths
Drawing by author
- FIG 3.16 Gardens: Pristine/Broadacres
Photos by author
- FIG 3.17 Gardens: Saturated/Mid-Century Gardens
Photos by author
- FIG 3.18 Gardens: Liminal/Old City
Photos by author
- FIG 3.19 Gardens: Pristine/Civic Terrain, Borderlands
Photos by author
- FIG 3.20 Gardens: Pristine/Terrain, Generic/Suburban
Photos by author
- FIG 3.21 The Dominant Landscape
Drawing by author
- FIG 3.22 Strip Proximity
Drawing by author
- FIG 3.23 Strip Paths
Drawing by author
- FIG 3.24 Mile 1: Elastic Strips
Photos by author

- FIG 4.13 Series 4: Temporal Ridges and Valleys
Drawing by author
- FIG 4.14 Series 4: Passages and Barriers
Drawing by author
- FIG 4.15 Series 4: Permanence and Elasticity
Drawing by author
- FIG 4.16 Series 4: Flexibility
Drawing by author

5 Projections

- FIG 5.1 Series 5: Expanded Wilderness Grid
Drawing by author
- FIG 5.2 Series 5: Gardens
Drawing by author
- FIG 5.3 Series 5: Exchange
Drawing by author
- FIG 5.4 Series 5: Strip Landscape
Drawing by author
- FIG 5.5 Series 5: Interlocking Grids
Drawing by author

FIG 4.13 Series 4: Temporal Ridges and Valleys

Drawing by author

FIG 4.14 Series 4: Passages and Barriers

Drawing by author

FIG 4.15 Series 4: Permanence and Elasticity

Drawing by author

FIG 4.16 Series 4: Flexibility

Drawing by author

5 Projections

FIG 5.1 Series 5: Expanded Wilderness Grid

Drawing by author

FIG 5.2 Series 5: Gardens

Drawing by author

FIG 5.3 Series 5: Exchange

Drawing by author

FIG 5.4 Series 5: Strip Landscape

Drawing by author

FIG 5.5 Series 5: Interlocking Grids

Drawing by author

APPENDIX A

Interviews

The field research consisted of interviews, Questionnaires, and the Paths discussed in Chapter 3, during four weeks in January and one week during March. I attempted to meet with a variety of people, of different occupations, and length of residency in Springfield. My interviews by no means represent a fully comprehensive slice of the regional population, and I have attempted to fill in gaps with additional research—in particular the report on social Capital by Dr. Mike Stout, local literature, news paper, and radio programming.

My approach to the interviews (with the exception of City Officials), was focused but casual. I found people were more comfortable with a conversation format rather than a list of questions. I attempted to establish a baseline of information, years of residency, where people live, general attitudes towards Springfield, likes and dislikes, things they would change (these questions are reflected on the official questionnaire). Often the conversation would turn to a specialized topic related to the person's occupation or length of time they have lived in the city. For instance residents who have lived in Springfield for more than 20 years often spoke about the changes the city has undergone, re-counting (often with regret) the days of a thriving downtown, the excitement of the new Battlefield Mall in the 1960's, the widening of Old Sunshine Road (Now Highway D). New-comers were often frustrated with the cities slow pace of growth, and the inability of the downtown to suffice for a "real city". Throughout I found a diversity of viewpoints, however, within each group there was an ongoing appreciation for the land, their homes, and the general quality of life. While this appreciation was not unsurprising, there were a variety of ways in which people engage with the land on a regular basis along with a general sense of optimism about the future of the region.

Questionnaire

The images on the Questionnaire were selected to represent a variety of landscapes and seasons in the region. By using images there was an attempt to create a datum, to see how people responded to the same images, rather than each person recalling their own memories at random. Questionnaires were completed by some of the interviewees, and additional Questionnaires were sent to those I did not meet with in person. The number of completed forms totaled 10.

In general people responded positively to images of natural scenery, some including specific stories they associate with a place. The pictures of the strip landscape, and industrial areas were more variable, many people did not comment on them unless they encountered them on a regular basis, and then the responses ranged from neutral to critical.

The names of all interviewees have been kept confidential, only occupation, age, and number of years as a Springfield Resident have been recorded here. This list does not account for the informal conversations that occurred during the field observations.

List of Interviews

No	Res. Years	Occupation	Date
1	35	Educator	01.08.012
2	35	Physician	01.08.012
3	20	Educator	01.12.012
4	27	Accountant	01.12.012
5	16	College Student	01.13.012
6	25	Local Business Owner	01.13.012
7	6	Local College Student	01.13.12
8	12	College Student	01.13.12
9	18	College Student	01.13.12
10	50	Physician	01.15.12
11	33	Family	01.15.12
12	25	Local Business Owner	01.17.12
13		City Official	01.18.12
14	60	Local Business Owner	01.22.12
15	12	Local Business Owner	01.22.12
16	1	Dentist	01.22.12
17	17	Architect	01.23.12
18		City Official	01.23.12
19	45	Physical Therapist	01.23.12
20	15	Farmer	01.23.12
21	17	Nurse	01.24.12

NAME:

DATE:

Plateaus, Hills, Saturation: Reinterpreting Ordinary American Urbanism in Springfield, Missouri.

The overarching intent of this thesis is to document, understand and reinterpret the typical conditions of American urbanism in Springfield, Missouri. I will be examining the relationship between settlement and landscape in Springfield, Missouri, as a basis to think about possibilities for the region's future growth and development. Particular emphasis will be placed on the everyday interactions of the local population and how they perceive and occupy city and countryside, as well as the salient issues facing professionals involved in urban growth.

Questionnaire Directions

For this questionnaire, your answers can be as long or as short as you like. I'm most interested in your day to day interactions, thoughts, stories, insights, etc.

1. How long have you lived in Springfield, MO?
2. Did you grow up in Springfield, or did you move from somewhere else? Why did you decide to move? Or why have you decided to stay in Springfield?
3. Does your extended family live in Springfield?
4. What part of the city do you live in? What are the things you like and dislike about this area?
5. Have you lived in other areas of the city besides your current location? What are the differences between places?
6. What parts of the city do you frequent most?
7. What parts of the city do you frequent least?
8. How often do you visit downtown Springfield?
9. How often do you visit the Battlefield Mall?
10. What are your three favorite places to eat?

11. Where do you work?
12. How far away is your job from your home and how long does it take to get there?
13. Do you like your job?

14. How would you describe Springfield to someone from another city?
15. What areas would you tell them to visit and why?
16. If you could change three things about Springfield, what would they be?
17. If you could keep three things about Springfield the same, what would they be?
18. What do you think has changed the most in Springfield over the past 10-20 years?
19. If you had to make a postcard for Springfield what image or images would you include?
20. Do you have a favorite local story, adage, or historical fact about Springfield and/or the Ozark Region?

QUESTIONNAIRE

21. Which places in the Branson area (if any) do you frequent?
22. Has the development in the Branson area affected you? For instance Highway 65 construction, the Branson Landing, the Branson Airport, 76 strip expansion, Tablerock Lake.
23. What is your reaction to the new 65-60 interchange by James River?
24. How often do you drive on the freeway? Would you describe Springfield as a place with traffic problems? Are there specific routes you use to avoid traffic or congestion?
25. Do you enjoy driving? Would you like to see other forms of transportation in Springfield?
26. How often do you travel outside of the Ozarks? Do you have other favorite places that you visit regularly?

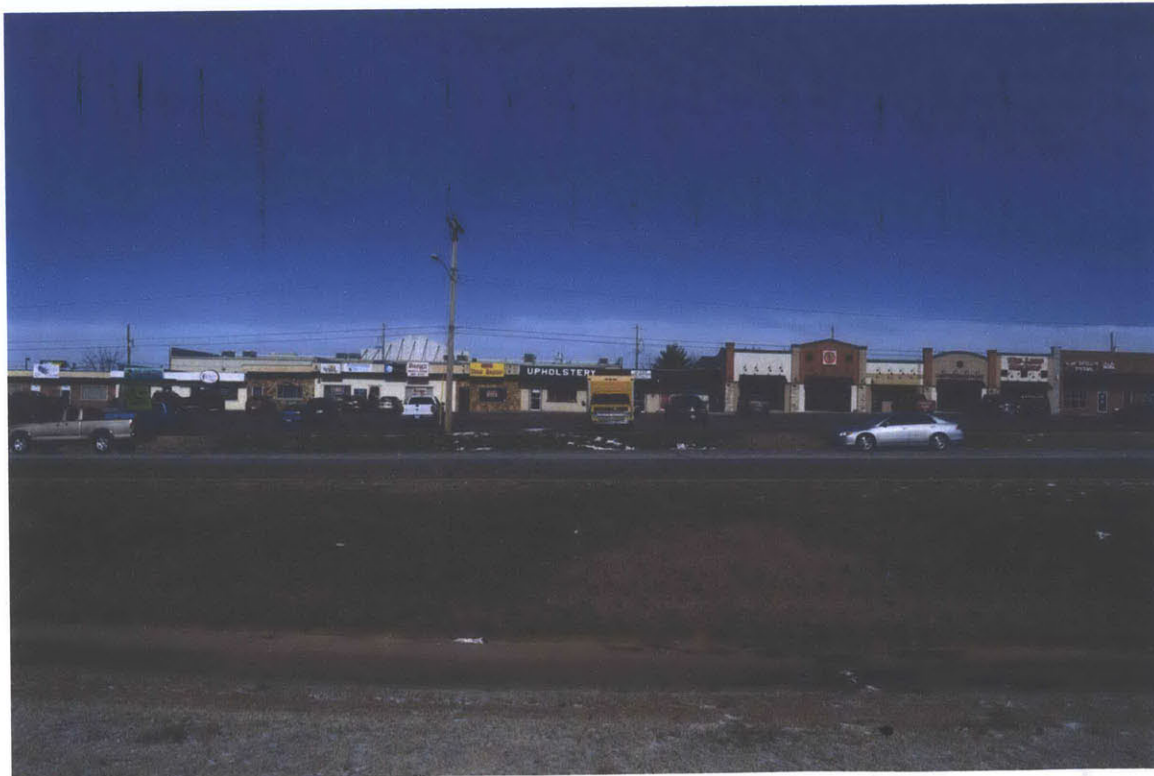
There are 18 images following. Please write your response to each image—for instance is it familiar to you, do you associate a meaning or memory with it, does it remind you of anything in particular, or does it mean nothing at all?



1. Glenstone/Battlefield Mall



2. Park Central Square



3. South Republic Road



4. Campbell/Primrose



5. Sunshine/65/Ingram Mill



6. Mid-City Neighborhood, Freemont/Cherokee



7. National Place, Subdivision, South Springfield



8. University Heights



9. MSU Library



10. St. Johns Main Campus Expansion



11. Rail Road/Grain Elevator, Division Street



12. 65 South, near Saddlebrook/Highlandville



13. Sequiota Park, Lone Pine/Primrose



14. Farm Road



15. East Sunshine



16. Tablerock Lake



17. Marionville, Old Town Square (Southwest of Springfield)



18. James River

APPENDIX B Notes on Drawings and Photos

Images and Field Observations

The paths were selected as representative slices through the landscape, based on my own local knowledge, and research on the area. The method of recording varied by transportation mode, by car photos were taken at intersections, and transitional points in the landscape—for instance from river to open field, hillside to plateau, or the line between suburban fence and countryside. By foot images were taken at major intersections and generally at 1/8 mile points in all directions (north, south, east, west). Again transitions were given particular notice. The bike paths are partially recorded on video, and were partially retraced by car to capture the observed fabric.

Each path and interview was also summarized in note form, some of which is included here in brief summary. The decision was also made to include photographs from both winter, spring, on days sunny and rainy to convey a full sense of the landscape, not only the idyllic blue sky images. Nor were these photographs taken as still portraiture, most of them were from a moving car, taken mid-step, capturing general overview and impressions, as one would experience them in real-time.

Notes on Drawings

The drawings series in Chapter 4 were generated from a compilation of GIS Data and observations collected during field work. The GIS data was obtained from a range of national, State, and local sources: The US Census Bureau; The Environmental Protection Agency; USGS Topo Agency; The Missouri Department of Natural Resources; The Missouri Department of Transportation; Green County and the City of Springfield GIS Department. All files compiled used the most recent available data, typically from 2010, and in many cases (such as MDOT or the Missouri DNR) 2010 and 2011. A full list of sources can be found on pages 194-195.

Drawing layers were created in GIS and exported to Auto CAD, where files were separated initially by land use and type (residential, commercial; industrial; civic) and eventually each drawing was separated into more elaborate conceptual layers that corresponded with terrain and classifications of the wilderness observed in the field. All new layers of information, such as transitional areas, road types, intersections, gathering points, temporal boundaries were generated in Auto CAD. All final drawings were plotted directly from Auto CAD to PDF.

There was an attempt throughout the drawing process to convey a sense of depth and density present in the Ozarks terrain, to convey the sense of the land as a layered process that is the product of synthetic form and natural surface, which at few point if ever can be detached from its relationship to the land.

NATIONAL SOURCES

US Census Bureau

US Census Bureau, Blockgroup, County, MCD, Place, Tract, 2010, 2000, 1990, <http://www.msdis.missouri.edu/data/datalist.html#adminpolbnd> (accessed October 15, 2011).

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USGS Topo

USGS Topo maps were used for topographic reference; PDF maps were converted to line vectors and used in Auto CAD, Public Land Survey Files and Hydrologic Units were accessed as GIS shapefiles and exported to AutoCAD

USGS, Public Land Survey (PLSS), <http://www.msdis.missouri.edu/data/datalist.html#adminpolbnd> (accessed October 1, 2010).

USGS Topo Maps, Quadrants: Willard, Ebenezer, Bassville, Strafford, Halltown, Brookline, Springfield, Galloway, Oak Grove Heights, Fordland, Chesapeake, Billings, Republic, Nixa, Ozark, Rogersville, Bruner, Aurora, Crane, Hurley, Highlandville, Selmore, Chadwick, Eisey, Galena, Spokane, Day, Garrison, Cape Fair, Reeds Spring, Garber, Branson, Forsythe, Lampe, Table Rock Dam, Hollister [http://store.usgs.gov/b2c_usgs/usgs/maplocator/\(ctype=areaDetails&xcm=r3standardpitrex_prd&area=%24ROOT&layout=6_1_61_48&uiarea=2\)/do](http://store.usgs.gov/b2c_usgs/usgs/maplocator/(ctype=areaDetails&xcm=r3standardpitrex_prd&area=%24ROOT&layout=6_1_61_48&uiarea=2)/do) (accessed February 20-26, 2012)

Watershed Boundary Dataset (WBD), Hydrologic Unit Codes (HUC) 8 levels 1-12, 2010 (<http://www.ncgc.nrcs.usda.gov/products/datasets/watershed/> (accessed February 16, 2012).

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The majority of state data was accessed through the MSDIS website

Missouri Spatial Data Information Service (MSDIS) <http://www.msdis.missouri.edu/data/datalist.html#adminpolbnd> (accessed October 15, 2011).

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Facilities and Structures: Public Schools, Dams ftp://msdis.missouri.edu/pub/Facilities_Structures/ (accessed October 15, 2011).

Geological Geophysical

Top of Rock 2006; Well Logs, 2006; Sink Areas, 2007; Inventories of Mines Occurrences and Prospects, 2008; Sinkholes, Structures, 2010 ftp://msdis.missouri.edu/pub/Geological_Geophysical/, <ftp://msdis.missouri.edu/pub/state/> (accessed October 15, 2011).

Land use and Land cover (lulc): lulc 2005; lulc 1991; lulc 1975 <ftp://msdis.missouri.edu/pub/lulc/> (accessed January, 26 2012).

Roads/Infrastructure

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MSDIS, Old Railroads 1990, Highways 2006, ftp://msdis.missouri.edu/pub/Transportation_Networks/ (accessed November 5, 2011).

Cities/Urban Areas

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lack of global awareness or assimilation to modernization. The opposition between urban and country is also significant, one because it supports a hypothesis about a stark difference in lifestyles in close proximity, two because it explains the development of a folk vernacular culture versus a global/modern culture in the cities—again a key premise or term in describing and understanding the settlement patterns of the Springfield metro area, third the economic dependence of rural farmer on city is reinforced—Missouri was no different in this pattern (reinforces writing of Reps and Jackson on the primacy of towns and cities even over the ideal rural pastoral)

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