



Our Design Process

THE KUBALA WASHATKO ARCHITECTS

Wholeness in everything we do.

We Design Collaboratively Using a Shared Language

THE ROLE OF A SHARED LANGUAGE

The act of planning and design should not be treated as a secret spell cast in the studio, away from the prying eyes of the client. The graphical skills, specialized tools, and jargon required of a design professional can exclude the layperson, either intentionally or unintentionally.

If client and architect are to become co-equal partners in the design process, it is important to create a common language. This language should encompass the knowledge of the client and the users of a place and serve as both a compass and a measuring stick for the design professional.

STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH



TKWA project team members are experienced in planning and facilitating public forums, whether to gain design input from stakeholder groups or to build community support for a project. We listen carefully and engage in a highly collaborative approach designed to build consensus.

A clear, compelling vision is the result of engaging stakeholders, of careful listening to what the people and place are telling us, and of synthesizing what we hear into a vision with community support. Our design team specializes in projects involving complex issues and the diverse interests of multiple stakeholders and we are skilled at consensus building.

Our experience has shown that early and ongoing community and stakeholder involvement fosters open communication and collaboration, which is key to successful project designs and project funding. Through a series of diverse public forums, listening, interactive workshops, and interviews, we establish a community-based, community-driven vision for the project.

OUR PROCESS

Pattern Language

A Pattern describes a recurring relationship between human activity and the environment, both built and natural.

TITLE: Every Pattern has a title. It should grab you immediately and capture the essence of the issue and/or solution.

ISSUE STATEMENT: The issue statement lays out the facts—some nugget or observation that describes a problem to be solved, a pitfall to avoid, or a resource to protect.

SOLUTION STATMENT: A good solution statement describes a successful outcome and proposes the physical shaping of space to achieve that outcome. It should be specific, without being overly prescriptive.



“It is impossible to create living spaces without a living process.”

Erik Hancock, AIA, NCARB
TKWA

We believe this Pattern Writing process—which can be completed within a normal programming time schedule—is the best possible way to define key issues and ensure that they remain prominent throughout the lifespan of a project. Pattern Writing has been successfully used on many TKWA projects.

Below are a few examples of patterns written for various projects. They are representative of the types of patterns that will be uniquely developed for any project.

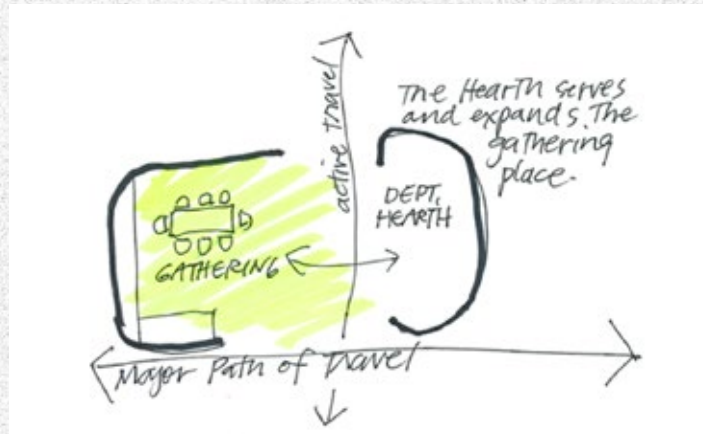
Gathering on Our Turf

Issue

Each department's identity is reinforced by their ability to meet together as a group. If the space used for all-staff meetings is not under the department's control, cohesion and identity can be eroded.

Solution

Within each department locate a space large enough for the entire staff to meet. This should be a space that is intensely utilized most of the time for other purposes, be it a work room, conference room, etc. This space should be either next to or part of the Department Hearth. Here is where everyone can gather for staff meetings, lunch or special occasions.



Marquette University: Zilber Hall

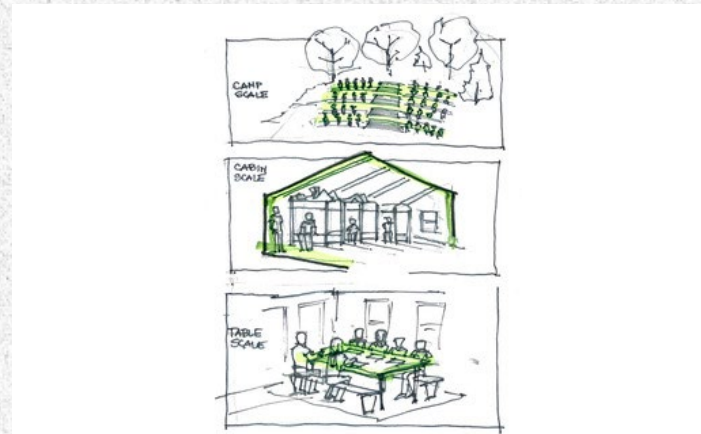
The Real Social Network

Issue

Camp is a community—the original social network—that creates a sense of belonging at all scales. Camp life is woven throughout with rituals and routines that bring together groups ranging in size from the whole camp down to cabins and pairs of campers. New buildings will fail if they don't acknowledge this network of social scales.

Solution

Identify all the social scales at play in each space (camp/unit/cabin/table/buddies) and incorporate these relationships as tangible elements in the physical design.



Camp Minikani

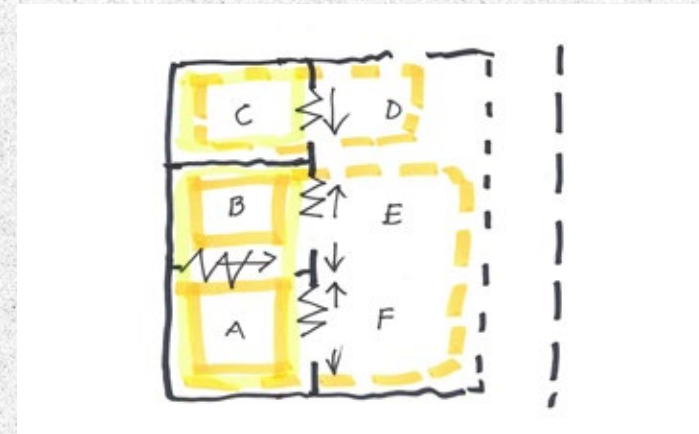
Future Flex

Issue

Programming and space needs are constantly evolving. Change is often much faster than the pace of designing and building even simple structures. Quick and expedient solutions can produce scattered, uncoordinated results; permanent solutions carry the risk that time and money is spent on structures that become relevant as camp evolves.

Solution

The long-term plan must balance durability and permanence with flexibility and alteration. Every solution must be grounded in simplicity, designed with accommodations for future adaptation. We must also search for the common threads that always have and always will be part of the character of camp.



Zhongguancun Elementary School No. 3

Traditional Programming vs Pattern Writing

What separates TKWA from other typical architecture firms is our approach to what is traditionally thought of as programming. While the typical architectural programming statement is concerned primarily with the physical allocation of space, we spend a considerable amount of time in the early planning stages working to understand an organization's culture, how it operates, and identifying ways a building and site can better support the mission of the organization. Through pattern writing, solutions naturally emerge for making a place more alive, more functional, and more inviting to both staff and visitors.

Our unique design process can help analyze intangible business goals, corporate culture and values, and organizational workspace models to achieve a design outcome that supports and reinforces an organization's overall brand identity.

Patterns In Practice

Case study: 4th & Wisconsin, Downtown Milwaukee

Milwaukee has long sought development plans for the vacant lot at North 4th Street and Wisconsin Ave. Once a vibrant, dense block of hotels and commercial storefronts, the vacant parcel erodes street life along Milwaukee's main east/west urban corridor.

In partnership with Creative Alliance Milwaukee, TKWA conducted a workshop with a diverse group of creative professionals and urban advocates to identify solutions for bringing vibrancy back to this psychologically dead site. The primary workshop goals were to stimulate collaboration and advocacy, to change perceptions about the area, and to show that diverse groups can come together to devise solutions for the neighborhood's future.

As an outcome of this effort Milwaukee was named one of six U.S. cities to receive a \$200,000 'Heart of the Community' Grant sponsored by Southwest Airlines and the Project for Public Spaces. The grant will be used to help further reimagine and activate this important and underutilized site in downtown Milwaukee.



Pedestrian Continuity

Issue

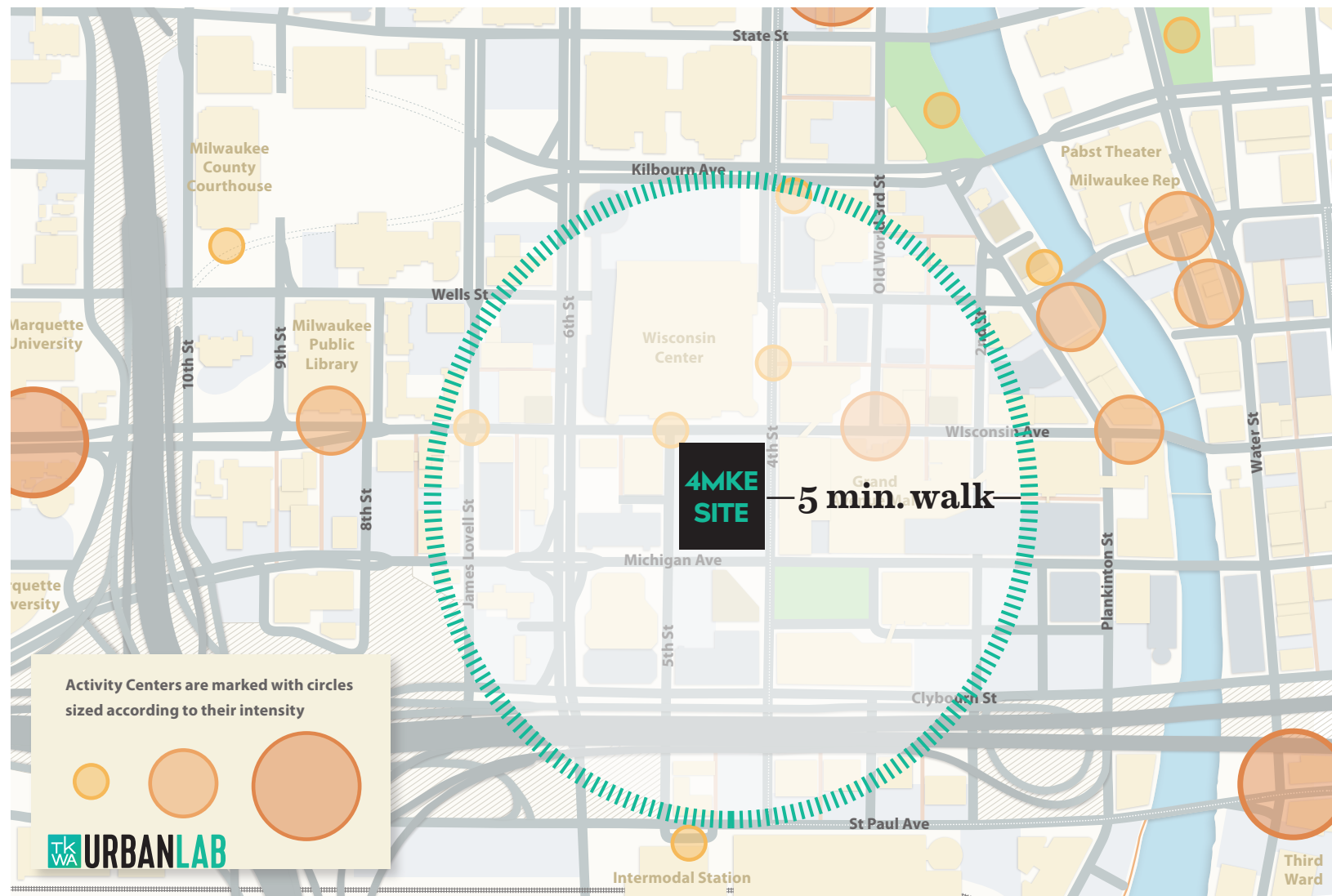
Milwaukee suffers from pedestrian fragmentation. Though the City offers places of pedestrian intensity, they are relatively isolated from each other; often by distances requiring a car to traverse.

Solution

A seamless network for pedestrians is needed to support activity and flow. Develop centers of intense pedestrian activity every 1200-1500 feet along inter-connected pedestrian ways. Provide a continuously vibrant and dynamic walking experience between these centers, utilizing small scale shops, restaurants, cafes and local businesses. Implement traffic calming techniques along with way-finding strategies to help create an easy to follow path of travel.

Below: TKWA mapped the project area (below) to identify intensities of consistent pedestrian activity. We worked within a quarter mile radius from surface parking lot, which equates to a 5 minute walk (the distance most people are willing to walk without grumbling).

The findings revealed a striking absence of people within the City's core. A lively urban setting tends to have nodes of activity clustered in close proximity. As a general rule, these nodes should be no further apart that roughly 1,200 feet. Ideally they are spaced much closer together to create a continuous network of street life.



Melbourne Australia is routinely cited as one of the most livable cities in the world. It took study, investment, and vision to achieve this distinction.

In the early 1980's very few people lived in the city center. Streets were largely vacated after the work day. City officials and community stakeholders went to work on a plan to induce more vibrancy into their public realm. By reclaiming an existing network of laneways as intense people places, Melbourne grew a formidable cafe culture. The continuity of always-crowded outdoor cafes and shops encourages locals and tourists alike to wander, linger, and explore.

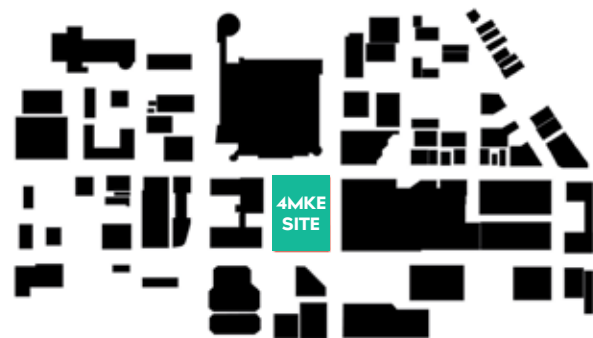
Short Blocks

Issue

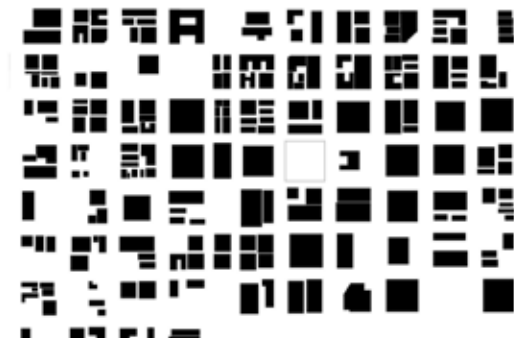
Urban block size has a critical impact on the life of a city. Research shows that as block size grows past 200' x 200', the vitality of street life diminishes.

Solution

Small blocks are needed throughout Milwaukee. Large blocks need to be broken up into smaller, more human-scale parcels. Find ways to utilize existing alleys or nooks as public realm spaces. Recreate the historic street grid when redeveloping superblock building sites.



MILWAUKEE
KILBOURN TOWN



PORTLAND
PIONEER SQUARE



“Long blocks tend almost always to be physically self-isolating.”

Jane Jacobs

The Death and Life of Great American Cities

The typical block size in the project area is approximately 350' x 450' -- much larger than a preferred 200' x 200' grid (as illustrated in the map of Portland, OR).

Historic city maps reveal that a distinct alley network once bisected each typical city block. These alleys created mid-block conditions offering alternative ways to traverse a long block while also creating valuable mid-block corner real estate. Over time these alleys were eroded by super-block buildings like a convention center, arenas and other civic structures. Future development must consider ways to once again offer pedestrians more ways to navigate the neighborhood.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

TKWA embraces a design philosophy of Wholeness, where the built environment supports and enhances both human activity and natural living systems. The idea of sustainability is a natural extension of wholeness-based thinking and is integrated into every studio project.

Our firm has particular expertise in working with public institutions and non-profit organizations where consensus building and fundraising play an important role in project development.

Wholeness in everything we do.



SERVICES WE OFFER
(Specific to Urban Planning and Design)

- Site Master Planning
- Programming
- Code and Zoning Review
- Stakeholder Outreach
- Architecture
- Sustainable Design
- Phasing Options
- Fund Raising Support
- Historic Preservation
- Cost Estimating
- Recreation Facility Design
- Presentation Materials
- Graphic Design
- Wayfinding and Signage

“The idea of a center is at the heart of all that creates life within an object... This emptiness is needed, in some form, by every center, large or small. It is the quiet that draws the center’s energy to itself, gives it the basis of its strength.”

—
Christopher Alexander
A Pattern Language



Thank you.

CONTACT

Wayne Reckard
Director of Marketing
262.377.6039
wreckard@tkwa.com



COLECTIVO COFFEE
Milwaukee, WI



Our focus is on placemaking and supporting how people live within spaces.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

We embrace a design philosophy of Wholeness, where the built environment supports and enhances both human activity and natural living systems. The ideas of sustainability/green design and historic preservation are a natural extension of Wholeness-based thinking and are integrated into every studio project.



RECENT MASTER PLANNING PROJECTS

- Grand Avenue Mall Redevelopment
Milwaukee, WI
- Milwaukee Inner Harbor District Master Plan
Milwaukee, WI
- Marquette University Campus Beautification
Milwaukee, WI
- 4th & Wisconsin (4MKE) Placemaking
Milwaukee, WI
- Albert & Ann Deshur JCC Rainbow Day Camp
Fredonia, WI
- Cincinnati Nature Center Master Plan
Cincinnati, Ohio
- Camp Alice Chester – Girl Scouts of WI, SE
Hubertus, WI
- Prairie’s Edge Mixed Use
Port Washington, WI
- YMCA Camp Carson
Princeton, IN

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

The Leopold Legacy Center is a LEED® Platinum net-zero energy facility that is the world’s first building recognized by the United States Green Building Council as carbon neutral in operation.

The experience gained from this project has helped our firm develop an integrated, whole-building approach to sustainability that is both proven and pragmatic. Our goal is to integrate sustainable design principles into highly functional and aesthetically pleasing buildings that are sensitive to occupant health and well-being.

We are a leader in the design of innovative, high-performance buildings that meet LEED standards for efficient energy and resource use.

AIA COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT (COTE)



TKWA has been the recipient of two national American Institute of Architects COTE Top Ten Green Project Awards, one of only a few firms in the country recognized with multiple awards (2007, Leopold Legacy Center; 2011, First Unitarian Society Meeting House Addition).

WELL BUILDING STANDARD



Workplace design that considers air quality, lighting, views to nature and the general layout of the interior can significantly impact health, satisfaction, well-being and staff productivity. TKWA’s wholistic, human-centered approach, can provide businesses with evidence-based solutions while gaining recognition for achieving the WELL Building Standard™.

LIVING BUILDING CHALLENGE



The Living Building Challenge is the world’s most rigorous sustainable performance standard for buildings. TKWA can help design your project to meet these standards.

The Leopold Legacy Center is the world’s first building recognized by LEED as carbon neutral in operation.



URBAN ECOLOGY CENTER
Milwaukee, WI



“We believe that the idea of sustainable design cannot be separated from the everyday work of creating good architecture.”