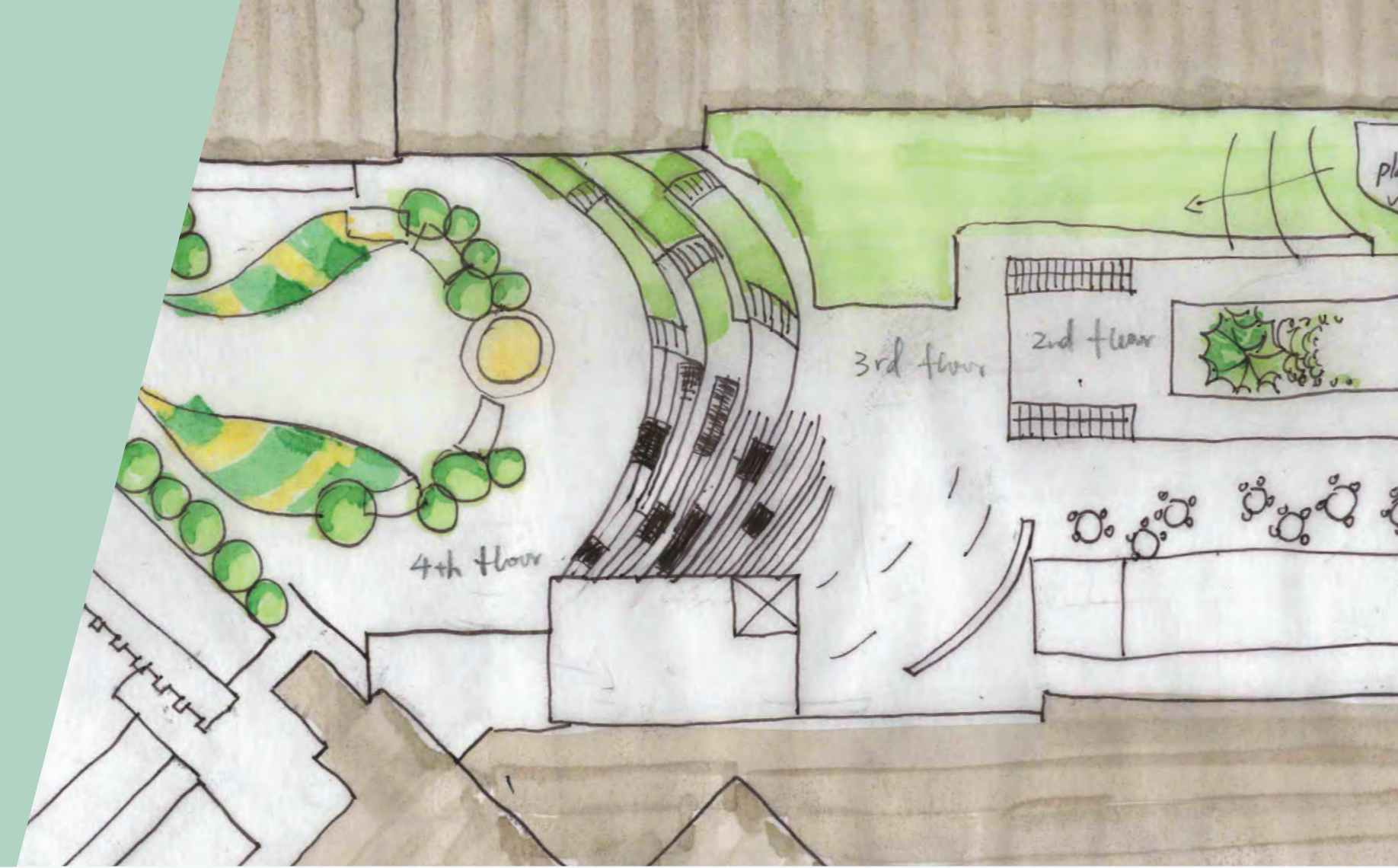




CIVIC CENTER VISION DEVELOPMENT

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THE CHALLENGE

UW's Urban Design and Planning graduate students are developing designs for Bellevue's new Civic Center area. The site encompasses City Hall, the Downtown Link Light Rail Station and its staging ground, the Grand Connection, Lincoln Center, and a lid over I-405. As the future gateway to Bellevue, this project is an opportunity to enhance Bellevue's civic identity and create a vibrant city center downtown. Our goals were to improve connectivity, address challenging topography, add affordable residential and commercial uses, and introduce human scale design and civic functions. Student projects are building upon Bellevue's motto "Our Diversity is Our Strength: Bellevue Welcomes the World," and character as "A City in a Park."



Students presented early designs at a stakeholders meeting. BRANDON BORN

OUR METHODS

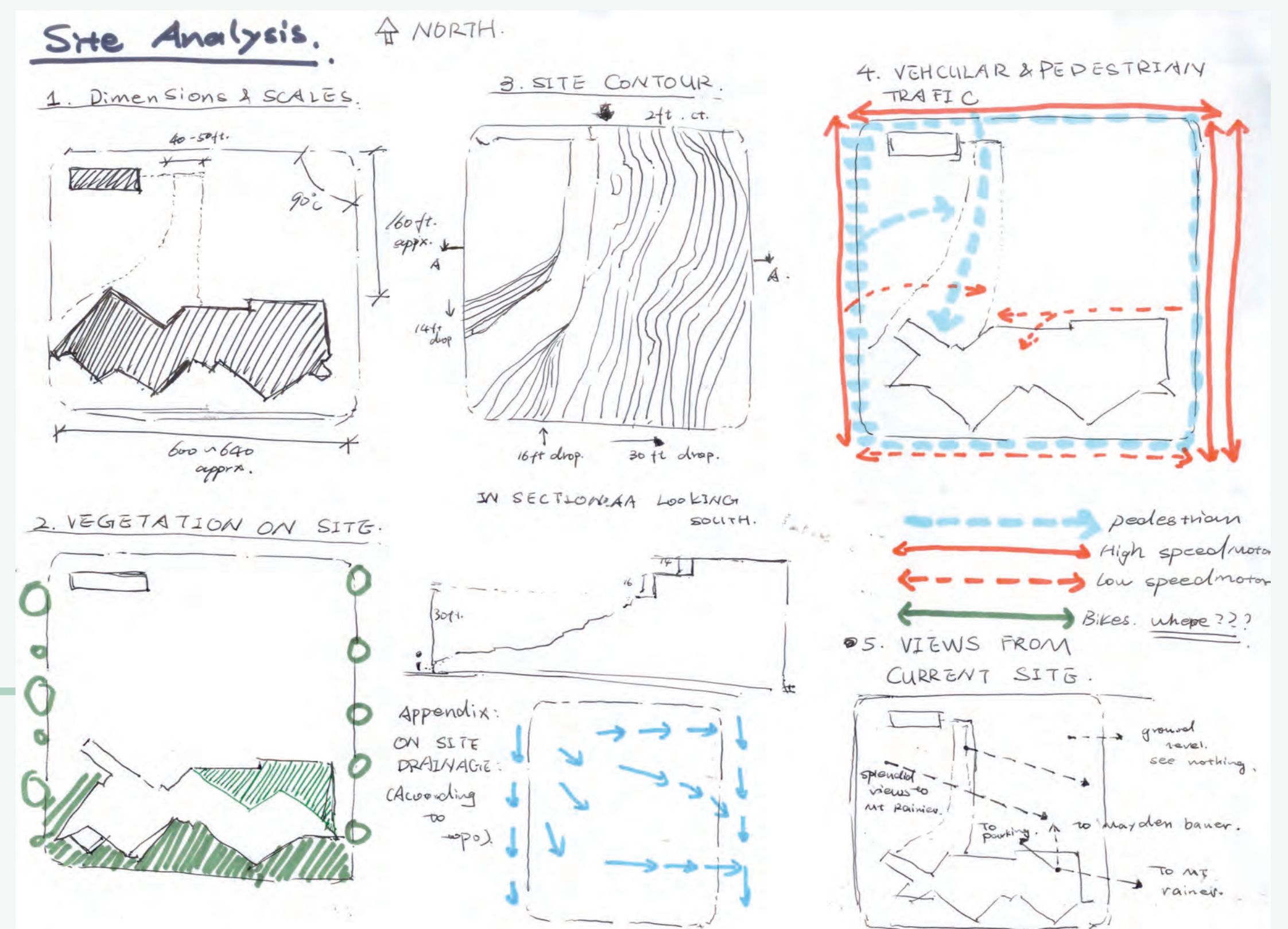
UW students worked on the civic center project for two academic quarters. During winter quarter 2019, students researched and evaluated the characteristics of Bellevue and compiled an Initial Conditions Report. Focus areas included the city's history, community, population, economy, transportation, infrastructure, public safety, housing, land uses, environment, and economic development. The research phase culminated with a stakeholder meeting with representatives from the City of Bellevue, Meydenbauer Center, Visit Bellevue, and the Bellevue Downtown Association. Students generated a memorandum identifying key issues and best ideas for the civic center.

OUR DESIGNS

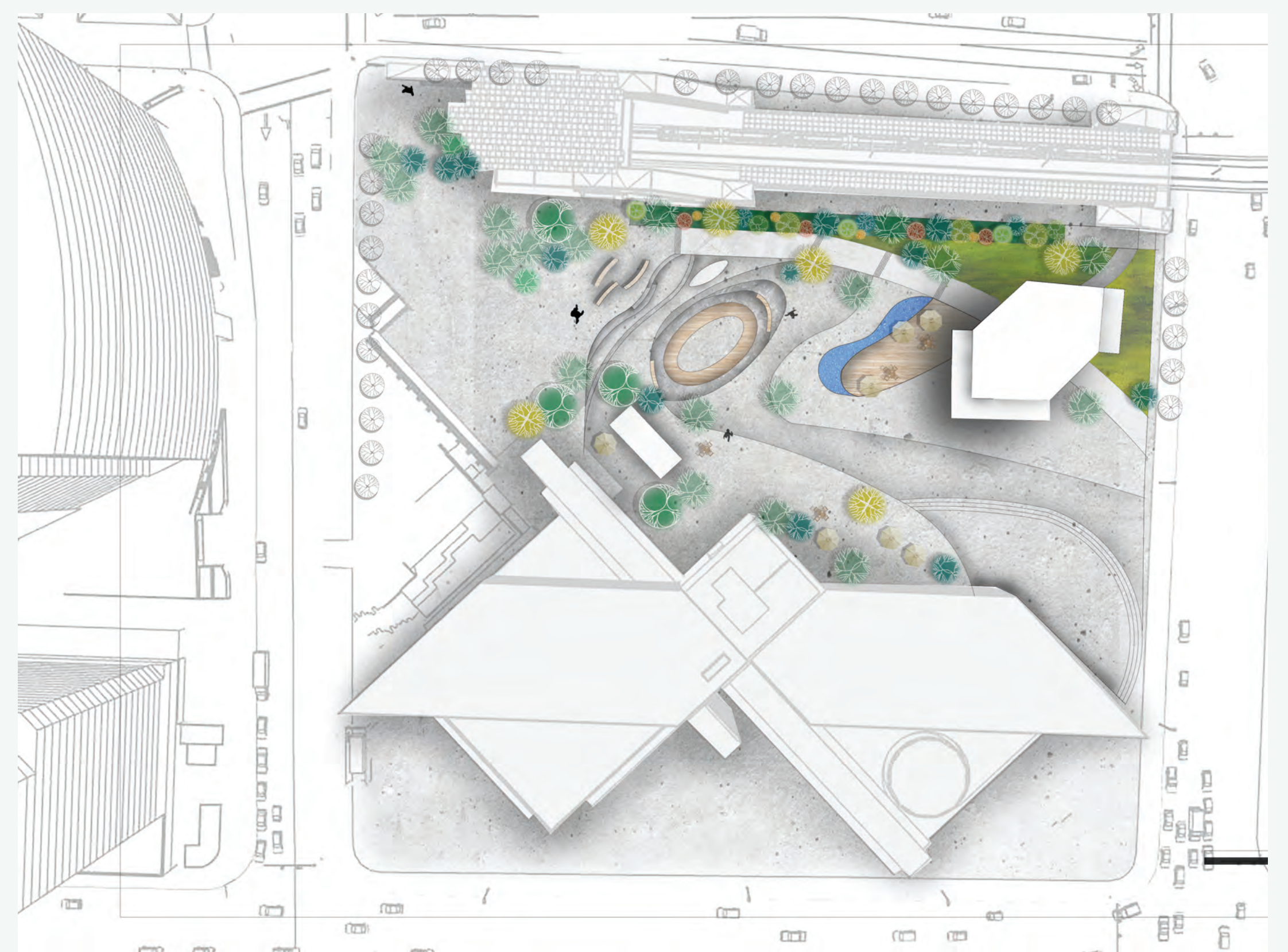
Cumulative analysis revealed that downtown Bellevue is missing a distinct identity. The environment is highly corporate and is not heavily used outside of work hours. With its tall towers, vast parking lots, and large blocks, downtown needs spaces that are designed at a more human scale. Bellevue also lacks retail and housing that are affordable for a wide range of income levels. Activating downtown Bellevue for local and visitor use at all hours of the day is an important goal for this growing neighborhood.

The three teams were structured around unique principles. The first team focused on "intimacy," characterized by green infrastructure, rooms, and local residents. They treated the site topography as an advantage for green space and community gathering that they amplified in their designs. The second team focused on a "civic home," characterized by space fluidity, vertical recreation, affordable opportunities. This team considered the potential to maximize residential units next to the future light rail as an essential opportunity. The last team focused on creating a "cultural center," characterized by civic identity, local economy, culture and diversity. They identified art and affordable retail spaces as key aspects for a vibrant, culturally engaging civic space.

Images displayed on this poster represent aspects of the design process. Incorporating input from stakeholders, the three studio teams are generating final designs for stakeholder review following the LCY Open House.



Students conducted site analyses to understand different aspects that will inform their designs. LCY STUDENT TEAM



Once design ideas had been developed, each studio team began to develop a draft plan to show to stakeholders. LCY STUDENT TEAM

