



Pockets for People -- Local ideas guided by local talents

Program to complement efforts by the 400 Block Committee to create an urban gathering place.....12/1/05 (rev 12/17/05)

Follow-up to a Public Hearing Testimony

This proposal is a follow-up to the testimony made by Mr. Kevin Korpela, Architect & Applied Artist, to the 400 Block Ad-Hoc Committee at the November 14, 2005 public hearing.

Introduction: Our City Square 400 Block will be the place to be, where to go!

Pockets for People is a program to complement efforts by the 400 Block Committee to determine the future of our City Square 400 Block. The program intent is to extend the Committee's role from making a Council recommendation to guiding/facilitating citizen participation. This initial four-page proposal outlines program details, such as: *focus group workshops, design competitions, downtown studio, and guides, leaders, facilitators*. These details help pull from ourselves those things that we want our City Square to be! Members of the 400 Block Committee, Mayoral staff, City Council, potential consultants and local talents will guide or facilitate interested citizens including children and young adults in a five-year process to frame an urban gathering place. The program is layered with specific components guided by two directives: **1. Frame an overall concept; 2. Plan multiple pockets**. Pockets are focus areas, such as a corner or edge, to be reviewed in five dedicated sessions, one each year, framed by the overall and flexible concept.

Citizen participation

The Pockets for People program outlines a goal-setting process with scheduled events to slowly and resourcefully grow the City Square 400 Block into a well-used, layered and welcoming gathering place for varied public events and small activities. Focus group workshops, design competitions and display walls with ideas & notations promote citizen participation. The workshop efforts could be coordinated from a downtown work space or studio in a vacant storefront near the 400 Block; find or lease a space for several months each year during five-year process.

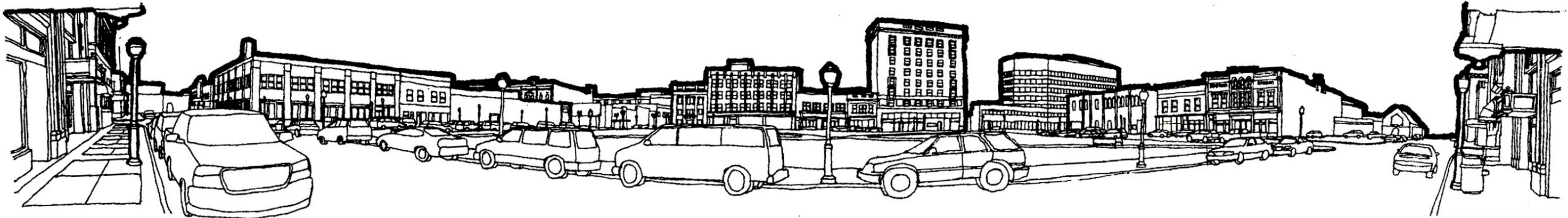
Right now, in the future

This flexible program with citizen participation would grow an energetic, enthusiastic and active public gathering place. Establish the overall concept in the initial session leading to the potential construction of the first pocket in year one. Other pockets would be built over the balance of the five-year program as funding is procured: *Pockets for People – Local ideas guided by local talents*.

If the Committee saw value and merit in Mr. Korpela's previous testimony and in this initial proposal, Mr. Korpela will welcome an opportunity to discuss Committee questions and adapt the program towards activating civic participation to grow the City Square 400 Block!

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Right now:
Establish process to determine what we want to be.

- Keywords**
- Citizen participation
 - 5 sessions over 5 years
 - Focus group workshops
 - Children, young adults
 - Inclusive, pluralistic
 - Welcoming, open, fun
 - Sit, play, socialize
 - Shady places, textured
 - Low walls, traffic buffers
 - Energetic, enthusiastic
 - Layered, overlapping
 - Multiple-use, variable
 - Resourceful, active
 - Downtown studio
 - Media involvement
 - Frame overall concept
 - Flexible, adaptable
 - Patient 5-year process
 - 8'x8' model of 400 block
 - Pin-up ideas, notations
 - Temporary, permanent
 - Listen, ask questions
 - New and more events
 - Big-picture, long-view
 - Potential consultants
 - Build mock-ups
 - Practical, reasonable
 - Reveal our possibilities
 - Corners and edges
 - Make big, small places
 - Local ideas and talents
 - **Pockets for People!**

Varied Participation & Ownership
 Maximize participation by providing varied workshop opportunities in evenings and weekends. Direct the program towards specific groups but plan for inclusive and pluralistic participation as the program evolves:

- Children and Young Adults
- Service learning programs
- Interested Citizens, Students
- Local Talents, Business Owners
- Youth Action Council
- Mayoral Staff, City Council
- 400 Block Committee.

Temporary versus Permanent
 Milwaukee's Summerfest has historically relied on temporary facilities for its events prior to building permanent structures. This resourceful approach might work for the 400 Block as activities are revealed or updated to discover its full potential and its true value. The flexible and patient plan outlined in this program allows for new ideas if future permanent buildings are deemed necessary.

Process
 The Pockets for People program is layered with specific components guided by two directives:

- Frame an overall concept
- Plan multiple pockets.

Examples of components

- Five Sessions over five years
- Each Session includes multiple Focus Group Workshops
- Mock-up work days to build actual-size concepts in the 400 block
- *Design Competitions*
- Brainstorming to invent and organize new 400 Block events
- Progress parties to display work.

Design Competitions
 Offer various *Useful Sculpture Design Competitions* where children and young adults would design useful sculptures under the guidance of local talents. For example, one competition might be for a Chess Table Sculpture where tables, chairs and a canopy offer a shady place to play chess or eat lunch.

Downtown Studio
 Propose that a downtown studio space be established to hold the multiple workshops and events. Work with local building owners to lease at a modest rent a vacant storefront for several months during the first quarter of each year during the five year process.

Plenty of wall space
 Record citizen progress with plenty of wall space to pin-up ideas and notations. This dedicated studio offers a consistent downtown location to encourage participation and share opinions with workshops and wall displays.

Eight foot model of 400 Block
 Provide generous table space for focus group workshops. Arrange the downtown studio to provide adequate room for a large-scale model of the square, perhaps 8'x8', to test ideas and frame an overall concept.

Out-of-town Consultants
 The Pockets for People program is flexible to allow for the tentative use of an out-of-town consultant for technical and facilitation assistance if the Committee, Council or citizens deem that such service is desired. Two potential consultants listed below offer varied levels of service. In the long-view, the future of the 400 Block will be determined by us with our ideas where consultants serve in a limited role to frame questions as we make our place.

- Two potential consultants:
- **Project for Public Spaces**
 New York, NY
 Fred Kent, President
 Website: www.pps.org
 - **Planning Design Institute**
 Milwaukee, WI
 Dr. Lawrence Witzling, President
 • UW-Milwaukee Professor
 • Architect & Landscape Architect
 Website: www.pdisite.com

Local ideas, local talents
 To help us reveal our possibilities this program will grow, nurture and promote local talent and knowledge to strengthen our abilities and services that exist or are latent in this city and region.

Guides, leaders, facilitators
 A diverse group of local volunteer talents (with tentative use of an out-of-town consultant) and their willingness to listen and ask questions will guide, facilitate and frame the overall process and lead workshops, community events, mock-up work days and host evening progress parties.

Place to be, where to go!
 The Pockets for People program will pull from shared or personal memories of this place or other places those things that we want to be and make a place to take us where we want to go. Our City Square 400 Block will be the place to be, where to go!

Five year process to frame an urban gathering space!

Year One: Month One and Two

- Plan initial process
- Review all past work & documents
- Define session and focus groups
- Lease/seek in-kind studio space
- Source in-kind paper, pens, chairs, tables, computer, marker boards
- Build 8 ft x 8 ft model of block
- Develop media packet
- Determine facilitation process
- Consider out-of-town consultants

Year One: Month Three

- Hold focus group workshops
- Interactive dialogue with lots of drawings, diagrams, models
- Compile data from workshops
- Build mock-ups of most appealing concepts from 2x4's and plywood
- Compare concepts to mock-ups with additional workshops
- Revise data from new workshops
- Present regular media updates

Year One: Month Four

- Refine concepts, discuss
- Prepare plans and posters
- Recommend construction details
- Consider construction materials
- Outline opinions of cost
- Write report, include diagrams
- Hold community events to pull in more dialogue and local ideas
- Test, measure, review, revise
- Frame long-view implementation

Year One: Month Five and Six

- Host open house at downtown design studio to provide maximum exposure and availability of information and citizen feedback
- Promote selected concepts and multiple-year implementation plan
- Secure construction dollars
- Prepare construction documents and project specifications
- Bid first pocket in year one?

Year Two thru Five

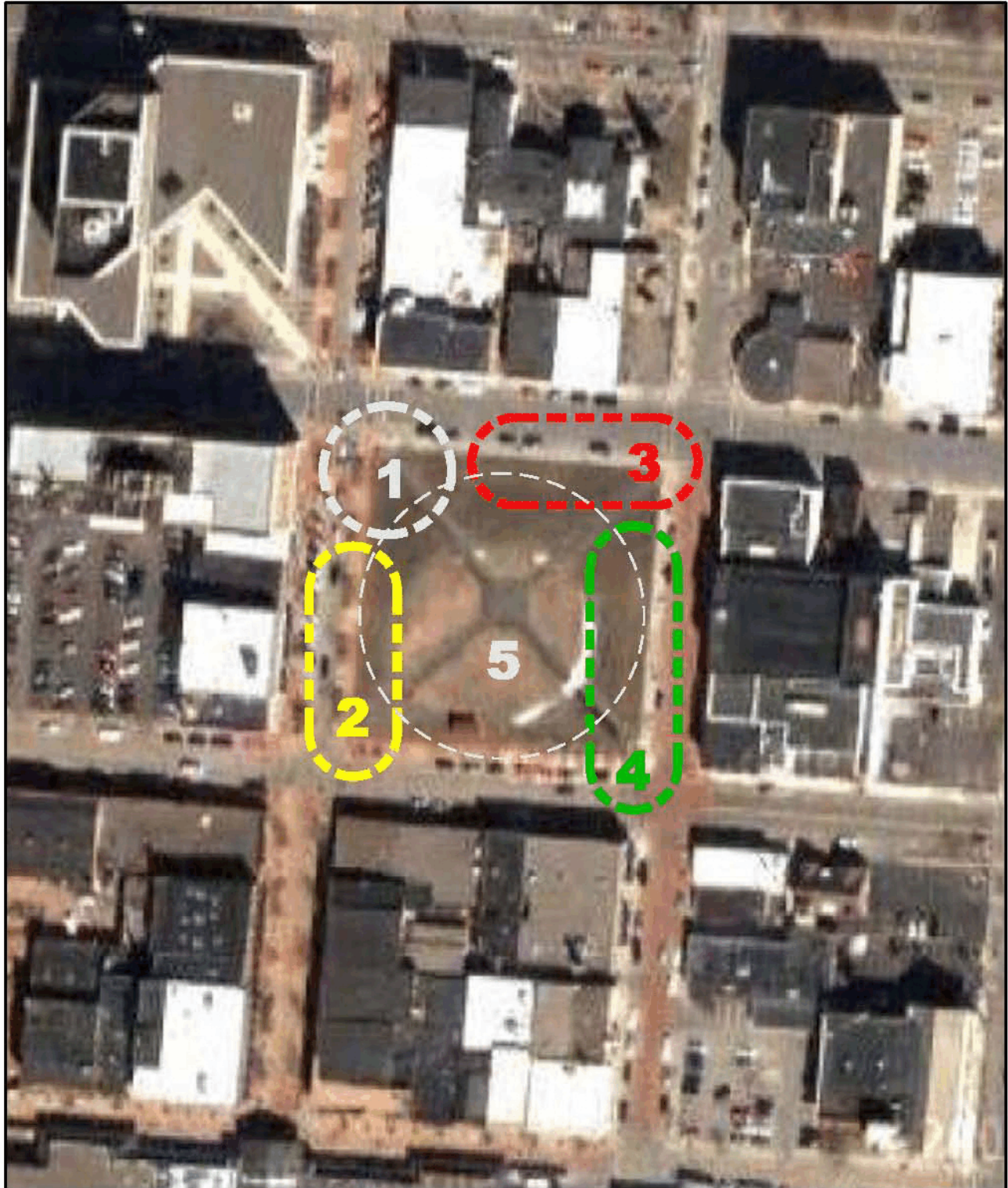
- Continue with new session, one per year.
- Phase construction.

In the future:
Let process take us to where we want to go.

Phased implementation for the 400 Block is guided by citizen participation

The Pockets for People program is a five-year plan with two parts guided by citizen participation:

- Frame a flexible and overall concept for the entire block that is composed of multiple pockets
- Design each pocket – such as a corner or an edge – in five dedicated sessions, one per year.



For information regarding the “Pockets for People – Local ideas guided by local talents” program, please contact:

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