



# JOPLIN CHARRETTE REPORT



American Institute of Architects  
Springfield Chapter



**Prepared for:**

American Institute of Architects  
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# CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction	2
Chapter 2: Lay of the Land	4
Chapter 3: Response	6
Chapter 4: Networking	8
Chapter 5: Strategizing	10
Chapter 6: Logistics	12
Chapter 7: Design	14
Chapter 8: Follow-up	24
Chapter 9: Lessons Learned	26
Chapter 10: Conclusion	20



# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

## Introduction

On May 22, 2011, the people of Joplin were confronted with a terrible force of nature. Two storms collided just west of town to create what the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) categorized as an EF-5 tornado. When the storm had lifted, a one-mile-wide and six-mile-long path of destruction was left in its wake. Approximately 8,000 structures, including 22 churches, 9 schools, and one of the region's two hospitals, were destroyed or severely damaged. The town of approximately 50,000 tragically lost 160 of its fellow citizens (one volunteer police officer died during the subsequent search and rescue).

After the tornado passed, volunteers poured into the area from across the state, region and country. Their efforts are a testament to the enduring human spirit. Amid the hive of activity, volunteers from across the world came to provide their assistance, architects and engineers from across the state volunteered to inspect damaged structures, and the community came together to dream big about its future for the prosperity of generations to come.

This is not a story of helplessness, but of hope. As soon as the tornado was over, the town, region, and country came to the aid of the people of Joplin. This synopsis is a case study of how the people of Joplin pulled themselves up by their bootstraps, and the America Institute of Architects (AIA) helped them shape their future.



# Chapter 2

## LAY OF THE LAND



## Lay of the Land

While the first few weeks after the disaster focused on search and rescue and the first three months focused on clean-up, a parallel process developed the means to engage the community on ways to create and rebuild a new Joplin. The City of Joplin, Town of Duquesne, and Jasper and Newton Counties slowly began the task of engaging the community in the rebuilding process. With the assistance of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Long Term Community Recovery Program (LTCRP) local elected officials created and empowered the Citizens Advisory Recovery Team (CART), an advisory board of citizens from impacted communities to assist in obtaining citizen input, analyze that input, and formulate ideas and projects to guide the recovery process.

The CART was divided into four committees or sectors: Economic Development; Infrastructure and Environment; Housing and Neighborhoods; and School and Community Facilities. For the first few months, CART, FEMA, and all other aid agencies were fast at work organizing the response, clean-up, and subsequent recovery from the devastating tornado.

AIA Springfield, a non-staffed, all-volunteer chapter led by their President Brandon Dake, AIA, began to engage the local community the day after the disaster. The chapter encompasses all of Southwest Missouri, including Joplin, Springfield, and smaller communities in the region. Only four AIA Springfield members practice in the Joplin area. Therefore, the chapter is heavily dominated by Springfield firms and institutions even though Joplin is only a 45 minute drive east on Interstate 44. The chapter had to respond quickly to a situation where no one had any prior experience with emergency response. It had to bridge historical and cultural divides between the two cities, and it had to develop and foster relationships with a community outside of its primary membership. These seemingly insurmountable barriers were taken head on by the chapter and its president. "What Brandon did is what needed to be done," said Michelle Swatek, Executive Director AIA St. Louis.



*"What Brandon did is what needed to be done."  
— Michelle Swatek, Executive Director, AIA St. Louis*



# Chapter 3

# RESPONSE

## Response

The day after the tornado, Brandon Dake, AIA reached out to the four AIA members in Joplin to make sure that they were safe and secure and to ask them if they needed any assistance. As it turned out, none of the Joplin architects was directly impacted as their homes and businesses were outside of the tornado's path, but like every resident of Joplin, they too were affected. On May 24, two days after the tornado hit, Mr. Dake and other AIA Springfield Board members drove to Joplin to assess the situation. By the end of May, Mr. Dake had reached out to AIA National for guidance and support. Additionally he contacted AIA Kansas City, AIA St. Louis, AIA Missouri, AIA Central States Region (CSR), and AIA National's Disaster Assistance Task Force to discuss a coordinated response. It was evident from the outset that whatever role AIA Springfield would play in the recovery would require resources beyond the chapter's capacity.

After the first trip to Joplin, AIA Springfield held a special Board meeting where three firms made a commitment to not pursue Joplin projects during the rebuilding process. Members of these firms became the "Joplin Executive Committee" for the chapter's official response. Mr. Dake printed new business cards, changed his email signature, and put in countless hours juggling the duties of his firm, Dake Wells Architecture, with the leadership of the chapter's response to the disaster. After two more trips to Joplin that month, he sent out an update to all his members. This was the first in a series of communications between Mr. Dake and members of AIA Springfield regarding Joplin. He explained that if the chapter could do anything to help he would be a hub of information for his members. Conversely all information and support from his members should be funneled through him to Joplin as needed.

The chapter's Joplin Executive Committee knew they had to reach out to the decision makers and elected officials in the affected area. They knew they had to leverage their relationships with its Joplin members as a starting point. The Joplin Executive Committee also knew that it would take

time, persistence, and maybe even a little luck. The unfortunate reality was that the worst time to try and develop these relationships was directly after a disaster event. While the AIA Springfield and local Joplin architects worked diligently to make these connections with local stakeholders, looking back they all realized that it would have been beneficial to have done this legwork prior to the disaster event.



# Chapter 4

# NETWORKING



## Networking

AIA Springfield's response team continued to travel to Joplin on a regular basis, searching for contacts to whom they could offer their expertise and assistance. In early June 2011 at a Joplin City Council meeting, Mr. Dake met Steve Castaner, who led FEMA's LTCRP team on the ground in the region. Around this time, Mr. Dake also met Jonathan Raiche, a planner in the city's Planning Department. These initial relationships became critical over time as the chapter began to understand where they could help the community. Mr. Dake said, "Jonathan became our "go-to person" because he was one of the few people who responded to emails and returned calls in those first few months."

By mid June 2011, AIA Springfield had set up a meeting with Joplin to discuss how they could contribute their support. This meeting included Erica Rioux Gees, AIA, the Executive Director of AIA Legacy and a leader in the AIA's disaster recovery efforts in Haiti, Steve Castaner of FEMA, Stan Peterson, FAIA from the AIA Kansas Disaster Assessment Program, Mike Vieux, AIA from AIA Kansas (who had experience in assisting Greensburg, Kansas after their tornado), and others from AIA St. Louis and AIA Springfield. Several ideas were discussed at the meeting, including a construction/product fair to educate the public on how to rebuild safer, stronger and more "green", and a Rural/Urban Design Assessment Team (R/UDAT), which would bring in national experts to help the area rethink how they could be more resilient in the future. It was also noted that, while this was truly a disaster, it could become an opportunity for growth and prosperity, which is how Greensburg, Kansas approached its disaster recovery process.

An early idea about a house plan bank where architects would donate schematics for people who lost their homes ran into legal issues and the construction/product fair gained no traction, so AIA Springfield focused on the R/UDAT idea with AIA National. In the meantime, AIA Springfield and AIA Missouri had announced a training and certification event for Missouri's Structural and Visual Evaluation (SAVE) program to be held on July 15, 2012. This training was a quick win for AIA Springfield and gave them some momentum moving into future talks with AIA National and the local stakeholders. It was the beginning of a bridge that was slowly being built. All of this work began to pay off for AIA Springfield. Through his work and persistence, Mr. Dake was invited by FEMA to visit Greensburg to study how that community recovered from a devastating tornado in 2007.

At this point, the AIA was still looking to connect their expertise to the needs of Joplin. Mr. Dake continued to ask "What can AIA do to help the city plan for its future?" On June 28-30, during the trip to Greensburg, Mr. Dake spent considerable time with another attendee, Gary Box of the Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce. During this tour, the two bonded and each proclaimed that this was a turning point in the relationship between Joplin and the AIA. Mr. Box was very connected with the decision-makers in the City of Joplin. This was where the story began to change, albeit slowly, for AIA Springfield. While it took time and a little perseverance, the introductions early on by FEMA began to develop into working relationships. As Mr. Dake put it, "They (FEMA) just kept lofting up soft balls and we kept hitting them". AIA Springfield was putting itself in a position to become a partner in Joplin's recovery process.





# Chapter 5

# STRATEGIZING

## Strategizing

On July 12, the CART hosted its first public outreach open house where it collected ideas and comments about the rebuilding process from the general public. The event brought together many of the decision-makers involved in the recovery, state and federal agencies, non-profits, regional colleges and universities, and other professional organizations. It may have been the first time that all these players had been in the same room at once. For AIA Springfield, this was the best networking opportunity yet.

On August 16, the CART hosted another community meeting where Brandon Dake, AIA was asked to be a presenter. He discussed the value of architecture and design in the rebuilding process and provided a general introduction to the public about the values of the profession including building safer and more sustainable buildings. While there were many visuals presented at this meeting as a means to illustrate the community's previous input, there was still an immediate disconnect between what the citizens of Joplin had identified as goals and needs, and recognizing the tools needed to obtain those ideals.

AIA Springfield's presence in the community began to pay off with the Chamber and City officials. On August 19, 2011, Joplin officially submitted a letter requesting that the AIA move forward with a R/UDAT. This was a significant milestone where Joplin went from discussing potential assistance from the AIA to requesting that assistance. AIA National agreed to support a R/UDAT, but not until January 2012, as the program was on an annual cycle. AIA Springfield knew that the people of Joplin needed something more urgently. This was where the idea of a "charrette" began to emerge as the best, most immediate support the AIA could provide to the Joplin community.

By the end of August, AIA CSR and AIA National had pledged funds for a charrette. Michelle Swatek from AIA St. Louis had also applied for a grant from the Hanley Wood Foundation to assist AIA Springfield in their efforts. AIA Springfield had leveraged its minimal funding within the chapter to cover some initial costs and advocated for additional financial support. Additionally, a call for administrative assistance came to fruition from retired architect Mike Vieux, AIA from Leavenworth, Kansas, who had been an integral part of AIA Kansas' response in Greensburg. Mr. Vieux provided organizational and administrative support for the charrette to help the unstaffed chapter of AIA Springfield.



# Chapter 6

# LOGISTICS

## Logistics

By September, AIA Springfield was working diligently to coordinate the goals, agenda and logistics of the actual charrette. Early in the month of August, the charrette was just an idea, but now it was time to make it a reality. AIA Springfield's Board and its Joplin Executive Committee began to develop a rough draft of the charrette's goals and agenda, using the citizens' comments from the public input meetings as a guide. They then met with and reviewed the proposals with FEMA and the CART to make adjustments accordingly.

By mid-September AIA Springfield continued collecting and uploading relevant data about the tornado onto a Dropbox website that would ultimately serve as a resource center for charrette participants. Maps, citizen comments, meeting notes, draft documents, pictures, and other materials were uploaded to the shared site.

After checking calendars and providing for enough time to arrange all the details, it was decided that the charrette would be a two-day event held on October 13-14 at the Forest Park Baptist Church in Joplin, Missouri. By late September, AIA Springfield had put out a call for volunteers to the larger design community (architects, planners, landscape architects, engineers, and environmentalists) in the region. The charrette would mimic the organization of the CART and work within their four sectors or committee areas of expertise including: Infrastructure and Environment; Housing and Neighborhoods; School and Community Facilities; and Economic Development. AIA Springfield's Joplin Executive Committee strategically selected architects within the chapter that had expertise in each of these sectors and invited them to be team leaders for the design charrette. These AIA team leaders were introduced to the CART co-chairs for their respective sectors and they worked together to identify specific projects or ideas to explore through the charrette process.

By the end of September, AIA Springfield began to organize all the participants and provide them with background information and other logistics, coordinate internet access at the event, obtain a

loaner plotter and scanner, order food, arrange hotels, and ensure media coverage of the charrette. In early October, prior to the event, AIA Springfield brought together the team leaders to attend an official CART meeting the night before the charrette.

Even with the assistance of Mike Vieux, AIA and other volunteers from the chapter, much of the burden of planning the event was put on Brandon Dake. Said Vieux, "Imagine what more Brandon could have done with even one AIA staff to cover all the administrative work."



**"Imagine what more Brandon could have done with even one AIA staff to cover all of the administrative work."**

*— Mike Vieux, AIA Kansas*



# Chapter 7

## DESIGN



## Design

The AIA CSR-hosted, CART-sponsored Joplin charrette took place as scheduled from Thursday, October 13 to Friday, October 14. The charrette began with an overview presentation of its purpose by AIA Springfield President and charrette facilitator Brandon Dake, AIA, which included the goals and desired outcomes as developed with the CART. Then each of the four group leaders gave a quick presentation of the issues within their respective sector. After a short break, a site tour of the disaster area was provided to all participants. Since most charrette attendees were from outside the immediate area, this was the first time they had seen the disaster zone. Although most of the clean-up had been completed by October and some rebuilding was already underway, the scar left by the tornado was still very evident and extensive.

Upon their return to the church that first morning, most of the charrette participants had been assigned to a sector, while others were allowed to choose their focus group based on need and attendance. The work began immediately on each respective topic area. At 4:00 that afternoon there was a community pin-up. At this pin-up, the working groups discussed their preliminary ideas and received input and direction from local residents and officials, as well as other charrette participants, on their proposals. While many CART members, city staff and the general public were in attendance throughout the day sharing their ideas and insight, this more formal review was designed to both create a focused dialogue between the designers and their “client”, the CART, as well as to allow for each of the four groups to see the other’s ideas and provide feedback.

After the first day, the group leaders met to discuss ways to bring their four group proposals in sync with comments at the pin-up and the CART’s objectives, thereby creating a more cohesive and comprehensive charrette proposal. Dinner was provided for those who chose to work into the night. Charrettes are inevitably chaotic and messy. In some ways that was exactly the point. The challenge for the leaders of this charrette was to somehow pull together all the resources and

varying design philosophies present and find a way to mesh the participants expertise with the needs and expectations of the community.

On day two of the charrette, the four groups started where they left off the day before and began to produce final images and illustrations. While some solutions were developed early, other ideas and concepts did not begin to take shape until well into the second day. At 7:00 that night, the final results were presented to the community, including the consultant who had been hired before the tornado to update Joplin’s comprehensive plan. While the AIA group leaders took varying approaches and each group had a unique composition of the general public, CART members, city staff, architects, landscape architects, city planners, other design professionals and students, the general concepts began to merge together. Their illustrations began to tell the story of citizen comments and the rebuilding of a better community with a higher quality of life than before the tornado. It was more than just getting back to normal. The charrette looked for ways, both system-wide and at the block level, to rebuild a better Joplin metropolitan region.



“The entire design community of Southwest Missouri felt the pain of the tornado. We were all looking for a way to apply our skill sets to the Joplin need, and the charrette was that way.”

*-Jerry Hagerman, Charrette Team Leader*

After nearly 48 hours of continuous design work by approximately 50 design professionals and the participation of about 30 Joplin residents, the groups had taken a system-wide look at the City of Joplin. The participants thought comprehensively about how the tornado path, which had effectively leveled a third of the city, could be rebuilt and reintegrated into a more vibrant and resilient Joplin as a whole.

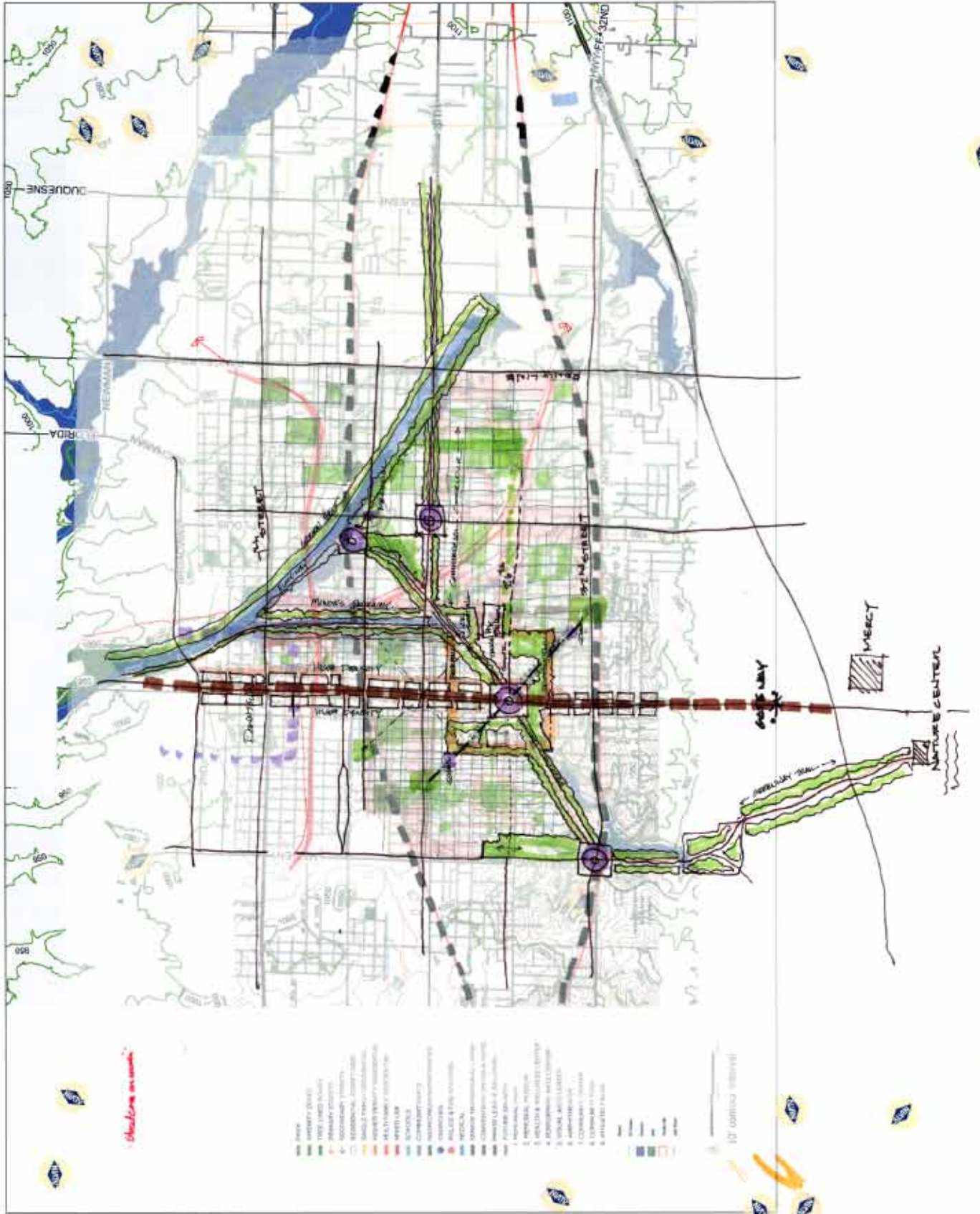
What started as an idea to rebuild the east-west axis of the tornado path evolved into how to strengthen the north-south axis along Main Street, which is the city’s historical urban core. The charrette identified sensitive ecological and disaster-prone areas that could be transformed and integrated into the region’s existing parkland. Participants proposed a modified transportation system that diverted truck traffic off Main Street and focused on developing green and complete streets that cater to all modes of transportation and simultaneously provides ecological and storm-water functionality. They proposed a trolley system between the new, relocated hospital on 50th and Main Streets to a revitalized downtown core with arterial feeder buses and an expanded bike network.

The old train depot in downtown, though not affected by the tornado, was conceived as a farmers and flower market. Nodes for various activities would be developed, including a cultural arts center along Main Street in the tornado path, a new education center adjacent to the site of the former high school (but outside of the floodplain where much of that facility had been located) and a memorial and museum complex at the site of the former St. John’s hospital.

New neighborhoods would be integrated into the existing and traditional grid street network. Mixed-use developments along arterials would transition to multi-family housing and then single-family housing with appropriate buffering and fencing to reduce nuisances. The charrette designed many neighborhood and housing typologies that explored how multi-family, triplexes and duplexes could be designed to fit into single-family neighborhoods. Most importantly, the charrette showed the community the power of design as a tool to shape their community.

This was a design moment for the people of Joplin. It was the first ever charrette in the community, and it showcased what the design profession could accomplish in so little time. It was a revelation to decision-makers and the general public about the possibilities for their community. For the architects and other designers involved, it was an opportunity to give back to a region in need. “The entire design community of Southwest Missouri felt the pain of the tornado. We were all looking for a way to apply our skill sets to the Joplin need, and the charrette was that way,” said one charrette team leader.





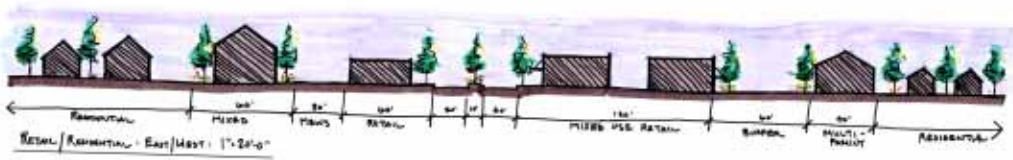
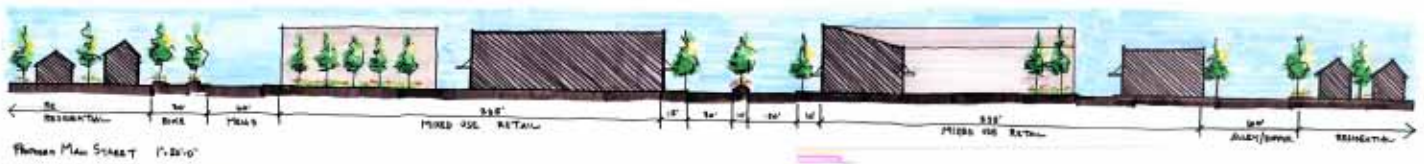
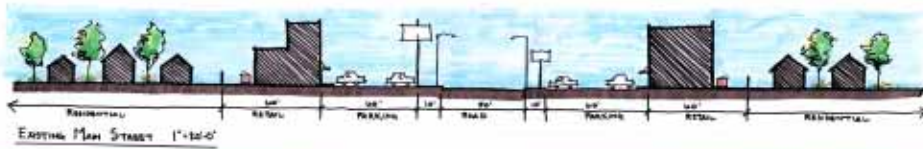


# SITE PLAN / LAND USE PLAN



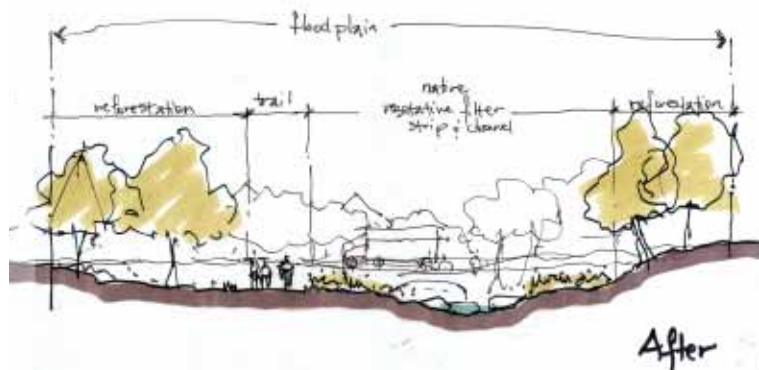
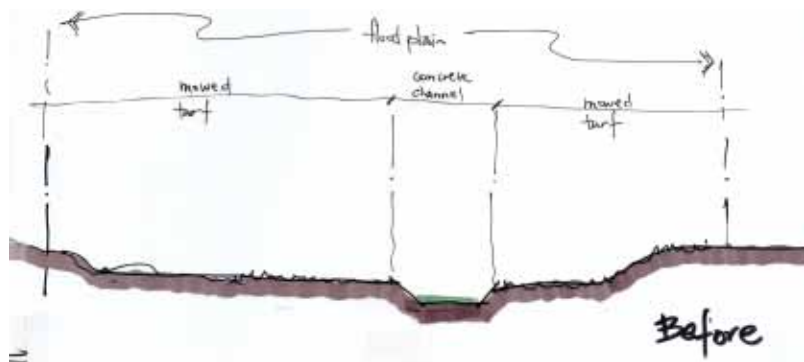
-  RETAIL / MIX USE
-  HOUSING
-  PUBLIC BUILDINGS / SCHOOLS

100' 300' 600'

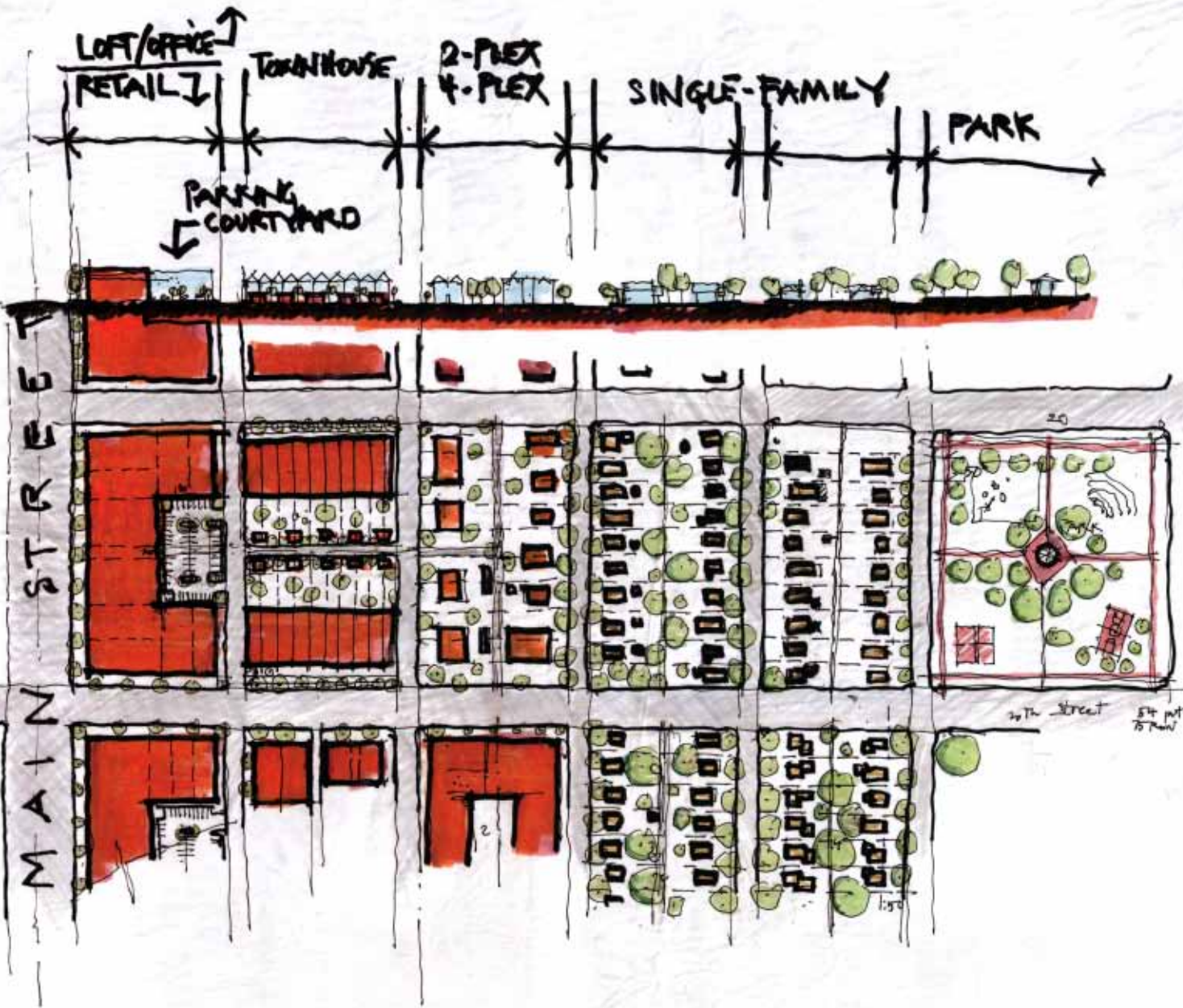
















# Chapter 8

## FOLLOW-UP



## Follow-Up

AIA Springfield spent the five days after the charrette scanning the images. By the end of October, FEMA had printed out a booklet of these images, and another Dropbox was set up for the CART to view and use them. AIA Springfield assisted the CART on their final plan, mainly providing insight on the charrette process and identifying relevant images. On November 7, the CART presented their findings from the community consensus building process to the Joplin City Council. Virtually all of the images in the CART plan were developed by the charrette. “The community was telling us over and over what they wanted. The charrette allowed us to show the decision makers what these words meant,” said Dake.

Although largely symbolic, the Joplin City Council voted to endorse the plan at its November meeting. Thanksgiving break led to Christmas break, and it was not until the New Year 2012, that the CART Plan reemerged as a true proposal. On January 19, 2012, a forum of the Joplin City Council, CART, town of Duquesne, and the Joplin School Board all met and unanimously approved the CART plan.

Given that AIA Springfield is an all-volunteer chapter, what the design community gave to Joplin was enormous given their limited resources. Post-charrette there will be numerous opportunities for the AIA to lend their expertise to Joplin. Whether it is developing a Request for Proposal for future projects, writing policies in the comprehensive plan update, creating a design review process in the zoning code, designing a competition for community facilities, bringing in a Rural/Urban or Sustainability Design Assessment Team, or even hosting more charrettes, the AIA has a continuing role to play in the implementation of the long-term disaster recovery in Joplin. Both the AIA and the people of Joplin tread lightly on the possibility of future partnerships, but both have a desire to continue the relationship. Through continued communication, the AIA can continue to help Joplin rebuild.



“Joplin is moving into the implementation phase, and what we have learned is that design is a tool for us to develop the type of community we want and for which the public has been asking.”

— Gary Box, Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce



# Chapter 9

## LESSONS LEARNED

## Lessons Learned

Throughout the conversations and review of documentation to develop this synopsis, there were many opinions expressed. What was consistent was the general appreciation for the AIA's participation. Hindsight provides us the luxury to review what did happen and to make suggestions for future improvement. Similar to the built environment, the documentation of the charrette is meant to constantly improve what now exists. Below are the various lessons learned that were compiled through this process:

Designate a point person to disseminate information. This single source needs to be either local AIA staff that will help coordinate efforts throughout the process, or someone nominated by regional or national AIA to provide assistance. Brandon Dake served this function, but, as a volunteer, his time and other resources were limited. A functioning disaster assistance team or committee at the chapter level could have more easily provided this function.

Coordinate with other relevant design professions and their respective institutions and university affiliates to approach the community-in-need as one single design effort. The city of Joplin consistently expressed how difficult it was to manage and determine whose help would be the best and in line with their local process. When a community is overwhelmed by a natural disaster and a flood of volunteers offer assistance it would behoove the AIA as a leader in design to conduct

some preliminary coordination before the initial approach to the affected population.

Be sensitive to the local community, which is usually in shock after such a traumatic event, and care for their general state of well-being. In this sense the architect must use the design process as a means to heal collective wounds. With that said, never approach a community in need claiming you have all the answers. As was done in Joplin, always ask what they need and then educate them on what skills and services you can provide. Encourage them to look for the opportunities.

Develop a clear plan of action with identified goals and objectives for your project team prior to any design intervention. Charrette leaders will inevitably come from different practices, backgrounds and even architectural ideologies, and any deficiency in preparation will ultimately translate into an absence of clear direction. If you do not have more time beforehand to coordinate amongst the charrette group or even with your local partners, add another day, if possible, to the charrette in order to have this intensive conversation internally before the beginning of the public charrette. If this does not occur, precious time will be lost within the larger groups working through these issues, educating charrette participants, and generally coordinating with each other during the event.

Trust in the design process and explain its methodology to local partners so that they understand your expectations. Architects and other designers must approach a problem the way they



have been trained, and that is starting from the general then moving to the specific. If a client, like the CART in Joplin, tasks you with a specific, geographically defined problem, take care to clearly define how you arrive at your interventions through a broader, comprehensive process. There were many city-wide and even regional issues that needed to be addressed in Joplin before the charrette could even begin to more clearly focus on the area of the tornado's path. The most important outcome of the charrette was that it helped the community broaden their understanding of their problems and opportunities. Unfortunately, this also limited the time many of the groups had to develop the very specific design interventions they were tasked with. Sometimes a disaster will unearth large and complex problems that plagued a city even before such an event occurred. Such instances are perhaps a community's greatest opportunity to reexamine itself and begin to correct these issues through the rebuilding process. "We need to solve the urban problem before we solve the neighborhood problem," exclaimed charrette team leader Jerry Hagerman.

Clearly state the design process of your event to the public to maximize their time and engagement. A charrette should be a place where designers, citizens, decision-makers and elected officials engage in a dialogue about the future of their city. That discourse is facilitated by an architect and translated into the language of design. While there are many ways to host a charrette, the lynchpin is that as many stakeholders as possible are engaged in the entire design process. The public must be fully engaged from the beginning, participating with designers during the process, in order to both increase buy-in of the outcomes, and to ensure that the results are directed to meet the community's needs. If there had been a second or third charrette, those events might have been more and more productive as the design community came to a better understand each other, Joplin and its clients' needs.

Never stop communicating. Communication amongst and between the design community and the public must not stop after the charrette. In fact, the communication of the ideas developed at the charrette should increase after an event. The CART

Plan used many of the ideas and designs from the charrette that were presented to City Council shortly thereafter. After this council meeting, due to the schedule, holidays, and even fatigue, the AIA did not continue to press the agenda of the charrette in the community. It also dropped most of its communications to its own members regarding Joplin. By not holding the public to the standards they developed at the charrette throughout the on-going disaster recovery process, the AIA partially lost its voice in the discussion about how to rebuild a more resilient, sustainable Joplin.

The initial engagement should not be the final course of action. After the planning process is complete, with general consensus about the policies moving forward after a disaster, continue to work with the local stakeholders in many and varied ways to help implement your hard work and the community's vision. Joplin did not understand how to apply the concepts that came out of the charrette, and therefore, could have used a follow-up event, be it another charrette, public meeting or presentation to allow the architects to explain their message to the people of Joplin.

Use plain language. For example, while the term charrette has become a common phrase in the design world, not everyone knows what it means. Like the actual process, the communication and message needs to be tailored to your audience. Several community leaders in Joplin said that there could have been more public involvement if the charrette was not called a "charrette." It is such an industry-specific term, and this had never been done before in Joplin so many people may not have even known what it was. "Charrette" is jargon, and the term may have been off-putting.

Documentation of the charrette or design process must be immediate and comprehensive. Make sure that whatever documentation is produced, whether it is a booklet, handout or PowerPoint presentation, that there are multiple copies in decision-makers hands and that it is freely accessible to the public, such as via the internet. Immediately after a charrette, when there is still a buzz about the event, make sure all those involved have access to the images or the booklet that is produced. While this may be solved later on, it is those first few days



after an event that really matter. After the Joplin event, “Everybody was asking where the booklet was,” explained one local decision-maker.

Never stop working. Disaster recovery is a long, hard road. After establishing yourself with a charrette or other design event, continue to work with the community to provide expertise. The AIA could have followed the charrette with a R/UDAT or even a Sustainability Design Assessment Team (SDAT) in January as originally planned. This longer-term engagement and involvement in the community could have framed the charrette in a different light, and created a follow-up process to continue the AIA’s engagement in Joplin’s recovery process. The AIA also could have hosted a design competition, helped develop an architectural review board, or even hosted more charrettes that focused on the implementation of specific, catalyst projects.

Utilize the AIA network more effectively. AIA, as a national organization, should develop and maintain a network to keep local components connected to state chapters and regional units, who then in turn are connected to AIA National. There is a lot of talent in the architectural community, and AIA National should better position itself to bring people together and allocate resources accordingly.

Develop local capacity in the AIA to respond quickly to future disasters. AIA National should bolster the funding and capabilities of its Disaster Assistance Task Force so that it has the flexibility to respond to disasters as needed. A new role for the strengthened Task Force should be to develop, train and assist state disaster assistance teams, such as the one in Kansas, which can be used to provide entrée into a community at an early date. Weeks prior to the Joplin tornado, a tornado struck Tuscaloosa, Mississippi. Much of the AIA resources for disaster recovery were already deployed in Tuscaloosa and elsewhere. There must be a more mobile unit or structure that can help local chapters respond to disasters.





# Chapter 10

## CONCLUSION

## Conclusion

Considering all the obstacles, it was an admirable feat by AIA Springfield and their president, Brandon Dake, AIA, to pull off a charrette in so little time. The chaos on the ground made it difficult politically, economically and logistically. It is important to take these lessons learned within their context: no one, from AIA Springfield to the city of Joplin had ever done anything like this before. It was the first design charrette ever in the city of Joplin.

What is important moving forward is that with the documentation of this event the AIA can better help local chapters respond to the next disaster. More than anything, it is imperative for the AIA's local chapters to engage their decision-makers today and let them know they are a valuable resource, not just in emergencies, but on all matters concerning the built environment. When disaster strikes, both sides will have built relationships that will put them at the table during discussions about response, rebuilding and long-term recovery.





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