GAMMAGE SQUARE - RECOMMENDATIONS

We envision an expanded cultural district surrounding the historic ASU Gammage. Creating a cultural district will enhance the existing historic landmark by activating the surrounding space on a daily basis. Currently, the block is absorbed entirely by ASU Gammage and its parking lots; activity on the block is limited to performances and events that take place in the theater. Visually, it's a sea of cars that blemishes views of Frank Lloyd Wright's masterpiece.

This cultural district will extend the current downtown area further south, which will be necessary given downtown Tempe's predicted growth. Creating density along Mill Avenue will help to strengthen the existing promenade through the downtown, which leads to the new Tempe Commons and Tempe Town Lake. It could include ASU alumni housing, aimed at senior citizens, building on ASU's plans for the blocks to the north. These buildings would be activated by ground-floor retail that appeals to those residents and theatergoers alike.

This cultural district will build upon a new public space that incorporates new cultural development within the existing footprint of the ASU Gammage parking lots, the curved portion of the existing configuration of Apache Boulevard, and the existing green space. The redevelopment of the existing curved roadbed, the existing park, and parking lots will:

- Create a public square serving both the region as a whole and the residential communities south, east and west of the square.
- Position Gammage Square to act as the front door to Arizona State University.
- Create two distinctly separate, yet connected spaces framing the vista to the iconic ASU Gammage.

Figure 4.7.1- An aerial view of the recommended Gammage Square.

- Create a new public square sized appropriately for the population density we expect as Tempe develops.
- Accommodate daily programming and events.
- Enhance the visitor experience to ASU Gammage by providing ample accessible parking in two new parking garages, one on either side of the theater building.
- Diversify the residential experience offered in downtown Tempe by focusing on creating senior housing and a new cultural residential community that meets the future market demand and expands upon the existing downtown offerings.
- Activate the edges of the public space with a dense variety of uses. This will attract a wider range of users that will use the square at a broader spread of time during the weekday, as well as the weekends.

We recommend creating a new promenade along the existing Apache Boulevard curve that acts as a plaza extension stitching ASU Gammage on the north side of Apache with the rest of the square. This space should plan to incorporate the streetcar, be closed to vehicular access, and allow for Apache Boulevard to be realigned into the grid of the city and intersect with Mill Avenue at a right angle. The new promenade will:

- Create a consistent, minimum 20 foot wide pedestrian way along the street edge on both sides of the realigned Apache Boulevard.
- Front all new uses to the sidewalk in order to activate the walking experience.
- Incorporate restaurant and kiosk uses into the square along the new pedestrian/streetcar promenade, and fronting onto a newly developed outdoor dining terrace and cultural lawn.
- Incorporate mixed-use residential buildings along the eastern and southern edge of the square along with two new parking garages.

Additionally, we recommend transforming the parking lots into a grand public space with intimately scaled rooms for programming, a common lawn for neighborhood use and communal programming, and a public plaza for dining and other events requiring a hardscaped surface. The public space should:

- Provide shade structures and/or trees throughout the space.
- Present opportunities to create an expanded cultural district that faces the new public space by incorporating two pad sites fronting the parking garages, and developing two future cultural facilities there.

GAMMAGE SQUARE - IMPLEMENTATION

Creating a cultural district at ASU Gammage will be a large undertaking, but creating a public realm that is worthy of Tempe's most iconic building is a rare opportunity. Most cities (never mind Tempe's neighbors) don't have the chance to combine world-class architecture and a renowned educational institution with outdoor cultural amenities, all in a compact mixed-use downtown. Gammage Square wouldn't just be the Southern gateway into downtown: if handled properly, it could become a defining image for ASU and the city that helps attract investment, businesses, and residents. It would be an attraction that even other large "college towns" couldn't match. We have provided a general overview of the project's physical components, but in order to bring this project to reality, we recommend that ASU takes it over from planning to execution. We have generally outlined the following implementation components:

Governance

ASU currently owns and operates the majority of the block; ASU should continue to operate the site. Birchett Park, the remaining portion of the block located at the intersection of Mill Avenue, Apache Boulevard, and 13th Street, is a City-owned and operated park. We recommend creating an agreement with the City of Tempe that gives ASU control of Birchett Park so that the entirety of the block can be operated by ASU.

Fundraising for Capital Expenses

In order to cover the capital expenses for the project, we recommend an ASU capital campaign for the project, positioning Gammage Square as the gateway to the dispersed ASU campus and an icon that represents the university. Gammage Square is located on Mill Avenue, the main street through downtown, making it the ideal location for a grand entrance to ASU.

Generating Revenues for Future Operations

By converting the space into an active urban space, it is possible to eventually make the space financially self-sustaining. With percentage-based rent agreements from tenants, sponsorship deals, and event revenues, it is possible that these revenues cover the operating expenses of the space.

In addition, it will be crucial to involve a developer for the privately owned mixed-use development, one who understands the value of active public space surrounding the buildings. This partnership can potentially lead to a ground lease agreement that includes the developer financially contributing to the public space's operation costs on an annual basis. The location on an active public green space will serve as an amenity to their tenants and increase their rents (and asset values).

Tenants

Our plan for Gammage Square will require several types of tenants, including:

Restaurant Tenants: The preferred lessee will be an experienced multi-site food operator. The different restaurant concepts located throughout the space should range in price and type of cuisine. The lease agreements should be based on a percentage of food and alcohol sales, instead of a flat fee. The activity created in the space through programming will positively impact food and beverage sales. A percentage-based rent with a lower base rent will allow for a much larger upside for Gammage Square and ASU.

Incubator Space Tenants: We expect that the demand for incubator space will grow through our proposed container

village project. The container village project will serve as a temporary activator for the ASU block where the Opus development is planned, until construction begins. Developing the temporary container village and creating a network of incubator spaces tenants will ultimately contribute to Gammage Square's success as these small businesses mature and move to the new cultural center.

New Cultural Arts Venues Tenants: The new cultural venues could house a wide variety of cultural arts tenants. One of the new cultural venues could serve, partially or completely, as an exhibition space for various fine arts schools within ASU, such as the School of Ceramics. Another option is to create a "black box" theater that could be used flexibly by different types of performers; it could be a venue for new plays and musicals or experimental theatre not appropriate for ASU Gammage. Additionally, we recommend reaching out to regional and national arts organizations who could be potential tenants, offering a middle-ground between the small-scale fine arts exhibition spaces and the large scale performances at ASU Gammage. The goal is to create a spectrum of cultural art opportunities, ranging from small to large, that will create variety in Gammage Square and attract a wide array of users.

Finding Programming Partners

Finding programming partners to activate the space will be crucial to the success of Gammage Square. Daily programming will encourage daily use of the space, leading to an active and urban feeling space. Programming partnerships are created by engaging local businesses and organizations in the space through different activities and/or events. For example local painting studio could hold painting classes, a local Salsa dancing studio could hold dance classes, and the ASU Department of Ceramics could hold interactive demos. See "Identifying and Recruiting Programming Partners" on page 75, for an outline of our recommended process and approach to implement this plan.

We believe that Gammage Square perfectly complements the City of Tempe's Art and Cultural Plan that was completed in 2015. As noted in the executive summary of the Tempe Arts and Cultural Plan, "Perhaps the defining feature of this new vision is broad community engagement and the desire for elements of the community—citizens, artists, the business community, City government, the University, schools and others—to come together in building the cultural life of the community to the next iteration of richness." Gammage Square will create a central cultural gathering space, engaging all of these parties, and will further establish Tempe as a regional hub for arts and culture. Combined with a rejuvenated Tempe Arts Park, Gammage Square would provide two hubs for cultural activities that would allow Tempe to realize the vision of the Tempe Arts and Cultural Plan.

GAMMAGE SQUARE

BRV BIEDERMAN REDEVELOPMENT VENTURES