



Location of Virginia in the United States (4)

The city of Roanoke was established in 1884 as a crossroads for the railroad, which started the town's rapid growth. It is now a center for transportation, trade, manufacturing, recreation, and much more. The city's most visible attraction is the Mill Mountain Star, a 100-foot-high illuminated steel and concrete structure, which has been a beacon for more than 40 years. Thus, Roanoke is called the "Star City of the South".

The Market District is the oldest area of downtown Roanoke. The establishment of the Norfolk and Western Railway in 1882 sparked a tremendous amount of growth in what is today the downtown area. Its location at the edge of the Market District helped to establish Market Street and Campbell Avenue as the main arteries in the district in 1884.

The historic farmer's market is the oldest in continuous use in Virginia. Farmers began selling their wares in 1882 and although the contents may have changed, the exchange of goods still lives strong today. The market's season occurs from March until October. Activities at Center in the Square (located at the head of Market Street), such as tree-lightings and museum exhibits, attract visitors during the off-season.



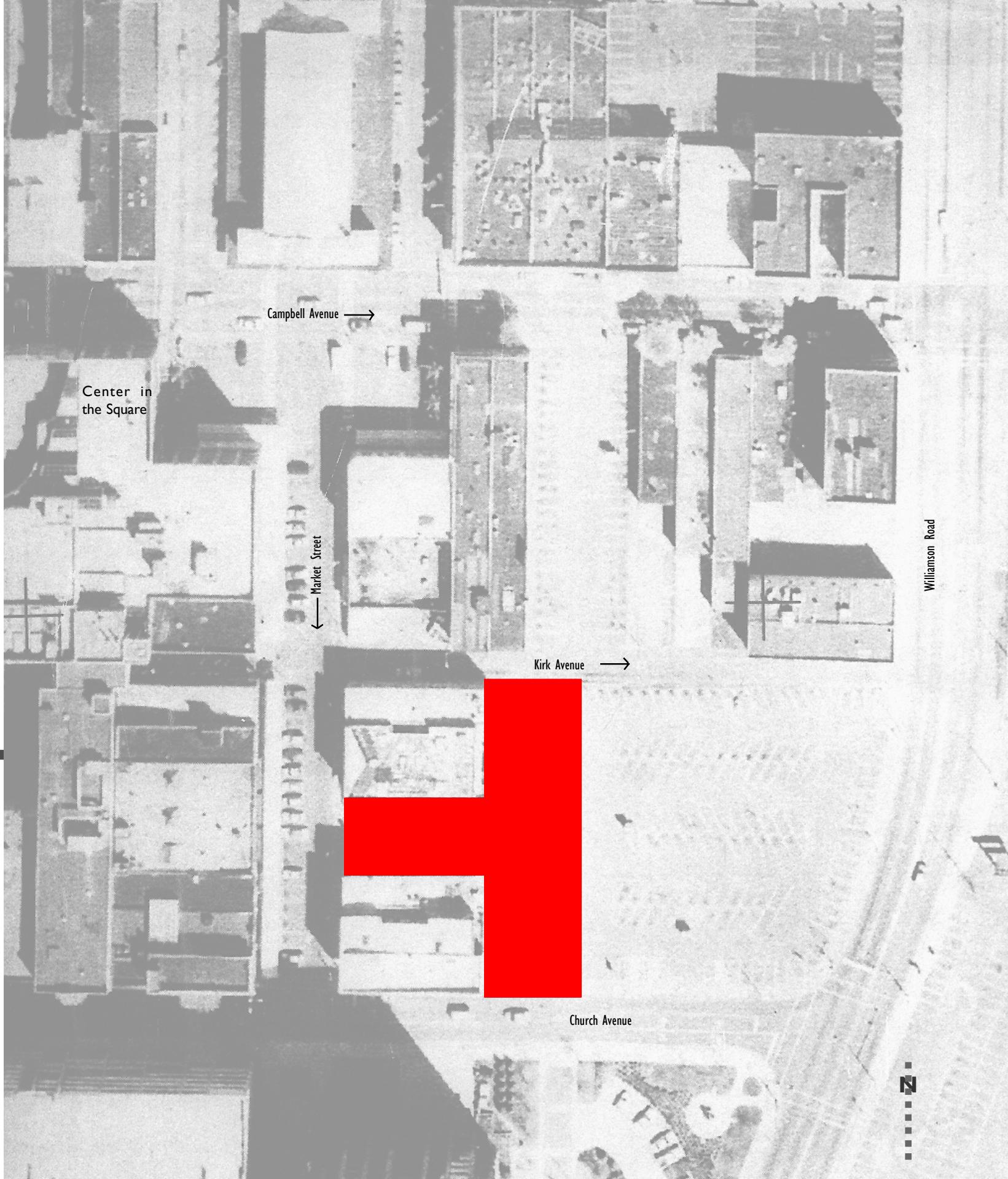
Market Square in 1915 (5)



Market Square in 1936 (6)



Location of site in downtown Roanoke (7)



the site

Aside from the farmer's market, Market Street is also home to restaurants, coffee shops, a bakery, wineshops, and a variety of boutiques. It is anchored on the north end by the City Market Building. This building used to house seafood and meat markets, but today serves as a food court for many downtown commuters.

This site was selected for its prime location in the district as well as its role in being part of the path downtown employees and visitors use when going to and from Market Street. Its function as a pedestrian path in the district gives it a critical role in one's daily life. People have made walking through the parking lot part of their routines when they go to lunch or meet someone. Maintaining these well-travelled routes is important in considering this site for an intervention.

The T-shaped lot is bounded by Kirk Avenue to the north, Church Avenue to the south, and Market Street to the west. The front portion measures 50' x 100'. The back portion measures 200' x 75'. It serves as a parking lot, but the unkempt facades offer a poor greeting to passersby on I-581, just east of Williamson Road.



site from Market Street (8)



Kirk Avenue across
Market Street (9)



Kirk Avenue toward
Williamson Road (10)



Corner of Church Avenue and Market Street (11)



Market Street from Church Avenue parking garage (12)



City Market Building (13)

Market Street is known for the colorful produce and the handmade crafts sold by farmers. The linearity of awnings establishes unity to the storefronts along the street. The individual facades are of a 2:1 proportion. The storefronts are organized by the fenestrations and topped with cornices. Brick is the material of choice for every building, whether it is grey, orange, or red.

During a normal weekday, many zones of activity occur along the sidewalk. The thresholds of the stores are well-defined by the notched spaces at the entryways. This intimate space implies a private zone in front of the store which serves as the store's display area. The awnings designate a zone for window shopping. Their lower heights communicate a more leisurely pace as well as protect shoppers from the elements. The uncovered portion of the sidewalk can be seen as the fast lane. People in a hurry to reach their destination use this path. Then, there is the zone of the car. Its presence seems only to be acknowledged by the row of constantly filled parking spaces, mostly farmers' cars and trucks. Since Market Street is a one-way street, the flow of traffic is not very heavy. Being a predominantly pedestrian area, the chosen site is well suited for more retail and urban housing.

The rear of the site is marked by unkempt brick facades and lack of organization. No canopies, fenestrations, or cornices occur on these exteriors. The backs of other buildings on the site are treated with the same carelessness.

This side of the site only acknowledges the pedestrian with respect to the car. No clear path is designated for the pedestrian to access Market Street; only by the spaces in between the sea of parking can one get to the destination. Kirk Avenue (seen in the lower right corner) forces its way through the parking lot; yet, it is a street in name only. No curbs, sidewalks, or elevation changes clearly define it as a street.

The development of Market Street was obviously a one-sided growth towards the downtown area. These exteriors are what greet the passersby on I-581 and Williamson Road. The time has come to give a new face to this area.



Parking lot side from Kirk Avenue (14)



Condition of artist's studio facing parking lot (15)



Condition of buildings facing parking lot (16)



Condition of restaurant facing parking lot (17)



10

Sam's Clothing Company (left of site) (18)



Site (19)



Carlos' Brazilian Restaurant (right of site) (20)

The two entrances into the store are separated by a door leading to a second level, an office space. Although made up of vertical elements, the doors and windows, the soldier course and awnings order it horizontally.

The brick load bearing walls of the adjacent stores provide a modest backdrop to the site. The color and quality of the brick add character to an otherwise dull space. A covered balcony 15' above street level sits halfway back on the left side. For the purpose of this project, I am assuming that it is presently being used.

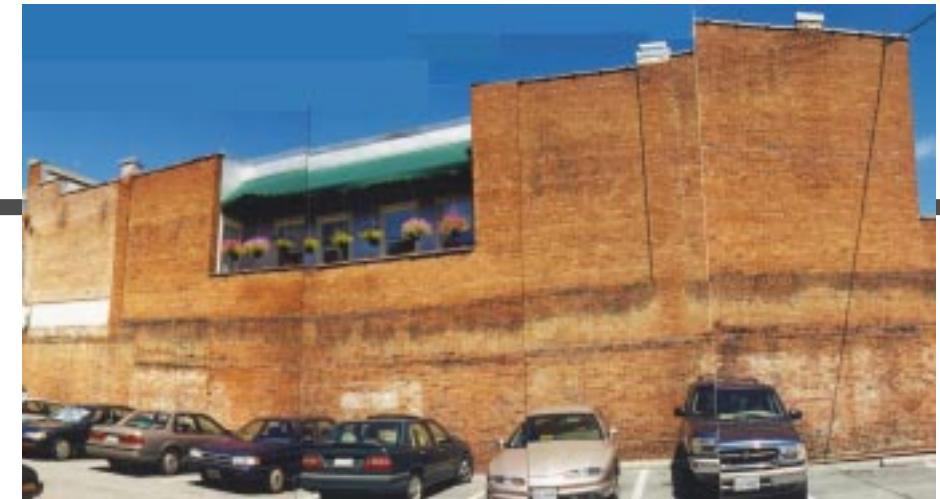
Coupled with the awning, the recessed entryway provides additional shelter for customers. The narrowness of the facade emphasizes the horizontality of the windows and roofline.



Side view of Carlos' showing condition of brick (21)



Rear of site (22)



Side view of Sam's showing condition of brick (23)

From the parking lot, the rears of the buildings illustrate the disorder and lack of concern for the backs of the buildings. The fenestrations supply little order to the facades and the rooflines are not articulated. Some doorways lead to nowhere while others now exist with mismatched brick that emphasizes the insignificance for visitors from Williamson Road.

Looking at the facades of the adjacent buildings, the present condition of the brick is quite beautiful. The varying shades of orange, red, and brown set a nice background for any activities that could occur in the space in between. The preservation of these facades is very important; therefore, acknowledging that the project is an intervention and not a destruction.

Many observations of Market Street revealed three primary paths that pedestrians take to reach the Market District during the day.

The first path runs between Elmwood Park (past Norfolk Southern Building) and the City Market Building. Both physically and visually, it is a direct connection from the park to the City Market Building, which houses a food court and becomes the pedestrian's main destination at lunchtime.

The second path starts at Franklin Plaza and splits in two directions; the first goes through the site to Market Street and the second goes through the site to Campbell Avenue. The route is less direct, but gives use to the sidewalk next to the Norfolk Southern Building, which originates in a heavily trafficked financial area.

Note: The numbers, designating the location of the photographer, correspond to the photographs on the opposite page.





Elmwood Park to City Market Building (24)



City Market Building to Elmwood Park (off map) (25)



Parking lot to Norfolk Southern Building (26)



Parking lot to Market Street (27)



Norfolk Southern Building to parking lot (Campbell Avenue in distance) (28)