



Speck Dempsey (then Speck & Associates) design for Lyon Square, completed in partnership with Concept Design Group, creates a new front door to downtown along the Grand River.

Downtown Walkability Study

In February, 2008, CEOs for Cities brought Jeff Speck to Grand Rapids for a full week, to contribute a chapter to its report on making Grand Rapids a more successful city. Over the following several years, Jeff Speck made frequent visits to Grand Rapids to present his findings to city leaders and other community members. These findings were effective in capturing the imagination of their audience, and are said to have had a significant influence in the continued evolution of the downtown. They also helped to spur two additional projects, the Lyon Square redesign, and the Crescent Street Corridor.

Lyon Square

Commissioned initially by the Amway Grand, and ultimately by a coalition of interested parties (likely to include the DDA), Speck & Associates completed a full redesign of the key block of Lyon Street between Monroe Street and the Grand River, including all new ground surfaces and landscaping, a replacement of the DDA's waterfront amphitheater, and new artistic cladding of both the Devos Place loading dock and the mid-block skywalk. This project was taken through Design Development, but is currently on hold pending further investment from the Amway Grand.

Crescent Street Corridor

Speck Dempsey teamed with the URS Corporation to complete a study for reactivating the disused east-west axis of Crescent Street from Bostwick avenue to Monroe Street. This effort resulted in a report submitted in May of 2010. This study acknowledges the impediments to circulation caused by the superblock interventions of the 1960s, and proposes remedial actions that will improve pedestrian activity downtown.

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