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# **Invigoration:** **growth through activity**



The city that put the world on wheels is now covered in tires.



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# WRITTEN

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# think



In Western society, the undeveloped wilderness is valued greatly. The United States considers its “wide open spaces” just as great of an asset as the Europeans’ do their city centres.

Oddly enough, Detroit lies between these two realms. A void of two conditions exist: a ground plane that is no longer necessarily urban and a landscape that is not quite rural either. It stands in a void, thus placing the “city” within the territory between.

The space between is characterized by a disparity of wealth and knowledge, a division of peoples and politics, and a devaluation of land.

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# abstract

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In a post-industrial society there are many social issues plaguing urban dwelling Americans. There is an abundance of unemployed land in cities. Without program these spaces are not seen as assets to their communities. These marginalized spaces are assumed to reflect a surrounding community of similarly marginalized people. This thesis explores the un-tapped potential found in these underutilized vacant spaces as a conduit for contemporary recreation and community involvement.

# circumstance

With a focus on the vacancy posed by abandoned post-industrial urban centers, the project will attempt to enhance Detroit's Lower East Side Community through the conversion of abandoned and deprogrammed sites into recreation and mixed use development opportunities

The Lower East Side Suffers from two voids:

1. An over abundance of empty, deprogrammed space.
2. Deficient public space which does not serve the local community

Utilizing the vacancy available in the post-industrial condition in Detroit's Lower East Side, this project will attempt to find a freedom through space and activity. An invigoration of space is sought. This will be accomplished through the conversion of abandoned and deprogrammed sites into areas dedicated to active and passive recreation, as well mixed use communities.

# thesis paper

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In a post-industrial society there are many social issues plaguing urban dwelling Americans. One of these is the abundance of unused land. This thesis explores employing underutilized vacant spaces as a conduit for contemporary recreation and community involvement as a catalyst for prompt change.

The thesis engages a multitude of components that encompass a large geographic area; it requires a frame of thought with a similar scale; using theories of Landscape Urbanism will provide the best answers. As a relatively a new design field, landscape urbanism challenges and mediates architecture, landscape, and urban design. This field is misunderstood due to its name; "rarely is landscape used to refer solely to pastoral scenery or garden planting"<sup>1</sup> according to James Corner who describes it as, "diverse and rich, embracing urbanism, infrastructure, strategic planning, and speculative ideas alongside the more familiar these of nature and environment"<sup>2</sup>, which may come to many as a surprise. The overall appeal of this train of thought is that one can utilize the landscape as an asset for activity and development.

Much of this thesis is based upon the city in which it is being written, Detroit. To move forward we must understand that Detroit embodies the perils of a post-industrial city. At one time the city had been the fourth largest city by population and industrial might in the United States and even began to rival New York City and Los Angeles in clout<sup>3</sup>. In 1950 Detroit had 1,850,000 residents, by the year 2000 the city had shrunk to 951,270 residents<sup>4</sup>. In fifty years, Detroit had experienced race riots, the flight of manufacturing jobs to suburban and rural locations, as well as the loss of its principle shopping district, and the majority of its corporate citizens. Today, "the sheer size of its 142 square miles coupled with the amount of vacancy and abandonment has made the challenge of providing basic human services difficult"<sup>5</sup>, yet this aftermath does not begin to

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1 James Corner, *Recovering Landscape* (Princeton Architectural Press, 1999)

2 Park Kyong. *Urban Ecology: Detroit and Beyond* (Hong Kong:Map Book Publisher, 2005)

3 James Corner, *Recovering Landscape* (Princeton Architectural Press, 1999)

4 Phillip Oswald, ed., *Atlas of Shrinking Cities* (Ostifildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag 2006)

5 Park Kyong. *Urban Ecology: Detroit and Beyond* (Hong Kong:Map Book Publisher, 2005)

express the human cost.

The affects of Detroit's environment on one's upbringing is profound. As an example, a visitor to Detroit's Lower East Side will notice in places a large amount of rubbish. This is not to say that citizens are intentionally messy though, rather concepts as simple as litter or crime can be desensitized, phenomenologist D.R. Koukal asserts:

"Litter seems to be embedded in the very fabric of Detroit, so much so that it seems hardly worthy of comment. Some long-time residents see the litter but don't see it as an offense; it is simply part of their everyday environment, like the leaves on the trees. Others appear to not see litter at all; It doesn't seem to appear to their consciousness in any significant way" <sup>6</sup>.

Not all Detroiters are immune to trash and some do understand and associate 'grime' or poverty with it, rather it is just one of the ways to generalize about those who are a product of this environment.

Another product of this environment is obesity. Detroit is an unhealthy city. Despite the presence of 50 square miles of vacancy, youth and adults do not use this space for outdoor pursuits. According to city data, the majority of the parks are "under capacity", thus the issue is clearly not about available recreation space, but recreation that meets the needs of the people. Today's youth play much differently than twenty, fifty, and especially one hundred years ago. For as quickly as technology has changed, so have the methods of recreation. Children play more video games than hopscotch for instance.

People from Detroit are also strong, and although they may suffer from a weak regional community, there is a common denominator in their struggle with the lack of civic services, "into this breach have stepped powerful neighborhood organizations and privately funded social service organizations, a large cadre of volunteers, and in extreme cases, a form of "vigilantism" to help provide safe and secure neighborhoods"<sup>7</sup>, and it is these passionate Detroiters that the thesis will attempt to address.

One of the most interesting regions of the city is the Lower East Side. Although it is adjacent to the river, the vast majority of this territory can be found as an 'urban frontier'. This area is void of any large parks of note. Industrial relics rot with surrounding neighborhoods that once housed their workers. Like most of the city, due to middle class flight, many of the business, social clubs, and other amenities have also followed. Fires have left many of the blocks nearly empty for some time. Ironically enough, this condition is not very different

6 Arron Taylor, ed., *Dichotomy 15: Trash*, no.16 (2006)

7 Park Kyong. *Urban Ecology: Detroit and Beyond* (Hong Kong:Map Book Publisher, 2005)



what it was 250 years ago.

The city was part of a new frontier. As the French Settled, the land was divided into ribbon farms, running inland, perpendicular to the river. The lower East Side was site to many of these farms due to its strategic location to the Fort was near present day Downtown Detroit. Access was provided by the riverfront, or later on by a road that paralleled the river. Later on, as the area developed, roads were cut along the property lines. Over the course of the history of the city, the Lower East Side has been home to not only the original farming communities, but latter on to elite and working-class-immigrant neighborhoods, railroad lines, early pharmaceutical companies, and other large industrial factories.

Now the Lower East Side of Detroit is in a state of Limbo. Some of its waterfront is public space. The context of place, such as knowing how to get from “here to there”, is not apparent. Luxury condos, private gated communities, and new middle class housing are being built on former industrial sites that once lined the river. Most of the time it is these newer developments that inhibit the pedestrian flow between nearly fourteen separate parks. Despite this, there are efforts to connect about half of these parks with a linear park, The River Walk. This space is meant to facilitate non-motorized traffic from the Downtown core to roughly 3.5 miles of river front. These “positive” developments are needed, yet all have not been executed in a thoughtful manner.

Although there is not a lot of park space in the overall region, along the river front there is a considerable amount of space dedicated to this effort. Of the fourteen parks two are large historical parks of note: the first is the city’s’ flagship public space, Belle Isle. Design by Frederick Law Olmstead, it is considered a study in classic urban park design. Formal activities, canoeing, tennis, sailing, and crew were all planned for the island. Over 100 years after its design and execution the park has still retained much of its glory, despite its decline in use, funding, and inevitably quality of maintenance.

Nearly as old, Water Works Park, which is operated by the city’s water department as a purification plant. It was the city’s’ first modern plant at its conception. The name of the plant is indicative of its double life as a public space. At one time was just as popular, if not more so than its larger sibling across the river. At nearly 100 acres, it is quite large.

Historically, as public space, it housed the first branch of the Detroit Public Library and city airport (seaplane port). Activities ranged from swimming in one of the ponds near Jefferson Ave., picnicking, and other leisure pursuits of the time. It has always served first and foremost as a utility, but in times of war the park would be closed to the public. This has caused public protest and peaceful demonstrations. Today, the

park is closed to recreation, with the exception of its grandstand which is used for the city's hydro plane races.

Its location makes it a crucial component of the east riverfront, positioned between three distinct neighborhoods, as well as connecting a major thoroughfare, Jefferson Avenue, with the river. It is also adjacent to two canals that reach inland. Regrettable, due to the paradoxical situation of a public space being privatized, this keystone to the Lower East Side is no longer accessible. It is a governmental form of privatization of space. Our current 'War on Terror' in the Middle East has given justification for an indefinite closure. Yet, Water Works Park has such potential with so much of its ground plane not in use.

Although not too many sites exist quite like Detroit's Lower East Side, and specifically Water Works Park, there have been many post-industrial communities that have benefited by new public space. One of these precedents that exhibits a similar scale is Landschaftspark in Germany. The idea of a "landscape park" (the name translated to English) has been called the "quintessential park of the early 21st century"<sup>8</sup>. While it reuses an abandoned steel plant, it does so with respect to the sites history and ignores the notions of traditional parks. Here a user will not find tennis courts, bocce, or even a soccer field, nor a pastoral oasis in a dirty city. It is a park about contemporary landscape design. The lead architect, Latz is quoted saying, "'Landscape is not the opposite of the town. Landscape is culture'"<sup>9</sup>. Creating an urban space that does not attempt to hide its past, nor the city of which it is apart, is not like parks past.

Of late, more and more post-industrial sites have found new life as public space. To simply clear them would rid the surrounding community of their identity. One of the first to embrace their industrial past is Gas Works Park in Seattle, Washington, it utilizes its industrial relics as a thematic backdrop to alternative park activities; kite-flying and sun-dialing. These parks become a real preservation of their urban condition. Even without this design theory, it may have been cost prohibitive to go forward with these types of projects, if the remaining industrial artifacts had to be removed.

In Chicago, Illinois, there is a proposal to pursue a much different form of planning. A city wide system of water and green ways that will embrace the city's water utility have been proposed. This project proposes, exposing drainage and water reclamation areas into ribbons of park that lead to the city's respective water shed: Lake Michigan. The motivation behind this plan is not intrinsic good though. The value of water is touted as 'the next oil'. And, as it is a resource to be valued and conserved, should it truly be treated as a commodity. Besides

8 Arthur Lubow, "The Anti-Olmsted" *New York Times*, 16 May 2004

9 Arthur Lubow, "The Anti-Olmsted" *New York Times*, 16 May 2004

this though, it does raise awareness to the lay public of water hydrology, increasing public greenways and connectivity to the city's neighborhoods and parks, as well as creating more vibrant communities.

The post-industrial condition has created a series of problems for the citizens that live in the Lower East Side of Detroit. The answers to the problems shall provide an outlet for the community to gather, recreate, and make productive use of the vacant spaces. These solutions should also account for the culture that already exists in this urban frontier. The design solution will have to be true to the nature of the area. ●

# ANALYSIS

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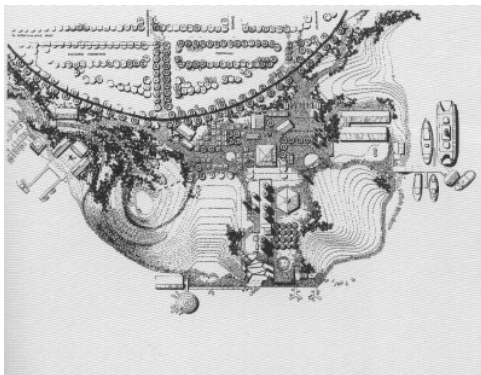
# Gas Works Park

**precedent study** Architect: Richard Haag  
Location: Seattle, WA

A former industrial site, across Union Lake from Seattle's downtown, was abandoned in the 1960's. It was quickly purchased by the city. Within a decade landscape architect, Richard Haag, began to recreate the area as a multiuse park.

An imaginative spirit has been employed; the site was transformed from a somewhat repellent past. Richard Haag was aware of preconceived notions, he knew the space had to be reintroduced to the public, yet it was a fine line also, for he made every effort not to erase the industrial past.

To accomplish this difficult task Haag introduced new, "childlike" activities to the site. First, Integrated into the pipes of the gas plant, an exotic playground unfolds: slides, obstacles, and other "gym" like objects for children to leap, tag-a-round, and enjoy. Secondly, Haag creates a Kite Flying Hill to bring an activity in which a whole family could be activated by. This by all means shakes what one might assume to do at a formerly toxic site.



**15.1:** Site Plan for Gas Works Park illustrates the dramatic change in topography.



**15.2:** Users fly kites near the hill top sundial.

Many of the techniques employed are successful and to their strength, most serve a dual purpose. For instance, the kite flying hill has a sundial, yet together conceal structural waste of the former plant, that has low level toxicity. Clearly, the ruins of the site that have been kept not only act as an exotic back-

drop, they are conserved as a resource, not allowing the local community of being striped of a landmark structure.

The strongest design quality of this project is the architect's effort not to sanitize the site, which could have been done quite easily. In the book *Drosscape*, author Alan Berger speaks to this condition, "The internal frontier emerges from the composite of many landscape fragments with in the local urbanized area: strips, lots, and unbuilt or unbuildable properties."<sup>1</sup> This is no exception. The ability to preserve what was and integrate it into a new and productive purpose was revolutionary for brownfield sites in general. The "frontier" or the idea of a societal threshold is not necessarily so figurative either, with many urban areas experiencing "doughnut" growth, these areas of cities have developed a "genius loci" or spirit of place.

Moreover, Gas Works Park revitalization has crossed its site borders . First, bike paths connect the park with other neighborhoods and attractions. Second, it has lead a renaissance in the surrounding community, creating a more vibrant residential neighborhood, especially assisting in shedding negative perceptions of the area. In fact, today, as a testament



**16.1:** The industrial realm of the Gas Works plant, before the plant's conversion into a park.

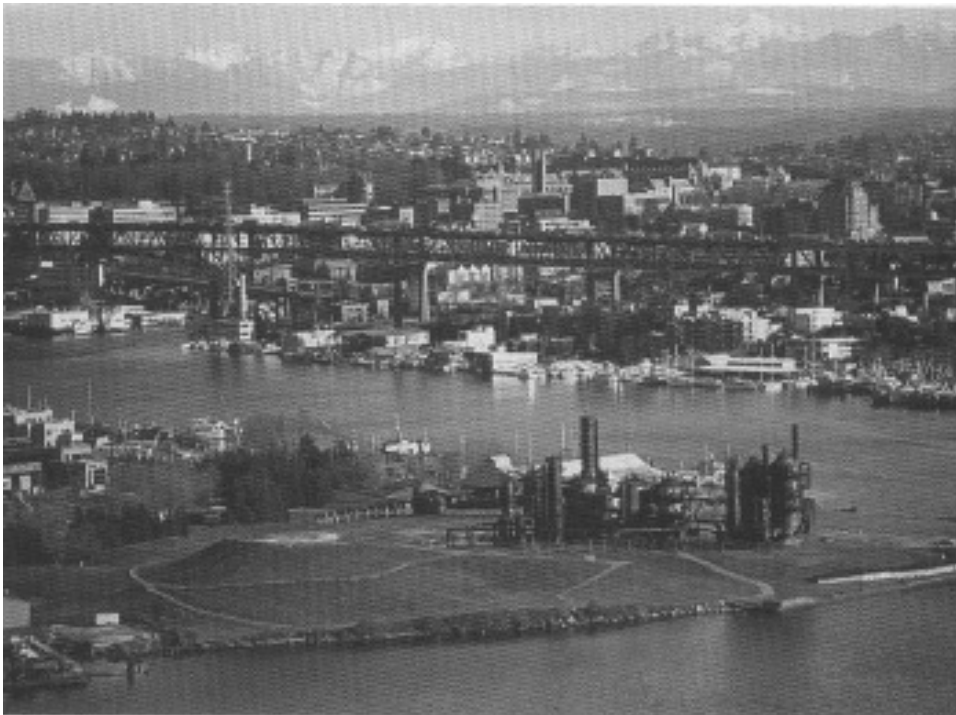
of its popularity, its found on many city tourist guides:

"This is an example of urban renewal at its best. Take an old gas-processing plant that has outlived its usefulness, and transform it into something everyone can enjoy. Located on the north shore of Lake Union (opposite downtown), the park has excellent water views and a spectacular, unobstructed view of the city skyline. It is a popular spot for concerts, bikers, kite

<sup>1</sup> Berger, Alan, *Drosscape: Wasting Land in Urban America*. First. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2006.

flyers, families on picnics and just about everyone else. This is also a prime spot from which to view the Fireworks on the Fourth of July as great place to view the city sky line”<sup>2</sup>

Overall, Richard Haag has successfully achieved the following: he changed the perceptions of a post-industrial site through a respectful blend of playfulness and pragmatic site development. He includes a host of activities and user types, making the park a destination for many in the surrounding neighborhoods and beyond. Becoming an anchor for recreation and social activity are a sign to his innovation in Landscape Design.



**17.1:** Gas works park, after its dramatic transformation.

<sup>2</sup> Yahoo Travel, <[http://travel.yahoo.com/p-travelguide-2747355-gas\\_works\\_park\\_seattle-i,2008](http://travel.yahoo.com/p-travelguide-2747355-gas_works_park_seattle-i,2008)>





18.1 Gas Works Park could have been easily erased.



# Landschaftspark

**precedent study** Architect: Latz + Partner  
Location: Duisburg-Nord, Germany



**19.1:** Landschaftspark uses changing light as an art form to draw attention to its industrial past.

A district in the city of Duisburg served as a coal and steel manufacturing for over a century. Today, after much planning, the industrial heritage is showcased in a park that creates opportunities for the current citizens and respond to current trends in recreation. The park's web site describes it as "combining) the industrial cultural heritage, Nature and a fascinating light-show"<sup>1</sup>.

Landschaftspark by Latz + Partner is not just an industrial redevelopment, it is reincarnation. The former life of the site has not been sanitized nor has it been embalmed for viewing. It is to be enjoyed and used as if it has been given as a transplant.

The architect answers the question 'What is appropriate for our time?', by saying "Landscape is not the opposite of the

1 :Landschaftspark, <http://www.landschaftspark.de/en/derpark/index.html>

2 Arthur Lubow, "The Anti-Olmsted" *New York Times*, 16 May 2004

town. Landscape is Culture". Thus, the preservation of the existing site is in keeping and expressing culture.

The blast furnaces were quite important to the architect, they have been left intact at a level that a grandparent could tour with their grandchild and explain how the plant functioned and their role in production. To this end, most of the site had to be left intact, thus the only large site changes being program, time, and ecology.

Considering the function of Landschaftspark in its former life, cleansing the site presented a significant challenge. Nearly all waste treatment occurs on site. Contaminated soil was treated using phytoremediation, which is a process that uses long term exposure of sunlight and plant growth. Larger demolition waste was buried in mounds. These knolls appear to be artificial, almost alien like, with very little foliage, to intrinsically represent their contaminants and waste below. Due to the high toxicity of the soils, most plant life cannot be sustained, this is intuitively acknowledged by users, serving as a visual warning.

The park has been designed not to be a demonstration of nature or of mankind, but rather a platform to display and exchange of culture as well as recreate. With theatre and music venues, as well as the intent for future gallery spaces and other amenities, Landschaftspark is meant to provide a place for the people to create and display artistic expression. To this extent, the



20.1: An informal dance performance found on 'YouTube'.

users may find an amateur video of a dance troupe on line, or see a band play on one of the stages.

The functions are not limited to the common notion of what a park is. The user may also use a variety of amenities such as a youth hostel, biergarten (beer garden), and lookouts. These provide both social and financial benefits that will assist the park to further develop with art galleries and more civic meeting spaces in the future.

According to an interview with the architect in the New York Times, the park's effect on the surrounding neighborhoods and districts has prompted the construction of new flats and other housing options for those in the working classes. While it is common for projects of this magnitude to serve as a catalyst for other projects, it is uncommon for the new development to actually be targeted for the actual area residents/ Most similar projects prompt upper-middle class housing, but this project serves the common people, including the large immigrant population in Germany. This condition is unique and not found in most cities.

The project is large, but again it reaches beyond its borders. Muslim women in a nearby neighborhood are normally not permitted to leave the house independently. By preserving an elevated rail line and utilizing it has a promenade, the Muslim community has embraced the walk to the park, due to its increased visibility. This is a new freedom for women in this community. It will allow for greater exchanges within their culture, and others in their community.

With a strong historical context, the park demonstrates the value of preservation as much as integration of historical



**21.1: Landschaftspark, illustrated to show new vegetation, in reference to the original steel works.**

and respect of a people's labor and struggle. This project exemplifies a contemporary design philosophy that starts to answer greater issues of program and toxic remediation in a post-industrial context.



**22.1:** The focus is kept on the activity in this scene. While the industrial relic is important, it does not take the foreground.

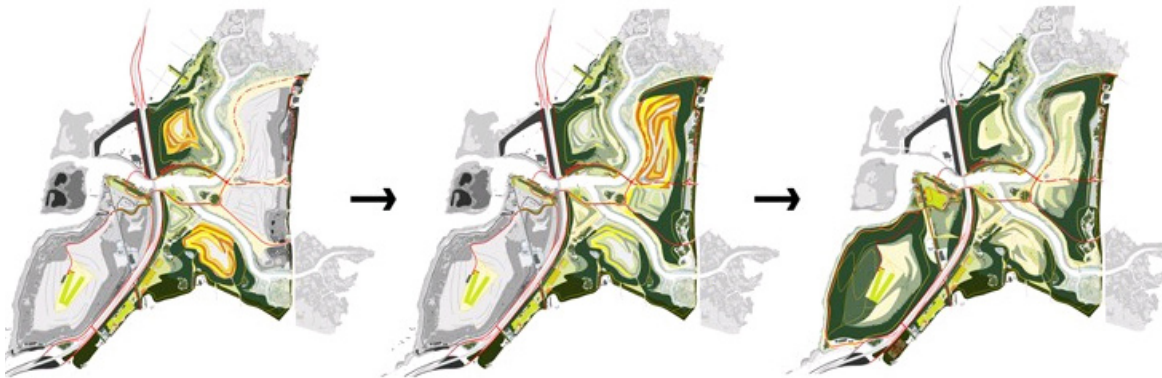


# Fresh Kills

**precedent study** Architect: Field Operations  
Location: Staten Island, New York

One of the nations largest and longest functioning land fills, Fresh kills, at 2,200 acres, is planned for a brownfield development, creating a public park. Field Operations plans for a new landscape that will offer a variety of recreational opportunities while rehabilitating the local wildlife and water shed.

The overall intent is to create a “frame work” for development to grow over time, in phases, but also in an organic fashion. The initial phase is budgeted at over \$100 million. The goal is to commence on creating a space that becomes friendly



**23.1:** This diagram expresses the change that is to occur over time at Fresh Kills Land Fill. This type of diagram is viewed as a staple of Landscape Urbanism.

to the public and environment.

This project will require remediation of toxic soils and ground water. Creation of paths and access roads are to be a spine of infrastructure to support additional facilities. Fresh Kill will offer boat launches, equestrian stables, and other nodes of activity. Although the plan is ambitious, it is not planned as the next Central Park.

The site has suburban surrounds, with a highway running through the heart of the current land fill. It is a very vehicular oriented area, but Field Operations will encourage more urban dwellers to visit via water taxi. It is foreseen as creating this as a destination for pastoral day trips. With respite in mind, the

rolling hills of the landfill will fulfill this typology.

Overall, it seems that a project of this scale relates to the post-industrial urban condition. It has created a recreation and ecological centric plan. The site could have easily be capped and left to nature, but instead, it is being proposed to create a site safe for humans, and create a site large enough for a more contemporary flow of recreation. Detroit for instance could borrow from the concept of brown-field development, and letting the project bleed into the surrounding region, not just through paths and roads, but making water taxis available. It creates an exotic experience for urban dwellers. It could be used for city



**24.1:** It is envisioned for the new park to make use of its name sake water body, Fresh Kills for kayaking.



**24.2:** The landfill forms will be used as assets to outdoor recreation.

school field trips. There is a certain amusement found in having to travel to a park and although it won't merit National Park status in terms of its natural beauty and grandeur, it will be seen as an asset to the region.

# US Nation Whitewater Center

**precedent study** Landscape Architect: ColeJenest & Stone  
Location: Charlotte, North Carolina

The US National Whitewater Center program elements are unique in nature. A 270-acre site that sits outside the CBD of Charlotte, North Carolina serves as a recreational outlet and training center for alternative high intensity outdoor sports. Developed facilities include mountain biking trails, artificial white water courses and rock climbing wall, a water rescue training center, camp sites, and an outdoor concert venue.

The project lacks a complexity in its context, but as a non-profit, the management as well as the programing is inspired. The buildings contain support functions, such as a pump house, locker facilities, cafe/restaurant, and the architecture is quite simple. Yet, the buildings begin to convey the activities and they thoughtfully channel visual sight lines. Not depending on a 'woody' theme log cabins, the structures themselves do integrate natural materials with relatively simple forms.

Overall, the entire US National Whitewater Center begins to challenge what a park can be - but unlike Landschafts park, it does not utilize post-industrial structures. The activities bring the outdoor experience much closer to the community.



25.1: The USWC site plan includes areas for picnickers



25.2: White water rafting on the artificial rapids

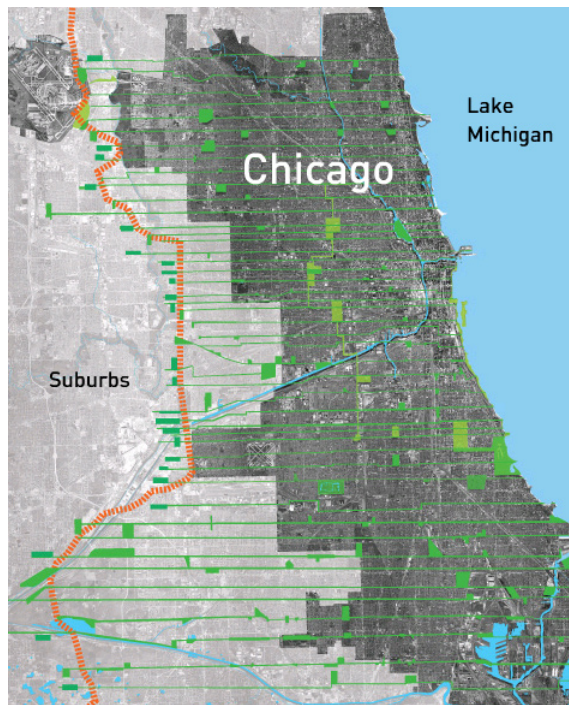


# Growing Water

precedent study Architect: UrbanLab  
Location: Chicago, Illinois

Designing the future of Chicago, UrbanLab has proposed that water is the new oil. As a city, the firm seeks in creating an infrastructure that celebrates the process of reclamation and use. The proposal is for a city of the future; the year 2106.

Oddly enough, a project that is based on a city model that looks so far into the future, it references past civic achievements. The plan states that the, "project is inspired by three historic Chicago engineering feats: (1) The "Emerald Necklace" of public parks, boulevards and waterways... (2) The reversal of the Chicago River... and, (3) The Deep Tunnel"<sup>1</sup>. The object of Growing Water is to process water naturally.



**26.1:** Master Plan takes into account the mid continental divide, denoted in orange, as well as the city's existing parks.

First, building upon current parks and boulevards, the

<sup>1</sup> "City of the Future Competition, Chicago." Urban Labs. 2 May 2008 <<http://www.urbanlab.com/h2o/>>.



project will look to enhance current recreational offerings with Eco-Boulevards. It is the intent to utilize these as greenways and infrastructure for the conveying and treating of waste water.

Second, the reversal of the Chicago River will be undone. It is their wish to restore the Great Lakes Watershed so that it drains only via the St. Lawrence Sea Way, not the Mississippi, via the Chicago River. This will be dependant on a successful treatment of current waste water, before being dumped into the Chicago River, hence its reversal in the first place.

Third, the Deep Tunnel is a waste water diversion for overflow during heavy storms. Their previous proposed solutions would make this engineering obsolete, thus turning it into a rail transit way. This would begin to solve another problem in the city of Chicago.

This project uses Landscape Urbanism to solve real problems on a large scale, yet it does so on terms such setting it in the future, to make it acceptable to the general public. It is this futuristic attitude that is ironic, all the processes proposed to filter water in this plan are now available, so it is not that the project is dependant on new technologies, just new attitudes and mind-sets.

The ideas of a reorganization of public space and better use of water and land could be applicable to Detroit's Lower East Side. The Eco-Boulevards would being to convey people, and truly integrate many layers of usage into one streamlined corridor.

Overall, Growing Water will invigorate the city and lay the form work for a new and modern way of infrastructure.



**27.1:** A site montage illustrates the many functions the eco-boulevards and the many different activities and functions.

# New Bedford Master Plan

**precedent study** Architect: Stoss Landscape Urbanism  
Location: New Bedford, Massachusetts

A common highway landscape is proposed to be transformed by public installations that convey movement and identity. Stoss accomplishes this by incorporating functional and natural components in an artful way.

The American Highway is bland, nondescript, and normally a horizontal void of substance. Stoss proposes that the community of New Bedford seek this opportunity as a way to define their community as well as engaged the natural landscape. With two major highways passing through, the intent was to activate the mind, on what is normally a numbing experience. Considerable effort is made to integrate natural landscaping techniques with everyday functional landscape accessories, such in image 28.1, airport runway lights and tall grasses.

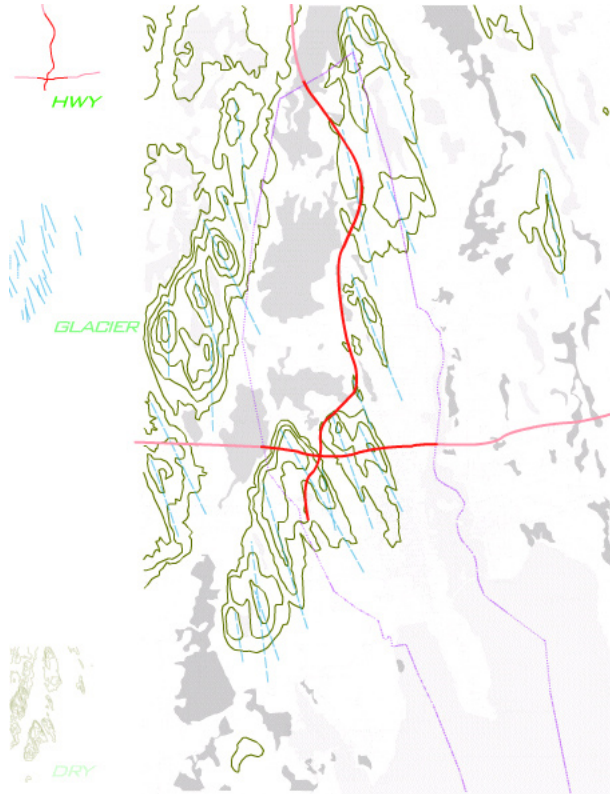
Much of their methodology is rooted in mapping exercises. Stoss records local conditions on maps, in this case, the location of a glacier many years ago (image 29.1). This is not to say that their entire design hinges on their nontraditional data, but they further their abilities to reveal the landscape's history.

Overall, Stoss pushes the horizontal landscapes threshold by introducing new dimensions like history, functional



**28.1:** A montage illustrates the American Highway with a revised landscape, using what is currently available, and re-programing it.

'sculpture', as well. The plan for New Bedford will begin to address context and scale in the demeaning world of suburban highways.



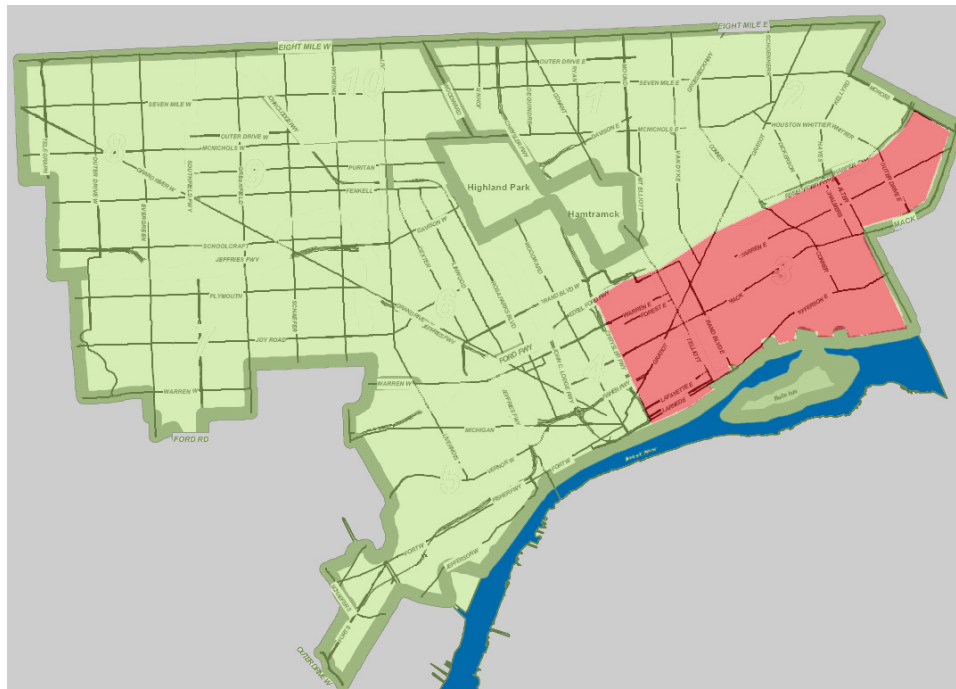
**29.1:** A mapping exercise shows land attributes and historical geographic informations, such as glaciers.

# The Lower East Side

## site analysis.1

The Lower East Side of Detroit, at nearly 21 square miles is one of the most poverty stricken parts of the city. It exists in juxtaposition to the central business district and the 'Tony' Grosse Pointe suburban communities, which lie to the East, to the West is the Central Business District, and the North Lies Hamtramck and Interstate 94.

Historically, this is one the oldest inhabited areas, originally settled by the French Colonist some 300 years ago. The east river front was site to 'ribbon farms', narrow strips of land, sometimes as narrow as a few hundred feet, and ran inland for about a mile, perpendicular to the river. This provided land owners access to riverfront for transportation and kept homesteads close to the protection provided by Fort Ponchartrain. Lasting evidence of the ribbon farms may be all but gone, yet the majority of the streets in the Lower East Side are named for many of the original french landowners, while many of the roads that run inland follow the ribbon farm property lines.



30.1: The Lower East Side, denoted in red represents about 1/6 of Detroit.



During Detroit's late 1800's and the first half of the 1900's, like most of the city, this community was predominately covered with low density, working class housing. These neighborhoods provided the workforce for factories which had the same kind of secular presence as a Catholic Parish. A few communities has survived the industrial decline, an example is the one time exclusive streets of Detroit's industrial might, Lumber, Auto, and Stove Barons who once resided in Indian Village, with affluent professionals living nearby. Also surviving are cultural institutions, such Pewabic Pottery and the world's largest island park, Belle Isle. These anomalies occur within a mile from the riverfront.

Today, within the Lower East Side, contrast also occurs: the realms of industrial and post-industrial eras collide; creating conflict and exacerbating the differences of the two worlds. One, industrial is near obsolete, while the other, post-industrial, is still in its infancy. The later of the two still creating many developments for investment, dictated by aesthetics and profit.

Industrial relics now stand as the backdrop to new, gated, waterfront condos and estates. Riverfront development has occurred at a much more rapid rate, due to the attraction of the water, and also the proximity to Jefferson Avenue. While many investment has and continues to occur, much of the inland property has slowly become an urban prairie.

At times desolate, the Lower East Side has found itself the site of innovation and creativity. Urban farming programs, Earth Works being one. The idea of utilizing this land for another purpose is of interest to many, yet hurdles for community developments corporations, churches, private investors has been difficult, a patchwork network of this land is publicly



31.1: New condos being sold in the shadows of a power plant.



**32.1:** The Heidelberg Project has transformed found objects into statement about blight and consumerism.

controlled.

Another project of note is the Heidelberg Project, created by Tyree Gunter, takes hold of his neighborhood, plagued with arson and disinvestment. Using found objects, and household items such as paint, he has created a neighborhood identity.

The landscape is dotted with vacant and occupied housing. The City of Detroit has proposed consolidation, retracting infrastructure and civic rule, in exchange for fewer expenses. And although most changes are met with great opposition, the question still remains, 'What to do with this new void?'. Landscape attributes to this site are quite intriguing and offer many opportunities. Besides the Detroit River, which borders



**32.2:** Earth Works is a non-profit urban farming project that provides produce to a nearby soup kitchen.

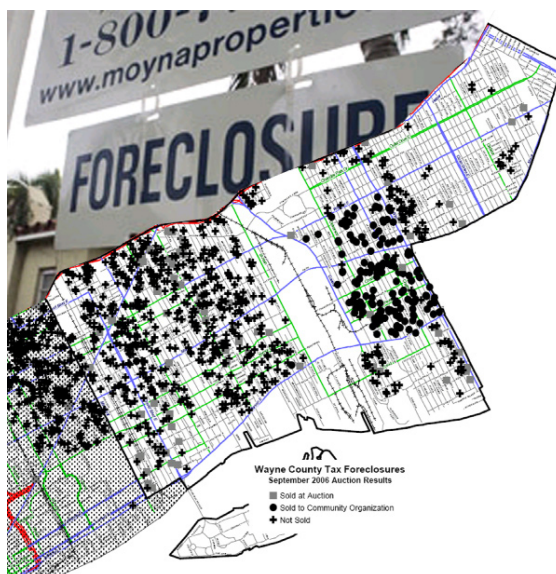


and defines the Southern boundary, nearly half-a-dozen canals reach inland, many of which are abandoned, but some are used as marinas for the adjacent homeowners, the public at large, or sit near former dock yards for industrial functions. Topography varies very slightly with almost nonexistent changes, minus the riverfront itself. No functioning tributaries to the Detroit River are round in the Lower East Side, indigenous creeks were converted into closed sewers over the last 100 years.

Statistically and visually it can be gathered that there are a few very stable neighborhoods. Most of these are of higher class housing stock, either in historical neighborhoods, such as Indian Village, or in newer developments along the waterfront. One exception is the East Village Neighborhood, which is wedged between I-94 and the Grosse Pointe Communities, it is known for its quaint neighborhoods, historically occupied by



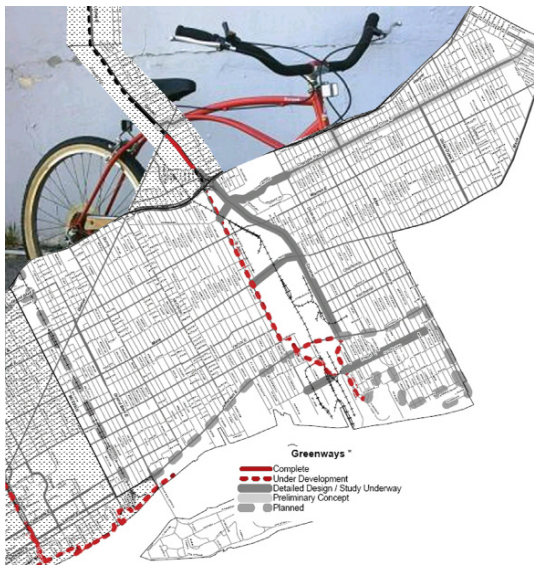
**33.1:** The red indicates empowerment zones, while the hatched represents a 'renewal community' identified by the city is an euphemism for blighted community. These areas are in need of some of the most funds. Much of the Empowerment Zone encompasses new automotive manufacturing investments, and do not necessarily benefit small existing businesses. The effects of these designations have not been profound.



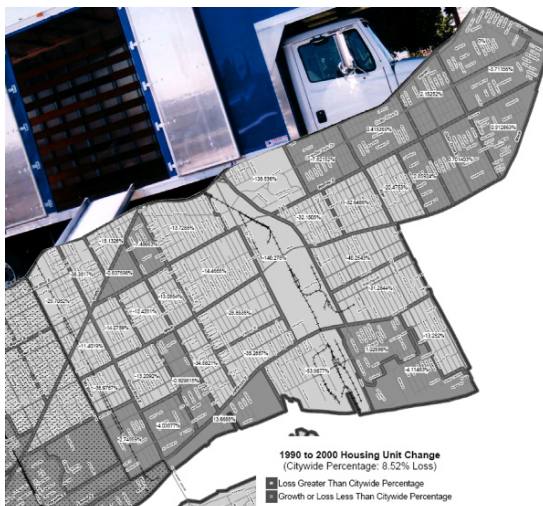
**33.2:** Detroit has consistently had some of the highest foreclosure rates over the past few years. Crosses (+) denote repossessed homes that did not sell at auction, dots represent homes purchased by non-profits, and lastly grey square where sold at market rate to private buyers. Many churches invest in the communities in which they serve.



**34.1:** Ironically, Detroit, the 'Motor City' has a much lower automobile ownership than its surrounding suburbs. The Lower East Side has some of the regions lowest vehicle ownership. This graphic represents that household vehicle ownership, the darker the grey correlates with a lower percentage. Public transportation in this part of the city does not necessarily bridge this gap.



**34.2:** A system of non-motorized transit path is beginning to form, creating a more bike friendly environment. To the south, along the water is the river walk, while the main northwest running route is the Conner Creek Path. The paths may start connect this large region to neighboring suburban and urban districts.

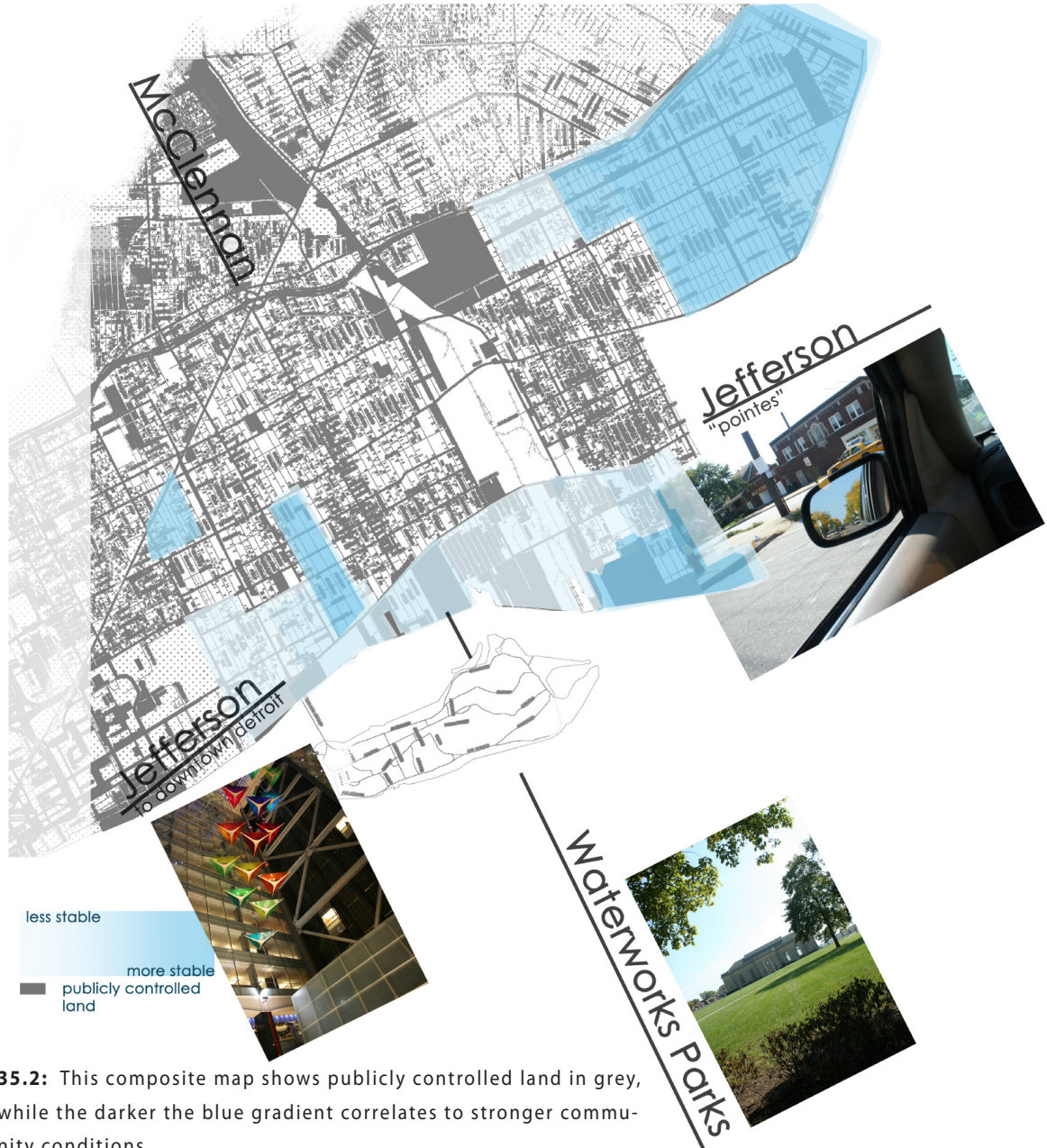


**34.3:** Flight from the weaker districts of the Lower East Side is a common condition. The lighter grey correlates to losses of population greater than that of the rest of Detroit.





**35.1:** Housing density in the Lower East Side is relatively low, with the riverfront serving as one of the few anomalies. Note: the grey areas display properties of no housing density, thus a non-residential usage. Many of these are large industrial parcels that divide the Lower East Side.



**35.2:** This composite map shows publicly controlled land in grey, while the darker the blue gradient correlates to stronger community conditions.



**36.1:** Lower East Side with the three potential thesis sites.

many city employees, such as police and fire personnel.

Specifically, the Lower East Side offers three sites that seem to express the conditions that would provide opportunities for the thesis, as described earlier:

1. Packard Auto Plant
2. Industrial block at Mack and Beaufait
3. Waterworks Park



**36.2:** Packard Plant has become an ad hoc of dissemblers artist.

The Packard Plant lies in the Northeast Corner in the region being studied. It was an integrated plant, housing all production functions need to produce an automobile. Over all it occupies 3.5 million square feet<sup>1</sup>. It is huge. It offers a surrounding community of low occupancy, in the typical urban prairie. Although the building is being dismantled slowly over time, it is so large, that currently other their industrial business that are still operating, are not in least effected by these efforts.

<sup>1</sup> McGraw, Bill. Is there new life for old Packard plant? Detroit Free Press 18 APR 2008



The potential of the site is quite varied. The opportunity for a large scale adaptive reuse project comes to mind very quickly. Although, the scale of any project would create an 'island', thus any concept would have to begin to blend this boundary. The envisioned work must have a 'mega' mixed use project, similar to a Portman center, such as Detroit's Renaissance Center. The sheer scale though does pose many negative implications to the design; how can one occupy 3.5 million square feet? Also, the space is somewhat used; can it be redeveloped without evicting current legal and illegal occupants?



**37.1:** Many buildings along an abandoned rail line on Beaufait Street were at one time industrial shops.

The next of the sites is the industrial block at Mack and Beaufait. Historical, turn of the century buildings border an abandoned rail line. On either side of this industrial strip lie what is left of pre-world war two, working class housing stock with low occupancy. Many of the buildings that line Beaufait are being used by different industrial shops, such as tool and dies. Yet, most have been all but abandoned by the outside viewer. Some of the voids are now acres of refused tires, waiting for a proper disposal. The abundance of materials and buildings create an interesting situation where the remediation of the tires could be utilized into creating a new function for the buildings lining the street, while still encouraging the existing industrial shops to stay. It could become an incubator for new recreation methods or hollowed out to become an 'architectural' playground.

Lastly, Water Works Park, which lies near the south center of the Lower East Side, occupies a large portion of the water front. It currently lies in an area of statistical interest, with three distinct neighborhoods on both sides, ranging from stable to not stable. The site itself is currently publicly owned, but has a 'by appointment only' policy in terms of access. It contains a water purification plant, among other functions.

The park itself is quite interesting. Historically, it has been a very popular park for the Lower East Side. Protest have occurred, just to keep the park open. It was even said to have

been more popular than Belle Isle in its early years. Although its original function was to provide water, its property is under utilized and could become a very active part of the river front once again. It is apparent that its sheer scale is one of its largest assets. Acres unfold nearly a half mile towards the river from Jefferson Avenue, arguably the second most important road in

the city. Also, a series of canals border the site, creating opportunities for recreation that can begin to permeate out into the community. Water Works park offers the best site for my thesis project.

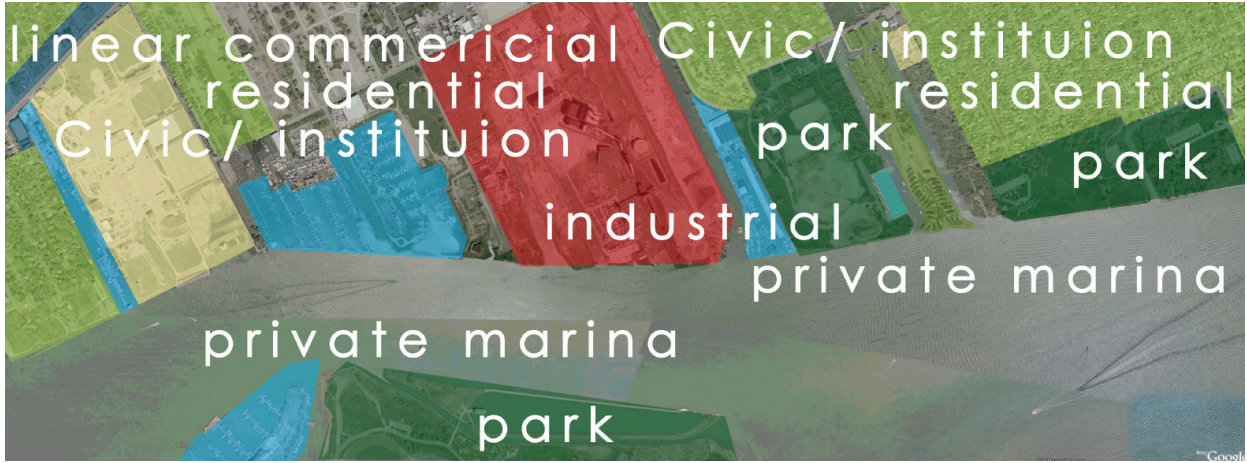


**38.1:** The Pump House at Water Works Park is an original building.



**38.2:** Haliburton Gate, at one time welcomed visitors. It has been recently restored.





**39.1:** Mapping exercise illustrates the various land usages near the riverfront in the Lower East Side.



**39.2:** Another mapping exercise illustrates the homogeneity of the land use in the interior of the Lower East Side.



# Water Works Park

## site analysis.2

Water Works Park, being a complex, and diverse condition, a certain reverence is inspired while examining all that it encompasses. As state earlier, this park is a modern, functioning water processing plant. It processes nearly a quarter of Southeastern Michigan's water; Detroit's Water Department services as far away as Flint, Port Huron, and western Wayne County. There is a physical importance to the site as well, it occupies a large part of the riverfront.

From the beginning, this sites purpose was two fold; to provide water and recreation. To better understand the site, historical information must be provided. First operational in 1879<sup>1</sup>, and grown in use and complexity ever since.

The public entrance of Water Works Park, a Beaux Arts stylized pedestrian gate, name for its benefactor, once greeted users in a grand fashion. Other than its name, one would not assume this park had such a functional purpose. In terms of public access, Water Works Park has housed the city's first branch library, wadding ponds, a series of canals that led to the river and formerly utilized the top of one of the site's towers for an observation gallery. Pathways led to the river, providing access to the water front. As stated earlier, the park was at one time more popular than Belle Isle, most likely due to its adjacency to residential neighborhoods. Despite this very public image and use of the park, for security reasons it has always closed in times of war. Water Works has been the subject of protest, citizens argued that the park should remain open. The park has been permanently closed to the public, with no current plans to open.

First and foremost, the park is owned by the water department and serves to provide clean, safe water to its municipality. The purification facilities have been modernized many times and expanded to accommodate the needs of the city. Much of this is to the credit of the park's size; facilities to be built and dismantled with out disrupting service at a steady pace. Much of the riverfront was not utilized for recreation though, at one time it was used to receive and store coal ship-

<sup>1</sup> Daisy, Michael. "The First 300 Years." A Brief Histroy. 2001. Detroit Water and Sewer. 2 May 2008 <[http://www.dwsd.org/history/complete\\_history.pdf](http://www.dwsd.org/history/complete_history.pdf)>.



**41.2:** Haliburton Gate, at one time welcomed visitors. It has been recently restored.

ments brought by boat. The site also housed the engineer's home, horse stables (common for professionals at the time). The site is also home to one of Detroit's older Fire Houses.

Today, the water processing plant has been modernized. According the Detroit Water Department, "The plant can produce up to 240 million gallons of superior quality drinking water per day (MGD) with room for expansion to 320 MGD"<sup>2</sup>,

The site is surrounded three distinct neighborhoods. The most stable, and least intriguing lies southwest and across a canal. Here, stately homes, including the Manoogian Mansion, where the City of Detroit Mayor resides are located here. Very well maintained, low density homes, with a high unit occupancy. Historic homes are also in this community.

To the north a

**41.2** A disused canal becomes a fishing spot for locals.



<sup>2</sup> Daisy, Michael. "The First 300 Years." A Brief History. 2001. Detroit Water and Sewer. 2 May 2008 <[http://www.dwsd.org/history/complete\\_history.pdf](http://www.dwsd.org/history/complete_history.pdf)>.





**42.1:** Scripps School once occupied this now vacant field. Parcels such as this hold much of the potential for the Lower East Side.

much different neighborhood exists; homes were for the working class, and nearly all have been abandoned. Large buildings along Jefferson Avenue for institutions such as the YMCA are now vacant. This area has a pastoral quality to it. Grasslands and trees occupy a majority of the land.



**42.2** A former Fire House now acts as support space for neighboring Pewabic Pottery.

To the northwest, the area is similarly experiencing a high level of vacancy, but there is a suburban style housing development under construction, as well as an existing canal with a few nautically oriented houses. Closest to Water Works Park are a row of town homes and along the river are a series of marinas, restaurants, and a club. Despite the diversity of the communities housing stock and functions, a synergy does not occur. Instead, restaurants are a destination via automobile or boat, rather than foot.

Sight unseen  
another layer of data

exist, although it is under the park, water carrying pipes which lead all over the region. Much like a heart, they all join at and around the source of their pressure. The purpose of this analysis is to better understand if there is a specific or reoccurring pattern in the placement of the pipes. The study does not seem to provide a specific system of organization, but it has been found that there are two underground reservoirs and areas that are free of any pipes, while others are clustered. This information was gathered from the Sanborn Maps, but it was not until the data was modeled that it was fully realized.

Being on the riverfront poses a lot of opportunities. More than anything, the attributes of the site can truly contribute and shape the thesis project.





1\_YMCA



2\_Pump House



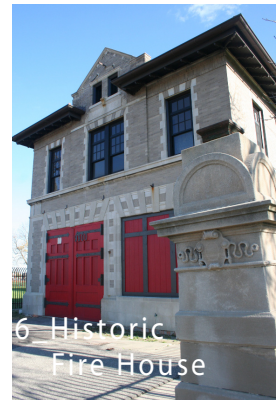
3\_Canal



4\_Historic Housing



5\_Haliburton Memorial



6\_Historic Fire House



7\_Good Shepherd Church



8\_Vacant Field

44.1 This graphic maps the location of sites of significant assets throughout the thesis project area.



# Historical Analysis

## Water Works Park

Opening in 1879, Water Works park has had a turbulent history, marked with closures due to war, the health department, and eventually change in function.

During its history of 129 years, it has been closed 35 years just because of war. The park, as stated earlier, at one time was a very prominent place for Detroiters to recreate, with swimming facilities, a seaplane dock, library branch, and gardens.

Images are one of the strongest tellers of Water Works Park, according to the Water Department's historical narrative, the site has updated its facilities and infrastructure many times.<sup>1</sup> It is very different for a public space to have so many incarnations with little public involvement. With history of protest, it is evident that the public has attempted to take ownership of the space.

Despite this effort, the park has been closed and will continue to be closed for an indefinite period of time. Time has shown that the park is not under public rule.



45.1: The Pump house construction being finished.



45.2: The stand pipe was built in 1877.



45.3: The site has gone through many different uses.



45.4: Child-protesters demanding public access to Water Works Park.

1 Daisy, Michael. "The First 300 Years." A Brief History. 2001. Detroit Water and Sewer. 2 May 2008 <[http://www.dwsd.org/history/complete\\_history.pdf](http://www.dwsd.org/history/complete_history.pdf)>.

# PROGRAM

# Project Program Summary

## Statement

The project components look to create a network of connected vacant spaces that will act as a conduit and encourage public access of the river, as well as the inland vacancy. These spaces can begin to provide infrastructure for non-motorized transit, produce gardening, and social interaction.

1. Non-motorized transit paths will provide a viable alternative to vehicle ownership for short to medium trips throughout the city. This network will also serve as a feeder to other amenities and lead to Waterworks Park, which serves as a network anchor. The scale will be large, but mostly linear.
2. An interpretative museum will begin to educate users about hydrology, farming, and the history of Water Works Park.
3. The existing historic fire house will become a welcome center for Water Works Park as well as promoting other Lower East Side Cultural institutions.
4. A functionally relaxing atmosphere will be integral to the project. In an attempt to blend social economical boundaries, it is necessary to create a "place" that is a non-confrontational environment, not to inspire a harsh convergence, or to accentuate the juxtaposition.
5. Farming should occur on empty lots throughout the Lower East Side. This will provide a community "victory garden" while paying homage to the historical French Ribbon Farms that existed in this community. The scale would be small, not requiring heavy equipment, more so a garden shed.
6. Social congregation should be integrated into all programming elements, but "focus centers" should be at nodes of different activities, and specifically at the interpretative/welcome center.
7. Creating opportunities for users to people watch and engage in passive activity.
8. Continuing the current fishing opportunities off of canals and along the riverfront will be an important task; hence it transcends cultural bounders and is something that can be

easily engaged in, with regard to skill and physical ability.

Overall the program shall contribute to the community at large, becoming a tool that strengthens the presence of the river, reopens waterworks park, and utilizes the vacant space as an asset to residents.



# Project Quantitative Summary

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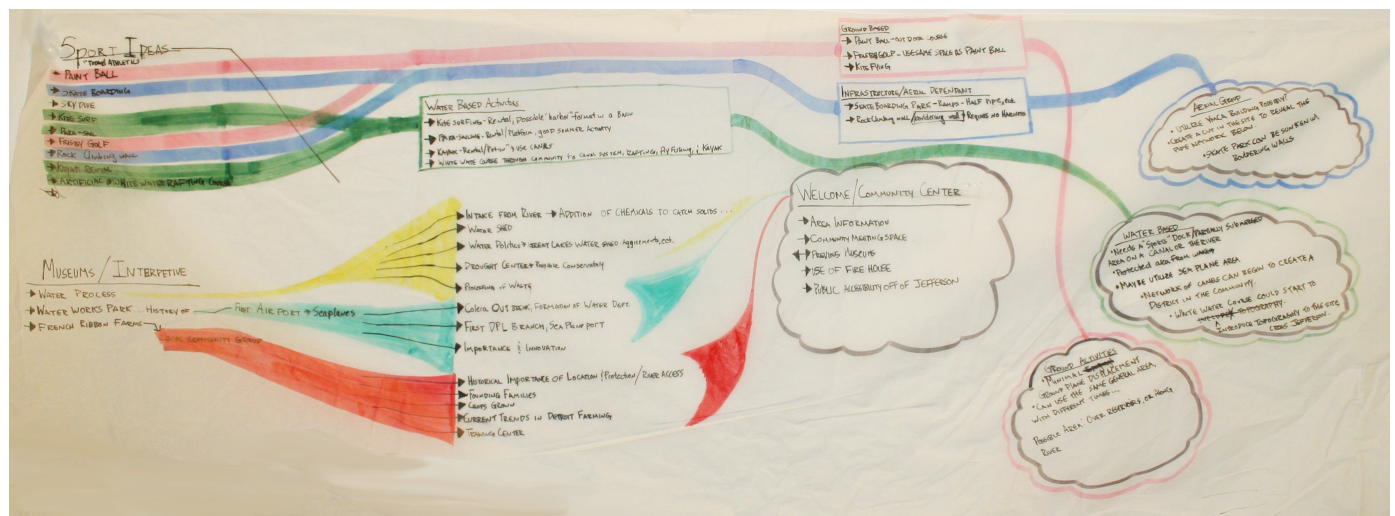
## Statement

Program Area	Size
Welcome Center	3,200' <sup>2</sup>
Hydrology Center	10,000' <sup>2</sup>
Farm Center	3,000' <sup>2</sup>
Rapid Pump House	15,000' <sup>2</sup>
Rafting Center	5,000' <sup>2</sup>
Boat House	5,000' <sup>2</sup>
Dry Dock	16,000' <sup>2</sup>
Marina Housing	10,400' <sup>2</sup>
Southeast Restaurant	10,000' <sup>2</sup>
Marina Support	6,000' <sup>2</sup>
<b>Total Planned Square Feet</b>	<b>74,600'<sup>2</sup></b>

# Program Diagrams

Throughout the design process, the program diagrams were instrumental to the evolution of the thesis project. The images forward begin to show process.

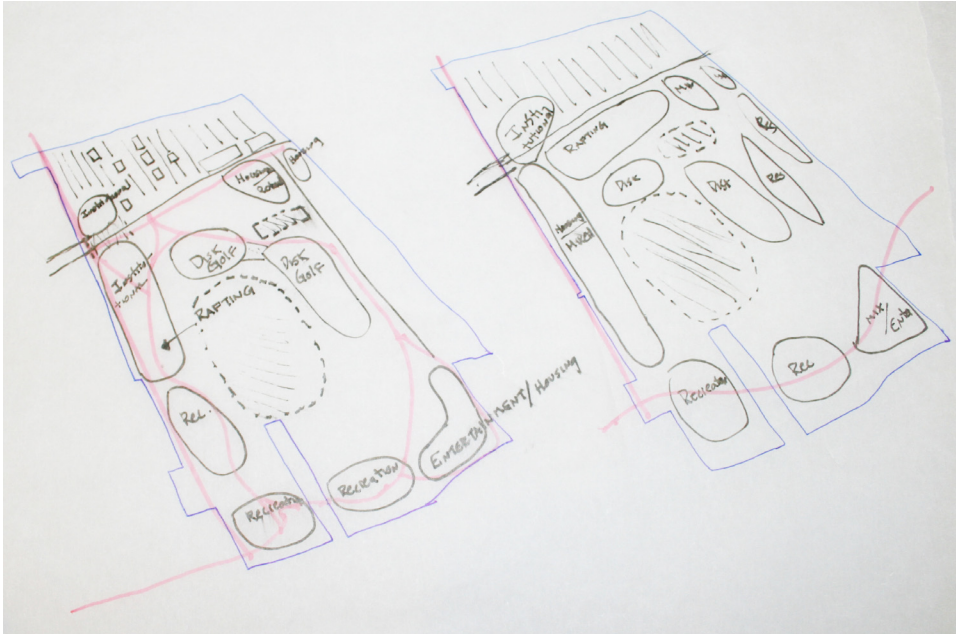
First of these (50.1) does not include site, but does acknowledge the site physical attributes and resources available at Water Works Park. Grouping the activities into educational or sports and further more into sub categories, such identifying the ground planes required, the diagram became a tool for deciding the appropriate activities and their eventual grouping.



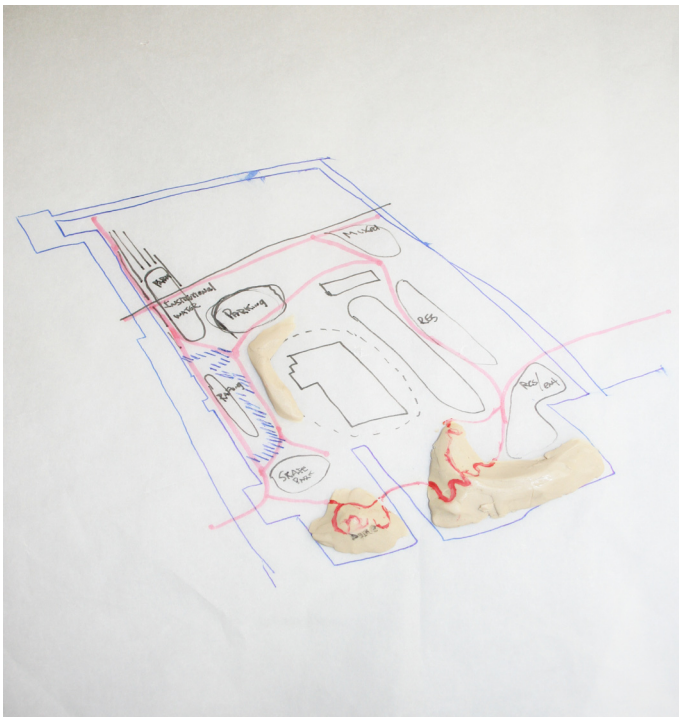
**50.1:** The above diagram organizes the different program potentials and the conduit required. Many of the activities were initially ruled out.

Later on, two important thought emerged and was refined through these diagrams. This being the creation of the secure zone, as well as the movement of non-motorized transit.

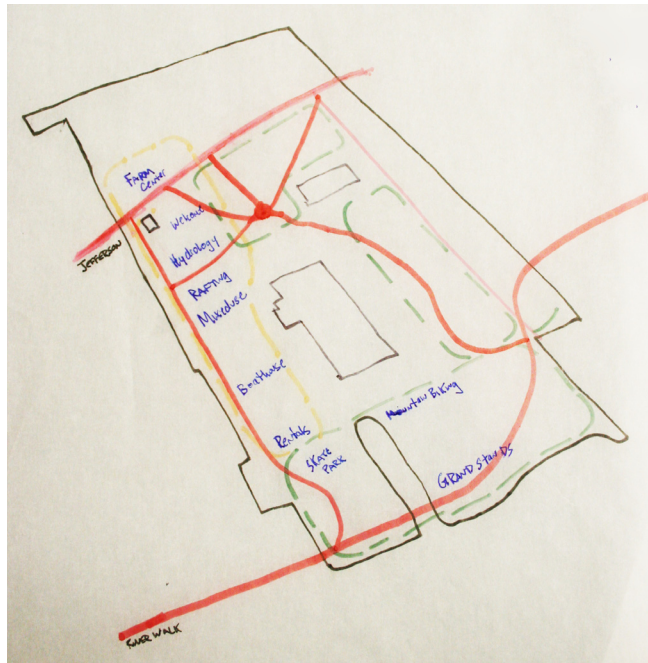
Previous iterations of the site plan made the site seem quite fragmented, while the these next began to develop the site to different levels of refinement. While the first site diagram was completed in model form using clay, quickly they developed to into quick sketches to for better development.



**51.1:**The above site diagrams (from right to left), chronicle the most major of the site changes: repositioning of the white water rapids and its support facilities along with a new systems of paths.



**51.2:** This diagram explores the use of topography and development of the rapids.



52.1: The above site diagrams (from right to left), chronicle the most major of the site changes: repositioning of the white water rapids and its support facilities.



- 1\_ Density Strip
- 2\_ Mountain Biking Hills
- 3\_ Grand Stand for Hydroplane Races
- 4\_ Restaurants and SE Gateway
- 5\_ Frisbee Golf
- 6\_ Meridian
- 7\_ Fish Hatchery
- 8\_ Urban Farming

52.1: This diagram illustrates the distinct zones of programming in the Water Works Park Plan.



# Space Details Summary

## Statement

### Welcome & Community Center

#### A. Space Capacity:

1. Space Capacity:
2. Number of Units: 1
3. Net Square Feet: 3,200'<sup>2</sup>
4. Total Net Area: 3,200'<sup>2</sup>

#### B. Purpose/Function:

The Welcome Center will serve as a visible central place for new area/park visitors to be received and a location for local residents to meet. In the overall scheme of the site, it will be the only to relate to every component.

#### C. Activities: Fact finding, exploring, learning, collaboration, and sharing.

#### D. Spatial Relationships: Occupying a former firehouse, much of the existing character will be preserved. A 'Great Hall' space will be carved out the central of the floor area, opening a central space across all floors. The visitor should feel comfortable within the gallery and information areas.

#### E. Qualitative Considerations:

Light will pour through existing windows, but when light sensitive art is present, and translucent louver system will be activated.

#### F. Equipment:

- 2 Digital Multi-Media Projectors, one each for the Gallery Space and conference room.

#### G. Behavioral Considerations:

The planned spaces are to occupy and existing building, most importantly would to create a multi-story space.

#### F. Structural Systems:

Must maintain structural integrity during and after renovation.

## Hydrology Center

#### A. Space Capacity:

1. Space Capacity: 750 people
2. Number of Units: 1
3. Net Square Feet: 10,000
4. Total Net Area: 10,000

#### B. Purpose/Function: To convey the importance of Water in modern life.

#### C. Activities: Museum/interpretive center with interactive learning stations on Water Hydrology, Water Works Parks function present and History.

D. Spatial Relationships: The museum flow should occur over the course of multiple galleries. Each should have a specific theme, while participating in the centers overall typology. Rooms volumes and shapes should reflect that of the buildings, as well as how rain water is dealt with.

E. Qualitative Considerations: Light should be convey though exhibit sensitive windows. The building shall allow for minimal artificial lighting, as well as not losing the context of the space, within the overall site. The location itself is pertinent to the understanding of Water Works Park over all.

#### F. Equipment: Interpretive exhibits

G. Behavioral Considerations: A multi-story space that is to allow vantage points across the site. It is also meant to encourage a social museum experience, with volumes which open into each other and the floors above or below them.

F. Structural Systems: the building's skeleton will be exposed to convey the functions of the support system.

## Farm Center

#### A. Space Capacity:

1. Space Capacity: 250
2. Number of Units: 1
3. Net Square Feet: 3,000'<sup>2</sup>
4. Total Net Area: 3,000'<sup>2</sup>

B. Purpose/Function: To describe and illustrate aspects Detroit Farming, starting with Indigenous peoples, French Ribbon Farms, to the current Urban Farming practices.

C. Activities: Again, interactive exhibits will allow for visitors to learn either by doing or by demonstration. Interpretive Farming plots will also showcase different Crops.

D. Spatial Relationships: The location of this building is such that it should relate to the adjacent Hydrology Center across Jefferson. The galleries will be few, with the main focus being the outdoor demonstration plots.

E. Qualitative Considerations: Large Windows shall enable visitors to observe the surrounding farms. Light should be respective to the exhibits.

F. Equipment: Tools for manual labor will be available, possibly large farming equipment for rent to local farming groups.

G. Behavioral Considerations: Visitors should have the ability to understand the overall purpose of farming in Detroit. Any other activities will detract from this focus.

F. Structural Systems: Similar typology to the Hydrology Center, the building's skeleton will be exposed to convey the functions of the support system.

## Rapid Pump House

A. Space Capacity:

1. Space Capacity: 50
2. Number of Units: 2
3. Net Square Feet: 1500'<sup>2</sup>
4. Total Net Area: 3,000'<sup>2</sup>

B. Purpose/Function: To functionally mitigate water from the filtration plant to the rapids. To showcase this event to park visitors.

C. Activities: Non staffed learning stations that allow visitors to learn about the system that controls the rapids and intrinsically conveys the water's source. Mechanical valve spaces.

D. Spatial Relationships: The pump house must have public and private sections. This will contain visitors to spaces where they can observe, without have the chance to tamper with mechanical equipment.

E. Qualitative Considerations: Windows that overlook the rapids are imperative, as well as ones that view from the visitors section over to the private, mechanical one.

F. Equipment: Large Valves and an overall water flow monitoring system.

G. Behavioral Considerations: Visitors should feel welcomed and engaged, but not have the ability to touch. Information should be displayed, but it should convey the importance of this function to the overall white water rafting.

F. Structural Systems: The building system should convey movement, but also maintain structural integrity with such large mechanical systems being housed or that run through.

## Rafting Center

A. Space Capacity:

1. Space Capacity:
2. Number of Units: 1
3. Net Square Feet: 8,000'<sup>2</sup>
4. Total Net Area: 8,000'<sup>2</sup>

B. Purpose/Function: This building and its outdoor areas will be the hub for all water based activities on the site. Storage for boats will also occur on site.

C. Activities: Visitors will have the opportunity to engage in activities that will prepare them for white water rafting. Information desk, with videos and instructors present will be able to answer questions about either White Water Rafting and kayaking.

D. Spatial Relationships: The volumes of spaces that will occupy the building are to act as a 'lodge', thus, they shall connect, while maintaining an open feel. It was located above the rapids, connecting the central visitor receiving area for the parks program, while leading users further south into the interior of the park.

E. Qualitative Considerations: The outdoor rafting course and learning areas are the highlight of the center. It should be apparent to the visitor that the indoor space is just supporting the greater activity outside. Large track windows will be open during pleasant weather.

F. Equipment: Large cistern, indoor kayaking pool, digital multimedia projectors

G. Behavioral Considerations: Users should have an experience that allow for learning a new sport, thus the space should seem somewhat foreign, to heighten the senses. Forms and layout should convey this.

F. Structural Systems: Wood Glue Laminated post-beams/trusses should be employed to create a rhythmic, open space,



while being able to span long distances.

## Boat House

### A. Space Capacity:

1. Space Capacity: 300
2. Number of Units: 1
3. Net Square Feet: 5,000'<sup>2</sup>
4. Total Net Area: 5,000'<sup>2</sup>

B. Purpose/Function: Support adjacent marina, social gather. Provide basic services.

C. Activities: Casual dining will take place inside a full service cafe or at an outdoor bistro. A convenience store will fill a gap for residents, as well as boat owners. Support services will include showers, a laundry mat, and a social space for entertaining.

D. Spatial Relationships: The spaces should open up onto the marina, rather than into each other, becoming a series of "shops".

E. Qualitative Considerations: The building structures should abide within the typology set forth by the previous buildings. Spaces should reflect weather or not they are open.

F. Equipment: Full service professional kitchen appliances. Computer systems for retail and marina management.

G. Behavioral Considerations: Users should be able to use facilities as needed, outdoor spaces should act as a promenade or the English 'High Street'.

F. Structural Systems: The building will begin to transition from the Wood Glue Laminated Post-Beam, to the more residential typology of the Marina Co-Housing Units.

## Dry Dock

### A. Space Capacity:

1. Space Capacity: 50
2. Number of Units: 1
3. Net Square Feet: 16,000'<sup>2</sup>
4. Total Net Area: 16,000'<sup>2</sup>

B. Purpose/Function: Dry dock maintenance and sales facility

C. Activities: Sales of boats as well as full service.

- D. Spatial Relationships: Large space should perform.
- E. Qualitative Considerations:
- F. Equipment: Boat service equipment
- G. Behavioral Considerations: NA
- F. Structural Systems: Steel Truss, must span large distances.

## Marina Housing

- A. Space Capacity:
  1. Space Capacity: 6-12 Residences
  2. Number of Units: 3
  3. Net Square Feet: 3,800'<sup>2</sup>
  4. Total Net Area: 10,400'<sup>2</sup>
- B. Purpose/Function: Flexible community housing options, on the water.
- C. Activities: Living/ Sleeping, Eating, Recreation,
- D. Spatial Relationships: Units are to relate to the water, as well as each other. Rooms and units should unfold and be complimentary to each other.
- E. Qualitative Considerations: Light and windows should be allowed to open out to the landscape around, while also maintaining the privacy of the individual units.
- F. Equipment:
- G. Behavioral Considerations: Allow for some flexibility of the units over time.
- F. Structural Systems:

## Southeast Restaurant

- A. Space Capacity:
  1. Space Capacity: 1-2 eateries + 1 night club
  2. Number of Units: 1
  3. Net Square Feet: 10,000'<sup>2</sup>
  4. Total Net Area: 10,000'<sup>2</sup>
- B. Purpose/Function: Facilities to strengthen existing entertainment and restaurant presence
- C. Activities: Entertainment, eatery
- D. Spatial Relationships: Very close to the water, must

take advantage of location.

E. Qualitative Considerations: Light and windows should be allowed to open out to the landscape around.

F. Equipment: Professional kitchen(s)

G. Behavioral Considerations: Allow for some flexibility in the divisions.

F. Structural Systems:

## Marina Support

A. Space Capacity:

1. Space Capacity: 10-15 persons
2. Number of Units: 4
3. Net Square Feet: 1,500'<sup>2</sup>
4. Total Net Area: 6,000'<sup>2</sup>

B. Purpose/Function: Bathing and laundry services for boaters

C. Activities: Washing

D. Spatial Relationships: Units meant for the function of cleansing- should celebrate revitalization

E. Qualitative Considerations: Light and windows must straddle privacy, while providing ample ventilation and lightness to the structure

F. Equipment: Industrial washing machines, male and female sauna, bathrooms, showers, lockers.

G. Behavioral Considerations:

F. Structural Systems:

# DESIGN

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# Springboard + Schematic Design

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## Semester 1

The design process has taken this thesis in a few different directions. Initially, it was anticipated that the project would become more about a series of linear parks, rather than one large one. Yet, with this said, it is the idea that this will become a key component in a overall plan of the Lower East Side.

Early on, the focus of this project dealt with an overall plan for the Lower East Side. It was the intent to identify a connector for the residents of the area to use as a conduit towards the river. This would serve to strengthen the community and its economic strength, Image 62.1 illustrates this concept in relation to Water Works Park, a larger piece of the greater whole. As this network radiates out, it does so not always in an organized, orthogonal fashion. At times it arcs and jumps, creating an interesting array of opportunities.

The idea of the connection evolved, first as the paint, then later to string, to represent the poetic movement through space, that although it may be designed for movement directly along a path, very rarely is the person's movement so organized. Physically, the urban river that is Jefferson Avenue, must be reconciled with. It is proposed that there be some sort of bridging mechanism.

As the project continued, different ideas of what possible recreational pursuits could become available to the Lower East Side, sjee Image 50.1. Out of this flow chart, the program diagram specific activities were identified: White Water Rafting, Fishing, Mountain Biking, Farming, Skate Park, and Frisbee Golf. The design of the site had to begin to reflect these new activities.

The next spring board exercise, image 64.1, represents the layers of information that exist on the site. Some of this is in the form of history, other is physical infrastructure. It would be the intent to uncover this. The excavation may be in the form of physical uncovering or educational. Either will create an awareness among the users and begin represent the site's depth of history in a more appropriate and apparent way.

Distilling this idea into a physical form, model in image

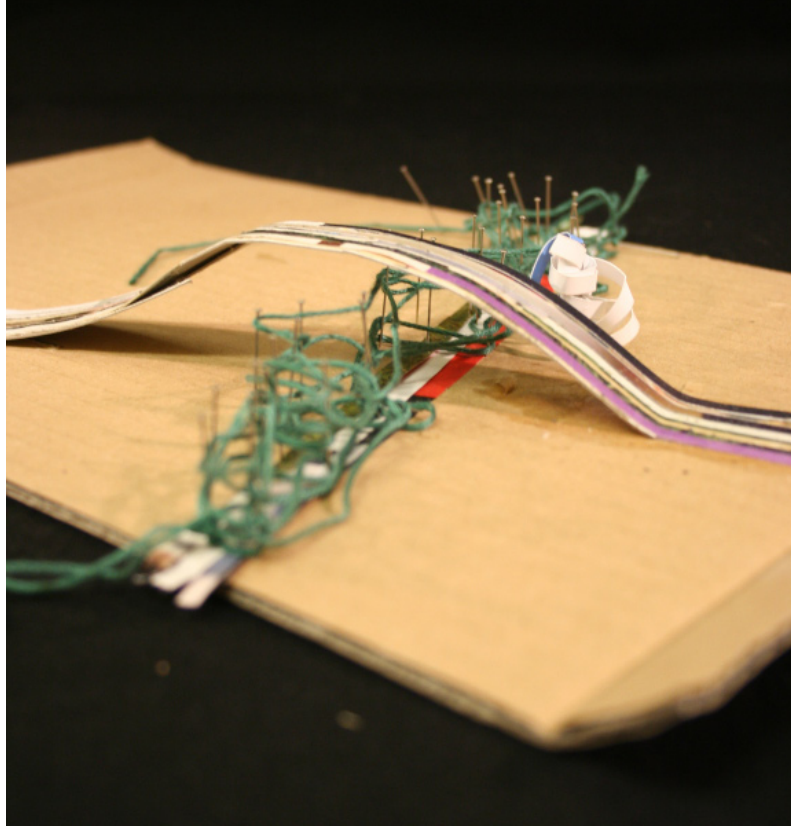


**62.1:** From the project conception, it was meant to spread out to the surrounding neighborhood. This illustrates Water Works Park as the bulk of the blue, while it flow out and over Jefferson Avenue. It is intended to be a network of spaces, rather than just one dominate gesture.

65.1, is shown as a then program element, a skate park, partially submerged into the landscape, begins to expose water mains, as well as possible archeological items from the french settlers on the site.

Program elements are designed to be exist in symbiosis. Located next to the skate park is a bouldering wall, that allows for skaters and climbers to exhibit their sports. Creating a boundary, the rapids flow through the site serving as a visual cue to the activity and the substance that is needed.

Moving towards the physical development, an exercise was performed to better understand both the site and any existing system that may begin to inform further design. After researching Detroit's Sandborn fire insurance maps, which show water mains, buildings, and roads. In figure 66.1, the site models shows the location of the pipes with the string, while exist-



**63.1:** Modeling of movement, crossing beneath Jefferson Avenue. The introduction of the White Water Rapids added a new conduit for activity. The intent was for it to 'break' the boundary of Jefferson.

ing bodies of water are shown through the absences of cork. There seems to be no visible or inherit organizer for the water mains, just function. Most likely the location of the destination and the obstacles are the greatest influence for the pipe's location.

Program development became site development in the next model (67.1), using clay on a map to mold new topography and sculpt the rapids and other water features into the site. Hills begin to line the riverfront, providing topography for mountain bikers, while also becoming the site for a grandstand. The rapids are placed near Jefferson Avenue, for visibility. Nearby, in the northeast corner of Water Works Park, a disk golf course is employed for easy recreation.

Existing canals are extend inland to provide a protected water for novice kayakers, in addition to creating a identity to the site. The land north of Jefferson is dedicated to urban farm-



**64.1:** This portion of springboard began to examine the layers of the chosen site. The depth of history and the impending recreation plan that will soon over lay all of this. It is extremely important for the designed intervention to honor the layers which still exist.

ing for the existing residents and area non-profits. They use a proposed farming center to house training facilities and a historical interruptive center on the original french ribbon farms.

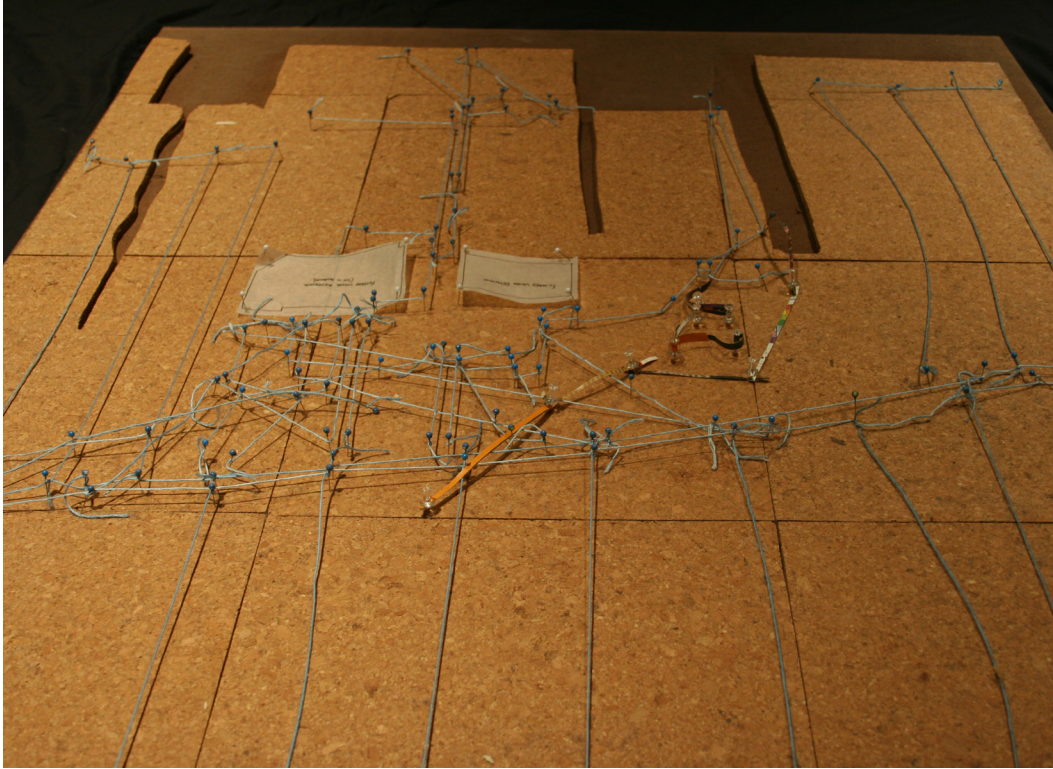
This center bridges Jefferson to the south, allowing for easy passage for visitors to a Hydrology Center. This would become the public visitation center for the filtration plant, which is now 'by appointment only". The center will have exhibits of waters role, the local watershed, and the rain cycle.

Outside of this space, expanding the existing marina facility will utilize a new boat house, bistro, and dry dock. Along the canal will be a bike bath that leads to a skate park near a proposed extension of the river walk. At this focus area, a rental lodge and support facilities will be available to users.

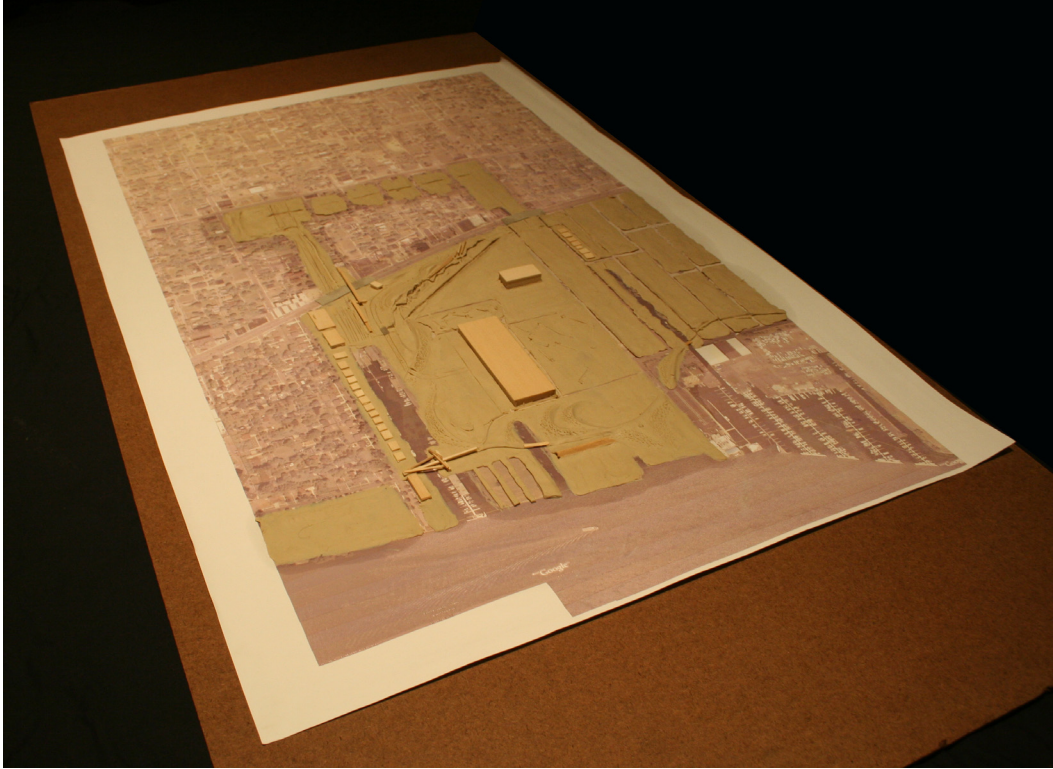




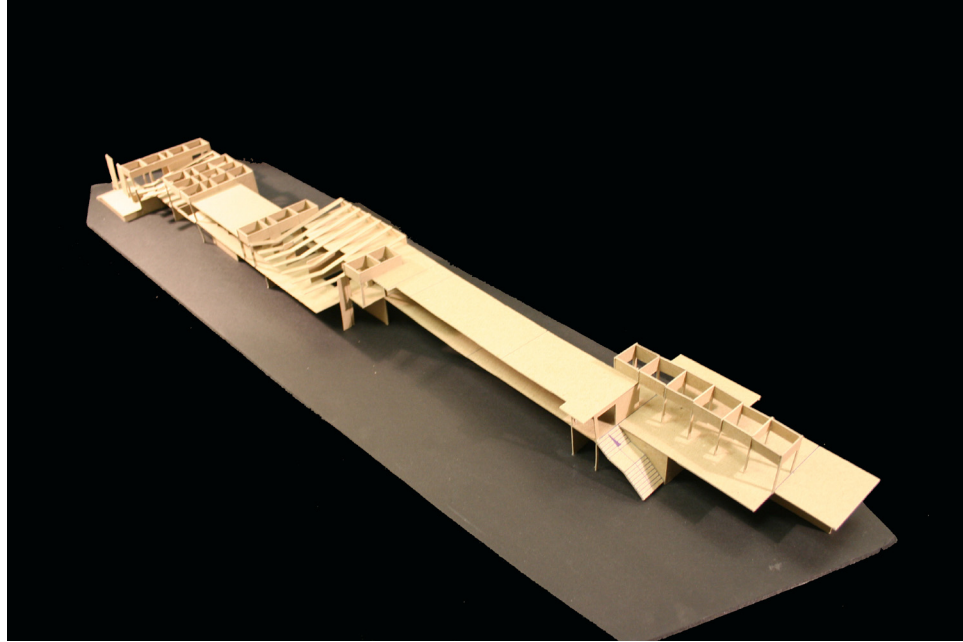
**65.1:** Out of the previous exercise, the condition of the layers was examined with the integration of recreational elements. Could these elements be used to uncover water pipes, or the idea of the pipes existing?



**66.1:** Site development encompassed many methods. I examined for analysis as well as spring board, the effects of the under laying system of pipes, and how that may inform forms as well as function that will occur above. While the blue string represents a water line, the white trace denotes underground reservoirs.

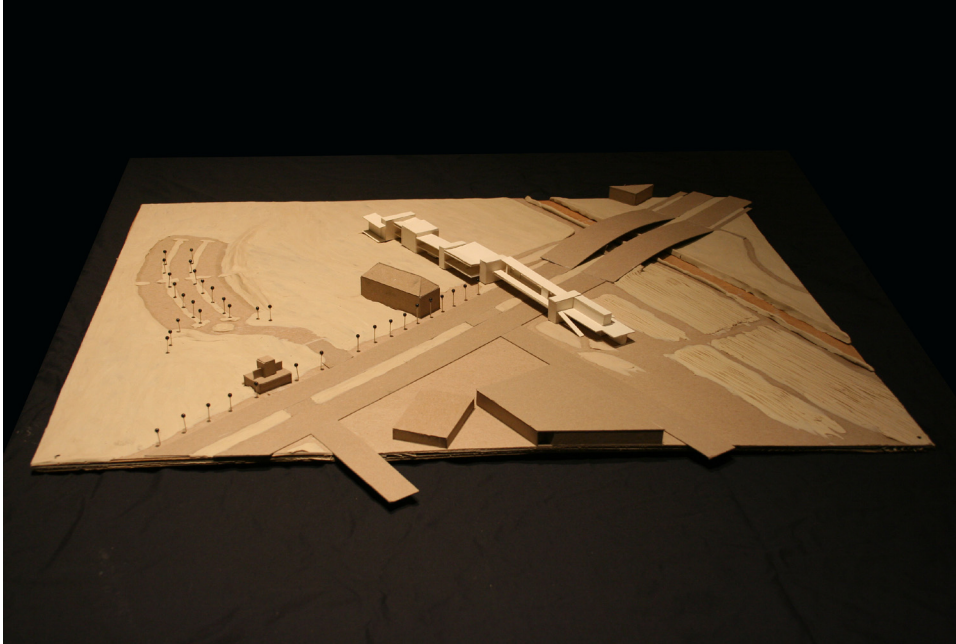


**67.1:** A clay on paper model started to express site form and changes. This form of modelling communicates the fluidness sought in ground plane.

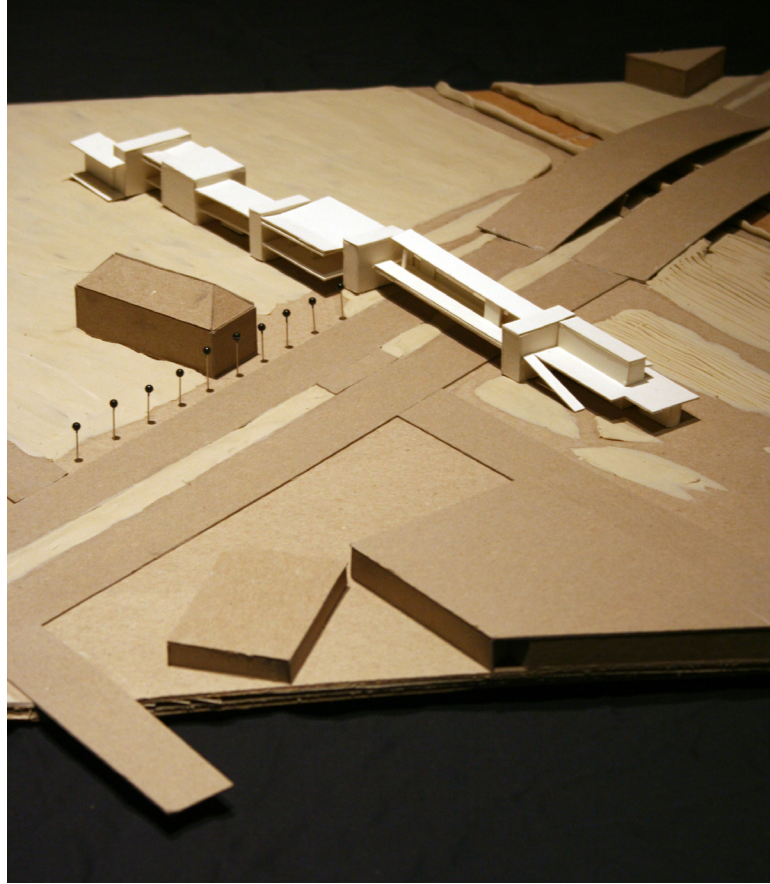


**68.1:** The concept of crossing Jefferson and having the site expand across the boundaries is accomplished through this building form. To the left is a Hydrology Center, which focuses on the importance of water and the history of Water Works Park. The right side, a Farming Center, focuses on educating about urban farming, and the heritage of farms since the original French Ribbon Farms. A bridge connects the two buildings over Jefferson Avenue. The roof planes reflect the way in which untreated water runoff is mitigate; green roofs and cisterns are employed.

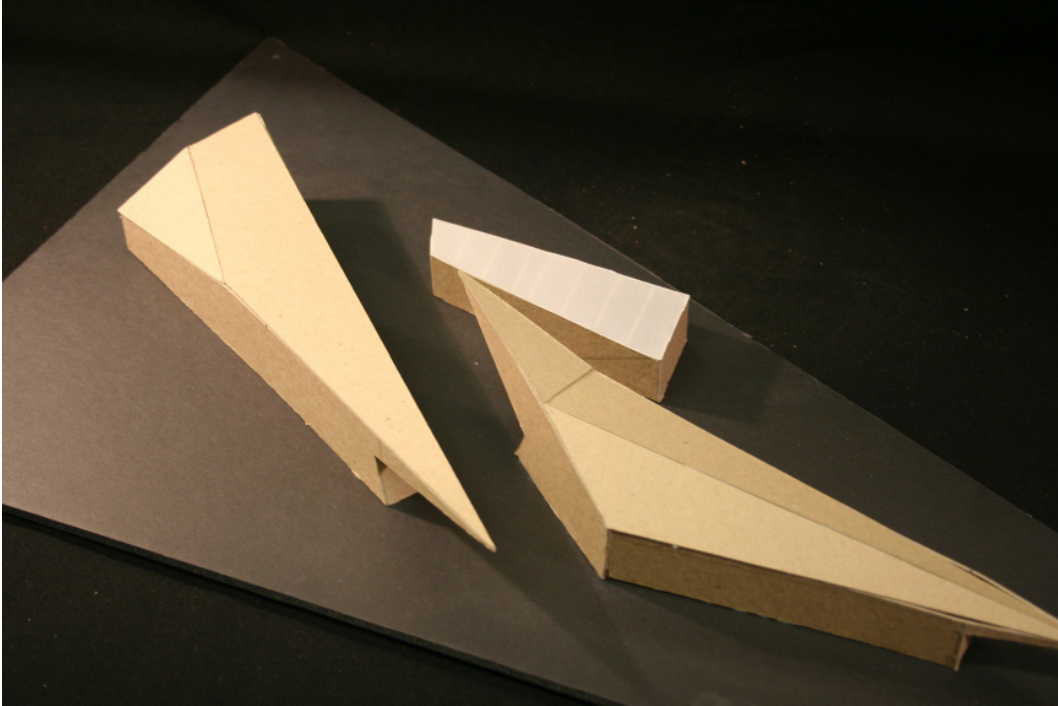




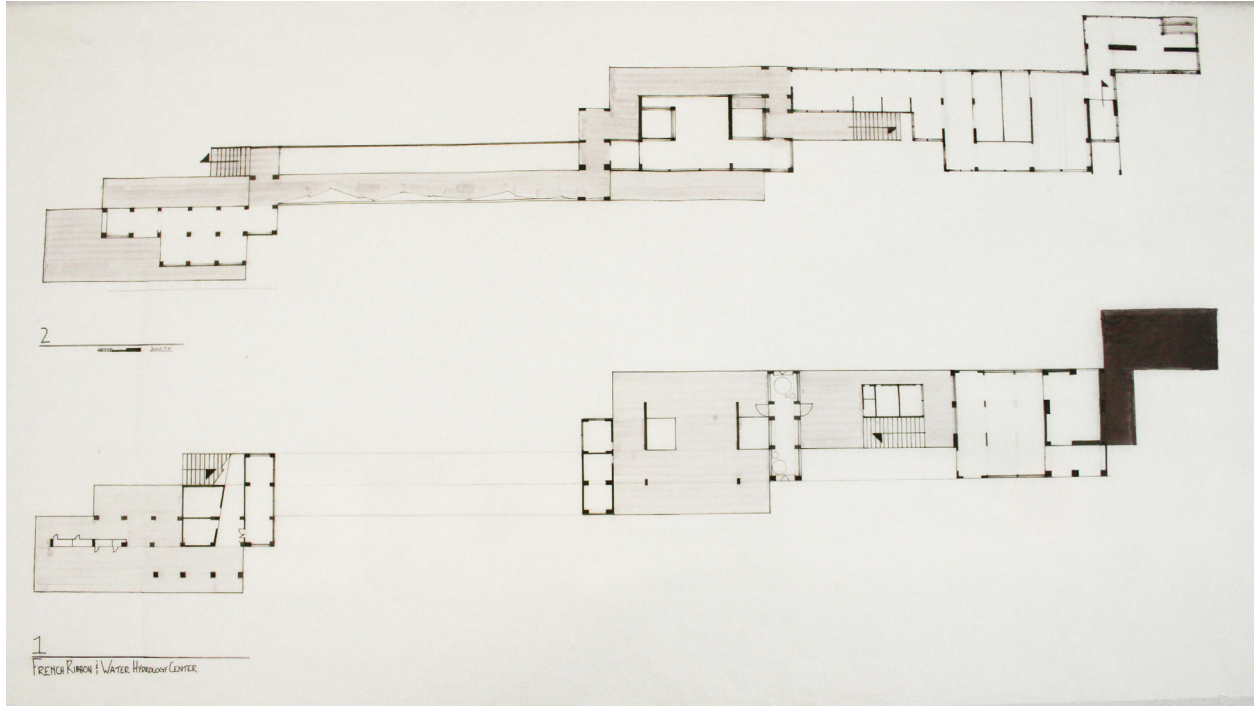
**69.1:** As development continued with the surrounding site, the importance of the canal and farming system came to fruition, beginning to make individual statements about site use and connection. The Canal system shall create a 'district' in which it is easy for persons to utilize this as a way of transportation, via kayak or by walking along an adjacent path. At this point, utilization of the site in its entirety was not taken to the fullest form.



**70.1:** Zooming into the model, the attention to roof plane is more apparent. The segmented parts represent different internal functions, with the larger, solid forms acting as mental 'cleansers', while the open forms overlook the site, and use it as a more teachable moment.

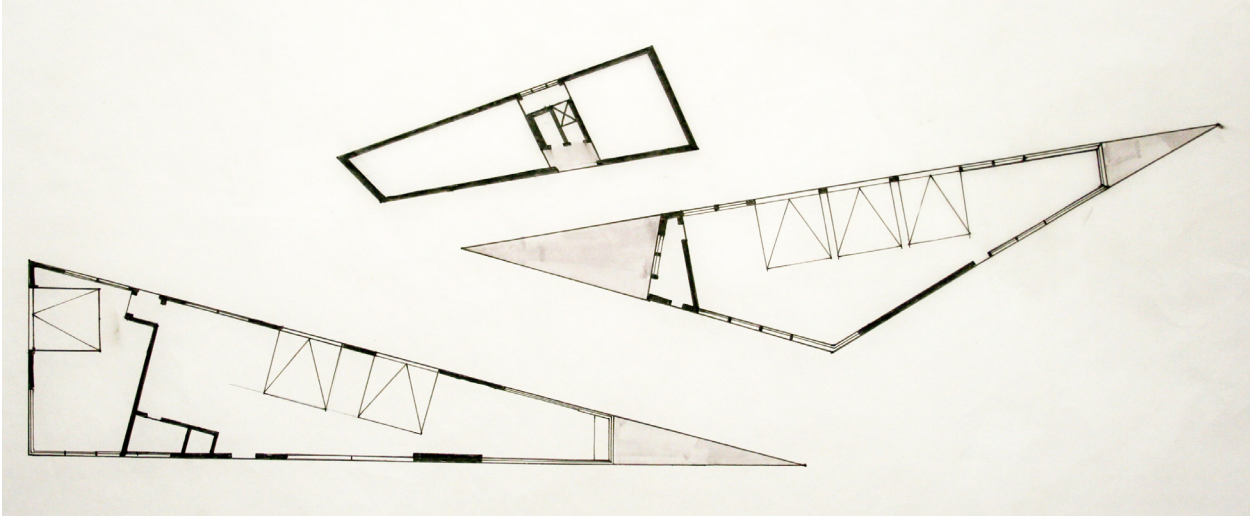


**71.1:** Although not fully developed, the Rafting Center was originally intended to be a stand alone facility near the Northeast section of the site. At the time the form was to evoke the feeling of a narrow canyon or boulder shelves.



**72.1:** The final reiteration of the hydrology and farming center took into account many of the previous exercises and desires that were had.





**73.1:** The rafting center used many windows and large roll-ups to create cavern-like spaces that blurred the lines of inside and outside.



**74.1:** Program collage shows mountain biking on one of the new hills created.



**74.2:** Utilizing land that has a reservoir and innumerable water mains beneath it, a frisbee golf course is added .



**75.1:** Kayaking and farming in the Northwest part of the site offer an opportunity for multiple pursuits.

# Springboard + Schematic Design

## Semester 2

The semester's focus has turned toward site development and building placement. After semester break, the previous semesters arrangement left many fragmented parts, leaving for a abrupt flow through out the park. To remedy this a new density is being explored by creating a center of activity, see image 77.1.

The area along the Detroit Boat Basin, on the west edge of the site, it seemed to be a natural zone to build on. First, according to earlier site analysis, it has a lower concentration of water mains and infrastructure. Second, it has a history of being in the public domain, more than any other part of the site, as there have been no major water processing facilities occupying the general area. Third, being along the marina, it integrates this function into the many of the other activities, this carries out a goal of bringing people engaging in other pursuits together.

Another new aspect of the project is securing the filtration plant. By centralizing the new buildings, a secure zone surrounding the facility can be employed. The use of landscape in this new goal will challenge the current project and continue to require the creation of diverse landscape forms for security to be accomplished. Creating dense zones of activity will concentrate where users should be. Thus, the inverse areas will make it apparent if there are individuals who may be engaging in suspicious behavior.

Very quickly, it was realized that the orientation of the white water rapids would benefit from being rearranged along with the support building. The rapids create a natural barrier to the filtration plant, while also integrating the activity into the area of density.

At the end of last semester, the Water Hydrology Center and Ribbon Farm Center both were more successful in their location and building design. To cluster the buildings between the canal and the rapids, it would become a linear rhythm of buildings, utilizing a developed typology that would allow the basic principles to be applied to any of the new buildings that had yet to be designed. The idea of creating a linear ribbon of





**77.1:** The first major change in the site plan was the creation of concentric rings that represent different zones of activity density. Note the placement of the rapids, as they have yet to be moved.

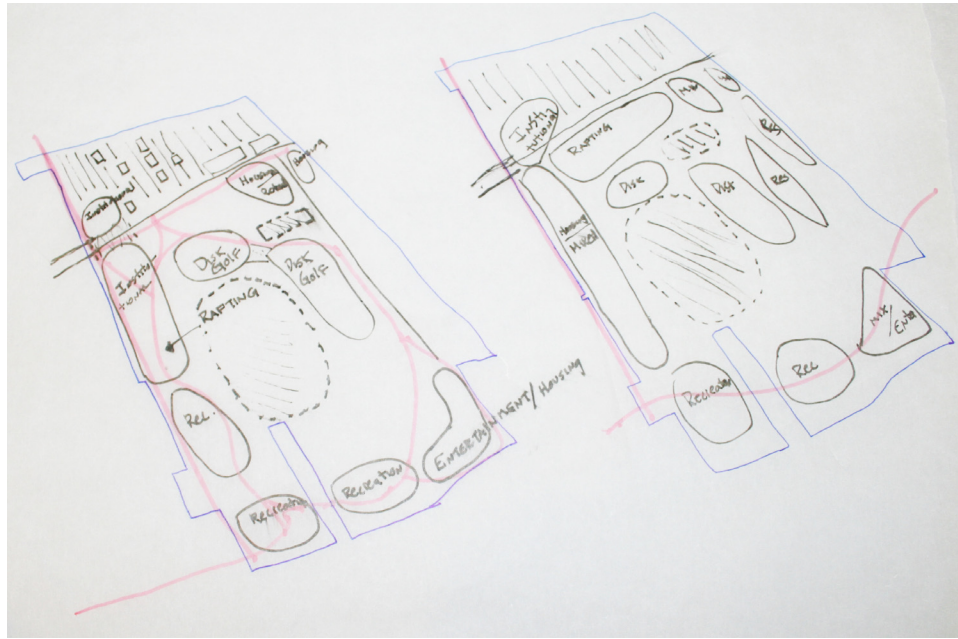
buildings developed.

Along with the development of site, new program elements are also introduced, housing and a fish hatchery. The addition of housing would be placed into the park's new core strip of activity, thus blending the neighborhood's role in the park, and the fish hatchery designed for the northwest canal focus area, which anchors the opposite end of the core strip of activity. These new elements required the thoughtful addition of more support facilities, such as parking, altered landscape and path ways.

Yet, as many of the activities are consolidated, it becomes apparent that the park is not well connected to the north side of Jefferson Avenue. Although, the Hydrology and Farming Center still do bridge across Jefferson, a stronger design intervention was required. The development of site brought about the introduction of a "meridian" to the site, that nearly uninterrupted connects the northwest canal focus area through the Haliburton Gate, and onward towards the river. Although formal in nature, it is an element that would blend the functions of both sides of Jefferson Avenue.

The meridian is also seen as a divider between the two different functional areas, the area to the west, which has the activity strip, while to the east is the frisbee golf. While the tree lined path will divide the two spaces. This is a somewhat formal movement, yet it serves to frame the Haliburton Gate.

Once further developed, it was realized that the merid-



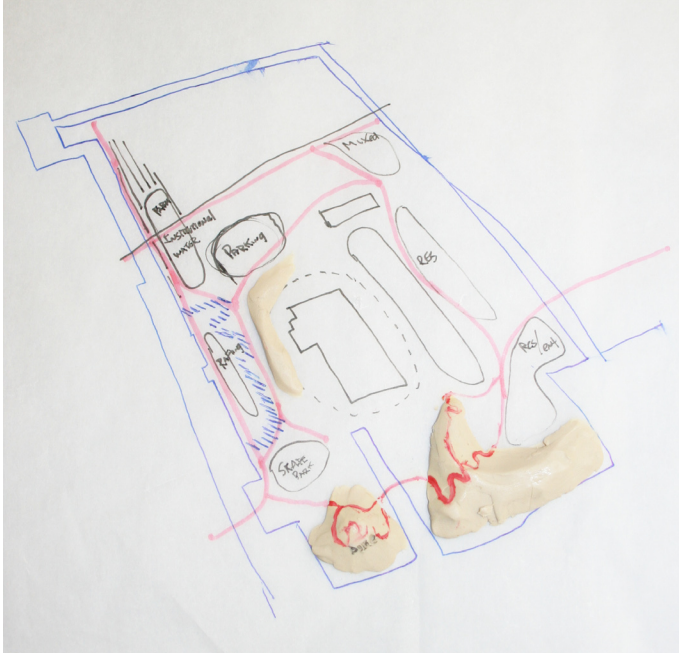
**78.1:** The first major change in the site plan was the creation of concentric rings that represent different zones of activity density. Note the placement of the rapids, as they have yet to be moved.

ian would collide with the water filtration plant. This, in further reiterations will be cause for some interesting solutions that enhance the space. By splitting the path into two sections, it allows for the inside space to be used for wild flowers and passive uses such as picnicking.

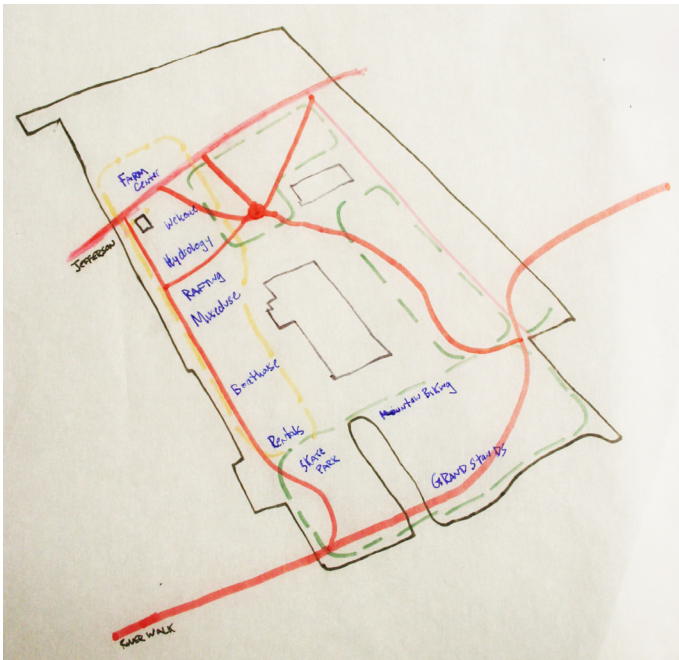
As designed continued, it was realized that the core strip was becoming quite dense. To include both the rapids, its return, in addition to buildings and their support infrastructure, a certain spirit was missing, with the filtration plant nearly 'colliding' with the other elements, it was thought best to 'weed out' what was not necessary.

Further examination of building integration, image 83.1 is designed to better integrate the 3 major buildings into the site plan. Applied to the ground plane is a grid that includes the orthogonal cardinal directions and a 'ripple' effect that echoes out parallel to Jefferson Avenue. Within this frame work is an adaptable system for different ground covers. Hard surfaces, such as concrete, or permeable ones, like gravel are used to convey the circulation of people. Porous surfaces, such as native grasses create rain gardens, while grassy lawns are used in areas where people may gather to sit. Trees are also employed here to create a canopy that will dominate the buildings and site, much like the neighborhoods to the north and west.

This courtyard like plaza is enclosed on only two sides, but, much like the Spanish Steps, in Rome, Italy, the area funnels individuals to create a more enclosed space. Here, users

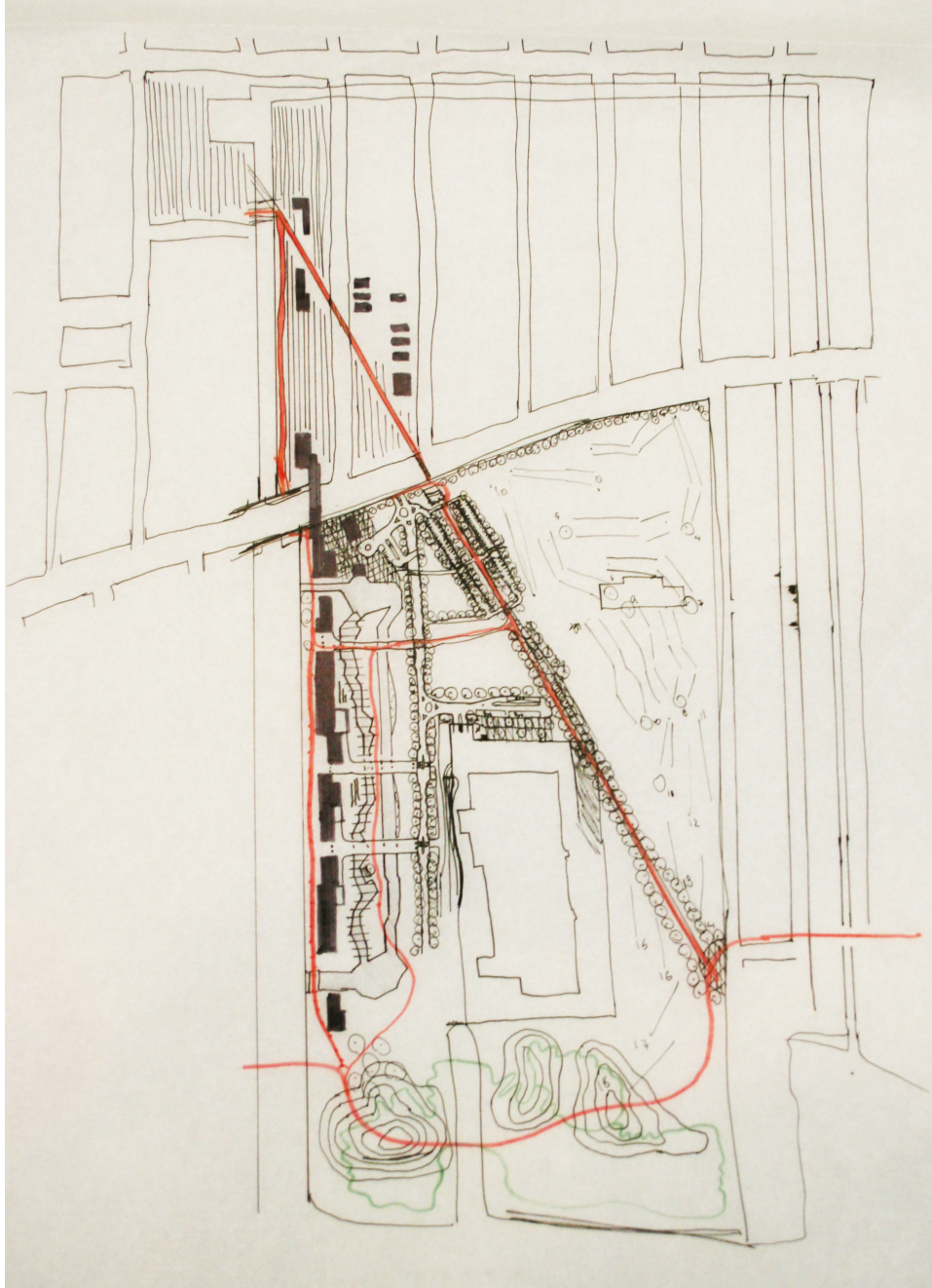


**79.1:** The first major change in the site plan was the creation of concentric rings that represent different zones of activity density. Note the placement of the rapids, as they have yet to be moved.



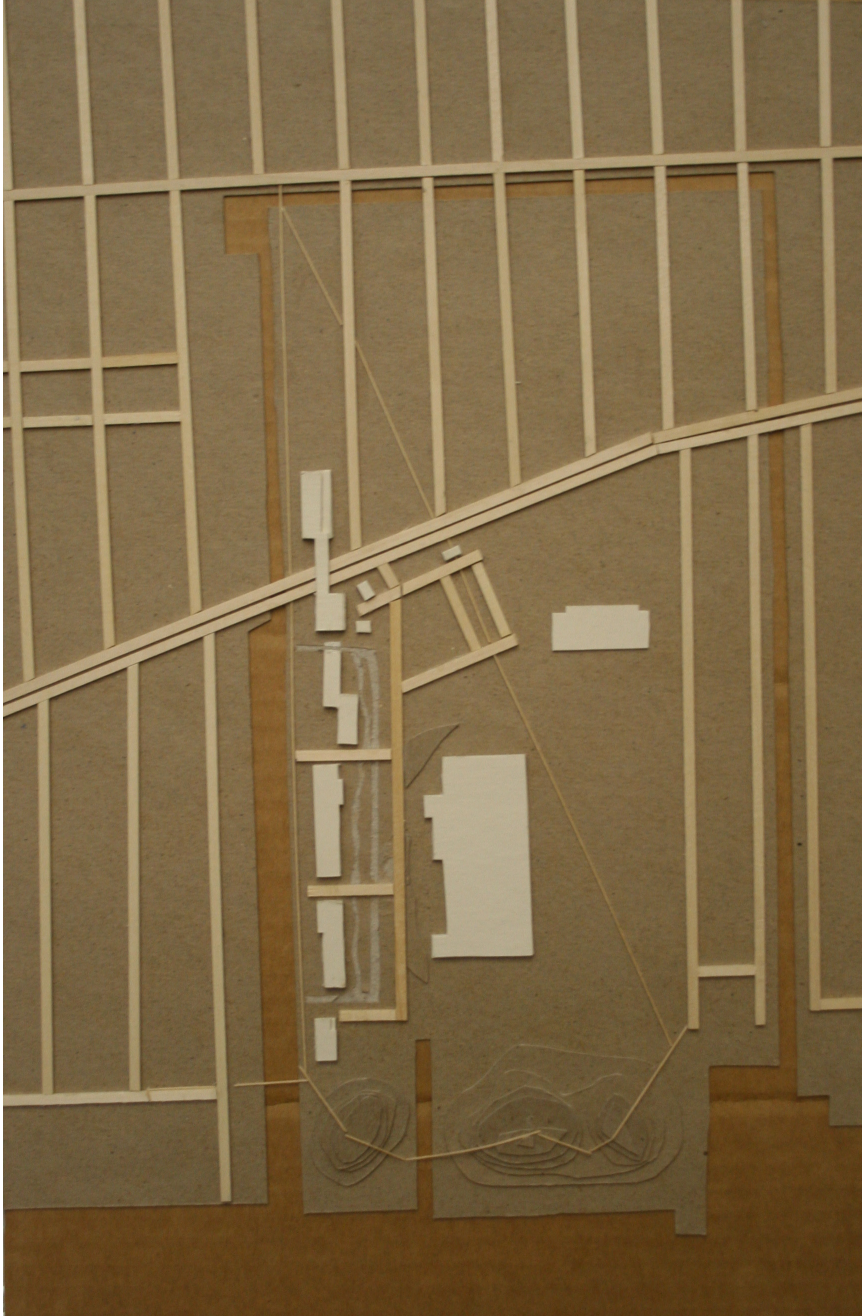
**79.2:** The first major change in the site plan was the creation of concentric rings that represent different zones of activity density. Note the placement of the rapids, as they have yet to be moved.



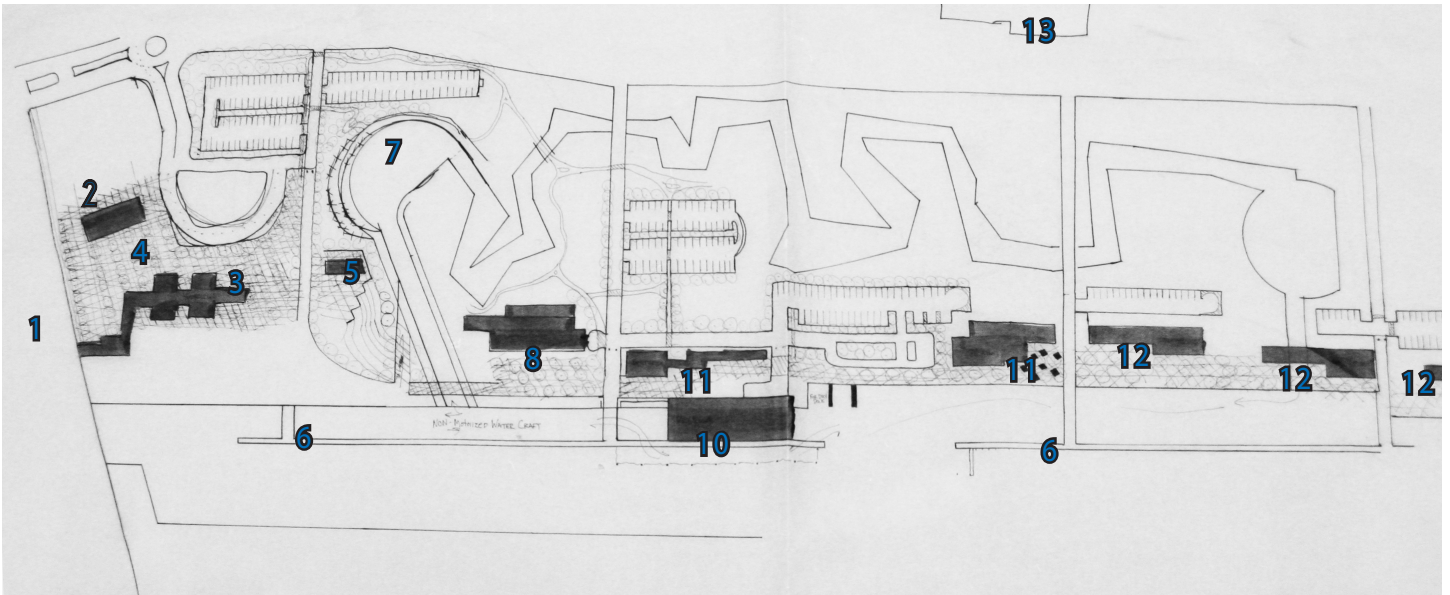


**80.1:** The meridian in this drawing connects the Northwest corner with the Southeast, creating a connection to the neighboring marinas and restaurants, the major areas of function, as well as the residential neighborhood and proposed farms north of Jefferson Avenue.





**81.1:** This model reiterates the meridian, while introducing topography and mountain biking into physical form.



1\_Jefferson Avenue  
 2\_Welcome Center  
 3\_Hydrology Center  
 4\_Receiving Plaza  
 5\_Pump House

6\_Marina  
 7\_White Water Rapids  
 8\_Rafting Center  
 9\_Boat House  
 10\_Dry Dock

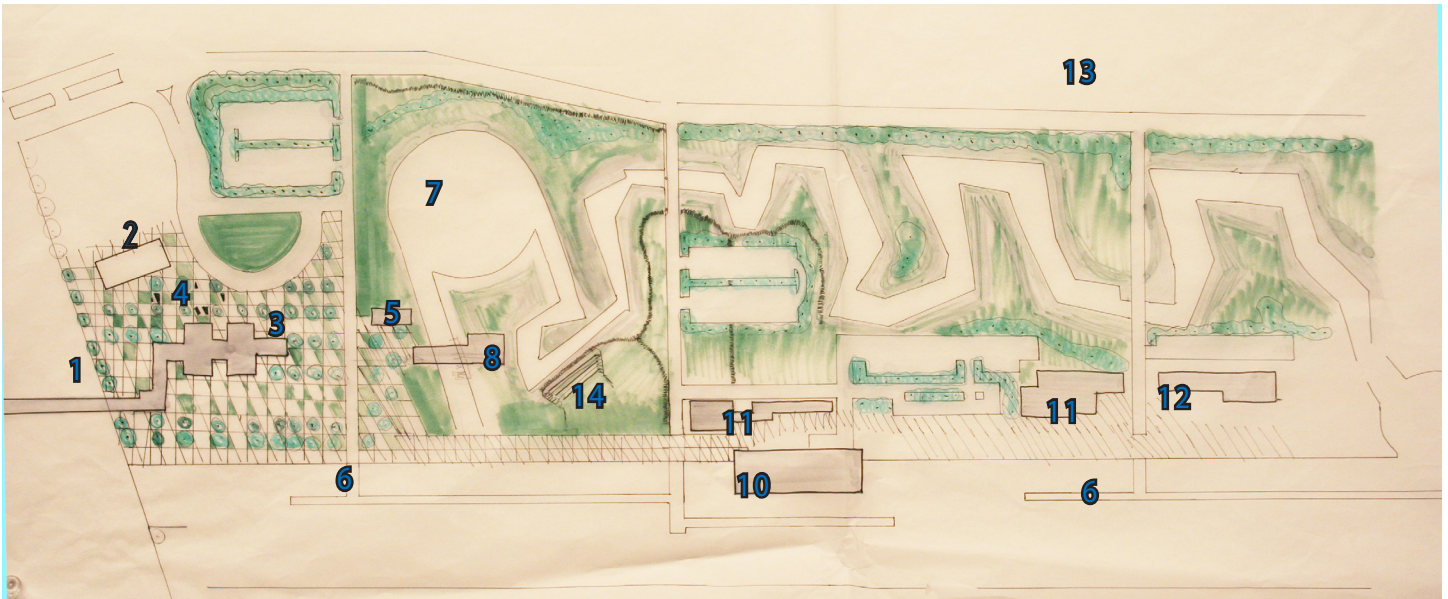
11\_Bistro  
 12\_Marina Housing  
 13\_Filtration Plant

**82.1:** Zooming into one of the most intense of the programmed areas in the high density strip is the zone nearest to Jefferson Avenue. This drawing explores the buildings' interactions with the landscape and rapids.

are received into the high density program area via public transportation on Jefferson Avenue, non-motorized transit off of adjacent proposed pathways, private vehicle or motor coach. All entering are forced to converge in the same space, creating a place for all to mix.

The area between the marina and the buildings is envisioned to be a boardwalk like space. The most public of facilities are placed closest to Jefferson. This becomes a 'corridor' where the majority of users are moving towards the water from Jefferson Avenue, or the opposite. Yet there is limited opportunity to travel eastward, in an attempt to funnel users away from the secure areas in the interior of the site.

As the site plan developed, parking and service courts were created and strategically placed near buildings, as well as the marinas for ease of moving gear to or from vehicle and vessel.



- |                    |                      |                     |
|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1_Jefferson Avenue | 6_Marina             | 11_Bistro           |
| 2_Welcome Center   | 7_White Water Rapids | 12_Marina Housing   |
| 3_Hydrology Center | 8_Rafting Center     | 13_Filtration Plant |
| 4_Receiving Plaza  | 9_Boat House         | 14_Grand Stand      |
| 5_Pump House       | 10_Dry Dock          |                     |

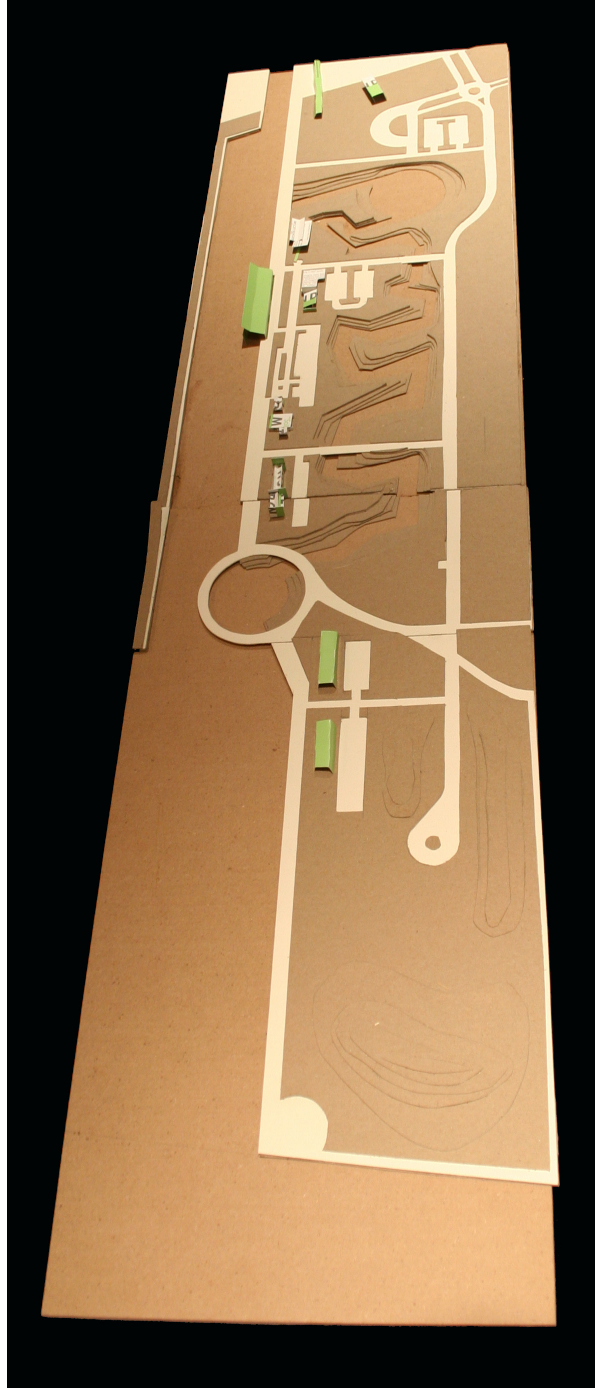
**83.1:** As the site plan further developed, the rapids forms becoming more formalized. Note the changed location of the rafting center(8), see image 98.1 where it now straddles over the rapids.

While moving the rafting center to the high density area was done so to strengthen the overall interaction of site program, it also required a new design for the center based upon a modified version of the already established typologies from the previous semester. Continuing this proved to be difficult, with minimal satisfaction in the designed buildings.

First a study was done on roof forms the express their system of water catchment or treatment. This led the design work towards a butterfly truss, and eventually a inverse gabled like post and beam structure.

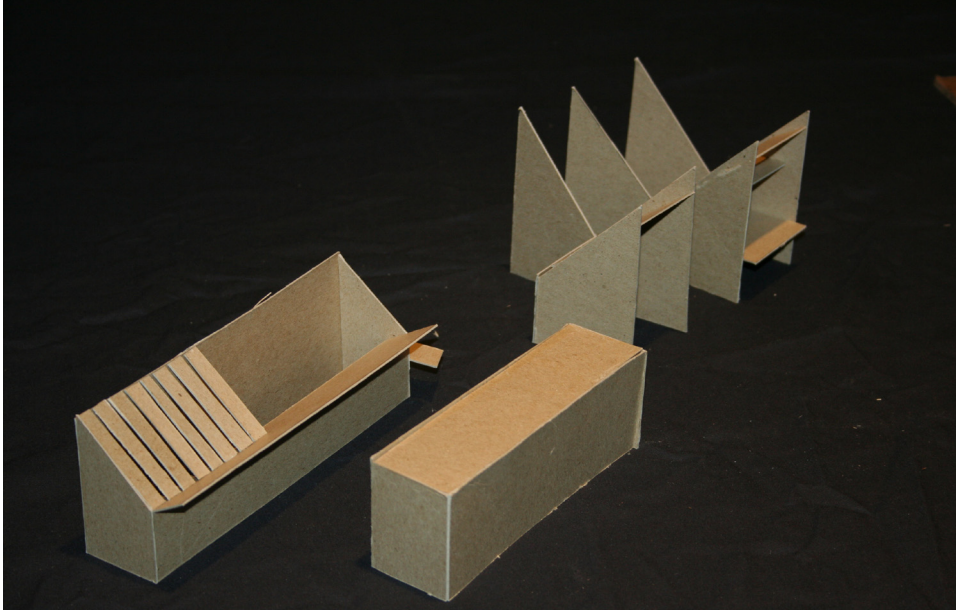
Importantly, this structure assisted in the development of interior program spaces, as well as outdoor learning areas. The idea of a specific column rhythm was also explored, and within this rigidity, that breaks could occur between the buildings, but yet still relate within this system, as if to be connect-





84.1: High density strip, with the rapids and marina.

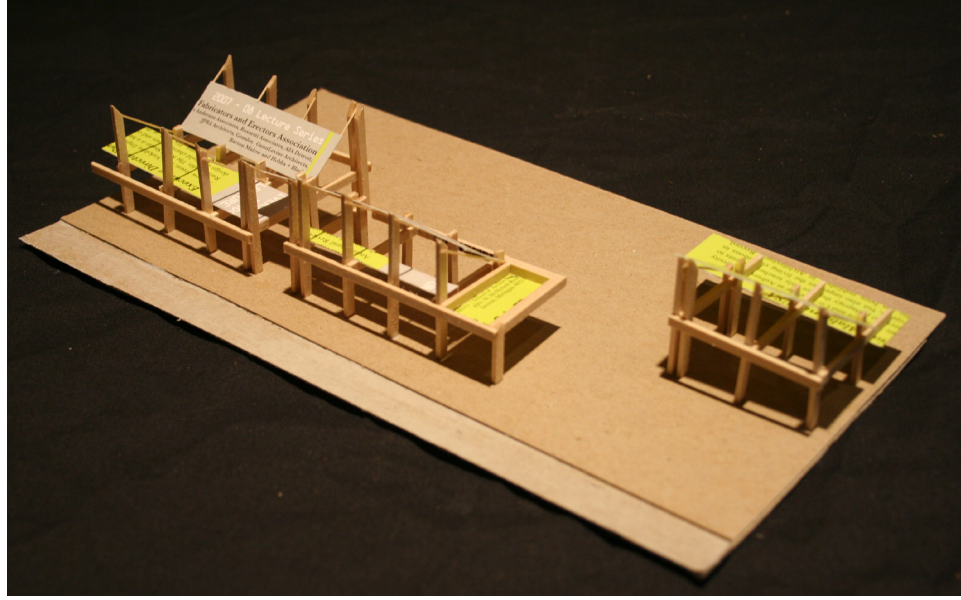




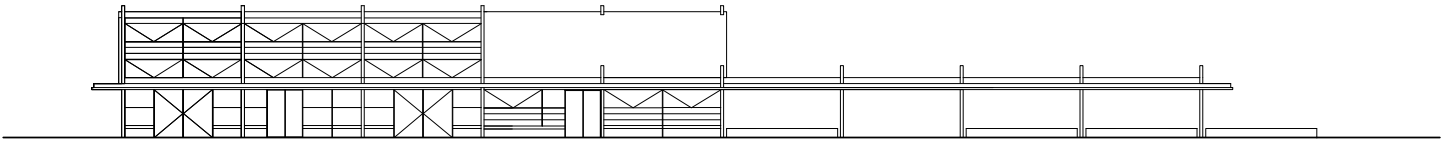
85.1: Models explore water reclamation



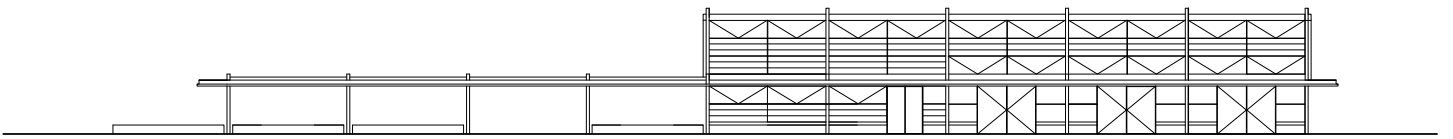
85.2: Preliminary Rafting Center Model 1 (note outdoor instructional space)



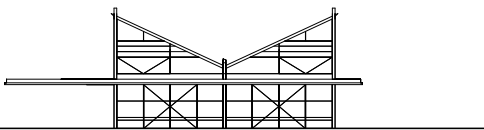
**86.1:** Rafting Center Sketch Model 2



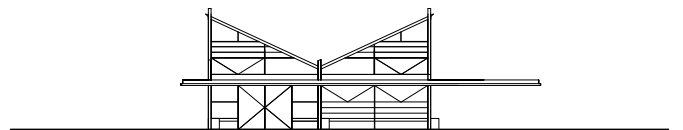
**86.2:** Rafting Center West Elevation



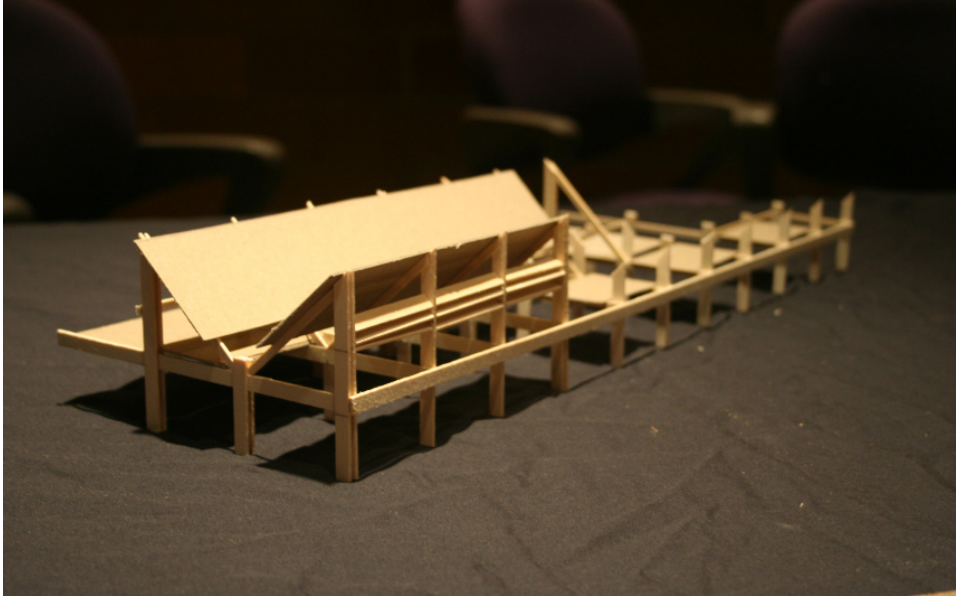
**86.3:** Rafting Center East Elevation



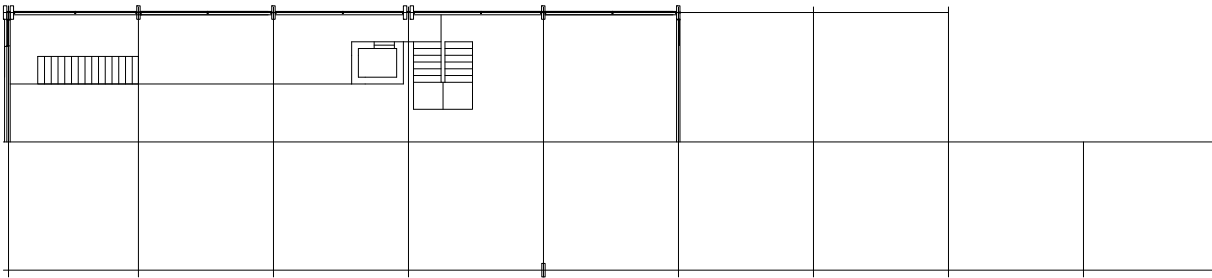
**86.4:** Rafting Center North Elevation



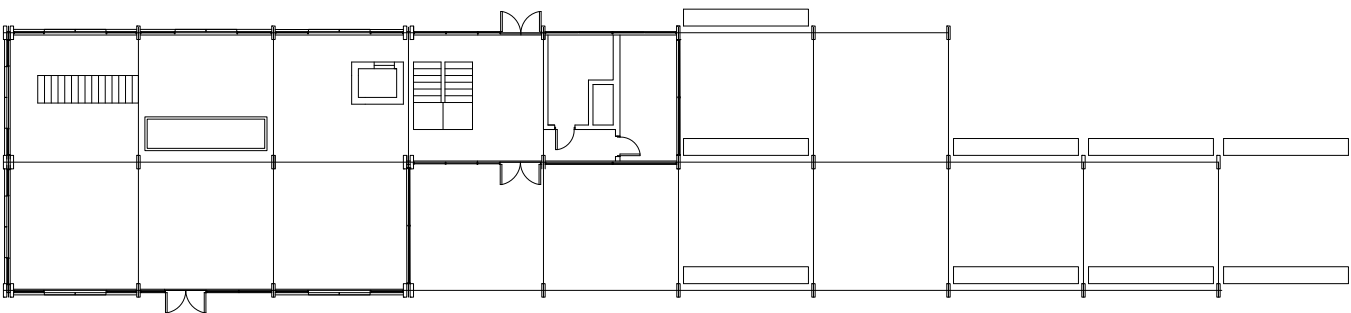
**86.5:** Rafting Center South Elevation



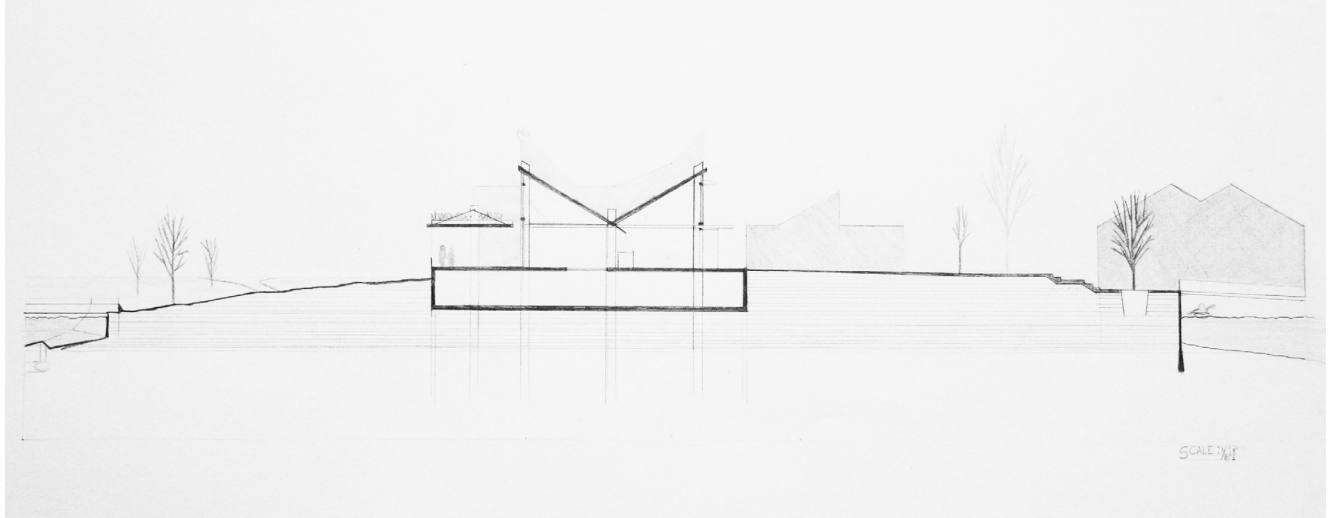
**87.1:** Rafting Center Sketch Model 3



**87.2:** Rafting Center Floor Plan, Level 2



**87.3:** Rafting Center Floor Plan, Level 1



88.1: Site + rafting section

ed. These key attributes were applied later in the semester.

Another as the housing component developed in the project, the form that was used in the rafting and hydrology centers. A preliminary model, image 89.1 shows a similar reiteration, much like the rafting center. Yet, considering the complexity of housing, this form lack the dynamism required.

Further more, a struggle ensued while deciding the appropriate housing type. Initially it was thought that co-housing would be best suited for fitting a variety of needs and peoples.

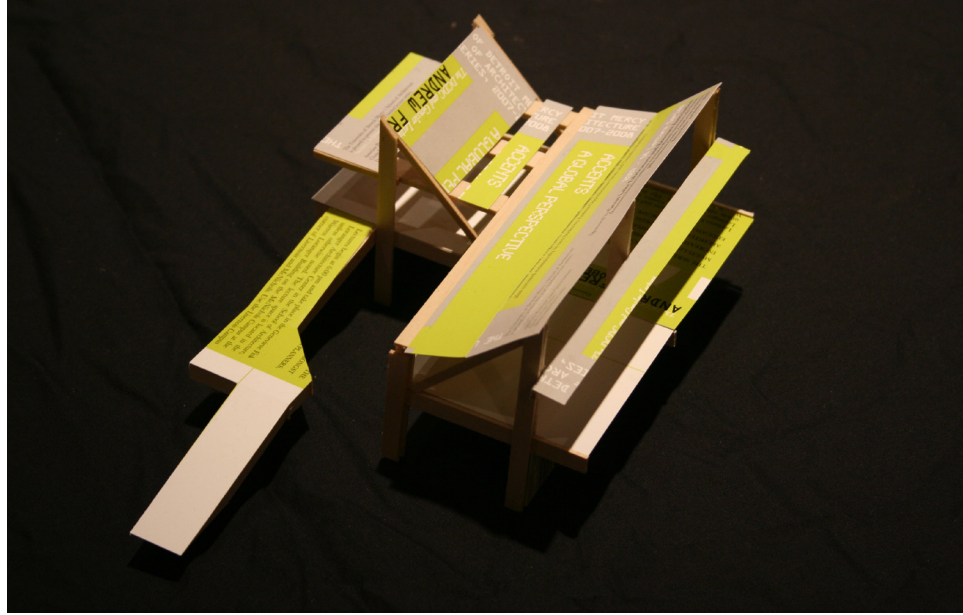
The newly design Marina Housing component's composition includes the attributes of the previous buildings: the structural and physical rhythm of the rafting and hydrology centers, while offering an expressive roof. Each unit is self sufficient, but most are different by design. Studios, one and two bedrooms, as well as units that are ADA compliant. Most with a balcony or first floor outdoor social area on the 'board walk'.

Within the co-housing concept, a commons area would be placed on the second floor, above the rear parking. Consideration has been given to separate this function out from the units them selves. A commons space would contain the kitchen and dinning function, along with two social rooms and a fireplace for gathering.

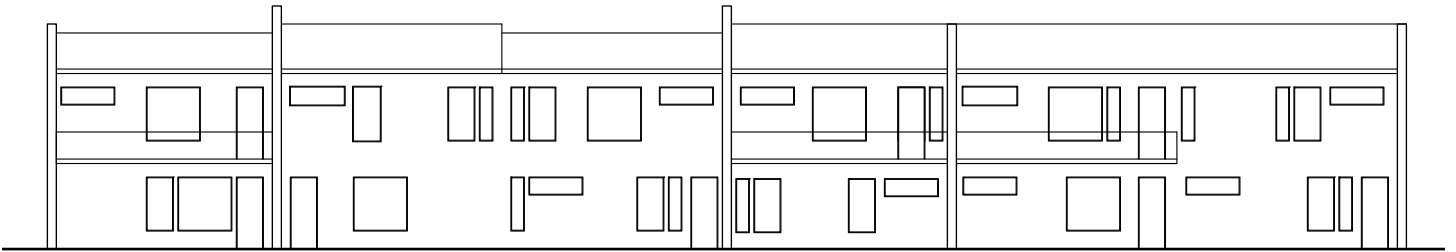
In further design development, the housing component was left in this schematic stage.

Slightly back tracking in terms of completed components, it was necessary to return to the rafting center's design. It did not challenge form or site. Of all the buildings, this one needed to. This building was not like the others, it had to relate to the water differently; conveying people and their equipment from land to water. Also important is the need for new participants

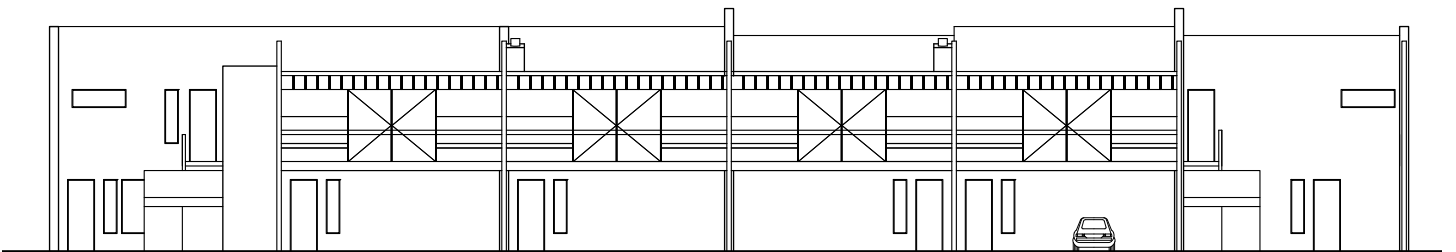




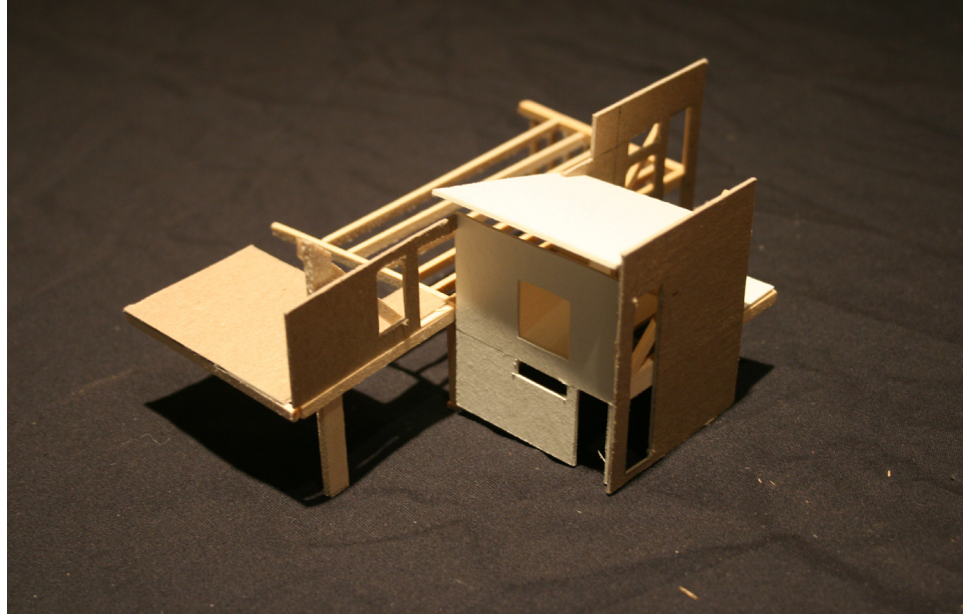
**89.1:** Preliminary Marina Housing Study Model



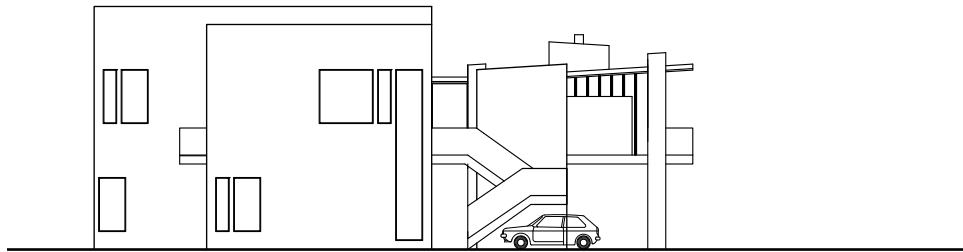
**89.2:** New Marina Housing West Elevation (Canal Facing)



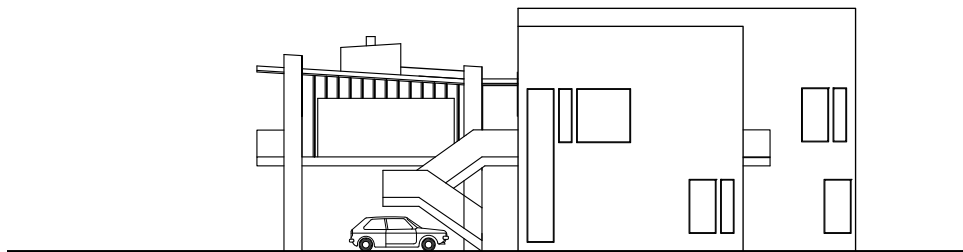
**89.3:** New Marina Housing East Elevation (note second floor commons)



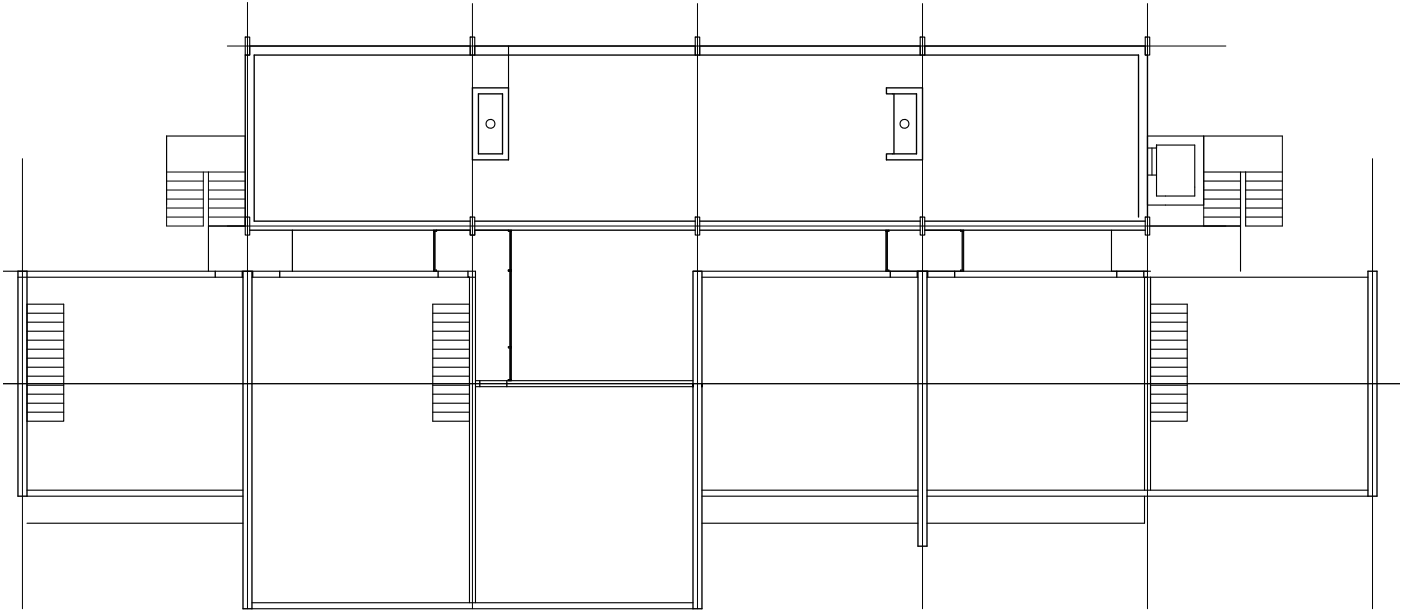
**90.1:** Marina Housing Construction Model



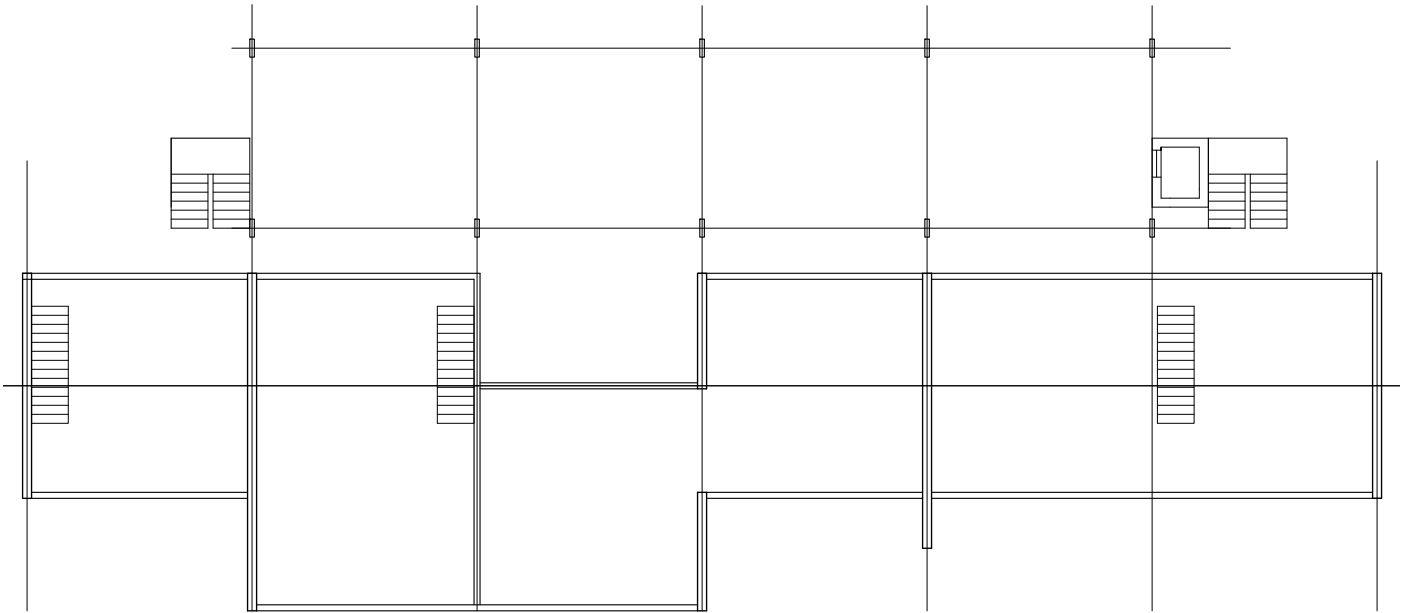
**90.2:** Marina Housing South Elevation



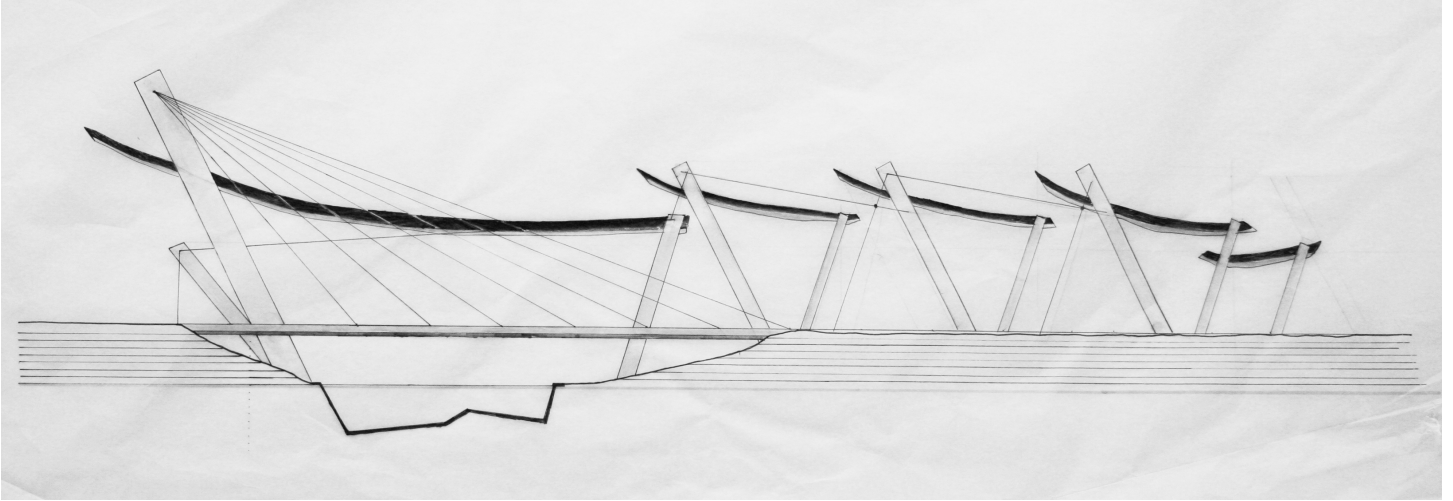
**90.3:** Marina Housing North Elevation



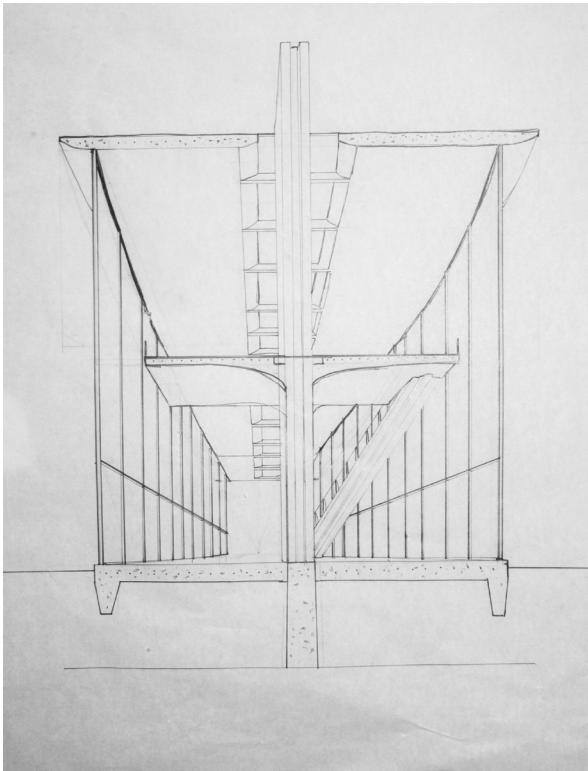
91.1: Marina Housing Floor Plan, Level 2



91.2: Marina Housing Floor Plan, Level 1

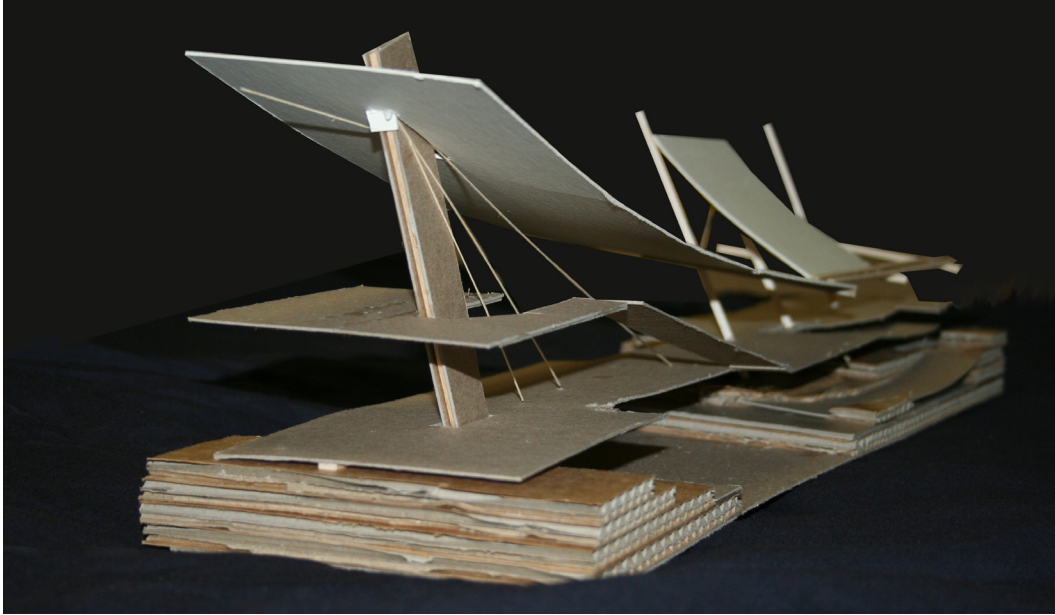


92.1: New Rafting Center Concept Drawing

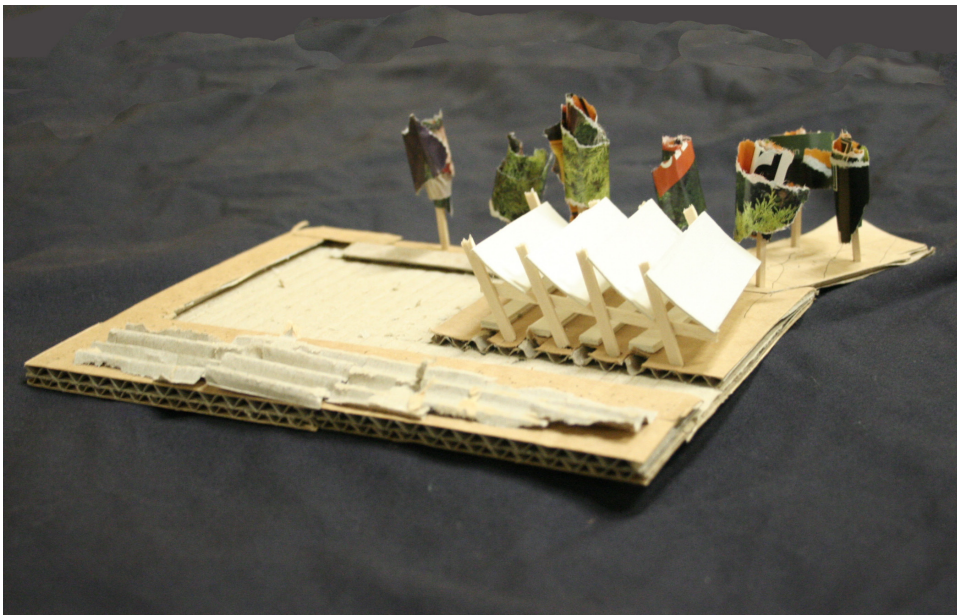


92.2: New Rafting Concept Building Section





**93.1:** New Rafting Center Concept Sketch Model



**93.2:** Marina Housing Construction Model

to have a place for instruction and observation.

To begin to draw upon the movement of the water, a stronger form was developed, much like the waves the rapids, and the sails of the boats in the marina, the building too would have a flowing line, in which users and non-users could identify the place as more intriguing than the others.

After multiple sketches and models, the building refined the typology to a higher level, creating a need to once again update the surrounding structures.

Lastly, returning to the fish hatchery (image 93.2) in the Northwest focus area, using the newly updated typology, the structure would still be seen as a continuation of the high density activity area.

# FINAL DESIGN

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# Final Design

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## Realization & Construction

The final development of the building and site designs were based upon the previous models and drawings. Not all were brought up to presentation quality.

Developed were the overall site plan, image 97.1, the high density activity area, with the surrounding buildings' floor plans, and a site section images: 98.1+.2, 100.1+.2. Additionally, models were built to represent a piece of the Hydrology center, as well as the over all high density activity area and the Northwest area.

Water colors and montages were used to illustrate the site and buildings in the final presentation. Developed floor plans and sections were integrated into the previously mentioned methods to better illustrate the project's buildings and landscape relationship. Image 97.1 is the overall site plan for the thesis project. It shows the integration of the various site elements into the overall plan. With continued development from previous benchmarks, the site plan serves as a mater document to the entire project. It is integral to understanding to connection and movement within and outside the site.

Final Models that were developed included the high density activity area, a detailed site model of the Jefferson Avenue section of the high density area, the Northwest Canal area, and lastly a building section model of the Hydrology Center.

Moreover, the final presentation included many of the previously developed site images and analysis.



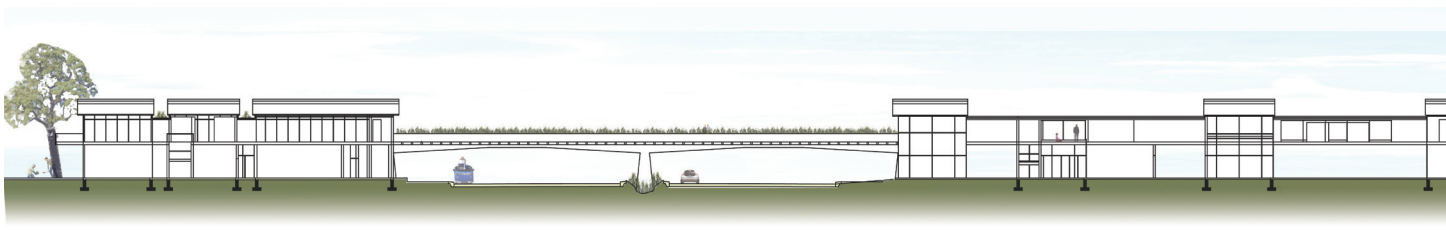


97.1: Site map



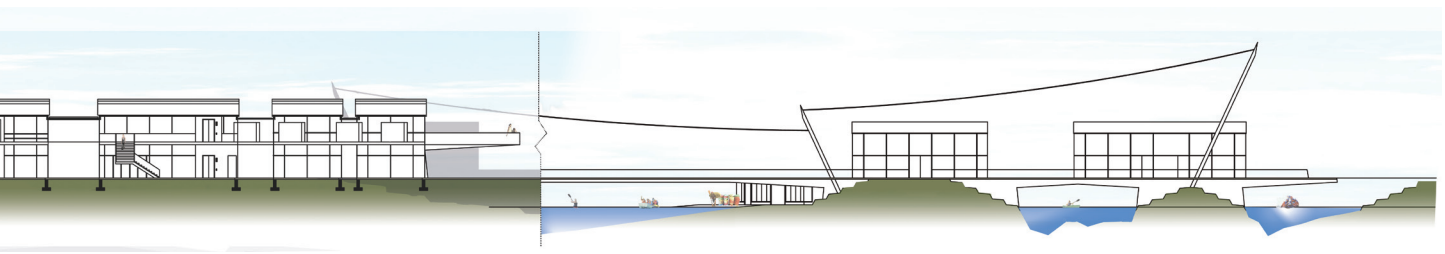
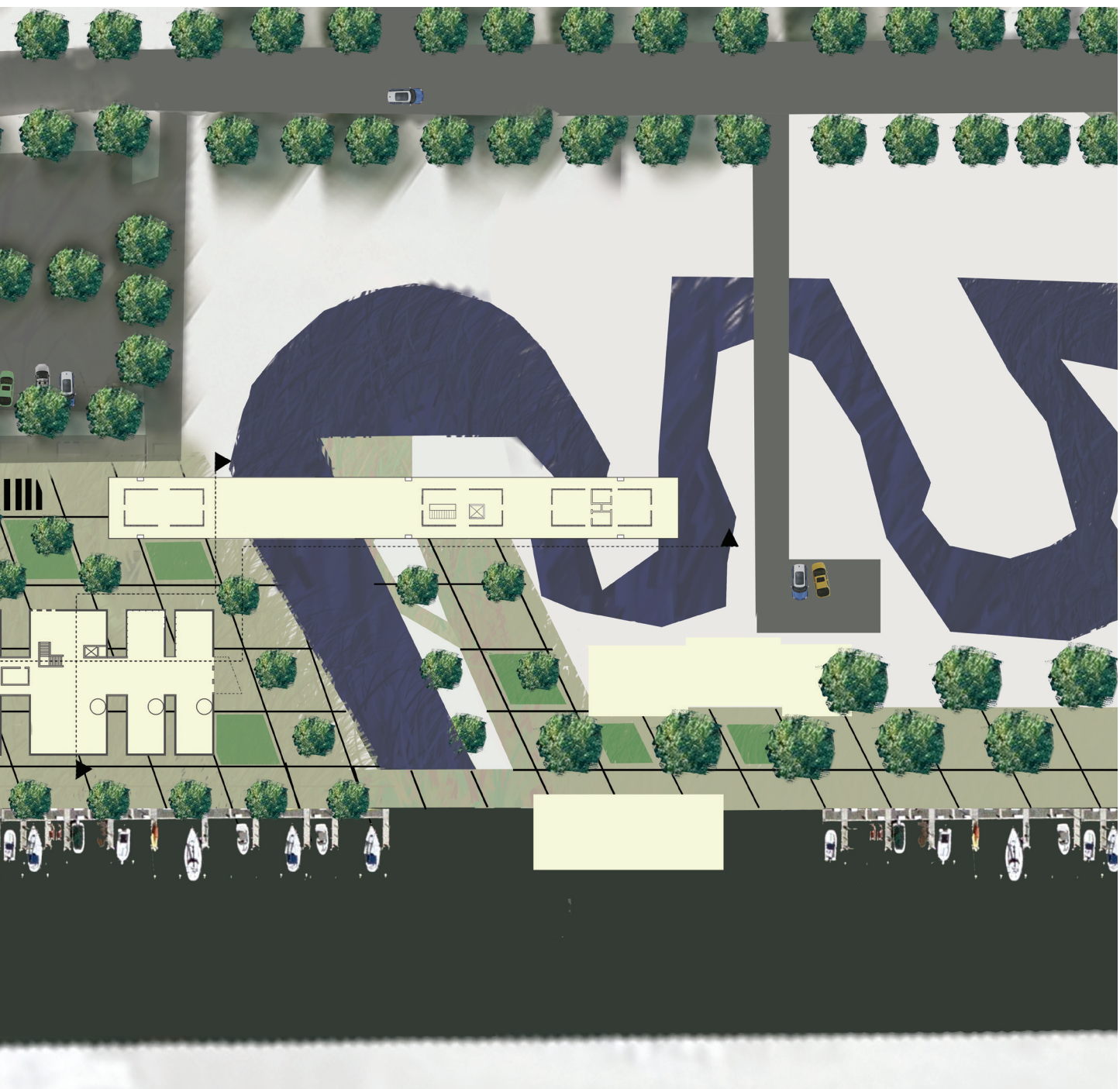


98.1: High Density Activity Area, ground level

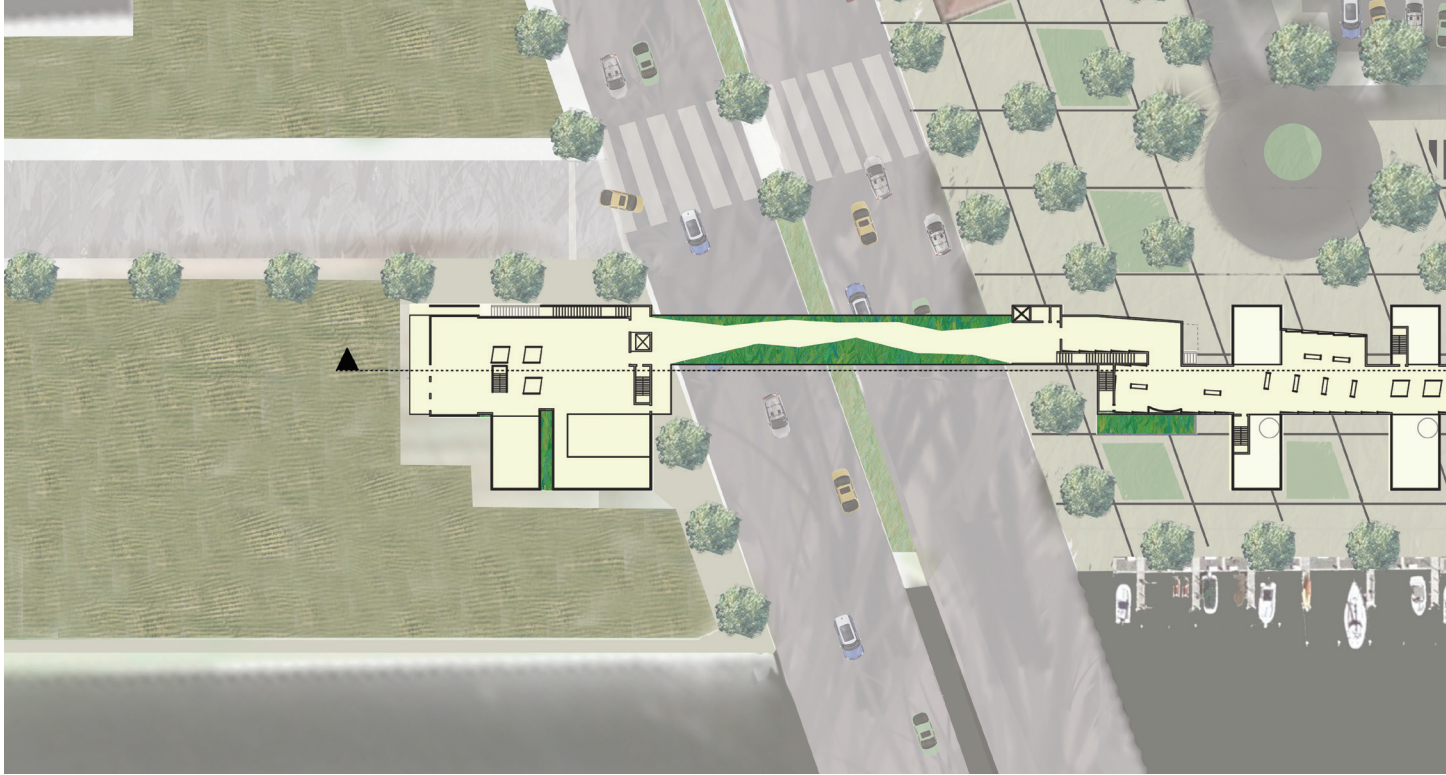


98.2: High Density Activity Area, Site section

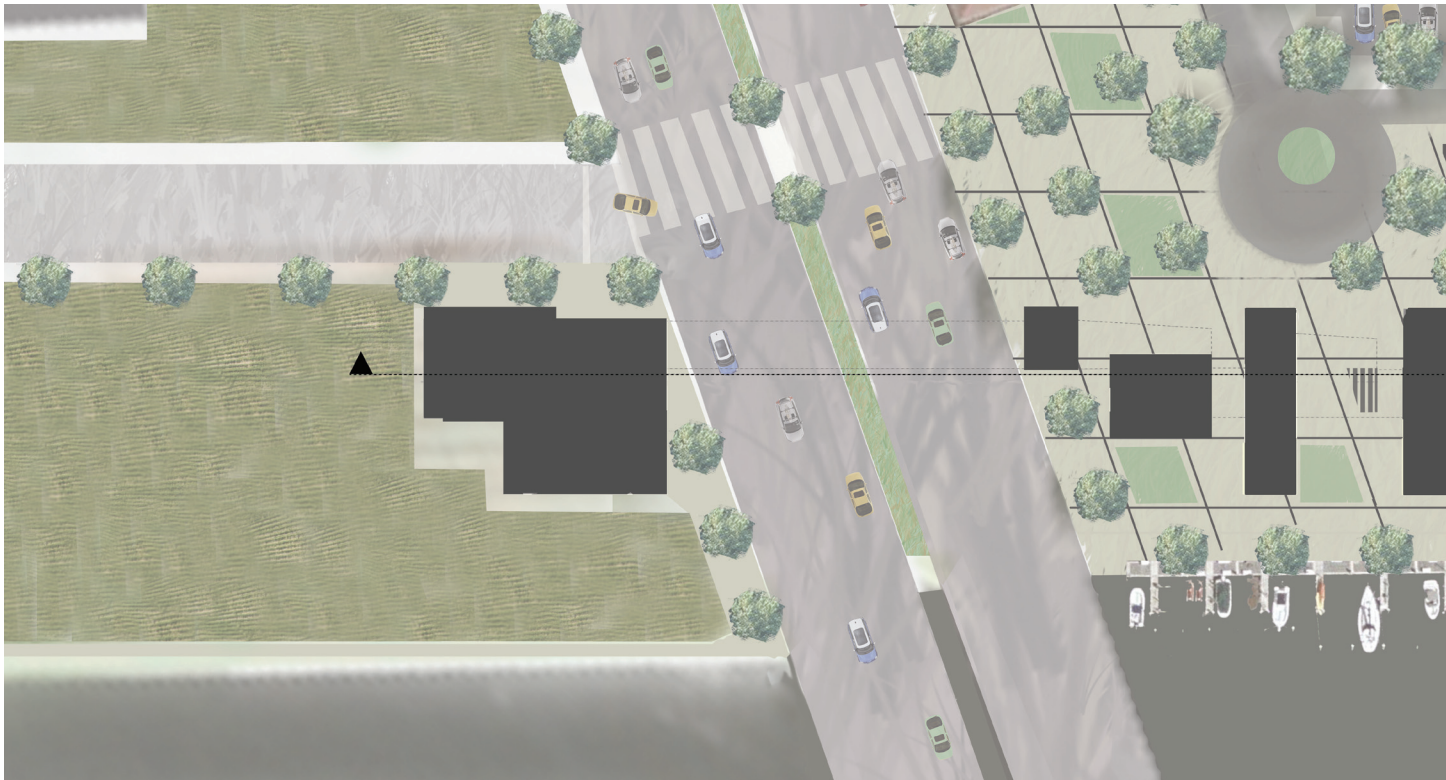






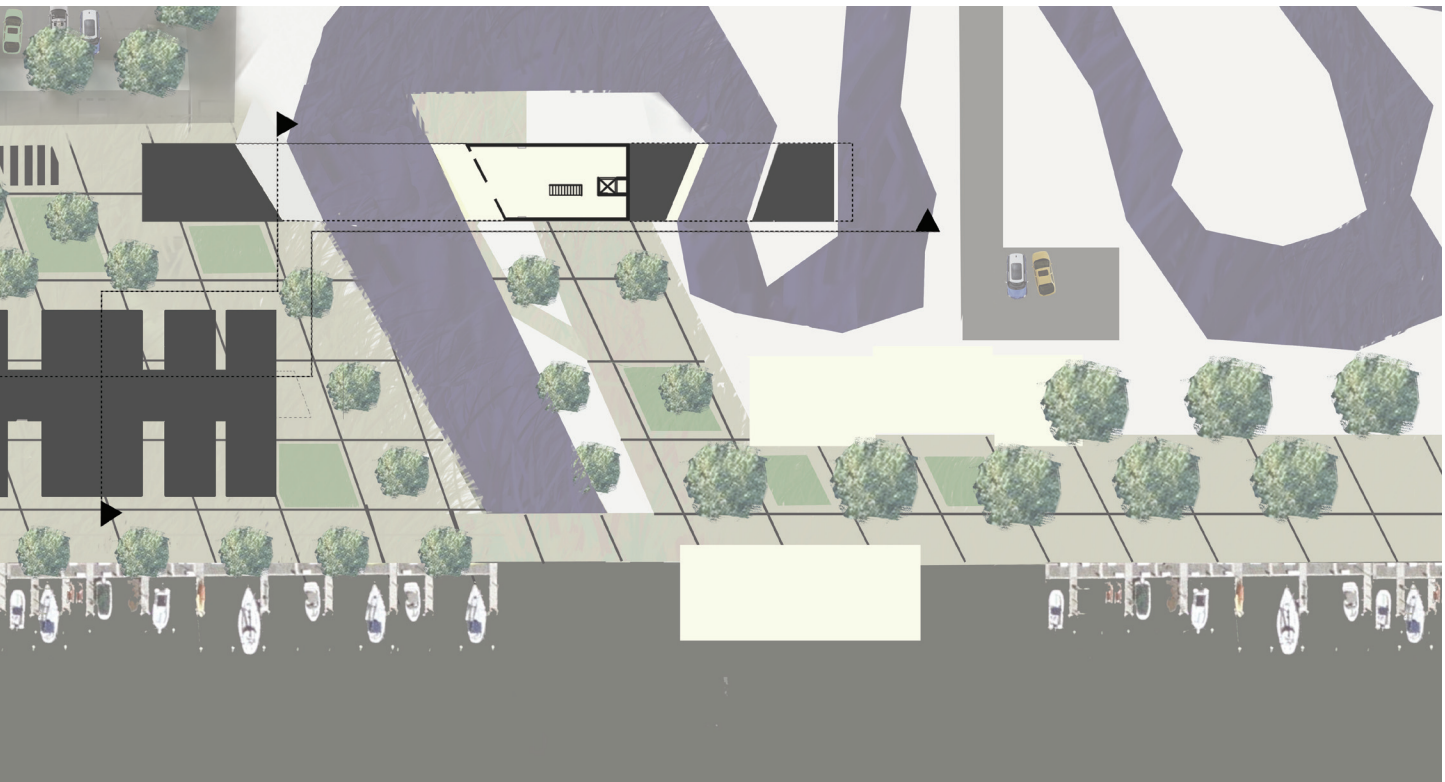
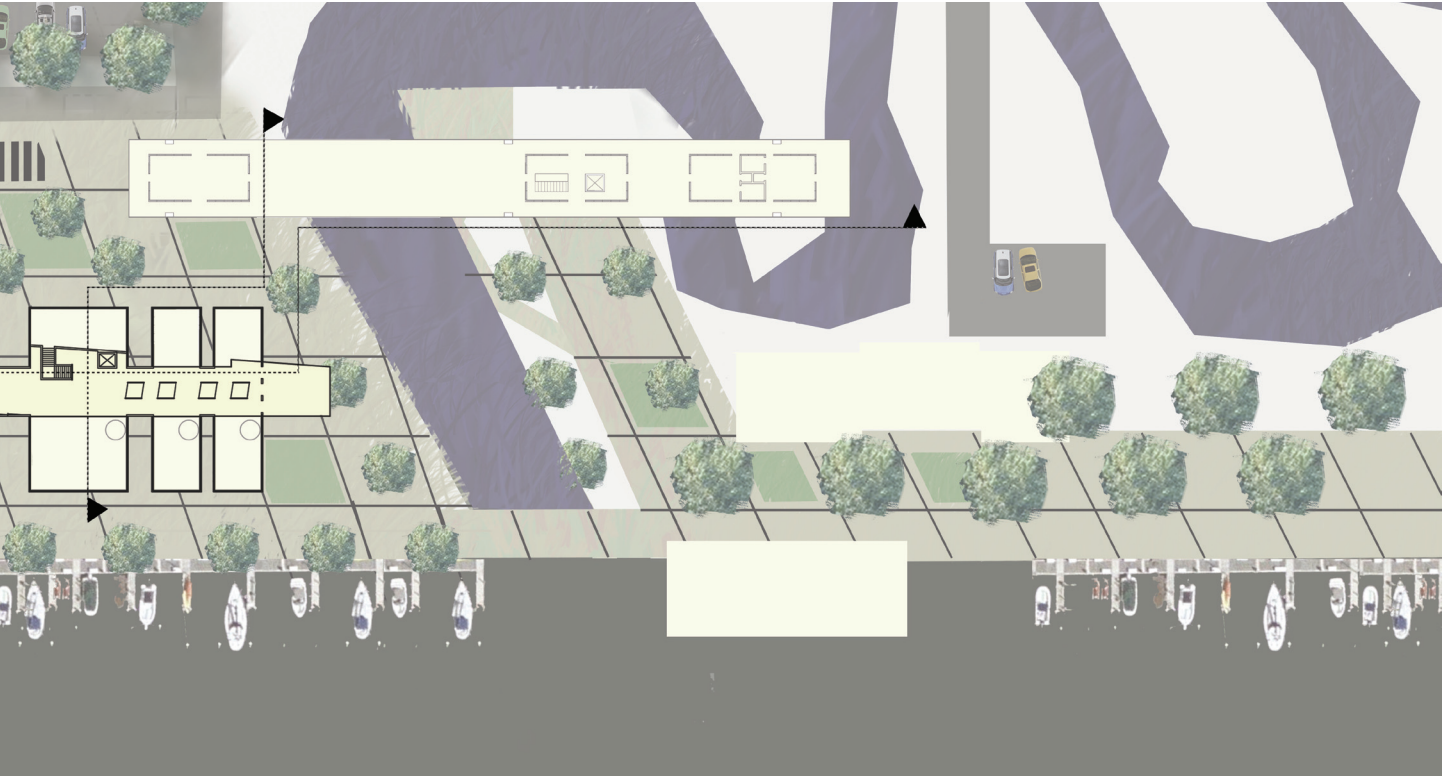


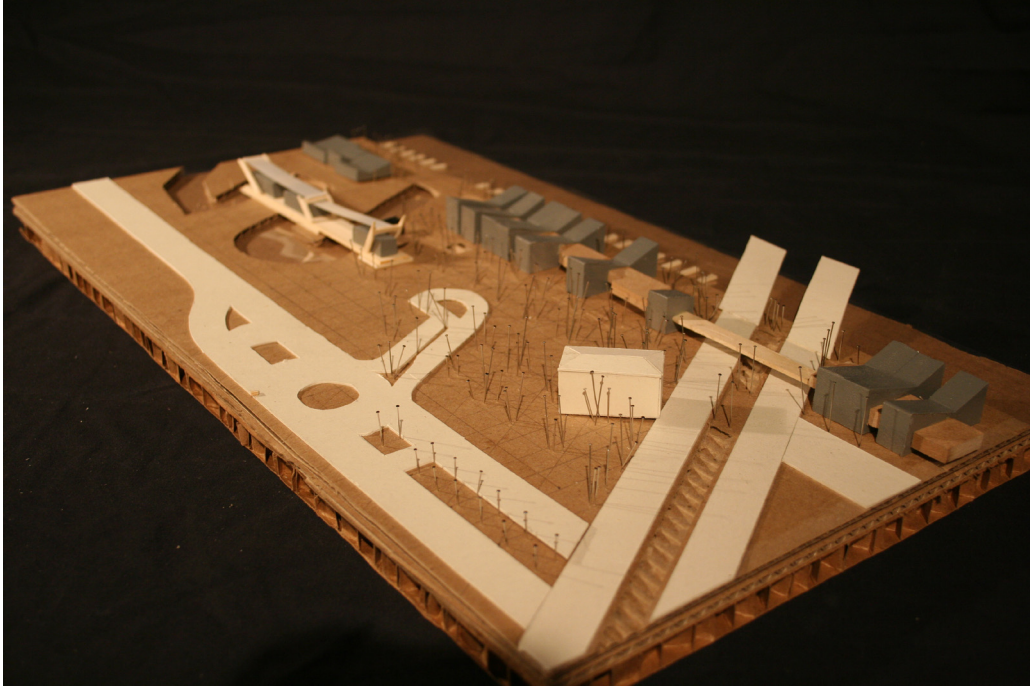
100.1: High Density Activity Area, second level



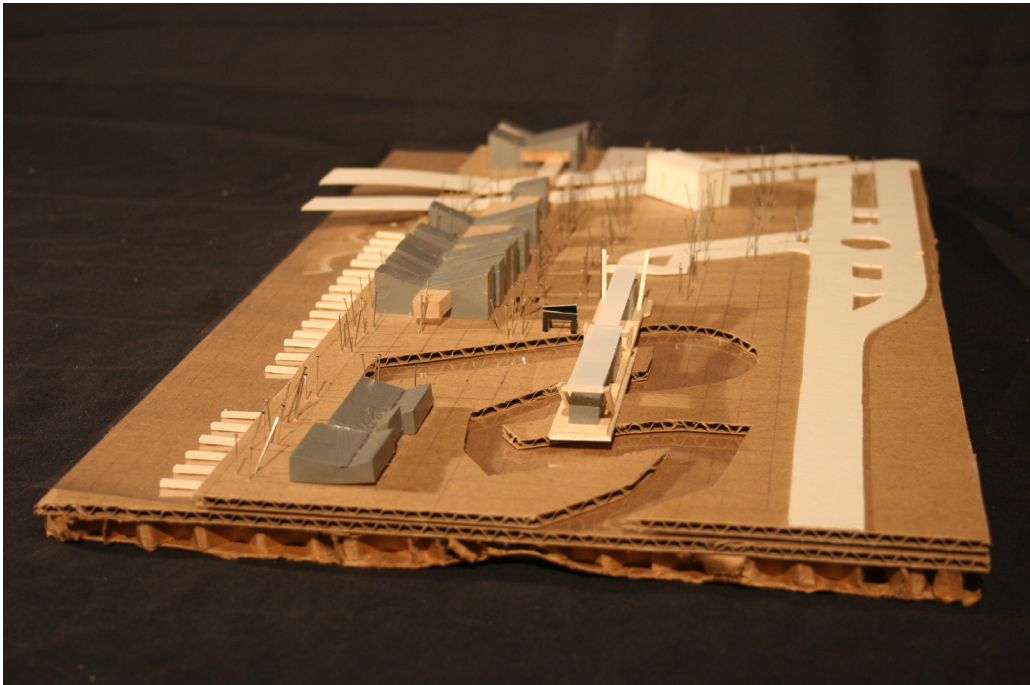
100.2: High Density Activity Area, lower level







102.1: High Density Activity Area, Site Model



102.2: High Density Activity Area, Site Model





103.1: Hydrology Center, Building Section Model



103.2: Hydrology Center Water Color



104.1: Hydrology Center, Section Model, with lantern effect



104.2: Hydrology Center, Section Model, with lantern effect





105.1: Farming Center montage

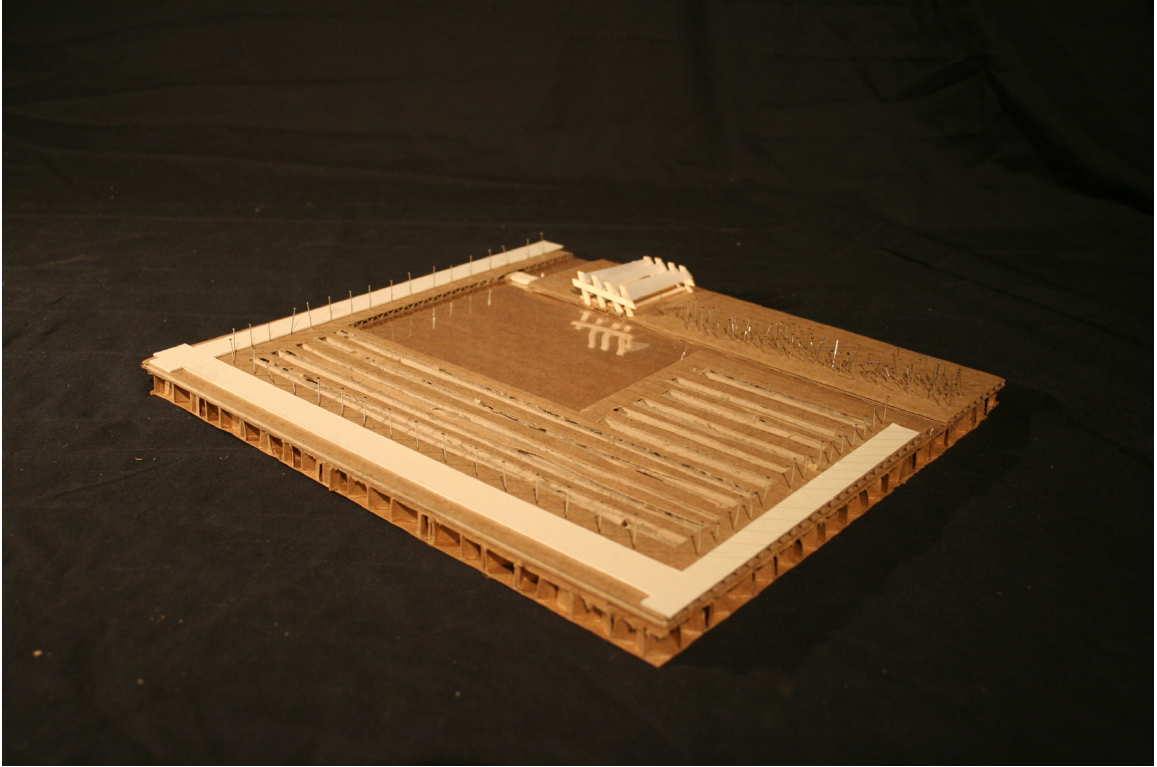


105.2: Haliburton Memorial Gate montage



106.1: Marina with Hydrology Center





107.1: Northwest Activity Area, Site Model

# POST LOG

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# Conclusion

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As stated in many other theses, how can one conclude 35 weeks of research, design, and thought? It is almost inappropriate to think that a few pages could summarize the experience and the thoughts.

The day of the Final Critique, the excitement of a projects climax was not to be underscored by any of the failings or short comings of its creator. This is not to say that the short comings were not recognized by either juror or juroree.

First off, some blanket statements:

In agreement to many of the comments dispensed, there were missed opportunities for further development of the goals of the thesis. While this project started as a way to collect the land in the surrounding areas, it turned into a very large, one site, master planning project. There is validity in the work completed, but the vision of the original project is lost at times.

The constant process of reinvention during the second semester was a hindrance to development of details. Again, continuing to better design the buildings on the site greatly approved the project, but it has been recommended that if their was more intent in the design, the decisions made may have been much more informed, meaning speedier and easier.

Accepted oversight:

What is the role of the architect in this project? A developer, community leader...? Regretfully, analyzing the philosophical arguments of the motives for such a project was never thought through. It was hoped that by trying to bring about social justice through recreation and mixing of social economics that the intrinsic good would, well go a lot further.

With all of the reinvention that occurred in this project, one might think that many of the gaps in the project would have been filled. What did happen is that certain level of detail was lost over the last month or so, earlier site drawings contained more thought at times than the final. Sections were drawn well that exhibited the buildings relations to the site and rapids... the list goes on. The difficulty was that with all of the reinvention, their was a lot of duplicated efforts to represent

the changes made. This may have been due to the non-digital media used, or the general oversight of the designer. Either way, there were gaps of information, what is worst is that many of these gaps had already been created in an earlier representation.

Warm Fuzzies:

What has been created is believed to be a good project. There is a confidence had in regards to this project. The concept is strong, "Why can't recreation be a conduit for social integration and revitalization?". Like most projects, not all of reality has been represented. Yet, to do this would be impossible. Studio is not reality. The project will forever live in the fictional world of academia.

This project addresses an irony: a large, well maintained public park is seized by the government to further public interest, all the while the site is surrounded by once private land that is no longer maintained and has now been "public-tized". The people that choose or are unable to dis-invest in this area lose a maintained park, in exchange for an urban prairie. Like pioneers they are isolate, forced not to interact with the surrounding area, unless they are able to either self-sufficiently adapt to the changing conditions, or they exposed to the value of this new condition, and they may hopefully adapt to the site.

Does this project fully respond to this irony, results are inconclusive. Maybe it further complicates matters, due to unforeseeable forces that were not represented.

On the other hand, the project begins to respond to this irony: using the un-maintained land, that society at large expects to be cared for as productive space. While using the land that society expects to be unproductive for public enjoyment/enrichment, as recreational space.

The concept is almost obvious, but then again, its creator has been designing for over 35 weeks.

# Gratitude

## a word to my supporters

I would like to take a moment to recognize that I did not come to this point alone. There have been so many influences on my personal and academic development while at the University of Detroit Mercy that it would be nearly impossible to name each one. Yet, I shall at least attempt to give credit where it is due.

First, I would not still be at this institution after my freshman year without two of the University's greatest individuals, Architecture Professor, Tony Martinico and University Minister, Beth Finster, SSJ. Independently of each other, they helped me realize my place in architecture, the university, and more importantly, society. They continually add value in my formal and informal education while at Detroit Mercy.

Second, my instructor and advisor, Will (Willhelm) Wittig, has been instrumental in this project coming to fruition. I have yet to meet another professor who invests so much into his students. It is difficult to think of many days where he did not have an insightful suggestion with fresh research or precedents that were appropriate to the project. His challenges have not always been met without resistance, but in hindsight they are now greatly appreciated.

Third, one of the greatest influences on my development here at the School of Architecture is visiting landscape architecture professor, Margot Lystra. Under her instruction in the fall of 2005 for studio Adamah Redeux, a new level of formation took place for me. In defining what landscape is, architecture was redefined, pushing and pulling my mental threshold. I am amazed at how every studio since then has been compared and contrasted to hers as a benchmark. I can attribute many of my successes to Margot's studio and I only wish more students at the School of Architecture could have had her.

Forth, and oddly enough I find it important to add that studio, a noun, is not just a work space, it is also a group of people. This year's studio has been particularly unique and quite enjoyable. I have fond feelings towards our late nights of cursing our own work, seeking affirmation on our designs, and discussing politics, religions, and all other topics ad hoc. Our

laughs were many, our indiscretions few. The rest of the 'g-boys + E' (Adam Gerlach, Jake Gehring, Eli Kafer), and myself will all agree on the importance and influence of each other on our own project's formation at one time or another.

Lastly, and by far most important, I would like to thank my benefactors, who happen to also be my parents. They, whom I am in much debt to have given me much support, both financially and emotionally. I only have two words that only can begin to describe my gratitude: Thank you. Without you both, this would have been much more difficult five years, if it would have happened at all. As I made my way across the globe, to some very obscure places for a man my age: Philmont, Dry Tortugas, El Salvador, Malta, Japan, along with the more common European countries, and the list goes on... you both were there encouraging me to see more, which is instrumental in raising a child in a suburban vs. global dichotomy. Always instructing me to see beyond my paradigm, raising me to know others. Like my professor, I appreciate all the hard lessons you both have taught me, and at my young age I am happy to realize this.

And to the others, my close friends, colleagues, University Ministry and of course, my fair city of Detroit, that I gladly call home:

**Thank you, I hope to return the favor.**



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