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CENTER OF HOPE: AN ARCHITECTURAL TYPOLOGY FOR SOCIAL MIXING

by

Jeevan Thapa

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Architecture

Major: Architecture

The University of Memphis

May 2020

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CENTER *of* HOPE

An Architectural Typology for Social Mixing

DEDICATION

To my wonderful parents:
Krishna Bahadur Thapa and Kalpana Thapa
For teaching me to work hard for the things that I aspire to achieve.

To my amazing wife:
Priya Kharel
For your endless love, support, and belief in me, even when I did not believe in myself.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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I must express the most profound thanks to my thesis chair, Jennifer Barker, for generously offering your time. Your guidance, feedback, and persistent help until the very end have been the most significant support to me in all the time of research and writing of this thesis.

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I am extremely grateful to my parents for their love and prayers. Your care and sacrifices have made me the person I am today. I hope to continue to make you proud forever.

I am forever indebted to my wife for pushing me to pursue a graduate degree. Thank you for taking the supportive action to help me succeed. You are mostly responsible for this success.

Thank you, Lord Shiva, for always being there for me.

ABSTRACT

This thesis engages with the issue of homelessness in the city of Memphis. It manifests a realization that the solution to the problem of homelessness is not just providing necessary facilities (to include emergency, transitional, and permanent shelter). Rather, the challenge is to empower and encourage those in homelessness so that social relationships can be strengthened. This thesis proposes an architectural typology for a common place that can inspire social change. It not only serves as a hub for a large network of support, but also encourages social mixing as a platform against segregation, stigma, and exclusion. This is accomplished through a sustainable urban renewal process that includes the economic, environmental, and social redevelopment of a neglected urban neighborhood.

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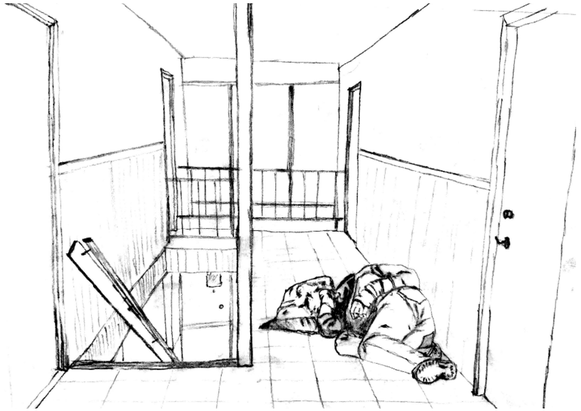


Figure 1 Author's First Encounter

Figure 2 Author's Second Encounter

MANIFESTO

AN UNHEARD VOICE

A usual morning with an unusual incident:
With infinite stress as of a regular student,
I stepped out of my apartment.
I could not walk any further;
I saw a man sleeping on the lobby outside my door (figure 1).
A dirty man with filthy clothes,
shivering and trying to wrap up
in the blanket that is insanely torn.
Cardboard as a bed, no pillow at his head,
afraid and full of hope he looked into my eyes
as if sorry to be there at that moment.
I left for school.
The encounter flashes through my head all day.
I see the man again as I go back to my apartment at night
shivering and expecting someone to open the door (figure 2).
His eyes full of hope
his lips full of frozen words
paint me the picture of the life
he is struggling to live.
I imagine myself as him:
dirty, hungry, lonely, cold.
There is a pain deep inside
touched by that invisible soul.
Afraid to take him in,
and sorry to kick him out
I enter the building.
Leaving the door open
I head to my room wondering—
Are they the problem in society,
or the victim of the problems that society has?

INTRODUCTION

The approach to analyze the complexity of the problem of homelessness needs to change now. Architecture and urban planning are the manifestations of social, economic, and political structures in society.[1] Having an emotional and cognitive sense of home makes a person or people feel human.[2] However, not everyone in society has the luxury of sensing his or her humanity through the means of physical shelter. Today, homelessness is a significant issue both locally and globally.[3] Often misinterpreted and ignored, it is not just a matter of physical space or shelter; there are underlying layers of emotional and mental aspects associated with homelessness, including complex social problems such as poverty, lack of affordable housing, uncertain physical and mental health, addictions, and community and family breakdown. Existing urban structure and civic spaces are not capable of supporting and rehabilitating these urban nomads, because they lack the neutral ground where all people can intersect, interact, and blend regardless of social and economic status. Absence of a neutral ground to facilitate such interactions only serves to increase segregation, stigma, and exclusion.[4] The approach of this thesis is to find a strong relationship among physical space and civic life, human connection, and social inclusion to reinstate the dignity of persons in a state of homelessness by connecting them with others in the community through interpersonal, economic, and social empowerment.[5]

To inspire this sense of social change it is necessary to understand factors and architectural responses to the notion of homelessness. This thesis explores creating a new public domain as proposed by Maarten Hazer and Arnold Reijndorp, which describes subdividing public places into domains to allow access for multiple groups.[6] Also, the guidelines proposed for the quality and function of a third place have been implemented within the design parameters to create a neutral ground that has a character of openness, low profile, and offers a wide range of activities.[7] The Theory of Community Formation by McMillan and Chavis influences the design solution based on social psychology, the notion of membership, integration, fulfillment of needs, influence, and shared emotional connection.[8] Finally, Intergroup Contact Theory provides a strong base for an architecture of integration and inclusion. This theory holds that a reduction of prejudice and stigma between groups is made possible through contact between members of groups where different hierarchies of interaction can be encouraged through careful spatial configuration and empathic design.[9]

This thesis explores the idea of creating a place of hope, “a new common place,” that serves as a bridge for connection and integrity. It is a home for the homeless and a home away from home for others. A hub of essential facilities provides a network of support and a platform against segregation, stigma, and exclusion through the help of different spatial configurations that facilitate contemplation, care, communication, and connection. In order to create a domain for a wide range of people, the project site is located on Poplar Avenue within the corridor between Morris Park and Danny Thomas Boulevard. The site has a significant presence of the target user group and has great potential to be a bridge to connect this area with other parts of the city. The site is developed to anchor the existing supportive facilities and public park, while also revitalizing the existing urban environment.[10]

1. “AIA Code of Ethics.”
2. Rowe and Barber, “Power of Giving Homeless.”
3. “TN-501 Report for 2018.”
4. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice.*
5. Bell, Hawkins, and Evanics, *All Together Now.*
6. Hajer and Reijndorp, *In Search of New Public Domain.*
7. Oldenburg, *The Great Good Place.*
8. McMillan and Chavis, “Sense of Community.”
9. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice.*
10. Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities.*

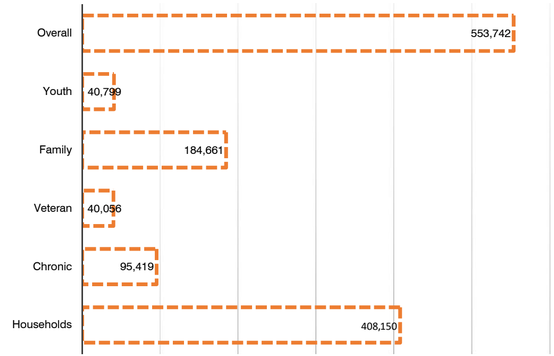


Figure 3 Homelessness in USA

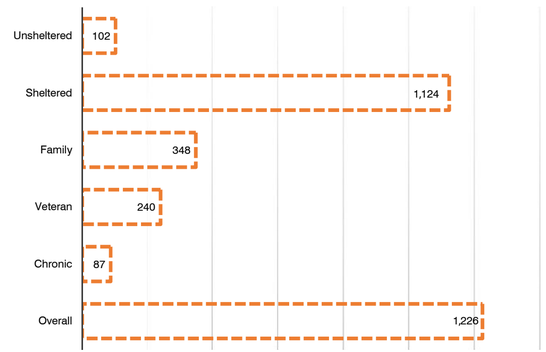


Figure 4 Homelessness in Memphis

DESIGN SOLUTION

The design process evolved from the basic understanding of the needs of people in homelessness. Beginning with the notion of providing shelter and support facilities, the process evolved further towards design being the tool for social integration as a platform against stigma, exclusion, and segregation. To further analyze and derive an effective intervention for meaningful social mixing, both local and global scenarios about the pervasive nature of homelessness were studied.

PRESENT SCENARIO OF HOMELESSNESS

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) conducts the annual Point-in-Time Count, which allows communities across the United States to conduct a comprehensive census of all persons who are experiencing homelessness at a given point of time through a continuum of care program. This program requires a count of both sheltered and unsheltered persons (figure 3) every other year to determine:

- The characteristics of persons who are experiencing homelessness;
- The effectiveness of programs and initiatives, both locally and nationally;
- Strategies for funding decisions, system planning, and program planning.

The Point-in-Time report for Memphis/Shelby County, TN, is being conducted by Community Alliance for the Homeless, one of the leading organizations initiating effective practices to end homelessness in Memphis/Shelby County. According to data published in 2018, there are over 100 persons found sleeping in places not meant for human habitation; a total of 598 persons reported in emergency shelter facilities; 526 persons reported in transitional housing facilities on the night of the count; all totaling around 1300 people in a state of homelessness in Memphis/Shelby County itself (figure 4).[1]

1. “TN-501 Report for 2018.”

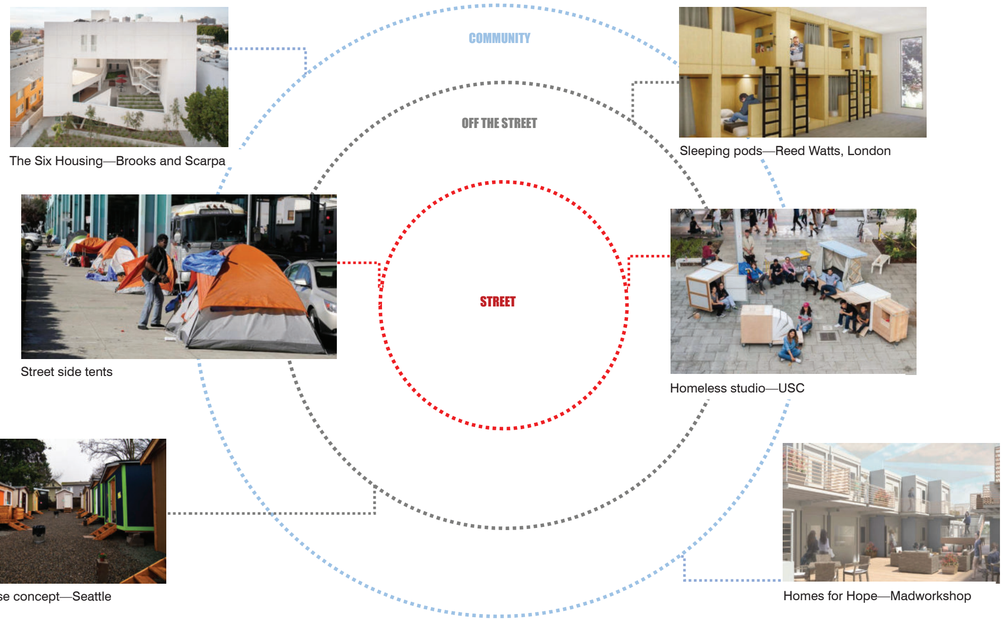
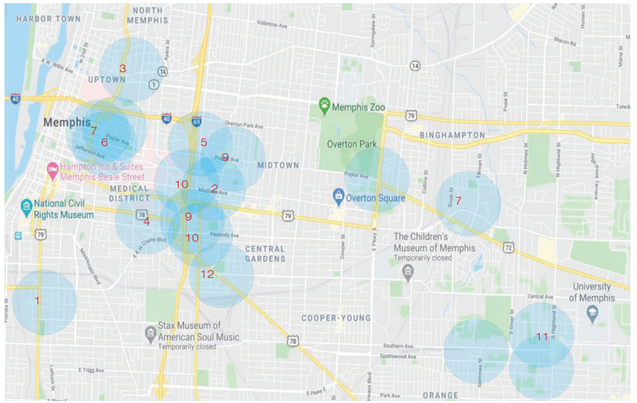


Figure 5 Conventional Support System



0.5 Mile Radius

LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

1. Calvary Rescue Mission
2. Case Management Inc.
3. The Salvation Army
4. Mifa Emergency Shelter
5. Door of Hope Memphis
6. Hospitality Hub
7. Memphis Union Mission
8. Memphis Family Shelter/ YWCA
9. Dorothy Day House of Hospitality
10. Alpha Omega Veterans Services
11. HOPE Memphis
12. Barron Heights CDC

SERVICES PROVIDED

- Food
- Sanitation
- Recreation
- Health/Clinic
- Counselling
- Job training
- Storage
- Postal address
- Spritual/Chapel
- Emergency shelter
- Transitional shelter
- Permanent housing

Figure 6 Organizations Working for Homelessness in Memphis, TN

According to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), an individual or family is considered to be experiencing homelessness when they:

- Lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.
- Will immediately lose their primary nighttime residence.
- Are unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth.
- Are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence.[2]

The real situation to the problem of homelessness can be analyzed by the study of different types of support systems available in the community and the way they function. It gives an idea about the general trends of support cycles and helps analyze both positive aspects as well as missing threads, if any.

CONVENTIONAL SUPPORT SYSTEM

Different agencies and community partners are working to help people in a state of homelessness by providing a variety of services and support programs, including shelters. Some churches around Memphis run ministries to provide free food and other services. The services being provided to the people in homelessness varies among organizations. Basic services such as food sanitation, health checkup, and emergency shelters are more common services being provided. Job Training, empowerment program, transitioal, and permanent housing are being provided by some organizations only (figure 6). There are different layers of shelter or housing services being provided. It starts from basic tent or mobile temporary shelter to a more profound housing with a sense of community (figure 5). Even though all the current support systems are making a huge impact, this thesis identifies and addresses the gaps in existing support systems to derive an effective environment of collaboration with community partners through an holistic approach to the problem of homelessness.

2. "TN-501 Report for 2018."

HOSTILE ARCHITECTURE

One approach of this thesis is to identify and redefine different components of public place to become more inclusive, convenient, and safe for all groups of people. Hostile architecture (figure 7) is a defensive measure where architectural elements of the cityscape and the public realm are used to control human behavior. It is a controversial urban approach often deemed inhumane because it purposefully limits access to public spaces for certain groups of people.[3] This type of approach raises a concern about the role of architecture towards human dignity and the welfare of the public.[4]

Instead of adopting hostile measures, it is necessary to think and practice ethical and humanitarian approaches while designing public places to encourage a sympathetic and socially-integrated environment. People in a state of homelessness should be co-present in public spaces. This creates opportunities to encourage intergroup contact and interaction, which promotes social mixing.[5]

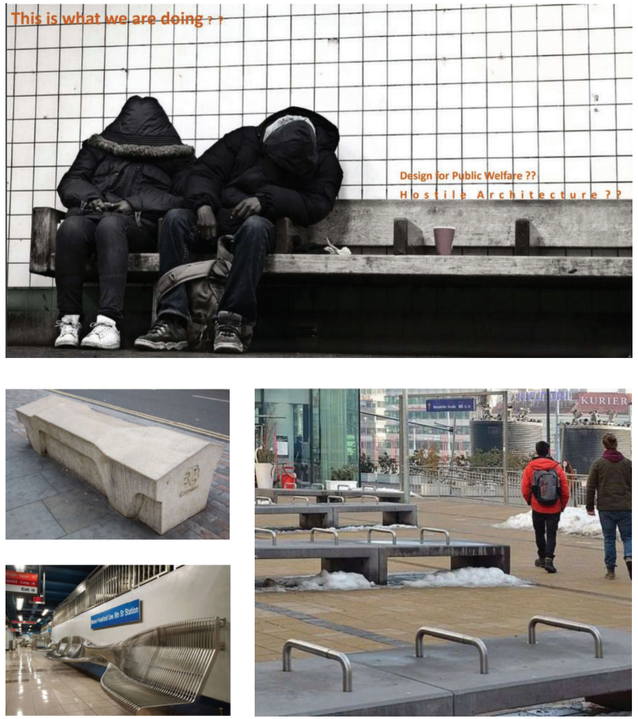


Figure 7 Examples of Hostile Architecture

3. Hu, "Hostile Architecture."
4. "AIA Code of Ethics."
5. Langegger and Koester, "Invisible Homelessness."

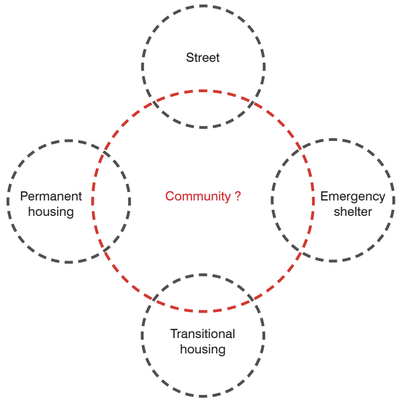


Figure 8 Conventional Support Cycle

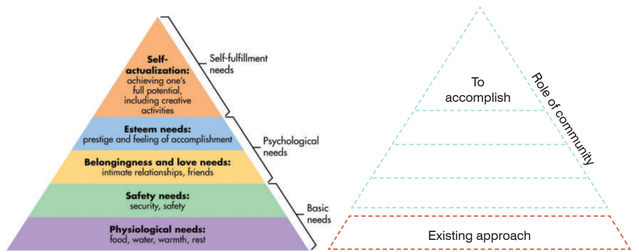


Figure 9 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Analysis

WHAT IS MISSING?

There are different layers to the conventional support system offered to people in a state of homelessness including those within government, non-profit, and public levels. Though this system addesses the problem, it is not enough to profoundly impact the path out of homelessness. The journey of one homeless person is often defined as street to temporary shelter, transitional housing, and finally permanent housing. This path lacks holistic social intervention to assist with building a supportive community where people can harmoniously coexist and persons in a state of homelessness can continiously receive the support they need (figure 8).[6]

The analysis of existing support systems shows that the communal aspect is not well adressed. Aspects of community support also play a significant role in developing human needs (figure 9). This thesis incorporates the notion of community formation and social integration to inform the basic premise for the design of a new common place, including spatial analysis and organization. The next area of discussion turns to observing relevant architectural precedents.

6. McMillan and Chavis, "Sense of Community."

PRECEDENT STUDIES

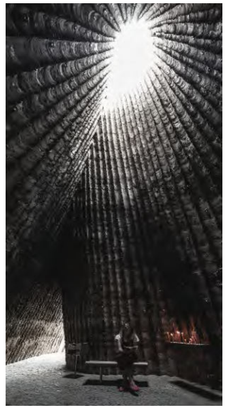
The following precedents exemplify architectural concepts and features that are important to consider when designing for a new common place. The projects are grouped by their topic areas: contemplative spaces, public housing, public places, and modular design. Each project includes a brief description that highlights the important aspects under study for their use within the design development and solution.

CONTEMPLATIVE SPACES

It is important to understand the impact of physical space on healing a person's mind, body, and soul from isolation, stigma, and segregation. The following projects, Bruder Klaus Chapel and Refugee Camp Community center, suggest ways that architecture can address contemplative aspects through carefully designed physical space.

BRUDER KLAUS CHAPEL
Mechernich, Germany

Completed in 2007, the Bruder Klaus Chapel reflects the visual manifestation of a building evoking a beautiful silence associated with attributes such as composure, self-evidence, durability, presence, and integrity, with warmth and sensuousness.[7] The authentic and innovative construction methodology (using tree logs as concrete framework and then burning them to reveal a hollowed blackened cavity with charred walls) creates an evocative place with ordinary materials (figure 10).



Chapel interior

Chapel exterior

Figure 10 Bruder Klaus Chapel

REFUGEE CAMP COMMUNITY CENTER,
Spinelli, Germany

The main idea of this 2017 community center is to provide a quality common space within the desolate surrounding of the refugee camp at the American Spinelli barrack in Mannheim (figure 11). The community center was built by the inhabitants of the refugee camp along with 18 students from the Faculty of Architecture at TU

Outdoor deck

Performance area

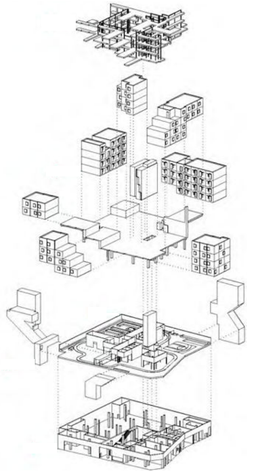
Internal courtyard

Figure 11 Refugee Camp Community Center

7. Zumthor, *Thinking Architecture*.

Module configuration around central courtyard

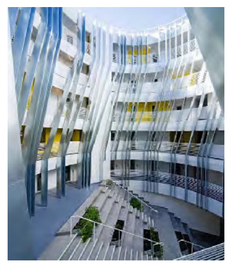
Building exterior with retail at base and residential module at top



Building exploded axon

Figure 12 Star Apartments

Foliated facade



Internal courtyard

Figure 13 Carver Apartments

Kaiserslautern, who had developed the design during the previous semester of their studies. The timber structure combines community space and an area of retreat to create a pleasent environment and the perforated walls blur the expansive views of the dull surroundings.[8]

THESIS APPLICATION

These projects inspire the creation of an evocative place through the use of material, texture, light, transparency, mass, and void to promote a spiritual sense of place and contemplative healing. This thesis incorporates spritual spatial engagement through indoor contemplative space and outdoor refuge spaces.

PUBLIC HOUSING

The idea of studying Michal Maltzan's housing projects is to analyze his unique approach on public housing, prioritizing the value of good design to create place to live and promote interpersonal and societal healing.[9]

STAR APARTMENTS
Los Angeles, California, USA

The Star Apartments are a six-story, 95,000 sq.ft. building in downtown Los Angeles, which provides supportive housing for people who were formerly homeless. Within the singular stacked mass of the building there are three spatial zones: a public health space on the first level, a community and wellness program on the second level, and four terraced floors of supportive residential programs at the top level (figure 12).[10]

CARVER APARTMENTS
Los Angeles, California, USA

The Carver Apartment's 97 units provide supportive housing for people who were formerly homeless, elderly, and disabled residents of downtown Los Angeles. The

8. Gibson, "Community Centre."
9. Shen, "Architecture and Homelessness."
10. Kilston, "Design Solution for Homelessness."

apartments' six-story circular form spirals around a private courtyard in the building's center (figure 13). The courtyard functions as a gathering space and provides natural lighting and views of each unit in all directions. The project is a good example of how well-designed social housing can improve people's lives. The apartments not only create a place to live, but they also provide a safe and protective space from which to grow.[11]

THESIS APPLICATION

These projects by Michael Maltzan emphasize the importance of aesthetic and active communal space as a part of social housing to evoke a sense of positivity and optimism. This thesis uses an idea of providing different types of communal spaces embedded within the built environment. Also, the idea of mixing residential units with other semi-public and public spaces promotes both personal and communal belongingness.

PUBLIC PLACES

The idea of exploring traditional public structures helps one to understand the value and importance of public infrastructures for engaging communities while providing a sense of refuge. Such multi-functional structures should be incorporated within the urban fabric to support diverse activities and communities of people. The pati and the stoa are two examples of public structures that demonstrate these characteristics.

PATI

Kathmandu, Nepal

A pati is a small, public, open-air pavilion that provides shelter from the rain and sun and a place to meet, eat, and participate in community activities (figure 14). It is a multipurpose community infrastructure in traditional settlements in Nepal. The pati is an example of cooperative management of public infrastructure, with a centuries-old cultural legacy, located in almost all major street intersections, community squares, and city squares;

City map showing pati at street intersections

Individual pati structure

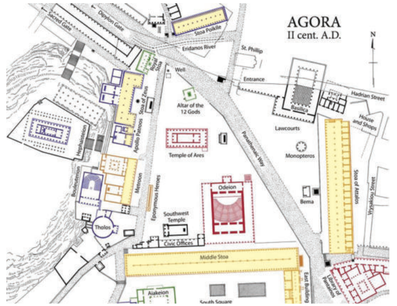
Pati incorporated at first floor of a community building

Figure 14 Typical Street Cornor Pati of Kathmandu

11. Kilston, "The Design Solution for Homelessness."

Stoa interior

Exterior colonnaded walkway



Stoa around central square of Agora

Figure 15 Stoa

Building relationship with street and sidewalk

Street side view

Night view

Figure 16 Box Park at Al Wasl, Dubai

the design, construction, and community ownership decisions happen with community consultation and participation.[12]

STOA

Agora, Athens

A stoa refers to a freestanding colonade or covered walkway or portico, commonly for public use. The structure created a safe, enveloping, protective atmosphere. The stoa served as an essential built structure of Greek public squares, often surrounded by marketplaces and important sanctuaries forming a public promenade (figure 15).

THESIS APPLICATION

This thesis design incorporates the idea of the pati for programming refuge spaces along the sidewalk and street plaza to serve as a resting place and a stage for diverse activities. The idea of creating a colonnaded pathway at the periphery of the central plaza is adopted from the stoa to form a transitional space.

MODULAR DESIGN

This thesis explores the idea of using shipping container modules as an alternative construction typology to explore a sustainable and universal solution that can be easily used wherever needed. Studying similar projects is essential to analyze and unfold the functional, technical, and aesthetic value associated with this type of modular structure.

BOX PARK

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Composed out of shipping containers, Box Park is a unique urban revitalization project that has an effect on encouraging local startups through an active retail and commercial development (figure 16).[13] The tectonics

12. "Revitalizing Traditional Pati."
13. Petrovic, "Dubai Boxpark."

of the shipping container module, use of vibrant colors, combination of other materials for texture and porosity, and the structure's relationship with the street and sidewalk provide an inviting, comfortable, and engaging setting to the city's diverse community.[14]

MEATH GARDEN HOPE APARTMENTS
West London, United Kingdom

Hope Garden is a temporary accommodation for people who have found themselves without secure or long-term housing (figure 17). For many people in west London, it is the last resort before sleeping on the streets. The whole design is for temporary use and has just 7-year site use; after that, the units will be taken to another site. The containers themselves each have a specific number and logbook, which allows future reuse and flexibility of how the containers can be joined together in the future. This also allows these modules to continiously be transported and reassembled to wherever there is a need for transitional and temporary shelter. Having multiple modules as living units allows users more privacy and control over their lives compared to conventional bed-sit style hostels of emergency and transitional shelters.[15]

THESIS APPLICATION

These two examples provide insights for using modular units in an innovative and unique way to create habitable, lively, and optimistic community spaces. They provide direct precedents for the use and organization of shipping containers within the design solution.

Building layout with central communal space

Apartment interior—living area

Apartment interior—bedroom

Figure 17 Meath Garden Hope Apartments

14. Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities.*
15. "Emergency Shipping Container Housing."

Figure 18 Site Location Assessment

Figure 19 Site Selection and Immediate Support Anchors

SITE SELECTION

The selection of site is crucial in achieving the purpose of this project and has a significant impact on the notion of creating a hub within a wide range of support. For this design, a common place is best served by a location where there are a high concentration of the transient population and existing supportive services around (figures 19 and 20). The site for the design is at the intersection of Poplar Avenue and North Danny Thomas Boulevard (figure 18). There is a significant presence of the transient population in and around this location due to the concentration of support facilities and service providers. Major service providers in this area include Memphis Union Mission, Hospitality Hub, and Ronald McDonald Charity House. The site sits in the middle of two major open spaces: Morris Park to the east and Court Square to the west. The site is within the Memphis Medical District overlay with St. Jude Hospital to the North and Historic Victorian Village to the south. Developing this site as a hub will help to activate this section of Poplar Avenue as an anchor by creating a cohesive sense of place. This thesis also focuses on revitalizing the existing urban environment; this site offers an opportunity to activate a blighted neighborhood that once used to be a dense community (figure 21). The site is surrounded by three different types of the street with different street node environments which helps to develop street plazas with diverse physical and experiential quality (figures 22 and 23).

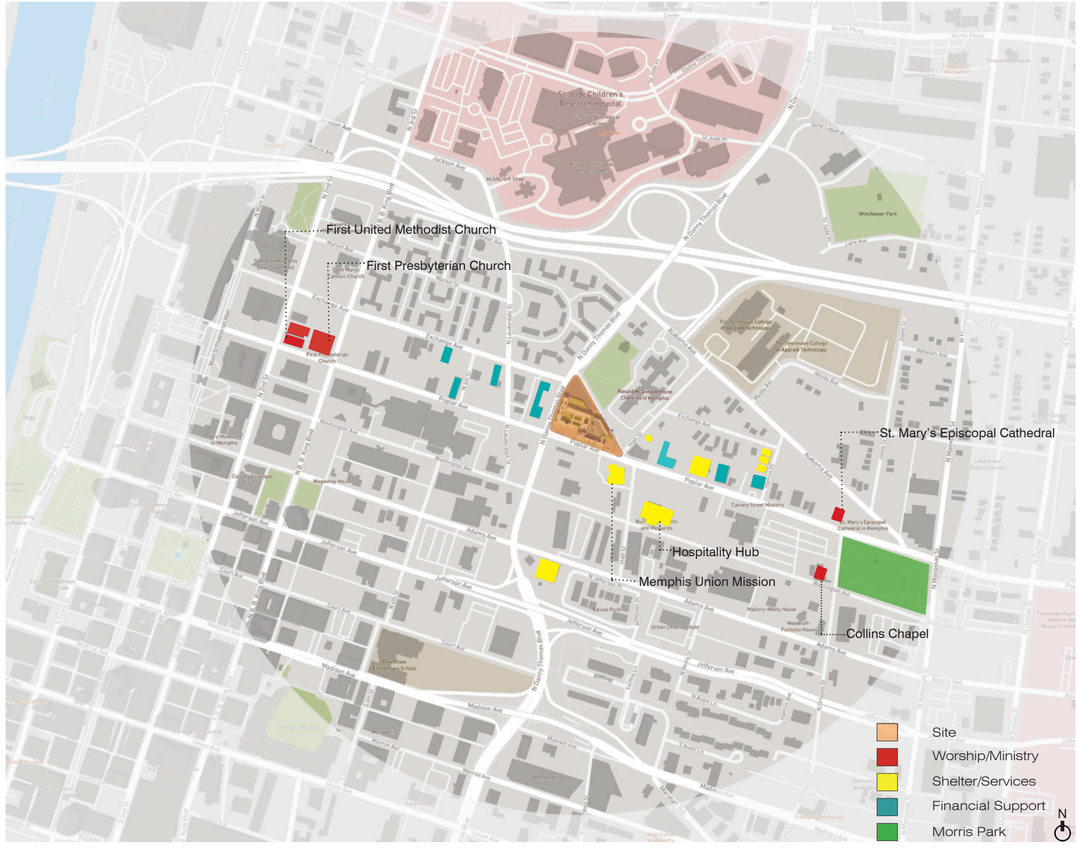


Figure 20 Site Connection with Existing Supporting Facilities

1938

1962

2018

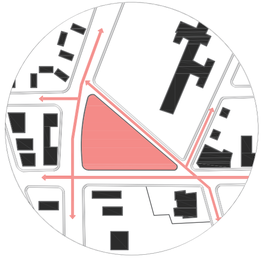
Figure 21 Urban Morphology

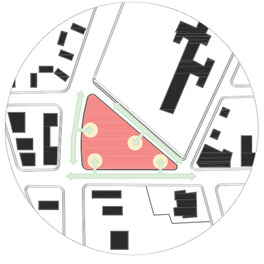
Intersection at Poplar Avenue, Caroll Street, and High Street

Intersection at N. Danny Thomas Blvd. and Caroll Street

Intersection at Poplar Avenue and N. Danny Thomas Blvd.

Figure 22 Site Context Photos





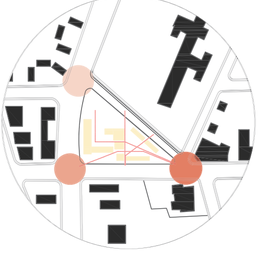


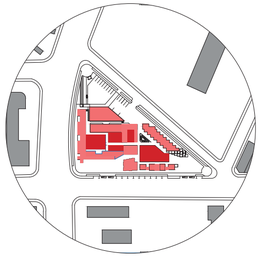
Figure 23 Site Access and Street Node

DESIGN PARAMETERS

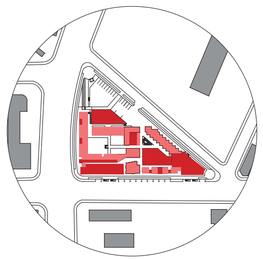
This design approach for a new common place facilitates and initiates different levels of interactions; this starts from the interaction within oneself, then with another in a similar state, followed by an intimate group, and finally with a random person. This continuum of interaction is encouraged through spatial attributes that create a sense of engagement and connection. The challenge is in the mixing of a transient population, who may feel disconnected, with a larger population that may have preconceived thoughts about them. The idea is to create a new center within the existing support to act as a pivot, growing a network based on the three factors of the continuum of engagement: social offerings, openness, and aesthetic.[16]

The journey from a state of hostility to one of hospitality has several stages with different states of mind, emotions, and feelings. This design intends to empathize with people in homelessness through three stages of spatial engagement: collaborate, connect, and contemplate. These three parameters are developed by the synthesis of four main theories of social psycology and urban design that emphasize and support the idea of social mixing: Inter-Group Contact Theory[17], Theory of Community Formation[18], A Third Place[19], and Urban Magnet Theory[20] (figure 25). Key aspects of these theories are analyzed and separated into three groups based on the spatial and experiential aspects that develop the three design parameters (collaborate, connect, contemplate) for meaningful social mixing.[21] These three parameters co-exist and overlap within site to form a holistic project (figure 24). These parameters are integrated strategically on the first floor (figure 28) and second floor (figure 27) through the intermixing of the program, as shown in the spatial layering diagram (figure 26).

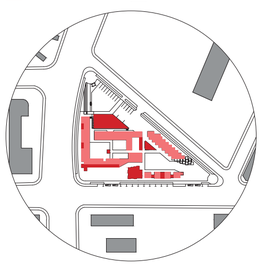
16. Sucher, *City Comforts*.
17. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice*.
18. McMillan and Chavis, "Sense of Community."
19. Oldenburg, *The Great Good Place*.
20. "Urban Magnets."
21. Bell, Hawkins, and Evanics, *All Together Now*.



Collaborate Hub Programs Surrounding Buildings



Connect Hub Programs Surrounding Buildings



Contemplate Hub Programs Surrounding Buildings

Figure 24 Collaborate, Connect, and Contemplate Spatial Overlay

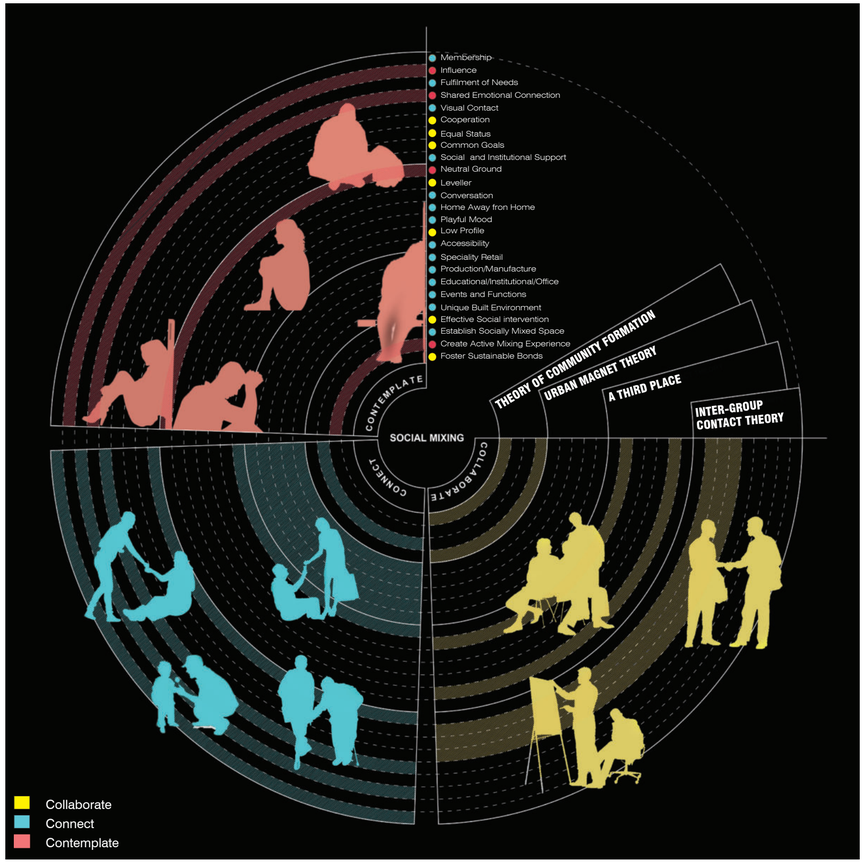
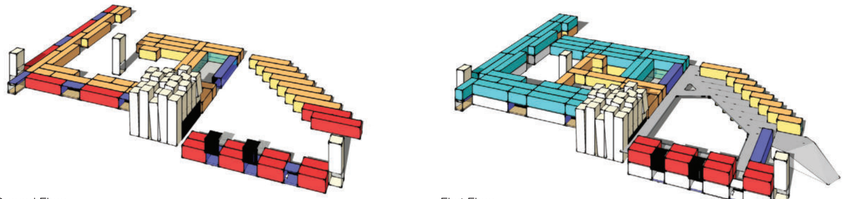


Figure 25 Synthesis of Theory into Design Parameters



Ground Floor

First Floor

SPATIAL LAYERING

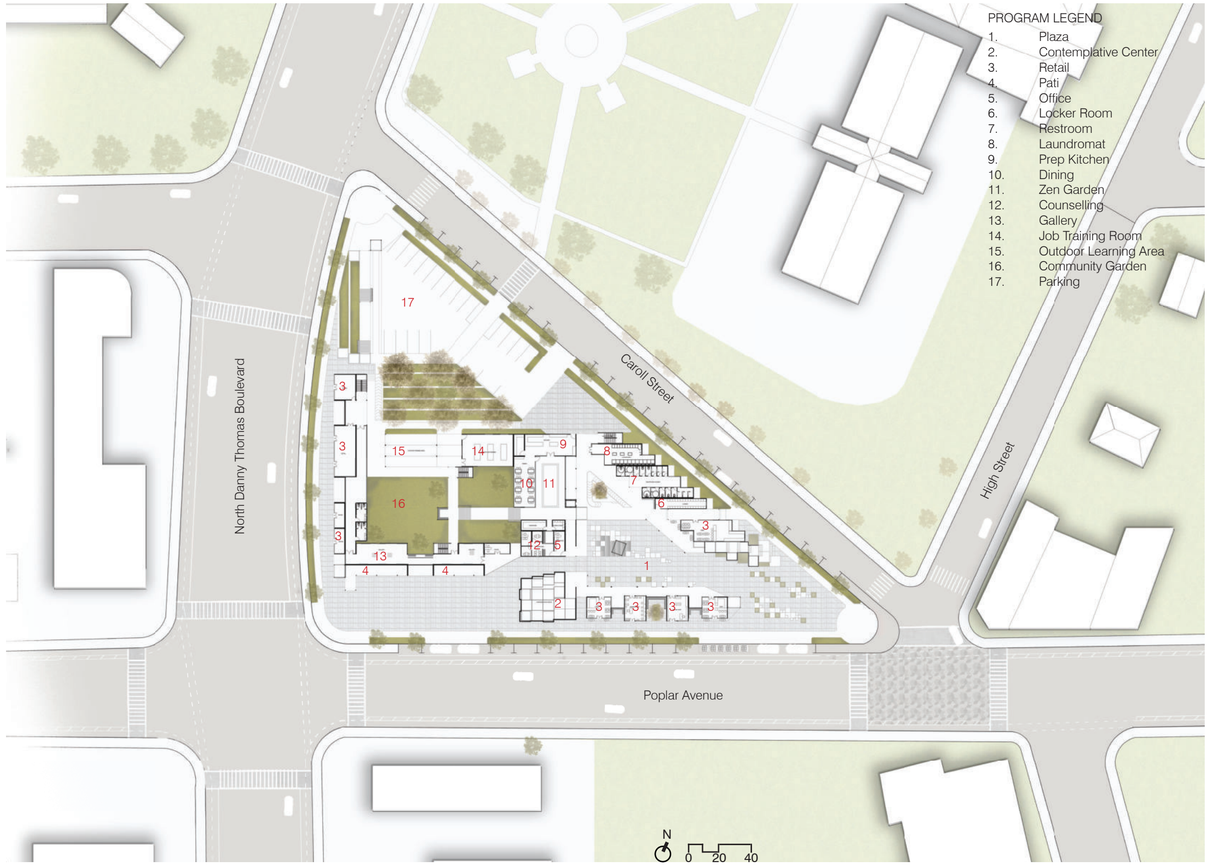
- Retail
- Services
- Refuge
- Contemplate
- Living Units

Figure 26 Spatial Layering

PROGRAM LEGEND

1. Upper Plaza
2. Contemplative Center
3. Retail
4. Pati
5. Office
6. Restroom
7. Living Units
8. Community Hall
9. Plaza Open Stair
10. Elevator
11. Staircase
12. Ramp

Figure 27 Second Floor Plan



PROGRAM LEGEND

1. Plaza
2. Contemplative Center
3. Retail
4. Pati
5. Office
6. Locker Room
7. Restroom
8. Laundromat
9. Prep Kitchen
10. Dining
11. Zen Garden
12. Counselling
13. Gallery
14. Job Training Room
15. Outdoor Learning Area
16. Community Garden
17. Parking

Figure 28 Site Plan

COLLABORATE

The first design parameter to consider in the project is collaborate. Collaboration starts with a sense of familiarization and is a vital tool to develop empathy and positive feelings towards others.[22] Careful design can encourage both formal and informal communication. This is acheived by creating an integrated platform for collaboration at three levels: support systems adjacent to the site, thoughtful placement of program within the site, and specific facilities within the program to support opportunities for sharing.

COLLABORATE WITH EXISTING SUPPORT SYSTEMS

The main idea of this project is to be a hub for a large number of support facilities that are functioning independently around the site (figure 29). This design collaborates by binding these entities together through strategic site selection, program overlap, and visual and physical connections to surroundings. Program overlap is another important aspect of collaborating with the existing support facilities, which helps to develop and strengthen the support system by adding or avoiding services. Another important aspect of collaborating with the existing support system is to maintain physical and visual connections to and from hub. This is acheived through careful placement of access from adjacent streets. Visual connection is acheived by making the first floor more permeable through a massing strategy and using perforated wooden screens at streetfront refuge spaces (figure 30). This encourages visitors and residents to visually engage with the internal environment and activities happening at the hub (figure 31).This project not only shares a common platform for a wide range of services, furthering a network of support, it also creates a positive social environment.

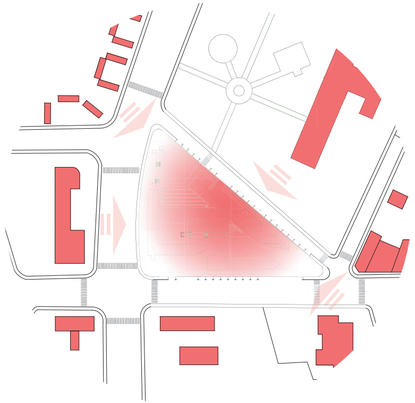


Figure 29 Collaboration with Existing Support Systems

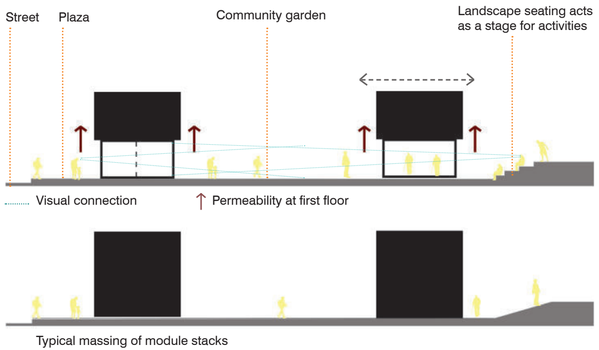


Figure 30 Massing Strategy for Collaborative Environment

22. Bell, Hawkins, and Evanics, *All Together Now.*

Figure 31 Natural Terrain Landscape

COLLABORATE WITHIN THE HUB

There are several programmatic components arranged throughout the site to form different types of mixing environments. The collaboration of such programmatic components is achieved by having a different hierarchy of open spaces, and connecting them to achieve a variety of activity zones within a holistic design (figure 33).

Common places are shaped by the type of programmatic components that surround them (figures 32 and 35). For example, the courtyard, bounded by the private living units and the semi-private kitchen and dining area, has less prominent access, where the size and activity is also limited. In contrast, the central plaza, which is mostly bounded by public services, is more open, has prominent access, and allows for multiple events to happen at one time. The central plaza is designed to function as a common place, supported by mixed-use activities including retail and commercial services (figure 34). The central plaza opens on both ends towards two major street intersections, enabling it to function as a pedestrian walkway. Continuous pedestrian movement through the central plaza keeps it active and engaging.

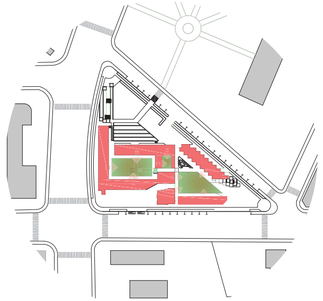


Figure 32 Collaboration within the Variety of Services

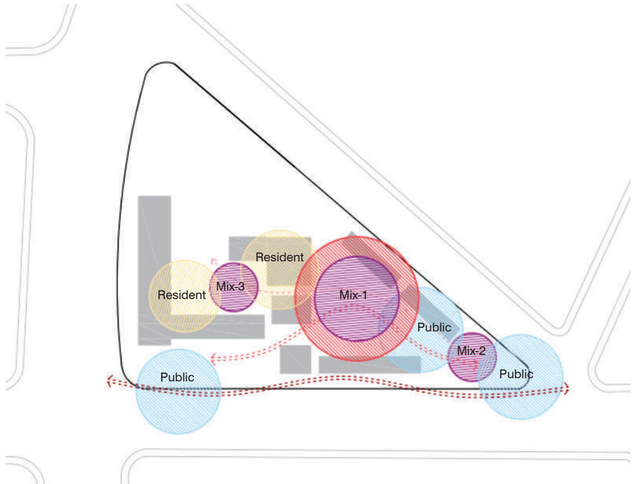
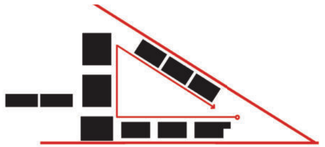


Figure 33 Hierarchy of Inter-Group Mixing

Figure 34 Upper Plaza

Program along the street

Looping program



Site adaptation creating a hub

Figure 35 Services Layout Concept to Create Hub

COLLABORATE WITH PEOPLE

An effective way to reduce exclusion and stigma is by encouraging collaboration between individuals and different groups of people. It helps personal development and provides an interactive platform where people can share their stories, ideas, skill, feelings, and motivations with one another. This creates a positive learning environment with the help of art, music, food, counselling, and job training.[23]

The hub encourages collaboration through dedicated programmatic spaces for art, music, counseling, job training, and a community garden for fresh food production. The importance and effectiveness of such a facility can be witnessed locally at the Memphis Hart Gallery (figure 36), which began offering art classes for the homeless community. Classes are held weekly at the Door of Hope, St. Mary's Episcopal Church, and Outreach Housing and Community. The gallery has extended its program for other marginalized populations, such as veterans, people dealing with mental illness and physical disabilities, low-income seniors, and refugees. Testimonials from those who have been involved in the classes showcase the effectiveness and impact of this initiative (figures 37 and 38).[24]

The hub includes an indoor art gallery to exhibit the art works produced by individuals who are homeless and other marginalized people taking art classes and training there (figure 39). Collaboration with local artists, musicians, service providers, and other volunteers helps create sustainable bonds and a more inclusive social environment.

Figure 36 Memphis Hart Gallery

Figure 37 A Featured Artist at Hart Gallery

Figure 38 Art Training Program

23. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice*.
24. Paraham, "Art Gallery."

Figure 39 Indoor Art Gallery

CONNECT

The second design parameter to consider is connect. Encouraging meaningful social mixing is a vital part of building a more integrated society.[25] This requires organizing programs to shape the terms of engagement between users and foster the psychological conditions under which positive social bonds are most likely to develop.

The idea of connection works in different layers in this design model (figure 40). It promotes the connection with oneself through contemplation, connection with facilities and services for people who are homeless, connection with the same group through shared physical space, and connection with other groups through mixing program and designing socially mixed spaces such as a public plaza, community garden, cafe, laundromat, and other services (figure 41). All three levels of connection are complementary and work in unison to create a holistic mixing experience. The refuge space for self connection also supports the connection with other people or small groups. Connection with same group further extends and facilitates the inter-group connection. Street plazas are designed to initiate the interaction and mixing in small groups, which supports and encourages the activities at the main plaza for larger social mixing. Design elements such as seating, pathway, and pavement are strategically placed to focus and encourage the same (figure 42). These levels of connection are facilitated through the thoughtful design of transitional spaces.

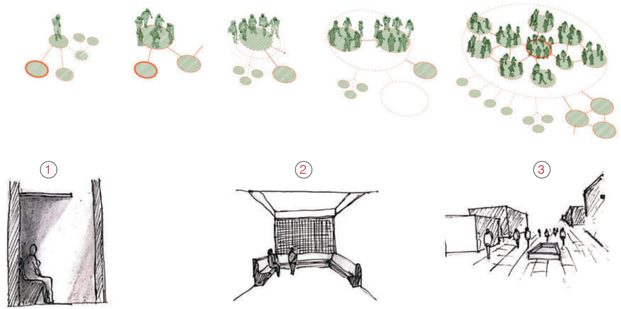


Figure 40 Hierarchy of Human Connection

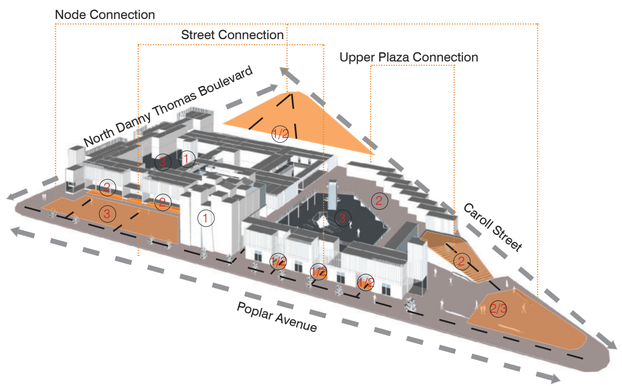


Figure 41 Types of Spatial Connection

25. Bell, Hawkins, and Evanics, *All Together Now.*

Figure 42 East Street Plaza

TRANSITIONAL SPACE

Transitional spaces provide an option to slowly blend into an active environment, softening the approach rather than dictating people to use a space in a certain way. This type of intermediate space provides a sense of refuge and sometimes acts as a delicate line of control between two different active social environments.

Transitional spaces should have specific spatial characteristics based on the psychological understanding of people in the state of homelessness, to include a sense of boundary, sense of refuge/enclosure, sense of low threshold, sense of feeling safe, sense of warmth, sense of visual connection and sense of emotional connection (figure 43 and 44). The transitional spaces are arranged at the periphery of the active spaces such as the main plaza, commmunity garden, and courtyard (figure 45). These tansitional spaces around the active spaces work as a threshold and soften the boundary. They serve as a primary means of circulation for the adjacent services and secondary means of circulation for the main plaza.

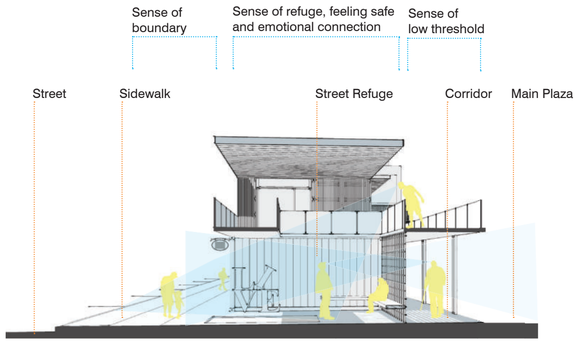


Figure 43 Transitional Space between Public and Semi-Private Zone

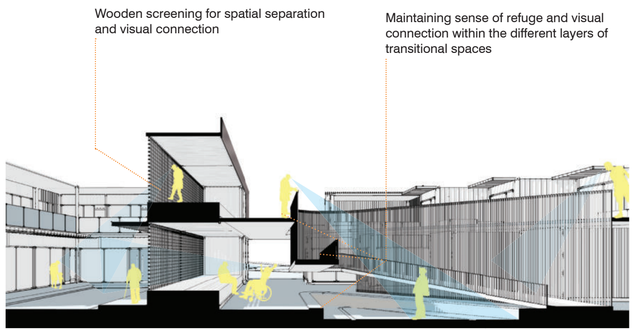


Figure 44 Transitional Space between Semi-Public and Semi-Private Zone

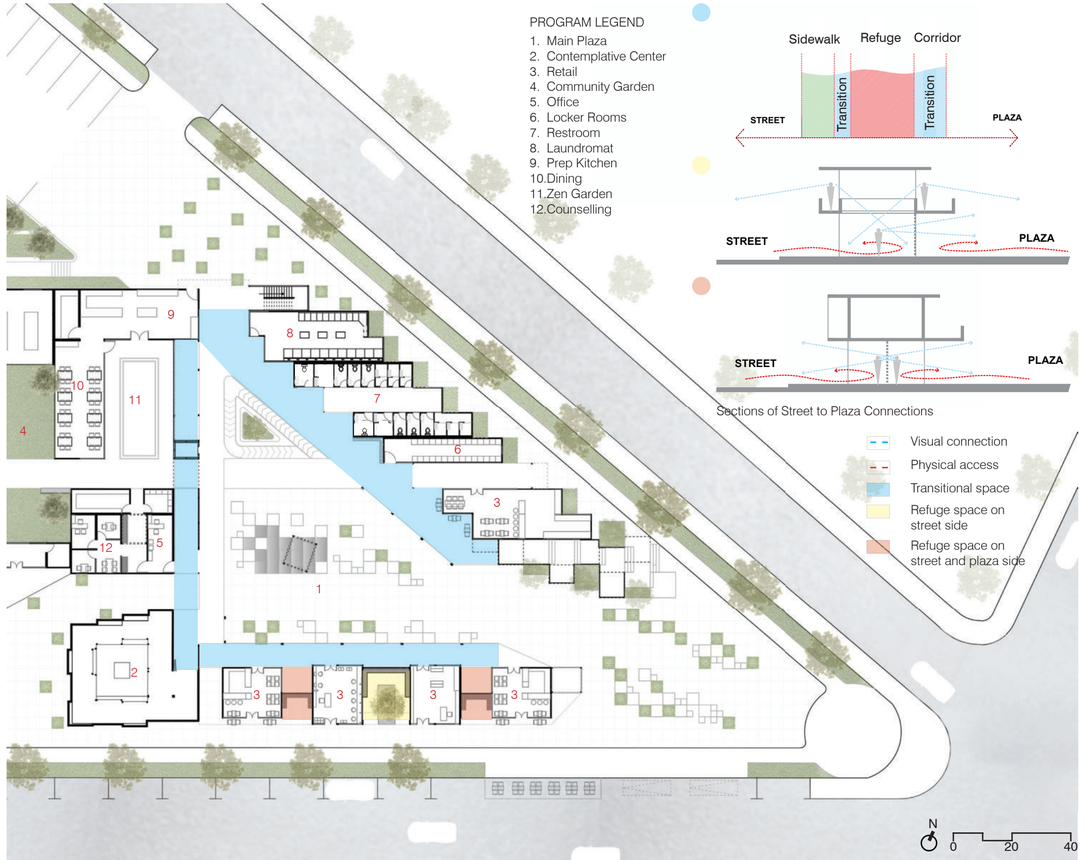


Figure 45 Transitional Space between Street and Plaza

MAIN PLAZA

The main plaza is envisioned as the primary mixing place for different groups. It is designed to attract and gather a diverse group of people through the arrangement of programmatic spaces, design elements that allow users to stay in the space over a period of time, and visual and physical connections to the surroundings. These design considerations make the plaza an active, cohesive space for interactions among all user groups, as multiple users will need to pass along and through this space to access the amenities.[26]

The main plaza serves as a "front yard," providing direct access to several programmatic componets such as retail shops, restaurants, laundromat, contemplative center, and community garden. Mixing essential services for residents of the hub with services and amenities for visitors to the hub is key to bringing people together.[27] The inclusion of seating and a water fountain with splash pad within the plaza also helps in attracting users to this space.

It is also important to maintain a visual connection from sidewalk to main plaza and vice versa. This connection is made possible through the use of wood screens. The screens also provide a transitional refuge space along the street edge (figure 46 and 47). Opening a passage between the contemplative center and the community hall connects the east and west street plazas. This allows the main plaza to be used as a secondary street, which helps keep it engaged and active (figure 48).

Figure 46 Transitional Space between Sidewalk and Main Plaza

Figure 47 Transitional Space between Street Plaza and Community Garden

Figure 48 Main Plaza

26. Hajer and Reijndorp, *In Search of New Public Domain.*
27. Bell, Hawkins, and Evanics, *All Together Now.*

CONTEMPLATE

The third design parameter to consider is contemplate. Homelessness itself can be viewed as a traumatic experience, and being homeless increases the risk of further victimization. Contemplation works as self-care and serves as a base for spiritual healing, self-actualization, and socialization. It helps to rejuvenate from the emotional, mental, and social breakdown.[28] This design creates a healing, spiritual experience through spatial engagement. It proposes a non-religious spiritual space that offers multi-sensory engagement, both haptic and intuitive, with the help of material, light, and space evoking the sense of compression and tension.[29]

The contemplative space works as a transitional space to neutralize the physical and emotional harassment of street life and encourage self-realization. The primary design characteristics—an interior volume defined by a submerged plane with water feature and an overhead mass that steps into an oculus above (figures 55 and 56)—blur the physicality and presence of the user through the interplay of lightness and dark, void and mass, which will help facilitate the interaction among those within the space (figures 52 and 57). The bold and interesting volume carved within the void of the modular form (figures 49-54) breaks the monotony of continious street facade and also works as an anchor to connect all the built components together.

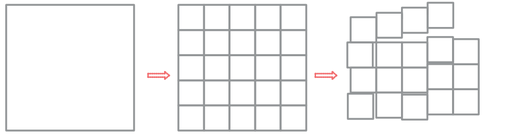


Figure 49 Massing Diagram for Contemplative Center

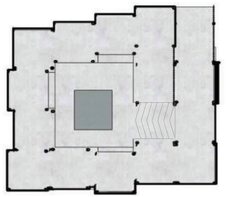


Figure 50 Contemplative Center—First Floor Plan

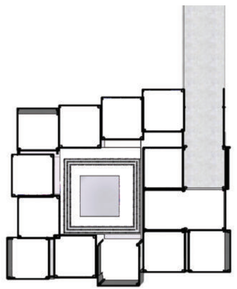


Figure 51 Contemplative Center—Mezzanine Level

28. Rowe and Barber, "Power of Giving Homeless."
29. Zumthor, *Thinking Architecture.*

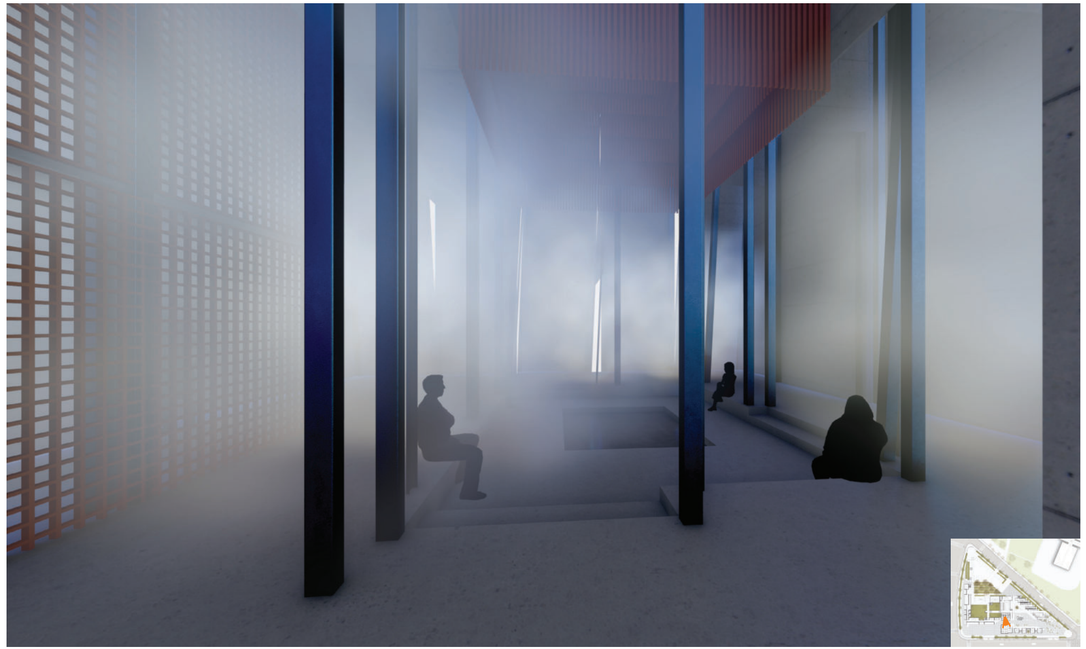
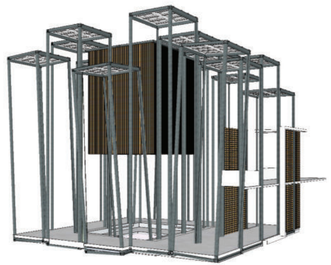
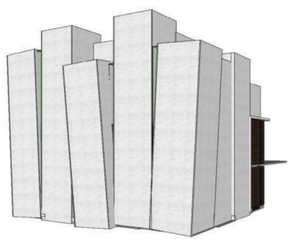


Figure 52 Contemplative Center—Spiritual Sense

Basic structure of connected container module, which are shifted slightly to allow for slices of light to enter the space



Addition of wood screening elements to intensify areas of compression and mystery



Enclosure system of fiber reinforced concrete panel to allow for an internalized volume for connection to self

Figure 53 Contemplative Center—Structure

Figure 54 Contemplative Center—Sectional Details

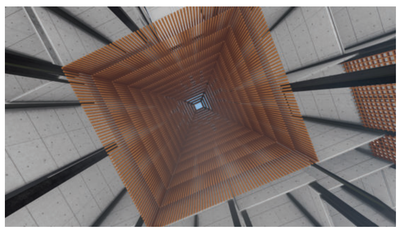


Figure 55 Contemplative Center—Oculus

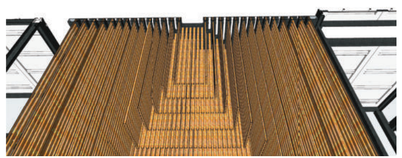


Figure 56 Contemplative Center—Skylight Detail

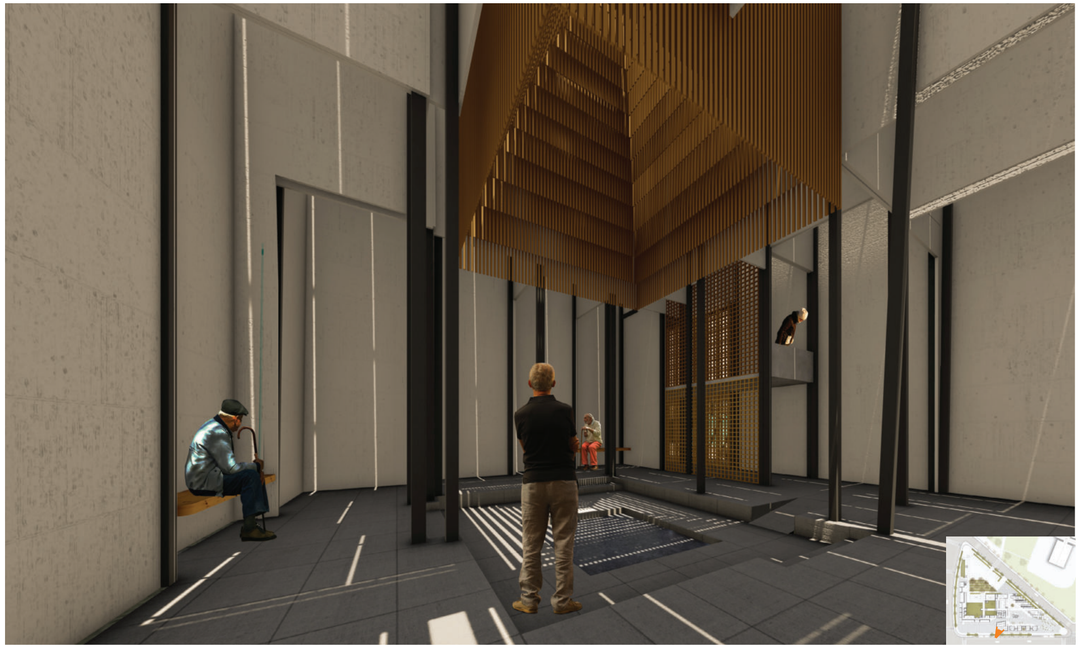


Figure 57 Contemplative Center—Interior

OTHER FORMS OF CONTEMPLATIVE SPACE

Apart from the dedicated and distinctive indoor space for contemplation, there are other spaces that have such spatial characteristics. As contemplation or self-actualization needs more private or isolated space,[30] there are some pockets within the site where people can be more secluded. However, the intention is not to isolate such areas entirely but to maintain a visual connection from the surrounding areas. For example, the base of the tower at the community garden serves as a refuge space or an isolated space within the community garden for contemplation (figure 58). Transitional space within the ramp serves as an intimate refuge space next to the active main plaza, which serves for both individual and small group interaction and connection (figure 60).

Nature also facilitates the aspect of contemplation.[31] An outdoor garden is created utilizing the natural topography on the northern side, which connects the north street intersection with the community garden. The provision of both grass and concrete seating under the dense trees render an essence of being in nature.This garden space serves as a place to sit under the tree and as a stage for the activities happening in the outdoor job training area and community garden (figure 59).

URBAN RENEWAL APPROACH

This thesis focuses on revitalizing the urban environment by activating site surrounding through different urban renewal strategies such as; live local love local, unique built environment, something for everyone, sense of place, and aesthetic of streetscape (figures 61-67).[32] These strategies are implemented in overall site development and detailing of building elements, which is further elaborated in sections and elevations.

30. Krinke, "Nature, Healing, and the Numinous."
31. Ibid.
32. Sucher, *City Comforts*.

Figure 58 Refuge Space at Tower Base

Figure 59 Outdoor Garden Area

Figure 60 Transitional Space within the Ramp

Figure 61 Site Axon with Context

Figure 62 Upper Plaza Access to Contemplative Center

Figure 63 North Danny Thomas Blvd. Street View

Figure 64 West Street Plaza

Figure 65 View from Parking

Figure 66 Poplar Avenue Front View

Figure 67 East Street Plaza

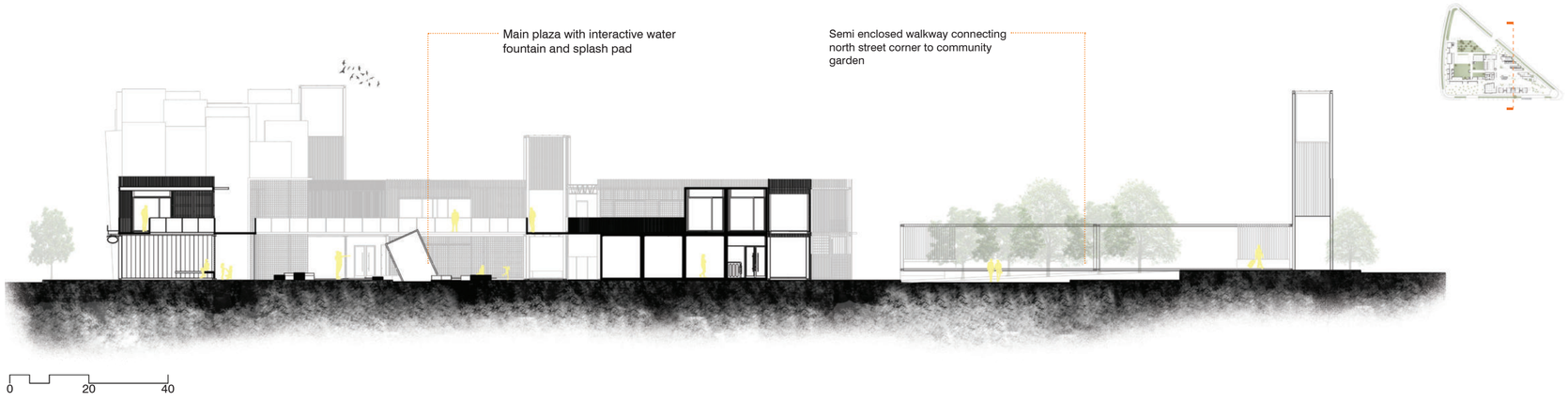


Figure 68 Section through Main Plaza

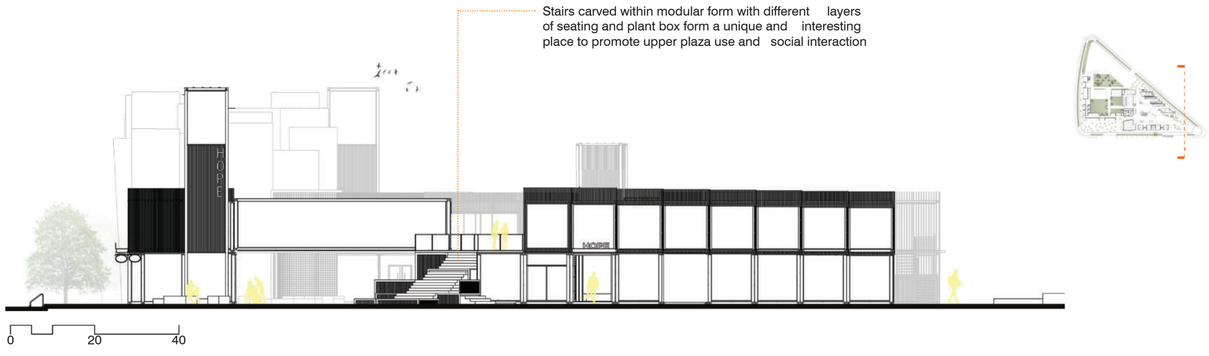


Figure 69 East Elevation, Caroll Street Front

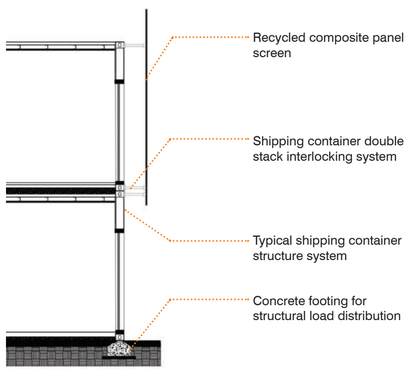


Figure 70 Typical Wall Section

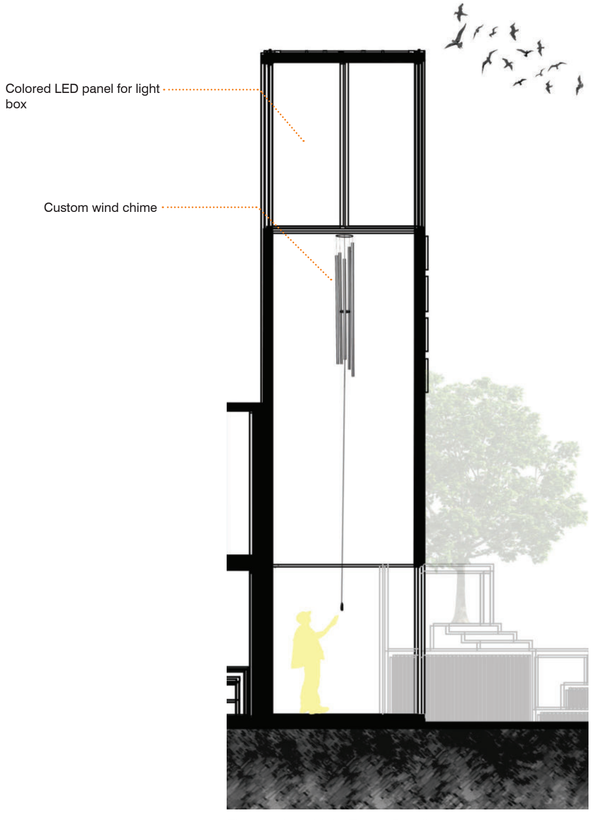


Figure 71 Light Tower Detail

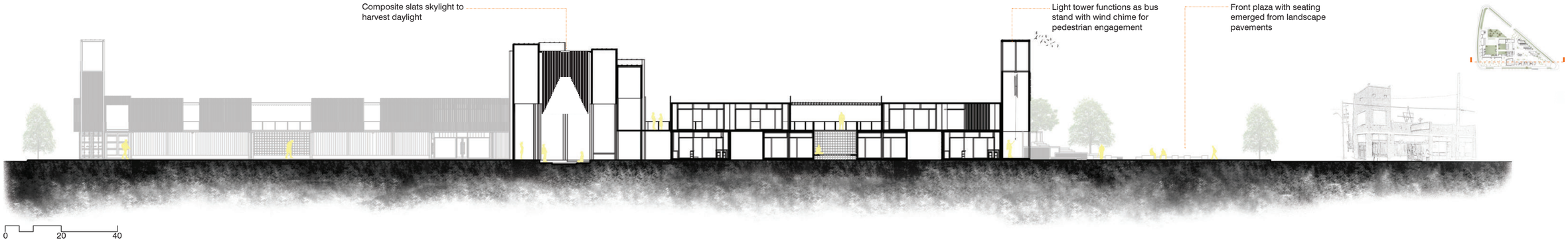


Figure 72 Section through Contemplative Center

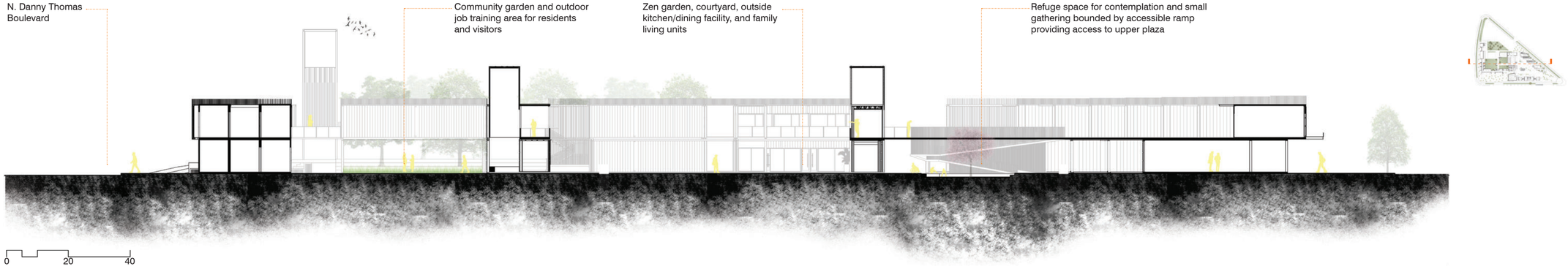


Figure 73 Section through Community Garden

Figure 74 South Elevation, Poplar Avenue

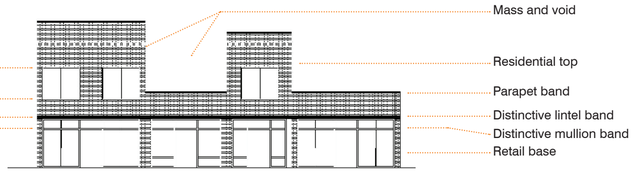


Figure 76 Contextual Facade Analysis

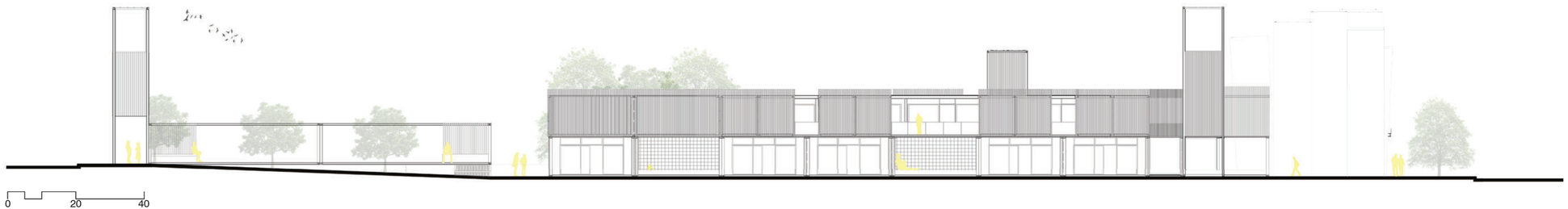


Figure 75 West Elevation, North Danny Thomas Boulevard

FACADE CONCEPT AND MATERIALITY

This project focuses on using modular units—composed in a special way—to create an intimate space that has an unique social quality. The street facades are composed of two distinctive layers: a commercial base is acheived with retail shopfronts using glass and steel frames for openness, and residential at the second level with recycled composite slatted screens to provide translucency (figures 68-75). The material palette is limited and focused on sustainable material and construction techniques to have more flexibility of expanding or reducing program. This type of project has potential to evolve over time; having flexibility to transform and become mobile adds significant value to the project.

In respect to the immediate building context, datum references are pulled from the adjacent buliding's lintel and parapet bands to acheive a continuous street character (figure 76). Prioritizing the building's relation to the street is essential for the street experience, therefore, this project implements some basic principles of urban design: building to the sidewalk, promoting pedestrian experiences, and buiding permeability and access from the street (figures 77-81).[33] These interventions influence the environment of the internal plazas by engaging people on the street front and encouraging them to access the inner plazas.

33. Sucher, *City Comforts*.

Perforated wooden screens between street side plaza and internal community garden maintain visual connection and add warmth and aesthetic value in the presence of both daylight and artificial lighting

Transluscent lighting incorporated within the contemplative block harvests diffused daylight during daytime and creates an unique street experience at night

Different spacing of vertical composite slats for screening system define the transparency and opacity of the facade adding variable depth and tone during the day and at night

Light tower with Memphis base color light panels to evoke sense of place, mimic the bell tower of a church, embodying the notion of faith and hope

Figure 77 South Elevation Night Rendering

Figure 78 Front Plaza View from Caroll Street

Figure 79 Poplar Avenue Front at Night

Figure 80 West Street Plaza

Figure 81 East Street Plaza

LIVING UNITS

The idea of providing living units is driven by connecting people experiencing homelessness to a place to go where they feel safe and protected. The solution to the problem of homelessness is not just providing permanent housing; the need for temporary, transitional, and permanent housing still exists. Due to the lack of affordable housing, people in a state of homelessness are likely to cycle in and out of this problem.[34] In that process, most of the people are likely to find a place in emergency shelters.

Even though emergency shelters provide a place off the street, there are many underlying concerns (safety, low living standard, health issues, psychological stress). Incorporating living units in the program provides decent, safe, and affordable transitional and long-term rentals for individuals and families in the state of episodic and chronic homelessness.[35] These living units will be provided in collaboration with surrounding support facilities and the rent could be paid by volunteering in day-to-day facility and jobs at retail shops within the hub (figure 86).

There are three types of living units: (figure 82) single bed units, appropriate for individuals who use a common kitchen/dining area and sanitary facility; studio and two-bed units, appropriate for families. The living unit module is placed with the provision of a common outdoor area (figures 84 and 85), which gives a sense of intimate community living, while a shaded entrance provides a sense of porch (figure 83). This housing scheme provides a sense of ownership and belongingness, which cannot be achieved in group shelters.[36]

34. Davis, *Designing for the Homeless.*
35. Wasserman and Clair, "Housing Patterns of Homeless People."
36. Rowe and Barber, "Power of Giving Homeless."

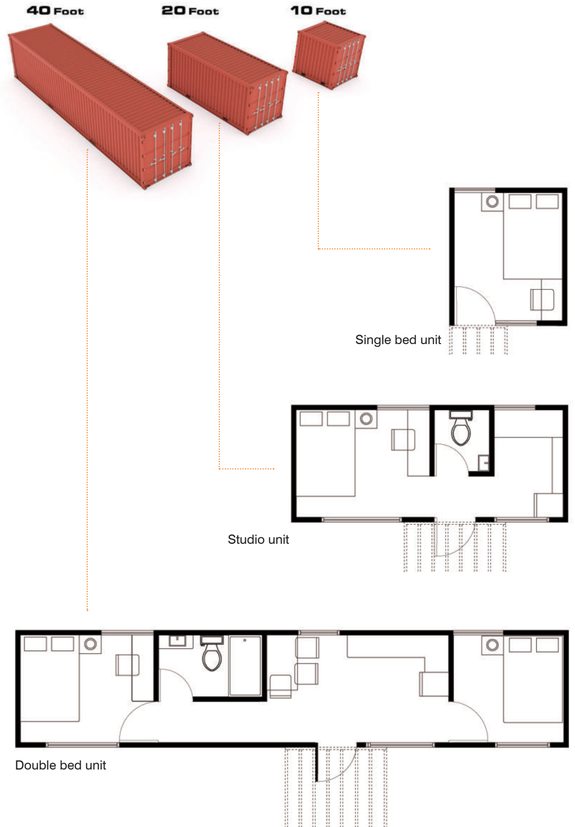


Figure 82 Living Unit Types

Figure 83 Living Unit Exterior

Figure 84 Living Units Access from Ground Floor

Figure 85 Zen Garden Courtard

Figure 86 Poplar Avenue Front View

SHIPPING CONTAINER MODULE

The idea of using a high cube shipping container module (figure 87) for this project is to explore a reliable, quick, and cost-effective option to create a unique built environment. Shipping containers offer various aspects, such as: prefabricated module, sustainable, transformative, universal, economical.[37]

There is a significant number of shipping container yards scattered in and around the city of Memphis (figure 90). Shipping containers are becoming more popular in commercial developments across the city, integrating into the urban fabric. Examples of repurposed shipping container developments in Memphis include Railgarten, BOX LOT, and Shab Chic Marketplace (figures 91-93).

Apart from the above listed rational attributes for repurposing a shipping container as a building component, this thesis also recognizes a metaphorical sense for these objects associating them with the state of homelessness. In particular, this involves breaking stigma by salvaging a discarded and unwanted object. There is always hope that helps bring life back and this is conceptually linked with the large idea of this thesis to restore dignity, faith, and hope for people in a state of homelessness.

Figure 87 Shipping Container Module

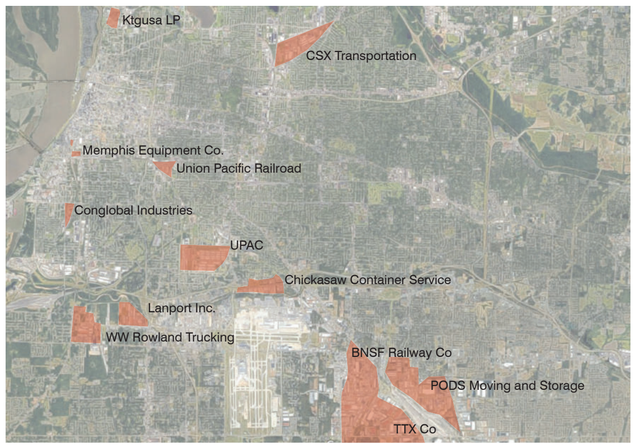


Figure 88 Shipping Container Yards in Memphis

37. Peters, "The Mini-Neighborhood for the Homeless."

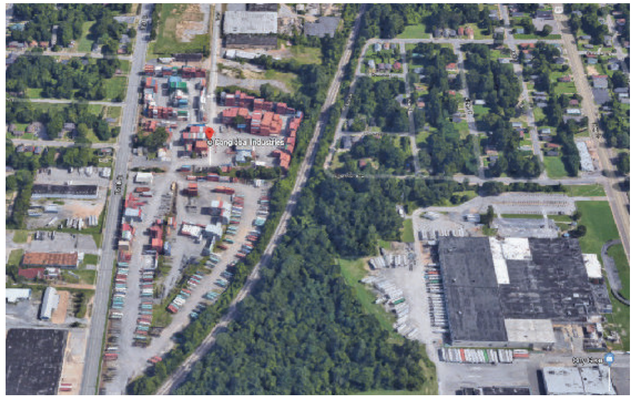


Figure 89 Conglobal Industries Container Yard

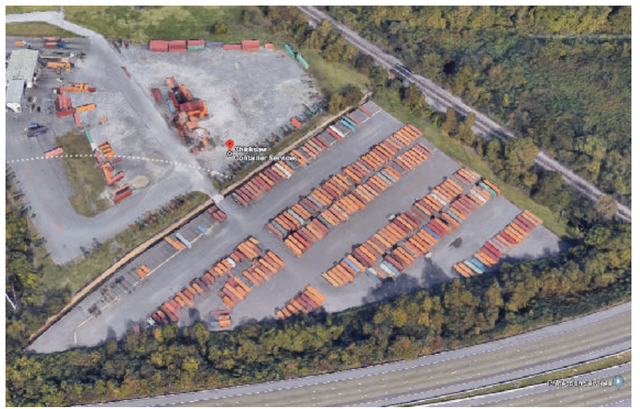


Figure 90 Chickasaw Container Services Yard

Figure 91 Railgarten, Central Avenue, Memphis

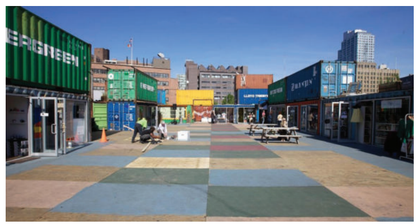


Figure 92 Shab Chic Marketplace, Memphis

Figure 93 BOXLOT at Edge District, Memphis

CONCLUSION

This thesis is an exploration of a missing thread in the conventional support system for homelessness. The main intention of this thesis is to propose a new support system that serves as a step beyond conventional homeless service facilities through programmatic spaces that encourage and nurture intergroup interaction and social mixing. This new approach seeks to connect and collaborate with existing service providers to create a social hub that evokes a sense of optimism, positivity, and hope (figure 94).

Site selection for this project plays a crucial role in creating a connection between the user group and the services, which allows this project to evolve to function as a hub within a large network of support systems. However, there is still an opportunity to further explore the evolution of changing program in relationship to forthcoming proposals for additional support facilities in this area. Also, as the main plaza is the primary space for intergroup mixing, it is important that the space is occupiable throughout the year incorporating additional natural and artificial shading to cope with the summer heat will help to prevent spatial disintegration in this area. Although the idea of creating a sense of place through a unique blend of aesthetics and empathy is successful, there is still an additional scope for analysis on individual and societal behavior for spatial engagement considering different aspects of age group, gender, and culture.

Figure 94 Site Axon

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

"AIA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct." *The American Institute of Architects, 2018, updated 2020.* Accessed March 5, 2020. https://content.aia.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/2020_Code_of _Ethics.pdf.

The American Institute of Architects has established a Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct to address the life safety and public welfare issues, and also includes rules of conduct that deal with professional interactions between architects and their colleagues and their clients.

Under the general obligations of AIA code of ethics, cannon I, E.S. 1.5 Design for Human Dignity and the Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Public, members should employ their professional knowledge and skill to design buildings and spaces that enhance and facilitate human dignity and the health, safety, and welfare of the individual and the public.

Allport, G. W. "The Nature of Prejudice." Cambridge, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1954. https://archive.org/details/TheNatureOfPrejudice/mode/2up.

In this research, Allport presents Intergroup Contact Theory, the theory that under the appropriate conditions, interpersonal contact is one of the most effective ways to reduce prejudice between majority and minority group members. The theory is based on the idea that if one gets an opportunity to come in contact and interact with another, they can communicate their point of view and resolve prejudice. To acheive this, the contact should be properly managed to facilitate the resolution of stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination. Gordon Allport was an American psychologist who focused on the study of personality and is referred to as one of the founding figures of personality psychology.

This theory is based on social psychology and derived by Allport from the examination of social scientists of the disintegration of racial attitudes in the U.S. Merchant Marine and New York City Housing Projects following World War II. Allport suggested some criteria to obtain beneficial effects such as: Equal Status—both groups must engage equally in the relationship; Common Goals—both groups must work on a problem as a common goal; Intergroup Cooperation—both groups must work together for their common goal without competition; Support of Authorities, Laws, or Customs—both groups must acknowledge some authority that supports the contact and interactions between the groups; Personal Interaction—the contact situation needs to involve informal, personal interaction with outgroup members. The intergroup contacts under these four criteria helps to reduce the predudice.

The thesis incorporates the idea of bringing people together, promoting a more positive intergroup attitude, through the careful structuring of program and space. Collaborative design measures such as mixing programs, incorporating a community garden, retail and office spaces, and plazas for diverse activities, are used as mechanisms to facilitate the criteria of Intergroup Contact Theory.

Bell, Richard, Antony Hawkins, and Radmila Evanics. "All Together Now: Meaningful Mixing for a More Integrated Society." *The Challenge*. 2019. Accessed December 12, 2019. https://www.belongnetwork.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/tc-all-together-now.pdf.

This article is about the challenges in the process of social integration and possible interventions to overcome that developed by one of the UK's leading social integration charity organizations, "The Challenge." The organization proposed a model known as 'Mixing in Motion', for developing an integrated society with three main principles: establish a socially mixed space; create active and intense mixing experiences; and foster sustainable bonds. Richard Bell is associated as a head of public affairs, policy and research, Antony Hawkins as a head of strategy, and Radmila Evanics as a strategy and impact manager at *The Challenge*.

The authors effectively outline the problem, analyze the aspect of disconnection, and propose design principles for meaningful mixing. The key aspect of promoting the cycle of economic participation and the cycle of empowerment helps to form a strong base for a more

integrated society.This can be acheived by providing access to good job opportunitues and skills training, which will eventually help them participate in community life and be a part of society where more people feel they are equal and belong. This action eventually helps develop more empathy and positive feelings towards each other.

This thesis adopts the idea of promoting a cycle of empowerment through creating a sustainable community. This influences the provision of the following program within the project: counselling, job training, art classes, work opportunities in hub, and startup office programs.

Davis, Sam. *Designing for the Homeless: Architecture that Works*. London: University of California Press, 2004.

Davis emphasizes that the services being provided to the homeless population need to happen in a secure, safe, and positive built environment. He focuses on appropriate design and the use of diverse housing resources to solve the problem. Based on his extensive experience working in this field, he argues that the different psychological, social, and financial services that people in homelessness are receiving lose their significance in lack of adequate housing services. He highlights the importance of housing design and says that it should be considered as an essential component of policies and programs. Sam Davis works at the University of California, Berkeley as a professor of architecture and is actively involved in designing shelters for the homeless.

In this book, Davis describes how careful and purposeful design responds to the needs of people in a state of homelessness. He uses an example of one of his projects, St. Vincent de Paul Village in San Diego, to highlight the architectural features that have helped address the problem. Having the credibility of designing and building affordable housing for people in the state of homelessness for thirty years, he argues that it is essential that the architecture and program should offer beauty, security, and hope.

The idea of prioritizing shelters and housing services parallel to other supporting services is incorporated in this thesis. The provision of secure and habitable space for living is crucial as it provides the basic need of shelter and a sense of positivity and optimism.

"Emergency Shipping Container Housing UK." *ISO Spaces*. June 7, 2019. Accessed November 2019. https://isospaces.com/case_study/hope-gardens/.

Meath Hope Garden is the largest temporary accommodation made of shipping containers in the United Kingdom. It was developed in response to the London Borough of Ealing's housing supply problem. Hope Garden apartments provide comfortable accommodation for over 280 people living in temporary shelter and facing potential homelessness. This project is designed and built by ISO Spaces, which are known for the design and manufacture of high-specified portable buildings and spaces from shipping container units in the UK. This innovative model focuses on the reusability of the shipping container module to address the long-term affordability and sustainability of the built environment for both the Ealing Council and other parts of the world.

Gibson, Eleanor. "Architecture Students Build Latticed Wood Community Centre in German Refugee Camp." Dezeen, November 23, 2017. Accessed December 15, 2019. https://www.dezeen.com/2017/02/22/spinelli-community-centre-german-refugee-camp-mannheim-university-of-kaiserslautern/.

In this article, Gibson highlights a wooden community center designed by architecture students from the University of Kaiserslautern, Germany. This community center provides a sheltered communal area for refugees arriving in the camp located on the former US Army's Spinelli Barracks in Mannheim. The center consists of a series of courtyards and covered spaces with latticework wall structure and cross-laminated timber cladding. The spatial integrity and detailing of wooden elements are used to encourage the intimate warmth, aesthetic, and haptic experience. This project also provided the residents at the refugee camp an opportunity to actively shape their environment and create a quality place for common or individual uses by participating in the construction process. Elanor Gibson is a US editor for dezeen. She graduated from Newcastle University with a BA in architecture. She is also the co-founder of Foci, an online magazine for art students.

Hajer, Maarten A. and Arnold Reijndorp. *In Search of New Public Domain: Analysis and Strategy*. Rotterdam: NAi Publishers, 2001.

The authors emphasize the importance of public spaces for an urban society based on a cultural perspective of public space within recent social redevelopments. This book offers a framework for designing public spaces for architects, planners, government bodies, and organizations based on theoretical discussions and analysis of practical problems. Maarten Hajer is a planner and political scientist, as well as a Professor of Management Science at the University of Amsterdam. Arnold Reijndorp is an independent researcher and publicist active at the forefront of planning, architecture, and urban culture.

The authors describe the importance of public spaces and how these spaces influence the image and attractiveness of cities. It is essential to consider the physical-spatial characteristics of public spaces. However, the authors argue that there is a difference between 'public space' and 'public domain,' and not every public space is a public domain. The public domain demands additional requirements because the spaces are positively valued as places of shared experience by people from different backgrounds or with different interests.

This thesis adopts the idea of creating street intersection plazas and a main central plaza as public domain beyond the traditional urban spaces of streets, parks, and squares. Within the project, these public domains are connected through an idea of liminal space to enhance their physical-spatial characteristics.

Hu, Winnie. "'Hostile Architecture': How Public Spaces Keep the Public Out." *The New York Times*. November 8, 2019. Accessed April 15, 2019. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/08/nyregion/hostile-architecture-nyc.html.

This article outlines the impact of hostile design in public spaces in New York and other cities. Even though the defensive measure is said to be adopted to maintain order and ensure public safety, it still is inhumane and targets the people in the state of homelessness. Winnie Hu is a reporter on the Metro desk, focusing on transportation and infrastructure stories. She has also covered education, politics in City Hall and Albany, and the Bronx and upstate New York since joining the *Times* in 1999.

The author explains that hostile design includes not providing a place to sit, or using a prominent wall, fence, or metal spikes embedded in seating and pavements to prevent people from occupying elements in a certain way. Hu explains that around five percent of the total homeless population of 75,000 in New York are living on the street and prohibiting people in the state of homelessness to sit and rest in public places is unnecessary and inhumane. This thesis avoids such hostile measures and incorporates inclusive and common design strategies for public areas that serve all.

Jacobs, Jane M. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York: Random House, 1967.

Opposing rational urban renewal programs, Jacobs emphasizes for dense mixed-use development and walkable streets, with "eyes on the street." The main aspect of this book is the principle of the close-grained mix of uses that gives people constant, mutual support, both economically and socially. Jane Jacobs was an American-Canadian journalist, author and activist.

Jacobs identified seven concepts of urban quality applicable for a sustainable urban environment: environmental quality, human health, efficiency, equity, diversity, accessibility, and learning. The need for mixed primary uses also associated with the aspect of diversity composed of three diversity actors: communities, cultures, and individual's behavior. Jacobs emphasizes how streets, districts, third places, and neighborhood parks

should serve more than one primary function. A mixture of multiple services helps activate the space creating an opportunity for community engagement, economic growth, and social safety. She emphasizes the role of diverse functional components such as, neighborhoods, buildings, and streets to make more active, healthier, and livable cities.

This thesis incorporates the idea of creating a diverse functional space or mixed-use activity in neighborhood scale, which also helps to engage people within close proximity to the project. The mixed-use aspect provides a more diverse set of activities to engage people continuously and make the place lively. This thesis incorporates retail, institutional, recreational, educational, contemplative, and other services to achieve active visual, physical, and social interaction.

Kilston, Lyra. "The Design Solution for Homelessness." *Next City.* September 8, 2014. Accessed March 27, 2019. https://nextcity.org/features/view/the-design-solution-for-homelessness-Skid-Row-Housing-Trust.

This article is about the Star Apartments in Los Angeles by Skid Row Housing Trust, which is home to 100 homeless individuals struggling to rebound from lives on the street. Kilston explains the initiation of the Skid Row Housing Trust to provide housing for the people in the state of homelessness. The unique design solution and striking buildings have raised the design profile of Los Angeles and redefined the conversation about how to build affordable housing in place. Lyra Kilston is a writer and 4th-generation Angeleno. Her writing has appeared in *Artforum, Los Angeles Review of Books, Time,* and *Wired*, among other publications.

Kilston explains that this building typology can participate in and redefine the overall future of the city. She feels that the aesthetic value that causes the imbalance of social structure is lost in the name of affordable and temporary solutions. The Star Apartment's courtyard, open staircase, and open terrace help to maintain interaction and communication with the community. The careful design and planning help provide a healthy and affordable space to the people in need and helps to establish social equity and balance.

This article influences this thesis with an idea of designing and creating the best possible environment for the user group, which helps to heal and recover from the problem of homelessness. Effective design encourages physical, mental, and social well-being, and helps create a better community and better city.

Krinke, Rebecca. "Nature, Healing, and the Numinous." In *Transcending Architecture: Contemporary Views on Sacred Space*, edited by Julio Bermúdez, 47-62. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2015. https://manualzz.com/doc/39914945/transcending-architecture.

Bermúdez refers to contemplation as a mode of profound self-reflection that is often used in a non-religious context. The physical design responsible for contemplation can be a range of contexts, from sacred spaces such as religious buildings, to calming gardens, to spaces of refuge in vibrant urban centers. Rebecca Krinke further highlights that the human connection with nature or vegetation has a beneficial effect on physical and psychological health which is not just an intuitive understanding but has empirical evidences from natural and social sciences to support. Rebecca Krinke is a multimedia artist, working in sculpture, installations, and site art. She hold degrees in fine arts and landscape architecture and also works as a professor of landscape architecture at University of Minnesota.

Langegger, Sig, and Stephen Koester. "Invisible Homelessness: Anonymity, Exposure, and the Right to the City". *Urban Geography 37*, no. 7 (March 2016): 1030-1048. DOI:10.1080/02723638.2016.1147755.

This article analyzes the challenging ways in which people who are homeless in Denver must now manage their exposure to others in public spaces due to recently passed legislation banning camping in all open spaces. The authors believe that the ban deprives the evicted individuals of their fundamental right to the city. Sig Langegger is associated with the Department of Geology, Akita International University, Akita, Japan, and Stephen Koester is associated with the Department of Anthropology and Health and Behavioral Sciences, University of Colorado in Denver.

The authors put forward the voices of Denver's homeless, those most impacted by the new law, to demonstrate how everyday social justice springs from an interaction between people co-present in public space. Analyzing the impact in three different public place types—prime, every day, and marginal public places—the authors identify that the new law significantly impacts people's use of every day and marginal public places. It forces people in the state of homelessness to be anonymous or invisible, which further disconnects them from necessary services like coffee, shower, restrooms, and other amenities. This article emphasizes four exposure types, such as information, observation, interaction, and actual membership to encourage regular and sustained contact.

This article contributes to this thesis by providing a framework for contact and exposure as it has a significant impact in turning invisible people to visible. Positive exposure reduces prejudice toward another group. The four exposure types help develop design parameters for this thesis and are incorporated within connection and collaboration. These exposure types influenced the idea of creating refuge and transitional spaces.

McMillan, David W., and David M. Chavis. "Sense of Community: A Definition and Theory." *Journal of Community Psychology 14*, 1 (Jan 1986): 6-23. Accessed April 2019. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235356904_Sense_of_Community_A_Defination_and_Theory.

Through this article, the authors explain the dynamics of the sense of community and identify the associated factors that foster that experience. Based on the principle of social psychology, the authors formulated the theoretical framework to strengthen social fabric and develop a sense of community. David W. McMillan and David M. Chavis were both professors of psycology at George Peabody College of Vanderbilt University.

McMillan and Chavis define a sense of community as "a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and the group, and a shared faith that members needs will be met through their commitment to being together." (9). The new definition for the model of community formation proposed by McMillan and Chavis has four elements: membership, influence, the fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection. Membership refers to a defined and clear boundary that provokes a sense of belongingness and emotional safety. Influence refers to the power and trust of the members over the group. It helps to acknowledge the needs and values of another member. Influencing each other in a group and a community creates a strong sense of community. Integration and fulfillment of needs refer to a shared value for which every member of community exercise and integrate. In the case of homelessness, a shared value could be improving the quality of life. Shared emotional connections are considered an essential element of community formation, which involves emotional bonding that stimulates sympathy, faith, mutual interaction, and connection.

These four elements of community formation set a core value for this thesis and are embedded within the design parameters collaboration, connection, and contemplation. The development of the program and synthesis of physical space is influenced by the notion of creating a sense of community.

Oldenburg, Ray. *The Great Good Place: Cafes, Coffee Shops, Bookstores, Bars, Hair Salons, and Other Hangouts at the Heart of a Community.* Philadelphia: Da Capo Press, 2005.

Oldenburg describes the term "third place" as public places where people can gather outside of their home and workplace (their first and second places). He emphasizes the importance of a third place as they are the heart of a community's social vitality. A third place facilitates informal public life, which is essential for the health of

both communities and individuals. Ray Oldenburg is an American urban sociologist known for advocating the role of informal public gathering places for a functioning civil society, and civic engagement. He coined the term "third place."

Describing third place as an anchor for community life, Oldenburg summarizes it through eight characteristics: neutral ground, a leveling place, conversation as the main activity, accessibility and accommodation, having regulars, a low profile, playful mood, and a home away from home. Oldenburg listed some examples of third places as community centers, coffee shops, bars and pubs, restaurants, hair salons, malls, and markets, among others.

This thesis focuses on creating a place of vibrant civic engagement by adopting the characteristics of a third place. Including programs like restaurants, a café, hair salons, a laundromat in this thesis encourages informal public interaction, which complements the larger goal of intergroup connection and community formation.

Paraham, Wesley Morgan. "Art Gallery for Marginalized Artists Illustrates Homelessness." *High Ground*. January 26, 2017. Accessed December 15, 2019. https://www.highgroundnews.com/features/HartGallery.aspx.

In this article, Paraham highlights the role of Memphis Hart Gallery and other local art programs to promote artwork of the homeless and non-traditional artists. Started from Chattanooga, Hart Gallery opened its second branch in Memphis to support homeless and non-traditional artists by providing art training classes and a gallery to exhibit and sell artworks in collaboration with local support groups.

In this article, the author also shares the story of former homeless artists who benefited from the program to get out of homelessness and other psychological and financial burdens. Wesley Morgan Paraham is a Memphis native. He writes about music and art especially from local artists. He is currently attending the University of Memphis and seeking a degree in Public Relations.

Peters, Adele. "This Mini-Neighborhood for the Homeless Could Be Built in 90 Days." *Fast Company*. February 12, 2019. Accessed August 15, 2019.https://www.fastcompany.com/90300902/this-mini-neighborhood-for-the-homeless-could-be-built-in-90-days.

In this article, Peters describes a proposed design solution being implemented in Los Angeles to counter the problem of homelessness. Los Angeles declared an emergency shelter crisis in 2018, having the largest population of people in the state of homelessness across the United States. Peters explains one project by R&A Architecture and Design in Los Angeles, which proposed to develop vacant land into a community for people in the state of homelessness in 90 days. Adele Peters, who is a staff writer at *Fast Company,* focuses on solutions to some of the world's most substantial problems, from climate change to homelessness. Previously, she also worked with GOOD, BioLite, and the Sustainable Products and Solutions program at UC Berkeley.

Explaining the project by R&A, Peters highlights the importance of easy and fast construction, noting that modular design can provide a potential universal solution to the problem. Based on that aspect, the design by R&A uses a shipping container as a resource that can be easily turned into a comfortable shelter. The containers are arranged in such a way that they evoke an essence of community and living together. Another important aspect of the design is the central community garden, which acts as a "zipper" to connect the housing with the surrounding neighborhood.

The idea of using the shipping container as a building module is incorporated in this thesis. Also, provison of a common ground as a "zipper" is incorporated in the plazas and community garden of the thesis to evoke a sense of community.

Petrovic, Marina. "Dubai Boxpark: Shopping among the Shipping Containers ..." Accessed December 15, 2019. https://www.commercialinteriordesign.com/insight/shopping-among-the-shipping-containers.

In this article, Petrovic highlights a commercial development on Al Wasl road, Dubai known as Boxpark. Boxpark is a retail complex composed of over 200 repurposed shipping containers which has a mix of boutique stores and food and beverage outlets. Box park is inspired by urban renewal projects that combines the contemporary architecture with the aesthetic of warehouse containers. The use of multicolored container modules and provision of colorful illumination along the street edge creates an inviting engaging environment. Petrovic further explains that the modular design allows both indoor and outdoor space to flow and change when needed. Marina Petrovic works as an editor for commercial interior design magazine.

"Revitalizing Traditional Pati (Info Falcha): An Innovative Collaboration between MIT, LUMANTI, and Community." *Lumanti*. Accessed November 2019. http://lumanti.org.np/news/details/info-falcha-innovation.html.

A "pati" is a community infrastructure in traditional Newari settlements in Nepal that serves as a place for gathering and other social events. "Revitalizing Traditional Pati" is an initiative to revitalize the traditional patis affected by the devastating earthquake of 2015 to support communities by providing a safe place to gather in these extreme events. The collaboration between MIT, Lumanti, and the community developed a new model of pati to be a more functional and effective shelter during emergencies.

Lumanti Support Group for Shelter is a member of the Community of Practice (CoP) of the NGO Disaster Preparedness Program of Give2Asia and IIRR. It is a non-government organization dedicated to reduce urban poverty in Nepal through an integrated approach to improving shelter conditions.

Rowe, Michael, and Charles Barber. "The Power Of Giving Homeless People A Place To Belong." *Citylab*. June 12, 2018. Accessed February 18, 2019. https://www.citylab.com/solutions/2018/06/the-power-of-giving-the-homeless-a-place-to-belong/562595.

This article highlights the very crucial and delicate aspect that the problem of homelessness is not merely providing a physical home. Physically ending a state of homelessness for a person might be easy, but finding a true home for that person is more complicated. The authors' analysis of that aspect is based on studying cases of homeless populations in New Haven, Connecticut, for around 20 years. Michael Rowe is a professor of psychiatry at Yale University, and Charles Barber is a visiting writer at Wesleyan University.

As researchers in mental health and criminal justice, the authors studied the cases of the New Haven outreach team to analyze and identify the possible causes for psychological dissatisfaction of those who had experienced homelessness, even after having a safe and secure place to live. The authors put forward that conventional shelters and housing services are proving to be a new and more alien environment to people in the state of homelessness as they feel more isolated and disconnected in shelter facilities. The authors suggest that there is a need to create a formal mechanism to promote a sense of belongingness and citizenship among the society's outsiders. The authors Citizens Project in New Haven define the project through a person's connection to the "Five Rs"—rights, responsibilities, role, resources provided by society through different institutions, and relationships with people and social networks.

This article raises an important question about the success of support systems in transforming someone's life. This thesis is an exercise to explore a new approach where fundamental needs and support systems resonate with psychological needs. This thesis incorporates different mechanisms like contemplation, counseling, job training, empowerment, art and music, and a sense of ownership in the living units to engage the user with oneself and community to enhance a sense of belongingness.

Sucher, David. *City Comforts: How to Build an Urban Village*. Seattle: City Comforts, 2003.

This book emphasizes simple rules and details to foster livable and lovable cities and neighborhoods. Sucher uses photographs of specific details picked from careful observations of city and neighborhoods to evidence real-life examples that address specific problems. David Sucher is a renowned urban planner, a development professional, and a lawyer. He was also a member of Seattle planning commission for four years.

Sucher uses the metaphor "urban village" to refer to a city that provides the intimacy and connection of a village, but with the scale and anonymity of a large city. Sucher describes three 'rules' of urban design: build to the sidewalk, make the building front permeable, and prohibit parking in front of buildings

The idea of creating a livable, walkable, sustainable built environment is incorporated in this thesis. The three rules of urban design influenced the overall street front and edge design.

"TN-501 Point-in-Time Report for 2018." *Community Alliance for the Homeless, Inc*. Accessed September 8,2018.https://www.cafth.org/assets/2018%20Summary%20Report.pdf.

Community Alliance for the homeless is the designated organization as the collaborative applicant for the TN-501 continuum of care, which provides planning, technical assistance, and service coordination to both public and private agencies who are working to end homelessness in Memphis and Shelby County. They are also responsible for conducting the survey and analyzing the community's progress toward ending homelessness and submit the data for the annual homeless assessment report to Congress (AHAR). The statistics and data used in this thesis about homelessness are pulled from the 2018 Point-in-Time report for Memphis/Shelby county.

"Urban Magnets: The Five Essentials of Successful Places." *DIALOG*. July 16, 2015. Accessed December 12, 2019. https://www.dialogdesign.ca/stories/urban-magnets-the-five-essentials-of-successful-places.

The principle behind the Urban Magnet Theory is that people define the success of the place, not the physical form. Urban Magnet Theory proposes five key factors for a successful urban mix that include: Retail, Production/ Manufacture, Educational, Programming/Events, and Unique Urban Form. Urban magnets help to create a place where people engage with themselves and others, building relationships and loyalty to the place and a true sense of community. This thesis incorporates these urban magnets in the program and the synthesis of design parameters.

Wasserman, Jason Adam, and Jeffrey Michael Clair. "Housing Patterns of Homeless People: The Ecology of the Street in the Era of Urban Renewal." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography 40*, no. 1 (February 1, 2011): 71-101. Accessed March 2019. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0891241610388417.

In this article, the authors analyze the political and economic aspects of people who are homeless, among other groups, who are most vulnerable to urban renewal initiatives. The authors explain how people in the state of homelessness, who are often considered as undesirable, are key stakeholders in urban communities with similar goals, concerns, and interests as others in the community. Jason Wasserman is a professor with Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences, and Jeffrey Clair is a professor with the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

The article further explains that even though there is a strong association with social structural factors, the public, as well as governments spanning the local, state, and federal levels, still perceive homelessness as an individual problem, particularly one of addiction and mental illness. To counter that problem, many redevelopment projects fouc on community relationships, becoming socially conscious and attempting to create mixed-class spaces with pedestrian-friendly environments, while locating residences closer to retail centers. Using analysis, sampling, and data of economic and political aspects of various communities in urban conflicts, the authors state that a significant way to achieve balance in urban regeneration is to bring those groups together, creating an environment to work together in society.

This idea of creating a common place, an interactive environment to bring people together, is adopted in this thesis by incorporating different plazas and community gardens. These places of engagement help raise critical and reflexive questions about how people can relate to one another, so they discover possibilities for collaboration in their commonalities and differences.

Shen, Yiling. "Architecture and Homelessness: What Approaches Have We Seen?" *ArchDaily.* August 15, 2018. Accessed March 27, 2019. https://www.archdaily.com/898651/architecture-and-the-homeless-what-solutions-have-we-seen.

In this article, Shen summarizes the different ideas about how architecture can help solve the homelessness crisis through creative and innovative design. She also explains how the homelessness problem is complex and has various structural factors and individual circumstances. She further describes how large cities around the world are affected by the problem, typically responding with defensive and hostile solutions. Yiling Shen works as an author in ArchDaily.

The article further explains that the social responsibility the architecture profession carries can improve society through the built environment even though it cannot solve the problem permanently. Providing different examples and interesting concepts of short-term and temporary solutions, Shen shows how cities are dealing with the problem. Most often, designers fail to analyze the complexity and impact of the new built environment. She analyzes pros and cons of different design concepts, including: parasitic architecture by Michael Rakowitz's project, Framlab, French architect Stephane Malka's project and various case studies for a long-term solution, social housing like Crest housing in LA by Michael Maltzan, and tiny home villages in Australia.

This article influenced this thesis by providing examples of different types of design approaches for homelessness. Analyzing pros and cons of those design ideas helped synthesize an interesting architectural typology that is socially-supported and community-oriented.

Zumthor, Peter. *Thinking Architecture*. 2nd ed. Basel: Birkhäuser, 2017. https://www.academia.edu/9850977/Thinking_Architecture_Peter_Zumthor_0

Peter Zumthor is a renowned swiss architect and a Pritzker Laureate. He is known for his sensous materiality and attention to place that fosters the experiential quality of a physical space. In this text, he describes how physical space is capable of evoking a spritual sense. Of particular interest to this thesis is Zumthor's notion of silence in a building. He describes this in the context of a building being itself, with qualities of presence, integrity, warmth, and sensuosness, all of which contribute to architectural works that exhibit soul. Furthermore, this thesis makes reference to Zumthor's Bruder Klaus Chapel for its use of physical space and materiality that evoke both spritual and meditative qualities. These characteristics are important for the design of the contemplative center.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: PRESENTATION BOARDS

Figures 95-102 are the final defense presentation boards. Figure 103 is the overall gallery setup layout. Figure 104 contains photographs taken during the presentation. Figures 105 and 106 contain photographs of the overall site model and detail model of the contemplative center. Figure 107 features the research summary presentation slides.

Figure 95 Manifesto and Introduction Boards

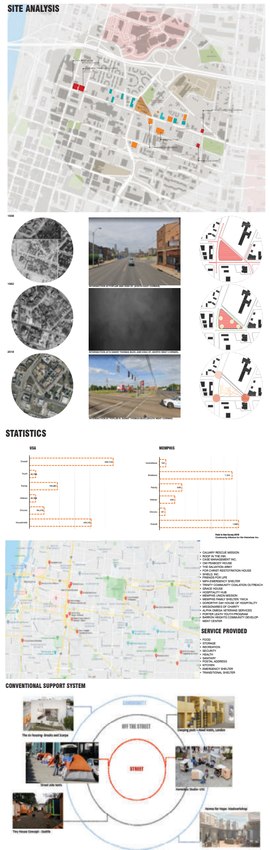


Figure 96 Site Analysis Boards

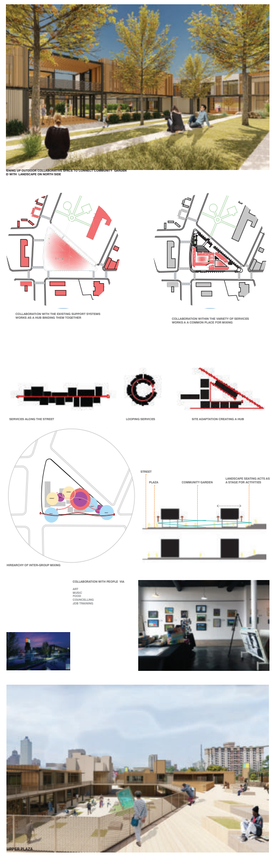


Figure 97 Presentation Board—Collaborate

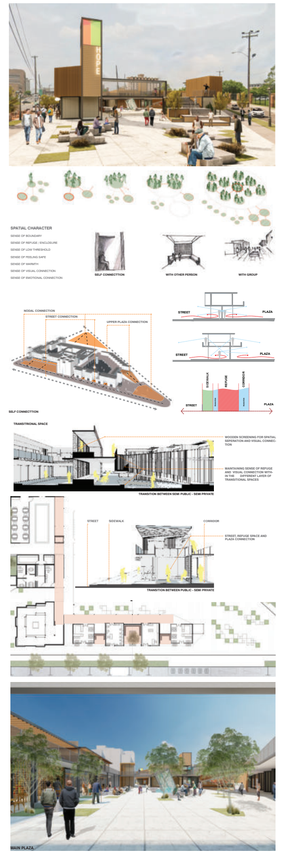


Figure 98 Presentation Board—Connect

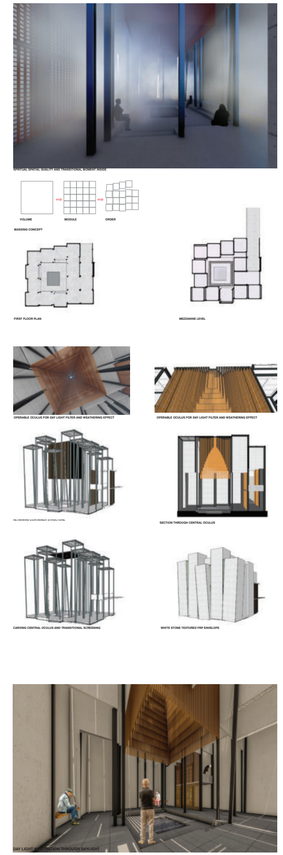


Figure 99 Presentation Board—Contemplate

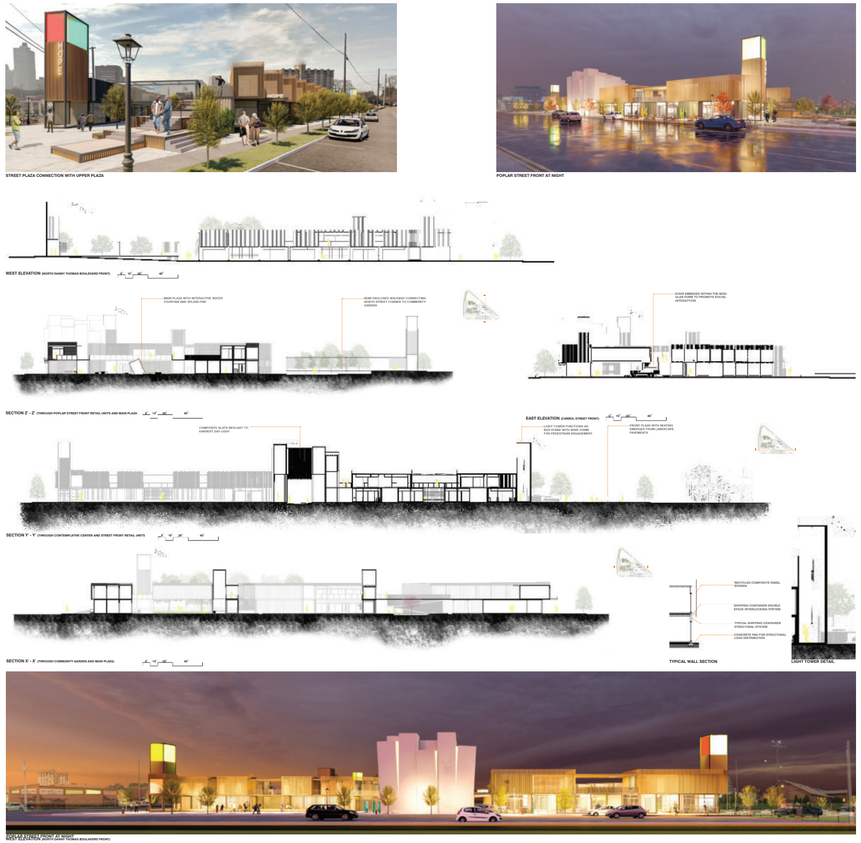


Figure 100 Sections and Elevations Boards

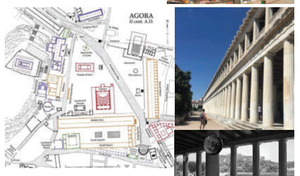
Figure 101 Floor Plans and Site Axon Boards

Pati
Kathmandu Valley

A small, public, open-air pavilions providing shelter from the rain and sun, and a place to meet, eat and participate in community activities.
Located in almost all major street intersections, community squares and city squares.

Stoa
Agora, Athens

A covered walkway or portico, commonly for public use.
Early stoas were open at the entrance with columns, usually of the Doric order, lining the side of the building; they created a safe, enveloping, protective atmosphere



Boxpark
Dubai, UAE

Breathing new life into the city, Boxpark is an urban lifestyle destination in Dubai offering a selection of unique retail experiences and quirky dining concepts from around the world in a unique setting to appeal to the city's eclectic community.

Meath Court Hope Garden
West London

The whole design is for a temporary use; it has a 7-year site use, at which point the units will be taken to another site (the current agreement is for a 25 day dismantle of the site to completely remove the buildings and the services).

The containers themselves each have a specific number and log book, which allows future reuse and flexibility of the accommodation to be moved together in the future (this helps with logistics and turn around time in the future)

Figure 102 Precedent Study Boards

Refugee Camp Community Center
Spinelli, Germany

The project is about creating a pleasant place within the sadness of the refugee camp and activating the potential of the inhabitants at the same time.
It was designed and planned by a group of 18 students of the Faculty of Architecture and Urban Design Universität Kaiserslautern from April to August 2016 under supervision of the departments of Timber Construction

STAR APARTMENTS
LA, CA

The new Star Apartments contain the six stories of 102 units of permanent supportive housing for formerly homeless people in downtown Los Angeles.
Within the building are three spatial zones stacked into one mass: a public health clinic on the first floor, a communal and wellness program on the second level, and four terraced floors of supportive residential programs at the top level.
The building has an on-site medical clinic, Health and Wellness Center, and the new headquarters of the LA County Department of Health Services' (DHS).

CARVER APARTMENTS
LA, CA

The project's 97 units provide supportive housing for formerly homeless elderly and disabled residents of downtown in order to help them live independently and safely.
The apartment's six-story circular form looks like a spiraling shape and has a private courtyard in the building's center. The courtyard can provide natural lighting and views of each unit in all directions.

The project is a good example of how good social housing design can improve poor people's lives. Adjacent to kitchens, a "medical and social service space," and a "medical and social service gallery," LA creating an interactive network of communities connected to each unit and to the city as a whole. The apartments not only provide a safe and healthy place for private living and protection from the rain from which to grow. According to Mike Alvidrez, an executive director of the trust, people can discover "the therapeutic value of good design" LA in the apartments.

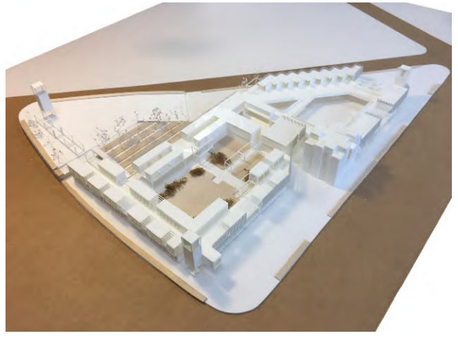
SHIPPING CONTAINER

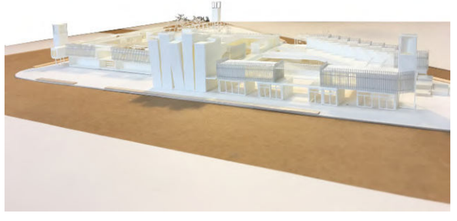
Prefab Module
Sustainable
Transformative
Universal

Unique
Economical

Figure 103 Final Defense Gallery Setup

Figure 104 Final Defense Presentation





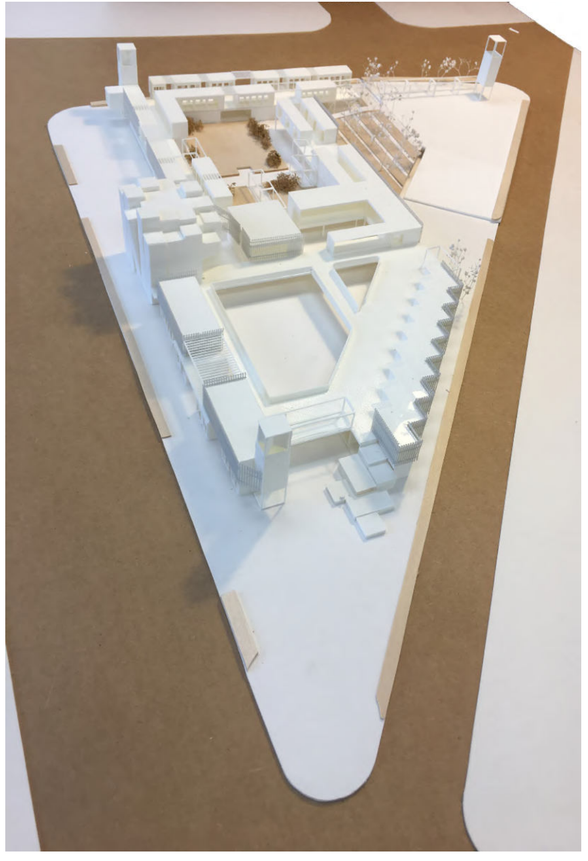


Figure 105 Overall Site Model

Figure 106 Contemplative Center Detail Model

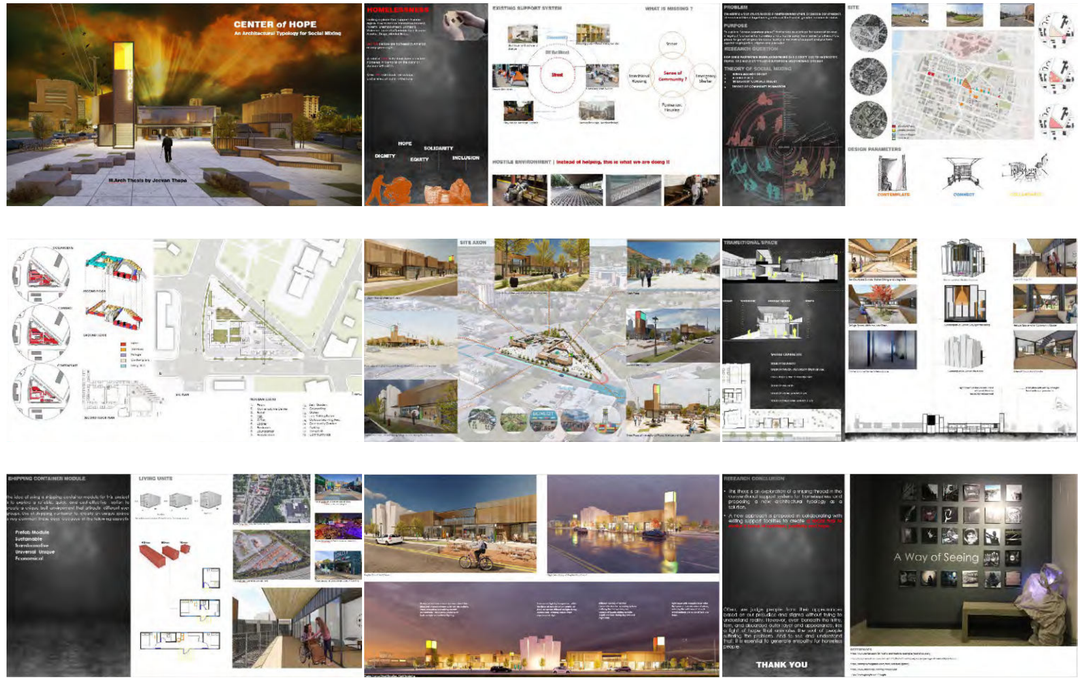


Figure 107 Research Summary Presentation

APPENDIX 2: PROCESS PIECE

HAVE YOU EVER FELT INVISIBLE?

The idea of this process piece is to bring the invisible soul of a person to the forefront, to compel the viewers to think deeply about the problem and people in the state of homelessness (figures 108 and 109) We are so used to seeing people in the state of homelessness in tattered clothes, sometimes with a sign standing, sometimes pushing a shopping cart on the street, or beside abandoned buildings, that our mind has developed a subconscious sense to ignore them.

Often we judge people from their appearances based on our prejudice and associated stigma without trying to understand their reality. So this process piece tries to reflect the idea that even beneath the filthy, torn, and discarded outer layer and appearance, lies a light of hope that animates the soul of people suffering. It is essential to generate a sense of empathy and humanity to see beyond the stereotype of a stigmatized group of people.

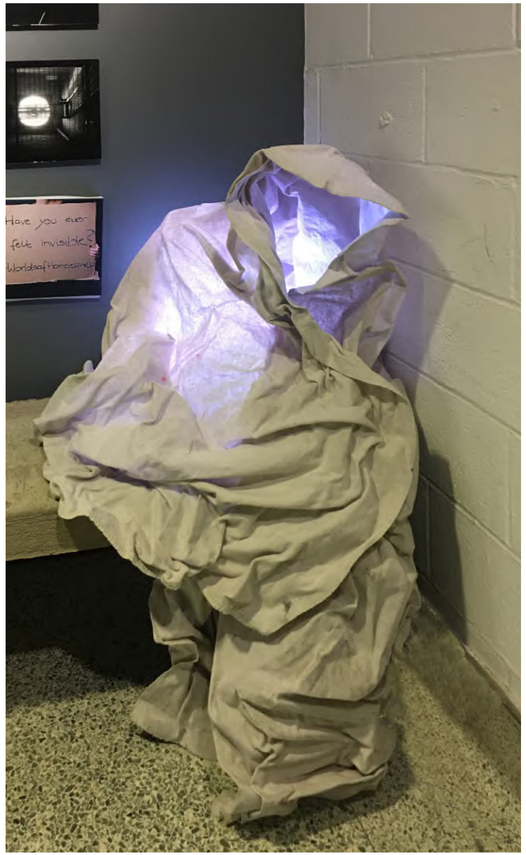


Figure 108 Process Piece—Invisible Soul

Figure 109 Process Piece—"A Way of Seeing"