

# TOM HU

*Architecture Portfolio 2026*



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|    |                                                                                   |            |
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Tom Hu

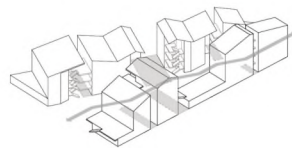
## 01

### VERN-NAC-U-LAR

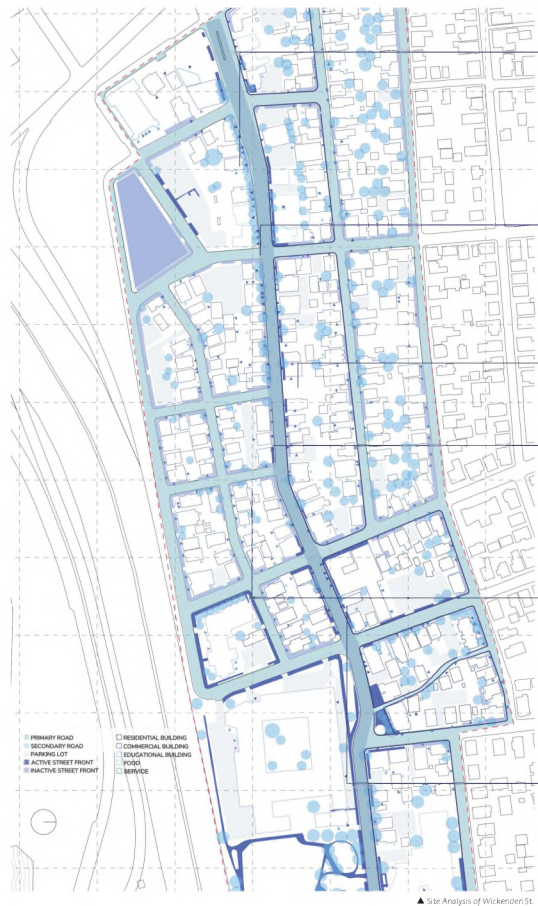
*Design Studio: Vernacular*  
*RISD/Partner: Nancy Ruonan Wang/Spring 2025*  
*Instructor: Charlotte Lipsitz*

Located on Wickenden Street in Providence, the project situates the design within the neighborhood's defining spatial patterns.

The interplay of side and front entry points that generate flexible, vibrant in-between spaces; the rhythm of active and inactive street fronts that shape a dynamic pedestrian experience; and the varied "missing teeth" between buildings that accommodate both shared and private programs together establish the neighborhood's evolving vernacular. Collectively, these conditions reveal how urban life unfolds along Wickenden Street and frame a new expression of the city's vernacular.



VERN-AC-U-LAR



▲ Site Analysis of Wickenden St.



▲ Private commercial staircase access



▲ Active street front with organized landscaping



▲ Main entrance and parking



▲ Shared public programming



▲ Shared residential main entrance



▲ Public facade pushed to street front



▲ Side / Back Entryway Analysis



▲ Section Analysis of Wickenden St. City Grid

From our research on Wickenden Street, we identified 3 main spatial patterns:



▲ Varied sizes and types of "missing teeth" (gaps between buildings) result in diverse applications of shared or non-shared programs.

▲ Side entry points and front entry points create flexibility and enable vibrant in-between spaces between buildings.

▲ Active and inactive street fronts shape a dynamic pedestrian experience and reflect the different programs of adjacent buildings.





▲ Ground Floor Plan

① Point-load cores allow dual access and side entries, maximizing circulation and providing a buffer zone between the public and residential programs. This leaves space in between units as social gathering spaces

② The extension of the balcony and spaces in front of each unit allows opportunities for different usage, giving the building a dynamic "street fronts".

③ Programmatic variation in the size and function of the gaps between buildings allows each "missing tooth" to serve a unique communal or private purpose.



▲ Physical Units Model



▲ 4th Floor Plan

This creates different types of missing teeth: The public missing teeth (serving as circulation and utility spaces to support the main program) and The Residential Missing Teeth (serving as a shared entryway and communal gathering space)





▲Folded Building Section A

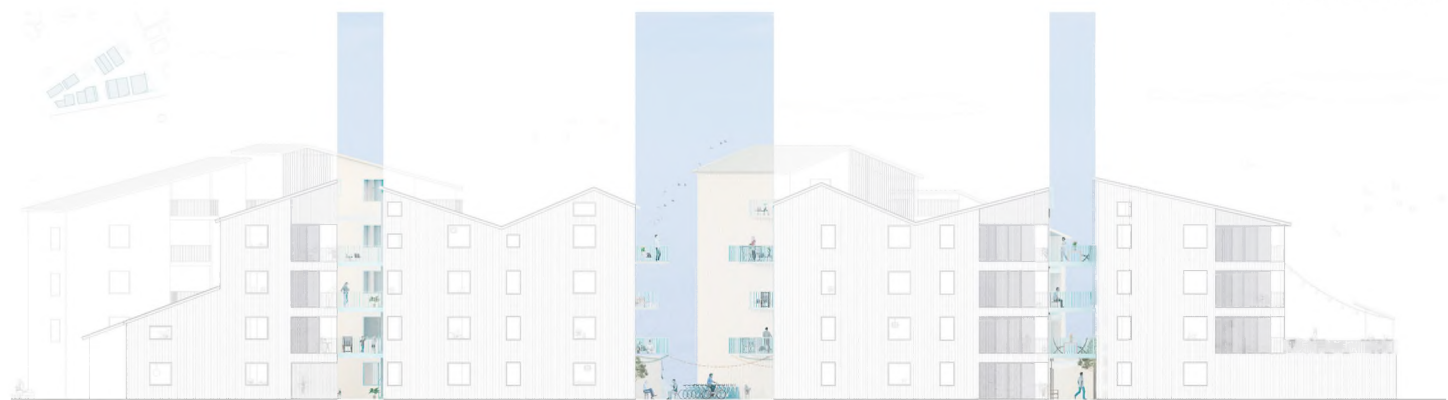


▲Folded Building Section B





▲ North Elevation Highlighting Missing Teeth



▲ South Elevation Highlighting Missing Teeth



▲ Model 1' x 1/8"

We translated these patterns into three core design strategies to create a lively and engaging community that embodies the spirit of Wickenden Street on our site. This defines a "New Vernacular" for the providence neighborhood.



## 02

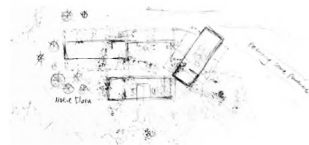
### Taking Care of Business

*Advanced Studio: Taking Care of Business*  
 RISD/Partner: Morris Lin, Bryn Stappeler/Spring 2024  
 Instructor: Aaron Tobey

What future shape will organizations of architectural production take? How can we reimagine the architecture design process?

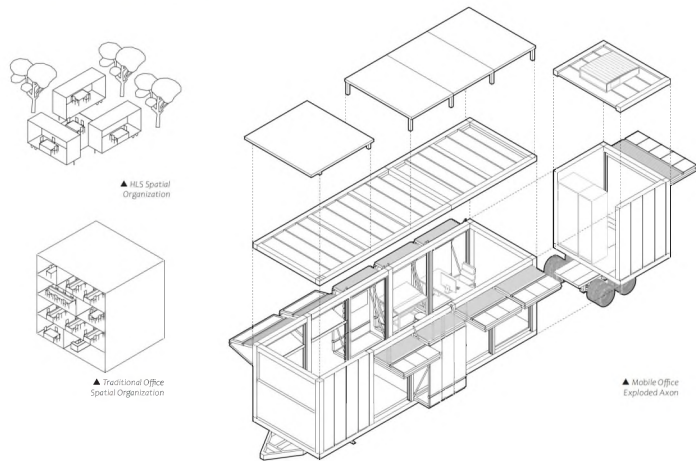
At HLS, we pride ourselves on our exceptionally immersive architectural design process. We prioritize site presence throughout the architect's journey, fostering communication between the environment, client, and each other. Our mission is to reimagine traditional architecture office work into an interactive on site experience.

HLS specializes in residential architecture for private construction and estate development firms, with a strong expertise in exploring off-grid potentials for project sites.



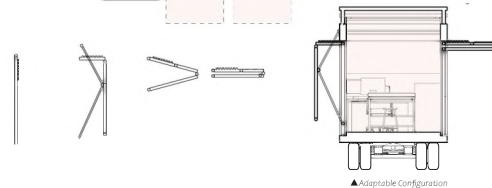
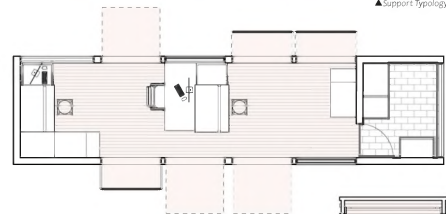
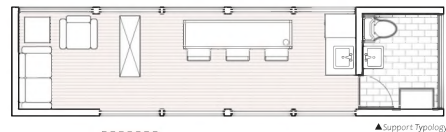
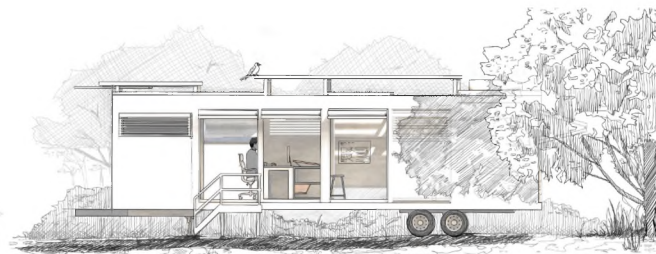


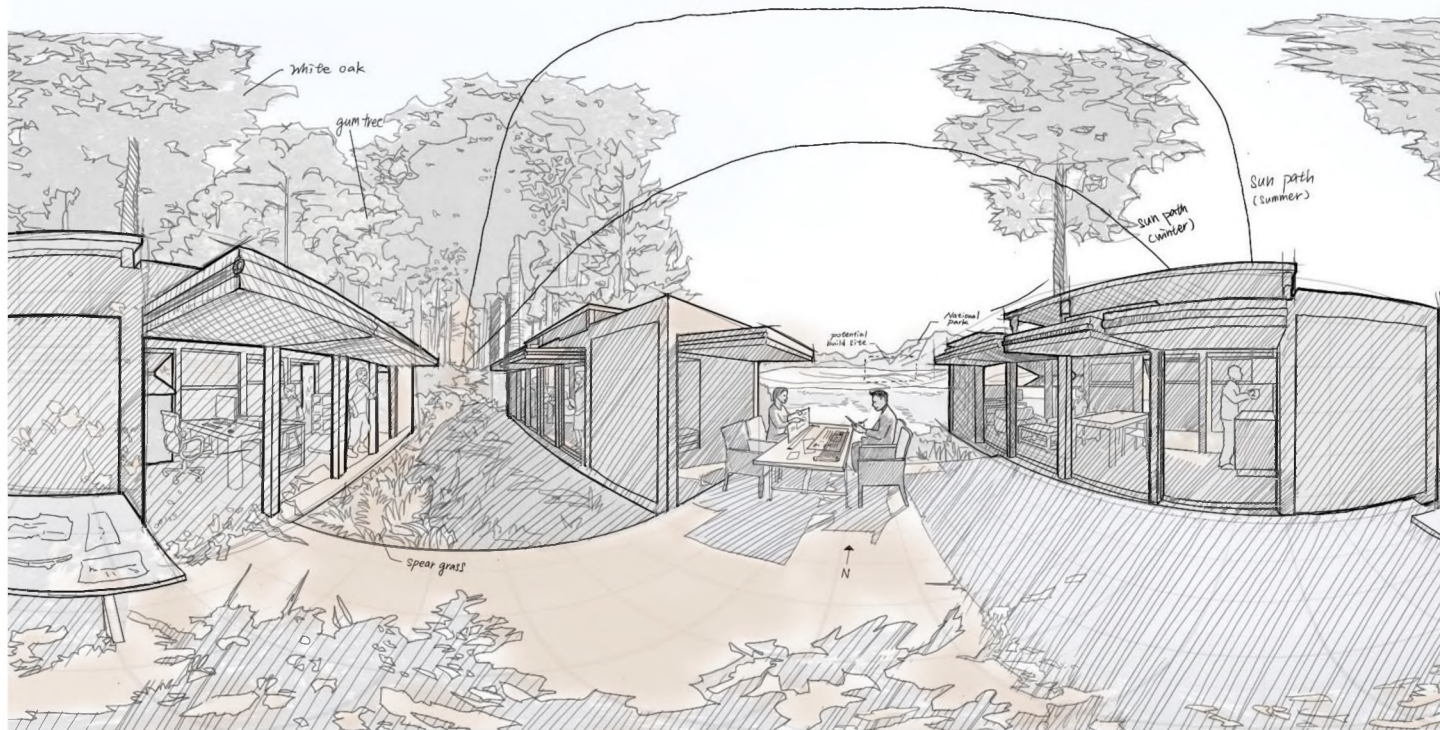
“Founded in Perth, Australia, we prioritize site presence throughout the architect’s journey, fostering communication between the environment, client, and each other.”



## Mobile Office Design

The mobile office layout utilizes operable and solid walls to create a balance between permeable and non-permeable spaces. Permeable areas feature triple-segmented operable walls with glazing and louvers, allowing for shaded zones, natural light, ventilation, and full enclosure as needed. The non-permeable space serves as a utility room, efficiently integrated with the archiving system for seamless equipment and document exchange.





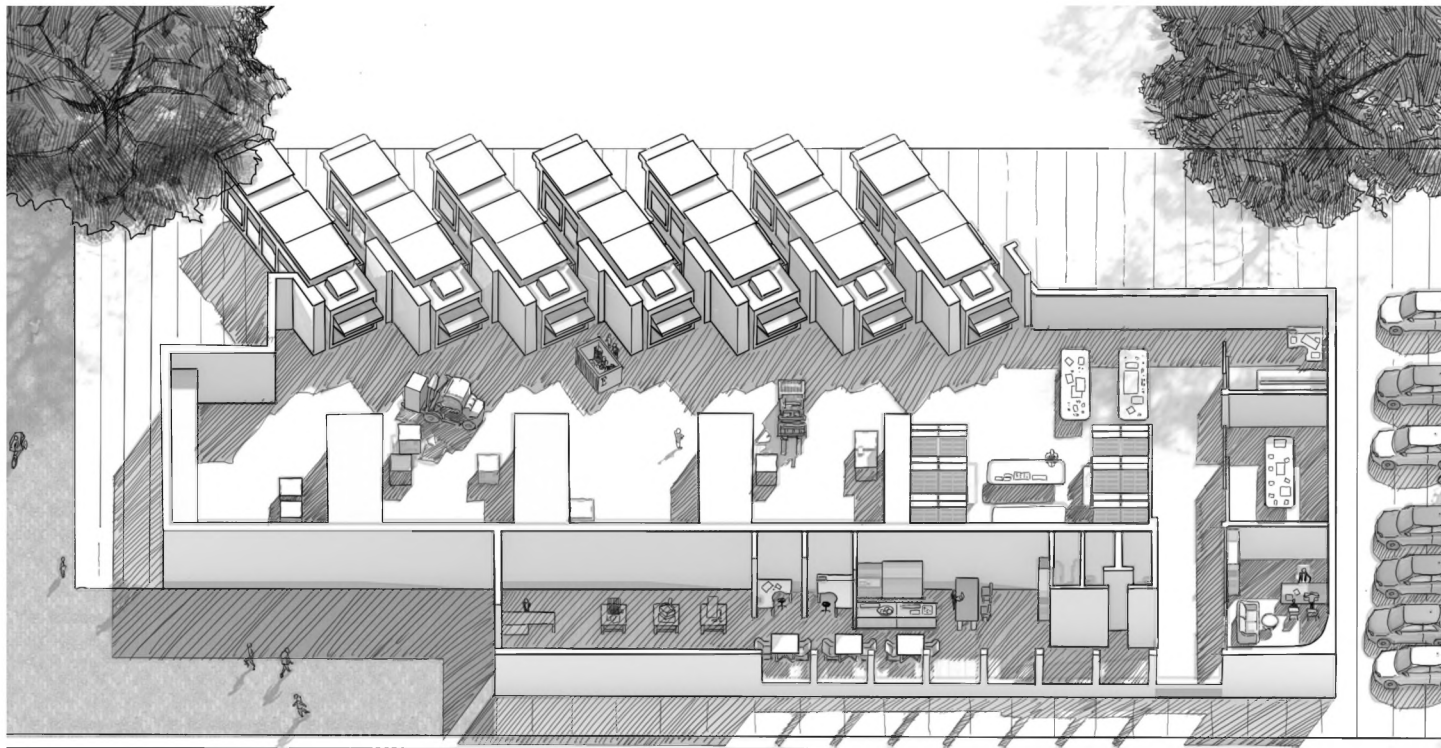
## Documenting Design

### *Stereographic projection panoramas*

Site presence provides the opportunity for architects to explore tactile and traditional methods of design, documenting through seeing, drawing, and foraging rather than lifeless photos. Our unique approach to stereographic drawing allows us to convey hand-drawn conditions, designs, and annotations through virtual reality, bridging traditional illustration with advanced digital experiences.



▲ In Person Perspectives in VR

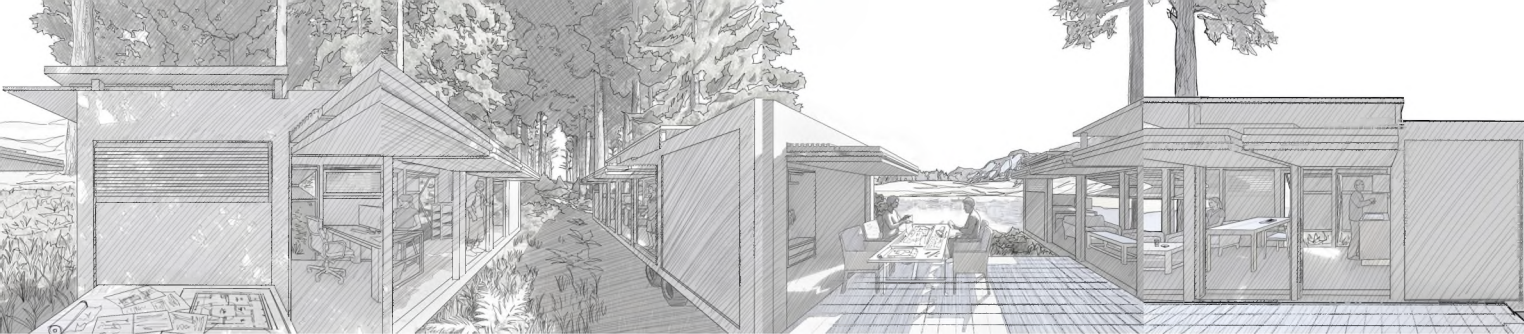


▲ Main Office  
Axon

## 01 Rollout Phase

*Mobile offices are stacked and deployed from the main office to the project site*

The design incorporates traditional warehouse organization to effectively support our designers' workflow and mobile office rollouts. Once a trailer arrives back from the site, all equipment is unloaded and brought over to our warehousing section. All documentation and on site materials are recorded and archived for future reference.



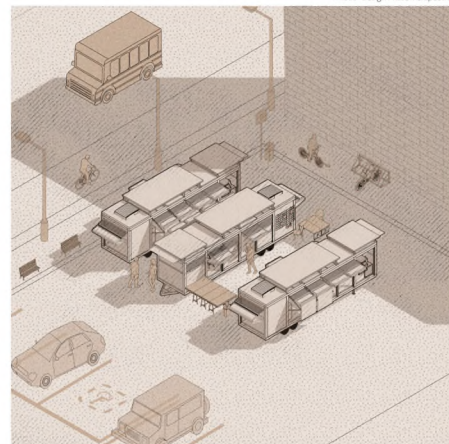
▲ 360° Design Phase Perspective



▲ Collaborative Design Typology



▲ Adaptive Landscape Typology



▲ Urban Pop-up Typology

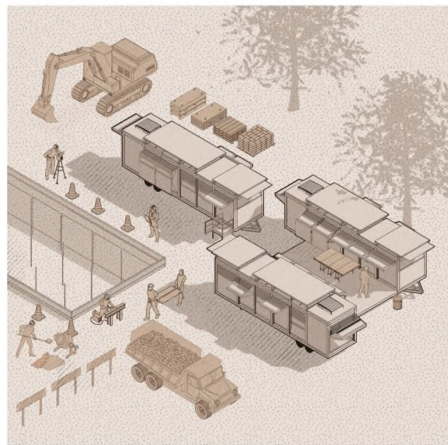
## 02 Design Phase

*Office typologies are arranged on site for design*

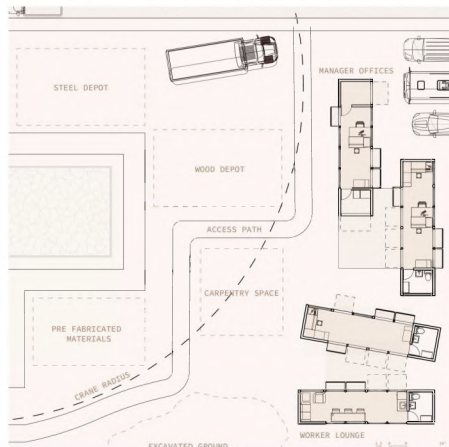
The arrangement of a functional design studio enhances the understanding of the site's architectural potential, directly informing the architects' design process. This tactile process enhances engagement and immersion, fostering a deeper exchange of ideas between the environment, architects and clients.



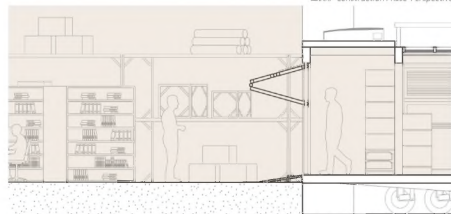
▲ 360° Construction Phase Perspective



▲ Construction Typology



▲ Construction Organization



▲ Archiving Detail



▲ Archiving Plan

### 03 Construction Phase

*Office typologies convert for construction*

Trailers are re-called and arranged for contracting, managing, and construction teams. Meetings, documentation processes within construction management, and resting spaces are formed. Creating a comfortable space is essential for facilitating effective and organized communication.

### 04 Recall Phase

*Trailers return for project handoff and documentation.*

Once a trailer arrives back from the site, all equipment is unloaded and recalled to the warehouse. All documentation and on site materials are recorded and archived for future reference.



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## 03

### Straw - Bale - Office

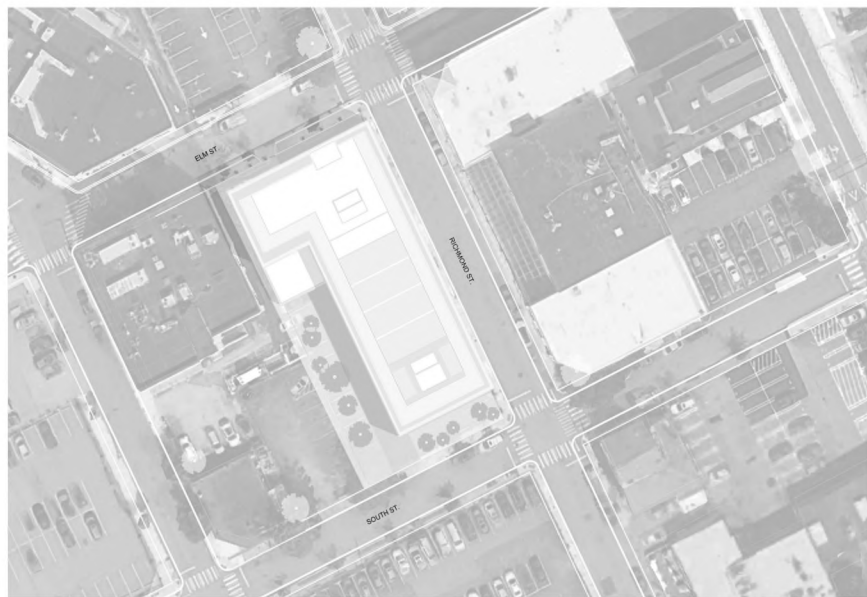
*Design Studio: Building Assembly & Systems Design  
RISD/Partner: Kaimei Zhu, Michel Song/Fall 2025  
Instructor: Laura Briggs, Ryan McCaffrey*

This project proposes a three-story straw bale office building in Providence, Rhode Island, defined by a hung wall system that allows each floor to cantilever independently.

The thick walls and increasing gap created by these cantilevers produces transformative changes in utility and spatial applications as the building rises. The ground floor is organized into two zones, separating public-facing spaces from building utilities, while the upper floors accommodate two tenant offices per level. The design integrates a high-performance straw bale envelope with a fully code-compliant structural system, life safety strategies, coordinated HVAC strategy, and site-responsive water management. Together, these systems address local climate conditions while demonstrating the viability of straw bale construction in a contemporary urban, multi-story context.



Straw-Bale Office



▲ 297 Richmond Street

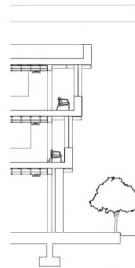


▲ East Elevation / A Street Showing Shading

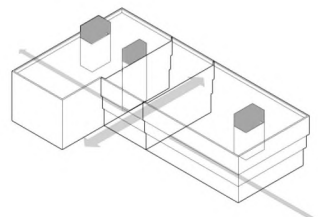
## Reimagining Coworking Space

How can multi-tenants, adjacency, and dynamic working spaces be better integrated into office architecture? Could co-working to emerge organically and enable the building to continuously evolve alongside its occupants?

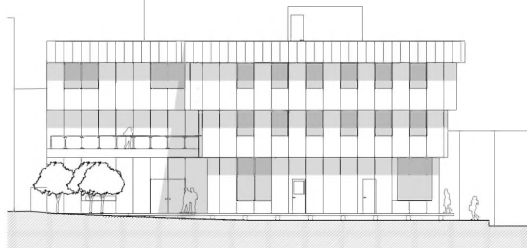
This approach allows the building to adapt over time. Because co-working is embedded within the architecture rather than imposed as a program, different tenants can appropriate these shared zones in multiple ways



▲ Evolving Spaces



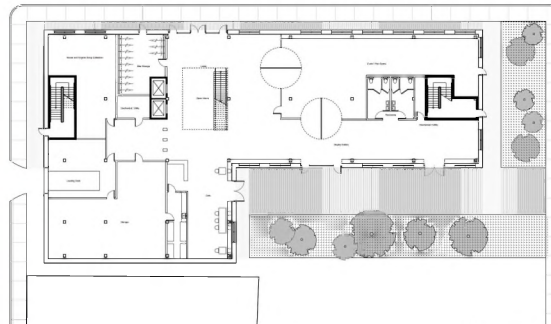
▲ Concept Diagram



▲ West Elevation / B Street Showing Courtyard



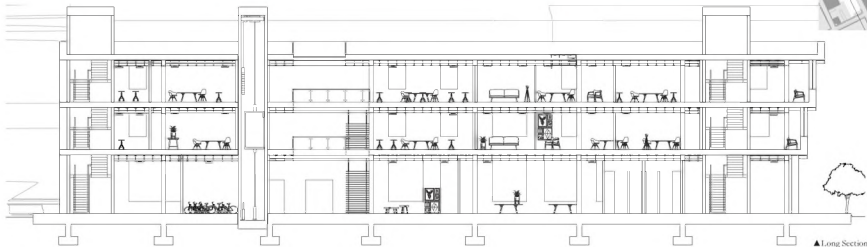
▲ Lobby Render



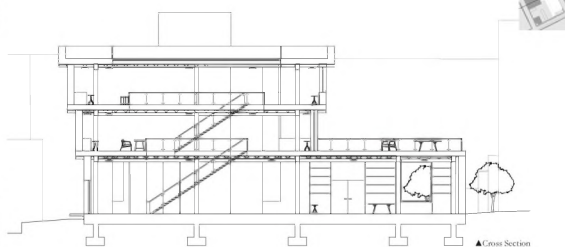
▲ Ground Floor Plan



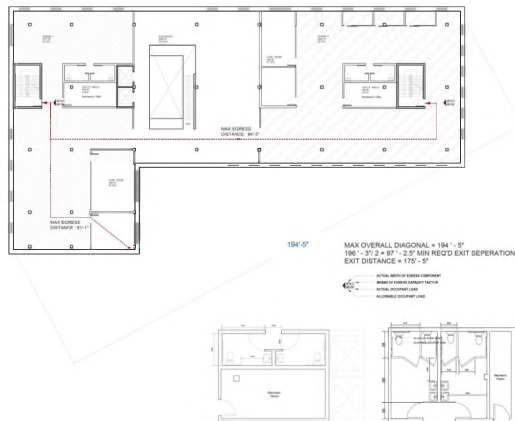
▲ 3rd Floor Plan



▲ Long Section



▲ Cross Section

[illegible]

- 
- ▲ Panelized Strawbale Assembly

- 
- ▲ Hong Facade and Cantilever Structural System

ROOF ASSEMBLY (EXT. TO INT.):

- Growth Media, 5", R 1.25
- Filter Fabric, 0.5", R 0.05
- Drainage Layer, 1", R 0.25
- Rigid Insulation, 13", R 74
- Concrete Roof Decking 2.5", R 2.5

TOTAL ROOF: R 76

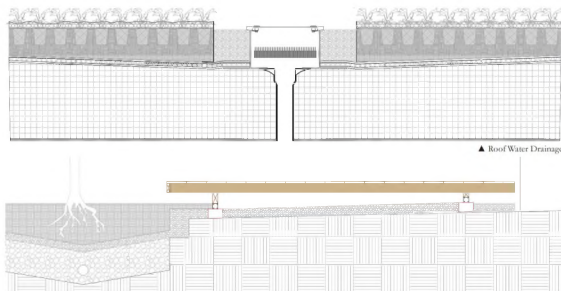
WINDOW:

- Triple Glazed
- Fixed
- U-Value: 0.26
- Window to Wall Ratio: 20%
- Solar Heat Gain Coefficient: 0.4

WALL ASSEMBLY (EXT. TO INT.):

- CLT Cladding, 0.75", R 0.94
- OSB, 0.75", R 0.35
- Strawbale, 6", R 60
- Gypsum Plaster, 0.5", R 0.45

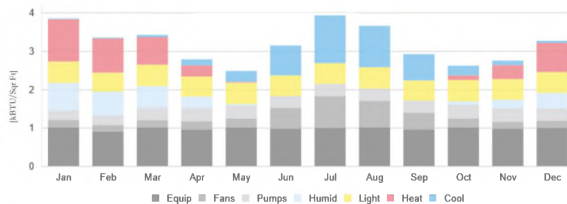
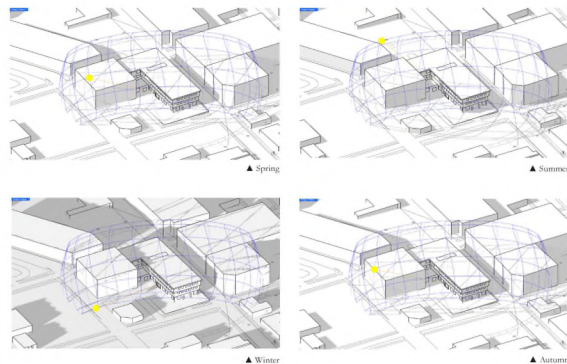
TOTAL WALL: R 61.44



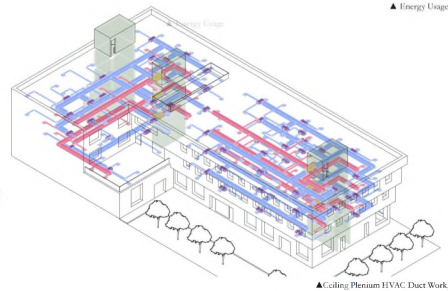
▲ Enclosure Details

|              |    |
|--------------|----|
| Site EIR     | 38 |
| Op. Carbon   | 18 |
| Energy Cost  | 2  |
| 58%          |    |
| Baseline EIR | 90 |

▲ Ground Water Drainage



▲ Energy Usage



▲ Ceiling Plenum HVAC Ductwork



## 04

### Interlocking Fragments

*Design Studio: Urban Ecologies  
RISD/ Partner: Kaiwei Zhu/ Fall 2024  
Instructor: Manuel Cordero Alvarado*

This project rests in a forgotten corner of New Bedford, severed from the city by a towering overpass. Empty factories and a neglected port line wide, unmarked roads, while high walls embody the quiet caution of those within. As architects, we read the site as a space that has been fragmented. Pieces of programs of varying densities create spaces that are voided, dangerous, yet poses an exciting architectural opportunity to reconstruct this element of fragmentation for interstitial activities.

By starting with single townhouses that gently open outward, we aim to dissolve the isolation, inviting connection interlocked across multiple scales and breathing life back into this secluded landscape.



## New Bedford Iconic Landmarks:



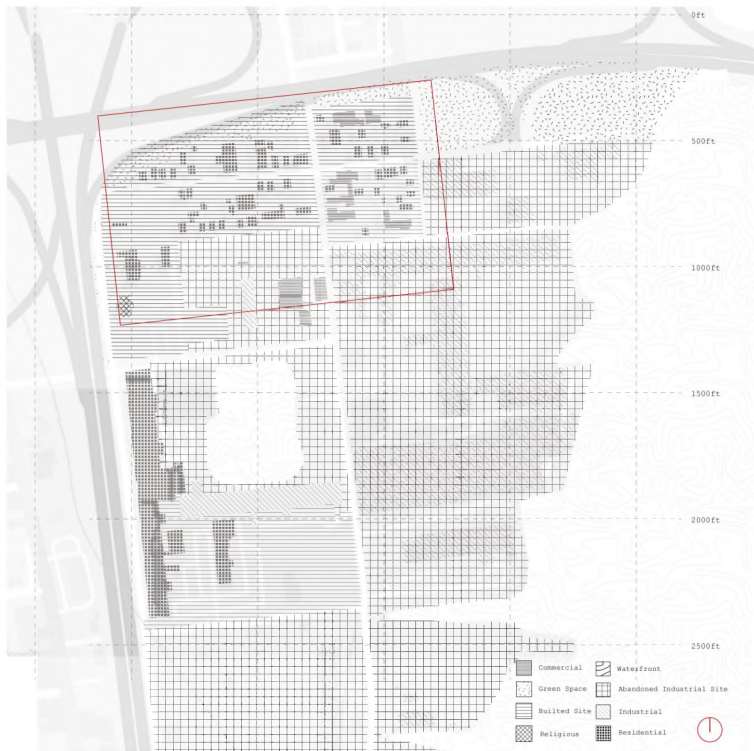
Abandoned Industrial Buildings



Vacant land



Abandoned Harbor



▲ New Bedford Site Plan

Our research and numerous site visits have revealed that this part of New Bedford resonates with an intense sense of abandonment. This feeling is woven not only into the visible—abandoned factories, empty lots, and the remnants of an old port—but also into subtle details of urban design. Enclosed by two major highways that act as towering walls, the community feels boxed in, with residents often confined to compact, affordable units where connections remain sparse. Fences that mark boundaries further intensify an atmosphere of caution and isolation.

Through small-scale, thoughtful design interventions, our project seeks to bring warmth to personal spaces, dissolving barriers and nurturing a renewed sense of safety and belonging in this isolated landscape.





Building on the basic form of the townhouse, we designed mixed use / residential typologies, with a distinct third space that accommodates diverse social needs. Its design features two sides with programmatic flexibility and negotiable spaces in between depending on the residential / business requirements. This configuration honors the local custom of multi-family housing and small businesses within one structure, while the buffer zones ensure ample privacy between households.

These units are lead by two major components, the utility core (highlighted in red), housing wet walls and staircases and the shared space (transparent corridor connecting the two sides), creating an internal dialogue between residents and community.

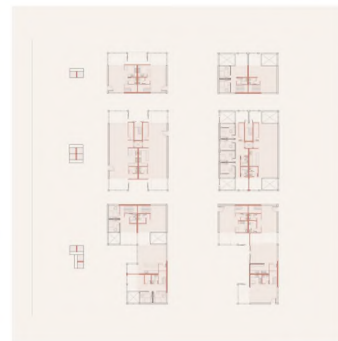
▲ Interior Rendering



▲ Exterior Rendering



▲ Unit Model



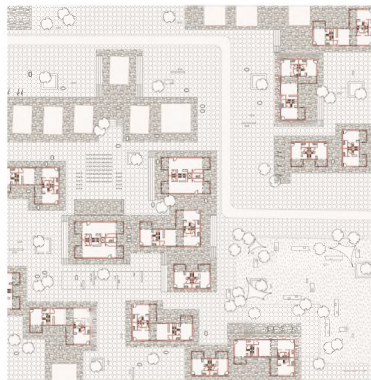
▲ Plan Typologies



▲Neighborhood Section



▲Unit Scale



▲Neighborhood Scale



▲Site Scale



▲Model Scales

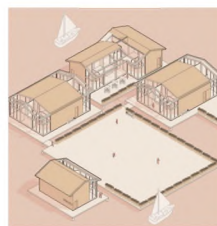
At a community scale, by thoughtfully arranging these units into clusters of shared spaces, the design creates adaptable areas for larger communal activities: lectures, reading corners, temporary service centers, and more. This interconnected growth spreads like a web, forming a supportive network that gradually dissolves individual barriers and fosters a unified, resilient community.



▲Transparent corridor interventions



▲Vehicle and Pedestrian Circulation



▲Rising sea level typologies



▲Shaded gathering spaces between communities



## 05

### Professional Projects

*HOK Chicago - 2025*

*Design Distill - 2024*

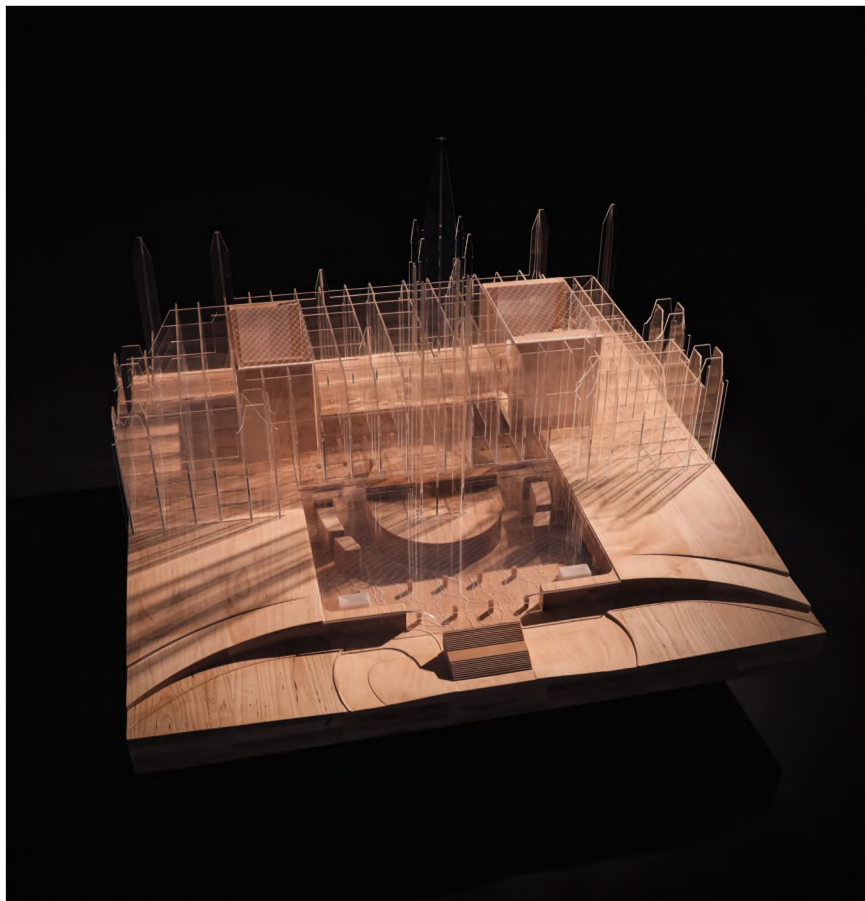
*B+ARC - 2025 - 2026*

#### HOK:

Built nearly a century ago following the fire that destroyed the original Parliament building, Centre Block houses Canada's Senate, House of Commons, and Library of Parliament. This model represents the design of the underground Visitor Welcome Centre. Entering beneath the Vaux Bridge, visitors pass through a security mezzanine before arriving at the main hall, which connects to the North Gallery and the East, West, and Central courtyards. The model emphasizes the original heritage building integrated with key architectural gestures of the project, framing the visitor experience as a convergence of Sky, Land, and Water.

#### Design Distill:

Located approximately 17 miles northwest of Columbus, Ohio, the Metro Center district in Dublin, Ohio is undergoing a transformation from a suburban office park into a vibrant mixed-use destination. Working with Design Distill, I produced architectural visualizations supporting the master plan developed by Sasaki in collaboration with the City of Dublin. The imagery illustrates the district's shift toward a more dynamic urban environment across different seasons.

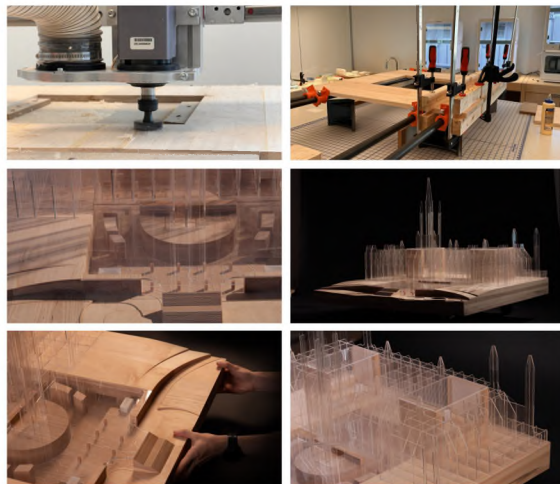


## Centre Block Rehabilitation Government of Canada

*Internship  
HOK Chicago/Summer 2025*

This model of Centre Block represents the design of the underground Visitor Welcome Centre. Entering beneath the Vaux Bridge, visitors pass through a security mezzanine before arriving at the main hall, which connects to the North Gallery and the East, West, and Central courtyards. The model emphasizes the original heritage building integrated with key architectural gestures of the project, framing the visitor experience as a convergence of Sky, Land, and Water.

Cross Laminated Soft Maple, Acrylic, PLA  
36" x 38" x 24"



## Redevelopment Visualization - Dublin, Ohio

*Internship  
Design Distill/Summer 2024  
Client: Sasaki*



## BEB Archive

Podcast Interviewer / Editor  
ALIAS Affiliated Publication / Podcast  
RISD 2025 - 2026

The BEB Archive is a Publication and Podcast series featuring interviews with RISD Architecture Alumni who are shaping new directions in their design careers. This effort is dedicated to the students, alumni, and faculty of RISD Architecture to inspire new ways one can navigate, pivot, and creatively excel in the field of Architecture by learning from the stories of our esteemed alumni.

This was made possible in collaboration with a team of editors and co-presidents to network, design, record, edit, market, and manufacture the resources and materials required to publish these alumni stories.

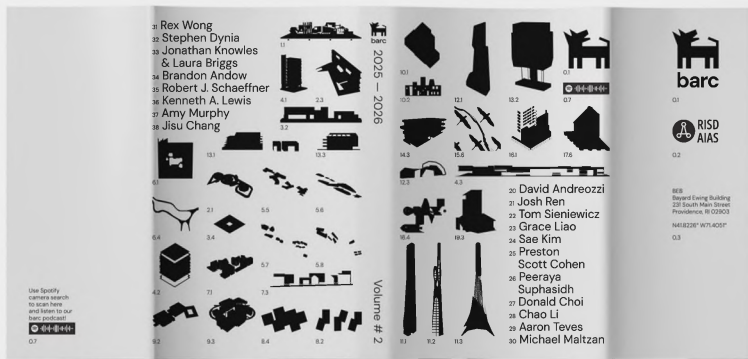
Use Spotify  
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barc podcast!  
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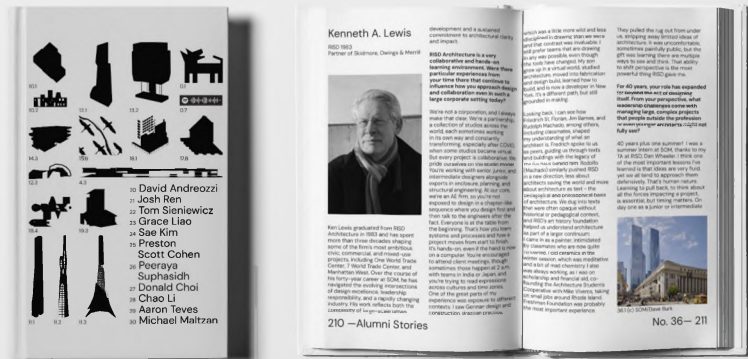
▲ Podcast Episode Icons



▲ Sample Alumni Article



▲ Book Jacket



▲ Cover Page

▲ Sample Alumni Article

