2013
RUDY BRUNER AWARD
PROJECT DATA

RUDY
BRUNER
AWARD
FOR URBAN
EXCELLENCE

PROJECT DATA

Please answer questions in space provided. Answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

Project Name The Steel Yard Location Providence, RI

Owner The Steel Yard (non-profit organization)

Project Use(s) Work space for arts-based non-profit to conduct instruction and studio space for metal arts, glass, ceramics

Project Size 3.5 acres Total Development Cost $1.2 MM

Annual Operating Budget (if appropriate) $526,000 (2012)

Date Initiated 2002 Percent Completed by December 1, 2012 100%

Project Completion Date (if appropriate) September 2010

Attach, if you wish, a list of relevant project dates

Application submitted by:

Name Mark Klopfer Title Principal

Organization Klopfer Martin Design Group

Address 214 Cambridge Street, Suite 500 City/State/Zip Boston, MA 02114

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Email mklopfer@klopfermartin.com Weekend Contact Number (for notification): 781.910.8533

Perspective Sheets:

	Organization	Name	Telephone/Email
Public Agencies	City of Providence, Arts & Tourism	Lynne McCormack	401-680-5759
Architect/Designer	Klopfer Martin Design Group	Mark Klopfer	617-227-2560
Developer	The Steel Yard	Drake Patten	401-273-7101
Professional Consultant	Morris Beacon Engineering	Jon Ford	401-451-5123
Community Group	Monohasset Mills	Julia Gold	401-743-4630
Other	Board of Directors, The Steel Yard	Peter Gil Case	401-453-1300

Please indicate how you learned of the *Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence*. (Check all that apply).

☐ Direct Mail ☐ Email ☐ BrunerLoeb Forum ☐ Previous RBA entrant ☐ Previous RBA Selection Committee Member

☐ Professional Organization (please specify) _____

☐ Newsletter/Magazine - online or print (please specify) _____

☑ Other (please specify) through teaching colleague

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Signature Date

Project Data – List of Relevant Project Dates

Early 2001 - Property purchase by partners Nick Bauta and Clay Rockefeller (as milhaus, llc.) and non-profit formation begun, Phase I Assessment

November 2001 Phase II assessment

Mid 2002 Property sale completed
October 2002 The Steel Yard incorporated
December 2002 Settlement Agreement Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM)/milhaus, llc.

April 2003 Groundwater Investigation
May 2003 Landscape Cap design begins
July 2003 Remedial Action Work Plan completed (RIDEM approved)

March 2005 Percolation tests
August 2005 Site placed on National Register of Historic Places
September 2006 First round of cap design bids due

Fall 2006 EPA Brownfield Clean-up grant awarded & Yard by the Foot Campaign launch

May 2007 The Steel Yard buys land from milhaus, llc. with RIDEM approval
July 2007 Work begins on Master Plan

2008 RIDEM regrant partially matches EPA funds

July 2009 Second round of cap bids due
August 2009 Steel Yard negotiates loan with Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation
September 2009 Construction begins

August 2010 Construction completed
September 2010 Ribbon cutting

2013 RUDY BRUNER AWARD **PROJECT AT-A-GLANCE**

RUDY BRUNER AWARD

FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

PROJECT AT-A-GLANCE

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NOTE: This sheet and a selected image will be sent to the Committee in advance.

Project Name The Steel Yard

Address 27 Sims Avenue City/State/ZIP Providence, RI 02909

1. Give a brief overview of the project.

In 2002, the founders of The Steel Yard purchased a vacant steel fabrication facility in an industrial Providence neighborhood as a home for their nascent arts based non-profit. Faced with an expensive and comprehensive brownfield cleanup to allow the site to be used as envisioned, the Steel Yard had to negotiate environmental requirements while also leveraging limited funds to meet programmatic needs and leave room for the organization's future growth. To do so, this still-young organization undertook a comprehensive process of master and strategic planning to ensure the final project would meet as many of the organization's long-term goals as possible.

Landscape architects Klopfer Martin Design Group provided leadership and vision in this process. Under their guidance, and in partnership with stakeholders, the Steel Yard was able to marry innovation within a tight project budget. The final project both met the preservation standards required of a National Historic Register site and managed to lead by example in its innovative design for passive, on-site storm water management.

Today, the Steel Yard offers up a reclaimed urban landscape that represents the neighborhood's industrial history while also offering a campus for industrial arts education, workforce training, and small-scale manufacturing. In addition, the Steel Yard is a lead partner in the intentional reclamation of Providence's "Industrial Valley" and serves as a modern, publicly accessible de facto park.

2. Why does the project merit the *Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence*? (You may wish to consider such factors as: effect on the urban environment; innovative or unique approaches to any aspect of project development; new and creative approaches to urban issues; design quality.)

Cities with industrial pasts inherit problematic environmental futures. The Steel Yard's clean up (the process and the outcome) is a showcase of collaborative and regenerative design in a tough environment. As a strong example of placemaking, this project is a publicly-accessible intervention that upends commonly held notions of blighted neighborhoods and shows the potential for real, actively engaged—not simply 'adaptive'—re-use. The Steel Yard's industrial campus for learning embodies the non-profit's mission promise through innovative (and necessarily inexpensive) brownfield remediation, stormwater filtration and reduction, and purposeful design focused on meeting the needs of a growing community organization with a bright future.

The project was tasked with tackling the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management's mandated brownfield cleanup while also creating a memorable, identifiable place. Guided by sustainability and cost-effectiveness goals, the decision was made to retain much of the contaminated soil and manage stormwater on-site despite the regulatory difficulty of meeting these objectives, which could be viewed as at odds with each other. A solution was developed in which much of the contaminated soil was treated with a binder and capped with clean fill or pavement to allow it to remain on site, rather than being exported to become a problem elsewhere. Through a system of bioswales and permeable surfaces, the Steel Yard infiltrates 90% of annual rainfall without employing the new connection to sewers. Accommodating this functionality, while also ensuring that contaminated soil does not leach off-site, involved a process of directing infiltration and controlling its volume. The innovative solution married these issues with success, providing a site that both solved the environmental issues and fosters the Steel Yard's organizational flexibility and growth. For these efforts, the project has been recognized with remediation, environmental, public space-making, and landscape design awards.

2013
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

RUDY BRUNER AWARD FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

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1. Describe the underlying values and goals of the project. What, if any, signifcant trade-offs were required to implement the project?

The Steel Yard acts as a catalyst in the creative revitalization of the industrial valley district of Providence, Rhode Island. In fostering the industrial arts and incubating small business, the non-profit seeks to cultivate an environment of experimentation and a community strengthened by creative networks. – Steel Yard Mission Statement

The enactment of the Steel Yard's mission: "economic revitalization though creative means" involves simple action (teaching people to be makers and doers) combined with a complicated practice philosophy that asks us to apply this practice to all that we do. It is this ability to marry pedagogy with applied community building activities that makes the Steel Yard unique. Whether cleaning up a brownfield, enrolling students in classes, leading summer camps for youth, re-branding neighborhoods through functional public art, or training a future generation of skilled workers; the approach is always aimed at creating systemic change. It is their belief (and increasingly proven experience) that the vernacular knowledge of a community will always remain the key to its recovery and success.

Informed by the Steel Yards philosophy and values, the goals of the project were to 1) create a memorable and flexible place that embodies their mission, 2) engage the site's unique existing structures, 3) utilize best sustainable practices possible within a constrained budget, 4) provide a public landscape to an underserved neighborhood of Providence, and 5) serve as an example to others as to the potential for other local properties to be revitalized in non-traditional ways.

Trade-offs were mostly related to the project's timeline, scope, and, in some cases, to materials choices. In the case of its timeline, it took nearly two years to shepherd the project through the permitting process. This was frustrating, but in many ways set the tone for the project. The Steel Yard was determined to create the right kind of project and they stuck to their plans, in some cases even educating the agencies from which they sought permits. In this, the Steel Yard traded deadlines for quality and the right to be innovative. Additional tradeoffs were made in focusing the scope of this project to the mandated brownfield cleanup of the site due to budget limitations despite the competing need for building improvements. With materials choices, the designers were forced to be flexible and creative in incorporating donated and lower-cost materials to work within the constrained budget. While initially viewed as trade-offs, material choices added to the site's innovative quality as an opportunity to feature uncommon recycled materials (e.g. discarded sheet pile culled from waste of other construction sites and scrap metal bales of bicycles, appliances, and car parts) that became prominent site elements and demonstrate artful use of steel.

2. Briefly describe the project's urban context. How has the project impacted the local community? Who does the project serve? How many people are served by the project?

The Steel Yard is located on the site of the Providence Steel and Iron Company—a century old business that closed its doors in 2001, a victim of the changing economy that left behind empty mills, brownfield sites, and communities of new immigrants with decreasing opportunities for employment. Within this environment, the Steel Yard sits at the convergence of five of Providence's poorest districts, including our immediate 'host' neighborhood of Olneyville, a federally designated Enterprise Community. Characterized by abandoned and contaminated industrial lots, old housing stock and a minimum of green space, the five neighborhoods that surround the Steel Yard have traditionally contributed little to the overall physical and mental health of their residents and workers.

This environment has helped promote vast inequities that can be measured both by standard indicators of poverty, education and health, as well as by those less commonly used, including linguistic isolation and cultural access. A range of serious inequities is most concentrated in the neighborhoods directly served by the Steel Yard, and its work aims to address these areas. In 2012 alone, the Steel Yard served close to 4,500 people thorough programs, workforce training opportunities, and free or low-cost events. The Steel Yard's focus on community redevelopment through an economy built on vernacular creativity is perhaps best exemplified by its Weld to Work program for urban youth, ages 18-24, whose particular demographics places them beyond the embrace of traditional out of and after school opportunities. The Steel Yard works with these youth and a roster of independent artists to design and fabricate one-of-a-kind street amenities that are transforming city and townscapes across Rhode Island.

The Steel Yard has also paved the way in the early renaissance of Providence's "Industrial Valley." A growing group of neighborhood projects have followed the development of The Steel Yard including: Monohasset Mill (equity opportunities for working artists), Box Office (an office complex built out of re-purposed shipping containers), Paul Cuffee School (a developing charter school campus), Butcher Block Mills (shops and studios), Umicore (a 7-billion dollar international company involved in sustainable technology), and most recently, Waterfire Art Center (a public art performance realizing its first home on a brownfield). As the only one of these projects that is currently open to the public, the Steel Yard is a gateway to education about what can happen when environmental challenges and a strong design combine to support and enhance a vibrant community-driven mission.

3. Describe the key elements of the development process, including community participation where appropriate.

The Steel Yard began active fundraising for the project in 2006, and purchased the property from the organization's founders in 2007 along with initiating work on a Master Plan. By the summer of 2009, the organization had made enough headway with permitting and permissions to put the new design out to bid and site work began that September. Including a short winter hiatus, construction was completed in August of 2010.

The Steel Yard worked tirelessly to engage with stakeholders and community stewards while they were developing the final plans for their development of their site. With so many individuals and groups who feel ownership of the non-profit and its mission, this required tenacity and diplomacy. While not all viewpoints could be manifested in the final project as built, the staff, board and designers all agree that a larger than usual demographic was involved in the final product.

Community buy-in was achieved first through a series of focus groups and later, through a number of general-audience open houses where the Steel Yard's constituents could review and comment on the plans. These meetings were conducted in English and Spanish. The Steel Yard also kept its audience updated as the project progressed. The development culminated with a large volunteer event (for planting) and a few months later, with a public celebration and ribbon cutting.

4. Describe the financing of the project. Please include all funding sources and square foot costs where applicable.

Acquisition costs: $1.5 million. As of this writing, the Steel Yard owes only $250,000

Brownfield Clean up: $400,000 EPA Brownfield Clean-up Grant; $199,000 Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation-managed EPA funds and $100,000 of RIEDC Revolving Loan Program loan. $300,000 in founder's initial remediation investment and $100,000 from Steel Yard's private fundraising.

By utilizing recycled and donated materials, employing community efforts for obtaining and planting trees and bioswale vegetation, and minimizing the extent of civil engineering systems for storm water drainage and base course excavation of pavement, landscape construction cost was held to a remarkable $8 per square foot.

5. Is the project unique and/or does it address significant urban issues? Is the model adaptable to other urban settings?

What makes this project unique is not its identity as a cleaned-up brownfield, but rather as a well designed opportunity for community engagement and community service: a place to fulfill an ambitious and critical mission. The integration of engineering with placemaking and the smart use of material and method in the design also make the Steel Yard significant. Throughout the project, uncommon recycled materials are featured as prominent site elements. Permeable pavement and bioswales are employed creatively both as sustainable strategies and as design features. Stringent construction budgets necessitated the deployment of volunteers (192 on planting day alone).

The use of a transformed brownfield site as a public landscape, an active campus and a manufacturing center is a triumph. To date, the Yard has hosted many popular and growing-in-attendance public events as well as educated increasing numbers of individuals each year. In 2011 and 2012, in addition to offering expanded education and training opportunities, the Yard served as a rented or donated venue for music, dance, art markets, movies, weddings, college social events, and a writers' series. The new landscape facilitates these user-driven and volunteer-run opportunities for community engagement and neighborhood development.

The modest budget and strategic delivery of site systems have already begun to serve as a model. In presenting this project to college audiences and interested visitors to Providence over the past two years, city officials, the Steel Yard Executive Director, and designers have heard repeatedly how the project has influenced thesis projects and served as inspiration to similar endeavors across the country.

2013 RUDY BRUNER AWARD DEVELOPER **PERSPECTIVE**

RUDY BRUNER AWARD

FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

DEVELOPER PERSPECTIVE

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This sheet is to be filled out by the person who took primary responsibility for project financing or is a representative of the group which did.

Name Drake Patten | Title Executive Director

Organization The Steel Yard | Telephone (401) 273-7101

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Signature Date

1. What role did you or your company play in the development of this project? Describe the scope of involvement.

I am the Steel Yard's Executive Director, and I serve as its only fundraiser. The Steel Yard's ambitious and costly brownfield clean-up was an unlikely marriage of limited resources and idealistic principles about urban stewardship. As a result, after successfully raising the bulk of our funds through grant writing, and an unusual fundraising campaign, I also became the project manager (we essentially had no choice).

It took the Steel Yard two years to permit our clean-up. This was mostly related to our state's peculiar way of doing business but also due to our conviction that our project needed to be a model for new ways to use a brownfield. With all my Steel Yard hats on at once, I was charged with taking our project through this arduous process. I found myself repeatedly tackling roadblocks with independent research and new ways of arguing our case. Simultaneously, I needed to keep the organization on mission and make sure we continued to raise funds for our day-to-day operations. This unique arrangement was made vastly easier by a willing team of designers, environmental engineers, and contractors and sub-contractors.

This hybrid role of manager, fundraiser and chief executive, while often frustrating, was also quite a blessing. In addition to saving money, it allowed the organization to manage the project carefully and to stay on top of details at a level we would not otherwise have been able to accomplish. It also instigated a powerful level of investment for our organization and our constituents. By building a daily relationship with our contractor and their crew, we, as a client, were able to stay on track and on budget. Most importantly, by having a front row seat to the site's transformation, I was able to work through projected program ideas and concerns while also being given a chance to identify new opportunities and possibilities.

2. What trade-offs or compromises were required during the development of the project?

All in all, we fought trade-offs pretty hard and that decision is clearly at the heart of the project's success. By this, I mean we refused to take the "easy" path to get our permission to begin the project because the alternatives were simply not palatable to us as an organization. We also felt deeply committed to Klopfer Martin Design Group's design because it came out of a very thoughtful and engaged process with our community. So, we stood our ground and argued and educated for two years.

There were minor trade-offs around material choices but we believe those were positive and brought us unexpected support from unexpected places: witness the donation of scrap sheet bale for a retaining wall-a savings of over $40,000 to our bottom line. Organizationally, we certainly struggled with my focus being consumed by the clean-up and with level of personnel resource re-direction this required of my small staff.

3. How was the project financed? What, if any, innovative means of financing were used?

In addition to our successful competition for EPA funds, the Yard was the recipient of Rhode Island EPA funds (as a re-grantee). In addition to the in-kind materials donations discussed above, the Yard bridged the cash gap with our 'Yard by the Foot' Campaign. This unusual fundraising approach "sold" one square foot of the Yard to donors. The campaign materials were printed on one square foot of paper with photo of one square foot of ground pre-cleanup. This was a well-loved approach that allowed people to buy just one ($25) or many (our largest raise single "purchase" was for 200 square feet). This whimsical approach was in keeping with our commitment to operate as a donor-centric organization with philanthropic opportunity for all. While we consider this our most innovative piece of the financing package, perhaps the most important part of the story is when we raised these funds-and that we were able to do so in one of most challenging economic climates any of us have seen. Our success in overcoming that obstacle is a testament to how much buy-in we had for the project and how determined many individuals and groups were to see our success.

4. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of the project?

As the person who wore (and wears) so many hats on this project, I will admit this is a difficult question to answer.

As the fundraiser/project director it remains a disappointment that we never won over our local DEM and that while we have made it easier for innovation in local brownfield clean-ups, that agency has never recognized our project nor seen themselves as part of our success. We pitched a big tent, but we couldn't get them to join us there. We've also set a high design bar for the re-use of industrial landscapes and I truly think that is important to the life of cities.

On the other hand, as the Steel Yard's Executive Director, the aspect that seems the most successful to me is the way in which our project succeeded in creating the campus on which we are doing our important work in local economic development while also inspiring others in our neighborhood, our city and much further afield. I believe that the Steel Yard's determination and uncompromising standards around what we wanted to create- both from a design perspective and in terms of program outcomes-makes others approaching similar challenges feel more confident, more open to possibility.

2013 RUDY BRUNER AWARD ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER **PERSPECTIVE**

RUDY BRUNER AWARD

FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER PERSPECTIVE

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This sheet is to be filled out by a design professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing design, planning, or other services.

Name Mark Klopfer | Title Principal

Organization Klopfer Martin Design Group | Telephone (617) 227-2560

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1. Describe the design concept of this project, including urban design considerations, choice of materials, scale, etc.

Working within a pre-established framework of buildings and gantry cranes, we developed a programmatically flexible landscape that lends a visual identity to the Yard. Formal design moves were driven by operational and conceptual design objectives:

1. Reduce soil disturbance: Following a client directive to keep contaminated soil on-site, ground disturbance was minimized, thereby limiting excess fill housed in on-site landforms. Where possible, pavement was built up from existing grade to eliminate excavation for base courses. A large surface of permeable and non-permeable pavement, 'the carpet,' was placed in the center of the site to serve circulation, event, and outdoor fabrication functions.

2. Reconcile grade displacement: New, higher, pavement grades were integrated with lower finish floor elevations of existing buildings through the introduction of a 'moat' at the perimeter of the 'carpet.' This zone lowered grade at the buildings, and captures, transports, and stores stormwater during rain events as a bioswale.

3. Re-introduce 'Urban Wild' vegetation & habitat: The 'moats' were filled with water-loving plants to filter stormwater and prevent erosion, but more importantly, to establish vegetation where not conflicting with events or fabrication. Landform areas are also planted according to their use—some with turf to allow spectator seating or lounging, and others with sumac and grasses to enclose the main space. Native pioneer and volunteer species were planted, and are expected to re-colonize the site, restoring the abandoned site's existing condition—a leafed oasis in its industrial context.

2. Describe the most important social and programmatic functions of the design.

Exterior spaces include a primary central space (fashioned as a multi-colored paved 'carpet') that allows for individual and group work, staging of large events with audiences of up to several hundred, car rallies, farmer's markets, etc., and whose character defines a sense of place. This is surrounded by secondary work spaces such as interior/exterior spill-out shop spaces, an outdoor foundry, a 'hang-out' space for movie nights and relaxation, and a future visiting artist's studio (each ~1000-2000 sf). Tertiary service spaces include storage for raw materials and finished art pieces, a paved space serving incubator businesses and artists in shipping container studios, and 20 parking spaces. We strove to create both large scale spaces serving great public events, and smaller work and social spaces that serve those who work, teach, learn and live in the neighborhood. For many living nearby, the central landform is their backyard, what the executive director of the Steel Yard describes as 'de-facto public space.'

Throughout all of these spaces the predominant material is steel, suggesting both the site's past, present and future. As a former steel fabrication facility, now serving exploration in "metal arts," we celebrate steel as a material with various types of steel retaining walls, fencing, building cladding and covering, and art objects. Through these elements social spaces are furnished, as critic Robert Campbell describes of the project, "every technical move doubles as a social move." LAM 12/11 p84

3. Describe the major challenges of designing this project and any design trade-offs or compromises required to complete the project.

The challenges of this project were many. Foremost among these were the difficulties of aligning the interests of the various oversight regulators with each other. As part of the Narragansett Bay watershed, the Narragansett Bay Commission required the project to keep and filter as much stormwater on site as possible, and preferred to make no connection to the stormwater sewer.

Providence Steel & Iron was a known brownfield site, primarily from lead painting operations, when purchased in 2001. Environmental remediation standards required the extraction of a small amount of soil with lead contamination higher than 10,000 ppm and some chromium contamination. The remaining contaminated soil was treated with a binder to allow it to remain on site, rather than being exported to become a problem elsewhere. A cap of 12 inches of clean fill or pavement was required across the entire site. Department of Environmental Management requirements preferred an impermeable cap across the site, ensuring that contaminants in the soil do not leach off-site. Of particular concern was the proximity of the Woonasquatucket River on the opposite side of Kinsley Street. Through many months of negotiation and education on all sides, the team of designers and engineers devised the system of bioswales and permeable surfaces that infiltrate 90% of annual rainfall without employing the new connection to the NBC sewers, while the contaminants, essentially glued in place, remain on site, by directing water infiltration and controlling its volume.

As a newly conceived non-profit organization, funding and budget were also important limitations. A first scheme tackled the required program of the organization, but did not celebrate steel as the heart of this place, and achieved workability through the most simple and affordable materials possible. The entrance of a new executive director allowed the design team time to rethink the site engineering (saving money by building an alternative to a buried pipe system) and propose new and more thoughtful ways to employ recycled materials to lend character to the place while also meeting requirements of the bottom line. A new building for visiting artists was postponed as a second phase, but provisions for utility feeds and parking requirements are met in the what was constructed.

4. Describe the ways in which the design relates to its urban context.

Olneyville represents the pervasive problem of industrial cities across the country and world. Dis-used and abandoned facilities, often in urban places that are no longer desirable, offer potential for re-use but only when the transformation is economically feasible. This project is unusual in the way that its redevelopment effort was one of grass roots—the founders saw an alignment in the facility and its equipment with their interest in making art and commitment to reversing declining skills in metal arts. The project represents true re-use of an industrial site, in a way that re-frames but also celebrates the industrial function and context.

Proximity to the Woonasquatucket River drove the original development patterns that created Providence's "Industrial Valley." The design decision to infiltrate stormwater on site, in a way that became a design feature, highlights the adjacency to the river and locates the site within the context of a larger watershed. Significant improvements to water quality within an urban watershed are necessarily cumulative, and the Steel Yard stands as a model for sustainable site-based stormwater infiltration that could be replicated toward this end.

2013
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PUBLIC AGENCY
PERSPECTIVE

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This sheet is to be filled out by a staff representative of a public agency directly involved in financing, design or public approvals that affected this project.

Name Lynne McCormack | Title Director

Organization City of Providence, Dept. of Art, Culture + Tourism | Telephone (401) 680 5759

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Signature Lynne McCormack | Date 12/7/2012

1. What role did your agency play in the development of this project? Describe any requirements made of this project by your agency (e.g., zoning, public participation, public benefits, impact statements).

The City of Providence played a supporting role in the development of this project. The project went through the standard city development process with its standard public participation requirements. Early on the project was identified as beneficial to the city. As the project would maintain it's historic, industrial use and revitalize a neighborhood, the city was interested in seeing the project to fruition. The department of art, culture + tourism acted as an adviser, particularly putting forward the idea of sale of the site land to the non-profit in order to make the EPA Brownfields grant a possibility. Additionally, the planning department prioritized this project for support of EPA Brownfields dollars and advocated for funding. The planning department also acted as an ombudsman for the project with the RIDEM, assisting the Steel Yard when the project was not moving as quickly through the bureaucratic process as necessary.

The department of art, culture + tourism also worked with the Mayor's Office to grant a tax stabilization for the project. This was passed by the City Council and is significant factor in the projects ability to sustain its business model.

2. How was this project intended to benefit your city? What trade-offs and compromises were required to implement the project? How did your agency participate in making them?

The project was intended to benefit the city by transforming a working steel manufacturing site into a communal hub of artistic creation. The project's founders watched out the windows of their nearby studio space as a vital steel mill aged out. The founders saw the potential of the space and developed intentional and meaningful relationships with the family that had owned the mill for almost a century. Early on the founders shared their intentions with the city and particularly the Office of Cultural Affairs (now the Department of Art, Culture + Tourism). Staff of the Office of Cultural Affairs played a minimal but supportive role in these early strategy discussions and understood the incredible impact this transformation could have on the neighborhood and the artist community. The fact that the use would reflect and carry on the space's traditional and historic use was a win/win for all.

As the project evolved and grew the city worked in an advisory capacity with Steel Yard staff. In terms of trade-offs the city's tax stabilization is probably the most significant. Elected officials and city staff recognized the positive impact this project would have on the neighborhood. Historically, tax stabilizations were implemented for large scale development projects, condos, office towers etc. At the time of the Steel Yard's stabilization, these were being phased out. Art, culture + tourism played a critical role in advocating for this stabilization as a neighborhood revitalization project that would reflect the core historic industrial values of the corridor.

3. Describe the project's impact on your city. Please be as specific as possible.

Providence is a city that is being re-imagined. It is a place where artistic vision and community building are valued and nurtured. The build out and brownfields clean up of this space has made a major impact on the city of Providence, particularly the Valley neighborhood. KMDG's design of the site reflects the vision of the founders, the staff and board of the Steel Yard to create a dynamic community hub for creation and celebration. The design allows for sustainable operations and inspires all those who work there to pay homage to the past while creating the future. At the recent Iron Pour in October, the sense of community pulsed throughout the space. Artists, families, people of all ages came together to experience a constructed ritual that bound everyone together. The design of the site facilitated an epic and soulful celebration that reflected the regions creativity and industrial heritage. This kind of shared experience is what breathes life into the city. The City has also seen the impact of the Steel Yard grow beyond it's facility. The street furniture program has impacted many neighborhood beautification efforts. Additionally in 2009, the department of Art, Culture + Tourism and the Providence/Cranston Workforce Solutions Board received major funding through ARRA for summer youth jobs. The Steel Yard played a major role in this program, employing youth throughout the summer and training them in the welding field. While the program was only funded for that year due to federal appropriation, the Steel Yard has continued its relationship with Providence/Cranston Workforce Development and youth job training.

4. Did this project result in new models of public/private partnerships? Are there aspects of this project that would be instructive to agencies like yours in other cities?

This project's model of public/private partnerships is truly organic. The city agencies responded and supported the needs of the artist founders and the Steel Yard organization and cultivated the project whenever possible. In terms of new models - the project serves to illustrate the power of community ownership and engagement. The intentionality of the founders to respect the past while breathing life into an aging facility represents a best practice for the post-industrial city. There is something very powerful about city agencies responding to the creativity of artists as community developers. City administrators need to be creative themselves, understanding the multiple perspectives and patiently sifting through the creative process with artists.

The process that has evolved from this project is one of give and take - one of collaboration and experimentation. KMDG and the Steel Yard, particularly Drake Patten, executive director worked diligently to engage the community around the Steel Yard in the design plans for the site. They worked hard to make sure all voices were heard. This process worked to create deep ownership and stewardship of the space. The designers and artists rebuilt and transformed the space with recycled materials that reflected the long history of the site. As one stands on the site, one cannot help but feel a sense of the roots that have been put down in the past and the new ones being planted today.

5. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project?

The Steel Yard is a vital and creative community center. The staff and board are working diligently to sustain a dynamic and new model non-profit. The most successful aspects of this project have already been mentioned above. The design and build out of the space truly reflect the core values of the organization. The sense of community and connectedness the space breeds is exceptional.

The least successful aspects of this project have more to with its complexity. The Steel Yard is ripe with projects that are truly creating social and economic change in the city. Yet, this story is still difficult to tell. There are so many deep, transformative stories connected with the space - young people getting a second chance, artists creating work that impacts the entire city, traditions being passed from master craftsman to a new generation. Foundation, corporate and government support for these efforts needs to grow. In order for this to happen these stories need to be mined and shared.

2013 RUDY BRUNER AWARD PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT **PERSPECTIVE**

RUDY BRUNER AWARD FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. Answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by a professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing services other than physical design or planning (e.g. legal services).

Name Jonathan Ford, PE | Title Principal

Organization Morris Beacon Design | Telephone (401) 451-5123

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Signature Date

1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project?

Morris Beacon Design (MBD) provided civil engineering services to design and permit site layout, grading, and infrastructure for the project, including innovative stormwater management design to enable Klopfer Martin Design Group's vision. MBD successfully permitted the project design with the City, Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC), and Narragansett Bay Commission (sewer authority).

MBD's services included extensive earthwork analysis to minimize soil export, as well as negotiation with Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) and the Narragansett Bay Commission to reach consensus for site drainage design while meeting brownfield stormwater infiltration requirements.

2. Describe the project's impact on its community. Please be as specific as possible.

The Steel Yard project has been transformative for the neighborhood - neighborhood here defined both physically as an urban place and more broadly as a network of people across Providence, Rhode Island, and beyond.

MBD's offices are located two blocks from the Steel Yard, so we have seen firsthand over a period of two years how the physical transformation of the site has improved neighborhood character and spurred change. The site is located within a gritty, post-industrial section of the city, and the sheer uniqueness and quality of Klopfer Martin's design, combined with the environmental benefit of capping contaminated soil, truly stand out and inspire confidence that the neighborhood is headed in the right direction. The implemented landscape design, including a mix of pervious hardscape surfaces as well as bioretention and bioswales, creates a rich, greener-than-green counterpoint to the post-industrial concrete, brick, and steel backdrop.

The social network of Steel "Yardies", nearby residents who use the space as a gathering spot, and new converts to the Steel Yard and in a bigger way to the entire neighborhood under transformation, now use the site as an informal gathering place, a setting for art installations, a stage for art-industrial fabrication, and a hosting spot for large-scale gatherings drawing visitors from across the state, such as annual car shows and an iron pour event, and much much more.

3. How might this project be instructive to others in your profession?

I have used this project as a case study to numerous civil engineers, landscape architects, planners, and architects, and have taught brownfield remediation stormwater management classes to Groundwork Providence's green workforce training students at the site several times. The site is a superior example of technical design and implementation of Low Impact Design (LID) strategies within an urban, constrained, redevelopment context. Bursts of green, linear natural elements as gateways and thresholds, hard edges without appearing "over-engineered", green networks of interconnected nodes and conveyances framing vehicle/pedestrian patterns and public/semi-private transitions, and creative use of native materials (native to the industrial context!) all contribute to mini celebrations of nature - "moments" within the site.

From a technical perspective, the engineering design meets stringent state stormwater management requirements without the use of aesthetically detrimental features such as detention basins or costly measures such as underground detention/retention systems. Stormwater is naturally filtered and infiltrated as close to where it falls as possible, taking a huge step towards mimicking the site's natural, undeveloped state. In addition, stormwater runoff to the combined sewer system in the adjacent street is minimized - of critical concern in Providence given combined sewer overflow (CSO) problems.

4. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project?

The most successful aspect of this project in my opinion is KMDG's innovative and strategic capping design, which allows full use of the site while providing a state-approved clean material cap. The cap varies, utilizing bituminous pavement, pervious pavers, pervious concrete, stone parking, concrete, and bioretention planted areas for stormwater management. Stockpiles of capped contaminated soil serve as raised gathering areas or strategic bermed areas, enhancing site character while minimizing cost to export contaminated soil.

The least successful aspect of the project from my civil engineering perspective was temporary erosion control to stabilize site planted stormwater management areas until plantings established. It took a period of several months to incorporate temporary erosion control measures such as geotextile mesh and stone stabilization, along with minor grading fixes, until planting fully established. Once planting fully established, the site functioned as intended.

2013 RUDY BRUNER AWARD OTHER **PERSPECTIVE**

RUDY BRUNER AWARD FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

OTHER PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. Answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

Name Julia Gold | Title

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Signature | Date

1. What role did you play in the development of this project?

After graduating from Brown University, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to serve as an AmeriCorp VISTA at the Steel Yard. This was my first experience working for a non-profit and it was an exciting time for me. Throughout my year of service, I participated in all aspects of the organization, including grant writing, programming, and community outreach. Becoming a part of this blossoming non-profit was a life-changing experience for me. As I worked to help root the Steel Yard in Providence and the Olneyville neighborhood I also gained a strong bond with the the greater 'Yardie' community and recognized my love for Providence and community planning. After my VISTA year at the Steel Yard, I received my masters in Urban and Environmental Planning and purchased a home within Monohasset Mill, the artist community adjacent to the Steel Yard. I joined the board of the Olneyville Housing Corporation, with whom the Steel Yards partners, and I was uniquely able to participate in the Steel Yard's brownfield remediation project. The Steel Yard was included as a case study in my book, 'Principals of Brownfield Regeneration: Cleanup, Design, and Reuse of Derelict Land.' Becoming a part of the Steel Yard helped to create my community in Providence and as the organization became strongly rooted as an artistic and cultural institution in the City, I felt myself becoming more and more connected to it as well.

2. Describe the impact that this project has had on the your community. Please be as specific as possible.

Living adjacent to the Steel Yard has allowed the organization to play a large role in my life. For my 1 year old son and the other 12 children that live in our building, the Steel Yard gives them a backyard, a playground, and a wonderful introduction to the creative community here. In many ways, the Steel Yard is the glue that helps hold our community together. The Steel Yard provides many of our neighbors jobs, it gives us the opportunity to experiment artistically, offers us a wide variety of cultural events, helps us to remain playful as adults, and gives us the chance to celebrate life. Sometimes these celebrations have been very personal as well. We had our son's baby shower on site and our closest friends were married there. The richness the Steel Yard provides has spread much farther than just our Monohasset community. Other creative projects have sprung up throughout our larger neighborhood and the organization's inspiration for these developments is clear. The Steel Yard's strong positive presence had helped to change the way people look at this area. From an urban planner's perspective, I see people from all over Providence coming into our neighborhood because of the Steel Yard. The image of our neighborhood has improved because of this and it is becoming a place that people know and visit. At the same time, the Steel Yard has reached out into the greater Providence community through its Urban Furniture program, helping to bring one-of-a-kind bike racks, garbage cans, tree guards, and benches to many neighborhoods. The Steel Yard has contributed to the beautification of Providence through this program, helped train many artists in metal working, and given the public an opportunity to appreciate and benefit from such unique work. The Steel Yard is truly a pivotal organization for cultural and artistic opportunity in the city of Providence.

3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them?

One of the greatest challenges faced by the organization was its brownfield remediation project, which included heavy metal cleanup, intensive storm water planning, and a full site redevelopment. The outcome of the project was absolutely amazing, but it was a complicated process for the Steel Yard staff, particularly the Executive Director, Drake Patten, to have to become project managers. This was not a task they were familiar with and it required them to step away from their daily tasks of running the non-profit and put a great deal of energy towards something completely separate from their programming. Taking on a brownfield redevelopment is an extremely complicated and time consuming process. It requires learning environmental state regulations, delicately balancing relationships with a variety of state agencies, planners, lawyers, scientists, and other professionals, and finally serving as the mediating party among all these involved parties. After years of working on this cleanup and redevelopment of their site, the Steel Yard staff had to compromise where they focused their energies. However, in the end they came away with a beautiful and environmentally safe property.

4. What do you consider to be the the most and least successful aspects of this project?

One of the challenges the Steel Yard has faced is creating revenue generating programming that can sustain the organization. The community classes are wonderful and, compared to other similar organizations around the country, their classes are affordably priced. However, in these economic times it is difficult for people to justify spending money on classes. As other non-profits have been challenged in the recent years, fundraising and income generation have been difficult.

The most successful aspect of the Steel Yards creation, is the revival it has brought to a former steel mill and the surrounding neighborhood. A site that probably would still be vacant, now is a culturally and artistically rich organization that brings people from all over the city, state, and world to learn metal working, ceramics, glass, and jewelry. It has created a larger community around its programming and has given youth and adults the chance to develop skills that they may never have had the chance to otherwise. It is a place that many people call home.

2013 RUDY BRUNER AWARD OTHER **PERSPECTIVE**

RUDY BRUNER AWARD

FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

OTHER PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. Answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

Name Peter Gil Case | Title President

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Signature Peter | Date 12/06/12

1. What role did you play in the development of this project?

I am the President of the Steel Yard (Chairperson of the Board of trustees), and am also a practicing architect. My primary role was to review and support our Executive Director, Drake Patten, in all phases of the design, permitting and construction of the project. I sat in on a good number of the meetings between the design team and the Steel Yard staff, and was involved in the lengthy negotiation process with the state environmental office (Department of Environmental Management – DEM), and I also observed during the construction phase.

I also served as the architect for the adjacent portion of the site that was being developed (by the founders of the Steel Yard) concurrently with the Steel Yard project. This additional role placed me closer to the center of the day-to-day activities more than if I were only serving as President of the Steel Yard.

2. Describe the impact that this project has had on the your community. Please be as specific as possible.

Prior to the Steel Yard site improvements, the neighborhood was on the verge of losing its identity as a historic industrial corridor. There had recently been a "strip mall" development nearby that might have demolished six mill structures were it not for a small but vocal group of opponents who managed to save three of the structures from the wrecking ball. This group, lead by various local artists who had been living illegally in these structures for years, but who had been contributing to the economic growth of Providence as entrepreneurs, became the developers of a large mill restoration adjacent to the Steel Yard (The Monohasset Mill Project) and eventually were the purchasers of the Providence Steel and Iron Works which became the home of the non-profit industrial arts center, The Steel Yard. (Also considering the site at the time of purchase were "big box" retailers, such as Walmart, but the seller was intrigued with the site remaining as a productive steel-oriented mission.)

While mitigating some of the negative effects of the strip mall and developing The Monohasset Mill Project were the first positive steps in the area. The Steel Yard has been the biggest step, and has signaled a major turning point in the "Valley" neighborhood on Providence's West Side. The Yard is a magnet for artists and others interested in the arts of all economic classes both from within the local community and from around the region. Through a combination of ongoing programming – classes, worker-training, for example – and a yearly schedule of events, public and private, the Steel Yard site draws thousands of people a year to a this area - which is showing signs of a mixed-use revival. The Steel Yard "campus" is in an unlikely place to find two acres of outdoor space, but by "springing from out of nowhere" it made an instant impact that is growing each year.

3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them?

The permitting period with DEM was the most daunting, time-consuming and disillusioning part of the process. Through a combination of outdated regualtions and incompetent staff, the Steel Yard project danced in and out of limbo for about two years. During this time we lost valuable momentum for fund raising to do a captial campaign. This was one of the biggest compormises we had to make. In the end, while there was a successful small campaign that did help close the funding gap, we had some difficulty synchronizing with the repetitive delays from DEM. The Steel Yard now serves as a precedent for future RI brownfield sites, but the cost of promoting a "new-ish" low tech/high yield strategy was a lengthy delay, and a shorter fundraising window.

From a design standpoint, therefore, the compromises were budget-driven, and were more to do with materials and some infrastructure than anything else. While we may have had to settle for a little less than what was designed initially, I think Drake Patten and Klopfer Martin Design Group did a terrific job in maintaining the intergrity of the intial design all the way through to completion.

4. What do you consider to be the the most and least successful aspects of this project?

The most succesful aspects of the project include one that isn't seen: an excellent use of taxpayer dollars. I have never been associated with a (mostly) government-funded project as succesful as the Steel Yard redevelopment. Thanks primarily to Drake's administration of the work, I can say with certainty that the taxpayers got their money's worth. There was very little excess expense, and costs were monitored throughout. Drake managed to play a key administrative role in the delayed permitting process that could have cost the taxpayers thousands of dollars.

Also, I think the physical space, the end result taken as a whole, is magnificent. It does all that it was asked to do, and in a way that leaves room for further interpretation in years to come. For example, since it is one of the largest open spaces in the city, it can be programmed in myriad different ways. Also, there are several portions of the site that are yet to be developed, leaving room for added interest and future programming. However, what I love most is the way the site is both urban and wild - which is how it could have been described before the work began - in a way that allows room for insiration and reflection as well as for artistic productivity and civic participation.

The least successful aspect of the new Steel Yard is that you practically have to enter it to find it. There are ways to create more of a street presence (in the original design, but not executed due to funding) that I hope will be installed one day. I think it could have more "curb appeal" one day.

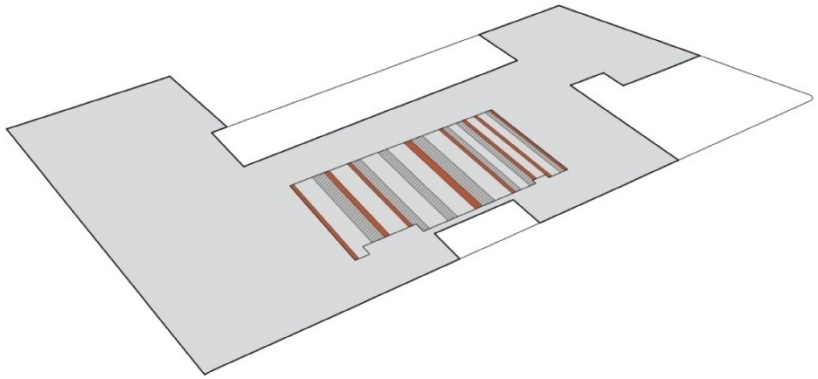

The Steel Yard
Providence, RI

URBAN CONTEXT

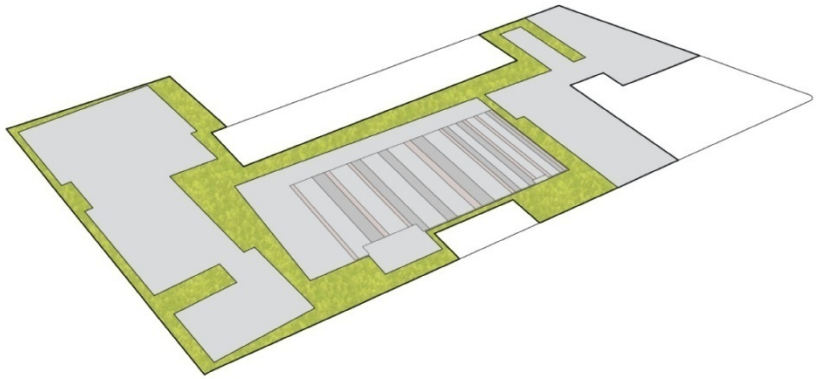
EXISTING CONDITIONS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

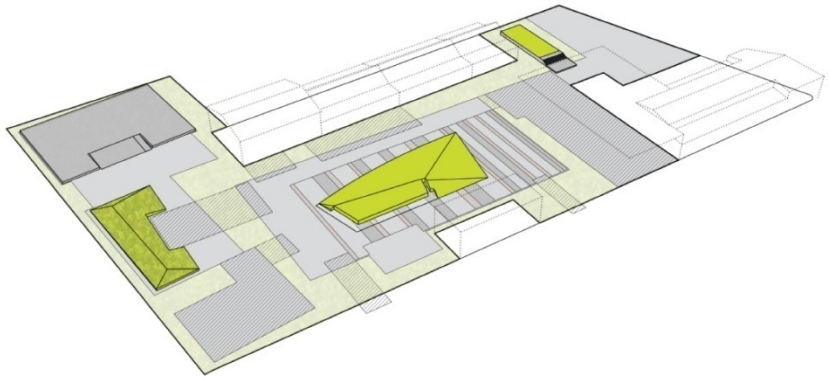

LEGEND
1. “Moat” Stormwater Bioswale
2. Outdoor Workspace
3. Parking
4. Central Landform
5. Modular Studio Platform
6. Outdoor Foundry
7. “The Carpet”
8. “The Movie Room”
9. Pedestrian Entrance
10. Vehicular Entrance
WOONASQUATUCKET RIVER
KINSLEY AVENUE
LONG BUILDING
ONE SIMS AVENUE
FUTURE BUILDING PAD
27 SIMS
SIMS AVENUE
N



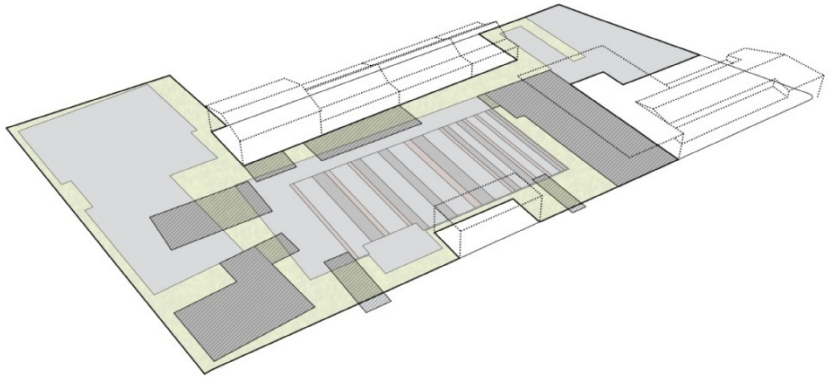
1 CARPET



2 MOAT



4 LANDFORMS

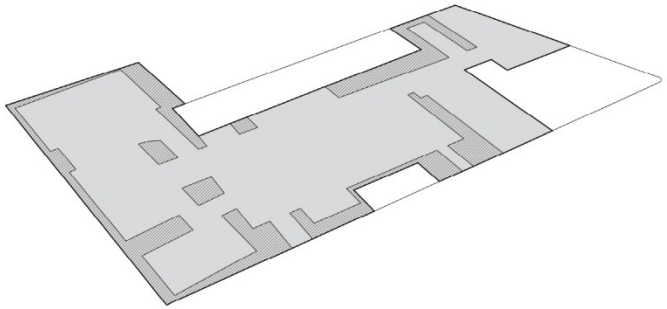


3 BRIDGES + WORKSPACES

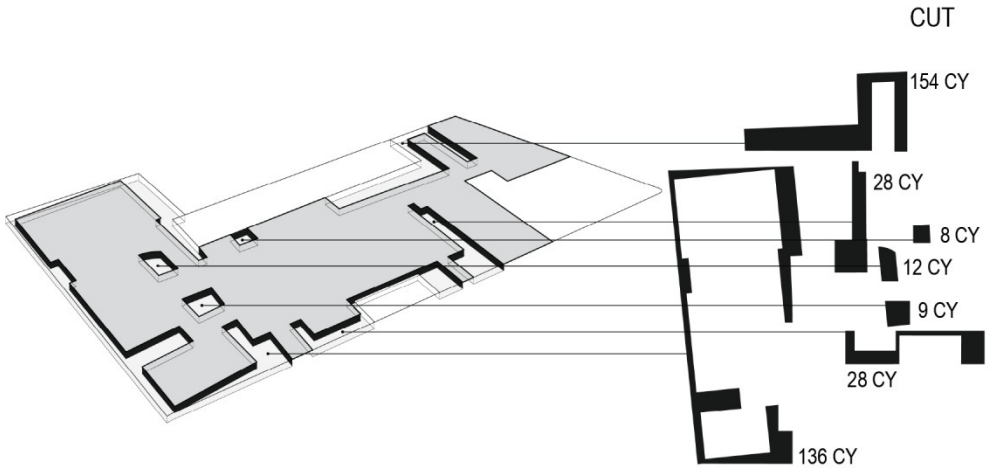
ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY

THE CARPET + CENTRAL LANDFORM, LOOKING SOUTH

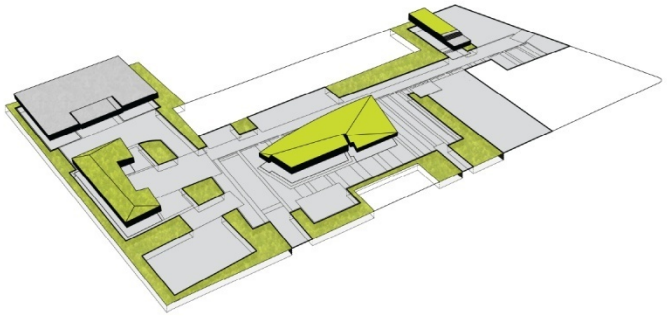
THE CARPET + CENTRAL LANDFORM, LOOKING NORTH



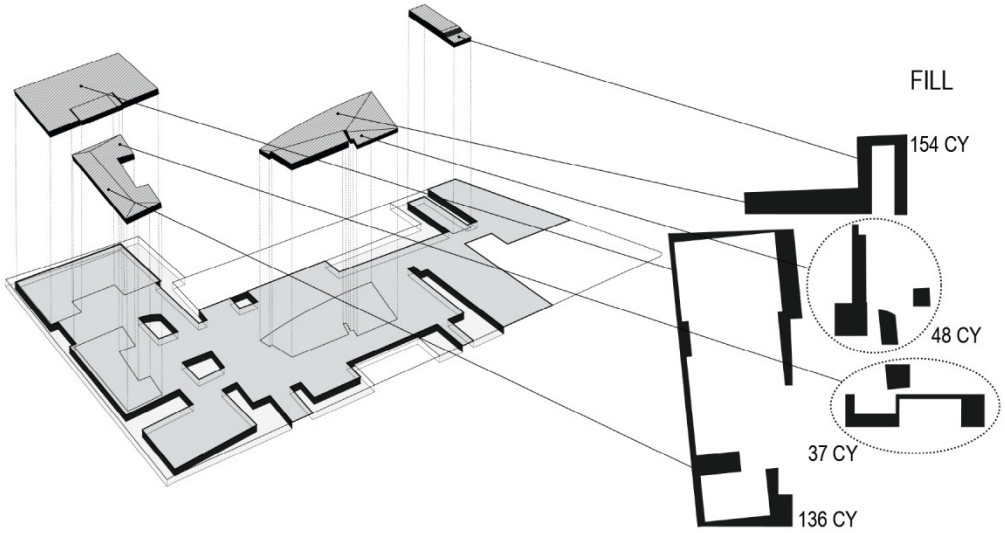
1 TOTAL CAP SURFACE



2 EXTRACTION (MOAT)

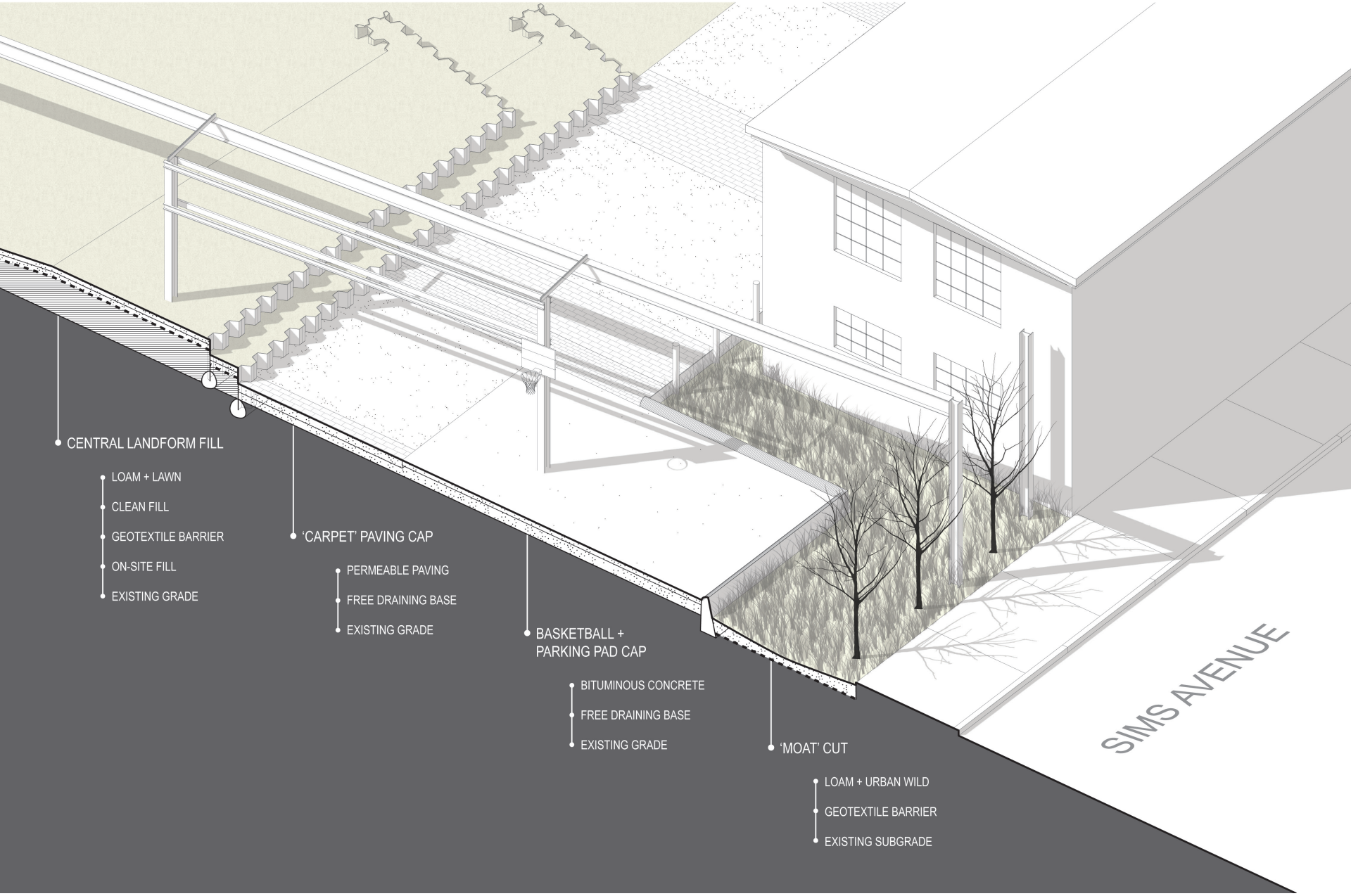


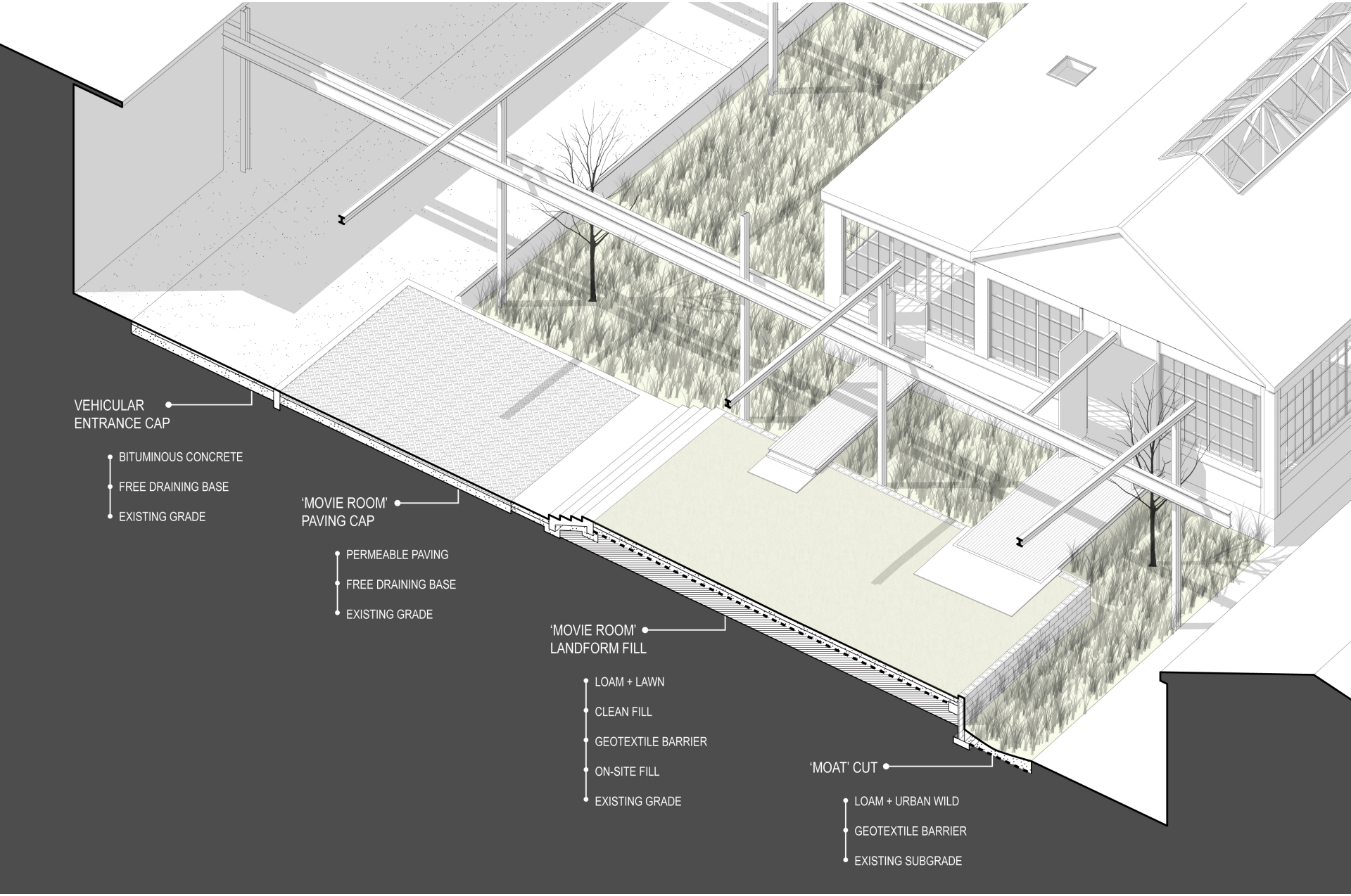
4 VEGETATION (URBAN WILD + TURF)



3 AGGREGATION (LANDFORM)

REMEDIATION STRATEGY


CENTRAL LANDFORM FILL
LOAM + LAWN
CLEAN FILL
GEOTEXTILE BARRIER
ON-SITE FILL
EXISTING GRADE
'CARPET' PAVING CAP
PERMEABLE PAVING
FREE DRAINING BASE
EXISTING GRADE
BASKETBALL +
PARKING PAD CAP
BITUMINOUS CONCRETE
FREE DRAINING BASE
EXISTING GRADE
'MOAT' CUT
LOAM + URBAN WILD
GEOTEXTILE BARRIER
EXISTING SUBGRADE
SIMS AVENUE


VEHICULAR ENTRANCE CAP
BITUMINOUS CONCRETE
FREE DRAINING BASE
EXISTING GRADE
'MOVIE ROOM' PAVING CAP
PERMEABLE PAVING
FREE DRAINING BASE
EXISTING GRADE
'MOVIE ROOM' LANDFORM FILL
LOAM + LAWN
CLEAN FILL
GEOTEXTILE BARRIER
ON-SITE FILL
EXISTING GRADE
'MOAT' CUT
LOAM + URBAN WILD
GEOTEXTILE BARRIER
EXISTING SUBGRADE

URBAN WILD LANDFORM + GANTRY

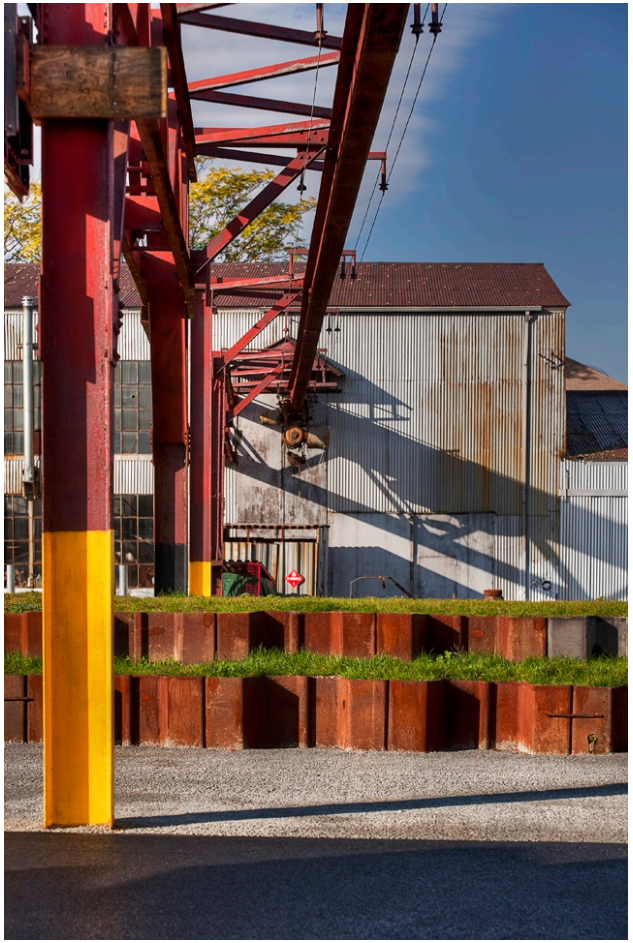
REPURPOSED SHEET PILING WALL

POST-CONSUMER METAL BALE WALL

BRIDGING STUDIO AND MOVIE ROOM

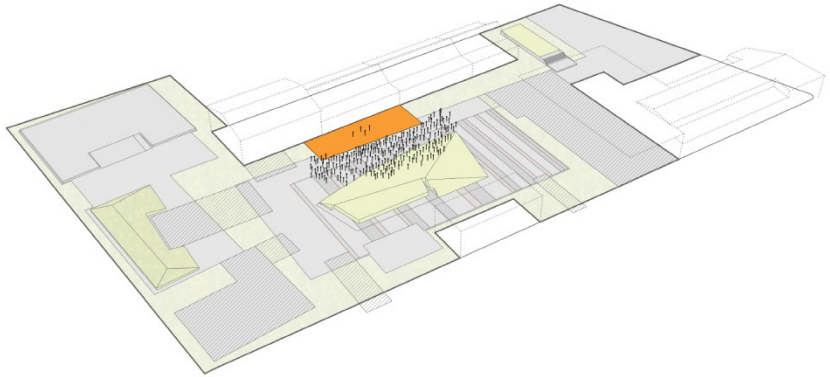
SPONTANEOUS OUTDOOR LIVING ROOM


CENTRAL LANDFORM

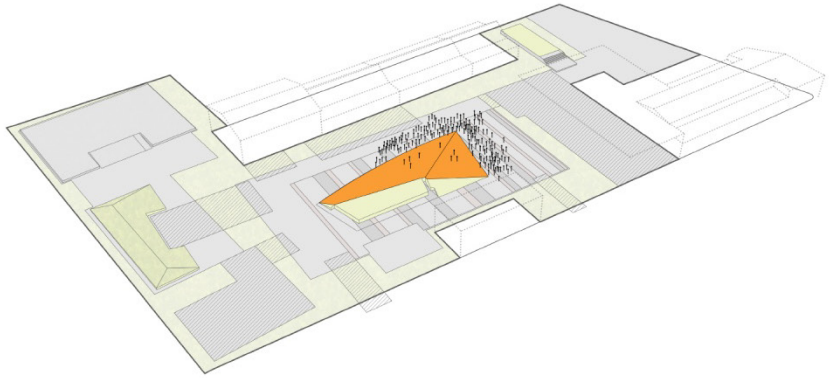


HANGING OUT IN THE MOVIE ROOM

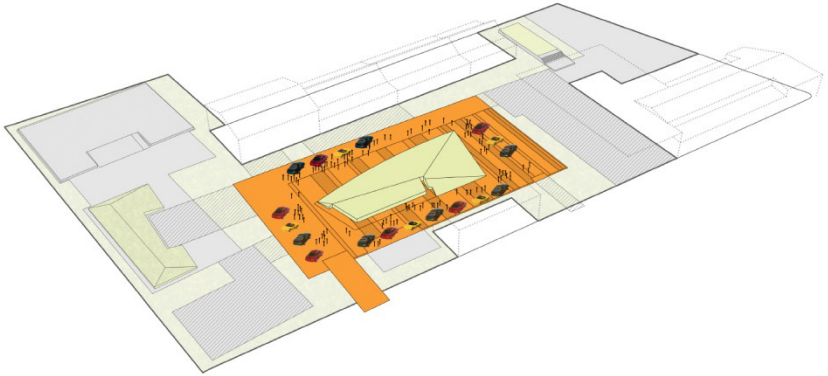

EVENTS



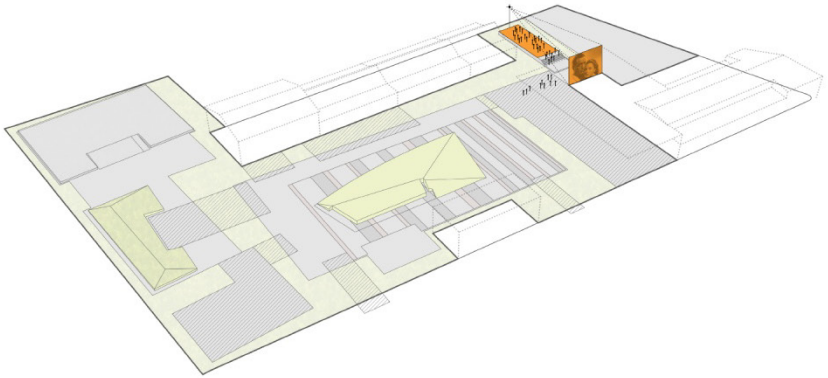
IRON CHEF



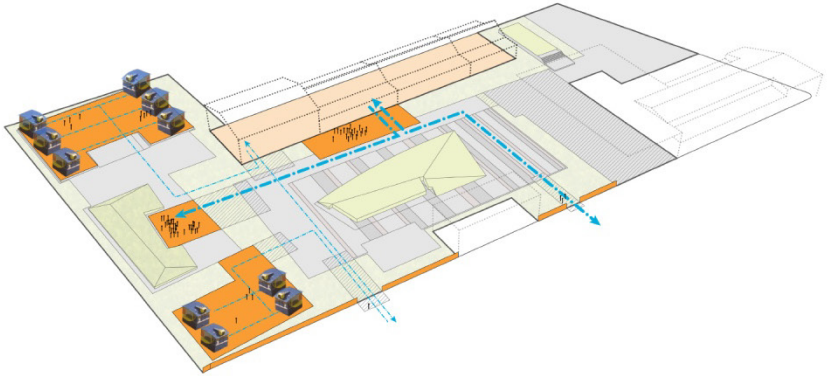
HALLOWEEN IRON POUR



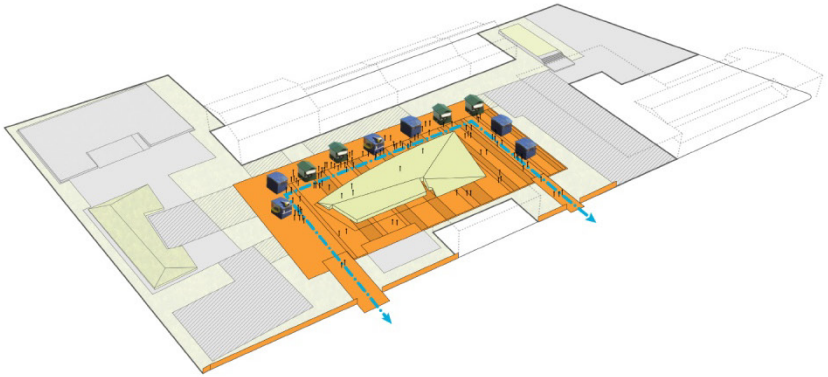
CRUISE NIGHT



MOVIE NIGHT



LEARNING + TRAINING + MAKING



MARKET + OPEN HOUSE

Supplemental Information – List of Awards & Publications

Historic Preservation Awards

2011 Preserve Rhode Island and Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission – Rhody Award

2010 Providence Preservation Society – Reuse & Neighborhood Revitalization Award

Public Space-Making and Design Awards

2011 American Society of Landscapes Architects – Honor Award

2011 Boston Society of Landscape Architects – Honor Award

2011 New York School of Interior Design - Green Design Award for Development

2011 Environmental Design Research Association -- Great Places Award

2011 Rhode Island Monthly Design Award

2011 Mayor's Citation for Reuse and Neighborhood Revitalization (Providence)

Environmental Awards

2012 Environmental Council of Rhode Island – John H. Chafee Award for Outstanding Conservation Project/Program

2012 Brownfield Renewal – Social Impact Award

Publications

Campbell, Robert. "Steel, Still: An abandoned steel mill on a toxic site is transformed into a home for a rich variety of arts and crafts—including, once again, steelmaking." *Landscape Architecture Magazine* Dec 2011: 84-93.

Campbell, Robert. "At industrial sites, the landscape shifts: Providence's Steel Yard is a fine case in point." *Boston Globe* May 1 2011.

Cameron, Kristi. "Community Activists: Rising from the Ashes." *Metropolis* Jan 2011: 70-74.

Per, Aurora Fernandez and Javier Mozas, eds. "RECLAIM: Remediate Reuse Recycle."*a+t architecture* Spring-Autumn 2012.

Hollander, Justin B., Niall G. Kirkwood, and Julia L. Gold. *Principles of Brownfield Regeneration.* Washington D.C.: Island Press, 2010.

Smith, Alyssa. "Heavy Metal: The Steel Yard is all cleaned up and ready for new beginnings." *Providence Monthly* Aug 2010: 27-28.