HIDING IN PLAIN SITE

MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE
THESIS
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MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE THESIS
This thesis investigates an architectural intervention of a social concern, specifically the at-risk population of runaway and homeless youth, ages 18-24. Currently, there is a platform for spacial invention and innovation to accommodate this group in the social and architectural discourse because there is currently lack thereof.

This invisible population has been historically under served. Large cities, such as New York, have developed youth shelters, but mid size cities, such as Grand Rapids, have failed to accommodate these youth appropriately. They are left in the sliver between children’s shelters (serving 0-17 year olds) and adult shelters (serving 25 years old and up). While all too often being pushed to adult shelters. Displaced adults victimize a high percentage of these youth. Typical shelters serving adults are not appropriate for the unique stage of physical, emotional, psychological, and social development these youth are experiencing.

Due to fear, safety and lack of survival skills, a youth’s preference for a safe place to sleep is not a doorway or a traditional shelter; it is on their uncle’s couch, at a 24/7 location such as McDonalds, a public park, or a college campus library. They are hiding in plain site.

Within this social concern, there is an opportunity to utilize architecture to give these youth a place. A place that will meet their immediate basic needs of shelter, food, hygiene, and safety then give them connections so they then can focus on their life skills, stability, and future plans. This thesis demonstrates how their movement, behavior, tendencies, needs, desires, and aspirations can be translated into a strategic site location within the context of a city and be used to create a place to be safe, restore dignity, establish a community, and be empowered.

The design project, located in Grand Rapids, Michigan tests this thesis. Based on Grand Rapids extreme need for helping these youth, this project occurs at the junction of a spot to hang out and a place to get help, to grow and be nurtured. The program is structured around the process of exposing and connecting these youth to the appropriate resources of day center, overnight stay, and transitional living. This will not only give youth a place to hide in plain site, but also to offer help and support during a critical time of their development.
THE NUMBERS & FACTS

Have you ever heard the stories of the children who were left orphaned, but found refuge and independence through living in a boxcar until they were gloriously retrieved by their grandfather? The boxcar children along with other folk tales such as Huckleberry Finn, Peter Pan and Davey Crockett have romanticized the outcomes of runaway and homeless youth.

Or perhaps, you have looked at the kids who hang around entrances of buildings or in groups as causing trouble, loitering, or scheming........

Runaway and homeless youth are a growing social concern but are not appropriately accounted for or cared for, and are historically under served. THIS IS A VERY REAL, SERIOUS ISSUE. Unfortunately, youth get tangled in different scenarios, which may result in them running away or becoming permanently homeless. Sometimes it is their choice to leave and other times they are forced to go. The top three reasons for the displacement of these youth are aging out of foster care, getting thrown away by their guardian, or running away.

AGING OUT OF FOSTER CARE Every state has a different age set for youth to exit the foster care system or “age out”. In the United States, 1 in 4 youth who age out of foster care, become homeless within four years. Often times, youth exit the foster care system lacking the finances and skills necessary to transition into independent living.

THROWN AWAY YOUTH In the scenario of a youth getting “thrown away”, the youth is asked/forced to leave by a parent or household adult, without any adequate alternative care arranged. Youth are thrown away due to a variety of reasons, including: a youth has problematic behavior, parents can not financially support youth any longer, or there has been some type of conflict.

RUNAWAY YOUTH In this situation, youth leave by their own will. The most common reason for youth running away is due to them being abused in some way, whether it is verbally or physically. One night of absence is considered “running away”.

FANTASIZE OR.. CRIMINALIZE
In the face of one of these scenarios there is the horrifying reality a youth is out on their own, and it is all up to them to survive. Due to fear, safety and lack of survival skills, a youth’s preference for secondary shelter is not a doorway or a traditional shelter; it is on their uncle’s couch with no stability, at a 24/7 location such as McDonalds, a public park, or a college campus library.

SOCIETY’S RESPONSE

If a youth seeks help or is referred, society’s current response is to connect a youth with an emergency shelter, safe haven or transitional living home. All great options, but in many cities (especially mid-size cities) there are not these available options for all ages. In many cases, there are children’s shelters (age 0-17 yrs) or adult shelters (18 + yrs).

How in the world are we allowing this?? According to the government, these youth may be considered adults, but socially, mentally, emotionally, physically, and psychologically, they are at a completely different point in their life! They are adults - in progress.

What happens to youth who are 18-24?? In most cities, an adult homeless shelter is the only refuge in an emergency situation of an 18-24 year old youth. Youth have a large suspicion of these types of places due to homeless adults preying on them. Displaced adults victimize a high percentage of these youth.
The majority of homeless youth & children fall into the age range where there is the least amount of help! (See the previous page!)

If these displaced youth do not find refuge they become homeless for a day, a week, a year, and at worst...... a lifetime.

Homelessness is a daunting social issue that is not only national but international. In it’s most basic definition - a human being displaced from their home is homeless. Most often, they have an emergency need for the basic necessities of food and shelter.

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reported that were over a half million homeless people in the United States in 2014. Of that count, 194,302 were children and youth. (The HUD considers ages 0-18 as children and ages 18-24 youth.) If these children and youth are not part of a family, they are considered “unaccompanied”.

The HUD has made great advancements in identifying homeless youth, however there is still a deficit in numbers. ³
YOUTH ARE DIFFERENT. They are episodic in their homelessness ...otherwise known as RUNAWAYS. They cannot be quantified in the same way as adults because they are not found in the same places and have different behaviors.

US Government Departments are collaborating data and statistics to accurately quantify these youth, but are merely scratching the surface and there are large gaps in the information. In addition to the HUD, and the Department of Criminal Justice there are other counts on homeless and runaway youth that could potentially be looked at, especially the Department of Education.

Although there is not a specific count on these youth, they are not invisible. THE ISSUE EXISTS
THE DANGERS & RISKS OF HOMELESS YOUTH

- 71% Youth who run away and are at high risk of danger
- 51% Reported staying in a foster or group home (of 656 youth)
- 30% Homeless youth (18-24) who have been arrested
- 40% Adult homeless community were homeless as youth
- 33% Identify as LFBTG
- 50% Report intimate conflict or physical harm from a family member
- 15% Found a shelter on their own
- 77% Sex-trafficked youth who reported previously running away from home
- 78% Youth who will use a drop-in center versus a shelter
- 40-60% Runaway youth who have been physically abused
- 33% Parenting teens who experience homelessness
- 75% Have dropped or will drop out of school

Statistics provided by the Youthful Data Project/HQ.
Looking at the situation, there is no question it requires action. Social Action.
Architects are entrusted with a great power. The power to affect a person's life.

Most people spend the majority of their lives occupying architecture. The design of that architecture affects how people work, heal, think, aspire, produce, play, and live overall. Architects do not just design buildings; they design the fabrics of people's lives.

Along with addressing this concern in a new way socially, there is an opportunity to also address this issue in a new way architecturally.

Sam Davis said it well in his book *Designing for Homeless*:

"The buildings that we construct are a reflection of our values and our culture. At its best, architecture not only reflects but also serves society; it has a duty to provide for those with the greatest need and the fewest options.

An architectural opportunity exists to design and dream about a place for these youth, specifically thinking about their movement, behavior, tendencies, needs, desires, and aspirations. This designed place will give youth a destination within the city where they can get help but also pursue their dreams.

There are youth in our cities that are at risk. They are vulnerable and under served. There is a great danger if these youth go unnoticed; their lack of opportunity, resources, and housing stability leads to experiences of violence, illness, and exploitation.

This thesis advocates for a social concern and elevates this segment of our population through the power of design and architecture.
Looking at the “Numbers and Facts”, youth who runaway or are homeless do not have a specific age. Being without a home or leaving one is a problem with infants all the way to the elderly. However, there is a certain age group who currently stands out: ages 18-24.

This group of youth is especially under served. In our current social frameworks, these youth are considered adults. At age 18, a youth legally becomes an adult. Some larger cities have social services for the specific ages of 18 - 24 but most cities move 18 and up to adult services. However, these youth are still adults in progress. Not to mention, a high percentage of adult homeless victimize these youth. Adult homeless often are not looking to a future as a youth is but instead are just looking to survive. They are experiencing this window of time where they are gaining social independence and are transitioning. Decisions are being made as to how they will fit into society: will it be employment, education, both, or different? This thesis specifically responds to this age group.

To service this age group, it is important to consider where they are psychologically and emotionally. Just as there is a shift legally, at the age of 18 there is a shift of maturity. There independence is becoming a reality as they have more responsibility to find a job (if they have not already) to support themselves or pursue secondary education. Once they are forced to live alone, an even bigger realization hits of how they will provide for themselves. By age 18 they have established friends and are highly influenced by the opposite sex, which in the case of a runaway or homeless youth could be detrimental. Most often they are enthusiastic about there future, but may be easily discouraged if resources are not available to them. The number one rule in helping this age group is offering, not imposing. They want to make their own choices. Most fear social services due to past experiences with authority or trauma from abusive adults. Only 15 % of all youth find a shelter on their own.
"I figured being with those guys and doing what they wanted was the price I had to pay to keep off the streets. I figured I would go through the same stuff as the streets. But at least I had a warm place to stay."

"It's a constant, constant, constant worry. You always worry where your next meal or bed is coming from. You also have a feeling of loneliness all the time because you don't have your parents or a place to come home to. It brings on a lot of anxiety."

"When I was on the streets, I was always moving, not staying only in one area too long. People saw me just like any other guy trying to get somewhere. The only thing is that they didn't know that I didn't have a"
His first move was to his sister’s boyfriend’s family. Due to overcrowding and fear of his sister’s boyfriend’s illegal activities, Blacc was forced to move on. Her boyfriend was heavy into car jacking and instead of enduring police raids and interrogation, he moved on to a friend’s couch.

It immediately became apparent that these youth are episodic, mobile, camouflage, and often on an emotional roller coaster ride. Their stories and paths are unpredictable and vary.

BLACC
New York City, New York

Originally from the Far Rockaway neighborhood in New York City, New York, a young man named Blacc experienced a routine of homelessness that is an all too common tale of a youth’s displacement, moving over 20 times between the ages of 19 and 21. From the time Blacc was born, he was a part of the foster care system. After living with over a dozen foster care families, a rare situation happened where Blacc and his siblings were adopted when Blacc was eleven. Although Blacc had been adopted, he struggled with fighting and running away through his school years. Shortly after graduating high school, he was thrown away by his adopted father over his lifestyle choices and lack of a paying job.

My father said, “You have thirty minutes to pack your S#@* and get out of here.” S#@*, OK. And that was just it. I could have begged, but I was like “I’m not going to beg no more to stay in his house.” So I packed my s#@* and I left.”

If there is not an accurate tally of how many youth are experiencing displacement and lack of attention to this group, how can the life situations of these youth truly be understood? To start to grasp this issue - articles, memoirs, second hand reports, videos, interviews, blogs, social media and other research were useful tools to collect the true experiences of these youth, and to begin to understand their secrets.

To process, represent and begin to re-tell their stories, a collage was made on canvas, with string representing the paths of two youth in particular: Lauren and Blacc.
During this time, Blacc landed himself in jail for a letting his anger lead to a physical altercation with a man who had assaulted one of his friends.

After being released from jail, he went on to live with another friend at his father's house. His friend was upset with his father so he sought revenge by setting the house on fire.

Because they had no where else to go, Blacc, his friend (who set the house on fire) and a couple of others continued squatting in the burned house until snow started to fall. Unable to endure the cold, one of the girls, Melissa, was able to get a studio apartment. Melissa then invited Blacc and his girlfriend to live with her and her boyfriend.

It did not sit well with the landlord that there were four people living in the studio apartment, so he locked them out without warning. They sought refuge in Brooklyn at a homeless shelter but did not stay because they all had to be separated and there was a cat to which Blacc was allergic. To make matters more difficult, Melissa was pregnant and refused to be separated from her boyfriend. There shelter for the night was the A train on the subway line. It became the only route Blacc new of and therefore trusted. The A train was referred to as the “moving hotel” by many of New York City’s homeless population because it has one of the longest routes.

Without any communication, Blacc was unable to find his friends the next day after they were separated. He returned to their previous locations, when he found someone who had referred his friends to an adult shelter. Blacc figured he was too young to join his friends and was offered a spot at Covenant House so he took the opportunity. Covenant House is one of the oldest and largest youth shelters existing in the United States.

Blacc felt uncomfortable and mistreated at Covenant House.

“...They just was like  they’re shady  staff don’t talk to you with respect  you know, some shelters are better than others.” Despite the unpreferable conditions, it was worth enduring to avoid sleeping outside in the harsh New York City winter conditions.
Due to Covenant House’s required condition of employment or in pursuit of, Blacc acquired a job in the formal economy, but also had a secondary job in the informal economy. Making $200 a day, he and some friends had a business of bending metro cards to make them work then selling them to people. Working in a group, they had it down to a science. When Blacc got a higher paying job, the scamming was over and he was prideful of his honest work.

In the up swing of having a job and making new friends at the shelter, Blacc was kicked out after a month for fighting. He was then referred to the men’s homeless shelter in Brooklyn, (Bedford Men’s Shelter.)

Joining his friends in Times Square Blacc found security and familiarity in being in this group. According to him, “the first rule of the streets is sticking with your friends—as finding and keeping friends may mean the difference between surviving and not surviving on the streets.”

His probationary period at Covenant House ended so he decided to head back there, but was refused stay. Covenant house referred him to a transitional living program at another location.

The Bedford Men’s shelter had a long history of dangerous conditions including drug abuse, mental illness, fighting and theft which still lingered from an even wilder past. The shelter used to serve up to 900 men but due to escalated life threatening conditions, it only serves 350 currently. Blacc did not have a good experience here.

“My stuff hasn’t ever been stolen when I was out on the street. But the second I go into a shelter, all of my stuff disappears.”

By this point, Blacc was 20 years old. Due to his age, the waiting lists of other small shelters, and his six month suspension from Covenant House, he had no other options other than to stay at the men’s shelter so he tolerated the conditions for two months. He then caught wind that some of his previous friends were sleeping on the A train so he gladly joined them.

Blacc was able to enter a small youth center at which he stayed for about 2 months. By his own doing, he was discharged for intoxication. He then had a week stint in another emergency shelter but wanted to join his friends who were sleeping in Times Square.

At the transitional living program, trouble arose. After getting in a fight over gang territory, he was referred to an 24 hour shelter, where he had spent time in before. Ironically, the other gentlemen he had fought with, also was sent to this shelter. The two ended up making amends and looking out for each other. The emergency shelter then tried referring him to the adult men’s shelter. Instead, Blacc opted out due to fear of the conditions he had experienced and ended up back on the train. Moving around once again, he headed to Union Square, a popular hang out for street youth.
Union Square did not end up being a great option. There was too much drug and police activity. The police constantly tried prohibiting youth from sleeping in the park. Although drawn to groups of friends, Blacc was especially deterred by the youth who occupied Union Square. Blacc was no stranger to using alcohol to forget his problems, but with most of the Union Square youth on drugs, they were a whole different level of crazy. Blacc then found a staircase to sleep in the project buildings where he had friends, and eventually moved up to the roof.

In the back of an old Protestant church, Sylvia’s place was the first LGBTQ shelter in New York City and was often a packed house. Blacc made good connections here and was able to enter into an affiliated program that was a year round shelter. Sadly, that program came to an end but luckily Blacc had the chance to return to Sylvia’s Place where he was able to be transferred into a transitional living program which finally offered stability. Blacc’s future plans were to work to leave New York City.

LAUREN
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Lauren was referred to and staying in a residential facility. Meeting a boy through school, she ended up running away from the facility, lured out by him. Her boyfriend then introduced her to a madam (a female pimp). To be a part of this family, she was forced into a physical exchange.

After a few week of this, Lauren was able to receive help but soon returned to a life of prostitution.

ANNA
Seattle, Washington

Anna’s parents fell on hard economic times, leaving her little option but to move out. Now moving from shelter to drop-in centers, trying to get out of a homeless state, Anna longs for stability.
LESSONS LEARNED

ON THE MOVE
These youth are highly mobile and episodic in their homelessness. Often, there are significant signs of a potential homeless youth. A high percentage of youth will experiment with running away before they leave permanently and become homeless. Youth who are in an instable housing condition rarely live “on the street”. Envisioning them as “out on the street” is a static image for they are constantly on the move and live in several different places in quick succession as seen in the example of Blacc. ⁹

CAMOUFLAGE
The majority of youth are “blending in” or “hiding in plain site”. They adapt to the social construct we place on them: “A youth with a backpack, they must be in school/college” or they go unnoticed because they are in the same clothes as us. Appearance is associated with personal identity and is something these youth often protect. They strive to fit in and do not want to be called or seen as “homeless” due to the stereotype that it is associated with.

SURVIVAL TACTICS
Street Bonds. Unlike homeless adults, a life of a homeless or runaway youth is extremely social. Youth form familial relationships to protect themselves and because they strive for relational connection. They rely on their peers for information and most often will learn about and trust helping services through word of mouth.

Street Money. Many youth depend on the informal economy for income. The top jobs include: 1) sex work (prostitution) 2) drug trade 3) theft 4) panhandling.

Camouflage. Not only is this a point of pride, but also a survival tactic. Looking homeless can draw unwanted attention from the police, pimps, drug dealers, and the general public. Although this invisibility may protect these youth, it makes it exponentially harder for social services and others to identify these youth to extend them help.

A NEW AGE OF HOMELESSNESS
Anna’s story is a testimony to a new generation of homeless youth - referred to as “transitional age youth”. In this scenario, the issue is purely financial. In most cases, a youth has gone to college and is trying to make it, but gets slammed by the hardships of the economy and finds themself unable to pay rent with their daunting college debt and other expenses.

In some situations, these youth have over committed themselves financially and simply need a landing pad to redirect. Many cannot return to their parents household due to their parents own economic struggles. Many have the attitude: “ Once I get my pay check, I should be on my way.” The recession in 2012 left young adults from the ages of 18-24 with the highest unemployment rate. This group is most often couch surfing, sleeping in cars and other private places…...avoiding the stigma of homelessness. ¹⁰

EMOTIONAL ROLLER COASTER
Fear, anger, exhaustion, confusion, depression...as is evident in these life testimonies of Blacc, Lauren, and Anna - many emotions are experienced before, during, and after an episode of homelessness and are felt simultaneously.
THE STRATEGY

DEFINING A NEW TYPOLOGY: A NEW ADVOCACY
**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Now that the issue has been clearly defined, this section lays out the existing conditions of the history, types of social projects, social processes, and architecture that has/is responding to homeless & runaway youth ages 18-24. A visionary strategy is then presented on how a design intervention could address this social issue.

**HISTORY OF PERCEPTIONS**

Homelessness is a daunting social issue that is not only national but international. The first record of “homelessness” in the United States was in 1640 when homelessness was considered a moral deficiency. Many historical shifts due to the economy, government, natural disasters, and other influential events have affected the amount of individuals who experience homelessness. To their misfortune, the perception and understanding of this population has determined how they have been accommodated and addressed throughout history.¹¹

The same patterns are evident in the case of the specific population of runaway and homeless youth. The social responsibility and response to youth who have needed help has been determined by the societal perceptions of who homeless and runaway youth are along with what they experience during their period of homelessness. These perceptions have been influenced and shaped by many agents.

Three main eras exist when paralleling responses and services with these perceptions.¹²

1. Child Savers Movement
2. Youth Development, Delinquency, and Subcultures
3. Street Kids and Youth Geographies
**JUVENILE DETENTION**

**1823** In New York, Children were being incarcerated and put into adult prisons for working in the informal economy (scavenging, stealing, prostituting) and were labeled “homeless.”

**1825** House of Refuge was opened to prevent youth from going to adult prisons and was the first “youth detention center in the United States.”

**1853** Charles Loring Brace founded *Children’s Aid Society, a private child welfare nonprofit in New York*. Brace stated in reference to “street kids”: “The police soon knew them as ‘street-rats’; but like the rats, they were too quick and cunning to be often caught in their petty plunderings, so they gnawed away at the foundations of society undisturbed” - a statement from Brace in reference to runaway & homeless youth.

**ORPHAN TRAINS**

In the early 19th century, much attention was brought to the “working-poor children” in industrial cities. During this time, there was great segregation between the urban poor and the middle/upper class. These “working-poor children” were viewed with sympathy and condemnation. Sympathy was given to them as they were overworked, poverty stricken, and exploited in the formal economy (factories, shops, mills) while they were condemned for working in the informal economies (stealing, picking pockets, begging, prostituting, peddling).

Charles Loring Brace along with others popularized the idea that “street children” (those working on the street and sometimes living there) were a product of a slum environment. These slums were occupied by poverty stricken people, many of them immigrants living in overcrowded, poorly maintained tenements.

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Brace’s solution to this problem was to “save” the youth by removing them from these slum environments.
1893 - 1903
PUBLISHED LITERATURE
Others along with authors Jacob Riis and Brace were publishing literary works further projecting children of slums as victims.

1900
EARLY 1900’s
CHILD LABOR LAWS
Reform and revolution begin to happen with child labor laws. The National Child Labor Committee and U.S. Children’s Bureau are founded.

EDUCATION
The middle and upper class pushed for education for all children.

By creating both a sympathy and fear of these “working-poor children”, Brace started the Emigration Plan known as the Orphan Trains. Youth were removed from the “harmful” urban environment and sent to families in “safer”, “more productive” rural landscapes. Farming was considered honest work and the supportive industry of America. In some accounts, youth were forcibly taken to serve families who needed cheap or unpaid labor on their farms.

By the end of the 19th century, over 250,000 children were shipped across the United States to various farming families.

Fewer work hours because of child labor laws and youth being taken from homes altogether caused families to financially suffer due to the portion of income they had depended on from their children working.
1920s - 30s

**SOCIOLOGICAL STUDIES**
Chicago School of Urban Ecology takes interest in studying working-class youth and gangs (Juvenile Delinquency Studies) in relationship to socioeconomic structures.

“Children are blank slates that readily adapt to their social surroundings” (PG. 47) (Gibson)

**SOCIAL CONSTRUCTS**
Social norms of the expectations of youth are continued to be formed by the upper and middle classes causing curfews and recognizing gangs as deviant and dangerous.

1950s

**SOCIOLOGICAL STUDIES CONTINUE**
Youth Development continues to be studied and steps of childhood to adulthood are more clearly defined: the term adolescence arises from this period.

**SOCIAL SERVICES**
With the recognition of gangs, social services start street outreach programs to meet youth on their “turf.”

1961 & 1967

**FILMS & BOOKS**
These works depicted street youth and youth homelessness as revolving with little to no adult presence and “gangs” of friends depended on for survival.

**RUNAWAY**
A spike of young, white middle class females fleeing the suburbs to the city during a cultural revolution in the 1960s coining the term “runaway.”
1974 Runaway Youth Act
Runaways became a national problem. Federal funding granted for local organizations to aid runaways with shelter, basic care and counseling. Also included a law that made it illegal to run away if you were under age 18.

1977 Runaway Youth Act amended to include homeless youth

1976 "Young Hookers" was a popular teen read that aided in changing the perceptions of runaways only being female victims, including males and their shared vulnerability.

1980 OVERALL HOMELESS POPULATION SURGE
Activism against mental institutions surged as reports of abuse and mistreatment in such facilities was identified by the media. These patients were supposed to be re-located to community based health centers but many were released to the streets.

The Linda Rae Fitzpatrick murder case spiked fears and promoted connections between the hippie culture and young female runaways.

"independent, active, strong-willed. If they are frightened, they hide it well - at least in the beginning. Often, they are intelligent, although intelligence alone may not be enough to prepare a vulnerable teenager for the vicissitudes of city life and the struggle for survival" - a statement published in popular literature the time reflective the perspective of runaways.

Both gender and racial stereotypes were established during this era that still exist today in 2016.

Homeless and runaway females were strongly perceived as exploited sexual victims while males were considered adventurous and free spirited. White youth were looked at as if they just had come from an loving home in a suburb while Hispanic and African American youth were viewed as a product of a poverty stricken or abusive home.

YOUTH SERVICES IMPLEMENTED
1972 Meeting the physical needs of these youth was primarily on the shoulders of private religious organizations and charities. Covenant House opened in New York. Historically, one of the largest youth shelters.

1974 As the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act takes action, social services are revamped to serve this population including the creation of the National Youth Hotline (a 24/7 call center connecting youth with resources). The government’s role/perception begins to change from punishing these “criminal kids” through the justice system to counseling these kids and helping them smoothly transition into adults.
1990

**HOMELESS HOUSING PROJECTS TRANSFORMATION**

Due to disorder, crime, health issues, and other negative factors, a shift from large, warehouse-like shelters to small, private shelter with concentrated focuses on “problem issues” such as substance abuse, battered woman, and work readiness.

**CLINTON ADMINISTRATION**

Pushes hard for homeless shelters to have social programming

1999

U.S. Department of Justice issues a special report on runaway and throwaway children.

2000

**2011**

For the first time in history, Youth are a part of the “One Night Count in LA and Boston. (One Night Count: occurs at the end of January. The Continuum Care Program governs a large base of volunteers who physically count people over the period of one night.

Although the counts have existed since 2005, it was not until 2011 that youth were considered.

2013

Although adult counts have existed since 2005, children and youth did not officially become a part of the United States Department of Housing Count until 2013.

2015

**OBAMA ADMINISTRATION**

Issues Federal strategic plan to end homelessness in the United States

**STREET KIDS**

Recently, progressive social service providers have begun to implement programs based on other facets of street youth’s lives and skills. In fact, the re-appropriation of the term street kid refers to the value placed in the resiliency and knowledge of youth who survive the streets.
Perceptions of the Past, now the Present

From the societal perceptions of “youth are a product of the slums” leading to radical action of the orphan trains to the perceptions of these youth being “rebellious, wild, and untamed” causing charitable and religious organizations to rise up along with the government to enforce laws to keep these children under control - we, as a society in the United States culture, are experiencing another revolution in perception of runaway and homeless youth. First an item on the agenda of the Clinton administration, now the Obama administration, it is important to realize this is a big deal in our country and that there is a gap in the provision of help.

In our previous social constructs youth either have a home or they do not (putting them on the street), but on the contrary, youth who are without a home also exist in the interstitial spaces such as squatting in an uncle’s barn, sleeping on a friend’s couch, living out of their car, or staying in 24 hour coffee shops and university campus libraries. As already mentioned previously, there are several pressures on these youth that result in their homelessness whether they are forced to leave or go willingly. As of late, there has been more attention of the media on how youth are unfairly mistreated and rejected by their parents. In the past few years, we have seen this highlighted on the issue of gender shaming. We are finally grasping the perception that whatever the situation, youth should be helped. They are a fragile population that has hope and potential.

More importantly, a youth’s perception of runaway and homeless youth is finally being taken into consideration. One of the biggest reasons youth are not getting help or seeking out services that are provided is due to their perceptions.

MORE THAN 50% FEAR USING SERVICES DUE TO...

• Personal Safety (most have been abused or mistreated by adults)
• Fear of entering the Foster Care System
• Lack of awareness of programs
• Word-of-mouth that no beds are available
• Fear of being a part of the “homeless” stereotype
EXISTING CONDITIONS

TYPES OF SOCIAL PROJECTS

To address an unstable housing condition, there are six basic types of housing projects, classified by the government, which often take different formats and are available based on requirements and lengths of stay. Whether operated by the government or a private organization, all housing types registered and are licensed with the United States Department of Housing. Temporary projects include: emergency shelters, transitional housing, and safe havens. Permanent projects include: rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, other permanent housing.

TEMPORARY YOUTH HOUSING

- **Emergency Shelter**: Temporary shelter often with some social services and nightly beds.

- **Safe Haven**: Provides temporary shelter and services to specific individuals who are especially at-risk. For example: there are emergency shelters specifically dedicated to women who have been abused, therefore are considered a safe haven.

- **Transitional Housing**: Provide an extended stay shelter and often other services. Stay periods range.

PERMANENT YOUTH HOUSING

- **Rapid Rehousing**: Provides short-term rental assistance and stabilizing services to formerly homeless people

- **Permanent Support**: Provides long-term housing for formerly homeless people
All of these types of social projects are excellent solutions and supply a variety of ways to help an individual who is experiencing homelessness. Unfortunately, there is not a sufficient amount of places for a youth. In 2014, HUD asked CoCs to report the number of beds targeted to youth. Homeless people in these subpopulations may access both beds set aside for them and those available for the general homeless population.

There were 14,229 beds identified as targeted to homeless youth (under 25). Half of youth beds were TH beds, 32 percent were ES beds, 15 percent were PSH beds, and 2 percent were RRH beds. Out of 772,788 types of places for homeless individuals in 2014, only 14,229 were allotted for youth, which is a far cry from the 45,000 + youth or are homeless or have runaway. 23

Beds often are given to younger youth first as they are more vulnerable, therefore older youth (ages 18-25) are pushed to adult homeless places. Displaced adults victimize a high percentage of these youth. The programmatic spaces serving adults are not appropriate for the unique stage of physical, emotional, psychological, and social development these youth are experiencing.
EXISTING CONDITIONS

PROCESSES

Many different processes and programs exist when it comes down to helping homeless and runaway youth. Government departments have several more hurdles and regulations than private charities and organizations.

The Continuum of Care, a program of the HUD that coordinates housing and services for the homeless, has developed a model for serving homeless individuals and families. This model has been very successful, and is a good starting point for serving the specific population of runaway and homeless youth ages 18-24.23

Addressing youth with the current framework for homelessness is not entirely feasible. The fundamental needs of youth are entirely different and although they may be able to be categorized much like the needs of adults, they function differently. The top reasons for adult homelessness include: mental illness substance abuse, unemployment, and domestic violence. The top reasons for youth experiencing homelessness are youth aging out of foster care, thrownaway youth, and runaway youth.

As mentioned before, one of the biggest barriers to these youth receiving help is their perception of people and places offering the help - there is a presence of fear. Young adults, eager for independence, are reluctant to admit that they need help and housing. Shelters designed with young adults in specifically in mind, are small and rare. Regulations and requirements for a youth who needs help need to be rethought and reconsidered to eliminate barriers. Process of entry...process of staying...Youth homelessness is unique - programs/processes should specifically address this demographic.
Youth homelessness is unique because young people:

- Are physically, emotionally, psychologically, and socially still developing — they are adults-in-progress with unique strengths and assets.
- Enter into homelessness with little or no work experience.
- Are often forced into leaving their education prior to completion (i.e., junior high and high school) as a result of their homelessness.
- Experience high levels of criminal victimization, including sexual exploitation and labor trafficking.
- Often enter into homelessness without life skills, such as cooking, money management, housekeeping, and job searching.

**CASE STUDY**

**SEATTLE, WA**

Roots is a private organization responding to young adults who face the challenges and hardships of homelessness. There is process is simple: show up between the times of 8:30 and 9:00 pm to find a safe, clean overnight stay with food and showers. Unfortunately, there is a max capacity so if there are over 45 people, they use a lottery drawing to determine who gets a spot.

- Shelter for young adults in a church basement
- Holds 45 people
- Must be 18 years or older
- Included: meals, laundry services, counseling
EXISTING CONDITIONS

ARCHITECTURE

As mentioned before, this specific age group is inadequately served. An enormous obstacle in addressing this social issue architecturally is the almighty dollar. Competitive and insufficient funding are often limiting. After touring and researching layouts of both youth and adult homeless shelters, problematic architectural issues were apparent that hindered the potential help to youth.

RECYCLED SPACES

Not only are the programmatic spaces insufficient for youth - the majority of the buildings and spaces used for homeless people are reused or donated buildings that have become a place for a charity or organization over time but were never properly designed to accommodate the experience. Limited funding only allows minor face lifts of color and casework.

CASE STUDY

LA, CALIFORNIA

Youth Center on Highland

“The use of color was one of the most successful aspects to add energy to the space. We could not afford very sculptural interior architecture or upgraded finishes. As a result, we relied heavily on color to activate the space.” - HOK
PROGRAMMATIC SPACES

In larger cities, there are large enough organizations to support shelters and services purely geared toward runaway and homeless youth 18-24. However, in most mid size cities, there are housing arrangements available for youth under 18 years of age, but any youth past age 18 years of age are expected to receive shelter and services through the frameworks of adults. The programmatic spaces are most often generic and not specific to a youth’s interest or needs. The traditional programmatic spaces need to rethought of in terms of events/activities appropriate for youth.
A NEW ADVOCACY

It can be very tempting to look at the existing conditions of the history of homeless and runaway youth, social projects, social processes, and existing architectural responses - only to be quickly discouraged with the complexity of this issue and all parties involved.

A passion for people and that ability to enhance a person’s life through design drives my passion to practice architecture. Moving to the city from a very rural area, I have been struck by how people inhabit the street and endure the hardships of a nomadic life. I discovered that there are youth in our cities that were at risk. They grab my heart as they are vulnerable and under served. There is a great danger if these youth go unnoticed; their lack of opportunity, resources, and housing stability leads to experiences of violence, illness, and exploitation. I saw this thesis as an opportunity to advocate for a social concern and to elevate this segment of our population through the power of design and architecture.

Much can be learned from precedents where architectural thinking and design is intervening and enhancing our social infrastructures.
INSPIRATIONAL PROJECTS

BUD CLARK COMMONS
HOLST ARCHITECTURE

Portland, Oregon

Housing

130 Permanent supportive studios for single men or women

Day Center

1

Shelter
DESIGN POINTS:

- The entrance replicates a park, much like the park some of the shelter’s residents slept in the night before. The park allows a smooth transition to passing the threshold of committing to accept the services of the Bud Clark Commons and upholds dignity as they are not forced to wait alongside the street.

- The apartments are durable, simple, clean, and beautiful with well considered storage, furniture, day lighting, and materials.

- After really studying this population, more programmatic elements were included such as an art studio, meditation garden, and mailboxes for an address.

- The use of beautiful materials and day lighting elevates the level of quality of the spaces and respect for the place and individuals.

- Careful consideration of thresholds - day center/housing - shelter/day center
INSPIRATIONAL PROJECTS

STAR APARTMENTS
LA, CALIFORNIA

MICHAEL MALTZAN ARCHITECTURE

RESIDENTIAL

COMMUNITY AND WELLNESS PROGRAMS

PUBLIC HEALTH ZONE
DESIGN POINTS:

- One of the key design considerations of this project was the shared community spaces where those who live in one of the 102 apartments or surrounding community members can intermix. Programmatic spaces include public health services and community recreation.

- All apartments are given to people who were formerly homeless.
PROPOSED STRATEGY

Throughout the duration of this thesis, not only was a final piece of built architecture designed, but also a process of how a place for runaway and homeless youth would work, what it would be, and where it would be located.

Due to the limited research on the topic, this strategy was developed to test the thinking and encourage careful consideration when addressing this social concern architecturally.

1. FIND A PLACE WITH A NEED
2. INVESTIGATE SOCIAL CONTEXT
3. LOCATE SITE
4. DETERMINE PROCESS
1 FIND A PLACE WITH A NEED

As mentioned previously, mid-size cities (such as Grand Rapids) have a great need for helping these youth, but often lack the resources and awareness of the issue to do so.

Evident through the research studies of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Michigan has the 7th highest population of homeless youth. Kent County alone has over 1500 youth without a permanent place to stay. Grand Rapids is the perfect opportunity to test this thesis.
4,094 Homeless

1,537 Children and Youth

Temporary Youth Housing: 12
- Safe Haven: 12
- Transitional: 0
- Emergency: 0

Permanent Youth Housing: 0
- Rapid Rehousing: 0
- Permanent Support: 0

Total Youth Housing: 12

Overall total of year round beds: 1,427
INVESTIGATE SOCIAL CONTEXT

Once a place with a need has been established, it is critical to gather as much information as possible about what’s happening in the social services context of the city - *WHO’S ALREADY HELPING?*

Several interviews were conducted along with site visits to HQ, Arbor Circle, Wedgewood Christian Services, Mel Trotter, and Webster House. *(interview questions can be found in the appendix)*

By examining Kent County’s social context, I was able to establish a knowledge of what services exist, what they are currently doing to help, and what are some of the gaps.
2 INVESTIGATE SOCIAL CONTEXT

Although the programmatic pieces and parts of a place where youth can get help are translatable from city to city, it is critical to understand what programs exist within the particular city of interest, to identify what is most needed. These places vary in multiple ways, including: age limitations, duration of stay, government based verse charity based, rural verse urban and so on. Within Grand Rapids, HQ and Arbor Circle exist and were considered when developing program. Webster House was also a valuable resource in understanding what program parts are currently lacking in most places for youth.

A large “gap” in our current services is the component of shelter. Currently, Kent County has some good services, but not good spaces. A youth between the ages of 18-21 could not find a bed to sleep in at a shelter tonight. Arbor Circle has 12 of them, but they are constantly full.

PROGRAMMATIC SPACES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAMMATIC SPACES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRAND RAPIDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arbor Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUSKEGON</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webster House</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### SOCIAL PROGRAM

#### GRAND RAPIDS SUPPORT SYSTEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>17</th>
<th>18</th>
<th>19</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>21</th>
<th>22</th>
<th>23</th>
<th>24</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arbor Circle</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HQ Runaway &amp; Homeless Center</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### SHELTER PROGRAMS

| Arbor Circle | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |

### Facilities

- **Toilet Rooms**: X
- **Shower Rooms**: X
- **Formal Learning**: -
- **Private Meeting Space**: X
- **Offices**: X
- **Exterior Hangout**: X
- **Resource Storage**: -
- **Overnight Shelter**: X (only up to 17 yrs)
- **Transitional Living**: X

![Journal Entry 1](image1.jpg)
![Journal Entry 2](image2.jpg)
3. LOCATE SITE

Where does this place happen within the city? Is it associated with the city (suburban, rural) or submerged (urban)? What is the appropriate context for this place?

Starting on a macro level, a SWOT analysis was done to begin the determination process of the location for this place. Ultimately, an urban setting was the most appropriate for Grand Rapids.

After the determination was made that this site would be located downtown or in very close proximity, four sites were considered based on a series of criteria (see Site Axon) and 447 East Fulton was selected as the most ideal primarily due to its adjacencies, supervision, and accessibility (see diagrams on following pages).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>URBAN</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STRENGTHS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to other locations allow for drop in/out spaces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Visibility - create awareness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place will have to provide few amenities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPPORTUNITIES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to institutional/cultural amenities (i.e. Museums, Libraries, Colleges...etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to recreational amenities (i.e. parks, arenas, health &amp; fitness centers)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interconnected with public transportation (higher mobility for youth as most do not have their own vehicle/driver’s license)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher visibility for the community to be aware of this place, causing awareness of this issue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEAKNESSES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher visibility could impede on privacy &amp; security of youth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THREATS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of adult homelessness - adults preying on youth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher access to abused substances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher crime rates and violence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compact program (possibly limited on real estate)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRENGTHS</td>
<td>WEAKNESSES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High concentration of residential</td>
<td>Amenities spread out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RURAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRENGTHS</td>
<td>WEAKNESSES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More space for program</td>
<td>More supportive amenities due to lack of surrounding amenities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PROPOSED STRATEGY

SITE CRITERIA AXONOMETRIC

FUTURE HIDING PLACES

- TRANSPARENCY
- CAMOUFLAGE

Regions were identified as transparent or camouflage in relation to quality of hiding. Transparent areas are places where a youth would avoid hiding such as industrial areas. Camouflage areas are where there are ample hiding places such as college campuses.

CURRENT HIDING SPOTS

- USED
- AVOIDED

Due to fear, safety and lack of survival skills, a youth’s preference for secondary shelter is not a doorway or a traditional shelter; it is on their uncle’s couch, at a 24/7 location such as McDonald’s, a public park, or a college campus library.

Hiding Places in Grand Rapids include Rosa Park Circle, the parking garage stairwells, coffee shops, the Grand Raids Public Library. They are hiding in plain sight.

CONNECTIONS

- medical
- permanent housing assistance
- legal services
- counseling
- substance abuse rehab
- job centers
- pregnancy resources
- universities & colleges
- cultural & civic
- recreational

Within Kent county, the majority of the connections for youth in need lay within the downtown limits along with the transportation systems. Therefore, it was immediately established that this place would be located within this area.
DETERMINING FACTORS

SITE ADJACENCIES

SITE SUPERVISION

SITE ACCESSIBILITY
The path and process of engaging with this place is not an linear one. Each youth will experience a different sequence of activities and varied levels of help based on their specific needs and preferences. This place will meet basic needs, help establish connections and frameworks, then allow aspirations and desires to become reality. By meeting basic needs then giving the opportunity to go through a transitional living program where they can establish patterns, habits, skills, and goals, then achieve them. - the sky is the limit.
YOUTH IN NEED

ENTRY

Qualifications:
- Must be age 18-24
- Accept membership (agreement to respect this place, the people within it, and yourself

DAY CENTER
EMERGENCY HELP HANDBOOK

DAY

REST
RESOURCES
EAT
RECREATION
HYGIENE

OVERNIGHT STAY
EMERGENCY SLEEP (MAX 14 DAYS)

Qualifications:
- Need stable housing
- Go through application/background check/interview to determine proper placement

TRANSITIONAL LIVING

TEMPORARY HOUSING
RESOURCES
HEALTH
CONNECT
After all of the other steps are executed, there is the knowledge to form a program based on what the need is, what other social services are/are not providing, what the process is of a youth’s engagement with this place, and where the place is located.

When striving to form a networked community it is important to include spaces that bring youth together, spaces where common interest can be shared, but also spaces for youth to be alone. It is equally important to understand the culture of the youth and their interests. For example, activities popular in the West Michigan (Grand Rapids) culture that bring youth together are music, movies, and video games.

This program diagram represents each of the different programs pieces, the activities that happen within them along with a collaged experience of the space.

String was then applied on top of this print to demonstrate how mobile youth could be within this place. (As seen in the image to the left)
THE DESIGN VISION
Currently utilized for surface parking for St. Cecilia Music Society and Lutheran Social Services - the proposed site is in an excellent location with downtown directly to the west and the historic Heritage Hill neighborhoods to the east. There is a variety of typologies surrounding the site.
The site is nestled within a traditional context of religious and historical architecture. The architecture of this new place demands to be different because it is a different response to this social concern. The form and materials reinforce a statement architecture among the neighbors.
The neighboring buildings have direct visual access to the site and currently there is a parking lot to the west allowing visual access until further development takes place. A large terminating viewpoint occurs at the intersection of Jefferson Avenue and Fulton Street.

The site has an elevation change of approximately 10’ from the north east corner to the south west. There are currently two levels of parking on the site.

As far as views go, the majority of the site is landlocked but as you reach the elevation above the surrounding neighbors, views of the Grand Rapids skyline become more apparent. There is also a clear view corridor to the south looking down Jefferson Avenue.

Fulton Street is a main side walk artery to downtown from the hill neighborhoods. There is a high volume of people walking by the site on Fulton for their daily commute.
Fulton is a main arterial running directly through the heart of downtown, connecting the west and east sides. It is one of the highest volume traffic roads in downtown Grand Rapids.

Two major bus stops for the Grand Rapids’ bus system are located to the southwest of the site.

Many front doors are located on Fulton and contribute to the circulation adjacent to the site.

Lutheran Social Services, St. Cecilia Music Society, and Ransom Apartments all have a facade within 50’ of the site boundaries. Respecting each facade is crucial to strengthening community connections and neighborhood engagement.
SITING THE DESIGN

With such a rich surrounding context in an urban context, many factors weighed in on where the design intervention would take place on the site.

NESTED IN SITE

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EXISTING ENTRY ZONE

Lutheran Social Services currently has two existing entrances on the west side of their building.

PATH TO PLACE

Allows for elongated path sequence
AXIS OF ENTRY

With elevation change and surrounding context, there is opportunity for two entrances to accommodate different personalities of youth.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS

ALIGNED ENTRY WITH MAIN VIEW

PUBLIC FACE, PRIVATE CONNECTIONS

PLANNING FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

This approach will preserve the existing entrance zone while allowing for future urban street front development in the St. Cacila parking lot.

OFFSET FROM MAIN THOROUGHFARE
The programmatic spaces, characteristics, and criteria laid out in “The Strategy” will be implemented, but furthermore adjacencies and specific details of the program are identified.

There is definite thresholds between the interventions of day center, overnight stay, and transitional living. All of these 3 components are intertwined and are forming the overall community of this place, but they are operating on different time schedules.

Within the day center, overnight stay, and transitional living – 3 important factors are key in consideration of adjacencies:

1. Maximize resources
2. Form a community within this place
3. Control security and access
### SUPPORT SPACES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Space</th>
<th>SF Per SF</th>
<th># people</th>
<th># rooms</th>
<th>SF Per Room</th>
<th>TOTAL SF</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>STAFF</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome Desk</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>Welcoming, but secure - non-transparent; staffed by (2) welcome staff/receptionist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin Offices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>400</td>
<td>open office workspace - (4) work stations, collaboration table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>550</td>
<td>SF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STORAGE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource Storage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>300</td>
<td>Storage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal (for youth)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>500</td>
<td>Lockable by admin - keep for up to 14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>800</td>
<td>SF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SERVICE KITCHEN</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Kitchen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>150</td>
<td>Industrial kitchen equipment, kitchen for volunteer staff to come and make meals; teaching kitchen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Counter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Service Hot Meal (see note about when food isn’t being served)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>980</td>
<td>SF</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,330</td>
<td>SF</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### DAY CENTER ACTIVITIES & SPACES

**SERVES 30-60 YOUTH PER DAY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Space</th>
<th>SF Per SF</th>
<th># people</th>
<th># rooms</th>
<th>SF Per Room</th>
<th>TOTAL SF</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Youth Kitchen</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Kitchen</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>Microwave, sink, refrigerator, accessible snacks and quick meals, coffee!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>225</td>
<td>SF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cafe (Dining)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dining</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>Variety of dining spaces - high bar &amp; low table clusters (flexible furniture)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>800</td>
<td>SF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hangout Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lounge</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>Variety of seating spaces: comfortable, relaxing, - places for people to gather - nooks for individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource Storage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>(book shelves and open cabinets (games)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>SF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>** Formal Learning**</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>Audio/visual capabilities - writing surface - gather (learning together) instead of lecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>400</td>
<td>SF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tech Lounge</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Variety of spaces: computer stations, printer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tech Hub</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Variety of spaces for gaming - video game, comfortable seating for gamers</td>
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<td>Large screens (2-3) - comfortable/flexible seating for gamers</td>
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<td><strong>Studio</strong></td>
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<td>Variety of spaces for painting - graffiti - drawing - painting along with smaller spaces for writing a poem or sketching</td>
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<td>Create Space</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Available resources of feminine products, condoms, and other toiletries.</td>
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<td>Available resources of towels, soap, other toiletries</td>
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<td>Private meeting space to have confidential conversations, meet with a case worker or parole officer, counselor</td>
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### OVERNIGHT STAY

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<th>TOTAL SF</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CABINS</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
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<td>15</td>
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### TRANSITIONAL LIVING

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### TOTAL BUILDING

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DESIGN CONCEPTS

DRIVING CRITERIA

DESIGN CONCEPTS

- PLACE TO HIDE... IN PLAIN SITE
- MASKED → NESTED

- LET THEM (YOUTH) APPROACH PLACE AT THEIR PACE
  - ENTRY OPTIONS
  - MOVEMENT THROUGH SITE
  - PROGRAM SEQUENCE

- INDIRECT OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY, FRIENDSHIP... HELP!
  - PATHS ARE INTERMITTENT
  - MENTORSHIP
  - LOOKING OUT FOR EACH OTHER

BE SAFE
- NON-DECRIMINATING
- COMMUNITY
- SLEEPING SPACES
- BARRIERS
- STAFF

BE EMPOWERED
- SOCIAL PROGRAMS
- STAFF
- SEQUENCE OF SPACE

DESIRE DIGNITY
- SOCIAL PROGRAMS
- STAFF
- ENTRY

ESTABLISH COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS
- COMMUNITY SPACES
- PATHS

STABILITY
- SUPPORT
- ACTIVITY
- CIRCULATION

LIVING
MAIN CONCEPTS

ORDER & CHAOS
Determine site organization. Strong entrance axis with chaotic activity then formal bar of support.

CONCENTRATED MASSING
Stacking floor plates to one east side of site will allow for open visual access to the entire place giving youth options, opportunities and ultimately the choice.

PROTECTIVE SKIN
The skin will be protective of it’s contents (the youth) but will allow for a radical form within the context to elevate the social issue.
DESIGN CONCEPTS

SKETCHES

SECTION PERSPECTIVE LOOKING EAST

SECTION PERSPECTIVE LOOKING SOUTH
**Massing Strategy**

**Entry Bar**

Takes advantage of the opportunities for multiple entrances, while preserving a single point of check in. This entry bar is the seam between St. Cecilia and the activity of this place. The one story volume also preserves the views from the balconies of Ransom Apartments.

**Day Center**

First level placement allows for immediate access. Stacked and shifted floor-plates create an overall connectivity of the community and visual access to all available options of this place.

**Emergency Stay**

Nestled in the north east corner of site. This location is removed from the public face of the building allowing for quiet, rest and protection.

**Transitional Living**

This element is located at the highest level of the building as being apart of the Transitional Living program is the highest level of stability in this place. A youth can “move up” in the system to be a part of this space. The elevation gives incredible views to the downtown and puts this program component at the same elevation as neighboring apartments.
DAY CENTER
OVERNIGHT STAY
TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM
Coming across the bridge, there is a moat of activity happening below. The programmatic spaces of studio and game zone are acting as an “arena” of activity to be observed from all areas above. Leading down from the cafe, there are terraced stairs allowing for a gradual decent into this area. The staff is located on the second level to allow for surveillance but has open workstation near the computer lab so staff are accessible to youth.

In the studio area, there are movable “walls” that can be used to paint, draw on, or exhibit work along with nooks for sketching/observing and gathering spaces along the east wall tucked under the floor plate.
This place is all about **choice**, which may be a first time experience for some youth. By arranging the program vertically and opening up the building - visual access is given to all of the available options of this place - giving someone the choice to engage with whatever they want and have the option to take an opportunity.

Although visual access is given to everything the direct path across the bridge leads to the immediate need options of the hygiene bar to the left (hot shower - clean clothes - toilet) and the open cafe (all you can eat!) to the right.
ENTRY

ADJACENCIES & TIME FRAMES
There are multiple options of entry. As mentioned, entering may be the biggest barrier in receiving help. If you want to come to this place there are two different options of entry both leading to a single reception desk.

PUBLIC ENTRY
The public entry is where a youth can enter a pronounced, celebrated entrance, entering with dignity and pride, most likely walking past gathered groups of youth sitting on the green or seating.

SECRET ENTRY
The secret entrance accommodate youth who are scared, nervous, or unsure. This entrance is not known to everyone so behaves as if it were the “rave entry”.

SECRET ENTRY

ENTRY

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SECRET ENTRY
Enter into the corridor, you can see the front desk but due to ramp, they cannot completely see you.

Opening into large volume.

Entrance into vestibule.

Entrance under canopy, seating available.

Thresholds/ Entry Sequence

Public Entry


OTHER RESOURCES


“Recommended Practices: Preventing Challenging Behavior in Young Children: Effective Practices” by Peter J. Alter & Mareen A. Conroy


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**OVERVIEW/ GENERAL INFORMATION**

- Please give a brief overview of your function / role in the organization
- How has the scene of runaway and homeless youth changed in the last 3 years? What has driven/is driving these changes?
- How do you measure success at _____________? Do you use any metrics/tracking?
- What's your current staff count?
- How many youth do you currently serve? Are your numbers decreasing, increasing, or consistent?
- What is your first interaction with a youth?
- What is the process of a youth coming and interacting with Webster House, logistically? (How does your process work)
- What is the process of a youth coming and interacting with Webster House, emotionally?
- How do you connect with other organizations or services?

**THE YOUTH**

- What makes youth decide to engage this service? Is there anything that makes them not return once they have come?
- How do youth know to come to this place?
- How often do they come? How long do they stay?
- What are the most important events in the day for these youth? (Eating? Sleeping?)
- Where are they coming from? Where are they going to? (What are their patterns of travel?)
- What is their most common way of transit? Foot? Public Transportation? Bike?
- What are these youth aspiring to do/to be?
- Are youth social or anit-social? Or both? Does this change when they engage with Webster House?
- How do these youth connect socially to each other?
- What are their common interests? What unites them?

**THE ORGANIZATION**

- What are the biggest challenges or barriers to your organization? (i.e.: people/communication, spatial/storage, workload/process)
- What role does technology play in your work and within the services of your organization?
- What types of spaces do you (your staff) need for the administration part of your work?

**YOUTH ACTIVITIES/PROGRAMS/SERVICES**

- What are the top needs of these youth?
- If you could have any one thing to serve this group of youth what would it be?
- What is the expectation of a youth when they come to this place?
- Are there special equipment needs in your service delivery? (i.e.: physical therapy, emotional therapy, occupation therapy, large T.V. monitors, etc.)
Has HQ House considered including a shelter for youth? Why or why not?
What is one of the most **successful** things about this place and why?
What is one of the most **unsuccessful** things about this place and why?
What **spaces** are the most successful? Why?
What **spaces** are the most unsuccessful? Why?
If you could change anything about this physical place, what would it be?
What is the most used space at Webster House? What is the least used space?

**STORAGE**
Please describe storage amounts and types (lateral drawers, shelving, pedestal drawers) that you use to serve the youth.
Do you give personal storage to youth? If so, how?
Do you store items to give to youth?

**PRIVACY/SECURITY**
Describe any physical security concerns.
Describe how your organization handles any confidential or sensitive information.
Are they **internal** concerns of safety? If so, in between youth?
Are there **external** concerns of safety? If so, from who/what?

**LOCATION OF PLACE**
Were there strategies in how you geographically located this place within the context of the city?
If you could change the location, would you? To Where?
If you could suggest one article, book or other piece have you read or are reading that pertains to working with these youth?
BEGINNING WORK....

STARTED WITH SCHEMING TO TAKE OVER BOTH PARKING LOTS FULLY WITH A LARGE RECREATIONAL COMPONENT OF THE PROGRAM - BUT DECIDED TO FOCUS MORE HEAVILY ON A BUILDING INTERVENTION.
CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT
TRANSITIONAL LIVING

LIVING UNITS
OPEN
COMMUNITY SPACE
OPEN TO BELOW

SECTION B
CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT
EMERGENCY STAY VERTICAL STACK

INTERCONNECTED SPACE

FLOWING TERRACES → HIDDEN BUT OPEN

ENTRY
(compression/fire expansion)

VIDEO GAME THERAPY
TECH

PERSONAL STORAGE

SECURITY? ONLY FOR TLP?
HOW WOULD THIS BE MONITORED?
PLAN DEVELOPMENT

OPTION 1

FIRST FLOOR
SECOND FLOOR
THIRD FLOOR

OPTION 2

FIRST FLOOR
SECOND FLOOR
THIRD FLOOR
FORM & SKIN DEVELOPMENT

"SOLID & Void"

PLYNTH ENTRY
STUDY MODELS
MATERIAL:
PERFORATED METAL PANEL, PERFORATIONS VARY TO ALLOW FOR DIFFERENT LEVELS OF TRANSPARENCY (SEE ELEVATION SKETCHES)
WHITE
FED GALLERIES MASTERS EXHIBITION
A HUGE THANK YOU TO...

THE ROCKSTAR FACULTY:
BRIAN CRAIG, JULI BRODE, TRAVIS WILLIAMS

AN OUTSTANDING THESIS ADVISOR:
THOM DANCKAERT

Fellow MArch Students:
MRS. Anne Doornbos, Alicia Miller, Geena Pickering, Dan “the man” Montgomery, Courtney Wierzbicki, and Jenn Hicks

MY FAMILY

HUSBAND CHRIS VALLIER

the FRIEND PACK