mobile public space
lara davis

influx masterplan : hastings corridor individual design

Mobile Public Space

use safe program module attach easy canvas mobile place adapt

place in a changing landscape

The Need for Place

The Influx strategic plan speaks directly to the importance of community sense of place in both its principles and focus on preserving and enhancing existing character areas. Sense of place is required for social sustainability, as places are sources of identity for groups of people (Relph) and shared sites of memory (places) hold these identities together over time (Crang). Place is distiguished from space by it's meaning and sense of civic and poetic orientation. It emerges where layers of past, present and future value combine to form memory. These forming of these patterns of memory requires repeated actions and interactions over time. Although the development of place has been traditionally described as enabled by these repeated actions in the context of a particular physical location, contemporary research indicates that placemaking can occur without being specific to a particular location within the landscape.

Temporary Vacancy and Change

Advances in space-shaping technologies and unstable economic cycles have resulted in the human-scale urban landscape becoming impermanent (Crang). The condition of temporary urban vacancy is a common result. Within the study area, this is exemplified by the large number of temporarily unused lots that line hastings street and are littered throughout the surrounding neighborhoods. Vacant lots have been called the "missing teeth" of the urban fabric (Corbin), an accurate metaphor that describes the absence of an "aesthetic of care" they imply (Nassauer). The presence of derelict space in the urban landscape has significant negative cultural implications. Within the context of the Influx strategic plan, the character of these vacancies disrupts the sense of place that the master plan endeavors to preserve/enhance. Recognizing the instability of the contemporary economy and the incremental nature of the proposed development, this is a condition that without focused intervention, can be expected to persist.

Vacant Place

The existing condition of temporary vacancy disrupts the community self-sufficiency that sits at the core of the Infux strategic plan. Undermining the values of the proposal, it draws a hard edge between uses over time, seperates sites from community social systems, and disregards the inherently flexible nature of the vacant condition. As this physical circumstance is expected to persist, how can the Hastings Corridor eliminate the related interruptions to its sense of place? "Placing the vacant" is one appropriate response. In recognizing the overlooked potential of temporarilly vacant spaces to contribute positively to community sense of place, this view allows moments of urban vacancy to become acknowledged components of community place narrative. It is an approach that transforms vacant spaces into a unified network, enabling the repetition of experience neccesary for community sense of place, social sustainability and the fulfillment of the performance goals of the Influx strategic plan.
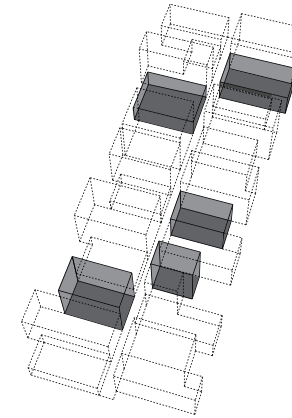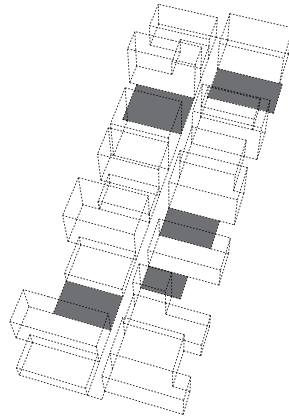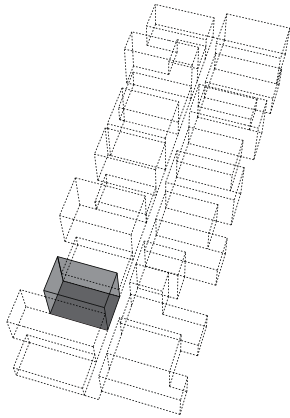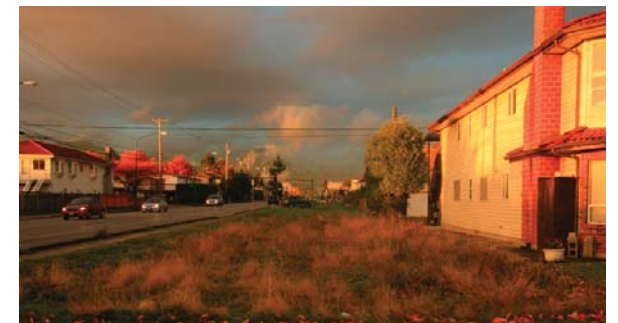
Current Vacancy and Parking
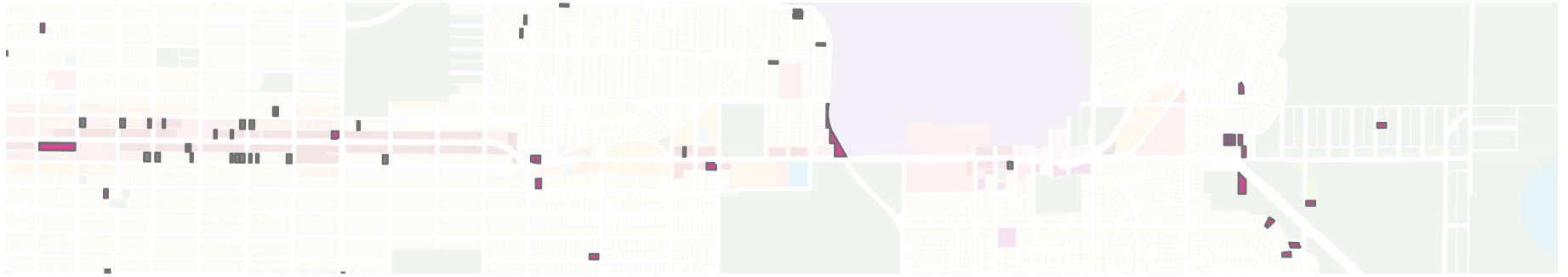
Site Characters

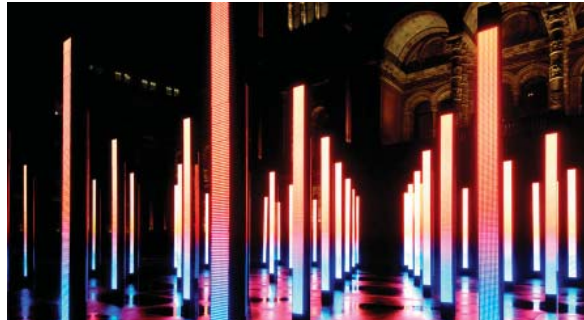# Precedents

Temporary Landscapes: mobility, modularity and responsiveness

BALLOON CAUGHT. space agency. 2005

gastown installation can be installed in multiple sites

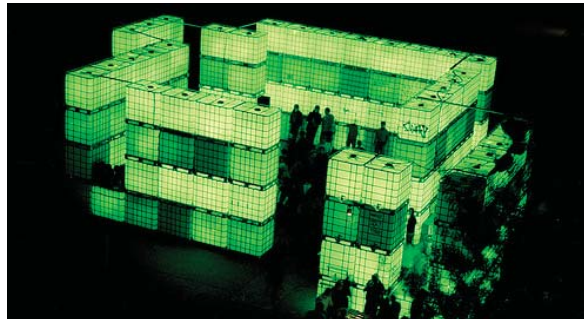VOLUME. united visual artists. 2008

light forms in exterior plaza respond to user movement

YARD FURNITURE. ppag architects. 02-08

modular seating elements in Vienna's museum quarter are rearranged periodically

HERBES FOLLES. encore heureux. 2003

green surveyor's tape attached to exterior vent on Paris street creates interactive installation

KUBIK BERLIN. modulorbeat. 2006

recycled illuminated water containers are stacked to create a temporary public space and club

PF1. work architecture. 2008

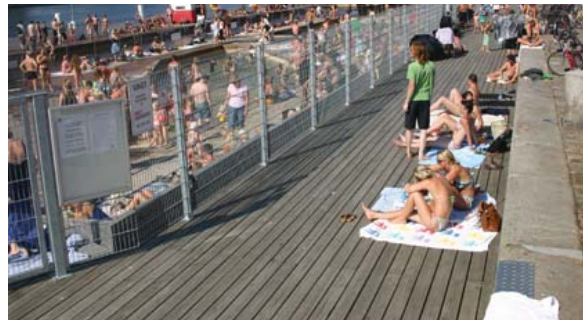modular raised food garden in New York City's PS1 gallery courtyard uses sonotube for bed structure

Successful Public Spaces: characteristics and design guidelines

PALEY PARK. New York City

pocket park incorporating moveable elements

GASWORKS PARK. Seattle

adaptive re-use of refinery as safe and functional public space

PEOPLE'S PARK. Copenhagen
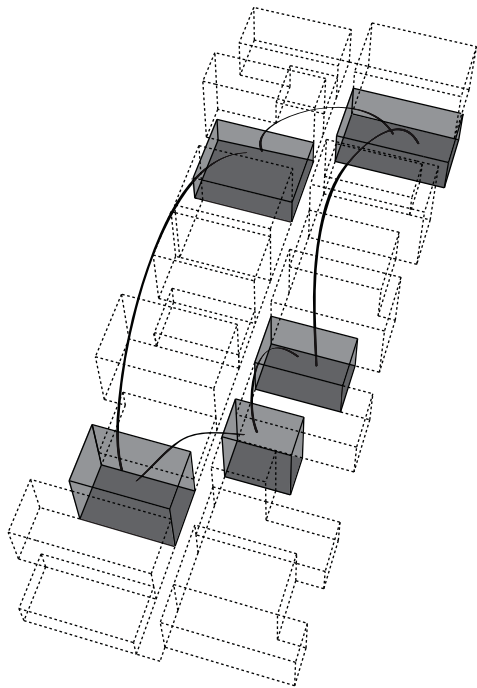
community input influences site design and development

DUISBERG NORD. Ruhr River Basin

sculptural forms indicate use other than original industrial function

Goals and Objectives

Goal

mobile public space: a responsive modular system that can be inserted into areas that are temporarily vacant.

Performance Objectives

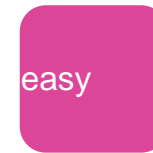**use** — indicate that the site is meant to be used.

safe — safe and comfortable environment.

program — flexible programmatic elements.
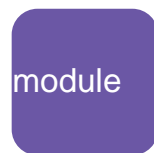
module — modular components that users can manipulate or change.

attach — community involvement in design, implementation and construction.

easy — easily installed by community members.

canvas — multidimensional canvas for the community and its context.

mobile — specific to multiple spaces without infrastructural investment in the sites themselves.
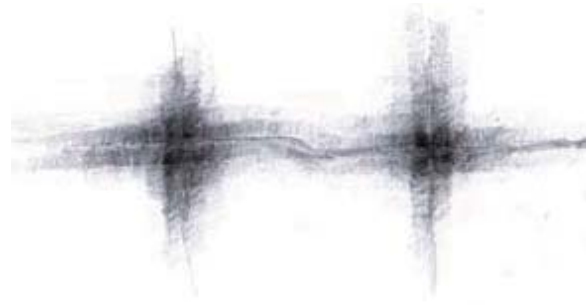
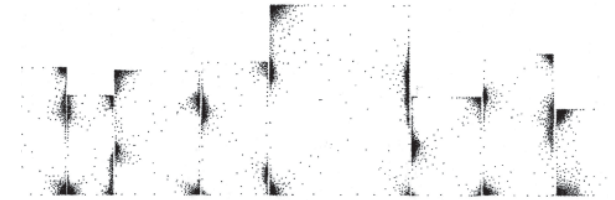**place** — equal attention to place as visual art and place as social setting.
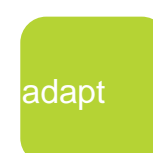
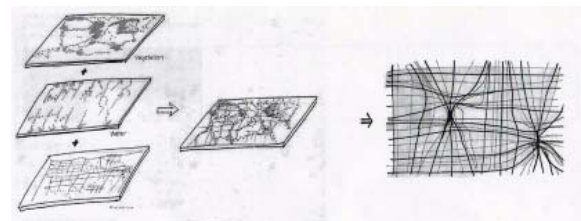**adapt** — adaptable to new materials and technologies as they become available.

Gradation: dissolving rigid boundaries

use | mobile | place

Resilience: decreasing inflexibility

program | module | adapt

Dynamic Equilibrium: connect systems

safe | mobile
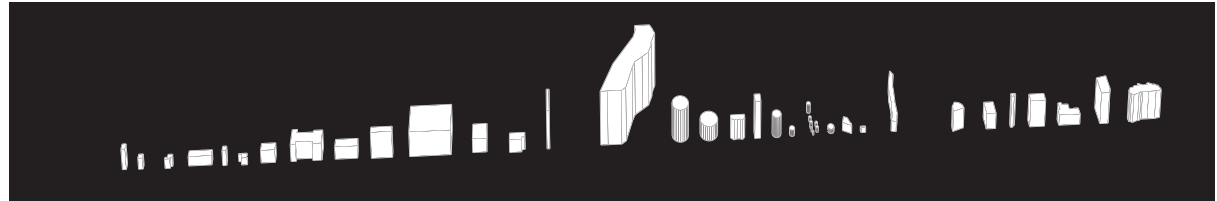

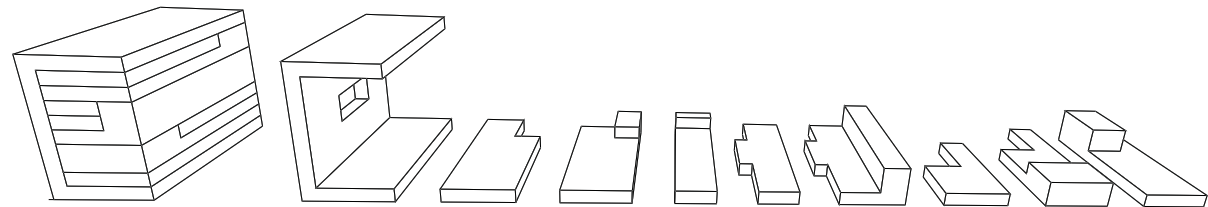### Self Sufficiency: community placemaking

attach | easy | canvas

Process: concept

Volumetric Light Form

illumination of temporarily vacant sites. form
based on shape of site or historic form/function

`module` `attach` `canvas` `mobile`

Module for Accomodating

transportable module to accomodate user needs

`use` `safe` `program` `module` `attach` `mobile` `adapt`

Responsive Light Environment

interactive system tracks user movement and
activates lights based on spatial location

`program` `module` `attach` `canvas` `mobile` `place` `adapt`
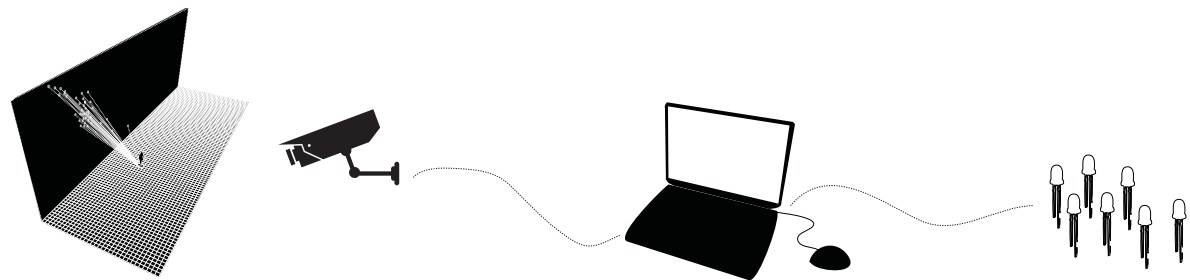
Testing forms and functions
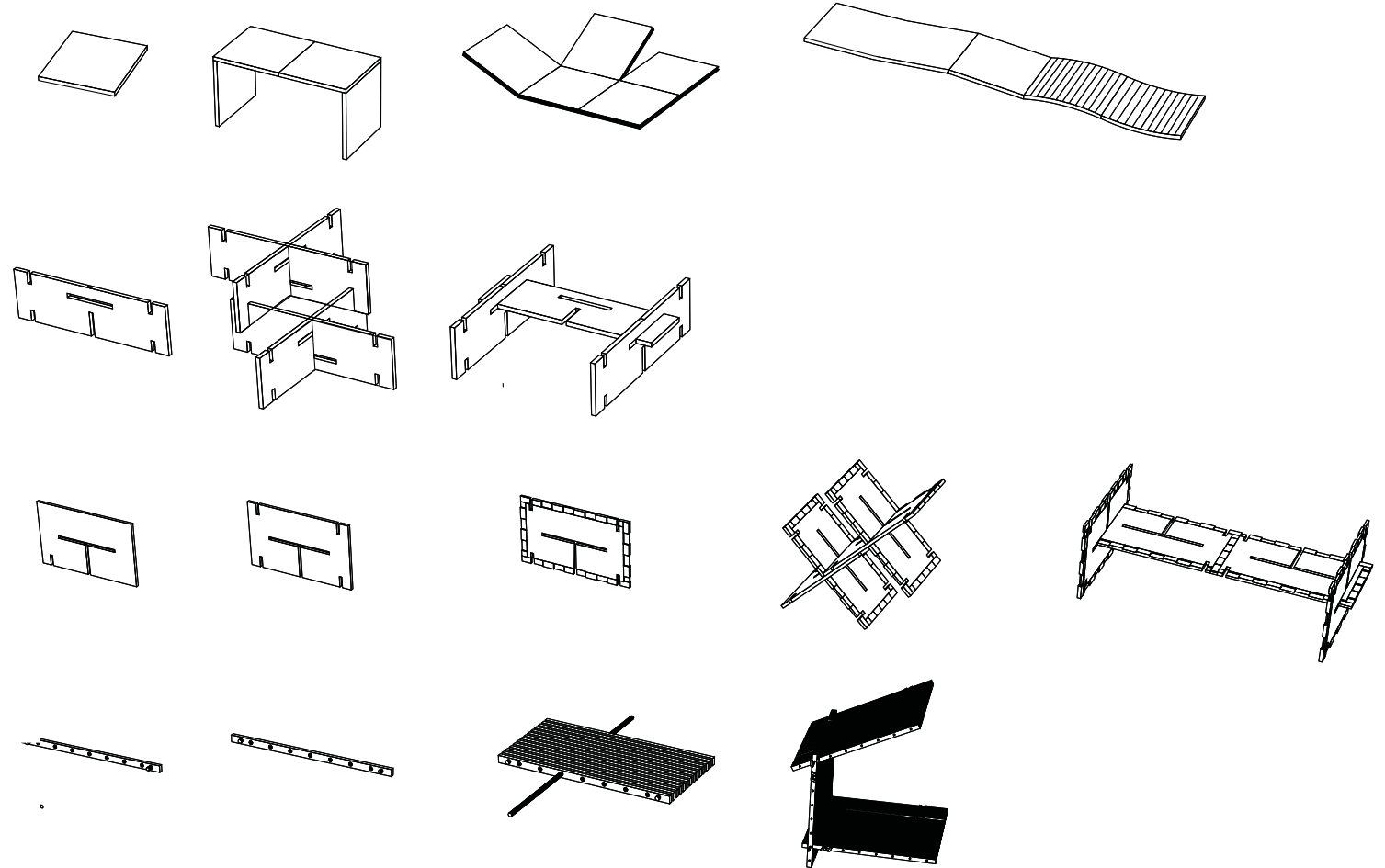
Mobile Public Space: package

mobile public space

easy
requires no tools or special skills to
assemble

mobile
self-contained unit can be placed on existing
sites with no other significant site changes

use
the formal character of the module indicates
an aesthetic of care and suggests usability

attach
community and B.I.A. engaged in supporting
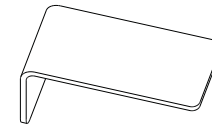implementation on private/public property
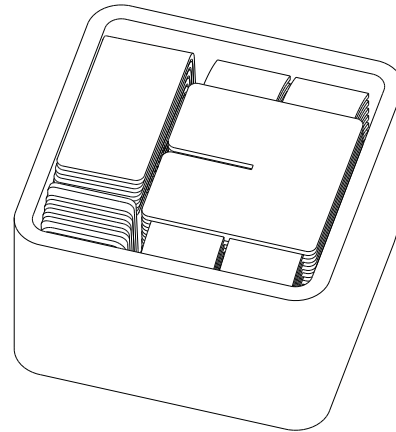
1 8'x8'x8' container
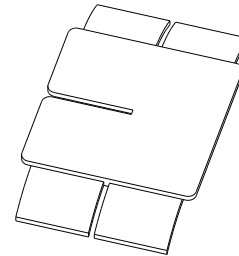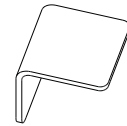
25 a

5 b

10 c

your mobile public space

1.

2.

3.

instructions

Mobile Public Space: component form

module modular components are interchangeable and can be easily reconfigured/replaced

safe even surface and standard height seating reduces liability concerns

canvas dimensions based on standard lot size and requirements for functional human-scale use
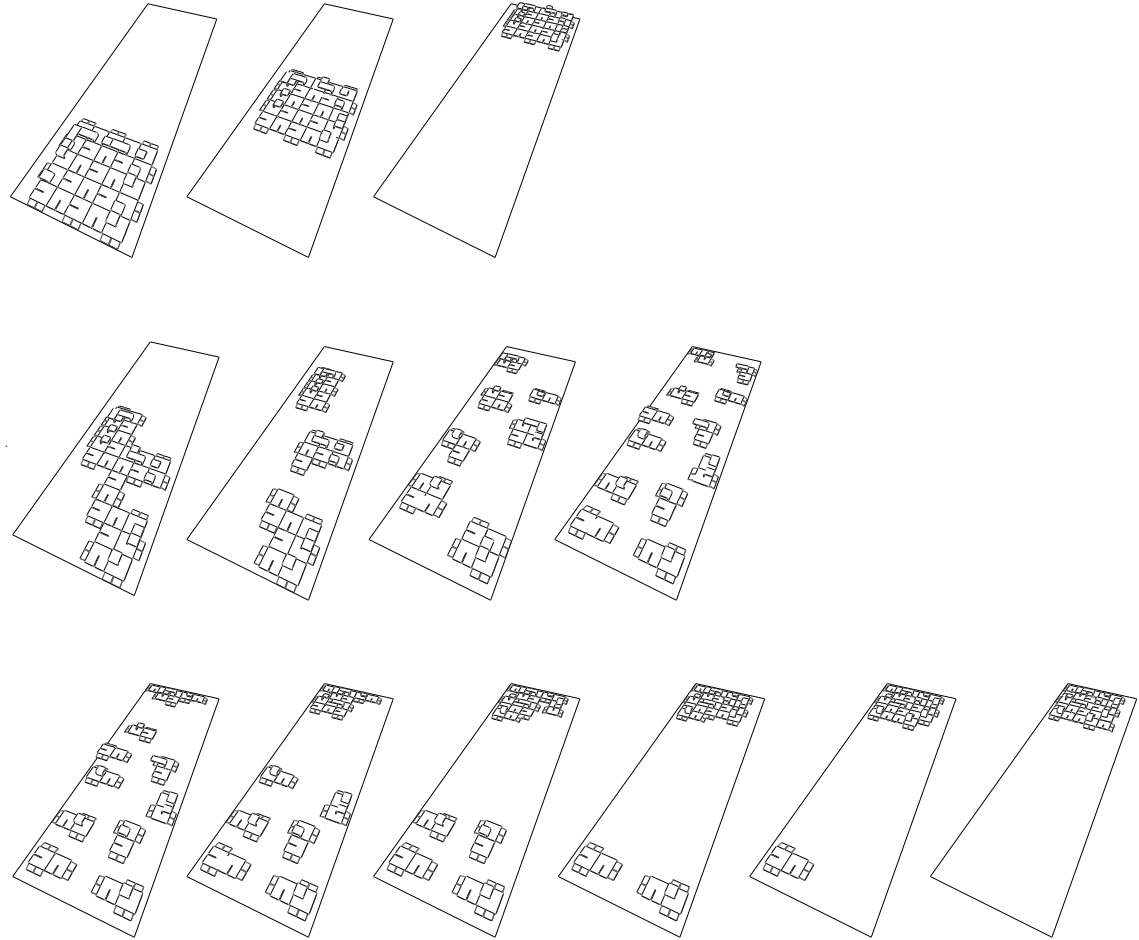
Configured

	a	b	c
side		2.5'	2.5'
	10"		
bottom	5'		
top	5'	2.5'	2.5'
	5'	5'	2.5'

20"
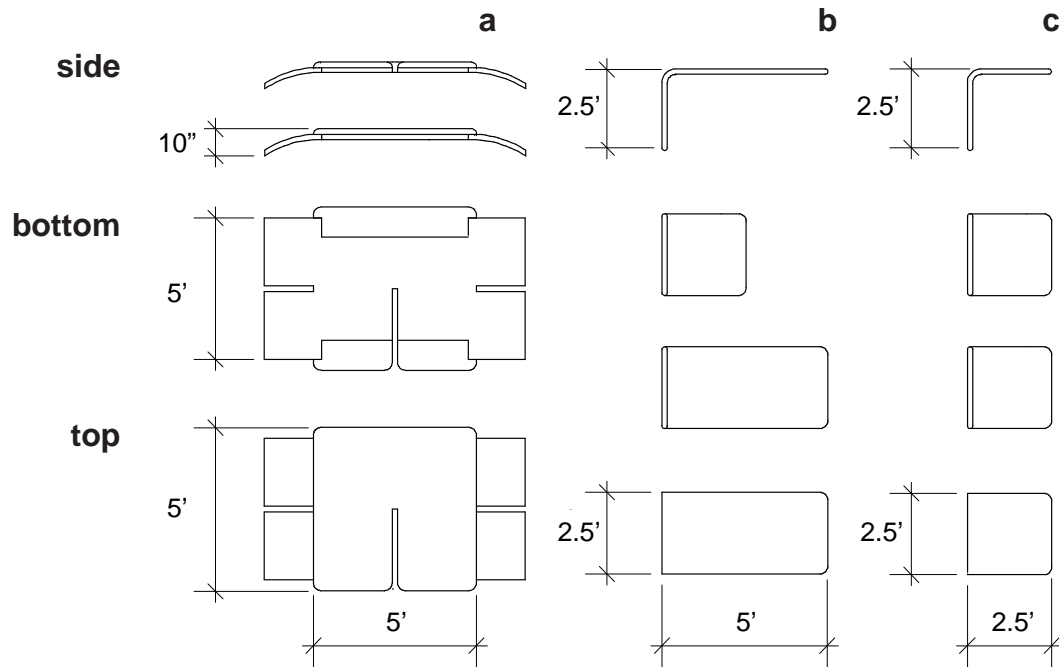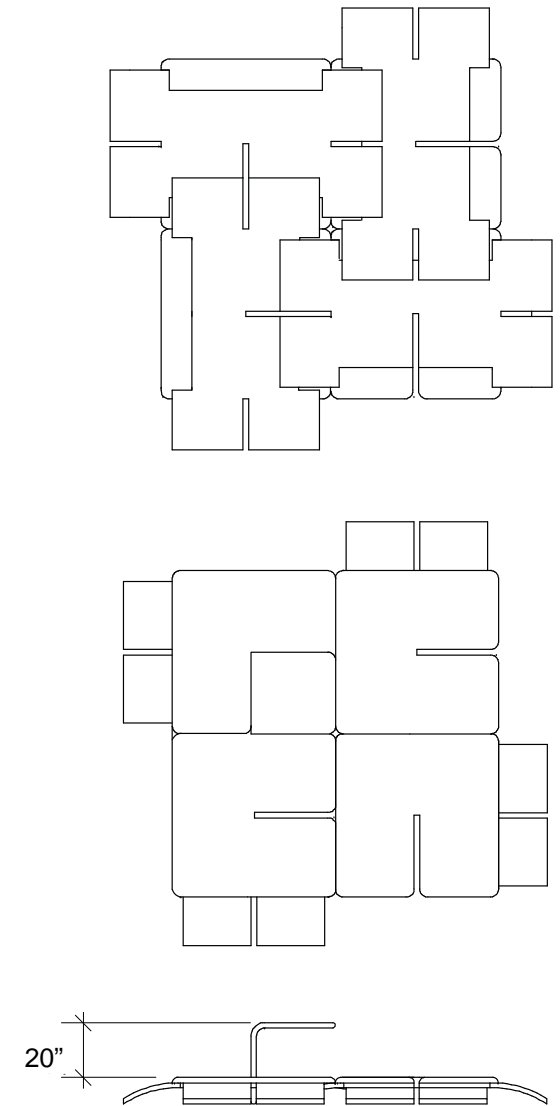
# Mobile Public Space: base configurations

program — multiple combinations of possible grouped form results in high programmatic flexibility

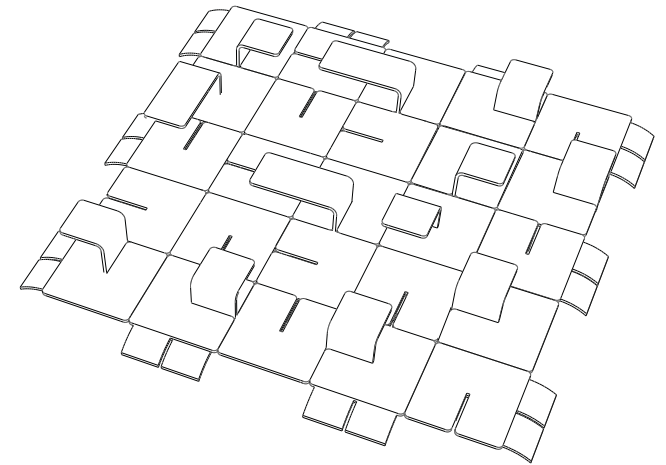mobile — flexible arrangement allows for installation around existing vertical site elements

Mobile Public Space: seating configurations

attach multiple possible configurations allow for many unique user-defined layouts

module seating is easily reconfigured as desired to enable preferred social arrangements
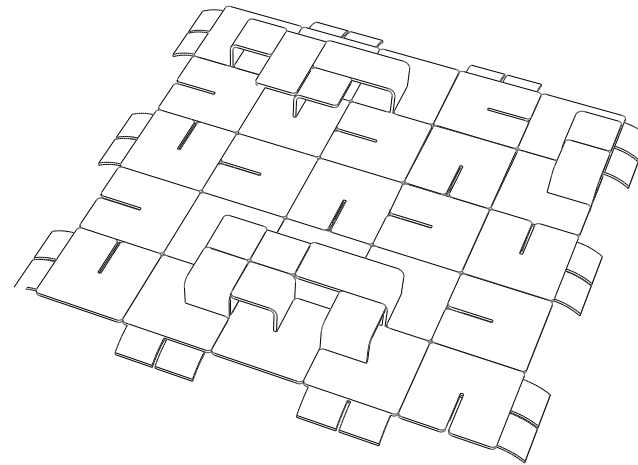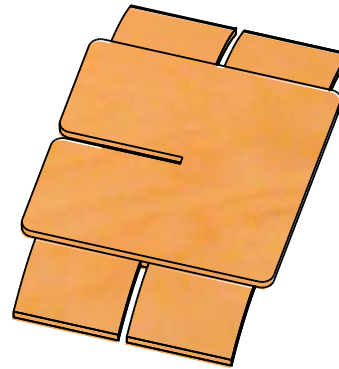
social space

individual space
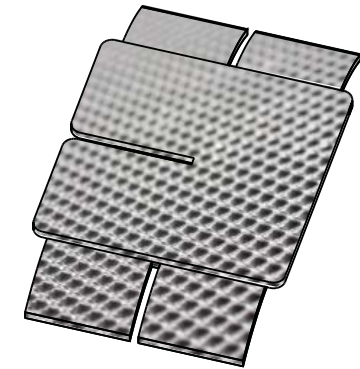
Mobile Public Space: materials

adapt can be made from a variety of recycled materials as they become available

canvas materials derived from local demolition by-products represent historic material fabric
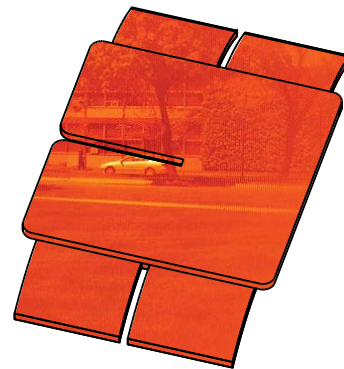
wood
as the most significant component of construction and demolition waste, a variety of recycled wood products may be used

metal
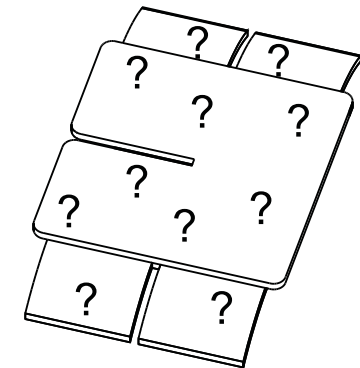the most frequently recycled component of demolition waste, recycled metal products are widely available and easily fabricated

plastic
a component of construction waste, plastics are a recycleable material that can be fabricated into a variety of structural forms

other
as construction materials and recycling processes change in the future, new materials appropriate for use will likely become available

Mobile Public Space: surface responses

canvas responsive charactersitics allow for the recording of community context and activity

place artistic and functional components support and enrich each other

adapt response characteristics may change as technology advances

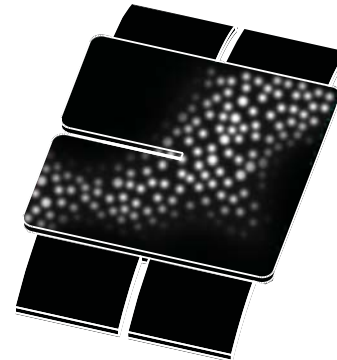### photoluminescent coating
photoluminescent paint selected to reach full luminosity after 12 hours of light exposure. shadows from context during the day are imprinted, becoming visible at night

interactive projections
interactive projections respond to user movement. content to be determined by community members

interactive LED
interactive solar powered LEDs can be embedded into the module's surface. they may be activated by user movement, or may indicate locations of previous users
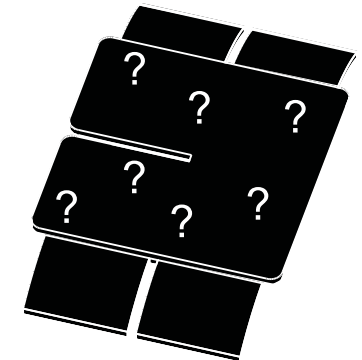
other
as technologies continue to advance, new responsive technologies appropriate for integration into the module will likely be developed
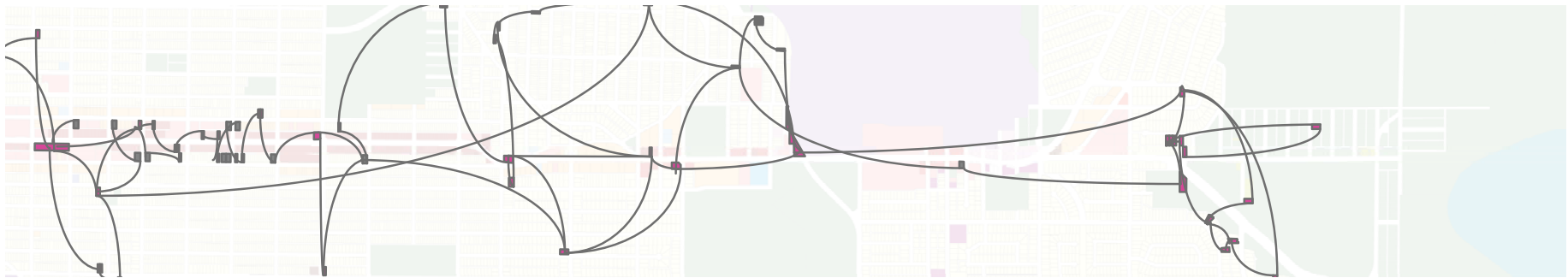
use safe program module attach easy canvas mobile place adapt

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Place in a Changing Landscape

Temporarily vacant spaces become a unified place network over time, enabling the repetition of experience neccesary for community sense of place, social sustainability and the fulfillment of the principles of the Influx strategic plan.

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