Disturbances release resources and energy and set in motion dynamic ecosystem processes. Might we think of architectures as disturbances in urban environments, projects that both instigate and accommodate beneficial social, environmental and economic change? This studio will focus on the Booth-Kelly site in Springfield, a post-industrial site just south of downtown (we will concentrate on a smaller, ‘cataytic’ site within the 17-acre project area). We will adopt the EcoDistricts framework as a larger conceptual lens that can positively inform building scale decision making (see: http://www.pdxinstitute.org/index.php/ecodistricts).

This studio supports the Sustainable Cities Initiative’s partnership with the City of Springfield in 2011-2012. Additional project partners include Salmon Safe (nonprofit), the Portland Sustainability Institute, and students in the Oregon Leadership in Sustainability (OLIS) certificate program and in the Center for Sustainable Business Practices.

We will utilize the fall seminar to develop the program in detail. A preliminary listing of project activities includes places of production (incubator businesses that will help form a thriving bioregional economy, for example manufacturers of sustainable timber products), places of recreation and entertainment, places of dwelling, and places of ongoing (urban) ecological experimentation.