Studio Project: a Community Recreation Center for Brookings, Oregon

The studio project is to develop proposals for a Community Recreation Center for Brookings, OR. Brookings is a town of 6,500 people on the southern Oregon Coast six miles north of the California border on U.S. Highway 101. It lies between the Chetco River and Harris Beach State Park. Much of the popularity of Brookings stems from its mild climate, beautiful coastline, and natural recreational amenities.

Every ten years (or so) the town of Brookings has revisited the idea of building an up-to-date recreation center. The popular outdoor swimming pool is open only a few months out of the year, and there is no local YMCA. This fall a series of planning workshops has sparked renewed interest, and Brookings has decided to move forward with a more serious exploration of what the possibilities are: “the what, the where, and the how.”

Opportunities for Students in the Studio

This studio is invited by Tony Baron, a U of O architecture graduate in 2000 who is now the Parks and Technical Services Supervisor for the city of Brookings; this means there is opportunity for students to work with real people on a real problem that is significant to their town. The Brookings Community Center Task Force has identified several potential sites for the project. There will be a student team that explores each site, and everyone will develop a proposal (on one of the chosen sites) for a phased build-out of the Recreation Center. The studio process will focus on ways in which students can contribute to the sound decision-making of city leaders as they investigate the opportunities inherent in moving forward with a project of this scope and significance. The city recognizes the importance of creating a building that models sustainable and regenerative building practices. Student collaboration will be encouraged for those who would like to develop a project proposal jointly.
**Program**
The program is still in the making (December meetings), but will include spaces that are diverse and rich. The 40,000 to 50,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility will include an aquatic center, family recreational spaces, a fitness (wellness) center, exercise rooms, and locker rooms.

**Focus of the Project Design**
- **INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS OF POTENTIAL SITES:** identifying opportunities and constraints.
- **SITE PLANNING AND BUILDING ORGANIZATION:** getting the right things in the right places.
- **BUILDING PHASING:** developing strategies for building a project over time without losing its essence along the way.
- **SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES:** exploring passive and active systems for heating, cooling, and water filtration.
- **TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR LONG-SPAN SPACES:** creating a structural methodology.
- **MATERIALS AND DETAIL:** developing a cohesive, beautiful building vocabulary.

**Critical Process Issues**
- **CONCEPTUAL THINKING:** utilizing imagery, models, drawings, and words to clearly articulate design intentions at each cycle of the design.
- **SKETCHING AND DRAWING (BOTH BY HAND AND COMPUTER):** exploring spatial qualities of site; building; and room in plan, section, elevation, and perspective.
- **MODEL-MAKING (BOTH PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL):** developing a clear, three-dimensional understanding of the project.
- **FINAL PRESENTATION OF HIGH QUALITY:** submitting a scheme document for the City of Brookings that will generate interest in the project and promote fund raising.

**Required Field Trip**
The studio will have a required field trip – **Friday early morning until Sunday early evening**, at the end of the first week of winter term. Our hosts will pay for our lodging (two nights in yurts at Harris Beach State Park) and some meals. Students will be responsible for other meals and transportation costs (allow $100 to be safe).