Redevelopment of the ODOT Blocks:  
A Study in Urban Place-Making

STUDIO INTRODUCTION

The Central Eastside is currently the most dynamic and evolving district in Portland's Central City. Adopted as an official district in 1988, in an effort to preserve it as an urban “industrial sanctuary”, in recent years it has seen an explosion of revitalization thanks to several adaptive redevelopment projects like Olympic Mills, the Eastbank Commerce and the coming Burnside Bridgehead. These projects have been instrumental in bringing non-industrial businesses to the area, creating an entrepreneurial atmosphere, and in beginning to reconnect the Central Eastside to Portland’s urban fabric. However, the allowance of these non-industrial uses has also raised concerns over the ability to maintain the district as an “industrial sanctuary”.

Led by Will Ives of Hennebery Eddy Architects and Erica Dunn of Green Hammer in conjunction with Brad Malsin of Beam Development, this studio will explore the redevelopment of three contiguous parcels owned by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) bounded by the Hawthorne Bridge, Water Avenue, and I-5. Centrally located within the Central Eastside Urban Renewal Area and a gateway to the Eastside Esplanade, the site has the opportunity to be the hub of the Central Eastside and create a thriving street life.
This design studio is a study of strong urban place-making and an introduction to sustainability as an inherent (not additive) component of design in the professional practice. The studio will also introduce students to the pace and rigor of the design process within a firm. Organized around the framework of integrating strong design and sustainable strategies, the studio will explore these at all stages from initial Design Concept through Schematic Design and the development of technical details. Additionally students will explore the realities of developing sustainable design strategies in an urban setting such as the impact of adjacent buildings on daylighting or imperfect site orientation.

EDUCATIONAL THEMES OF THE STUDIO

*Development and Expression of Design Concepts*

A strong design concept or parti diagram is a critical tool for designing a building that is not just a collection of moments but a comprehensive and cohesive piece of architecture. This studio will focus on developing an effective concept to serve as a “road map” informing the design process.

*Integrated Environmental Design*

Sustainability should no longer be seen as a goal in projects but rather a given. This studio will emphasize an integrated environmental design process so sustainable solutions are logically woven into a comprehensive design supporting the overall concept.

*Observation and Response to Site*

A successful urban building relates to its architectural, cultural, and social context. Students will be expected to investigate and understand the context in which they are working and develop designs that respond to both the site and its surroundings.

*Individual Identity and Urban Engagement*

Strong urban buildings enhance the character of a city by relating to their surroundings, engaging pedestrians, and blending into the urban fabric. The studio will encourage exploration of the relationship of public and private spaces at the building and urban scale.
**Visual and Verbal Communication Skills**

Essential to academic projects and professional practice, visual and verbal communication skills will be of particular focus. Students will be encouraged to explore traditional and alternative methods for presenting ideas such as digital slides, videos, animations, models, sketches, spoken and written words.

**STUDIO METHODOLOGY**

The studio is organized around an overlapping series of vignette studies to engage students and continually challenge and refine their design solutions. Successful students will better understand the creative process and integrated approach necessary to develop advanced academic and professional projects.

**Vignette Studies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exercise</th>
<th>Sketch/Test #1</th>
<th>Sketch/Test #2</th>
<th>Sketch/Test #3</th>
<th>Sketch/Test #4</th>
<th>Sketch/Test #5</th>
<th>Final Review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Initial Concept</td>
<td>Urban Engagement</td>
<td>Integrated Environmental Design</td>
<td>Technical Development</td>
<td>Design Synthesis</td>
<td>Presentation Methods</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Integrated Environmental Design**

Each student will select an area of focus: water, energy, light or habitat. Students will be asked to consider how these factors relate and are communicated to building users and the public. Students will be challenged to use sustainable solutions to reinforce the projects design concepts. Concepts will be reviewed in Pin up #1, #2, and Review #1.

**Initial Concepts**

Following a project brief and program analysis students will be challenged to quickly assess the context and develop a site analysis as well as ideas for sustainability, form, urban connections and program relationships. Concepts will be reviewed in Pin Up #1.
Urban Engagement
The first two stories of a building and its relationship to the public realm are vital to the success of an urban building. In this study students will focus on transparency, materiality, approach, entry, and public/private relationships. Concepts will be reviewed in Pin Up #2.

Technical Development
Critical to the development of real world projects, students will explore and develop a detailed wall section or other critical element of the building design. This process will focus on materiality, connections and sustainable design strategies. Local professionals will be engaged to provide students “consultants” in the development of wall sections, details, or detailed models. Concepts will be reviewed in Pin Up #3.

Design Synthesis
A critical phase of the studio in which students will integrate initial concepts and each of the vignette studies completing the term with a well developed, cohesive project. This study will lead to the final review.

COMMUNICATION OF IDEAS
Written Statement
Often overlooked in the design process, writing offers designers the opportunity to reflect and analyze their concepts. These will also prepare students for delivering oral presentations of their ideas. Each student will complete five 200 word statements which succinctly and clearly present ideas about the specific area of study.

Pin Ups
Individual studies will be reviewed through a series of pinups providing feedback and challenges to student work. These also provide regular intervals to assess work quality and progress. Pinups may be internal (peer review) or include outside reviewers from within the professional community.
Reviews
Two significant milestones, the midterm and final review will give students opportunity to present developed ideas and imagery in a media most suited to their project. These reviews will not be stopping points for production but rather refined studies within the design process. The midterm will be used as a rough draft of the final with the emphasis on clear, concise, and engaging presentations, both verbally and graphically.

Anticipated Imagery
While presentation methods and communication will be left open, students will be expected to develop the conceptual and technical drawings vital to an architectural design. These will include, but are not limited to:

- Diagrams
- Floor Plans
- Wall Sections
- 3-D Renderings (Analog or Digital)
- Site Plan
- Building Sections
- Details
- Models