

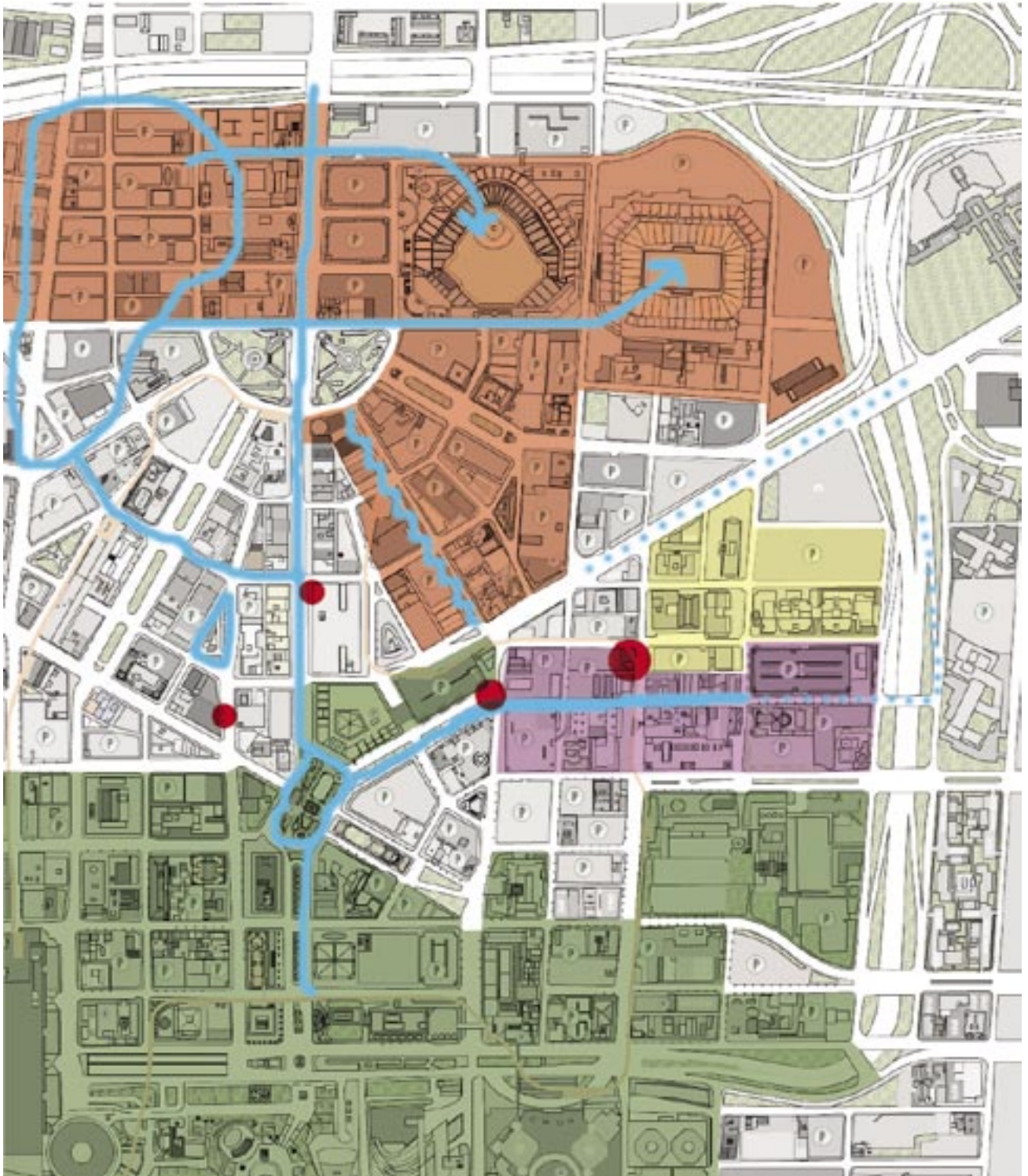


final project

Site Analysis

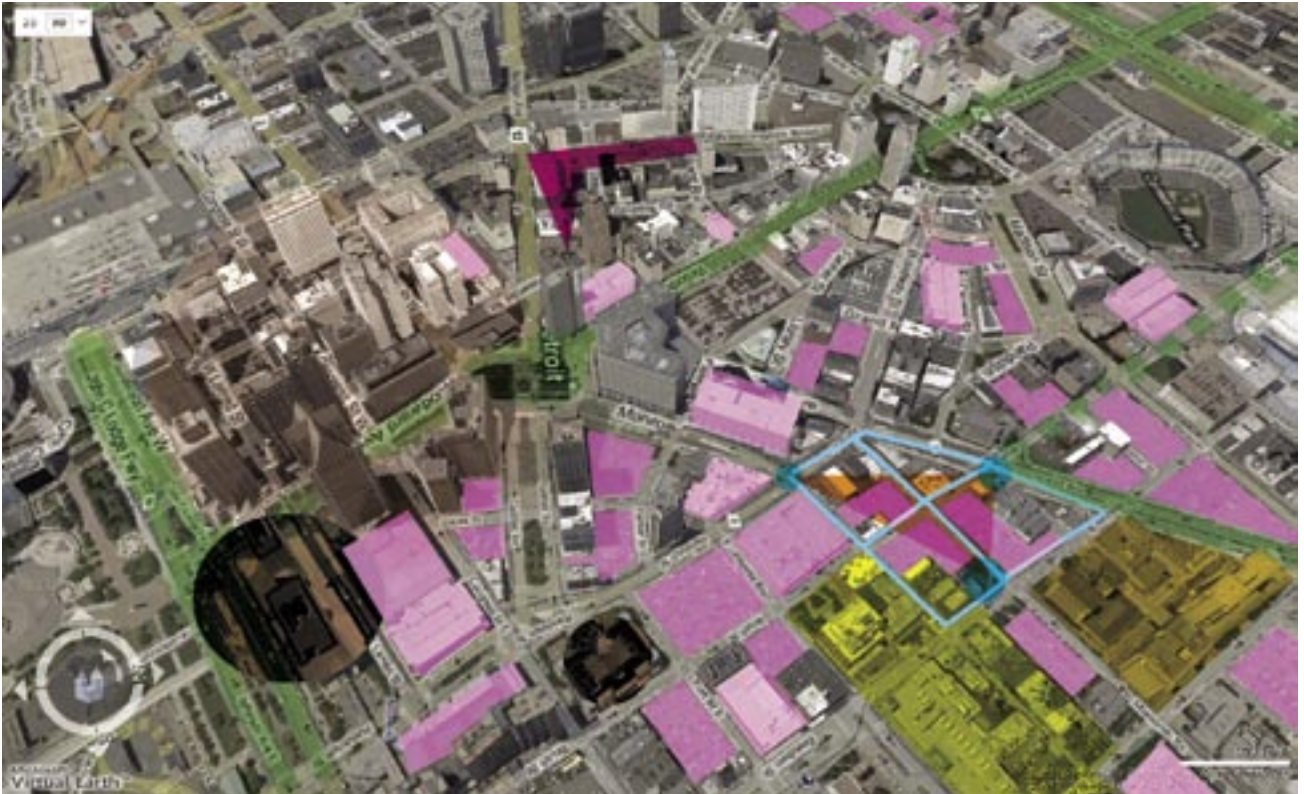
The city of Detroit is unique in the sets of challenges it brings. Downtown Detroit is in a state of re-building. As a part of this rebuilding, the identity of Detroit is reshaped and re-evaluated. Therefore, this idea of public space is really an ongoing issue in the development of Detroit - as throughout its history, its identity and who it intends to serve has shifted and changed. Much of the development of Detroit is related to economy and what can make money. Obviously, the financial purpose of development is forefront in the decision making process. However, people follow money and once there are people involved, they begin to appropriate and claim space as their own. Much of the downtown core to the south is occupied and controlled. There is not much public space here - and that is fine, because the purpose is clearly defined there. If we look to the north and the more recent entertainment developments, we realize that here too, there is not a lot of public space. The majority of this space is designated as parking for the various sporting and theatre venues and then also the restaurants and bars that service the crowds that come down for these events and then leave after they are done. Again, these spaces are quite controlled for specific purposes, which when broken down are all related to the creation of capital - and this is fine, because this is what America was built upon. In the space between the northern entertainment area and the southern financial core, there is a sort of buffer zone between the two. Here, there are a lot of still vacant and abandoned properties, but also a variety and mix of other uses. Transportation hubs, small retail, small businesses, small independent restaurants, bars, etc. It is here that there is a rich mix of what is private but also what is public - library, harmonie park, the pseudo-public campus martius, bus stops, all spaces that are gathering points where different people are allowed to mix and interact (somewhat freely). The project focuses on the following 4 sites as sites of interest: Griswold (steam pipe), Woodward (bus stop), Randolph and Monroe (steam), and garden station park (small park).

the downtown area can be separated by a few major distinctive areas. the orange represents a night-time crowd for entertainment and restaurants. the green represents the daytime financial business operations. the purple represents the greektown area and the yellow is the courthouse and police headquarters. the selection of sites exists in the areas in between these different areas.



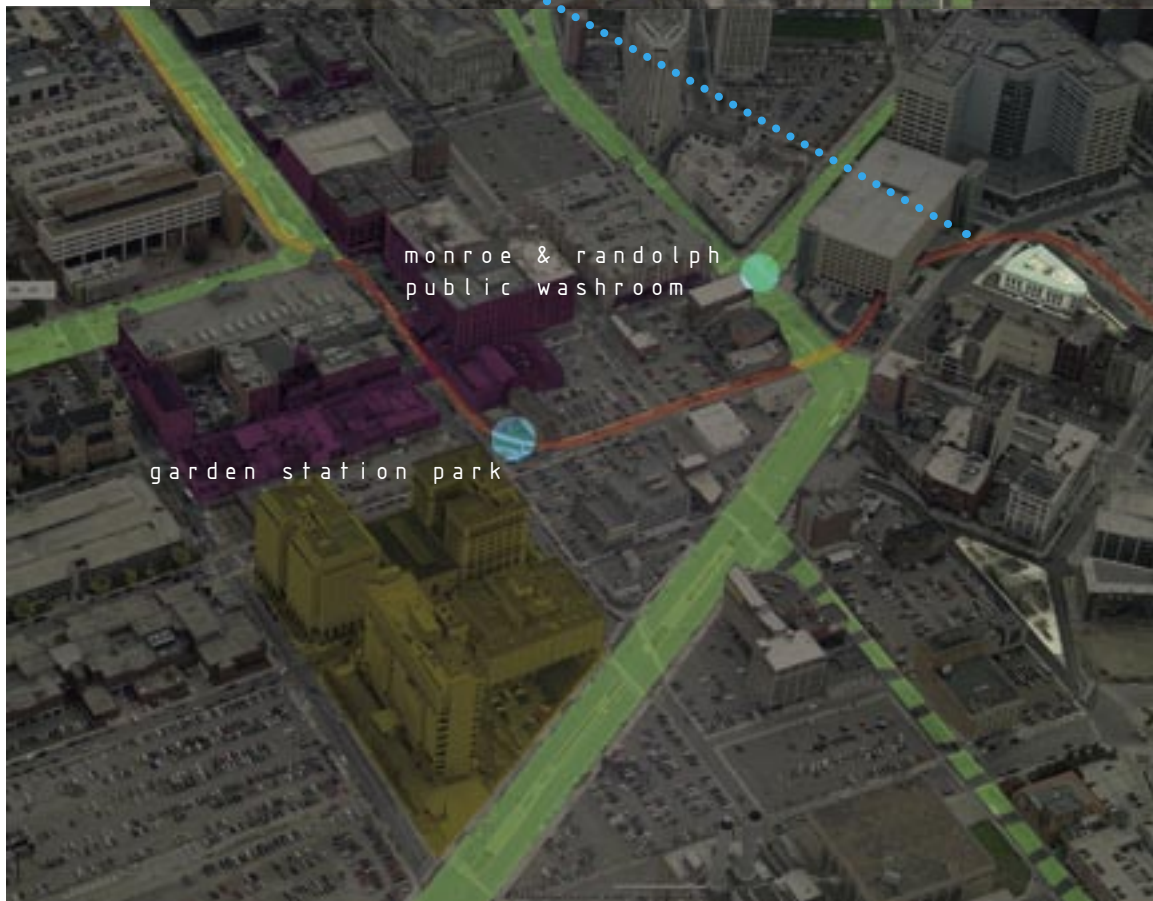


the areas in between the major activity areas already have some public spaces such as the rosa parks transportation hub, capitol park, the library, and harmonie park (all in yellow). the semi-public campus martius lies to the south in orange.

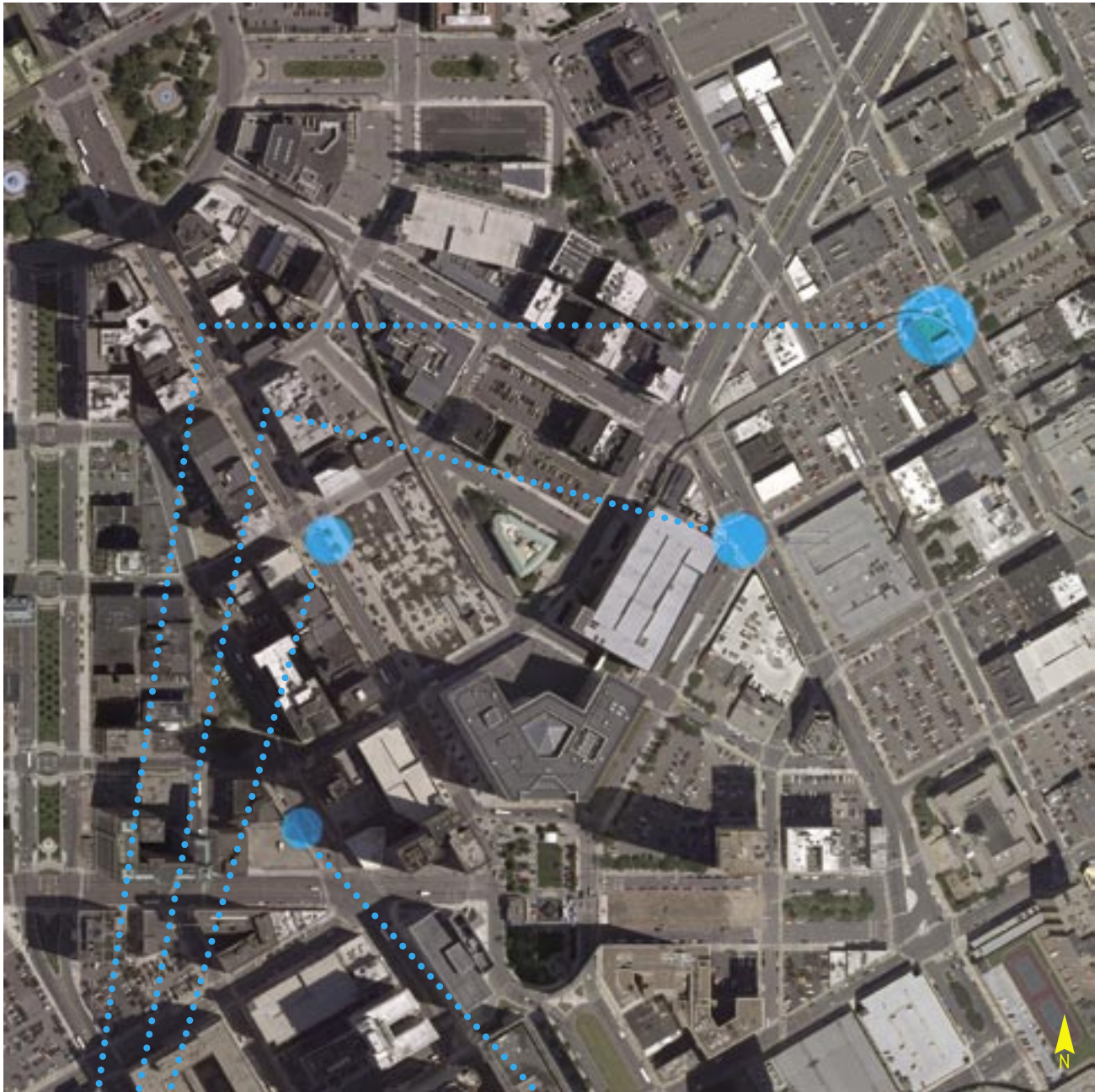


pink represents some of the surface parking lots in the area.

Site Selection



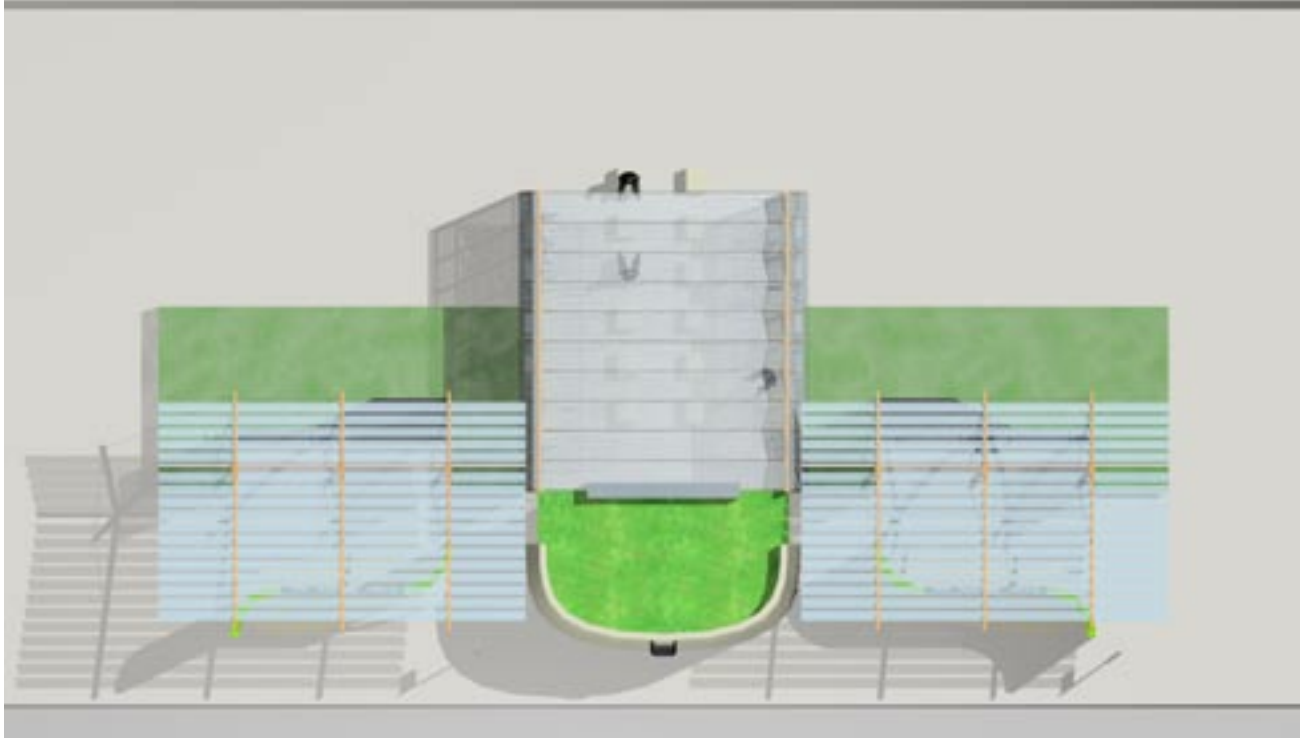
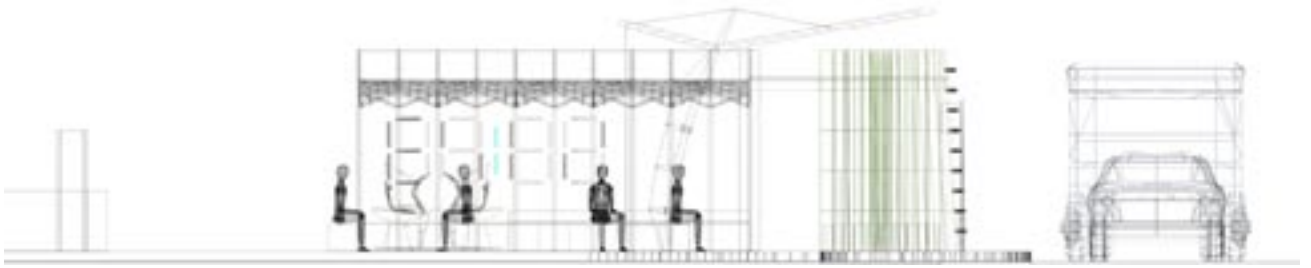
Site Selection

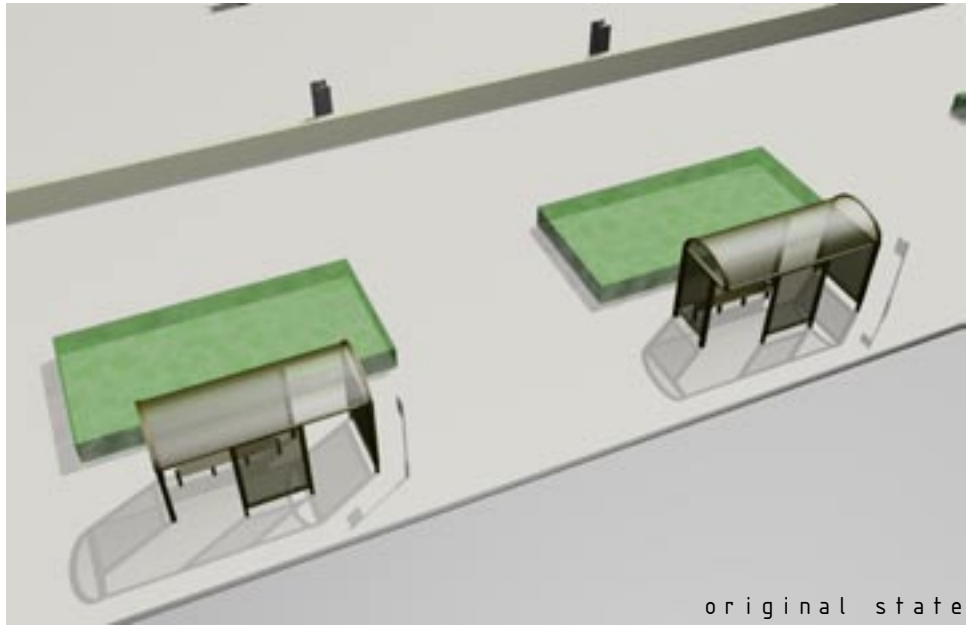


- GRISWOLD STEAM CAR WASH
- WOODWARD BUS STOP
- MONROE & RANDOLPH WASHROOM
- GARDEN STATION PARK

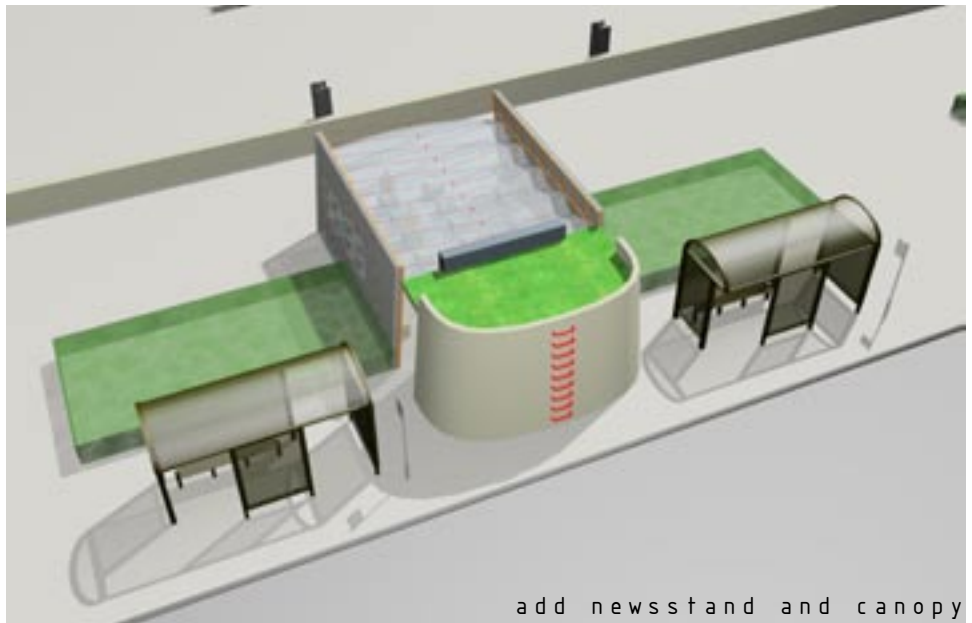
Woodward & Grand River Bus Stop







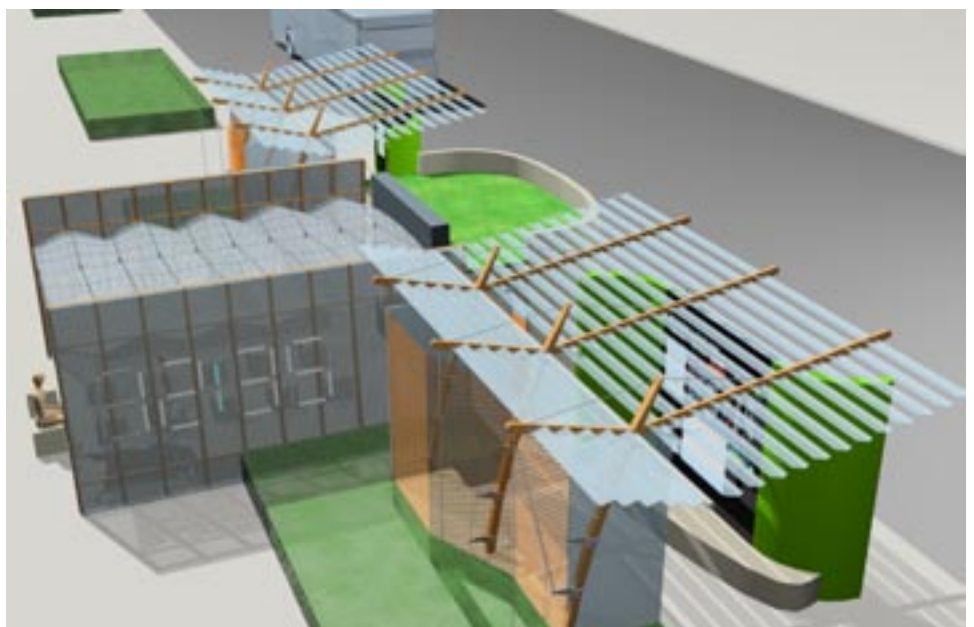
original state

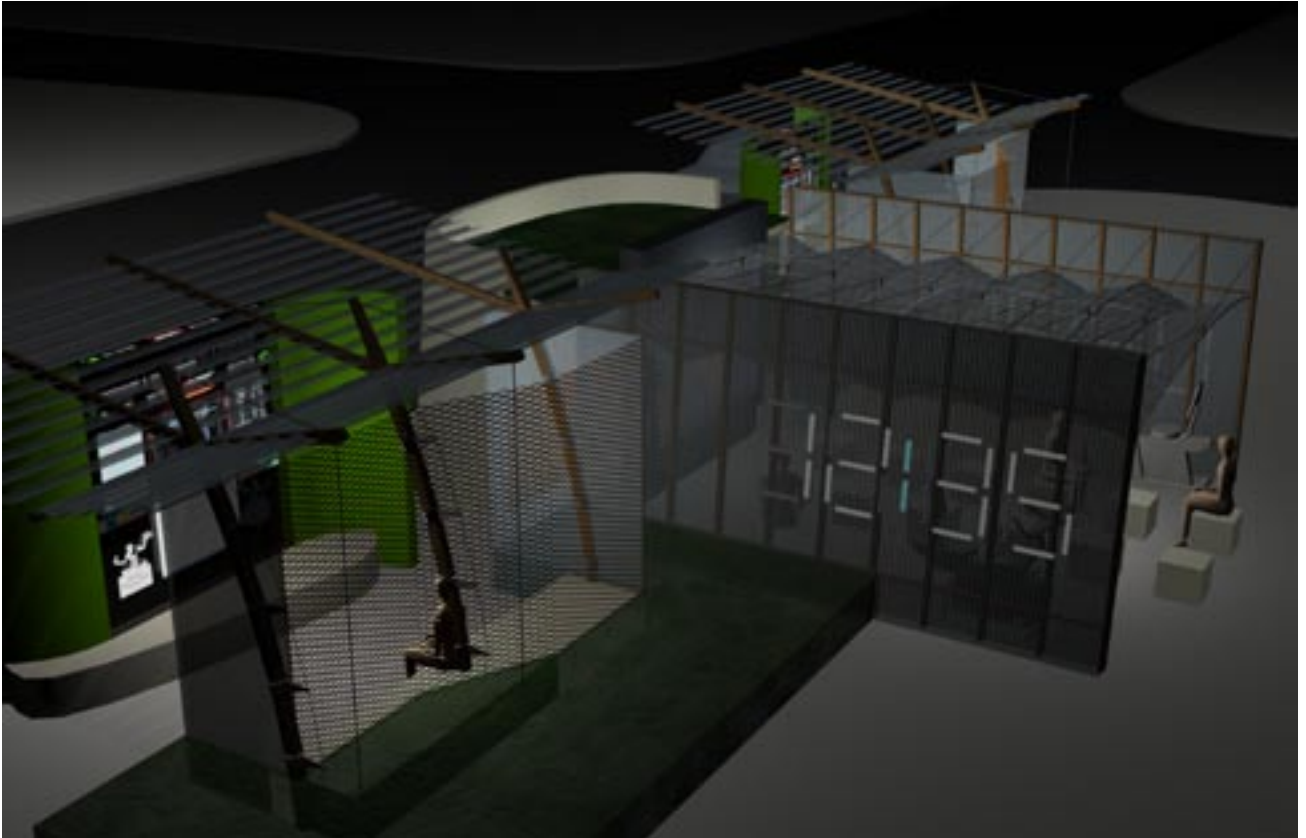


add newsstand and canopy



add new bus shelters





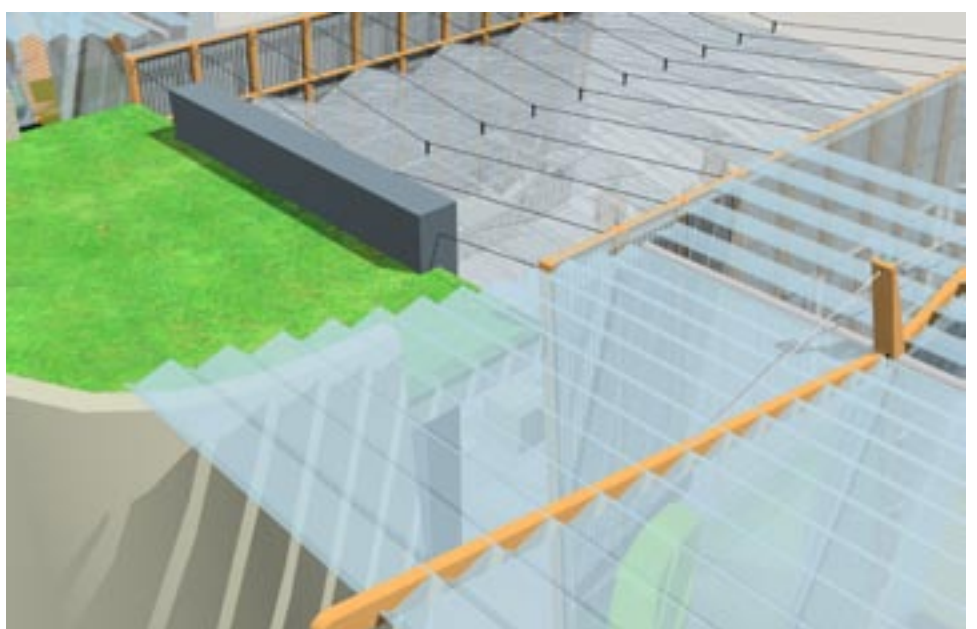
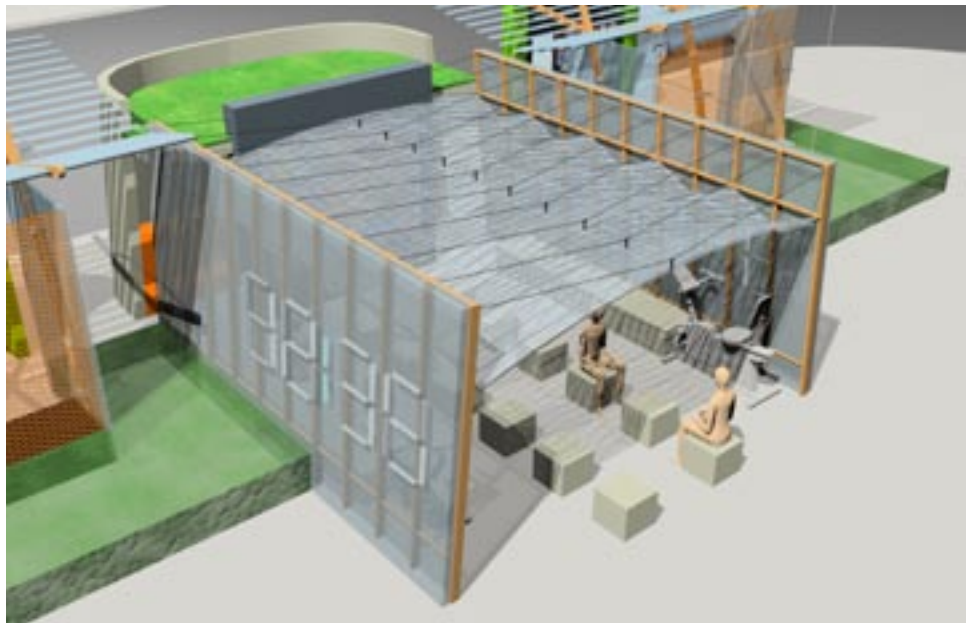
waiting area

tv screen

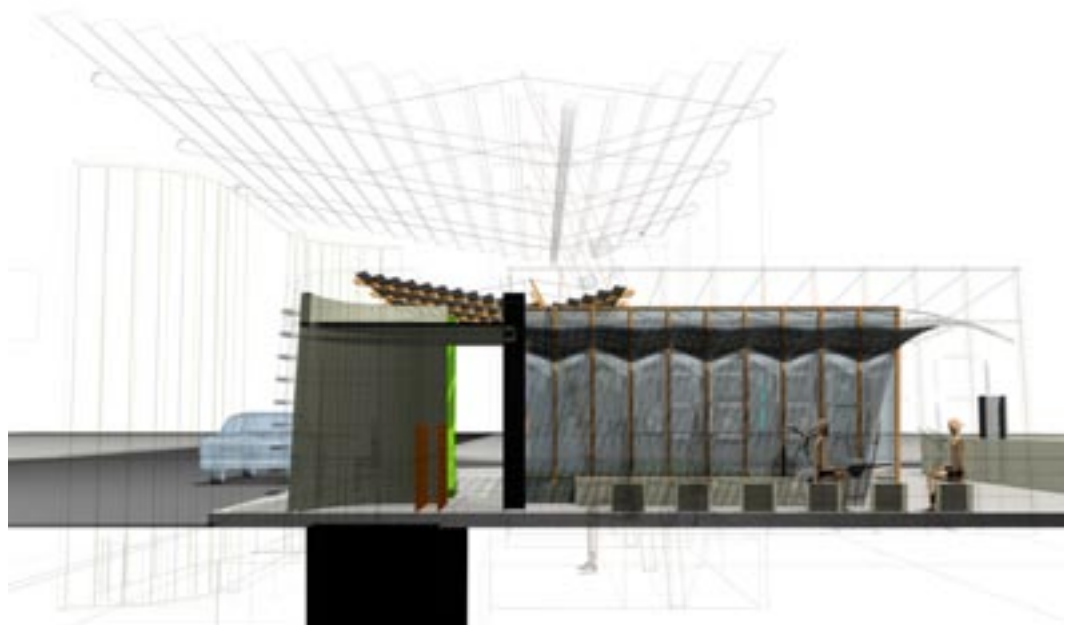
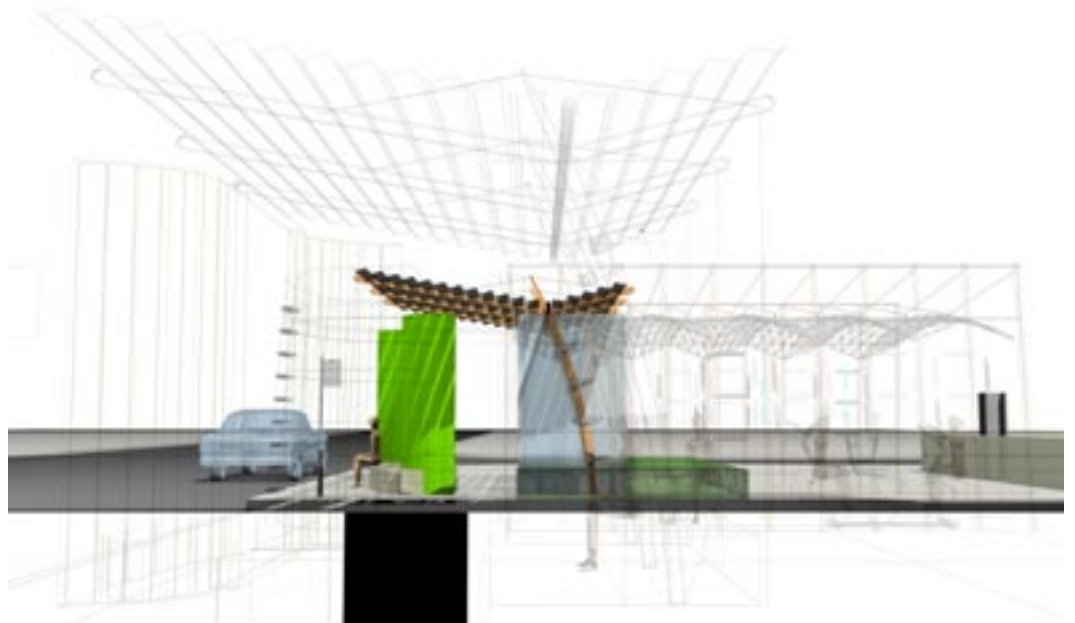
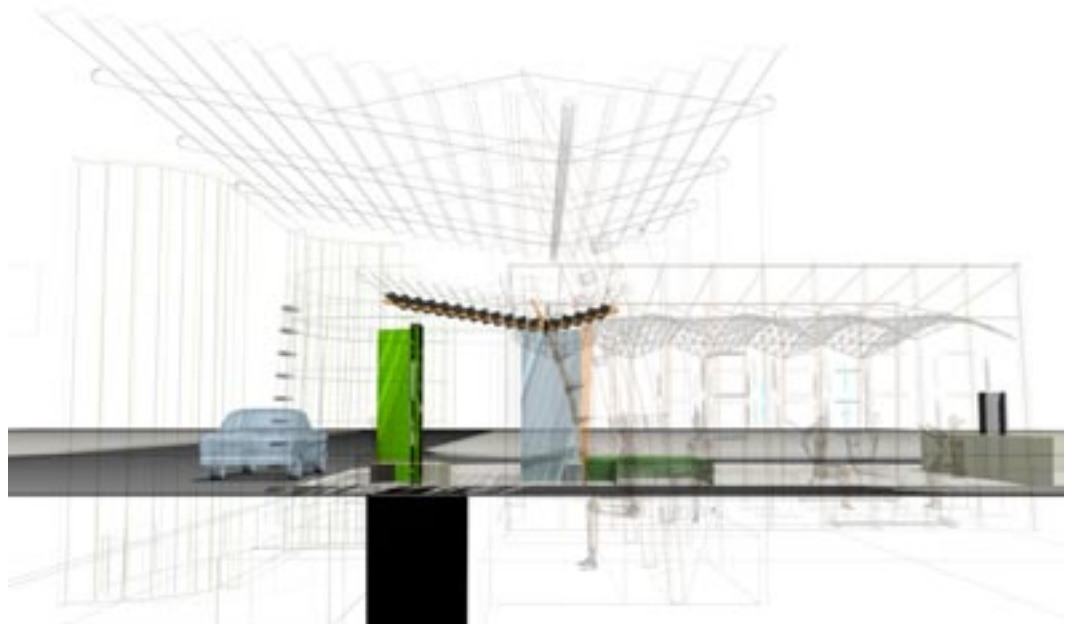
newsstand

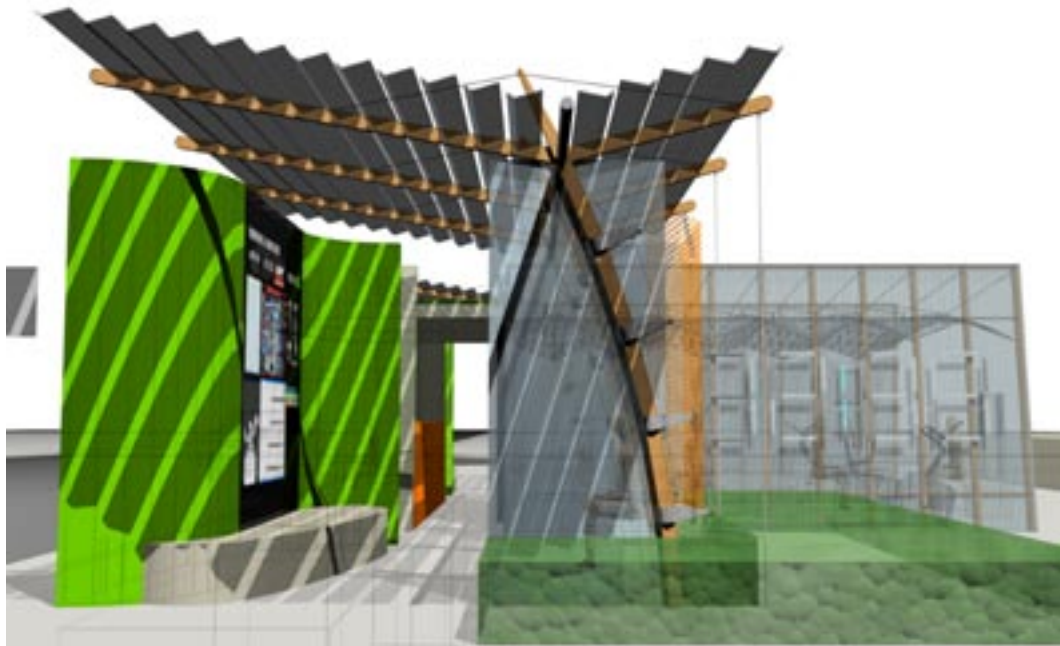
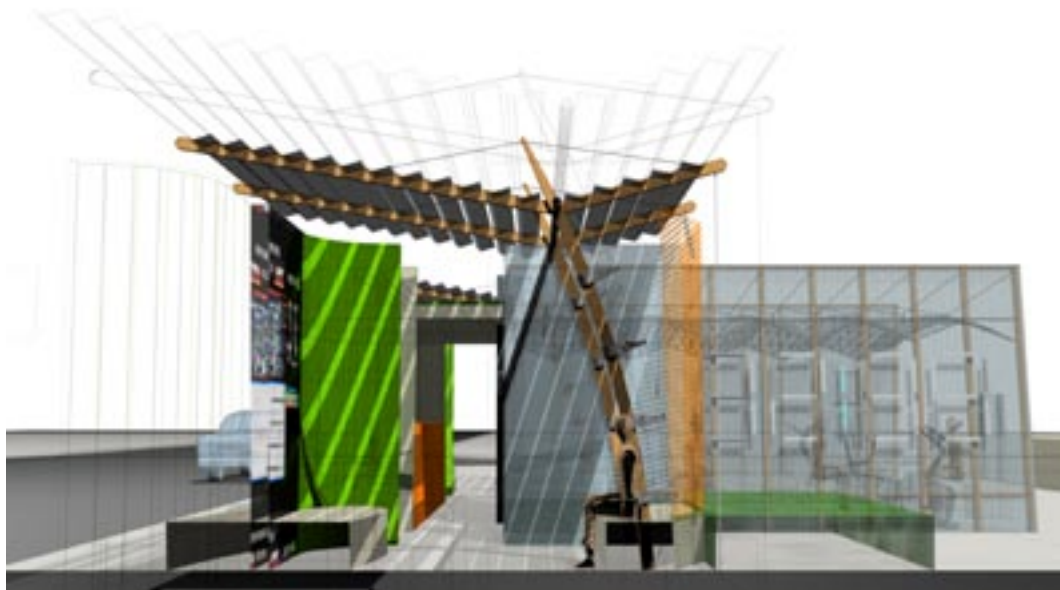
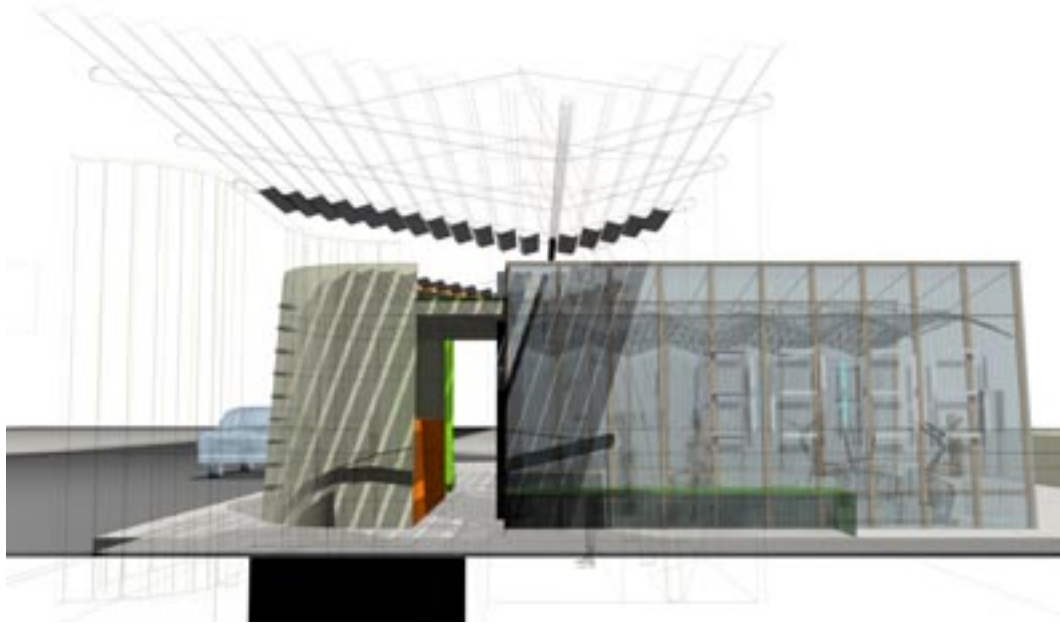
modified exercise bike generates electricity which is stored in batteries that also are the seats to the waiting area. the power is used for the lighting, television, wi-fi internet access, and general plugs.



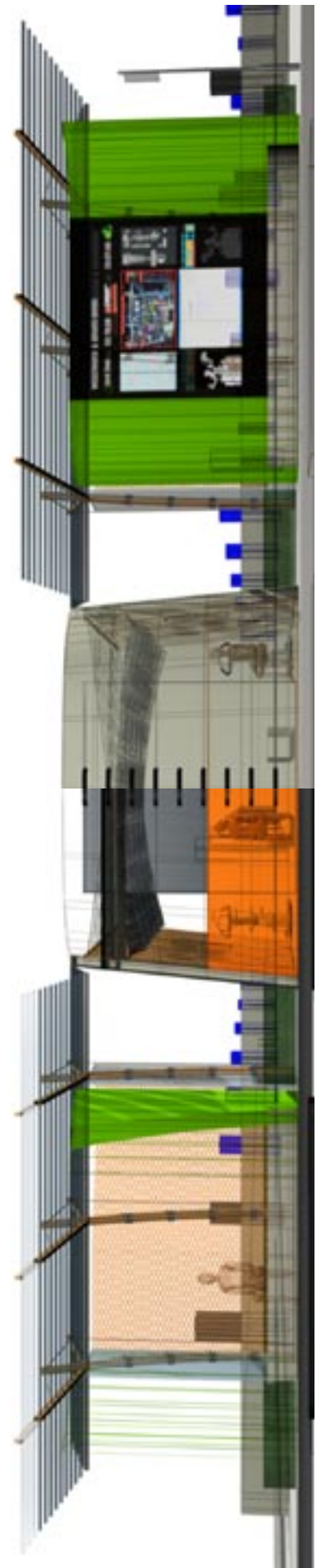




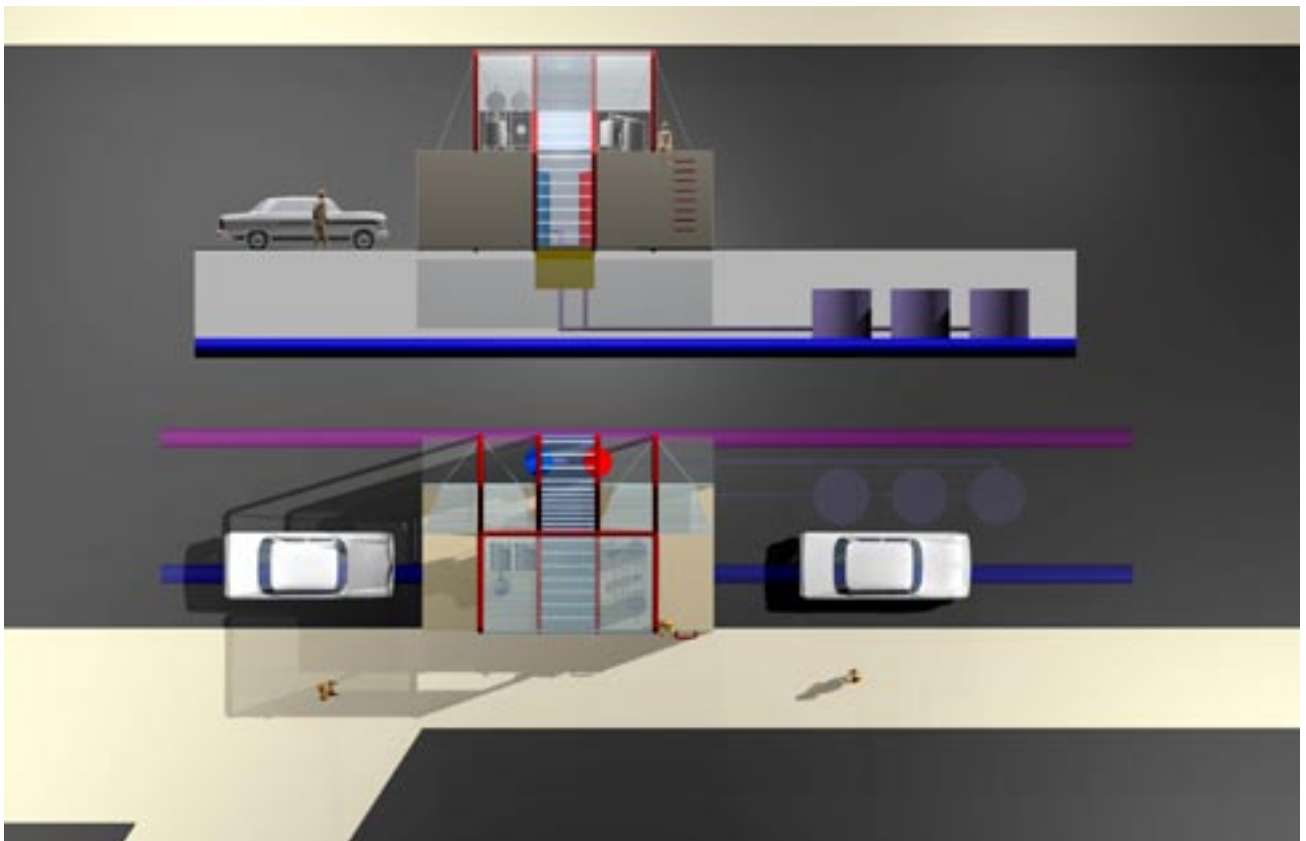
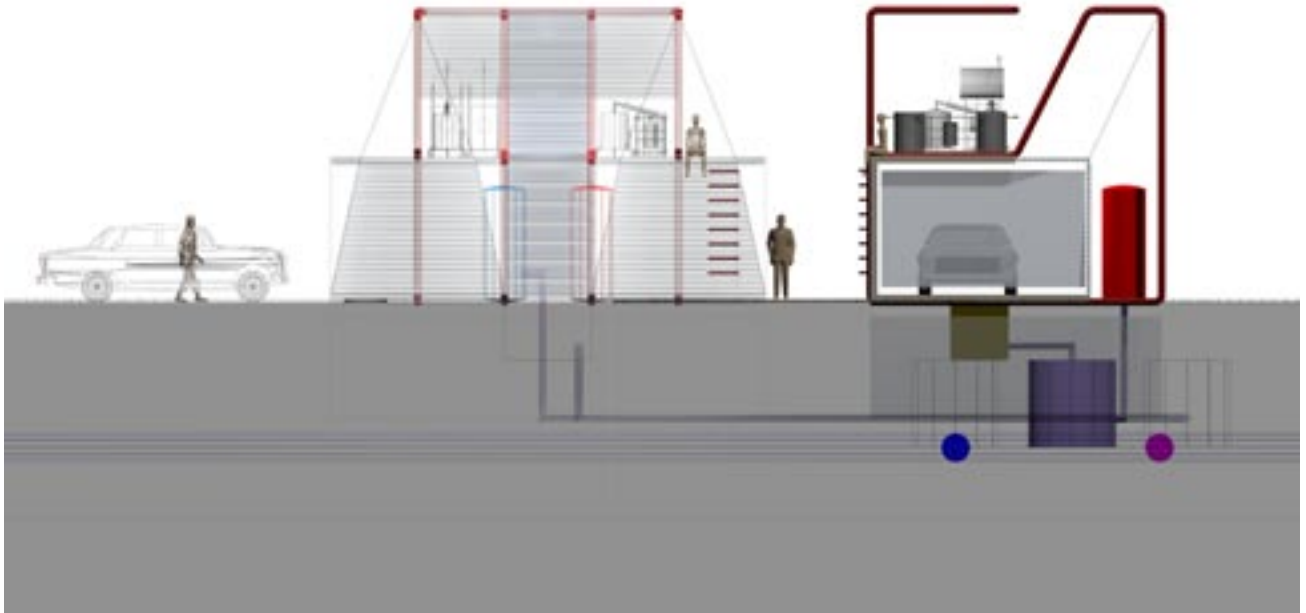


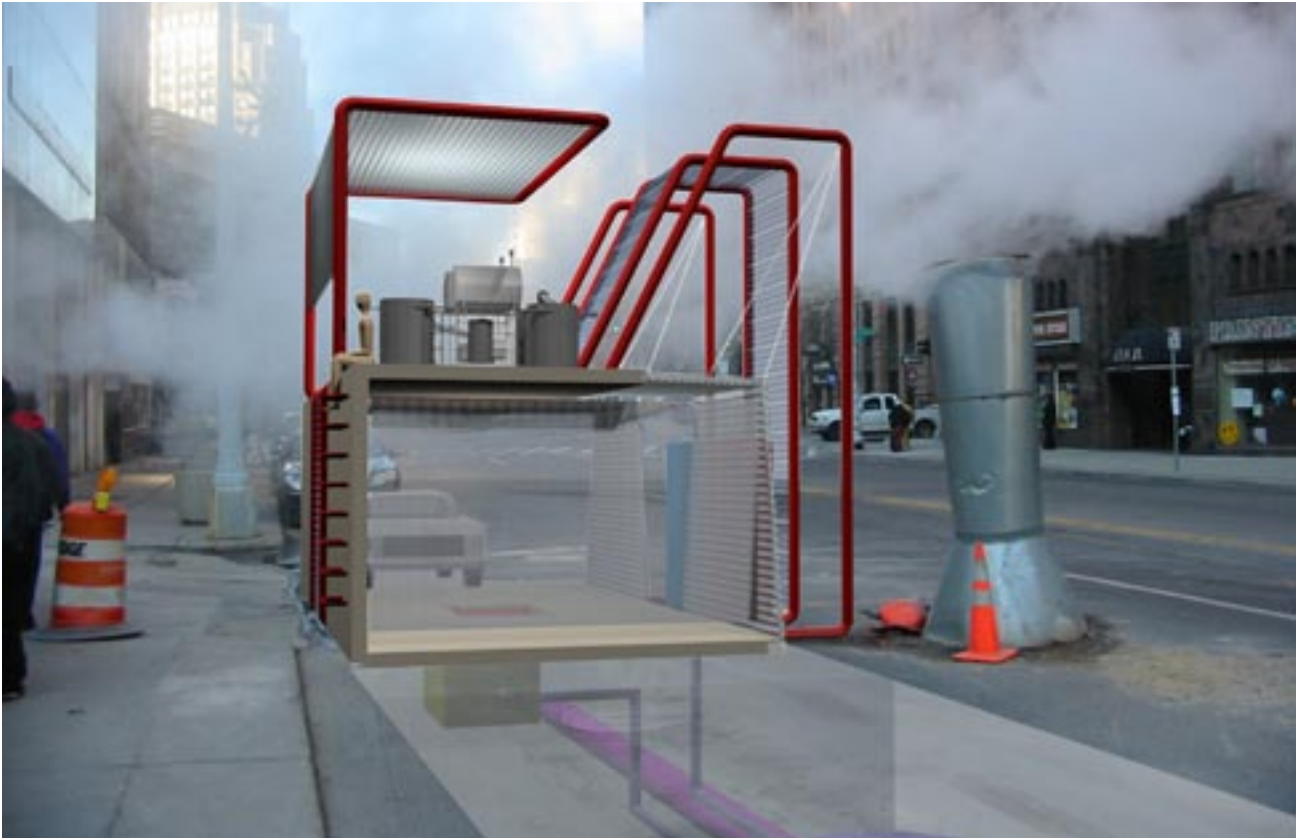
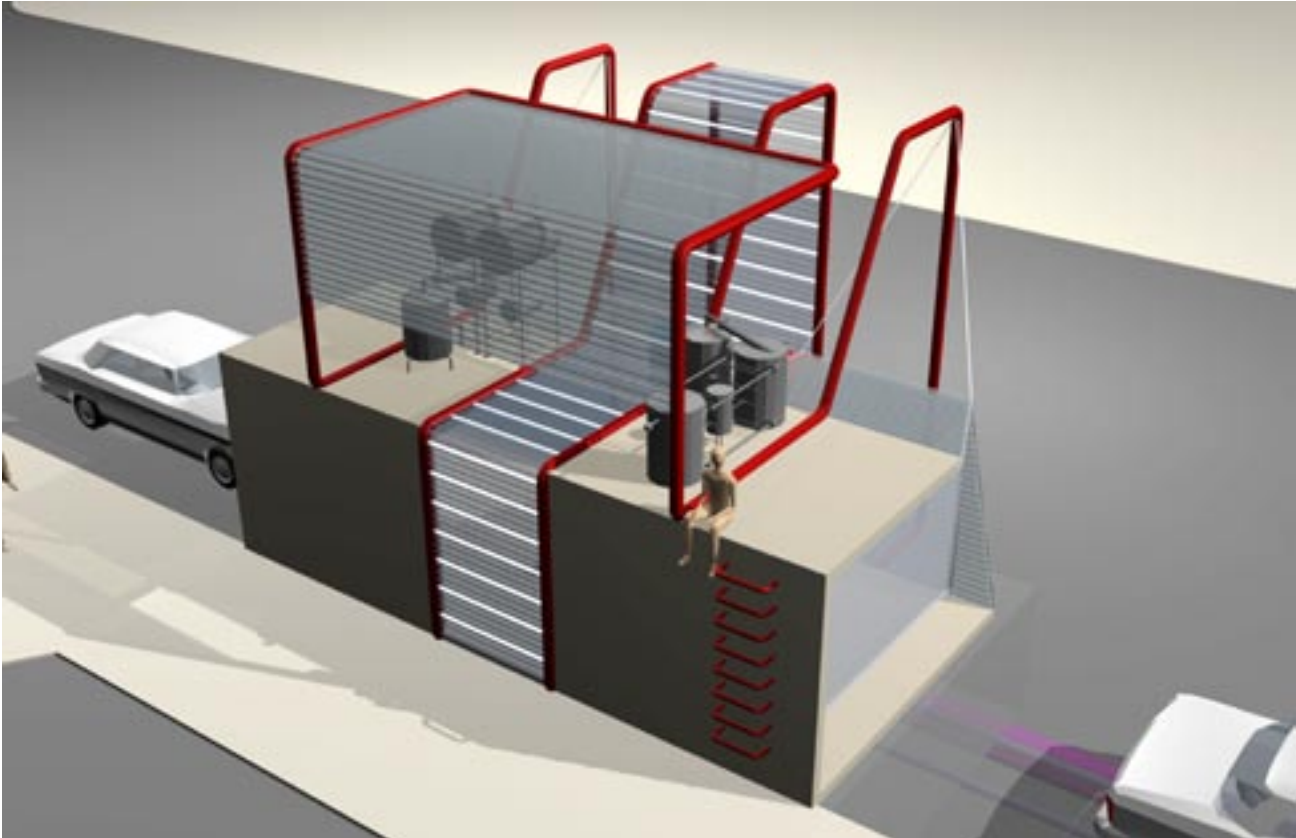


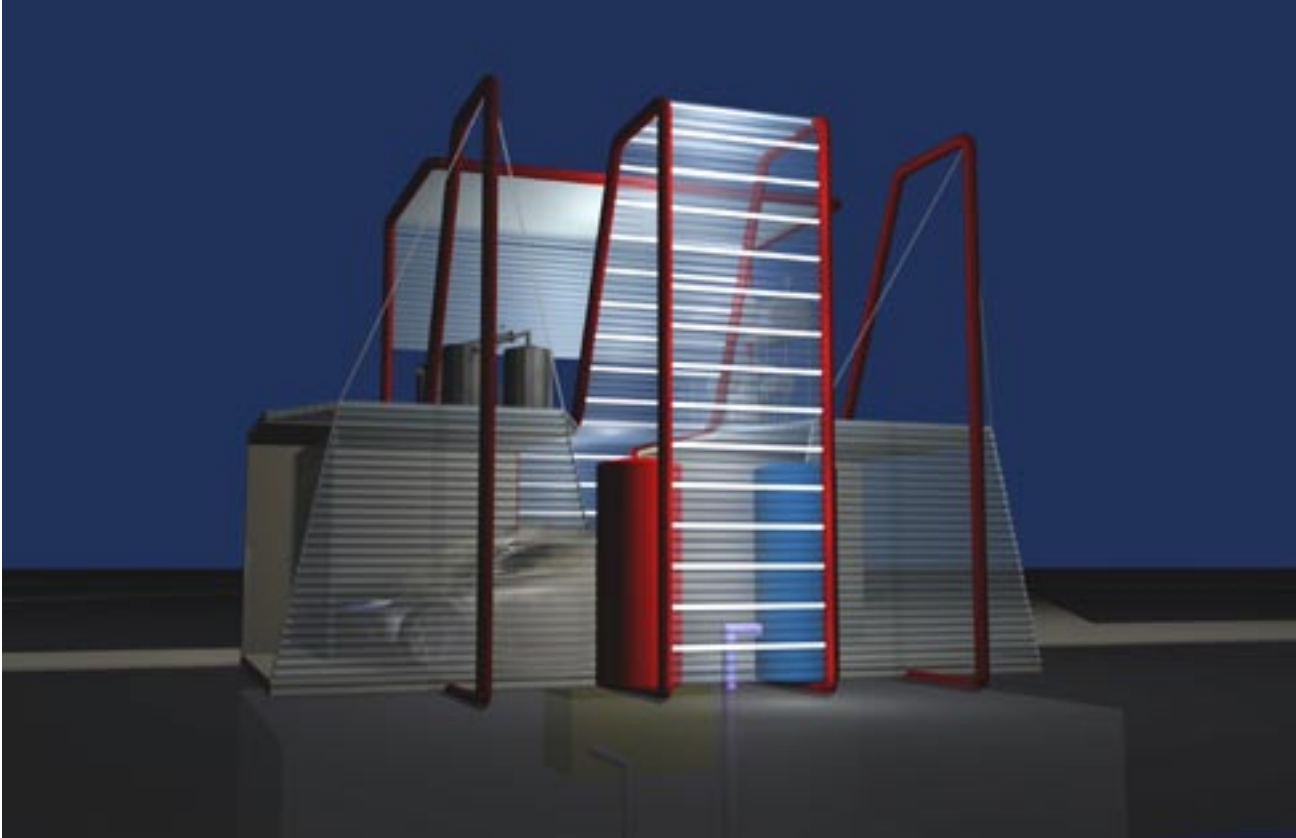
People wait for the bus here. Why not make it more pleasant while they wait? The proposal idea is to put in a newsstand between the existing bus shelters. Then putting a TV screen as well for the people waiting for the bus to stay informed. Access to information is the beginning to knowledge - and since "knowledge is power", at least that's what it's supposed to be... It's about beginnings and opportunities. In a way, the TV is quite a dangerous installation; just as information is quite dangerous when it exposes a lie, for example. There will also be benches and seating in front of the big screen TV. The existing bus shelters will be upgraded to include wi-fi access and information screens that allows connection to the basic internet and also acts as a message board for the community - a side board will allow for physical postings. In order to power all of this, there will be a pedal crank system in place that will generate electricity which will store into batteries which are a part of the benches that are in front of the TV. It's like an exercise bike connected to an electro magnet dynamo. The technology exists, but perhaps it is not in place because if people realize how easy it is to generate some electricity, the electric companies may be in trouble. But they won't, because people are usually too lazy to get on the bike and pedal for 10 minutes, but they will if it can get them a half hour of television or internet. This self-reliance and self-empowerment (literally) gives this gathering area an edge of public interaction that brings fresh identity to downtown Detroit.

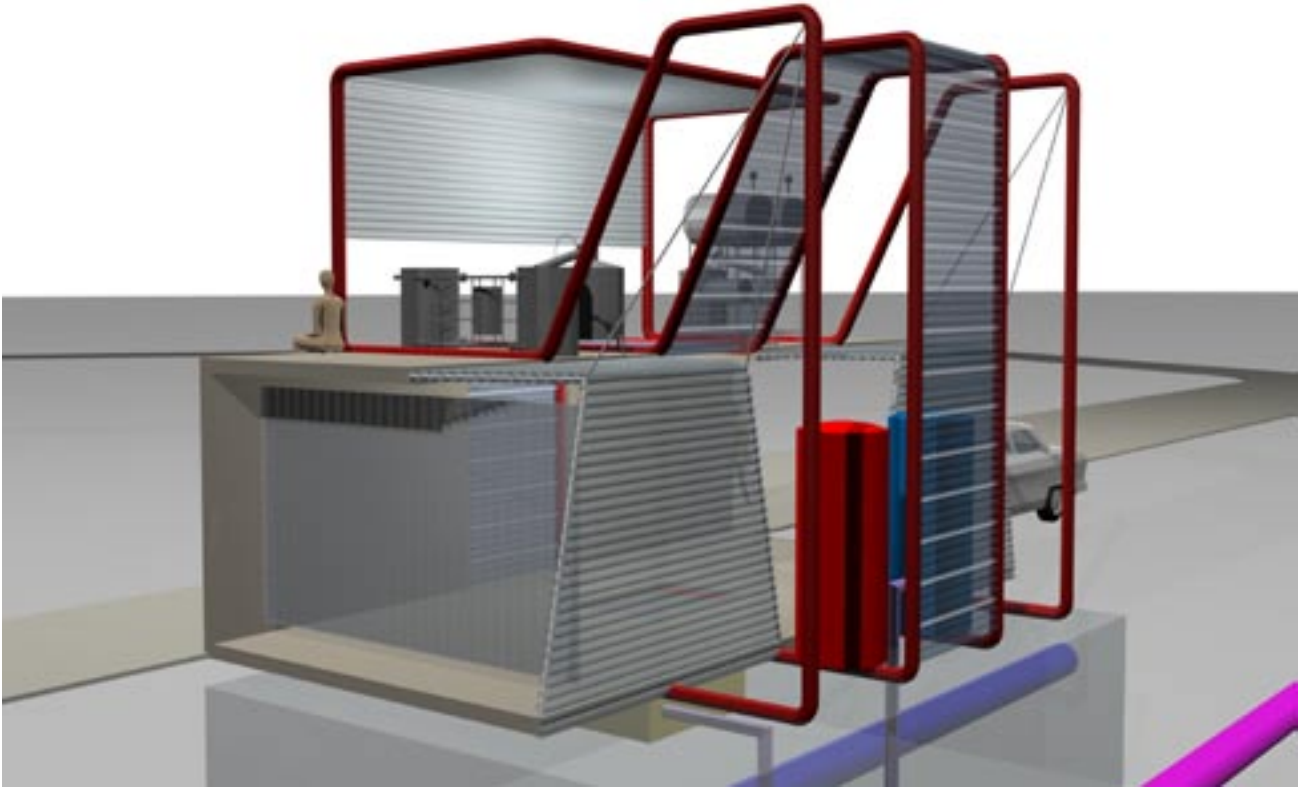


Griswold Steam Car Wash

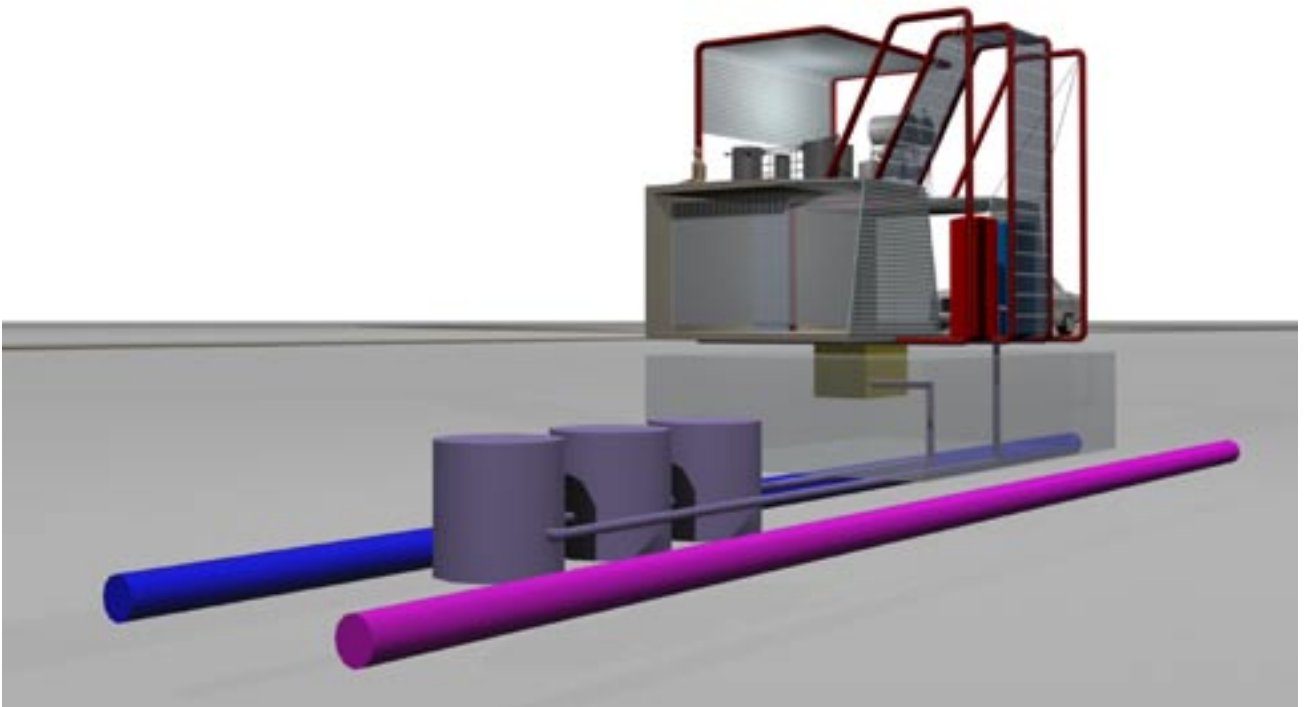


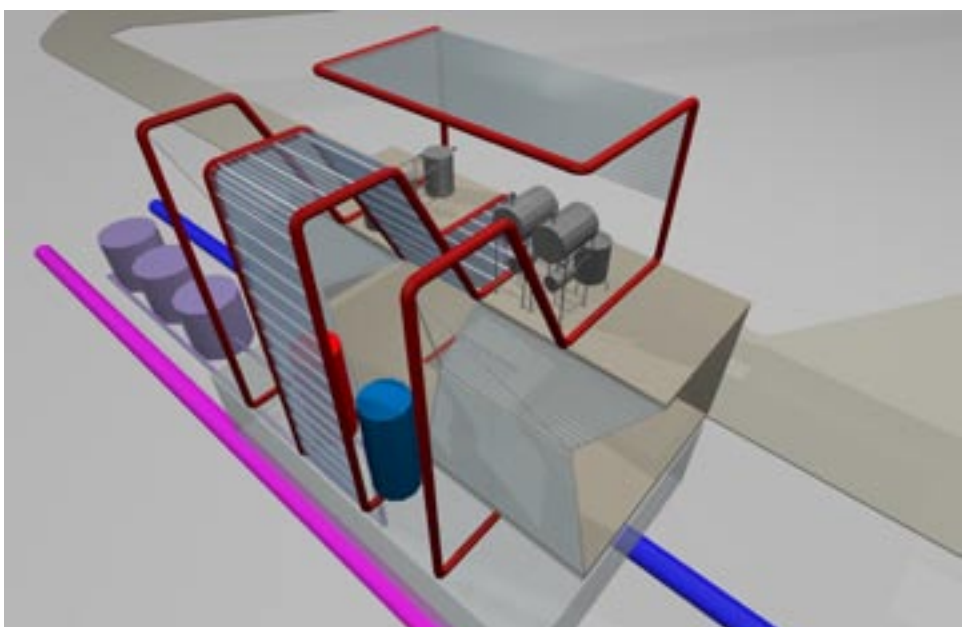
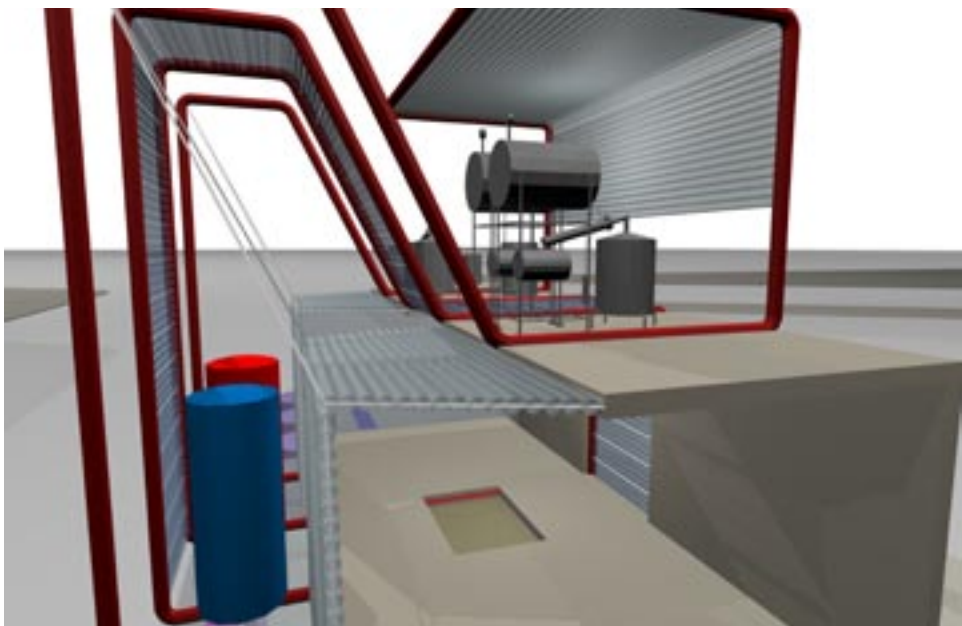
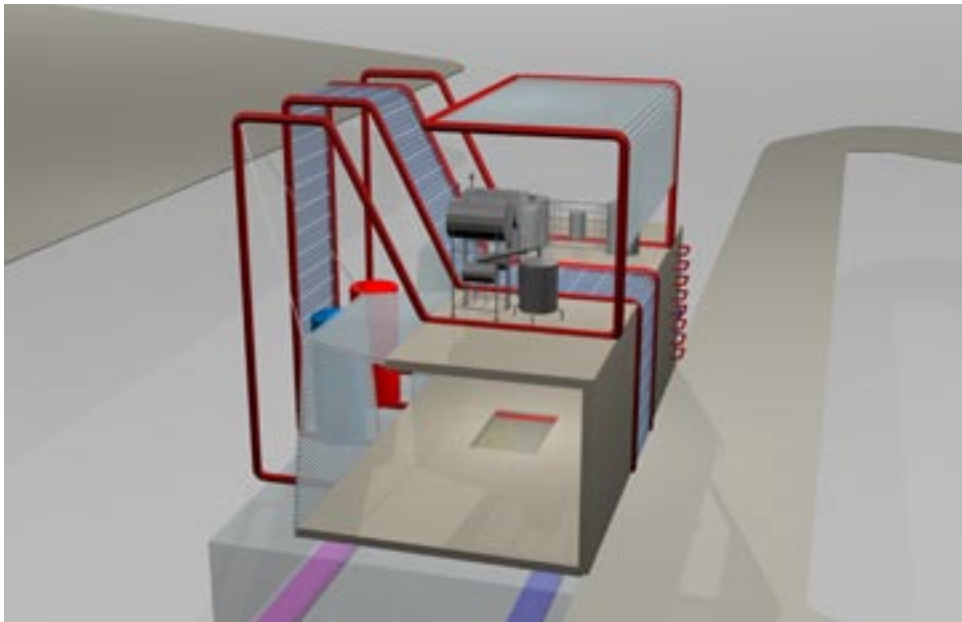


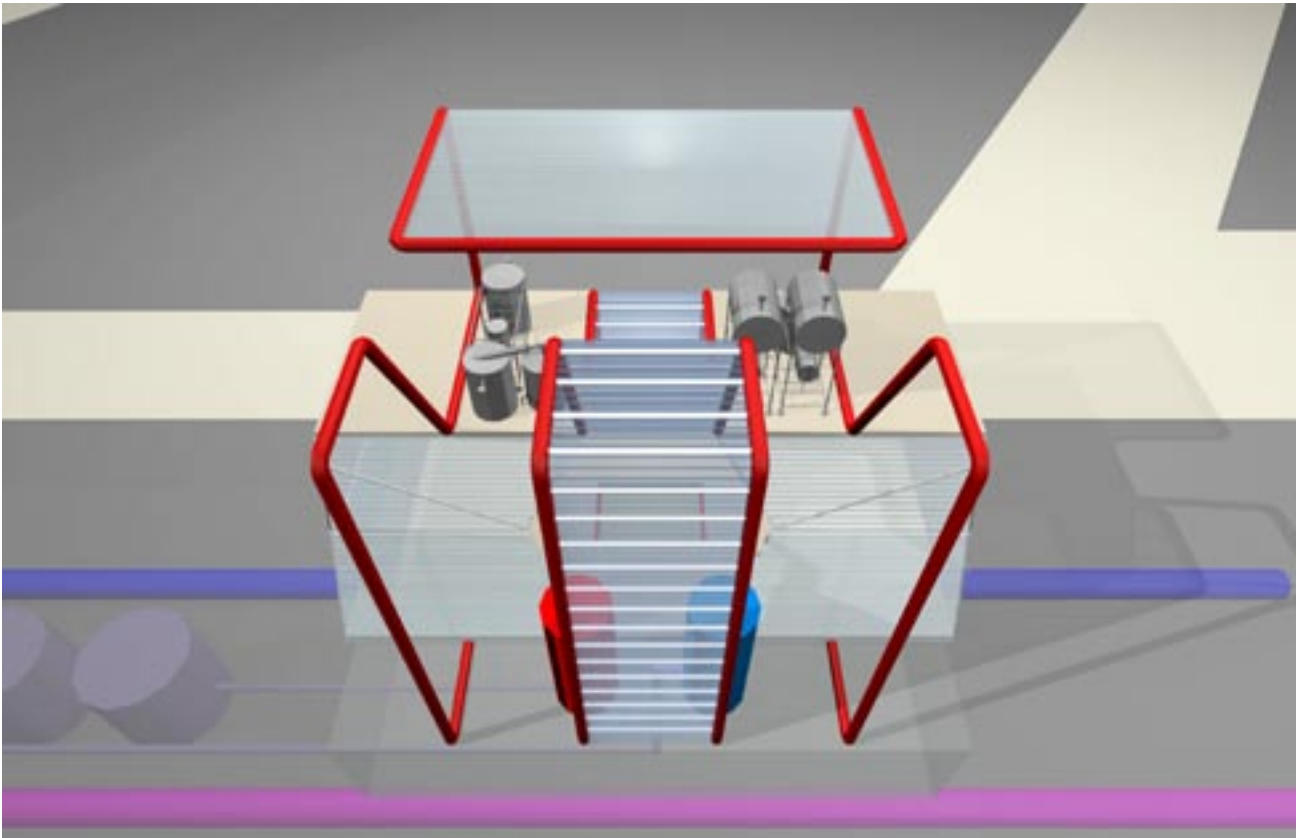
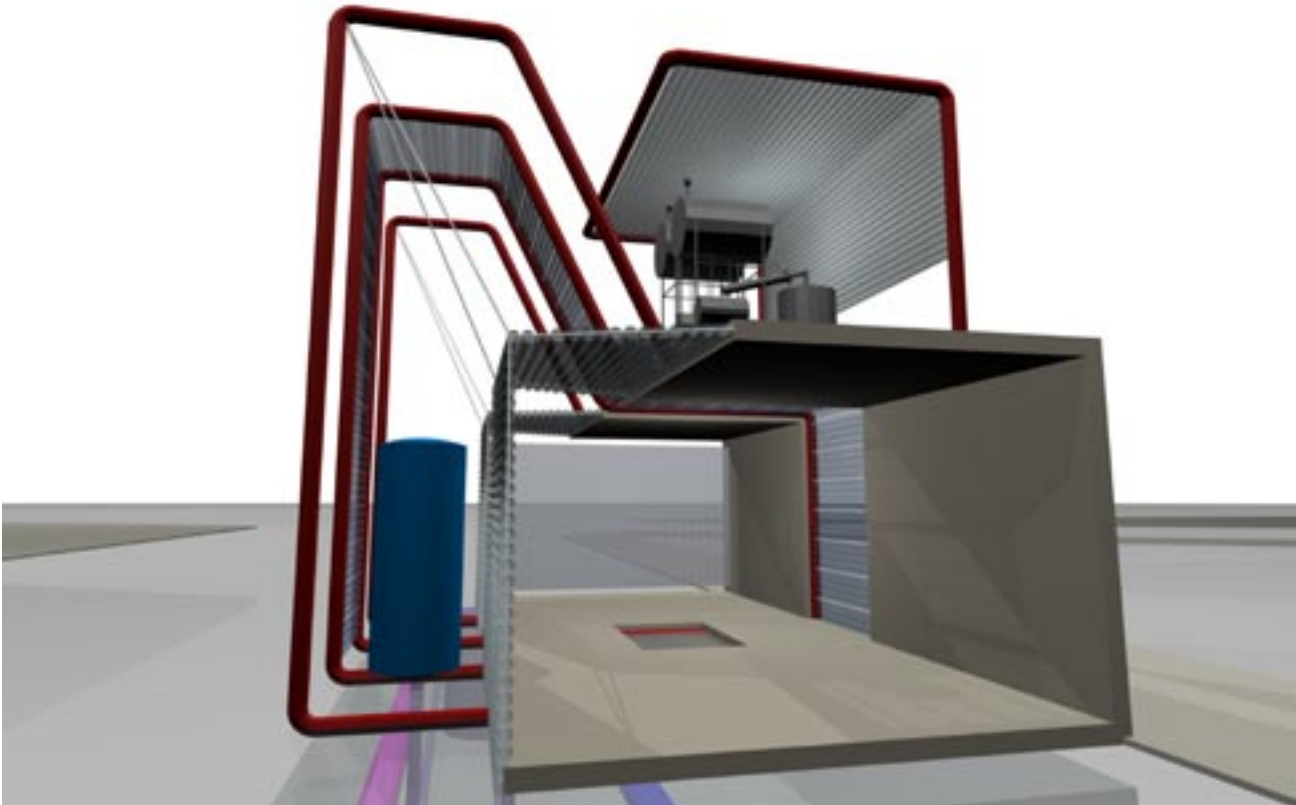


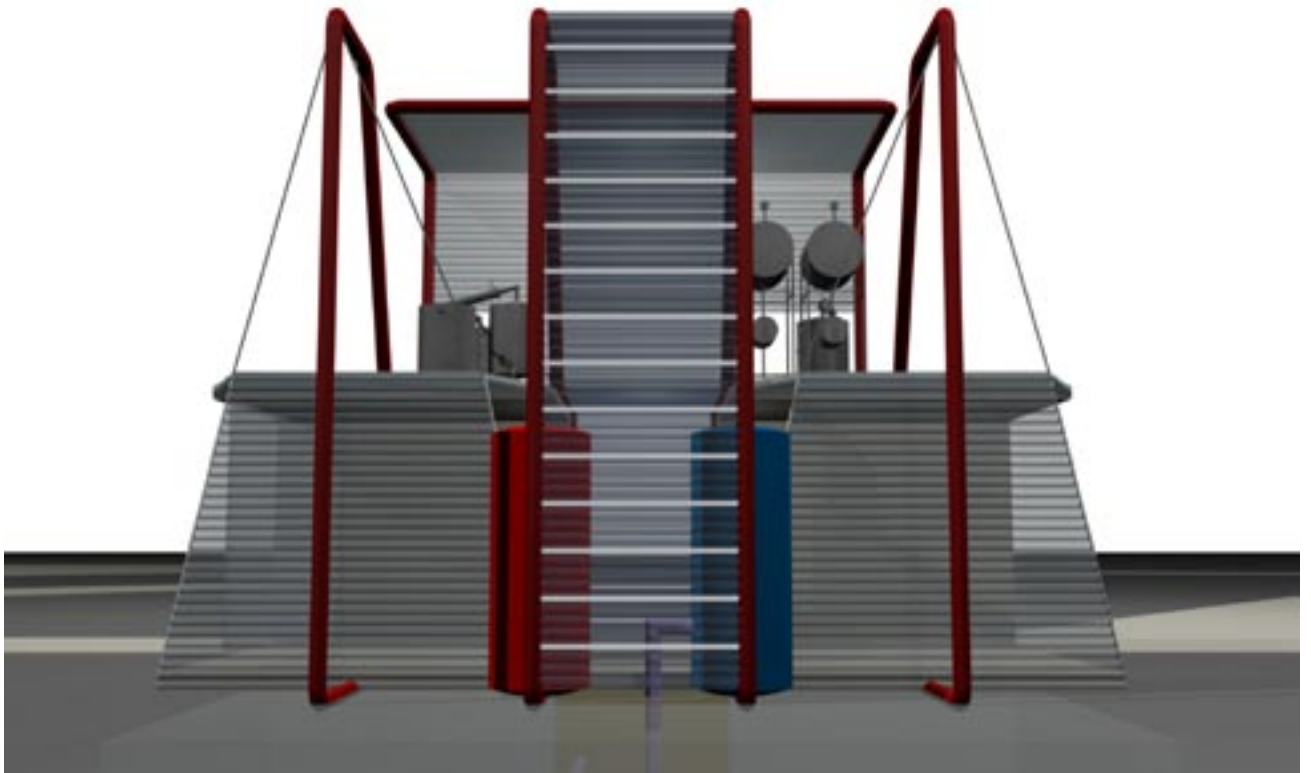


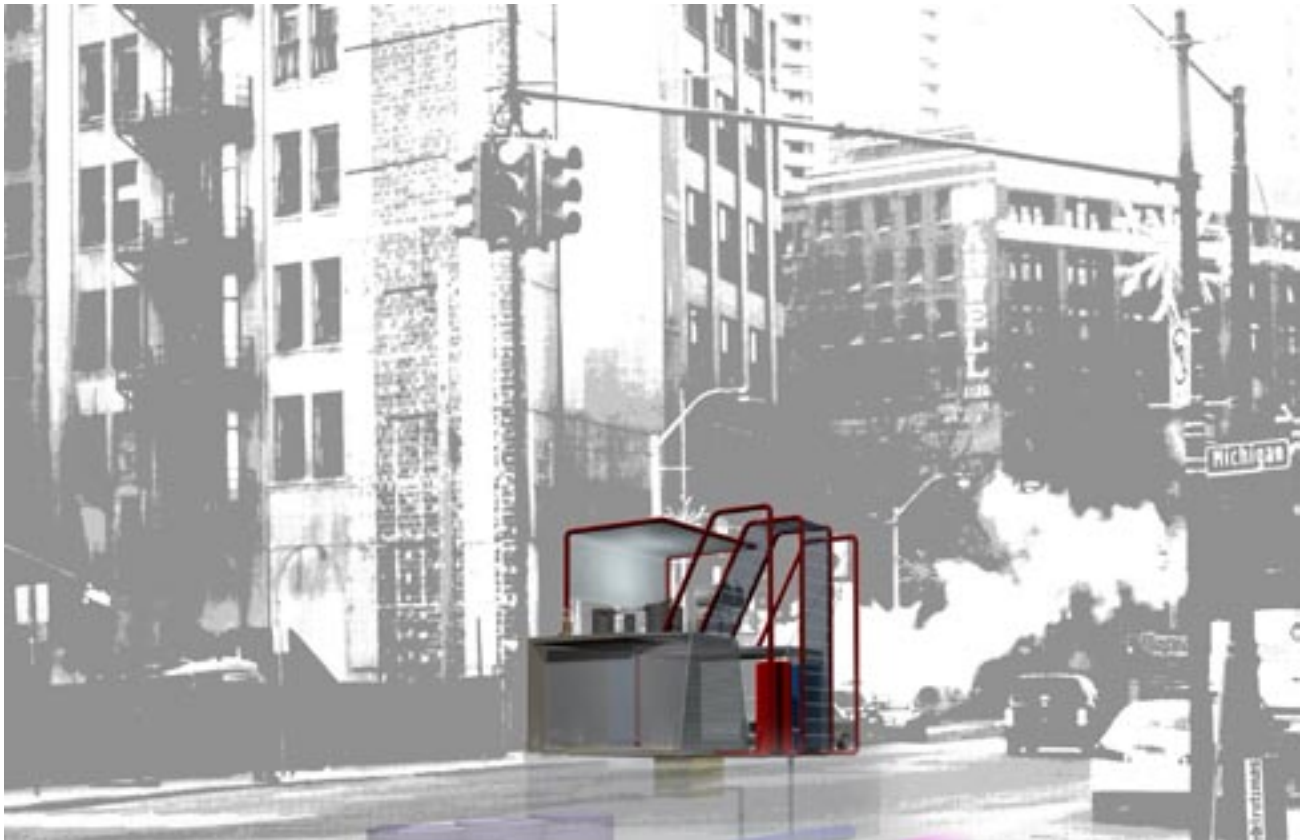
Cars are an essential part of Detroit culture. But why is it that in the summer, the Woodward Dream Cruise stops short and ends just inside Detroit city limits? Why is it that automobile culture is not more celebrated downtown as it is in the surrounding suburbs? The purpose is to focus on a commonly shared interest by a wide public audience and then using that interest and translating it into space that can be used and shared by that wide audience. The idea of the car wash is to appropriate space that makes some money and employs people in the community. The steam connection makes use of existing "waste" and infrastructure. A water recollection system helps to save water.



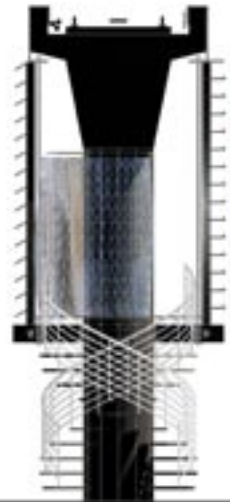




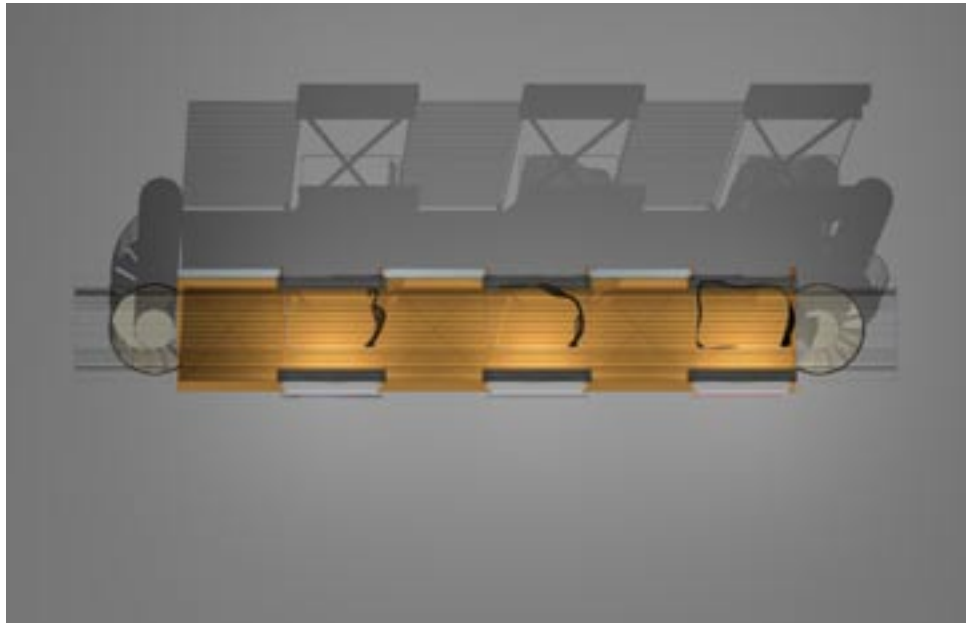


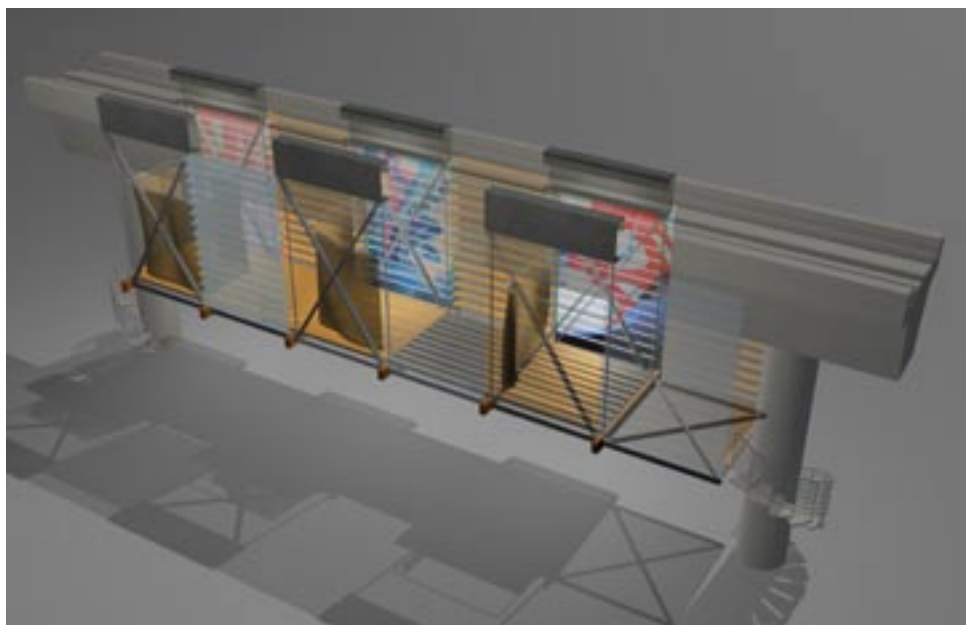
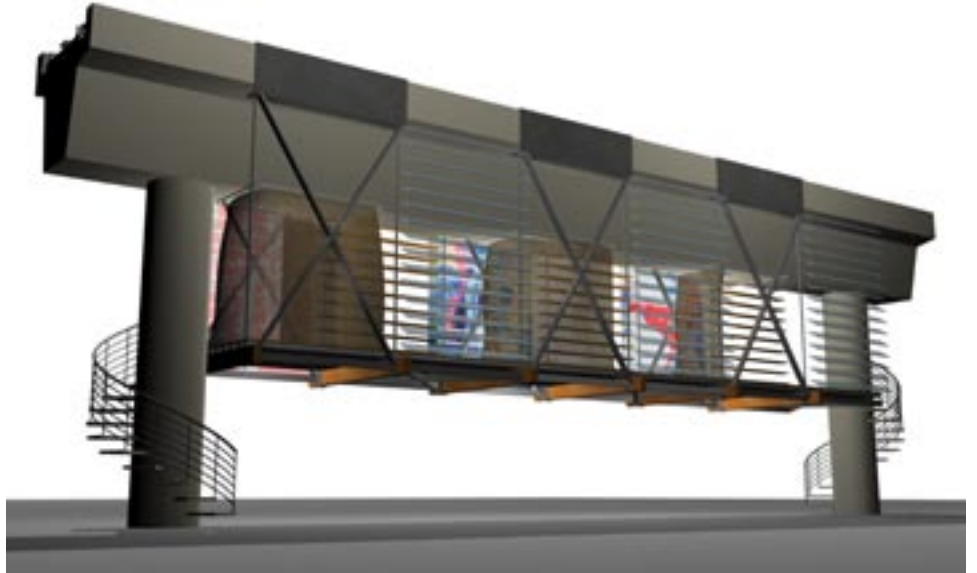


Garden Station Park

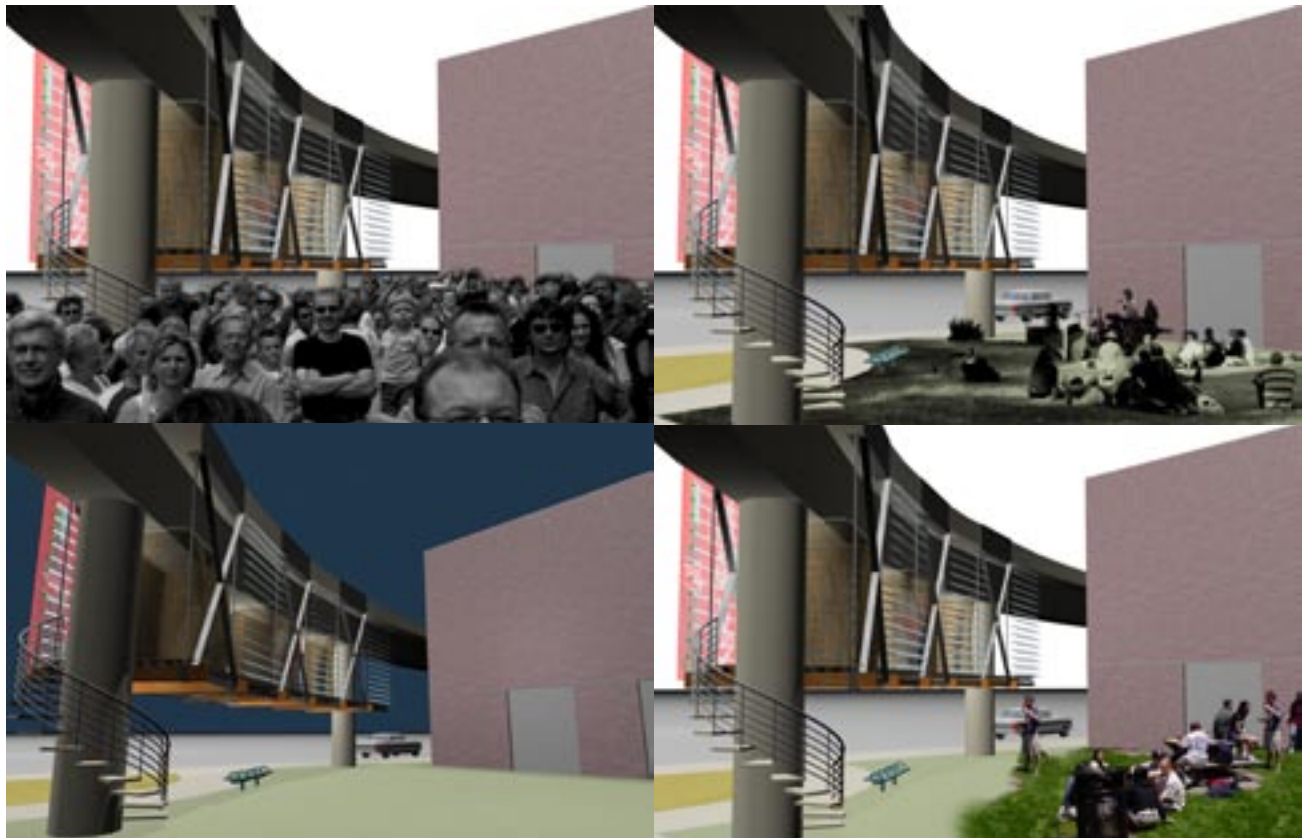


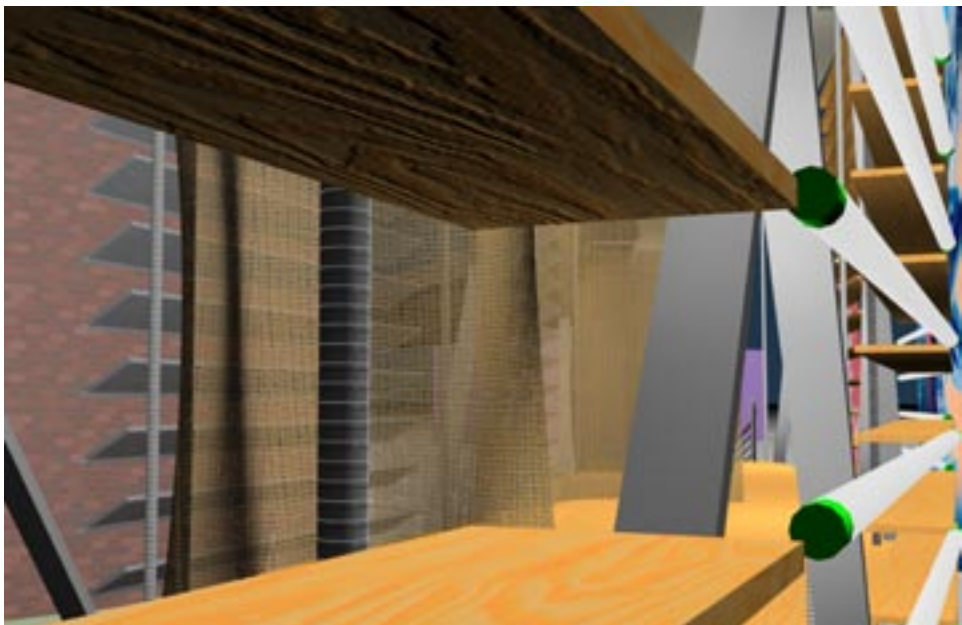
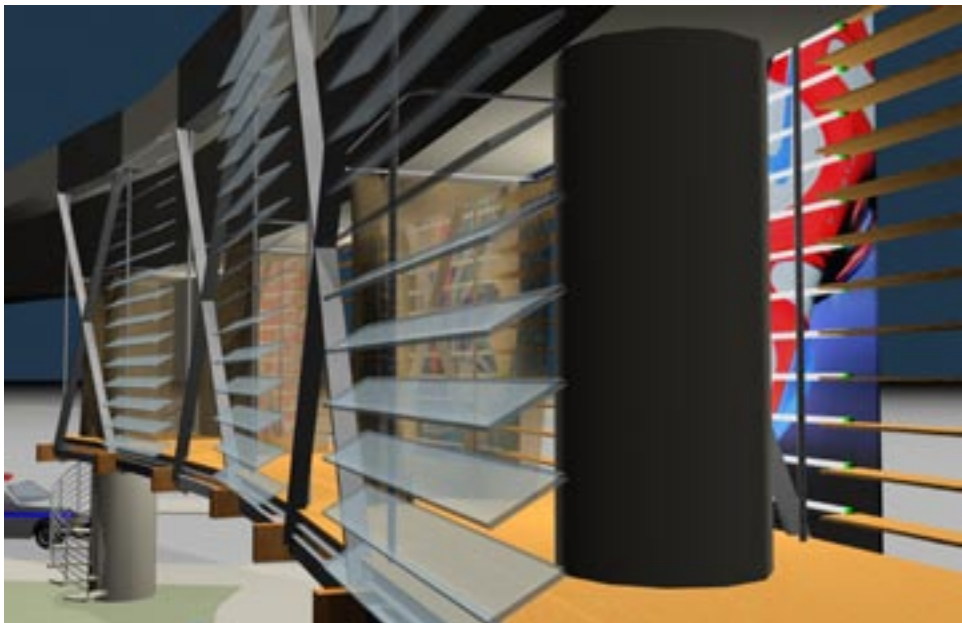
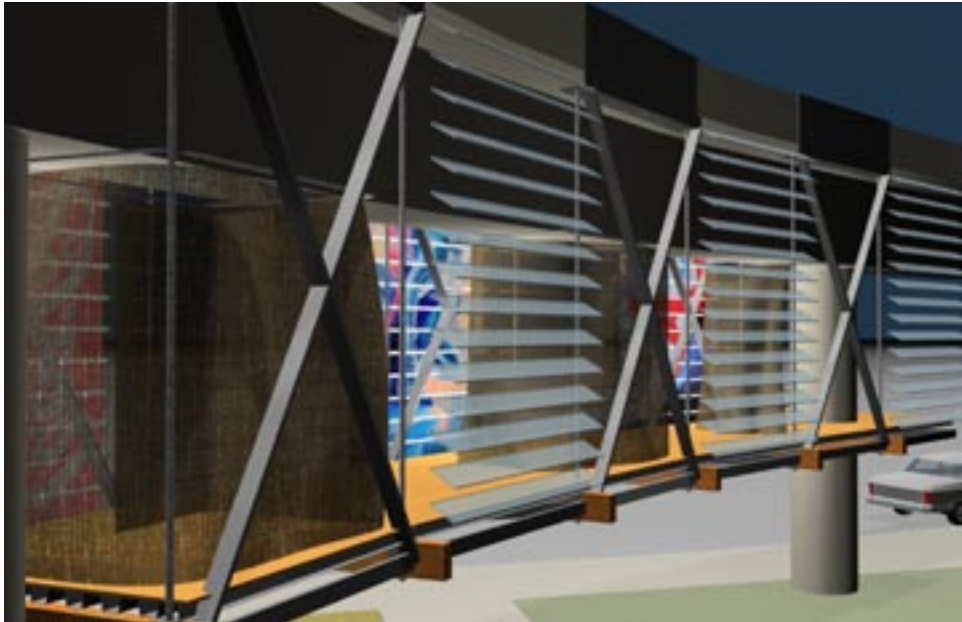
pod structure hangs
from people mover



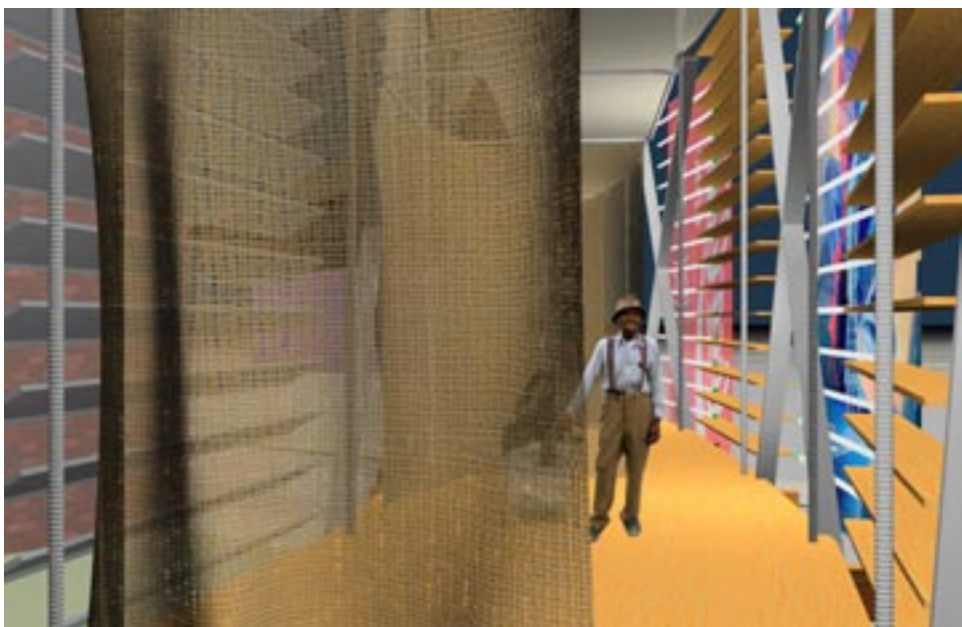
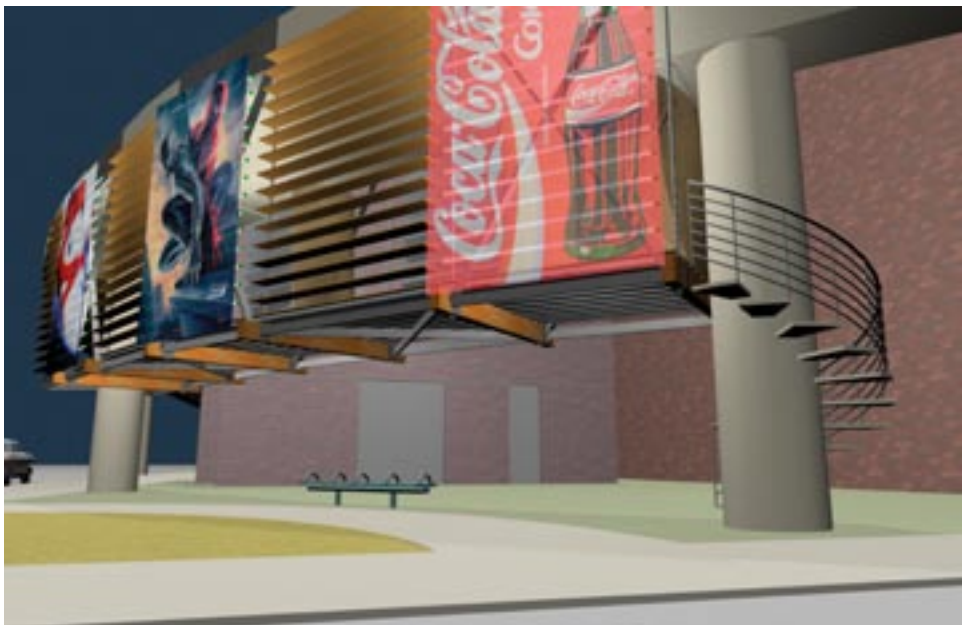
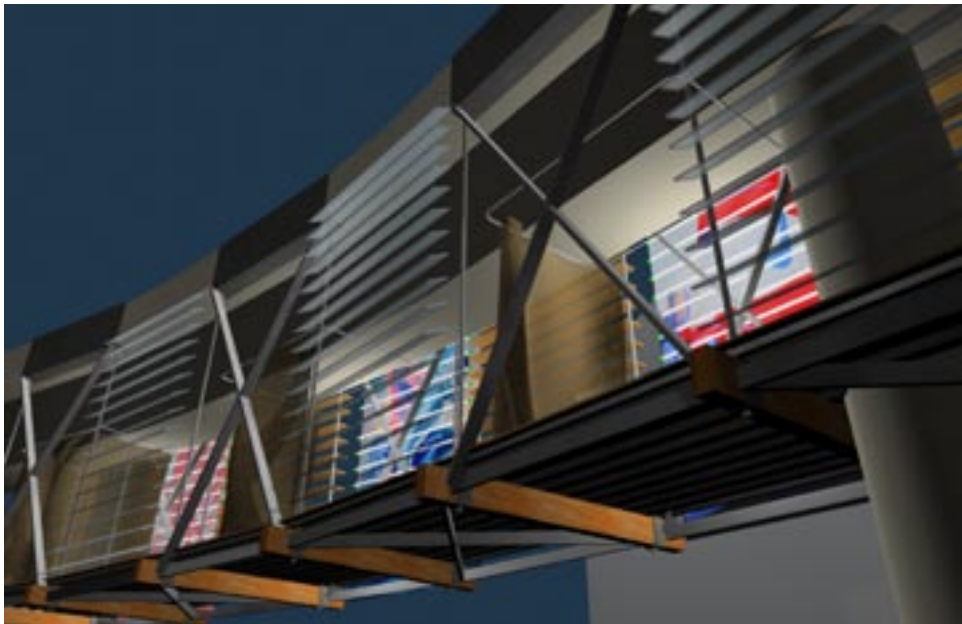


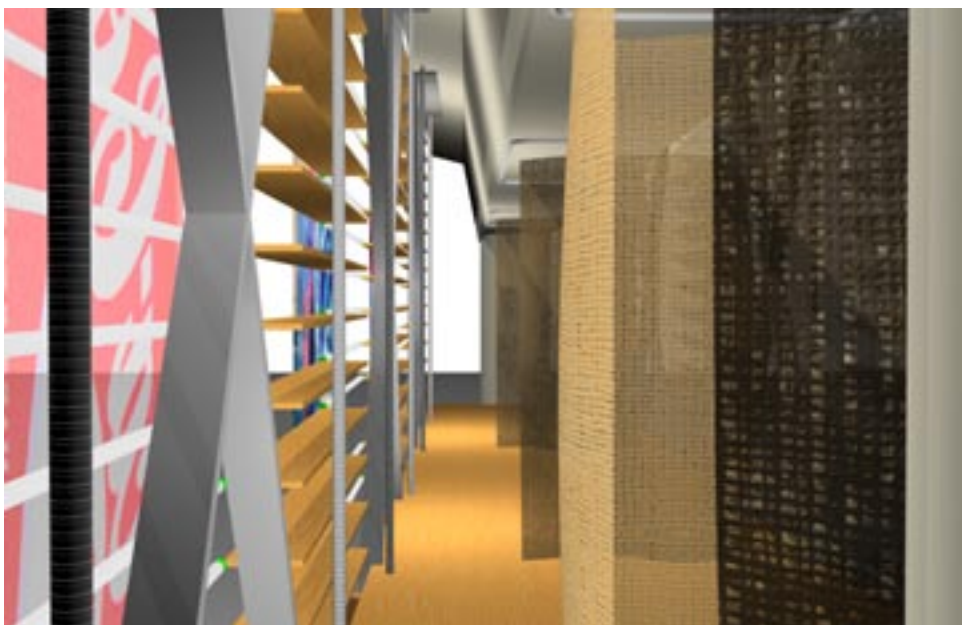
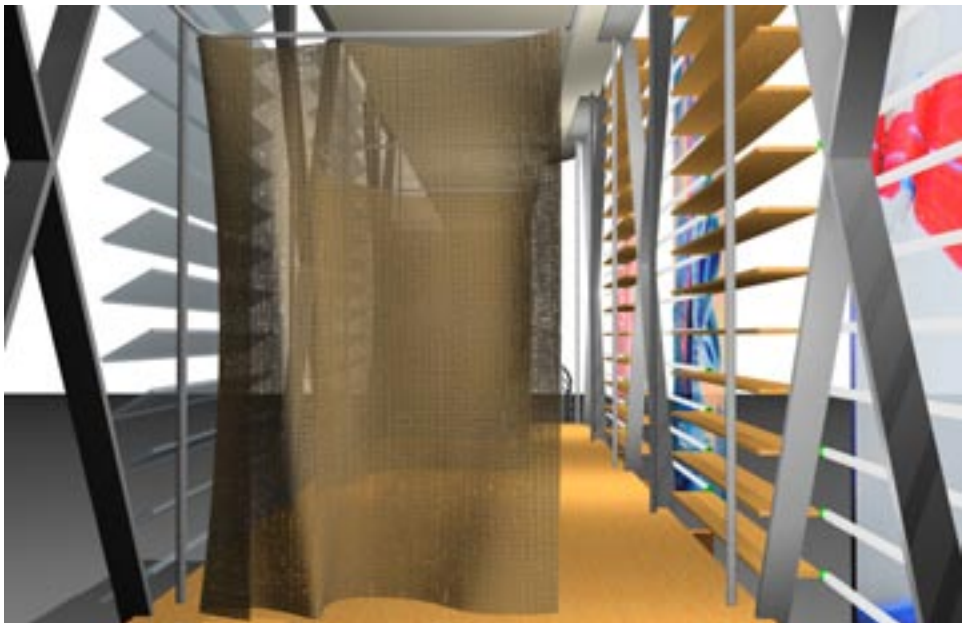
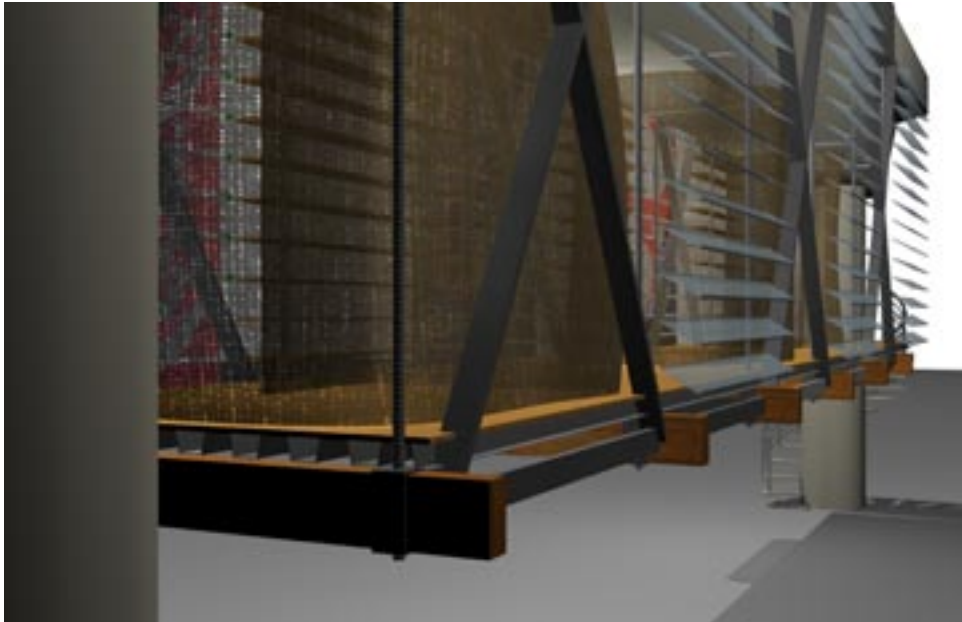
This park is not really being used a lot. People usually walk past it going to and from Greektown, but seldom do people stop to use it. Since the park is so small and there are no tables and just a small "bum-proof" bench, it is not a very friendly place or welcoming area to stop by and each lunch there, for example. However, someone had used a road sign to hide their belongings along side the wall near the alley. Therefore, again, it shows that there is little traffic along the park that deemed it safe enough as a storage area for an assumed homeless person. The design intends to take the park (the airspace is cut by the people mover) and make it more "public". Right now it is a "public place" but it really serves nobody. The location of the park is right across from the police headquarters and a block from the Greektown entertainment and restaurant area. These establishments and institutions reflect a public space concerned with order and good business. The idea of the park would be to operate within the good nature and order of the surroundings, but to also introduce a space that would allow for the free expression of the public. Therefore the park will be more like a stage that will host events such as gatherings, BBQs, small concerts, etc. Because the new programs might displace the storage space and perhaps even the resting space of individuals already using the park, a parasitical construction will hang off the people mover and will initially act as space available for storage, with advertising as the "façade" of the structures. Once storage is offered, the likely use will then be a type of temporary shelter of rest. Although these shelters may be seen as "homeless shelters" they are not. Use is what determines how it is judged. For example if there were a concert going on in the park, these units would be like private box seats above the rest of the crowd. So, these individual units can then behave like small storage units - almost like cottages or tree houses/clubhouses under the people mover track. Anyone could make use of these, not just homeless people. Since there is a large portion of people coming into the city who are not residents of the city and have actually driven maybe a ½ hour to an hour or more to get downtown, perhaps they can set up a unit that can be used when they arrive into the city. In the same way people have cabins or go camping, these units can be the urban equivalent to people exploring the city, just as it can be used for homeless people too. This presents a potential unconventional housing opportunity.









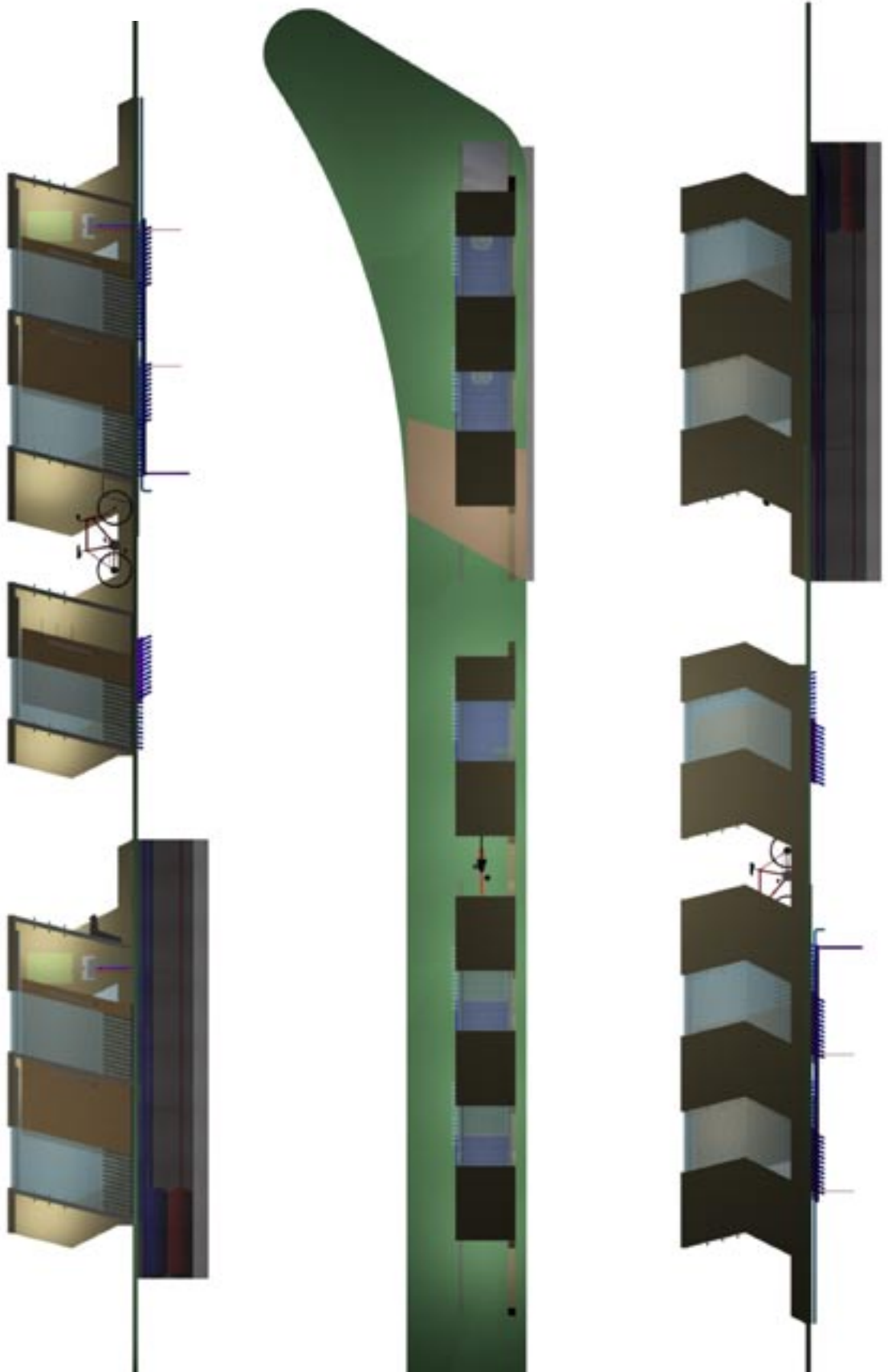


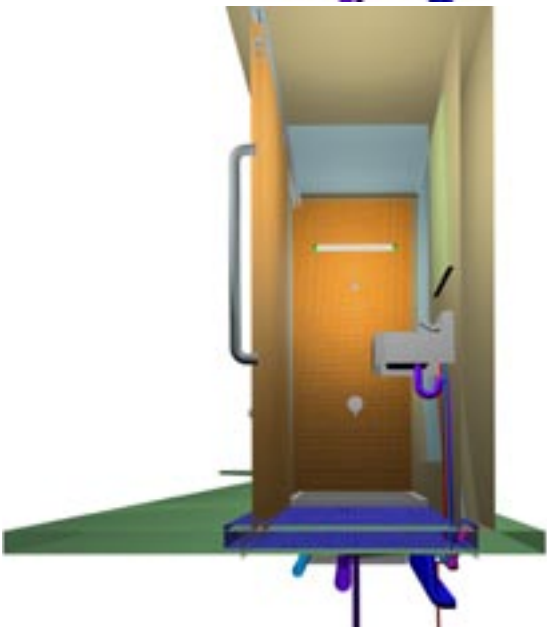
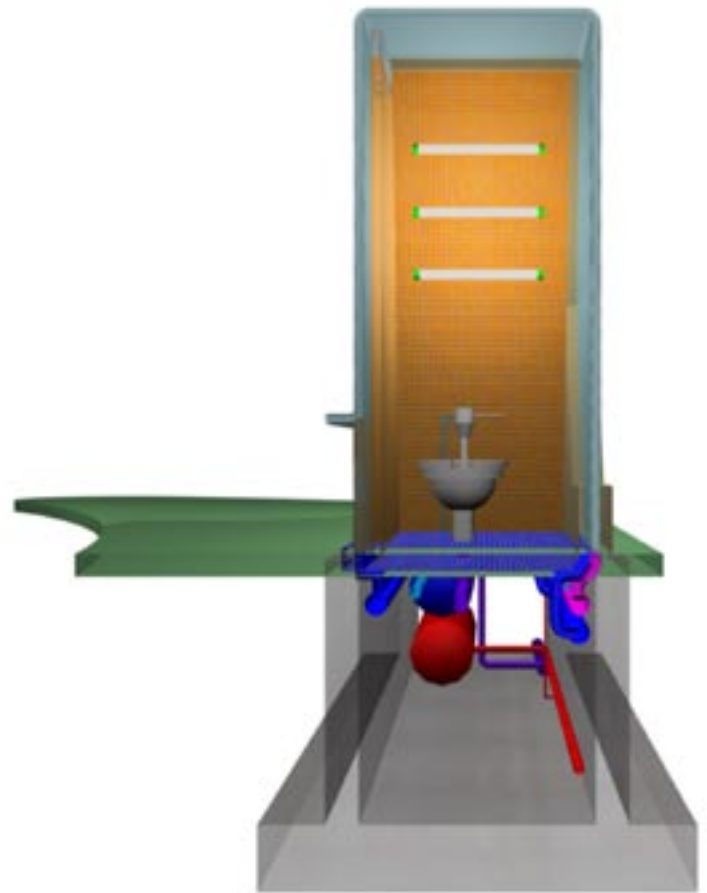
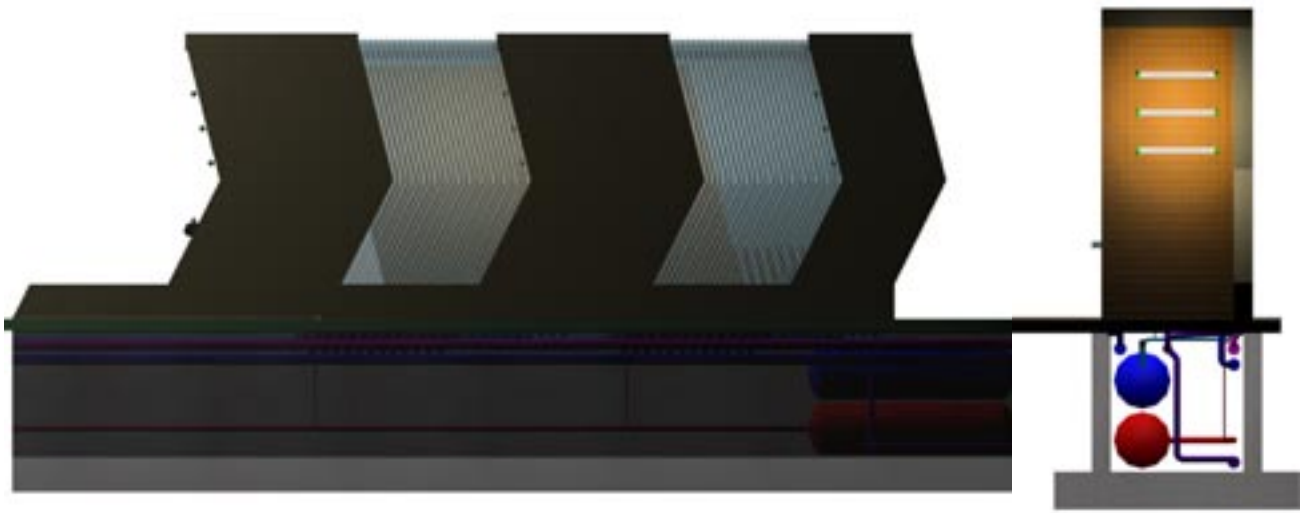


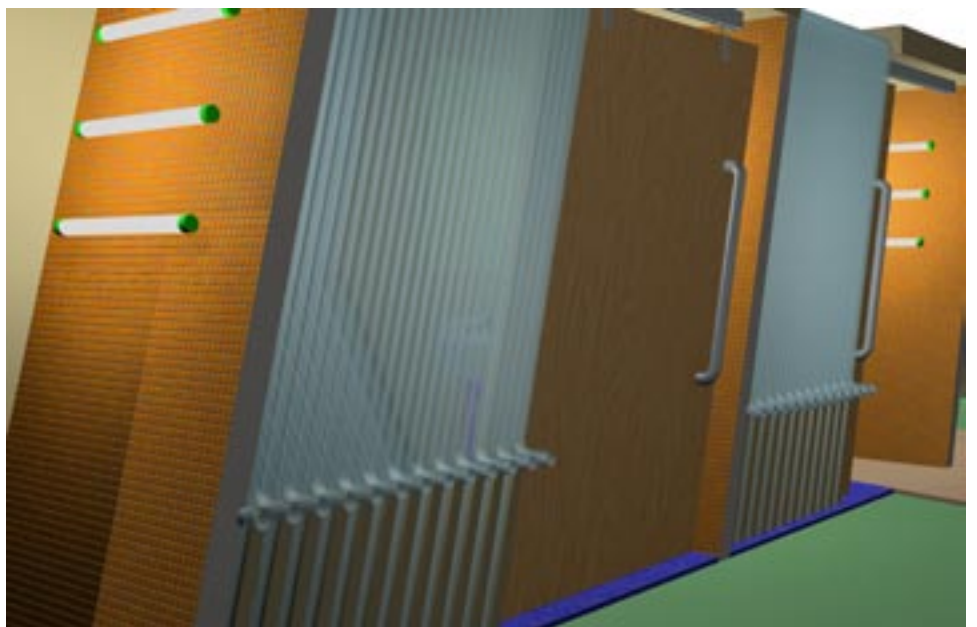
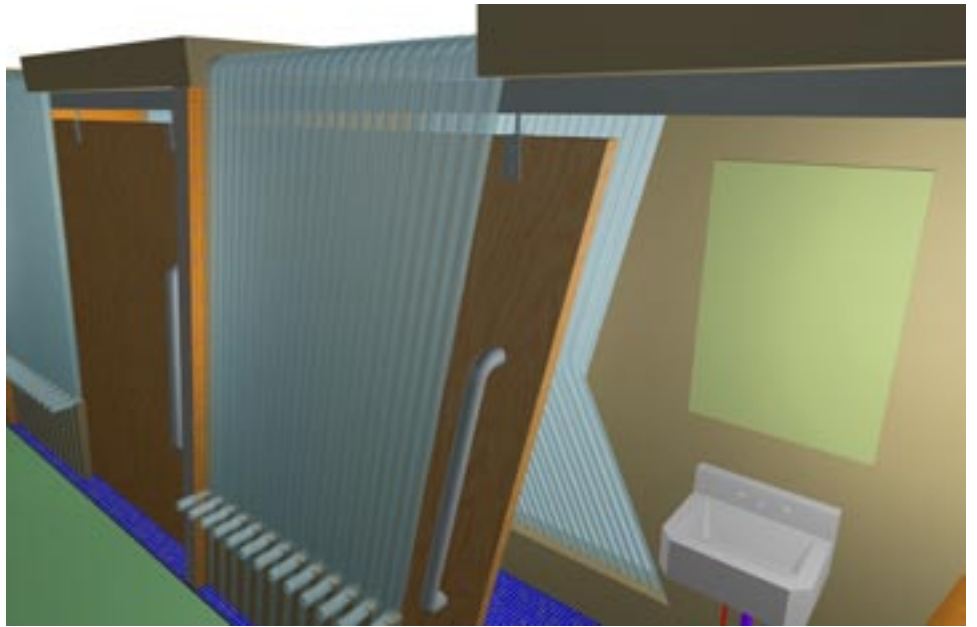




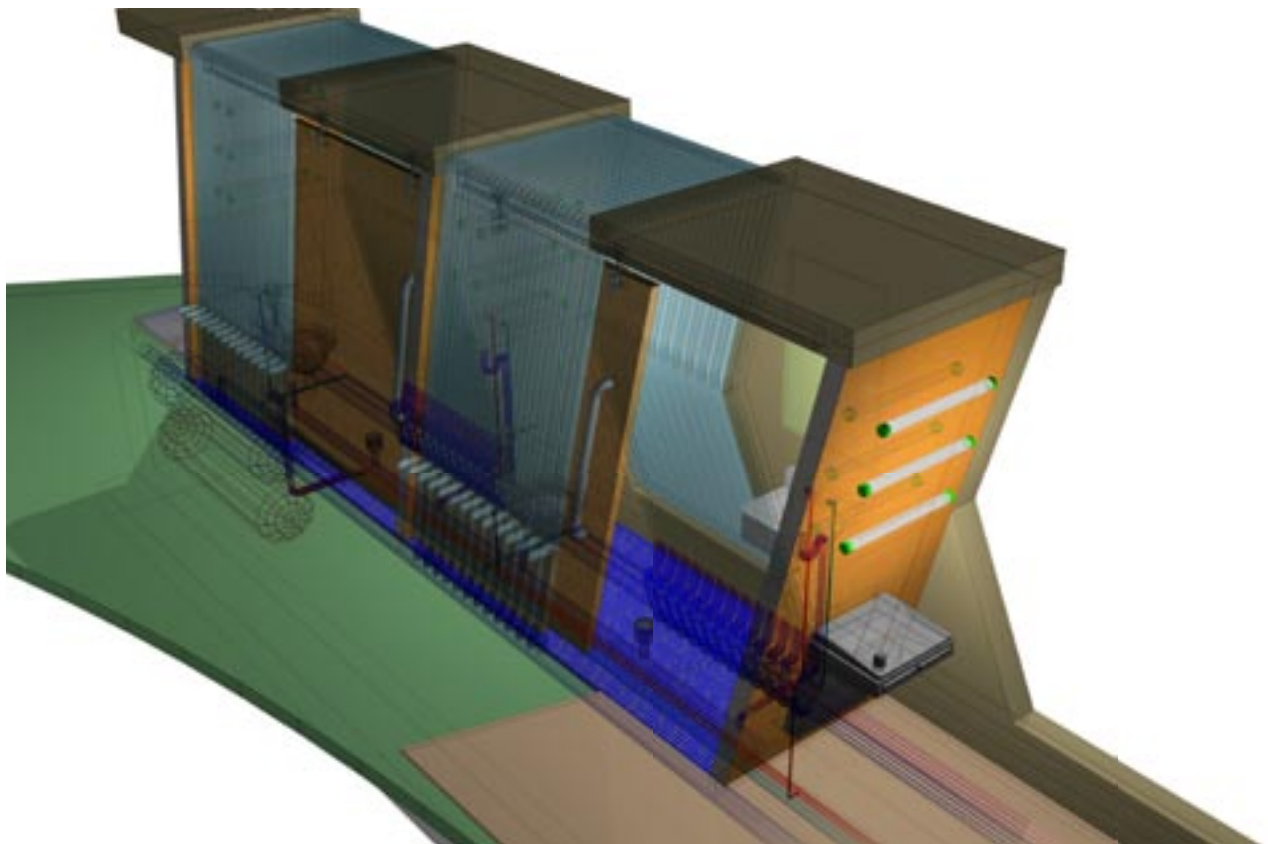
Monroe & Randolph Public Washroom

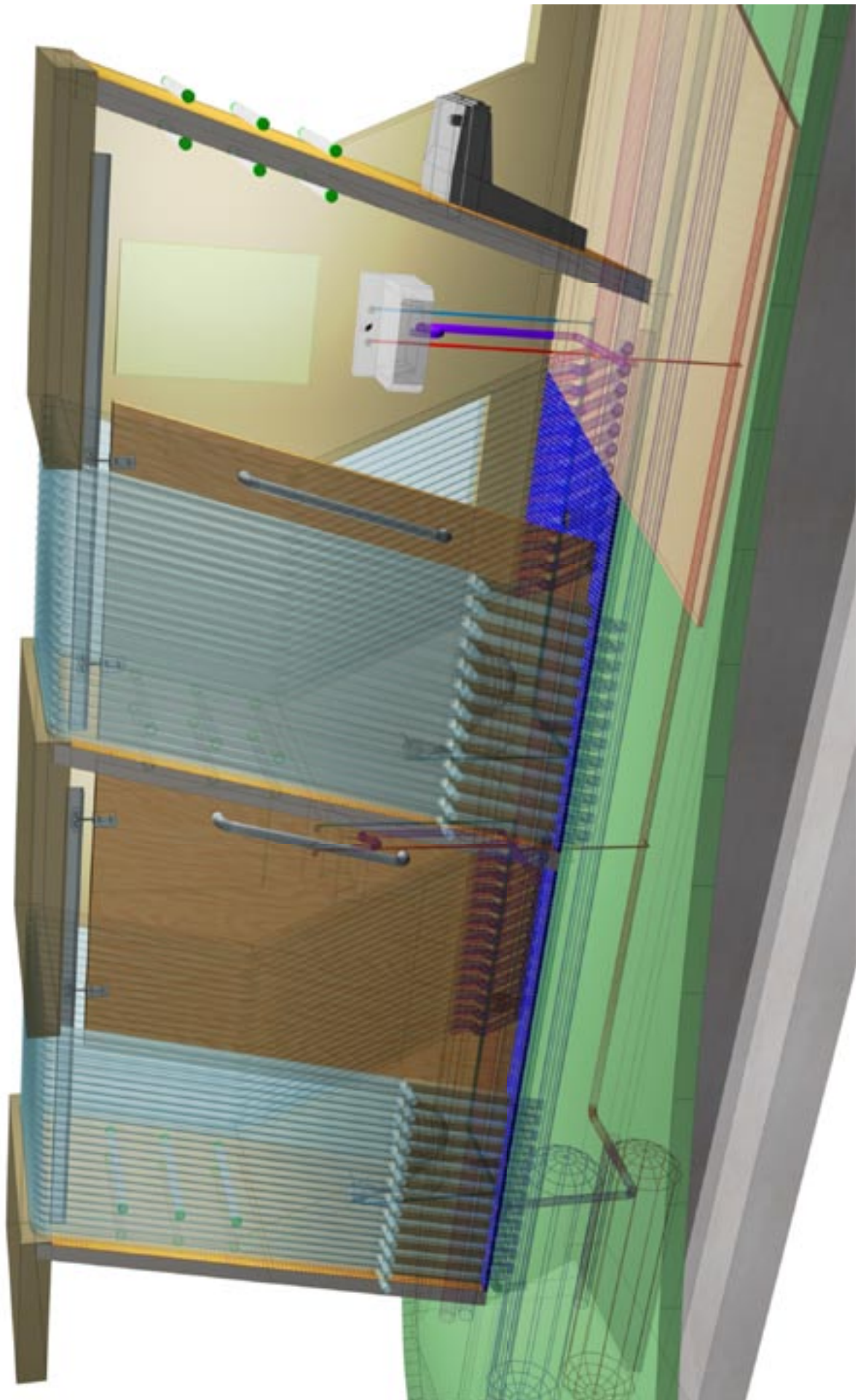


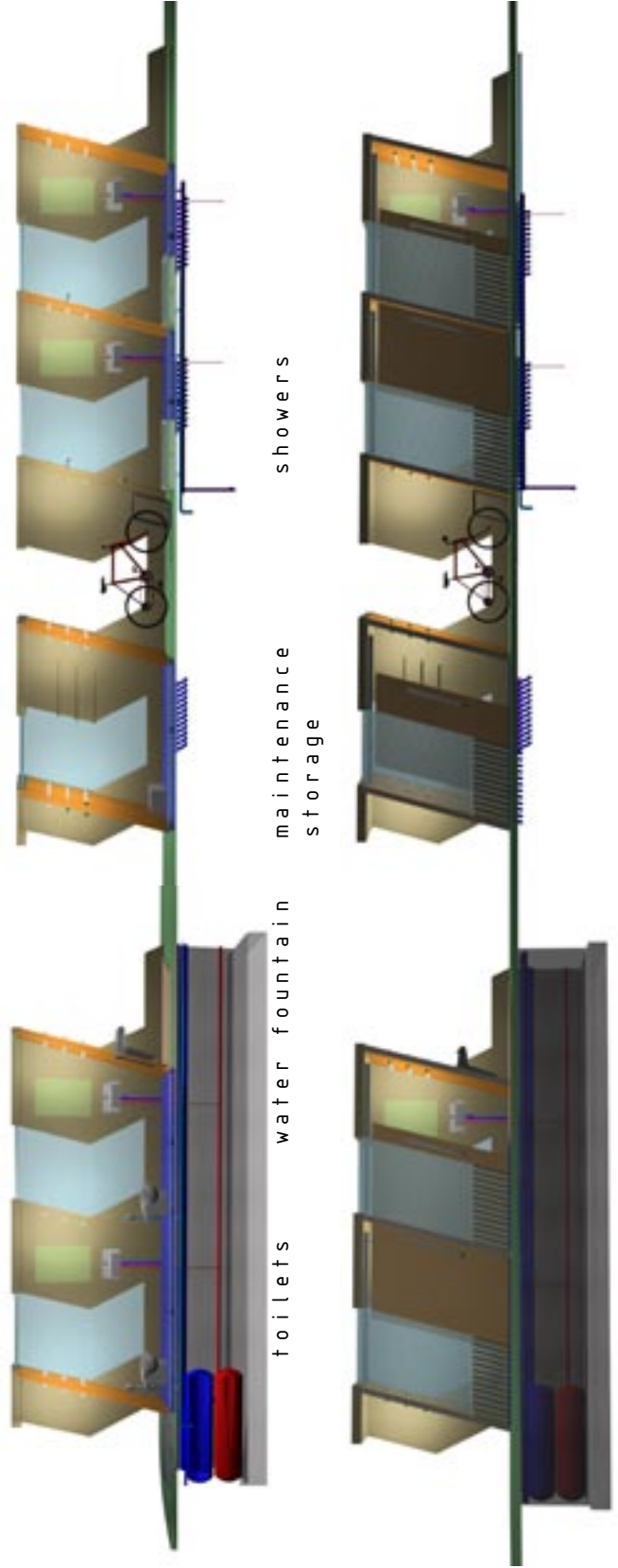
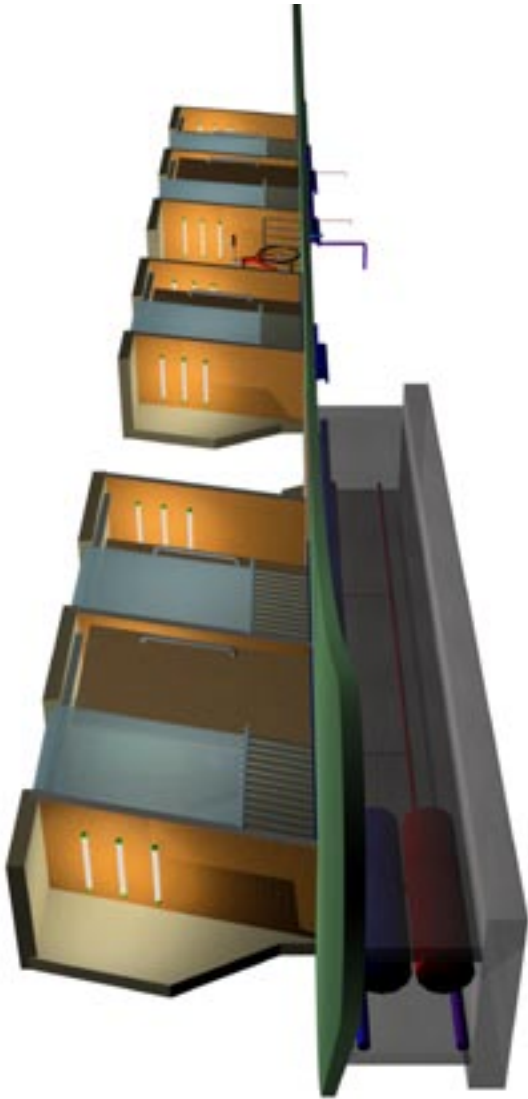




The washroom is a truly democratic program that applies to the needs of every single person. Often washrooms are hard to find downtown. Either stores are not open, or you have to be a customer to use their facilities. Although by code, the restrooms must be made available by any occupant inside the building, the customer rule is good for business. This piece of land left over from traffic patterns presents an opportunity to place a public washroom facility. The steam outlet can be appropriated to provide heating, and a separate tubing system can circulate cold water in the winter time. The concept of utilizing existing waste and making greater use out of existing infrastructure gives the public a washroom that intends to be an open democratic place but also a safe and controlled environment, so that people will feel comfortable using it. This is the challenge. The structures are quite basic and simple. Some stalls are only toilets with sinks while others are showers which allow downtown office workers to bike to work or to have a lunch time run around the city. The showers can also be used by anybody of course and will run on a coin operated timer to avoid wasting water. The translucent piping allows for some level of security and dialogue between inside and outside. Again, this could be a public works project from the city government, where jobs can be created to take care and maintain this washroom. In return, the idea of advertising money could be used to subsidize costs (more to cover the wage of the worker/attendant, rather than water costs).









Cloud Atlas is an attempt at investigating the nature of urban public space. Each of the projects attempted to provide a public service of some sort while still embracing the ideas of civility and order. The idea was not to completely take one side of radical socialism or corporate sterility. Public space embraces a little of both. There is, however, room for 'misreadings' and the opportunity for the public to really use these proposals. The creation of public space allows the general public to engage and take ownership of space. This makes the projects dynamic in that they are not prescriptive of any particular urban condition, but rather offer a basic service and a platform for social interaction. In particular, the roof space of each proposal offers potential for further development. Roof space is inherently powerful and holds a 'king of the castle' mentality of space ownership. This condition can be examined in a future study. Each proposal perhaps begins to suggest an alternative to traditional urban development, which Detroit can experiment with as it continually evolves and defines itself. Like a cloud, the ever-changing nature of the city is its vitality, and the projects attempt to provide a basis for the sponsorship of public participation. The creation of public space is always a struggle. Public space is contested space because everyone has a stake in it. The struggle for ownership is the active engagement and participation in urban life which is critical especially in a changing city such as Detroit.



conclusion

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