

2019

DETROIT COLLABORATIVE DESIGN CENTER Annual Report



02

DIRECTORS' LETTER

The Detroit Collaborative Design Center (DCDC) at the University of Detroit Mercy School of Architecture has seen a year of transition. In the last year we have stepped into the roles of Co-Executive Directors. Combined, we have been with DCDC for over 25 years and we are excited for the opportunity to continue to lead the office into our next chapter. After 20 years of transformational leadership, Dan Pitera moved into the role of Dean of the School of Architecture at Detroit Mercy! We love that he will continue to be a champion for our collective work at DCDC.

This year we also co-launched our second office off-campus at Neighborhood HomeBase on McNichols Road. We are so pleased to share this space with Live6 and community programs and events.

In this moment of transition, we have also taken the opportunity to embark on a strategic planning process led by DCDC staff. Through this process we have reaffirmed our values and work ethic while articulating internal and external goals for our team.

This process has also helped jump start new traditions, including this annual report. We have also reaffirmed our commitment to longstanding traditions that are at the core of our work – building strong relationships with community partners, educating the next generation of public interest designers, and working toward greater access to community-engaged design citywide.

We look forward to fully living into 2020!




Ceara O'Leary


Christina Heximer

OUR TEAM

Current DCDC Staff

Josh Budiongan, Designer & Project Manager
Charles Cross, Director of Landscape Design
Toni Henry, Designer & Project Manager
Christina Heximer, Co-Executive Director
Julia Kowalski, Designer & Project Manager
Brigette Murphy, Business Manager
Ceara O'Leary, Co-Executive Director

Transitions!

Dan Pitera, DCDC Executive Director 1999-2019, is now the Dean of the University of Detroit Mercy School of Architecture

Rebecca "Bucky" Willis left DCDC after seven years to pursue research opportunities

2019 Emerging Designers

Andrew Ashby
Nicole Fricke
Raquel Charrier

2019 Student Designers

Suliaman Bangura
Shajnin Dristy
Angela Lazarte
Tatyana Mourad
Alexa Perez-Bermudez
Kiyone Tuazon



Josh Budiongan



Charles Cross



Toni Henry



Julia Kowalski

04

HOW WE WORK

Mission

The Detroit Collaborative Design Center (DCDC) is a multi-disciplinary, nonprofit design center located in the University of Detroit Mercy's School of Architecture. DCDC exists to bring high-quality and community-engaged design to all neighborhoods in Detroit. We do this by engaging, educating and promoting equity in design processes and outcomes.

Vision

Every person has access to well designed, healthy spaces and neighborhoods and has an active role in the decision-making that impacts their community.

Services

We work with community partners citywide on a range of projects at different scales, prioritizing participation in the planning and design process with the belief that local expertise leads to the best ideas.

Our services include:

- Architectural design
- Landscape design
- Urban design
- Neighborhood planning
- Infrastructure strategy
- Community engagement
- Capacity building
- Small scale installation design

Our Office Values

- Meaningful, authentic engagement that celebrates local expertise
- Equitable spaces and sustainable solutions that prioritize quality design and access for everyone
- Collaboration built upon partnerships and relationships
- Celebrate histories, local culture, and stories of staff and partners
- Educating designers and supporting diversity in design professions
- Local capacity building
- Public interest design research and knowledge sharing
- Professional development and growth opportunities
- Healthy, mindful office culture
- Foster creativity, fun and playfulness

“ DESIGN IS AN ACT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE. ”

All people have the right to well designed, healthy spaces and neighborhoods. DCDC works with communities who typically are left out of design decision or do not have access to high quality design. DCDC facilitates an open and transparent process that builds trust and strives to include as many diverse voices from a community as possible. These perspectives are intentionally integrated into all designs to ensure that the spaces and neighborhoods reflect the spirit of the individuals and their communities.



Photo credit: Erik Paul Howard

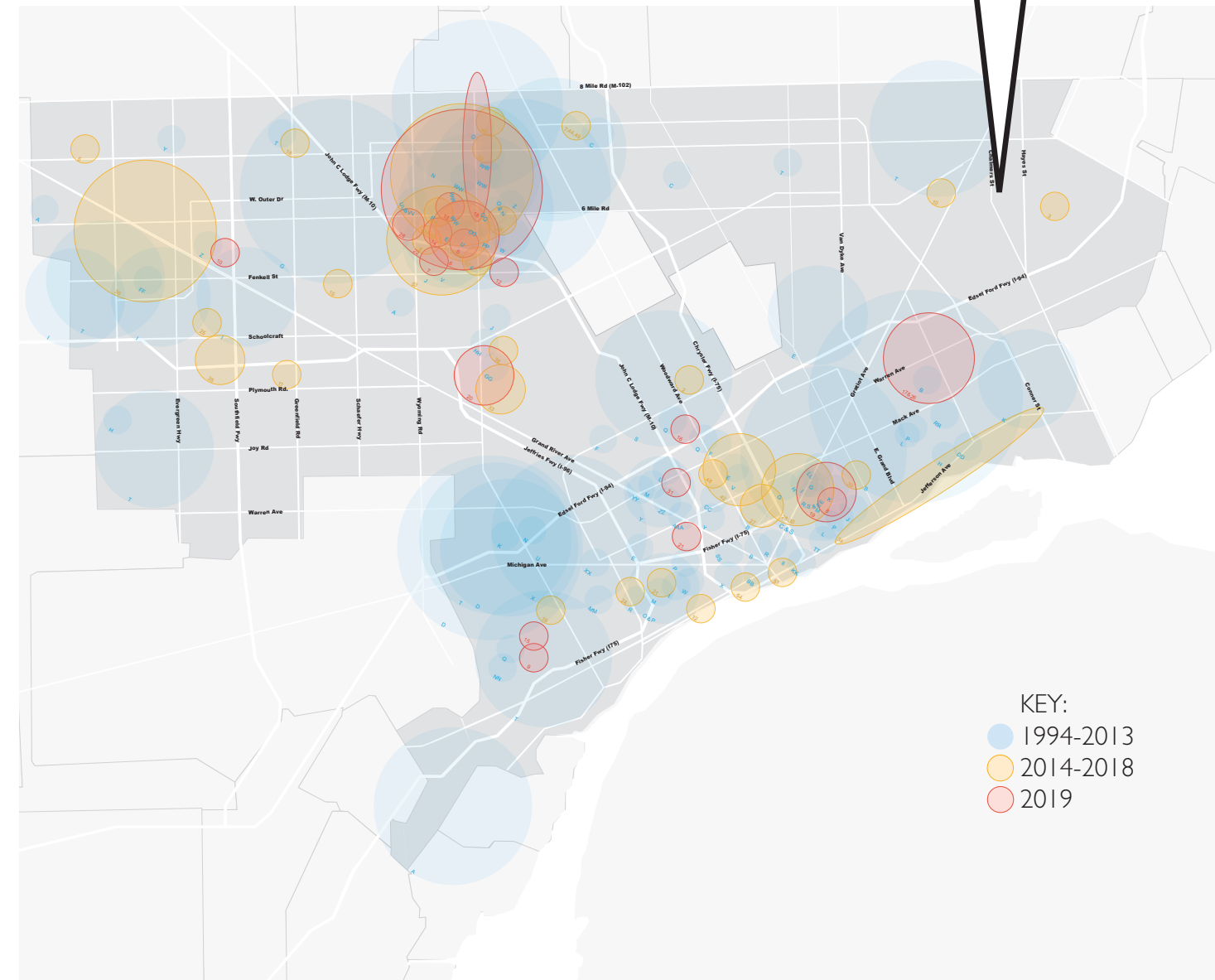
06

25 YEARS!

Over the last 25 years we have worked with nearly **300 partners** on almost **200 projects**.

In 2019 we celebrated twenty five years since DCDC was founded by former University of Detroit Mercy School of Architecture Dean Stephen Vogel, FAIA. For our 20th birthday we threw a big party at the Detroit Public Library. Since then, in the five years between 2014 and 2018, we worked with over 125 partners on 60 projects. In 2019 alone we worked on 28 projects.

The map below illustrates all of our Detroit projects. 2019 projects are also detailed in the following pages.

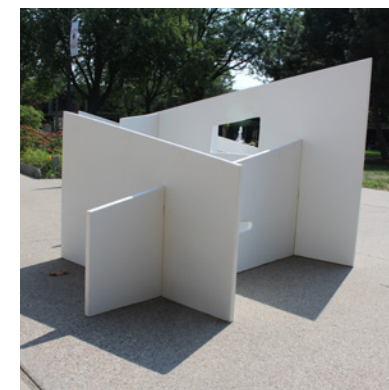
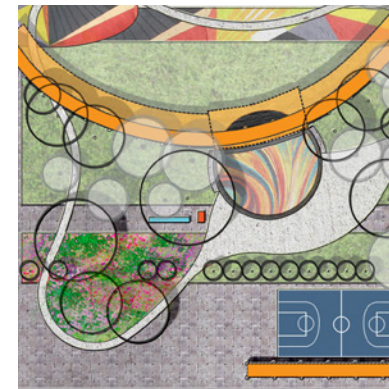
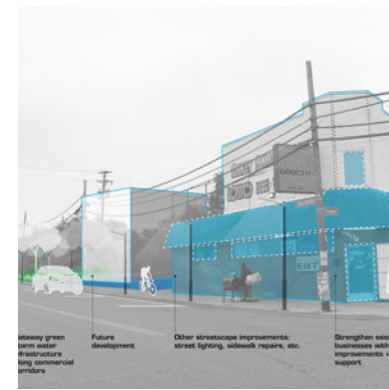
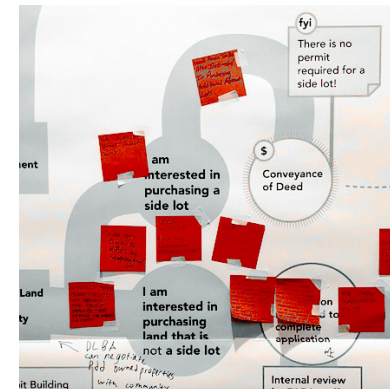
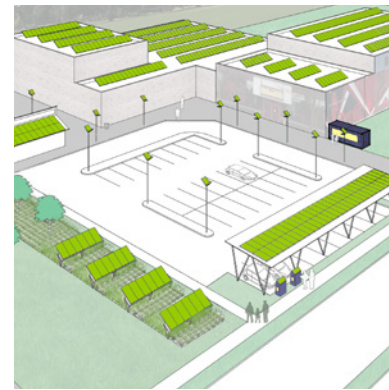
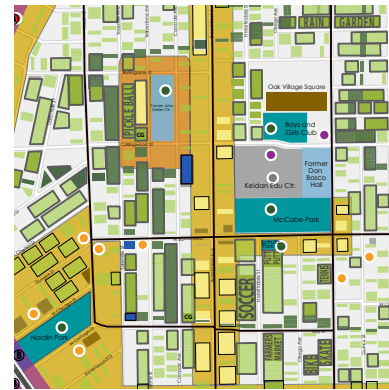


IN 2019 WE WORKED ON 28 PROJECTS ACROSS DETROIT.

Each project is included on the following pages, along with collaborating partners. We apologize if we unintentionally omitted anyone!

THESE PROJECTS WERE:

- Landscape design
- Neighborhood planning and urban design
- Citywide infrastructure
- Architectural design
- Engagement catalysts and capacity building
- Small-scale installations



10

LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Brilliant Detroit North Central & Brightmoor Outdoor Community Spaces

DCDC is working with Brilliant Detroit and neighborhood stakeholders in two Detroit neighborhoods, North Central and Brightmoor, to design outdoor community spaces adjacent to Brilliant Detroit's houses. DCDC facilitated a community engaged design process to determine residents' priorities for the two outdoor spaces.

Partners: Brilliant Detroit, Ron Omilian

Century Forward Replay Garden

This project helped re-envision three vacant residential lots into a community gathering space with an emphasis on a natural play space for young children. The design includes a raised deck with play fort and play elements derived from nature: boulders, tree stumps, and slack-line. DCDC conducted extensive youth engagement with nearly 600 students from Bethune Elementary and Middle School and adults from the community shared additional feedback.

Partners: Century Forward, Bethune Elementary, Turner Street neighbors

Fenkell Beautification Project

This project features landscape beautification elements for a vacant block of Fenkell Avenue in northwest Detroit, including a walking path, trees, sculptural posts and seating areas. DCDC facilitated the engagement process and is the project designer.

Partners: Progressive Neighborhood Designers, Grove Hall CDC, LaTanya Garrett, 7th District Michigan House of Representatives, livingLAB, Michigan Economic Development Corporation

Franklin-Wright Settlements Outdoor Space

The project visualizes an outdoor community space adjacent to the Franklin-Wright Settlement facility located in Detroit's McDougall-Hunt Neighborhood. The space includes native landscaping, places for people to sit and gather, a splash pad and artistic hardscape. DCDC developed the conceptual design and visualization for the space.

Partners: Franklin-Wright Settlements

Grace in Action Community Plaza

Plaza Villelobos is a multi-use community plaza that transformed Grace in Action's corner parking lot into an active pedestrian space. The plaza, dedicated to a community leader, supports community gatherings, small business growth, and the arts and culture of the neighborhood.

Partners: Grace in Action Collectives, Et.Al Collaborative, Proxy By Design

North Rosedale Park Community House Plaza

As the North Rosedale Park Civic Association sought to frame their newly acquired sculpture by renown artist Charles McGee, this plaza project reimagined the outdoor space of their community house at large. The plaza contains the Charles McGee installation, rain gardens and native plantings, and event space that overlooks the athletic fields beyond.

Partners: North Rosedale Park Civic Association, Environmental Consulting and Technology, Inc.

Sacred Grounds in Detroit

This program of the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) promotes education of our natural spaces and the values of pollinator habitats in the urban setting. Five houses of worship were awarded small grants to install pollinator habitats that were designed by DCDC after a collaborative group workshop process with the 2019 grant awardees. In 2020, DCDC and NWF will work with 8 additional houses of worship.

Partners: National Wildlife Federation, Christ the King, Meditation Methodist Baptist Church, Holy Redeemer, St Paul of the Cross, Citadel of Praise



12

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING + URBAN DESIGN

Fitzgerald Open Space Activation & Creative Alley Revitalization

This resident-led initiative focused on Ella Fitzgerald Park programming including monthly activity days led by local residents and movie nights. The creative alleyway revitalization includes alley clearing, installation of solar lights and the addition of neighborhood stars. DCDC coordinated project activities and convened resident leaders.

Partners: Fitzgerald neighborhood leaders and residents, College Core Block Club, Ryter Cooperative Industries, Motor City Grounds Crew, Soulardarity, The Kresge Foundation, the City of Detroit

Good Stock Neighborhoods Land Use Framework

This planning study lays the groundwork for future planning and implementation of open space strategies in the Good Stock area, building upon neighborhood strengths, seeking sustainable solutions for vacant land, and setting a precedent for planning in Detroit's less dense neighborhoods. DCDC led the planning work, plugging into existing community engagement efforts.

Partners: Eastside Community Network, Good Stock Steering Committee



McDougall-Hunt Neighborhood Sustainable Redevelopment Implementation Plan

The McDougall-Hunt Neighborhood Sustainable Redevelopment Implementation Plan charts a course toward a sustainable set of strategies that work together to envision a holistic neighborhood future that is driven by McDougall-Hunt community members. DCDC led the planning process and deliverables, plugging into an existing engagement ecosystem.

Partners: Eastside Community Network, McDougall Hunt Neighborhood Association, Bailey Park Project, Data Driven Detroit, Cinnaire, Alternative Foundation

Nardin Park Improvement Rock Neighborhood Plan

The neighborhood plan includes opportunities for revitalization of vacant space into productive landscapes, neighborhood hubs, connecting green paths, housing development, and mixed use development in the Nardin Park neighborhood. DCDC facilitated an engagement process and asset identification with stakeholders, and developed an opportunities map for revitalization of open space and vacant properties in the neighborhood.

Partners: Nardin Park Improvement Rock & City of Detroit Planning and Development Department

North Corktown Open/Green Spaces Project Character and Sense of Place Guidelines & Urban Design Standards

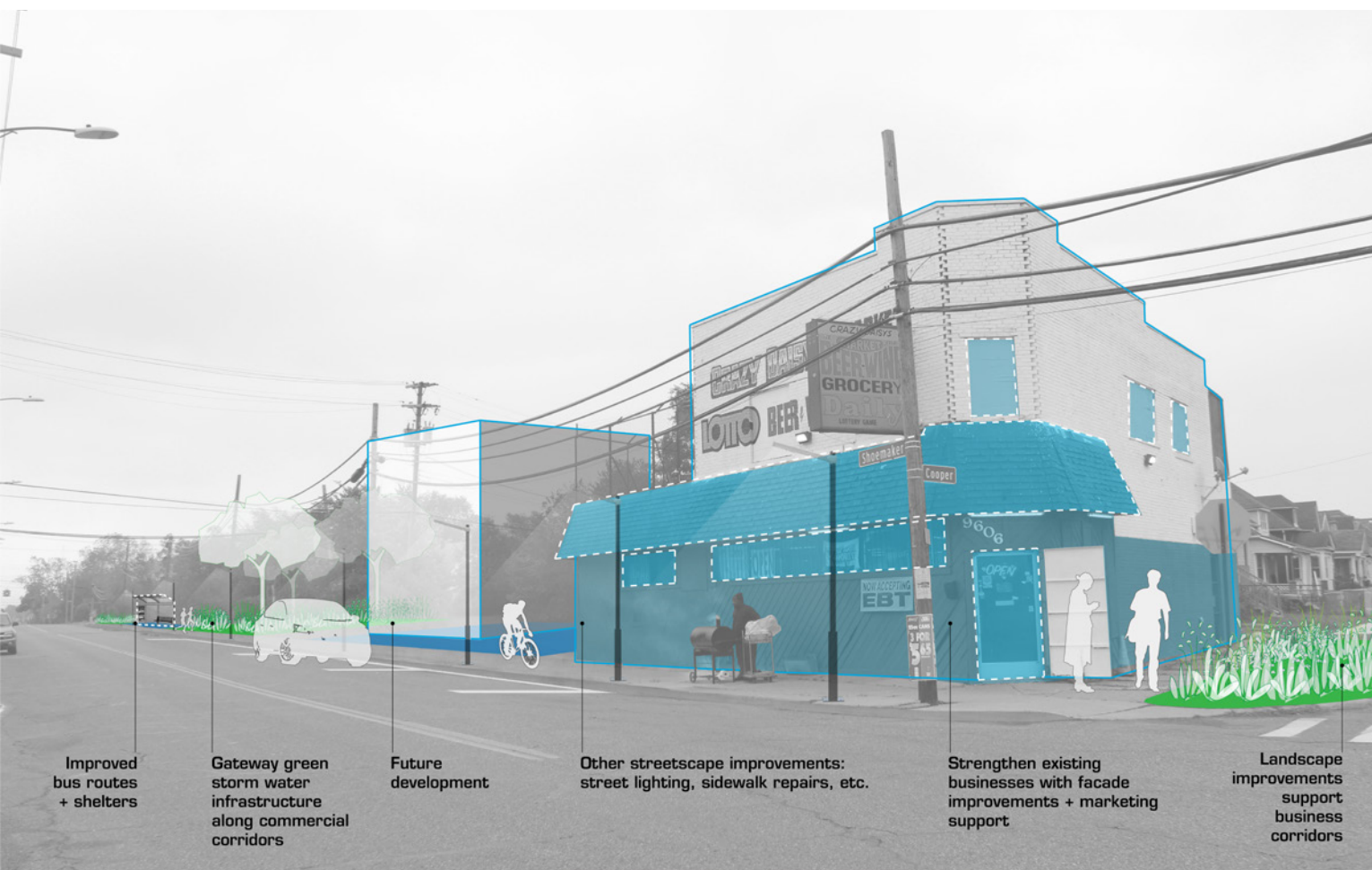
These design guidelines are a North Corktown resident-driven document that illustrate the character and/or sense of place prioritized by the community as the neighborhood undergoes future changes. DCDC contributed to the community engagement process led by Mission Lift and led the development of the guidelines.

Partners: Heritage Works, North Corktown Neighborhood Association

Reimagining the Civic Commons (RCC)

RCC is a national multi-year collaborative funding initiative that invests in civic assets to foster engagement, equity, environmental sustainability and economic development. In Detroit, this work is focused in and around the Fitzgerald neighborhood and is led by the City of Detroit. DCDC contributes as a founding participant, community connector and local learning partner.

Partners: Live6 Alliance, Invest Detroit, City of Detroit, Greening of Detroit, Reimagining the Civic Commons



14

CITYWIDE INFRASTRUCTURE

Amplify Art Detroit: Action Planning for Arts, Culture, Entertainment

This planning effort will inform how cultural policy and city departments support artists and the creative economy in Detroit. DCDC supported the community engagement to inform the effort and initiative.

Partners: Lord Cultural Resources, rooftop, City of Detroit Arts, Culture, and Entrepreneurship Department, City of Detroit Planning and Development Department, Detroit Economic Growth Corporation

Detroit Solar Feasibility Assessment

This work to assess citywide solar feasibility for the City of Detroit included an interactive Online Solar Capacity Map, an Equity Solar Deployment Guide, a Solar Policy Deployment Guide, and financial modeling of solar deployment strategies for the City. DCDC developed solar design guidelines, diagrammatic renderings and a permitting process map.

Partners: City of Detroit, Elevate Energy, EcoWorks, Great Lakes Environmental Law Center, Data Driven Detroit, Michigan Energy Options

Land Based Projects: A Pathway to Purchase, Permit and Design

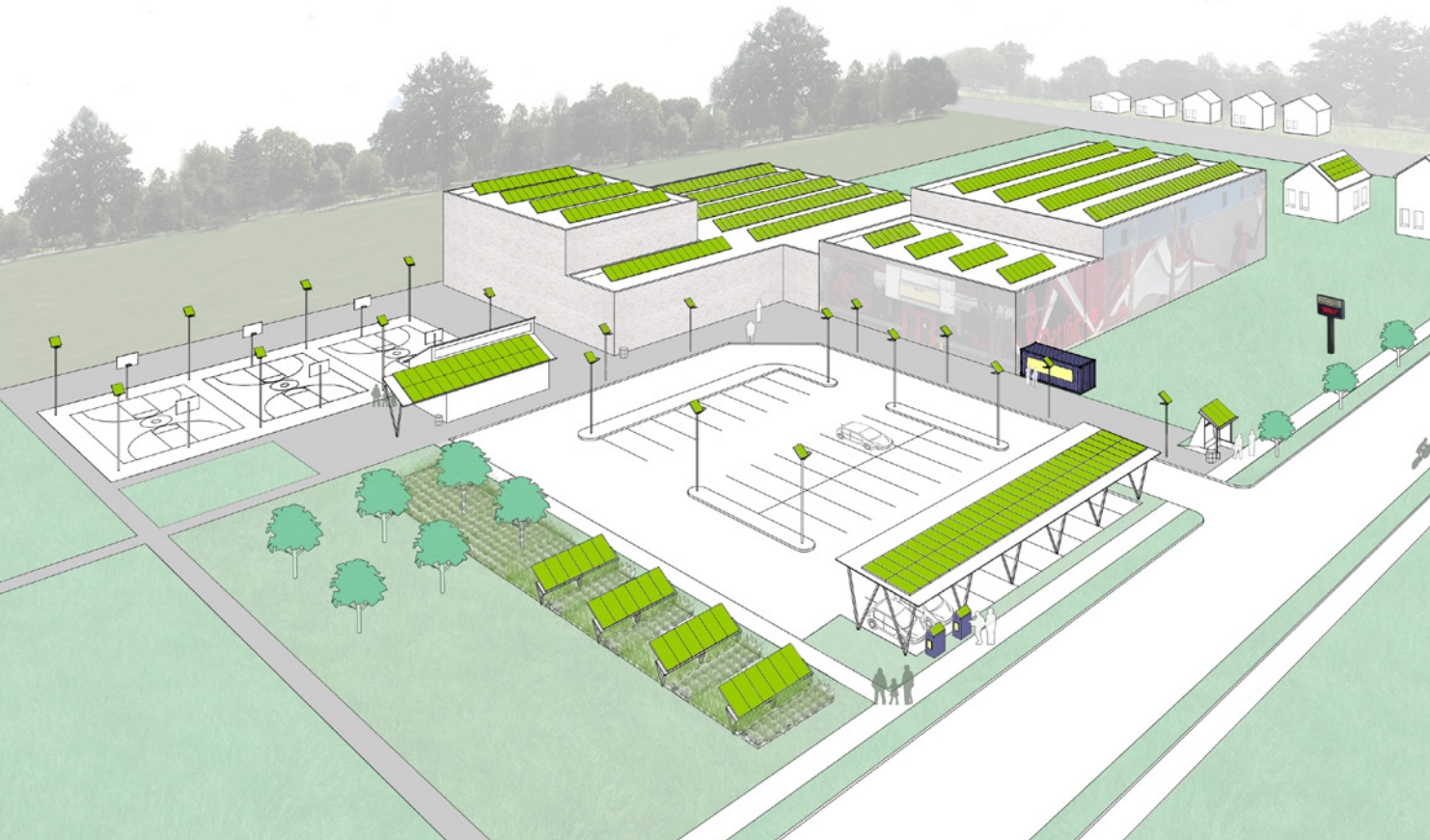
The City of Detroit is currently working to improve the process for purchasing and permitting land based projects. A land based project uses land for urban agriculture, gardening, beautification and other productive uses, whether for profit or as a community based activity. DCDC led the community engagement that informed how the City of Detroit could streamline their approval processes to help community members navigate the pathway to achieving their project.

Partners: City of Detroit, Akasura Robinson, Agency Landscape & Planning, Detroit Food Policy Council, Keep Growing Detroit, The Work Department

Offsite Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) in the Goodstock Neighborhood Proof of Concept Study

This study examines opportunities to leverage green stormwater infrastructure investments in Detroit's Goodstock neighborhood to generate multiple benefits for investors and the community. DCDC authored the study and led an interdisciplinary team representing landscape design, stormwater analysis, legal and financial strategies.

Partners: Eastside Community Network, InSite Design Studio, Great Lakes Environmental Law Center, Zachary & Associates, Erb Family Foundation



16

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN



Fenkell Street Artist Studio & Loft

The project includes the renovation of an existing building on the corner of Fenkell and Normandy into artist studios and lofts. DCDC developed the conceptual layout and a rendering of the concept.

Partners: Sharnita Johnson

Neighborhood HomeBase

Neighborhood HomeBase is a community gathering space and shared office space for the Live6 Alliance, DCDC, and several “hot desks” for various City of Detroit departments working in the district and other non-profit organizations. DCDC worked with the Live6 Alliance and partnering architect, Timothea Miller Wittig to develop the design through construction.

Partners: Live6 Alliance, Timothea Miller Wittig, Jenkins Construction, University of Detroit Mercy Facilities Operations, Kristin Nelson, James Leach, HuronMade LLC.

San Juan Fitzgerald Pavilion

A Detroit Mercy School of Architecture (SOA) vertical architectural design studio and DCDC have worked with the San Juan Block Club and residents in Detroit’s Fitzgerald neighborhood to design and construct a covered park pavilion for a neighborhood hub along San Juan Street.

Partners: San Juan Block Club, INTOTO Studio, HuronMade LLC, City of Detroit, Detroit Mercy School of Architecture

18

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN, CONT'D.

UNI Lawndale Center

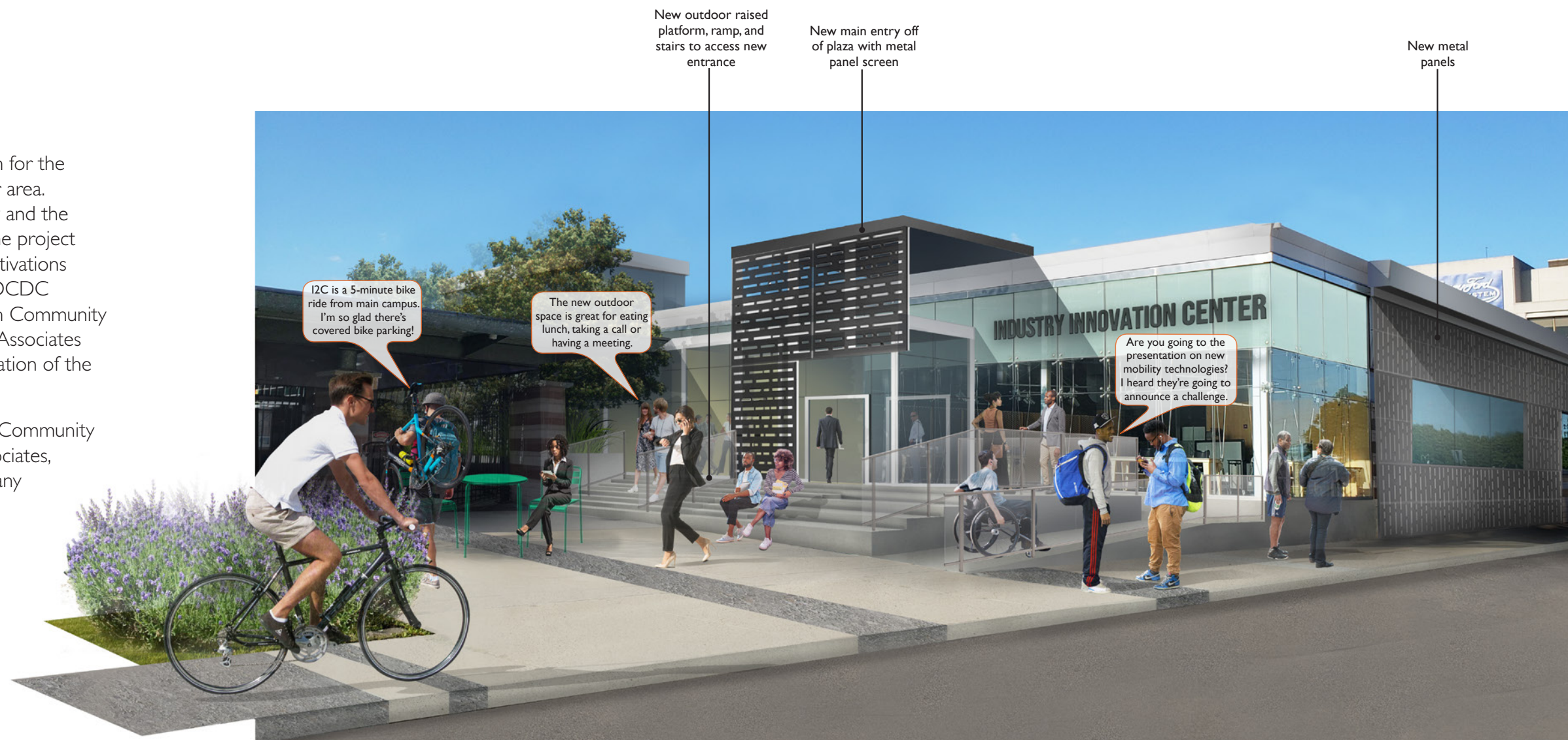
This project involved a participatory design process centered around the adolescent youth community of Southwest Detroit, and helped UNI determine the best use of an unrenovated portion in their Lawndale Center building. The project, co-designed with their Youth Advisory Board, allowed UNI to expand from their youth services into a new space that better fit the programmatic needs of their adolescent community.

Partners: Urban Neighborhood Initiatives (UNI), UNI Youth Advisory Board

Wayne State University Industry Innovation Center

The project is a conceptual architectural and landscape design for the former NextEnergy building and site in Detroit's New Center area. The building and site will be a place where university, industry and the surrounding community can come together to collaborate. The project also included the implementation of a series of short-term activations to test ideas for making the site more open and welcoming. DCDC facilitated the participatory design process in partnership with Community Development Advocates of Detroit and Hamilton Anderson Associates to develop a conceptual design for the renovation/reconfiguration of the existing building and site.

Partners: TechTown Detroit, Wayne State University, Proxy, Community Development Advocates of Detroit, Hamilton Anderson Associates, DiClemente Siegel Design Inc., & Turner Construction Company



20

ENGAGEMENT CATALYSTS + CAPACITY BUILDING

Brightmoor Quality Initiative Indoor/Outdoor Early Childhood Education Site Improvement

The purpose of the field trip and workshop was to spark Brightmoor Early Childhood Education (ECE) providers' interest in outdoor natural play spaces. DCDC developed and facilitated a day-long workshop with Brightmoor ECE providers at the Nature Preschool in Midland Michigan's Chippewa Nature Center.

Partners: IFF & Brightmoor Quality Initiative

Hope Starts Here Engagement and Advocacy Network

DCDC is one partner working on the Detroit Champions for HOPE, a network of parents, caregivers, families and organizations advocating for children's positive development.

Partners: Impact Detroit, Purposeful Journey, Black Family Development, Detroit Parent Network, J Winston Group, Maria Montoya, James Ribbron, The Village Providing Comfortable Living LLC

Marygrove P-20 Cradle-to-Career Campus Community Engagement Framework

DCDC designed, facilitated, and implemented a community engagement framework to inform the overall cradle-to-career campus concept on Marygrove campus as well as individual partners' programs.

Partners: The Kresge Foundation, Marygrove Conservancy, Marygrove College, Starfish Family Services, Development Centers, Inc., IFF, Detroit Public Schools Community District, University of Michigan

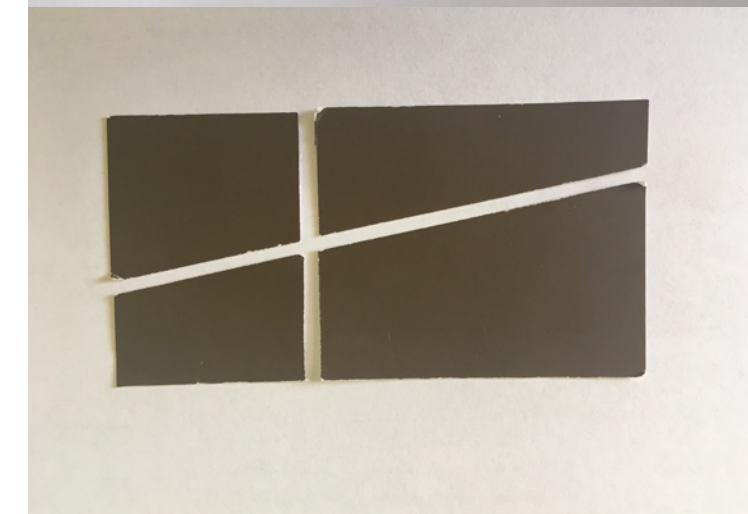
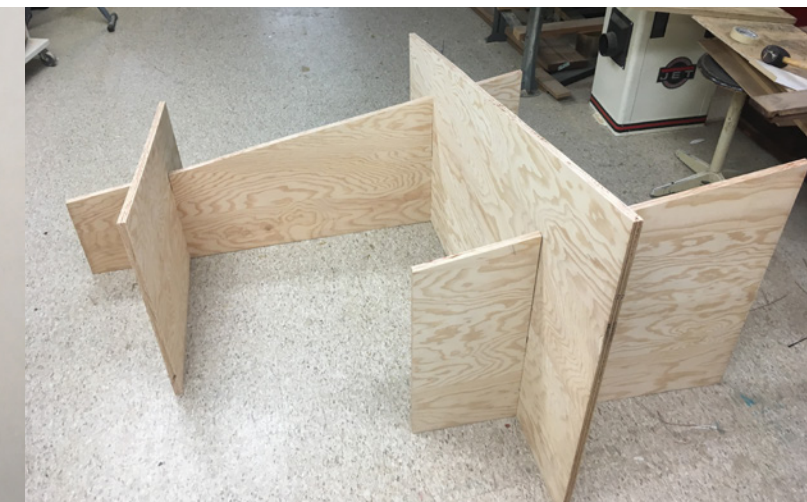
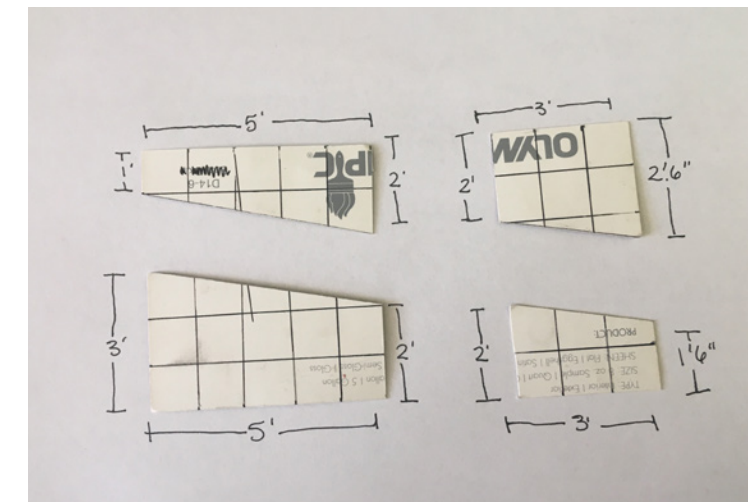


SMALL SCALE INSTALLATIONS

Brilliant Detroit Small Playscape

Designed for the young children ages 18 months to 3 years of age, this small playscape facilitates motor skills and playing games such as peak-a-boo. The four panels can be reconfigured and rearranged for both indoor and outdoor play and (in collaboration with a local artist) will be painted with colorful characters.

Partners: Brilliant Detroit, Artist: Carl Oxley 3 a.k.a POPARTMONKEY



Woodbridge Community Bulletin Boards

Woodbridge Neighborhood Development Corporation is working to create more ways for neighbors to communicate and share information. DCDC fabricated three bulletin boards for the community, featuring space for public posting, as well as art by local students and professional artists.

Partners: Woodbridge Neighborhood Development Corporation

TEACHING

Co-op Program

Every semester DCDC hires two-to-four School of Architecture students who have a co-op work experience as part of their degree. Student designers work alongside DCDC staff learning about community-engaged design by doing. We consider this part of our teaching commitment within the school and for the next generation of community-engaged designers.

Public Interest Design Studios

DCDC staff teaches Public Interest Design (PID) architecture studios in the School of Architecture curriculum every year, focusing on a Detroit project with community and collaborative implications. This year's studios are included below:

- Fostering Intergenerational Community, Toni Henry + Erin Porter Winter Studio 2019
- Public Re-Purpose, Ceara O'Leary, Fall Studio 2019



Photo credit: The Detroit News

Master of Community Development Program

DCDC staff also teach and speak in the Master of Community Development Program. This year multiple staff guest lectured in MCD courses and taught the following courses:

- Introduction to Physical Development, Summer 2019
- History, Theory and Practice of Community Engagement, Summer 2019
- Master of Community Development Workshop Series, Winter, Summer, Fall 2019

Faculty Collaboration

DCDC currently collaborates with faculty practice from time to time on projects throughout the city. We are looking to grow this practice further and develop a model for ongoing collaboration that benefits the DCDC, faculty, students and community partners.

High School Interns

This past summer DCDC hosted a high school student interested in design and staff are occasionally shadowed by students interested in our work. In 2020, DCDC will grow this experience and formalize a high school internship program in an effort to mentor Detroit high schoolers interested in design and provide aspiring designers their first job in the field.



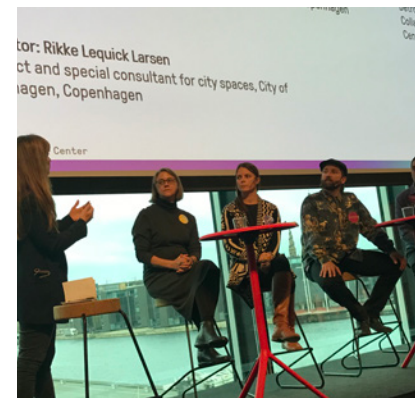
Student work by Kiyone Tuazon & Tatyana Mourad

24

KNOWLEDGE SHARING



Photo credit: Jess Zimbabwe



Presentations at Conferences

- ACSA 107th Annual Meeting: "Avis + Elsmere: Time as a Design Tool for Community" & Panel Discussion on Teaching Community Engagement, Pittsburgh, PA, March 2019
- Legacy Cities Community of Practice Convening 2; "Innovations in Community Engagement," Akron, OH, March 2019
- Association for Community Design 42nd Annual Conference: People+ in Greenwood, MS, June 2019, "Diversifying the Professional Development Pipeline," "People of Color Birthing New Design Genres," "The Detroit Collaborative Design Center: Engaging Youth for Equitable Outcomes" + "Evaluating Engagement"
- Community Development Symposium: "Cultural Asset Mapping in International Programs: Cuba and Brazil," Detroit, MI, May 2019
- National Organization of Minority Architects Annual Conference: Believe the Hype in Brooklyn, NY August 2019, "Loving Strangers through the Built Environment," "Engaging Youth for Equitable Outcomes"
- ACSA Fall Conference: "Co-Creation: Collaborative Design Practice as Pedagogy," Stanford, CA, September 2019
- Better World by Design, "Meeting People Where They Are At: Community Engagement that Interrupts Daily Rhythms," Providence, RI, September 2019
- Detroit Sustainability Forum, "Treehouses and Learning Landscapes," Detroit, MI, October 2019
- Bioneers, "Collaborating with Youth for Future Generations," Detroit, MI, October 2019
- Symposium: Commons and Communities, panel discussion on "How do we practice for sharing, collaboration, empowerment and engagement in communities," Copenhagen, November 2019
- American Society of Landscape Architects National Conference: "Achieving Diversity, Inclusion and Equity: Black Landscape Architects Panel Discussion," San Diego, CA, November 2019

Conference Planning

- Bioneers, Program Planning Committee, October 2019
- Community Development Education Symposium, Co-Lead Organizer, May 2019

Participation in Conferences:

- Detroit Food Summit, March 2019

- AIA National Conference, Las Vegas, NV, May 2019
- Knight Public Spaces Forum, Philadelphia, PA, June 2019
- Ecodistrict Summit, Pittsburgh, PA, November 2019
- Civic Commons Capstone, Washington DC, December 2019

Presentations to Visiting Groups and Students:

- University of Michigan, international researchers for a food-water-energy workshop, SUGI FEW program, July 2019
- Saginaw Basin Land Conservancy, November 2019
- Masters of Community Development Program, University of Detroit Mercy: Cultural Asset Mapping in Brazil, Detroit, MI, April 2019
- Presentation to Challenge Detroit Fellows, "Community Engagement Best Practices," Detroit, MI, September 2019
- Denmark + US Travel + Talk, September 2019
- Presentation to University of Detroit Mercy School of Architecture Students, "Lunch and Learn with DCDC," Detroit, MI, November 2019

Boards and Committees:

- 2019 Chair, AIA Housing Knowledge Community Advisory Group
- Wayne State University Transformative Research in Urban Sustainability and Training Advisory Board
- USDA Higher Education Challenge Grant, "Building Capacity and Diffusing Innovation in Community Development Education," Co-Principle Investigator
- Association for Community Design, Board Member
- Bleeding Heart Design, Board Secretary
- Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision, Board President
- American Institute of Architecture Committee on the Environment, Co-Chair and Fundraising Lead
- Restor'n E. Warren, Resident Participant
- Dunamis Community Development Corporation, Board Member
- Black Landscape Architects Network Advisory Committee
- Denby Neighborhood Alliance Advisory Committee
- University of Detroit Mercy School of Architecture Thesis Advisor

26

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Papers/Publications:

- 2019 ACSA/AIA Intersections Symposium: "Time as a Design Tool for Community," Co-authored with Tadd Heidgerken
- ACSA Fall Conference: "Co-Creation: Collaborative Design Practice as Pedagogy," Co-authored with Ann Yaochim
- "Shifting to an Equitable Development Framework" chapter in *Teaching and Designing in Detroit Ten Women on Pedagogy and Practice* edited by Stephen Vogel and Libby Balter Blume

Exhibits

- Detroit Design 139 Inclusive Futures
- American Institute of Architects Detroit (AIA) Celebration of Architecture, Office Showcase
- AIA Detroit Future Focus 2019 Emerging Designer Exhibition

Awards

- 2019 AIA/HUD Secretary's Award Community-Informed Design Award, Avis and Elsmere
- 2019 AIA Detroit Architectural Honor Awards Small Project, Avis and Elsmere

THANK YOU!

Community Partners

Our work would not be possible without our amazing community partners, whom we work alongside to develop community engagement processes and design projects. We deeply value our ongoing relationships and the trust partners bring to the process.

Funding Partners

We are also thankful for a funding community that supports our work and that of our community partners. We consider our funding partners as thought partners and allies in this work.

Stephen Vogel, FAIA

DCDC would not exist without the vision and determination of our founder, former Dean Steve Vogel, FAIA.

Dan Pitera, FAIA

We are particularly blessed by the leadership of Dan Pitera over the last twenty years. He made an indelible mark on DCDC, crafted our role in the city, and championed the relationships we hold dear.





Detroit Collaborative Design Center

University of Detroit Mercy
School of Architecture

Facebook [**@DCDC.UDM**](#)

Instagram [**@dcdc_udm**](#)

Cover photo by Harry Connolly