



MOSCOW CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND VISITOR CENTER

RENOVATION AND ADDITION



IDAHO DESIGN BUILD STUDIO - UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO



The Moscow Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center, located in the heart of the city's historic downtown, plays a vital role in bringing commerce and community together. Unfortunately, the organization's existing building was not effectively facilitating this role. Instead it was a mishmash of past uses, dating back to the 1920s, ranging from a utility company, to private offices, to a bank. [Redacted] partnered with the Chamber to renovate the 3,150sf building. The renovated facility better aligns visitor and staff experience with the organization's core mission.

As the city's Visitor Center, the Chamber building has a role that transcends its primary use as office space; it sets the tone for the experience of Moscow through glimpses into the city's unique identity. Each aspect of the design was viewed as an opportunity to connect building to place. This was accomplished by mapping material histories, phenomenological qualities, and cultural iconography onto specific project needs.

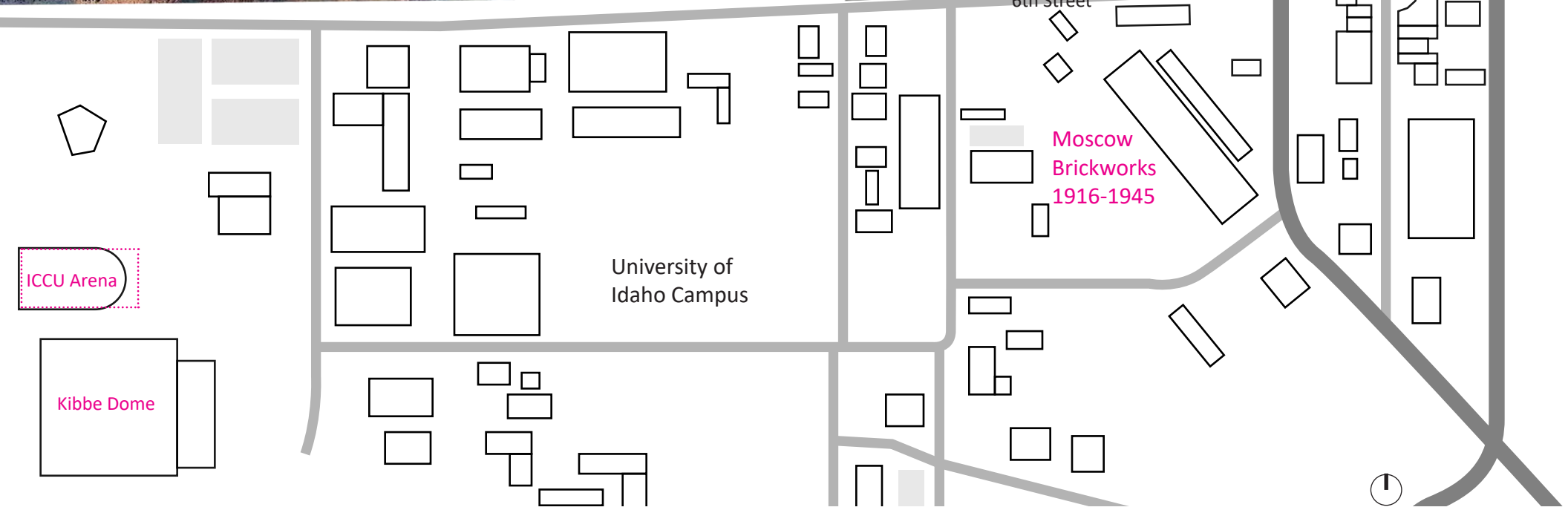
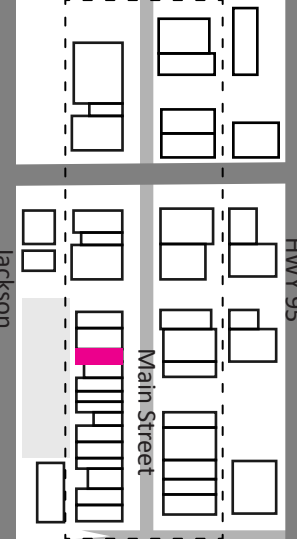
This ambitious approach combined with a very limited budget (\$14.60/sf) necessitated concurrent applied research into circular and vernacular construction strategies. Students investigated the incorporation of multiple streams of waste material from sources of local cultural significance. The design focused on surgical interventions during the demolition process; moving and reusing existing building elements. The project also recalls Moscow's well-regarded history of brick making through the development of a mortar-less compressed earth block partition wall system that challenges conventional office wall assemblies.

Through research, collaborative discussions, experimentation, prototyping, and construction students were able to provide a flexible and adaptable home for the Chamber. Integrating project responsive applied research and regenerative approaches resets the boundary for both students and the community of what architecture can be - both as a process and an outcome.

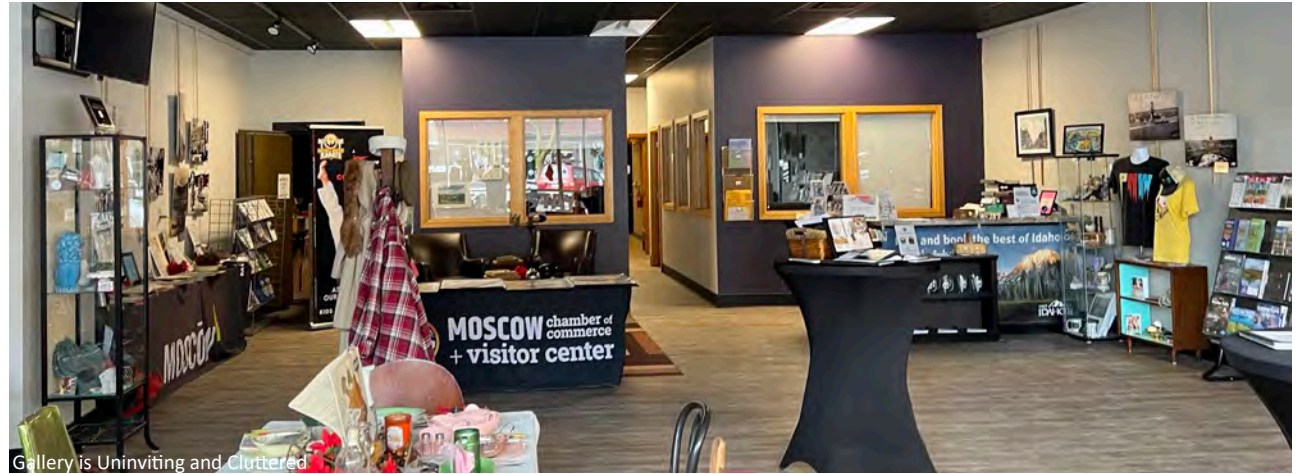
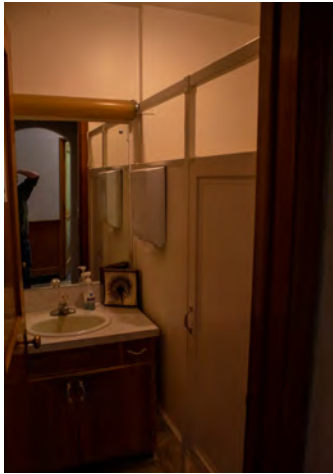
MOSCOW CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND VISITOR CENTER RENOVATION AND ADDITION



Downtown
Moscow
Historic
District



PROJECT LOCATION AND MATERIAL SOURCES - MOSCOW, IDAHO



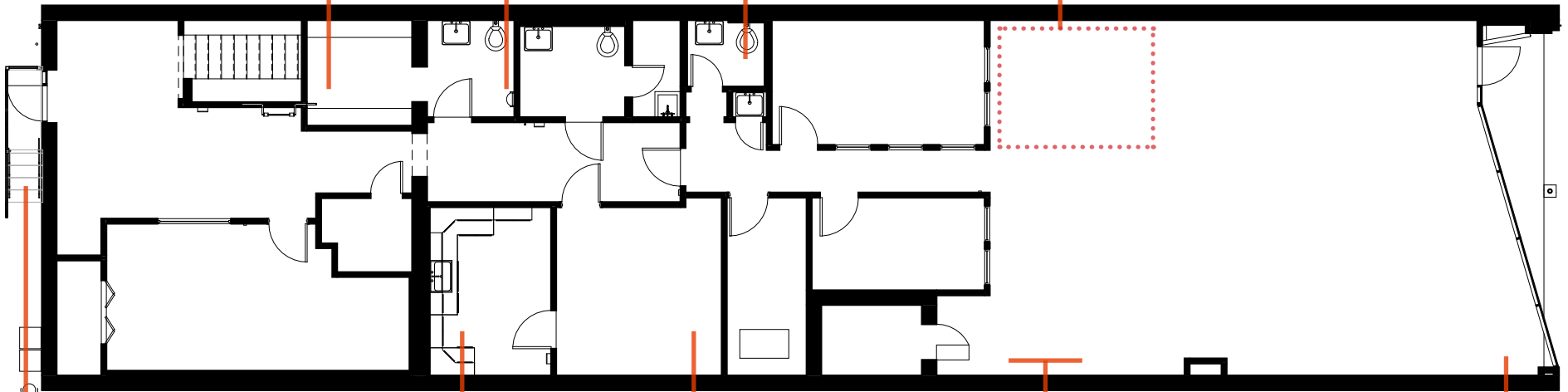
Gallery is Uninviting and Cluttered

Cluttered, foul smelling former locker room.

Non-Functioning, Unused Restroom

Non-Accessible, Outdated Restroom and Non-Functioning mop sink.

Disorganized reception and retail area Desk is outdated and uninviting.



Dangerous, unprotected stair.

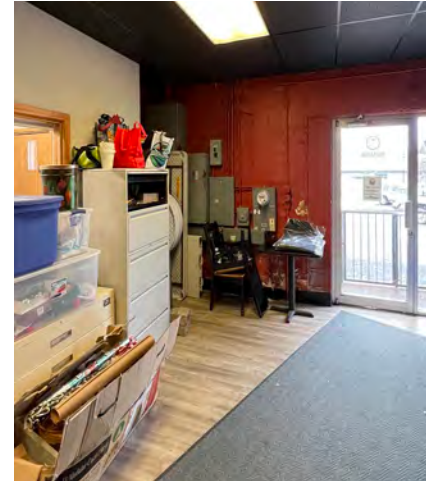
Non-Accessible Kitchen from Previous Use. Inconvenient location, too big.

Conference Room cannot fit all of the Chamber Members, Underutilized by public.

Community and Chamber member information relegated to unprofessional display on folding tables

Unorganized, Non-Cohesive Display for Retail

INHERITED CONDITIONS

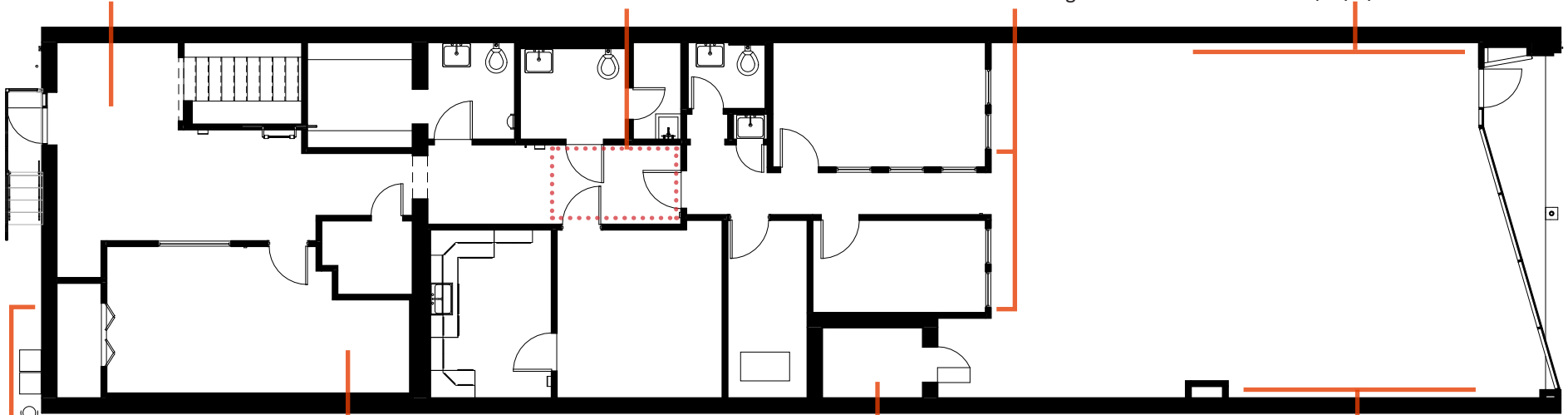


Entry space not serving any purpose.

Congestion point in hallway due to outward opening door cluster.

Front offices are exposed due to windows along the front. Blinds are broken and uninviting.

Non-functioning and unprofessional art display system.



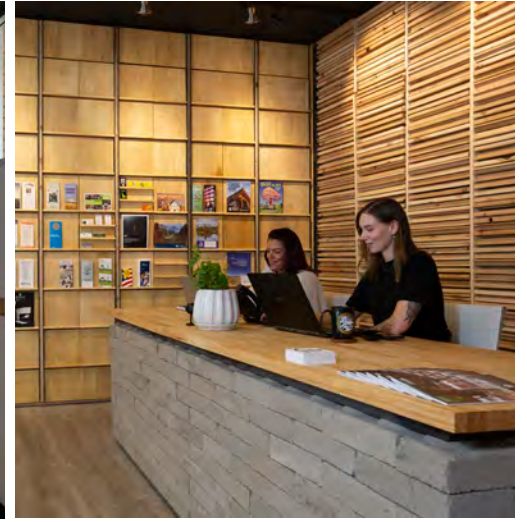
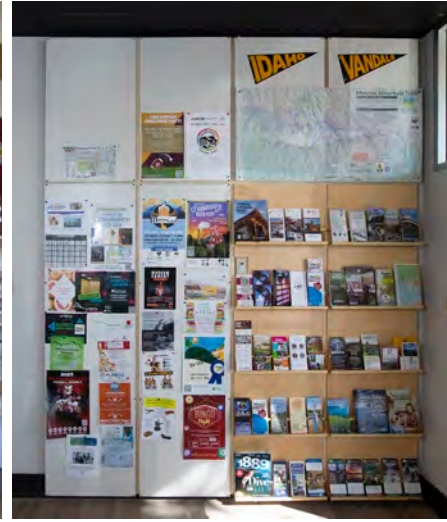
Outdated branding on cracked, flaking wall.

Office too large for one person. Does not allow for flexibility.

Insufficient storage, becomes disorganized.

Non-functioning and unprofessional art display system.

INHERITED CONDITIONS



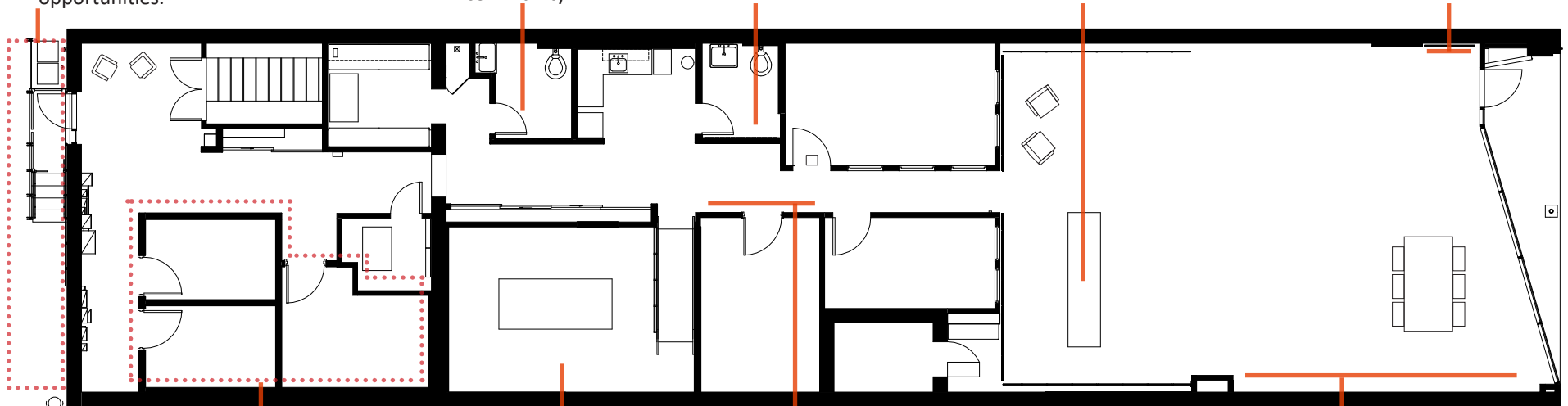
New covered entry and facade provide a direct connection to place and increase branding opportunities.

ADA accessible restroom featuring art installation that highlights the local community.

Expanded restroom highlighting material reuse to create a cost-effective, bespoke sink.

Flexible reception and event station, provides an immediate connection to place.

Primary information display, connects to the community.



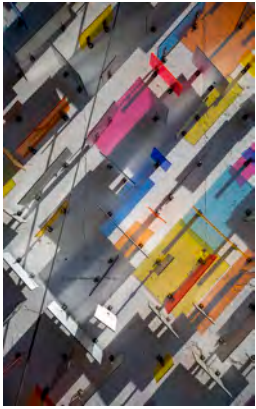
Reconfigurable offices provides flexibility to users.

Accessible conference room with movable tables provides adaptability to users.

Material histories were uncovered. Providing a positive connection to past uses.

Art display has a low profile, allows for more focus on the artworks.

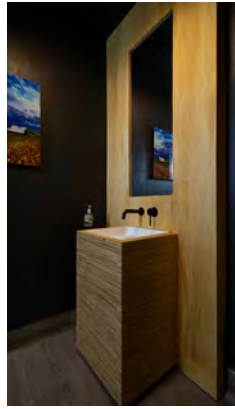
DESIGNING FOR THE FUTURE



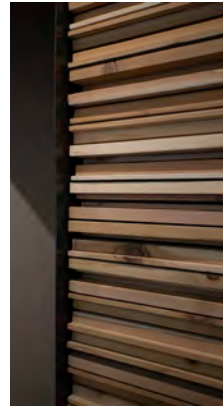
Art In Place



Art In Place



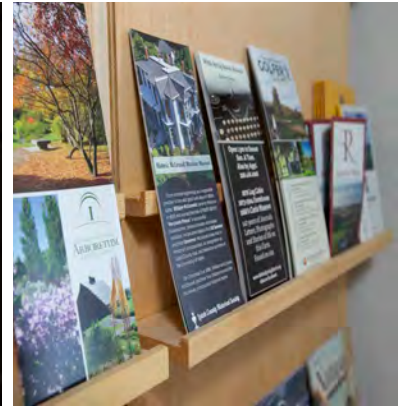
Designing with Scrap



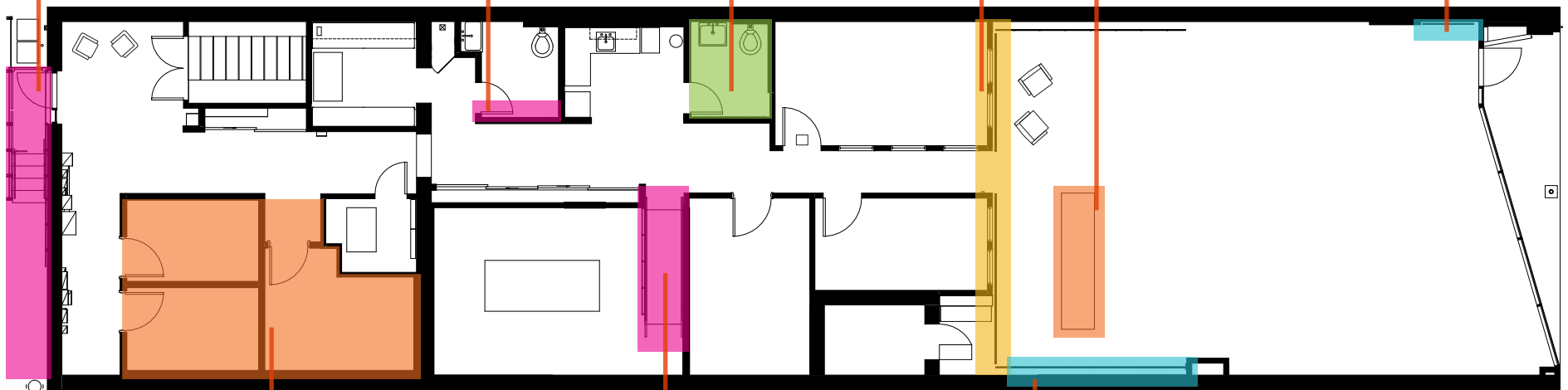
Repurposing Leftovers



Regenerative Building Practices



Adaptability/Flexibility



Regenerative Building Practices



Art In Place



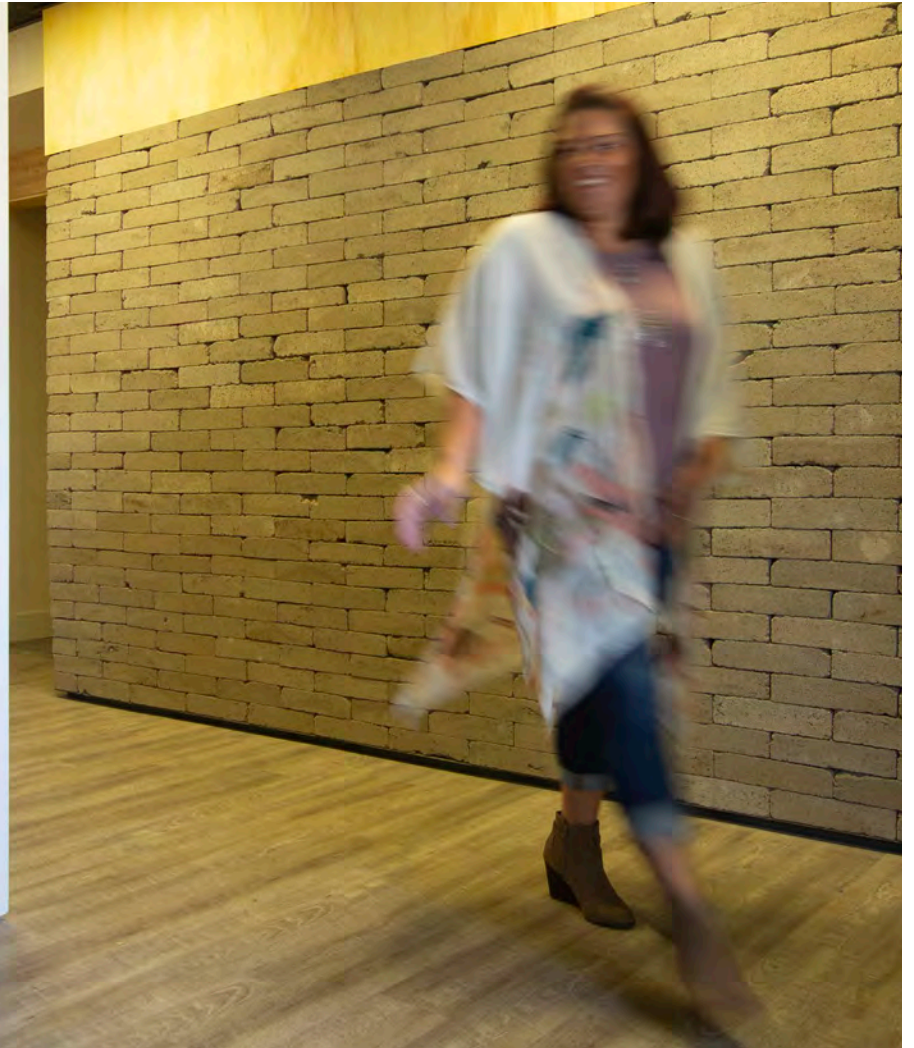
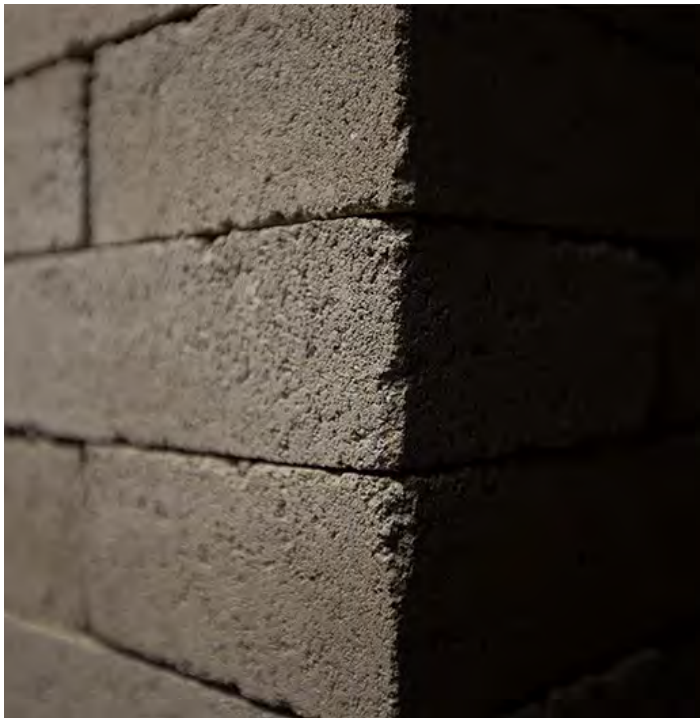
Adaptability/Flexibility



INTEGRATED MEANING AND APPLIED RESEARCH

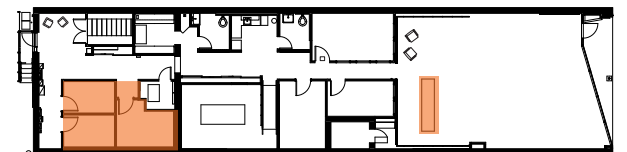


In studying local building practices and the challenges associated with renovations, students realized a need to create a reconfigurable, low embodied energy alternative to standard stud wall assemblies. So, students researched and developed a mortar-less compressed earth block wall system, built a pressing machine, and created a mix using local, tested soil. The resulting solution allows for easy reconfiguration of an office space that has been renovated multiple times already.



DIGGING INTO MOSCOW'S IDENTITY

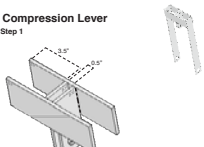
REGENERATIVE BUILDING PRACTICES



Design CEB Machine

Component B - Compression Lever

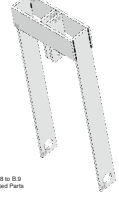
Compression Lever - Step 1
 Part Number: B.10.02
 B.10.02



Assembly Notes

Step 1: Tack Then Line Weld Indicated Parts

Part Number: B.10.02
 B.10.02



Assembly Notes

Step 1: Tack Weld Interior B.8 to B.9

Step 2: Line Weld the Indicated Parts

Part Number: B.8.02
 B.8.02

Component Assembly

Base to Pressure Plate to Compression Lever

Part Number: B.11.01
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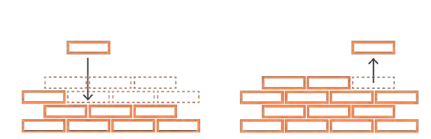
Source and Mix Local Soil



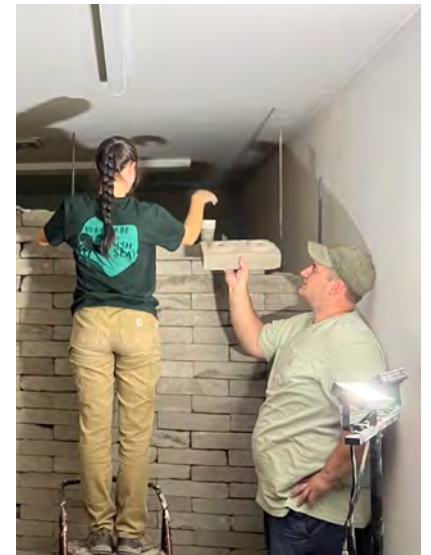
Compress and Cure Blocks



Wall Assembly

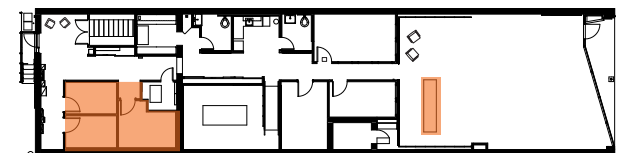


Easy Assembly and Disassembly
 Creates Opportunities for Reconfigurability



DIGGING INTO MOSCOW'S IDENTITY

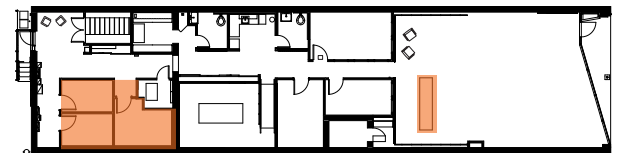
REGENERATIVE BUILDING PRACTICES





DIGGING INTO MOSCOW'S IDENTITY

REGENERATIVE BUILDING PRACTICES





Material Source - ICCU Arena Tongue and Groove Offcuts



Cataloguing and organizing for Re-use

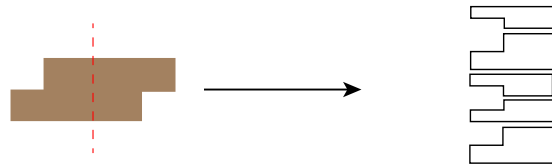


The existing gallery and reception space had several things going against it. Upon entry visitors were confronted with windows looking into private offices. Students created a screen wall that provides a more welcoming entry experience while maintaining staff privacy.

The modular panel wall was created from salvaged offcut material from the new ICCU Arena. The remilling, assembly, and non-disruptive installation strategy allowed students to remove a major roadblock to a functional space without adding significant cost to the project.



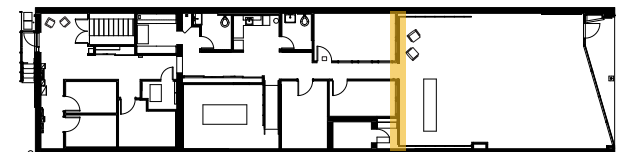
Remilling and Sanding Material

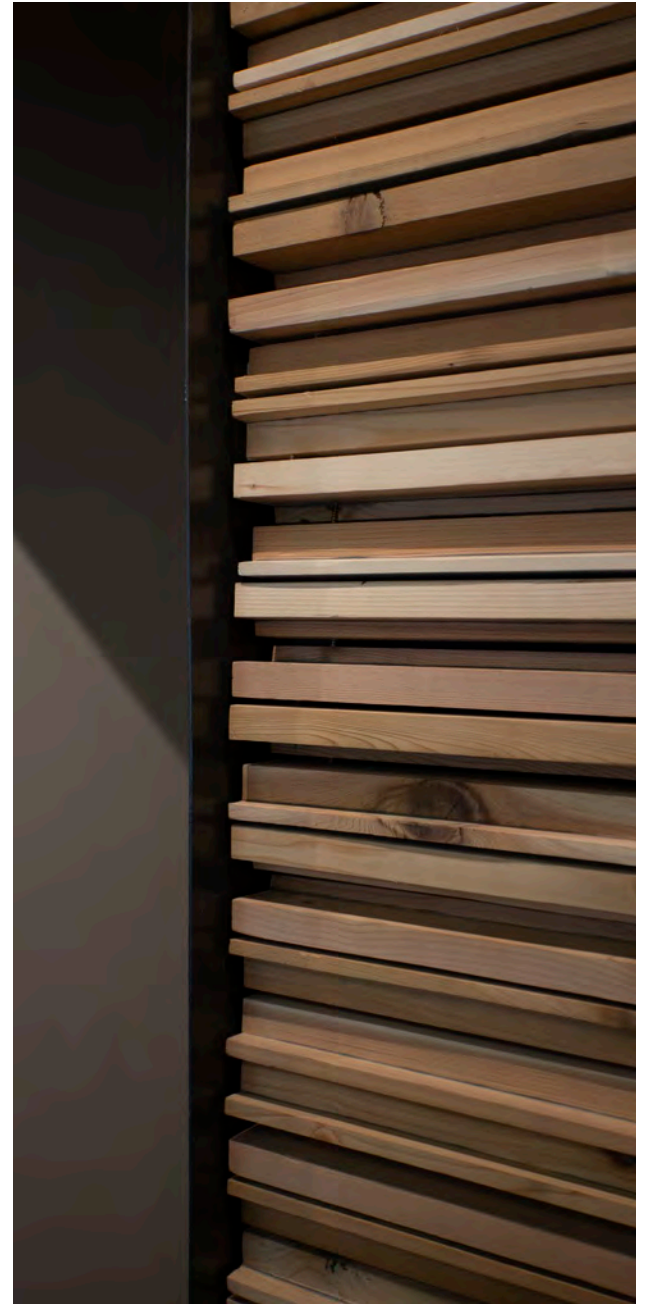


Assembly - 860 Slats, 14 Panels



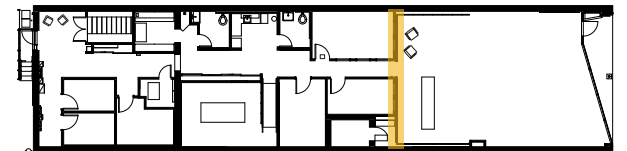
SPRUCING UP CEDAR OFFCUTS REPURPOSING LEFTOVERS

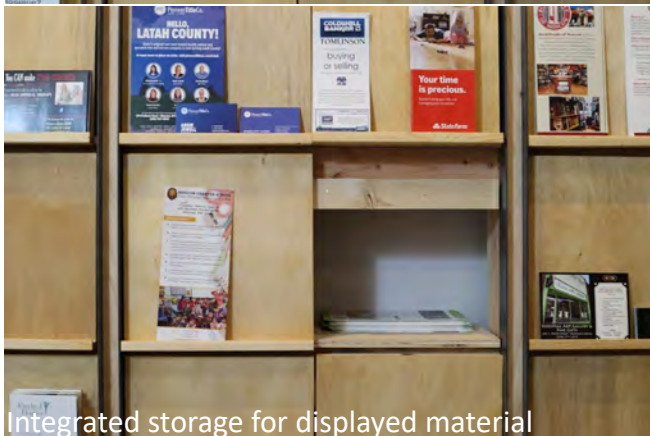




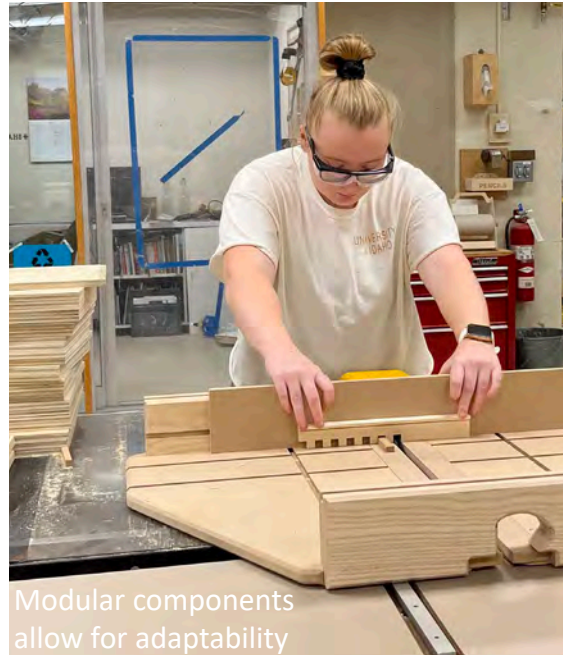
SPRUCING UP CEDAR OFFCUTS

REPURPOSING LEFTOVERS





Integrated storage for displayed material



Modular components allow for adaptability



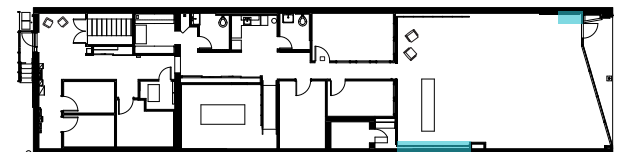
Rearranged existing walls



Reconfigurable conference and meeting space

MAKING ROOM FOR CHANGE

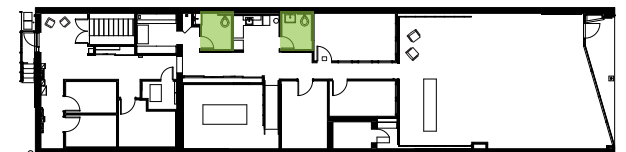
ADAPTABILITY/FLEXIBILITY





The reintegration of project waste material was seen as an opportunity to create unique, cost effective solutions that feel personalized. Plywood and steel offcuts were given new purpose in the creation of bespoke bathroom elements that highlight the ideals of a forward thinking organization and the community it serves.

STARTING WITH REUSE IN MIND
DESIGNING WITH AND FROM SCRAP





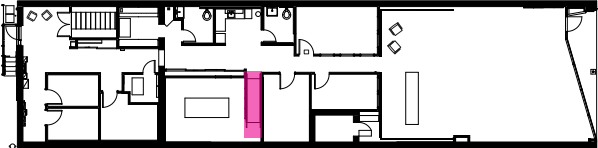
As students looked to the particulars of place for design inspiration, opportunities to integrate context specific art and experience emerged. The ramped entry to the conference room demonstrates this approach. Here, a privacy screen does double duty as an abstraction of the agricultural patterns and topography in the surrounding region. The design lets light into the space while reconnecting the interior of the chamber building with the Palouse.

A student prepares a custom artwork that emulates patterns from the Palouse



CONNECTING TO COMMUNITY

ART IN PLACE

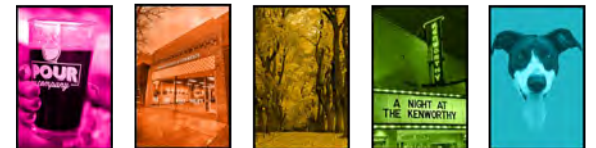




To reinforce the notion of the visitors center as a public amenity, students created a photo wall for the space that would highlight the people, places, landmarks, and events that make up the Chamber and community. The public submitted hundreds of images that were combined to create a community collage that lets Moscow to see itself literally and figuratively as part of the building's story.

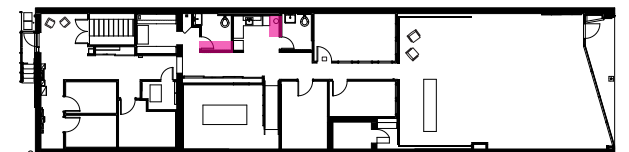


MOSCOW chamber of commerce
+ visitor center

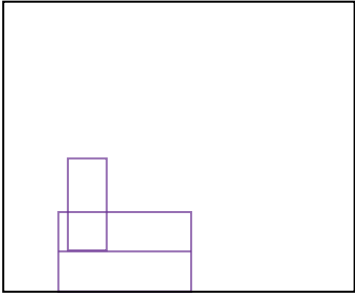


CONNECTING TO COMMUNITY

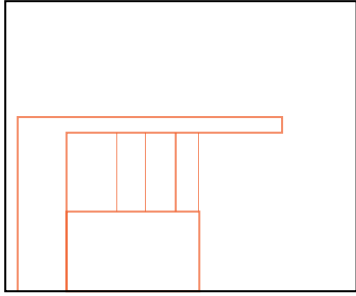
ART IN PLACE



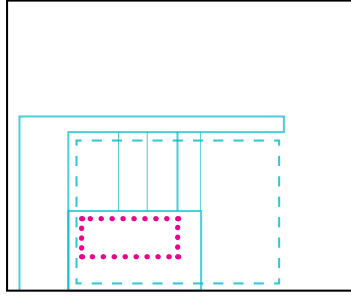
Existing Entry



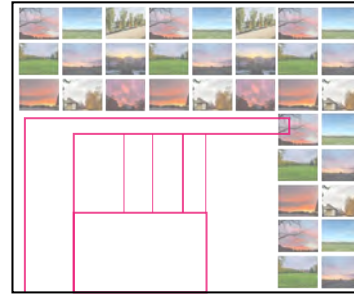
Covered Entry Provides Protection



Branding and Messaging



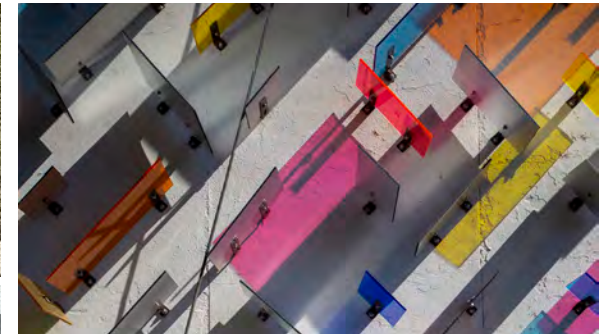
Reflecting Place



Changing with the Lights



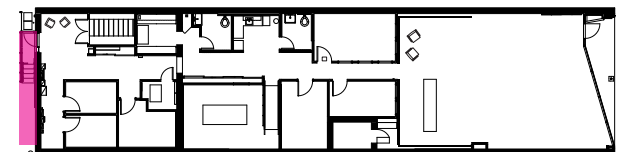
As much a work of art as it is a commercial facade - A student installs panels

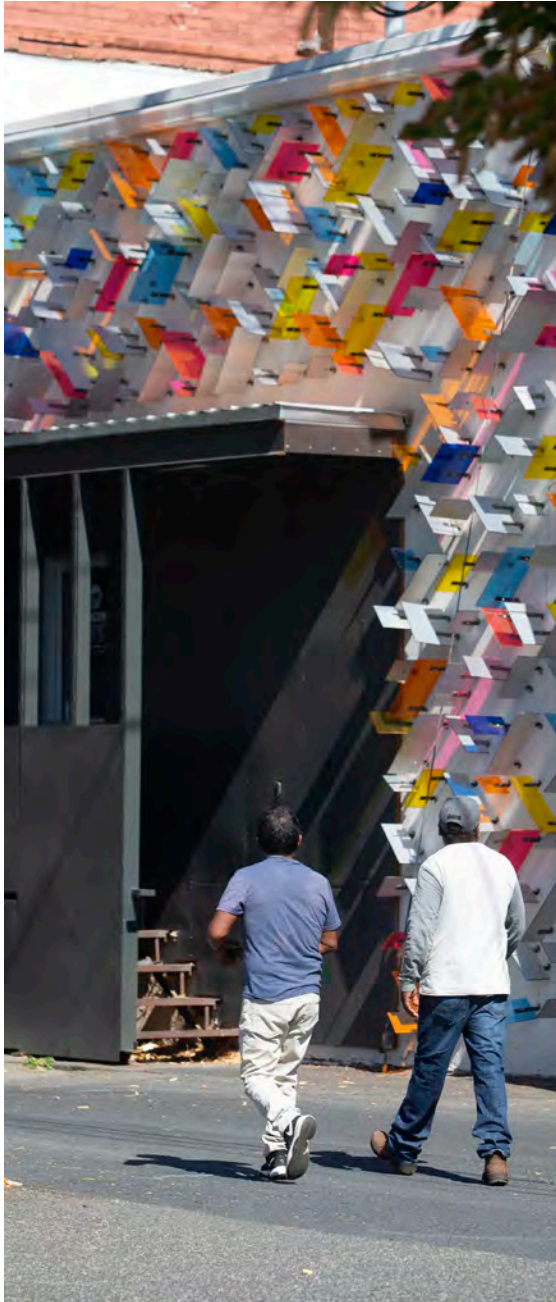


The West building facade highlights phenomenological qualities of place. The new covered entry provides all-season protection and better announces the entry. An art facade adds to a growing collection of murals that activate the alley-way. Hundreds of translucent panels create a constantly evolving experience as they capture and reflect daylight; emulating the vibrant colors of Moscow and the Palouse.

CONNECTING TO COMMUNITY

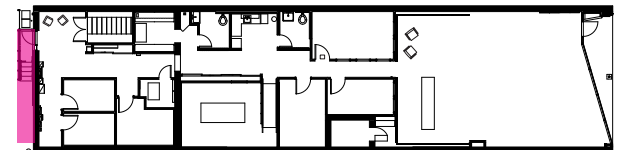
ART IN PLACE

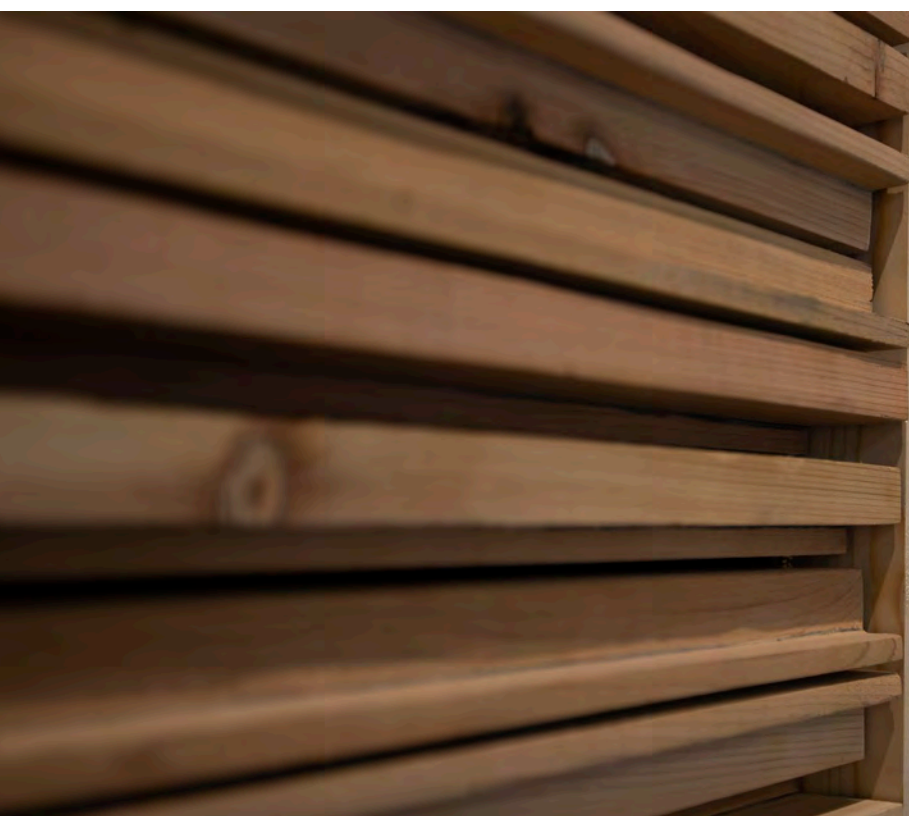
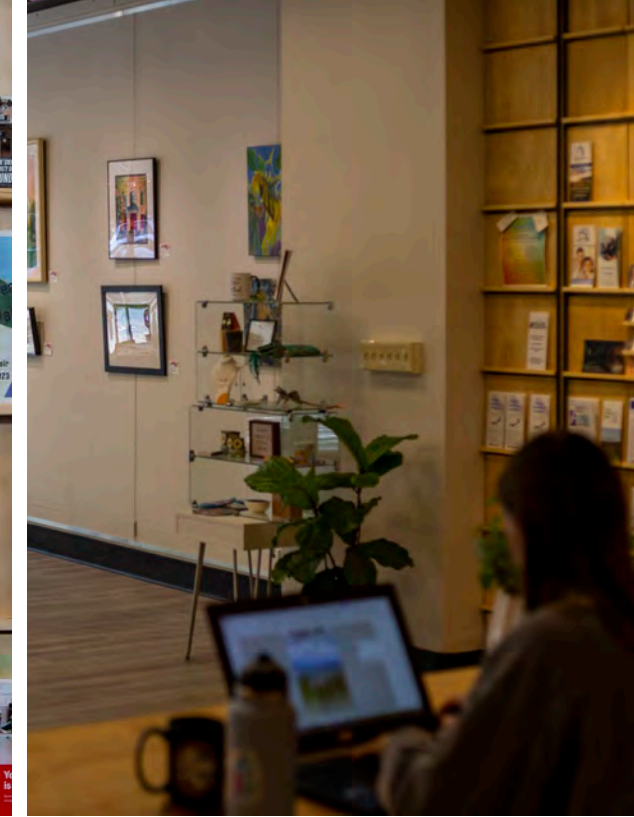




CONNECTING TO COMMUNITY

ART IN PLACE







Participants:

- 1 Professor
- 16 students for credit - 6 credit studio, 3 credit Summer
- 1 paid Teaching Assistant - 300 hours
- 1 for credit Teaching Assistant - 3 credits

- Electrician - paid for conduit, wiring, receptacles and switches
- Plumber - paid for new supply at sinks

Start of Project and Associated Research: January 2023
Project Completion: July 2023

Students: Ezrie Anderson, David Asokeji, Carson Conery, Asia Davis, Bethany Frey, Litzzy Gomez, John Gross, Karl Hunt, Chloe Macon, Anneke Mulder, Syringa Riley, Garrett Schwalber, Kelsey Starman, Madeline Smith, Taylor Watson, Matt Weigand.
TAs: Brittney Ellenbecker, Riley Leighton

COLLABORATION AND CREDITS