

Social Tension

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ABSTRACT

Social Tension

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Homelessness is a prolonged crisis in Seattle. The number of individuals unhoused on the streets has continued to rise despite strong efforts by city leaders and members of the public. When resources are limited all attempts to address homelessness are forced to prioritize between addressing long-term structural issues of housing affordability and the humanitarian disaster on the streets of the city. Homelessness is a compound problem with multiple causes and no single solution. Inherently rooted in modes of perception and cultural concepts of poverty, the way the city experiences and understands poverty can be a crisis in itself. This thesis proposes a concept for emergency housing that can address social issues and physical need, both for the immediate crisis and the underlying systemic problems. To do so it observes the existing transitional encampment system in Seattle and develops a structure that corresponds to the encampment system's operational mode, social environment, and physical context.



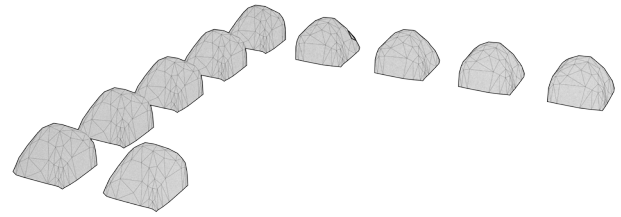


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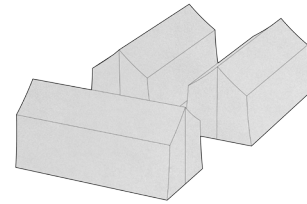
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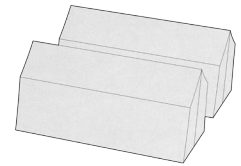


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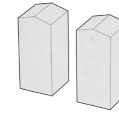
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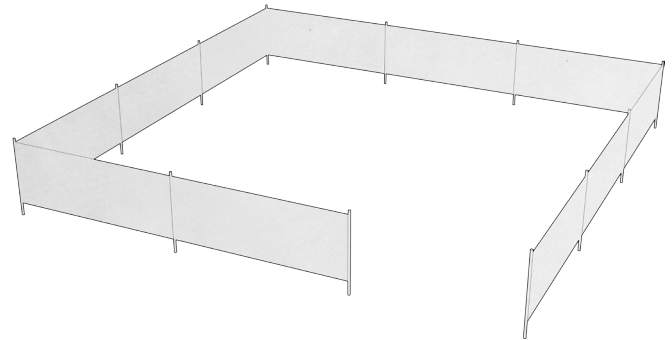


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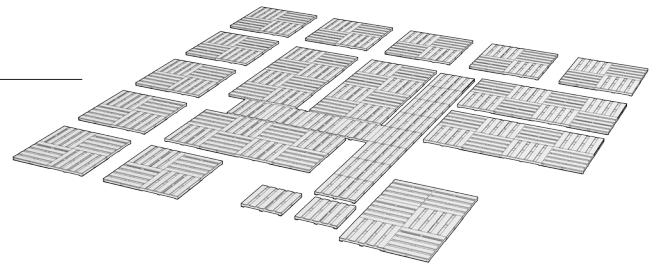
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FENCE



PALLET FOUNDATIONS



## FOREWORD: projections

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Urban poverty has existed for as long as cities but it remains an urgent concern for municipalities today. The goal of this thesis is to address a diverse issue with a specific intervention that is suited to the cultural and physical context of homelessness in Seattle.

This is a project with political as well as architectural considerations. Observations and opinions about the homeless are frequently used as evidence in arguments for diverse philosophies, from social Darwinism to socialism. This project engages different concepts of poverty but does not attempt to advance a specific political philosophy or party.

One significant aspect of contemporary urban homelessness is the visibility as the homeless conduct their lives in public space. Despite this visibility they have a limited role in debates about the issues of homelessness. This means political and economic marginalization, and the homeless are frequently excluded from decisions of great importance to them. Many projects conducted on behalf of the homeless are compromised because they fail to appreciate the perspective and experience of the homeless community. Any built project needs to include the homeless community as stakeholders at any possible stage. This thesis project seeks to strike a balance in its relationship to the community as a theoretical and academic project. Throughout this process it was often suggested by reviewers that the members of the Tent City community be involved as designers and advisors. After several conversations with members of the Tent Cities it became clear that they, as a community and as individuals, are occupied with their own pressing needs and interests while life as an organized community places demands on individual schedules. Although the members of the Tent City community are very generous with their time they do so with an awareness of their need to be politically engaged, and to shape their presence in the larger community. To involve one or several residents of the community in a theoretical project would suggest their endorsement and could be a potential risk and liability for the community as a whole. The ideas contained in this thesis are those of its author, drawing on observations of the Seattle Tent Cities, and do not represent the plans or goals of the Tent City community or its associated groups.

Deep gratitude is due to the communities at SHARE/WHEEL and Tent City 3 for generosity with their time and energy. Thanks especially to Lance and Rodge for sharing their experience and perspective. Gratitude also is due to Jenny at Greater Seattle Cares, who was kind to answer many questions.

My advisors, Peter Cohan and Tyler Sprague, I cannot thank enough. Completing this project has been a challenge, and without their exceptional patience, steady advice, encouragement and forgiveness I would not have been able to complete it.



# STATEMENT: social tension

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## PROBLEM

Homelessness in Seattle has grown to the proportions of a humanitarian disaster. This growth has continued despite dedicated efforts from the city to provide new housing and services for its unhoused population. On January 28, 2016 the One Night Count recorded a 19% increase in the number of people spending the night outside to 4,505. This level of mass homeless is unprecedented in Seattle's history, and Seattle leads the nation in homelessness per capita.

As Seattle seeks to address this crisis it requires both short-term and long-term solutions, to address both the immediate disaster of a large, unhoused population and the structural deficiencies of its housing supply. The city is simultaneously pursuing multiple strategies to address this challenge. One of the city's current strategies is the permitting of additional tent city encampments.

## THESIS

The tent city is a system of community organization, social outreach and mobile architecture that fosters a unique environment of collaboration and independence for its residents. For the homeless community these tent cities have many advantages as compared to other services and institutions. As individuals the social benefits of living in the tent city community are significant, but the physical conditions the tent cities are not fundamentally different from life on the streets: when it rains a tent in the encampment is still just a tent, and it is difficult to maintain a healthy environment. This physical environment limits their effectiveness and makes them unsuitable for some members of the homeless population. A new form of emergency shelter could combine the organization of the Tent City with a structure that is better suited to it.

## PROJECT

This thesis will develop a structure that accommodates the tent city communities in a healthier environment, one that provides greater opportunity for outreach and integration with the larger city. As a response to the present crisis it will consider the specific context of Seattle, physically, socially and economically.

## METHOD

The tent city is both a political and physical system: this thesis will ground its architectural concepts in social theories and organizational systems. The proposed design that develops will be specific to Seattle's political, economic and meteorological climates and is not intended as a general proposal or ideal community. By reconsidering the city's approach to encampments and the forms they take, this project envisions an approach to homelessness that relay material solutions into social change.



## FOOD WATER SHELTER: roots

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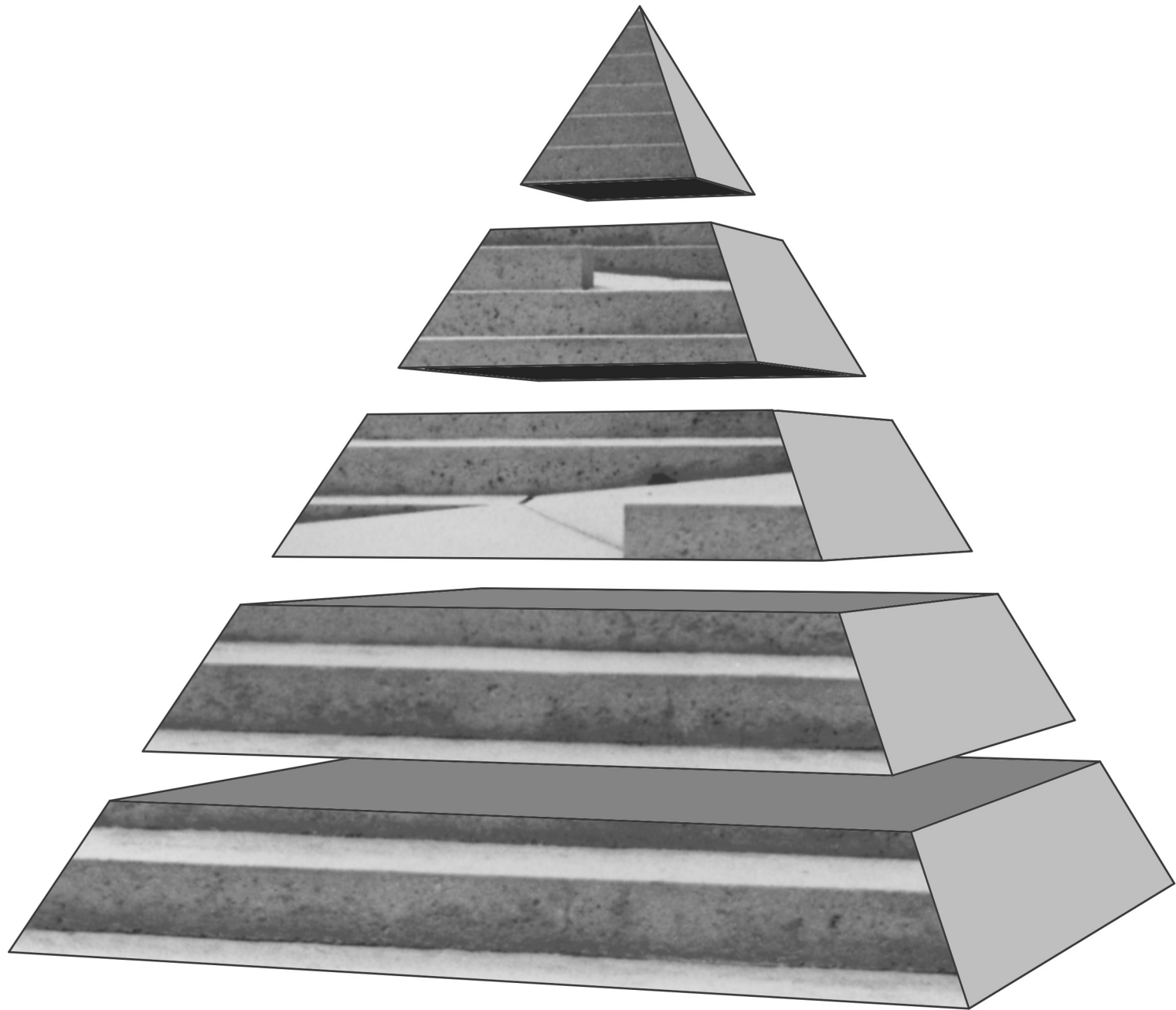
At a basic and literal level, the word “homeless” refers to the absence of a home rather than the absence of shelter. So defined, the central issue in homelessness is not the physical survival of the body, but securing the individual’s place in the world.

Shelter is a simple physical requirement for survival, the most basic kind of necessity. In 1943 Abraham Maslow published “A Theory of Human Motivation”, a prominent publication of modern psychology that remains influential in some fields today, including homeless services and poverty studies. Maslow’s theory proposed an order in which an individual will address different types of personal need: from physiological survival to personal safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. Although subsequent psychological and sociological studies have provided more nuanced understandings of individual needs, Maslow’s Hierarchy is an established concept that many are eager to define themselves against. The idea that an individual will rationally proceed from securing basic shelter to higher-order needs is a premise that has been enthusiastically challenged by theorist Virginia Postrel, among others.

*Human beings do not wait for aesthetics until they have full stomachs and a roof that doesn't leak (...) They do not pursue aesthetic needs 'only when basic needs have been satisfied.' (...) Poor people built the cathedrals of Europe and developed the sand paintings of Tibet. Poor people turned baskets and pottery into decorative art. Poor people invented paints and dyes, jewelry and cosmetics .... These artifacts do not reflect societies focused only on 'lower-order' needs.*

(As cited in Hosey, 2012, p.23)

Postrel extrapolates Maslow’s original concept to the scale of entire societies, and correctly observes that it does not fit. In doing so she suggests that a relationship exists between an individual’s understanding experience of need and a society’s relationship to poverty. A society, experiencing poverty possessing limited resources, makes decisions on a collective level and takes actions that can be rational and ordered, or aesthetically motivated activity related to poverty. Postrel imagines an aesthetic response at the level of society, in which cultural achievements representing high levels of self-actualization are accomplished despite apparent need. It is also possible that these declarations of identity, individually and culturally, are in themselves fulfilling fundamental needs.



## FOOD WATER SHELTER: primary

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p9: based on Le Corbusier, *The City of Tomorrow*

In *The City of Tomorrow*, Le Corbusier presents his version of the origins of architecture: the basic shelter created by an individual, acting on the environment.

*Primitive man has brought his chariot to a stop, he decides that here shall be his native soil. He chooses a glade, he cuts down the trees which are too close, he levels the earth around; he opens up the road which will carry him to the river or to those of the tribe whom he has just left; he drives in the stakes which are to steady his tent. He surrounds this tent with a palisade in which he arranges a doorway.*

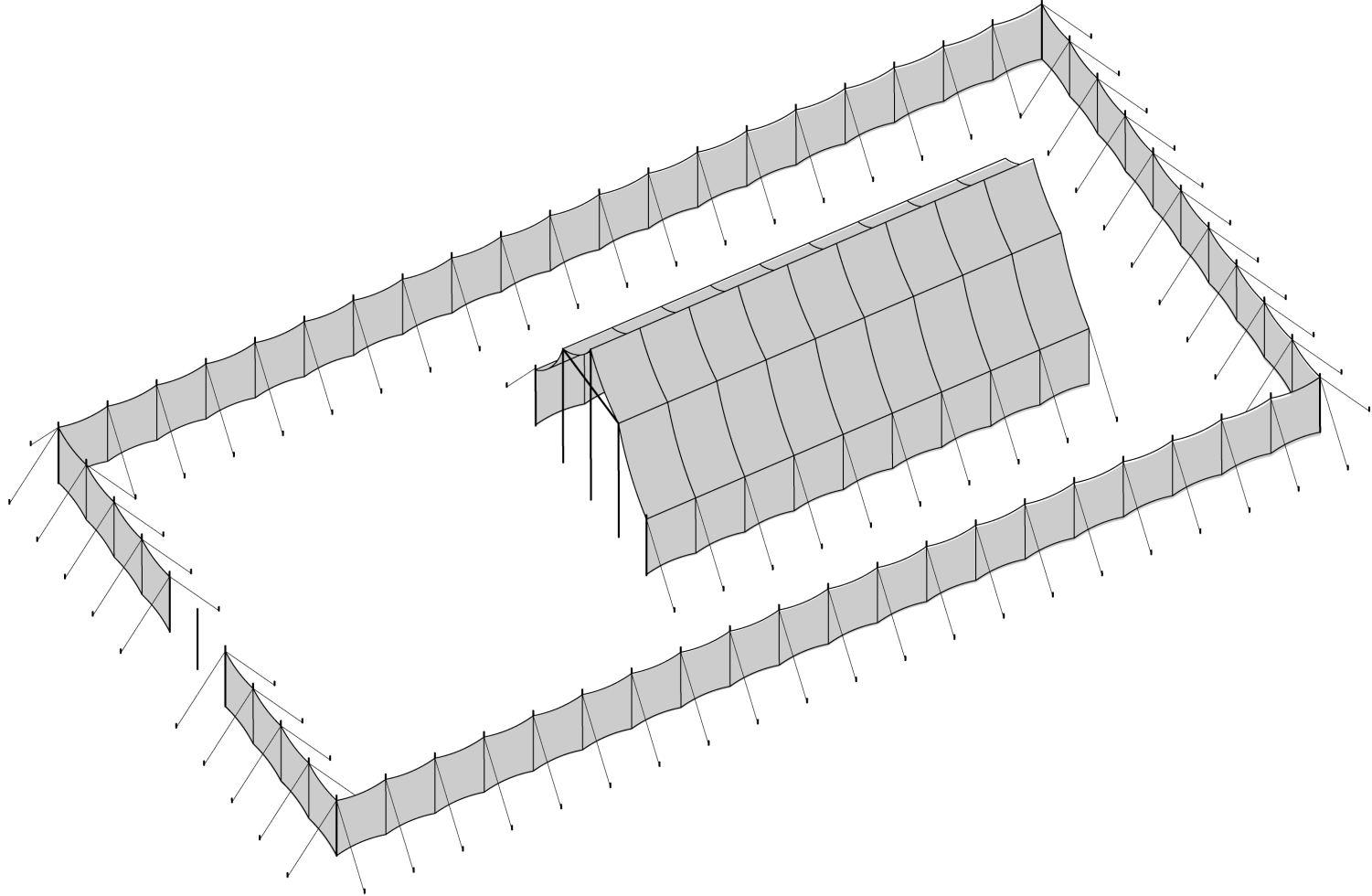
(68)

Corbusier's pioneer originally exists in the state of nature, but methodically transforms the glade into a zone of human habitation. The tent provides physical shelter from the elements while the palisade, next to be constructed, provides a different kind of shelter. Following Maslow's hierarchy, it would be clear that the palisade's function is to provide safety and protection. For Corbusier, the palisade is also a realization of the individual's nature. This is elaborated in a similar scene, published six years earlier in *Towards a New Architecture*:

*Placed in the midst of a chaotic nature, man for his own security creates and surrounds himself with a zone of protection in harmony with what he is and what he thinks ... Order is indispensable to him, otherwise his actions would be without coherence and could lead nowhere. All the works that man has achieved are an 'ordering.'*

(22)

Definition of one's place in the surrounding disorder is a fundamentally human act. Corbusier's ideal expression of rational, human order is like an image of the mind imposed on nature, and as such it is a product of the natural order itself. It's essential that this settlement is a product: fabricated rather than found, it physically represents the experience and knowledge of its maker. The governing principle of this original, ideal settlement is then extended to the cities and towns that might develop from it. Corbusier argues for the use of rigorous, rational geometries in the layout of human settlements. These are no longer the result of a specific individual's intentions, but the signifier of a rational group, an intelligent society, and possibly of a great culture.



## FOOD WATER SHELTER: order

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p.10: based on *Equality*, sculpture by Ken Leback and Rolon Bert Garner

Twenty years prior to Corbusier's writings, the rational nature of the city was considered differently by Georg Simmel. Where Corbusier sees the working of the city as the product of a rational mind, Simmel considered the effects of a rational environment on the individual psyche and his conclusions are more ambivalent. He does not view the metropolis as an optimized mechanical system or an complete human environment, but a strange hybrid. His essay, "The Metropolis and Mental Life", predated the *Social Shaping of Technology and Sociotechnics*, but still considered the basic elements of those later disciplines with an honest and clear vision.

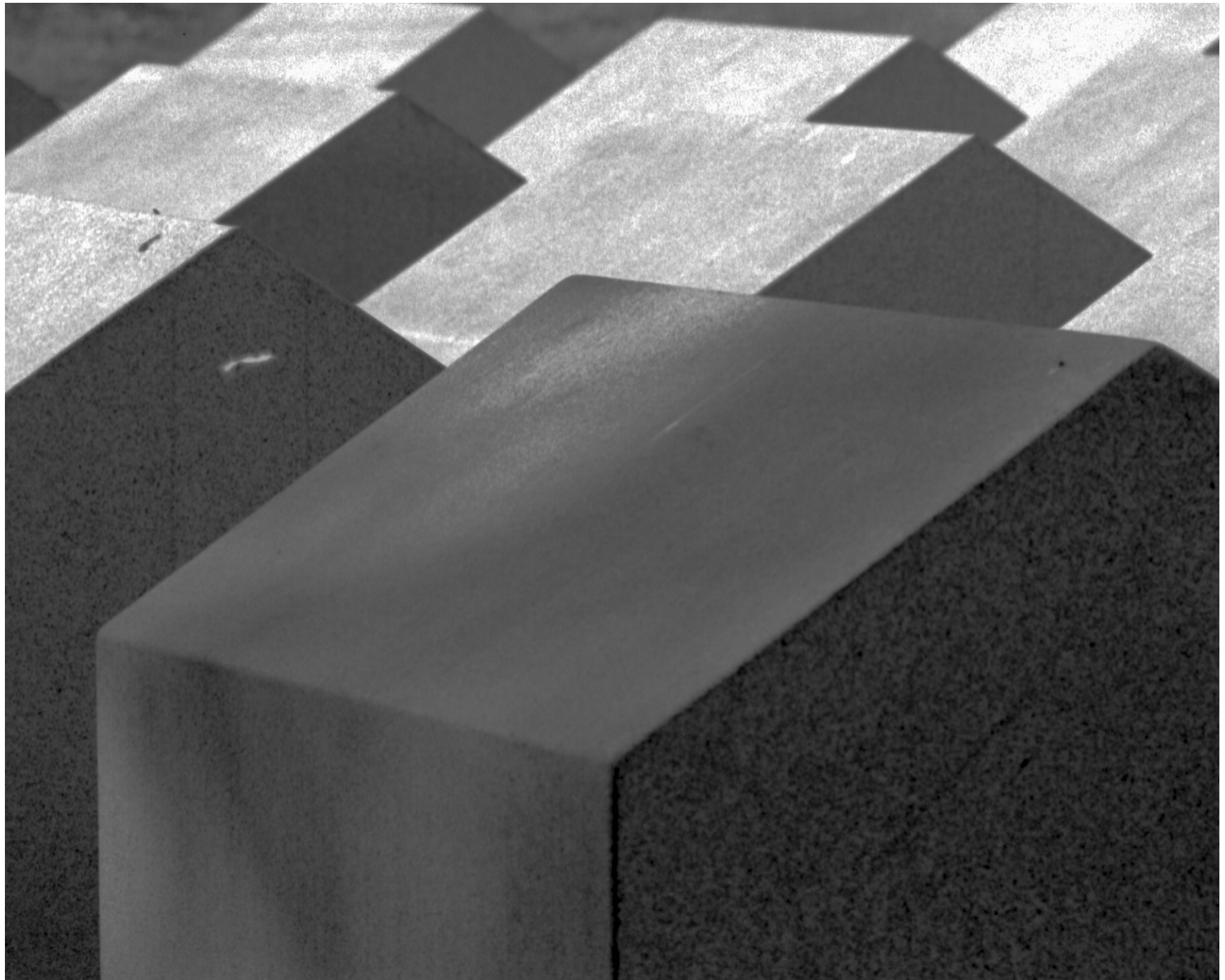
The urban environment requires an individual to adapt to its rules and logic. An industrial city needs thousands of machines and utilities to perform efficiently, from delivery vehicles to traffic signals and water mains. The population of laborers, bankers and shopkeepers must also perform their work with similar timeliness and reliability in order for the city to survive. This magnitude of activity has an impact on the mind:

*The psychological foundation, upon which the metropolitan individuality is erected, is the intensification of emotional life due to the swift and continuous shift of external and internal stimuli. ... Thereby the essentially intellectualistic character of the mental life of the metropolis becomes intelligible as over against that of the small town which rests more on feelings and emotional relationships. (...) Instead of reacting emotionally, the metropolitan type reacts primarily in a rational manner, thus creating a mental predominance through the intensification of consciousness, which in turn is caused by it.*

(11)

The emotional intensity of urban life requires the city dweller to disengage from emotional modes of understanding. For Simmel, it is not only the marvels of the Belle Époque metropolis that overstimulate, but the sheer number of personal interactions in a single day: "All emotional relationships between persons rest on their individuality, whereas intellectual relationships deal with persons as with numbers, that is, as with elements which, in themselves, are indifferent, but which are of interest insofar as they offer something objectively perceivable. It is in this very manner that the inhabitant of the metropolis reckons with his merchant, his customer and with his servant, ..." (12) The unmanageable number of people met in a given day prohibits an individual from forming meaningful relationships with a significant portion of them. The discrepancy between traditional and modern social and physical surroundings ultimately forces individuals into rational, ordered mode.

Simmel does not consider what happens to those who don't conform to the city's logic. His model does not incorporate those who miss their bus, or their shift at the bank for any reason. Although the mental and physical order of the city generally prevails, in doing so it creates a secondary order.



## FOOD WATER SHELTER: city

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Contemporary cities still perform the rational functions of Simmel's metropolis, but the logic they employ is not unbroken. Ninety years after "The Metropolis and Modern Life" Ignasio de Solà-Morales Rubio reconsidered the individual's experience of the contemporary urban environment. "Empty, abandoned space in which a series of occurrences have taken place seems to subjugate the eye of the urban photographer. Such urban space, which I will denote by the French expression Terrain Vague, assumes the status of fascination, the most solvent sign with which to indicate what cities are and what our experience of them is." (119) These empty spaces have an attraction and power for the intellectualized urban resident, they draw the eye as well as the mind. As Solà-Morales Rubio explains, Terrain Vague is both the physical void in the urban fabric and the discontinuity in an individual's mental experience. In the functional metropolis these areas remain as anomalies.

*Void, absence, yet also promise, the space of the possible, of expectation. (...) Unincorporated margins, interior islands void of activity, oversights, these areas are simply un-inhabited, un-safe, un-productive. In short, they are foreign to the urban system, mentally exterior in the physical interior of the city, its negative image, as much a critique as a possible alternative.*

(120)

The city's own operation produces these disordered and un-rational zones. Because of their irrelevance to the ordered environment Terrains Vagues become exceptional in the mental experience of an intellectualized urban resident. By existing without function they require emotional understanding rather than logical faculties. To build in Terrain Vague is almost impossible: "Only an architecture of dualism, of the difference of discontinuity installed within the continuity of time, can stand up against the anguished aggression of technological reason, telematics universalism, cybernetic totalitarianism, and egalitarian and homogenizing terror" (122) These fragile spaces exist only in opposition to the all-consuming order of the city, and cannot be an accessory to it.

The essay is written from the perspective of the metropolis, considering Terrain Vague at a distance, as a kind of wilderness were rational, ordering humanity does not go. Corbusier's pioneer, if loose in Terrain Vague, would swiftly reshape it into a zone of "technological reason". For an individual outside of the city's mental-physical regime these spaces of potential might appear very different. Socially marginal individuals, finding themselves external to the economic function of the city are forced outside of its physical order as well.



## FOOD WATER SHELTER: need

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Following Virginia Postrel's argument, an individual or a society can be in poverty and need but still develop significant works of expression, identity and self-actualization. In Seattle, in spite of its growing wealth the city is experiencing dire need. The city's lack of affordable housing is part of this need, straining working households and driving up rates of homelessness. At the same time the larger population needs order, growth and stability. Even today, when public homelessness can be the norm, the presence of thousands on the streets is not sustainable or acceptable for the larger city. Seattle is drawn into crisis by these multiple needs, and indecision over which to address and how.

The steps that the city government takes in response are of extreme consequence, but there is still not a clear consensus among civic leaders or among the general population about the path of action. Addressing mass homelessness is inherently a challenge of economics, logistics, and aesthetics: aspects that cannot be ignored when deciding when and how to provide the homeless with food, money, employment and housing, or when to arrest and drive out illegal squatters on public land, or when the government should raise taxes or increase wages. For example, it is often challenging to find locations for new homeless shelters due to neighborhood opposition, even if suitable space is available near to transit and services. For better or worse the cultural and emotional aspects of poverty are primary for a project that addresses homelessness. It is not a simple question of infrastructure; the city is not free to make decisions purely for the sake of order or for the benefit of the very poor. While this constraint is part of what leads to political deadlock over homelessness it also indicates a possible strategy to address it. The city is not of a single mind about what to do in response to homelessness, and it does not represent unified order. Actions to relieve homelessness can take place at the boundary of the metropolis and the marginal.

Determined efforts on behalf of the rational, bureaucratic agencies that provide social services are needed, but there is also the possibility for another type of action. Just as Corbusier's pioneer finds self-actualization to be inherent to actions addressing lower-order need, action by the homeless community can be declarative, expressive action that communicates their identity and independent order. This may even be a necessary step, enabling those experiencing homelessness to relate to the larger city on their own terms.



## PURSUIT OF PROPERTY: national context

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### CHANGE

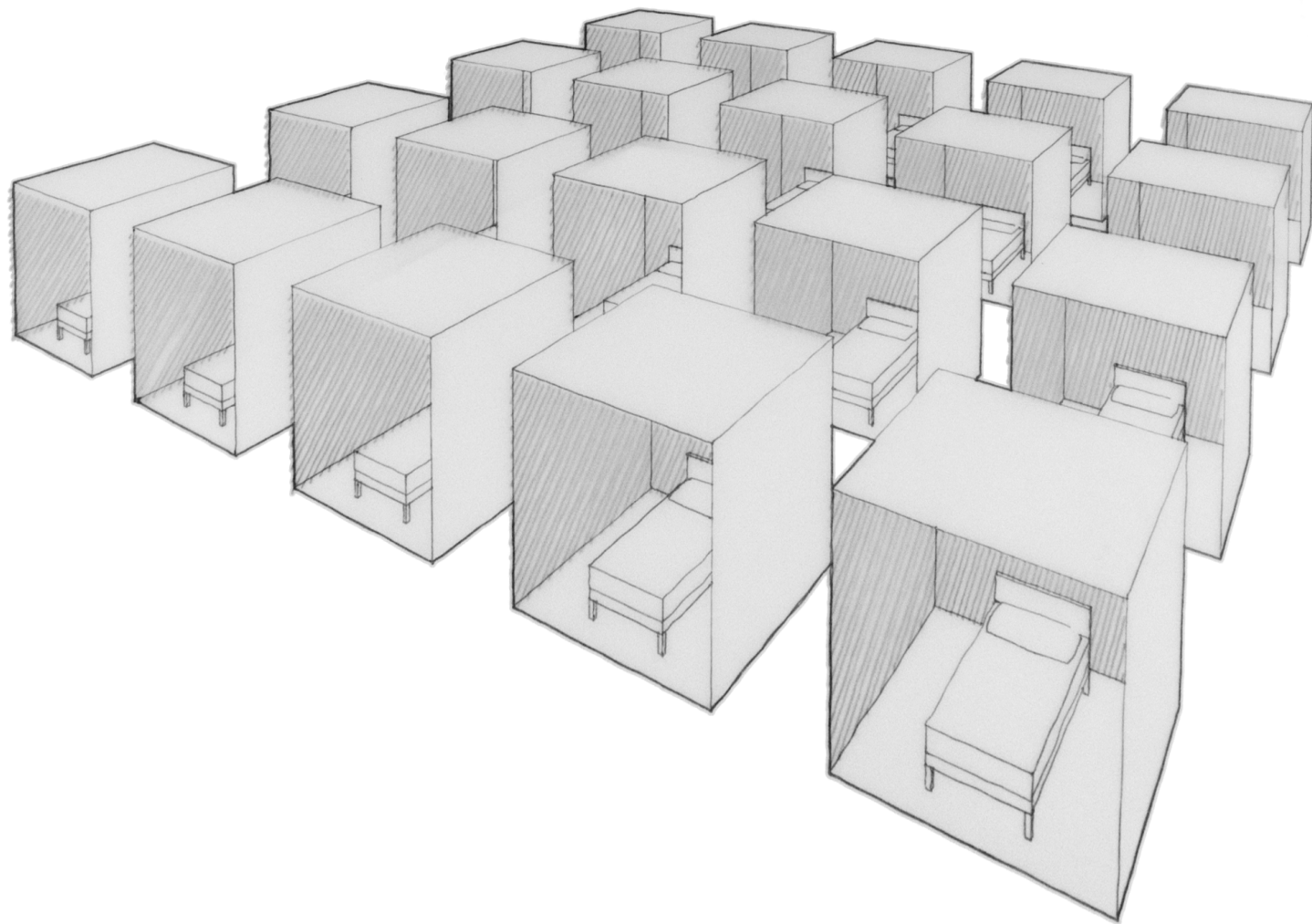
Ideas about wealth, independence and poverty are embedded in American culture, constantly present from founding narratives about upward mobility to basic interactions on the street today. These ideas change and develop over time in relation to historical events and form a cultural memory of events and practices. This memory includes the positive associations charity and compassion, but also maintains a fear of poverty and crime. All actions related to poverty and actions across classes occur in relation to this cultural code.

To understand the context of homelessness today it is necessary to consider how the social concept of poverty developed over time, how it was shaped by developments in industry and labor, changing cities and demographics. Generational shifts in poverty and its associated problems may inspire subsequent shifts in social responses to it, but these developments of need and aid are not always synchronized. The historical developments of poverty in America is typically considered in four phases: The Tramp Army, The Great Depression, Skid Row and New Homelessness. These eras are recognizable by the distinct cultural myths they inspired, except for the present phase of poverty as the cultural understanding and social response are not yet fully formed.

### TRAMP

Poverty and migration are part of the American narrative prior to the founding of the colonies, but the issue first assumes a form relevant to contemporary homelessness in the mid-19th century with the emergence of industry, urban centers, mass unemployment, and public mobility. It was in these conditions that the 'great tramp army' emerged (DePastino). The tramp is well documented in popular culture and literature, and it persists as a non-threatening, nostalgic caricature today. However, in the years following the Panic of 1873 unemployment and mass vagrancy were the source of real anxiety. As a financial crisis struck industries across Europe and the Americas it drove unemployment to new highs. The crisis was prolonged, and the New York Times lamented in 1878: "While they have proved a great annoyance in past years, there was not that boldness attending their movements and actions which has characterized them this year." (NYT, 1878) The same article reports murders, robberies and arson committed by vagrants. These claims indicate the deep and general fear that the tramp army inspired at the time. Many municipalities responded with harsh anti-vagrancy laws that shaped the experience of homelessness for the next century.

The mobile poverty of the tramps was highly visible and publicly debated, but at the same time a more ordinary and less visible form of poverty was developing in the tenements and minority neighborhoods of major cities. In 1890 this urban poverty was documented with by Jacob A. Riis in *How the Other Half Lives*, a set of first-hand observations of the working neighborhoods of New York. Descriptions of the tenements raised public awareness and repulsion, directed at the poor living conditions as well as at the poor themselves.



## PURSUIT OF POVERTY: national context

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### DEPRESSION

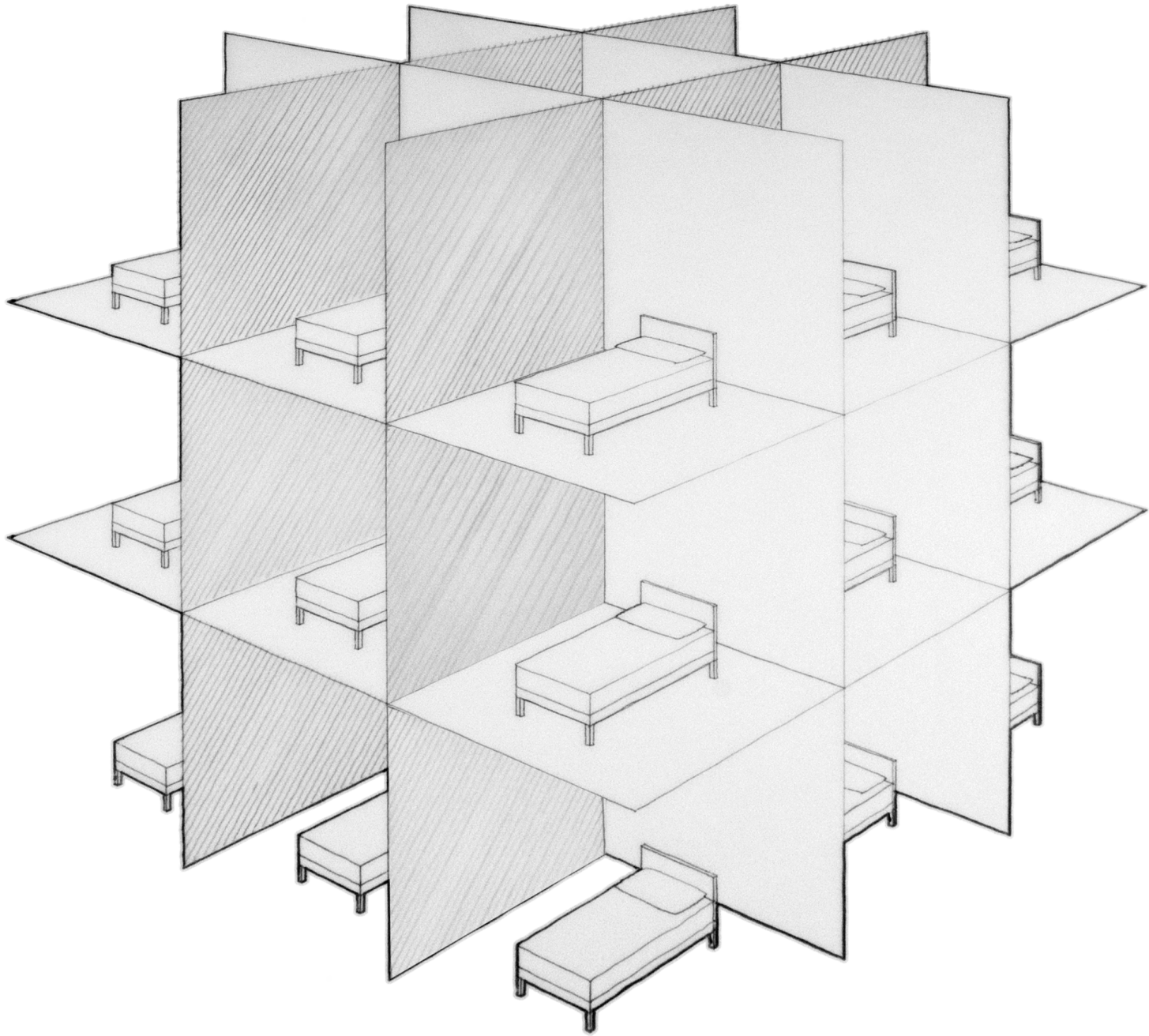
The Great Depression remains the most culturally familiar event of mass poverty in the history of the country, not only because of the numbers of people drawn into poverty, but because it marks a time when the middle class specifically was forced onto the street. Large municipal shelters already existed before the crash of 1929, serving the same underclass that Jacob Riis had documented. As described in Ella Howard's *Homeless*, in New York in 1928 'The Tub', a private charity, reportedly hosted over 1,100 vagrants on a typical night and served 2,000 meals on an average day. (22) When the economy turned the influx of new residents was far more than the existing network of private charities could support.

The first public agencies specific to homelessness were developed in response to the expanding ranks of poverty: the National Committee on Care of Transient and Homeless formed in 1932 with a mandate to organize the response of various charities. This committee became a valuable advisory body on subsequent policies, like those of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (formed in 1933), the CCC (1933) and the WPA (1935). The sequential development of the federal agencies demonstrates how different types of aid produce different effects, a lesson that has not been forgotten but that has been highly politicized. The Depression as a whole demonstrates how poverty can always overwhelm existing capacity and forms of aid, and there is no guarantee that anyone is entirely safe from need.

### SKID ROW

During the prosperity of the postwar years homelessness did not feature in the national conversation, either because the number of people in need was relatively low or because the country's attention was focused elsewhere. For several decades following 1950 the housing supply was large and growing, unemployment was low and much development was focused outside of the old urban centers, leaving intact the run-down skid rows. More than the site of cheap housing, skid-rows also generally contained the SRO (single-room occupancy) housing stock, where rooms were leased by the night for as little as \$5. This arrangement provided shelter for the poorest members of society, favored for both its low cost and flexible pay structure. It would not be uncommon for a homeless individual to use multiple housing strategies throughout the year: SRO lodging, public shelters, religious shelters and nights on the street.

Social sciences reexamined the issues of urban poverty in the 1960s, focusing largely on the medical and mental conditions of the homeless. This approach generally framed problems in terms of individual issues and relationships, and their choice of life on Skid Row. Cheap and flexible SRO housing was seen as an enabling factor for individuals caught in the cycle of poverty, affording them shelter without effort. The conditions were not substantially different from those observed by Riis over 60 years earlier: unsafe and unsanitary conditions, deemed to be inhumane and unsuitable by the authorities. Urban renewal and housing codes targeted the SRO housing supply for these reasons, as an element to be removed from the city. With the disappearance of this housing-of-last-resort a different form of homeless emerged.



# NEW HOMELESSNESS: current conditions

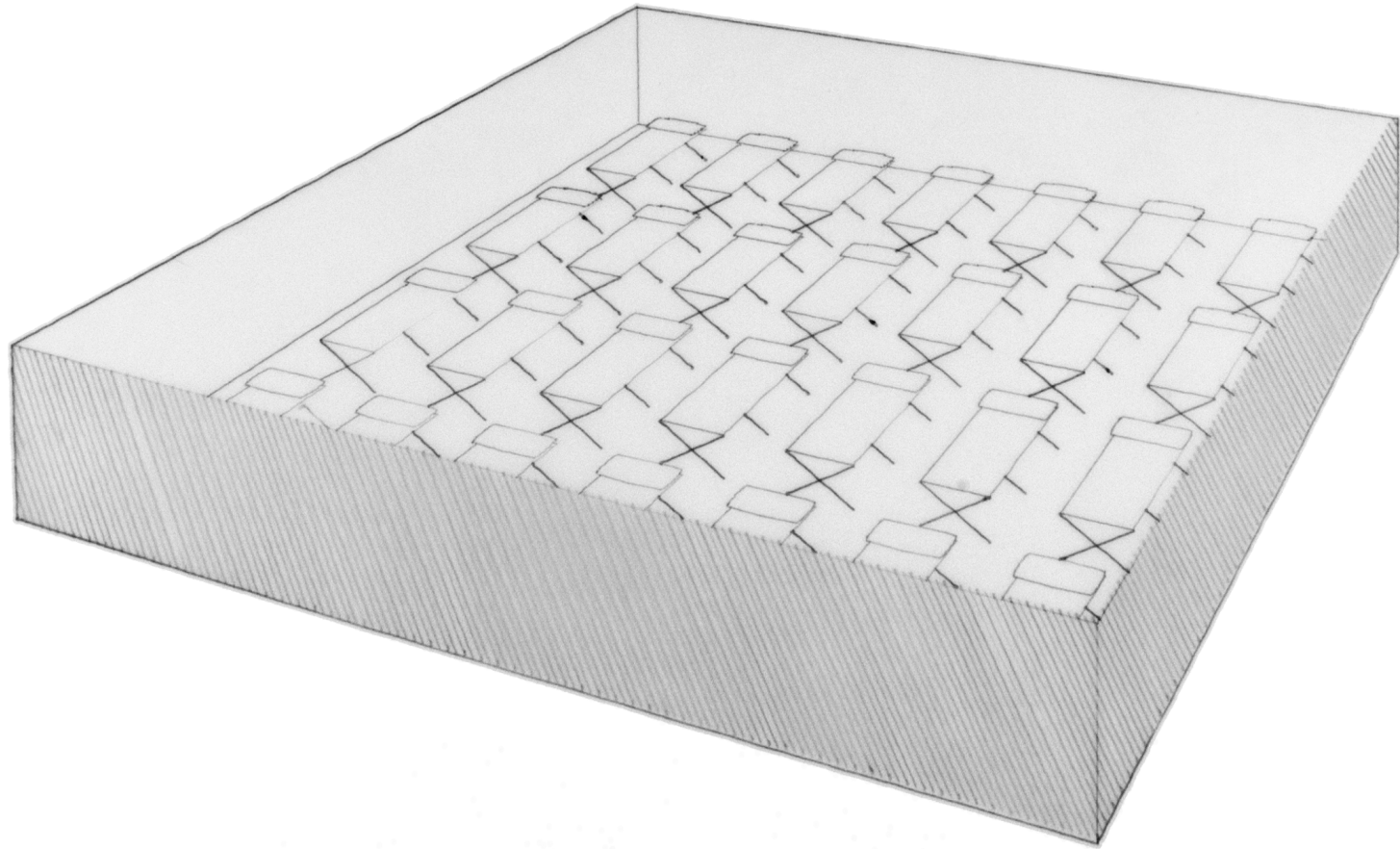
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## INTRO

In major cities around the country today the extremes of poverty and wealth exist side by side. This has become the new norm and the presence of the homeless throughout many different parts of a city is unsurprising. Although similar conditions of poverty have been observed for over three decades, and it is still called the era of New Homelessness. The term originated with the economic recession of the early 1980s, as the population of the streets increased in its size and demographic diversity. The older male vagrants of skid row were still present at shelters and service agencies, but alongside women, families and youth. Unlike the Great Depression, in which specific national events and economic pressures provided a clear cause for the newly homeless, there is not a single source of the present crisis. Every individual now seems to experience a unique set of circumstances and challenges that prevent them from maintaining stable housing. To provide a comprehensive model of what drives individuals to housing instability, or a cohesive list of measures to apply in response, remains the goal of social science research. For the purposes of this thesis New Homelessness is considered at the intersection of three systems: economic, social, and urban.

## ECONOMIC

Changes in the global economy reshaped the American employment landscape in the twentieth century, a process that has continued through the present. Following the economic restructuring of the 1970s and 1980s many well-paying manufacturing jobs disappeared. Many of the working-class jobs that remained were low-skill or unskilled labor, with less opportunity for economic stability or labor-union organizing. Real wages declined for the working class and it became more common for workers to hold part-time positions and work multiple jobs. These economic conditions allowed the wage gap to expand, which in addition to other cultural factors resulted in greater stratification of American society. They have also had the effect of destabilizing unionized labor and keeping the working class in a financially precarious state. In Seattle the recession of the 1970s was compounded by the layoffs and unemployment of the “Boeing Bust”, as the aircraft manufacturer halved its workforce at the beginning of the decade.



# NEW HOMELESSNESS: current conditions

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## SOCIAL

The shifts in the homeless population occurred in relation to existing demographic and population dynamics of the country as a whole. Wolch and Dear observe several major shifts in the 1970's and 1980's, traced in part to the maturing population bubble of the baby boomers. As boomers entered the workforce the competition for jobs drove wages downward and unemployment grew from 5% to 18%. Women were entering the workforce in greater numbers, out of need as the number of single parents and female heads-of-households increased, but also in search of opportunity as cultural expectations empowered women in the workplace. Similarly, large numbers of individuals entering the housing market as adults and occupying apartments individually put high demands on the existing housing stock, which were not met by the construction rate of new housing. Increasing longevity of the population also meant that older individuals were keeping their housing longer and driving up demand. These seniors were able to apply political clout to compete for what social aid was available, and enjoy that aid for longer. This demand for aid from the growing senior population added to the already increasing number of people seeking aid.

Demographic and economic developments were increasing pressure on lower income households, while at the same time the political climate was reducing the amount of support available to these same groups. The United States generally began to retreat from welfare state policies of the mid century, both in housing and welfare programs. Policies of deinstitutionalization were part of this process, resulting in the closing of mental hospitals across the country without a viable alternative. In the wake of these broad changes to social support mechanisms the government introduced legislation specific to the issues of homelessness for the first time, and the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act was passed. Later renamed McKinney-Vento, the bill provided federal resources for shelter housing, as well as enhanced shelter programs for mentally ill and disabled individuals. Later versions included provisions for rehabilitation of SRO housing. Perhaps most importantly, it established the Interagency Council on the Homeless, now the Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH), which remains the current national governing body for emergency housing relief programs.

## URBAN

The social and economic developments of the twentieth century were simultaneous with transformations of urban form and often the poorest areas were considered the most available for development or in need of greatest change. Urban renewal projects sought to remove inhumane and substandard urban housing, with some compensating tenants and landlords in the process. However modernizing policies of slum clearance and development targeted minority and low-income neighborhoods for demolition. As development transformed the old skid rows of major cities it removed not only a number of low-cost housing units, but a unique environment. By 1990 this typology had effectively disappeared, with municipal homeless shelters emerging as the only comparable option. Since the 1930s the demolition projects of urban renewal were often coordinated with plans to construct public housing (Howard, 118), but project failures were not uncommon. The imbalances of supply and demand for low-cost housing ultimately represents a structural issue in which the available housing stock does not provide sufficient housing for the lowest income households, either in terms of quality or quantity, and support systems are not robust enough to make up the difference between the cost of housing and the ability of the poor to pay for it. This is the fundamental issue of the affordability crisis, the phenomenon that drives an increasing proportion of housing instability.



PROPERTY OF  
AVALON DAIRY

FRESH  
OF

ENLAND MILK PROCESSING  
DAIRY

VITAMIN

BROOKLYN DAIRY

WILCOX FARMS

BROOKLYN DAIRY

BROOKLYN DAIRY

BROOKLYN DAIRY

## TENT CITY: in case of emergency

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### ENCAMPMENTS IN AMERICA

The rise and fall of hobo camps, Hooverville, Skid Row and public housing has followed the larger patterns of politics and the economy in the last century, but there is always some number of individuals who simply are forced to survive outside. Those who sleep unsheltered may be a larger or smaller portion of the homeless population, but at present the available housing resources are once again overwhelmed, and individual as well as group encampments have become more common in and around urban areas. Contemporary mass encampments are frequently compared to the Hoovervilles of the Great Depression, which is still the cultural precedent through which the public understands informal housing in America. This association could potentially give them a slightly more sympathetic or nostalgic public image, and encampment residents frequently evoke this image themselves for its political implications. Tent cities have re-emerged across the country during the last few decades, both against the will of municipalities and with their cooperation. The form, operation, and living conditions of these encampments is extremely varied, and as in Seattle they may be physically adjacent to each other but the experience within them will be distinct.

### GOODWILL GATHERING: July – August 1990

The current organization of the Seattle homeless community developed and gained public visibility in 1990 during the Goodwill Games, a Cold War athletic exhibition between the United States, USSR, and over 50 other countries. The Games occupied multiple venues around Western Washington, providing civic leaders an unrivaled opportunity to project an ambitious image of the city. For the homeless, this event brought reason to anticipate sanitation sweeps and forcible removal. This was a real possibility based on a similar scenario before 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, when transients and panhandlers were removed from the streets and detained. The response of the Seattle homeless was to preempt their own removal by planning the Goodwill Gathering, held at Myrtle Edwards Park where they could be relatively safe but avoid the attention of the international media. The event was the first action for the Seattle Housing And Resource Effort (SHARE), a newly formed homeless-run organization. The Gathering included representation from social services, as well as food and music. It was sheltered by a large tent during the day but at night patrons were required to find their own shelter off the premises. Such inconsistency at an event specifically for the homeless was considered an injustice, one that motivated further activism and the ongoing projects of SHARE.

### GOODWILL ENCAMPMENT: November – December 1990

On November 24, 1990, the Goodwill Encampment (later known as Tent City 1) was installed on a gravel parking lot south of the Kingdome. This was primarily a protest encampment, demonstrating the strength and motivation of the newly formed group with marches to city hall and agitation for more adequate housing. The encampment contained over 150 individuals and existed for two weeks after which the city responded to the sustained pressure and provided a bus barn in the Queen Anne neighborhood as an alternative venue.



## TENT CITY: in case of emergency

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INDOOR SHELTERS: December 1990 -

The Bus Barn was the first SHARE indoor shelter, housing approximately 100 individuals in the cavernous space. The shelter functioned for 5 months, during which the organizational principles of SHARE encampments began to be developed. The early SHARE encampments were not the first exercises in self-governance by the homeless in America, but they were certainly among the pioneering groups, in cooperation with Association for Dignity and Fairness for the Homeless of Philadelphia and other groups around the country. (NYT, 1990) In negotiations the city agreed to purchase the Aloha Inn on Highway 99, it was provided to SHARE for conversion to a homeless shelter and it remains the longest-running indoor shelter in the SHARE system. Through the next several years SHARE continued to grow in membership and influence. In 1994 it was complemented by the formation of a sister organization: WHEEL, the Women's Housing Equality and Enhancement League. This organization continues to advance the specific interests of homeless women in Seattle. Together SHARE and WHEEL now operate 18 indoor shelters in the Seattle area and three tent cities while also providing other needed services such as storage locker rentals, laundry and hygiene facilities. In spite of these advancements the unmet need for any kind of shelter continued to grow.

TENT CITY 2: June – July 1998

The second Tent City existed for less than a month, in the context of intense negotiations between the city and SHARE/WHEEL. Following a series of murders in the Jungle the homeless community was under great stress, and SHARE maintained its position that “clean safe encampments are a necessity until there is enough housing for everyone” (Poole). The encampment, the first since the Goodwill Encampment, occupied the Beacon Hill Reservoir with tentative permission from Mayor Schell. It grew rapidly to accommodate over 50 individuals, with social service workers present and seeking to get the campers connected with aid. Within two weeks the Mayor Schell announced that the camp was to be evacuated, and through negotiations with SHARE opened the Municipal Building Winter Response Shelter three months early to accommodate the camp residents.

TENT CITY 3: April 2000 –

The third encampment established the model that is seen across Seattle today. With the closure of the winter shelters SHARE/WHEEL established Tent City 3 on a vacant lot on Martin Luther King Way and remained there until the city threatened fines against the owners of the lot. This initiated the regular encampment moves that continues to define the Tent City's operation. El Centro de la Raza hosted TC3 for the remainder of the year, accumulating \$17,000 in municipal fines during the process. (seattle.gov) The Tent City continued to operate in an unsanctioned manner until 2002, when the Consent Decree was signed by SHARE/WHEEL, the city, and El Centro. The Consent Decree remains an important document for the camp, it provided the limited freedom and security needed for the camp to operate without the threat of demolition. The Decree restricted SHARE/WHEEL to one encampment, with the possibility of negotiating for a second encampment. This did not occur for the first two years of operation.

TENT CITY 4: May 2004 –

As the model of Tent City 3 gained support and recognition in the community it became possible to replicate it. Tent City 4 primarily serves the East Side, and is still in operation under the same principles defined by the Consent Decree.



## TENT CITY: in case of emergency

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NICKELSVILLE: September 2008 –

The Nickelsville community has a unique role in the Seattle encampment system and homeless community. It was initiated as a protest encampment on public land near the Duwamish: an array of 150 hot-pink tents named in opposition to Mayor Greg Nickels' clearance of homeless dwellings. The camp remains an unsanctioned, though longstanding, encampment. It has gained a unique role in the homeless network as the result of a schism within the SHARE/WHEEL community. For some residents of the SHARE/WHEEL Tent Cities the conditions of the consent decree are restrictive and possibly punitive measures. The requirement to move frequently is a physical and social hardship, and SHARE/WHEEL policies banning alcohol and other substances can be seen as arbitrary, patronizing rules that resemble the larger homeless system's stigmatizing approach to the homeless. Nickelsville today employs more durable structures, such as tiny homes, and moves less frequently if possible. The Nickelodeons continue to seek an agreement in which they would be able to establish their community permanently on private land and operate without interference from the city or state. Although they report having found willing landowners they have been unable avoid intervention from the city. Instead the community has expanded and replicated its model, much like the Tent City. There are currently four separate Nickelsville locations in the Seattle network, with some differences in their structure types and populations.

SANCTIONED ENCAMPMENTS: March 2015 -

In January of 2015, nearly thirteen years after the original consent decree went into effect, Mayor Murray and the Seattle City Council authorized the creation of three new encampments to serve the growing homeless population. This step was taken not as a full endorsement of the encampments, but in the interest of pragmatism. Mayor Murray made this clear when announcing the plan in January 2015: "Permitted encampments are not, in my view, a long-term strategy to end homelessness. But planned, organized encampments have less impact on our neighborhoods and provide a safer environment than what we see on our streets today." (murray.seattle.gov) This ambivalence is a fair reflection of the city's mixed feelings about the encampments. The new encampments were permitted but with new restrictions on their placement, they were to be greater than a mile apart from each other and not located on public parks. Although these tent cities were on city properties they were to be run and operated by SHARE/WHEEL and Nickelsville.

STATE OF EMERGENCY: November 2, 2015 -

At one time the city had expected 2015 to mark the completion of its ten-year plan to end homelessness, but after a decade and several hundred million dollars expended on aid, Mayor Murray declared a civic State of Emergency due to the continued growth of the homeless population. Citing the deaths of 66 individuals on Seattle streets in the first ten months of 2015, Executive Constantine affirmed the urgency of this crisis in remarks at city hall:

*Emergency declarations are associated with natural disasters, but the persistent and growing phenomenon of homelessness – here and nationwide – is a human-made crisis just as devastating to thousands as a flood or fire.*

This declaration mobilized an additional \$5 million in emergency funds, specifically dedicated to helping connect homeless individuals more quickly to appropriate services. Officials published an executive action plan that called for mobile response vehicles, multi-disciplinary response teams and additional shelters. The city also acquired additional authority to create housing and shelters quickly through the State of Emergency, rather than working through conventional time-intensive political processes.



# TENT CITY: in case of emergency

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## OTHER ENCAMPMENTS

Due to the fluid nature of the crisis and any present list of all encampments in Seattle would become obsolete. Multiple newly formed groups have formed in the last three years, including Camp Second Chances, Camp Unity, and Camp United We Stand. As both the homeless community and the larger city become more familiar with the encampments and experienced with their operation it becomes more feasible for new encampments to succeed. Physical differences between the encampments allow them to serve slightly different populations, for example older residents may be less able to sleep in a tent but find a tiny house to be adequate shelter. Cultural differences between the encampments may lead to less internal conflict for each individual encampment, for example the independent spirit of the original Nickelsville may still be a better fit for campers who find it difficult to live in a more tightly regulated environment.

## THE JUNGLE

For all the success of the encampments under consideration so far, The Jungle was the longest-running and most resilient mass encampment. The northwest and west faces of Beacon Hill possibly acquired its name prior to the Great Depression, but rose to prominence in the nineties with the rise of New Homelessness and accelerating development in Seattle. As the recurring site of crimes and drug related activity, and as the home to a hidden population of unknown size, the idea of 'The Jungle' still injects real anxiety into the politics of Seattle. Fear of The Jungle has been a motivating factor in actions by both the homeless community and the city government at different times. It is possible that without the presence, or imagined presence, of The Jungle the new encampments would receive less support. When Mayor Murray announced the plan to authorize new encampments he described them as preferable to the present alternative, and preferable to The Jungle. With the clearance of the original Jungle new locations have arisen around the city. It is estimated in 2017 that around 400 different unauthorized encampment sites exist. (murray.seattle.gov)



# TENT CITY: methods and materials

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## SOCIAL METHODS

Tent Cities are a social-physical system, their function requires the coordinated action of the community and careful management of materials. They have been refined in both their social and physical aspects and the general form of the Tent Cities has been stable for several years. The SHARE/WHEEL tent city operational model requires the participation of all members, both in the upkeep of the physical camp and in the daily interactions of the community.

## MEETINGS

The camps are democratic units, requiring the attendance and participation of residents at weekly camp meetings. Decisions are made through discussion and voting, with each member getting one vote.

## BOARD

At a given time there are three campers elected to the Board, a set of positions that provides leadership at meetings and handles issues until they can be brought before the larger group.

## SECURITY

The daily functions of the camp revolve around the security desk, always on duty, stationed at the entrance to the camp to meet any new individuals or donations. Visitors to the camp are required to sign in at the desk and are accompanied by security unless with a resident. Those on security duty handle daily litter patrol, conflicts between other residents, and other tasks as needed to keep the encampment running smoothly. Security duties are assigned to all who are able, and usually each individual will perform several security shifts each month. The camp's rules on sobriety are strict, drugs and alcohol are not permitted in the camp, nor are campers allowed to be present if under the influence. Failures to observe the rules of the encampment can result in warnings, a short-term ban or permanent ban.

## MOVE MASTER

The camp designates an experienced camper to orchestrate each move. This person makes all necessary arrangements, designs the layout of the new encampment, and orchestrates the sequence of deconstructing, packing, moving and re-assembling its different systems. The significance of this position is respected, and the task of assigning individual tent locations requires sensitivity to the different habits and personalities of an entire community. The sequencing of actions determines the speed of the move, and a good move will be less stressful both physically and socially for the entire group.



# TENT CITY: methods and materials

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## PHYSICAL METHODS

The physical form of the camp is a mix of pragmatic methods, containing many elements that can be modified as needed to suit different locations or political contexts.

## FENCE

The fence is an essential structure, defining the boundaries of the encampment and controlling physical access. Equally important, it provides a degree of privacy, the kind of personal space and security that can never be found on the streets. Or, as one good-humored camper observed, a fence prevents the residents from staring at everyone who passes by. For those who otherwise live in public spaces, the fence is essential.

## PALLETS AND PLATFORMS

In Seattle's rainy season it is essential to have some degree of separation from the ground, for moisture and temperature control. This is achieved with a system of pallets and plywood that provide foundations for tents, as well as composing the walkways between them. The conventional plywood panel provides a unit of scale for different types of structures.

## COMMUNITY TENTS

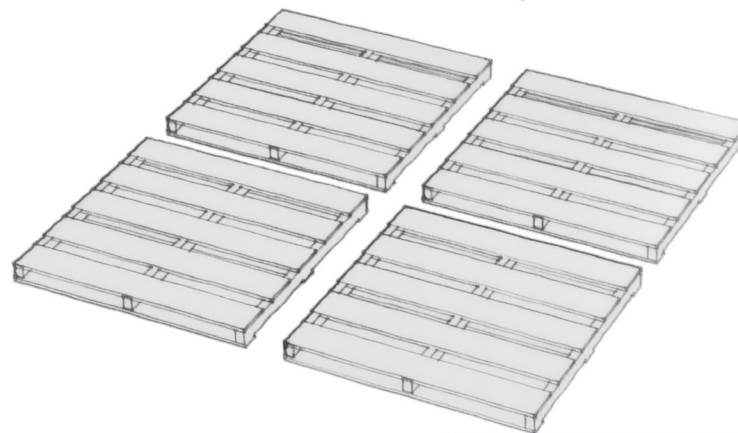
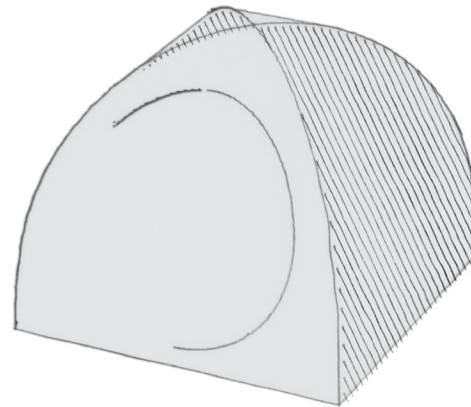
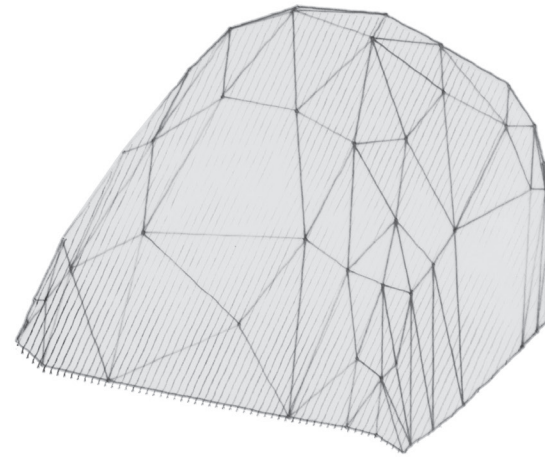
The group spaces are constructed from off-the-shelf pole tents, covered with heavy-duty tarps as available. At a given campsite the community tents may be arranged differently based on available space. Always present are: Security, Kitchen, Pantry, and Donation tents. As space permits, the Tent City will construct Computer Workspace, Television, Accounting, and Blanket Supply tents.

## RESIDENTIAL TENTS

Several community tents are used as dorms containing six to eight beds, with separate dorms for men and women. The dorms enable a higher number of residents on a given site, and new campers who are unknown to the community will stay there with supervision from the other residents for the first month of their stay. Most residents live in single tents, on an allotted foundation of two plywood panels. Couples and families may occupy a space of three or four panels.

## UTILITIES

The Tent Cities employ different strategies to acquire utilities as needed at each location. Electricity and water may be run from a host organization when possible, or the encampment may be able to connect directly into city infrastructure and maintain its own account with utility providers. If this is not possible the camp is able to get needed power from its own generators, but doing so requires significant effort and expense to acquire gas. Water may be transported to the site as needed, but this also represents an added cost. Every Tent City install includes a set of portable toilets and hand washing station, even when they are hosted by a church or other facility that has indoor plumbing. This is one way that the Tent City ensures good relationships with host organizations. For garbage, the camp rents a dumpster of its own at each location.



## TENT CITY: outlook

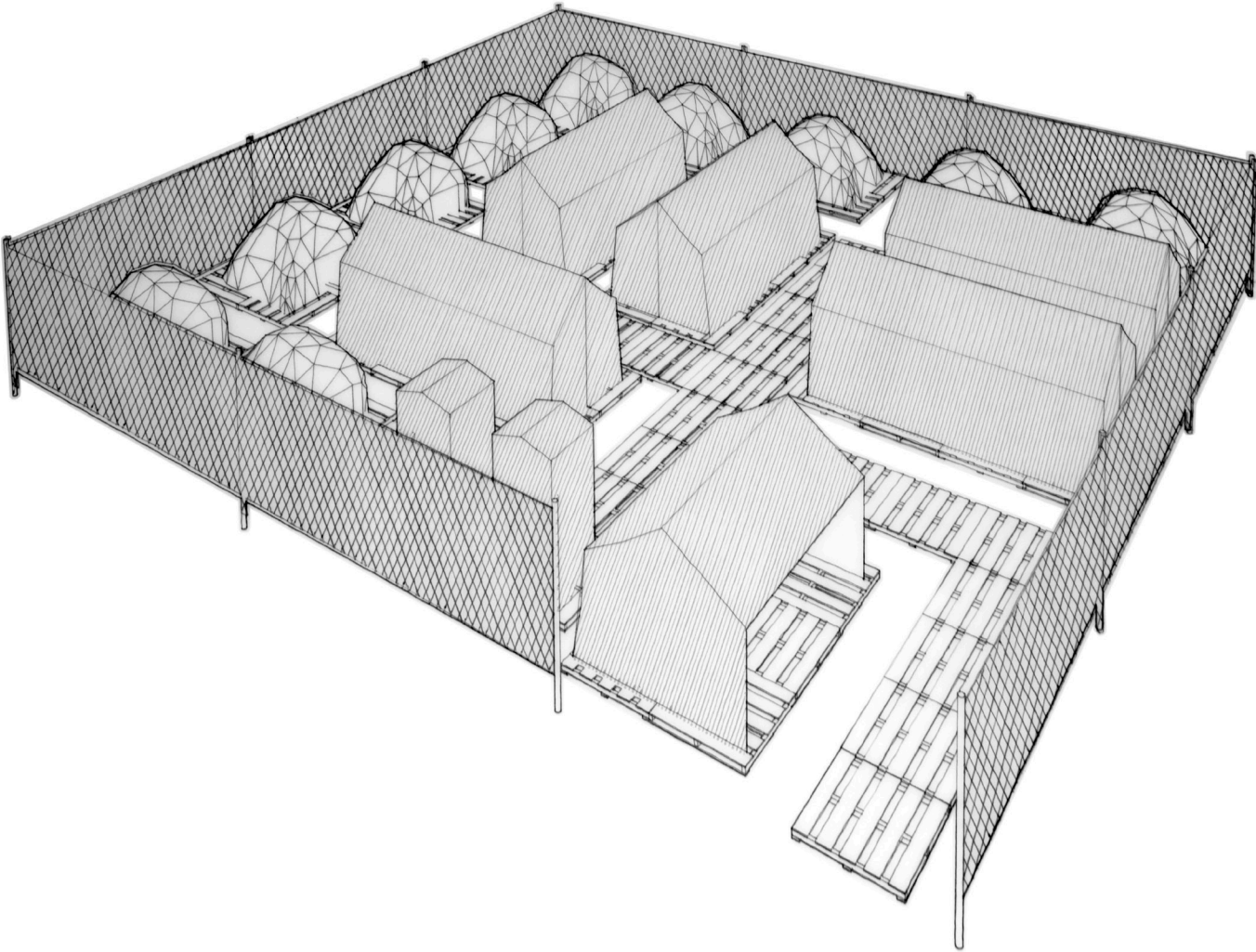
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Since the declaration of the state of emergency the city's encampment network has continued to expand at an increasing rate. In two years from 2015 to 2017, eight encampments, tent cities, and tiny house villages were formed with varying levels of official approval. In 2016, during this period of expansion, Seattle hired Barbara Poppe, a nationally known homeless consultant who led the federal response to homelessness during the Obama administration. She was unequivocal in her opposition, saying: "I find it horrifying you have children living in encampments and that is somehow acceptable to this community, (...) It's just unconscionable to me this is a choice that's been made here. That said, I understand there's great pressure to have a short-term solution. But I don't happen to think these encampments are the best solution." (Beekman) Seattle has been initially resistant to her advice. As Mayor Murray was quoted in the same article: "We know (authorized encampments) are safer (than the street). People aren't getting murdered in (authorized) tent cities." This difference of opinion was followed by the announcement in January, 2017, of an additional 3 sanctioned encampments.

Poppe's perspective as an outsider to Seattle is crucial in this respect, as she is able to see the encampments without the jaded perspective of someone from Seattle. She understands that encampments are not necessarily sufficient simply because they are better than what preceded them. Poppe advocates instead for finding efficiencies in the service provider network, with different agencies providing more specialized services. This restructuring of aid, in addition to strong public investments in public housing, represent a strategy of rapid re-housing, outlined in the 2010 USICH policy "Opening Doors". This set of practices aims to identify those at risk and intervene more rapidly when people become homeless.

The City of Seattle has maintained a 3-prong executive strategy in its current phase of actions on homelessness: addressing the needs of the unsheltered, addressing long-term systemic issues, and ultimately addressing the affordable housing shortage. Although each of these three steps is undertaken simultaneously, addressing the needs of the unsheltered requires greater urgency, while impacting systemic issues and the affordability crisis are extremely difficult challenges and will take time to address. The city need an answer to homelessness that can be implemented rapidly but sustained until funding can be secured, housing can be built, and rents can be managed.

In 2014, after significant investments in housing aid during the Ten-Year Plan, the city commissioned an Emergency Task Force on Unsheltered Homelessness. Their review recommended that the city permit additional encampments on public or private property, and anticipated up to 7 permitted encampments housing up to 100 individuals each. It considered SHARE/WHEEL's reported cost per bed-night of \$2.50 and projected possible cost savings with municipal contracts for services and utilities. As they stated in their comments: "Transitional encampments are a necessary part of Seattle's response to the crisis of high numbers of unsheltered homeless people. Organized, group encampments are a first step out of isolation into community, increased access to services, and a path to housing stability. Public land and financial support will increase the number of otherwise unsheltered people living in safe, sanitary and neighborly encampments." (Albert et al.) The city has carried out these recommendations and continues to follow through on the ideas originally put forward by the Task Force.



## SETTLEMENT: hypothesis

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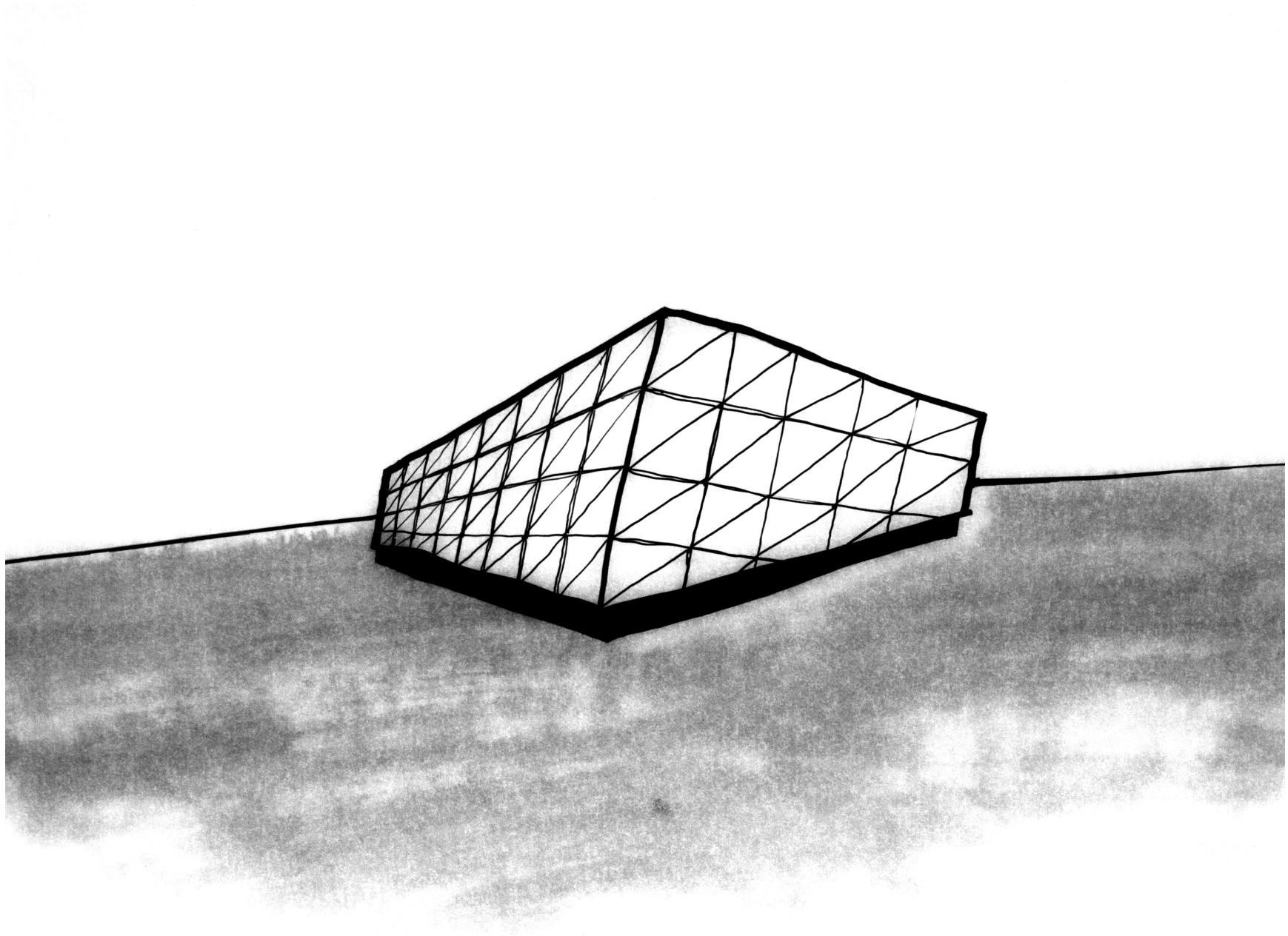
As Seattle shapes its response to a changing crisis it must address the immediate, humanitarian emergency of homelessness as well as the structural issues that have produced it. The city is taking significant actions to provide housing, but the scale of the issue and the challenges of providing housing in an increasingly competitive housing market means that these efforts will require several years before capacity can hope to equal the unmet need. Until that time the humanitarian disaster on the streets requires an interim solution. On principle, city leaders have declared that unauthorized camping on the streets is inhumane and unacceptable for any number of people and for any amount of time. In practice, the city has not provided an alternative that is capable of providing enough adequate shelter for the unhoused population.

By allowing the crisis of unhoused homelessness to continue the problem is exacerbated. Public sentiment toward the homeless is not improved by the ubiquity of unauthorized encampments throughout the city. The homeless agencies are not able to reliably locate and serve the people they are seeking to help. Criminal activity and drug use are more difficult to monitor, and many homeless individuals are falsely associated and stigmatized as a consequence of this uncertainty. As a humanitarian measure the city cannot delay action on unsheltered homelessness. Not to do so would fail those in need as well as the larger city.

Besides the opening of emergency shelters throughout King County, the city has supported the expansion of the authorized encampment network throughout Seattle. This decision is a profound vindication of the encampment model and their effectiveness as institutions within the city. However, it is counter to the advice of national experts who oppose additional encampments on the grounds that the environment in the encampments remains below the standards of what a city should support. It's clear that the physical conditions of a tent are not adequate housing for Seattle's climate: whether that tent is within an authorized encampment or hidden in The Jungle it has the same, inhumane effect. The government of Seattle is currently forced to choose between the culpability of endorsing these conditions in the encampments, and being merely negligent by allowing them to continue visibly on the streets or else concealed in The Jungle. The city is in need of a strategy that can provide adequate emergency housing immediately without removing significant resources from permanent housing efforts. Most of all it needs to create a support system that provides a beneficial social context for those who find themselves on the margins of society.

The encampment networks have the potential to become a more effective and humane response to the city's present crisis. Their operational model and communal environment is are great strengths, but the physical shelter they provide remains only what the homeless have been able to provide for themselves already. To pair this community with a structure that is compatible with their operation would allow them to become the effective institution that the city will need for years to come.

To address a constantly changing problem in a dynamic context, these new encampments would still need to be highly adaptive. By moving around the city they maintain many valuable connections to different communities within it. Capable of operating as a network, they share resources, ideas and information. By interacting freely with a changing city, they are a flexible response to a persistent issue.



## SETTLEMENT: method

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### ADAPTATION

Limitations of capacity are a recurring problem in the history of homelessness. To construct additional housing is generally demanding of time and resources. In an already competitive housing market like Seattle's there is also significant expense and delay involved in securing voucher assistance and placements in private-market housing. These two issues, of scale and speed, are met in the transitional encampments, as they can be rapidly set up to meet the level of need, and expand or diminish as the level of demand changes. To provide improved shelter that can accomplish these same results this design employs a modular strategy.

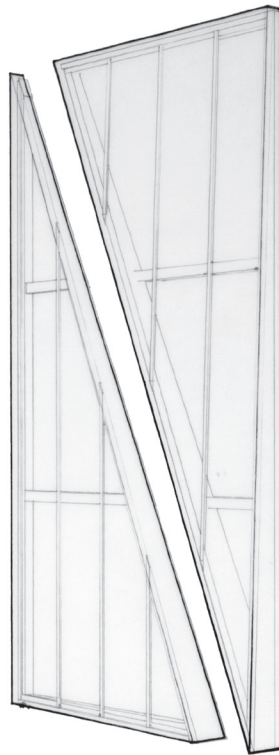
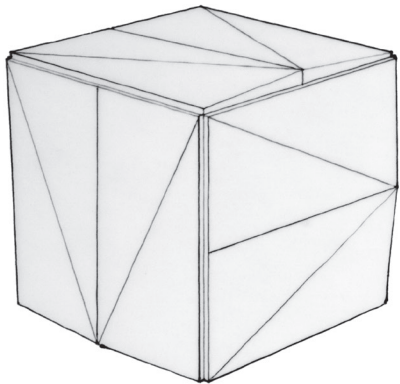
### MODULARITY

The material logic of the existing camps relies on versatile modules in multiple aspects of its design. Plastic milk crates, for example, are used to construct shelving, platform beds, seating, and as supports for the fence posts. Besides the furnishings, this principle applies to the community spaces and dorms, which can be installed quickly during the move before expanding as needed over the duration of the camp's stay at a location. When it is necessary for an encampment to adapt to a changing population size, these ad-hoc systems can be adjusted without interrupting the function of the camp as a whole. Similar properties can be maintained in a redesigned encampment, with systems that can be assembled in many possible configurations on complex sites. To achieve these goals the process of design studied different module strategies, from independent housing modules to large vehicles that transport entire encampments. The simplest strategy is a panel which can be joined at its edge in different ways.

### MODULE

The panel is based on a standard four-by-eight foot dimension, enabling commonly available building materials to be used in its composition.

The panel is not of constant thickness, tapering from six inches to three inches across diagonal corners. Faceting on the outer face enables it to shed water, and the increased depth of the panel provides improved structural properties.



## SETTLEMENT: methods

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### MASSING

The panel can be assembled in several different, simple configurations, suitable for housing different areas of the encampment.

Some possible arrangements are shown here, ranging from large to small spaces.

Different massing options provide the opportunity for taking advantage of solar properties, air circulation and natural lighting as permitted or required by the site.

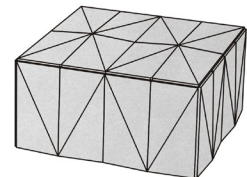
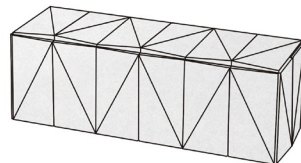
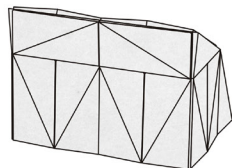
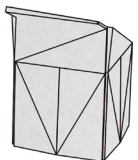
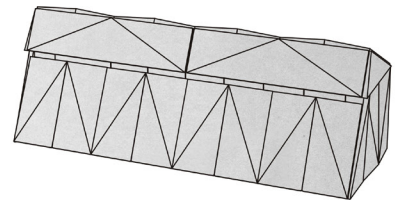
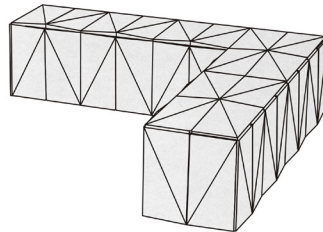
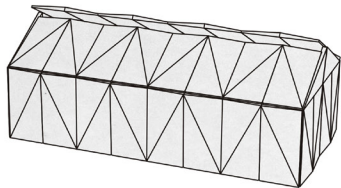
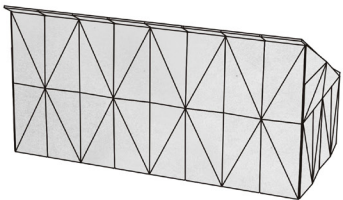
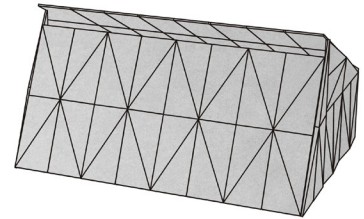
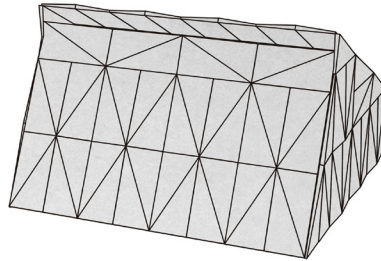
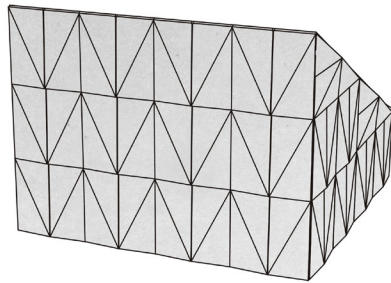
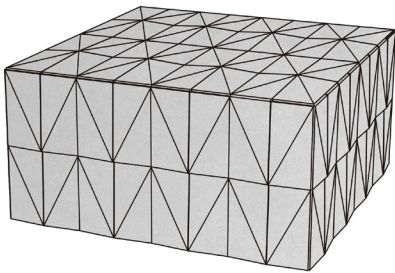
### URBAN NETWORK

The homeless population of Seattle is never a constant number, as individuals cycle in and out of poverty subject to economic, social and personal factors. For the city to fully address unauthorized camping it needs a system that can scale and multiply its capacity in coordination with the city. A redesigned network of encampments can share materials and services as needed.

Each encampment would move annually, as was recommended by the mayor's task force on emergency housing. However in the temperate rainforest of the Pacific Northwest it could be an advantage for smaller encampments to move seasonally when locations are available. By changing locations or reconfiguring the encampments between seasons the physical conditions in the encampments could be maintained in all seasons.

Despite its apparent versatility, consistent methods of arranging the encampments would assist it in consistent operation. Some practices can be based directly on the existing model of the Tent Cities: the security desk is still the anchoring point of all activity in the camp, and would remain a constant presence at the entry. The utility areas of the encampment that could require regular and convenient access are also located near the street.

The sites selected for the design examples that follow are based on a preliminary list of approved encampment sites that accompanied the city's decision to sanction additional encampments. Siting and location for encampments remains a highly contested issue in Seattle, but as the public has become more familiar with the encampments and the crisis of homelessness has continued the restrictions on their location has lessened.



## SETTLEMENT: duwamish

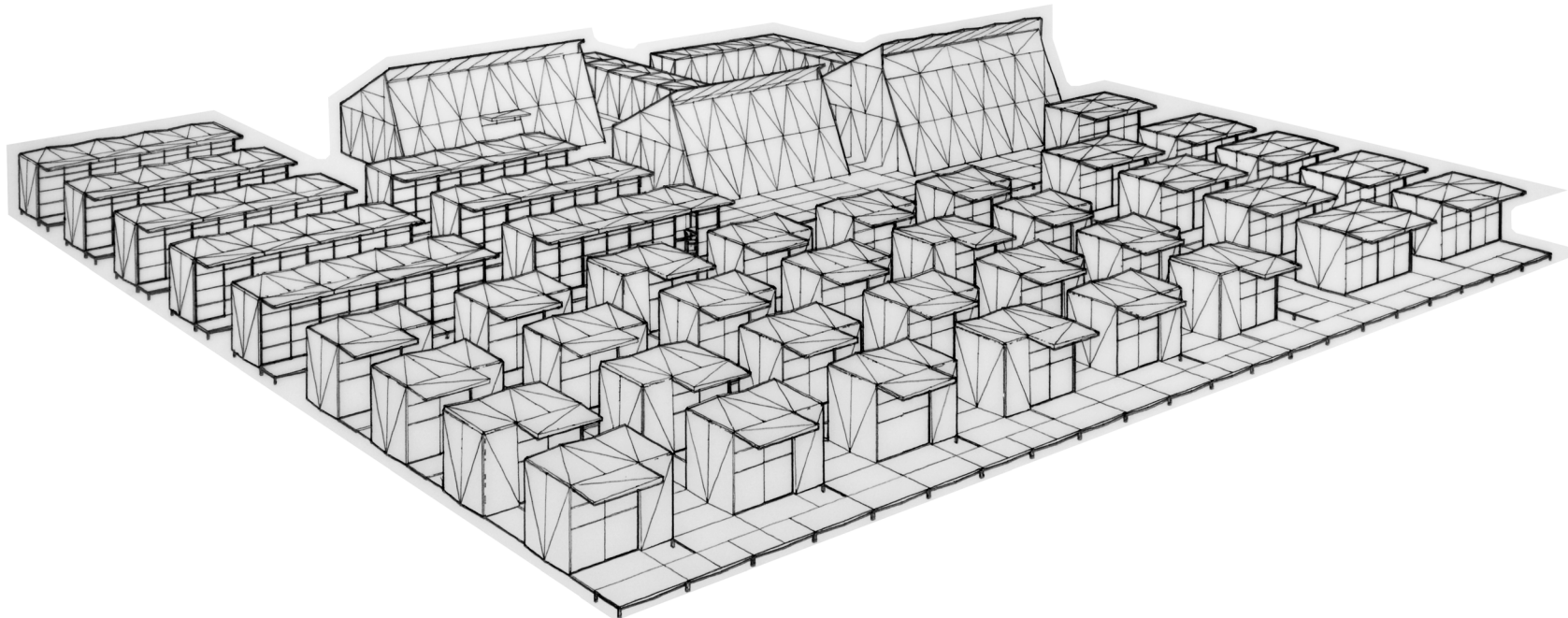
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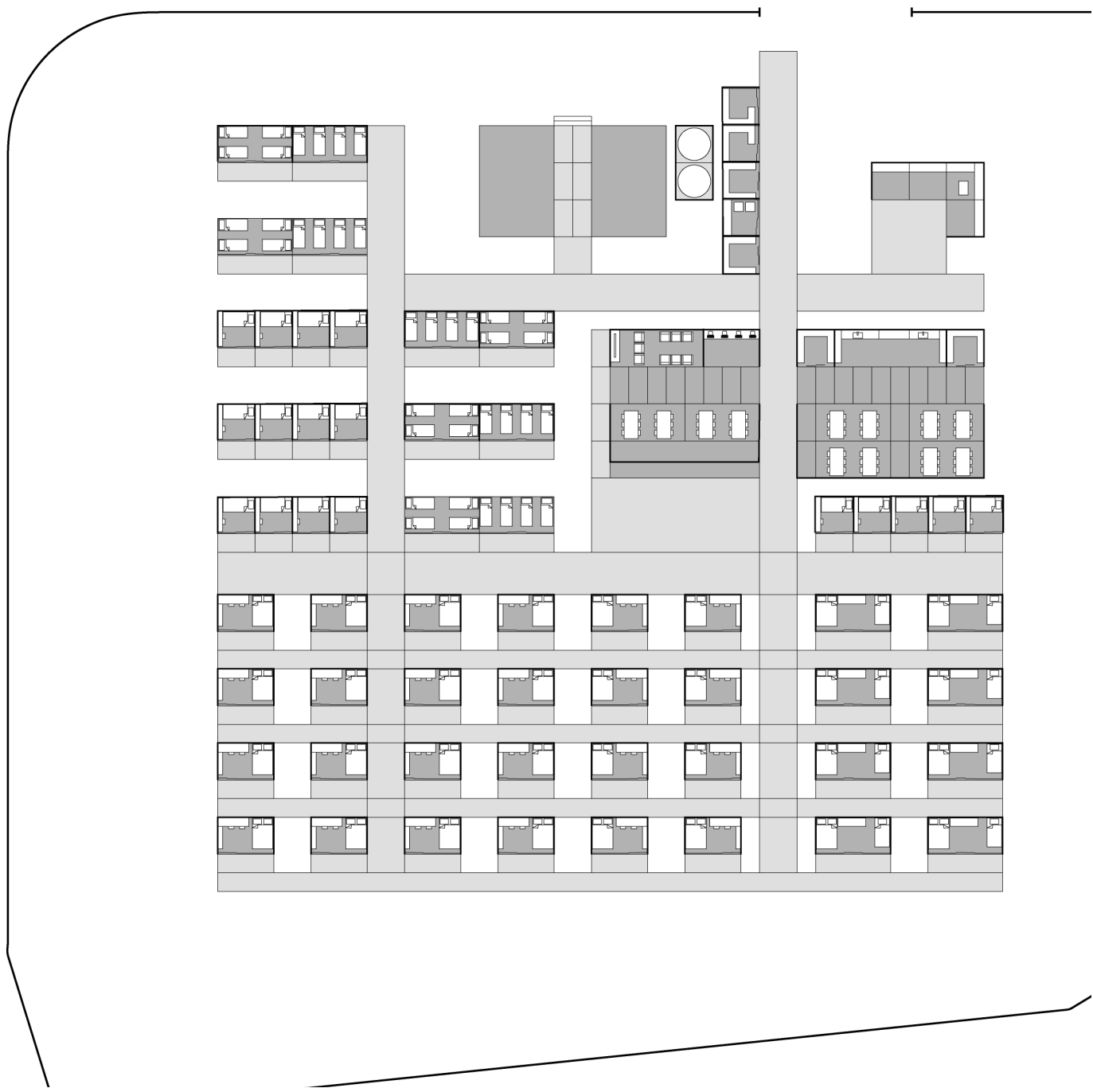
2nd Ave SW: 57,735sf, 129 residents

The glassyard site is a large industrial property near the Duwamish Waterway. It was identified at a time when the city was seeking locations for transitional encampments outside of residential neighborhoods, and its context is relatively bleak: the nearest place to buy food of any kind is a gas station one mile away and on the other side of the Duwamish. Isolation is a significant challenge for those in poverty, as their ability to manage daily necessities is further restricted by lack of transportation. The site's disadvantages are one illustration of why the city has expanded the sites available for encampments. Although it may not be ideal, the site remains viable due to good access to transit and for the very large amount of space available.

At nearly 58,000 square feet, the site is large enough to accommodate over 100 residents without crowding. It is likely that the challenges of managing a larger community would be the limiting factor. The area of the site allows each individual a significant amount of space, as compared to more confined locations in the city, and much of the housing is configured as independent assemblies to achieve this. The resulting "suburban" massing is oriented to the south, gaining as much solar access as possible. A set of raised walkways connects each of the housing units and community spaces, providing circulation and airflow on the low-lying site.

The additive nature of this massing would enable expanding the encampment onto the surrounding site if needed. It could also enable entire assemblies to be removed and transported to other locations.







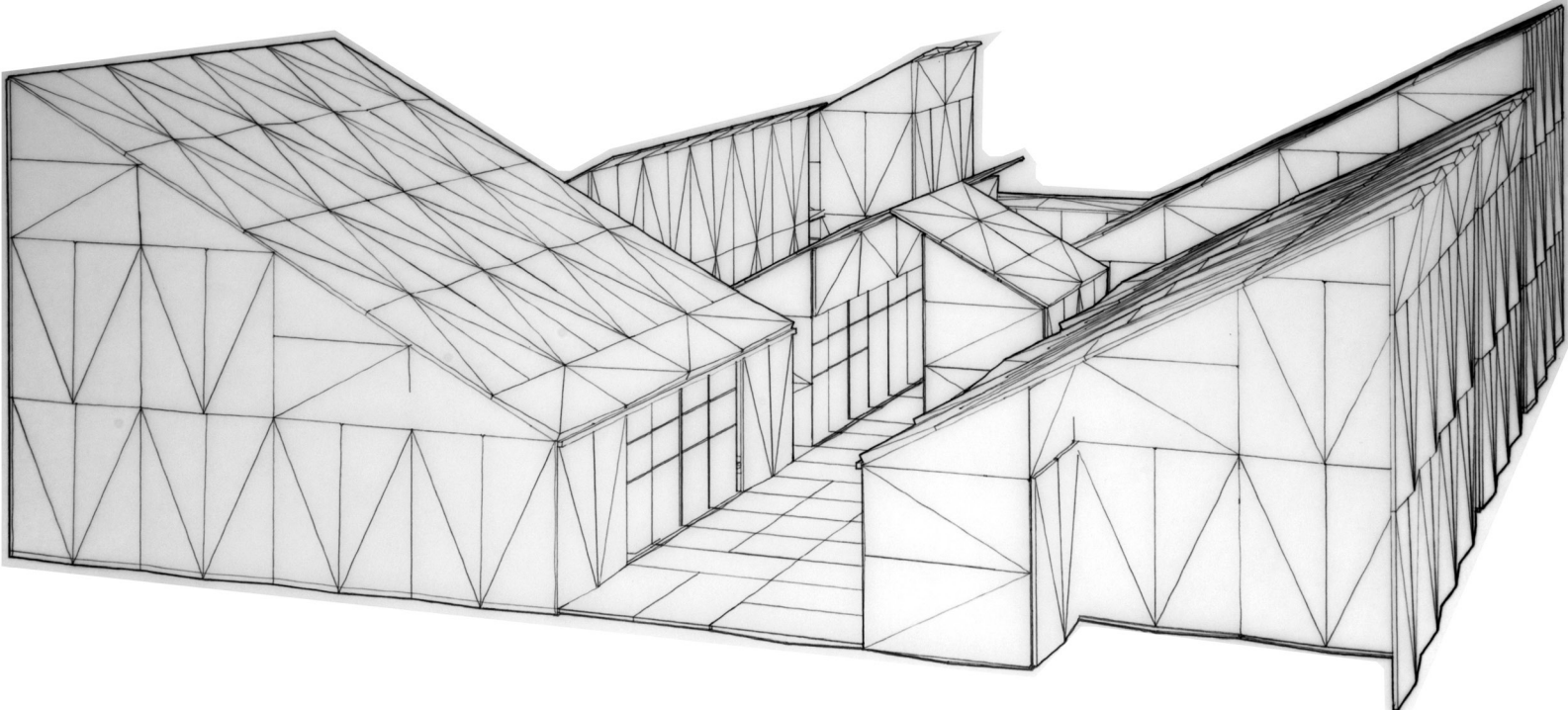
## SETTLEMENT: university

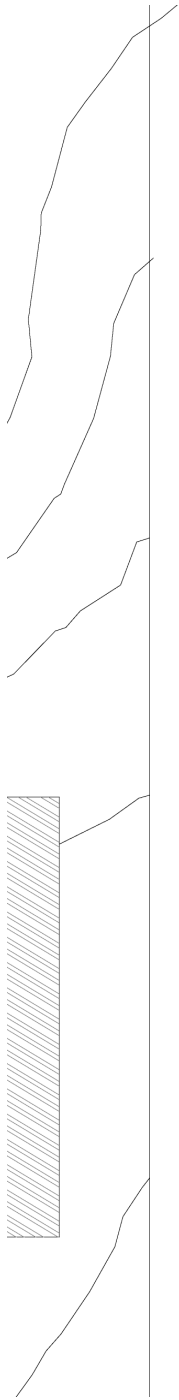
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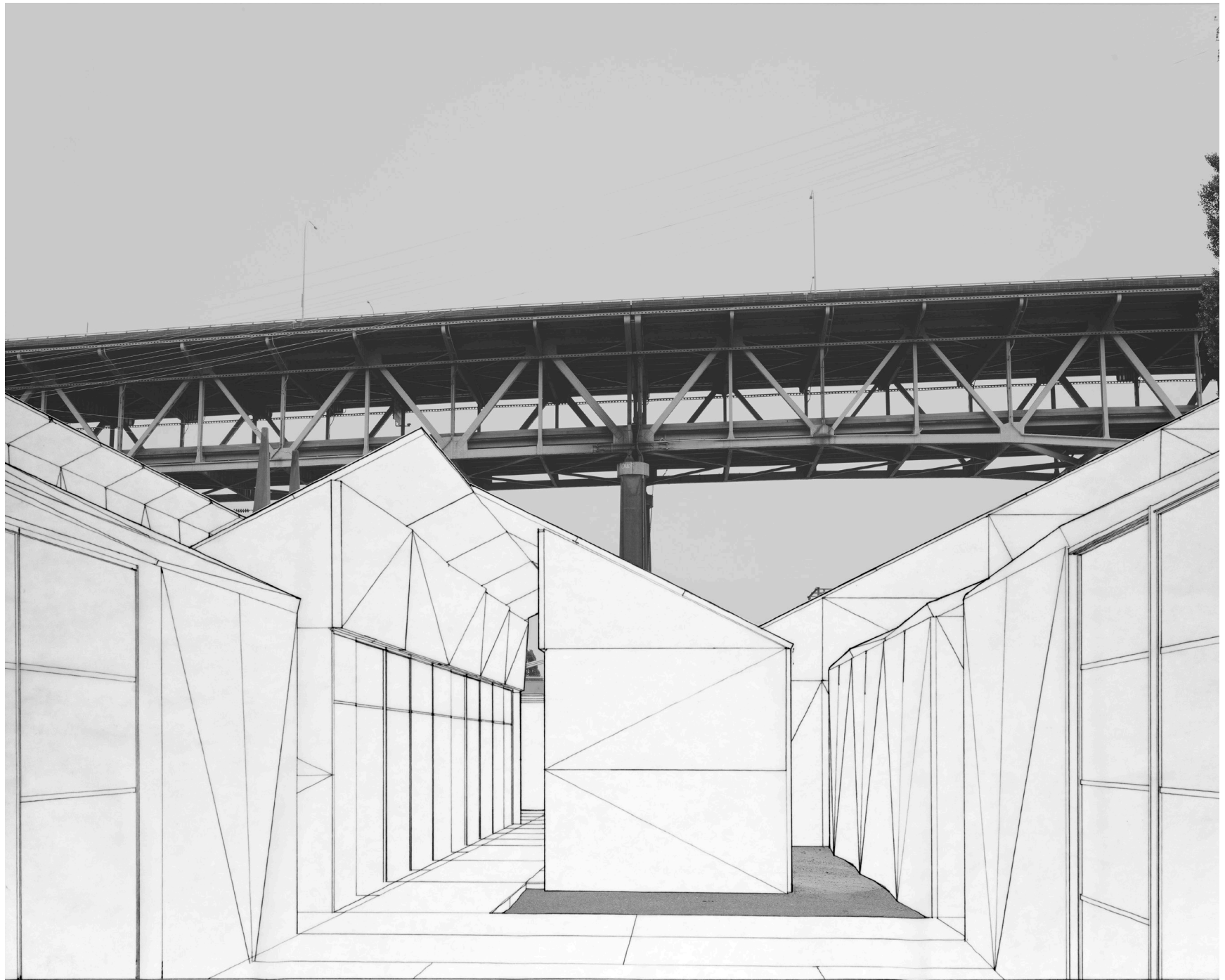
3814 4th Ave NE: 8,400sf, 45 residents

This mid-sized encampment is capable of housing 45 individuals, it does so with an emphasis on communal areas. The communal spaces are housed in two larger structures at the west end of the lot, with platforms creating an outdoor gathering place between them. The food storage, preparation and dining areas are housed in the larger structure on the north side of the lot, while the security desk, TV area, and computer work space are connected at the south side of the lot. The community spaces are central to life in the encampments, especially in the winter. By developing these spaces the design seeks to better support the social environment of the group.

The higher, sloping roofs of the assemblies used throughout this encampment have potential to provide better natural ventilation in the summer.







## SETTLEMENT: ballard

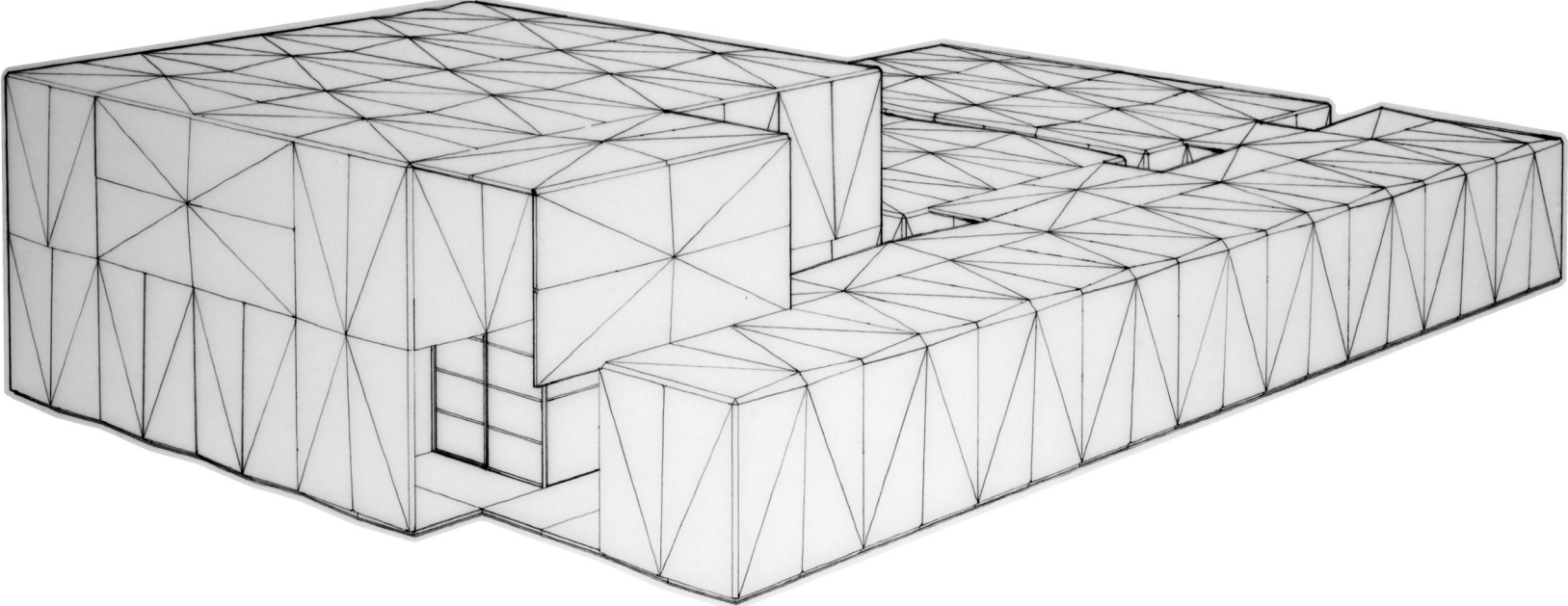
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8030 15TH Ave: 4,000 sf, 31 residents

This configuration demonstrates the possibilities for installing the encampment as an urban infill structure, and the possibilities for sheltering a significant number of people efficiently.

The City Light property on 15th is extremely sheltered. Obscured on the south side by a large apartment structure, the west by an electrical utility structure and on the north by a row of dense cherry trees, this site is accessed by the alley and is not otherwise visible. The site is extremely small, measuring 5100sf in total, with 4000sf of usable space. By arranging the residential areas of the encampment for higher capacity it is able to house 31 individuals.

To do so it relies more on dorm arrangements, while still providing necessary communal spaces in a compact arrangement.







## SETTLEMENT: brighton

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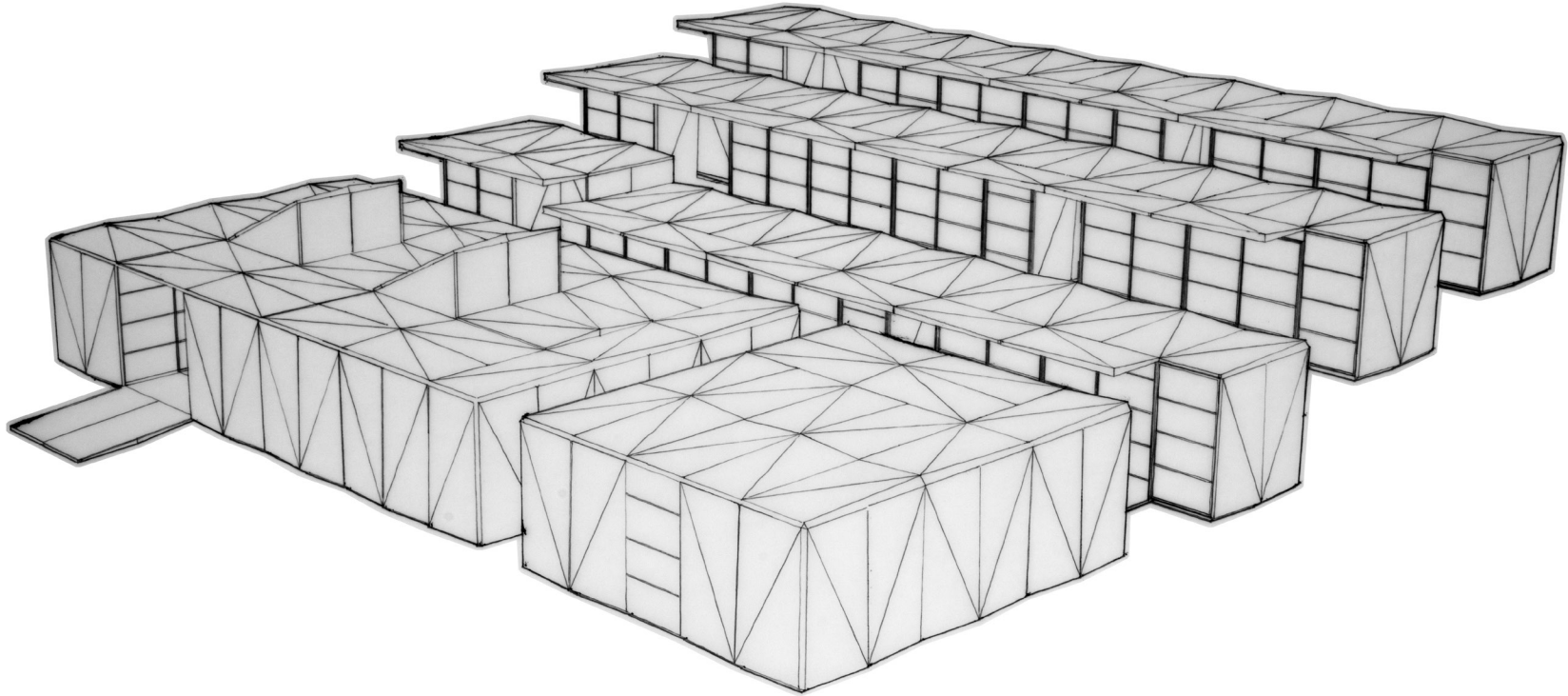
7110 Rainier Ave S: 5,700 sf, 22 residents

This site demonstrates the ability of the encampment to adapt to a physically complex site, and also shows the possibilities for social arrangements in a smaller encampment. The Seattle City Light property is a corner lot near the neighborhood center of Brighton. The site is convenient, with immediate access to transit and many nearby businesses who could potentially provide employment.

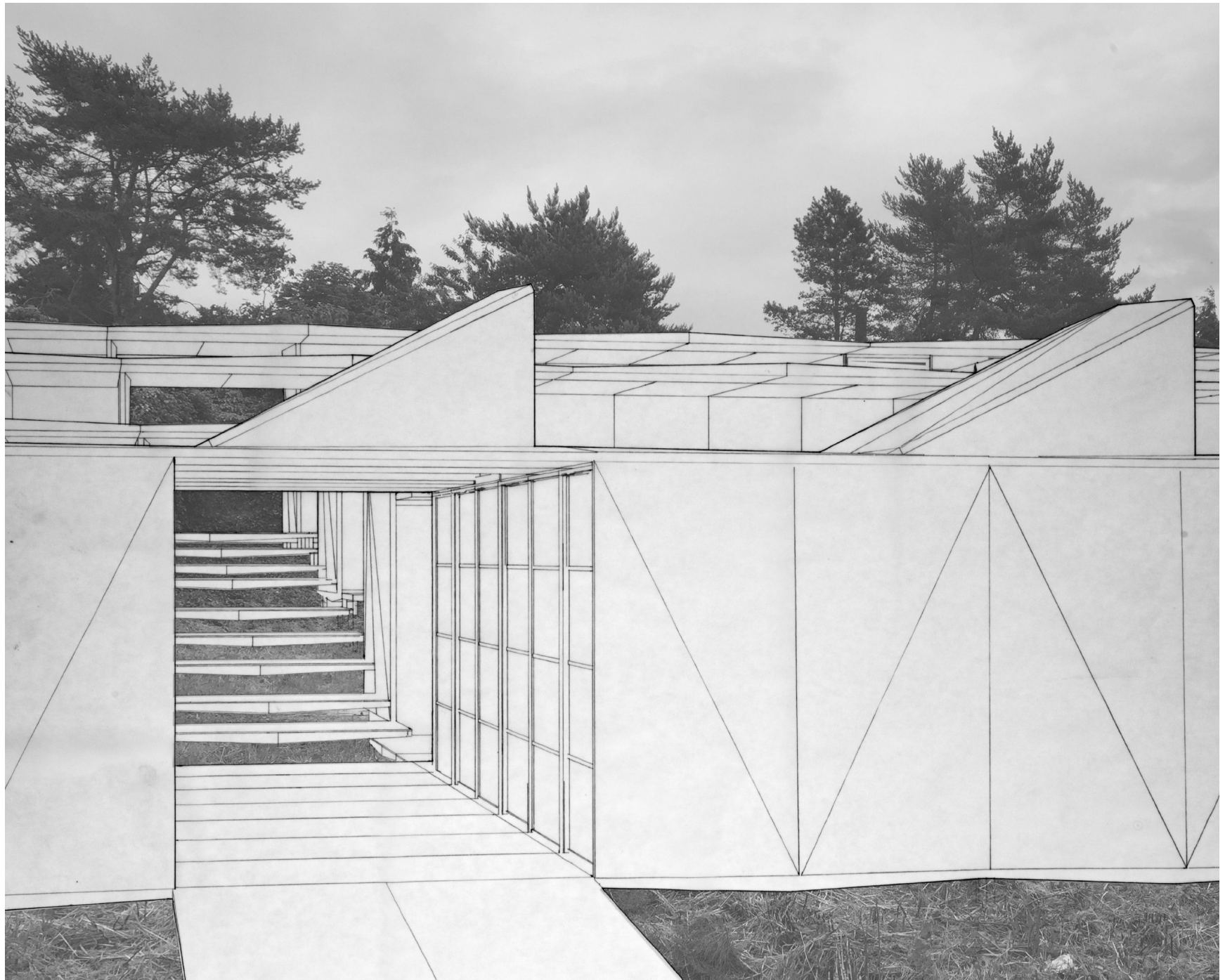
As presented, the encampment houses 22 individuals on a 5700sf lot. Because the neighborhood includes many single-family residences and working-class households this configuration would be suitable to housing couples and families. Neighborhood locations for encampments have raised concerns in the past, frequently over fears that the homeless are dangerous or incompatible with the neighborhood context. By configuring to house couples and families this encampment could promote greater identification between the encampment residents and the host neighborhood.

The site slope is 33% at its steepest point, and would present a challenge to for installing tents on the side of the hill. This design addresses the site by terracing the encampment structures above the irregular terrain. The three bars of housing step down the hill toward the street and all communal spaces and facilities are gathered in a single, larger bar at the lower end of the lot. This massing provides the residential areas of the encampment with a degree of privacy, and separation from the traffic on Rainier Avenue. Placing the bath house and utilities at the front end of the lot provides access for water and service trucks.

To admit additional light into the communal spaces, roof monitors are raised up above the security desk and kitchen areas.







## CONCLUSIONS: synthesis

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Measuring progress in homelessness can be difficult: Seattle is making significant achievements in providing housing and is a national leader in its response to homelessness, but the number of people living without stable housing is still increasing. For any strategy, there is no guarantee of success and no certainty that the city will solve the crisis within a given time. The current crisis has already proven itself to be difficult to resolve.

There are limitations to what any system can achieve, and it is unlikely that the entirety of poverty will be solved soon. Until that happens there will be a number of people at a given time who are vulnerable to losing their housing, for reasons both personal and systemic. The changing nature of cities and housing itself will be a factor, along with employment practices and labor. It will fall to society to decide what to do about it. The shifting interrelationships between these different elements will produce a different expression of poverty over time, but the issue will remain. This project argues for a strong response to homelessness that addresses both the physical context of the problem and the perception of it in society.



## LEGISLATION AND POLICY: timeline

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1932

- National Committee on Care of Transient and Homeless
- Formed with the intention to coordinate and advise assistance programs
- Became an important research and advisory body for the federal government

1933

- Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA)
- Funded the construction of shelters and camps
- Provided job placement assistance
- National Industrial Recovery Act
- Permitted the WPA to use federal funds for slum clearance and construction of housing

1937

- National Housing Act
- Established the Public Housing Administration

1949

- Urban Housing Act
- Set goals of “a decent home and a suitable environment”
- Authorized 810,000 units

1954

- Urban Housing Act

1965

- Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) established
- The department was initially tasked with creating a program to supplement the housing of low-income families in private-market housing

1968

- Housing and Urban Development Act
- Goal of 26 million new housing units in ten years
- Two types of support provided for families: mortgage insurance and rent subsidy

1973

- Public Housing Moratorium

1974

- Housing and Community Development Act
- 

Section 8 Housing

- Initiated the Scattered Sites approach

1983

- Housing and Urban-Rural Recover Act of 1973
- Redefined Section 8 benefits, slightly restricting their application

- 
- Created Rehabilitation Program for rental housing

1987

- Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (later changed to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act)
- First legislation to directly address homelessness
- Established the United States Interagency Council on the Homeless. (ICH)
- Authorized the Emergency Food and Shelter Program under the authority of the FEMA
- Created the Emergency Shelter Grant and SRO Moderate Rehabilitation programs under the authority of HUD
- Provided for Mental Health Services block grant programs and Health Care for the Homeless
- Authorized education and job training programs administered by the Department of Education
- Extended food stamps programs to include individuals without a residence
- Extended the Veterans Job Training Act

1990

- Cranston Gonzales National Affordable Housing Act
- Established Homeownership and Opportunity for People Everywhere (HOPE) program, providing support for low-income families to acquire or retain their housing

1992

- HOPE VI legislated in Congress

1997

- Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act
- Removed disincentives for aid recipients to seek work
- Reregulated the financial and operational structure for public housing programs

2000

- National Alliance to End Homelessness: Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness
- This influential program laid out a set of policy guidelines that many municipal governments adopted:
- Promotes planning for the outcome of eliminating homelessness
- Argues for the expansion of services, like healthcare, that can prevent individuals from becoming homeless
- Strongly commits to housing-first approaches, providing a stable environment in which individuals can recover
- Supports the construction of affordable housing, and establishing a living wage, to support the working class

2008

- Housing and Economic Recovery Act

2009

- American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

2010

- Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to End Homelessness
- Outlined plan to end homelessness among veterans by 2015 and entirely by 2020

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