COMMUNITY HARVEST

Only 2.5% of our available crop land is harvested for produce. Currently our country does not produce enough fruits and vegetables for every citizen to have the minimum recommended daily serving.

1 In 4 Children in the US struggle with **HUNGER**

The overall price of fruits and vegetables in the US increased by nearly **70%** since 1990, while the price of fatty foods decreased by more than **20%**

TODAY, **17% of U.S. Households**, 1 in 6 people, are **FOOD INSECURE**

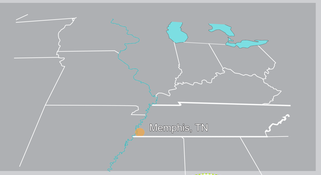
Studies show a **strong correlation** between food insecurity and increased diabetes rates. One study of Chicago neighborhoods found the **DEATH RATE** from diabetes in **FOOD DESERTS** to be twice that of areas offering access to grocery stores.

23.5 million people live in a Food Desert, more than **one mile** away from a supermarket and **do not own a car**

Cultivating Security in Urban Food Deserts

Laura Cole, Regenerative Desgin Studio, Dr. Hajo Neis , University of Oregon, Spring 2013

In our country, unlike the rest of the world, food is a privilege, not a basic human right as established by the UN. In our economy food markets follow profit, so low-income neighborhoods are often miles from the closest source of fresh produce. We are the richest country in the world and also the only one to have 'Urban Food Deserts'. In response to the dire hunger problem in Memphis, TN I propose to regenerate a once thriving community, now a large food desert in the heart of the city. This 'regeneration' will take the form of infill development around community gardens and an urban farm. The anchor building covers social justice design by democratizing and socializing access to food for the surrounding low-income community as well as providing a place to gather, play, and learn. A system and building complex designed around the idea of teaching everyone how to grow and prepare their own food, thereby establishing food security at a fundamental level and separating it from economics as much as possible. **Community Partners: Grow Memphis Urban Farm, Vance Avenue Neighborhood Collaborative, Memphis Housing Authority, Roots Farm Academy, Food Corps, Ida B. Wells Head-start.**

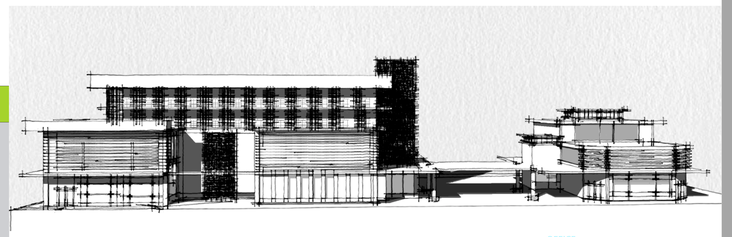


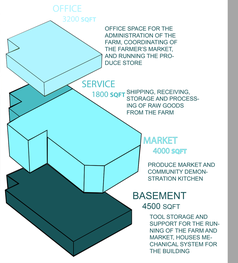
Downtown Memphis, Food Desert Map

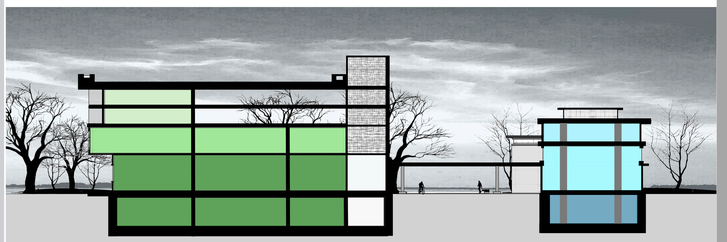
Urban Food deserts are defined by:
> the lack or absence of grocery stores that sell fresh produce and healthy food options
> low-income populations living on tight budgets that either simply can't afford to buy food, or their assistance program (SNAP, WIC) is not accepted at the neighborhood market.

As of 2010 a Gallup poll ranked Memphis #1 in the country for hunger with a startling 26 percent of people in the Memphis Metropolitan Statistical Area saying they couldn't afford to buy food for their families in the last 12 months. "What we know about Tennessee is that almost 13 percent of the census tracts are considered food deserts, both in inner-city urban areas as well as rural areas," Ellen Holtzman head of Tennessee's Food Trust.

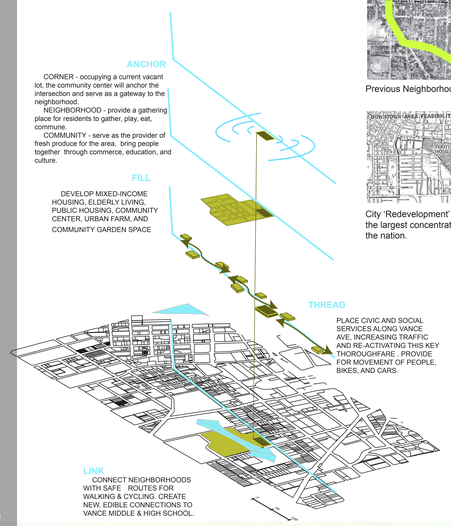
Photographs from the Commercial Appeal essay 'What Obama didn't See' by Alan Spearman, May 2011. These photographs document the Vance Avenue neighborhood and residents of the Foote Homes housing project. This is the community my project serves.







Repairing Urban Social Fabric



Previous Neighborhood Density circa 1940

City 'Redevelopment' in the 1940's created the largest concentration of public housing in the nation.

Present condition of the 72 acre site, vacant

Improvements Vance Avenue Residents Would like to see:

~Increased housing choices, renovated houses

~A Grocery Store

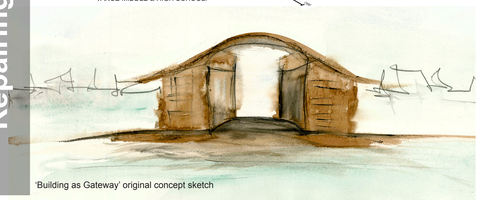
~ Cleaner, nicer parks and recreation areas

~ Improved sidewalks and public lighting

~ A Community Center

~ Services and activities for the elderly

Proposed neighborhood plan



'Building as Gateway' original concept sketch

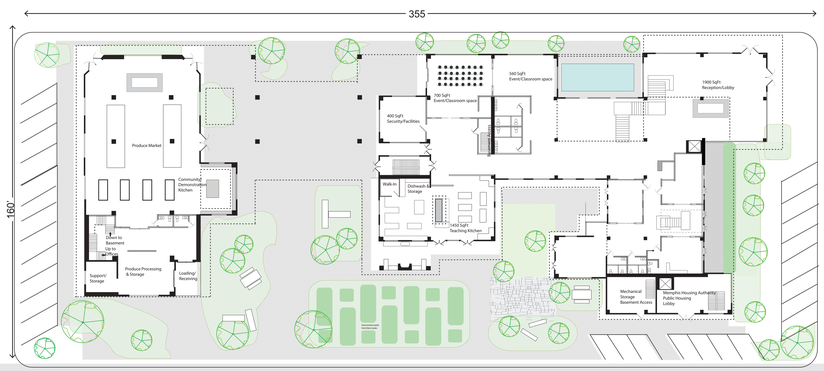
NEW PATTERN:
EDIBLE LANDSCAPE

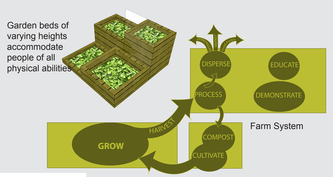
PROBLEM:
Lack of space for community gardens

DESIGN SOLUTION:
Instead of ornamental foliage, plant only edible shrubs, vines, and fruit-bearing trees along public pathways and parks. Create an abundant public harvest for the entire community to partake in.

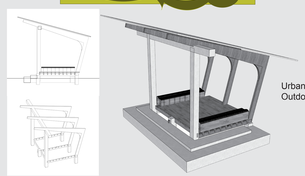
grow memphis

love thy neighborhood Vance Avenue COLLABORATIVE

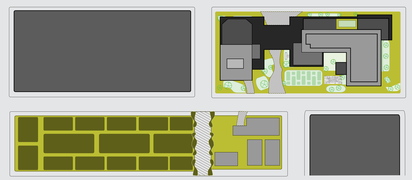




Farm System

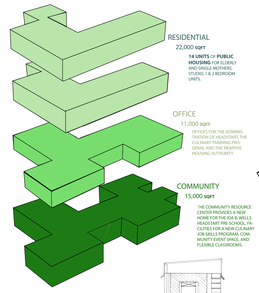


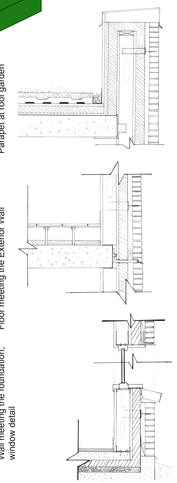
Urban Farm Outdoor Classroom

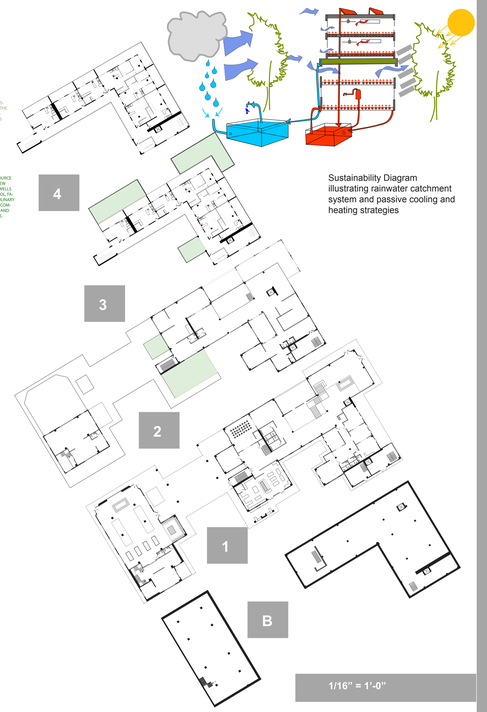


72,300 Sqft of Garden & Farm space = 1.6 acres

Grow Hartford, Urban Farm Hartford, CT







Sustainability Diagram illustrating rainwater catchment system and passive cooling and heating strategies

Construction Details