ARCHITECTURE IN OLD TOWN / CHINA TOWN / JAPAN TOWN
INTRODUCTION

RESOLVING A PORTLAND DEVELOPMENT DILEMMA IN A TRANS PACIFIC EFFORT

Development in Old Town / China Town / Japan Town (OT/CT/JT) has been stymied by a series of conflicts among various stakeholders in the area, parts of which have historic-preservation status. For example, developers need a certain building height to make their projects pencil out, but preservationists oppose greatly changing the scale of buildings. Some see the homeless and very-low-income population as a hinderance to development while others are committed to keeping that population in the neighborhood. Some want to recognize the history of Asians in the neighborhood; others do not have the same commitment in the new development.

In this studio, six blocks of OT/CT?JT were used for carefully-planned case-study investigations to try and resolve these dilemmas, hopefully making a useful contribution to the discussion. With programs for mostly mixed-use buildings, we undertook a series of design studiess that deal directly with the various development dilemmas. For example what are the issues of massing, facade composition, and materials that allow taller buildings to exist comfortably with lower buildings of historic character? How can uses be defined that enhance neighborhood character but also result in a good ‘bottom line’?

The project involved two 484/585 studios in Portland and one graduate design studio from Meiji University, Tokyo.
Housing for Students and Young Professionals
Adria Moyer

Urban Design
The urban design aims to connect the waterfront park to the park blocks by extending the existing festival streets on Davis and Flanders. Car access will be allowed on these streets, but the narrowness will encourage traffic to move slower, making it more pedestrian friendly. Couch St will gain a designated bike lane, and also help connect the west esplanade bike path to the city.

Block Design
Looking at the proposed Educational district in the blocks surrounding the University of Oregon and the Oriental College of Medicine, this proposal focused on uses which could benefit the growing number of students in the area. The existing PDC building sits on the north west corner of the lot, and I am proposing a new building next to it in the north east corner which would contain a library on the first floor, and three floors of commercial above. The southern end of the block contains one building which is ground floor retail with student and young professional housing above.

Building Design
The building itself consists of the existing building located in the south east corner, and the new portion adjacent to it. Respecting the height the existing PDC, the new addition is slightly lower than it. The building design began by aligning the retail access along the festival streets in order to encourage activity. An alley was carved off of 5th to allow for access to the housing, and a courtyard was carved out of the existing building and the proposed library. This space has the potential to be used by all buildings on the block, and several of the restaurants on the retail floor have direct courtyard access.

The housing was oriented in a W shape, creating two courtyards on the 3rd floor which are used to allow light into the corridor of the housing. The west most courtyard contains a green roof and no roof access, while the east most courtyard is usable exterior space. The ‘corridor’ which lines the courtyards has been widened to create shared commons spaces which residents can use as a community living room.
Oregon Leather Company Renovation
Oliver Brandt

Urban Context/Concept:

Located at the center of downtown Portland, Chinatown/Japantown is currently significantly underused in terms of both variety of use and density of development. Proposed changes to the area recognize the value of maintaining and retaining the historical fabric of the neighborhood while attempting to add value and diversity by supporting positive trends already taking place.

New green streets crisscross the area providing alternate routes of transit for pedestrians and cyclists along burgeoning commercial areas while connecting major existing green areas. Couch is proposed as a major commercial corridor, encouraging the small but vibrant retail and office buildings that have already begun to give new life to portions of the street.

Block Strategy:

At the block level a pattern which echoes the historic pattern of small lots with common courtyards and alleys is proposed. Such a pattern allows for interaction amongst the occupants of the dense and varied buildings. Small lot sizes coupled with semi-private outdoor spaces not only provide a rich street life for the neighborhood at large via fine-grain street frontages with varied facades and uses but also the opportunity for genuine interactions and unusual connections between tenants who might otherwise only interact superficially.

OLC Renovation:

The Oregon Leather Company building is an historic, quarter block, two-story structure on the Northeast corner of NW 2nd Avenue and NW Couch Street. Currently home to a leather retail and warehouse space, the building is underutilized programmatically but also in need of serious upgrades, seismic and otherwise before it can be revitalized. The proposed renovation utilizes the creation of a central atrium as the location of the majority of the structural improvements while also transitioning the interior of the building from a primarily horizontal existence to a form which allows for interaction across a triple-height space.

The building’s new program consists of flexible workshop office and storage space for small businesses with a focus on urban manufacturing and production. Above are located various sized studio apartments that can occupied by the business owners themselves or simply rented normally. A roof penthouse provides flexible space that can adapted to either fit the needs of a large business in the form of office space or a special tenant in the form of a single penthouse apartment.
Penthouse Floor:
- Rooftop Terrace
- Penthouse/Office

Second Floor:
- Studio Apartments
- Office Space

Ground Floor:
- Retail Workspace
- Main Lobby/Atrium

Basement Floor:
- Storage Spaces
- Communal Workspace
The Erickson Saloon Library and Offices
Tyler Colville

The focus of my project was block #19, bordered by W Burnside to the south and NW 2nd Ave to the east. This block sits at one of the main entrances to Old Town / China Town / Japan Town. Old town's adjacency to downtown and the Pearl district makes it a key neighborhood within the city. The area is already the subject of much debate as to which direction it will be headed in the future. The high number of historic buildings in Old Town (all but one on block 19 are historically contributing) complicates the issue as most of them are in poor condition and would require seismic upgrading ($80) if they were to be redeveloped and maintained. The city of Portland takes pride in its past and is very adamant about preserving the existing building fabric wherever possible. So the question that we are faced with as designers is, what level and type of intervention is appropriate in Old Town? Should we be reconstructing and preserving the buildings that have been here since the late 19th/early 20th century or should we be replacing those buildings with newly designed structures? And if so, how do we maintain the sense of place that one feels when walking through this historic neighborhood?

Urban Design:

Old Town is situated in an area of the city where social services, higher-end mixed use buildings, and downtown offices converge. The area is very well served by public transit, making it a sensible location for many different building types. What the area lacks, however, is a sense that it is a neighbor-
hood with people living there. Litter is occupied at night aside from the bars. Due to the relatively large number of social service buildings in the area, there is a large homeless population too.

Following Jane Jacobs' theory that in order to make a place safe and lively you must create a mix of uses and get "eyes on the street," I proposed an urban design focused on encouraging foot traffic and invigorating the area by bringing in young people who would be more accepting of the grittiness of the place. I proposed that Couch and Flanders be developed into pe-
destrian and bike-friendly "green" or festival streets, connecting waterfront park to the north park blocks. I also proposed building up with offices and retail spaces along Burnside since it is the main artery running through Old Town. I viewed the area north of Burnside along the green streets as the quiet "back yard" of the neighborhood where residential buildings could be mixed in amongst retail and restaurants. Finally, after identifying the existing educational and other mini-districts that are already forming in Old Town, I proposed developing several libraries which would be disbursed throughout the neighborhood (much like the "lighthouse" libraries of Curitiba). These would be smaller, more digitally oriented neighborhood libraries that could become social gathering places for the residents of Old Town.
Building Design:

My design response was to focus on one of the iconic historic buildings on block 19, the Erickson Saloon Building, and make a transformation that would exhibit this building and Old Town as something that has a strong history but is part of a city that is rapidly growing and evolving.

I wanted to design a light building. Light in appearance since it would be fitting into and on top of an historic building and literally light, admitting much natural light via skylights and atria. I also wanted the building to appear modern while still being acceptable to the historic preservation community. After structurally reinforcing the building with steel, the north-most bay would be removed and a glass structure would be inserted, stepped back and connected to a glazed fourth floor “cap.” The glazing would be frosted and potentially colored along the upper floor with joints aligning to regulating lines of the historic facade.

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The ground floor library/bookstore café has seating along the street edge and an indoor theater/stadium seating area that is open to the second floor. The north end of the building or the new bay would become an atrium spanning all four floors, bringing natural light into the building and providing a unique indoor space.

The third and fourth floors are office spaces with views to the street and a light well cutting through both floors just off center. There is an accessible balcony at the top floor office, overlooking 2nd Ave. Some precedent studies included Renzo Piano’s Morgan Library addition, Steven Holl’s Pratt Institute project, and Allied Work’s Wyden and Kennedy Building.
The Patch Block
Peter Hamilton

Chinatown needs help.
It needs work.
Yet it needs to remain Chinatown.

In an effort to realize change and transition for a ‘run down’ neighborhood that seems to be staled with decades old reputations and stereotypes, our class - with the help of our Japanese friends from Meiji University in Tokyo - has established a holistic urban design vision for this community. The ‘blighted’ neighborhood is at risk of slowly losing its flavor, history and identity due to neglect and disrepair as well as gentrification through large scale development. In an effort to avoid this loss, we thoughtfully researched what Chinatown was and what it represented, carefully observed what it is today, and delicately investigated how we can sustain that unique identity while making it a thriving, successful, and contributing community in Portland.

Our group first took a ten-thousand foot look at Portland and identified the positive, successful pieces of the city and how they connected to Chinatown. We then looked at the the major activities that defined this area, and decided how, with little or no development, could enhance and define main activity corridors throughout.

With these two goals in mind, we identified Couch Street as Chinatown’s most successful and active street that housed interesting and creative commercial spaces. With the myriad of unique businesses that line the street’s edge, Couch offered the opportunity of connecting the commercial success of the Pearl with the commercial successes of Chinatown.

We saw Davis as a more pedestrian-dominated street. Davis acts a strong connection between the park blocks and the Willamette River Front.

Lastly, we identified the way in which the streets and the blocks interact with on another. With this in mind, we then established a our urban design strategies that we believe will enhance this neighborhood.
**Design Strategies**

The action stems from the center of the block in focus. The street ends in a cul-de-sac at an upper level, lightly connected to the surrounding buildings. However, more importantly, the project is a place for connection, for gathering, for coming together, for the consumer, and the resident.

1. The building fits into the block. It is a corner of blocks, but rather it is a generic to connect the sides of facades that make the block. Behind the flank rises to the activity, and life.

2. The block creates a pedestrian connection between Burnside and Clack. Along that connection, the pedestrian is connected with the neighborhood to the block, and the neighborhood aspect of Circulation.

**Structure + Texture**

Circulation is a unique neighborhood in a rich variety of ways, but particularly it regards to its presence, contemporary built state. It is gritty, old, and includes urban mosaic, while a deep desire of renewal, intervention, culture, and continuity.

To achieve and continue the same professional clarity and typology of this neighborhood, I thought it was imperative to design its façades to serve both its purpose, gritty but satisfy warm sense of the neighborhood.

The façades from the street and from the courtyard differ, in the reflection of diverse uses, but rather the massive gridded on one another as a gridded. The façades experience those spaces from the other side of the building.

The street maintains that grit of Circulation, but also focuses on an inviting, life, texture, and warm experience.

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**The Patch as Parti**

Block 14 is unique to its road in the assembly of the block, whereas some aspects of its façades. The primary function of the design is to complement the existing grid of what the larger urban context.

The building in Block 14 meets such aesthetic, unique and unique, unique, to respond to the space’s needs, to help design a notion of texture and surface together with the meanings of urban, echoing together in an urban essence. The urban texture is much to complete, building and surface, and identity of the urban context. The urban texture is much to complete, building and surface, and identity of the urban context.

The many designs together as in the urban, grid, unique, and integrated, where the urban texture is much to complete, building and surface, and identity of the urban context. The urban texture is much to complete, building and surface, and identity of the urban context.

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**Applied Concept**

**Museo di Castelvecchio**

As a preserved, located at the heart of the College of Architecture in Burnside, the design is focused on the College of Architecture in Burnside. The design is focused on the College of Architecture in Burnside.

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**Concept Model**

**Street Elevation Study**

**Burnside Elevation**

**Ground Floor Plan**

**2nd-3rd Floor Plan**

**4th-7th Floor Plan**
Old Town, China Town, Japan Town is in desperate need of a new identity. It has been the place for many groups of people since the beginning of Portland. It now houses Portland’s population that needs the most help, the homeless. When giving OTCTJT its new identity it is important that this population isn’t displaced. OTCTJT is as much theirs as any newcomer that might make this place their home.

To give OTCTJT a new identity I propose a series of high density towers. This new tower district will be between Everett and Glisan. The city has already zoned this area for increase height, but the FAR has not been changed to reflect the density that the height demands. With an increase in density for Market rate, student, and affordable housing OTCTJT will gain the population necessary to reinvent itself. This new tower district is where my building is being design.

As the first of the towers to be developed it will set a standard for all subsequent buildings. It will set a series of precedents: ground floor street activation, broad range of housing types, height, and developing community. At this stage of development my tower has accomplished almost all of these criteria. It is also developing a conversation with the neighborhood. It does not step back from the street, it’s podium is minimal, it’s foot-print is less than a quarter block, and it falls within the 200-350 height range for the tower district. These standards will help to maintain the structure of the existing neighborhood, while adding a new characteristic and subdistrict to OTCTJT.
Often times we think of the construction of buildings as single value objects. To architects, they must be beautiful. To contractors, they must be quick to build. For developers, the property has to make money. Often times, we think of these things separately, and, not surprisingly, the result is an often fractured building, insensitive to its social context.

Here, we have to find a balance, to think about all aspects of the design from the very beginning. Will the developer make the profit required to stay competitive? Can the design meet be of a high quality rather than trying to "max out" the numbers? What does the future look like for the area?

This building emerged through two simultaneous visions: provide a public space open to all, for use throughout the year in spite of Portland's grey skies and wet weather, and to create an economic and social catalyst within the center of the Old Town/Chinatown district.

The building has two enclosed parks at two corners of the building. The building opens onto these two enclosed parks with several cafés and restaurants, a public theater, creative industrial/arts workshops, and a music conservatory.

Initial walk-through of the site led me to want to preserve the existing open area in some way. Though it's a parking lot now, all of the buildings that surround it are large and some have potential for intense interaction.

A 20x' 200' park seemed large for the area, both now and in the future. The neighborhood has many small alleys and courts, so a large park would be out of place. We have decided to break the open space into two parts.

Each park was made unique. One park serves as a public amphitheater and stage, the other the dining area for a café-restaurant. Each use requires a different form and section.

Each building mass has a different function. One serves as the music conservatory. It is meant to be open and inviting through access and open ports above to the park spaces. The other is creative offices, meant to be walked around at the ground floor.

Spaces are spread out to give greater integration and experience to the path spaces. Both parks are covered and conditioned, enjoyable year-round through Portland's grey climate.

The buildings are simple and reflect the industrial character of the neighborhood through a simple, exposed column and slab construction method.
The floors plans are laid out in 'books.' General areas, hallways, and corridors are not heavily conditioned. Each "room" or floor within each floor is heavily insulated and has its own HVAC system. This is similar to a Japanese house.

Simple in massing; these are two quadrants devoted to public space and two quadrants to building space, with a large mass on top.

The inspiration for the facade came from the trees that will be planted inside. Simple and massive at the top, trees get more complex and intricate as one moves to the branches.

Many of the street-facing trees of the facade were derived through potential site trees and floor heights. The idea is to create a blurred view inside that does not let one see into the many rooms to contain one within a forest.

The regulating temperatures from the plants and humidity may be used to help condition the 'human' spaces, relaxing HVAC load.
Old Town Community Art Center & Museum

Hanna Lirman

The Old Town Community Art Center & Museum is located at the Southwes corner of Block 33 in the Old Town neighborhood of Portland, OR. Block 33 is currently a surface parking lot located between Couch & Davis and 4th & 5th Streets. My proposal for Block 33 is to create an active street retail level with a specialty foods market acting as an anchor tenant on the Northern half of the site and smaller, fine grain retail along the South, West, and East edges of the site. Located directly above the food market I propose a retail tower that helps to maximize both the F.A.R. and height requirements of the block. On the Southwest corner, there will be retail along the ground floor, with the art museum facing the South edge of the block, adding to the creative and artistic community that already exists in that area. Above the museum there will be studio space for artists to live and work, and will be funded through public grants associated with the museum below.

Old Town Development & Analysis:

1. Establish Connections Between Old Town and Adjacent Neighborhoods:
   - Help establish Couch Street as Old Town’s major retail Corridor.
   - Further develop bike lanes along Everet & Glisan Streets.
   - Encourage residential development along Davis Street to create a pedestrian oriented corridor through the neighborhood.
   - Maintain Burnside as a major thoroughfare & transit street.

2. Maintain the Historic Typology of the Old Town/Chinatown Neighborhood:
   Historic maps of the area shows a pattern throughout the Old Town/Chinatown/Japantown neighborhood of fine grain development & outdoor urban spaces at the street level. This pattern is still utilized presently, creating unique outdoor spaces and the ability for small & independent businesses to succeed in the neighborhood.

3. Maximize F.A.R. & Development Costs:
   Max Gross sf: 5 x 40 = 240,000 sf
   Net Rentable %: 85 x 240,000 = 204,000 sf
   Total Net Rentable Space: 204,000 sf
   Revenue:
   Residential: 136,000sf x 17.5 = $2,380,000
   Commercial: 25,500sf x 19.5 = $497,250
   Retail: 34,000sf x 19 = $646,000
   Total: $3,523,250
   Cost:
   Construction Cost: $34,800.00
   Land Cost: $5,200,000
   Total Development Cost: $40,000,000
   Cost Effectiveness Ratio: 0.88
   F.A.R. Efficiency Ratio: 1.0
Reimagining Historical Facades in Old Town/China Town Portland

RICHARD NELSON

This project attempts to balance the goals and expectations of those wishing to preserve the historic nature of the area and the expectations of the end user for open spaces filled with light, ventilation and access to the exterior. The historic masonry construction of Old Town/China Town/Japan Town resulted in a common typology marked by similar building heights, vertical bays, horizontal lines, window to wall ratios, color, architectural motifs, and structural expression. The typology originated as a result of construction methods now outdated. Contemporary masonry wall systems are non-structural weather screens that are not constrained by the need to transfer loads to the ground. The character of the area was defined by a construction typology that is currently obsolete and unnecessary. This project attempts to transform the societal cultural constraint of matching the area’s character into an asset by reimagining the shape, form and function of the historical façade. By treating the historical façade as an external superstructure offset from the contemporary building, this project creates an activated transitional zone between a residential private environment and Old Town Portland. Offset by ten feet from the building, the weather screen creates a covered arcade at ground level and balcony space at the residential levels.

Urban Design

This development study proposes to redevelop the NE, SE and SW quadrants of Block 34 in Portland utilizing a mix of new development, rehabilitation, and demolition. The NW quadrant currently housing the Portland Development Commission will not be altered. The two story building on the SW quadrant will be demolished and replaced with a seven story mixed use building. The SE currently houses a historically recognized three story building in need of seismic upgrading. This block proposal includes a plan to rehabilitate all three floors of this building while leaving it at its current height. The NE quadrant is currently a parking lot and will house a 114’ ten story mixed use high rise. Above the sixth floor the building will set back to the West, by fifty feet and rise another four floors. All new development will house retail on the street level, followed by two floors of office and residential above.
JAPAN TOWN RESIDENCES
Simrit Khalsa

Portland's Old Town/ China Town/ Japan Town has a rich cultural history. Sadly much of that history has not been preserved and the district has lost some of its identity only gaining a reputation as the scary homeless area of town. There are not many businesses in the area and it is mostly populated by Nightclubs and a few remaining Chinese restaurants and the area is very quiet during the day except for the lines of homeless rounding the blocks of the mission and like places.

The District needs new life, a new urban vision. The key factor is drawing in more people. Because there are MAX lines lining the district and the train station just north of the district there is a lot of opportunity to revive the district. Most people don't move past the park blocks and out of the pearl district, inviting lively, pedestrian streets are what is needed to draw people down through the district and to the waterfront. The street should be designed for the pedestrian first and the car second.

New businesses and more residents need to be brought in to create a district that has something happening no matter what the time of day. The northern part of the district is zoned for higher building heights and has several empty lots that would be good for residential type buildings. The idea is that since the homeless services own their own buildings and are here to stay we need to plan for them staying in the district and instead think about how we can dilute the homeless population and create a more balanced residential area.
UPPER RESIDENTIAL FLOORS

UPPER TERRACE AND COMMUNITY ROOMS FLOOR 9

LOWER RESIDENTIAL FLOORS 4-8 SCALE 1" = 1/8"'

OFFICES FLOORS 2-3

GROUND FLOOR

WEST ELEVATION: 4th Street

EAST ELEVATION: Everett Street

SECTION A

SECTION B
The Erickson Saloon Library and Offices

Tyler Colville

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The ground floor library/bookstore café has seating along the street edge and an indoor theater/stadium seating area that is open to the second floor. The north end of the building or the new bay would become an atrium spanning all four floors, bringing natural light into the building and providing a unique indoor space.

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Portland Music Academy
Jacob Spence

There is a liveliness which can be experienced at night along west Couch street in Portland's Old Town / Chinatown / Japantown. Historically a neighborhood of immigrant and transient populations related to the shipping industries on the Willamette, the district is unique to the city yet has always been in search of its identity. It is a prime location immediately adjacent to downtown and the Pearl district with numerous modes of transit within yet continues to be stifled by constraints and stereotypes: low permanent resident population, concentration of social services, historic architectural infrastructure needing expensive seismic upgrades, small lot sizes, limited building height, low floor-to-area ratio requirements, perception of crime and noise on weekends, all which restrain typical growth and development which has been seen in other parts of the city.

This proposal on Bock 19, between Burnside and Couch, and Second and Third Avenues looks to embrace the existing conditions by cooperating with and maintaining social service establishments, preserving historic facades through adaptive reuse and retaining the nightlife and entertainment scene for which the area is known. The primary component is a new Portland Music Academy, providing youth musicians an urban institute for classical education.

The block is currently completely occupied by structure and so it is through a qualitative conversation about integrity and quantitative look at metrics that led to decision about how to interject. It was also the intention to make a development project pencil out, so different programs are proposed to both help activate the block and be realistic economically. Retail is suggested at the ground floor of the converted buildings, commercial office space above and in the northeast parcel, shop houses with 3 added levels of housing. Another strategy was to open up the facade along Couch Street to accommodate a public performance / events hall which has the potential to spill out onto the street if necessary. Going along side this space, and opening to the rear of the academy is an enclosed alley, connecting to Burnside and providing an intimate gathering space for events and circulation to residences above.

A single-story existing building along Third Avenue, lacking historical significance served as the point of departure and new face for the academy. The site is narrow at 25 feet so the adjacent condemned building, the Glade Hotel was incorporated into the project. The school is designed with a vertically hierarchy: lobby and events space and a small performance auditorium at the base and institutional components above.

With each architectural addition to the block, of primary concern was how to appropriately address the historic building, especially in elevation. The facades have a real and tangible thickness, relating to past construction methods but have a certain meaningfulness. This depth served as precedent for the treatment of the new facades, seeking to design a respectful yet distinct insertion.

The northeast corner parcel which is currently unoccupied has the opportunity to be opened up to Couch Street and contribute to arts/entertainment/music scene in the way of a public auditorium, meant for lectures or small music concerts, Couch Street could be closed off for a street audience.

While the existing buildings feature unique and significant facades, the ground levels have been modified at later dates. This block design proposes new retail treatments on a majority of parcels, linking the development with similar architectural detailing, emphasizing a restored history above.

This parcel along Third Avenue presents the greatest opportunity for change. The existing building is not of historical significance and does not contribute to the block in height or aesthetics. This proposal utilizes this parcel as the primary and entrance piece to the Portland Music Academy.

This historic buildings on the block do not rise above three floors yet the narrow lots and modern code requirements limit development profitability. This design proposal rises up to the current height limit but setting back the structure once above adjacent buildings.

Parcels 33 to converted to ground floor retail and shop house. Parcel 6 to be modified into public auditorium and enclosed alley access above to be combined into housing.

Portland Music Academy, utilizing parcels 22 and 4. Previously the Glade Hotel. Building the historic façade and north wall are to be semi-retrofitted and maintained as part of new construction.

Ersking Saloon building's ground level program to be maintained. Upper floors converted to office space with future expansion above as part of seismic upgrade.

Parcel 28 to be converted to ground floor retail and office space above. West portion to become circulation.
PORTLAND'S OLD TOWN/CHINATOWN/JAPANTOWN neighborhood possesses a unique character and charts the industrial and cultural growth of the city through the last two centuries. Though some buildings remain culturally and visually relevant, others are unsafe or have been altered through the years beyond recognition. Many have been demolished, giving way to parking lots or new construction. The neighborhood struggles for connection with the rest of the city, for the vibrance of the surrounding areas, and for a cohesive identity that recognizes and celebrates its diverse heritage.

Development Considerations in this neighborhood are particular to that of historical district: numerous vacant lots; vital historical architectural context; the need for seismic retrofits; a variety of building height limits; smaller lot sizes; the lack of connection to other districts; the current population of homeless and people receiving aid that are main residents of the area; and a strong arts and nightlife presence.

To develop as a successful district while maintaining its historical identity, Old Town must denude, connect, and cultivate. It must become a path and a place, interfacing cultural past with current identity and the future needs of the neighborhood.

OTCTJT Library/Gallery spans the E-W axis of Block 26, creating a path and a place. To tie into the identity of the neighborhood, a gallery for remembering and for creating a cultural future forms a path from the gate street of Chinatown/Japantown to a view of the Lan Su Chinese Garden. The gallery is embraced and supported by the library, which serves the building residential and office population, as well as the existing homeless population.

Both programs shape a public space that responds to the growing needs of the neighborhood, providing a place for everyday life, big events, the celebration of cultural heritage, the administering of social services, and the cultivation of arts.

E-W PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE STREETS
RECONNECT TO THE URBAN FABRIC THROUGH GREEN STREETS AND FESTIVAL STREETS, CREATING SLOWER STREETS AND ARTERIAL CONNECTIONS.

NEED FOR A LIBRARY IN OLD TOWN
NEAREST LIBRARIES ARE MORE THAN 1/2 MILE WALKING RADIUS. CURRENT DEMOGRAPHIC + FUTURE RESIDENTIAL COMPONENT WILL BE WELL SERVED BY SUCH AN AMENITY.

CHINATOWN/JAPANTOWN
ACTIVATE GATE AND GARDEN BY CREATING A LOOPED PATH WITH A UNIQUE VIEW THROUGH BUILDING.
A Socially Conscious Community Art Center
Copeland Downs

Nestled into the bend of the Willamette River, Old Town/Chinatown/Japantown has had a mixed history of success and tragedy. Serving once as a prosperous trading grounds for Chinese business people, WWII marked a slur-type change with the influx of displaced Japanese. A new art scene is emerging now, the nightlife has become popular enough to constitute shutting down certain streets during peak hours and all types of businesses are thriving. Right along side to all the good remains the constant presence of perhaps the longest standing residents, the homeless. Arguable a major deterrent for development is the lingering stigma of danger because of the homeless population.

Urban Design
The new urban design proposal focuses on improving pedestrian conditions along the East - West axis in response to the high number of North - South transportation networks. Since the Chinese gate is already at 4th and Burnside, this proposal suggests changing 4th street into a two-way street to support a sort of main-street catalyst. Development would be helped by the number and slower speed of cars passing through. Along the East - West axis, pedestrian friendly improvements like paving patterns, plant design and bioswaled sidewalk medians will help support the movement between transit and possably breathe new life into the existing “festival streets” that are currently underutilized.

Block Design
With a high number of art galleries and light manufacturing in Old Town/Chinatown, as well as more schools moving in, block 13 seems like a n opportunity to contribute to the trend by redeveloping the Oregon Leather Building into a brewery school. A small bar which features beer made by students of the school will face the alley contributing to the nightlife and casualy meeting scene along Couch.

The Great Need for Art.
When speaking with Amy, an employee of Central City Concern who works at the Royal Palm Hotel, the question of access to productive community came up in regard to high number of homeless people and social programs to help. Despite the Bud Clark Commons creating communal and an art studio geared towards the underprivileged, funding has fallen short of the hopeful programs that would provide a creative outlet.

Block 13 has the opportunity to provide a social service without being labeled explicitly as such. An arts center could provide rental space for professional painters, dancers, etc., classes for children or adults and host community events, the proceeds of which could help subsidize programming that allows homeless or underprivileged community members to partcipate as well.
300 NW Flanders
Hudson Lasher

Introduction

Old town-Chinatown-Japan town has been faced with a number of issues in the past. Recently it has been under scrutiny for its thriving albeit raucous nightlife, and large percentage of underprivileged and homeless inhabitants. Due to its rich historical background, much of the neighborhood is historically sensitive, and most blocks contain historically significant buildings.

It also has very harsh traffic heavy edges, bordered by the Burnside corridor to the South, and Naito Parkway to the East.

Urban Design: The International District

This proposal is focused on developing a stronger connection between the two parks that flank the district. Flanders and Davis Streets are good candidates for this connection because they each have a number of undeveloped surface parking lots, which if developed to a moderate density would add a significant population to the neighborhood. Davis is also a good choice for redevelopment because it intersects the light rail tracks at the first stop on the West side of the river, which gives it the potential to become a gateway into both the neighborhood.

An extension of the Davis and Flanders festival street design from the park blocks to the waterfront creates a distinct icon and unifying theme for the district. Providing a clearly delineated and safe pedestrian route from the Pearl District to the Willamette River will cultivate an active community.

Block Design: The Blanchet Block

The block design takes cues from the architectural character of the historical Blanchet House located on the Northwest corner, and the courtyard typology of the New Blanchet House located on the Northeast corner. The new block features a central courtyard which grants all of the buildings access to natural light. It also results in the majority of the building mass along the periphery of the block, which provides a robust urban edge.

Building Design: The Urban Backyard

The selected site is located on the southern half of the block, at the original Flanders festival street. Small scale retail spaces face Flanders, activating the festival street and reinforcing the lively atmosphere cultivated in the urban plan.

The mass of the building stays within the courtyard typology, and is terraced from East to West so that steps up to the taller buildings to the West. The lower corner responds to the reduced density of the Chineses Garden, while providing outdoor activity, in an attempt to meet their guidelines. The terraced form also allows better solar access to the residents of the Blanchet House. The largest advantage to a terraced form is that it breaks up the traditional block of penthouses typically found on the top floor. This spreads the larger properties throughout the floors, providing urban backyards, and adding to the diversity of each floor.
Redesigning Old Town/Chinatown/ Japantown
Natalie Marcisz

The OT/CT/JT neighborhood is faced with the dilemma of being seen as an area to travel through, rather than a destination. A main street down 4th street was proposed in order to create a heart of the area, and a place that encourages both vehicular and pedestrian traffic to stop and stay. Parallel routes off of the main East/West roads (Burnside and Everett) were developed in order to create alternative, safer pathways for pedestrians.

The block design was heavily influenced by the collaboration with the Japanese students. The idea was formed to break up the blocks into smaller pieces- split up by alleys and interior gathering places. While this idea may not be viable for every block, its general notions of creating active areas for pedestrian interaction with the building can still be upheld.

Block 13, the site of this project, is in between 1st and 2nd, Couch and Davis. This block has two existing buildings, the Leather Company and the Fleishner Building- both of which were kept in order to maintain as much of the historic character of the area as possible. The Northern side of the block faces the NW Natural Building, which is much taller than the rest of the neighborhood, making use of its 250' height restriction. Thus, the Northern bar of Block 13 can stand to maximize its own height restriction of 75'. The block is consisted of 3 main building programs including a grocery store, office space, and residential units (in ascending order). The new construction is pulled away from the existing structures in order to create an interior courtyard. The courtyard is raised one level in order to allow maximized solar access as well as a provide space for much needed parking underneath.

The building program on the first floor is comprised of parking and a grocery store. The area is in desperate need of a store that can provide fresh food, and Block 13’s location along the MAX line makes it a prime candidate. The second level is mostly office space as well as a small restaurant that is open to the public. The existing Leather Building will be re-programmed to have a museum located on its second floor, accessed through the courtyard. This courtyard will act as an outdoor event area for all three programmatic elements that surround it- aiming to activate an otherwise off-the-street area. The third floor includes more office space, and the remaining top floors are solely apartment units. The apartment units are varied from the mid-400 sqft range to 1400 sqft. This allows for several unit types, including multi story units, that will attract different residents to the area. The fourth floor employs a roof top garden/patio that can be used by all units and directly accessed by the fourth and 4th floors.

The facade makes use of black brick veneer and metal screened panels that are attached to a curtain wall system. The overall feel of the facade was inspired by the Japanese style of sleek, simple, yet layered aesthetic, and heavy use of screens and patterns.