



THE GLC PAVILION

Albert and Tina Small Center for Collaborative Design | Fall 2025

CONTENTS

- 1 background
- 2 process
- 3 proposal
- 4 construction
- 5 finished product



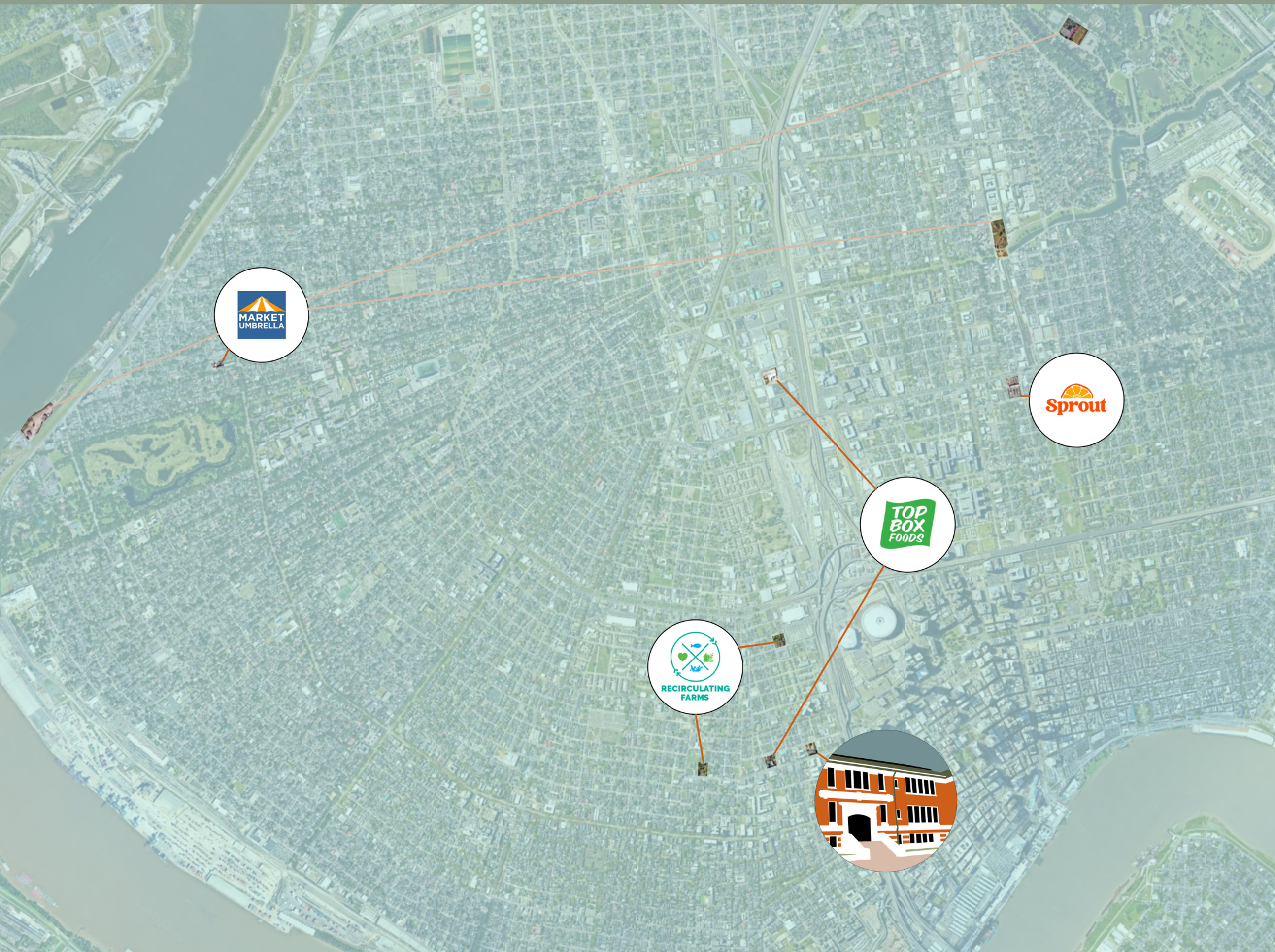
COMMUNITY PARTNER:

GROWING LOCAL COLLABORATIVE

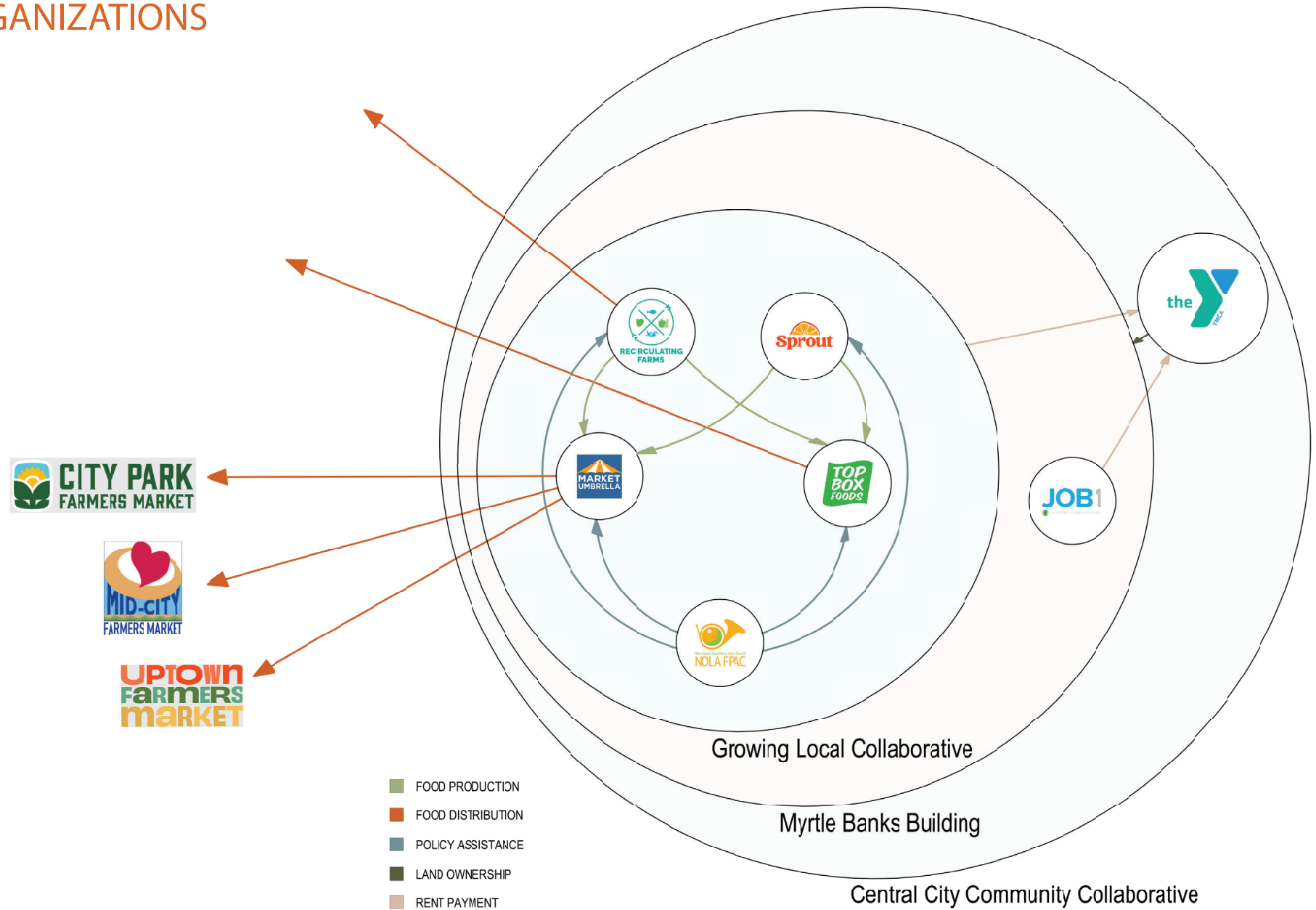
The Growing Local Collaborative consists of New Orleans organizations like Recirculating Farms, New Orleans Food Policy Action Council, Sprout NOLA, Market Umbrella, and Top Box Foods Louisiana. They work to promote community health and wellness through increased food access, job training, and policy advocacy. They cover food production and distribution, farmer support and development, entrepreneurship, and market expansion - particularly in neighborhoods with limited access to fresh food. Additionally, they grow fresh local food in New Orleans and surrounding areas.

“BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER AROUND FOOD”





ORGANIZATIONS





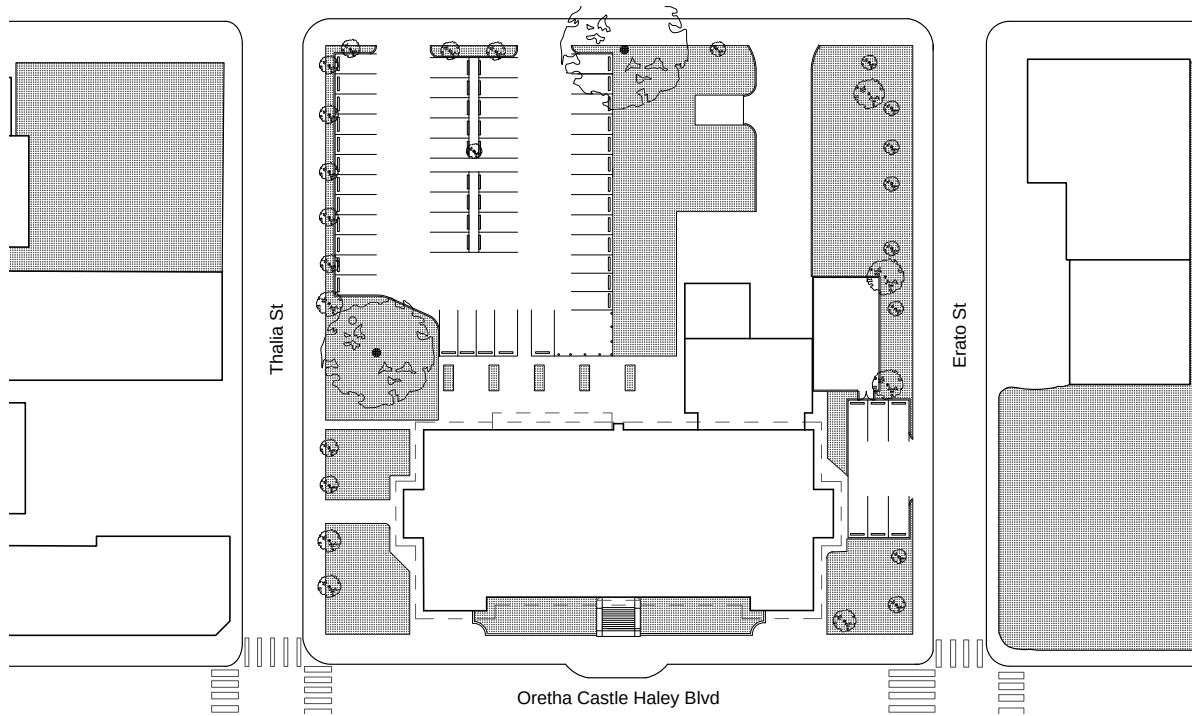
CONTEXT

Located at the intersection of Oretha Castle Haley Blvd. and Thalia St. is the Myrtle Banks Building. While the primary tenant of the building is Job 1, a municipal employment center, its grounds represent the future home of the Growing Local Collaborative (GLC). The site will foster their urban farming and community engagement needs with educational spaces, a sensory garden, and a food production space. Events held here will range from classroom style learning to a weekly farmers market. The GLC asked the Small Center for Collaborative Design to create a space that would bring people together around food. This was achieved by designing with consideration of natural systems, adaptable assembly spaces, and opportunities for teaching through demonstration.



GLC PAVILION NEEDS

- 1 Gathering space protected from direct sunlight
- 2 Space to be used for weekly farmers markets and community events
- 3 Connection to environmental systems for education and sustainability
- 4 Growing space for native and edible plants
- 5 Consideration of the architectural vernacular of the neighborhood



SITE ANALYSIS

The Small Center team started by analyzing the historical and existing conditions of the site in order to better understand the non-profit partners' and community's needs. The site has a rich history of community engagement related to food, located adjacent to the historic former site of the Dryades Public Market.



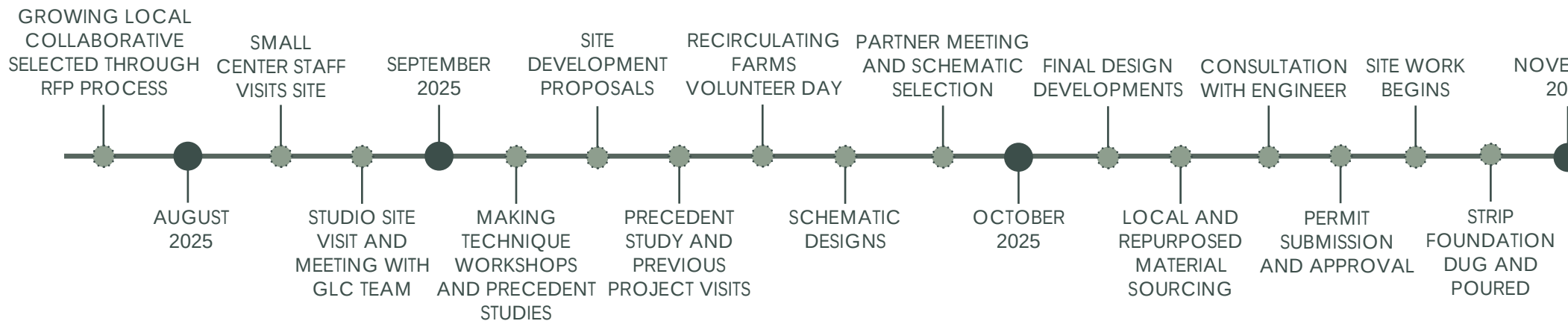
PROCESS

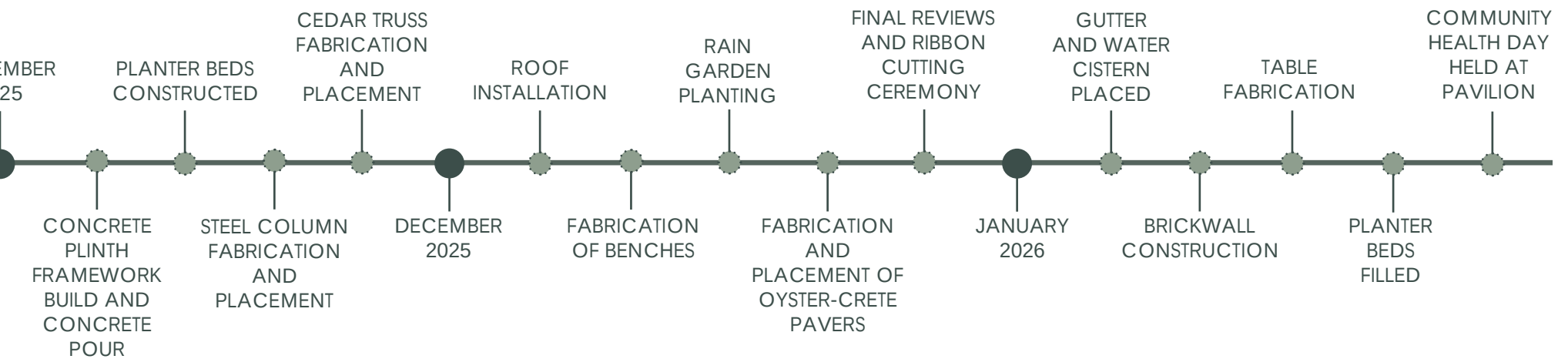
Small Center's work with the Growing Local Collaborative (GLC) began in the summer of 2025 after their proposal had been selected through an RFP process. The team met with GLC staff to better understand the organization's mission, the possible scope of the design + build project, and to identify possible project sites.

Student engagement started in late August with a meeting to learn about the site, the challenges and opportunities it posed, and the everyday work that GLC anticipated — including growing, community events, farmers markets and education programming for youth and adults.

Students worked through a series of assignments over the following weeks to begin generating conceptual ideas for the site and pavilion. Work began with an analysis of the entirety of the existing site and resulted in proposals for optimal locations for a sensory garden, food production space, compost and glass collection, and the pavilion. Precedent studies were conducted and multiple concepts were generated for the pavilion. This made space for conversations about scale, materiality, use, and form.

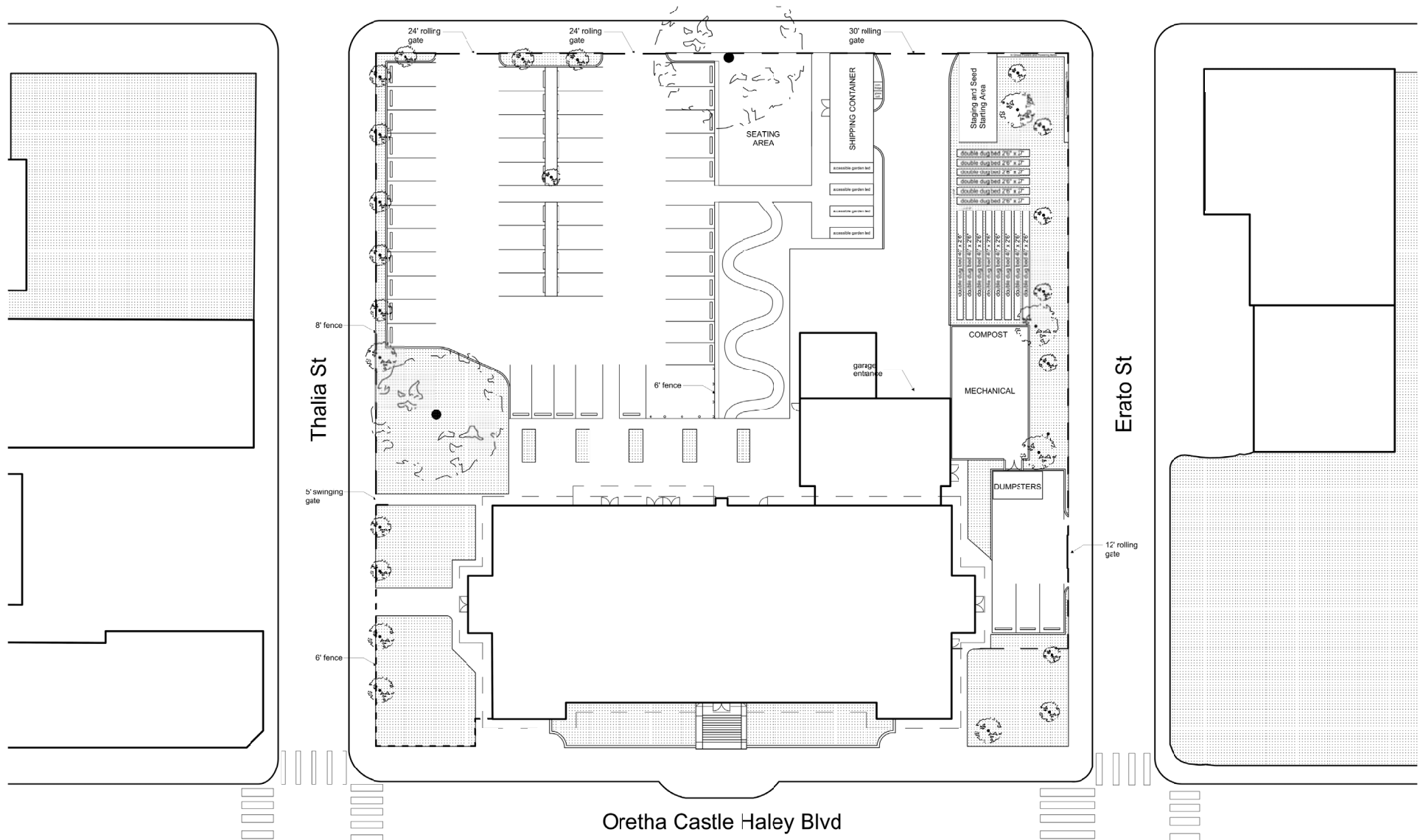
The studio team then went through iterative rounds of reviews of possible designs, resulting in three final proposals that were presented to the GLC team. Ultimately, elements from all three proposals were woven together, permits were secured, and construction began in November. Students worked in groups to tackle specific portions of the build: the main structure, seating, oystercrete pavers, planter boxes, water management systems, and the rain garden.





SITE PROPOSAL

The Small Center team generated multiple site proposals for the Growing Local Collaborative. These site plans took into account the Collaborative's future plans for the site, including a sensory garden, outdoor classroom, administrative space located in a repurposed shipping container, production areas for growing and propagating, compost and glass recycling, and a kitchen with refrigerated storage. By considering the daily operations and potential events to be held on site, the team used a holistic approach for the designs, taking into account both the needs of GLC and the community.



RECIRCULATING FARMS VOLUNTEER DAY

The team of Small Center students and project leads volunteered at the Recirculating Farms community garden to better understand their needs and daily operations. As the primary growing and production organization for the Growing Local Collaborative, Recirculating Farms helped the team understand what is needed to support urban farming and community engagement. Daily operations included crop management, compost processing for farm use, and prepping planting beds for the upcoming growing season.



MAKING TECHNIQUES

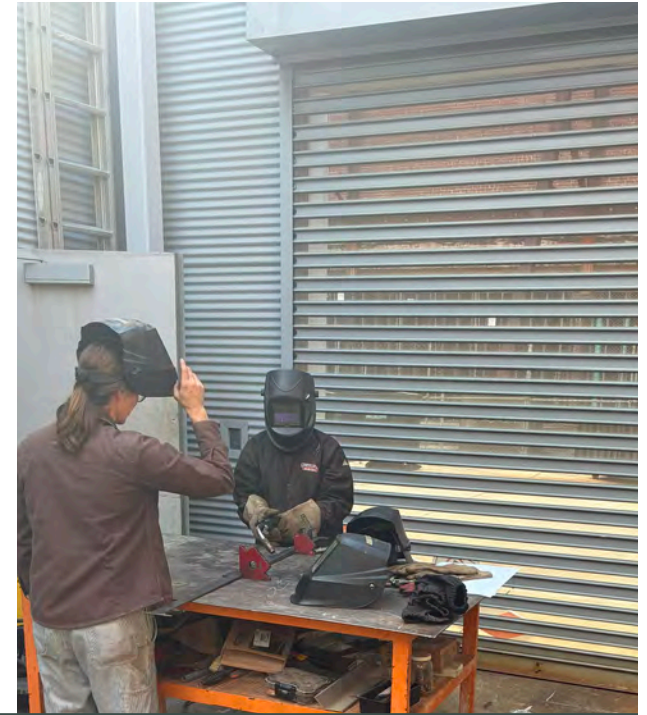
Students spent time learning and experimenting with a variety of different making techniques, including wood working, metal working, concrete and plaster casting, and experimenting with materialities such as brick and oyster-crete.



**CONCRETE &
PLASTER CASTING**



**MATERIAL
STUDIES**

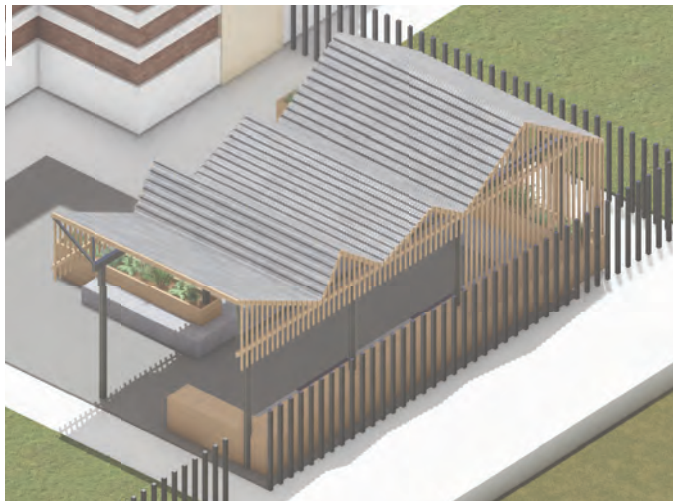


**WELDING &
METAL WORK**



SCHEMATIC DESIGN

The design research process led to three final design schemes discussed collaboratively with GLC and its constituent members. Robust discussions amongst the diverse member participants ran across several meetings and working sessions. The collaborative process allowed GLC to clarify and solidify project and overall site goals and for the design team to tailor each design element to suit planned uses and users.



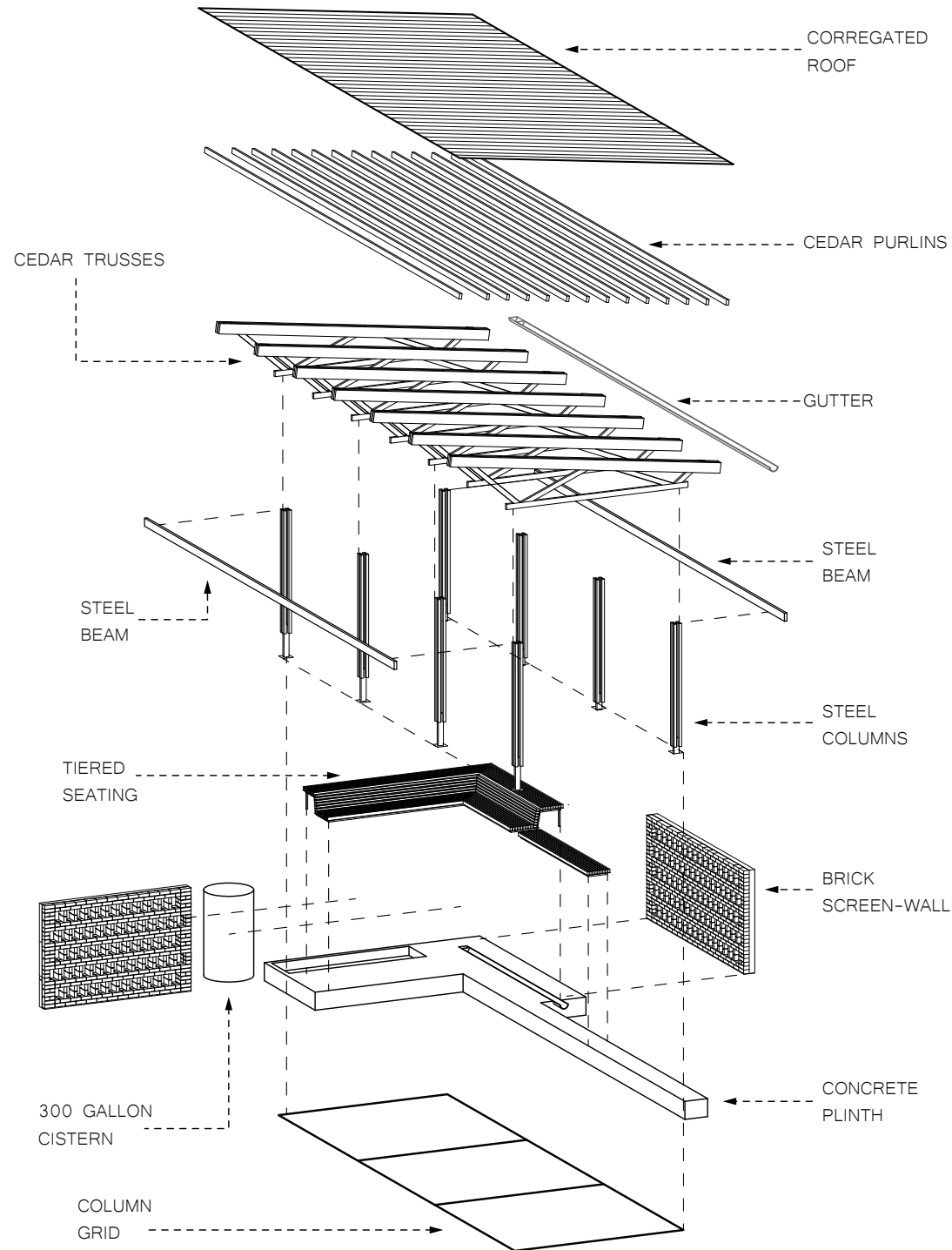


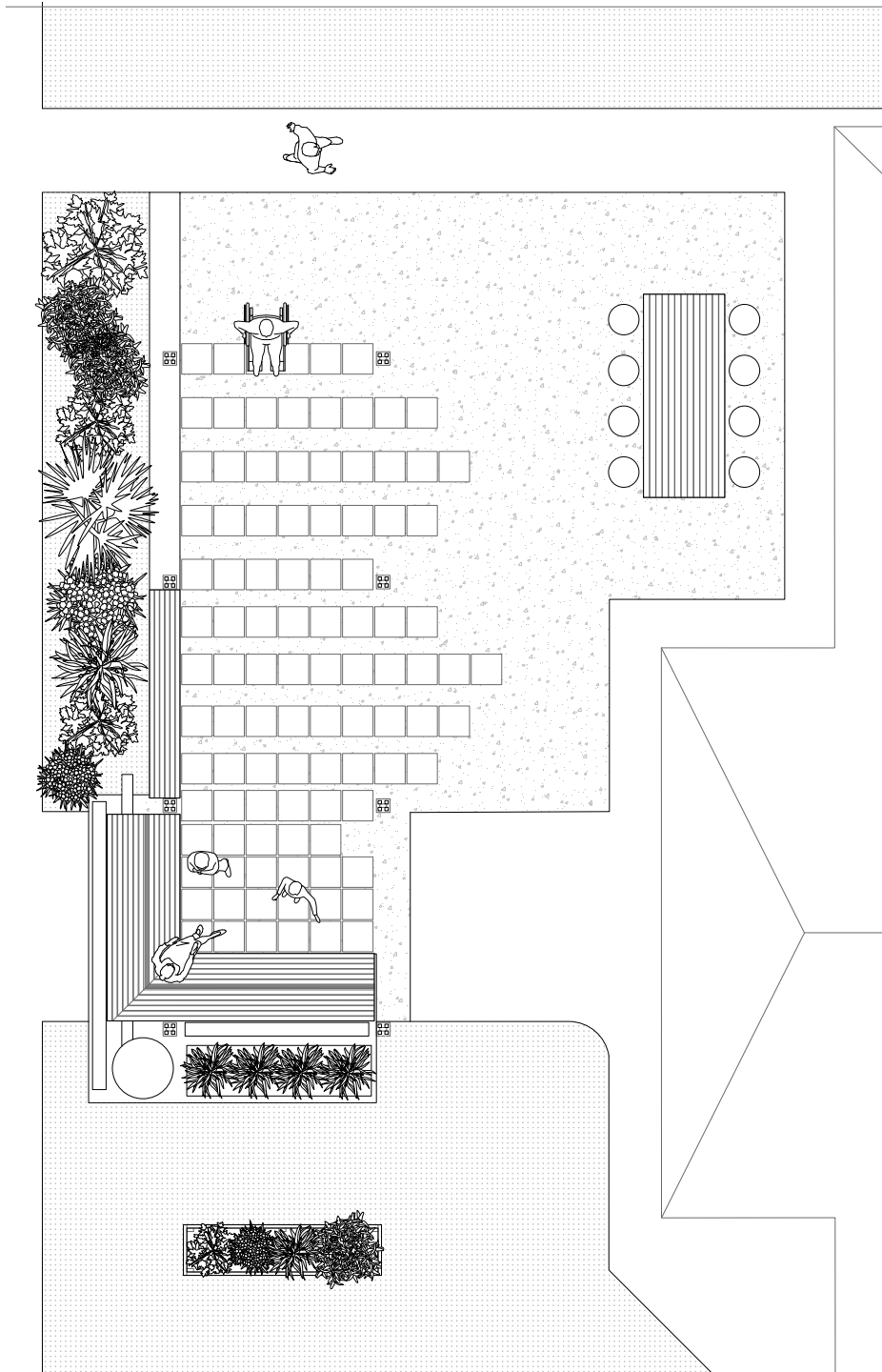


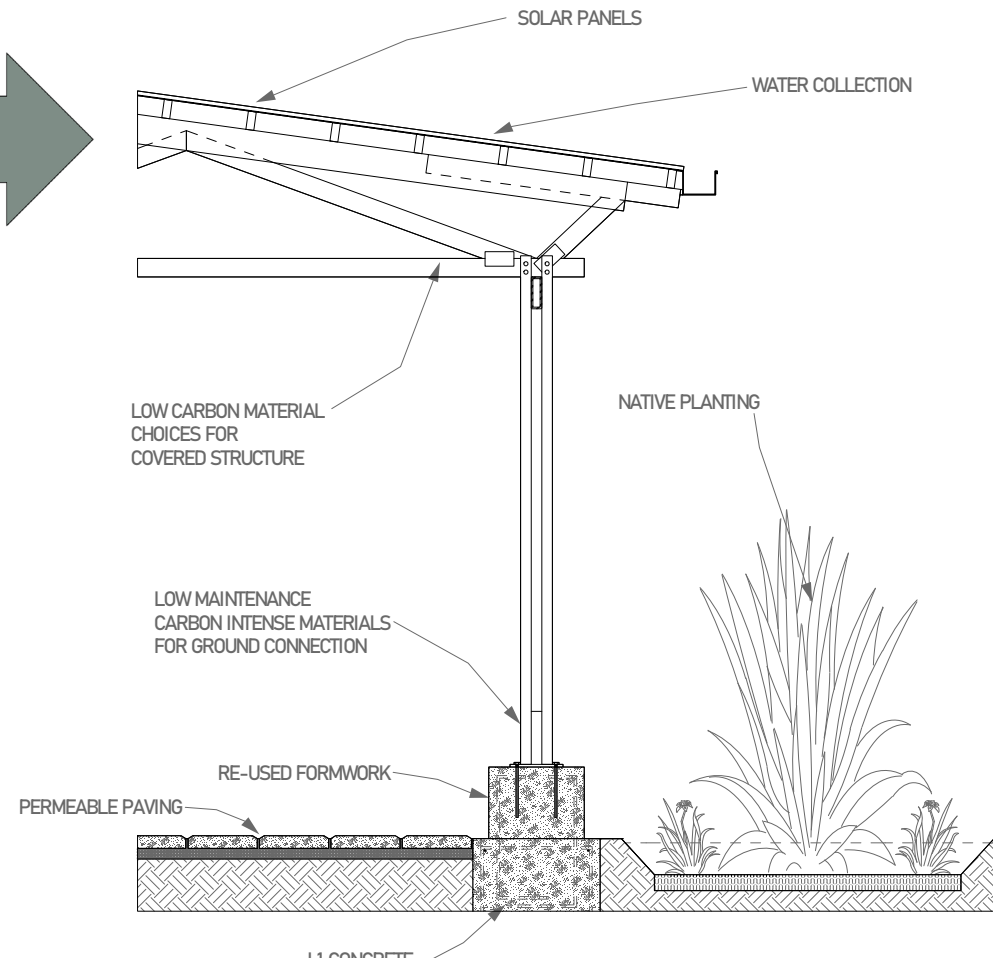
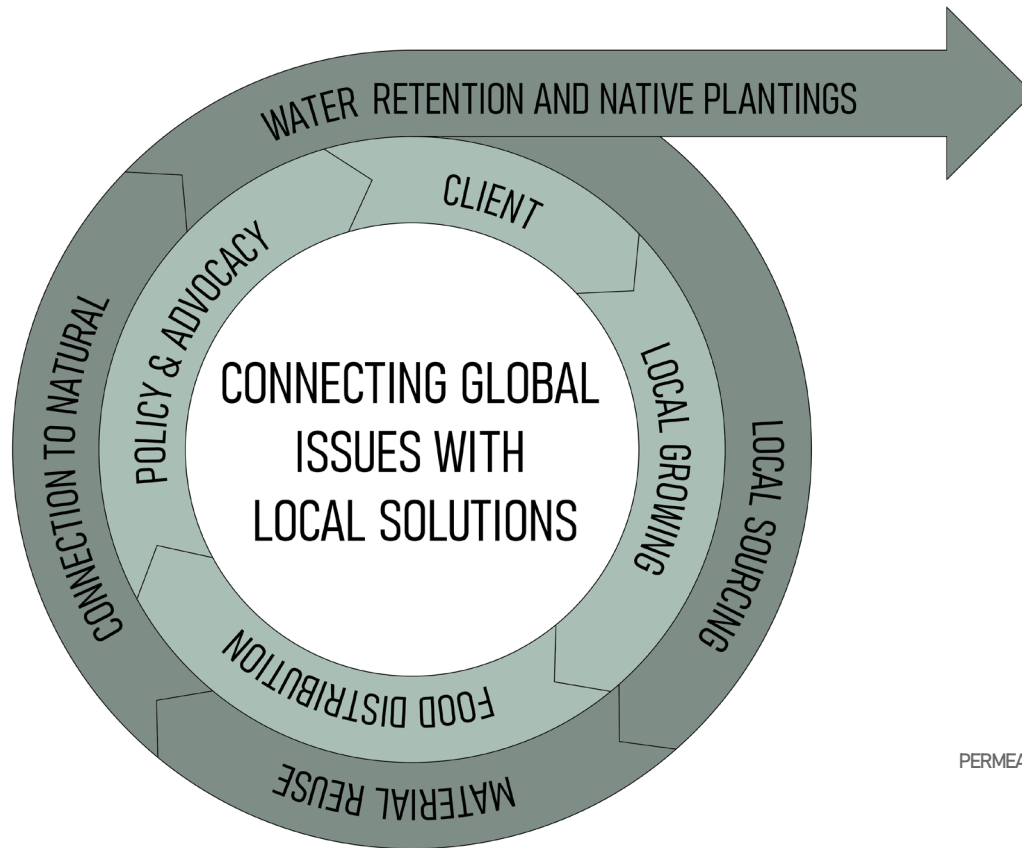
FINAL PROPOSAL

Working from partner feedback, the student design team created a final design proposal and drawings needed for permitting and construction, with a number of elements from the design research and site analysis phases informing the final design. The final design includes a primary structure for gathering and outdoor classroom instruction, a gathering/teaching table, growing beds, a water management system, public seating, and rain gardens.

Proposal

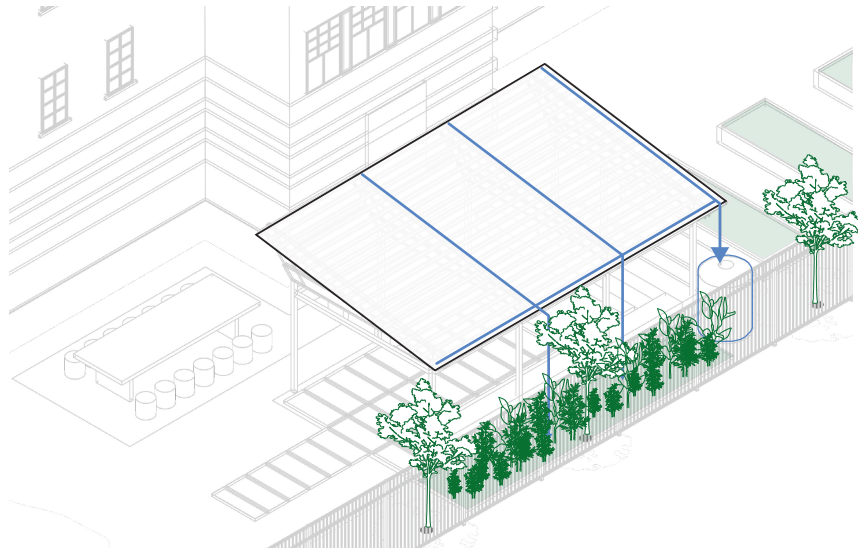




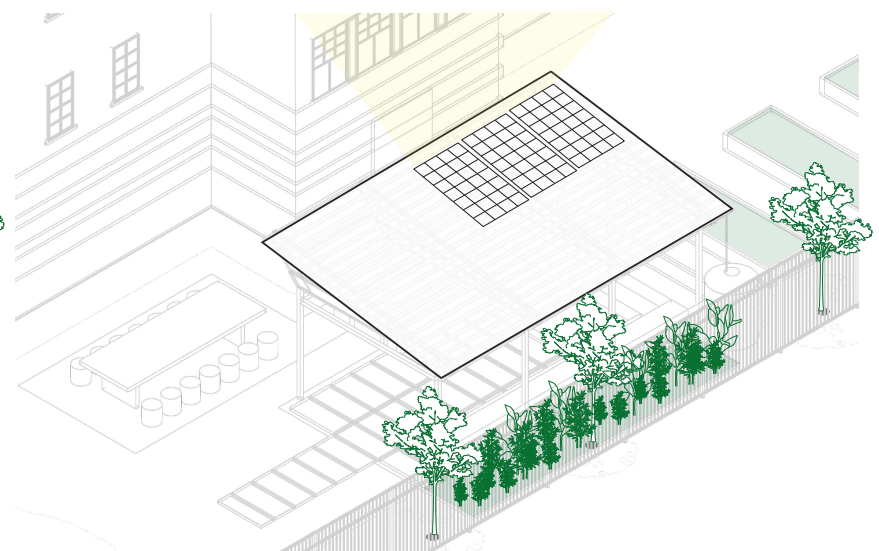


DESIGN CONCEPTS

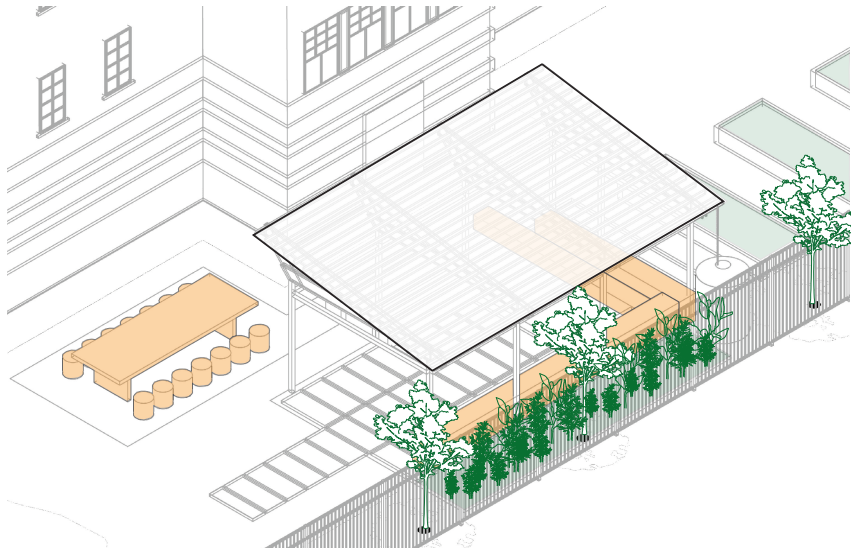
The proposed pavilion and site design responded to the needs of the non-profit partner and local community through a collaborative design process. The proposal also addressed important water management and infiltration goals critical to any project in New Orleans. Students spent significant time exploring and creating alternative materials with lower carbon footprints, reducing overall material use, and understanding the relationship of this single site to the metro and regional context.



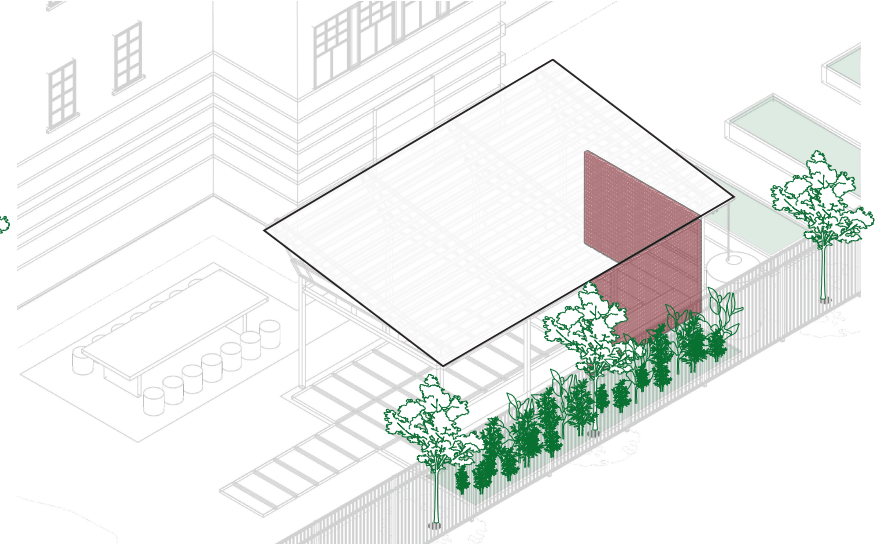
WATERSHED



SOLAR

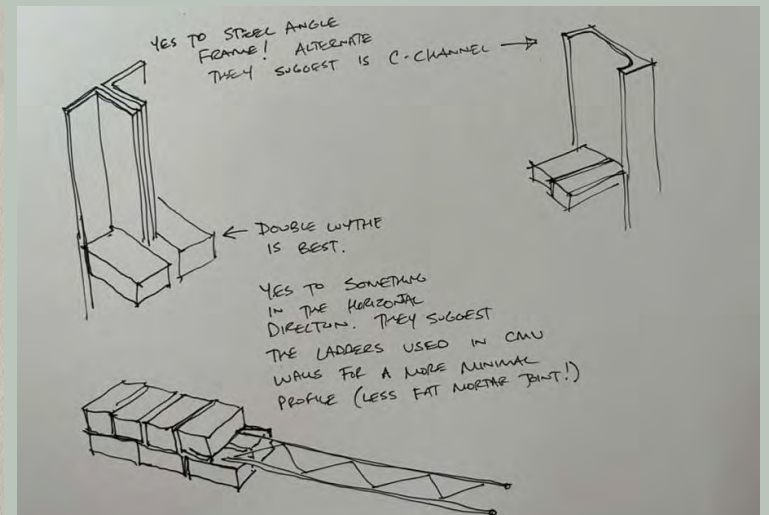
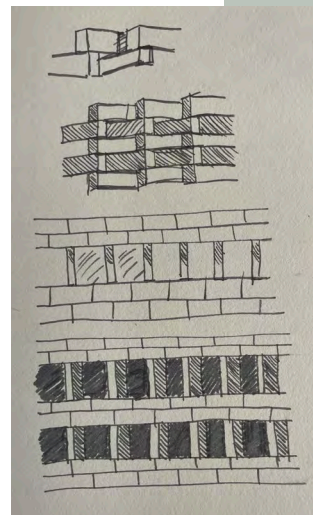
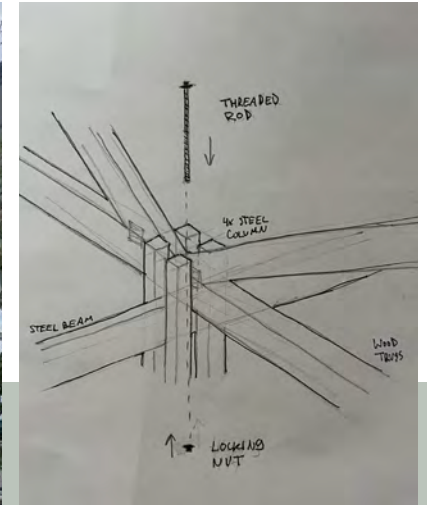


SEATING



SCREEN WALL

MATERIAL PALETTE



DETAIL DEVELOPMENT



CONSTRUCTION

Construction of the primary structure and roof was achieved in just 6 weeks. Students conducted all aspects of construction including digging and pouring foundations, welding and erecting steel members, prefabricating and erecting wooden trusses, and installing the roof. Public seating made of concrete, wood, and steel, in addition to rain garden construction and planting, and site work including oystercrete tiles and gravel were also completed in this timeframe. Additional work was conducted in Spring 2026, including the gathering table, cistern, gutter system, and planter beds.

CONSTRUCTION TIMELINE



foundation dig

plinth



beams



roof

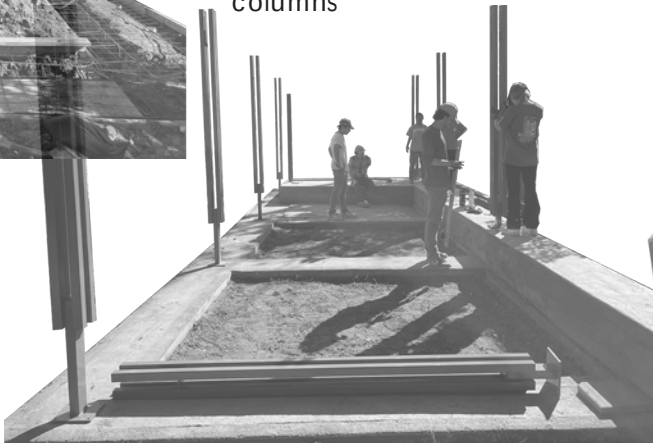
foundation pour



trusses



columns

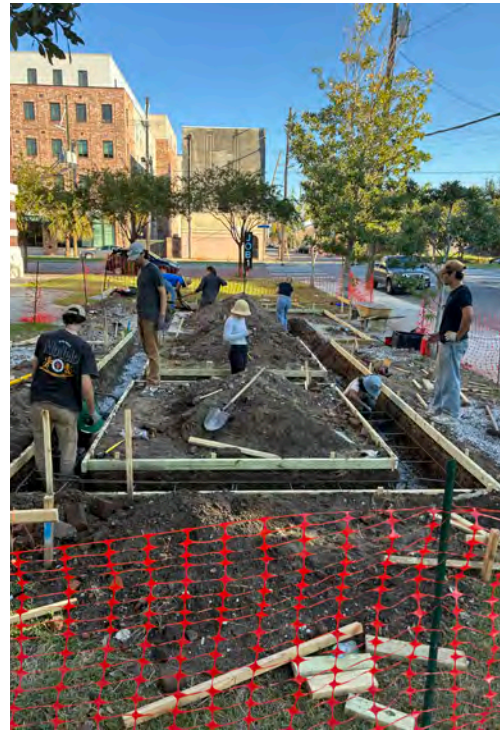


benches



screen wall

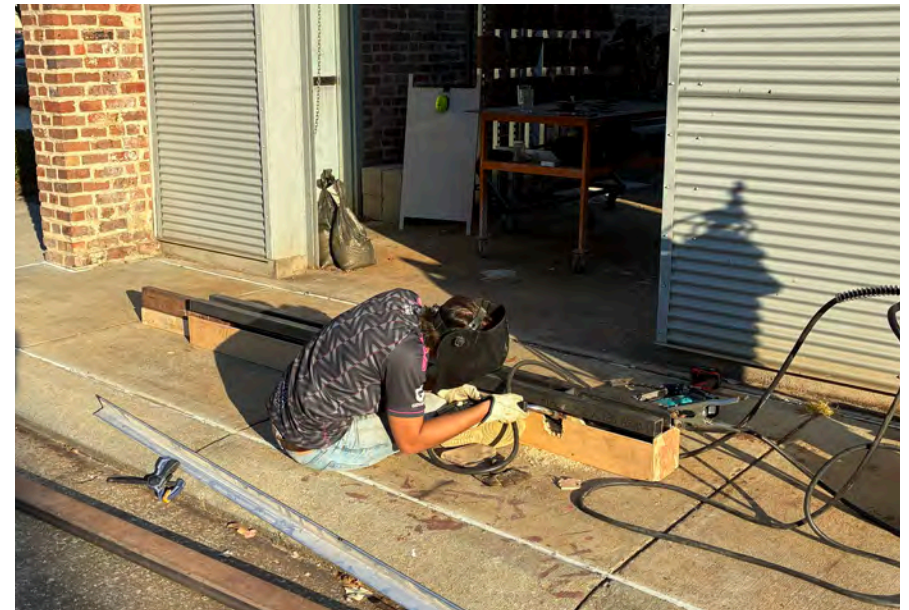
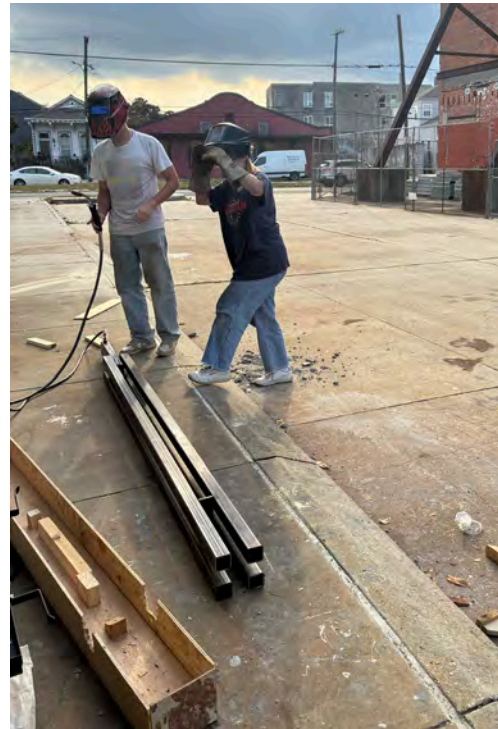




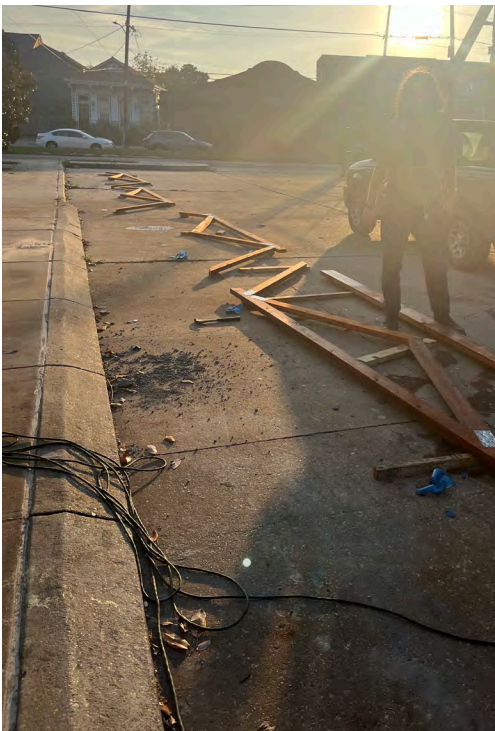
FOUNDATION *The foundation was designed to anchor columns and meet code-required wind-lift regulations for the pavilion roof. Students recovered a large number of bricks during excavation and were able to reuse some of them elsewhere in the project.*



PLINTH *The plinth was designed to support public seating in the outdoor classroom, and also includes an imbedded trough which channels runoff water directly to a waiting rain garden. Cedar formwork used for the pour were retained and repurposed as raised planter beds.*

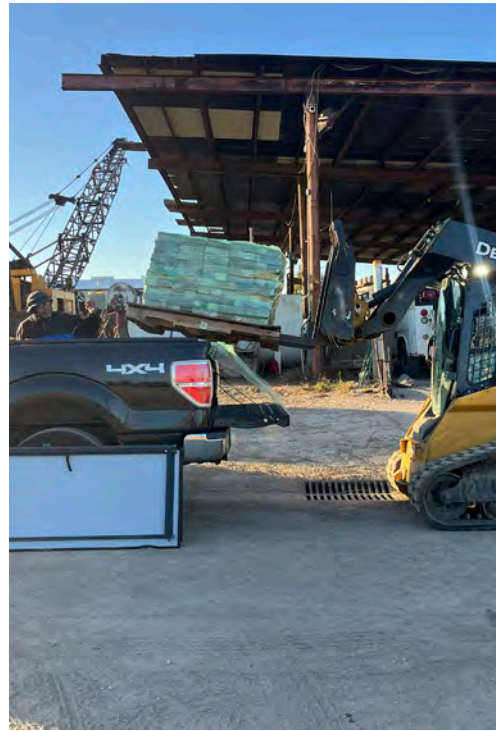


COLUMNS Unique “quad” columns were designed and fabricated at Small Center, then installed on site. Their open structure contributes to the light and airy quality of the overall design, and were designed to receive the beams and trusses in an interlocking structure.



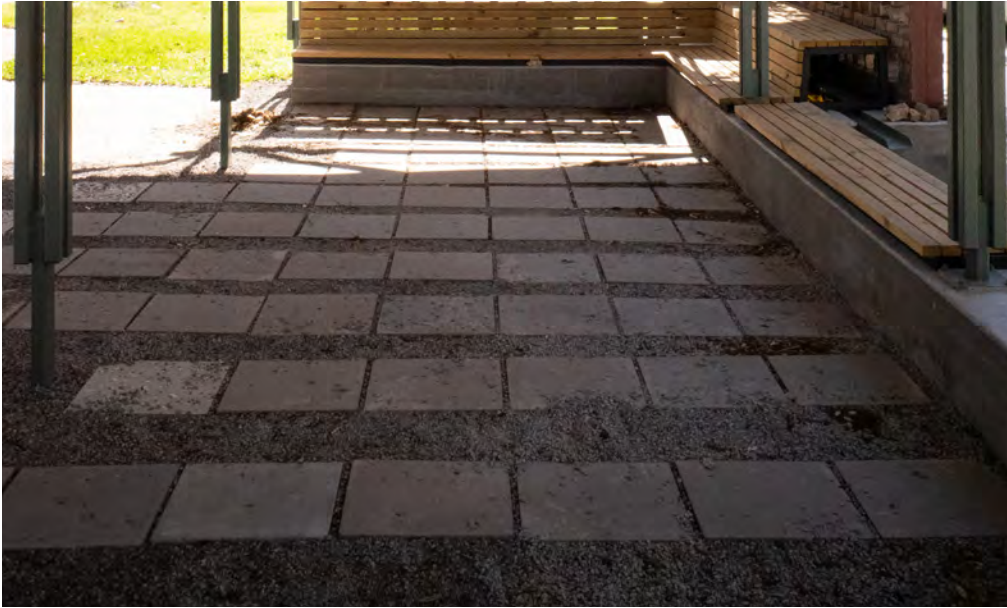
TRUSSES

Cedar was chosen for the trusses due to its durability in New Orleans' hot and humid climate. While columns are made of steel due to their contact with the ground, the lighter wooden roof structure is less carbon intensive. The design team ensured durability and maintenance goals were met while considering the carbon footprint of their material choices.



SEATING & SCREENWALL

Public seating for the outdoor classroom allows for two tiers of school kids to occupy the pavilion. It is shaded by a custom brick screen wall that mitigates direct southern exposure. Brick was salvaged locally and includes brick unearthed in the foundation dig - a direct reference to the residential and material past of the neighborhood.



PAVERS

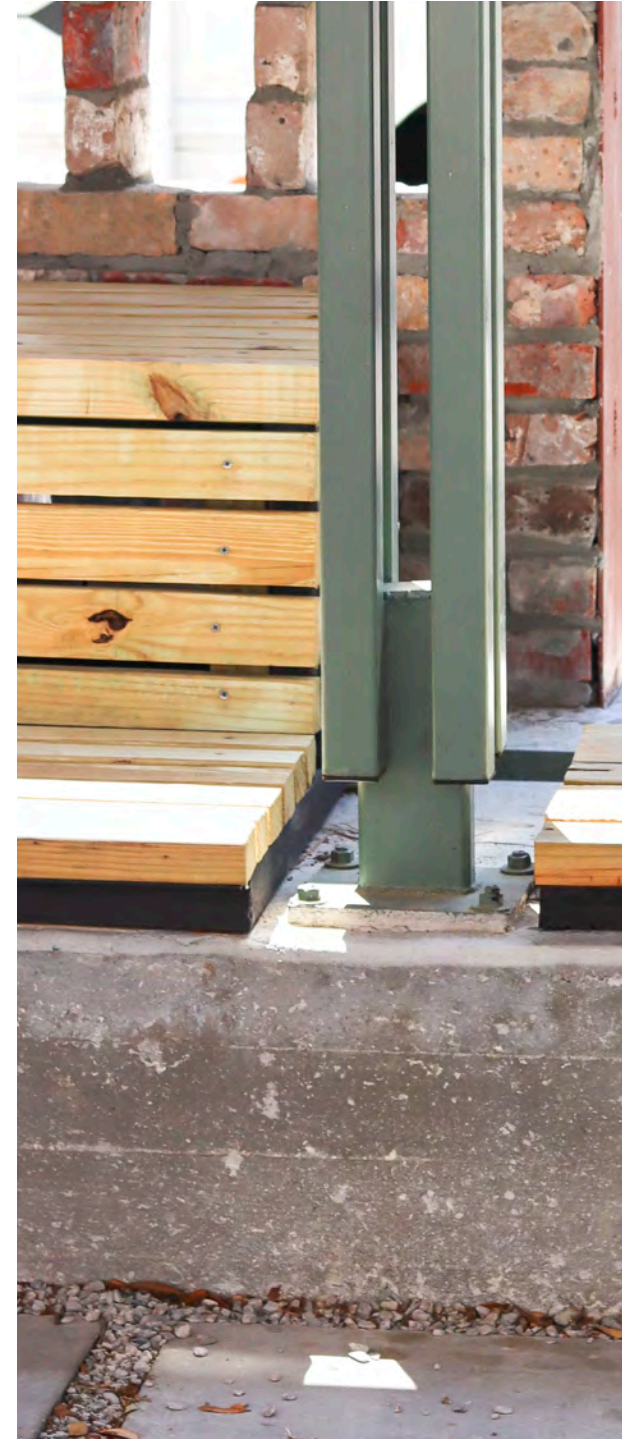
Within the theme of 'bringing people together around food', the groundscape team researched literal ways local food systems could become a part of construction. Students experimented with a variety of new paver materials, eventually creating custom oyster-crete pavers to provide a useable hardscape that also allows for water to infiltrate and drain towards rain gardens.

RAINWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM

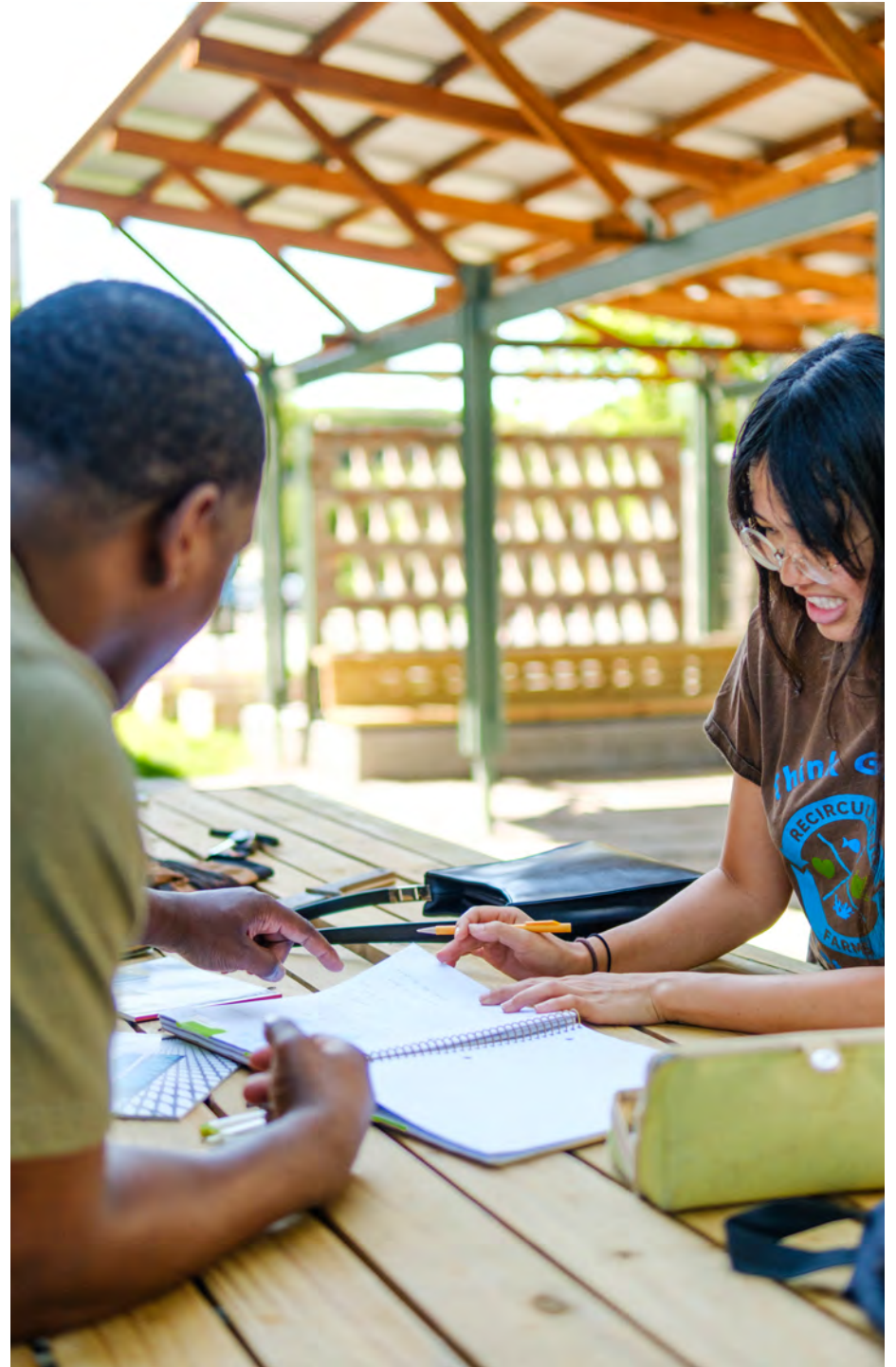
The rainwater collection system includes a simple shed roof gutter leading to a large cistern. Additional runoff is channeled to new rain gardens, preventing site runoff from reaching the overburdened municipal drainage system. The cistern is sized to serve both existing planter beds and a planned extension of the growing areas, accommodating GLC's site uses for years into the future while reducing the need for municipal water.



















COMMUNITY HEALTH DAY

Recirculating Farms held the site's first community event on March 28, 2026. The event brought the community together for a day of wellness, connection, and support, providing access to valuable health resources, giveaways, and free food in a welcoming, upbeat atmosphere. Small Center used the opportunity to gather folks around planting the four initial planter beds, beginning what promises to be a long tradition of on-site food production.



TEAM

Design and construction by Small Center and students and faculty of the Tulane School of Architecture and Built Environment in collaboration with Growing Local Collaborative and the Dryades YMCA

COLLABORATORS

GROWING LOCAL COLLABORATIVE

*Recirculating Farms, New Orleans Food Policy Action Council, Sprout NOLA,
Top Box Foods Louisiana, Market Umbrella*

PROJECT LEADS

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Photography

Stephen Lomonaco

Landscape Consultation

Wes Michaels, Liz Camuti

Masonry Consultation

Jeff Porée Plastering & Paint

