AFSF

ARCHITECTURAL
FOUNDATION
SAN FRANCISCO

2022
DESIGN IDEAS
COLLECTIVE

Introduction

The Architectural Foundation of San Francisco welcomes you to participate in its 2022 Design Ideas Collective. This exciting opportunity challenges high school students to reflect critically about the world around us and enables participants to put their creativity, spatial and analytical thinking and design sensitivity to the test. Students are asked to conceptualize a design and communicate their solutions through of variety of drawings, models, and writing. Open to all high school students across the world, young thinkers are provided the chance to engage in what is a very unique learning project. Entries into the Collective will be reviewed as a judged competition.

For this challenge, you are provided design context from which to better understand current issues we're facing as a point of reference for your design intervention. This brief includes live links highlighted in red for you to glean more information.

How can we use architecture and design to analyze current issues we face and create solutions that better our collective standing moving forward?

AFSF History

The Architectural Foundation of San Francisco is an educational non-profit organization that involves students in a mentored appreciation of the built environment. Students engage with professionals in the architecture, engineering, and construction industry while honing their design and critical thinking skills across multiple project typologies at various scales.

For 53 years, there has been an architectural design competition for Bay Area high school students and beyond. Established in 1969 by the American Institute of Architects San Francisco Chapter, sponsorship of the Annual High School Design Competition was transferred to AFSF in 2000.

Spurred by future-altering events we collectively experienced in 2020, AFSF launched its first-ever Design Ideas Collective challenging students to consider how design thinking could address current issues at hand and create a path forward for a better future. This is the 3rd Annual Design Ideas Collective.
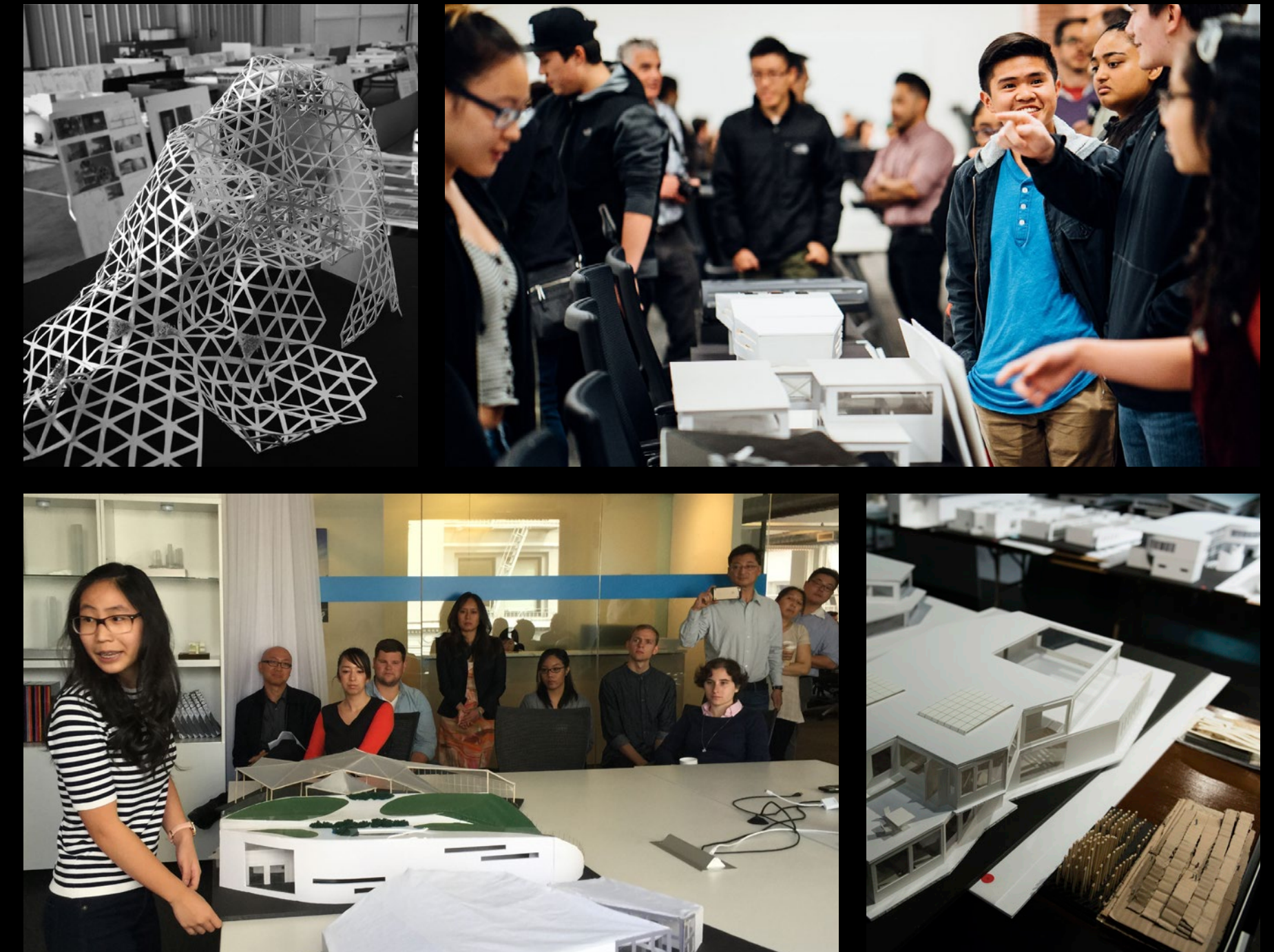
DESIGN CONTEXT

Design Context

The Future Public Realm

As cities around the world deal with the ramifications from the COVID-19 pandemic head on, recovery efforts aimed at adapting to 'new normal' ways of life are taking shape. How cities address economic fallout, public safety and new strategies to create human-centric spaces are tied to how we envision the future of our collective public realm.

AFSF ARCHITECTURAL FOUNDATION SAN FRANCISCO

Image Ref: Jessica Christian / SF Chronicle

Design Context

Mixed-Use Districts

Downtown Cores or Central Business Districts within cities are best utilized when a true mixed-use condition exists – a combination of residential, office and retail along with recreational, commercial and industrial program all present to create a vibrant atmosphere. Not only does this increase overall usage in the area but it also increases the diversity of people who frequent a shared space throughout a more prolonged period of a typical day.

Image Ref: Mission Rock Development / Port of SF

Design Context

'Future Cities'

Prior to the pandemic, the notion of 'Future Cities' included mixed-use ideas around density – live/work/play in close proximity all while easily accessed via efficient public transportation, micromobility (bicycles, scooters, etc.) and enhanced pedestrian experiences.[1] While more people globally are still moving into denser city environments than not, the pandemic altered just how busy these urban centers are on a daily basis and challenge us to rethink best uses for shared space from residential streets to downtown cores.

1   The Design of Cities in the Year 2039

Image Ref: Design of Cities in the Year 2039

Design Context

Slow Streets

Already designed as a way to increase pedestrian safety and provide equitable access for a larger demographic, Slow Streets were intended to reduced vehicular traffic to a minimum while prioritizing travel by foot and micromobility. During the pandemic, the need for outdoor space along with the ability for people to spread out became even more apparent. Slow Streets proved helpful in accommodating socially-distant travel, providing room to exercise and enabling alternative ways for the public to utilize shared space. Streets typically dedicated to solely residential through traffic became multi-use communal spaces, engaging more people and more user types.

Image Ref: SFMTA Slow Streets Program
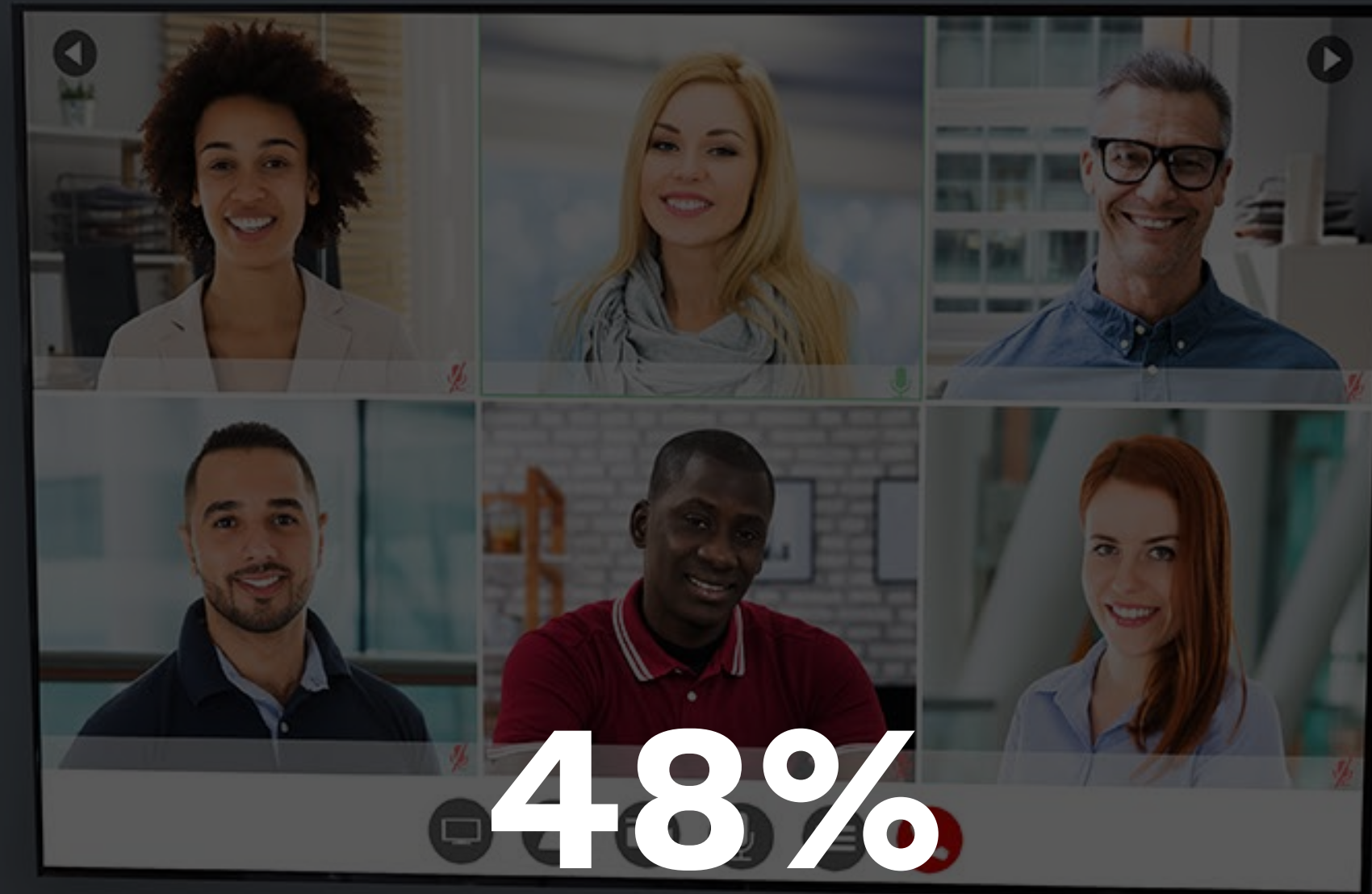
Design Context

Office Re-Entry Rates

Since the last major Omicron surge in 2021, office re-entry has been climbing back at various rates throughout the United States:[1]

Austin	62.4%
Houston	56.3%
Dallas	51.8%
Los Angeles	41.1%
Washington, DC	38.9%
Chicago	37.8%
Philadelphia	37.8%
New York	37.1%
San Francisco	34.6%
Silicon Valley	31.8%

1   Source: JLL Research, Kastle, Update April 21, 2022

Image Ref: Insperity

Design Context

Hybrid Work Models

48%

of the workforce are anticipated to be in a hybrid/flex work style globally (2-3 days per week working from the office).[1]

1   Source: JLL (2021) Work Dynamics Pulse Survey, October 2021

Design Context

Downtown Recovery

According to data compiled by the <u>Urban Displacement Project</u>, through May 2022 downtown San Francisco had only climbed back to 31% overall activity compared to the same month pre-pandemic in May 2019, ranking dead last in the United States. By comparison, Boston and Seattle's downtowns climbed back to 52% while New York's jumped up to 78%. Despite similar key factors driving recovery rates across all cities, one factor stands out among the rest and provides insight as to why San Francisco is an outlier when it comes to slowed downtown activation — lack of economic diversity.[1]

1   Why downtown S.F.'s COVID-19 pandemic recovery is dead last in the nation

Image Ref: Bay Briefing: Is downtown S.F. finally on the cusp of recovery?

Design Context

Economic Diversity

San Francisco has 31% of jobs downtown that can be categorized as well-suited for remote work – professional, scientific and technical services, all of which include computer systems design, law, accounting, advertising, architecture and consulting firms. Given downtown SF's lack of employment presence in health care, social services, arts, entertainment and recreation that would all demand a higher in-person presence, there exists a lack of diversity among downtown workers.

Image Ref:Defining the Hybrid Workplace for Companies

Design Context

Zoning, Land Use & Policy

In addition to a lack of employment diversity in downtown San Francisco, there is also a shortage of residential use within the area to truly establish a mixed-use district since more than 75% of downtown is dedicated to office use.[1] In order for cities to thrive moving forward, policy will need to be put in place that prioritizes diversity both in terms of land use and business sectors that support a well-rounded approach to shared space.

1   Downtown SF Public Realm Action Plan

Image Ref: Jessica Christian / SF Chronicle

Design Context

Current State & Impacts

With the slow rates of return to downtown cores come trickle down effects for these areas in particular that are typically the economic engine of the cities they inhabit. Without an influx of office workers, the impact to local businesses in the area leaves shops, restaurants and cafés fighting to stay open. Without spending, a decline in transportation ridership and property values dropping in value due to vacancies, city revenues will decline and potentially impact a number of public services, affecting society as a whole. Without consistent foot traffic and a high volume of people spending time downtown, public safety also becomes an elevated concern throughout these specific areas.

Image Ref: Jessica Christian / SF Chronicle

Design Context

Action Plan

While San Francisco may be one of the hardest impacted cities when it comes to downtown recovery, all cities will need to mitigate their own difficulties by implementing both long-term and short-term strategies to solve similar issues through a combination of policy, planning and design. Cities also need to take note of how spaces were transformed in unforeseen ways during the pandemic and how to carry positive direction forward. The basis for this design challenge is to consider actionable measures that we can take now to improve our public realm, increase a diversity of use and user groups and create thriving and desirable shared spaces in our own communities.

Image Ref: Public Realm Action Plan

DESIGN CHALLENGE

Design Challenge

Project Brief

Select a location in the town/city of your choosing that you're familiar with, which could benefit from a wider array of designed uses to create a vibrant, socially-active public space. Survey the existing conditions of the area, identify opportunities for creating thriving and desirable shared spaces and propose design strategies that can be implemented in support of creating a highly-utilized and diverse public realm that the community can flourish from.

Design Challenge

Identify a Site

Select a project site that's been affected recently by the pandemic for your design intervention. It can be a primarily residential area that's seen the addition of slow streets and now needs more program for the residential/slow street condition to thrive and grow. It can be a transportation hub that's seen a dramatic decrease in the use of ridership and is in need of new attractors for visitors. It can be a stretch of downtown that's seen its workforce diminish and needs alternate user groups to make use of the space and help sustain/grow local businesses. It can be a park that's excelled during the pandemic as people search out established outdoor space to congregate. It can be any of these examples or an entirely different condition – the choice is yours based on your interest.

Image Ref: Dequindre Cut – Groundswell Design Group

Design Challenge

Examine Existing Conditions

Your design narrative should be presented in three primary sections:

1. After you identify your site, the first step is to survey/observe its existing conditions (what's around and how are people using the space currently), research how the space used to operate prior to the pandemic (what's changed and how did people used to interact with the space) and predict how future use of the space would continue if nothing were to change moving forward. You may present your findings through written descriptions, photos, diagrams, sketches, models, etc.

Image Ref: Cherry Street Pier

Design Challenge

Brainstorm Opportunities

2. After you gain an understanding of your site and its existing conditions, brainstorm best use cases and opportunities at your site (what's missing currently – space for recreation, dining, commerce, gatherings, activism etc.) to create a thriving and desirable shared destination. Consider how you can leverage existing infrastructure (buildings, landscape, street conditions) to accommodate your proposed use cases. Benchmark your identified opportunities against precedent research of spaces that work well (what are similar spaces that currently exist, which help breathe life and energy into the community). Explain how these proposed use cases and opportunities would enhance your chosen site. You may present your ideas through written descriptions, photos, diagrams, sketches, models, etc.

Image Ref: Ella Fitzgerald Park & Greenway

Design Challenge

Design Strategy Proposal

3. After brainstorming proposed opportunities and use cases on your chosen site, propose design strategies in support of creating a highly-utilized and diverse public realm. Consider how the space lays out in plan and how people move throughout. Consider what the space looks like in three dimensions and what you perceive when you approach the space from different directions. Consider how the space functions for different user types – individuals, groups, families, residents, office workers, visitors, etc. Consider elements for seating, planting and protection from the elements (sun, rain, wind). You may present your design strategies through written descriptions, photo collages, diagrams, sketches, 2D drawings (plans, sections elevations), 3D models (physical and/or digital), renderings, etc.

Image Ref: Moment, San Pedro Square

DESIGN
CASE STUDIES & CONSIDERATIONS

Design Case Study

Downtown SF Public Realm Action Plan

The Downtown SF Partnership, a 501(C)3 non-profit organization,[1] released its Downtown SF Public Realm Action Plan that "reimagines downtown's built environment through a robust 'people-centered' focus on walkable and activated streets and spaces."[2] The study examined six key concepts throughout San Francisco's Financial District and Jackson Square Historic District and proposed a series of strategies to implement design vision for a better future. Use the links on this page to review their research and plan to better inform your own thinking.

Curate a Downtown Canvas

Street Opening

Targeted Revamp

Image Ref: Public Realm Action Plan

1   Downtown SF Partnership
2   Public Realm Action Plan

Design Case Study

Downtown Brooklyn Public Realm Action Plan

The Downtown Brooklyn Partnership, a non-for-profit local development corporation,[1] developed a "new vision and roadmap to transform the public realm of Downtown Brooklyn by reclaiming its streets for greater pedestrian use and creating attractive, accessible public spaces that prioritize people and the environment."[2] As the area has developed into a true mixed-use neighborhood, the surrounding streetscape has yet to catch up to the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and mass transit riders seeking a less car-dependent culture. The Downtown Brooklyn Public Realm Action Plan sought to create infrastructure for people, introduce a shared street network and increase biodiversity. Use the links on this page to review their proposal to better inform your own thinking.

1   Downtown Brooklyn
2   Downtown Brooklyn Public Realm Action Plan

Image Ref: Downtown Brooklyn Public Realm Action Plan

Design Case Study

Adaptive Public Space

The Knight Foundation, an American non-profit that provides grants for journalism, communities, and the arts[1] commissioned an assessment of its seven public spaces in its portfolio to understand the impacts related to the COVID-19 pandemic. In **Adaptive Public Space**, Places for People in the Pandemic and Beyond, "the findings illustrate the power of public space as a platform for community development: whether by building resident trust, spurring social activity, supporting economic and workforce development, or catalyzing neighborhood change."[2] Use the links on this page to review their assessment to better inform your own thinking.

1   The Knight Foundation
2   Adaptive Public Space

Image Ref: Michigan Blue – Walkin' the River

PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

Summary

Program:
This is an architectural design ideas collective and competition sponsored by the Architectural Foundation of San Francisco.

Design Challenge:
You are challenged to select a site that's been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic to design a vibrant, socially-active public realm.

Eligibility:
The program is distributed to all high school students throughout the greater San Francisco Bay Area but participation is both encouraged and welcomed from all high school-level students interested worldwide.

Educational Objectives:
• Identify current issues in the community and brainstorm creative solutions.
• Increase your awareness of the relationships between space, human scale and function.
• Develop design skills and gain experience in communicating your planning and designing ideas through sketching, hand drawing, computer-aided design platforms, physical model making, and writing.

Costs:
No entry fee and no preregistration is required.

Awards:
This is a judged competition. Submissions will be reviewed by a select jury panel and monetary awards will be distributed in recognition accordingly.

Schedule:
September 26, 2022 | Distribution
December 9, 2022 | Submission entries due
December 11, 2022 | Virtual Awards Ceremony (participants will be notified of ceremony details prior to the event)

Deliverables

As a participant in the 2022 Design Ideas Collective, you may choose to enter as an Individual or as a Group participant. As a Group Entry participant, you may work in teams ranging between 2-3 people. The final deliverable for entry into the collective is a Google Slides Presentation along with a brief video (no more than 2 minutes maximum) to better explain your thinking to the judges. Please use the AFSF template provided via the link below and make a copy to save out a new file:
[AFSF Google Slides Template](#)

Only label your slides with a project title. Do not list your name or school – you will fill this information out on the Google Entry Form when you submit. In this slide deck, you may present your design ideas by incorporating any of but not limited to the following items to best describe your design solution:

- Drawings — sketches, diagrams, scaled drawings (hand drawn or computer-aided drawings) in plan, elevation, section, axon, and/or perspective. Scaled drawings must indicate a scale bar and north arrow for reference.
- Models — images of physical models and/or digital models. This can be a single final model, a series of studies, or both.
- Renderings and collages — hand drawn illustrations and/or digitally rendered models.
- Collages and Image References — digital and/or scanned or photographed collages, image references to convey design intent.
- Writing — written description of your work and thought process. Give your project a title that best describes your design. Compose a thoughtful and concise description of your design solution and strategy. This should include your inspiration and what you are trying to achieve with your proposal. This is your opportunity to articulate any other ideas you may have that aren't as easy to read from your drawings and models alone such as material choices or site ideas relative to the larger context.
- Photos — to best support your site research

Submission & Resources

Submissions are due by Friday December 9, 2022 at 6pm PST.

You are required to submit your entry via the Google Form link below:
Entry Form

All of your files must be labeled with your project tile. You are only to upload Google Slide Presentations and videos describing your project. Please do not exceed 1GB or 8 files in total (4 Google Slide Presentations and 4 videos maximum). Please direct your inquiries to Ryan Lee (ryan@afsf.org).

Project Resources
Google Drive Project Folder
• Entry Form
• Google Slide Template

Software Resources
Autodesk Education
SketchUp

Judging Rubric

Below is a list and breakdown of judging criteria that will be used to evaluate your submission.

Big Idea
What is the narrative for your design and how is it informed by your research? Each project should be grounded in a big picture idea that may be inspired by your interest such as the site, the program, the users, design composition, history, view corridors, etc. Develop a concept for what you're trying to achieve and make that evident in your drawings, models and written description.

Design Function
How does your design function and is it conducive to a realistic working solution? Consider programmatic adjacencies (what things are next to what?), circulation routes to and from spaces and access to light, air and views. User experience should be carefully considered – think about the different type of people who may be visiting aspects of your design and how their interactions might differ.

Design Aesthetics
Do you have a compelling solution that visually carries forth your big idea? Consider spatial composition. How does your design read from multiple vantage points on site?

Technical Execution & Clarity
Is your design thinking clearly presented through well-executed drawings and/or models? Use your presentation skills to curate a well-thought-out and compelling project.

Process
Did you include images of your thought process leading up to your design solution? From conception to execution, the journey is just as important as the final product and we would like to see some of your process work. Document study models, include diagrams, sketches, whatever it may be that helped lead you to your conclusion and helps you narrate your thinking.

Awards

Award categories for Distinction, Exceptional Submission and Best of Class will be given for the best proposals put forth. Please note that Judges reserve the right to adjust awards and categories as they best see fit to provide recognition for projects entered into the competition.

Best of Class
1st Place | $200
2nd Place | $150
3rd Place | $100

Student Work Examples
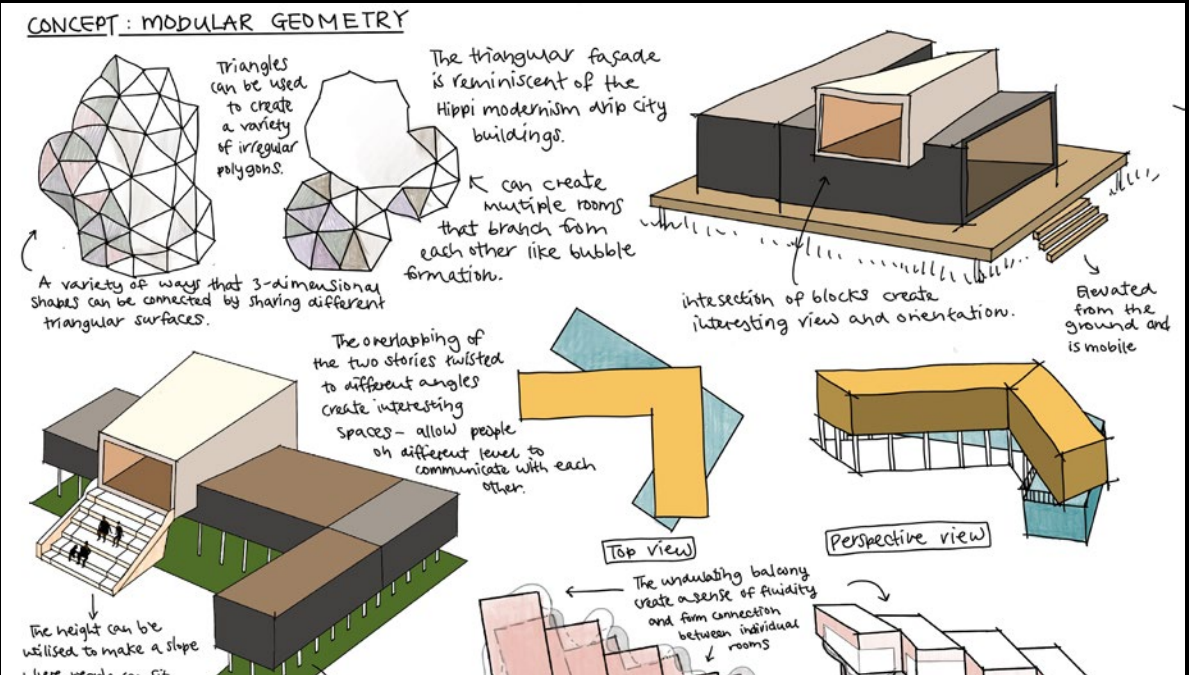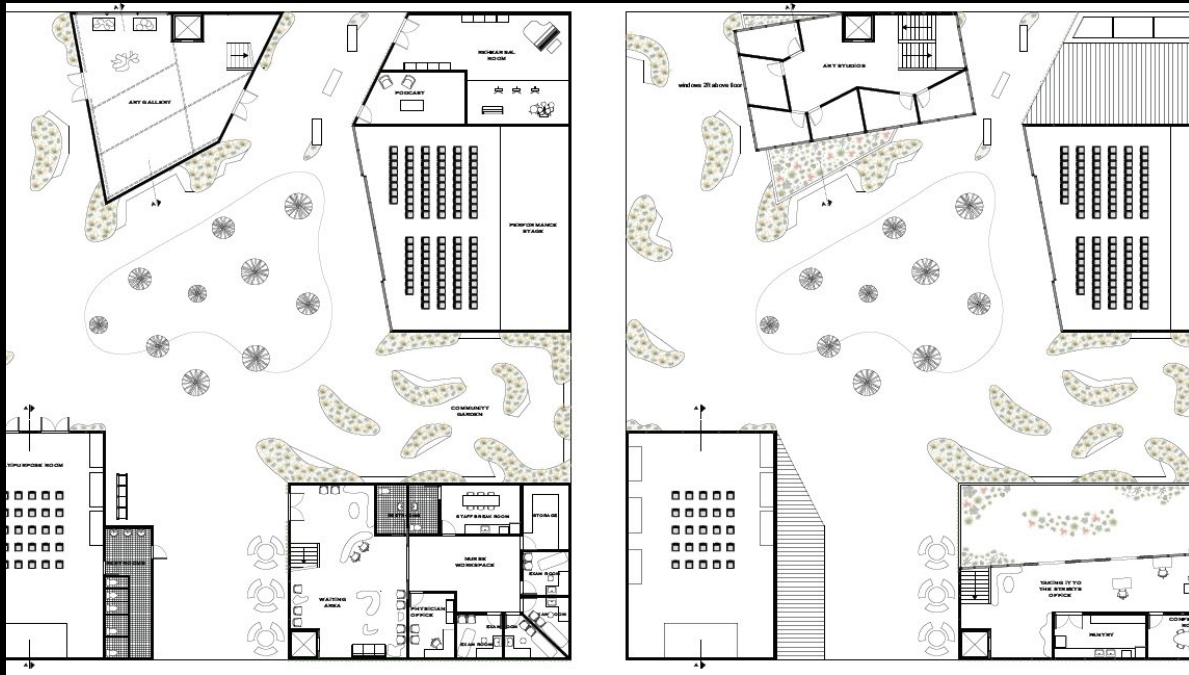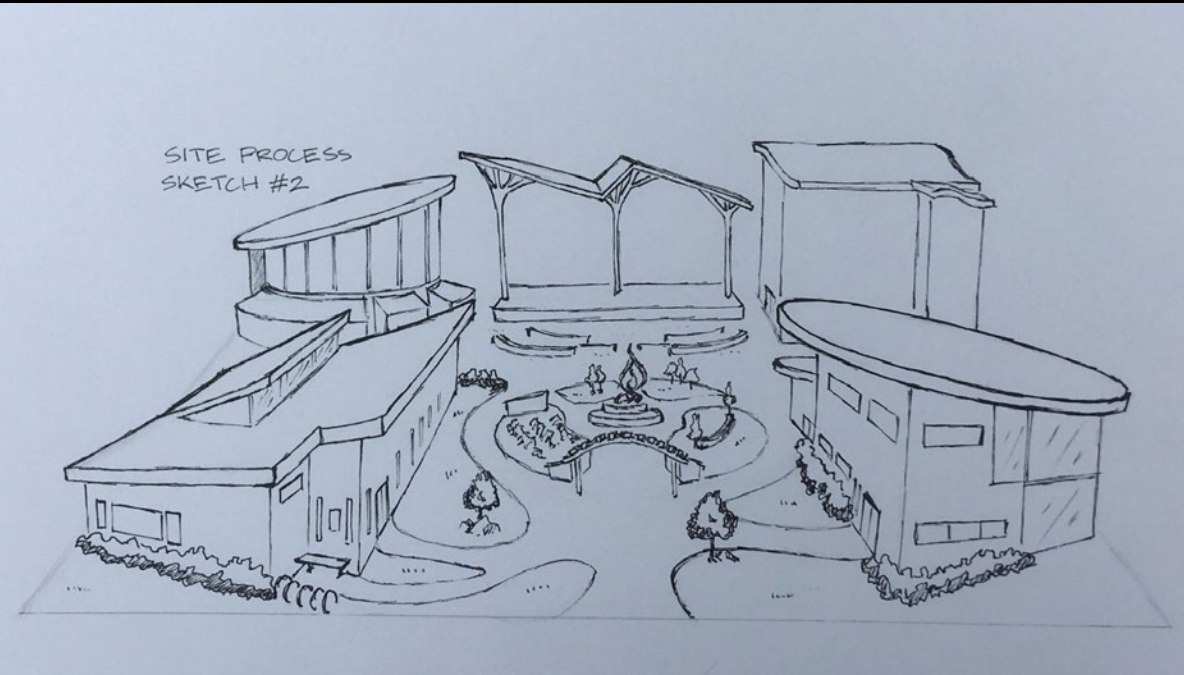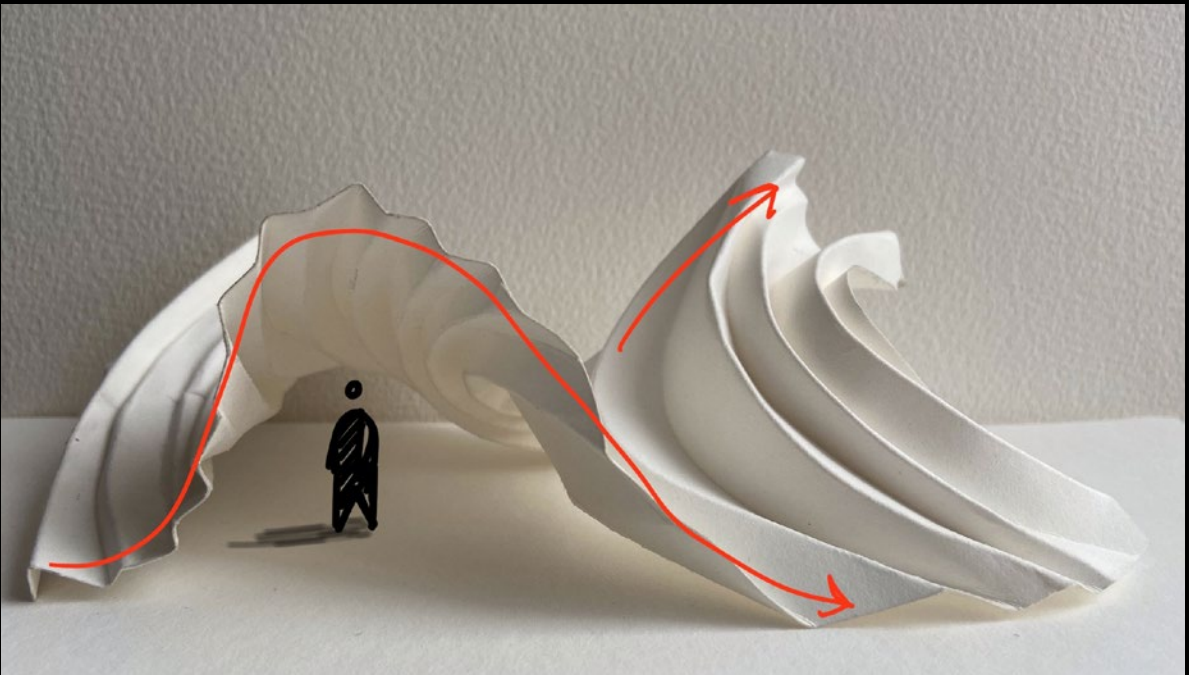
AFSF Staff & Board of Directors

AFSF ARCHITECTURAL FOUNDATION SAN FRANCISCO

Design Ideas Collective Competition Committee

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Vice President - Board of Directors, AFSF
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For questions regarding the 2022 Design Ideas
Collective Competition, please feel free to contact
Ryan and Alan at the email addresses listed above.

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Thank you for participating in the AFSF 2022 Design Ideas Collective. Best of luck to you all!