

# Time Cooling

PANDD DAYS 2021

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE + URBANISM  
LANDSCAPE JUSTICE INITIATIVE



**BRINGING  
CLIMATE JUSTICE  
TO SKID ROW**

# FOREWORD

While permanent supportive housing (PSH) must remain the unwavering goal to address the humanitarian crisis of LA County's 66,000+ unhoused individuals, the reality is that goal is taking time to achieve. Supportive interim strategies must continue to be developed. This project imagines an expanded network of public spaces in Skid Row that have the capacity to better support and provide comfort [or relief] to those who occupy them.

## DE-CRIMINALIZING SPACE

The City of L.A.'s Municipal Codes render almost every aspect of one's daily life and routine punishable while unhoused (sitting, sleeping, lying in public places; storing personal property; etc), which physically manifests in urban landscapes that are brutal for unsheltered persons to navigate. Persons experiencing homelessness (PEH) spend most of their day faced with what they CAN'T do, but what if our landscapes began asserting what one CAN? How can we design spaces to recharge one's humanity – to not only access services and programming that are already provide, but to serve as climate havens from extreme heat that also empower a dignified existence, and allow for a sense of community to build around a shared resource. The establishment of basic routines for the reliable ac-

cess to basic needs is made more difficult by extreme heat events and an unequal distribution of shade. California's declining urban tree cover has been attributed to drought, development pressures, conflicts of infrastructure, and issues of management, funding, and maintenance.

According to LA County's Department of Public Health, "heat causes more deaths in the U.S. each year than floods, storms, and lightning combined..." and impacts vulnerable populations most (especially PEH). One of the most effective ways to combat extreme heat is to increase the urban forest cover, but even this seemingly simple solution must be analyzed against the policies, codes, and regulations that might criminalize an unhoused individual in the context of Skid Row. What if pilot urban cooling projects in Skid Row began to engage the unhoused community to develop possible solutions, pairing impactful cooling interventions with additional solutions that enhance access to basic needs like hydration, hygiene, and electricity [among others]? This project intimately engages local organizations, and brings our expertise in the design of civic spaces, to imagine an expanded network of refreshing spaces emergent from community engagement that considers healing and thermal comfort as a key decision-making metric.



**TOPIC PROMPT: SHELTER**

Housing Homeless: Out-of-the-box solutions for LA's Skid Row:

**How might we develop a space to serve the needs of the homeless, one of our most vulnerable communities in the County?**

Create and design a model to address any of the myriad of needs for people experiencing homelessness (PEH) including possible solutions for housing, hydration, hygiene, and summer cooling.

**THE IDEA**

The inequities of urban heat are often most visible in global scales, with a lot of consideration given to unequal global impacts whereby certain parts of the world (who are the lowest emitters of carbon emissions) are bearing the heaviest brunt of the climate crisis. Those inequalities also play out across much more localized geographies, and Los Angeles is an exemplar case of the inordinate burden of climate change most predominantly impacting lower income communities of color, and the unhoused community. For as long as it takes to deliver a housing solution, unhoused individuals in Los Angeles will continue to suffer at the hands of our codified systems of regulations (like the LA Municipal Code), and at the hands of climate change, including extreme urban heat conditions. While the City of LA recently ran a successful urban cooling station program from July through October, due to financial constraints, these cooling stations were decommissioned at the end of October 2021. This project imagines an expanded cooling station network in Skid Row that has the capacity to better support and provide relief for those who occupy it, introducing a decision-making tool for engaging the unhoused community and bring climate justice strategies to Skid Row with humility and compassion.

**AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT:**

*While this work welcomed and appreciated any and all innovative and visionary ideas and designs to help tackle solutions to the problem being studied, students undertook this work with empathy and compassion, mindful that the goal of this assignment were not to "beautify" or "romanticize" the urban conditions and social struggles of persons experiencing homelessness, or create a utopian tent city. The work strives to avoid "parachuting" into this community, extracting knowledge and leaving nothing in return, or taking on a 'savior complex.' It is important to think of this work as a small contribution to more longstanding efforts, utilizing the skills of the landscape architect to make this contribution.*

*The work presented herein will be refined into the future. We acknowledge that each of us approaches this complex, heavy, and often-times emotional subject matter with our own preconceptions, our own understandings (and misunderstandings), and our own levels of comfort in learning and talking about topics like homelessness. We sincerely hope that all those who continue to engage in this work and topic will be a support system for each other in unpacking this topic, looking beyond stereotypes and learning from the community partners that have joined this effort.*

*We encourage everyone to have a supportive mindset about the work, acknowledging that this is not an issue that can be solved with one idea, or in a few months time. The intention of this work is to meaningfully and empathetically engage with a very specific site, its conditions, its community, and the resources, services and organizations that exist within this context that are doing work to provide for unhoused individuals in the context of Skid Row. This work represents an opportunity to test ideas and to ground those ideas in an empathic way, bringing the lens of landscape architecture, community, and built environment to climate justice work in Skid Row, and beyond.*

# SUPPORT

## PARTNERS

### **PANDO, [HTTPS:// PANDOPOPULUS.COM](https://pandopopulus.com)**

Pando innovates at the intersection of education and public agencies to implement the goals of Los Angeles County’s Sustainability Plan, aiming to make the world a community of more resilient communities. Pando is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization based in Los Angeles County. The workshop outcomes will be developed to submit to Pando Days 2021.

### **CITY HOMELESSNESS INITIATIVES, OFFICE OF LOS ANGELES MAYOR ERIC GARCETTI**

The Mayor’s Office of City Homelessness Initiatives (MOCHI) oversees the Mayor’s strategy to solve homelessness and housing instability in Los Angeles. The office directs the City’s street strategy to address encampments, the development of interim housing citywide through the “A Bridge Home” program, and the production and preservation of affordable and supportive housing for Angelenos who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, including oversight of the Prop. HHH program. MOCHI guides the regional planning efforts alongside our County and State partners on effective homelessness interventions, including in Skid Row, the epicenter of our crisis.

## ADVISORS

### **HOMELESS HEALTH CARE LOS ANGELES (HHCLA), [HTTPS://WWW.HHCLA.ORG](https://www.hhcla.org)**

HHCLA helps people wherever they are on their journey, both physically and spiritually, without judgment. They are the largest harm reduction organization in the US and provide needle exchange, naloxone for overdose reversal, housing, hygiene services and medical and behavioral health services. Their programs include the Center for Harm Reduction, Refresh Spot, and Skid Rover, and they provide street team outreach, training and education, behavioral health programs, and connections to permanent housing for people affected by homelessness throughout Los Angeles.

### **LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORK (LA CAN), [HTTPS://CANGRESS.ORG](https://cangress.org)**

The mission of LA CAN is to help people dealing with poverty create & discover opportunities, while serving as a vehicle to ensure they have voice, power & opinion in the decisions that are directly affecting them. LA CAN organizes and empowers community residents in Skid Row and South Central LA to work collectively to create systemic change. LA CAN’s constituency consists of extremely low-income and



homeless people, primarily those living in Downtown LA and South Central LA.

**DOWNTOWN WOMEN'S CENTER (DWC), [HTTPS:// DOWNTOWNWOMEN-SCENTER.ORG](https://downtownwomen-center.org)**

The Downtown Women's Center (DWC) is the only organization in Los Angeles focused exclusively on serving and empowering women experiencing homelessness and formerly homeless women. Founded in 1978, DWC was the first permanent supportive housing provider for women in the US. Its mission is to end homelessness for women in greater Los Angeles through housing, wellness, employment, and advocacy.

**LOS ANGELES POVERTY DEPARTMENT (LAPD), [HTTPS://WWW.LAPOVERTYDEPT.ORG](https://www.lapovertydept.org)**

Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD) was founded in 1985 by director-performer-activist John Malpede. LAPD was the first performance group in the nation made up principally of homeless people, and the first arts program of any kind for homeless people in Los Angeles. LAPD believes in the power of imagination to motivate people - and not only artistically by acknowledging the hopes, dreams, rational and spiritual power at the core of everyone's humanity.

**SPONSORS**

The Master's Program in Landscape Architecture + Urbanism and the Landscape Justice Initiative would like to acknowledge Pando and the Pando Days program, as well as the The Grant & Shaya Kirkpatrick Landscape Architecture + Urbanism Leadership Fund for sponsoring this important workshop and expanded project.

**ABOUT: PANDO DAYS '21**

Pando Days is Pando's annual flagship program that brings together educators from the arts, humanities, sciences, and technology to tackle the biggest sustainability challenges facing LA County. And asks them to inspire each other. And their students. And Angelenos. And the world. With ingenious new solutions and plans. Los Angeles County has a master plan for sustainability called OurCounty LA. Pando Days brings colleges and universities together from across the Southland to help implement the plan, dedicating full courses, studios, or labs to creating ingenious solutions that further the region's goals. Schools brainstorm projects in the spring, implement in the fall, premiere final presentations for judges in December, and showcase at the Pando Days Gala — after which the process of project innovation and implementation begins again.



**RESOURCES + RESTRICTIONS**

**SKID ROW, LOS ANGELES, CA**

SKID ROW APPEARS TO BE A MODEL OF BOTH RESOURCE ALLOCATIONS AND RESTRICTIONS THAT ARE OFTEN AT ODDS WITH ONE ANOTHER... IF THE HISTORY OF SKID ROW IS ANY INDICATION, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SKID ROW IN 1915 WAS AN "UNOFFICIAL" "CONTAINMENT ZONE" WHERE HOMELESS PEOPLE, SHELTERS AND SERVICES WOULD BE "TOLERATED" (BGC, 304p).

"YET, WITHIN THE SKID ROW NEIGHBORHOOD, THE DENSITY OF SERVICES AND RESOURCES ARE AT WAR WITH THE CITY'S RESTRICTIVE CODES AND ORDINANCES THAT RESTRICT AND CRIMINALIZE ONE'S ABILITY TO EQUITABLY EXIST. SKID ROW EXISTS AS THE HIGHEST BEER OF BOTH DISPLACEMENT PRESSURE [ ] AND HOMELESSNESS [ ] IN DTLA, WITH THE DENSITY OF EXISTING ENCAMPMENTS [ ] AGGREGATED NEAR THE RESOURCES, BUT NEW LAWS COULD DENY INDIVIDUALS FROM BEING ABLE TO SLEEP WITHIN 50' OF CITY PARKS, SCHOOLS, AND HOMELESS RESOURCES [ ] - 50%."

North ^  
SCALE: 1" = 1,000'  
0' 1,000' 2,000'

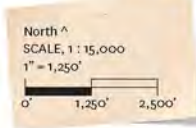


**CONTEXT**

**SKID ROW, LOS ANGELES, CA**

**THE "HEART" OF DTLA?**  
I NEVER REALLY THOUGHT ABOUT SKID ROW'S GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT AS THE CENTER OF LOS ANGELES, ITS 1MI. BUFFER ALMOST PERFECTLY ALIGNED WITH THE FREEWAYS THAT CIRCUMNAVIGATE, OR CONFINE, THE URBAN CENTER OF LOS ANGELES, YET WITHIN THE RELATIVE FLATNESS OF THAT CIRCUMFRANCE, MANY GRADIENTS EXIST - DENSITY TO THE WEST, INFRASTRUCTURAL TO THE EAST, AND THE EPIDEMIC OF HOMELESSNESS AS THE MOST DEFINING FEATURE OF THE CENTRAL ZONE.

WITH ALMOST 4,750 UNHOUSED INDIVIDUALS IN THE 2019 SKID ROW HOMELESS COUNT, BOTH SHELTERED AND UNSHELTERED (LAHSA, 2019), THE POPULATION DENSITY OF UNHOUSED INDIVIDUALS ALONE IN SKID ROW (0.45Q.MI.) IS OVER 11,875 PEOPLE PER SQUARE MILE. AN 11% INCREASE FROM THE PREVIOUS YEAR, SKID ROW ACCOUNTS FOR 13% OF THE CITY OF LA'S 36,000+ UNHOUSED.



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FALL 2021

THE

CHALLENGE

COOLING TIME: BRINGING CLIMATE JUSTICE TO SKID ROW

**DISCLAIMER:**

This work firmly believes that the solution to homelessness is NOT a designed landscape, but rather an institutionalization of more concrete programs that reduce or prevent the likelihood of homelessness, paired with permanent supportive housing strategies. The solution to homelessness IS housing. BUT for as long as it takes to deliver a housing solution, our unhoused communities will continue to suffer at the hands of our designed civic and open spaces, and at the hands of our codified systems of regulations that restrict and criminalize their abilities to even exist. This work does NOT intend to solve homelessness, OR provide housing, but rather this work explores impactful interim improvements to the current, daily, in-the-moment and traumatic conditions experienced by LA's unhoused communities.



01

# CHALLENGE

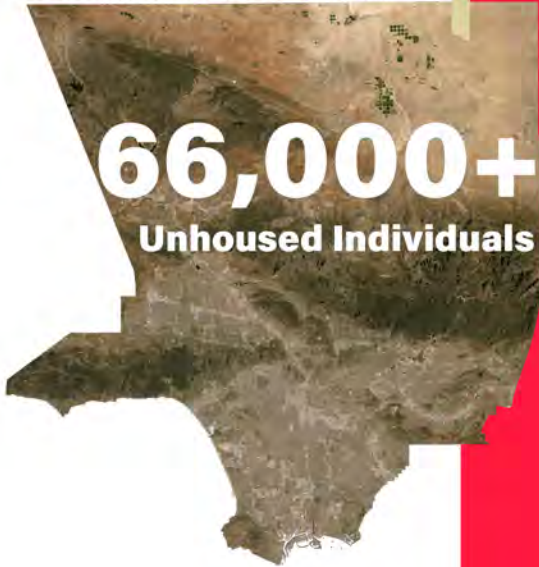


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# THERE ARE

## ~580,000 PEH IN THE US + ~66,000+ PEH IN LA COUNTY

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

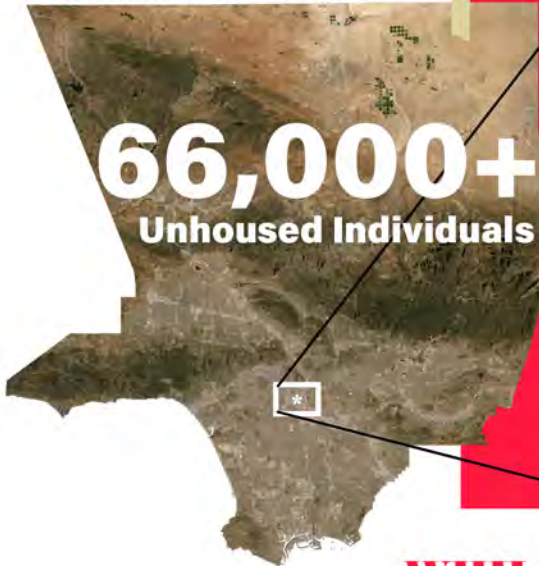


PEH = PERSON(S) EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

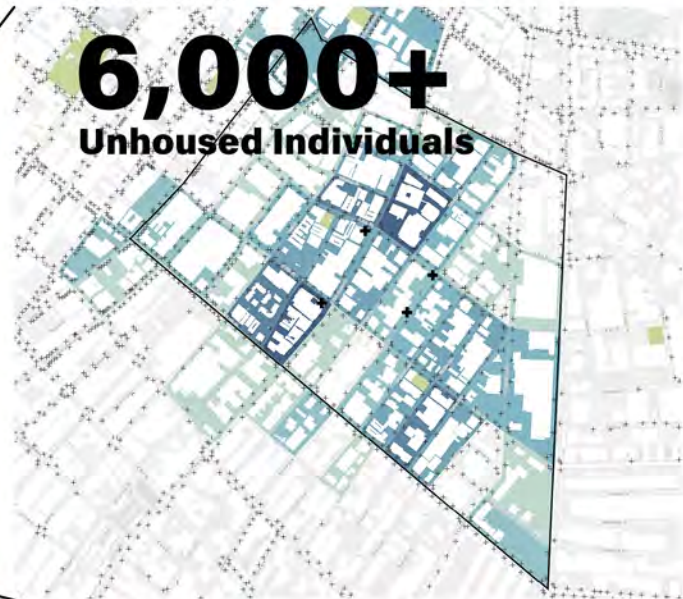
THE TREND CONTINUES TO RISE.



LOS ANGELES COUNTY



SKID ROW



HOMELESS COUNT  
SKID ROW, LOS ANGELES, CA

- SKID ROW BOUNDARY
- EXISTING COOLING STATION
- STREET LIGHT
- PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

2020 HOMELESS SURVEY COUNT

0-1
1-4
4-7
7-15
15-25
25-31
31-62

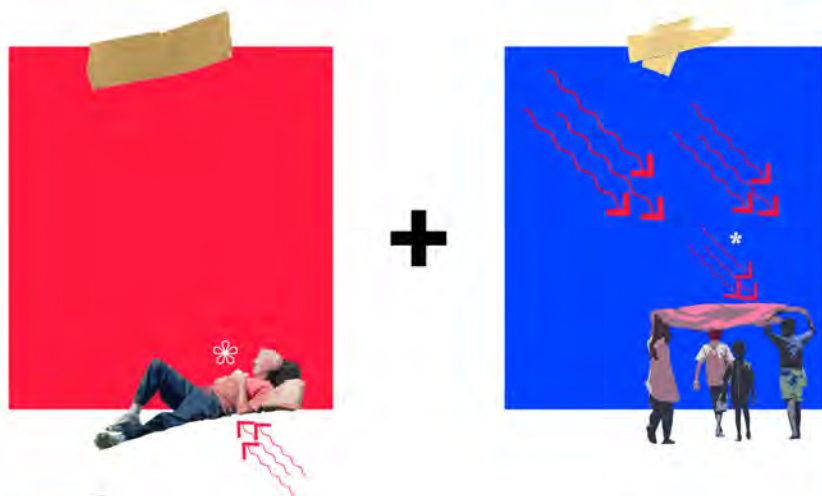
SOURCE: Los Angeles GeoHub, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA)

8000' 0"  
SCALE: 1" = 5,000'  
0' 500'

**WHILE PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING must remain the unwavering goal to address the humanitarian crisis of LA's 66,000+ unhoused individuals, the reality is that goal will take time to achieve.**

**SUPPORTIVE INTERIM STRATEGIES must continue to be developed.**





# HOMELESSNESS + EXTREME WEATHER = Converging Crises

## INTRODUCTION

This project considers the human experience of conditions and policies in Skid Row, to design urban cooling strategies focused on both climate justice and community resiliency.

As aspiring landscape architects, we are the future designers of parks, open spaces, streetscapes, and the civic spaces that unhoused communities navigate. This work is a call to action for landscape architects, and all design professionals, to begin looking beyond our zoning and building codes, and to begin actively engaging our Municipal Codes (as well) to understand the implications of the physical design of space on vulnerable populations in the contexts where we work.

This work is interested in exposing the structures that isolate, exclude and oppress the unhoused community, to determine how codified spatial regulations disproportionately target, and criminalize one's ability, and right, to live while unhoused. The work builds on over a year of research and

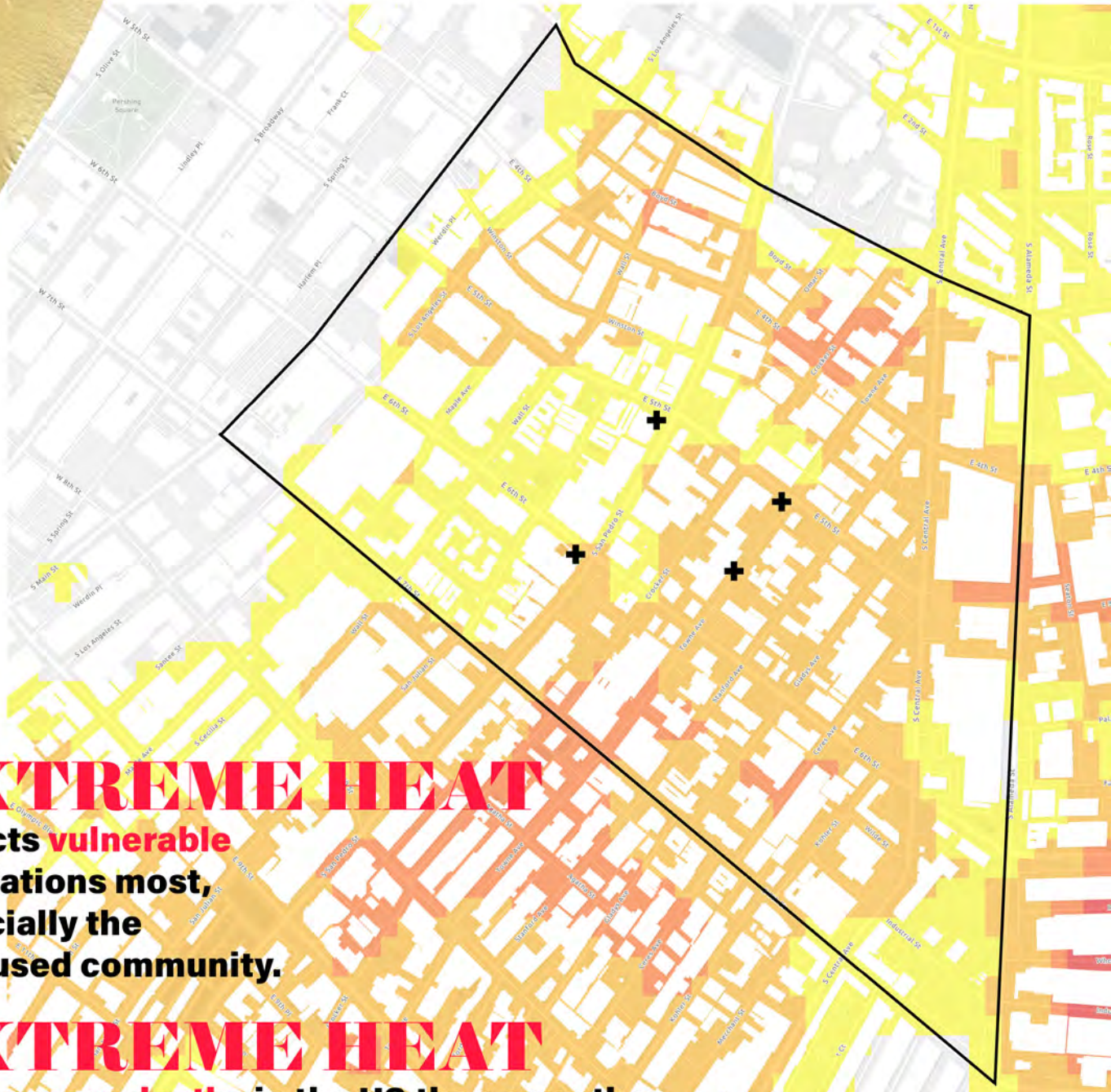
design curriculum that was initiated in Fall 2020 in USC's Master of Landscape Architecture + Urbanism program and the USC Landscape Justice Initiative, and specifically the capstone project of Jared Edgar McKnight, the lead organizer of this effort, who completed his graduate work through this multi-year effort.

**Today, LA County is experiencing a humanitarian crisis of over 66,000 persons experiencing homelessness (PEH). The largest congregate setting of LA County's 66,000+ unhoused individuals are concentrated in the streets of Skid Row, a 51-block area in the heart of Downtown Los Angeles (~6,000 people), and this number continues to rise.** While permanent supportive housing (PSH) must remain an unwavering goal, the reality is that the need is growing faster than the capacity. The solution to homelessness is housing, but the staggering costs and bureaucratic hurdles to achieve this solution, are still, unfortunately, likely decades away. With adequate housing for LA years away, there is a NEED for interim strategies NOW.

FALL 2021

COOLING TIME: BRINGING CLIMATE JUSTICE TO SKID ROW

# SKID ROW



## EXTREME HEAT

impacts **vulnerable** populations most, especially the unoused community.

## EXTREME HEAT

causes **more deaths** in the US than any other weather-related disaster.

## EXTREME HEAT

is **worsening** due to climate change.

Sources: Los Angeles Homeless Count, National Alliance to End Homelessness; Los Angeles Homeless Count, USGS, Esri Living Atlas; Sources: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

# URBAN HEAT

SKID ROW, LOS ANGELES, CA

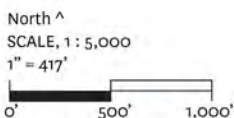
— SKID ROW BOUNDARY  
 + EXISTING COOLING STATION

URBAN HEAT



Data is derived from ground-level thermal sensors from the summers of 2018 and 2019. Data shows where certain areas of cities are hotter than the average temperature for that same city as a whole. Severity is measured on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being a relatively mild heat area (slightly above the mean for the city), and 5 being a severe heat area (significantly above the mean for the city).

SOURCE: The Trust for Public Land, Descartes Labs, USGS, Esri Living Atlas



## EXTREME HEAT

Limited access to shade, clean water and air-conditioned spaces puts the health and well-being of unhoused individuals in serious jeopardy.

Over the past four decades, LA has seen a steady increase in the number of heat-related deaths in summer. **Although extreme heat often takes place out of sight and out of the news** (compared to other climate-related disasters that produce visible imagery of devastation), **it is quietly the nation's leading climate-related killer.**

"In an editorial published in more than 200 medical and health journals worldwide in September (Call for emergency action to limit global temperature increases, restore biodiversity, and protect health, Atwoli, et al.), the authors declared a 1.5-degree-Celsius rise in global temperatures the "greatest threat to global public health." The world is on track to warm by around 3 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels by 2100, based on current policies." (NYTimes)

Every summer, in LA and specifically Skid Row, an area which has one of the highest concentrations of unhoused individuals in the nation, people are left vulnerable to relentless heat with limited access to shade, clean water and AC-ed spaces with the extended exposure putting health and well-being of unhoused individuals in serious jeopardy.

The growing population of unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness in Skid Row are in need of housing, but they are also in need of hydration, hygiene, cooling centers, a moment of relief from the extreme conditions that are perpetuated by the planning and design of this community over decades. **"Skid Row is a climate desert, registering as many as 15 degrees hotter on a summer day than comparable areas within LA that offer trees and shade."**

## SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Los Angeles County has a master plan for sustainability called OurCounty LA. The plan sets out to enrich the region through justice and community resilience, outlining a bold, inclusive and truly regional vision for the present and future generations of Los Angeles.

*“OurCounty focuses on people. It outlines what local governments and stakeholders can do to enhance the well-being of every community in the County while reducing damage to the natural environment and adapting to the changing climate, particularly focusing on those communities that have been disproportionately burdened by environmental pollution. This plan envisions streets and parks that are accessible, safe, and welcoming to everyone; air, water, and soil that are clean and healthy; affordable housing that enables all residents to thrive in place; and a just economy that runs on renewable energy instead of fossil fuels.”*

**This project responds to a number of Los Angeles County’s OurCounty Regional Sustainability Plan Goals, but within the Plan’s 220 page report, “homeless” or “homelessness” is only mentioned 8 times. Our work asserts that including the unhoused community in these goals is paramount.**

Pando Days takes up the challenge of helping to implement the OurCounty LA plan, but in this specific project, and while this work seeks to respond to the adjacent 5 goals from the plan, we cannot support the goals without declaring that these goals must include the unhoused community and persons experiencing homelessness in order for them to be effective in delivering both climate justice, environmental justice, spatial justice, and social justice solutions.

We advocate for the unhoused community to be included in: Goal 1 pertaining to building resilient and healthy community environments where residents thrive in place (including Skid Row, until the time when enough housing capacity can support the needs of the unhoused), Goal 3 when discussing displacement (including the displacement of encampments), and Goal 11.



# OURCOUNTRY

## Los Angeles Regional Sustainability Plan Goals:



**Goal 1)** Resilient and healthy community environments where residents thrive in place *(including the unhoused)*



**Goal 2)** Buildings and infrastructure that support human health and resilience



**Goal 3)** Equitable and sustainable land use and development without displacement *(including the unhoused)*



**Goal 6)** Accessible parks, beaches, recreational waters, public lands, and public spaces that create opportunities for respite, recreation, ecological discovery, and cultural activities



**Goal 11)** Inclusive, transparent, and accountable governance that encourages participation in sustainability efforts, especially by disempowered communities *(including the unhoused)*

**VS**



Sources: OurCounty, Los Angeles County Chief Sustainability Office



**LA.MC. § 56.11.** POLICY X  
 Storage of Personal Property.  
 (1) No person shall store any personal property within the feet of any residential lot (1000 sq ft or less), and, provided it is located on a sidewalk, within any public lot, in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk, or in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk, or in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk.



**LA.MC. § 41.31.** POLICY X  
 Trees - Injury To.  
 (1) No person shall place any object, structure, or other material, except any tree, plant or shrub, in a way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk, or in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk.



**LA.MC. § 41.47.2.** POLICY X  
 Urinating or Defecating in Public.  
 (1) No person shall urinate or defecate in any public place, including any sidewalk, street, park, public building, or other public recreational facility or place, in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk, or in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk.



**LA.MC. § 41.03.** POLICY X  
 Lookouts for Illegal Acts.  
 (1) No person shall act as a lookout for any building, premises, or establishment used for gambling, prostitution, or any other form of vice or illegal act, or where obscenity, liquor or illegal drugs, food or narcotics, or for any person soliciting, offering or providing prostitution, gambling or any other form of vice, or for any other purpose prohibited by law.



**LA.MC. § 41.27.** POLICY X  
 Intoxication.  
 (1) No person shall drink any wine, spirituous or other liquor containing more than one-half of one per cent of alcohol by volume, open any bottle, cask, or other container, or in any way place together to the advantage of the public, which produce gas or steam for the consumption of such liquor on the sidewalk.



**LA DEPT. OF REC. AND PARKS:** POLICY X  
 Citywide Park Closures - 2020.  
 In compliance with the local emergency proclamation with a declaration with the most recent a County Department of Public and Health orders, and the Mayor's order or other direction, the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks (DARP) provides the following opening or programming, events, facilities, park closures and usage.



**LA.MC. § 56.11.** POLICY X  
 Storage of Personal Property.  
 (1) No person shall store any personal property, including any vehicle, on any public place, including any sidewalk, street, park, public building, or other public recreational facility or place, in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk, or in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk.



**LA.MC. § 63.44.** POLICY X  
 Regulations Affecting Parks and Recreation Areas.  
 (1) No person shall enter any public park, including any sidewalk, street, park, public building, or other public recreational facility or place, in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk, or in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk.



**LA.MC. § 41.59.** POLICY X  
 Prohibition Against Certain Forms of Aggressive Solicitation.  
 (1) No person shall, in any way, including any sidewalk, street, park, public building, or other public recreational facility or place, in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk, or in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk.



**LA.MC. § 41.18.a.** POLICY X  
 Sidewalks, Pedestrian Subways - Loitering.  
 (1) No person shall loiter or stand on any sidewalk, street, park, public building, or other public recreational facility or place, in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk, or in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk.



**LA.MC. § 56.11.** POLICY X  
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 (1) No person shall store any personal property, including any vehicle, on any public place, including any sidewalk, street, park, public building, or other public recreational facility or place, in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk, or in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk.



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**LA.MC. § 41.18.** POLICY X  
 Sidewalks, Pedestrian Subways - Loitering.  
 (1) No person shall loiter or stand on any sidewalk, street, park, public building, or other public recreational facility or place, in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk, or in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk.



**LA.MC. § 63.44-46.** POLICY X  
 Designation of Drug-Free Zones.  
 (1) No person shall, in any way, including any sidewalk, street, park, public building, or other public recreational facility or place, in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk, or in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk.



**LA.MC. § 41.19.** POLICY X  
 Public Assemblies - Obstructing Entrance.  
 (1) No person shall, in any way, including any sidewalk, street, park, public building, or other public recreational facility or place, in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk, or in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk.



**LA.MC. § 41.46.** POLICY X  
 Sidewalks - Cleaning of.  
 (1) No person shall, in any way, including any sidewalk, street, park, public building, or other public recreational facility or place, in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk, or in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk.



**LA.MC. § 63.44.** POLICY X  
 Regulations Affecting Parks and Recreation Areas.  
 (1) No person shall enter any public park, including any sidewalk, street, park, public building, or other public recreational facility or place, in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk, or in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk.



**LA.MC. § 85.02.** POLICY X  
 Regulating the Use of Vehicles for Dwelling.  
 (1) No person shall, in any way, including any sidewalk, street, park, public building, or other public recreational facility or place, in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk, or in any way that obstructs or impedes any pedestrian's free and unobstructed passage along the sidewalk.

# Our design choices affect well-being.

Building off Jared Edgar McKnight's master's thesis last year, it is important to be mindful and sensitive when dealing with urban spaces to ensure physical interventions do not exacerbate the criminalization of the unhoused by municipal codes that restrict so much of everyday life in Skid Row.

Unhoused individuals in Los Angeles endure discrimination for their very existence, navigating the LAPD's yearly 14,000+ misdemeanor arrests attributed to "quality of life" violations that prohibit sitting, lying or sleeping on sidewalks (LAMC§41.18). Since the 1970s, Skid Row has been speculated to be an "unofficial containment zone" for homelessness, offering hundreds of resources, which some believed were originally designed to attract unhoused individuals away from tourist destinations.

As recently as September 2021, the Los

Angeles City Council finalized a sweeping ordinance to update Code §41.18 and restrict sleeping and encampments in certain areas of the city, including within 500 feet of schools, day care facilities, parks and libraries; and within 1,000 feet from facilities providing resources or services to persons experiencing homelessness, a statistic that would render over 2/3 of Skid Row uninhabitable by code.

## CODIFIED LANDSCAPES

Unseen conditions govern the vast majority of an unhoused individuals daily life and routine, influencing one's ability to have a dignified existence on the street.

From the increased policing, citations and incarcerations that exist because LA's Municipal Code deems certain activities unlawful, to the hostile landscapes that physically alter our spatial systems, and an unhoused individuals ability to navigate the

Sources: Jared Edgar McKnight, "Criminalized for their very existence: The Spatial Politics of Homelessness" (Diagramming the implications of the Los Angeles Municipal Code - LAMC)





**LA.MC. § 41.45.**  
**Unauthorized Removal, Use or Possession of Shopping Carts.**  
 (1) No person shall take in his possession any shopping cart, shopping basket or other similar device which has been removed from the normal possession and control by permanently affixing it to a sign, identifying it as belonging to a business establishment and confining it to the effect that such cart, basket or device is to be maintained at the same premises. (Amended by Ord. No. 181, 1997)



**LA.MC. § 56.11.**  
**Storage of Personal Property.**  
 (a) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (b) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (c) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (d) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (e) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (f) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (g) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (h) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (i) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (j) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (k) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (l) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (m) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (n) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (o) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (p) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (q) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (r) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (s) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (t) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (u) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (v) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (w) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (x) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (y) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area. (z) No person shall store any personal property, including but not limited to a City registration transponder, motorcycle, wheelchair or shopping cart, in a public area.



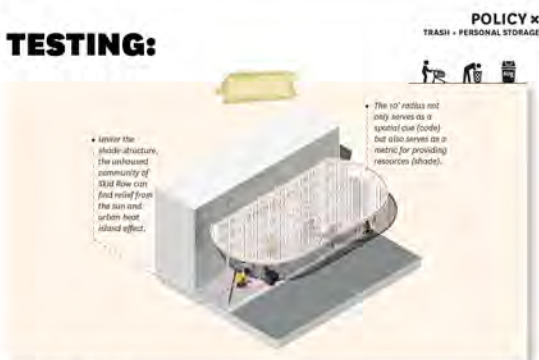
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**LA.MC. § 56.11.**  
**Storage of Personal Property.**  
 (a) No Person shall Store any Personal Property within ten feet of any operational and utilizable entrance, exit, driveway or loading dock. Without prior notice, the City may move and may immediately impound any Personal Property, whether Attended or Unattended, Stored in a Public Area within ten feet of any operational and utilizable entrance, exit, driveway or loading dock.



**TESTING:**  
**Made for shade.**  
 The 10' shade structure legally governs over the area prescribed by code that forbids individuals from storing personal property in this zones with proximity to an entrance drive for a warehouse, but the structure also offers a shade for this area of the street, so on hot days, unhoused individuals can use this zone to cool off (and do not have to worry about not knowing whether or not their personal property is at risk of removal).

sidewalk (even the Los Angeles Police Department Central Community Police Station in Skid Row has fortified its perimeter with a moat of sharp rocks that reject unhoused individuals by limiting the accessible path of the sidewalk.

Jared's work began to **SPATIALIZE** the Los Angeles Municipal Code to help the unhoused legibly understand how they can legally exist in public space, and to identify opportunities within the constraints of the code for opportunities that provide for the unhoused community. When a code restricts one's presence within such detailed constraints from 1,000 feet down to only 2 feet, that opens an opportunity to begin understanding that codified landscape spatially.

LAMC§56.11 prohibits the storage of personal belongings within 10' of an operable entrance (among other restrictions).

One example of a spatial inquiry could redirect that codified statement in the design a multi-purpose shade structure enveloping that 10' radius to:

- clearly define where personal property is at risk of confiscation,
- provide a refuge for programmed services,
- and provide a meaningful respite from excessive heat.

A design that serves as a survival guide for the unhoused to more safely negotiate civic spaces as inclusive environments, working within the constraints of the code to prevent further criminalization, and begin to provide moments of relief (from the traumatic daily lived experiences of this community, AND from extreme heat conditions). A seemingly simple intervention that offers multi-benefit solutions, and more importantly, opportunities for approaching designs in the context of Skid Row.

# SKID ROW

## TREE CANOPY

SKID ROW, LOS ANGELES, CA

— SKID ROW BOUNDARY  
+ EXISTING COOLING STATION

• TREE CANOPY COVER

LAND COVER: TREE CANOPY

- 0-7.5%
- 7.5-12.8%
- 12.8-17.6%
- 17.6-23.8%
- 23.6-32.5%
- 32.5-45.6%
- 45.6-68.0%

SOURCE: Earth Define, USDA Forest Service, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

North ^  
SCALE: 1" = 5,000'  
1" = 417'  
0 500' 1,000'

# Our policy choices affect one's ability to survive...

**Increased Policing:**

Increased police presence in Skid Row has led to a rise in arrests and citations, particularly for minor offenses like public intoxication and loitering. This has created a more hostile and surveilled environment for the homeless population.

**Ticking a Box: Restrooms (+ Shelters)**

While restrooms and shelters are essential services, their availability is often limited and subject to strict rules. Many homeless individuals face barriers to accessing these services, such as lack of identification or funds.

**Unwelcomed, Hostile Landscapes...**

Urban design choices, such as high-walled buildings and security cameras, can create environments that feel unwelcoming and unsafe for the homeless community.

**(En)forced Transiency: Street Sweeps...**

Regular street sweeping operations, often funded by city budgets (e.g., \$30 million), can displace homeless individuals and their belongings. This practice is often used as a means of enforcing transiency laws.

**STREET WATCH LOS ANGELES SERVICES NOTSWEEPS**

Community-led initiatives like Street Watch Los Angeles provide essential services such as food, clothing, and shelter, offering a more supportive alternative to city services.

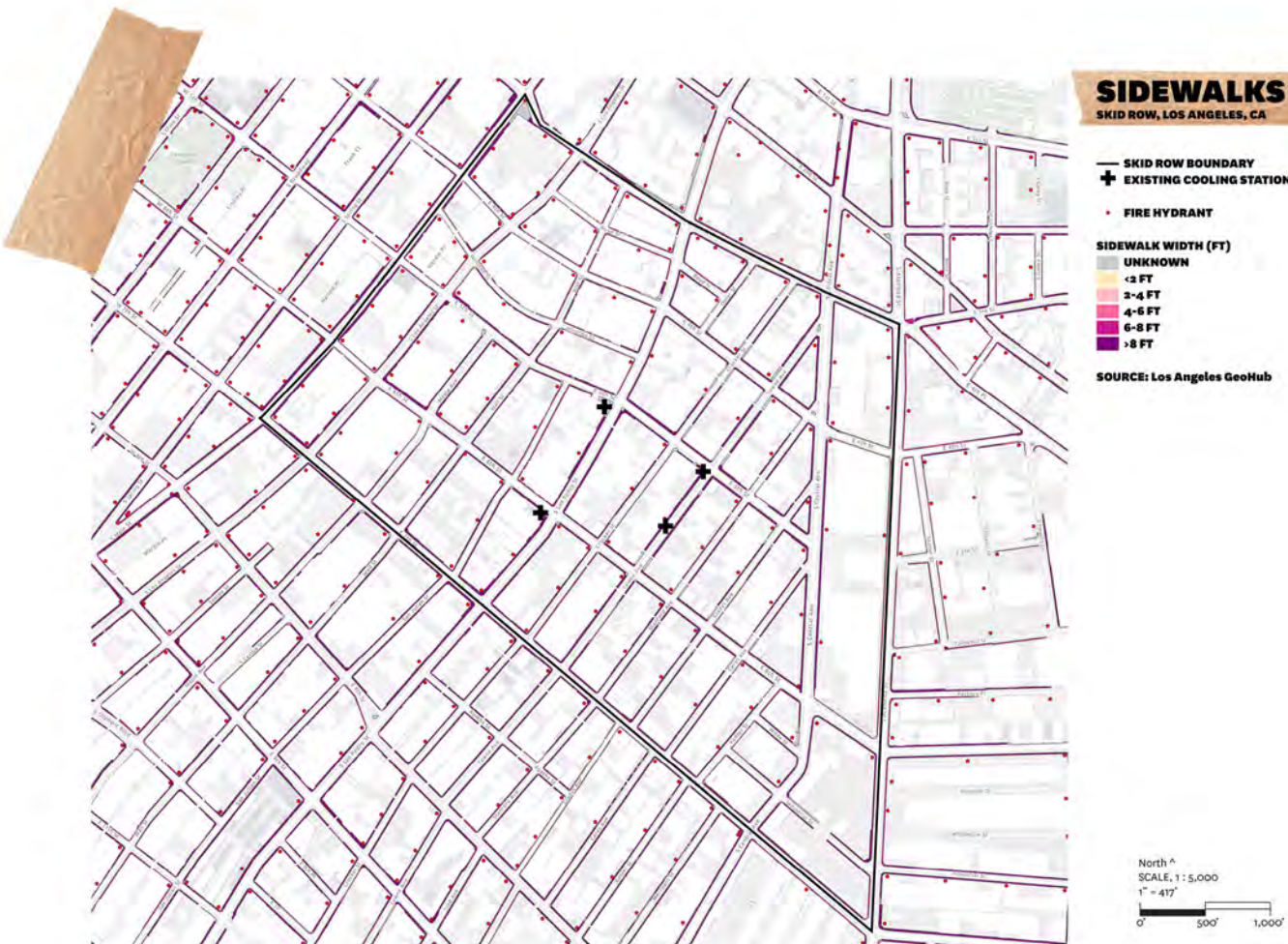
Sources: Earth Define, USDA Forest Service, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection; Jared Edgar McKnight, "Criminalized for their very existence: The Spatial Politics of Homelessness" (Diagramming the implications of the Los Angeles Municipal Code - LAMC)

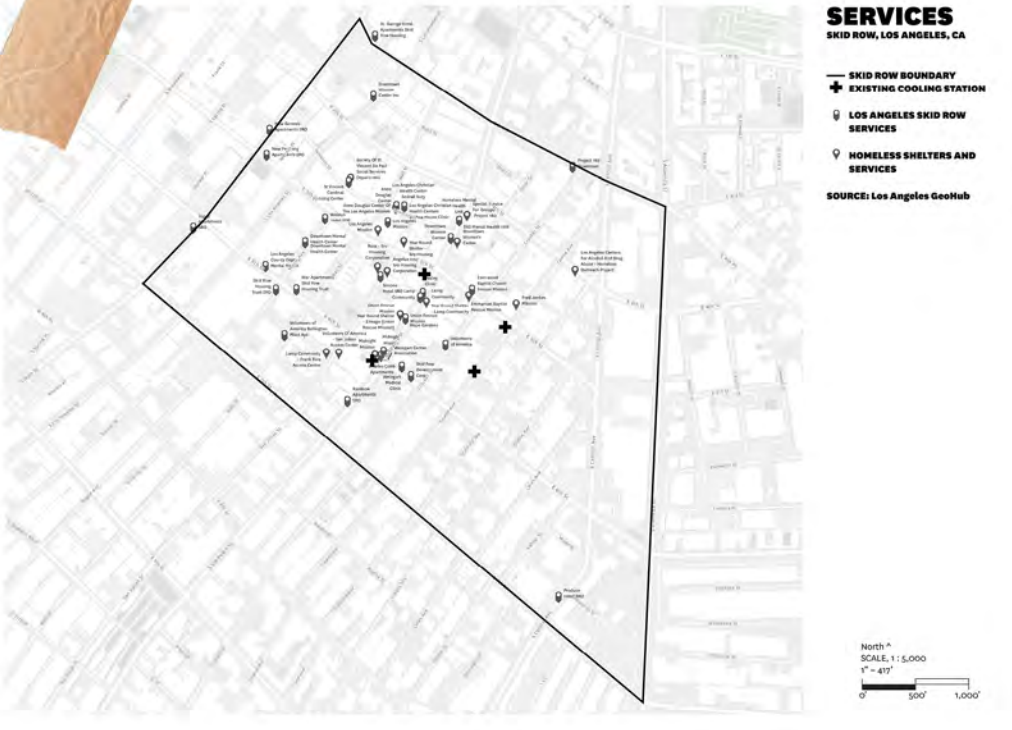
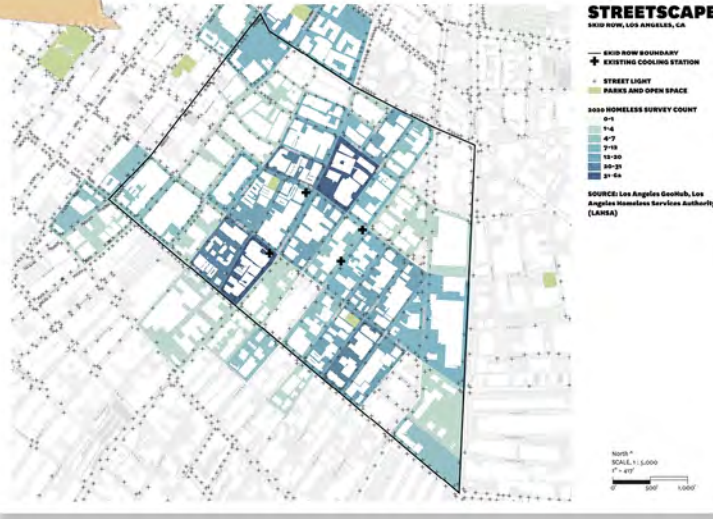
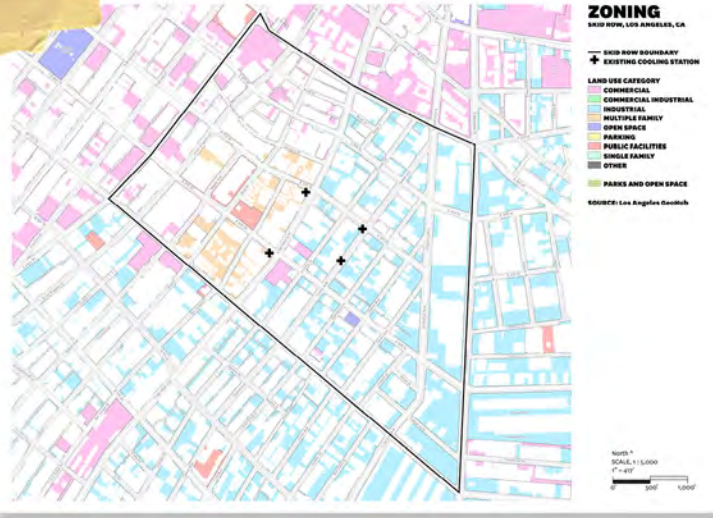
Moreover, policies that oppress or ignore human health impacts, such as low tree canopy and poor air quality, actually compound into health issues such as heart disease, asthma, and diabetes - which trigger serious morbidity risks during extreme heat events.

Our policy choices affect our tree canopies, their ongoing maintenance and health, and in turn, pollution, and its detrimental effects on our urban, and unhoused, populations.

**A sidewalk, by definition, is the portion of a street between a curb line and a property line, but by code, a sidewalk is an unlawful home.**

When our codes restrict someone's existence on the sidewalk, forbidding them from sitting, lying or sleeping, or storing their personal belongings in these spaces, the sidewalk criminalizes the existence of persons experiencing homelessness. As we populate that sidewalk with fire hydrants, street lights, trash cans, fences, curb cuts, and even street trees, each of those items is designated with a spatial regulation in the LA Municipal Code. Our policy choices affect one's ability to survive, and the enforcement of those policies and choices carries an injustice that burdens our most vulnerable communities the most, those living unsheltered, experiencing homelessness. This is an urgent call to action to design more spaces FOR the unhoused.







**PAVED SURFACE**  
SKID ROW, LOS ANGELES, CA

— SKID ROW BOUNDARY  
+ EXISTING COOLING STATION

LAND COVER: PAVED SURFACE

- 0-7.7%
- 7.7-15.5%
- 15.5-23.0%
- 23.0-27.8%
- 27.8-34.0%
- 34.0-35.2%
- 35.2-73.1%

SOURCE: Los Angeles GeoHub

North ^  
SCALE: 1:5,000  
0 500' 1,000'



**TRAFFIC**  
SKID ROW, LOS ANGELES, CA

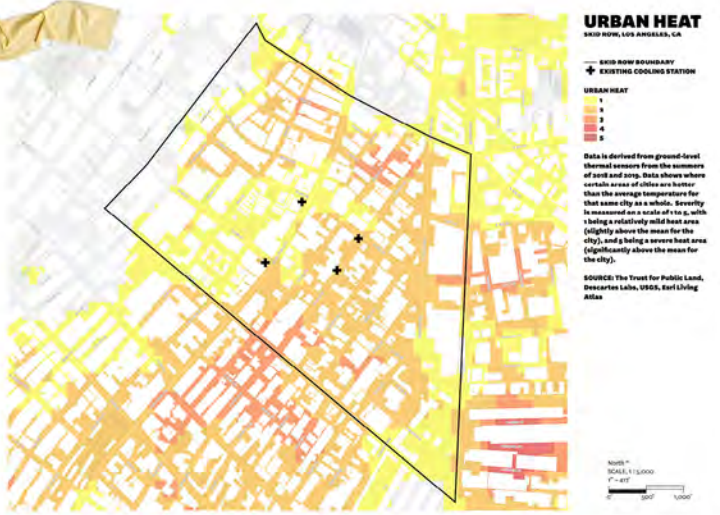
— SKID ROW BOUNDARY  
+ EXISTING COOLING STATION

DAILY TRAFFIC COUNTS

1 1,000 100,000

SOURCE: Earl

North ^  
SCALE: 1:5,000  
0 500' 1,000'



**URBAN HEAT**  
SKID ROW, LOS ANGELES, CA

— SKID ROW BOUNDARY  
+ EXISTING COOLING STATION

URBAN HEAT

1 2 3 4 5

Data is derived from ground-level thermal sensors from the sensors of snrk and smp. Data shows where certain areas of cities are hotter than the average temperature for that same city as a whole. Severity is measured on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being a relatively mild heat area (slightly above the mean for the city), and 5 being a severe heat area (significantly above the mean for the city).

SOURCE: The Trust for Public Land, Descartes Labs, USGS, Earl Living Atlas

North ^  
SCALE: 1:5,000  
0 500' 1,000'

**Additional Maps and Datasets**



# EXISTING COOLING STATIONS

## Strengths

- overall visibility
- shade + misters
- lighting + amenities
- staffing + services
- access to water



## Opportunities

- adaptable street fixtures
- weather protection (wind, rain, cold)
- shade for different angles of sun
- sidewalk and road width

# CITY OF LA RESPONSE

## Skid Row **Cooling** Resources

### MARCH 2021

On March 31, 2021, the City of Los Angeles and a coalition of organizations including HHCLA and Water Drop LA published the document Skid Row Cooling Resources:

A Request for Support. This document identified how the climate and racial justice impacts of Urban Heat Island Effect disproportionately affect the residents of Skid Row, and how existing city and mutual aid infrastructure were not sufficient to help. In light of this, Skid Row Cooling Resources proposed four Cooling Canopies in the Skid Row neighborhood to provide important resources and relief against the silent killer that is extreme heat.

### JULY 2021

The program was successfully implemented and the four urban cooling canopies [Skid Row Cooling Resources] were installed and staffed beginning in July 2021. Skid Row residents have benefited greatly from the meals, cold water, ice chips, shade, and places to sit under misting stations that the canopies have provided. Staffing at the sites has been run through Urban Alchemy,

an employment program that hires formerly incarcerated people and those with a history of substance abuse or experience with homelessness at a living wage with benefits.

We had the opportunity to tour all 4 cooling stations with representatives from the Mayor's Office of City Homeless Initiatives in September 2021 to see their impact in Skid Row, and learn more about the process to plan, design, and implement this idea.

### OCTOBER 2021

Due to financial constraints, as we reached the end of October, these 4 cooling stations located throughout Skid Row which provided a touch point for over 30,000 individual interactions per month, were fully packed up and decommissioned.

In their place, empty areas of sidewalks. The presence of these stations is visibly missing. In addition to cooling resources, these stations provided for a sense of safety, and community. How can we ensure their resilience?

FALL 2021

THE

NEED

COOLING TIME: BRINGING CLIMATE JUSTICE TO SKID ROW





# 02

USC MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE + URBANISM, LANDSCAPE JUSTICE INITIATIVE

## VISION

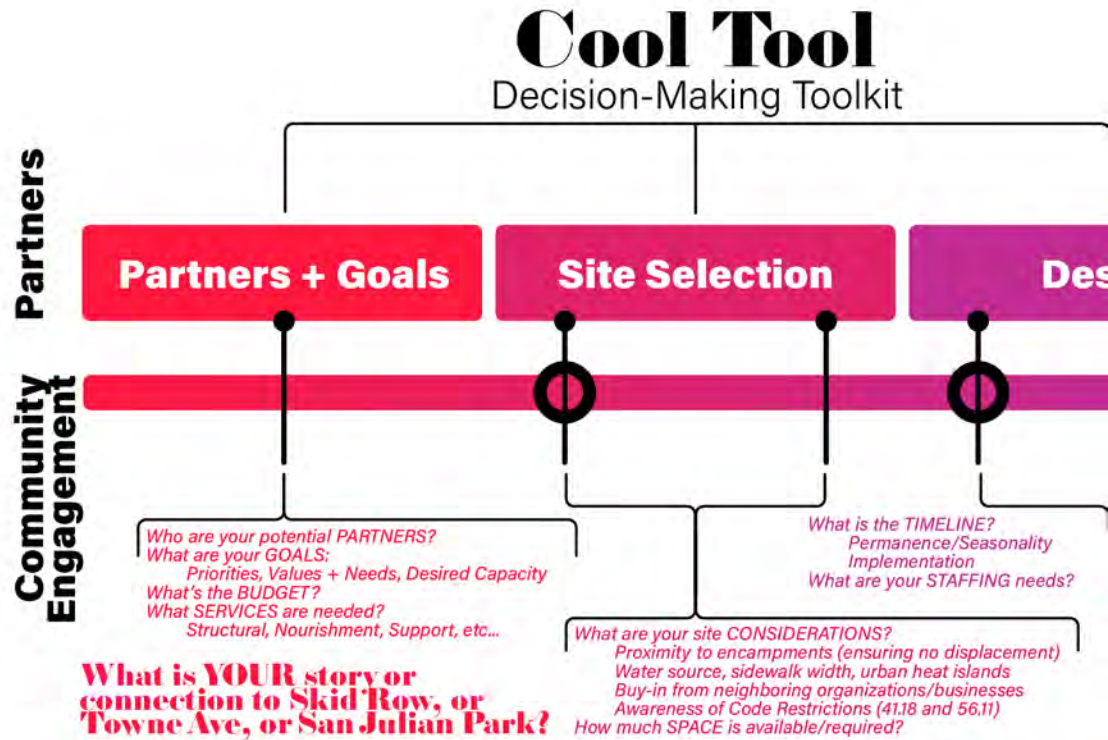
An expanded cooling station network in Skid Row that has the capacity to better support and provide relief to those who occupy it:

**A DECISION-MAKING TOOL  
FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE IN SKID ROW  
THE COOL TOOL**

IT STARTS WITH A DESIGN PROCESS,

FALL 2021

COOLING TIME: BRINGING CLIMATE JUSTICE TO SKID ROW



**Core Values: Consistency +**

**COLLABORATE:**

**“SUMMER’S OVER”**

Ever since the Skid Row Cooling Resource cooling stations were decommissioned in October 2021, the contexts in which they were situated remain empty (no encampments or unhoused individuals have taken residency in their absence). “Summer’s over” one individual proclaimed on a site visit in late October 2021, but Skid Row is in need of continued resources providing services for unhoused individuals to combat the extreme heat (and cold).

**A NEW METRIC**

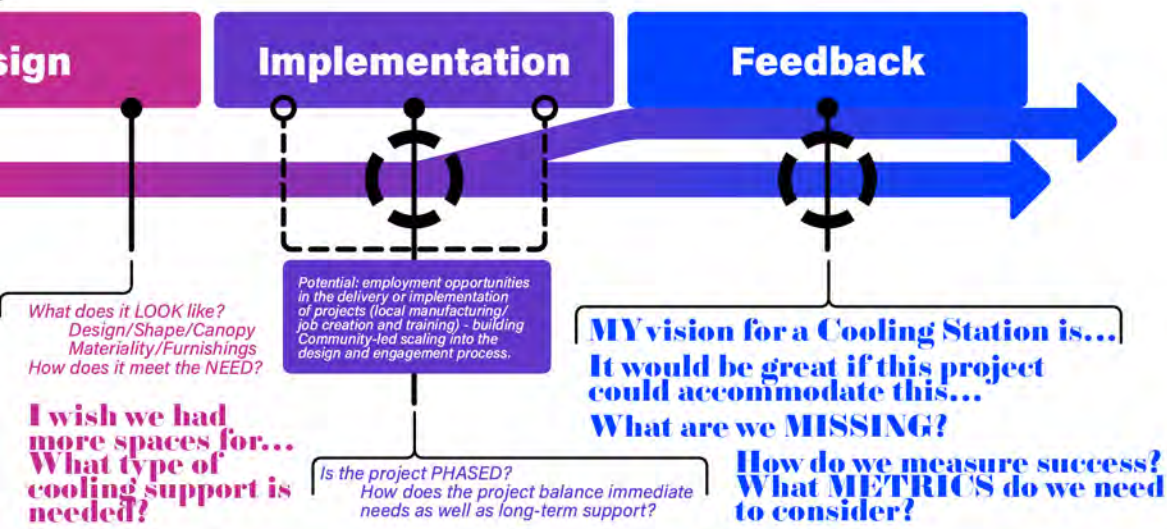
This project seeks to expand on the current metrics for locating City Cooling Station sites, which included: heat maps and data, sidewalk width analysis, proximity to a fire

hydrant (as a water source), avoiding the displacement of existing encampments, and visibility. In rethinking these metrics to be more inclusive of the local constituents, residents, business and organizations doing work in these areas, as part of the process.

From the City’s initial pilot process, the timeline captures, and expands, the key considerations to help streamline decision-making interventions for designing cooling stations. Community collaboration and participation in the design process is key with multiple opportunities for cross-collaboration between project partners and the local community. The design vision is intended to be led by the community’s needs along with the partner’s goals.

# FOCUSED ON ENGAGEMENT:

**INPUT + ITERATION:**  
 This process relies heavily on a participatory process with the local community of unhoused residents in Skid Row, and the organizations, non-profits, businesses, and service and resource providers to provide input in all aspects of the development. The feedback obtained will continue to evolve the development of projects into the future.



## + Comfort, a 24-hr Experience

### CORE VALUES

This process seeks to provide a consistency and comfort that is not part of the existing 24-hour experience of persons experiencing homelessness. This process seeks to position the unhoused individuals, and future patrons of the cooling stations as key stakeholders in the decision-making process, asking them what their story and connection to Skid Row is, what they wish we had more spaces for, what types of support are needed to provide thermal comfort, and what their unique visions for a cooling station could be, to expand the potential of the programs, services, and partnerships that the cooling stations can support in the community. This toolkit solidifies a new approach for this decision-making process to

empower the City and the local community to take ownership in the process, and the eventual outcome. The toolkit relies heavily on participatory processes to provide input on all aspects of the planning, design and development of cooling stations in the Skid Row community to help streamline decision-making interventions, and familiarize the community with the process (as well as potentially creating opportunities for job creation and ongoing stewardship).

The toolkit is designed to guide individuals through the process, asking questions of project partners, while ensuring community participation along the way. The following pages explore each of the sections in the Cool Tool document:

# THE COOL TOOL:

## A Decision-Making Guide to Provide Climate Justice Solutions

### 1 Who are your potential PARTNERS?

Agencies: \_\_\_\_\_

Community Orgs: \_\_\_\_\_

Service Providers: \_\_\_\_\_

Funding Opportunities: \_\_\_\_\_

**RESOURCES PARTNERS CAN PROVIDE:**

Staffing       Community Services

Equipment       Logistics / Delivery

Funding

### 2 What are your

**PRIORITIES**

Reliability      Stewardship

Community      Employment

Safe space      Immediate

Enclosure

### 3 What's the BUDGET?

Funding Source: \_\_\_\_\_

Funding Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

STAFFING


CONSTRUCTION


PLANTING


FURNITURE


MISC


### 4 What SERVICES are needed?

**STRUCTURAL** 

Seating

Storage

Thermal Comfort

**COOLING STRATEGIES**

Shade

Fans

Misters

Green infrastructure

Cool Pavement

Material Selection

**HEATING STRATEGIES**

Rain Shelter

Heaters

Insulation

Clothing Distribution

Other Services: \_\_\_\_\_

**SUPPORT** 

Medical Care

Harm Reduction

Device Charging

Wi-Fi

Community

### 5 What are your SITE considerations?

Proximity to population

Water source

Sidewalk width

Urban Heat Island

Not displacing encampments

Buy-in from neighboring organizations

Awareness of code restrictions

Existing Shade / Tree Canopy

Additional site assets: \_\_\_\_\_

### 8 What are your STAFFING needs?

Tabling

Outreach

General Support

Security

Other Staff Roles: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

### 9 Community

Outreach Events

Staff Interactions

Interviews

# for Los Angeles' Unhoused Community

## your GOALS?

VALUES + NEEDS		DESIRED CAPACITY
Stewardship	Funding	# People Accommodated: _____
Equity	Program	Daily Reach: _____
Transparency	Phasing	Monthly Reach: _____
	Partners	
	Tree Canopy	
	Utilities	

## FOURISHMENT

- Drinking Water
- Hygiene
- Food



## Engagement

Partners  
Organizations  
Locations (41.18, 56.11)  
Copy

## Community FEEDBACK

Events  
Actions

Which key community members need to be part of the conversation?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 6 How much SPACE?



## 7 What's the TIMELINE?

**PERMANENCE**

Pilot	Temp	Seasonal	Permanent
_____	_____	_____	_____

**IMPLEMENTATION**

Immediate	Long-term
_____	_____

**SEASONAL PROGRAMMING**

Warm Season: \_\_\_\_\_

Cool Season: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## THE COOL TOOL

A robust decision-making framework and engagement process for the design and installation of cooling stations based on factors pertaining to: broad and specific needs, community engagement, context analysis, sun/shade studies; phasing strategies and implementation plans (focusing on a scale of permanence looking at immediacy vs. longer-term solutions), scale, program, scales of stewardship in the community, staffing and labor, job opportunities, cooling strategies for thermal comfort, and budget [among others].

This toolkit looks beyond metrics alone to collaborate with local communities to begin to deliver implementable, real-time solutions to just one of the many issues that plague unhoused individuals in Los Angeles, the climate crisis and the injustices of thermal comfort. The Cool Tool intends to respond to the criminalization that exists in our open space and public realm networks, and deliver opportunities (while other measures are taken to ensure permanent supportive housing, and end the epidemic and crisis of homelessness).

# A TOUCHPOINT FOR INTERACTION + ENGAGEMENT



Agencies: \_\_\_\_\_

Community Orgs: \_\_\_\_\_

Service Providers: \_\_\_\_\_

Funding Opportunities: \_\_\_\_\_

**RESOURCES PARTNERS CAN PROVIDE:**

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Staffing  | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Services   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Equipment | <input type="checkbox"/> Logistics / Delivery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Funding   |   |

# 01: *Who are your potential PARTNERS?*

The Cool Tool starts off by asking the respondent to consider who their potential project partners are. The group of partners can also be considered project stakeholders for the project, or the key decision-makers, and advocates for bringing others to the table. The tool guides a process to begin identifying all partners from the onset of the decision-making process, ranging from: Agencies (federal, state, municipal / governmental organizations) including: the City of Los Angeles; Community Organizations (local organizations in the community where the project is to be sited); Service Providers (including non-profit organizations that provide resources and services within the Skid Row community) like DWC, LAPD, LACAN, HHCLA, ReFresh Spot, etc; and finally Funding Opportunities (working to begin identifying opportunities for outreach and engagement with funding providers for grants for pilot projects, or full project costs and staffing.

In addition to the identification of potential partners at this stage, the tool also encourages us to begin thinking about resources that potential partners can provide. The provision of resources and services is one of the ways that the cooling station can facilitate engagement with the local community and create synergies with other organizations to increase the number of touch points and interactions that unhoused individuals might have with potential service and resource providers.

The tool provides opportunities to consider the need for: staffing (at a variety of scales from providing resources, to providing security, to working and maintaining the cooling station), equipment (whether it be water purification systems, or generators/ electricity), community services (including programs for the unhoused), the logistics around project delivery, and how potential project partners might provide funding.

# 02: *What are your GOALS?*

The second section of the tool initiates the visioning and ideation phase, and begins to ask what the project goals are.

## PRIORITIES

Priorities begin assessing visions for the projects: reliability, how it creates a sense of community or responds to the community, desires to provide a safe space or refuge (from more than just urban heat), a sense of enclosure, goals around community stewardship (including a sense of community ownership), whether the project will also provide employment opportunities, and the immediacy of the project (see timeline section forthcoming).

## VALUES + NEEDS

In addressing values and needs from the onset of the project, in the process of establishing goals, it is important to understand both the broad needs, but also the specific needs that the project might be

responsive to. While broad needs might encompass the idea of funding and the partners, encouraging discussion around the value of these systems in the project, the identification of values and needs also seeks to be more specific at this stage, understanding potential programs, phasing, the utilities required to support these decisions, as well as if the project will also work to meet the needs for enhanced tree canopy in its context.

## DESIRED CAPACITY

Before the project goes into a design phase, it is important to understand if the project has a desired capacity in terms of the number of people it can accommodate (at one time), or a daily or monthly reach. For reference: the City of LA Skid Row Cooling Resources (4 total), provided a touch point for over 30,000 individual interactions per month, with a very simple, but effective set of infrastructure.

# 02

### PRIORITIES

- Reliability
- Community
- Safe space
- Enclosure
- Stewardship
- Employment
- Immediacy

### VALUES + NEEDS

- Funding
- Program
- Phasing
- Partners
- Tree Canopy
- Utilities

### DESIRED CAPACITY

- # People Accommodated: \_\_\_\_\_
- Daily Reach: \_\_\_\_\_
- Monthly Reach: \_\_\_\_\_



<b>Funding Source:</b> _____		
<b>Funding Amount:</b> _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>STAFFING</b>		
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>CONSTRUCTION</b>		
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>PLANTING</b>		
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>FURNITURE</b>		
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>MISC</b>		
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

# 03: What's the BUDGET?

One might think that the budget should really come at the end, once there are enough decisions made to begin quantifying line items, and delivering a potential cost, but to ensure the process responds to potential budget constraints, we offer a budget framework early-on in the decision-making process to help track and guide costs as the specific features are planned, to aide in the collaborative discussions that the decision-making tool will promote. To help guide future work, this section of the tool might identify an existing funding source or amount (from a grant or gift for instance), and can start allocating those funds out to then influence the decision-making that would follow (in steps 4-9).

One of the primary costs that the City identified in their Skid Row Cooling Resource program was staffing. The 4 cooling stations that the City opened over the summer provided 24/7 staffing that provided jobs and employment at a living wage through Urban Alchemy, an employment program that hires formerly incarcerated people and those with a history of substance abuse or experience with homelessness. To staff (1) cooling station 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year at a living wage with benefits would require a line item of over \$150,000 per year to be allocated to a group of employees who would work across (3) 8-hour shifts per day. This is an important consideration at the onset of the project to ensure its feasibility.

## 04: What **SERVICES** are needed?

With some understanding of the budget in mind, the next section of the Cool Tool begins to identify the services that are needed, by organizing the categories into three sections:

### STRUCTURAL

Which looks into the necessity of seating elements, storage elements, or structural elements pertaining to the provision of innovative cooling (and heating) strategies for thermal comfort. This shortlist of cooling (shade, fans, misters, green infrastructure, cool pavement, and materials) and heating (rain shelter, heaters, insulation,

and clothing distribution) strategies serves as a starting point for design decisions.

### NOURISHMENT

Understanding the desire for the cooling station to provide for other basic needs including drinking water, hygiene, and food.

### SUPPORT

Expanding the provision of nourishing basic needs, the support section identifies opportunities for the cooling station to provide interactions for medical care, harm reduction, device charging, wi-fi, and other services through engagement sessions.

## 05: What are your **SITE** considerations?

One of the most critical sections of the Cool Tool, the site considerations section, encourages a discussion around site assets, and how to best site a cooling station within a given context. In addition to the set of criteria used for the 4 pilot cooling stations by the City of Los Angeles in Skid Row, this tool incorporates an awareness of site assets, as well as of the Los Angeles Municipal Code restrictions (especially pursuant to sections 41.18 and 56.11) to ensure that the provision of resources in this location does not criminalize the unhoused individuals who site, lie, sleep, or store their personal belongings in the adjacent areas of the cooling station when they are engaging with the proposed cooling station.

- Proximity to population
- Water source
- Sidewalk width
- Urban Heat Island

**Additional site assets:** \_\_\_\_\_

# 04

## STRUCTURAL



- Seating
- Storage
- Thermal Comfort

### COOLING STRATEGIES

- Shade
- Fans
- Misters
- Green infrastructure
- Cool Pavement
- Material Selection

### HEATING STRATEGIES

- Rain Shelter
- Heaters
- Insulation
- Clothing Distribution

Other Services: \_\_\_\_\_



## NOURISHMENT

- Drinking Water
- Hygiene
- Food

## SUPPORT

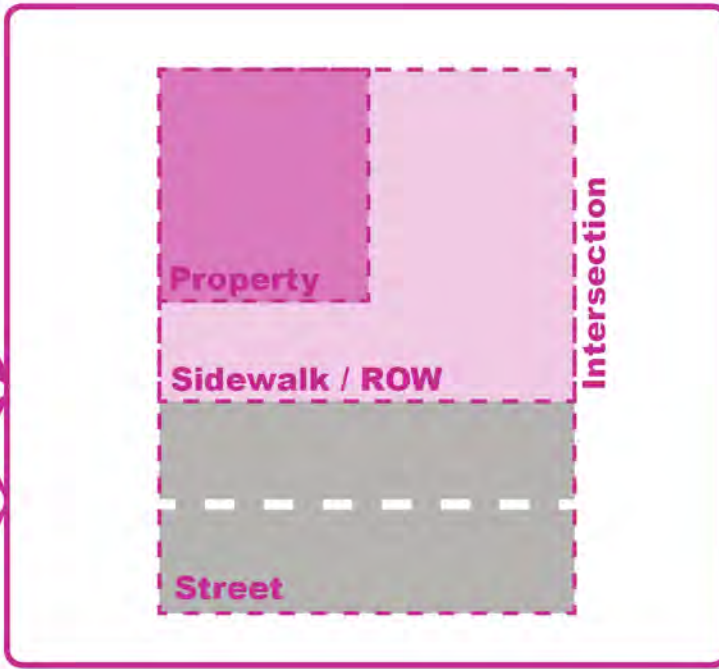


- Medical Care
- Harm Reduction
- Device Charging
- Wi-Fi
- Community Engagement

# 05

- Not displacing encampments
- Buy-in from neighboring organizations
- Awareness of code restrictions (41.18, 56.11)
- Existing Shade / Tree Canopy

# 06



# 06: How much SPACE?

The question of space is a question of both how much space is needed, but also how much space can be provided (once the site or context is selected). Initially, a decision can be made to site the cooling station next to a specific property, either in the sidewalk/ROW, close to an intersection, or even taking up a parking lane within the street (as a parklet style option). This simple diagram is intended to allow individuals to sketch and draw the types of conditions and configuration that would be most beneficial for the cooling station in a hypothetical, or real-world condition. The ideas that are generated from these discus-

## PERMANENCE

<b>Pilot</b>	<b>Temp</b>	<b>Seasonal</b>	<b>Permanent</b>

## IMPLEMENTATION

<b>Immediate</b>	<b>Long-term</b>



## SEASONAL PROGRAMMING

**Warm Season:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cool Season:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Start Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

sions will impact continued conversations in the design process about the size of the station (a small cooling station will fit within the sidewalk zone, whereas a medium or large cooling station might require a larger sidewalk area, near an intersection, or might have to extend into the streetscape to accomplish the desired programs and needs discussed during the decision-making process with the Cool Tool).

All of these considerations will have direct implications on the performance of the cooling station, its cost, and how many people (and programs) it will host and

serve. While each of these sections of the Cool Tool are separated out here as part of an explanatory description, the conversations and topics that are discussed within each are highly interdependent, relying on the tool as both part of a process, and part of an ongoing iteration that will right-size the cooling station to meet the needs of the project partners, and provide for the needs of the Skid Row community. Another important consideration in the discussion of size is the question of whether or not the project could/should be phased (refer to step 7 for additional discussion around timelines and permanence).

## 07: What's the **TIMELINE?**

Understanding the timeline of the cooling station project is another important consideration leading into the design and eventual implementation. This section of the tool explores three main themes:

### PERMANENCE

Initiating discussions around whether or not the project will be a pilot project (to test an idea that could be replicated in the future with additional funding), a temporary project (designed for only a short amount of time to meet a very specific need), a seasonal project (that might only appear in the hottest - or coldest - months of the year, and a permanent cooling station (that would be installed to last multiple years in the same location). Each of these levels of permanence carry with them unique implications in each of the other categories, but most specifically: cost/budget.

### IMPLEMENTATION

The question of implementation is a critical question that assesses the desires of a project to be immediate, or planned out as more of a long-term intervention. A project might also be planned as a long-term strategy (based on available funding), and incorporate more immediate responses that could transcend this category's scale.

### SEASONAL PROGRAMMING

Lastly, it is important to discuss whether a cooling station is providing for cooling during the warm season (summer), or if it will also provide warmth and heating during the cool season (winter). Cooling stations can be uniquely seasonal, or year-round.

Finally, anticipated start dates are discussed as part of this section.

# 08

FALL 2021

**Tabling**

**Outreach**

**General Support**

**Security**

**Other Staff Roles:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Staff Hours:** \_\_\_\_\_

## 08: *What are your STAFFING needs?*

Staffing and labor appear in many sections of the Cool Tool because they are some of the most important considerations in beginning this process of planning for a cooling station. This section encourages us to think more in depth in terms of what the specific staffing needs might be for a cooling station in Skid Row.

Does the cooling station need 24/7 security (24/7 security for an entire year at a living wage with benefits equals a \$150,000+ per year line item, split amongst a number of individuals who would rotate in and out throughout that 24/7 weekly cycle)?

What other staffing support does the cooling station need (are staff on hand 24/7, or

maybe just a portion of the day or night, does the station provide a cool refuge for individuals without specific staffing at all, or maybe it is a space for flexible or multi-functional outreach that can be programmed by a variety of local stakeholders on a monthly basis, with opportunities for tabling, or other outreach)? What are the other staff roles that the cooling station could benefit from, does it provide opportunities for job training programs that begin to employ the local community, etc?

This section encourages you to think more in depth about the staff hours that the cooling station should be designed for, understanding the capacity of the structure to support patrons and staff.

COOLING TIME: BRINGING CLIMATE JUSTICE TO SKID ROW

# 09: Community FEEDBACK?

Lastly, and part of the ongoing engagement process, the Cool Tool begins the conversation and facilitation of a series of community engagement meetings, while also understanding the capacity of the future cooling station to provide space for outreach events, staff interactions, and ongoing interviews with Skid Row residents to understand what the cooling stations are doing well, and what we are missing. These ongoing interviews and conversations are intended to form a dialogue whereby the cooling stations can develop a system of metrics to track success, not only understanding the volume of community members served by the cooling resources, but

also to encourage participation in the process of bringing climate justice and positive change to Skid Row.

At the onset of the project, the Cool Tool asks one final question: "Which key community members need to be part of the conversation?" in order to identify the local advocates, stewards, and community members who are already doing important work on the ground, and invite them to the table to be a part of the process. Establishing trust, consistency and comfort, and providing for the 24-hour experience that it is to be unhoused, remain the unwavering goals of this process.

## 09

- Outreach Events
- Staff Interactions
- Interviews

**Which key community members need to be part of the conversation?**

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FALL 2021

THE

SOLUTION

COOLING TIME: BRINGING CLIMATE JUSTICE TO SKID ROW



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# 03

USC MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE + URBANISM, LANDSCAPE JUSTICE INITIATIVE

# ION



# WORKSHOP

## VERTICAL WORKSHOP

### OVERVIEW

As part of Pando Days '21, the USC Master of Landscape Architecture + Urbanism program engaged in a week-long Vertical Workshop from October 18-25, 2021 (a mini Pando Days of sorts), grouping students across the graduate program to investigate sites in Los Angeles' Skid Row community with a focus on climate justice, urban cooling and multi-benefit infrastructures that engage local organizations providing services on the ground in Skid Row.

This week-long workshop was a small but important part of this ongoing research and longer-term USC MLA+U program engagement with the organizations and agencies working with the Skid Row community, starting in Fall 2020. It is intended to give the broader MLA+U student community an opportunity to utilize their skill sets and knowledge in climate, environment and equitable design to contribute to very real challenges in our local communities, and continue testing solutions as part of the larger conversation around climate justice, urban cooling, and working with the unhoused community to understand the constraints and opportunities of the urban realm in Los Angeles. While it was only a short workshop, the efforts were part of a much longer process of collaborating partners on what we hope are valuable ideas

and research to address climate justice in Skid Row.

The short term goals of this project were to provide relief from urban heat to Skid Row residents and work with the City of LA to implement effective urban cooling strategies. While this project aims to provide immediate physical relief, we cannot untangle it from the long-term struggle for housing and climate justice in this community. Our long-term goals include a resilient and healthy community, decriminalization of the unhoused, and permanent affordable housing for the unhoused communities of Skid Row, Los Angeles (City and County), and beyond.

MLA+U students and faculty were divided into 5 teams to develop urban cooling and multi-benefit design concepts for 5 specific/selected sites in Skid Row. Each team was asked to simultaneously address: urban cooling strategies in advancement of the Mayor's Office of City Homeless Initiatives work and LA County's Sustainability Plan: OurCounty, while also understanding, considering and designing for the unique needs of unhoused individuals in a way that does not criminalize them. Each group engaged a 1- to 2-block scale site, doing research into adjacent services, resources, or non-profits doing work in the community, as well as understanding the existing infrastructure of the streetscape.

## 03

This project encouraged students to engage with the human-scaled urban and spatial conditions in Skid Row (sidewalks, intersections, parks, etc) as well as their intersections with the policies that govern those contexts, to design urban cooling strategies that focus on both environmental/climate and social resilience. Specifically, students investigated and diagram the physical and social conditions, focusing their work on understanding the intersection of the physical and social conditions of Skid Row through a series of investigative diagrams that build on site-specific research. Each group of students participated in a site visit with local community organizations and partners, and had the opportunity to further study their sites to learn from the work these organizations are doing on the ground in Skid Row, and in order to identify the optimal sites within the defined study areas for urban cooling stations and strategies to engage Skid Row residents. All teams worked collaboratively with a faculty advisor, and regularly meet with both their faculty and project partners throughout each of the working sessions. The student concepts were evaluated by a jury of experts, public agency representatives, and non-profit organizations, and the proposals were refined for inclusion in this report document and presentation to Pando, the Mayor's Office of City Homeless Initiatives, officials from the City and County of Los Angeles, and other attendees.

## REQUIRED READINGS

Bloch, Sam. "Shade." *Places Journal*. April 2019. <https://placesjournal.org/article/shade-an-urban-design-mandate/>

Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP). "Dick + Rick." [http://welcometocup.org/Store?product\\_id=115](http://welcometocup.org/Store?product_id=115)

Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC 41.18), revised July 2021. [https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2020/20-1376-S1\\_ord\\_draft\\_7-02-21.pdf](https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2020/20-1376-S1_ord_draft_7-02-21.pdf)

Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC 56.11), revised May 2015. [https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2014/14-1656\\_misc\\_05-21-2015.pdf](https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2014/14-1656_misc_05-21-2015.pdf)

99% Invisible, *The Containment Plan*. November 2017. <https://99percentinvisible.org/episode/the-containment-plan/>

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Skid Row Cooling Resources, The Mayor's Office of City Homelessness Initiatives (MOCHI), City of Los Angeles, 2021

OurCounty, Los Angeles Countywide Sustainability Plan, 2019

L.A.'s Green New Deal, Sustainable City pLAN Environment, 2019

# HOW IT WORKS:

## OCTOBER 2021

As the City Cooling Stations were being decommissioned, our team hit the ground in Skid Row to explore these opportunities, and test a series of solutions:

## TEAMS, PARTNERS, SITES

### Team/Site 1: San Pedro Street (from 5th to 4th) > Community Partner: Downtown Women's Center

Faculty Advisor: Alison Hirsch (Workshop Co-Organizer)

Anna Avdalyan	Joyce Ji
Lucia Bayley	Eliana Ramirez
Jiawei Luo	Daniela Velazco
Gabrielle Castriotta	

### Team/Site 2: East 5th Street (from Maple to San Julian) > Community Partner: Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD)

Faculty Advisor: Jessica Henson

ARCH 590 Team Lead: Andrea Binz	
Paul Kim	Nina Weithorn
Yining Wang	Leslie Dinkin
Nehali Doshi	Yuxin Jiang
Jin Ma	

### Team/Site 3: East 6th Street (from Stanford to Ceres) > Community Partner: LA Community Action Network (LA CAN)

Faculty Advisor: Jen Toy

ARCH 590 Team Lead: Eva Malis	
Jeremy Joo	Tarana Chordia
Luis Mota	Yixuan Li
Colin Amos	Yiling Xu

### Team/Site 4: Towne Ave (from 6th to mid-block) > Community Partner: ReFresh Spot, Homeless Healthcare LA (HHCLA)

Faculty Advisor: Alex Robinson

ARCH 590 Team Lead: Zehra Baneen Rizvi	
Adrian Porter	Ignacio Avila
Lufan Hu	Yifan Yin
Ana Mangino	Yue Chen

### Team/Site 5: East 4th Street (from Omar to Towne) > Community Partner: Center for Harm Reduction (CHR), HHCLA

Faculty Advisor: Esther Margulies

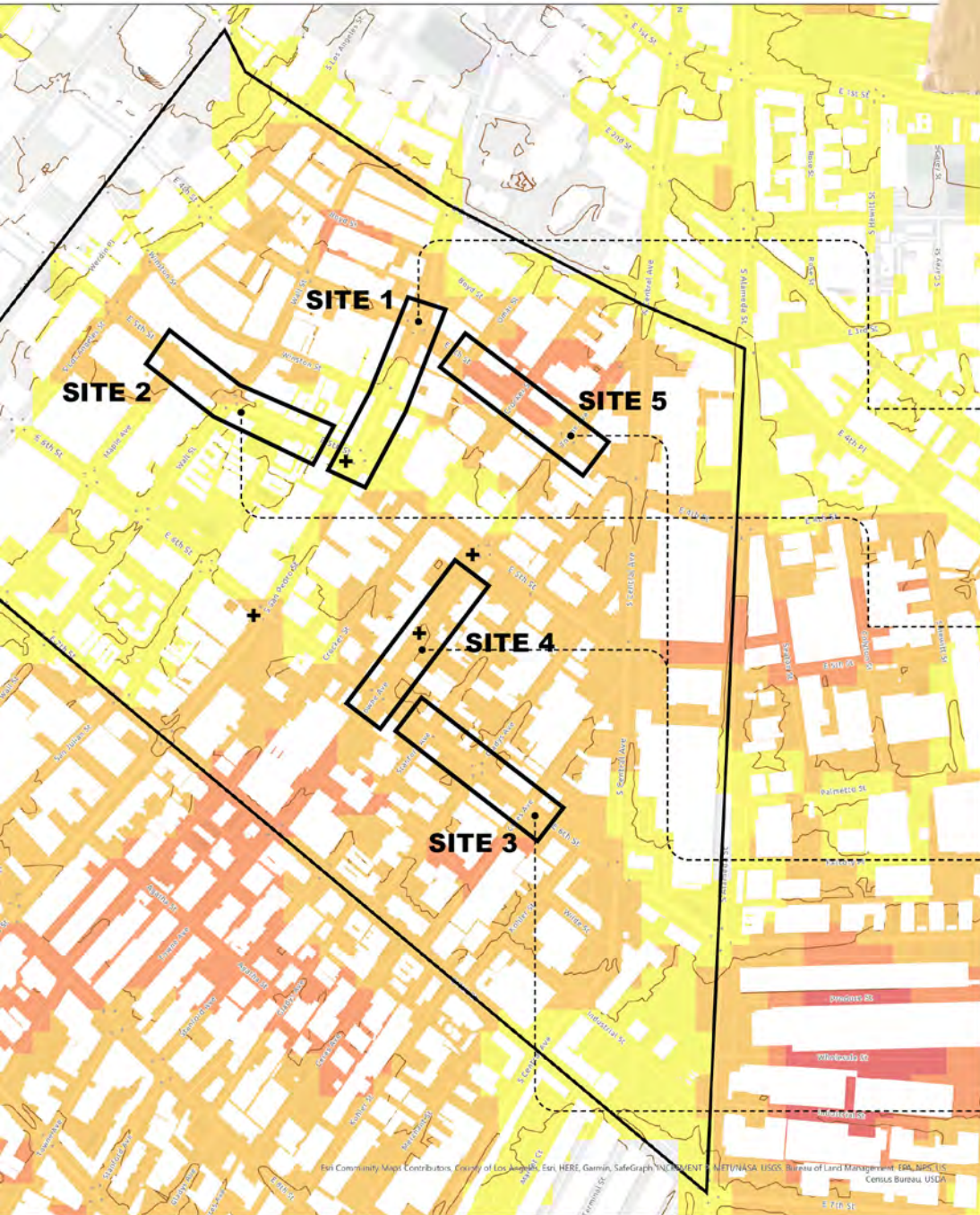
ARCH 590 Team Lead: Lara Lebeiko	
Paige Buckner	Brooke Redmond
Hannah Flynn	Gloria Gao
Asher Guzik	Kunyang Guo

#### With:

Kirkpatrick Tyler and City Homeless Initiatives, Office of LA Mayor Eric Garcetti: Megan Weiss, Tyrone Carter  
 Homeless HealthCare Los Angeles (HHCLA): Laura Anne Hamilton, Team Lead, The ReFresh Spot, and Donna Earles  
 ReRefresh Spot + Center For Harm Reduction (HHCLA): Evans Clark  
 Los Angeles Community Action Network (LACAN): Steve Diaz  
 Downtown Women's Center (DWC): Joe Altepeter, Chief Social Enterprise Officer  
 Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD): John Malpede, Director; and Henriette Brouwers, Associate Director  
 Pando: Eugene Shirley and Judith Parker  
 Farre "Faye" Nixon, Artist/Planner/Landscape Architectural Designer  
 James Gilliam, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA)  
 Kelly Turner, Assistant Professor of Urban Planning and Geography, UCLA  
 Lauren Elachi, Workshop Co-Organizer  
 Jared Edgar McKnight, Workshop Lead Organizer



# SKID ROW



**H O M E L E S S  
H E A L T H C A R E  
L O S A N G E L E S**



USC MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE + URBANISM, LANDSCAPE JUSTICE INITIATIVE

# THE COOL TOOL:

A Decision-Making Guide to Provide Climate Justice Solutions for Los Angeles' Unhoused Community

## 1 Who are your potential PARTNERS?

Agencies: LA City Homeless Initiative  
 Community Orgs: Downtown Women's Center  
 Service Providers: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Funding Opportunities: LA City

RESOURCES PARTNERS CAN PROVIDE:  
 Staffing     Community Services  
 Equipment     Logistics / Delivery  
 Funding

## 2 What are your GOALS?

**PRIORITIES**  
 Reliability     Stewardship  
 Community     Employment  
 Safe space     Immediacy  
 Enclosure

**VALUES + NEEDS**  
 Funding    Partners  
 Program    Tree Canopy  
 Phasing    Utilities

**DESIRED CAPACITY**  
 # People Accommodated: 1000  
 Daily Reach: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Monthly Reach: \_\_\_\_\_

## 3 What's the BUDGET?

Funding Source: City of LA  
 Funding Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

STAFFING  
 Staff: \_\_\_\_\_ \$150,000

CONSTRUCTION  
 (ultra D) \_\_\_\_\_ \$1,500-12,000

PLANTING  
 Mail-pocket planters: \_\_\_\_\_ \$850

FURNITURE  
 Off-the-shelf seating: \_\_\_\_\_ \$200

MISC  
 Shower, sanitary \_\_\_\_\_ \$150/units  
 4000000 hygiene kit \_\_\_\_\_

## 4 What SERVICES are needed?

**STRUCTURAL**  
 Seating  
 Storage  
 Thermal Comfort

**NOURISHMENT**  
 Drinking Water  
 Hygiene  
 Food

**SUPPORT**  
 Medical Care  
 Harm Reduction  
 Device Charging  
 Wi-Fi  
 Community Engagement

**COOLING STRATEGIES**  
 Shade  
 Fans  
 Misters  
 Green Infrastructure  
 Cool Pavement  
 Material Selection

**HEATING STRATEGIES**  
 Rain Shelter  
 Heaters  
 Insulation  
 Clothing Distribution

Other Services: \_\_\_\_\_

## 5 What are your SITE considerations?

Proximity to population     Not displacing encampments  
 Water source     Buy-in from neighboring organizations  
 Sidewalk width     Awareness of code restrictions (41.18, 56.11)  
 Urban Heat Island     Existing Shade / Tree Canopy

Additional site assets: \_\_\_\_\_

## 6 How much SPACE?



## 7 What's the TIMELINE?

**PERMANENCE**  
 Pilot    Temp    Seasonal    Permanent

**IMPLEMENTATION**  
 Immediate    Long-term

**SEASONAL PROGRAMMING**  
 Warm Season: Round the clock  
 Cool Season: Round the clock

Start Date: 2022

## 8 What are your STAFFING needs?

Tabling     Other Staff Roles: \_\_\_\_\_

Outreach  
 General Support    Staff Hours: 297 with DWC residents staffing during daytime  
 Security

## 9 Community FEEDBACK

Outreach Events  
 Staff Interactions  
 Interviews

Which key community members need to be part of the conversation?  
Stephanie Arnold Williams  
Anna Arnold Williams  
Community Center?

### EMPHASIS:

### 01 PARTNERS:

Creating an extended safe space with programs that focus on women's health and well-being by working together with DWC and local activist, Stephanie Arnold Williams.

### 04 SERVICES:

Collaborating with DWC to extend their social enterprise and job training programs into the greater community.



### Sewing the Seeds of Support

Alison Hirsch, Anna Avdalyan, Lucia Bayley, Gabrielle Castriotta, Joyce Ji, Jiawei Luo, Eliana Ramirez, and Dani Velazco

# SITE 1: San Pedro St

## (from 5th to 4th)

### SEWING THE SEEDS OF SUPPORT

USC TEAM: Alison Hirsch (Faculty Advisory), Anna Avdalyan, Lucia Bayley, Gabrielle Castriotta, Jlawei Luo, Joyce Ji, Eliana Ramirez, Daniela Velazco

COMMUNITY PARTNER: Downtown Women's Center (DWC)



### SEWING THE SEEDS OF SUPPORT

Located in the heart of Skid Row, like much of Skid Row, this area experiences above-average urban heat island effect, and would benefit from a cooling station.

Women and non-binary people account for a third of the homeless population of Los Angeles. In the last three years, female homelessness has increased by 55 percent. Over 90 percent of those women have experienced physical or sexual assault. Our community partner, the Downtown Women's Center, provides a safe space for unaccompanied women, trans women, and non-binary individuals. The DWC implements trauma-informed care to supply housing, supportive services, physical and mental health care, job training, meals, and basic necessities. During a normal year, nearly 5000 volunteers and 200 employees help run the organization, though volunteers have been unable to help in such numbers during COVID.

To site our cooling station, we considered

many factors, such as sidewalk width, nearby homeless services, public transportation, street lighting, water sources like fire hydrants, zoning, and available space. The Mayor's Office of City Homeless Initiatives had already placed a cooling center on the southwest corner of 5th and San Pedro, and for several reasons we determined that this location was ideal. Because the location was in use until last week, no people are currently living in this spot. We considered siting our station in the parking lot of the DWC, which is secured by a gate and staff to ensure that only unaccompanied women and women-identifying individuals, as well as non-binary individuals, are entering their space. This is primary to their mission of creating safe space. While we are eager to extend the sense of safe space into our cooling station, we decided to place the cooling station outside the gates onto the street in order to be accessible to all on Skid Row, just as the city's cooling station had been.

Additionally, the community already knew of the station's existence and the building



behind the cooling center offers shade for a good part of the day making this spot even cooler than others in our site. There are two street lights, a fire hydrant, and a community fridge there. More importantly, the site already has a guardian, Stephanie Williams.

## STEPHANIE

Stephanie is a resident of skid row, an activist, fashion designer, and community organizer. In an interview with the Los Angeles Poverty Department she said "they call me the governor of 5th and San Pedro because I take care of a lot of people, I do a lot of things, I wear a lot of hats."

We met Stephanie on our site visit outside of her self-made community center, the white house. She came up to us and introduced herself as the block's caretaker. Through her advocacy work, unhoused individuals in the area are able to keep their tents up instead of taking them down daily for cleaning by the LA Sanitation Department. Instead, Stephanie and a group of community members and volunteers keep the area safe and clean. She says Skid Row saved her life, offering her help when she needed it most. Through the hardships people in the community face she strives to

be the helping hand around the corner. She advocates against police brutality and has dedicated her life to protecting the community of Skid Row.

The White House Community Center serves as a social area of respite, a node of organizational support. Stephanie and local Los Angeles organizations such as Feed the Streets LA and the Good Karma work together to provide services such as coffee and donuts in the morning, free tent donations, and hot meals in the evenings. Stephanie makes pillows for the community and recently received 150 sewing machine donations, she plans on offering weekly sewing classes. The White House also currently holds community events such as the Friday Night Live, a dance party and karaoke event.

## A COMMUNITY-DRIVEN PROJECT

After analyzing site conditions, we decided to base our idea for the cooling station on a community needs strategy and collaborative approach to create something more valuable than just a cooling spot. The potential of building an ecosystem with new opportunities for the community and new connections between all participants (designers, DWC, and other non-profit organizations, businesses, and people) around the cooling station is the foundation of our design and services for the spot.

By placing our cooling station diagonally from the DWC, women from the center could partner with us to staff and run programs in the station. DWC Learning Center provides job skills services and helps with basic necessities that most people take for granted, like a physical address, an email account and so on. Through support from LA:RISE, a partnership between the City and County of Los Angeles' Workforce Development System, non-profit social enterprises, and for-profit employers, DWC also provides paid transitional employment at MADE by DWC, as well as final job placement and one year of support to ensure retention. Other non-profit organizations



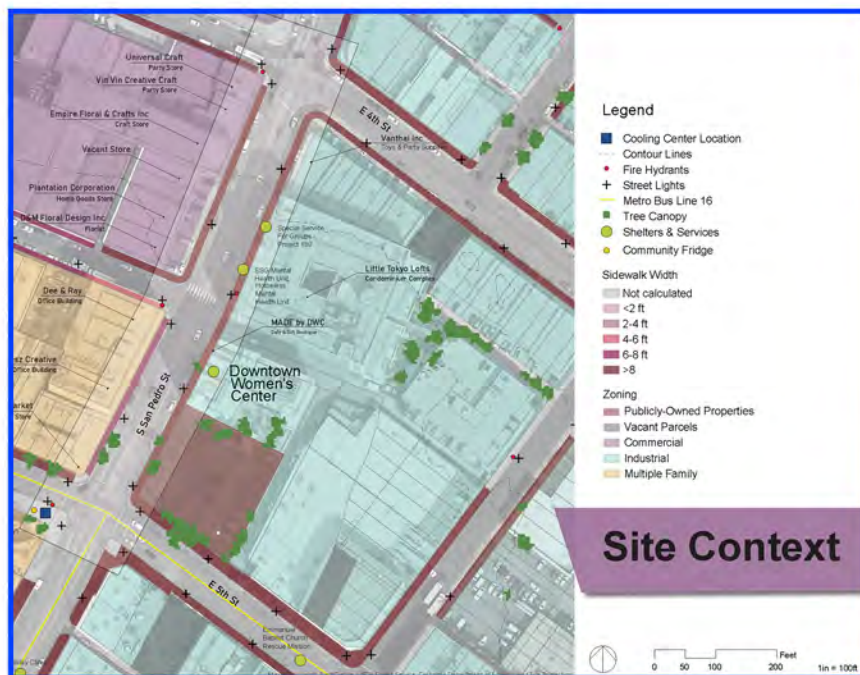
that work with the Skid Row community such as The Skid Row People’s Market have job training and employment programs. We plan to partner with them as well as social enterprises.

trum of services: from covering essential needs (shade! water!) to employment. It is a center to bring people, organizations, and businesses together.

How we consider partnership with the cooling station:

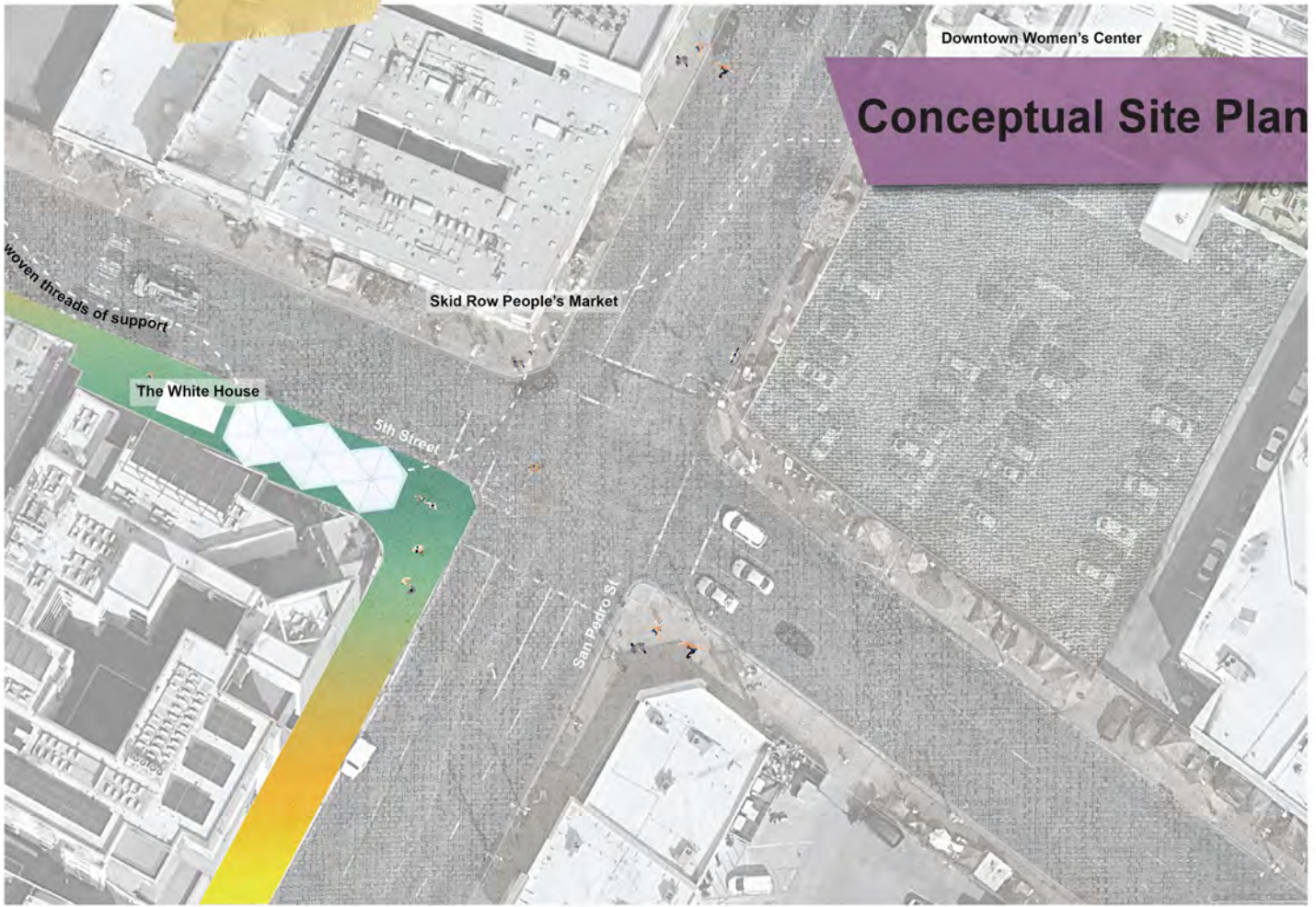
1. Non-profit organizations respond to the community’s needs (housing, wellness, employment, advocacy, adaptation).
2. Providing job training and employment opportunities and work in partnership with social enterprises.
3. Social enterprises organize events and create additional jobs for the community members, engaging people.

Through collaboration more partners and community members can be attracted to build a healthy community on Skid Row. From this perspective, the cooling station is a female/women-friendly multifunctional place for everyone that provides a spec-



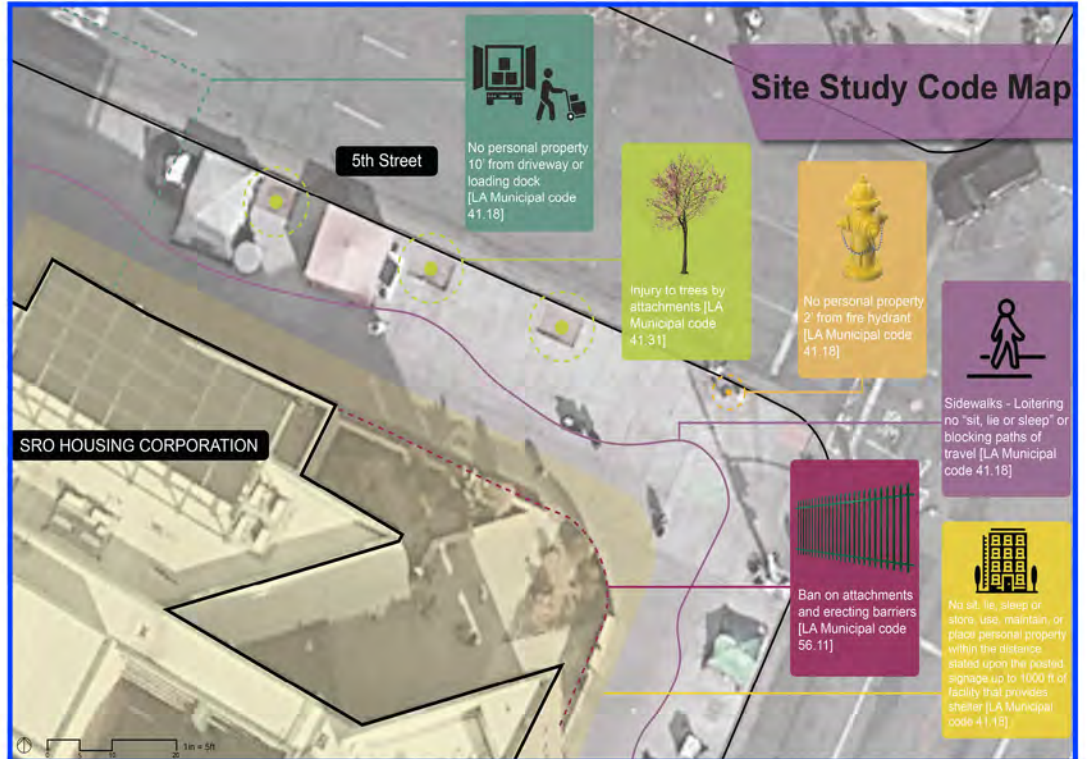
USC MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE + URBANISM, LANDSCAPE JUSTICE INITIATIVE





**LA MUNICIPAL CODE REGULATIONS**

Parts of Los Angeles's municipal code criminalize homelessness, with limits on attaching shelters to trees and fences; distance restrictions on entryways and fire hydrants; and ensuring that paths of travel are not blocked. This map shows the area where our cooling center will be located and the different reasons why people are criminalized for living here.



Through our research, site visit, and conversation with Stephanie we were able to gain insight on the particular needs of the community to better inform our intervention. The site serves as an intersection of multiple threads of support. By creating this public space for the unhoused in the area, they can have a safe space to legally spend time protected from the elements; a place of rest, a place to be, a place to focus on building community.

We created tulip shaped cooling/warming stations based off of the tulip umbrellas made by MDT-tex. We have placed 3 tulip stations that interlock, which are 20' in diameter. The tulips are multi-purpose and modular, with walls that roll down and can be changed out per summer and winter. Rain collection from the tulip shape provides extra water that can be used for cooling or watering the plants. The tulips give a sense of permanence while retaining mobility. The materials and activities were thoroughly thought-out, keeping the community, workers, and users in mind. The flooring is a vinyl tile floor with a light walnut wood finish, the fabric of the walls are made from heavy duty cotton in cream, the tulip itself is a waterproof canvas fabric allowing for light to come through and create a beautiful glow at night. The water can also be seen collecting in the center pole through the PVC pipe. We re-purposed over-door shoe holders as plant holders, inviting community members to garden in their own way which was inspired by the DWC's well-loved community garden.

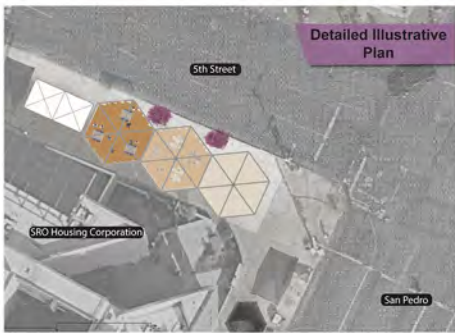
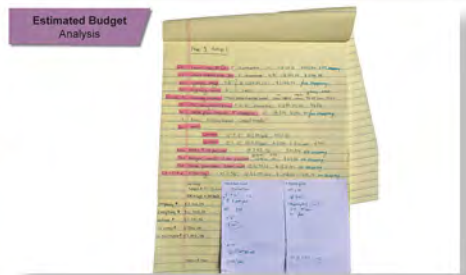
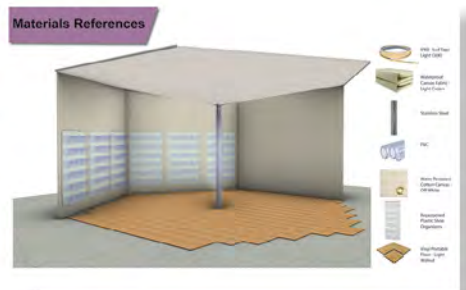
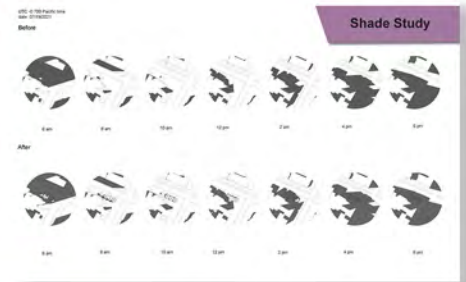
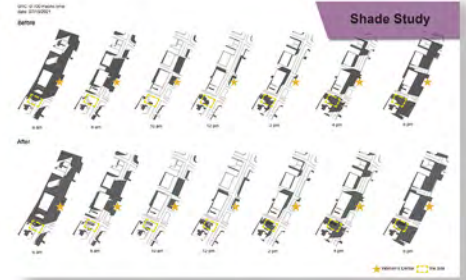
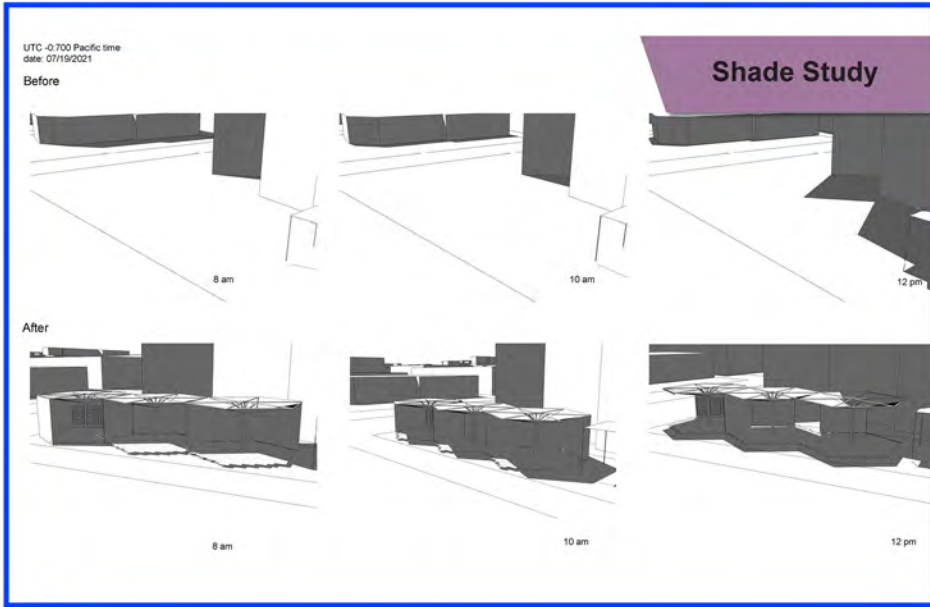
In analyzing the shade on our site, we found that though it received ample morning sun, it received afternoon shade, amplifying the cooling effects of our intervention. The shade study was divided into three diagrams. The first one shows how shade moves during the day from 6am to 6pm on a street scale including the women's center and its surroundings. We found that on our site, it is this corner where the shade lasts the longest and the space is big enough for us to design. The second diagram zooms in to explore the shade at

intervention scale. We found that between 8am and 12pm, the corner was totally exposed with sunshine, so we designed our cooling station to be able to provide more shade during this time of the day. The third diagram illustrates how the movable walls provide shade at this time.

The day section illustrates the streetscape during the day and at night and the programming that can occur within them. After experiencing hot and dry weather during the day in the summer, LA's weather can drop drastically at night, especially in winter. Similarly, the tulip structure adapts to a changing temperature by shifting its function at night. As a beacon welcoming those returning to the community at night, the tulip structure lights up, and the tulips adapt to new parameters.

The day perspective illustrates the temporal quality of the space, shifting based on the atmospheric forces of the day and the people and activities within them from gardening to music sessions. Each Tulip can drastically change depending on what is being offered at the time. A resume-building session can happen in one, while people enjoy a hot or cold beverage, or do crafts in another. The modules range in price between \$7-13k depending on function, providing modularity and amenities that help create a sense of safety, rest, and opportunity. Through the work development program, 24 hour staffing with 3 people working for 2hr periods up to 8hrs throughout the day (at \$21/hr) is provided.

These modular tulips are multi beneficial and multi scalar. By building on existing seeds (resources) the tulips serve as a resource-collecting node and vibrant urban living room. They can be implemented in a variety of sites and programmed depending on the particular needs of the community. They provide the necessary protection from sun, wind, heat and cold while providing the space to build a life-saving community. The assets are already in place for such an endeavor, they just need to be sewn together.



### Illustrative Section Daytime



### Illustrative Section Nighttime



# THE COOL TOOL:

A Decision-Making Guide to Provide Climate Justice Solutions for Los Angeles' Unhoused Community

## 1 Who are your potential PARTNERS?

Agencies: LA City, Donations Initiative

Community Orgs: Los Angeles Poverty Dept, LA Mission

Service Providers: \_\_\_\_\_

Funding Opportunities: LA City

RESOURCES PARTNERS CAN PROVIDE:

Staffing  Community Services

Equipment  Logistics / Delivery

Funding

## 2 What are your GOALS?

**PRIORITIES**

Reliability  Stewardship

Community  Employment

Safe space  Immediacy

Enclosure

**VALUES + NEEDS**

Funding  Partners

Program  Tree Canopy

Phasing  Utilities

**DESIRED CAPACITY**

# People Accommodated: 6,000

Daily Reach: 100,000

Monthly Reach: 300,000

## 3 What's the BUDGET?

Funding Source: City of LA

Funding Amount: \$1,000-\$8,000/week

+ 1174 full staffing

**STAFFING**

2 full-time staff \$36,000/yr

2 part-time staff \$18,000/yr

**CONSTRUCTION**

Steel frame \$1,000/unit

Roofing \$1,000/unit

Electrical/water, install \$1,350/unit

Unit installation \$1,500/unit

**PLANTING**

Planter box and plants 15\$/unit

**FURNITURE**

Mating system, metal \$1,250/unit

Metal fastening \$750/unit

**MISC**

Unit stacking designed varies

Electrical system varies

## 4 What SERVICES are needed?

**STRUCTURAL**

Seating  Storage

Thermal Comfort

**COOLING STRATEGIES**

Shade  Fans  Misters

Green Infrastructure  Cool Pavement  Material Selection

**HEATING STRATEGIES**

Rain Shelter  Heaters  Insulation

Clothing Distribution

**NOURISHMENT**

Drinking Water  Hygiene  Food

**SUPPORT**

Medical Care  Harm Reduction

Device Charging  Wi-Fi

Community Engagement

Other Services: \_\_\_\_\_

## 6 How much SPACE?



## 5 What are your SITE considerations?

Proximity to population  Not displacing encampments

Water source  Buy-in from neighboring organizations

Sidewalk width  Awareness of code restrictions (41.18, 56.11)

Urban Heat Island  Existing Shade / Tree Canopy

Additional site assets: 5th Julian Park

## 7 What's the TIMELINE?

**PERMANENCE**

Pilot  Temp  Seasonal  Permanent

**IMPLEMENTATION**

Immediate  Long-term

**SEASONAL PROGRAMMING**

Warm Season: Round the clock

Cool Season: Round the clock

Start Date: 2022

## 8 What are your STAFFING needs?

Tabling  Other Staff Roles: \_\_\_\_\_

Outreach

General Support  Staff Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Security

## 9 Community FEEDBACK

Outreach Events  Staff Interactions

Interviews

Which key community members need to be part of the conversation?

John Malgou (LAPD) Veronica Rodriguez (LAPD)

Bernadette Gonzalez (LAPD) Julian Torres

## EMPHASIS:

### 01 PARTNERS:

Partnerships with artists and activists through the Los Angeles Poverty Department prominently feature Skid Row arts and culture integrated into the cooling modules.

### 07 TIMELINE:

Flexibility is achieved by coordinating with neighboring organizations to provide round-the-clock access to site-specific services and information.



# SITE 2: East 5th St

## *(from Maple to San Julian)*

### WARM AROUND THE CLOCK / COOL AROUND THE CLOCK

USC TEAM: Jessica Henson (Faculty Advisory), Andrea Binz (Team Lead), Leslie Dinkin, Nehali Doshi, Yuxin Jiañg, Paul Kim, Jin Ma, Yining Wang, Nina Weithorn

COMMUNITY PARTNER: Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD)



### WARM AROUND THE CLOCK / COOL AROUND THE CLOCK

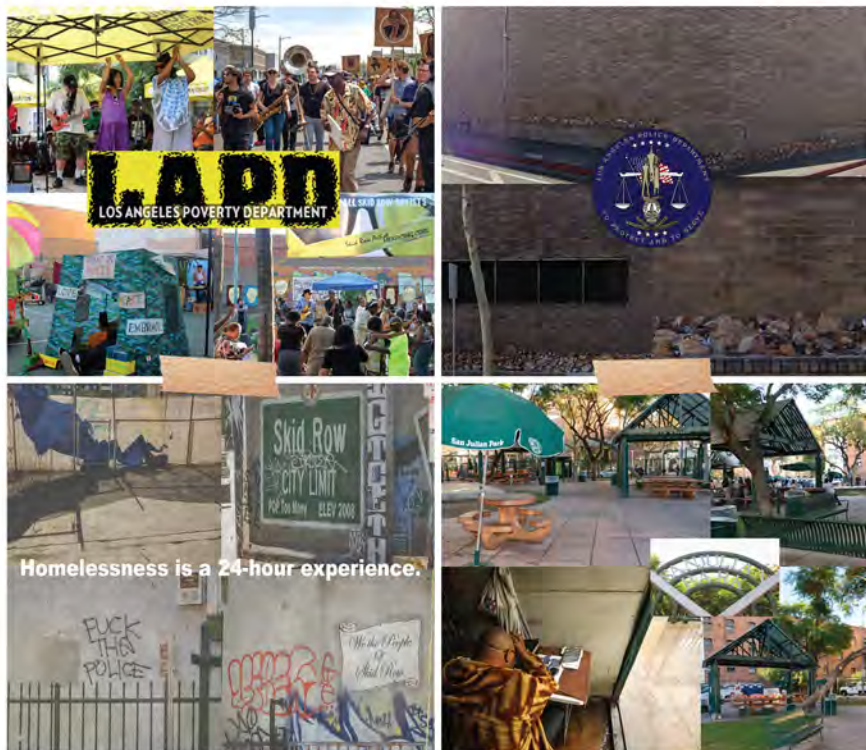
Homelessness is a 24-hour experience. Without intervention, climate change, urban heat, and increasingly extreme weather will continue to disproportionately impact the most vulnerable. The unhoused community of Los Angeles' Skid Row first must have their basic needs and rights addressed—water, food, hygiene, safety, and shelter. But the community deserves more than the bare minimum. Visual and performing arts provide nourishment for one's humanity through self-expression and the act of coming together. Organizations like the Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD) and Skid Row Arts Alliance as well as individual community members have worked tirelessly on the ground for decades to provide for all these needs.

San Julian Park, located on the south side of Fifth Street between Maple Avenue and San Julian Street, is providing a lot for the neighborhood. Equipped with shade structures, benches, large trees and antici-

pating a future million dollars of investment (including additional public bathrooms), the park is packed with people. Across the street, the Los Angeles Mission provides meals, clothing, showers, personal storage and 376 beds. But the park is closed at night and on weekends, as are most of the LA Mission's services beyond the shelter.

Our design aims to fill in the gaps. We propose permanent, round-the-clock, multi-benefit shade structures in key locations along the sidewalk. The idea is simple: to support residents and local services with a flexible, repeatable module made with durable and inexpensive materials that has a minimal footprint and can evolve with the needs of a specific location.

These structures will provide relief from the elements with year-round cooling and warming services through an adjustable awning, water station, fans, misters, heaters, and seating. Built-in LED lighting creates a welcoming atmosphere at night. Awning and lighting colors create a visual signal of available resources and upcoming events,



respectively. An electrical outlet provides a place for individuals to charge electronic devices or a hookup for speakers for festivals. Modules can be used for relaxation or gathering and as a space for organizations to “meet people where they are” on the street, reducing the intimidating threshold of entering a building to seek services. Finally, the modules provide employment for the community through staffing during hours when representatives from other services are absent and paid opportunities for Skid Row artists to design canvases and screens for each unit.

We identified three suggested locations to place our modules: (1) INVITE) and (2) EXPRESS on the sunny, south facing sidewalk in front of the LA Mission where people form lines for meals and (3) RECHARGE on the northeast corner of San Julian Park where a fire hydrant provides a water hookup. At any point of the day, on any day of the year, Fifth Street will have the resources that people in the neighborhood need.

## LAPD

Our community partner is the Los Angeles Poverty Department, the LAPD, and on our site is the Los Angeles Police Department,

the other LAPD. We thought a lot about these two organizations that share the same acronym. One with a vision to make “artistic work to change the narrative about Skid Row, to encourage a community of compassion, to change individual lives and to inspire the next generation of artists.”

And the other, who looks like this, the Los Angeles Police Department. This is a picture from our site, and yes you are looking at sharp rocks that border the windowless brick building that houses our Police Department. What do you think this tells people who live in Skid Row? These rocks tell you to stay back, to stay away, that you aren’t welcome here.

The LA Poverty Department started in 1985 by director-performer-activist John Malpede, “LAPD was the first performance group in the nation made up principally of homeless people, and the first arts program of any kind for homeless people in Los Angeles.” For almost 40 years, the “LAPD has encouraged many Skid Row agencies to integrate arts into their programs.” On our walk in Skid Row, John and Henrietta pointed out karaoke locations - our community partner, Los Angeles Poverty Department, brings these groups together and organizes parades, art walks, movie nights, art workshops, karaoke and is in general, very well connected to the community.

## WENDELL

But just down the street, we met Wendell Blassingame, who does just the opposite. He sits at the entrance of San Julian park with an abundance of masks and resources helping people find housing. He is 67 and has no actual employment in the park, but sits at his table as long as the park is open- from 8AM-6PM, 5 days a week. On a map he created of skid row for skid row, he points out exactly where to go if you are in need of water, clothes, shelter, food, the list goes on.

He stated to LA Downtown News, “Consider me a tree planted. I take the sunshine, I take the rain. I take people leaning on me,



birds and insects climbing on me. But I'm not moving, you understand? I'm just reaching out like the branches over this place. That's all."

"Reaching out like the branches over this place." We liked this idea. So much so that for our project, we want to do just this-- we want to be those branches.

### A 24-HOUR EXPERIENCE

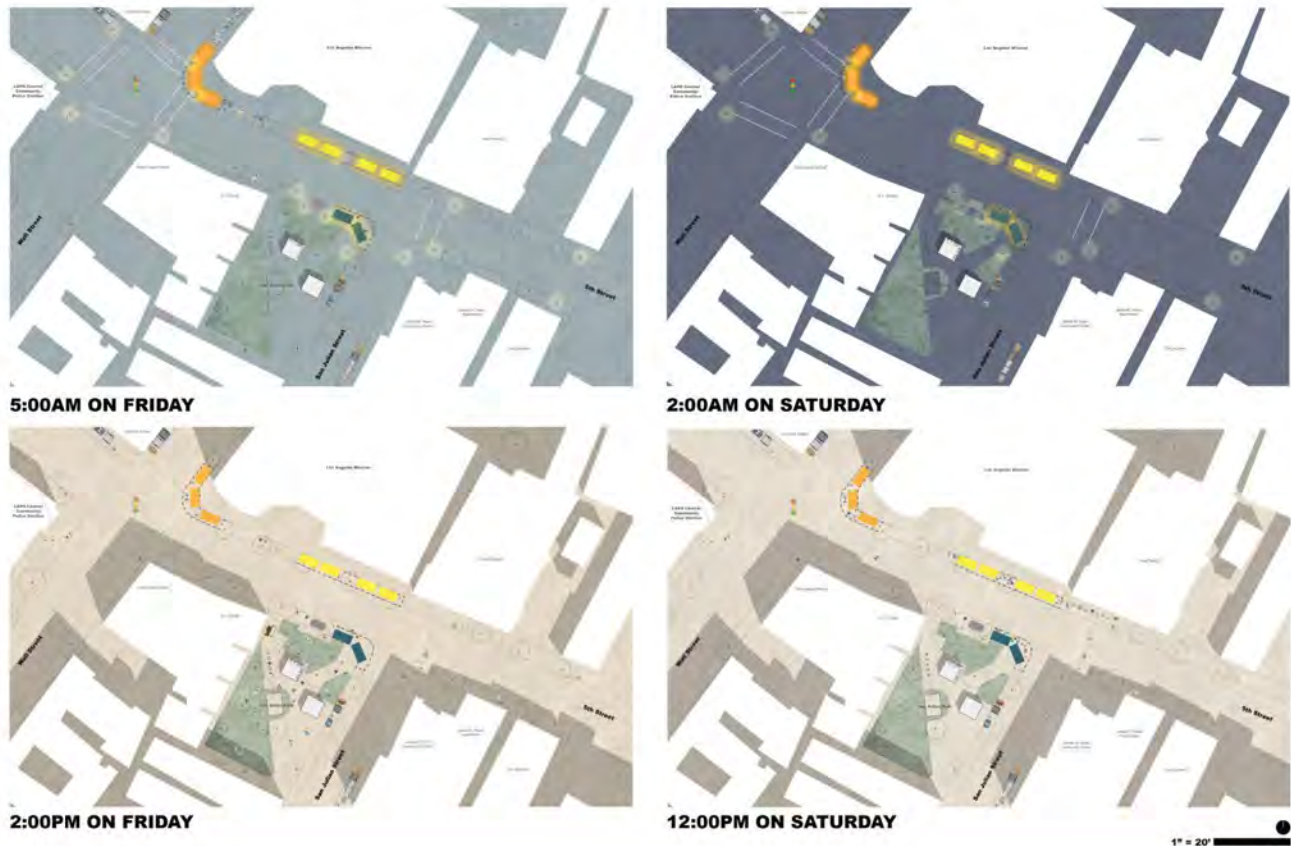
And we want to be those branches 24 hours a day. Become homelessness is experienced 24 hours a day. And it is today that matters. In the Los Angeles times, Blassingame states, "When people get homeless, they don't care about the future. They don't want anything but today. Whatever exists for today — strictly today — is what matters." Throughout our design process, we remember this. Until everyone on Skid Row is housed, we propose round the clock, all-season, multi-functional, permanent

modules placed in optimal locations on the sidewalk. But before we get into our design, we want to zoom out a little: factors in the entirety of Skid Row related to infrastructure, ecology, and existing services.

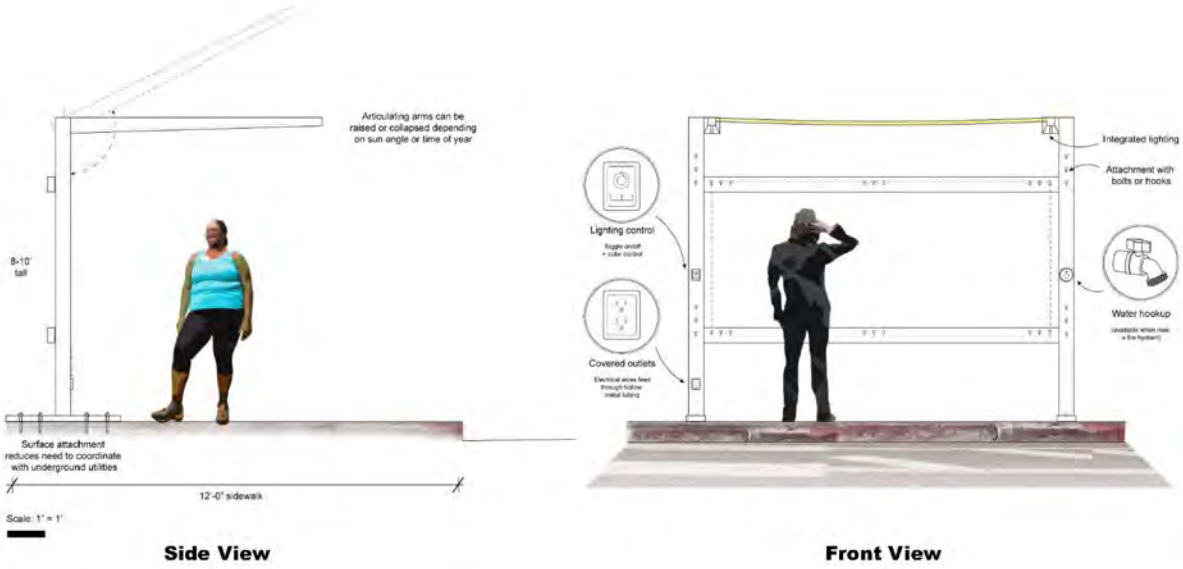
### Site Context: Arts

The map shows the Skid Row Arts Address area in Los Angeles, CA, with various landmarks and services marked. A legend identifies the Skid Row Boundary, Los Angeles Skid Row Community Services and Organizations, Art-Related Services and Organizations, and Transit Routes. Text on the right describes the Skid Row Arts Address, a partnership between the Los Angeles Housing Department and LAPD, aimed at providing a safe space for artists and the community. It lists activities like street performances, art walks, and music events. A source is cited as the Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD) and Skid Row History Museum and Archive. A scale bar indicates 1" = 20'.

## Warm Around the Clock / Cool Around the Clock



# Permanent Module



## Along 5th Street



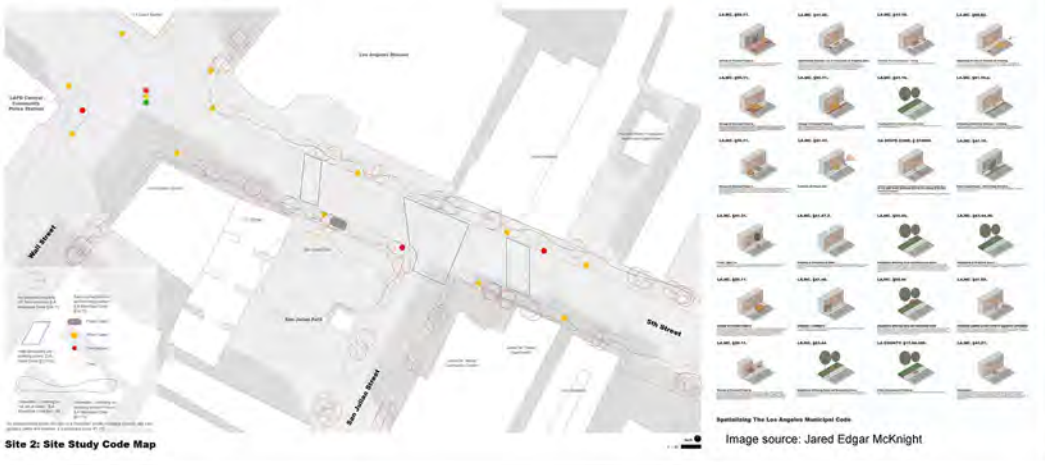
## Identifying the Gaps



## LA MUNICIPAL CODE REGULATIONS

We also looked at municipal codes that can function to criminalize the movements and actions of the unhoused community, such as specific rules regarding obstructing sidewalks with belongings or by sitting or sleeping. This code map shows the many municipal codes that relate to storage of personal property, loitering, possession of shopping carts, and so on, demonstrating just how off limits the sidewalk becomes...

## Code Map



Zooming into our site, at the intersection of 5th street and San Julian, we identified multiple elements that we found significant: Traffic, Fire hydrants, Trees, Fences, Public restrooms, Existing encampments. We also identified a few of significant organizations and services within our site: LA Mission and San Julian Park:

- The LAPD Central Police Station, which we previously mentioned is incredibly unwelcoming and hostile in it's design
- Contrasting with that though is San Julian Park. It's already a space for community gathering and has amenities such as picnic tables, water fountains, and performance areas and will soon be getting a 1.3 million dollar renovation, which includes a walking path and public restrooms.
- And then across the street is the LA Mission who provides services to the community including meals, storage, temporary housing, legal services, and many others.

## IDENTIFYING THE GAPS

While Skid Row continues to have a housing shortage, these resources cannot do everything. We identified some of the existing gaps in services within our site, thinking about the 24 hour day.

The LA Mission provides temporary and emergency housing for almost 400 people, but 75% of people experiencing homelessness in Skid Row lack permanent shelter. San Julian Park is closed from 6pm-8am daily and on weekends and additionally might be closed during the renovation in the near future.

Our design is intentionally flexible, modular, repeatable, inexpensive, discrete-- they do not take up a lot of space on the sidewalk, and most importantly, our design is variable depending on the needs of a specific location. You might be thinking-- our design is quite simple. It might even resemble a bus stop, but we want it to feel familiar and usable. At any point of the day, on any day of the year, the intersection between San Julian and 5th Street

will have the resources that people in the neighborhood need. Our cooling and warming proposal is episodic; like a clock, people can rotate through the stations cyclically, locationally, daily, and seasonally. Every single day of the year, structures will provide spaces for people to sit and rest and outlets for people to use. And with different plugins like heaters, fans, lights and misters, will operate depending on the needs of a given day.

First we must address basic needs and rights--water, food, hygiene, safety, shelter. But the community deserves more beyond that. Visual and performing arts provide nourishment for one's humanity--expression, community, feeling seen and heard, therapeutic benefits. The Skid Row Arts Alliance has recognized this over decades of work on the ground in the community. While cooling and warming are the main goals for our stations, we also want to provide a flexible outdoor performance space.

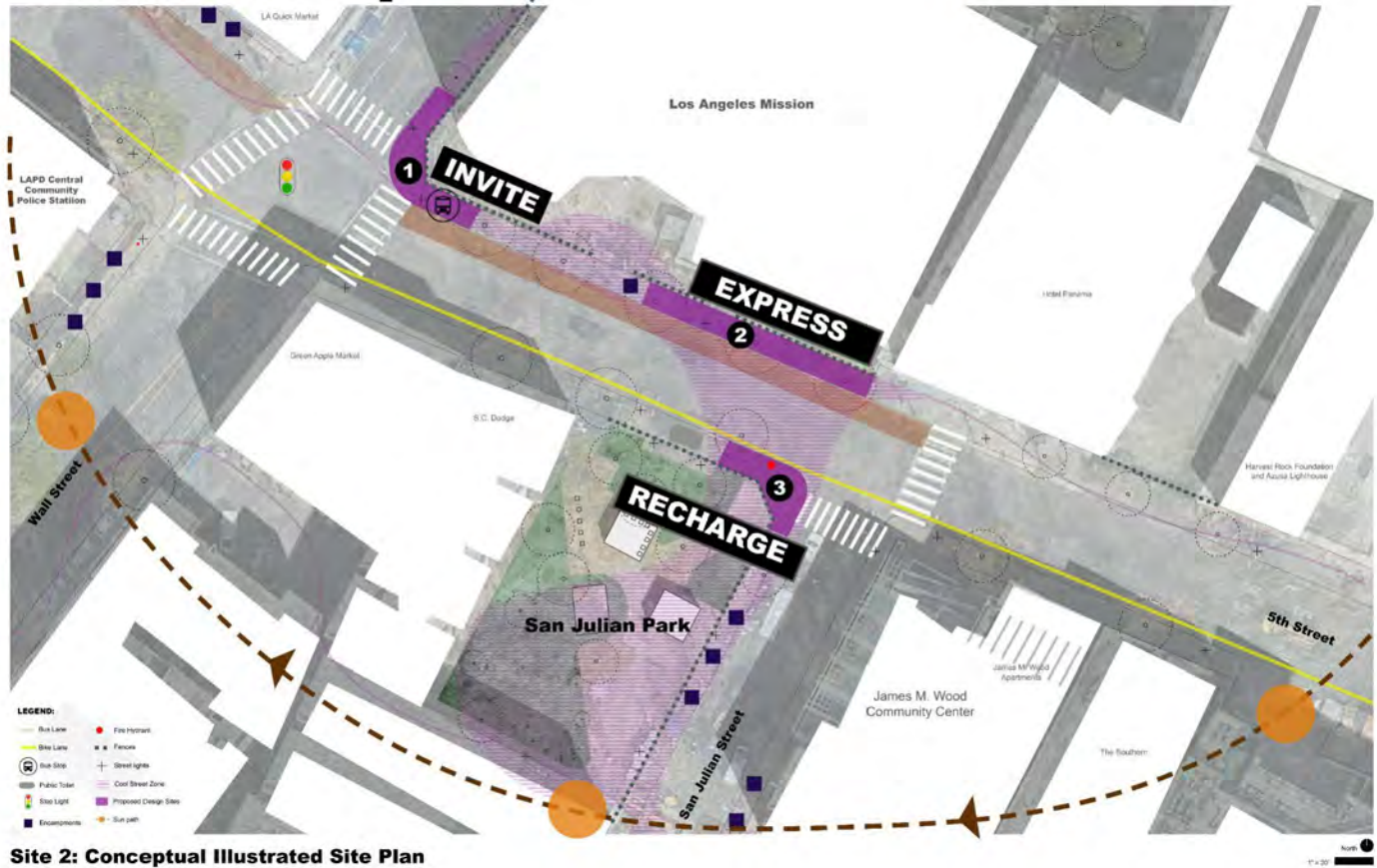
Employment opportunities for the community through staffing and artistic expression. Paid opportunities for artists in the form of shade canvases and windbreaks. Thus, cooling and warming stations must be so as well. San Julian Park is doing a lot for 5th street. Equipped with shade structures, benches, large trees and a future million-dollar remodel, which includes additional public bathrooms, the park is packed with people, but homelessness does not end when the park closes at 6 PM. We are here to fill in the gaps.

With eight to eleven thousand unhoused people sleeping in Skid Row every night, this is a human rights issue.

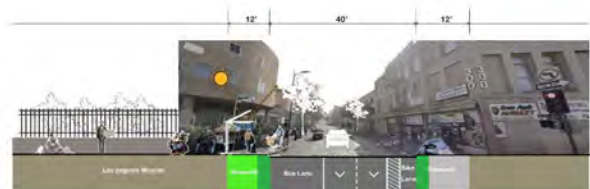
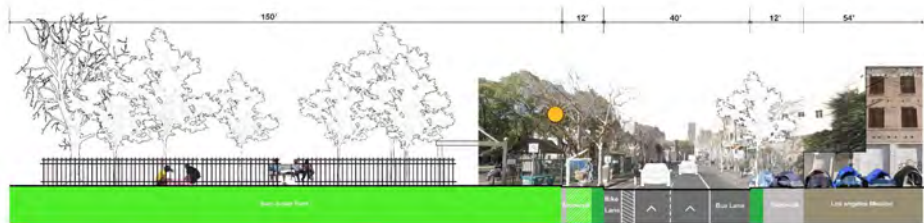
When most of the services close up at night, that is when even more people are in the area with unmet needs.

We envision the cooling station as a permanent resource, 24/7, to build trust and provide services through a flexibly designed space to support the community's evolving needs.

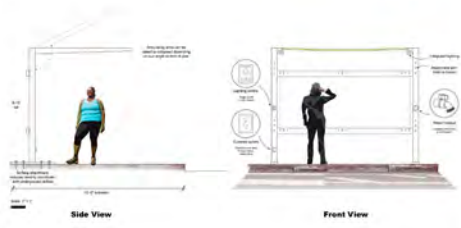
# Site Concept



# Sections



**Permanent Module**



**Flexible Arrangement**



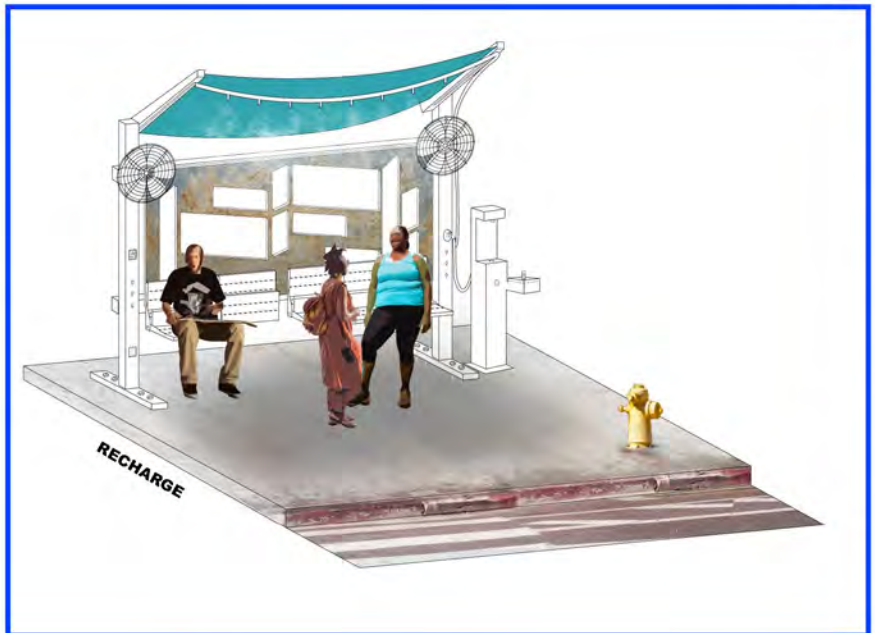
**Customization: Backing**



**Customization: Attachments**



**Budget Estimate**



# THE COOL TOOL:

A Decision-Making Guide to Provide Climate Justice Solutions for Los Angeles' Unhoused Community

## 1 Who are your potential PARTNERS?

Agencies: LA City, Homeless Initiatives  
 Community Orgs: LA CAN  
 Service Providers: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Funding Opportunities: LA City

RESOURCES PARTNERS CAN PROVIDE:  
 Staffing     Community Services  
 Equipment     Logistics / Delivery  
 Funding

## 2 What are your GOALS?

**PRIORITIES**  
 Reliability     Stewardship  
 Community     Employment  
 Safe space     Immediacy  
 Enclosure

**VALUES + NEEDS**  
 Funding     Partners  
 Program     Tree Canopy  
 Phasing     Utilities

**DESIRED CAPACITY**  
 # People Accommodated: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Daily Reach: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Monthly Reach: \_\_\_\_\_

## 3 What's the BUDGET?

Funding Source: City of LA  
 Funding Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

**STAFFING**  
 Staff: \_\_\_\_\_

**CONSTRUCTION**  
terra-cotta wall, shade system

**PLANTING**  
Monocled planters

**FURNITURE**  
Decorative seating, movable chairs

**MISC**

## 4 What SERVICES are needed?

**STRUCTURAL**  
 Seating     Storage  
 Thermal Comfort

**COOLING STRATEGIES**  
 Shade     Fans  
 Misters     Green Infrastructure  
 Cool Pavement     Material Selection

**HEATING STRATEGIES**  
 Rain Shelter     Heaters  
 Insulation     Clothing Distribution

**NOURISHMENT**  
 Drinking Water  
 Hygiene  
 Food

**SUPPORT**  
 Medical Care  
 Harm Reduction  
 Device Charging  
 Wi-Fi  
 Community Engagement

Other Services: \_\_\_\_\_

## 5 What are your SITE considerations?

Proximity to population     Not displacing encampments  
 Water source     Buy-in from neighboring organizations  
 Sidewalk width     Awareness of code restrictions (41.18, 56.11)  
 Urban Heat Island     Existing Shade / Tree Canopy

Additional site assets: \_\_\_\_\_

## 6 How much SPACE?



## 7 What's the TIMELINE?

**PERMANENCE**  
 Pilot    Temp    Seasonal    Permanent

**IMPLEMENTATION**  
 Immediate    Long-term

**SEASONAL PROGRAMMING**  
 Warm Season: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cool Season: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Start Date: 2020

## 8 What are your STAFFING needs?

Tabling     Other Staff Roles: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Outreach  
 General Support    Staff Hours: 500  
 Security

## 9 Community FEEDBACK

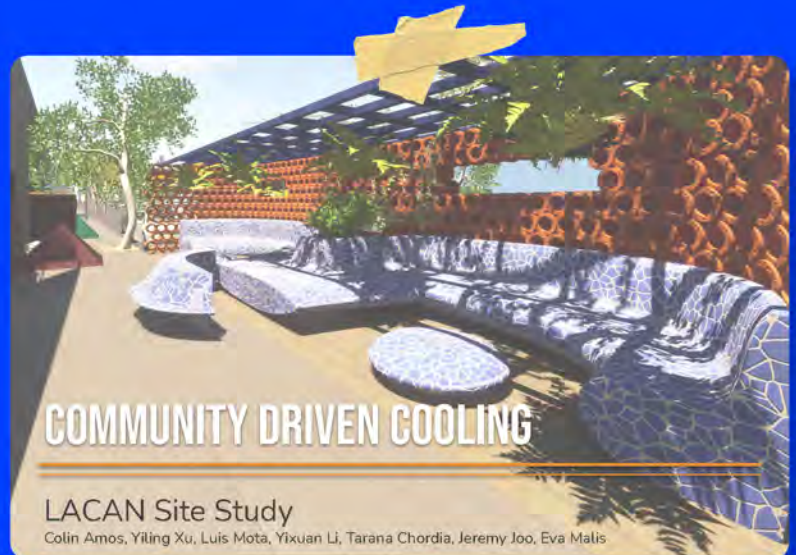
Outreach Events  
 Staff Interactions  
 Interviews

Which key community members need to be part of the conversation?  
Steve Rice, LA CAN  
Demetrius Dupree

# EMPHASIS:

# 05 SITE:

This permanent parklet approach extends LA CAN's community organizing and gathering space, while additionally offering Wi-Fi, a community board, and a terracotta cylinder cooling system.



## COMMUNITY DRIVEN COOLING

LACAN Site Study

Colin Amos, Yiling Xu, Luis Mota, Yixuan Li, Tarana Chordia, Jeremy Joo, Eva Malis

# SITE 3: East 6th St (from Stanford to Ceres)

## COMMUNITY-DRIVEN COOLING

USC TEAM: Jen Toy (Faculty Advisory), Eva Malis (Team Lead), Collin Amos, Tarana Chordia, Jeremy Joo, Yixuan Li, Luis Mota, Yiling Xu

COMMUNITY PARTNER: Los Angeles Community Action Network (LACAN)



## COMMUNITY-DRIVEN COOLING

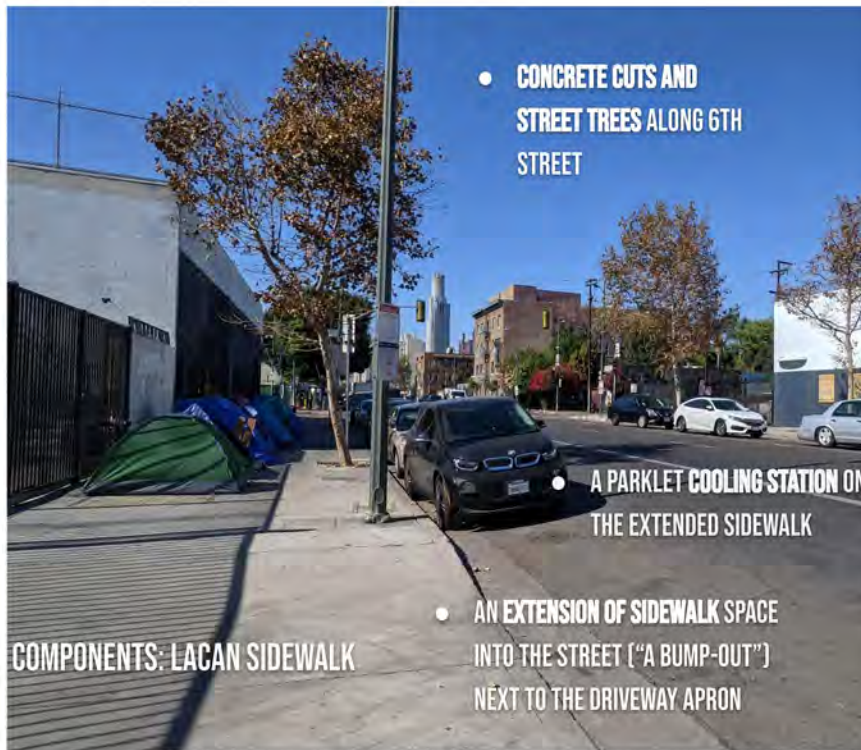
This Cooling Station brings climate justice to Skid Row residents in partnership with key community organization Los Angeles Community Action Network (LACAN). LACAN is a grassroots community organization dedicated to advocacy for low-income people in Los Angeles, with campaigns focusing on housing rights, fighting gentrification, and access to healthy food and clean water.

Our cooling station is located in front of the LACAN office on 6th St between Gladys Ave and Ceres Ave, a block away from heavily-used Gladys Park. There are many neighboring encampments along 6th street, especially along the South side of the street where the Cooling Station is envisioned to be placed.

The Cooling Station will replace 3 street parking spots to form a parklet to the west of LACAN's driveway. The Station utilizes terra cotta air-purifying cylinders, misters, and a green roof shade structure to cool

and purify the air, as well as provides comfortable seating and laying space for users to gather. The primary services provided include charging stations, cool drinking water, wifi, and a community resources board with heat advisory information to provide enhanced access to information for the unhoused community in this area of Skid Row.

Our design expands into the LACAN courtyard, providing additional planter beds, a green wall, movable seating, a sail shade canopy, small shade trees, and a container garden. This space functions as an extension of the Cooling Station to facilitate community gatherings, host community events and teach-ins, and nurture relationships between community members, and the local organizations and service providers who provide resources to the community. The project seeks to create enhanced synergies between existing programs and resources, extending the meaningful programs and work of LACAN closer to Gladys Park to encourage more interactions with the unhoused community, and providing thermal comfort through cooling strategies.



## LACAN

Established in 1999, the Los Angeles Community Action Network (LACAN) provides a venue for grassroots organizing, advocacy and self-representation of very-low-income people in the Skid Row community and South Central Los Angeles.

LACAN's past and present efforts include campaigns for housing rights, anti-gentrification, and access to healthy food and clean water. Since its inception, LACAN has expanded its network, and 25% of its membership reside in South Central Los Angeles. Currently, weekly events offered at its Skid Row headquarters include learning sessions about Housing Rights, Food and Wellness, as well as meetings of the Downtown Women's Action Coalition.

Our team met with Steve Diaz at LACAN to learn more about their programs, and tour this area of Skid Row to better understand the services and resources that they provide for the local community, and the advocacy they do on behalf of unhoused and very-low-income people in Skid Row.

## SITE SELECTION

In analyzing this area of Skid Row, our site

selection assessed four unique characteristics of the site:

1. Conditions
  - Existing infrastructure
  - Movement patterns of residents
  - Attitudes of neighboring establishments towards intervention
  - Regional and local weather patterns
2. Hazards
  - Heat, Cold, Dehydration
  - Being cut off from communications
  - Lack of advocacy and accountability
  - Mental and physical fatigue
  - Citations and police harassment
3. Features
  - Relatively wide sidewalk (15 feet)
  - Street lighting
  - Easy access to potable water (LACAN)
4. Opportunities
  - Proximity to service provider (LACAN)
  - Positive relationships with residents (through LACAN)
  - Existing community action network (through LACAN)
  - Option to expand sidewalk
  - Space for trees on 6th Street
  - Proximity to Gladys Park (and its many existing programs and partnerships in the Skid Row community)

## COOLING STRATEGIES

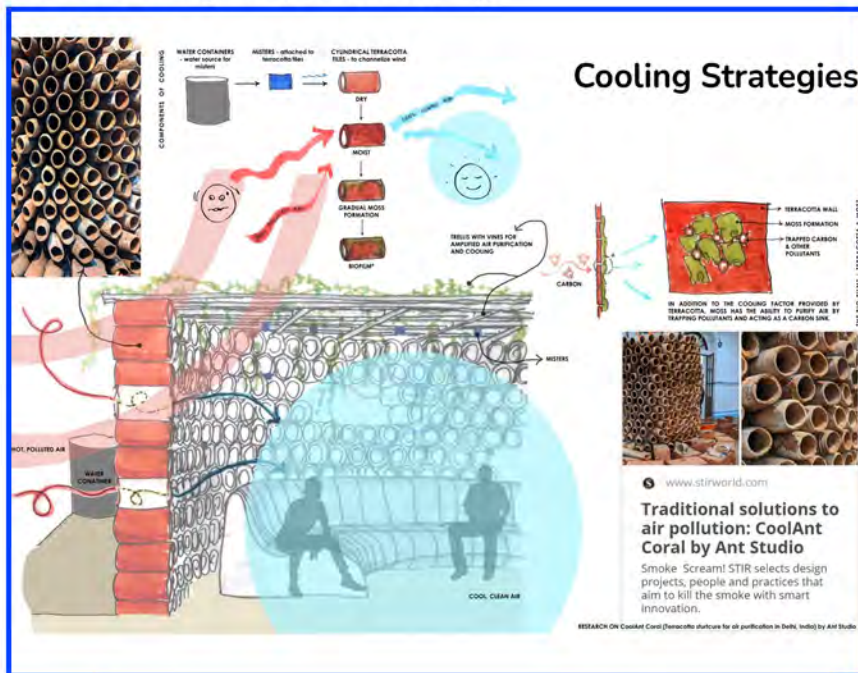
This project explores a variety of cooling strategies that are implemented in various ways in the design of the cooling station. The cooling strategies are organized around 3 guiding principles:

1. Provide Shade
  - Pergola and overhead plantings
  - Shade structures
  - Street trees off of 6th Street
2. Utilize Innovative Evaporative Cooling Materials
  - Terracotta cylinders
  - Misting System and Fans
3. Introduce Seating Elements
  - Multi-Use Benches
  - Comfort and Flexibility

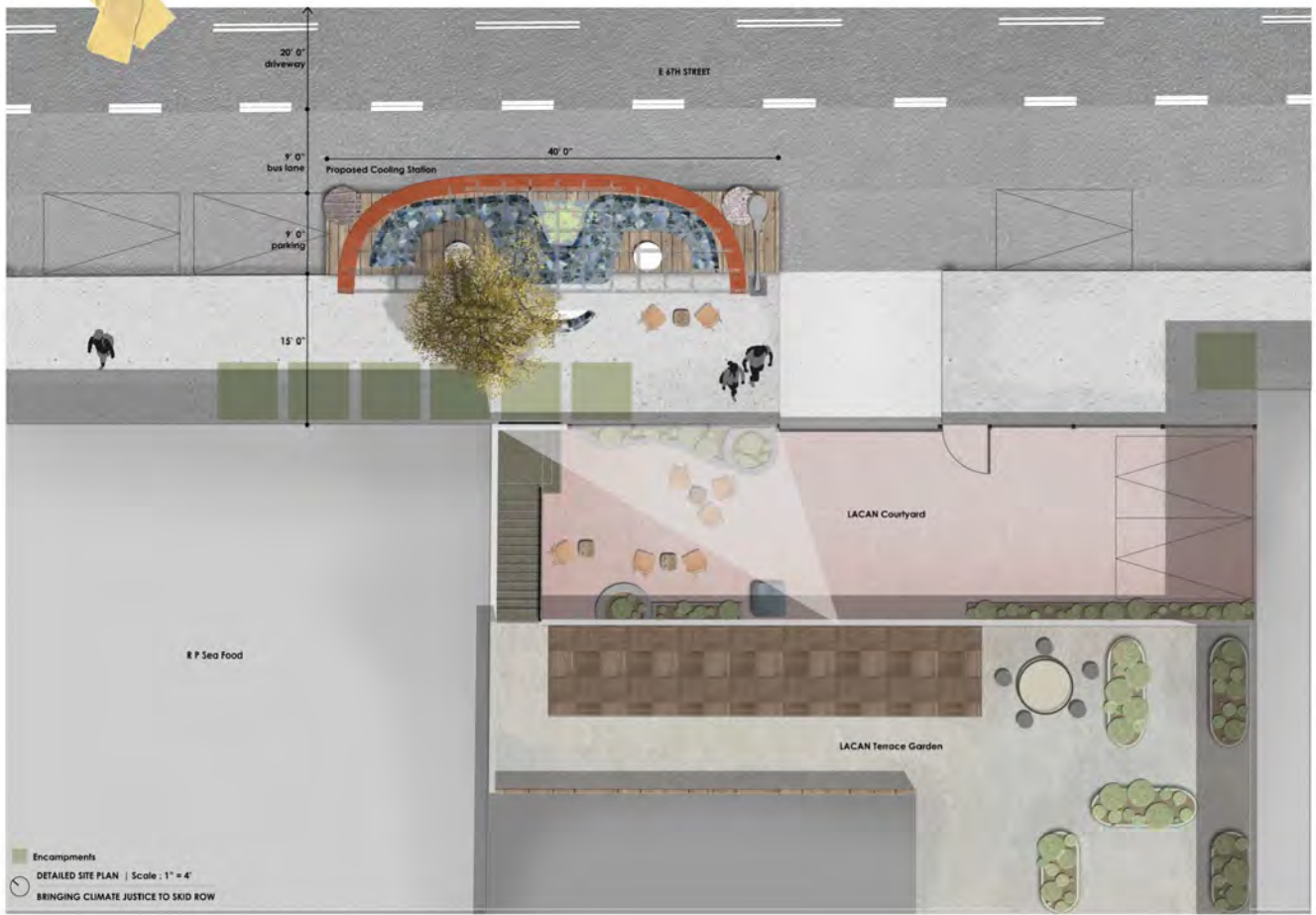


Terra cotta has cooling and air-purifying properties when wet, so misters are stationed along the terra cotta wall to enhance this material property during the day. A green roof shade structure is placed on top of the parklet to further cool and purify the air, and comfortable seating and laying space for users to gather is installed underneath. In addition to the cooling strategies that are implemented at the cooling center along East 6th Street, the cooling strategies are expanded into the existing LACAN courtyard, providing additional planting and a new shade canopy, and begin to form important connections to Gladys Park, to expand a system of resources along this streetscape in Skid Row. In addition to just providing for cooler microclimates that enhance thermal comfort, the intention of the project is also to provide information to the community. A community information board, designed to be modular and expandable in other contexts, provides a daily

heat advisory warning, as well as tips and tricks to stay cool in the heat ("stay hydrated" - today's high temperature, where to access water and resources, how to volunteer in LACAN's garden, wifi connectivity).



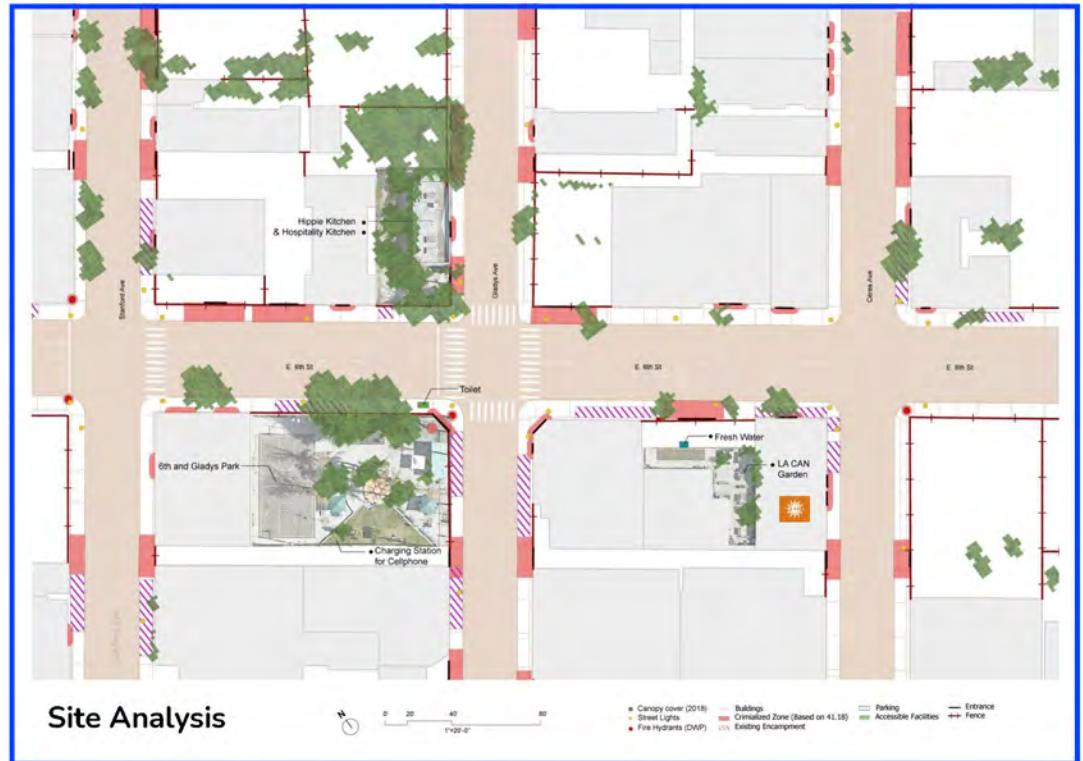
USC MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE + URBANISM, LANDSCAPE JUSTICE INITIATIVE



Detailed Site Plan (1"= 4'-0")

**LA MUNICIPAL CODE REGULATIONS**

Our analysis of the existing codes pairs an analysis of the existing canopy cover, with existing streetscape infrastructure (street lights, fire hydrants, etc), and criminalized zones based on LAMC 41.18, and also begins to map the zones where existing encampments are located that we documented during our time on site.



Site Analysis

## CONTEXT

As we toured the site, we started to notice that most of the encampments are located along the southern side of East 6th Street, the side of the street that experiences the most shade at the hottest times of the day. While there are some existing trees in the context, our project proposes additional street trees along the side streets that approach East 6th Street, in order to program East 6th Street between Gladys Park and LACAN.

## ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

As part of the ongoing operations, maintenance, and programming of the cooling station in this context, we begin to analyze the local organizations and teams who would have ongoing roles as part of the success of the Cooling Station in this location. LACAN could form a partnership with the cooling station to provide: resource distribution, preventative maintenance, supervised activities, updating the information board, landscape and planting maintenance (as part of their expanded gardening program from their roof garden), and reporting/feedback.

The City of Los Angeles and Mayor's Office of City Homeless Initiatives is engaged in the process in terms of providing feedback, understanding staffing and funding needs, as well as pursuing permitting and street service coordination with other City agencies.

Contractors could be engaged in the construction and ongoing maintenance (plumbing, electrical, masonry, etc), but this could also present an opportunity for collaboration around job training programs that begin to employ local residents and provide educational opportunities for the unhoused community.

Neighboring organizations and collaborators are envisioned as being engaged around occasional resource distribution, shared programming in partnership with

LACAN (and Gladys Park): information sessions and community events, and really focus on community-building and providing reliable and consistent resources.

Lastly, we see a potential for ongoing partnerships with USC in a research and design capacity, interacting with these organizations and stakeholders throughout the process, and facilitating engagement with LACAN and other project partners.

## CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES + SOLUTION STRATEGIES

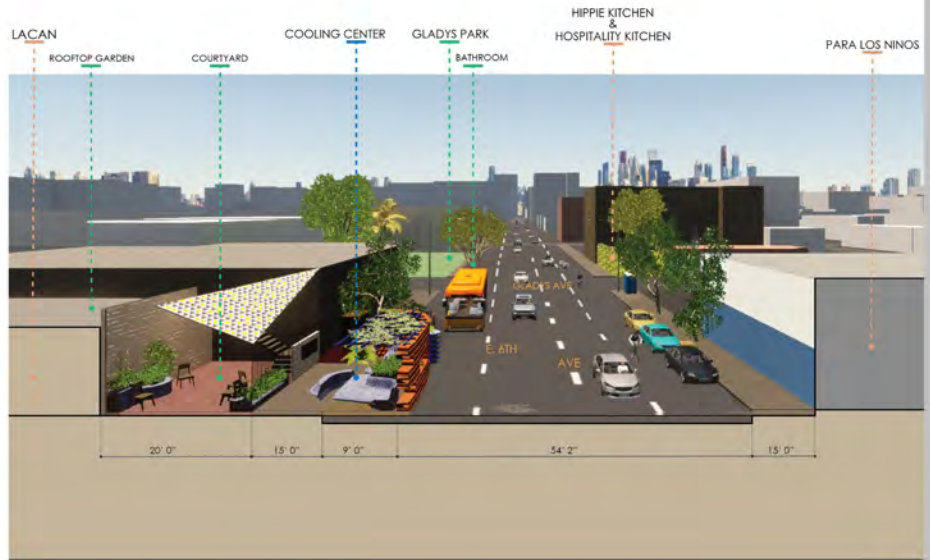
In completing this analysis and preliminary design work and ideation, we have begun to identify a series of foreseeable challenges, and starting to find opportunities and solution strategies to address them:

1. Wear and Tear
  - Preventative maintenance by staff
  - Funds available for repairs, and early budgeting that understands life-cycle costing
  - Reporting system in place for needed repairs and ongoing operations and maintenance
2. Vandalism
  - Staff supervision, and understanding staffing needs on a 24-hr cycle
  - Community ownership of the installation, and building community support for the site as a resource
3. Loss of Relevance
  - Fostering community around the cooling station installation

This project believes in the necessity of facilitating meaningful engagement and connections with local organizations in order to ensure ongoing support and community ownership of the cooling station. The project uniquely researches and tests innovative cooling strategies through its attention to material details that will provide a new context for the provision of resources, services, and cooling in the Skid Row community in a way that builds the capacity and potential of its patrons, collaborative partners, and the local community's interactions with its infrastructure.



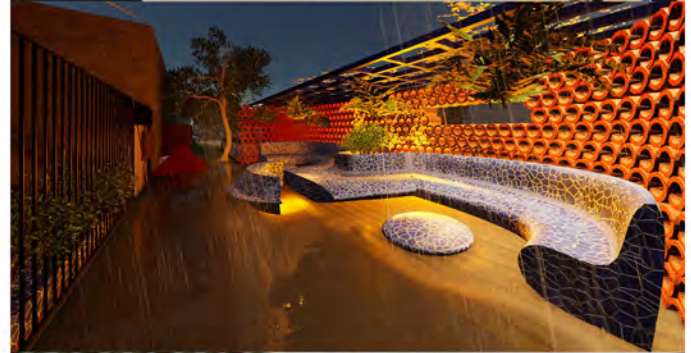
### Site Section



### Materials



### Streetview



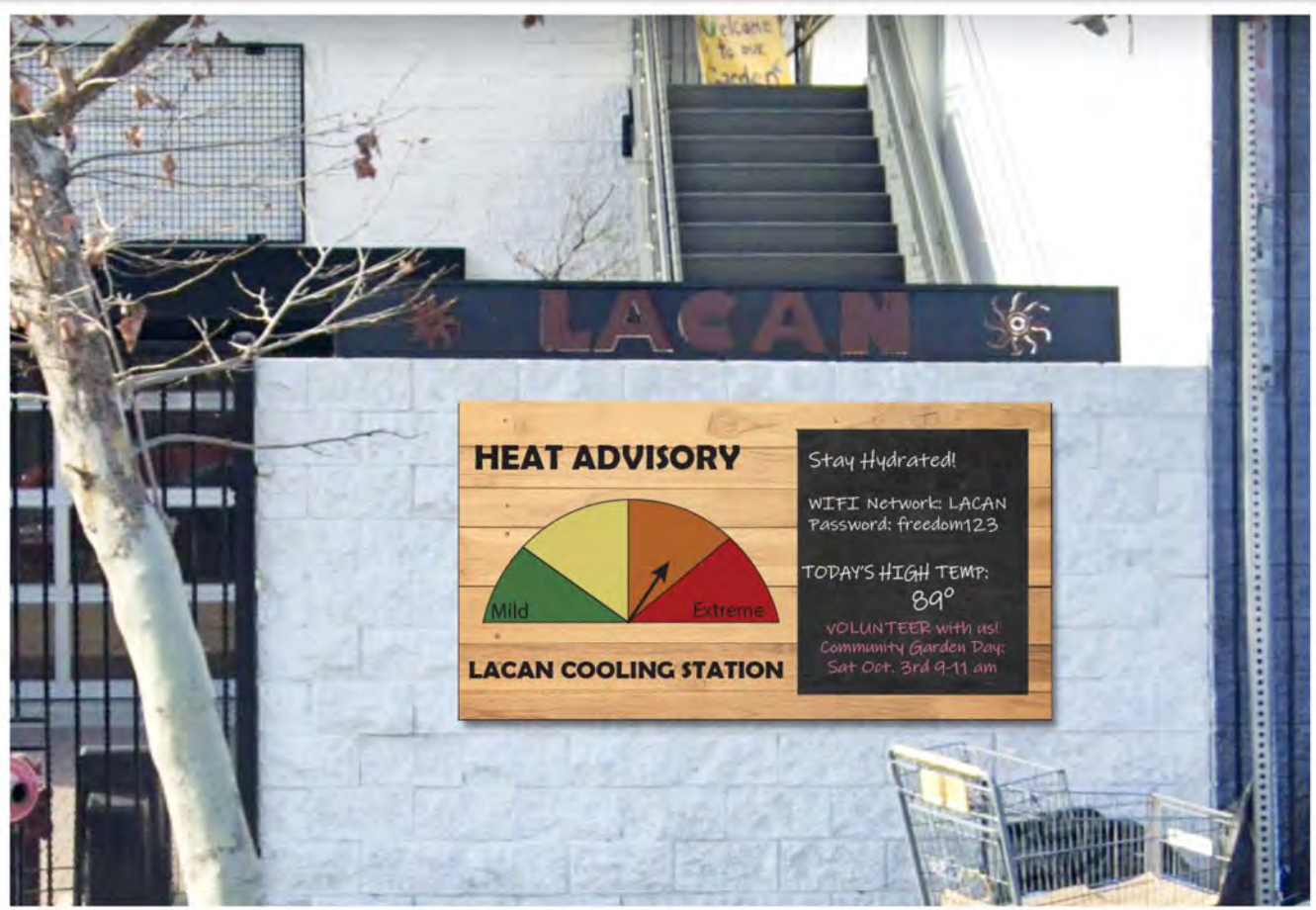


### Detailed Section



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### Community Information Board



# THE COOL TOOL:

A Decision-Making Guide to Provide Climate Justice Solutions for Los Angeles' Unhoused Community

## 1 Who are your potential PARTNERS?

Agencies: LA City, Donations Initiative  
 Community Orgs: HRCLA, ReFresh Spot  
 Service Providers: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Funding Opportunities: LA City

RESOURCES PARTNERS CAN PROVIDE:  
 Staffing  Community Services  
 Equipment  Logistics / Delivery  
 Funding

## 2 What are your GOALS?

PRIORITIES		VALUES + NEEDS		DESIRED CAPACITY
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reliability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stewardship	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Funding Program	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partners	# People Accommodated: <u>50</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phasing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tree Canopy	Daily Reach: _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Safe space	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Immediacy		<input type="checkbox"/> Utilities	Monthly Reach: _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enclosure				

## 3 What's the BUDGET?

Funding Source: City of LA  
 Funding Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

STAFFING  
 Staff: \_\_\_\_\_

CONSTRUCTION  
 Metal frame: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Original equipment: \_\_\_\_\_

PLANTING  
 Bioswale: \_\_\_\_\_

FURNITURE  
 Wood pallet: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Wood pallet crates: \_\_\_\_\_

MISC: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4 What SERVICES are needed?

STRUCTURAL	NOURISHMENT				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Seating <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Storage <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thermal Comfort	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Drinking Water <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hygiene <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Food				
<table border="1"> <tr> <th>COOLING STRATEGIES</th> <th>HEATING STRATEGIES</th> </tr> <tr> <td> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shade  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fans  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Misters  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Green Infrastructure  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cool Pavement  <input type="checkbox"/> Material Selection                 </td> <td> <input type="checkbox"/> Rain Shelter  <input type="checkbox"/> Heaters  <input type="checkbox"/> Insulation  <input type="checkbox"/> Clothing Distribution                 </td> </tr> </table>	COOLING STRATEGIES	HEATING STRATEGIES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shade <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fans <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Misters <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Green Infrastructure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cool Pavement <input type="checkbox"/> Material Selection	<input type="checkbox"/> Rain Shelter <input type="checkbox"/> Heaters <input type="checkbox"/> Insulation <input type="checkbox"/> Clothing Distribution	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support
COOLING STRATEGIES	HEATING STRATEGIES				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shade <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fans <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Misters <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Green Infrastructure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cool Pavement <input type="checkbox"/> Material Selection	<input type="checkbox"/> Rain Shelter <input type="checkbox"/> Heaters <input type="checkbox"/> Insulation <input type="checkbox"/> Clothing Distribution				
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Services: _____					

## 6 How much SPACE?



## 5 What are your SITE considerations?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Proximity to population	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not displacing encampments
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water source	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Buy-in from neighboring organizations
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sidewalk width	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Awareness of code restrictions (41.18, 56.11)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban Heat Island	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing Shade / Tree Canopy

Additional site assets: \_\_\_\_\_

## 7 What's the TIMELINE?

PERMANENCE  
 Pilot Temp Seasonal Permanent

IMPLEMENTATION  
 Immediate Long-term

SEASONAL PROGRAMMING  
 Warm Season: Round the clock  
 Cool Season: Round the clock

Start Date: 2022

## 8 What are your STAFFING needs?

Tabling  Other Staff Roles: \_\_\_\_\_

Outreach

General Support  Staff Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Security

## 9 Community FEEDBACK

Outreach Events  
 Staff Interactions  
 Interviews

Which key community members need to be part of the conversation?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### EMPHASIS:

### 06 SPACE:

The largest scale of all the project proposals, this design accommodates about 50 people at a time.

### 02 GOALS:

A community space is created with the intention to create a feeling of home, enclosure, and safe space that works in tandem with the ReFresh Spot across the road.



## CLIMATE JUSTICE IN SKID ROW

TEAM 4 -  
 Adrian Porter, Ana Mangino,  
 Ignacio Avalia, Lufan Hu, Yifan  
 Yin, Yue Chen, Zehra Rizvi

Faculty Advisor - Alexander Robinson

# SITE 4: Towne Ave

*(from 6th to mid-block)*

## CLIMATE JUSTICE IN SKID ROW

USC TEAM: Alex Robinson (Faculty Advisory), Zehra Baneen Rizvi (Team Lead), Ignacio Avila, Yue Chen, Lufan Hu, Ana Mangino, Adrian Porter, Yifan Yin  
 COMMUNITY PARTNER: ReFresh Spot, Homeless Healthcare Los Angeles (HHCLA)

## CLIMATE JUSTICE IN SKID ROW

With the effects of rising global temperatures coupled with a discernible correlation between urban heat levels and poverty Skid Row has become one of the most vulnerable communities for weather related health incidents in LA.

Our team recognizes the vital importance that cooling stations have, and will continue to provide for the unhoused in Skid Row. While the long term goal and overall solution to many of Skid Row's issues lie within sustainable housing solutions, we believe that after providing relief from dangerous weather conditions, one of the most integral parts of a cooling station may also be the simple idea of 'home' itself.

That is why our team decided to lend much of our design solutions to these two overarching goals of physical relief from adverse weather conditions, be it hot or cold, while also providing the basic and vital function of comfort and a sense of belonging. A cooling station may be a critical step in

combating homelessness and its adverse effects in Skid Row.

While our team recognizes that there are more sustainable solutions in mitigating urban heat island effect, our design plan attempts to find affordable solutions that can be easily implemented and configured depending on the needs that must be met at the human scale, and the scale of thermal comfort.

Specifically our site falls between 6th street and Towne. A block of industrial buildings and packing and distribution factories, void of any nature and reasonable camping sites, which has created a condition of harmful exposure to LA's urban heat. Yet for the sake of our case and our design, providing a cooling station within this site may actually benefit from its spatial detriment, because much of the site is inhospitable to legal camping it creates an effective environment for a shared common space, for the Skid Row community, and local partners and organizations that might provide services and resources.

**H O M E L E S S  
 H E A L T H C A R E  
 L O S A N G E L E S**

### REFRESH SPOT



Located on 544 Towne Avenue, Los Angeles, i.e. midway of our site, has been open since 2017, makes it the most reliable, and the closest thing that people have to call home.

The Refresh spot has been heralded as a huge success within the community. So much so that wait time for its services have been stretched and queues of people have formed. Creating a cooling zone that provides shelter from the weather and also allows for a comfortable and enjoyable place to reside while waiting for the refresh spot would be considered a huge public asset to the community, one that would foster a sense of community and belonging.

WHEN	WHAT	WHY
<p>2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opened in Dec. Was located on 527 Crocker St.</li> </ul>	<p><b>ROF</b> 544 Row Community ReFresh Spot</p> <p>Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restrooms</li> <li>Shower</li> <li>Laundry</li> <li>Phone Charging</li> <li>Music</li> <li>Small Library</li> <li>Job Referrals</li> <li>Drinking Water</li> <li>Peer Support</li> <li>Care Kits</li> <li>Testing</li> </ul>	<p>Principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open to anyone</li> <li>Provide a pathway to health, recovery, and emotional well-being</li> <li>Give the residents of Skid Row a sense of hope and dignity</li> </ul>
<p>2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Closed on 4/27</li> <li>Reopened on 7/19 &amp; moved to current location.</li> </ul>		
<p>2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Became 24hrs on 4/23</li> </ul> <p>To Be Continued</p>		



In addition to the lack of trees, and direct and intense sunlight, the urban setting and surrounding site does not function in a way that supports the unhoused community. Coupled with the LA Municipal Code's 41.18 and 56.11 rules, much of the streetscape is entirely unusable for the unhoused community. While many would consider this a disadvantage, we regard the site's inhospitable nature as an advantage - our cooling site does not take up vital camping space from the unhoused, and on top of this, the site is located directly across the street from the Skid Row Community ReRefresh Spot, with the potential to become an extension of this established public facility.

### REFRESH SPOT

Located at 544 Towne Avenue, Los Angeles, the mid-block of our site, the ReRefresh Spot has been open since 2017, and is known in the community as a reliable destination, and the closest thing that many individuals have to "home" in terms of access to resources. In 2021, the ReRefresh Spot became a 24 hour facility, offering services like: restrooms, showers, laundry facilities, phone charging, music, a small library, job referrals, drinking water, peer support, care kits, and a variety of testing services (HIV,

STD, COVID).

Operated by Homeless Healthcare Los Angeles, the Skid Row Community ReRefresh Spot works with a number of local sponsors and provides for approximately 350 people per day (with a capacity of 800-1,000 per day) under the principles of being:

- Open to anyone
- Providing a pathway to health, recovery, and emotional well-being
- Giving the residents of Skid Row a sense of hope and dignity

the refresh spot allows anyone at any time of the day to come do their laundry and take a shower, or access a restroom. The Refresh spot has been heralded as a huge success within the community.

So much so that wait times for its services have been stretched and queues of people have formed. Creating a cooling zone that provides shelter from the weather and also allows for a comfortable and enjoyable place to reside while waiting for the refresh spot would be considered a huge public asset to the community, one that would foster a sense of community and belonging.

### RELIEF + COMFORT

With these two driving factors of relief and comfort in mind. Our design creates a semi-permanent structure covered with an adjustable tent canopy that can be utilized for all weather and seasonal conditions. Sourcing cheap and maneuverable materials such as pallets has also meant that the cooling station can be deployed in specific ways depending on the needs that may need to be met. Whether it be creating more seating for the busiest time of day or adjusting the tent to create more seclusion and security, these flexible configurations are easily adjustable. We hope that due to the design's multi-functional approach and universal concepts of home this design can also lend itself to being a yearlong site with the ability of phasing and expansion.

The main objectives of our work seek to: build community, promote sustainability, provide safety, increase vegetation, incor-



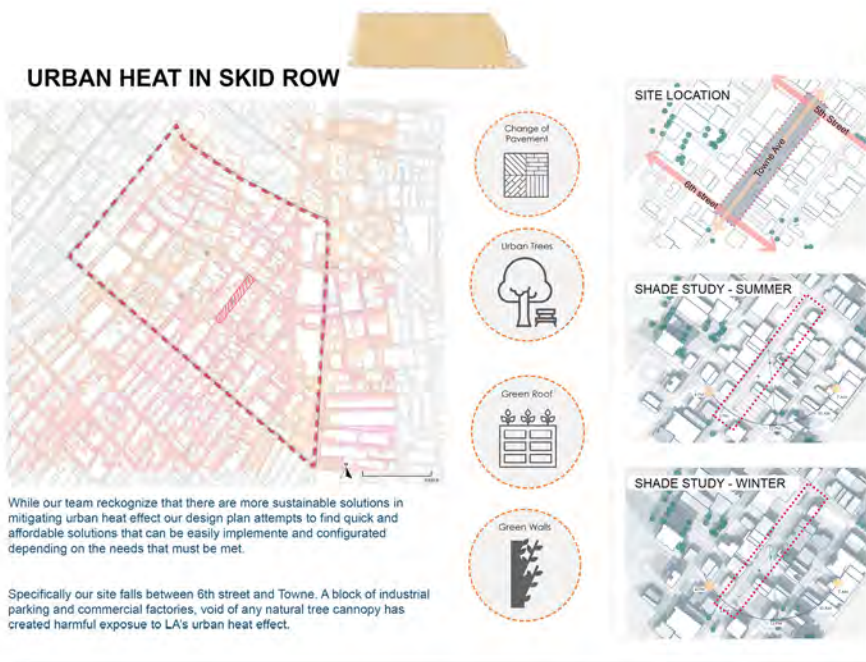
porate stormwater management, focus on cost efficiency, and provide for the health of Skid Row residents and the community.

Our conceptual approach to designing the Cooling Stations includes:

1. Expanding the foot path and sidewalk, taking over the parking spaces directly adjacent to the selected cooling station site.
2. Incorporating the cooling station as part of the streetscape, to make it more approachable.
3. Providing a multi-functional back wall to the cooling station that can store materials, and offer an embrace for the site.
4. Connecting it directly to the ReFresh Spot through a new mid-block crossing that helps mitigate traffic, and enhance safety.
5. Providing bioswales and increased vegetation on site, and planting trees that

will ultimately create shade.

6. Providing compact / cheap / readily available furniture and solutions.



**SITE LOCATION & APPROACH**



How will I ever manage to go in? will they ask for my ID? Will they co-operate

Fianly, something to rely on... Best thing Ever!!



PERMANENT STRUCTURE - PROS/ CONS



It does seem approachable & nice. but is it safe. ??

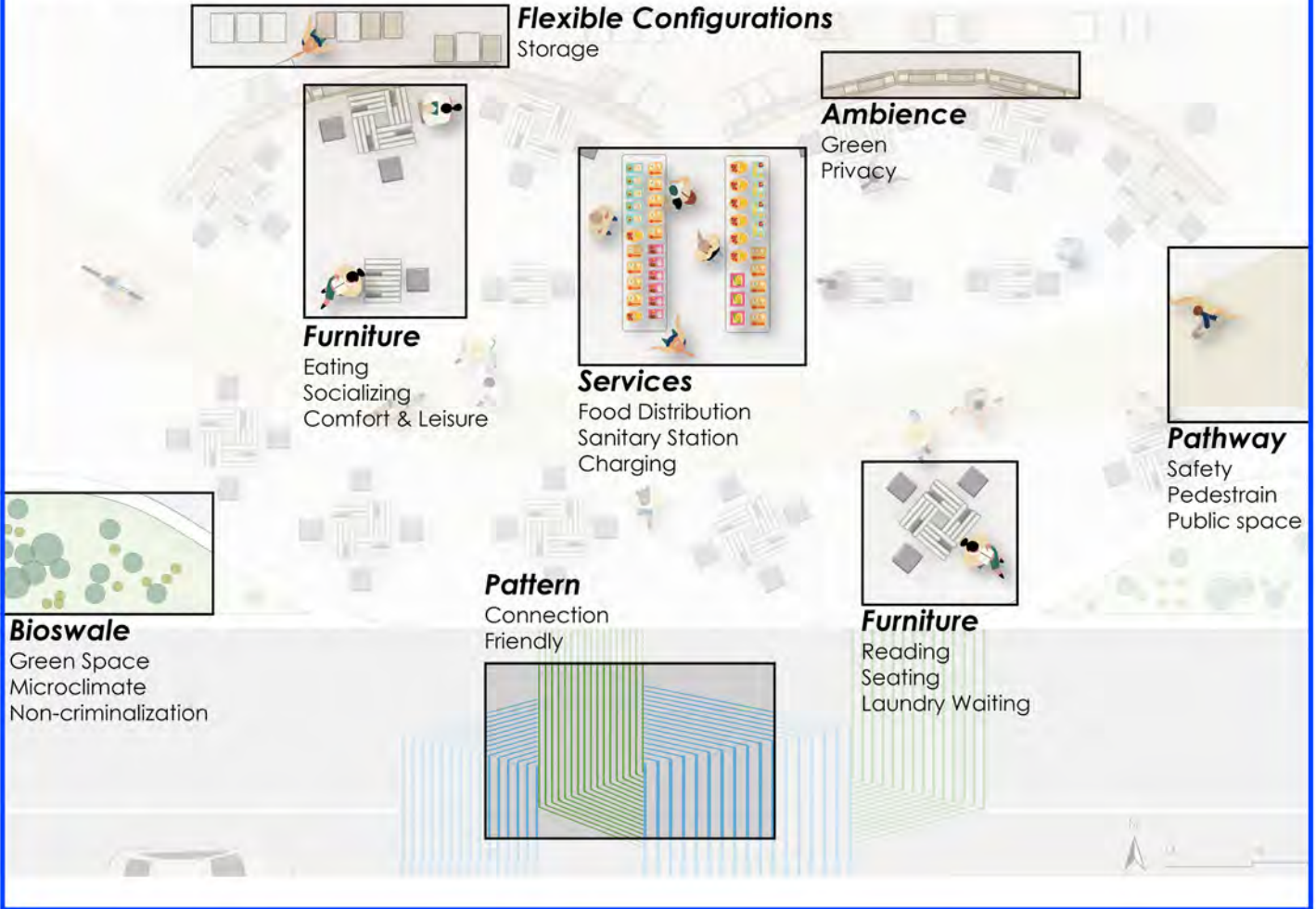
Temporary. ? How long before the abandon us again?

TEMPORARY STRUCTURE - PROS/ CONS

**MAIIN OBJECTIVES**



# COOLING STATION - PROGRAMMING



## LA MUNICIPAL CODE REGULATIONS

Specifically on our site, we explored the possible locations where individuals would be subject to criminalization by LAMC Section 41.18, while also starting to understand where it might be "legal" for unhoused individuals to exist in our site area.



## SITE CONTEXT



In addition to lack of trees, and direct and intense sunlight, the urban setting / site surrounding, doesn't exactly support homelessness, as per the 41.18 rules, make this street almost entirely unusable.

While many would consider this a disadvantage we regard the site's inhospitability as an advantage, as our cooling site does not take up vital camping space from the unhoused. On top of this, our site is directly opposite the refresh spot, becoming an extension of the established public facility.

The cooling station provides opportunity for multi-functional and flexible programs and services that provide resources to the community.

From the flexible configuration of storage areas, to a green screen that provides for a unique ambiance in the streetscape, the backdrop of the cooling station provides relief amidst the existing conditions. An accessible sidewalk/pathway is maintained through the center of the site, allowing even passersby to benefit from the cooling stations shade, and encouraging increased interaction with the furniture (for eating, socializing, or simply comfort and leisure), and the various services that could be housed within its canopy (from food distribution to sanitary stations and charging stations).

The furniture is designed to be multi-functional as well, providing spaces for reading, waiting areas for laundry (at the ReFresh Spot), and seating areas. The pathway provides safety, and a pedestrian-scaled experience that invites anyone into a space with the intention of providing thermal comfort. Between the cooling station and the road, a bioswale introduces green space, while also providing an enhanced buffer between the sidewalk and traffic.

The introduction of green space helps to create a micro-climate that protects and cools the site. The mid-block crossing to the ReFresh Spot also provides a pedestrian-friendly connection that does not criminalize individuals for crossing the street in an area where there is not a crosswalk, and acts to further calm traffic in this area and increase safety.

The structure will have two main elements: 1. Wooden Pallets, and 2. Metal Frame.

The wooden pallets will be recycled and refurbished so they can support vines.

The metallic frame structure will be in charge of supporting the canopy of the cooling station which incorporates a solar panel across the back of the shade structure for the charging stations and lighting,

with an origami-inspired canopy over the main seating area and sidewalk.

This shade is designed in a way that can be opened and closed according to the Sun exposure of the day This canopy is envisioned to provide more sun exposure in the winter (when warmth is beneficial), while blocking sun exposure in the summer to lower the temperatures experienced at the human-scale, and also provides for partial exposure as well.

While the cooling station is initially sited directly across from the ReFresh Spot, the project could be phased into the future, with future possibilities for smaller cooling stations to be located in areas adjacent to a larger streetscape improvement project incorporating bioswales along longer lengths of the streetscape.

Skid Row is a vibrant community which we as a city must pledge not turn our backs on. The cooling station is a demonstration of that pledge. Providing them with the basic functions of comfort and relief while also fostering a space of acceptance must be considered in the assistance and development of Skid Row.

The result is a place where people will have the opportunity to come, actively use the space or simply pass by, but whether they are an active or passive user, they gain something from the experience: a sense of safety, a moment of relief from extreme heat, or even a meaningful resource or touch-point with a local organization providing services. This space is designed with a capacity of welcoming around 50 people at a given time, but is envisioned to offer hundreds of touch-points a day, and it is expected to expand.

Eventually, once there is enough funding or partnerships, this prototype will expand and will be replicated along other locations in Skid Row, providing more opportunities for climate justice throughout Skid Row, and continuing to provide more comfort for the unhoused community.

### COOLING STATION - CONCEPT / APPROACH

- EXPANDING THE FOOTPATH, TAKING OVER THE PARKING SPACE ON ONE END
- STATION IS MADE MORE APPROACHABLE, BY INCORPORATING IT AS A PART OF THE STREETScape
- STATION IS MADE MORE APPROACHABLE, BY INCORPORATING IT AS A PART OF THE STREETScape
- CONNECTING IT DIRECTLY TO REFRESH SPOT, CREATING A JUNCTION, THAT HELPS MITIGATE TRAFFIC
- PROVIDING BIOSWALES; IN HOPE THAT THESE TREES WILL THRIVE UNDER 24 HOUR SURVILLANCE, ULTIMATELY CREATING SHADE
- COMPACT / CHEAP / READILY AVAILABLE FURNITURE

**WHO**  
Operator:  
**HOMELESS HEALTH CARE LOS ANGELES**

Sponsors:  
Eric Garcetti, LAHSA, Mindhumans, 501C THREE, Kevin De Leon, L.A. DWP, Los Angeles Department of Water & Power, U.S. Green Building Council

User:  
Currently: 350 people per day  
Capacity: 800 - 1,000 per day

#### SECTION - 1

#### SECTION - 2

#### COOLING STATION - PLAN

### SHADE STRUCTURE - DETAIL

Solar Panel Installation - for charging station/ Lighting/ etc

Origami Tarp Shade

Steel Truss Structure

Room for storage

Walkway

Refurbished pallets supporting vines

Winter Sun Full Exposure

Partial Exposure

Summer Sun No Exposure

### SITE PLAN / PHASING

LA.M.C. § 56.01

TESTING:

Phasing Proposal

LEGEND

- Main Cooling Station
- Future Possibilities
- Bio - Swales

Possible Partnership Opportunities

Costco, LA POWER SERVICE, F&W, Apple

Shading structure for street

Shading structure for cooling station

PERSPECTIVE 1



PERSPECTIVE 2



# THE COOL TOOL:

A Decision-Making Guide to Provide Climate Justice Solutions for Los Angeles' Unhoused Community

## 1 Who are your potential PARTNERS?

Agencies: LA City, Homeless Initiative

Community Orgs: Homeless Center for Harm Reduction

Service Providers: Homeless Health Authority

Funding Opportunities: LA City

RESOURCES PARTNERS CAN PROVIDE:

- Staffing
- Equipment
- Funding
- Community Services
- Logistics / Delivery

## 2 What are your GOALS?

**PRIORITIES**

- Reliability
- Community
- Stewardship
- Employment
- Safe space
- Enclosure

**VALUES + NEEDS**

- Funding Program
- Phasing
- Partners
- Tree Canopy
- Utilities

**DESIRED CAPACITY**

# People Accommodated: \_\_\_\_\_

Daily Reach: \_\_\_\_\_

Monthly Reach: \_\_\_\_\_

## 3 What's the BUDGET?

Funding Source: City of LA

Funding Amount: \$184,500

STAFFING

Tables	\$150,000

CONSTRUCTION

4 tents + canopy (total partners 4)	\$5,000
	\$135,500

PLANTING


FURNITURE

4 table planters + seating (24)	\$15,000

MISC

People drop-off (Homeless)	

## 4 What SERVICES are needed?

**STRUCTURAL**

- Seating
- Storage
- Thermal Comfort

**NOURISHMENT**

- Drinking Water
- Hygiene
- Food

**SUPPORT**

- Medical Care
- Harm Reduction
- Device Charging
- Wi-Fi
- Community Engagement

**COOLING STRATEGIES**

- Shade
- Fans
- Misters
- Green Infrastructure
- Cool Pavement
- Material Selection

**HEATING STRATEGIES**

- Rain Shelter
- Heaters
- Insulation
- Clothing Distribution

Other Services: Medical drop-off

## 6 How much SPACE?



## 5 What are your SITE considerations?

- Proximity to population
- Water source
- Sidewalk width
- Urban Heat Island
- Not displacing encampments
- Buy-in from neighboring organizations
- Awareness of code restrictions (41.18, 56.11)
- Existing Shade / Tree Canopy

Additional site assets: \_\_\_\_\_

## 8 What are your STAFFING needs?

- Tabling
- Outreach
- General Support
- Security

Other Staff Roles: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Hours: 200

## 9 Community FEEDBACK

- Outreach Events
- Staff Interactions
- Interviews

Which key community members need to be part of the conversation?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## EMPHASIS:

### 03 BUDGET:

Local sourcing and prefabricated materials create a highly adaptable and immediately implementable system.

### 04 SERVICES:

Modular seating, tents, replenishable goods, and sharps boxes follow the motto that "harm reduction is meeting people where they are."

**COMFORT + CONSISTENCY**  
VERTICAL WORKSHOP 2021 | SITE 5

Community partner: Homeless Healthcare Los Angeles | Center for Harm Reduction

Students:  
Paige Buckner  
Hannah Michael Flynn  
Gloria Gao  
Kunyang Guo  
Asher Guzik  
Lara Lebeiko  
Brooke Redmond

Faculty: Esther Margulies

# SITE 5: East 4th St (from Omar to Towne)

## COMFORT + CONSISTENCY

USC TEAM: Esther Margulies (Faculty Advisory), Lara Lebelko (Team Lead), Paige Buckner, Hannah Flynn, Gloria Gao, Kunyang Guo, Asher Guzik, Brooke Redmond  
COMMUNITY PARTNER: Center for Harm Reduction (CHR), Homeless Healthcare Los Angeles (HHCLA)

**HOMELESS  
HEALTH CARE  
LOS ANGELES**

## COMFORT + CONSISTENCY

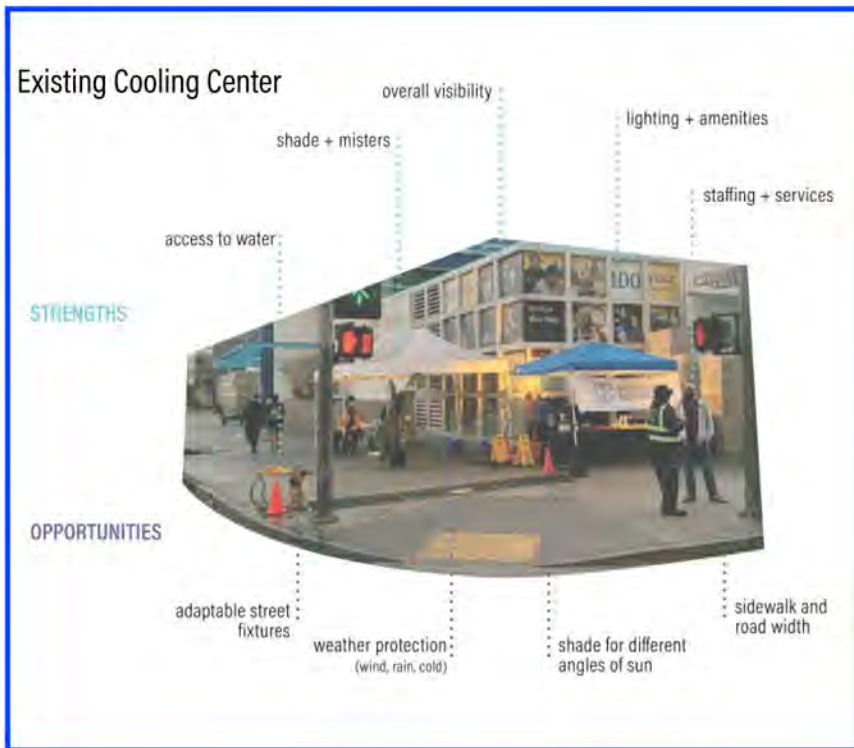
We are introducing a scalable solution for year-round comfort, first for persons experiencing homelessness in Skid Row, and then as a pilot program to roll out throughout LA.

On March 31, 2021, a coalition of organizations including HHCLA and Water Drop LA published the document Skid Row Cooling Resources: Request for Support. This document identified how the climate and racial justice impacts of Urban Heat Island Effect disproportionately affect residents of Skid Row, and how existing city and mutual aid infrastructure were not sufficient to help. In light of this, SRCR proposed four Cooling Canopies in the Skid Row neighborhood to provide important resources and relief against the silent killer that is hypothermia.

The program was successfully implemented and the four canopies went up in July. Skid Row residents have benefited greatly from the meals, cold water, shade, and places to sit.

As we reach the end of October, these stations will be fully packed up and decommissioned. Summer's over! Evans Clark, the Refresh Spot program manager so generously gave our group a tour around the area, made it clear: the stations need to stay. And everyone else we met that day agreed: the stations need to start offering coffee. And heaters. And hot chocolate. And soup. And the loss of that consistency is being felt: as of the writing of this narrative, the empty spot where one the decommissioned Cooling Stations was located has yet to be filled by anyone's belongings.

Los Angeles is a hot - and increasingly hotter - city. Extreme heat days are expected to increase steadily in the future. However, it's important that services address climate across the seasons. In 2018, more unhoused people died of hypothermia in Los Angeles than in New York and San Francisco combined (L.A.TACO). One woman we met in Skid Row told us that since arriving at Skid Row, she personally knew three people who had died of hypothermia.



This is where our idea comes in: transform the already-existing Skid Row Cooling Resources canopies into the Skid Row Comfort Resources canopies - they can even keep the same acronym! - and provide year-round resources for both hot and cold weather at the level of consistency that Skid Row residents need.

Our idea is to create a basic framework that can be implemented at all of the existing Cooling Station locations, as well as a new location at 4th and Crocker Street, across the street from the Center for Harm Reduction. We're introducing a simple modular system with three components: structure, seating, and services. These skeleton components can be customized to address site- and season-specific needs, including modular shade sails, planters, and solar-powered charging stations, heat lamps, and refrigeration. Prior to implementation, hyper-local community organizations like the Center for Harm Reduction can lead with engagement and outreach to understand which features are needed where. Importantly, no design is finalized without community input.

## THE SITE

To zoom in, our site is located in NE Skid Row, along 4th Streets between Omar and

Towne.

When we look at our site's physical characteristics, there are few trees, a lot of pavement and buildings, and as a result, some of the highest urban heat effects in Skid Row. Additionally, the area is dominated by commercial and retail operations, mostly smoke shops, with few services outside the Center for Harm Reduction for the unhoused population, demonstrating a need to ameliorate these climate and service needs.

The need for services and comfort are further borne out. Significant to this area when compared to other sites in Skid Row, is that there are few permanent populations on the street, with one encampment on the northwestern side of Omar. Part of this is due to code, such as the prohibition of blocking rights of way and driveways (our code analysis revealed some of the effects on where people can and cannot go), but more is due to the actions of local businesses, whose activities discourage unhoused populations to settle, such as through hiring private security that move people along. What is left as space for the unhoused population are two features: the Center for Harm Reduction, and the shade cast by buildings on the south side of the street, as sources for only temporary reprieve for the unhoused.

## CENTER FOR HARM REDUCTION

The Center for Harm Reduction serves unhoused individuals who are also experiencing addiction, and serves some of the most at risk populations of Skid Row. At this facility they practice harm reduction, which as we were told by Sylvia Meza, a substance use specialist, is "meeting people where they are, truly helping them without judgment." At this location, they provide needle exchanges and medical care, opioid detox, training on overdose reversals, and many other forms of care that people may need. In the last year alone, they have prevented over 300 overdoses in Skid Row. But despite this amazing work, there is still



room for further aid to help these particularly vulnerable populations.

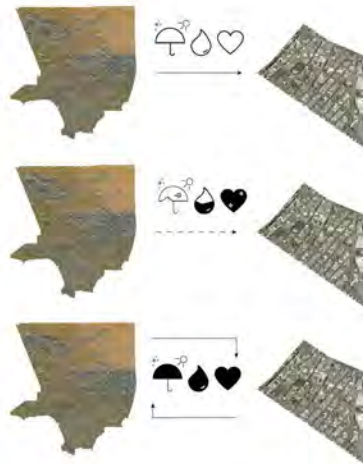
Realizing the value that shade has as one of the few amenities for the unhoused in this site area, we conducted a shade study, and found that during the hottest times of the year, the shade is entirely on the south side of the street. Knowing the importance that shade has to a design we wanted to implement more shade in order balance what the site could provide for the unhoused community. This pointed us to the opportunity to create more shade through design interventions as a resource that can be more fully utilized, situating our focus on the north side of the street.

In a region like Los Angeles, specifically Skid Row, these basic shelters and resources save lives. After spending time with local community organization leaders- continuing the stations through the winter and all year

was a priority, to ensure consistency. We want to institute a model with consistency and care where the community can adapt and feed resources back into itself.



Site Analysis: Diagram



LA city and county needs to provide for vulnerable communities, as these icons depict, through year-round shade and climate support, resources and services.

The Cooling Centers provide these, but in limited capacity, and inconsistently - especially as they close. More is needed.

We propose installing all-year comfort stations, for consistent community support

Partnership

Homeless Healthcare Los Angeles Center for Harm Reduction

"Harm reduction is meeting people where they are."  
-Sylvia Brock, Executive Director

- Syringe exchange
- Overdose prevention kits
- Wound care
- Opioid detox medications
- Case management
- Hygiene kits
- Hot supplies

Provide year-round, community-based consistency + comfort

- OPPORTUNITY → job creation → staffing, manufacturing
- ORGANIZATIONS → administration, local partners → community engagement, participatory design
- COMMUNITY → consistency, resources → hot weather, cold weather, services, food / beverages, donated goods

Streetscape Analysis

Sidewalk, Parking, Hydrant, Roadway, Flexible Space

Shade studies

August, June



### Streetscape and Code Analysis

Sec. 41.18 a. 3. No person shall obstruct a street, sidewalk, or other public right-of-way by sitting, lying, or sleeping, or by storing, using, maintaining, or placing personal property, within five feet of any operational or utilizable building entrance or exit

Sec. 41.18 a. 4. No person shall obstruct a street, sidewalk, or other public right-of-way by sitting, lying, or sleeping, or by storing, using, maintaining, or placing personal property, within two feet of any fire hydrant, fire plug, or other fire department connection

HHCLA  
Center for Harm Reduction

Day use area (observed)

Private security zone



### LA MUNICIPAL CODE REGULATIONS

While LAMC Sections 41.18 and 56.11, among others, govern and criminalize behaviors of those who live in Skid Row more largely, the bigger impacts in this site were the actions observed by local businesses, whose activities discourage unhoused populations to settle, through methods that include: hiring private security to move people along.

### Streetscape and Code Analysis

Sec. 41.18 a. 1. No person shall obstruct a street, sidewalk, or other public right-of-way by sitting, lying, or sleeping, or by storing, using, maintaining, or placing personal property, in a manner that impedes passage

Sec. 41.18 a. 2. No person shall obstruct a street, sidewalk, or other public right-of-way by sitting, lying, or sleeping, or by storing, using, maintaining, or placing personal property, within ten feet of any operational or utilizable driveway or loading dock

Day use area (observed)

Encampment



## ANALYSIS + APPROACH

Our idea is to create a basic framework that can be implemented at all of the existing Cooling Station locations, as well as a new location at 4th and Crocker Street, across the street from the Center for Harm Reduction. To develop tools for this framework, it was necessary to look at what space was available. In analyzing the sidewalks and potential opportunities for development in the roadway, we were able to find the maximum space to work with and develop modules to fit it.

We're introducing a simple modular system of components, so that they can fit general sizes of streets. For example:

1. Shelter is nine by eighteen and can fit into a sidewalk space
2. A parking spot-sized platform, and can raise up the street to the level of the sidewalk
3. A basic seating structure, 4.5by 4.5, that can also protect vegetation, such as newly-planted trees.

This simple, modular system incorporates three main components: structure, seating, and services. These skeleton components can be customized to address site- and seasonal-specific needs. The idea is that these are very basic forms that can be customized in different ways (with planters, solar charging stations, cooling paving and shading), and then these customizations can be chosen by the community in collaboration with local partners, and implemented as needed based on different seasons

The modular components will be introduced in phases:

Phase 1 is to meet the needs of the community (ready-made components, with an emphasis on sourcing them locally if possible).

Phase 2 is the pilot phase of a bigger manufacturing operation (at this point, we implement the modular system, with custom-manufactured components that give enhanced flexibility based on how they are implemented to provide comfort and shel-

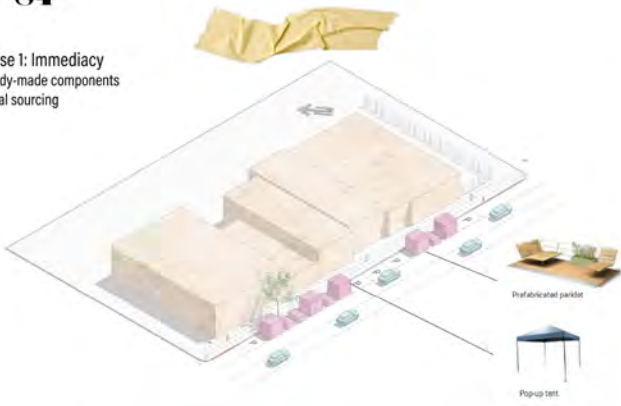
ter seasonally) - the Pilot Phase includes the installation of the shading components, the modular seating (a portable bench with storage functionality where people can freely arrange and position them according to need) with planter modules that isolate the seats to provide users with privacy, and the inclusion of services. Phase 2 focuses on the provision of 4 services: a donation box with a dual-function as a needle exchange; a solar-powered charging station that also provides power for a refrigeration system; and finally, a water supply system that utilizes water from an adjacent fire hydrant to filter for drinking water.

Phase 3 is the community-led scaling and design phase, once local manufacturing operations are established, this phase encourages the scaling-up of operations, and adding new community partners to open new locations that expand the system within, and beyond, Skid Row, providing job creation.

The streetscape can be arranged in a variety of configurations utilizing the components across these three phases, enhancing and augmenting any existing shade on the street. Local businesses, including Martha's Kitchen, also have opportunities to engage the system as a community partner. Narrowing the street with the components, the design helps to slow the speed of traffic, making the streetscape in this area a safer zone for pedestrians through high-visibility crosswalks that provide safer access for vulnerable populations, especially those experiencing addiction.

The work is sensitive to costs, recognizing the need for practicality, and cost efficiency, as well as immediate deployment with ready-made materials. At each point of our plan, our goal is to provide year-round comfort and build a consistent, empowering presence. By putting community partners in the position to amplify the needs of the community and determine where resources will be most useful, and developing a local economy, we will build towards something lasting and tailored to those who will be using it.

Phase 1: Immediacy  
 - ready-made components  
 - local sourcing



Phase 2: Pilot  
 - Community-led pilot  
 - Establishing local manufacturing



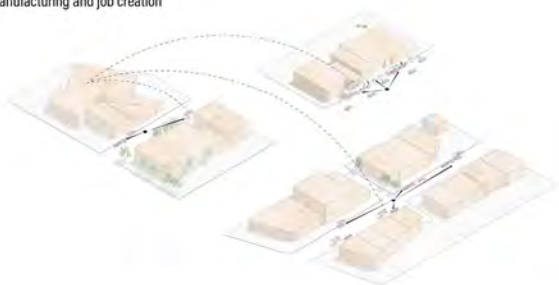
Phase 2: Pilot  
 - Community-led pilot  
 - Establishing local manufacturing



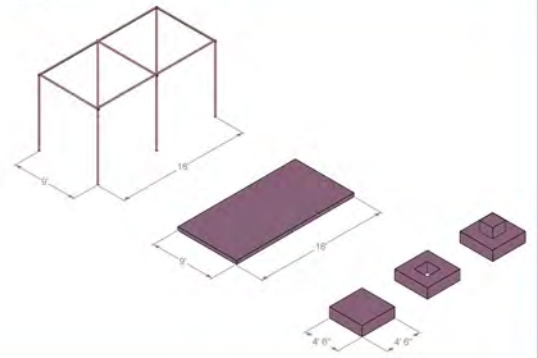
Phase 2: Pilot  
 - Community-led pilot  
 - Establishing local manufacturing



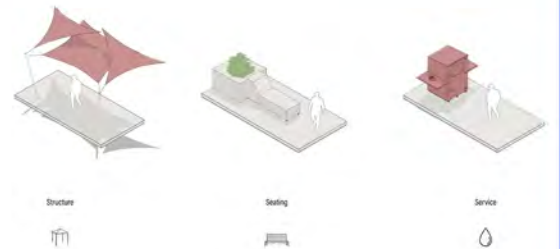
Phase 3: Scale  
 - Community-led scaling and design  
 - Local manufacturing and job creation



Component Skeletons



Components



15' x 6' PARKLET \$13,500  
 10' x 10' POP UP TENT NO WALLS \$100  
 10' x 10' CANOPY WALL \$50

**TOTAL MATERIAL COST: ~\$5,000 - ~\$55,000**  
\*EXCLUDING SHIPPING AND TAX  
 (5) 10' X 10' POP UP TENTS  
 (4) 15' X 6' PARKLETS  
 (10) 10' X 10' CANOPY WALLS

3' X 7' DRY BED WITH SHADE COVER \$500  
 5' X 5' PLANTER WITH SEATING  
 6' X 7' DOUBLE DRY BEDS \$800

**TOTAL MATERIAL COST: ~\$6,000 - ~\$30,000**  
\*EXCLUDING SHIPPING AND TAX  
 (2) 5' X 5' PLANTERS WITH SEATING  
 (8) 3' X 7' DRY BEDS WITH SHADE COVER  
 (4) DOUBLE DRY BEDS

# Components



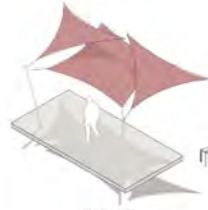
Summer



Splash Pad



Cool Pavement



Shade Sail



Mister



All Season



Seating/Relaxing Spot



Privacy/Rest Station



Solar Charging Station



Needle Drop Box



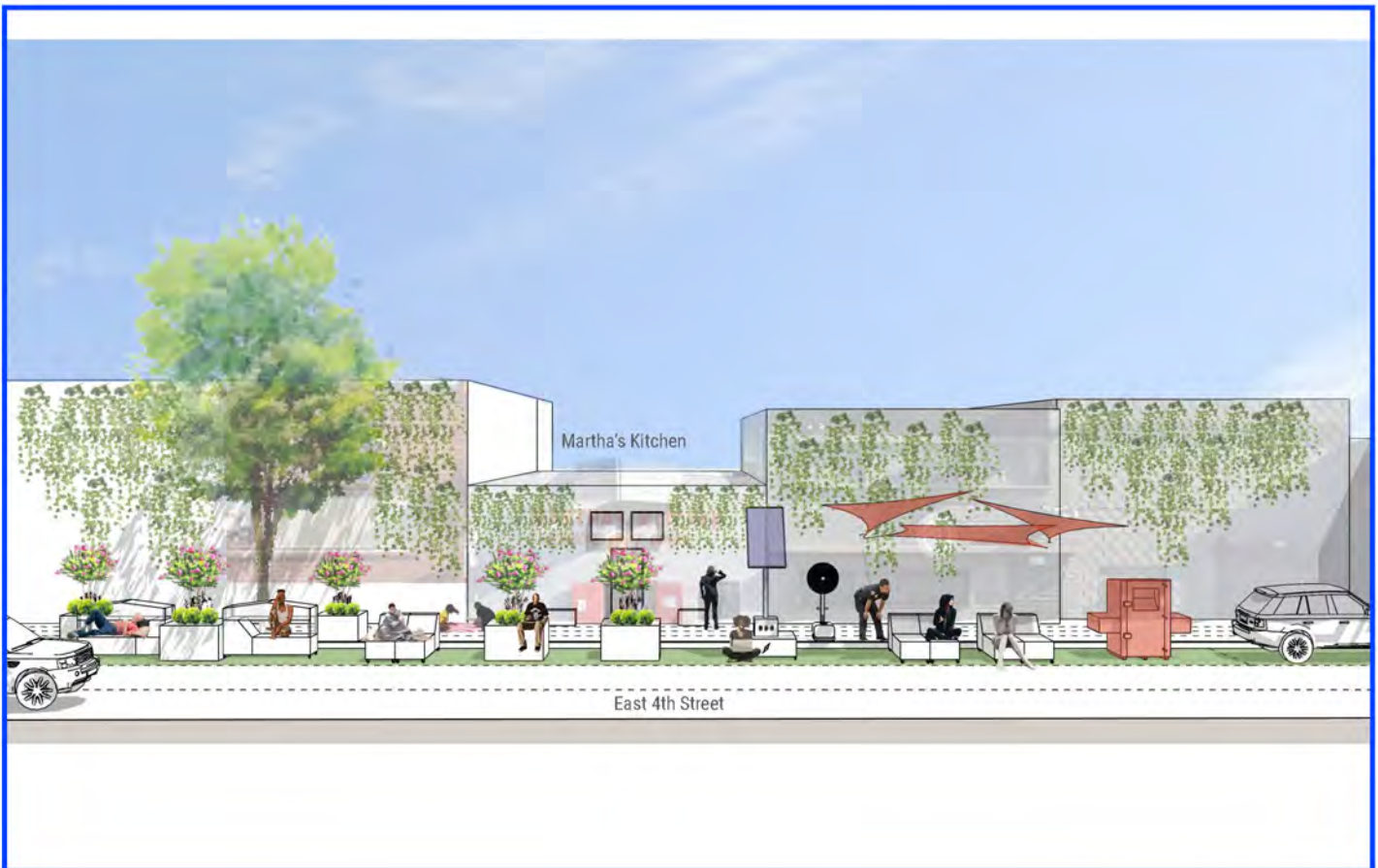
Winter



Outdoor Heater



Heat Shelter



FALL 2021

THE

CONCIL

(for now)

COOLING TIME: BRINGING CLIMATE JUSTICE TO SKID ROW



# VISION

+  
WHAT'S  
NEXT...

Billions in the pipeline,

# WHAT'S THE HOLDUP?



## TOP-DOWN APPROACH

Housing and climate issues and solutions have been on the radar for decades, delivering insufficient progress as the need expands.

These top-down solutions are well-funded but historically complex and mired in red tape:

- Jurisdiction
- Construction permitting
- Environmental impact review
- NIMBYism
- Mental health resources
- Real estate costs

2006 California heat waves result in 650+ deaths<sup>1</sup>

2014 Researchers declare that California extreme heat days cause up to 10% increase in morbidity<sup>2</sup>

2016 LA passes HHF \$1B+ funding of 10,000 housing units

2019 LA County goal to plant 90,000 trees, which can reduce heat, but plants only half its goal

2019 LA spent \$30 million on street sweeps

2020 NASA researchers warn that LA heat waves are worsening and could extend March - October<sup>3</sup>

2020 Controller criticizes HHF ineffectiveness as construction costs rise to \$550k / unit

2021 UC Davis researchers find poorer temperatures are 5 degrees warmer, and LA County predicts 30+ extreme heat days/year by 2050<sup>4</sup>

# BOTTOM-UP APPROACH

Cooling stations provide cost-effective, immediate, and consistent relief at a localized level.



LA COUNTY SPENDS...

**\$6,400/resident**  
**\$400-\$4,000/service**  
**\$500,000+/unit**  
 ...on homeless services.



2021 COOLING STATIONS COST...

**\$23/resident**  
**\$3/service**  
**\$125/square foot**

Sources: Climate change is supercharging California heat waves, and the state isn't ready. LA Times, 2021; The Impact of Recent Heat Waves on Human Health in California. Journal of Applied Meteorology and Climatology, 2014; Rising Trends in Heatwave Metrics Across Southern California. NASA 2020; Dimensions of Thermal Inequity: Neighborhood Social Demographics and Urban Heat in the Southwestern U.S. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 2021; The Services Homeless Single Adults Use and their Associated Costs: An Examination of Utilization Patterns and Expenditures in Los Angeles County over One Fiscal Year. LA County CEO: Ad Hoc Homeless Initiative. Fei Wu, Ph.D. and Max Stevens, Ph.D. 2016.



# WHY THE TOOLKIT?

## What's next? (for now at least)

### SCALING BACK

As we bring this stage of our research and work to a close, we scale back from the iterative solutions to the bigger picture of our approach:

Housing and climate solutions have been on the policy radar for decades, but are a big ship to turn. Los Angeles and California have attempted multiple interventions, but these top-down solutions get stuck in red tape.

For example, five years after approving \$1b to build 10,000 homes, very few have been built, stuck in permitting, neighborhood resistance, construction delays, and escalating costs.

**In contrast, this toolkit flips the solution, moving resources from a top-down approach, to a bottom-up one. The difference is collaboration with community partners through flexible solutions, to meet immediate needs.**

This bottom-up approach is drastically

more cost-effective when implemented through the local level:

- LA county spends about \$6000 per un-housed resident per month, at \$400 to \$4000 per individual service.
- Comparatively, the cooling stations cost \$23 / resident / month, or less than \$3 per service.
- The cost of providing new housing is more than \$500,000 per unit and takes about five years,
- While the operating cost of the cooling stations were \$125/SF, and take only a few months to create.

This Cool Tool framework seeks to streamline the best practices and expertise from the cooling stations, into a practical guide and decision-making strategy to empower communities to provide for residents, faster and more efficiently. The foundation of this model is complete. The next steps would be to formalize the toolkit to roll-out multi-site stations within Skid Row, as a fully-funded, year-round cooling station network.

*The Services Homeless Single Adults Use and their Associated Costs: An Examination of Utilization Patterns and Expenditures in Los Angeles County over One Fiscal Year, LA County CEO, Ad Hoc Homeless Initiative, Fei Wu, Ph.D. and Max Stevens, Ph.D. 2016.*

### THE COOL TOOL: A Decision-Making Guide to Provide Climate Justice Solutions for Los Angeles' Unhoused Community

- Who are your potential PARTNERS?**

Agencies: \_\_\_\_\_  
Community Orgs: \_\_\_\_\_  
Service Providers: \_\_\_\_\_  
Funding Opportunities: \_\_\_\_\_

RESOURCE PARTNERS CAN PROVIDE:  
 Staffing    Community Services  
 Equipment    Logistics / Delivery  
 Funding
- What are your GOALS?**

**PRIORITIES**   **VALUES + NEEDS**   **DESIRED CAPACITY**

Reliability   Sustainable   Funding Program   Partners   # People Accommodated  
 Community   Employment   Program   Tree Canopy   Daily Reach  
 Safe space   Immediate   Phasing   Utilities   Monthly Reach  
 Enclosure
- What's the BUDGET?**

Funding Source: \_\_\_\_\_  
Funding Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

**STAFFING**

\_\_\_\_\_

**CONSTRUCTION**

\_\_\_\_\_

**PLANTING**

\_\_\_\_\_

**FURNITURE**

\_\_\_\_\_

**MISC**

\_\_\_\_\_
- What SERVICES are needed?**

**STRUCTURAL**   **NOURISHMENT**

Seating    Drinking Water  
 Storage    Hygiene  
 Thermal Comfort    Food

**COOLING STRATEGIES**   **HEATING STRATEGIES**

Shade    Rain Shelter  
 Fans    Heaters  
 Misters    Insulation  
 Green Infrastructure    Clothing Distribution  
 Grid Payment    Material Selection

**SUPPORT**

Medical Care  
 Harm Reduction  
 Device Charging  
 Wi-Fi  
 Community Engagement
- What are your SITE considerations?**

Proximity to population    Not displacing encampments  
 Water source    Buy-in from neighboring organizations  
 Sidewalk width    Awareness of code restrictions (41.15, 56.11)  
 Urban Heat Island    Existing Shade / Tree Canopy

Additional site assets: \_\_\_\_\_
- How much SPACE?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_
- What's the TIMELINE?**

**PERMANENCE**

PDM   Temp   Seasonal   Permanent

**IMPLEMENTATION**

Immediate   Long-term

**SEASONAL PROGRAMMING**

Warm Season: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cool Season: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- What are your STAFFING needs?**

Tabling    Other Staff Roles: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Outreach    Staff Hours: \_\_\_\_\_  
 General Support    Security
- Community FEEDBACK**

Outreach Events   Which key community members need to be part of the conversation?  
 Staff Interactions  
 Interviews

## NEXT STEPS

While the ideas refined in the Cool Tool have been tested in a week-long workshop, an immediate next step is to formalize this process with the City of Los Angeles, iterate on the types of questions and desired data that could create a final version of this tool, and begin an initial community engagement process to begin testing the vitality of the tool in a real-world scenario. While longer-term we aim to raise funds to support the cooling network as year-round infrastructure that mitigates the unequal thermal burden experienced by the unhoused, this document and report can serve as a launching point to further advocate for the need of cooling stations in Skid Row, and help to raise funds for their ongoing implementation and support.

In order to continue advancing these ideas further into implementation, this research team is looking for seed funding to actively engage the City of Los Angeles and a group of local community stakeholders to establish a budget, continue the design process (not limited to a one-week workshop), and engage with the unhoused community in a chosen context, while bolstering further support for the funding

and implementation of a more permanent cooling station to provide for the needs of the unhoused in Skid Row.

To fund this process moving forward, planning a partner/stakeholder and community engagement process for the timeline shared above in Section 2: Need, the team envisions the work to be carried out over a 1-year period from initial discussions refining the Cool Tool, to establishing Partners + Goals, Selecting a Site, and facilitating a Participatory Design Process with the local community and stakeholders. This year-long effort would culminate in a design that could be bid for a final construction cost and a campaign to raise any additional funding necessary for construction and the staffing/maintenance of the cooling station. Pending the time required to raise construction funding, the team would continue to design a feedback process, and a system of metrics to analyze the cooling station (once construction is complete), to inform a feedback loop that will help to continue to refine the tool into the future.

## YEAR 1 PILOT PROJECTS:

- Refinement of the Cool Tool
- Engagement sessions applying the model to sites in Skid Row
- Continued refinement of the tool with City and stakeholder input
- Fund roll out of pilots and goals
- Begin testing and prefabrication construction during the Design phase
- Exploration of staffing models with city for expanded application
- Min. of 3 stakeholder meetings, and 3 community engagement sessions

To fund this initial year-long refinement, ongoing research, engagement, and design phase, we are looking for seed funding to continue supporting the next steps in this process.

Thank you very much for your time, consideration, and ongoing support of this work, bringing climate justice to Skid Row.

# WHAT'S NEXT?



**The COOL TOOL aims to streamline one interim strategy to alleviate the critical health impacts of the HOUSING CRISIS – as compounded by the CLIMATE CRISIS.**

**The next steps are to formalize this process with the city and to raise funds to support the COOLING NETWORK as year-round infrastructure that mitigates the unequal thermal burden experienced by the unhoused.**

The tool has potential to scale beyond not just Skid Row but across LA and nationally. Temperatures are rising; we want to empower communities to address the nexus of climate and housing vulnerabilities compassionately, effectively - and immediately.

# THANK YOU

**This is a project by Jared Edgar McKnight, Alison B. Hirsch, Andrea Binz, Lara Lebeiko, Zehra B. Rizvi, Eva Malis, and the University of Southern California Master of Landscape Architecture + Urbanism and Landscape Justice Initiative.**

## SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Our many collaborators, project partners, and supporters who have given their time and knowledge to help advance the ideas presented herein. We owe an incredible amount of thanks and gratitude for your collaboration, your time, and your willingness to invite us into your world's of advocacy and service to learn from your experiences.

The City of Los Angeles Mayor's Office of City Homeless Initiatives for serving as an amazing project partner, and mentor, educating our team on the City's history of meaningful involvement in the Skid Row community, and for giving us a tour of the Skid Row Cooling Resources, and remaining an engaged and insightful partner throughout this process.

Our student researchers and designers at the University of Southern California Master of Landscape Architecture + Urbanism program for their hard work, determination, and willingness to take on this complex, and emotional topic, and to the USC Landscape Justice Initiative for continuing this research and work on the topic of homelessness in LA.

Lastly, to Pando for providing the platform for these continued studies to further the initiatives of LA County's OurCounty Sustainability Plan, and for providing such amazing guidance and feedback throughout this opportunity during Pando Days '21.

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Pando Populus
- The Mayor's Office of City Homelessness Initiatives (MOCHI)
- Center For Harm Reduction (HHCLA)
- Downtown Women's Center (DWC)
- Homeless HealthCare Los Angeles (HHCLA)
  - Skid Row Community ReFresh Spot
  - Center for Harm Reduction (CHR)
- Los Angeles Community Action Network (LACAN)
- Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD)

*We continue to look for additional community partners to continue this work, if you are interested... Please contact: Jared Edgar McKnight at: [jarededgarmcknight@alumni.usc.edu](mailto:jarededgarmcknight@alumni.usc.edu)*

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Farre Nixon, artist/planner/landscape+architectural designer

Eugene Shirley, Founding President/CEO, Pando Populus

Judith Parker, Co-Executive Producer of Pando Days, Pando Populus

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Schneider, Benjamin. "CityLab University: Understanding Homelessness in America." Bloomberg, July 2020. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2020-07-06/why-is-homelessness-such-a-problem-in-u-s-cities>.

Stuart, Forrest (2016). "Down, Out & Under Arrest: Policing and Everyday Life in Skid Row," University of Chicago Press. (select chapters)

The Center for Urban Pedagogy (2015). "Dick & Rick A Visual Primer for Social Impact Design." <http://welcometocup.org/Store?productid=115> (free download)

We the Unhoused podcast, Episode 1: Rising in Power feat. General Drogon <https://soundcloud.com/user-369990655>

## GIS RESOURCES

2020 Homeless Count. Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA). <https://www.lahsa.org/data>

Los Angeles GeoHub. <https://geohub.lacity.org/>

## LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS + SERVICE AGENCIES:

Downtown Women's Center, <https://downtownwomenscenter.org/>

Homeless Health Care Los Angeles (HHCLA), <https://www.hhcla.org/>

Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles (LAFLA), Homeless Advocacy, <https://lafla.org/get-help/housing-homelessness/homeless-advocacy/>

Los Angeles Community Action Network (LA-CAN), <https://cangress.org/>

Los Angeles Homeless Outreach Portal (LA-HOP), Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), <https://www.lahsa.org/portal/apps/la-hop/>

Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD), <https://www.lapovertydept.org/>

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Skid Row Cooling Resources, The Mayor's Office of City Homelessness Initiatives (MOCHI), City of Los Angeles, 2021

OurCounty, Los Angeles Countywide Sustainability Plan, 2019

L.A.'s Green New Deal, Sustainable City pLAn Environment, 2019

# MORE INFO

## GRADUATE PROGRAM IN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE + URBANISM

Landscapes are the dynamic synthesis of natural systems, sociocultural forces and the physical material of the constructed world. The USC Master's Program in Landscape Architecture + Urbanism uses the complex regional geography of Southern California as a laboratory to generate and test responses to the planet's most pressing environmental challenges, including resounding impacts of climate change, rapid urbanization, social and environmental injustice, and the interface of nature and technology.

The MLA+U program is focused on the public realm and spans scales of impact from site design (parks, schoolyards, etc) to urban design (new and densifying metropolitan districts) to territorial responses to climate stress that impact our immediate region and around the globe.

With immediate access to one of the most culturally and environmentally diverse geographies in the world - within an hour's drive from the Pacific Ocean, the San Gabriel Mountains and the western edge of the Sonoran Desert - Southern California offers a wide range of landscape challenges from which to learn. Expanding from the region to landscapes throughout the globe, students conduct rigorous design-research to develop multi-scalar innovations in performative regional infrastructures, equitable urban frameworks and public spaces, and healthful biophysical systems.

Our diverse curriculum is focused on a balanced core of design studios, media and fabrication, history and theory, performance technologies, plant materials and ecology, construction and practice, urbanism and community-based design. The curriculum is focused on opportunities for applied research that has real impact on the ground or in shaping policy, with the ultimate aim being the development of critical thinkers and design leaders unafraid to tackle some of the most contested landscapes and environmental questions of our day.



# LANDSCAPE JUSTICE INITIATIVE

The Landscape Justice Initiative (LJI) is a platform for the Graduate Program in Landscape Architecture + Urbanism to position and implement its work in areas of Environmental, Spatial and Climate Justice.

This platform provides a vehicle and support structure both for community partnerships to contribute to immediate local impact on neighborhoods and their ecosystems, and for multidisciplinary collaborations to tackle large-scale policy and environmental change.

Part of the emphasis of LJI is to begin to fill the gap between academic inquiry and meaningful change on the ground. It provides a chance for students to participate in service-learning and long-term projects that depend on sustained engagement with local and regional communities. It offers opportunities to learn from local knowledge and expertise derived from lived experience and imagine how design can be enacted as a form of cocreation. And it allows for the initiation of projects outside the structures of the market, offering students opportunities to discover their agency and to develop into future leaders in design and environmental decision-making.

The primary geographic emphasis is Southern and Central California due to the range of socio-environmental challenges this region faces. Responses to this wide range of challenges have applications across the globe.

Much of the continued efforts of the Landscape Justice Initiative have been supported by **The Grant & Shaya Kirkpatrick Landscape Architecture + Urbanism Leadership Fund**, for which we are very grateful.

Visit: <https://sites.usc.edu/landscape-justice-initiative/>



**USC** *Landscape Architecture + Urbanism Program*  
and the **USC Landscape Justice Initiative**