US STEEL WORKING
SOUTH CHICAGO AN INDUSTRIAL ENCLAVE

US STEEL CLOSED
STILL ENCLAVED BY RESTRICTED OPPORTUNITIES

SOUTH-WORKS MASTERPLAN
NEGLIGENCE THE NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECT

THE REAL SOUTH-WORKS PROJECT
- BOTTOM UP INFLUX FROM NEIGHBORHOOD
- TOP DOWN INFLUX FROM CITY
FROM REALITY TO THE DREAM

IMPORTANCE OF ESTABLISHING AN ANCHOR PROJECT

NEW SUSTAINABLE MIXED-USE DISTRICT WITH VARYING FUNCTIONS, DENSITIES AND PUBLIC SPACES.
ATTEMPT AT PREDICTING THE OVERALL ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER
ENCLAVED FUNCTIONAL RESOLUTION
MISSING KEY PUBLIC BUILDINGS THAT SUPPORT THE OPEN SPACE FRAMEWORK

CURRENT PHASE-1
SUB-URBAN SHOPPING CENTER

PROPOSED MASTERPLAN BY SOM

RE-INTERPRETTING THE SOM MASTERPLAN
ALIGNING VISION AND URBAN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

THE FLEXIBLE FRAMEWORK WITHIN A ROBUST PUBLIC SPACE STRUCTURE SERVES AS AN IMPORTANT AND FERTILE GUIDELINE FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS.

INITIAL ANCHOR PROJECT MUST AIM AT NEIGHBORHOOD UPGRADE AND ESTABLISHING A BRAND FOR SOUTH CHICAGO TO BRING PIONEER SETTLERS AND ATTRACT FUTURE RESIDENTS AND INVESTORS.

INITIAL PROJECT MUST BENEFIT FROM THE POSITIVE NATURAL SETTING ON THE SITE AND USE IT AS THE VISIBLE IMAGE OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

INTERMEDIATE URBAN FRAMEWORK PLAN BY SOM
IDENTIFY AND DESIGN URBAN NODES FOR COMMUNITY TO MEET + EXPRESS + LEARN FROM STRANGERS

SOUTH-CHICAGO: AN URBAN CHARACTER MISSING

HOMOGENEITY OF SCALE AND FUNCTION

COMMERCIAL AVENUE
STREETSCAPE FOR CARS [NO PLACE TO MEET]

PORCH
SEMI PRIVATE SHARED SPACE. RESTRICTED INTERACTION

CHURCH
FENCED AND RESTRICTED PARTICIPATION

PARKS
TOO BIG FOR SOCIAL CONTROL

SOUTH-CHICAGO CONCEPT OF SHARED SPACE
CONCENTRATING EFFORTS.
FOCUSING ON 87TH AND 83RD STREETS.

READING THE URBAN CHARACTER. A
MORPHOLOGICAL AND FUNCTIONAL
INVENTORY

IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL NODES AND
LINKAGES

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PROJECT
LOCATING THE ANCHOR PROJECT

BUILDING UPON THE EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURAL AND NATURAL POTENTIAL OF THE SITE
PROPOSED ANCHOR PROJECT - 60 ACRE
SOUTHWORKS CENTRAL - 110 ACRE
SOM MASTERPLAN - 600 ACRE

ESTABLISHING AN URBAN RESEARCH LAB
INCENTIVES FOR PIONEER UNIVERSITIES AND INSTITUTES. ATTRACTING THE CRITICAL MASS OF RESIDENTS AND VISITORS TO PROMOTE SOUTH-WORKS AS A SUSTAINABLE MODEL FOR URBAN LIVING

BUILDING UPON CHICAGO’S LEGACY OF BEING A FORERUNNER IN THE FIELD OF URBAN INNOVATIONS
PUBLIC REALM: BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN OLD AND NEW

LAKEFRONT FROM BEING “ACCESSIBLE” TO BEING A DESIRABLE, APPROACHABLE, AND EVENTFUL DESTINATION.

FROM METRO STATION TO THE LEARNING CENTER
FROM LEARNING CENTER TO THE LAKEFRONT
SECTION A

MEETING PLACE
A SOCIAL AND FUNCTIONAL OVERLAP AT THE INTERSECTION OF 87 PEDESTRIAN PLAZA AND ORE WALL EXPOSITION PARK.

WATERFRONT ICON
ONLY BUILDING BEYOND LAKEFRONT PARK LIMIT.

CULTURE  MIX USE  COMMERCIAL

DUAL PARK LOOP
SOUTH-WORKS URBAN RESEARCH FORUM

THE BEACON FOR TRANSFORMATION FROM INDUSTRIAL NEIGHBOURHOOD TO INNOVATION DISTRICT.
CELEBRITY AMBASSADOR FOR SOUTH-WORKS DEVELOPMENT.

WHAT

PROVIDE EXPERTISE TO PROFESSIONALS
PROVIDE PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO POLICY MAKERS
USE AND PROMOTE SOUTH-WORKS DEVELOPMENT AS AN EXPERIMENTAL URBAN LAB
ESTABLISH THE CREATIVE ENVIRONMENT TO ATTRACT UNIVERSITIES

HOW

SHORT TERM PROJECT BASED RESEARCH
MASTER AND DOCTORAL COURSES IN URBAN MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF FUTURE CITIES
FORUM FOR CONFERENCES AND DISCUSSIONS ON URBAN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES
AN URBAN PIVOT

ARCHITECTURE AS AN EXTENSION OF URBAN MOVEMENTS.
INDOOR – OUTDOOR RELATIONSHIP

BOLD SWEEPING FAÇADE ON THE OUTSIDE TRANSLATES INTO AN UPWARD RISING NETWORK OF INTERCONNECTED SHARED FACILITIES OPENING ON TO AN INTERNAL ATRIUM.

OVERHANGING BALCONIES IN THE ATRIUM

SHARED SPACES ARRANGED ALONG THE SPIRAL FACADE
PROGRAMMATIC ARRANGEMENT
TOTAL AREA = 30600 SQ. M.
The graduation project is based in South Chicago and takes on the challenge to develop a masterplan for 600 acre site within the current urban scenario marred with the phenomenon of "shrinking cities", common to Mid-West America. Unsafe living conditions and lack of opportunities have created an undesirable image of this part of the city and vice versa. The current conditions are an outcome of strategic alienation of rich and poor neighborhoods in the American cities by means of political, economic as well as physical barriers that created inward looking neighborhoods dependent on industries. Once the cities started to transform after the end of industrial era in the early 80's these disconnected parts of the city turned into enclaves with marginalized opportunities and low sense of ownership among people. The project finds its complexity in bridging the gap between apparently polar positions of current residents, developer and new user group in the area. Further analysis of the interconnected network of physical, economic and social conditions on site clarified the design handles that need attention. 600 acre of empty land within city limits, beautiful landscape and natural setting, low investment opportunities and unpredictable future economic conditions and marginalized neighborhood being the key set of pros and cons.

To assume traditional ways of Urban Planning would be successful in bringing people to the site against the prevailing urban dimensions would have been naive and counter intuitive. The project finds its relevance in critical analysis of these urban conditions not only within the immediate context but all over Chicago and even Illinois. It is visible that Chicago has been practicing this policy of critical segregation of rich and poor for long and it has created a city divided. To add to problems Chicago has lost 250,000 people in the last decade. However, the downtown of Chicago remains one of the most desirable city centers in America and it added 50,000 residents during the same time period. To build up on this desire of people to move away from sub-urbs into close proximity of the urban center may be the key to reversing the trend of shrinking city. Hence, the South Works project must be one of the projects within a network of other such projects identified within the troubled and marginalized neighborhoods of Chicago. On a closer scale the 600 acre site must not re-create the division between new and old that was earlier. It should realize the current lack of interest and negative image and focus on improving the neighborhood through critical urban interventions that re-establish the urban character and creates better connectivity with the rest of the city. The urban strategy should focus on finding a kick start for the urban development rather than expecting the success of conventional masterplanning practiced in rapidly urbanizing parts of the world. This anchor development should capitalize on the positive aspects of the site like its proximity to the lake and opportunity to be the pioneer settlers of the development. Also, it should reinvent the image of the city as is understood by the conventional urban use by prioritizing ecological, social and multicultural connect over uncontrolled expansion, individual and detached living and dependency on cars. The morphology and phasing of this anchor should take into account the unpredictable nature of the events to follow and aims to adapt and manifest in response to failures or even unexpected success. To find this transition in scales and its continuity is to create a Typological Framework. It restricts urban insensitivity and promotes matter of factness of contemporary urban conditions and critical analysis of the same.

The core ideologies of the studio are reflected in this understanding of the whole and its continuing relevance throughout the spectrum of scales. The research phase of the graduation project saw us analyzing the urban systems, cultural background and infrastructure of Illinois, Chicago and South Chicago. It was challenging as well as interesting to compare and evaluate the urban masterplan by SOM that already exists on the site. Further, as a group we were able to identify the key aspects of the conventional masterplan and build up on the same to come up with a design framework that can accommodate and cherish the unpredictable nature of urban growth. Our main aim was to restart the development motor by concentrating efforts in the neighborhood that supports and prioritizes the creation of

REFLECTION

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a model for new and sustainable urban living on the 600 acre site. This design vision accompanied with Chicago's image of "forerunner in urban development" translated into an overlap of the neighborhood upgradation project with the establishment of an urban research initiative on the site. This core urban strategy aimed at providing better opportunities and exposure to the residents of South-Chicago and also to attract pioneer settlers to the new development catering to the developer interests. It focuses on the positive physical anchors on site that characterize the otherwise empty Southworks site. Ore walls, water slip, lakeshore drive, waterfront and public transport connectivity to name a few.

We established 3 key catalytic projects that would be the Limbs (Metro Station), Heart (Library and Vocational Institute) and Brain (Southworks Urban Research Forum) of this entire urban strategy, connecting them with a continuous line of pedestrian streets and plazas. I personally was interested in designing the Southworks Urban Research Forum (SURF) as it is the ambassador of the new way of sustainable and interdependent living that is envisioned in the overall strategy. Also, it was challenging for me to re-think the institutional type while impregnating the restrictive model of research and office building with a public component. It was relevant to the programmatic structure as this building lies at the intersection of urban vistas and is envisioned as an icon for Southworks on the lakefront of Chicago. The building is conceived as an extension of the two dimensional lines of movement into the third dimension. It appears to catch these linear lines and process them into an upward rising spiral. The basic functioning of the building follows the same line of thought as all the shared facilities of the institute are arranged along the spiraling facade. This rising system of shared facilities is linked to the private work spaces through an atrium that rises for 15 floors and characterizes the indoor environment of the building.

The graduation studio Complex Projects made it very clear to me that it is extremely important for architects to go beyond conventional divide between architecture and urban design and act as an urban initiator. The key lies in creating a typological framework that transcends the boundaries of scale and aims at diluting this transition by prioritizing the relation of time and space over formal criteria in design.