

# 2014 RALPH RAPSON TRAVELING STUDY FELLOWSHIP CASE STUDY HOUSE

This proposal for a case study house began with an evaluation of the current social and environmental conditions of the environments we inhabit. Over the course of this evaluation, three critical conditions emerged that ultimately influenced the development of this case study house:

## CONDITION 1

While the rural landscape is dominated predominantly by green space, the urban landscape is dominated by asphalt. This condition has contributed to the urban heat island effect and a mutual exclusivity between people and nature.

## CONDITION 2

Technology has afforded us countless possibilities, but it has also led to social isolation. People have become conditioned to connect virtually rather than physically. This condition is becoming more apparent in the younger generations and along with a lack of elementary social skills, the sense of belonging to a community is also disappearing.

## CONDITION 3

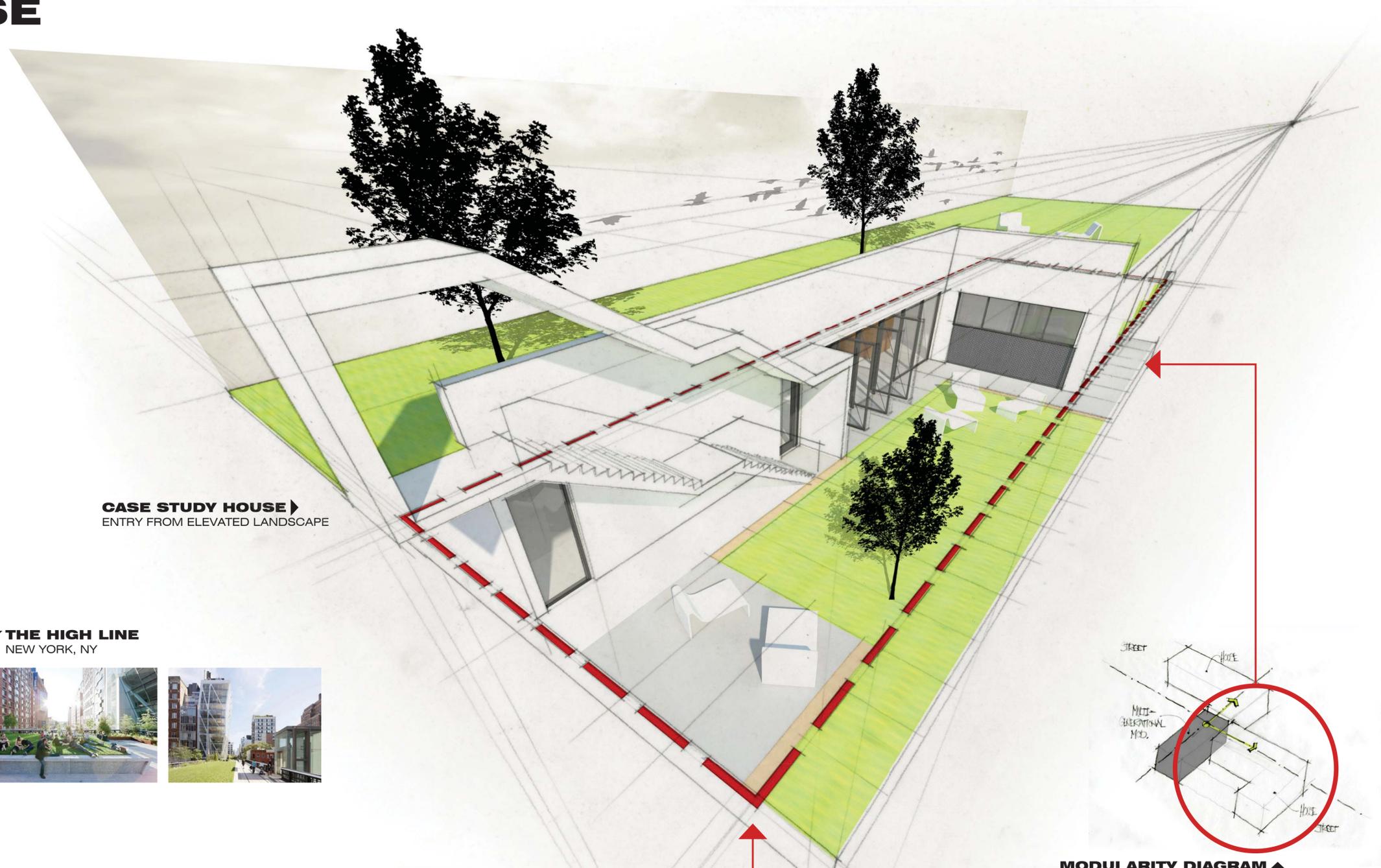
The baby boom generation is aging, which has the potential to create several problems for society. Some analysts believe that this demographic could become a serious drain on the nation's health resources. Meeting the financial and social burdens facing this aging demographic is likely to create real challenges in providing quality care to the elderly.

## PROPOSAL

In many ways, the three conditions that this proposal aims to address are unrelated. But the process of thinking about these three conditions has led to a simple solution that has the capacity to help solve each of these conditions for the future.

The design of this case study house really began with the design of a case study neighborhood. The house is simply a piece that fits into the whole. The neighborhood is designed as a modular system of houses, each fitting within a typical urban lot. The roof of the houses become the most important feature of the neighborhood as they seamlessly interconnect to create an artificial landscape (that is, a landscape created by architecture). This landscape is envisioned to replace the ever-increasing asphalt footprint of our cities with an alternative landscape that allows inhabitants to reconnect with nature. This landscape is also intended to become the social gathering grounds for neighbors and neighborhoods. In lieu of private, fenced in backyards, the elevated landscape is an open, public realm where social interaction is encouraged and sense of community can be rediscovered.

The modular nature of the house also offers flexibility in arrangement, location and adjacency from lot to lot within the neighborhood. With this flexibility, the modular houses can be arranged in a way that allows for shared amenities (ie.: kitchens, baths, etc.) between houses to promote communal and multi-generational living. The organic arrangement of these houses also allows openings between roofs to create internal courtyards at ground level that become extensions of the living spaces of the house. Both the case study house and the case study neighborhood can organically adapt to function as the demands of life evolve.



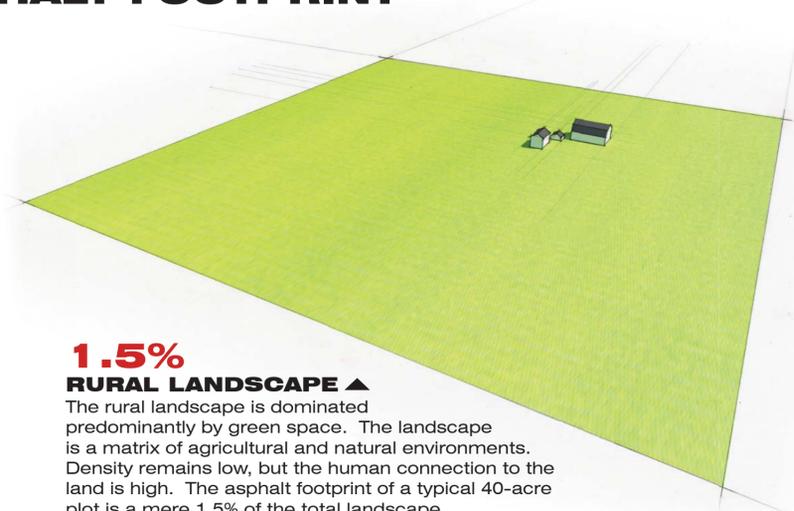
**CASE STUDY HOUSE** ▶  
ENTRY FROM ELEVATED LANDSCAPE

▼ **THE HIGH LINE**  
NEW YORK, NY



**MODULARITY DIAGRAM** ▲

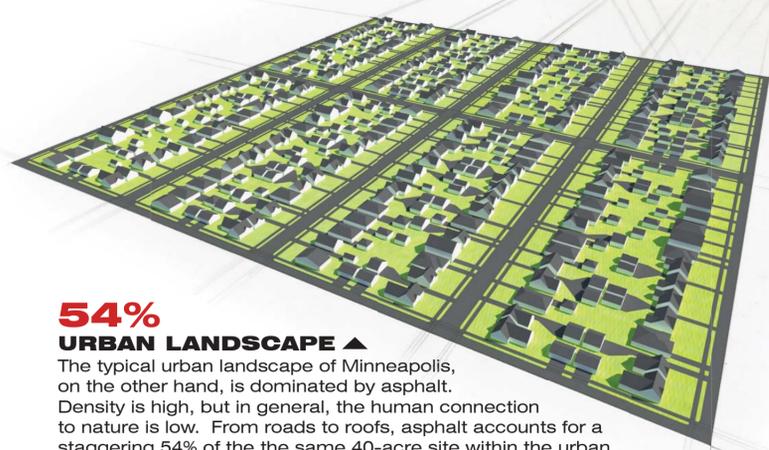
## ASPHALT FOOTPRINT



**1.5%**

### RURAL LANDSCAPE ▲

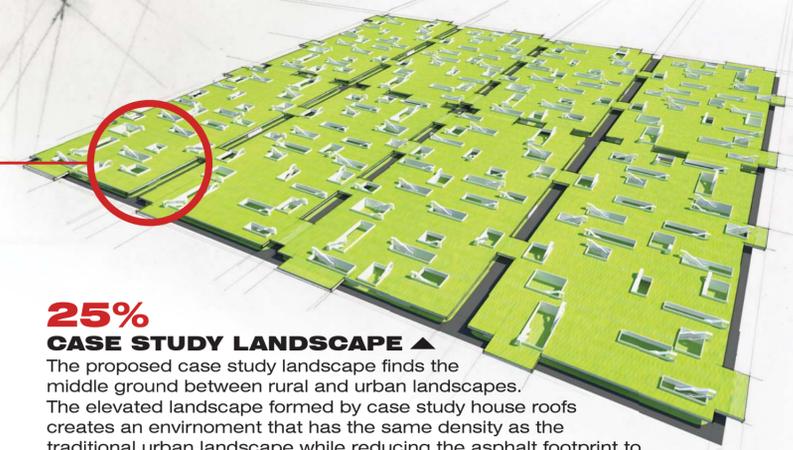
The rural landscape is dominated predominantly by green space. The landscape is a matrix of agricultural and natural environments. Density remains low, but the human connection to the land is high. The asphalt footprint of a typical 40-acre plot is a mere 1.5% of the total landscape.



**54%**

### URBAN LANDSCAPE ▲

The typical urban landscape of Minneapolis, on the other hand, is dominated by asphalt. Density is high, but in general, the human connection to nature is low. From roads to roofs, asphalt accounts for a staggering 54% of the the same 40-acre site within the urban landscape.



**25%**

### CASE STUDY LANDSCAPE ▲

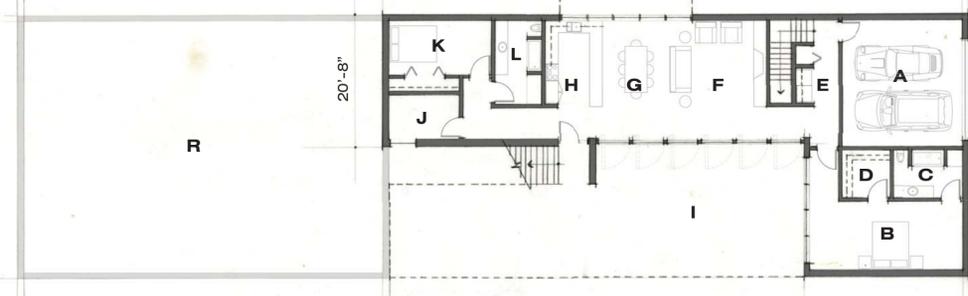
The proposed case study landscape finds the middle ground between rural and urban landscapes. The elevated landscape formed by case study house roofs creates an environment that has the same density as the traditional urban landscape while reducing the asphalt footprint to only 25%. This landscape emphasizes the importance of reconnecting with the land and the community.



◀ VIEW OF COURTYARD & ENTRY



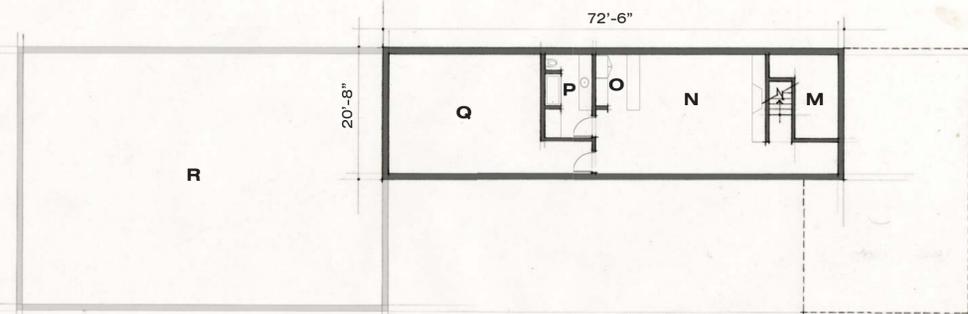
▲ VIEW OF STREET CORRIDOR BELOW ELEVATED LANDSCAPE



**FLOOR PLAN KEY**

- A GARAGE
- B MASTER BEDROOM
- C MASTER BATHROOM
- D WALK-IN CLOSET
- E LAUNDRY
- F LIVING ROOM
- G DINING ROOM
- H KITCHEN
- I COURTYARD
- J OFFICE
- K BEDROOM
- L BATHROOM
- M STORAGE
- N DEN
- O BAR
- P BATHROOM
- Q MECHANICAL
- R NEIGHBOR

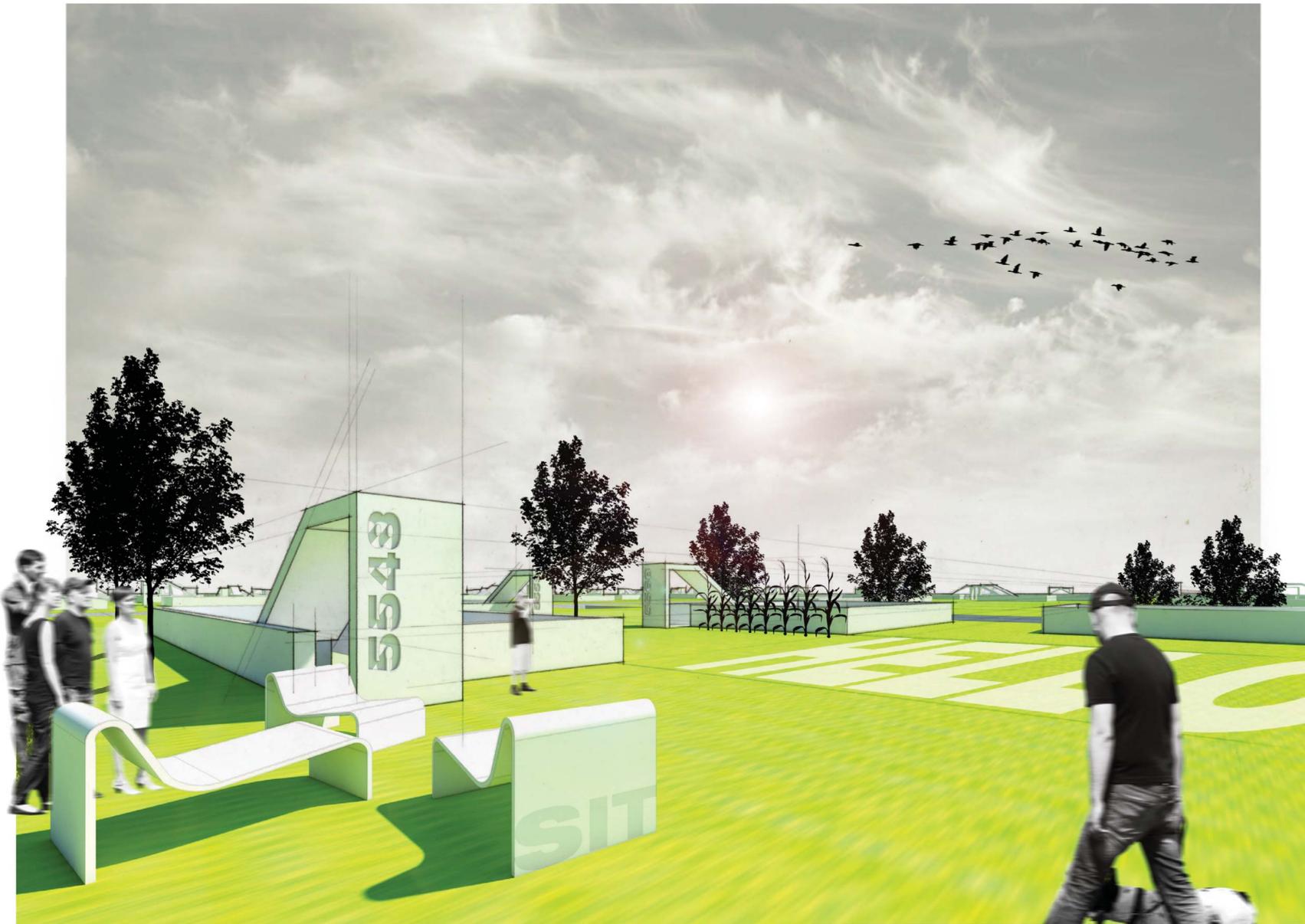
▲ FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"



▲ BASEMENT PLAN  
SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"



▲ VIEW OF COURTYARD



▲ VIEW OF ELEVATED LANDSCAPE

