

## Conceptual or Theoretical Urban Design Projects – FARM

TYPE: Mixed-Use

SIZE: 11,437 sf

COMMUNITY: South Calgary

YEAR: 2025 (Estimated Completion)

### **Eligability Statement (250 words)**

*Here today, gone tomorrow...*

This sentiment resonated with our client, a small developer in Calgary, who – in their brief for a new +/- 10,000 sf mixed-use building that includes both Food & Beverage and small commercial – challenged us to conceive of a building more as an event than object in an effort to elicit a higher reciprocity or conversation between built form, flexibility, flux and transience. Despite the fact that privileging the temporary and the ephemeral provides a bridge to the immediate, understandably, this not only implicates long-standing traditions of the architectural profession, but also challenges sustainable rhetoric which cites new construction as contributing approximately 40% of the world's carbon emissions, as such, substantiating permanence vs. impermanence as the “more responsible” design approach.

In response, we began by researching circular economies - in particular the advances being made around circular design - which advocate for a cradle-to-cradle ethos towards construction, engendering a novel life-cycle approach to design that is less preoccupied with permanence than it is with designing for circularity, disassembly, or impermanence.

With FARM, we began by producing a taxonomy of temporal, agricultural vernacular distributed across the Canadian prairie landscape. Quickly, we became enamoured with not only the bucolic beauty of Quonset huts, but also their modular, prefabricated assembly logistics (which is in keeping with circular design principles). Again, responding to our client's desire for a building with a 'shelf life', we challenged ourselves to design a building in which all components, systems, etc. were designed for disassembly. This flexibility affords our client the possibility of relocating the entire building to another site at some point in the future, should they decide upon a higher and better use for the current site.

## **Project Description (500 words)**

*Here today, gone tomorrow...*

“The creation of place, buildings, cities and landscapes has traditionally been conceived as a monumental art, as the creation of lasting artifacts that embody the achievements and ideals of a civilization. However, despite the current volatility of economics, climate, war, politics, technology and culture, the places in which we live, work and recreate are becoming increasingly predisposed to obsolescence, impermanence and transience. “ --

-YONA FRIEDMAN

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disassembly. This entailed specifying the use of: 1) screw-pile/grade beam foundation system that supports a pre-cast, concrete slab-on-grade floor, 2) modular, mechanically fastened structural ribs that also function as envelope, 3) insulative 'pillows' that are mechanically fastened back to the structure, 4) 4'x8' sheets of OSB (oriented strand board) and gypsum that are used for interior finishing, 5) fire-rated partition walls (e.g., used between each individual Quonset hut) constructed from concrete masonry units that are mortared together using dissolvable, cementitious grout, and 6) modular glazing units (with the exception of the arched glazing units). 74% of the components/materials used in the building will be indexed using material passports that, collectively, produce a database in which either the client, or future clients can access to aid in the future reuse or repurposing of the building, either wholly or in part.

Taken together, this 'Lego-like' approach to construction not only reinforces circular design principles, but also satisfies our client's desire for an impermanent building. This flexibility affords our client the possibility of relocating the entire building to another site at some point in the future, should they decide upon a higher and better use for the current site.