The High Cotton Project: A Community-Based Method for Serving the Urban Homeless

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ABSTRACT

This article details the ways a series of architecture graduate classes partnered with a nonprofit youth sports organization and other community groups to design a shelter to accommodate those experiencing homelessness in Lubbock, Texas. The researchers use a case study approach to discuss how graduate students repeatedly engaged with the public for feedback on their designs and eventually created a design for a community-specific homeless shelter and treatment center. This article shares the project's engagement methods, which included precedent studies, design charrettes, regular presentations to the public, meetings with stakeholders, and professional collaborations.

Keywords: urban planning, architecture, homeless shelters, campus-community partnerships, case study

Homelessness Engagement Precedent and Chronic Homelessness

What came to be known as the High Cotton project arose out of a desire to determine the existing priorities of individuals experiencing homelessness in Lubbock, Texas. Urban homelessness was a pressing issue in 2011 when this project began (Duara, 2011) and remains so today. As an example, according to the Lubbock-based South Plains Homeless Consortium, there were approximately 283 individuals experiencing homelessness in Lubbock on June 25, 2020 (KCBD Staff, 2020). This article discusses the authors' efforts to design a shelter that would best address the complex needs of Lubbock's urban homeless population, particularly those experiencing chronic homelessness.

Chronically homeless individuals make up "24 percent of the total population of homeless individuals." (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2019). Individuals experiencing chronic homelessness are difficult to document and study, as they often require more in-depth treatment for mental, physical and addiction issues. Caton et al. (2005) defined chronic homelessness as individuals who "use the system for extended periods of time and are the greatest users of shelter care services" (p. 1753). Relevant factors for how long an individual will remain homeless include: "employment history, family support, drug treatment (or lack thereof), [and] arrest history" (Caton et al., 2005, p.1757). According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness (2019), chronic homelessness has decreased by 35% since 2007, but those individuals suffering from chronic homelessness often have difficulty "getting back into housing, and they can experience long or repeated episodes." The chronic homeless make up a distinct subset of America's homeless population and current definitions of homelessness and attempts to aid them do not consistently account for their experiences.

Burt (2002) argued that the Steward B. McKinney Homelessness Assistance Act presents a "narrow" (p.1269) definition of

homelessness focused on if a person has a place to sleep in the previous night or the upcoming night. Such a narrow definition fails to account for different types of homelessness, as some individuals experience chronic homelessness for an extended period, while some find temporary shelter, only to experience homelessness again in a relatively short amount of time (Kuhn & Culhane, 1998). Frankish et al. (2005) repudiate the relatively narrow definitions in favor of a holistic approach to homelessness concerns as part of a "continuum" (S24) of related problems and potential solutions; for Frankish et al. (2005), individuals experience homelessness in markedly different ways and require tailored forms of housing and help.

This study discusses Lubbock Texas's struggle to address the issue of urban homelessness and the engagement methods a coalition used to collect and incorporate community feedback into shelter designs. In 2011, local service providers and community members formed a coalition around the issue of homelessness and toured several regional homeless shelters to learn more. Then, Driskill (the second author) and several colleagues used regular public engagement sessions and end of semester projects from a series of graduate courses to refine what the coalition had learned and generate a community-driven shelter design with housing and treatment options for individuals experiencing homelessness.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

By early 2011, the Mahon Public Library, located in downtown Lubbock, had become the central gathering space for the city's homeless population, which is commonplace in urban libraries throughout the nation (Vartabedian, 2016). In response to this concern, the city's downtown library ended their children's programming, restricted what could be brought into the library, and installed a midnight to 5 AM curfew for their campus (Bramlet, 2010). The city's swift response forced the homeless population to relocate to a small city park near an entrance to downtown Lubbock. The Lubbock encampment of individuals experiencing homelessness was in a small but prominently located city park. The encampment's location boosted the public's awareness of the city's homeless population and galvanized city leaders to act.

In March 2011, the encampment was relocated from the small city park to a former cotton gin site just outside downtown that was owned by Link Ministries, a now defunct faith-based organization that focused on community engagement through youth sports. Residents were soon sheltered in Army surplus tents, lending the encampment its nickname—Tent City.

The Lubbock City Council quickly approved the rezoning for the cotton gin site and appointed a Homelessness Take Force to study the homelessness issue (Hoover, 2011). The late Louise Hopkins Underwood, a Lubbock philanthropist, petitioned the Texas Tech's College of Architecture classes to aid the Homelessness Take Force through graduate classes at Urban Tech, a branch of Texas Tech University's College of Architecture; Urban Tech is an engagement studio directed by Driskill, which focuses on design-based solutions to public, urban issues.

At the Homelessness Task Force's request, Urban Tech began basic research about the ongoing issue of homelessness in Lubbock. An initial map of existing homelessness service providers and bus routes revealed two important issues. First, downtown Lubbock was indeed the city's default homeless center; second, Link Ministries' former cotton gin site was a good new location because of its relatively remote location from other housing and short distance from the city's transit center and downtown resources.

Even though the new Tent City location benefitted residents, both Link Ministries, and Urban Tech had to educate themselves about the best ways to collaborate with a series of fragmented and underfunded organizations that provided services to the city's homeless population.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study implemented a modified version of the World Café method to learn more about local citizens and organizations' priorities for a potential shelter, and then used a mixture of continued engagement and urban design principles to generate a city-specific shelter design that best served individuals experiencing chronic homelessness in Lubbock. In terms of focus, the authors' study of design and homelessness did not investigate the way individuals experiencing homelessness interact with the urban environment like Fahnoe (2018) and Kaplan et al. (2019). Instead, the study focused primarily on designing a new shelter around community needs. The final shelter plans did not radically reconsider existing shelter models like Culhane and Metraux (2008) and Siemiatycki (2017). Instead, similar in intent to Goel et al.'s (2017) study of regional homelessness shelters in the Uttar Pradash state in India, this study focused on a region—Lubbock and nearby major cities in Texas and Oklahoma. A narrower focus clarified what shelter amenities and housing options would best appeal to individuals living in the Texas-Oklahoma area. While Goel et al. (2017) reported a lack of basic amenities like first-aid supplies, drinking water, and cooking space, our study looked mostly at operating concerns like a facility's hours, access to treatment options, and connections to healthcare (p.92).

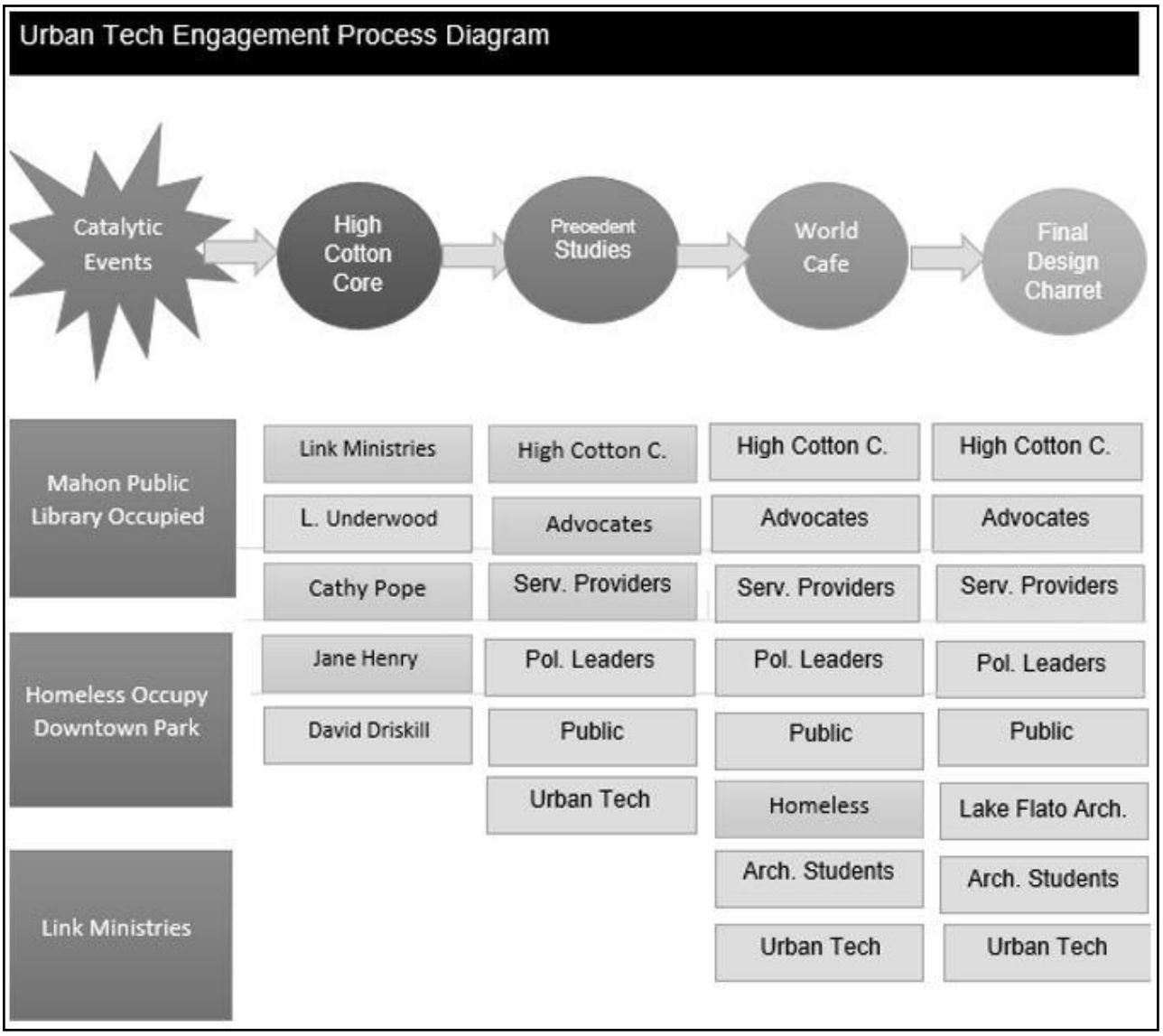
The research team used the World Café format to engage local stakeholders who had visited a regional shelter; then the authors refined stakeholders' initial ideas through series of public research presentations and professionally led design charrettes. To discuss potential options for a city-specific shelter, the research team used a series of "small group rounds," each built around a single issue or "question" (World Café, n.d.) based on what they had observed at other regional shelters. After listening to stakeholder feedback, the research team held an extended "harvest" (World Café, n.d.) where they presented the results of the World Café to stakeholders at a public meeting as a five-point list. The community ideas were refined even further through a series of design charrettes, which are "a gathering of people for an intense period of brainstorming and design" (Roggema, 2014, p.15) that focuses on finding a design-based solution to a problem. During most charrettes, design professionals engage stakeholders through drawings, maps, and other tools to generate and synthesize potential solutions.

Once the World Café revealed client and community priorities, the research team focused on addressing a social problem through design; Ravina et al. (2019) similarly addressed a social issue with design by creating a mobile vending cart and temporary shelter for Filipino street vendors that costs roughly one hundred and three Euros to build from local materials (p.7). Ravina et al. stated that they are planning to share their design with the public for feedback so that it can best fit community needs and be readily adopted (p. 7); the shelter design the Lubbock coalition created was similarly vetted through roughly a year of community feedback. Petrovich et al. (2016) also investigated a series of pre-existing studies and then proposed a series of practical day shelter designs for shelters in Dallas, Texas that emphasized safety and health. The authors' project similarly combined best practices for building shelters based on precedent studies and engaged with the local community to refine their ideas to produce a community-specific shelter design that featured temporary and semi-permanent shelter options. Figure 1 outlines the design team's process for directly engaging different parts of the Lubbock community across a series of discreet steps.

Student Involvement Throughout the Project

The large-scale social goals of the High Cotton project required significant time and labor from both Lubbock service providers and Urban Tech. And so, as Allahwala et al. (2013) stated about their own project, Driskill adjusted his graduate courses to "combine curricular objectives with civic

Figure 1. *A process diagram of the engagement model's major steps. This figure's catalytic event section on the left shows what began the program; each circle across the top of the figure shows the next major step, while the boxes under each circle show the stakeholders participating in each phase.*



engagement to enhance students' understanding of urban homelessness" (p.46).

Drawing from Allahwala et al.'s (2013) findings that students need responsibility to fully engage with the community, the year-long engagement process made students the focus of this "triumvirate" (p.48) of a university-student-community partnership. This project encouraged graduate architecture students to engage with the local community and professional designers as communicators and budding designers. Driskill initiated the partnerships, but the graduate students often served as the "face and program of the university" (Allahwala et al., p. 49) to the public as they facilitated monthly engagement sessions to gather public feedback about their evolving shelter designs. Facilitating and then sharing their findings with faculty, professional designers, and non-profit groups helped graduate students develop as listeners and problem-solvers, as they served

as a bridge between professional designers and community stakeholders. In short, this project allowed graduate students to engage in the complex process of collective decision making with stakeholders from a variety of backgrounds (Bainbridge et al., 2014, p.79).

For this project, graduate students toured selected shelters discussed later in this paper; the tours served as in-person precedent studies, allowing students to learn what was successful and what could be better at each location. These visits touched on everything from popular design ideas and amenities to the political moves necessary to build and maintain a shelter. During Summer 2012, students enrolled in Driskill's urban design courses were trained as facilitators for the World Café. After the World Café, students compiled notes and shared their findings through several interactive presentations. In the third phase, graduate students created a design that incorporated stakeholders and a community teams' priorities into a functional site plan with assistance from design professionals from Lake Flato Architects, headquartered in San Antonio, Texas[1]. The architects had their travel and lodging paid for by a stipend from Louise Hopkins Under-wood, a local philanthropist, but they contributed their expertise pro bono.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The High Cotton project featured a kickoff event, which was a gathering of community stakeholders and leaders, followed by three distinct data collection phases that are outlined in Figure 1. The first phase of data collection involved a small core of community stakeholders known as the High Cotton Core (HCC), made up of Driskill (with timely assists from Urban Tech staff), several philanthropists, and representatives from community health providers. The HCC visited three regional shelters in nearby major cities, which provided valuable ideas about serving the chronic homeless. At each shelter, the team asked shelter designers, administrators, and employees what worked well in the shelter and what they would change if they were able to. Driskill took notes during these discussions and used his notes to inform the World Café that makes up the bulk of Data Collection Step 2, shared in Table 1. Though the HCC did not reach a consensus after the initial visits, most stakeholders knew they wanted to explore options for a twenty-four-hour shelter with a treatment option.

In the second phase, stakeholders moved from a series of general ideas for a shelter to a consensus, as graduate students enrolled in Driskill's courses collected feedback from the HCC and the public using the World Café method. This particular World Café was a one-time event where students asked Lubbock citizens and the providers, advocates, and decision makers of the HCC to share their ideas about what makes for a successful shelter. The World Café facilitators each selected a table and recorded stakeholder ideas on butcher paper mounted to the walls. Each table focused on an issue for individuals experiencing homelessness like transportation options or health services. After a set amount of time, participants were invited to move to another table, so that they could visit all the tables over the course of ninety minutes to provide feedback. A month or so later, student discussion leaders reported back the trends they had recorded in another open-to-the-public session that was mostly attended by city officials and homelessness group stakeholders.

During the third data collection period, Driskill led an architecture graduate student staffed design charette, several small group meetings, and monthly public exhibitions to refine the project's conceptual design based on a mixture of design expertise and public feedback. Graduate students produced some initial design work based on priorities established

[1] Driskill was involved in the first and second data collection phases as a college representative and the third phase as a classroom teacher and charrette facilitator. Elliott, the first author, toured West Town as part of one of Driskill's classes.

Table 1. Steps in the Process and Key Findings and Accomplishments.

Step in the Process	Key Findings and Accomplishments
Data Collection Part 1: Visiting regional shelters	Stakeholders learn more about possibilities for Lubbock shelter, including the importance of treatment options, on-site care, and twenty-four-hour access.
Data Collection Part 2: Initial consensus with a World Café	Develop a coalition from various non-profit groups; agree on priorities for shelter offerings, job training, transportation, medical and housing facilities.
Data Collection Part 3: Graduate studios shared data with the public and participated in design charrettes	Share findings from graduate studios with the public; finalize basic structure of the site, including treatment options, a chapel, and space for service providers.
Final Design Concepts	Conduct a final professional design charette with stakeholders and architects; finalize a design with office space for community non-profits, ample public space, and quasi-private spaces.
Launching the Project to the Private Sector	Present site plans to Link Ministries; Driskill and Urban Tech end their involvement with the site and project.

during the World Café and then shared their ideas in monthly public exhibitions. In these community-focused data sharing sessions, students gave primarily visual presentations, sharing site drawings and other project images to communicate crucial ideas to the audience. The presentation and monthly exhibition formats allowed for a stimulating, small-scale student-to-public dialogue. The public's feedback was recorded and incorporated into subsequent iterations of the project, which were presented at the next month's design exhibition for additional public feed-back. After a year of engagement, Urban Tech team brought back several of the Lake Flato architects to lead a design charette with local stakeholders and finalize a shelter site design.

Data Collection Part 1: Visiting Regional Shelters

Members of the HCC visited three existing homelessness outreach facilities that serve nearby major cities' homeless populations. The HCC visited each site hoping to learn what amenities, services, and models would help them best serve Lubbock's homelessness population. Though the services and hours of operation for these shelters varied significantly, each shelter's approach taught the HCC some best practices for providing resources. The first facility, West Town, is a day shelter in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma that provides a diverse array of services. The Bridge in Dallas, Texas is a twenty-four-hour facility that provides an appealing courtyard and dining room for all clients and transitional accommodations. Lastly, Haven for Hope in San Antonio, Texas offers a therapeutic program for clients and collaborates with local police and medical personnel to holistically address clients' needs.

Site 1: West Town, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

The West Town facility is a day shelter with limited hours but a wide variety of services and service providers for clients. West Town opens at 9 am and closes at 4 pm Monday through Friday (Homeless Alliance, n.d.). West Town's schedule does not offer weekend or overnight accommodations, which limits its ability to offer shelter or provide full therapeutic services. Despite West Town's restricted hours, the HCC noted the facility's effectiveness in offering a series of coordin-

ated, desirable services to individuals experiencing homelessness on a single campus.

Specifically, the West Town facility provides office space for organizations dedicated to helping individuals experiencing homelessness find jobs and obtain housing in the same building where they can easily exchange files on clients through a shared database. The shelter itself also features a kitchen, showers, "…space for AA [Alcoholics Anonymous] and NA [Narcotics Anonymous] classes, devotionals…and other educational opportunities" (Homeless Alliance, n.d.). In addition to these facilities, the West Town facility provides several recreational options, including a library, a TV lounge and, crucially, a dog park. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, some 5-10% of homeless individuals keep pets, primarily cats and dogs (Pets of the Homeless, n.d.).

Site 2: The Bridge, Dallas, Texas

The Bridge is a twenty-four-hour shelter that addresses the needs of several subsections of the homeless population. The well landscaped and tranquil courtyard is accessible to all clients, and the elegant dining facility features flowers on the table and piano music during dinner. The Bridge offers extremely basic accommodations for individuals experiencing homelessness who are not clients—a mat to sleep on at night and access to a simple enclosed day area. The Bridge does feature more desirable accommodations for clients, as working individuals experiencing homelessness enrolled in shelter programs can live in semi-permanent transition dorms.

The Bridge illustrated the importance of comfortable day rooms, courtyards, and twenty-four-hour facilities (The Bridge, n.d.). The Bridge also stood out for its ability to recognize that one type of space does not address the varying needs of the diverse subsets of individuals experiencing homelessness.

Site 3: Haven for Hope, San Antonio, Texas

Haven for Hope is a large-scale day and night shelter, a massive hundred-million-dollar investment in cutting edge transformational and therapeutic care for the homeless, funded by large donations from Haven for Hope founder William E. Greehey and political assistance from former mayor Phil Hardberger (J. Henry, personal communication, April 2017). The Haven for Hope campus feels like a small town with different housing options for three major populations: individuals experiencing chronic homelessness are given only minimum accommodations, dorms are provided for a transitional population seeking support, and parents with children receive apartments (Haven for Hope, n.d.).

In short, Haven for Hope's therapeutic program addresses client needs and saves taxpayers money through a streamlined medical care and a proactive police intercept program. A police intercept facility—known as the Re-Engagement Center—serves as a coordination hub that offers help to individuals experiencing homelessness, battling addiction, or facing mental-health issues without processing them through the judicial system. In its first year of operation in 2008, the Re-Engagement Center "served 519 homeless individuals who would otherwise have been processed through the legal and hospital systems multiple times, saving… [Bexar] County $5.1 million and the City [of San Antonio] $1.4 million" (Wolff, 2009). Haven for Hope's coordinated police presence also saved the community an estimated $40,000 per case its first year and offers a better opportunity for rehabilitation (M. Legacy, personal communication, June 2012). On-site dental and medical care also prevents emergency room visits, a financial benefit to both clients and hospitals.

Haven for Hope uses their facilities to enhance clients' odds of success, which they define as graduating from the program and maintaining a job and a residence for one full year. As of 2012, clients who have completed a minimum ninety-day treatment program have an eighty percent success rate (M. Legacy, personal communication, June, 2012). Those who have not completed a minimum ninety-day treatment program have a zero percent success rate (M. Legacy, personal communication, June, 2012).

Analysis: Generating Rough Ideas from the Group Visits

In April 2012, the HCC organized a trip to the Haven for Hope for Lubbock community-service providers, civic leaders, and concerned citizens. Approximately thirty-five participants paid their own expenses for the roundtrip to San Antonio. Lubbock attendees included the then-newly elected Mayor of Lubbock, a city council member, the city police chief, several judges, and representatives from service providers. The evening before touring the campus, the Lubbock group learned about Haven for Hope and participated in discussion groups with San Antonio city administrators and Haven for Hope staff. After touring Haven for Hope, participants had various ideas for a possible twenty-four-hour facility in Lubbock but not a consensus plan. In the next phase, Urban Tech's summer 2012 graduate studio collected and synthesized various community ideas to create a consensus from this initial set of priorities.

Data Collection Part 2: Cultivating an Initial Consensus

To share their ideas with the larger Lubbock community, the High Cotton Core organized a World Café for additional service providers for the homeless, city and county officials, individuals experiencing homelessness, and advocates for individuals experiencing homelessness. The HCC World Café was funded by donations to the HCC and held at Urban Tech's offices. The World Café is an established data-gathering method, "a way of thinking and being together sourced in a philosophy of conversational leadership" (The World Café, n.d.). In this case, the World Café facilitated an open, trust-building conversation about the key issues and potential stopgaps to building a shelter between community partners.

The World Café helped expose and address some of the existing trust issues between the various smaller independent homelessness organizations, so all in attendance could develop a shared vision. Initially, providers and organizations expressed mistrust, uncertainty, and a fear of losing their organizational identity, but the World Café format helped facilitate dialogue. The World Café yielded strong results because participants met face to face and shared their various perspectives. Placing most of Lubbock's prominent homelessness organizations in a single room allowed them to discuss their overlapping values and goals. Exchanging perspectives built trust among the participants and allowed the entire HCC to create a set of five shared priorities, detailed in the next section.

Analysis: Five Priorities from the World Café Consensus-Building

Tu Nguyen, then a Ph.D. student in Land-use Planning, Management, and Design at Texas Tech University and research assistant at Urban Tech analyzed participant and facilitator notes from the World Café and found five priorities for a potential shelter in Lubbock:

1. Crucial amenities like a courtyard with basic services, a police intercept facility with non-judicial options, and a physical health assessment processing center.
2. Transportation solutions with vans, cell phones, and software.
3. Medical facilities that could serve clients as well as train clients and staff members to administer basic first aid.
4. Housing for every client level from nightly to semi-permanent.
5. Training facilities to transition individuals into jobs.

Once the World Café had established the basic priorities for the HCC, Driskill worked with his graduate studio classes to create design-based responses to the HCC's priorities.

Data Collection Part 3: Graduate Studios

The next three sections discuss a series of graduate design studios that incorporated findings from one studio into the next to provide an evolving, inclusive design. Each of the studios incorporated community feedback through monthly public design presentations and a few charrettes with professional designers.

Graduate Design Studio 1: A Site Plan Based on Public Feedback and HCC Consensus

During Urban Tech's summer 2012 graduate design studio, students and HCC members explored multiple ideas for the proposed site based on priorities established during the World Café.

After presenting their work to their classmates and Driskill, students presented their findings to the public for feedback during First Friday Art Trail (FFAT) research presentations at Urban Tech's downtown studio, which are held once a month on a Friday night. During the presentations, students share their research through posters and informal dialogue. Urban Tech's research presentations are one of many FFAT exhibitions that are part of a neighborhood wide FFAT program. Urban Tech's monthly exhibitions are funded by the College of Architecture and feature student research, local art, and free food; each event typically draws between 200 and 300 attendees from various parts of the surrounding area.

Visitors to Urban Tech's FFAT research presentations include a mix of College of Architecture students and faculty, local design professionals, city officials, and members of the general public. Attendees are invited to visit the rooms with student research to speak with students about their on-going projects, which are updated and displayed each month. During summer 2012, students also gave exploratory presentations to groups of local service providers for feedback. While these presentations did not generate systemic qualitative feedback, students recorded what they heard and discussed the feedback they received in class. Students then incorporated service provider and public feedback into their evolving designs and presented their revised designs at the next FFAT research presentation.

Graduate Studio 1 Findings

As a unit, the service providers within the HCC and the summer 2012 graduate students combined public feedback and stakeholder priorities to create a working list of six key findings:

1. Separation of client types is necessary. The proposed site included two parcels of land separated by a railroad track. The High Cotton site plan used this two-parcel structure to separate individual clients seeking treatment from other types of clients.
2. Administrators from The Bridge and Haven for Hope found that barriers between temporary and chronic groups tended to disappear over time, making for a more inclusive housing experience. The populations intermingled successfully due to a series of basic ground rules for visiting and living on the campus.
3. A connection to the Lubbock's park system would provide psychological and physiological relief opportunities.
4. Tents are a viable solution for temporary client housing because they offer a sense of privacy and space that dorms with bunk beds do not (Haven for Hope, n.d.). Tents also serve as a semi-permanent form of transition housing for individuals working to secure permanent housing.
5. Landscaping is critical to a facility where residents spend most of their time outside.
6. Services that cater to a broad population will enhance the surrounding neighbor-hood. At the time, five thousand individuals lived within a half mile radius of the High Cotton site without any neighbor-hood conveniences like food markets or convenience stores.

The summer studio's vision also included suggestions for neighborhood conveniences, job training, youth sports, an event center serving the greater Lubbock community, a local Black history museum, and future housing for families temporarily experiencing homelessness.

Graduate Design Studio 2: Professional Collaboration and Public Design Charrette

Using the six basic findings provided in the previous section, the fall 2012 Urban Tech graduate topical studio sought additional public feedback for the High Cotton project through a design charrette. The charette would help pinpoint design ideas that the public and

the HCC found most relevant for the High Cotton site, using the ideas generated during Graduate Design studio 1 as a starting place. Lake Flato Architects from San Antonio, Texas collaborated with the class through a stipend provided by Louise Hopkins Underwood. Four Lake Flato architects spent two days in Lubbock for the charrette. Approximately seventy-five members of the Lubbock community participated in the charrette including individuals experiencing homelessness, service providers, and concerned citizens.

The graduate student studio and design charrette established the design character for the project—shown in Figures 2 and 3—and generated more proposed uses for the High Cotton site. Community members suggested the site feature a new branch of the Lubbock public library, a grocery store, a local events center, nearby youth recreation and sports facilities, and additional housing options. Images from the charette and students' cotton gin-focused final projects were displayed to the public during Urban Tech's monthly First Friday Art Trail presentations.

Graduate Studio 2 Findings

Through discussion and debate, the High Cotton team drew on community input and conceptually organized the homeless facilities on the north site using a series of sketches and plans, like the one shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. *High Cotton character sketch developed from the Lake Flato Architects design Charrette from Graduate Studio 2 (Gus Starkey and Urban Tech with assistance from Lake Flato Architects).*

Graduate Design Studio 3: Final Designs and Visioning of the High Cotton Core

A third topical graduate studio, held in the summer of 2013, focused on incorporating the community-generated ideas refined during Graduate Studio 2 into a usable site plan for the High Cotton site. This final site plan functioned as an initial contact point for those in need of shelter, food, clothing, and minor medical help in Lubbock. The site plan concept represented in the upper right-hand corner of Figure 3 had proven its validity through multiple design reviews.

Figure 3. *High Cotton site plan. This image features a concept and view of the High Cotton chapel (Johnathan Card, Billy Henly, and Urban Tech with assistance from Lake Flato Architects).*

Three Texas Tech College of Architecture faculty members ran studios during summer 2013 that focused on different aspects of the proposed facilities to finalize the site plan. Dr. Elizabeth Louden, then preservation faculty, led a studio that explored how the existing cotton gin could be adapted for use as a fully functioning shelter. Associate Professor Robert Perl led a studio that developed small single occupancy units that could be used for transitional housing. Driskill led a studio focused on changes to two key proposed buildings: the chapel and the

community service center. These three summer studios' collaborations established confidence in the proposed concepts and solidified the design direction through feedback from monthly summer public exhibitions and end of semester architectural reviews provided by College of Architecture faculty and Dr. Scott Ackerman, an executive from Haven for Hope.

Graduate Studio 3 Findings

The summer 2013 classes confirmed that the site plan design was viable, as it included space for a ninety-day therapy program within a secure camp community. The chapel would function as a therapy center with various sized meeting rooms. The service center would occupy a semipublic zone where residents would interface with service providers. In terms of on-site amenities, the land-scape would provide shade, block the severe Lubbock wind, promote water management, and produce food through a planned garden.

The Genesis Project design produced and finalized during the summer 2013 graduate studios was the culmination of 12 months of graduate course work and combined concepts from preservation, small house ideas, and needs-specific design. The courses' initial design work in summer 2013 launched conceptual ideas that were integrated into Link Ministries' final plans for the site. What started out as an exploratory venture in the summer of 2012 had evolved into an actionable set of design plans that needed one more engagement event to refine site plan designs.

LAUNCHING THE PROJECT FROM THE UNIVERSITY TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR

The HCC—in particular Link Ministries—and Urban Tech had successfully collaborated for two years. The next step was to locate a professional design team to produce a final set of documents that communicated the team's vision. This final design charette was also funded by Louise Hopkins Underwood.

In the fall 2013, the team began searching for design partners. The final design team consisted of Driskill in his role as director of Urban Tech, Brantley Hightower, Highworks LLC, who had led the design Charrette team with Lake Flato Architects a year earlier, Jonathan Card of Urbanist Design, a Texas Tech Alumni whose offices are shared with Highworks, and Tary Arterburn, a landscape architect from Studio Outside. Once the professional design team was finalized, the next step was a design charrette that focused on the north side of the High Cotton campus, which became the focus of the Genesis Project.

Later in fall 2013, Urban Tech hosted the design team for a two-day design charrette with the full Link Ministries Board and the rest of the HCC. Driskill and the fall 2013 Urban Tech research assistants supported the design team throughout the charette, which included design information sessions with the HCC and intense work sessions. To get a sense of the existing facility, Brantley Hightower spent the first evening sleeping in Tent City. Mr. Hightower's stay provided insight into the final design from the perspective of the site's intended users. The design team also visited Tent City and invited residents to the charrette.

Professional Charette Findings

The charrette clarified the importance of incorporating treatment into the Genesis Project design and separating the individuals in treatment for a minimum of ninety days from any outside influences. Despite this planned separation, the design allowed all clients and the public access to the campus's community health center. After the charrette, several of the professional architects collaborated to produce renderings of the team's vision for the Genesis Project, and Mr. Arterburn, the team's landscape architect, developed the final site plan.

FINAL DESIGN CONCEPTS

First, the team followed the therapeutic model adapted from Haven for Hope, which included separate housing facilities for

individuals experiencing homelessness in-treatment and those not enrolled in a treatment program. In addition, the design featured pet-friendly spaces, on-site spaces for community non-profits, inviting public spaces, and quasi-private space.

Second, the design team's local community partners also played a role in the final design. Link Ministries was a religious organization and requested a contemplative space and chapel designed to accommodate religious ceremonies and music. The HCC also added quiet rooms for small meetings and therapy sessions near the chapel. And StarCare, a local mental health authority and part of the HCC, requested office space for community health care providers.

Third, the project's final designs adaptively reused a historic cotton gin and connected the site to the adjacent Canyon Lakes by restoring a branch of a local creek, which would have re-established a connection to the native landscape.

In April 2014, Urban Tech formally announced the Genesis Project through a press release and exhibited the design concepts at its downtown office space. The final Genesis Project design includes three components drawn from the design teams and graduate classes: a facility for the chronic homeless, an-onsite community health center, and ninety-day housing for clients in treatment. Despite all the collaborative design work that went into creating the plan, the Genesis Project followed the path of available funding options and the cotton gin site has not been developed further. Instead, federally funded tiny houses have replaced the tents at Tent City. Table 2 discusses the state of each major project element circa 2020 in more depth.

Table 2. *Major project elements and their status as of 2020.*

Major Project Elements	Current Status
World Café Method	Driskill still uses variations of this method as his classes engage with the public.
Public Information and Design Feedback Sessions	Still held monthly at Urban Tech in Lubbock, Texas. The monthly session's emphasis depends on the semester's course focus.
The community engagement method described in this article	Ongoing advocacy, coalition building, and engagement work happens at Urban Tech; a 2013 project used similar engagement strategies to create temporary installations in downtown Lubbock (Driskill & Elliott, 2015). Driskill is using similar methods to explore ways to convert a rail spur into an urban trail and walking park in Lubbock.
Constructing a treatment facility on the abandon cotton gin site	The *High Cotton* Genesis design won a 2015 Merit Award from the American Society of Landscape Architects, Texas Chapter. The team included Studio Outside, Link Ministries, Urban Tech, HiWorks, and Urbanist Design, PLC. The facility has not been constructed due to a lack of funding.
Cotton Gin Site; eventually known as Tent City	Home to Lubbock's homeless population as of 2020. Federally funded tiny homes have replaced tents.

CONCLUSION

Urban Tech's work forming a community team, gathering data, collaborating with community members and professionals ultimately produced a viable Genesis Project. The basic engagement model outlined here allowed students to design something meaningful for the community based on community feedback; but students also learned how to collaborate with the public and other design professionals and build their skills as listeners and communicators. Public engagement was listed as a course outcome for the graduate design studios, certainly; still, engagement became the most crucial component of the various graduate studios' work, as they collected public feedback and designed with a shared vision in mind. Due to the studio-based approach that included space for key assists from design and non-profit professionals, students were involved in everything from charrettes to small group presentations to collaborative design. Instead of simply creating a design solution in a vacuum, students engaged with the public throughout the project. And their final product reflected the consensus that addressing homelessness involves more than providing temporary housing.

The HCC used community feedback to create a Genesis Project design that offered both housing and community services, including treatment options, for all clients. Without substantial feedback from the Lubbock community, Urban Tech would have consulted a loose alliance of stakeholders and designed a homeless facility without treatment options; the community feedback the team received guided them towards a more community-appropriate design.

STUDY LIMITATIONS AND THOUGHTS ABOUT FUTURE STUDIES

The authors believe this method for engaging the communities are replicable for other classroom-community projects. It does take substantial work and time to produce an integrated, community-based design. Still, with periodic public check-ins, this engagement model seems applicable to a variety of social and design issues because it can generate and respond to a large volume of public feedback through a series of focus groups, interactive presentations, and design charrettes. All of these engagement activities present ideas to the public for feedback and incorporate this feedback into the next phase of the design. This approach certainly rewards engaged stakeholders like the HCC, and the authors think the basic approach of 'design, listen to the public, consult experts, then present design to the public for feedback again' has the potential to generate an action-able consensus that can be further refined through regular public feedback sessions.

As evidenced by the sheer number of parties listed in Figure 1, this process can sometimes be messy and difficult to quantify. So future studies might more concretely document and articulate community feedback through more detailed meeting notes, more standardized questions during charrettes, and perhaps even follow-up interviews with extremely engaged stakeholders and designers. In addition, the project benefitted from Louise Hopkins Underwood's financial commitment to the design and engagement process on multiple occasions; a future study might trace the impact (financial and otherwise) that one committed person can have on a design project aimed at addressing a social issue at the local level.

Together, the HCC applied the method outlined in this article to design a treatment and housing facility for individuals experiencing homelessness in Lubbock; but every city's homeless population has different needs, and each city has different resources. Future studies could apply this article's methods to gather precedent data, establish joint priorities, and explore and refine a design-based response that best addresses an issue like homelessness in a specific community setting. There is no one-size-fits-all solution to community-specific versions of larger social issues.

While each community-centered solution will be different, this article presents a method for generating a shared vision; this article's mixture of engagement and design provided real world experience to future designers and responded to community needs. Future projects may not feature the exact same mix of community priority gathering, community-engaged design studios, local partnerships, and professional collaborations outlined here, but these elements make for strong building blocks.

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