

SECOND COURSE: MILLVALE MOOSE

Mobile/Adaptable Cafe Feature Elements for Regional Non-Profit / Pittsburgh, PA / 2019
Urban Design Build Studio (UDBS)

The mission of Pittsburgh non-profit New Sun Rising (NSR) is to 1) Create economic opportunity, 2) Solve social challenges, and 3) Strengthen the vibrancy of place. NSR asked the Urban Design Build Studio (UDBS) and PROJECT RE_ to design and fabricate feature elements for its new café at the Millvale Moose Food + Energy Hub. The mission of New Sun Rising aligns directly with the mission of the UDBS—to develop appropriate, affordable, replicable, and regionally-specific design solutions in the public interest—and the mission of PROJECT RE_—to reuse materials, rebuild communities, and restore lives. SECOND COURSE: MILLVALE MOOSE is a manifestation of the allied missions of these partner entities, demonstrated through both process and product.

The scope of work included 1) a café service + transaction bar, 2) a movable, modular “green” partition wall, and 3) branding of the architect-designed interior awning. The client asked that the café modular/reconfigurable to accommodate various community programming, such as a cooking class, concert, or banquet. The café bar is the second iteration prototype of a modular, adaptable cart system built entirely from waste material—it is a site-specific iteration of a product intended for mass-production. Oak from deconstructed dormitory wardrobes, reused steel office cabinets, and reclaimed marble countertop are composed to create authentic, functional, place-specific furniture. Highly-specific, custom detailing was employed throughout the project to satisfy functional, usability, and ergonomic requirements while aspiring to invite visual and tactile delight for its users. The modular “greenwall”, desired by the client for display of low-light plants, is composed of stacks of plastic storage crates wrapped in plywood, creating a flexible and attractive partition wall that can be repositioned or restacked as programmatic functions change. A CNC-milled supergraphic depicting a moose in a field of wheat under a rising sun is applied across the cafe elements to give an authentic, place-specific identity to the space and speak to the ethos, heritage, and aspirations of the new Food + Energy Hub. Designed to emulate natural foliage, the textures and forms of the cafe are intended to inspire curiosity and imagination in a child, with hopes of positively impacting future generations through the build environment. All steel and stone components of the project were fabricated by Entrepreneurs-in-Training (E.I.T.s) at PROJECT RE_ as part of job skills training aimed at elevating the individuals’ prospects for earning a living wage. The project enabled the EIT to advance hard skills in tube welding, stone cutting, stone polishing, CNC plasma-cutting, and finely crafted detail metalwork, as well as soft skills in communication/coordination with designers and the reading of architectural shop drawings.

Years

Design 2018-2019
Completed 2019

Client

New Sun Rising; 412 Food Rescue; Sprezzatura

Design

John Folan, UDBS Director; Garrett Rauck, UDBS Fellow

Construction

PROJECT RE_

Partners

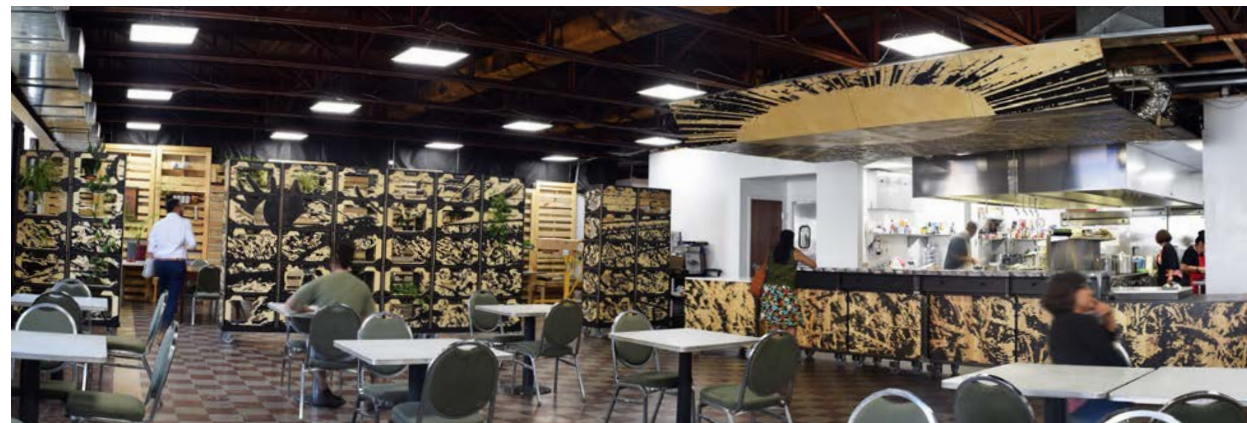
Trade Institute of Pittsburgh, Construction Junction, Laser Lab

Recognition

-AIA Pennsylvania 2019 Honor Award, Impact Design
-AIA Pittsburgh 2019 Certificate of Merit, Architecture: Small

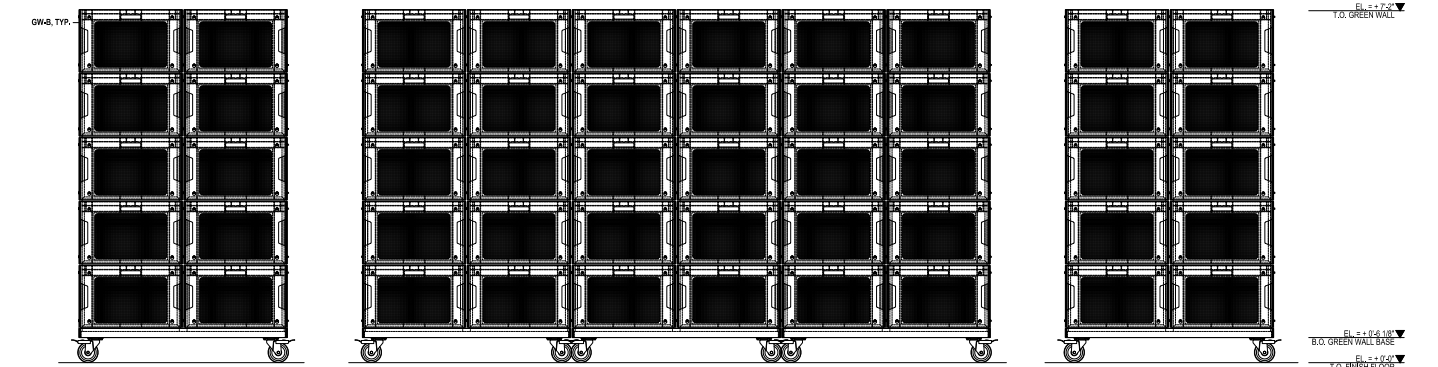
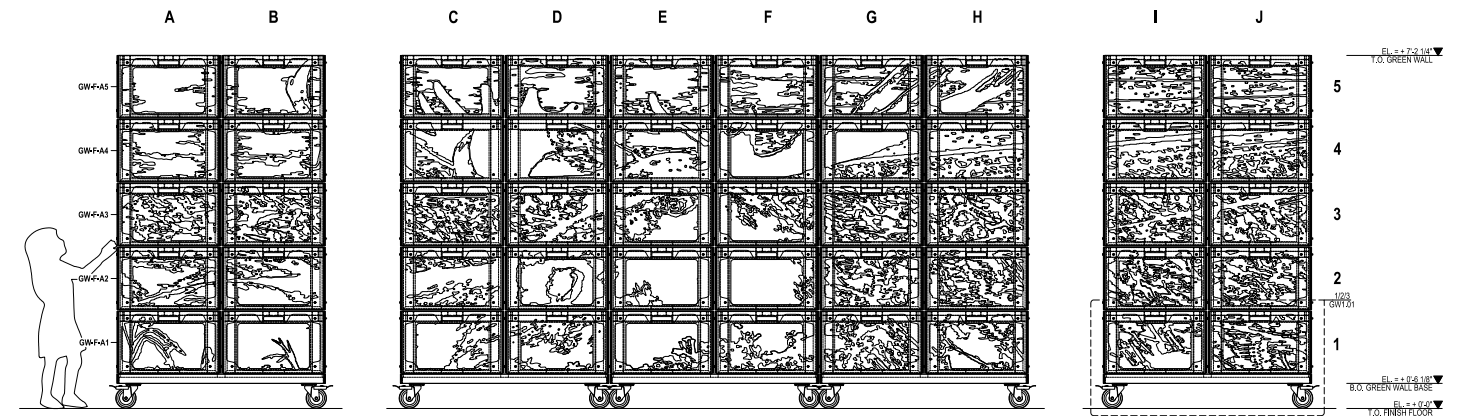
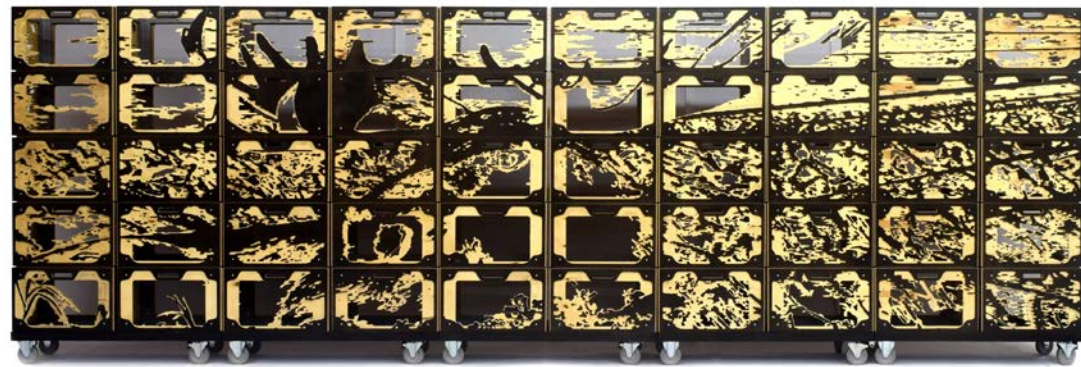
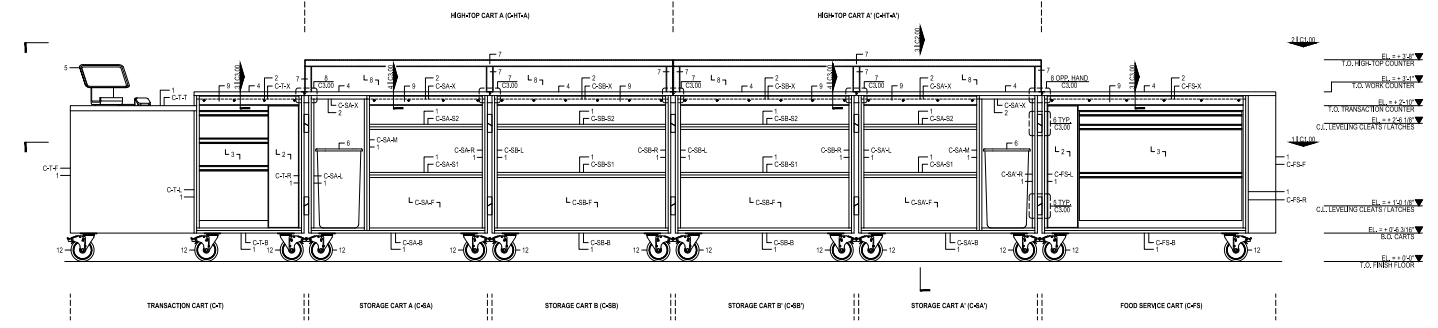
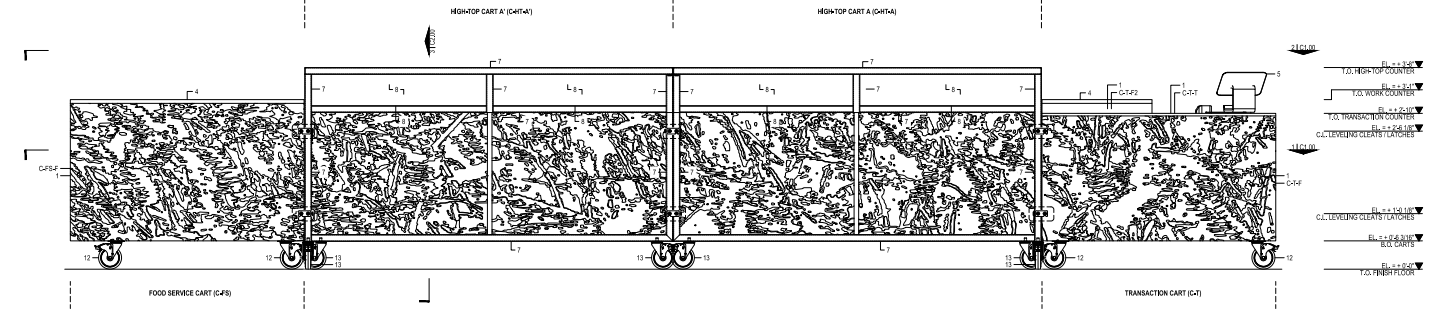


Exterior photograph of the Millvale Moose building.



Panoramic photograph of Millvale Food + Energy Hub Cafe showing cafe carts (right), awning (upper right), and modular “greenwall” (left). (Opposite) The cafe bar provides various surfaces for transaction, food prep and bar seating.



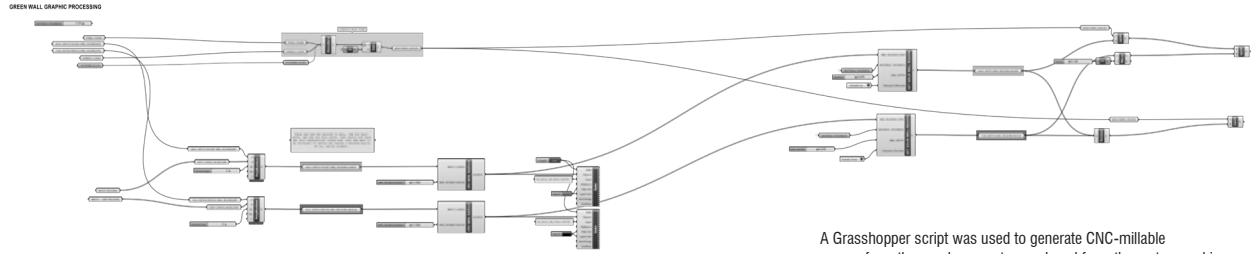


Elevation photographs of finished Cafe Bar and Greenwall. Both are "two-faced" in concept and function. Identified by warmer materials, the front of the bar serves as the public front to the café and is designed to create visual intrigue while providing variable height surfaces for interface with patrons. Identified by cooler materials, the rear of the bar is an ordered system designed to support the functional requirements of use by café employees. Reclaimed steel office cabinets provide lockable secure storage while adjustable open shelves allow for flexibility and easy access for stored items. The front face of the Greenwall is the visual focus of the space, the eye of the moose at its center. The back panels of the Greenwall are removable to allow access to plants housed inside.

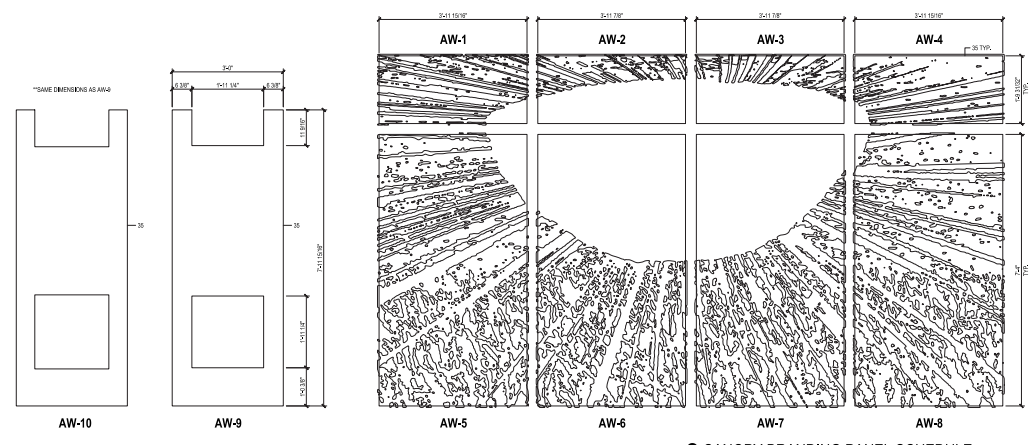
Front and rear elevation drawings of the Cafe Bar and Greenwall from Construction Document set, used during fabrication.



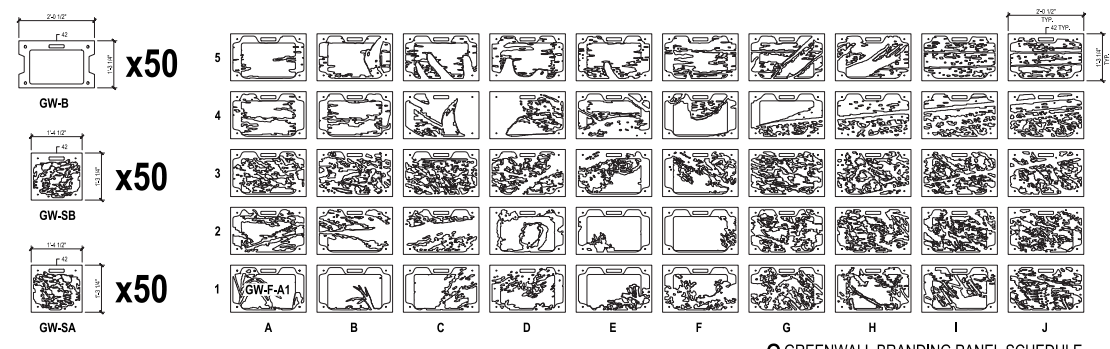
A raster image of a moose in a field of wheat under a rising sun was generated for supergraphic applied across the three cafe elements, intending to speak to the ethos, heritage, and aspirations of the new Food + Energy Hub.



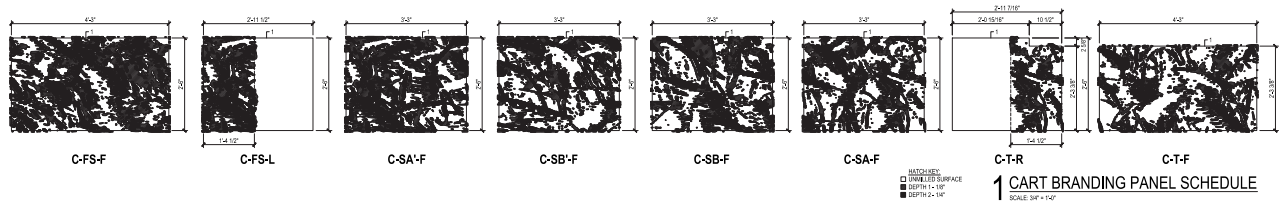
A Grasshopper script was used to generate CNC-millable curves from the rough geometry produced from the raster graphic.



3 CANOPY BRANDING PANEL SCHEDULE
SCALE 3/8" = 1'-0"



2 GREENWALL BRANDING PANEL SCHEDULE
SCALE 3/8" = 1'-0"



1 CART BRANDING PANEL SCHEDULE
SCALE 3/8" = 1'-0"



(Above) Construction Documents sheet with branding panel schedules for Cafe Bar, Greenwall, and Canopy, used to coordinate with fabricators. (Opposite) Detail of CNC-milled cafe cart shells. Solid oak planar stock was salvaged from Duquesne University dorm room wardrobes slated for landfill. The oak was laminated into panels, stained in ebony, and then milled to reveal the natural oak interior. Designed to emulate natural foliage, the textures and forms of the cafe aim to inspire curiosity and imagination in a child, with hopes of positively impacting future generations through the build environment.

Regionally-sourced waste material is diverted from landfill to create **authentic, place-specific furniture.**

The café bar is the **second iteration prototype** of a mobile cart system **built entirely from waste material**—it is a site-specific version of a product meant for **mass-production**. Oak from deconstructed dormitory wardrobes, reclaimed steel office cabinets, and waste marble countertop are artfully composed to create one-of-a-kind furniture that speaks to the material heritage of this region.



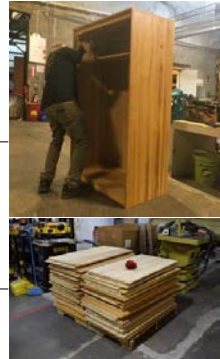
CABINETS: Reclaimed steel office cabinets provide a rigid, lockable core for the carts. The faces were sanded to remove the paint and refinished with clear polyurethane.



FIRST COURSE: FIRST COURSE Café, the first iteration of this cart system built from waste material, was completed in 2017.



COUNTERTOP: Reclaimed marble slabs stored outside at building material reuse facility. The marble was cut to size and installed by apprentices as part of job skill training.



OAK SHELLS: Dormitory wardrobes were salvaged from Duquesne University. The wardrobes were deconstructed to harvest the oak panels from them, which were then laminated, cut to size, and stained to form the shells of the café carts.



All steel and stone components of the project were fabricated by **Entrepreneurs-in-Training (E.I.T.s)** at the affiliated **non-profit prototyping facility** as part of **job skills training** aimed at elevating the individual's prospects for **earning a living wage.**

The project enabled the EITs to advance hard skills in tube welding, stone cutting, stone polishing, CNC plasma-cutting, and finely crafted detail metalwork, as well as soft skills in communication/coordination with designers and the reading of architectural shop drawings.

EIT welding tube for steel café cart.



Welding EIT cutting bar stock for lock pins.



EIT learning to cut stone with wet saw.



Custom lock pin fabricated by EIT.



Custom latches fabricated by EIT.



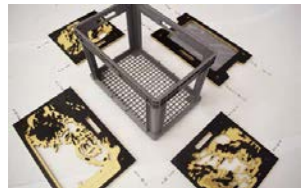
Greenwall stacking sequence

The **modular "green" wall** provides a playful solution for indoor plants while serving as a flexible means of partitioning space.

The wall consists of fifty modules that can be stacked in any arrangement. A plastic storage crate is used as the core of each module due to its inherent durability, porosity, and stackability. The crates are clad in stained and CNC-milled plywood panels—one unique front panel, two normative side panels, and one standard rear panel. The rear panels are removable to facilitate loading of plants. The stackable, reconfigurable system empowers the users of the space to form their own environment as they see fit.



Greenwall rear elevation. The back panels of the Greenwall are removable to allow access to plants housed inside.



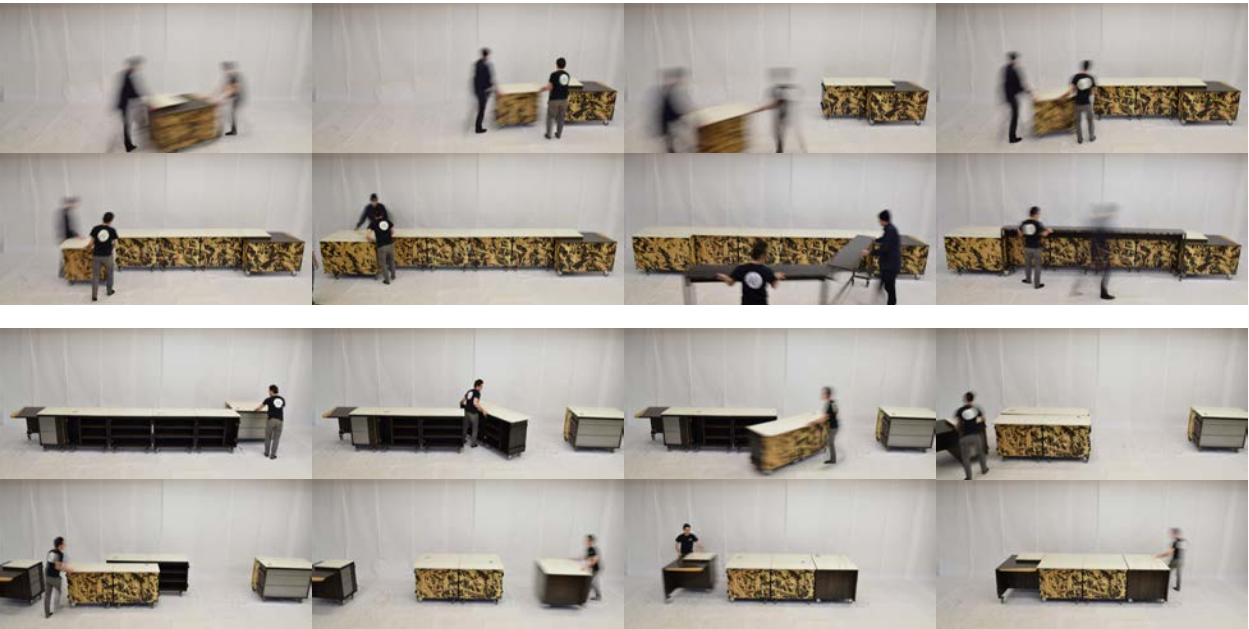
Greenwall module, parts disassembled to demonstrate assembly



Designed to **emulate natural foliage**, the textures and forms of the café are intended to **inspire curiosity and imagination** in a child, with hopes of positively impacting future generations through the built environment.



Design studies used to develop strategy for modularity/reconfigurability of the cafe elements.



Timelapse stills illustrating assembly and reconfiguration of the cafe bar into communal table.



A series of collaborative design charrettes with partner entities were used to quickly explore options and develop consensus.



The cafe carts can be reconfigured to form a communal table. Careful consideration was taken in sizing the carts to ensure alignment/unity in both configurations.