Hive of Hope

Concept
When confronted by the trials of homelessness, feeling connected to others and society suffers. Nature uses an arsenal of natural forms such as hexagons to provide structure. Using this inherently stable form, “Hive of Hope” works to re-establish essential connections to society. The center is designed to develop intricate networks of social engagement aimed at making each individual’s foundation become consolidated and stronger; while simultaneously creating a balance between personal time and connection with others.

The Importance of Biophilia
A major guiding principle in the design of this space was the notion of biophilia. As defined by Architect Magazine, biophilia is the urge for humans to affiliate with other life. Biophilic design is proven to improve physiological and psychological health. This is of utmost importance in the context of serving those experiencing homelessness as they often face emotional and mental battles.

The four key components of biophilia utilized in this design are as follows:
1. Natural Light - skylights provide natural light to increase visual emotions and creativity
2. Patterns - similar to those seen in nature, hexagons are used in the architecture and design of the space to provide visual stimulation and enhance the connection to nature
3. Minimally Processed Materials - the use of bamboo creates a connection to the natural world
4. Indoor Plants - Living walls improve the air quality of the space and create a comfortable atmosphere

Interaction vs. Isolation
Experiencing homelessness is often coupled with a sense of isolation. While privacy is an essential to human development and personal growth, it must be balanced by ample time connecting with others. According to IDEC Design Award winner Jill Pable of Florida State University, “among the most impactful aspects of environments for the home-less are psychological ramifications that encompass issues of personal space, territoriality and the spatial nature of human social interaction.”

Materials & Finishes
Each material was carefully chosen to evoke a sense of comfort and encourage interconnection.

Location
“On the site of January 22nd 2001, KKK murdered 198 people, subjugating thousands.” This quote is attributed to C. Victoria Tea (Gallow 2016).

Each shower unit is enclosed, yet present with a burst of soothing green and playful floor tiles.

Skylights provide natural lighting to create an uplifting feeling throughout the space.

"The people we serve, nobody really treats them with dignity and they certainly don’t live lives filled chuck-full of hope.”
From an interview with Kim Farrell, Bridgeport Rescue Mission

“IT’s about hope and dignity for all who enter. A strong sense of connection is crucial to that.”

Living Room
The outdoor space consists of multiple group seating areas, encouraging interconnection.

Outdoor Area
A unique approach to the glass exterior facade allows for proper function of the rearfront bathrooms while simultaneously creating an aesthetically pleasing location for signage.