

Program Summary:

An outdoor classroom, farmer's market space, and shaded workspace for an urban farm collaborative with rainwater catchment and native plantings.

Program Statement:

This pavilion was designed to support an organization focused on urban farming, food policy, and improving fresh food access in New Orleans' Central City neighborhood and beyond. The structure serves multiple functions: an outdoor classroom, a farm support space, and a venue for a weekly farmers market.

The design is guided by the organization's mission to bring people together around food. Water management, repurposed materials, and low carbon impacts weren't just practical choices — they reflect the values of the community the pavilion serves and reinforce what gets taught there. The architectural language draws from the surrounding neighborhood vernacular so the structure feels at home in its context rather than dropped into it. Additional details incorporate the local foodscape into the project, not just in raised beds but in subtle material choices like oyster-crete.

The result is a comfortable, flexible outdoor space that makes it easier for New Orleanians to learn about food systems, access fresh produce, and connect with one another.

SP05.01

Building Area: (sf)
470 sq. ft

Cost per Square Foot:
\$63.83

Construction Cost
\$30,000

Date of Completion:
March 2026



SP05.02

This pavilion is intended to bring people together around food. Located adjacent to a retirement community and high-density affordable housing, in an area of the city without healthy food access, the project serves as a hub for food distribution and education.

The goal of the organization for which this pavilion was built is to increase access to fresh foods through New Orleans while educating people about the benefits of eating fresh local produce.

This project was designed, permitted, and built in a short 15 week studio course with university architecture students. The students had to work with a community partner and within a budget, timeline, and their own abilities to design and construct the project.

SP05.03



The project site is located on a city block with a large masonry building that once served as a primary school. In recent years the large building has been home to a jobforce training and connections center run by the city. This pavilion serves as a first phase in a larger site plan that includes teaching gardens, a farmers market, and outdoor education classes. It also serves as a shaded space to eat lunch for the many employees in the adjacent building and nearby offices.

Directly across the street from the project are a retirement community, and a high-density, mixed use affordable housing development.

SP05.04

The pavilion and site design responded to the needs of the non-profit partner and local community through a collaborative design process. Through multiple engagement sessions the following strategies emerged:

SITE STRATEGIES

Water Management:

This is conducted through a cistern for the farm to come on site, and a raingarden with native planting to manage overflow.

Solar Harvesting:

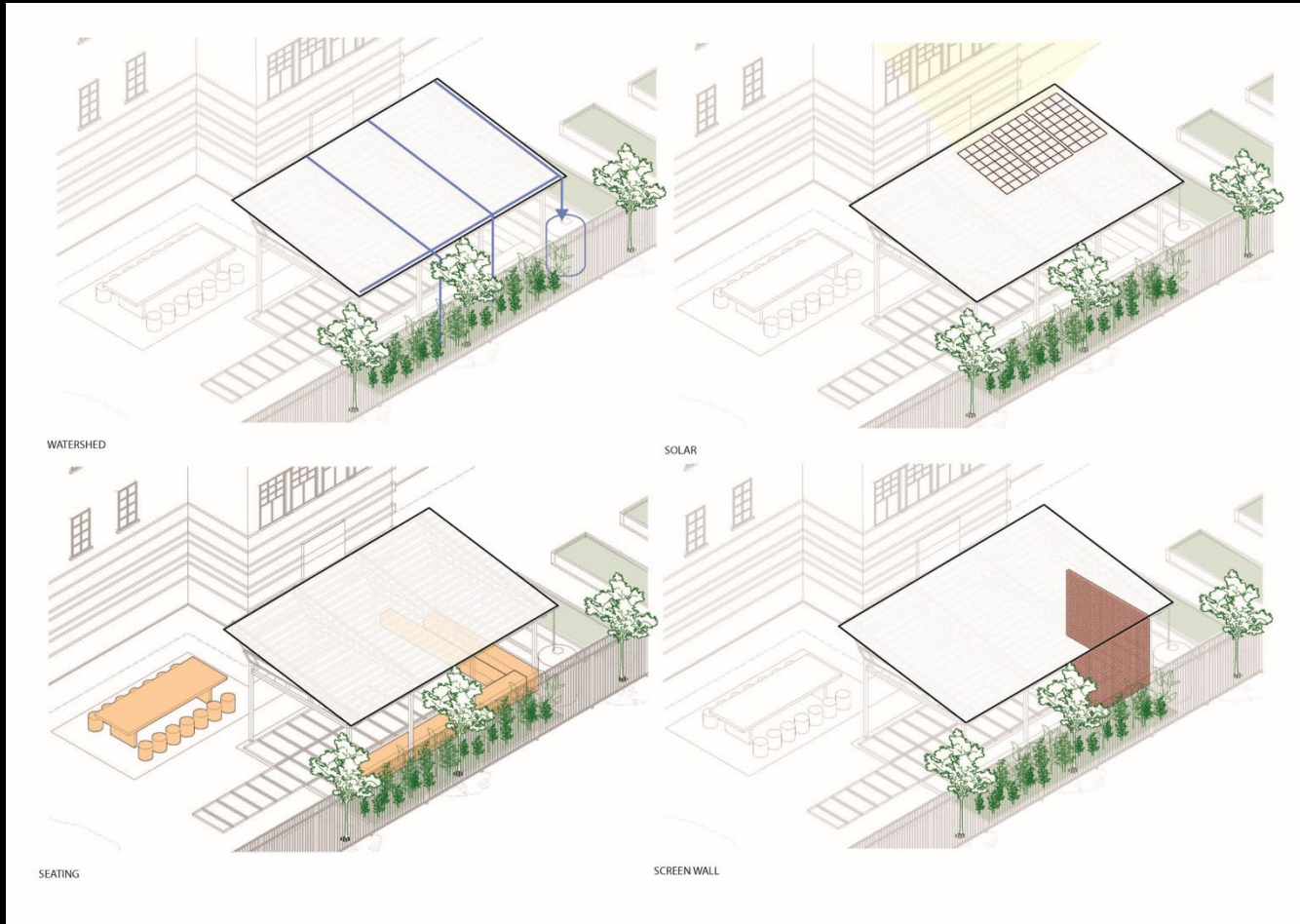
The roof optimizes solar panel placement to serve as a charging station during power outages

Seating and Gathering:

The pavilion supports multiple classes and food-related gatherings on site building social networks, economies, and knowledge around fresh local foods.

Screen wall :

A privacy and shade screen made from recycled brick was implemented to provide a layer of shelter and call back to the residential past of the site and the surrounding neighborhood





SP05.05

Gathering

The pavilion provides a shaded outdoor space for classes and gatherings, and other site elements expand on that community building aspect of the project. A large table serves as a space to eat on a busy farmers market day, or to lead a seed planting or educational activity with schoolkids during the week.



SP05.06

Water Retention and Management System

The water management system is intended to increase the amount of naturally sourced water available for gardening purposes. The shed roof and gutter system directs stormwater to an adjacent cistern. The cistern water is used for raised bed gardening.

The overflow from the water cistern is guided under the bench and out into the rain garden filled with native plants. This system serves as a visible way to slow and manage rainwater on site. This reduces the costs for the non-profit client and decreases the stress on the city's drainage infrastructure.

SP05.07



Detailing:

Design and detailing highlight points of connection and express the tectonics of this simple pavilion. Visible in this column connection is the decision to make each column of multiple pieces of steel that receive and align both the steel beams as well as the wood roof trusses.

SP05.08



Trusses

Material decisions were made in reference to their carbon intensity and balancing those environmental impacts with the client's need for a durable, low-maintenance structure.

The trusses were constructed using cedar wood for its environmental benefits. The change in material from concrete and steel to wood happens above ground, protected from the harsh New Orleans climate conditions and ensuring durability while reducing embodied carbon.



SP05.09

Brick Screen Wall

The brick wall was constructed to provide a permeable level of privacy and shade. The site is located on a major street and the screen helps to mitigate noise and distractions for classes and gatherings being held in the pavilion.

The screen wall includes brick unearthed in the foundation dig, used in tandem with bricks sourced from local demolition sites. The material reinterprets yet provides a direct link to the history of the site, which was once a residential block before the school was built in 1910.

The team of students building the project had little knowledge of masonry crafts, so a local consultant with a team of tradesmen and certified historic craftsmen were hired to share knowledge and give a workshop on screen brick walls.

Thalia St

SP05.10

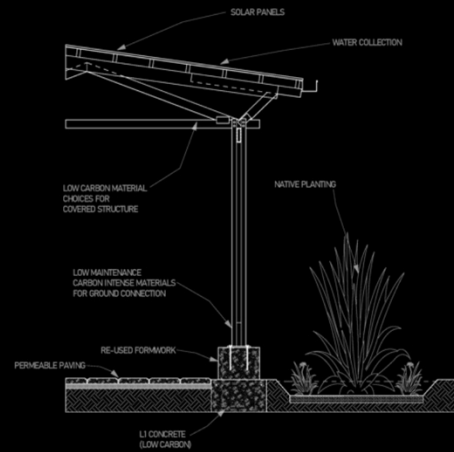


Plan

The proposal also addressed important water management and infiltration goals critical to any project in New Orleans. Students spent significant time exploring and creating alternative materials with lower carbon footprints, reducing overall material use, and understanding the relationship of this single site to the metro and regional context.



Material sequencing and logics helped to extend the "site" beyond just the footprint of the pavilion. Cedar board-form was used to construct the durable seating pinth, and then re-used to create raised beds in the adjacent sunny yard. This simple repurposing of material allows the raised beds and concrete plinth to be in conversation high-wise and in their joint spacing and surface quality.



SP05.11

Project Section showing minimal site impacts and stormwater garden. As a subtle way of underscoring the project goal of “bringing people together over food”, concrete pavers were custom made to include crushed oyster shells – a reference and conversation starter on local foodways.



SP05.12



Community outreach day on site where volunteers are planting the raised beds while neighbors in need are receiving free meals and services. Top left, local craftsmen show students how to work with historic brick and lay a screen wall.



The client organization held the site's first community event recent centered around wellness, connection, and support, providing access to valuable health resources, giveaways, and free food in a welcoming, upbeat atmosphere. Activities included planting out the first raised beds, beginning what promises to be a long tradition of on-site food production.

SP05.13

The pavilion will host a farmers market once a week, and urban farming and food education classes throughout the week.

