AGRICULTURE TOURISM COMMUNITY:
Fostering the resilience of urban neighborhoods in a changing tourism economy
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cities prioritize what urban farms offer in land value over cultural value
unequal financial and political return on cultural investment
key for long-term neighborhood security
genre offers community which is inherently unsustainable at mass scale,
more focused on leisure than self improvement
racially homogeneous public image contradicts racially charged past and present context
Agriculture
Tourism
Community
Cooperative Farming
Agritourism
Cultural Tourism
**Thesis Statement**

As local and urban farming and public interest in agriculture return to mainstream conversation, there still exist racial divides in access to healthy foods and inequitable representation of the activists advocating for it. What opportunities for sustainable development can a regionally responsive urban agritourism provide communities of color attempting to foster resilience through local food security and promote agricultural justice?

**Abstract**

Increasingly, tourists desire to have more genuine experiences with both nature and foreign cultures through ecotourism and adventure tourism. The industry has shifted to be more concerned with its environmental footprint, which can be beneficial, but has a complex set of consequences. While more universally lucrative for governments and foreign entrepreneurs, the benefits of ecotourism’s increased popularity rarely extend to the towns and villages in which resorts are built. Culturally rich neighborhoods across the United States face similar consequences as they are gentrified by entrepreneurs with no stake in the existing community looking to profit from the online short term rental boom. Parallel disconnects exists in both international and domestic tourism between the actual and perceived authenticity of place.

Small farms that participate in the local food movement have made great strides in advocating against the unhealthy and unsustainable practices of the industrial agricultural complex that dominate our global food system. This has lead to a higher quality of food production and environmentally sustainable consumption practices have become the expectation. Many small farms’ dependency on exploitation of migrant labor, going against our romanticized image of the family farm, shows a disconnect between our popular concern for ethical cultivation of produce and livestock and concern for the ethical treatment of the laborers who do it. The romanticized image of what an American farm looks like has also become racially homogeneous in the United States as a history of oppression and racially prejudiced policies have forced African-Americans out of organized agriculture with few left to advocate for the vital role agriculture plays in the defense of black land ownership.

This thesis looks to analyze the opportunities culturally threatened neighborhoods within American cities have through intersection with the tourism industry and the local and organic food movements. Through critique of the successes and shortcomings of tourism and farming, an argument will be made for the potential neighborhood farms have to utilize the flourishing agritourism industry as a way of promoting more sustainable lifestyle practices through connecting tourists with the process of growing food, its relationship to the larger environment, and the communities most influenced by injustices that exist within America’s food system. It will look at tourism through a lens of knowledge and self improvement rather than leisure and the opportunity to develop resorts as community and education centers rather than places of privilege. Through this model, neighborhood farms would advocate for food and environmental justice while fostering resilience within communities of color who have been less visible despite being just as active in America’s agricultural revolution.
Implications of cultural ecotourism

The global tourism industry is in the midst of a paradigm shift. As the effect we have on our environment becomes a more conventional consideration, it has influenced choices of vacation destinations and the environmental impact of the lodging we choose when we travel. This comes at a time when interest in nature and wildlife tourism is on the rise while the traditional 'sun-and-sand' vacation destination has reached market saturation with not much expectation for growth. Most of the nature and wildlife tourism market exists outside of the continental United States, in African as well as Central and South American countries with unique ecologies and cultures. The governments of countries like Ecuador, Costa Rica, Tanzania, and Zanzibar intend to capitalize on these desires for unique experiences and environmentally sustainable travel by promoting themselves as ecotourism destinations. While the specifics of what this means varies from place to place, the consistent definition for ecotourism is “Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people”.

The first part of the statement of intent of an ecotourism resort deals largely with the design and site strategies of ecotourism destinations. Most put forth significant effort towards building structures from local materials and with a regional vernacular best suited to the construction techniques available and local climate. Many resorts and destinations have strict conservation policies that control where tourists are allowed to tread in order to have the smallest footprint possible on the plant and animal species of the region. In cases like in the Galapagos Islands the ecology is the main focus of local tourism. Some intervention into plant and animal habitats have historically been allowed for scientists and environmentalists. As this form of ecotourism has become more popular with the average tourist, waste and environmental footprint have become much more difficult to manage. Across the industry ecotourism destinations are being forced to contend with the design and logistical issues that come with scaling to meet increased demand while maintaining their core values.
British-owned Fundu Lagoon in Zanzibar provides electricity, a school, a well, a farming cooperative, medical services, and other communal amenities to the local villages near the remote resort.

Maintaining an ecologically friendly relationship between tourists and wildlife becomes more challenging in places like the Galapagos Islands that are growing exponentially in popularity.

The later portion of the statement acknowledges that there is always a local population for whom an ecotourism resort’s presence will have consequences and some relationship must be forged between the parties. Ecotourism resorts are sometimes owned by European Westerners who have to put forth significant effort to make their intervention one that is as mutually beneficial as it can be. Resort owners attempt to hire from within local towns and villages and sometimes build schools and other civic buildings in the area to provide basic education and community services as a form of good will and betterment. In many cases interacting with the local culture is part of the ecotourism experience. This is quite common in African tourism and can be financially beneficial for local villages with rich cultural capital who can take advantage of tourists desire to have authentic cultural experiences as part of their vacation. These attempts at positive interventions are not always successfully or carefully undertaken and sometimes relationships can be tense, especially in locations with a history of colonialism and at resorts that seclude themselves away from the local population. Not only is there a historical imbalance of power in many countries where ecotourism is popular, but resort owners and the state receive a significant majority of what is to be gained financially from the ecotourism industry and the local populations around these resorts wield little power to control the level of intervention ecotourism has on their lives. Many villages feel pressure to allow their local culture to be exploited for financial gain, often generating a watered down or completely unauthentic version of their local customs in order to please tourists. They know what Westerners exotify and, in many places where tourism has become the primary industry, must cater to that in order to make ends meet.\textsuperscript{2}

There are many benefits to an ecotourism model for resorts and travel destinations. Its growing popularity shows a shift in the attitude the public has towards the experience of tourism. People increasingly expect a certain degree of environmental sustainability for their lodging and a consideration for its impact on the surrounding ecology. They also expect cultural experiences that are unique and authentic and to learn something from the experience about a culture or an environment previously unknown.\textsuperscript{1} This departure from the popular expectation of what it means to take a vacation requires further exploration into other equally fulfilling environmental and cultural experiences and ones that are inherently less environmentally taxing or culturally exploitative. Tourists in general do not yet desire to learn something from a vacation experience that effects their day to day life. Here lies the opportunity to effect lifestyle and cultural understanding through a tourism experience rooted in environmentalism and education, but one more pragmatically engaging than is the norm.

Galapagos Islands
Tourism Growth in the thousands [1]
African tourism more likely to be culturally exploitative as Western tourists travel there in particular to experience cultures they perceive as exotic.
The Cuban food system
A shift in the Cuban food system has taken place in the last 30 years that has transformed its relationship with agriculture. After decades of relying almost exclusively on agricultural and industrial imports and exports from the Soviet Union, its collapse in the 1990s forced Cuba into economic ruin and a dramatic food security crisis. During this time referred to as the Special Period in Times of Peace, Cuba had to become almost exclusively self-reliant on its own agricultural production. With no way to import agricultural machinery, petrochemicals, or fertilizers Cuba had no choice but to embrace the organic small farm model to provide for its people. The Cuban government set up programs to incentivize farming as hyperlocal from patios of urban residences to larger scale organic farms in rural settings. Arguably, the most successful arrangement by the Cuban government has been the creation of the organopónico, a system of urban organic farming that utilizes public urban space. Organopónicos employ residents of the urban neighborhoods that surround them and the skilled labor of urban agriculturists, one of the fastest growing fields in Cuba in the 21st century, to cultivate the land. Farm labor jobs have some of the highest wages in the country and many urban farms rely on the co-op model, stratifying the financial success of the farm across its workforce. Their placement in the heart of urban neighborhoods and good reputation in Cuban culture allow organopónicos to become a part of the urban fabric by serving the functions of community centers and town halls. Cuba has continued to expand its environmental quality improvement efforts to protect, air, soil, and water quality beyond just those made necessary by the Special Period. Agroecological urban agriculture in Cuba has led the country to think more critically about how its pollution affects the quality of its food and its ability to be a productive and healthy system.
The co-op model of urban farming in Cuba allows for a feeling of community buy-in that promotes integration of an urban farm with its surrounding neighborhood. Many organic farms in Cuba are located within converted public squares in large barrios or city centers, easily accessible to the residents who work for them and purchase their food from them.
The American food system
A major shift in the American relationship with agriculture is taking place across the country as consumers concerns shift towards food that is locally grown, organic or free of genetic modification, ethical treatment of livestock, and desire for greater reliance on our own individual ability to cultivate our food. After a period of nationally depending largely on industrial scale factory farms, small scale producers have reestablished themselves in the market through local food systems like farmer’s markets, local restaurants, and mom and pop grocery stores. Akin to ecotourism, and many other aspects of current American culture, a sense of authenticity contributes to the desire for connection with small farms and direct to consumer agriculture.¹ The direct-to-consumer relationship between farms and individuals is a notion that has become romanticized to a degree, but also implies trust in the healthiness and ethical handling of the food being produced. The ethical principles consumers desire to be upheld by the small farms they support rarely extend beyond produce and livestock to the men and women who are employed to cultivate them. In the last 30 years a transition has taken place from reliance on domestic labor on small farms to foreign labor, both legal migrant and undocumented. This arrangement can be one that is mutually beneficial. Small farms need seasonal low wage labor to be competitive with the industrial agricultural complex and migrant workers can make a large amount of money in a short time. The success of this relationship depends on the farm and issues related to equity and power are inevitable consequences.² Some farms put great care into their on site accommodation and set rules controlling the pay, hours, and intensity of work. Others put more effort into carefully tucking away the on-site housing they provide for migrant laborers, considering the reliance on migrant or illegal labor to be outside of the small farm branding image they wish to create for themselves. It’s also telling of the relationship they have with their undocumented or migrant workforce, having little respect for their rights or humanity.³

“The ethical principles consumers desire to be upheld by the small farms they support rarely extend beyond produce and livestock to the men and women who are employed to cultivate them.”
Migrant or undocumented labor make up the bulk of the American small farm work force, leaving their home country seasonally or for years at a time to make a living.
The current state of American agritourism ignores our racially charged agricultural history, which must be addressed if it intends to be inclusive. Many current food related issues that affect black Americans more than other groups stem from a history of oppression by (and exclusion from) our agricultural institutions and opportunities for land ownership. After the Civil War many African-Americans were determined to continue work in agriculture in their own right. Sherman’s Special Field Orders No. 15, commonly referred to as ‘40 Acres and a Mule’, originally allowed the belief that America, under Lincoln, was willing to attempt restitution for the enslavement of black Africans. This progressive decision was short lived as President Andrew Johnson, who was sympathetic to the South, quickly overturned the order upon taking office and stripped 40,000 freedmen of the land they’d recently been allotted along the Southern Atlantic coast. It was returned it to the former Confederate rebels who’d recently lost the war they were responsible for initiating. African Americans had no choice but to depend on sharecropping, a system of tenant farming employed in the post Civil War South, and government sponsored programs that attempted to bolster land ownership. This rise towards agricultural agency was short lived peaking at 15 to 20 million acres of farmland ownership in the early 20th century. A racially prejudiced system of offering USDA farm loans as well as mistreatment of sharecroppers by unsympathetic southern white land owners has slowed, and at some points prevented, growth of black land ownership. Lack of access to legal representation or political power to fight racist lending practices and land ownership laws has exacerbated these problems over the past century and today black farm ownership has declined by 98% with less than 2 million acres of land owned.

While the stigmas about farming in the black community may be rooted in slavery, it is not the primary reason there are not more African-American farmers in the United States. Black farming advocates agree that time and education are the best ways to begin reversing this trend and that both grass roots efforts like backyard gardening and cooperation between black farmers will begin to increase the number of black farmers in America once again. Across the country prejudices against black farmers still continue to shape their experience and space to educate about and organize against these practices is a necessity.
“American agriculture must also contend with the racist undertones that have shaped our agricultural system and our image of what the American farmer looks like.”
While American and Cuban agriculture have evolved quite differently over the past few decades, both have concluded that localized organic farm systems that emphasize individual and community involvement with our food production is the future of sustainable urban agriculture. While Cuba’s agricultural evolution has been able to rely on government support to make the transition, American small farmers have struggled to compete with the low prices offered by factory farm production. This has lead to a stark divide between the relationship each farm system has with its labor force, its community, and in turn the comprehensiveness of its food ethic. The competitive nature of the American food economy forces farmers to pay closer attention to ethically cultivated produce and livestock over ethical treatment of its farm labor because this issue has yet to drive the purchasing decisions of its consumers. American agriculture must also contend with the racist undertones that have shaped our agricultural system and our image of what the American farmer looks like. Much work still has to be done to confront Americans with the realities of agricultural labor and the tradition of racial prejudice that still shapes the industry. An agritourism that promotes awareness of alternative agricultural labor models can encourage consumers to demand a more comprehensive food ethic. An agritourism that encourages engagement with more diverse set of farmers can change the image of what a farmer looks like in the American imagination.\textsuperscript{1} The architecture of American agritourism should be responsive to our agricultural history in order to be inclusive and empowering.\textsuperscript{2} The site design and parti of agritourism lodging and its adjacency to the land should be contextual, but also mindful of the cultural memory of slavery and other racially charged stigmas associated with America’s agricultural past in order to be truly inclusive.

Growing, preparing, and sharing food has been always been at the center of community and culture. Sharing meals that represent the food traditions of our cultures has long been a way for us to find common ground and bring diverse groups of people together. Food is also a way to see the current state of a culture or community, as a community’s health and its nutritional health often go hand in hand. For this reason, communities recognizing an instability or injustice in their culture’s health or survival turn to food and agriculture as a centerpiece for their activism to correct or draw attention to these problems in a way that will bring about change. In the past several decades activists concerned with topics of environmentalism, nutrition, socioeconomic status, food access, and race have found agriculture to be a vehicle towards a solution for these issues as well as a productive way to draw attention to them.

Urban farms and gardens historically utilize blighted, typically city owned, lots turning them into an agricultural space. Lots like these are usually poorly maintained and repurposing them for urban agriculture improves the appearance of the neighborhood and expand its public spaces while decreasing its environmental footprint through soil remediation and improving air quality. Projects that utilize this grass roots approach have been taken on by community leaders and activists with a variety of agendas. Urban farms and gardens are used by neighbors to decrease their individual reliance on factory farmed goods and grow their own organic produce. They are used as education centers to teach organic farming and cooking methods to new generations and inform them of the effects climate change will have on our global food systems. Urban farms and gardens are frequently used to attempt resolution of food security issues in neighborhoods that have become food deserts with no local access to grocery stores. Through Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs that fill this gap in availability they are able to provide affordable and healthy produce to people who would not have access to it otherwise. Some urban farms are acting as community spaces to talk about and organize around issues like systematic oppression and what can be done to dismantle structural racial inequality. While many of these issues face us all, some are exclusively struggles of low income or impoverished neighborhoods inhabited primarily by people of color. In general the grass roots or guerrilla urban farms lead by the white middle class have better media representation and more access to funding. While urban farms lead by people of color in low income neighborhoods also have similar belief systems about the importance of nutrition and environmentalism, they are more likely to participate in this form of agricultural activism out of necessity and the lack of available resources can have more dire consequences.
High schoolers who participate in Grow Dat’s after school program learn leadership and management skills through the framework of urban agriculture.

Dennis Wilkes utilizes urban farming in Brooklyn to sell crops farm to market like he did growing up in Jamaica.


Some urban farms and gardens are attempting to close the racial and income disparities between black and white participants in agricultural activism and education. They understand that increased dialogue and collaboration between these disparate groups is the only way to achieve their goals of universal sustainable agricultural sovereignty. This must be attempted understanding the unique set of consequences that come with working in individual neighborhoods and communities and the social or agricultural justice issues that are most relevant to each. While attempts at equitable urban farming projects have a good amount of success generating concern for the issues of these neighborhoods, where they diverge is on long term success. When redevelopment and blight reduction takes place in low income urban areas, there is always the threat of gentrification following closely behind. While the intention of current residents may have been to improve the neighborhood for themselves, there is always the risk that instead outside populations with greater wealth may also begin to invest in the neighborhood. This historically has lead to a rise in property values, exodus of the existing community, and tension between the new and old residents. In cases where an attempt is made to resolve issues of food security, urban farms that don’t properly site themselves within the community with an understanding of the neighborhood’s context of race and socioeconomic history have failed to draw locals to the project. Instead of providing for the community in need of accessible food, these projects draw in outside populations who aren’t sensitive to the cultural memory of the place and perpetuate the alienation of existing residents. Whether groups intending to utilize urban agriculture in their activism, community building, or food education come from within our outside of an existing community, a thorough understanding of its historical, social, racial, and socioeconomic context is necessary for long term success of the project.
Jenga Mwendo started the Backyard Gardeners Network in the Lower 9th Ward of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina to provide a community space for gardening as well as cultural and educational gatherings.
Critical considerations for attempted solutions

Urban agriculture in America is still a young cultural project that has much to learn about what its place will be in our future. While every city is different, it is clear that the need for urban agricultural projects is only increasing and for this to be a universally beneficial and equitable endeavor, it will be need to be carefully implemented through well researched site strategies, programmatic intention, and design. As people more frequently consider this model for community education and outreach, there needs to be a more comprehensive study of potential ways an urban farm project can be a positive actor within the neighborhood, community, or region it intends to serve. Both urban and suburban populations have a limited understanding of their relationship with food. A growing trend towards seeking out sustainably grown and more ethically raised options has generated a desire to learn more about the way agriculture in America works. The cultural and racial divides between food producer and consumer has lead to a lack of thorough understanding of our food systems and has made us complacent in the passive role we play in food health policy and labor conditions for the people who grow and raise this food. The future of food education needs to provide a comprehensive understanding of the ethical issues that currently exist within both industrial and small scale agriculture to successfully influence the industry towards actual ethical authenticity and not just authenticity as a branding ploy. Agritourism design should facilitate spaces for conversation about and research into America’s agricultural past and ways this agricultural heritage shapes the approach taken to rebuild the African-American agricultural community. To best facilitate this dialogue, community focused agritourism should be sited within regions most affected by the systemic racism of American agriculture, and those lacking adequate representation of agricultural or community activism.

One of the potential obstacles for urban agriculture projects that seek to generate both social and financial capital is finding the resources to get them started. The trend toward crowd sourced short-term rentals will be explored as an opportunity for community building rather than community depredating by putting tourism control in the hands of the neighborhood at the grass roots level rather than non-local developers and entrepreneurs. The popularity of ecotourism and adventure tourism shows a change in what Americans desire to get out of the vacation experience and while the agritourism industry is still young, there is time to shape the definition of what one expects from its experience. Our desire to have a more hands on relationship with the cultures we connect with and foods we consume, either based on a concern for sustainability or made necessary by lack of access, has the potential to be explored through a tourism that emphasizes not only local culture and sustainability as ecotourism does, but also food and nutritional education. In urban areas that already have a strong tourism economy, there exists an opportunity for urban farmers to generate a new kind of tourism that offers a more comprehensive and authentic perspective of the local culture and well as a more comprehensive and authentic understanding of our food systems.

“The future of food education needs to provide a comprehensive understanding of the ethical issues that currently exist within both industrial and small scale agriculture to successfully influence the industry towards actual ethical authenticity and not just authenticity as a branding ploy.”
Shotgun-style homes like these are increasingly being purchased, renovated, and leased for short-term rental, fracturing the culture and identity of many well established New Orleans neighborhoods.

The Mardi Gras Indians are one of the many unique local traditions in New Orleans threatened by the unchecked commodification of cultural capital.

1 https://somethingfortheeyes.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/bywater-shotgun-houses-t.jpg

Annotated Bibliography:

Ecotourism and Sustainable Development: Who Owns Paradise

Martha Honey exhaustively investigates the global status of the ecotourism industry with in-depth looks at its history and the nations that actively participate. She explores the implications ecotourism has for the environment and the relationship resorts have with the communities they inhabit.

Food Activism: Agency, Democracy, and Economy

This collection of essays looks at the way communities around the world have used food and agriculture to unify around a united cause. It highlights the cultures who have used food to advocate for religious freedom, fight government or mafia oppression, and inspire reconnection with aspects of local cultures lost to westernization.

Beyond the Kale

This book tells the history of urban farming in New York and investigates its complex relationship with government bodies, gentrification, and activists for food and social justice issues that affect low income New Yorkers. The authors show how urban farming has been used to promote grass roots neighborhood improvement and the causes of people of color, feminists, the LGBTQ community, and the intersections within.

Ecotourism Architecture

Iacobucci in his thesis looks at the architecture of the ecotourism industry and explores the relationship the built environment has with the surrounding ecological environment. He evaluates various methods of resource conservation and gives examples of how it has been and could better be utilized by ecotourism resorts.

Wounds of Returning

Jessica Adams examines the ways that the commodification of black bodies did not end with abolition, but continues through the ways blackness is acknowledged or is ignored by modern plantation tourism. The majority of plantation home tour’s methods of whitewashing the slave narrative are hardly discrete, which is punctuated by the lack of preservation effort towards preserving slave spaces with the same rigor as preserving the homes of their owners, if even at all.
Food Farms and Community

The authors of this book offer an in depth and well diagrammed analysis of the current global food system and makes the case for a local food system with case studies of attempts to achieve a locally sourced and value based agricultural system. She also looks at ways agritourism has been used to promote the local food movement.

Cows Save the Planet

With the goal of investigating climate change solutions, this author looks at ways small farmers are experimenting with methods of increasing soil health and fighting climate change through agriculture. The major point the book intends to make is that small farmers are more likely to creatively explore options for fighting climate change than the participants in the corporate food system we largely rely on today.

Labor and the Locavore

This book calls into question the hypocrisy within the local food movement which is functionally only concerned with the conditions of animals and produce and not with the labor conditions of the workers who cultivate them. The author brings to light statistics on the almost exclusively migrant workforce that makes up small farm labor and investigates solutions for improving worker conditions.

Sustainable Urban Agriculture in Cuba

This book takes an in depth look at urban agriculture in Cuba, analyzing its transition from a state run centralized food system to a network of organic urban farms and gardens that provide all the food for the country. This change brought on by the collapse of the Soviet Union thrust Cuba into an agricultural model who’s success has far reaching implications for how other countries can adapt their agricultural development to address climate change, nutrition, and food insecurity.

Ethnicity, Inc.

As cultural tourism becomes increasingly popular, there are significant consequences that come with rampant human commodification. This book analyzes the populations being capitalized upon by the cultural tourism market and scrutinizes the effects it has on the survival of their unique ethnicity.
4 Design Precedents

precedent.1 the solar decathlon
  Washington D.C.

precedent.2 young worker & migrant hostel
  Paris, France

precedent.3 hut to hut
  Kumta, India

precedent.4 stony island arts bank
  Chicago, Illinois

precedent.5 systemic agro-tourism
  Arequipa, Peru
The Solar Decathlon is an international competition between collegiate schools of architecture held in Washington D.C. that asks students to design a solar powered, energy efficient home. These are ranked on their cost effectiveness, efficiency of their environmental control systems, and health and comfort consideration for the occupants. While the competition tends to be a highly academic endeavor from the point of view of the architecture community, the general public is able to view each of these houses during their judging on the National Mall. This event presents the opportunity for dialogue between the academic conversations about architecture, lifestyle, and sustainability and the public perception of these ideas and technologies in a way that is rare and productive for the dissemination of sustainable ideals into the public sphere. Short term rental provides a similar environment for learning about sustainable home technologies, designs and lifestyle changes in a palpable way. Agritourism can be a method of introducing sustainable lifestyle alternatives and provides a way to integrate food education with environmental education.

Solar homes remain open to the public to showcase their unique designs and technologies during the competition.

UC Lafayette’s Beausoleil was designed specifically to respond to the climate of South Louisiana.

The Beausoleil solar home floor plan was designed to allow for seasonal adaptability and passive climate control.

This project by the Paris Public Housing Agency at the perimeter of the predominantly Asian community of the city attempts to bridge this border by diversifying its programmatic use between an immigrant hostel, a young workers hostel, and a day care facility. The day care facility as well as other programmatic needs of both hostels, like laundry and gathering space, is shared with the goal of encouraging the mixture of diverse groups utilizing the space. Several aesthetic and sectional decisions are made to reinforce the client’s desire to increase dialogue between the Parisian and Lilasian residents of the neighborhood. The housing project sets a precedent for methods of encouraging dialogue across communities, which has implications for a community focused tourism. While one community will be permanent and the other short term, the sharing of communal space between them offers opportunity for dialogue that is not intrinsically a part of traditional tourism.
Commercial tourism in India has negative impacts on the environment as well as for the small villages frequently demolished to be replaced by large hotel complexes. A cross-disciplinary group of professionals and volunteers was brought together in Kumta, India to address these issues in the form of an architectural project in response. The Hut-to-Hut concept was developed as a way to promote an eco-tourism rooted in authenticity by making tourist dwelling units that are energy self sufficient and constructed from recycled locally sourced building materials. The small footprint of the project sited within a large farm reflects its intent to respect the local culture and landscape while stimulating small scale economic growth and promoting environmental education. This project’s consideration for the sweeping effects of tourism on a local culture is one that should be considered in a new model for agritourism. The desire to put tourism in the hands of the local populations, in this case farmers and villagers, rather than exclusively benefiting outside developers and entrepreneurs is one that sets a precedent for tourism related issues around the globe. Existing communities can directly benefit from tourism in this model in ways they do not currently in our corporate tourism economy.
The Stony Island Arts Bank, once a crumbling 1920s bank in the South Side of Chicago, has been renovated to become a gallery for up and coming black artists, a repository for African-American history and culture, and a community space for the residents of the neighborhood. Theaster Gates, the artist who envisioned the project, was able to acquire the building from the city of Chicago at almost no cost because of its lack of perceivable value. Despite its location and the condition of the structure, Gates was able to see the value in the building and what it could provide a neighborhood that lacked cultural resources in a city that only provides them to the wealthy. His desire to create a gathering space for artists in an under served neighborhood made the project successful as it was something the neighborhood needed as it stood without appeasing an outside demographic. A community centered agritourism would take the same approach to integration by locating itself in an under served community and providing both cultural and agricultural services not currently accessible.

Carlos Bartesaghi Koc’s Systemic Agro-Tourism proposes a post-colonial tourism for Latin-American cities located along the Chili River boarders in Arequipa, Peru. This project blends desirable components of urban and rural Peruvian tourism while attempting to shift the paradigm for what tourists look for from an ecologically-focused tourism experience. Hostels would be located within fields of crops along the river basin that would be terraced to accommodate activation of the waterfront. This new urban network of agricultural land along the urban waterfront unites both sides of the city that is currently culturally divided by the river. The fields would become a tool for drawing both tourists and locals to the waterfront. The sustainable design of the hostels built from recycled materials as well as guest’s and local’s interaction with farmers plowing the fields has the goals of increasing the environmental and agricultural awareness. This precedent for agritourism can be used in urban contexts that can benefit from alternative models for tourism creating stronger ties between guests and local communities. Agriculture can be used as a vehicle for strengthening communities and increasing their resiliency while allowing them to have a more sustainable and mutually beneficial relationship with tourism than currently exists.

The proposed hostels would be constructed from recycled materials.

This diagram of the hostels systems shows its plan to minimize its carbon footprint.

Site section showing terraced agricultural land along river basin.
Social & economical participation

CONTRIBUTIONS TO SOCALLY VIALBE ENVIRONMENTS
The design will integrate two social divided areas of the city connecting them through a Public Park. The pedestrian & bicycling network will enable the relationship between different tourist shelters & complementary infrastructure, along crops.

CONTEXTUAL RESPONSE & ECONOMICAL BENEFITS
The old abandoned tanneries restoration will be an opportunity to open new trading markets and broaden the cultural and commercial markets.

The economical regulation established between the touristic and agricultural activities is a homeostatic system that maintain a permanent level of incomes and regulate the local market.
5 Program Precedents

Precedent 1  Coro Field
Bangkok, Thailand

Precedent 2  The Rainforest Complex
Panama City, Panama

Precedent 3  Almagyar Wine Terrace
Eger, Hungary
Coro Field was developed to bring the farm lifestyle into the urban context. Located in a scenic town in Thailand, Coro is a phased project designed to bring these two contexts together through programming the fruit and vegetable farm with activities attractive to a variety of age groups. A gradient of levels of enclosure and a distribution of programmatic and gathering spaces across the property encourage engagement of visitors with the farm and its fields and green houses. Paths with seating are carefully carved through the garden and green house that connect the cafe and market with the amphitheater and play ground as well as with the shrine, all located at different corners of the field. This arrangement is an expression of the farm’s desire for visitors to engage with the agricultural process while utilizing all of the activities it offers its guests.

**Major Programmatic Spaces:**
- Green House
- Garden
- Playground
- Amphitheater
- Shrine
- Cafe
- Market
- Service Building
- Restrooms
The varied programmatic uses of the property ensure activity throughout the day and the seasons. Setting paths within agricultural space increases guest interaction with fields and greenhouses. Integrating communal space within agricultural space immerses visitors with the crops.
The Rainforest Complex is a conceptual project designed to bring ecological awareness to the Panama rainforest by placing academic and public programs within the rainforest in a way that engages students and the public with this sensitive ecosystem. The circular path connecting radially dispersed elements of the program highlight the rainforest’s beauty and value with the goal of teaching about the important relationship it has with urban Panama. The radially derived design diagram of the academic program of the facility focuses the view from its classrooms, lecture halls, library, offices, and visitors center in towards the center of the lake on which it rests and allows for expansive views out towards the rainforest in each direction. The visitors center, cafe, and open pavilion located along the single path connecting all of the elements of the program allow for interaction between all public and academic users of the space.

**Major Programmatic Spaces**
- Sanctuary
- Visitor center
- Open pavilion
- Lecture hall
- Library
- Classroom
- Office/Administration
- Cafe
- Kitchen
- Lab x4
Path connecting programmatic spaces offers a unique view of the encapsulating rainforest.

The Almagyar Wine Terrace offers accommodation for visitors to the Hungarian Eger wine region intending to emphasize the natural beauty of the landscape through minimal intervention. The small huts, proportionally and materially reminiscent of the archaic buildings of the region, and camping sites allow for overnight stays tucked into the rows of grapes. Paths through fields connect the overnight accommodation to the swimming pool and open air terrace where guests gather for meals and wine tasting. A lookout tower in the far corner of the property offers guests more intimate expansive views of the vineyard and the surrounding wine region. Multiple types of on site accommodation allow for both private and communal overnight experiences on the property inviting different types of tourists, from high end guests to backpackers, and group sizes.

**Major Programmatic Spaces**

- Vineyard
- Wine terrace
- Restrooms
- Pool
- Huts x3
- Tree grove/ Camping site
- Lookout tower

scattering communal program across the site activates the agricultural space

different types of lodging invite a wider variety of guests
6. CASE STUDIES

Case Study 1: The Kibbutz Movement
Uumm-J’uni, Israel

Case Study 2: Whitney Plantation & Evergreen Plantation
Wallace, Louisiana

Case Study 3: Grow Dat Youth Farm
New Orleans, Louisiana

Case Study 4: Vivero Alamar
Havana, Cuba
In 1909 a group of seven male and female Jewish immigrants from Romni, Russia formed the first communal farmstead and labor society based on socialist and Zionist ideas in Israel. This type of settlement became known as the Kibbutz and this first iteration became a model used by many settlements that followed over the next 30 years. All early communal developments of the Kibbutz movement were agrarian, valuing working the land and shared labor. They believed strongly in the Marxist principle that no person or form of labor was more or less valuable than any other. Direct democracy was key to preserving a non hierarchical command structure in which every member could hold any position in the Kibbutz eliminating specialization and proprietary knowledge. Their belief in shared labor, meals, and communal living arrangements allowed them to live happily with their limited financial and material resources, but as many Kibbutzim became more prosperous they became more dissatisfied with the strict enforcement of their foundational lifestyle principles. In the 1940s and 1950s members began to desire more personal goods and individual residences making the Kibbutz dynamic increasingly more similar to the capitalistically inclined settlements in the rest of Israel. While they maintained their democratic socialist governance, Kibbutzim increasingly sought other industry besides agriculture to keep up with the more lavish desires of second generation members than first. In the 1980s many succumbed to economic policies of Reagan and Thatcher taking hold in Israel and the Kibbutzim. Many aspects of the lifestyle did not survive this trend in Israeli governance and Kibbutzim’s dramatic loss of political clout forced them to abandon most of their founding philosophies.
Most attempted to develop a site plan and a design language that was indicative of this belief system and within their limited financial and material resources. Residences were small and dining and leisure spaces were shared among all members of the Kibbutz. The values of equity in agricultural labor are ones that resonate in today’s agricultural activism and should set the tone for an inclusive agricultural tourism. Agritourism design should more closely follow that of the early kibbutz than of the high-end resort. It should visually and spatially express the intention of an alternative tourism that is inclusive and communal rather than one that is exclusive and centered on the individual rather than the group.


The Whitney Plantation was founded on its location in Wallace, Louisiana in 1752. The ‘Big House’ was built on the property around 1815 under the ownership of Jean Jacques Haydel Sr by slaves owned by the family. The plantation under the ownership of the Haydel family operated first as an indigo plantation and then a sugar plantation dependant on the labor of enslaved African and Haitian people who lived in the plantation’s 22 slave cabins. The property depended on slave labor up until the Civil War and continued to operate as a sugar plantation into the 1970s. The property was purchased by John Cummings in 1998 who opened it as the first American slavery museum in 2014. The neighboring Evergreen Plantation is not explicitly a museum of slavery, but is the only plantation home along the Mississippi River that still has its original 22 slave cabins intact. The Whitney Plantation does more to document and memorialize the atrocities of slavery, but its slave cabins, purchased from other plantations in the region do not capture the scar of cultural memory the way Evergreen Plantation’s preserved slave village does. Together they create a more complete picture of the African American slave experience than they do individually. The site plan of Evergreen Plantation shows the strategic siting of the ‘Big House’ grounds where guests could enjoy the plantation’s gardens without being confronted with the slave quarters only a short walk away. The cultural memory of slavery is embedded within the design of the plantation and in turn in southern agriculture. Ecotourism resorts often utilize a site strategy not dissimilar in parti from the southern plantation. American agritourism that intends to be racially inclusive must consider this cultural memory in its planning and design.
separating agricultural labor from primary lodging emphasizes the dominance of the owner.
Grow Dat Youth Farm, located in New Orleans, Louisiana’s City Park operates with the primary goal of training young community leaders through the lens of agricultural work, collaborating on solving the public health and food security issues that confront low income New Orleanians. Grow Dat draws attention to the lack of healthy food access around low income areas of the city and has set up an agenda through urban farming to increase access to fresh produce and knowledge about sustainable food systems. The farm’s award winning eco campus was designed and built by Tulane University students to be a training center, teaching kitchen, offices, and post-harvest produce handling facility that acts as a central hub for the seven acre farm. This structure’s environmentally considerate recycled shipping container construction along with its sustainable land management practices provide a holistically considered environment for learning about pesticide and chemical free methods of growing crops and protecting soil health. Grow Dat’s eco campus stands out in City Park as an iconic structure that draws attention to the mission of the organization and the work happening within to improve the regional connection with fresh local food and sustainable lifestyles. Its location within City Park allows it to be accessible to the multiple communities it serves from a neutral ground on which everyone can start an equal participant in the process.
public location between neighborhoods makes the farm a neutral ground
In the early 90s, the collapse of the Soviet Union along with the United States Trade Embargo forced Cuba towards agricultural self-sufficiency in a time referred to as “The Special Period”. With the support of the federal government, many public green spaces were converted in to urban farms and gardens to help support the food needs of the Cuban people. Unable to import oil, fertilizers, or pesticides, Cuba got an early start as a part of the organic food movement and sustainable farming practice before mainstream US interest in similar agricultural values. The most successful of these organic farms is Organopónico Vivero Alamar. The farm, embedded within a dense neighborhood of soviet style housing units, provides vegetables, fruits, ornamental and herbal plants, goat and rabbit meat and other foods to the neighborhood and nearby restaurants. It operates as a cooperative with a strong sense of community amongst it member base and employees, each with a stake in the success of the farm. The pay and labor policies of Vivero Alamar are part of what makes the farm so successful. It's concern for fostering a good relationship with the outside community allows it to act as a community base for the neighborhood which gives it the opportunity to advocate for healthier eating habits in a time of rapid change in the Cuban diet from The Special Period to today. While on a much smaller scale and typically without the option of community buy in, this farming model has been utilized in many American urban neighborhoods, but without the same success. A closer adherence to the Vivero Alamar site strategy, program, and business model has the potential for greater integration of urban farms within the neighborhoods they are intended to serve.
locating agricultural space within a dense residential area increases likelihood of participation by locals
8. SITE SELECTION
thesis site pontchartrain park/ gentilly woods
New Orleans, Louisiana
Thesis Proposal

The proposal is for an urban agritourism and food education center. It has been developed with the intention of being sited within an urban neighborhood and desires to become an anchor for the surrounding community, providing services for both local residents and visitors. The program proposed is for a working/teaching neighborhood farm, a guest house with on site accommodation for overnight guests, and a multipurpose pavilion for community and guest use. This combination of program allows for integration of tourists with locals in a way that allows for a more authentic experience of local culture and a place to learn about our local and global food systems.

The neighborhood farm provides a source of income from the produce harvested and by being an educational and agricultural resource for the surrounding neighborhood. It will provide a space where visitors can learn more about home-scale agriculture, local food culture, and cooking from local farmers and other members of the community. Lodging accommodation is provided for guests who desire for agricultural education to be a major component of their travel and provides an additional source of income for the farm. An on site residence for the owner or property manager encourages greater integration of the farm with the surrounding neighborhood by acknowledging the residential context surrounding the farm where both the family farm and bed & breakfast scales are most appropriate. The community pavilion and outdoor classroom provides gathering space for use by the community and guests, fostering a close relationship between the farm and the neighborhood as well as allowing guests to gain a more authentic understanding of and connection to local culture in the neighborhood and the city.

The neighborhood farm will be developed with multiple scales of agricultural projects to teach neighbors and visitors how to begin growing their own food in a way that's tailored to their lifestyles, budget, and access to space.

Able to be grown indoors or outdoors, herb gardens are affordable and accessible with a variety of edible, medicinal, and aromatic uses. Vegetable gardens, whether grown in-ground, vertically, or hydroponically, require more time and space than herb gardens, but are still easily scalable. A green house allows space for hydroponic growing and propagation of ground grown crops. A vertical garden wall shows guests and neighbors that not a lot of space is needed for small scale growing that can be easily done at home. The orchard provides a larger scale income generating agricultural project for both the farm as well as potential food growers. These elements combine with the goal of offering an introduction to home gardening and farming with the intention of making the practice accessible to a wider variety of people typically excluded by socioeconomic limitations. Raised and ground plant beds show how home scale growing can be accessible to a wider variety of people typically excluded by physical limitations.

A gutter and tank rainwater collection system utilizes the roof planes of all structures on the site to decrease dependency on the city system for the water needs of the farm, provide a localized water source near all garden beds, and reduce site runoff onto adjacent residential properties and the street.
The neighborhood farm will be developed with multiple scales of agricultural projects to teach neighbors and visitors how to begin growing their own food in a way that's tailored to their lifestyles, budget, and access to growing space.

Able to be grown indoors or outdoors, herb gardens are affordable and accessible with a variety of edible, medicinal, and aromatic uses. Vegetable gardens, whether grown in-ground, vertically, or hydroponically, require more time and space than herb gardens, but are still easily scalable. The orchard provides a larger scale income-generating agricultural project for both the farm as well as potential food growers. These elements combine with the goal of offering an introduction to home gardening and farming with the intention of making the practice accessible to a wider variety of people typically excluded by socioeconomic or physical limitations.
The caretaker cottage acts as a permanent residence for the owner or property manager of the farm. A guest house acts as a **lodge for visitors**. Three private guest rooms and two multi-bed shared guest rooms offer accommodation for different income levels and group sizes of guests keeping in-line with the intention of the farm to make educational agricultural tourism as accessible as possible. At this scale the farm and guest house could be manageably family-run where increasing in scale would mean hiring permanent support staff.2 True to its vernacular roots, a **porch** on all of the center’s residential and lodging structures creates connection between the interior and the agricultural areas of the site and the surrounding neighborhood. It increases the amount of outdoor gathering space and shades the lower floor. **Outdoor dining** and the **community pavilion and outdoor classroom** also increase connection with the neighborhood by providing space for community inclusive events hosted by the center about agricultural systems, gardening, and food culture. The community pavilion can act as a landmark in the neighborhood for local meetings and events. The porch, guest lounge, and kitchen act as an interior extensions of the community pavilion, leading the connection to community indoors and throughout the gathering spaces of the guest house. All elements should respect the **scale of the surrounding neighborhood** and vernacular of the region.
A caretaker cottage on the site for the owner or property manager encourages greater integration of the farm with the surrounding neighborhood. The guest house should be designed in a way that respects the scale, proportions, and vernacular of the region and the neighborhood.

The neighborhood farm will be developed with multiple scales of agricultural projects to teach neighbors and visitors how to begin growing their own food in a way that's tailored to their lifestyles, budget, and access to growing space. Able to be grown indoors or outdoors, herb gardens are a gathering outdoors for meals is a core part of rural culture and fosters community. A caretaker cottage on the site for the owner or property manager encourages greater integration of the farm with the surrounding neighborhood. The guest house should be designed in a way that respects the scale, proportions, and vernacular of the region and the neighborhood.

A porch is a core piece of local vernacular. The community pavilion provides gathering space for the farm as well as the neighborhood. The porch has its roots in American agriculture and maintains a core piece of local vernacular. The community pavilion provides gathering space for the farm as well as the neighborhood.
The precedents previously cited have informed programmatic and site strategy decisions for the layout of the center and elements or ideas considered important to include or to acknowledge in any iteration of the project. Most successful urban, communal, or touristic agricultural projects pay close attention to the relationship between the spaces for agriculture, spaces for gathering, and spaces for dwelling. They provide multiple vantage points for celebrating their farms and gardens at both distant and intimate scales. They allow for the agricultural elements to be highlighted in some parts of the site and to provide aesthetic backdrop in others as relates to the multi-use purposes many of these kinds of projects typically serve.
various choice of path increase opportunities for interaction

paths set within agricultural space

located within a dense residential area

different scales of lodging
In many places in the American South where plantation tourism is alive and well, the history of these agricultural spaces is whitewashed by omitting the memory of slavery from the spaces inhabited on and stories told about the property. This decision is barely noticed by many of their white guests, but one that creates a clear feeling to African Americans that their exclusion from this narrative means they aren’t welcome in these places still to this day. Plantation homes in the South were intentionally designed for surveillance by white slave owners of their slaves and the land they worked on. Without considering these relationships architecturally, decisions can be made that unintentionally revisit cultural memories that should only be acknowledged with attention and care.\(^1\)
Agricultural sites where there is a history of agency and dignity associated with farming and gardening are the best precedents for the way site strategy and parti should express relationships between the owners of agricultural projects and the laborers who work there. Utilizing a site strategy that expresses equity allows a project to acknowledge that there is a history of systemic imbalance of power and that it has intentionally been subverted. A project that intends to celebrate the work of farmers, gardeners, and other agricultural laborers should do so in its built form and architecturally acknowledge the ideas of surveillance, ownership, dignity, and community.
neighborhood scale
greenhouse and container gardens
vertical garden wall
rainwater collection system
accessible plant beds
multiple scales of cultivation
community pavilion/outdoor classroom
guest house and caretaker cottage

gathering outdoors for meals is a core part of rural culture and fosters community

The community pavilion provides gathering space for the farm as well as the neighborhood.

A caretaker cottage on the site for the owner or property manager encourages greater integration of the farm with the surrounding neighborhood.

The guest house should be designed in a way that respects the scale, proportions, and vernacular of the region and the neighborhood.

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Able to be grown indoors or outdoors, herb gardens are affordable and accessible with a variety of edible, medicinal, and aromatic uses.

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The orchard provides a larger scale income generating agricultural project for both the farm as well as potential food growers. These elements combine with the goal of offering an introduction to home gardening and farming with the intention of making the practice accessible to a wider variety of people typically excluded by socioeconomic or physical limitations.

SITE ARRANGEMENT:
SINGLE PROPERTY
A satellite site arrangement would utilize the typical New Orleans urban lot division by claiming vacant 30x160 long lots that divide residential blocks.
Pontchartrain Park was developed on the east New Orleans lakefront in the 1950s when many residential developments in the city were white only, including neighboring Gentilly Woods. It was special for being developed as a black suburban community with the same sized homes as neighboring white neighborhoods. Its amenities included the only golf course in the city black people were allowed to play on as well as several other sports fields that were also black only. Since the 1970s the neighborhoods Pontchartrain Park and Gentilly Woods have become more demographically similar, largely populated with middle class African American families and retired people. The area is now commonly referred to as “Pontilly”.\(^1\) Community ties remained strong up to and through Hurricane Katrina, which had devastating effects, although the badly flooded neighborhood lost a significant portion of its population because of the storm. Pontchartrain Park’s number of occupied housing units dropped from 97 percent to 76 percent from 2000 to 2010, a large portion of this drop was from its elderly population, many of whom who’d been there since the neighborhood was first developed.\(^2\) Long time residents have struggled to return in the time since Katrina. Since the storm the annual household income has dropped from around $60,000 a year to $38,000.\(^3\) While programs exist to attempt blight reduction and to return the neighborhood to its former density, many feel that progress has been slow and that the requirements for applicants to assistance programs are out of touch with the context of the neighborhood.\(^4\)
Site Selection Parameters

Demographics
The site will be in a culturally rich neighborhood or region that is currently or potentially threatened by tourism related gentrification. The site will be in a neighborhood or region where gentrification threatens to reduce or eliminate its cultural value by making it economically unfeasible for its current residents to remain.

Land Requirements
The site, or network of sites, must be large enough to accommodate all elements of the program including the urban barn, community pavilion, gardens, and orchard. The site must be zoned, or be available for rezoning, to a minimum S-RD mixed housing type to permit use as a bed and breakfast.

Cultivability
The site must have, or must be able to achieve through phytoremediation, a soil quality conducive to healthy plant growth. It must have enough space with adequate daylight for the agricultural components of the project to thrive and must be relatively safe from flooding.
The demographic makeup of Pontchartrain Park residents remains majority African American, but as redevelopment projects continue to improve the area the existing culture within the neighborhood could be in danger. Adjacent to the Pontchartrain Park golf course is the New Orleans Lakefront Airport on a peninsula in the lake that includes a harbor and marina. A development headed up by the owner of the local music venue Tipitina’s has agreed to turn an old riverboat casino dock at the marina into an outdoor music festival venue, Lakeshore Landing, with high end retail and water park. The tourism associated with this new festival venue and other redevelopment ventures along the lakefront is slated to have a similar effect on Pontchartrain Park and Gentilly as the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, held in the New Orleans Fair Grounds Race Course, has had on Mid City, the Seventh Ward, and other adjacent New Orleans neighborhoods being bought up by opportunistic developers looking to lease whole houses to festival goers and tourists. The short term rental market is one that has been heavily contested in the city with recent legislation to control the amount of short term rental allowed in urban neighborhoods, although in many places years of neighborhood depredation have already changed the neighborhood demographics away from their traditional demographics. Without careful strategy the culture of the Pontchartrain Park and Gentilly Woods neighborhoods could lose the rich community they have been working to rebuild since Hurricane Katrina.

The site selected near the border between Pontchartrain Park and Gentilly Woods is a collection of four lots currently owned by the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority, an organization creating a catalyst for redevelopment opportunities across the city through managing and redistributing residential and commercial property. These vacant lots in the neighborhood would be utilized to accommodate the developed program for the project that keeps in line with NORA’s goals of providing sustainable, efficient, affordable housing for established New Orleans neighborhoods. Other adjacent lots are available to be expanded into which allows for phased growth of the project and further integration into the neighborhood. This property provides space to show that the traditional bed & breakfast model can rethought using urban agriculture to accommodate for tourism in a way that adds economic and cultural value to a neighborhood and keeps that value in the hands of the residents of the neighborhood.

While the current zoning of each of these properties is for single family residential use, it will be shown that allowing for resident controlled rental through a multi-family residential zoning change can provide the tourism space needed in the area without having the negative effects of full-home short term leasing of properties.

After sitting vacant for over five years, the soil on the property has naturally completed parts of the phytoremediation process improving the existing soil quality. To reduce flood risk and improve soil quality, a new storm water remediation plan has been implemented within the neighborhood that utilizes several strategies to reduce the burden on existing storm water drainage systems. By enhancing the neighborhood’s existing canal, building a bioswale around the golf course, regrading and properly planting vacant lots for storm water retention, setting aside lots within the neighborhood as permanent storm water managing green space, and making street improvements through the neighborhood including a network of impervious pedestrian alleyways, Pontchartrain Park and Gentilly Woods will be better suited to handle future flood events. All of these enhancements make the prospect of utilizing property within the neighborhood for an agricultural project significantly more realistic and sustainable as a model for long term community improvement.
The community pavilion and outdoor classroom area located adjacent to both the urban farming program and the center of the property. By being in close proximity to the agricultural space, it is well sited for farming and gardening classes and to keep the focus on sustainable and accessible food always in the backdrop of the space’s varied uses. A guest house will be located adjacent to the front curb of the site so that activities taking place within it also are able to activate the street scape of the neighborhood and encourage dialogue with neighbors. The community pavilion will act as the neutral ground between public and private programming of the farm and guest houses by negotiating the fluidity of public to private as it shifts for each event and activity.
SITE ARRANGEMENT:
PONTILLY, NEW ORLEANS

Main House 2556 sq ft
- Lounge/ dining 729
- Kitchen 341
- Laundry/ Storage 110
- Accessible restroom 58
- Residency room 250
- Private guest room 184 x3

Caretaker Cottage 739 sq ft
- Master bedroom 298
- Nursery 131
- Study 190

Retreat House 1237 sq ft
- Accessible guest room 297
- 8 bed shared guest room 301 x2
- Event restroom 145
- Laundry/ storage 46

Total area 4532 sq ft total
A large kitchen acts as a teaching kitchen with cooking classes and lessons on food preparation. The space will be arranged to encourage group cooking and sharing of meals between the farm’s overnight guests and other visitors. The kitchen will be adjacent to a guest lounge/living room, which can be adapted for group events and lectures hosted by the farm for guests and neighbors.
The second guest house has two hostel style guest rooms, an ADA accessible guest room, and guest bathrooms for large events. A more intimate exterior space for gathering exists within the main structure, which is attached to the community pavilion and outdoor classroom for convenient and accessible connection to the restrooms.
guest house/ green house east section