



AIA's Framework for Design Excellence

As we are less than a decade away from the [AIA 2030 Commitment](#), AIA Rochester continues to include a focus on sustainability in our annual Design Awards this year and into the future.

Please choose a minimum of **three** of the ten measures of the [AIA's Framework for Design Excellence](#). In 300-500 words, please explain how your project addresses these three measures. You may duplicate this slide to accommodate your responses. **(The minimum font size should be 10pt/Arial.) DO NOT change the background of this slide.**

The name of the project can be mentioned generically. For example entrants can say "The education center was designed for the university." Instead of "the John Johnson Educational Research Center was designed for the university."

The ten measures in the Framework for Design Excellence are:

1. **Design for Integration: What is the big idea behind this project and how did sustainability inform the design concept?**
2. **Design for Equitable Communities: How does this project contribute to creating a walkable, human-scaled community inside and outside the property lines?**
3. Design for Ecology: In what ways does the design respond to the ecology of its place?
4. Design for Water: How does the project relate to the regional watershed?
5. **Design for Economy: How does the project efficiently meet the program and design challenges and provide "more with less"?**
6. Design for Energy: Is the project energy-efficient and sustainable while improving building performance, function, comfort, and enjoyment?
7. **Design for Wellness: How does the design promote the health of the occupants?**
8. Design for Resources: How did the design team optimize the amount and makeup of material used on the project?
9. **Design for Change: Is the building resilient, and able to easily accommodate other uses in 50-100 years?**
10. Design for Discovery: What lessons for better design have been learned through the process of project design, construction, and occupancy, and how have these been incorporated in subsequent projects?

The vision for Buffalo's Outer Harbor Master Plan represents a transformative approach to revitalizing the waterfront, bringing positive change to the surrounding communities. With the combination of State and Local governmental leadership collaborating with local leaders to implement the Master Plan, a targeted underutilized site was identified activate the City's Lake Erie coastline with new public outdoor space amenities in the form of a new multi-use performance venue. This ambitious plan seeks to reclaim a former abandoned industrial warehouse formally known as Terminal B and converting the building and site into a dynamic public space where the community can reconnect with nature, embrace active lifestyles, and enjoy a year-round destination along the waterfront edge.

The design team was commissioned by Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation to design an adaptive reuse of a 100,000 square-foot cold storage warehouse facility and surrounding waterfront site. The transformation of the building was a complete inverse of the former program for this facility. The question that was paramount for our team's design to respond to was *"How do you take a contaminated industrial site and transform this into an active public landscape."* Furthermore, how does the design team solve for the pragmatic concern of introducing a balanced ecological recovery while generating a human dimension - where the building and the site offer a vibrant, healthy and welcoming public destination.

Grounded in community engagement, the project prioritizes social interaction, recreation, and entertainment to enhance the well-being of residents and visitors alike. A key design focus was preserving and celebrating Buffalo's industrial heritage, creating a poetic sense of place that reflects the city's cultural identity, history, and aesthetic traditions. The result is a vibrant mixed-use venue, integrating an amphitheater and transforming the site into a park-like, pastoral setting.

TERMINAL B

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DESIGN
FOR

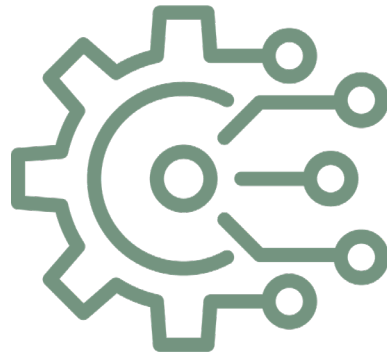
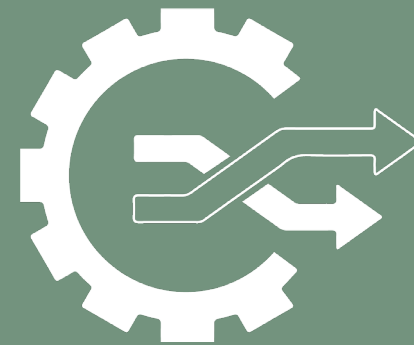
ECONOMY



WELLNESS



CHANGE



INTEGRATION



EQUITABLE
COMMUNITIES



DESIGN FOR **INTEGRATION**

The design of Terminal B at the Outer Harbor revolves around integrating functionality, accessibility, and sustainability to create a modern, efficient, and environmentally responsible activity for the residents of the greater Buffalo area. The big idea behind this project is to transform the previous industrial terminal into a seamless point of connection between the city, the natural environment and the waterfront. This integration is achieved through strategic planning, where the terminal serves not only as a destination for entertainment, but as a gateway that engages with the surrounding community and environment.

Sustainability played a critical role in shaping the design concept. The project prioritized reducing its carbon footprint by strategically adapting the existing warehouse into a hub of activity.

Careful consideration was used in retaining the existing elements of the warehouse while also reinforcing their durability as a strategy to reduce environmental impact.

Furthermore, the design focused on creating an inviting space for the broader community. Public spaces within the outer harbor are designed to be adaptable and serve as a catalyst for new and varied interventions throughout the park.



DESIGN FOR **EQUITABLE COMMUNITES**

The design team took a deep analytical dive into how best to adaptively reuse the former warehouse known as Terminal B. The original intent was to create a business environment, but this became too limiting. After multiple civic engagements and genuinely responding to the concerns of the public opinions the team referred to their core responsibility for the design of this site as the three R's. And so, this project is fundamentally about reclamation, reconciliation, and reconnection. The design team sought to reclaim a site that was previously an outlier and tangential to the citizens of Buffalo. By making this site a city-wide amenity, the designers reclaimed the site for the benefit of everyone. Reconciliation was another key theme explored throughout the design process. Designing without restarting allowed the team to meet budgetary and constructability concerns.

As an entertainment venue, the canopy is limited to usage throughout the year. However, the design is always equally accessible to all visitors. The design team had to create a space that was universally accessible to all occupants and become a public amenity when not in use as a concert stage.



DESIGN FOR **ECONOMY**

The project objective was to focus on rehabilitating the underutilized warehouse structure to create a public venue space with flexibility to handle a variety of events. While the existing building envelope and interior spaces were not salvageable the steel skeleton was reclaimed to create the framework for the new programmatic spaces while also serving as a landmark to the areas' industrial heritage. The existing concrete slab, which now would be subject to the elements, was prepared for its new use through the grinding off of years of industrial patina, adding densifier and hardener treatments, and installing a drainage system to alleviate water accumulation. The expansive slab area is intended to promote activities such as pickle ball, running tracks, game boards, and pickup basketball games.

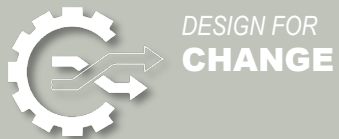
The project program also sought to connect events within the building footprint to the surrounding site with the addition of a performance canopy. The form of the "Bird in Flight" canopy, by structural necessity, required that the design team be economical with their cladding choice. A varied use of light weight corrugated and perforated metal panels applied as a skin to the structural framework allows for the canopy to reach out over the performers while appearing as a lofty mass in contrast to the skeletal framework. The structure of the canopy and warehouse were interlaced to reduce to amount of steel that would have been needed for a free supporting canopy.



DESIGN FOR WELLNESS

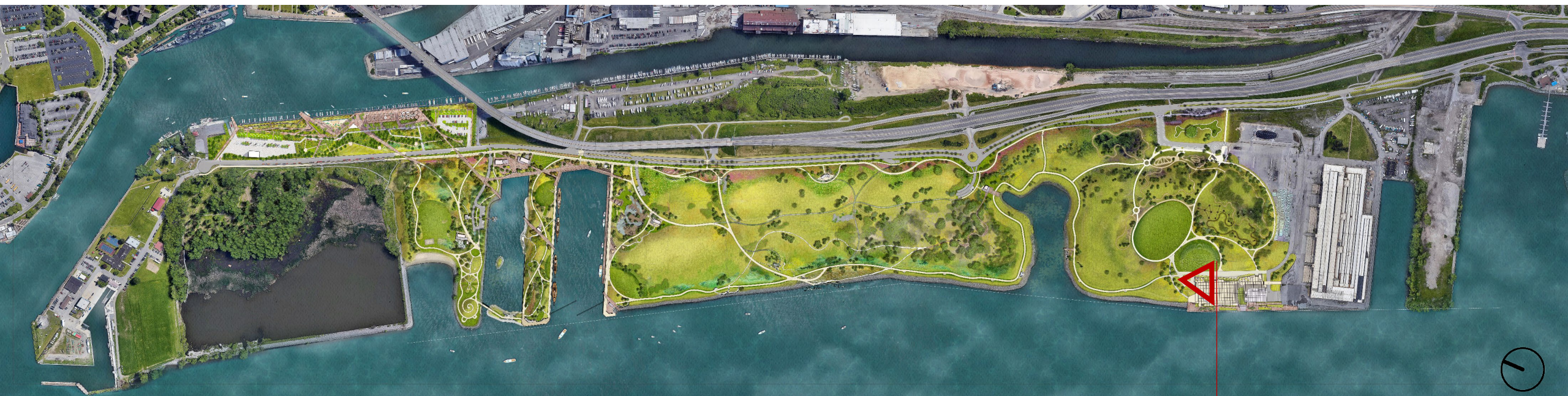
The Outer Harbor Park is a new destination for people within the greater Buffalo area as it promotes wellness through its natural beauty, recreational opportunities, and tranquil environment. Situated along the shores of Lake Erie, the park offers expansive green spaces, walking trails, and waterfront access that encourage physical activity and mental relaxation. The park's scenic views and fresh air create an ideal setting for outdoor exercises like jogging, cycling, and yoga. Visitors can also enjoy leisurely walks along the shoreline, taking in the breathtaking vistas of the lake and the Buffalo skyline. The outer harbor park and our intervention(s) are the connective thread that reconnects the inhabitants of Buffalo with Lake Erie.

The park's emphasis on green spaces also promotes environmental wellness, as spending time in nature is linked to improved mood, better sleep, and reduced anxiety. Whether people are walking, biking, or simply enjoying the serenity, the Outer Harbor Park offers a holistic environment that supports both physical and mental health, making it an asset for Buffalo's well-being and a model for urban parks. This is further reinforced by the creation of a destination of the amphitheater; as it 'pulls' visitors through the park and promotes engagement with nature and others.



Terminal B at the Outer Harbor has emerged as a significant catalyst for change for the residents of Buffalo. By offering new opportunities for environmental restoration and community engagement, the design team created a first installment of design interventions within the park. As part of the city's revitalization efforts, the Terminal B's redevelopment is transforming a once-neglected waterfront area into a vibrant hub of activity. It brings a range of benefits, outside activity, attractions, and recreational spaces, all contributing to the city's growth and revitalization.

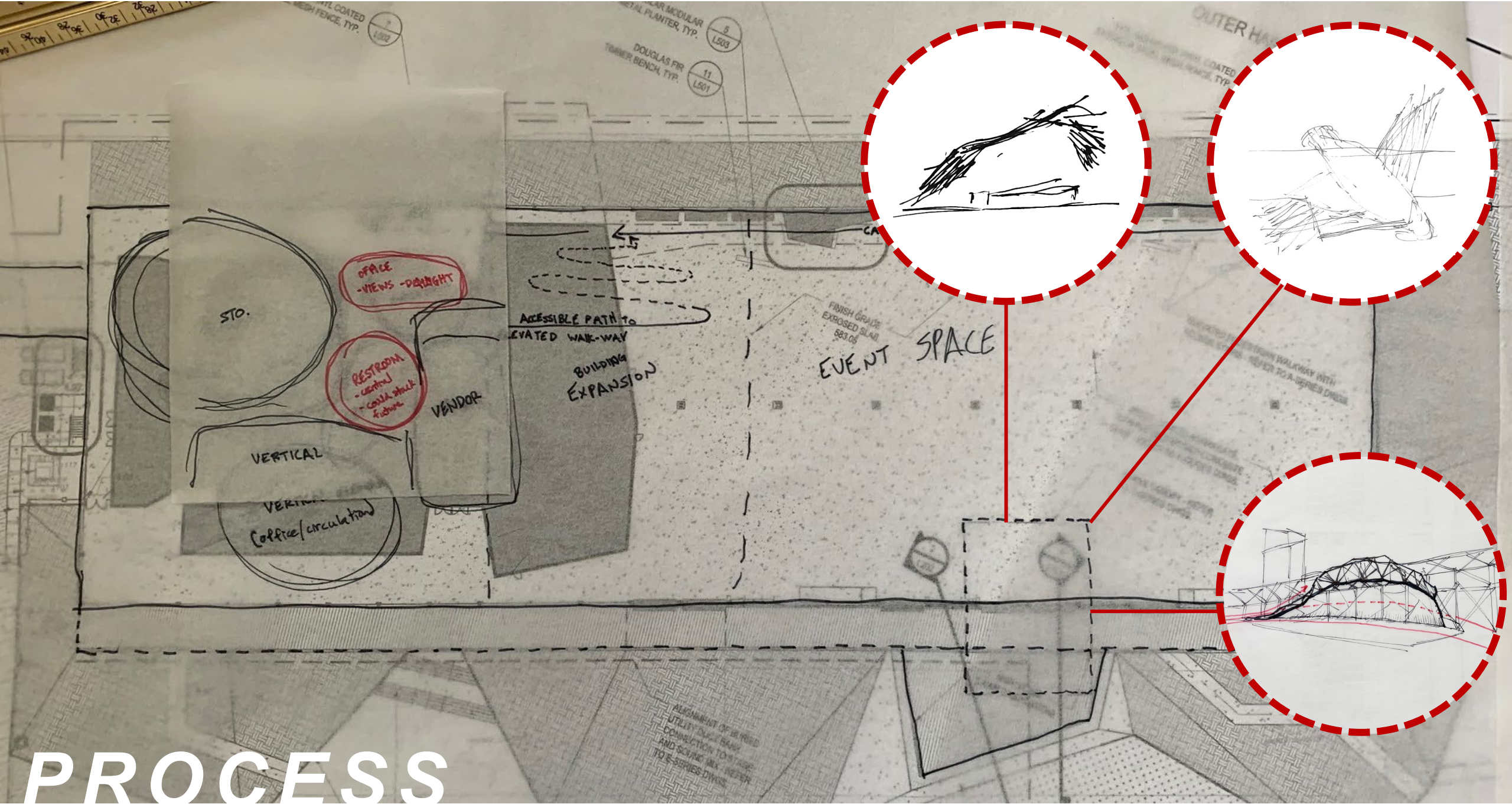
In addition to its economic and environmental impacts, Terminal B's development fosters a stronger sense of community. It provides Buffalo residents with access to improved waterfront spaces for leisure, education, and cultural events, enhancing their connection to the city's heritage. Overall, the transformation of Terminal B is reshaping Buffalo's future by improving infrastructure, boosting the activity, and enriching the lives of its people.



A DESTINATION IN AND THROUGH THE PARK

The significance of this site was not lost on our designers. In addition to providing ecological restoration through the entire site, our team conceived of rewarding the pedestrian path of travel through the park with the experience of the amphitheater. It serves both as an intentional destination and as pleasant discovery. The location within the greater development for the outer harbor was intended to be an intuitive and natural destination for the occupants of the park and serve as a greater amenity for the city.



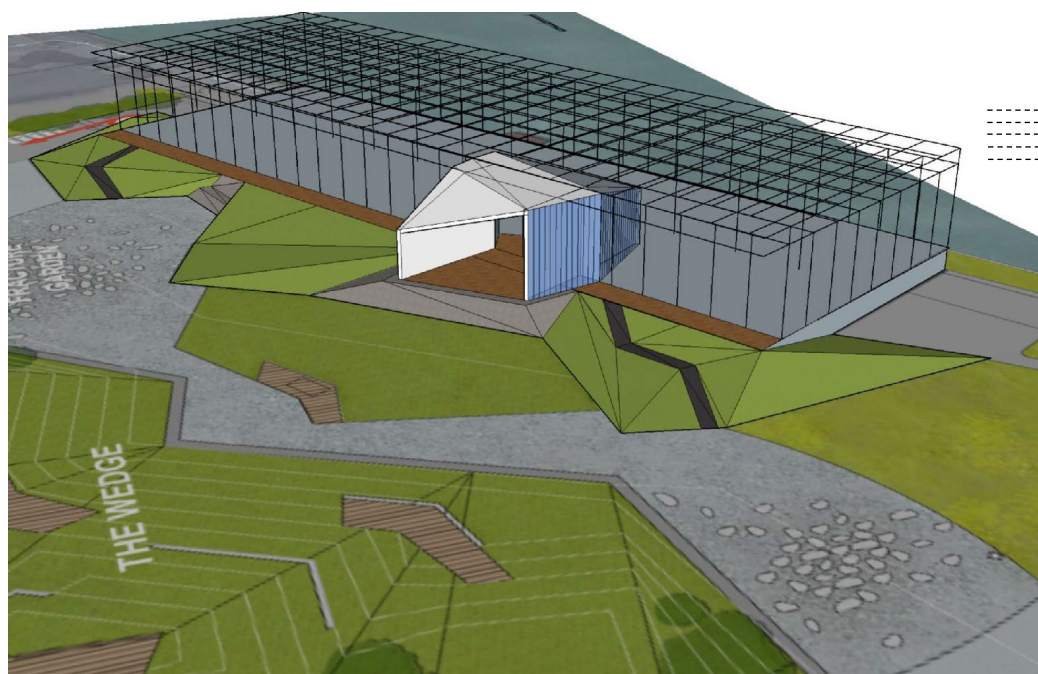


PROCESS





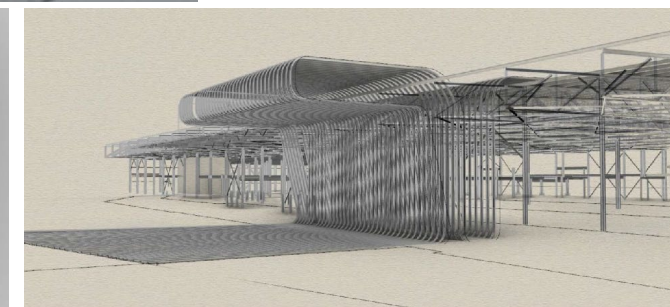
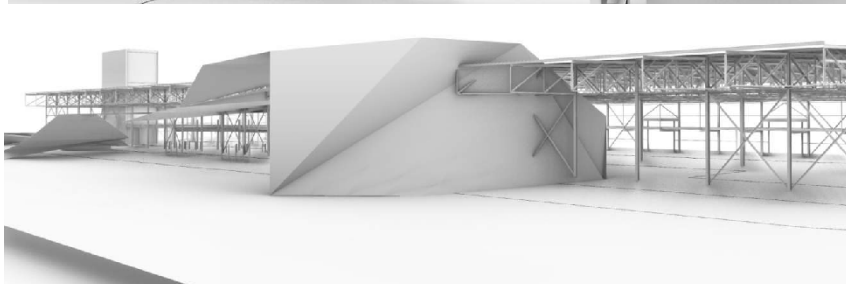
PROCESS



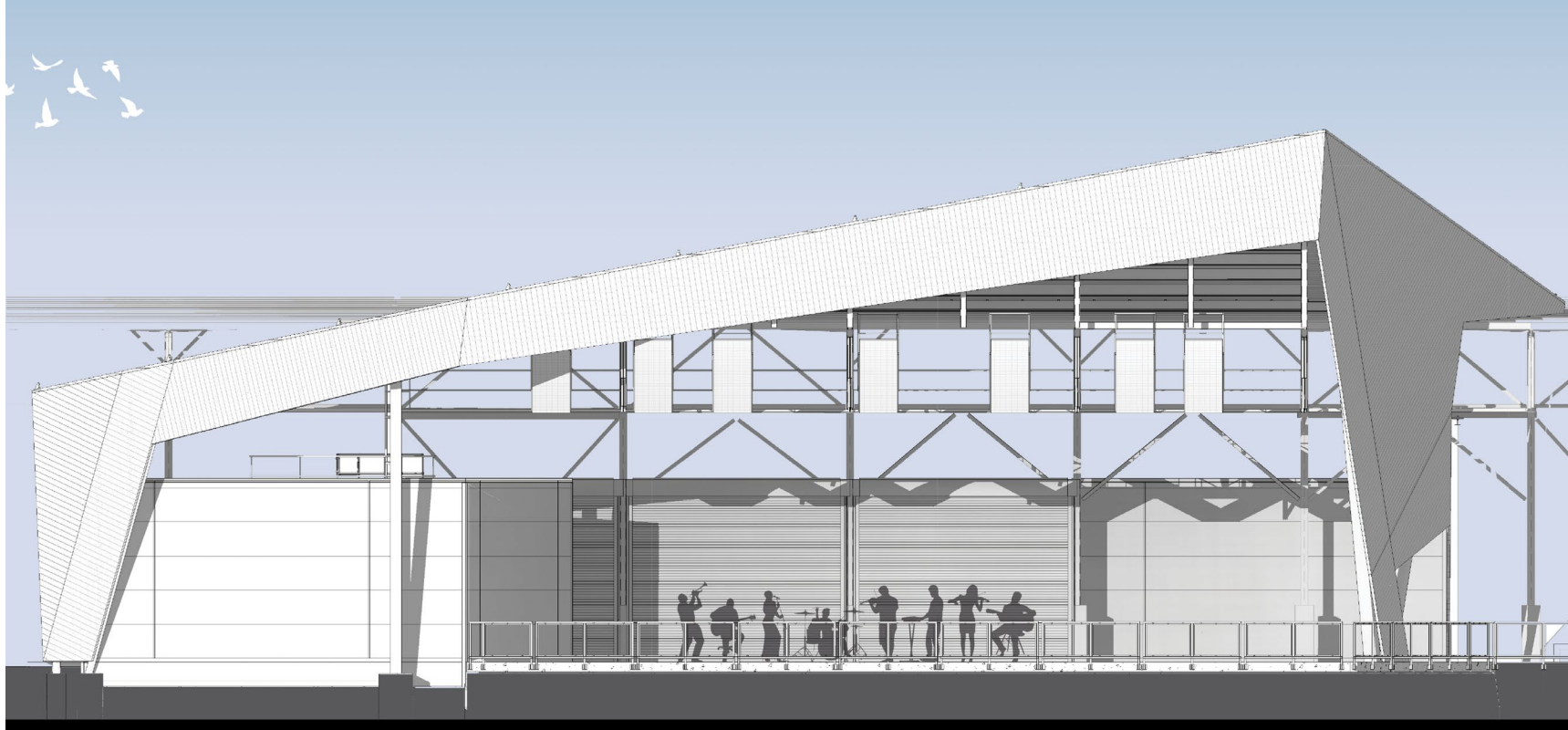
The design team engaged in internal charrettes

to facilitate quick iterative and unique design positions. While serving as an opportunity to democratize the design process within our own organization.

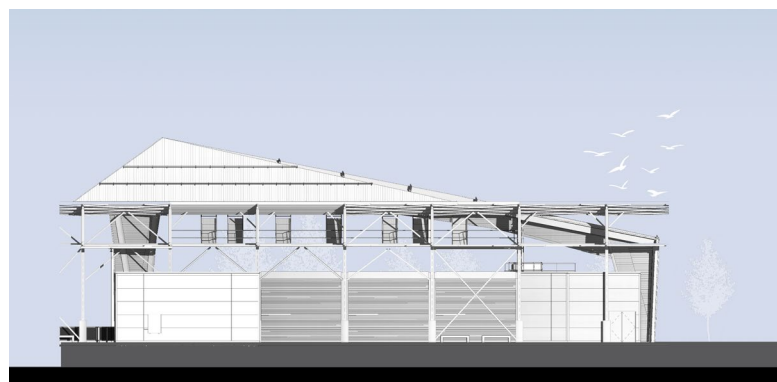
Discoveries were made and hybridizations of multiple schemes were realized.



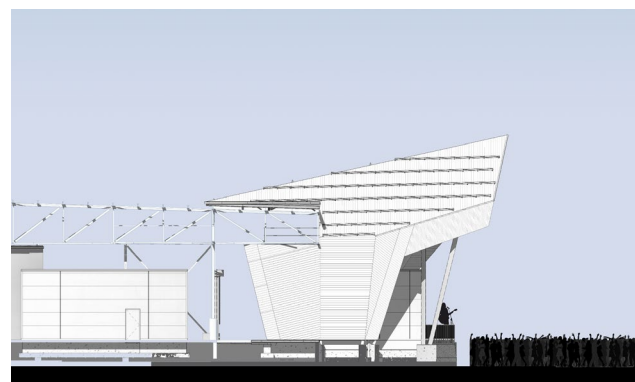




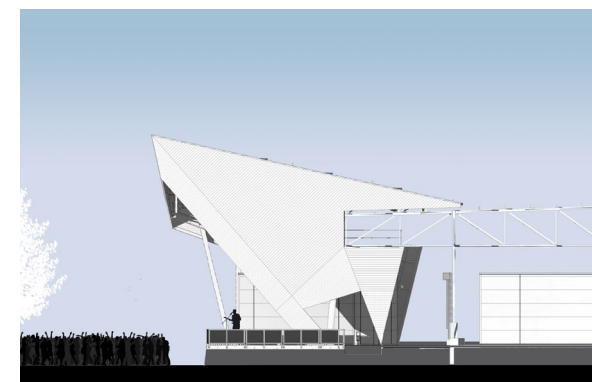
EAST



WEST



SOUTH



NORTH

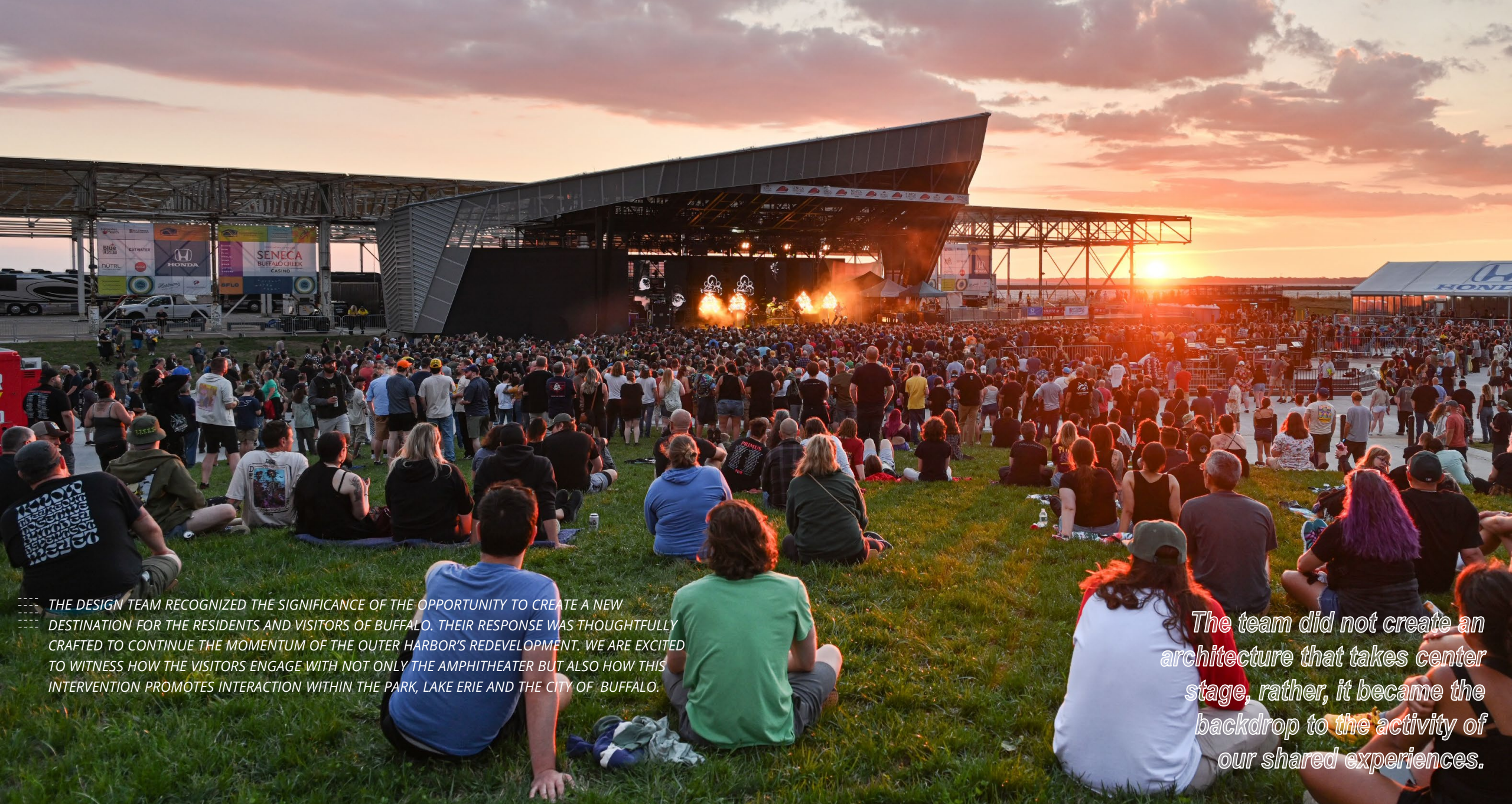




Serving both as a point of demarcation and as an easily recognizable feature within the outer harbor park – Terminal B's architectural vocabulary has become the defining icon for the Outer Harbor's official logo.



It was always the intent of the design team to create a layered and multi-faceted experience. There are a series of juxtapositions witnessed by the concert goer. The amphitheater against the existing warehouse structure, and the stage against the harbor. And at night these layers are reinforced by the choice of perforated metal cladding that allows the stage lighting to spill out and offer an ancillary illuminated experience.



THE DESIGN TEAM RECOGNIZED THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE A NEW DESTINATION FOR THE RESIDENTS AND VISITORS OF BUFFALO. THEIR RESPONSE WAS THOUGHTFULLY CRAFTED TO CONTINUE THE MOMENTUM OF THE OUTER HARBOR'S REDEVELOPMENT. WE ARE EXCITED TO WITNESS HOW THE VISITORS ENGAGE WITH NOT ONLY THE AMPHITHEATER BUT ALSO HOW THIS INTERVENTION PROMOTES INTERACTION WITHIN THE PARK, LAKE ERIE AND THE CITY OF BUFFALO.

The team did not create an architecture that takes center stage, rather, it became the backdrop to the activity of our shared experiences.

