

Hybrid Factory

Projects for an industrial park in Monterrey, Mexico

Design Unit Architecture and Urban Space, A.Y. 2022-2023
Architecture Construction and City, Politecnico di Torino

in collaboration with
Integrated Design Studio, Spring 2023
Architecture and Habitat Science, University of Monterrey

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Finsa Industrial Park, Mexico

Course topic

With the rise of industrial delocalization and the venture of logistics, industrial parks are becoming, especially in newly developing countries, increasingly oriented towards infrastructural and urban development. In many of these high-intensity production spaces, manufacturing buildings establish spatial relationships with a series of facilities that are fundamental to support modern production. Such intertwined relations between production, logistics, research and facilities generate hybrid spaces that unveil the contemporary industrial enclaves not only as extractive spaces but as urban infrastructures which provide the whole collective equipment for living.

However, despite the extremely relevant role they have in shaping contemporary cities, industrial parks and infrastructural landscapes seem to be more 'engineered' rather than planned or designed. Indeed, even if some of these parks are sometimes

fashioned with universal and generic labels such as "smart", "eco", "innovative", their development rarely addresses the intertwined relationships between global challenges and local places with respect of the communities and the natural environments. The consequent development often occurs through processes of land expropriation, colonization and capital accumulation without considering the potential interactions between new agents (human and non-human) and local neighborhoods, and without foreseeing spaces for collective life.

The design unit explores the growth and diffusion of industrial parks in Mexico, with the aim of developing hybrid settlement typologies where new infrastructural systems will act as catalysts for social life, collective well-being and nature protection, thus redefining the production/logistics unit as a basis through which to promote new forms of urban development on the edge of the city.

Course structure

During the first four weeks, the course will focus on activities necessary to make students able to understand the Mexican context: cartographic analysis of the site and lectures aimed at providing the theoretical and methodological tools for the project. Subsequently, the urban design area will be assigned to groups of 3-4 students who will be asked to deepen specific architectural design themes. Each week, reviews and discussion seminars will be held, alongside lectures from external guests.

Students will produce a research booklet dedicated to a systematic urban design strategy and provide their architectural intervention in coherence with the urban design strategy. Each solution will have to react to the existing overlapping and suburban fabric of the local community. Distribution, tectonics, and architecture will be the focus of the design for establishing new relationships with the existing built environment. Teaching activities may include intermediate exercises, carried out individually or in groups, the delivery of which is considered a prerequisite for taking the final exam.

During the final interview, each student must be able to give precise feedback on the work done during the semester and the project drawings presented. The evaluation will be the result of the assessments expressed by the entire teaching staff for each disciplinary contribution, but defined as a single overall grade, based on the exercises carried out during the semester, the quality of the final tables, and the ability to sustain the oral interview, the project, the lessons and the bibliography provided by the course.

All the activities will be carried out in collaboration with the Integrated Design Studio of the University of Monterrey which, in parallel, will conduct a project for an industrial park on the same area.



Projects site

The project site is located about 35 km north of the city center of Monterrey. It is a new development area, located near a highway, the interport and the Monterrey airport. The area is surrounded by suburban residential settlements.

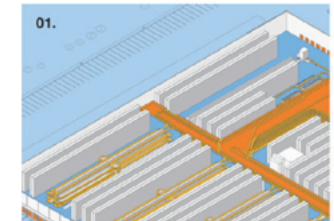
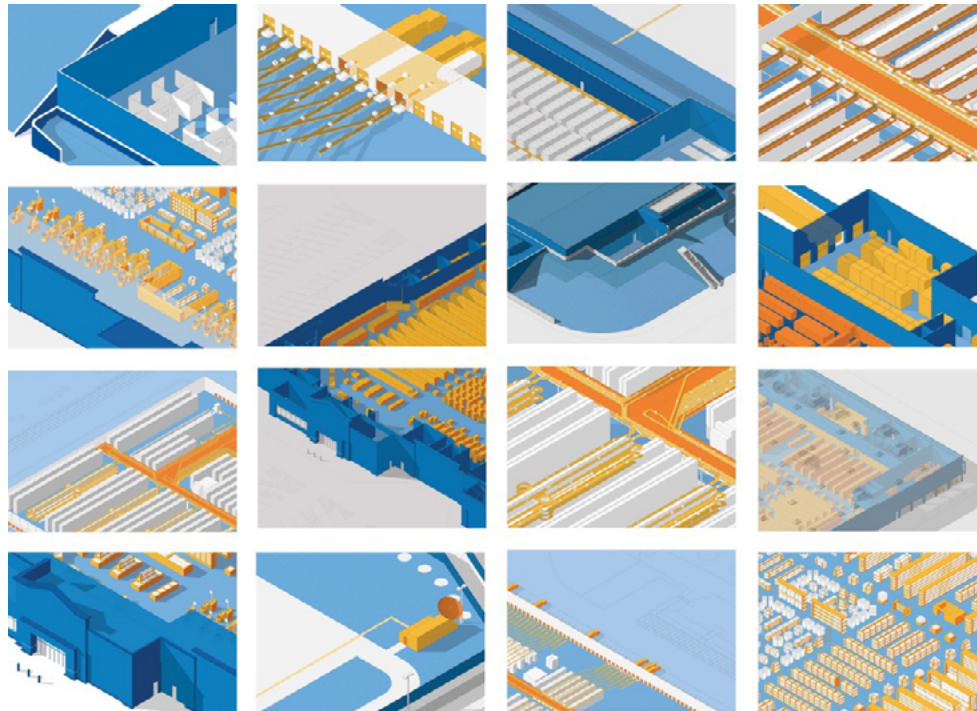
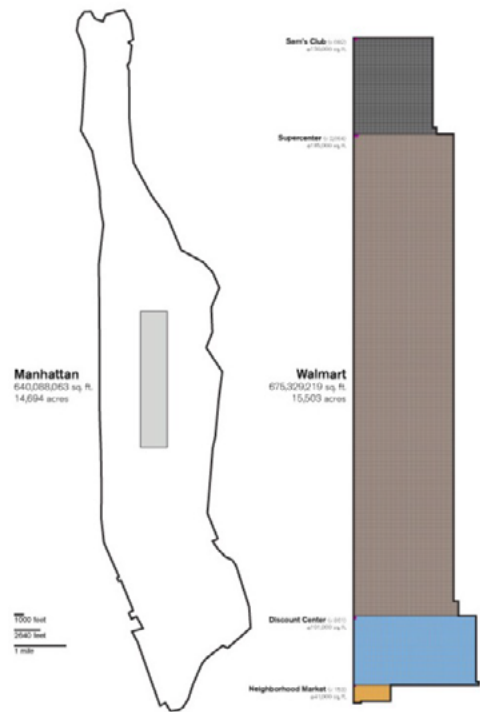




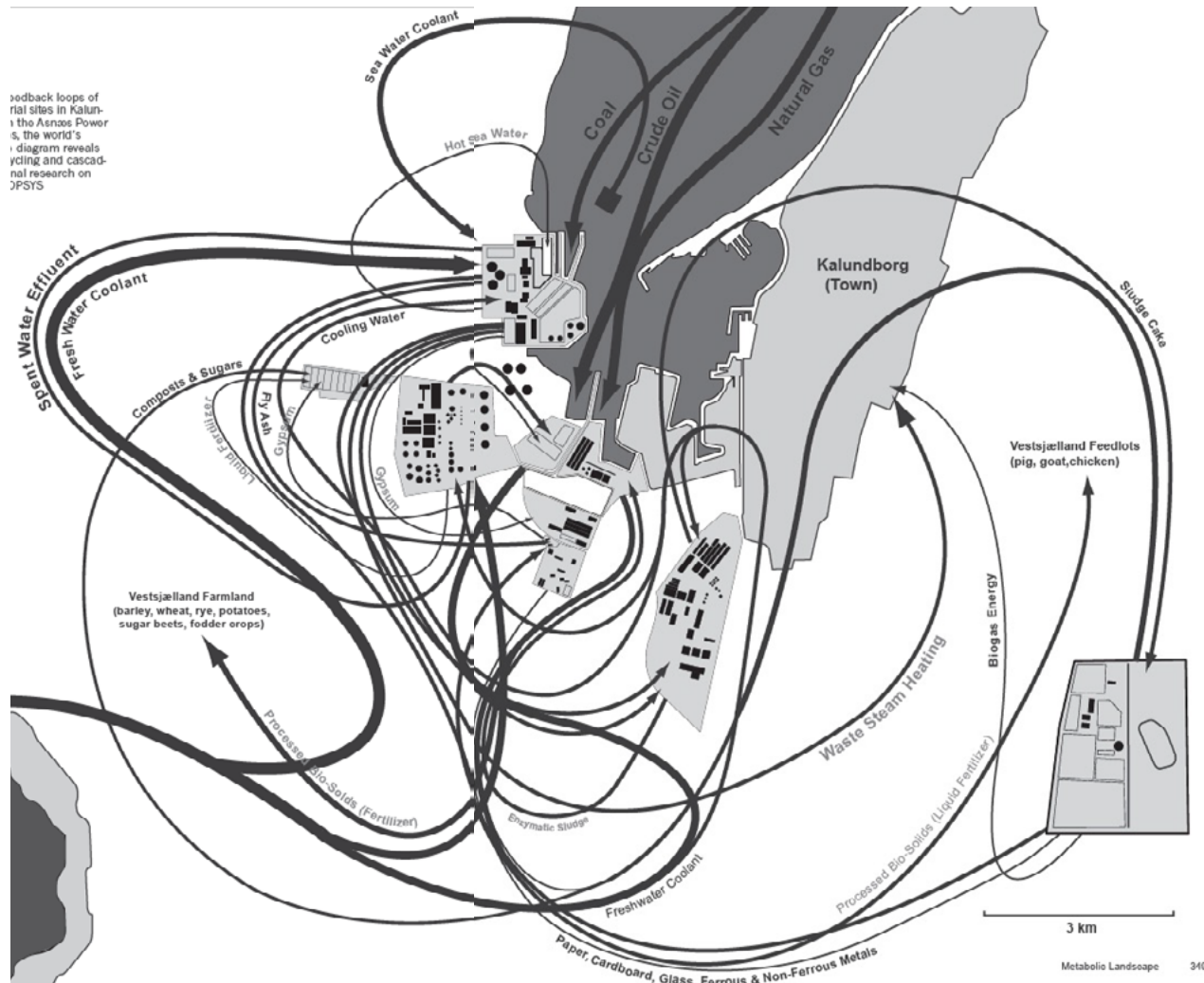
Walmart distribution center, Grantsville, Utah, USA

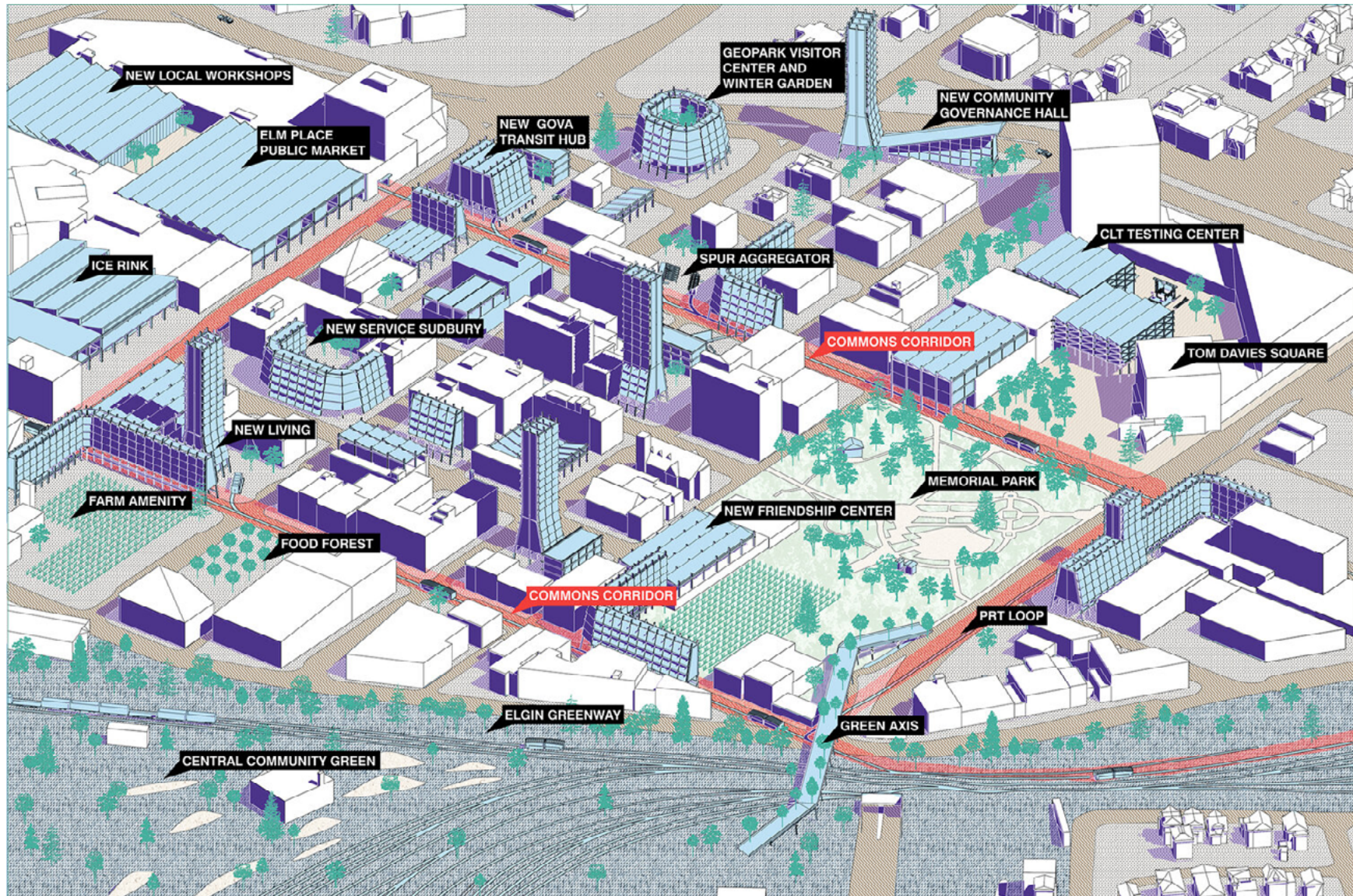


Tesla industrial center, Nevada, USA

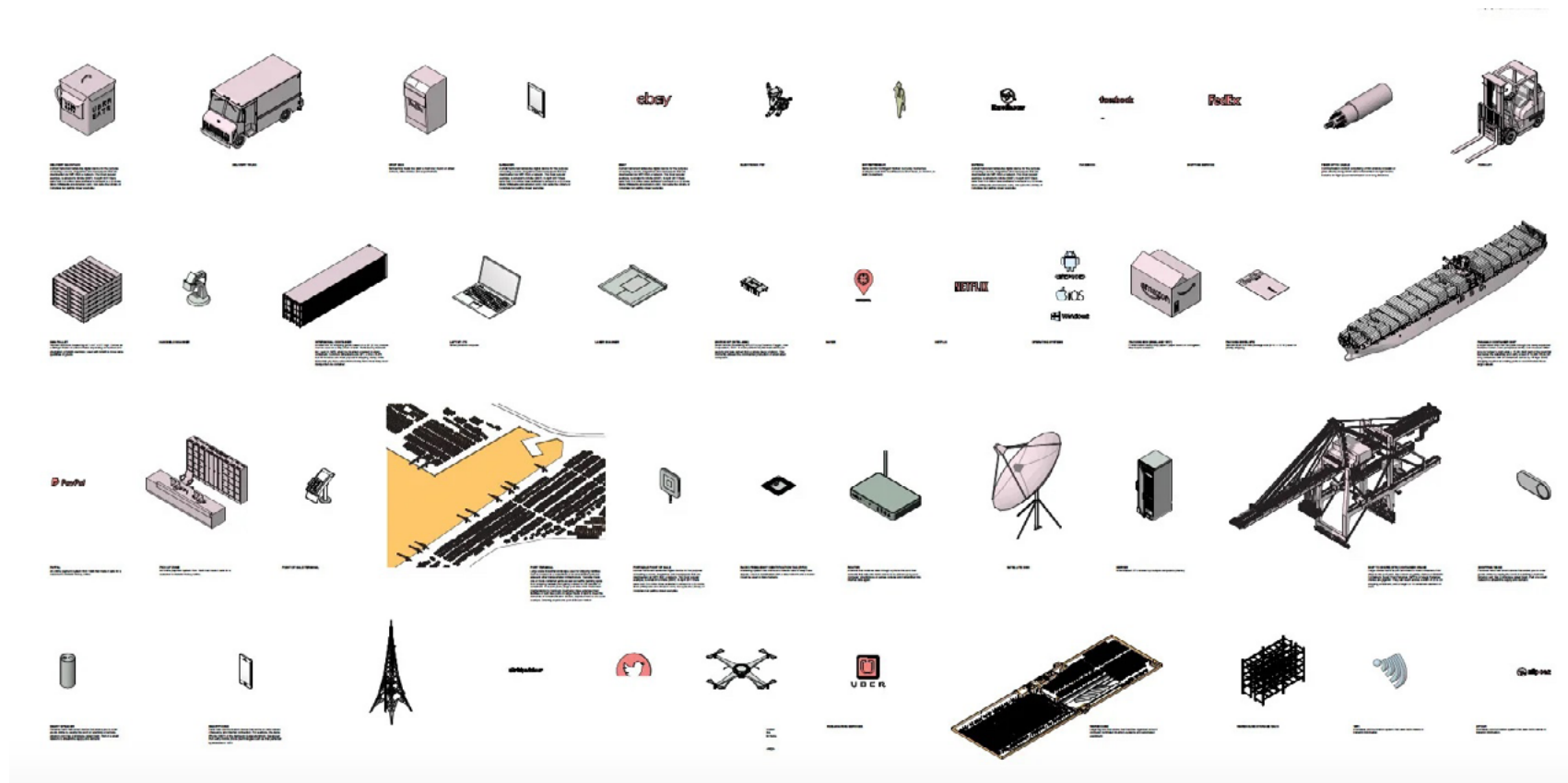


Jesse LeCavalier, *The Rule of Logistics: Walmart and the Architecture of Fulfillment*, 2016





Jesse LeCavalier, *Alimentary Urbanism*, Sudbury 2050 Urban Design Competition



Clare Lyster, *Guidebook to the Logistical City*, Seoul Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism, 2021.

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