RURAL REVIVAL
Rosalia, Washington
Adaptive Reuse for Rural Community Development

INTRODUCTION
The changing demographics of rural areas created by the growth of urban centers continues to impose economic challenges on these communities. Rosalia, WA is located in central Eastern Washington 40 miles south of Spokane and has a population of 500. The community plans to spur economic growth by renovating their downtown Pythian building into a commercial community kitchen available for residents and surrounding communities to rent with the goal of generating income for the city and supporting entrepreneurship within the greater Palouse. Additional plans for the building include a meeting space for 12 individuals, an office for clerical work and a community center with an occupancy load of 135 seated individuals. The building is currently used as a community event hall, hosting activities such as dances for the local public schools, birthdays, reunions, and an annual craft fair.

ELEMENTS OF ADAPTIVE REUSE
Transforming a previously underutilized building into an economically viable business boosts the local economy by increasing revenue and providing entrepreneurial opportunity.

The community hall act as the town’s social hub. Improving opportunities for socialization among residents encourages relationship with others and the community.

By reusing an existing building, the excessive waste and energy used to demolish and build new are minimized or eliminated.

METHODOLOGY

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS
Several workshops were conducted with the community of Rosalia. The initial meeting involved a panel of local leaders who discussed their concerns regarding the social, economic and environmental impact of the project. They provided information on projected and desired uses that were later translated into a design. After initial designs were completed, they were circulated throughout the community for feedback. Once the designs were finalized, they were presented to the community in an open forum display.

RESEARCH
Evidence Based Design
This project used evidence based design to meet user needs, optimize the functionality of the space and ensure a positive outcome. Research into community kitchen standards, codes and best practices was conducted. Other research priorities were Place Theory and Biophilia. These research insights, along with input from the community, formed the basis for this design.

Biophilia
Biophilia addresses human’s innate need for contact with nature. It was implemented in the design through recreating a connection with the outdoors by restoring the storefront and creating views. It can also be observed in the environmental graphic design which depicts images of the surrounding land. The color scheme and use of materials inspired by nature incorporated biophilic design. Variance in light, optimization of daylighting and variable sources of temperature such as windows and fans are used throughout the space.

Place Theory
Creating a relationship between residents, the town and the building was a priority in this design. Use of environmental graphics depicting images of the town’s evolution and surrounding landscape help to establish a sense of place. Forging this connection reinforces the identity of the community, creating loyalty and thereby encouraging community growth.

OUTCOME
Community Hall
The square footage for the community hall portion of the building needed to accommodate a maximum of 135 people. A desire for flexibility within the space was emphasized and accomplished through collapsible and stackable furniture enabling easy storage. The Pythian Building’s storefront was reinterpreted to reflect the original aesthetic of the building for modern times, meeting the desire for cohesion within the town’s architecture and integrating a sense of place by referencing the communities heritage.

Kitchen
The kitchen was laid out using evidence based design to maximize the functionality. Equipment, spacial and relational needs were studied to determine space requirements and station adjacencies. Prioritized functions included baking and general cooking, canning and food packaging. Additional considerations included washing basins and a janitorial closet and their proximity to one another for water line and sanitation purposes.

Meeting Room
The meeting room needed space for 12 people, requiring a square footage of 190 sq. ft. It features collapsible walls so the space can open to the rest of the facility. Dropped acoustic ceiling tiles assist in noise control for privacy.

Special thanks to Nan Konishi, Mayor, City of Rosalia, WA

Presented by Maria Tatum
Assistant Professor, WSU
Mentor: Kathleen Ryan

SOURCES