

Lawn Loungers: A Mobile Neighborhood Platform for Inclusive Design

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Abstract

Hawai'i has the fourth-highest average cost-of-construction in the world. It now takes 40 years to save for a down payment on a median-priced home. We have the highest per-capita homelessness rate in the country, tied with New York City, and Honolulu is now recognized as the fourth densest city in the US. As our need for affordable housing continues to grow exponentially, *How do we provide density without locals feeling overcrowded? How do we include residents in the design of their future neighborhoods?* We interviewed 30 families in their homes on five Hawaiian islands spanning rural, suburban, and urban contexts. We listened as families talked about their communities, neighborhoods, and homes interchangeably. Together with secondary research, insights from

these conversations informed the development of a community engagement process, a design framework, and a digital/physical research platform to be utilized by the local public housing authority in the planning of future projects. The everyday lawn chair serves as the design inspiration for this project. Lawn Loungers are familiar and approachable, humble and playful, welcoming and comfortable. They are composed of aluminum frames and woven surfaces. They serve as hangers for waterproof posters, as tables for co-creation exercises, and as chairs for chatting and relaxing. Collectively, these portable architectural artifacts frame communal spaces that allow guests to slow down and interact with one another while sharing their thoughts on the future of housing in Hawai'i.



Figure 1. Lawn Loungers at Parking Day 2019 in Honolulu's Kaka'ako neighborhood. Sierralta and Strawn.

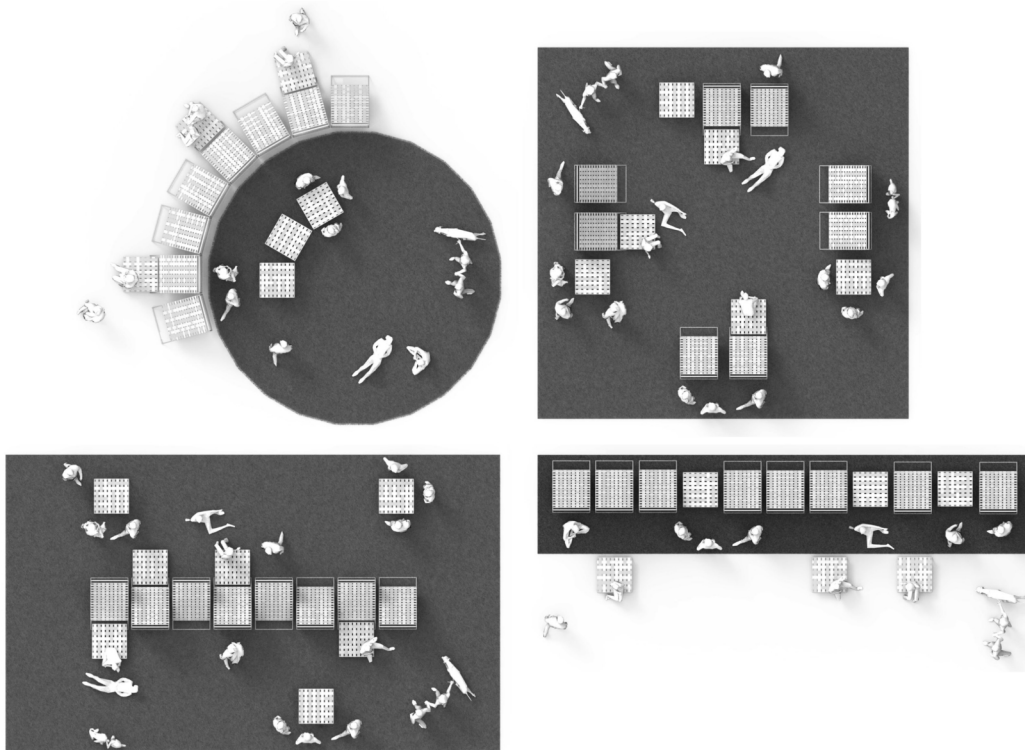


Figure 2. Lawn Loungers configuration possibilities. Sierralta and Strawn.



Figure 3. University of Hawai'i students interviewing neighborhood residents. Sierralta and Strawn.