JSMA Pacific Northwest Arts Center and Gallery at Eugene’s Downtown Riverfront Steam Plant

“The Steam Plant is the oldest standing structure on the Downtown Riverfront property that formerly housed utility operations and is a significant structure at the southern end of the Downtown Riverfront property. Its unique position as an icon of Eugene’s industrial past and location within 50 feet of the top of the riverbank calls for the Steam Plant to be preserved and repurposed as an important historic feature at the southern end of the planned riverfront park.”

“Request for Qualifications: Steam Plant Redevelopment”
Urban Renewal Agency of the City of Eugene, May 2018

The University of Oregon’s Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art (JSMA) has been Eugene’s premier art institution since 1933. The JSMA is seeking a museum satellite space to house its ever-growing art collection and to provide flexible multimedia exhibition spaces and galleries. This satellite space would also include art studios and classrooms to expand the JSMA’s cultural offerings to the City of Eugene and to become a center for the Pacific Northwest’s regional art community. The recent acquisition of the Steam Plant by the Urban Renewal Agency of the City of Eugene brings a unique opportunity to preserve and repurpose this historic property as an anchor for Eugene’s new cultural landscape.

The architectural design studio will investigate the possibilities of transforming the Steam Plant as the JSMA Pacific Northwest Arts Center and Gallery to become a key feature of the proposed Downtown Riverfront Redevelopment. Students will study adaptive reuse and urban design strategies to generate new ideas about space, building fabric, infrastructure and programming. Students will work in groups and individually in historical research, precedent studies, site assessment, and historic building documentation and design proposals.