Project Description
This studio will focus on a multidisciplinary urban design initiative that combines community economic development, with a focus on food-based and complementary industries, and habitat restoration and mitigation of floodwater risks associated with increasingly severe storm events in an era of climate change. The geographic focus of this project is the Foster Road area in Portland’s Lents neighborhood east of I-205 and adjacent to Johnson Creek.

We are interested in understanding diverse histories and identities of Lents and surrounding neighborhoods out of which new and innovative opportunities might emerge. We seek to gain a watershed-scale awareness in generating a vision of a portfolio of micro-urban design interventions that celebrate water management as central to design expression.

Studio participants will collaborate with community members as well as economists, artists, landscape architects, planners, hydrologists, engineers, and others in conceptualizing urban design and community development challenges synergistically. While the hydrological conditions of Lents are unique (flooding is a function of Johnson Creek overstepping its banks and rising groundwater associated with severe rain events and a granular geology formed by the Missoula Floods), the approach is intended to translate to other contexts. Ultimately this endeavor seeks to reimagine the functionality and civic identity of urban landscapes by contending with the realities of climate change.