food space pdx

the architecture and urbanism of food
in the Portland suburb of Gresham

This research seminar will support an ongoing project in Gresham: Rockwood Rising.

The Rockwood Rising project has just been awarded by the City of Gresham, and will be developed and built over the next year. It involves the development of a site into a hub for small-scale entrepreneurship, including small manufacturing businesses, food businesses and other facilities intended to support local grass roots enterprise. It is a unique project in its attempt to make such small-scale enterprise economically viable—and if it is successful, it will be a model for other such projects in the country.

The Portland architecture firm of YBA Architects is working with the chosen developer in the conceptualization and design of the project. Members of the seminar will carry out research that will help the preliminary design work.

Students will work under the direction of Howard Davis, UO Prof of Architecture, and Matt Brown, UO Arch graduate and principal of YBA Architects, on one of three tasks:

- a detailed mapping of food-related businesses in the vicinity of the site of Rockwood Rising.
- interviews with owners and customers of existing food-related businesses (The above two tasks will help us understand the "geography of food" in the area—the network of retailers, restaurants, food trucks, suppliers and customers that provide the infrastructure of food in the area.)
- precedent studies of similar and related projects in the US and throughout the world

These tasks will be carried out with strictly defined research protocols. Weekly meetings will be devoted to presentation of ongoing research results as well as the larger implications of the work for the project in Gresham and the question of the spatial dimensions of urban food systems. Students will be required to produce a final report that summarizes and illustrates the research results.