



APRIL 2021
BY JULIO CARRILLO

In 2019, Austin ISD rolled out a list of campuses proposed to be closed for various reasons. Their size and the significant community impact these campuses have made Parkhill wonder about potentially repurposing these facilities to build community in similarly critical situations. This paper describes the options and potentials for two elementary school campuses: Sims Elementary and Brooke Elementary.

Parkhill proposes solutions that are compatible with their neighborhoods and inspire the East Area community (an area that has historically been displaced and gentrified). This study proposes converting (repurposing) these two sites into market-driven, affordable residential units. The two examples shown herein are based on vertical mix-use entitlements for both sites.

Of the four elementary school campuses proposed to be closed, Parkhill selected two for this real estate analysis based on the neighborhoods' historically high levels of gentrification.

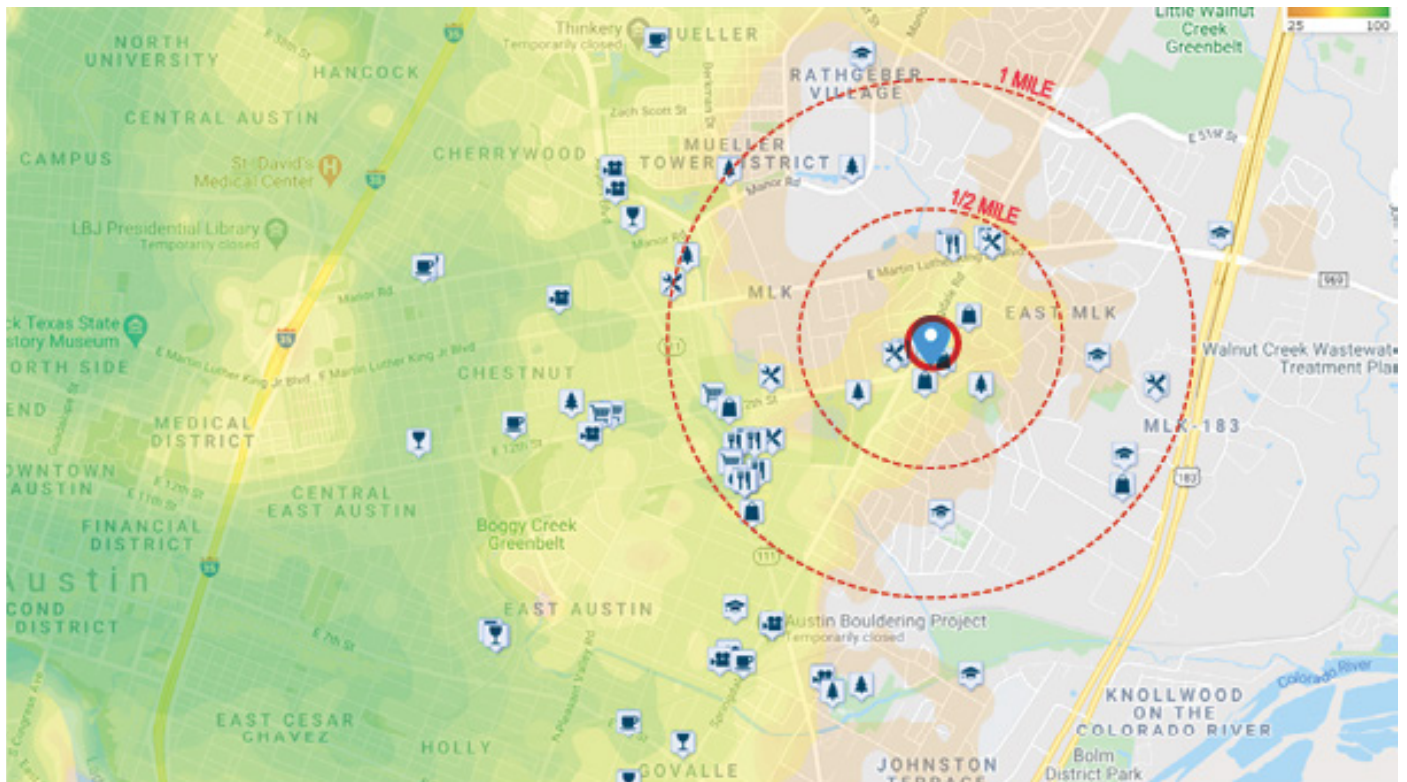
These two campuses, Sims Elementary and Brooke Elementary, are located within a fair amount of services, within walking (and biking) distance, and are relatively close to downtown Austin. Both sites are two or more miles apart and within a 10-minute commute distance (by car) to downtown.



In terms of proximity to basic services, these two areas have a few differences.

Site 01 - Sims Elementary:		Site 02 - Brooke Elementary:	
Walkability Score	45	Walkability Score	66
Transit Score (0-100)	44	Transit Score (0-100)	46
Bikeable Score (topography / bike-friendly infrastructure and routes)	72 (high score)	Bikeable Score (topography / bike-friendly infrastructure and routes)	90 (high score)
Walkability Notes	According to Walk Score's website, there are not enough basic services that could be accessed within a 10-minute walk, making this location more car-dependent.	Walkability Notes	According to Walk Score's website, there is a fair amount of basic services that could be accessed within a 10-minute walk.

Site 01 - Sims Elementary:



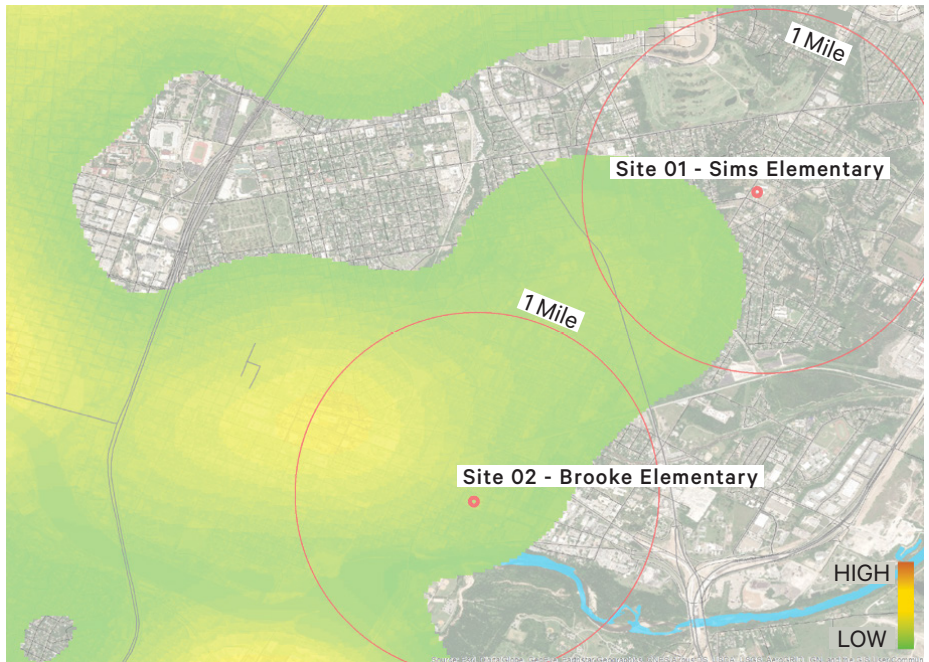
Site 02 - Brooke Elementary:



COVID-19 post-pandemic data suggests that communities with a higher risk of fatality rates align to communities with higher rates of obesity. Both sites also currently have low access to healthy food establishments based on data from the City of Austin (2019) and HFAI (Healthy Food Access Index).

The map to the right highlights areas in the vicinity of the two sites and their accessibility to healthy food. Note that most areas within a one-mile radius of the campuses have low and absent healthy food options.

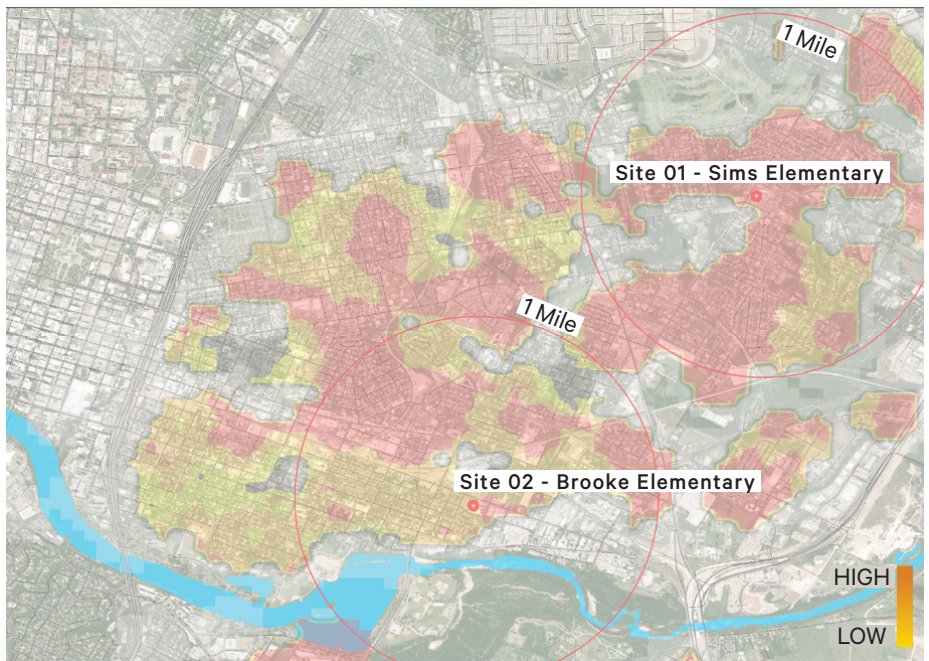
This proposal aims to improve the provision of healthy foods through educational programs and services within the selected sites. AISD could leverage this opportunity to include healthy food options for the community.



This area of Austin has been historically recognized as an area segregated from the downtown. East of IH35, the city's development and prosperity in the recent decades has continuously increased the pressure of displacement and gentrification of East Austinites.

This heatmap to the right showcases the concentration of ECODIS (Economically Disadvantaged) students within our study area.

AISD has a unique opportunity to continue supporting disadvantaged populations with the provision of affordable housing in both sites of this proposal. AISD could target the provision of affordable housing for its teachers and the ECODIS population as well as support programs and services for the economically disadvantaged population within the area of influence of these sites.



It is important to note that this site is currently located within a federally designated Opportunity Zone. That designation allows developers to obtain tax benefits for developing with a community-based approach while addressing the issues in its neighborhood and surroundings.

This proposal celebrates the educational history of the site, with the intention to maintain if place portion of the foundations of the original facility. It also aims to encourage celebration of community with a strategically placed community center that links a “paseo” designed for artist exhibitions and open-market style assembles.

A significant area dedicated to urban farming and healthy food produce (community garden) is reserved in a portion of the site in this proposal. Appropriately scaled architectural massing is proposed to comply with compatibility setbacks of the city.

The proposed retrofit of Sims Elementary Campus includes a few social and economic benefits to the city as a whole and to the neighborhood area:

AISD has a unique opportunity to provide housing for their teachers with accessibility to schools, the urban core, and services while proposing a unique, innovative solution to the housing affordability crisis.

Community gardens, arts and crafts, farmer’s markets, and book festivals will ensure the community’s ongoing celebration.

City of Austin will be providing additional units per their goal of 135,000 new units by 2027, contributing to the 60% targeted to income-restricted families.

Proposed project is scaled respectfully to single-family neighbors.

Community garden and green areas / trails dedication will promote community gatherings.

Community services and retail uses at the ground level will help increase

interactions and healthy activities for the community. Services could be increased per neighborhood needs. Example: childcare facility, grocery store, medical clinic, etc.

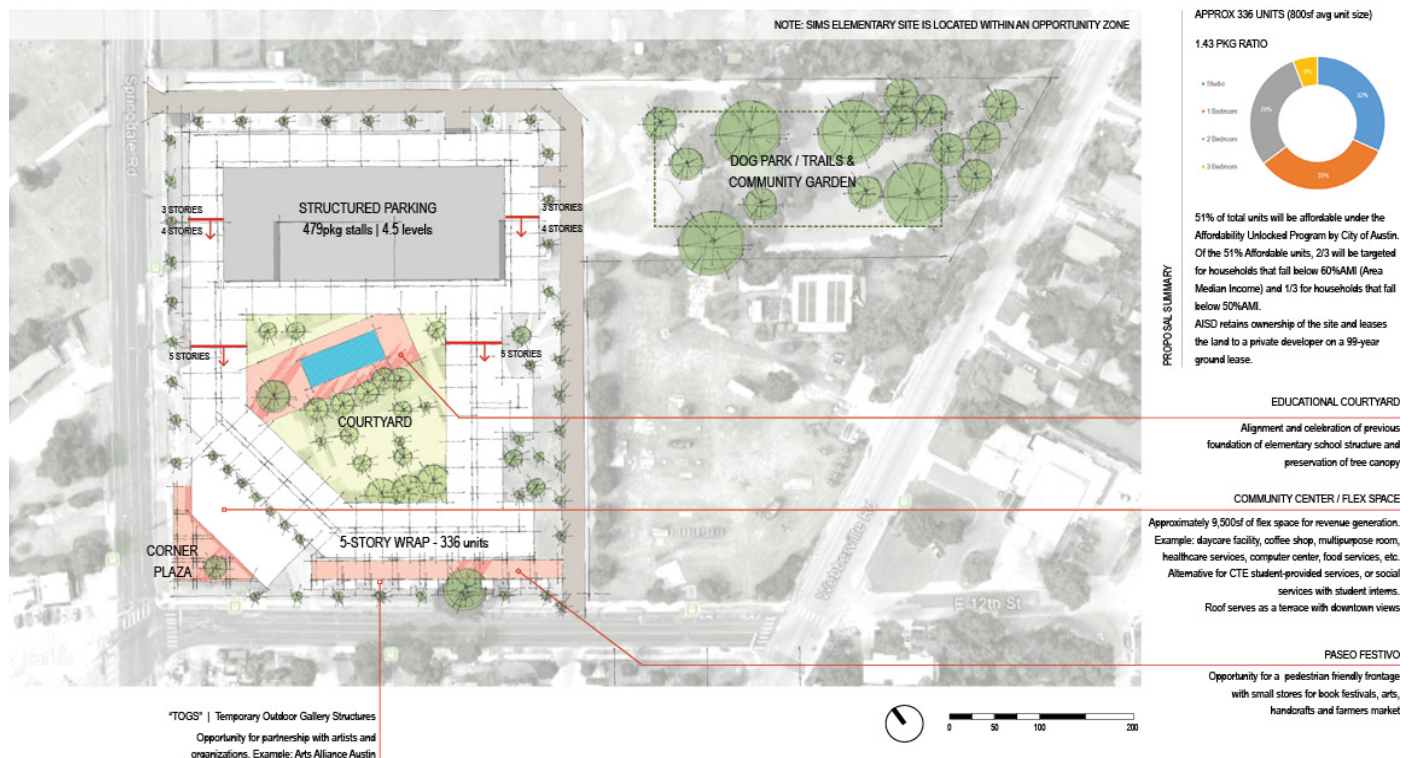
This proposal also recognizes a few benefits and opportunities for Austin Independent School District:

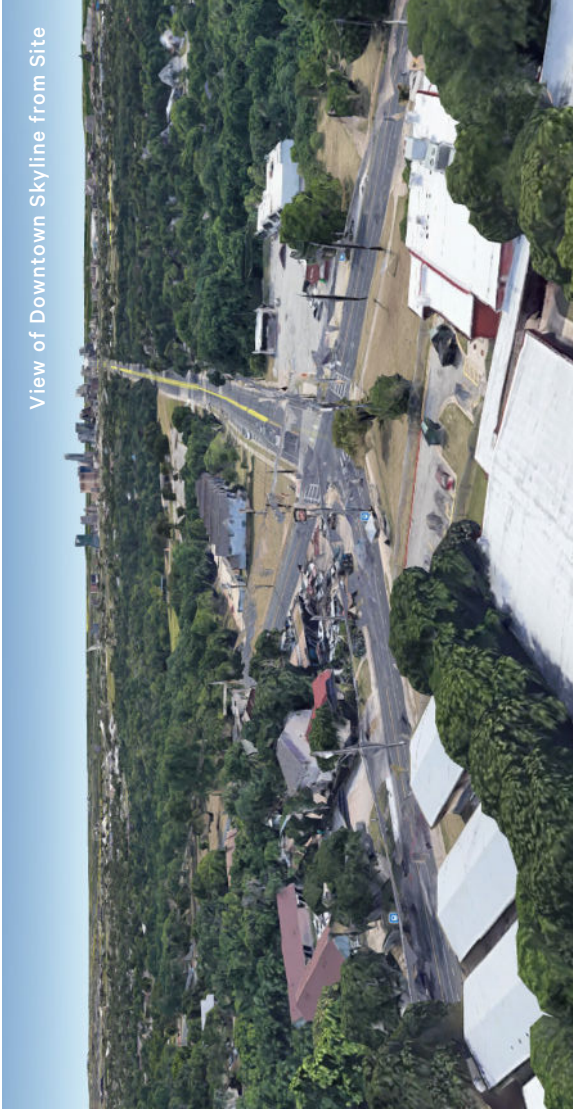
Recognition to AISD for the innovative model while integrating educational internships (CTE services provided). AISD to continue aligning with educational performance goals.

AISD leads in national recognition while addressing one of the most important crises in planning and urban development.

Public Private Partnership opportunity to further development of housing provision options, while advancing urban economic development.

AISD and School workforce could be brought together to inform the decision-making process so affordability goals are achieved





This campus retrofit also aims to celebrate culture and community at a human scale with a pedestrian-friendly approach.

This proposal supports community engagement by proposing a plaza at the North-East corner of the campus and a dedicated community center. This corner place can be an open-floor area of the building that can be flexible to provide revenue generation opportunities.

Alternatively, this space could be dedicated to CTE (Career and Technical Education) services provided by students of the district. Strategically located to the front of the pedestrian plaza, this space will have high visibility to/from one of East Austin's principal corridors: East 5th Street.

This campus proposal also offers the opportunity to generate healthy food produce. Through a series of community gardens along a neighborhood street and alternatively above green elevated terraces.

The proposed retrofit of Brooke Elementary Campus also includes a few social and economic benefits to the city as a whole and to the neighborhood area:

AISD has a unique opportunity to provide housing for their teachers in accessible areas to schools, the urban core, and services while proposing a unique, innovative solution to the housing affordability crisis.

Community gardens, arts and crafts, farmer's markets, and book festivals will ensure ongoing community celebration.

City of Austin will be providing additional units per their goal of 135,000 new units by 2027, contributing to the 60% targeted to income-restricted families.

Proposed project is scaled respectfully to single-family neighbors. Community Garden and Green Areas dedication will promote community gatherings.

Additionally, this proposal also recognizes a few benefits and opportunities for Austin Independent School District:

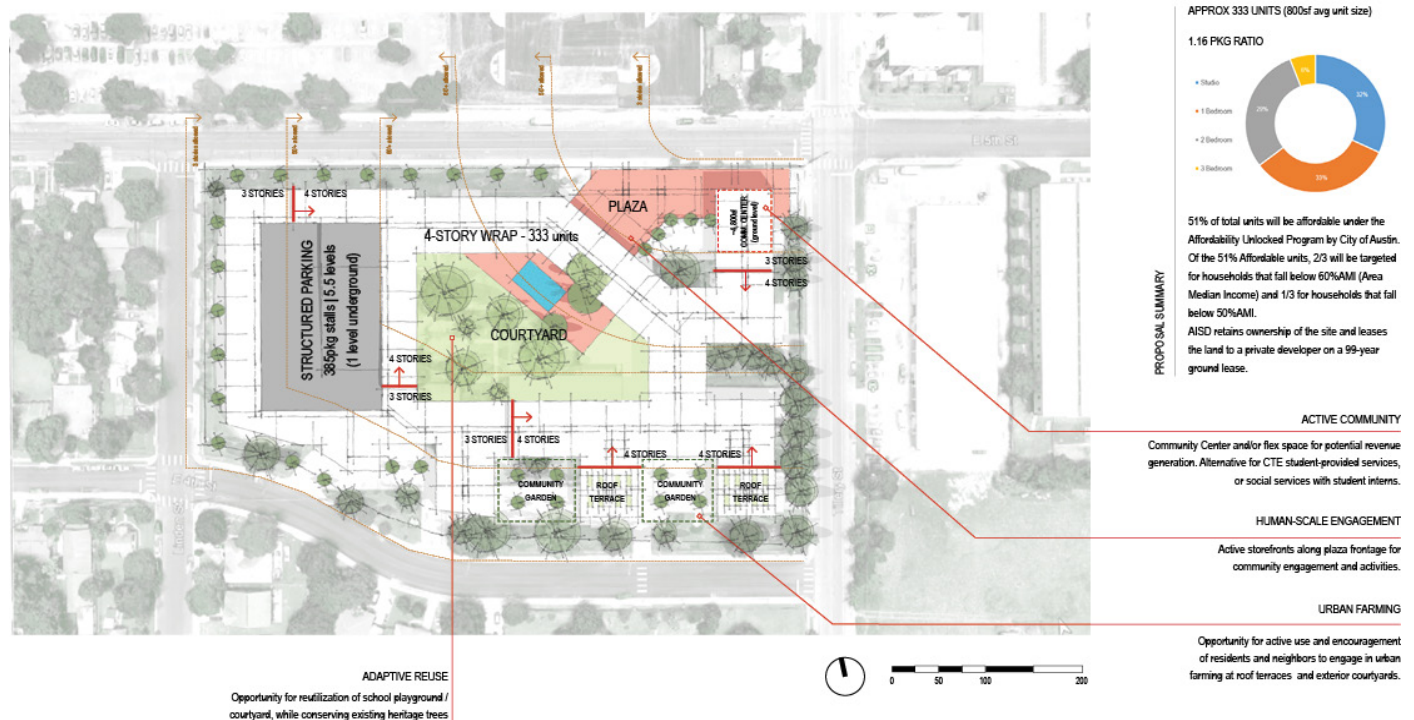
Community services and retail uses at the ground level to increase interactions and healthy activities for the community. Services could be increased per neighborhood needs. Example: childcare facility, grocery store, medical clinic, etc.

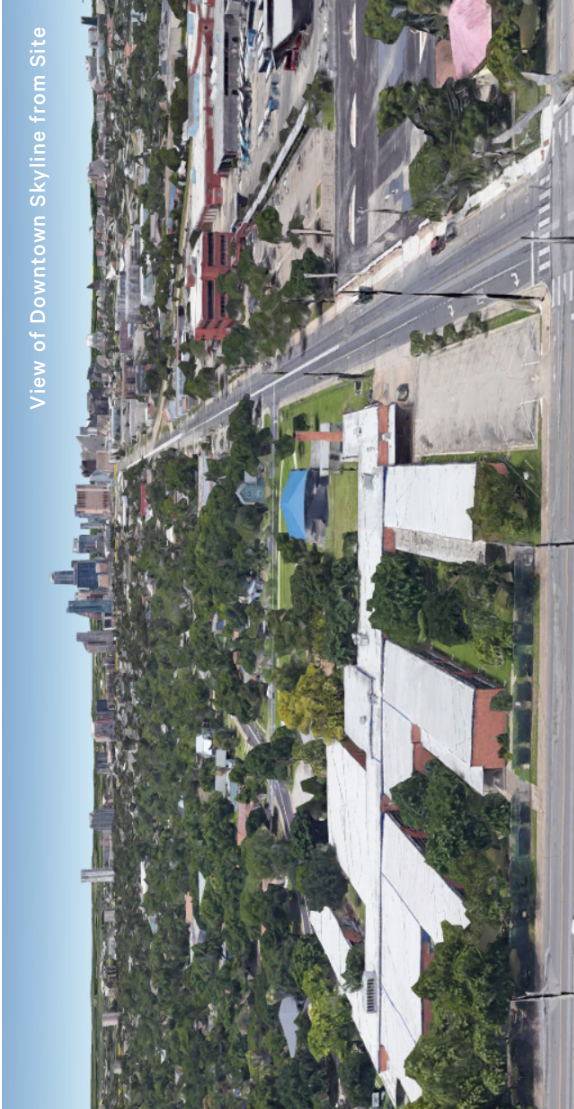
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Public Private Partnership opportunity to further development of housing provision options while advancing urban economic development.

AISD and School workforce will be brought to the decision-making process to achieve affordability goals.





**SENIOR PLANNER**

Julio Carrillo is a Senior Planner & Manager with Parkhill's Landscape Architecture & Planning Sector. With over 15 years of experience, he has managed and directed projects ranging from architecture and green building consulting to urban design and community planning. Through his diverse knowledge of residential, multifamily, corporate office, educational, institutional, municipal, and neighborhood design, Julio builds communities, not only projects. As a manager, Julio balances the abilities of diverse project teams and consultants with the Clients' expectations to create relevant solutions and support our communities in their vision for the future. He also fosters a passion for sustainability – a passion he puts into action. Julio co-founded and directed Peru's Green Building Council, and he is a LEED Accredited Professional. As a Certified Planner (AICP) and Licensed Architect (in Peru), Julio's experience and expertise goes beyond borders. He has also served on the Pedestrian Advisory Council in Austin, Texas, and his work and commentary have been recognized on national television in the United States and Peru. He is professionally affiliated with the World Green Building Council, the US Green Building Council, and the Urban Land Institute in Austin, who recognized his urban design practice with an Urban Design Award in 2019.

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