Given the universal yet malleable master plan of the Mill City District, which was generated from preliminary charrettes 1 & 2, questions were raised of how functional, dynamic, inhabited space could be shaped by massing and informed by disseminated program. The master plan was divided into three sections, and student pairs were asked to design each section independently. A fourth pair analyzed infrastructure, with particular attention given to the design of a canal within the mill district.

Building footprints sketched along the primary circulation paths created microcosms of program opportunities within each block. Program at the ground level was distributed largely in plan while live-work and housing types changed in the vertical direction. It was stressed that the main thoroughfare be articulated by lower height massing and the resulting sun filled voids be used as active courtyards, green space, and public/private circulation space. The riverfront was particularly interesting and opportunistic in terms of prime real estate because of an established waterfall prior to the canal that traverses the downtown area as it re-joins with the Mississippi River.