The task of this studio is to imagine and design a thriving mixed-use community in the transitional commercial neighborhoods of Eugene commonly associated with strip malls and cheap single-story buildings. As the ecotone between the civic core and the suburbs, these neighborhoods are ripe for much needed redevelopment. To repair and bring new life to these areas, we will design new living models for two emergent populations - the mixed/lower income and active aging classes. Asserting that these populations can combine to create socially inclusive communities, we will set out to weave them together in dynamic ways through the design of buildings and the environment between.

This studio will also focus on the restorative act of development at a broad community level. The existing context, which functions mostly as transition to and from the suburbs, offers much to be discovered in the run-on sentences of shopping centers and used-car lots. What do these spaces offer for new communities and new typologies of multi-demographic, multi-modal development? Underutilized or abandoned due to lack of demand and interest, they are more and more often passed-by and neglected. How do we engage these issues and redefine values of connection and convenience? Is the promise of “location” enough to inspire new and better ways of using these spaces? Do we really understand how suburbia is evolving? How can these neighborhoods play a more prominent role in creating a sustainable, healthy Eugene?

This studio will engage a larger conversation about affordable housing, community development, and sustainability through architectural design. Starting the term with a brief analysis of commercial zones, we will then choose our site(s) and develop the design work. Building program will be developed prior to the start of Spring Term and based on a mixed use of retail, commercial, and residential requirements and a building area of approximately 50,000 square feet. Anticipate the program to include:

- Low/mixed-income housing
- Common Community Space
- Commercial and Retail Space
- Social Services
- Education