The Tijuana Shuffles.

Upon the completion of *Quick, Loose, Dirty: A Tijuana Novela*, the research studio had six weeks remaining for the second part of the job: mobilizing a design strategy based on our collective research. Student partners Carmen Cham, Tyler Goss and I created the *Tijuana Shuffle*. This project deploys material rules derived from our study of the urban logic of the city of Tijuana, reconstituted as a manifesto for the universal proliferation of a quick, loose, and dirty urbanism.

The Shuffle is a system for manufacturing a measure of the vitality and serendipitous accidents of Tijuana's everyday conditions in a block-scaled, mixed-use community within the United States. Conceived as an alternative building code or set of protocols, the Shuffle adapts to different densities, conditions, and contexts.

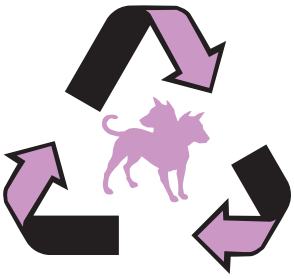
As luck would have it, our effort coincided with a pair of design competitions for mixed-use housing projects in both Charlottesville, Virginia, and San Francisco, incorporating similar scale and programmatic requirements, providing the perfect test bed for evaluating the application of the Tijuana Shuffle model across different sites. We cross-breed Tijuana with these two conspicuously different cities, disseminating our scheme across the country. Emulating the ingenuity of a *Tijuanense* handyman, we shamelessly recycle design ideas and translate our scheme wherever we can get the opportunity.

We propose a "wacky alley" approach for the redesign of both Octavia Boulevard in San Francisco and the Sunrise Trailer Court in Charlottesville. By projecting the building mass over pre-existing internal rights-of-way, the design generates a novel type of urban space. The Wacky Alley combines the logic of the Dutch "Woonerf" with the ad hoc and semi-hidden public spaces of Tijuana's back alleys, erasing the proscriptive boundaries defined by existing property lines, and creating inward-focused public courtyards which remix urban amenities. Simultaneously street, playground, restaurant row, backyard, and clandestine rendezvous point, the "wackinerf" is no ordinary alley. Instead, the traditional back-of-house zone has been reimagined as a new type of front.

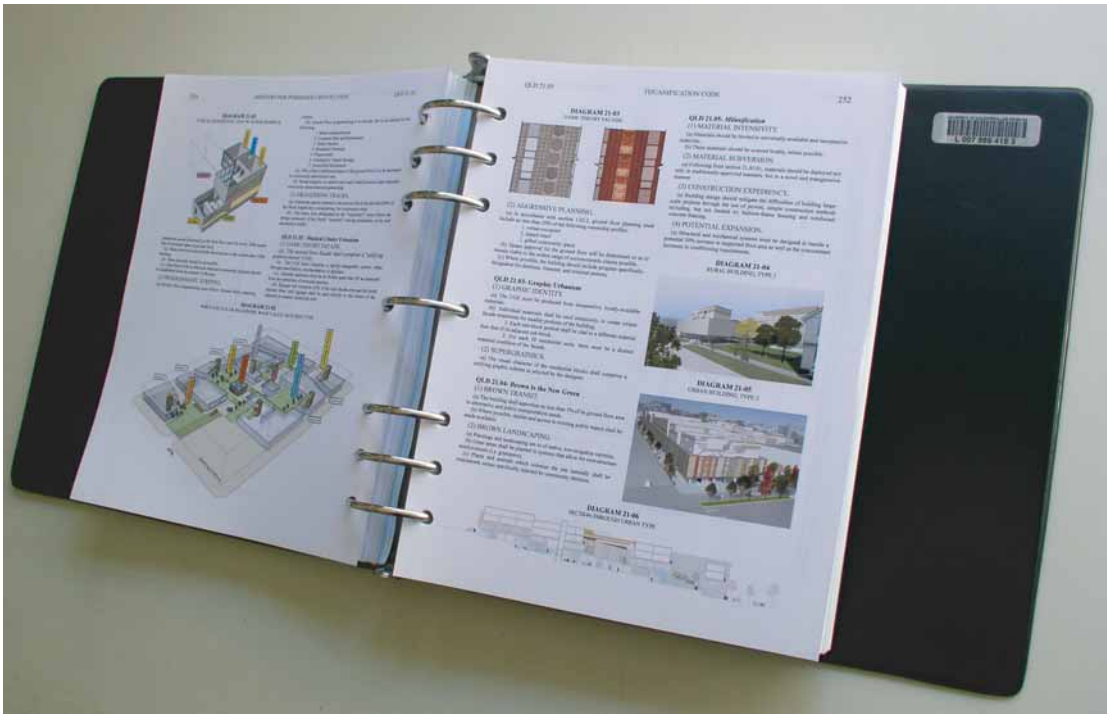
The programming of valuable ground-floor real estate generates a true mixed-use community in a more assertive and conspicuous manner than that to which the term is typically applied. The community has an unusually-high stake in the proliferation of ground floor program. A minimum of 30% of the ground floor area is designated as resident-controlled: democratic tenant associations claim the power to choose the businesses and organizations that occupy the ground floor – be they galleries, coffee houses, hardware stores, or barber shops. The community consequently retains the power to determine the essential nature of the "wackinerf," the social and economic heart of their daily lives.

The retail units on the ground floor are typically fronted with operable, bi-fold garage doors. When open, these doors disappear beneath the second-floor overhang, creating an open-air market that further erodes the already porous ground floor of the project – and a space

Spring 2005.
With partners Carmen Cham and Tyler Goss.
Studio instructor: R. E. "Bob" Somol.
Rendered with Rhino, Photoshop, Illustrator.



Reduce Labor. Reuse Diagrams. Reuse Diagrams.



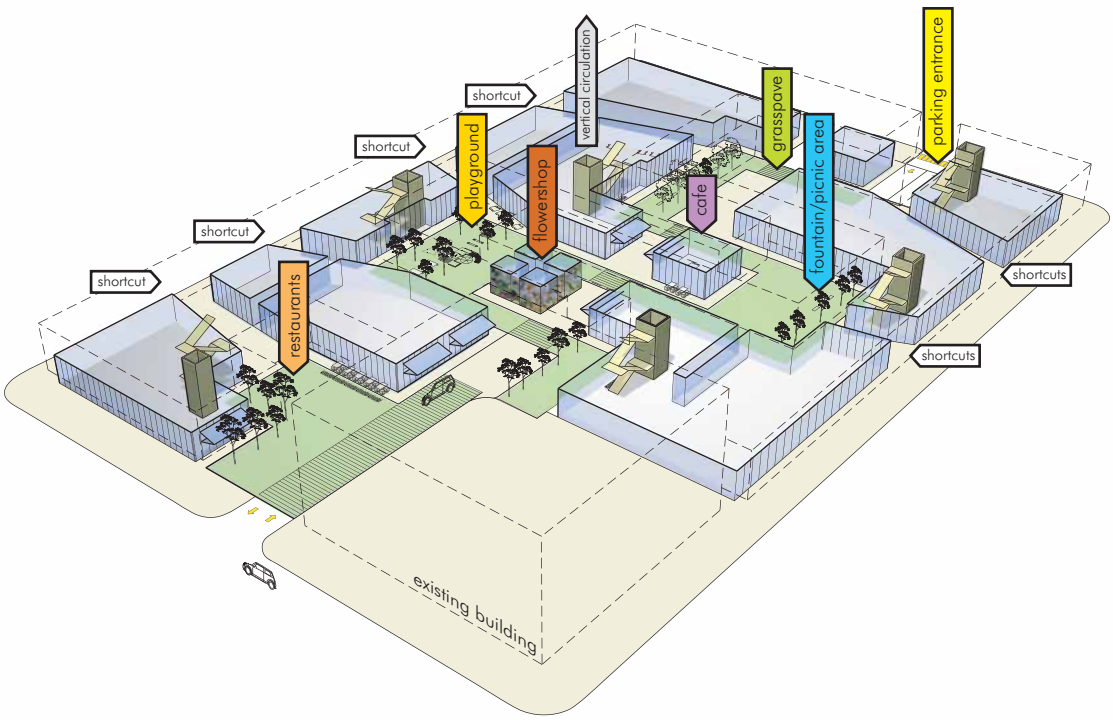
Left: "Uniform Tijuanification Code," providing protocols for the Shuffles Octavia and Charlottesville.

that aggressively encourages a wide range of users to enter. Shortcuts into this space from the adjacent city streets render the site permeable at ground level, inviting passersby to the interior and dividing the building's considerable mass into smaller, discrete volumes.

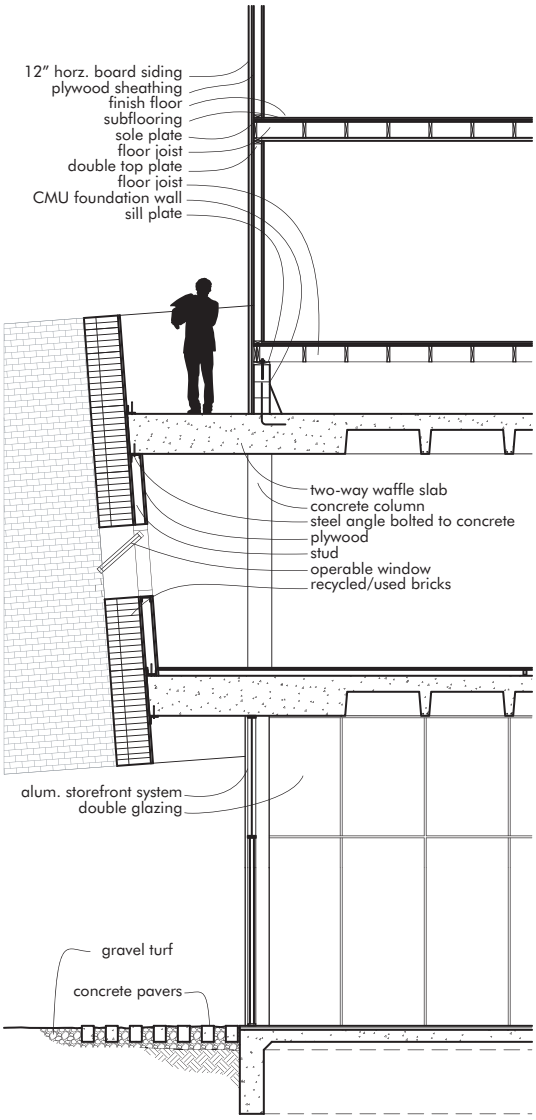
The design brief for both competitions suggested a segregated approach to the imposition of both market rate and affordable housing onto the site. The imposition of Tijuana's ubiquitously *mixto* zoning, however, suggested a more fluid approach to the delineation of socioeconomic status. The intertwining "fingers" of the residential blocks erode the distinction between affordable and market rate housing, creating a shared concern by all residents for the life of the alley and its *detourné* courtyards.

Residential circulation is likewise democratically shared. Nearly every apartment is accessed from an exterior walkway at the third floor, minimizing the conditioning requirements for shared public spaces, densifying circulation channels, encouraging chance encounters, and creating a sense of public space. From the third floor, apartments branch either up or down to the fourth and second floors.

Planned on a 14' programmatic module, the typical apartment unit occupies two of the top three floors of the project. This module is derived from that of typical manu-

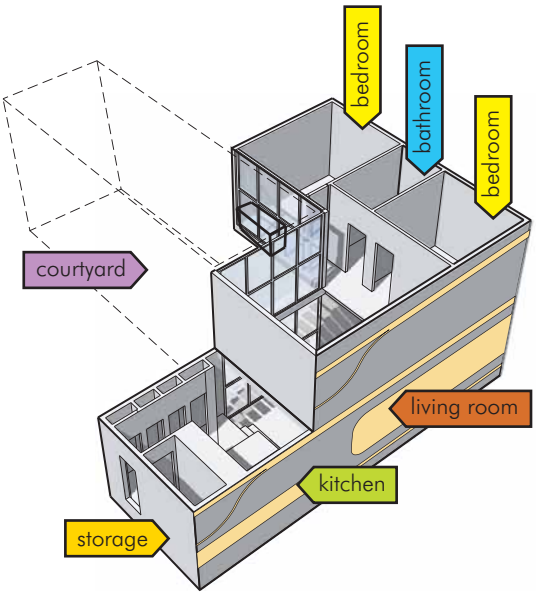


Left: "Wackinerf" diagram, Octavia Shuffle.
Rendered with Rhino, Illustrator.



factured homes, allowing the ready translation of highly-serviceable existing designs. Apartments range in size from 588 to 1372 square feet, and from one to three bedrooms. Storefront window systems look out on light wells that descend to street level.

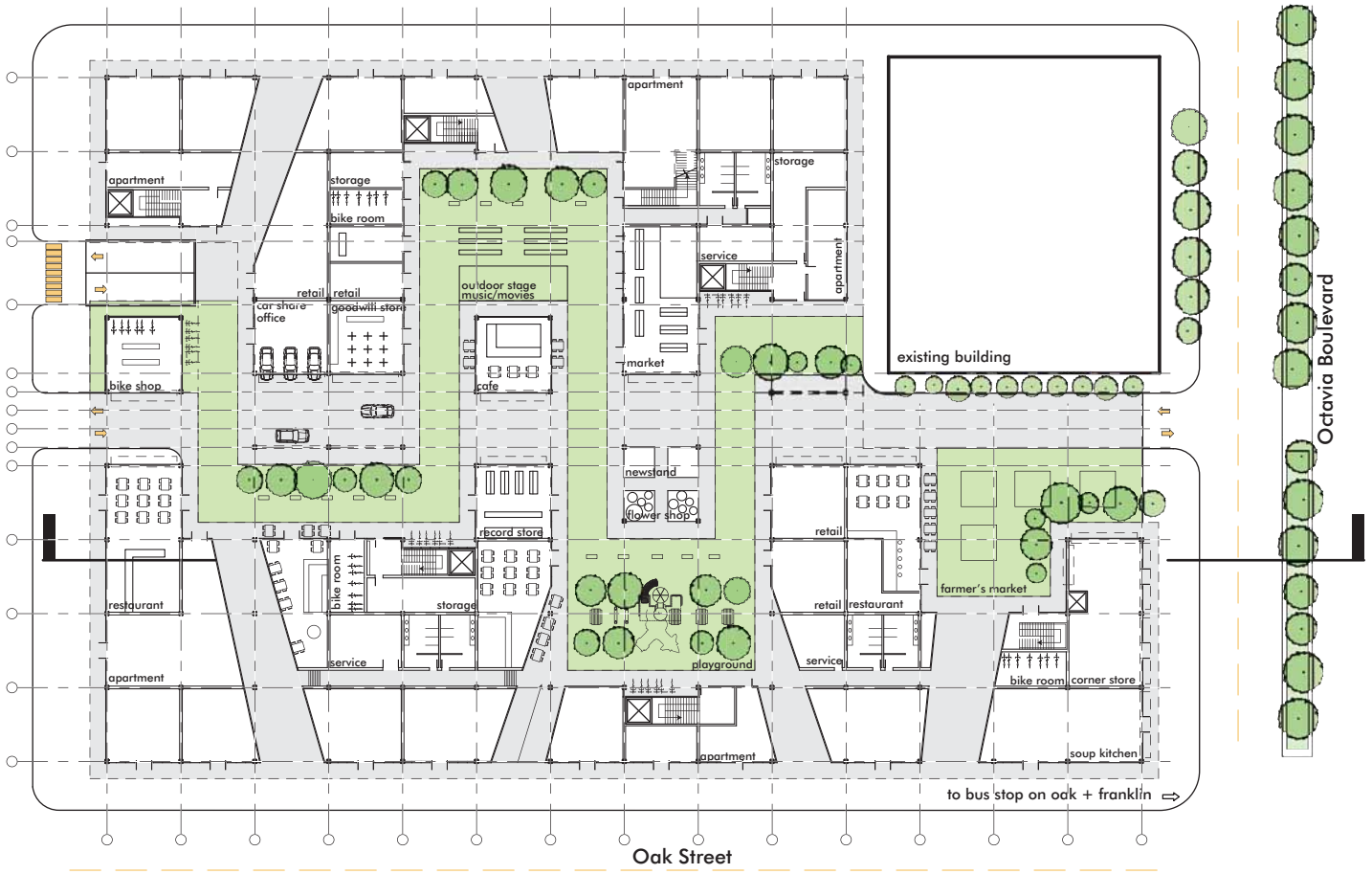
The buildings establish a sense of identity not through architectural heroics but rather through graphics, both as material and as appliqué. The graphic stripe wraps the entire building, simultaneously unifying the project through its shared architectural intervention and creating distinct sub-blocks through the intensive and graphic use of inexpensive materials. A common 42"-wide module permits customization and panel switching to suit the needs of tenants and clients. The constraints of a zoning code create opportunities for tenants to optimize their apartment or store's façade expression to best suit their lifestyle, while remaining adherent to the shared community spirit of the building.



Left: Typical dwelling unit diagram, Octavia Shuffle.
Drawn with Rhino, Illustrator.

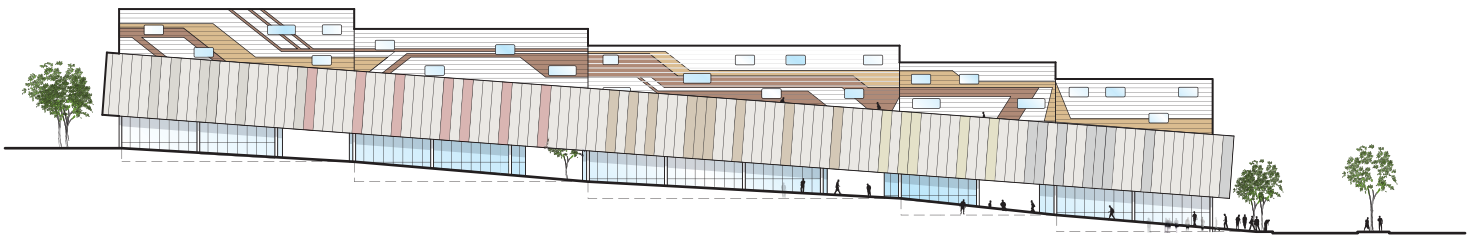
Far left: Wall section, Charlottesville Shuffle.
scale 1/8" = 1' - 0"
Drawn with AutoCAD.

Left: General view, Charlottesville Shuffle.
Rendered with Rhino, Photoshop, Illustrator.



Above: Ground floor plan, Octavia Shuffle.
scale 1" = 70' - 0"
Drawn with AutoCAD, Illustrator.

Above: Long section, Octavia Shuffle.
scale 1" = 70' - 0"
Drawn with AutoCAD, Illustrator.



Above: South elevation, Octavia Shuffle.
scale 1" = 70' - 0"
Drawn with AutoCAD, Illustrator.

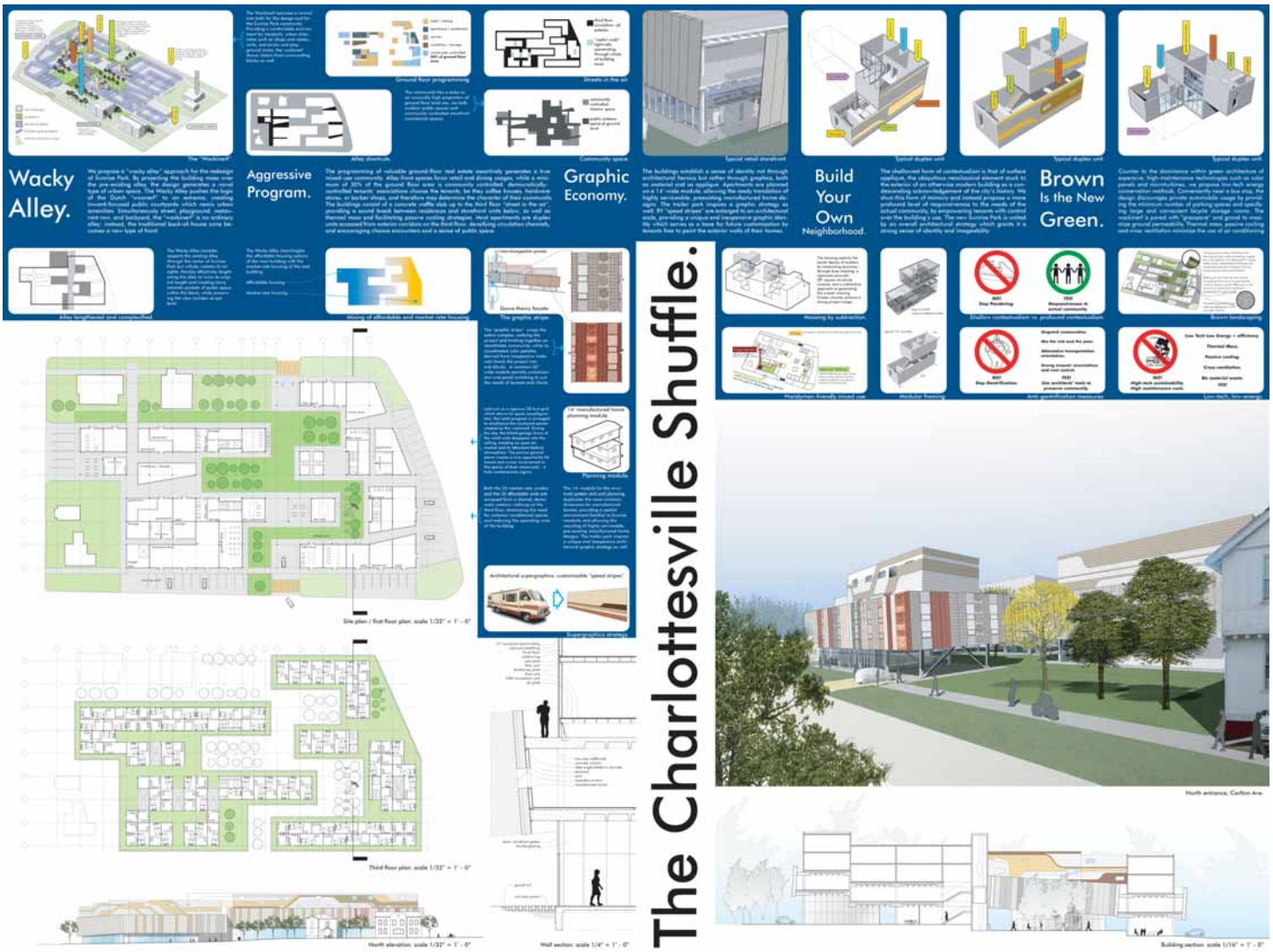
Above this "game theory façade," at the third and fourth levels, RV speed stripes are enlarged to an architectural scale, providing a unique and inexpensive graphic identity which serves as a base for future customization by tenants free to paint the exterior walls of their homes. The graphic stripe, in combination with the appliqués of the residential floors and the operable façades of the ground level retail corridor, creates an immediately recognizable, low-resolution image.

Counter to the dominance within green architecture of expensive, high-maintenance technologies such as solar panels and microturbines, the project promotes low-tech, low-input solutions to the problem of energy conservation and environmental responsiveness. Convenient to public transportation, the projects limit on-site parking to the minimum code requirements and aggressively encourages alternative forms of transportation. Building construction methods likewise maximize energy conservation, with the waste and excess building material either being recommodified and sold at the site, or integrated into the brown landscape.

The designs eschew shallow contextualism as exemplified by the applied "bay-window" or "Jeffersonian" aesthetic, both of which represent a condescending acknowledgement of a barely-viable historicity. Instead of this expressionistic mimesis, the Shuffles Octavia and Charlottesville propose a more profound level of responsiveness to the needs of the actual community by empowering tenants with control over the building's use and material appearance. The reified semiotics of gentrification are thus neatly avoided.

Born of disaster, executed in accordance with design principles based in the urban fabric of Tijuana – the so-called City of Tomorrow – the Shuffles Octavia and Charlottesville provide a baseline for a new international model of urban community development, a Tijuanification of the world.

Below: *The Charlottesville Shuffle*: competition board submitted to Urban Habitats competition, Charlottesville, VA, June 2005.



Left: *The Octavia Shuffle*: competition board submitted to San Francisco Prize / Octavia Boulevard Housing Design Competition, San Francisco, CA, June 2005.