Postindustrial cities are re-inventing themselves for the 21st Century using Smart Growth and Transit-Oriented planning strategies to develop sustainable mixed-use epicenters for living, business, retail, culture, healthcare, education, recreation, and other activities. These new developments are catalysts that are transforming post-industrial sites into vibrant communities that attract Creative Capital of people, goods, services, new technologies, and innovation. Transportation and sustainability play key roles in developing communities that promote density, livability, commerce, and ease of movement within pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods.

Franklin Point Redevelopment. Franklin Point is the 11-acre site of the former Grand Central Railroad Station that was razed in 1971 and has been vacant since. Located in the southwest Chicago Loop, the block is bounded by Harrison Street, Wells Street, Polk Street, and the Chicago River. Numerous proposals for redevelopment including mixed-use high-rises have been proposed but none realized. Redevelopment of the site will be for a 5 million square foot mixed-use, high-density, sustainable “urban village” with condominiums, apartments, office, retail and parking with access to the Chicago River. The design process will be divided into phases.

Process. The studio will consist of three major design phases. During Phase I student teams will develop a comprehensive program based on research and analyses of precedents and the site. Phase II consist of developing master plans of the site, which will then be developed into architectural designs during Phase II.

Phase I: Programming. The site, precedents, codes and ordinances, and precedents will be researched and analyzed in detail and presented. A detailed program will be developed for a mixed-use “urban village.”

Phase II: Master Plan Design. Master plan strategies will consider transportation modes and organization of the site based on the program requirements, building occupancies and scales, and sustainable factors combining living, working, shopping, entertainment, and recreation to create an environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable “urban village.”

Phase III: Architecture Design. Architecture design will develop schematic architectural solutions that will address the specifics of building uses, scales, materials, and methods of fabrication. It will consider the architectural implications of the master plan at the scale of buildings and infrastructure from architectural design, urban design, and sustainable points of view.

Partnerships. This studio will partner with architects, planners, and others who have experience in urban master planning, design, and development. The principal architectural partner will be Skidmore Owings & Merrill, LLP Chicago.

Collaboration: Large scale master planning and design requires designers to work together in teams. Consequently, students will collaborate on designs in teams of 2-3 based on enrollment in the studio.

Portfolio. This is an outstanding opportunity for urban design experience and a major project that will significantly enhance your portfolio and be especially attractive to potential employers.

Interested Students. Students who are interested in integrating urban design with architecture and motivated toward urban design, urban development, mixed-use and scale buildings, building technology, and sustainable design are encouraged.