

PUBLIC
RESTROOM
DESIGN





Randall's Island Comfort Stations

Randall's Island Park, located on 450-acre (182-hectare) Randall's Island in New York City's East River, is comprised of meandering open areas that together comprise one large park. As part of the implementation of the Randall's Island Redevelopment Plan, the opportunity arose to design 950-square-foot (84-square-meter) comfort stations. These three buildings, as a collective ensemble, serve a critical design function: as the only recurring feature in the park, they offer a visual cue to visitors that it is a continuous park, despite the park's size and physical fragmentation. The program for each building varies based on location and function; however, from the exterior, they are identical buildings, each with public toilet facilities, an information booth and an equipment room.

Location | New York City, United States
Architect | Ricardo Zurita Architecture & Planning, P.C.
Area | 900 square feet (84 square meters)
Photography | Normal McGrath and RZAPS
Client | Randall's Island Park Alliance, New York City Economic Development Corporation, New York City Department of Parks & Recreation

1 | View at Sunken Meadow
2 | Monochromatic muted interior



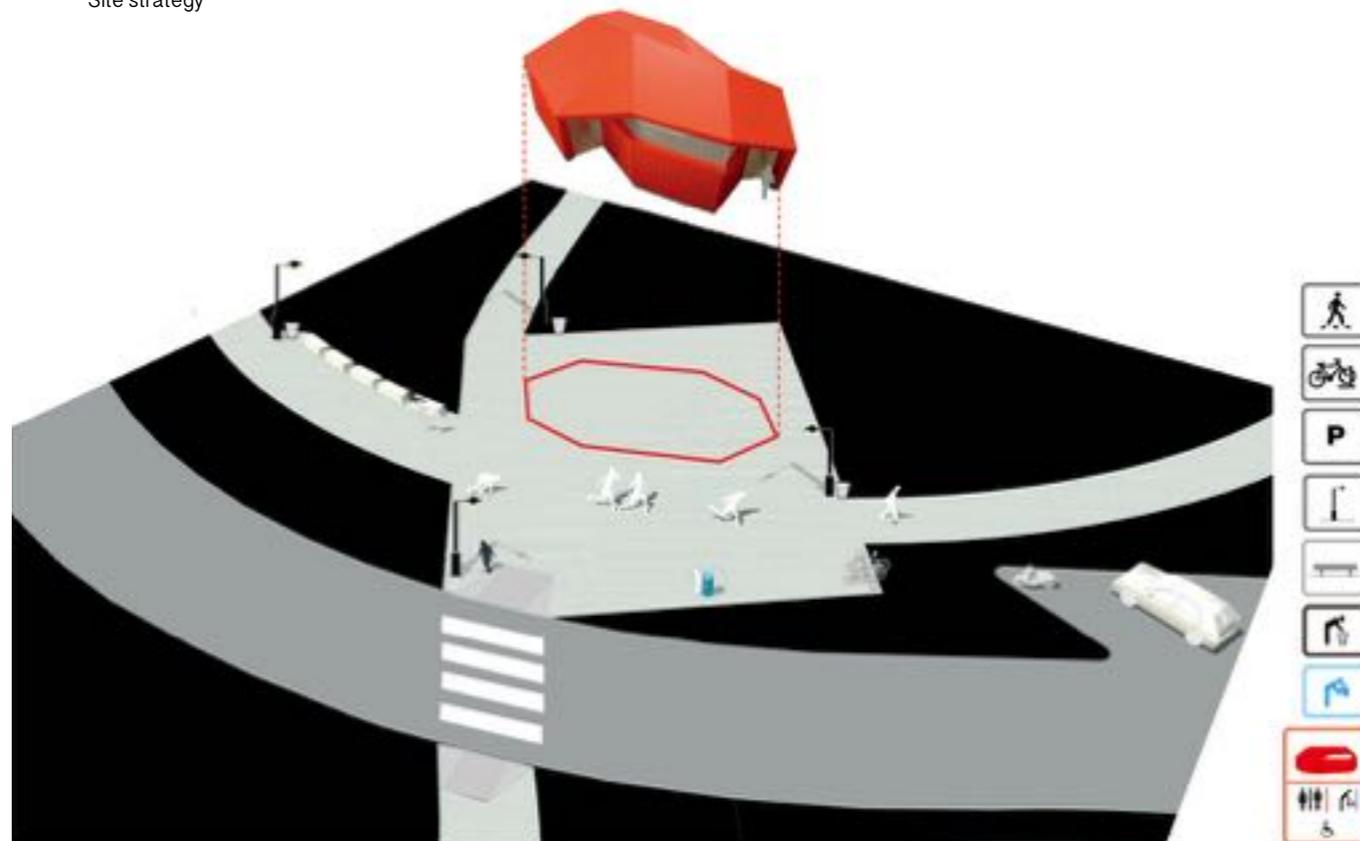
The buildings are designed to be minimal and frame focal landmarks. Each is a multidirectional object clad, from top to bottom, in a uniform, brightly-colored ribbed metal that from a distance is perceived as a monolithic, striking form in each of the respective surroundings. But when approached, doorways appear as the subtle result of the folding-in of wall panels; clearstories appear as splits between exterior panels; and windows as shuttered openings disappear when the building is closed. The shape of the buildings is a symmetrical polygon with chamfered edges, which is derived from a desire to create ambiguity between front and back. This is important for a building that would be approached and seen from many directions.

The project also attempts to transform the idea of the traditional park comfort station in the city, often designed in the style of small cottages, to reflect a contemporary approach to public infrastructure. The interest in reimagining this building type is also motivated by an interest in reducing the cost of typical NYC park comfort stations which are composed of more costly brick walls, masonry trim and metal roofs. As an alternative to this, ribbed metal is introduced as the main building material which is cost effective, modern, durable and readily available.



Comfort station locations

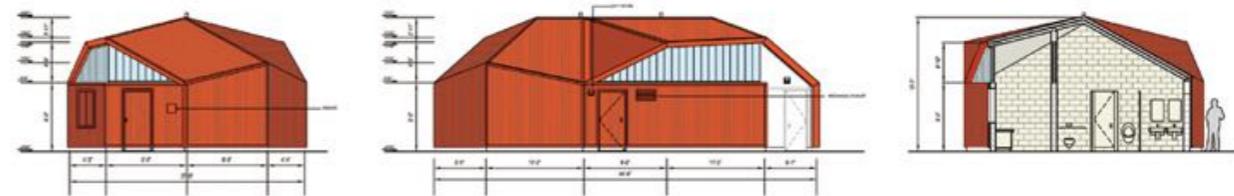
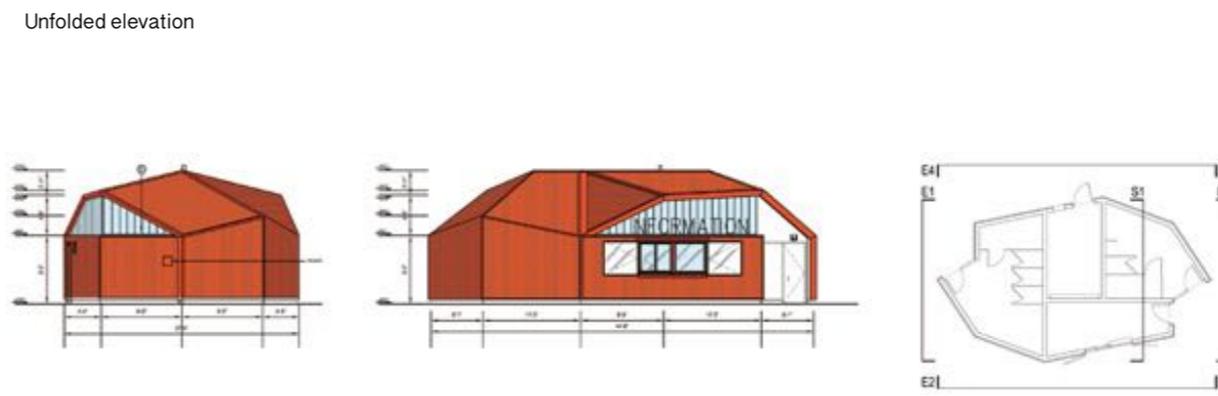
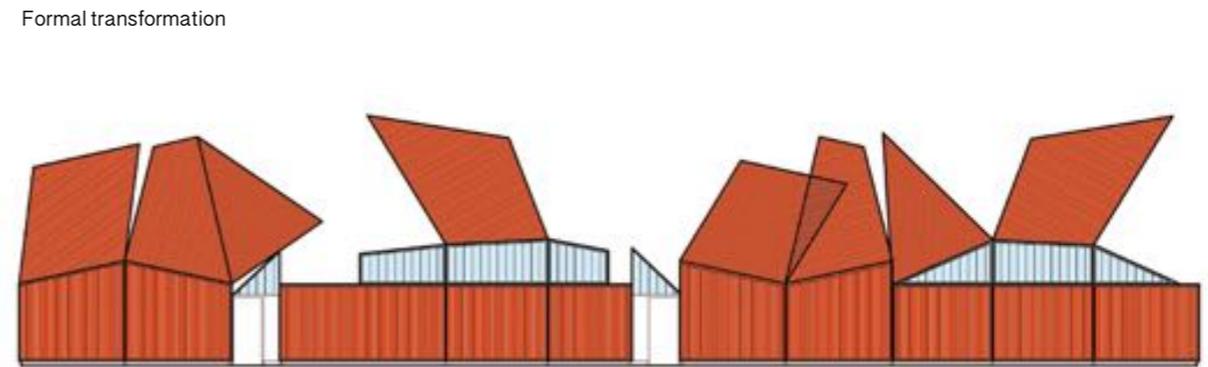
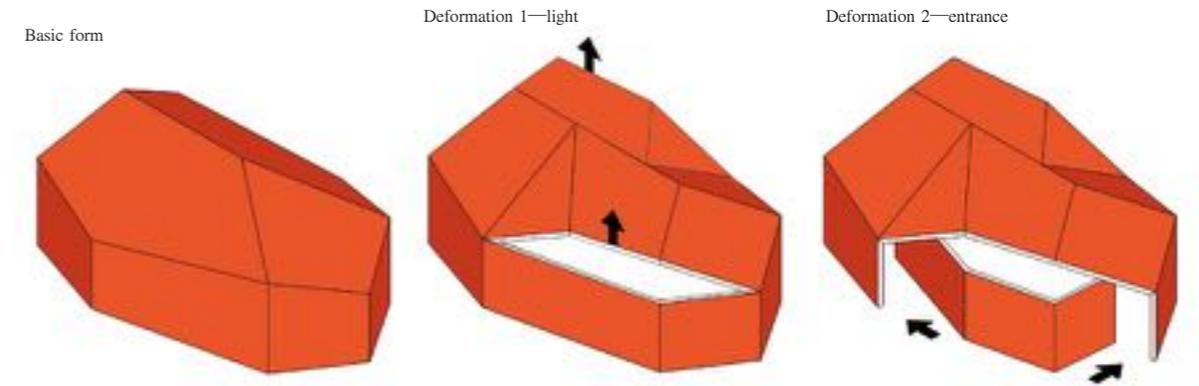
Site strategy



The walls consist of an outer layer of metal with an inner layer of glazed masonry block to provide the interior with easily cleanable surfaces. The roof was created of a frame of metal tubes welded offsite to reduce construction time and to ensure tight tolerances. The other significant material on the exterior is a channel (structural) glass for glazing. This material was selected for its impact resistance and translucent quality.

The interior is monochromatic, muted gray, and conceived as a calming counterpoint to the bold exterior. The materials are durable and easy to maintain with glazed architectural concrete masonry blocks, porcelain floor tiles, painted metal roof deck and stainless steel partitions, fixtures, fittings and accessories.

3 | View looking west at Wards Meadow



Building elevations



4 | View looking north at Wards Meadow
5-7 | Views at Bronx Shore Fields

8 | Stainless steel cubicles and fixtures
9 | Clerestory window with channel glass

