

corner canopies



introduction

Analysing the urban fabric as a collection of voids and unclaimed spaces, our proposal attempts to mitigate the effects of urban porosity by encouraging communal reclamation of street corners. These are among the most publicly occupied 'voids' in the city context, but are not typically considered in their potential to enhance liveability or sustainability in cities. How can these spaces be reclaimed by the public and remain adaptable to the diversity of urban conditions that exist around the world? We propose the *Corner Canopy*, a floating, tree-like garden that addresses issues of walkability, green space, communal engagement, and human-centred design.

Benefitting from the abundance of street poles that exist at most city corners, these canopies do not impede public motion but ameliorate the spatial experience of busy intersections. They engage individuals and communities by providing a means of local expression; a person or organisation could begin to 'claim' street corners in their locale by constructing canopies that represent their identity through decoration, ornamentation, painting, carving, plant selection, and more. The identity expressed in the structure is manifested clearly in the understory experience of each canopy, and would foster moments of social engagement where users pause and admire the artisanship on a corner while waiting for their turn to cross. Communities become more committed to their streets with the necessary maintenance the canopies require; the public would be brought closer and the hostility of intersections reduced. Lastly, these gardens would diminish urban heat-island effect, shelter pedestrians from climate conditions, and, if proliferated to an entire city, greatly increase the walkability and liveability of the general urban environment.

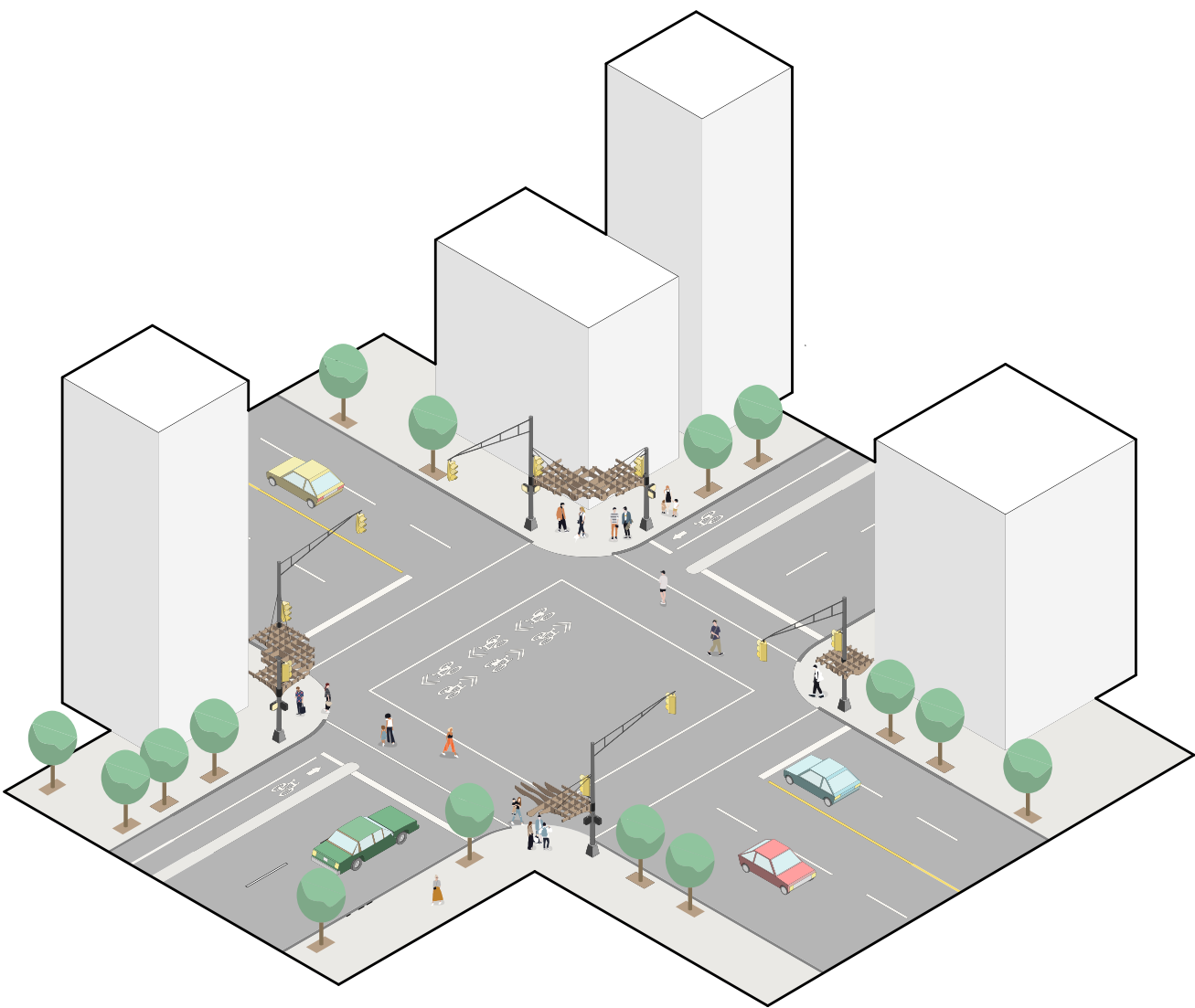


figure 1. street intersection

Figure 1 illustrates a typical urban intersection and the coverage that may be provided by four canopies. Three types are shown: Canopy 1 wraps a single pole and branches out in all directions, Canopy 2 cantilevers from a single pole, and Canopy 3 is a combination of two Canopy 2 modules.

figure 2. garden customization

Depending on user preference, climate conditions, and other factors, the canopy gardens can be customized to any quantity of planter boxes and vine coverage. Ideally, maximal plant coverage would be provided to shelter people below and increase green space.

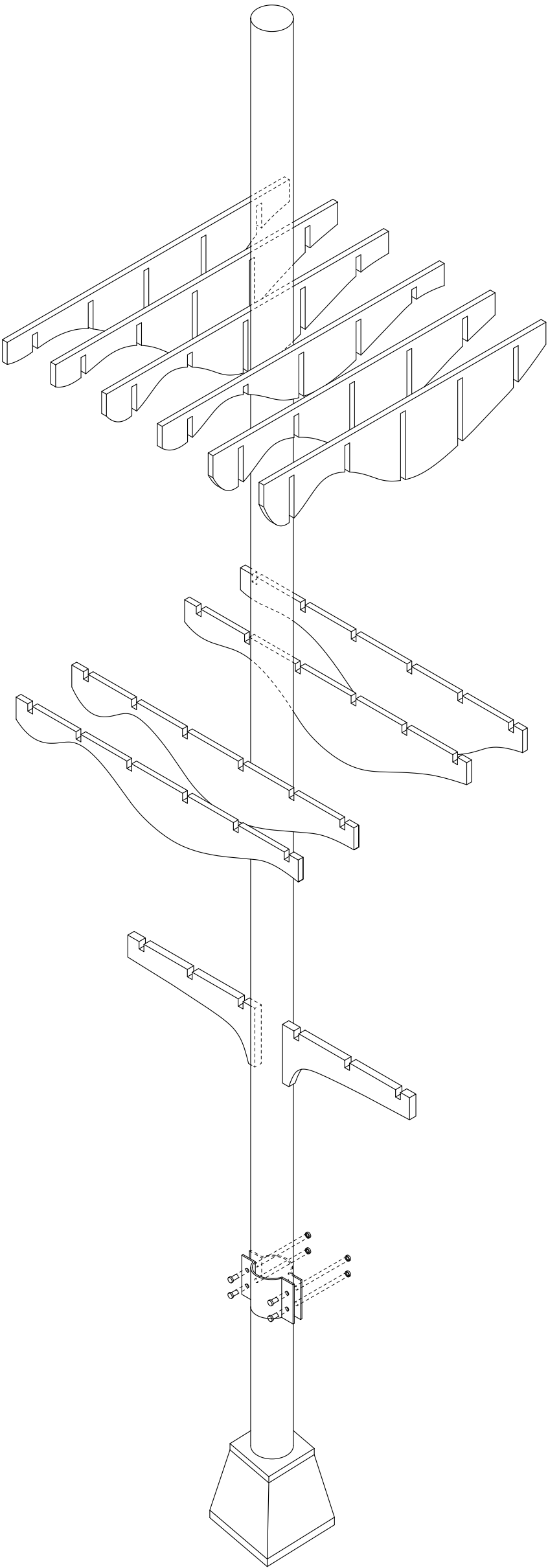
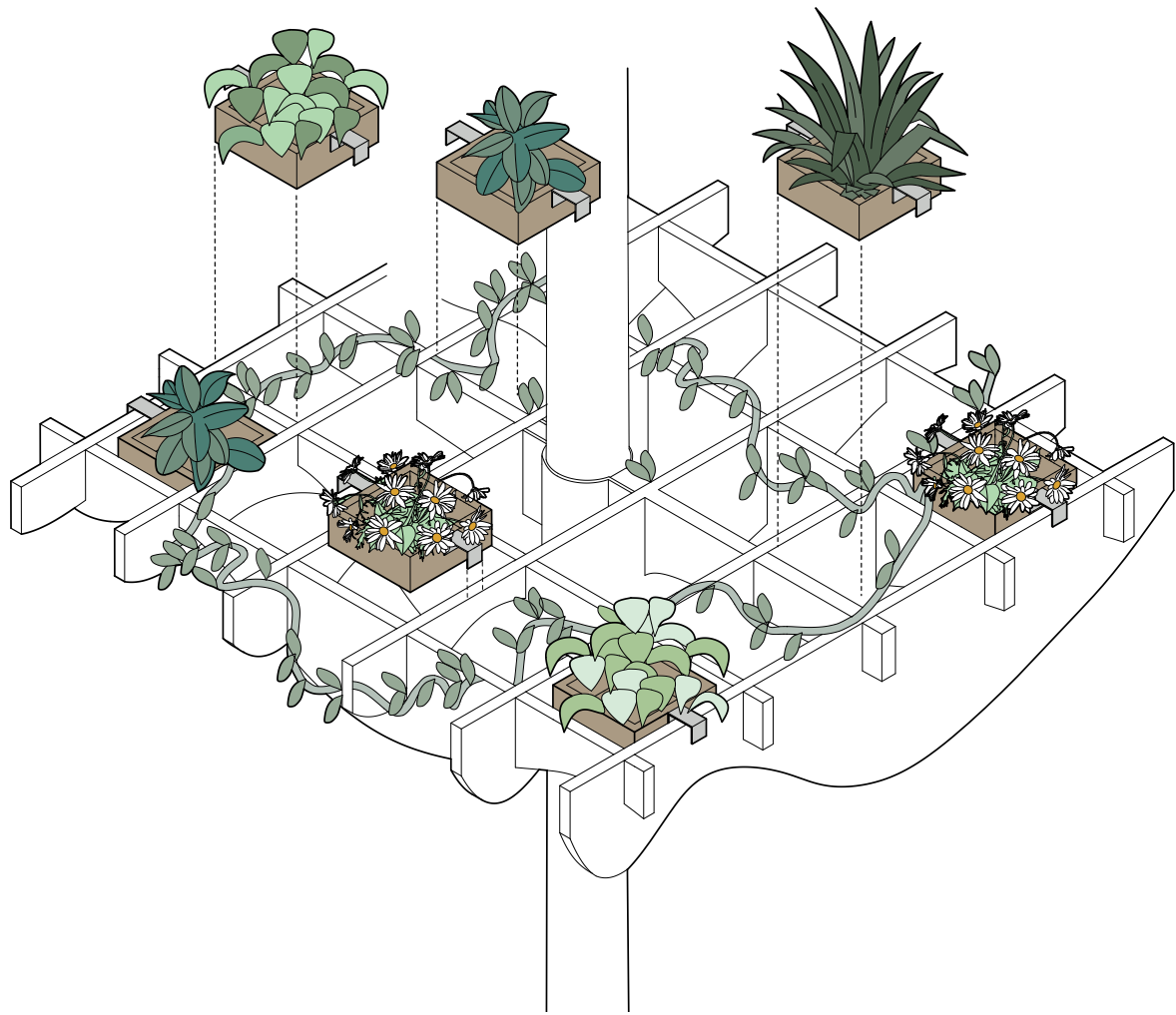


figure 3. canopy assembly

The canopies are assembled by interlocking orthogonal panels with lap joints. The structure is then secured to a pole with pipe brackets. Plywood panels or other wood materials may be used depending on user preference.

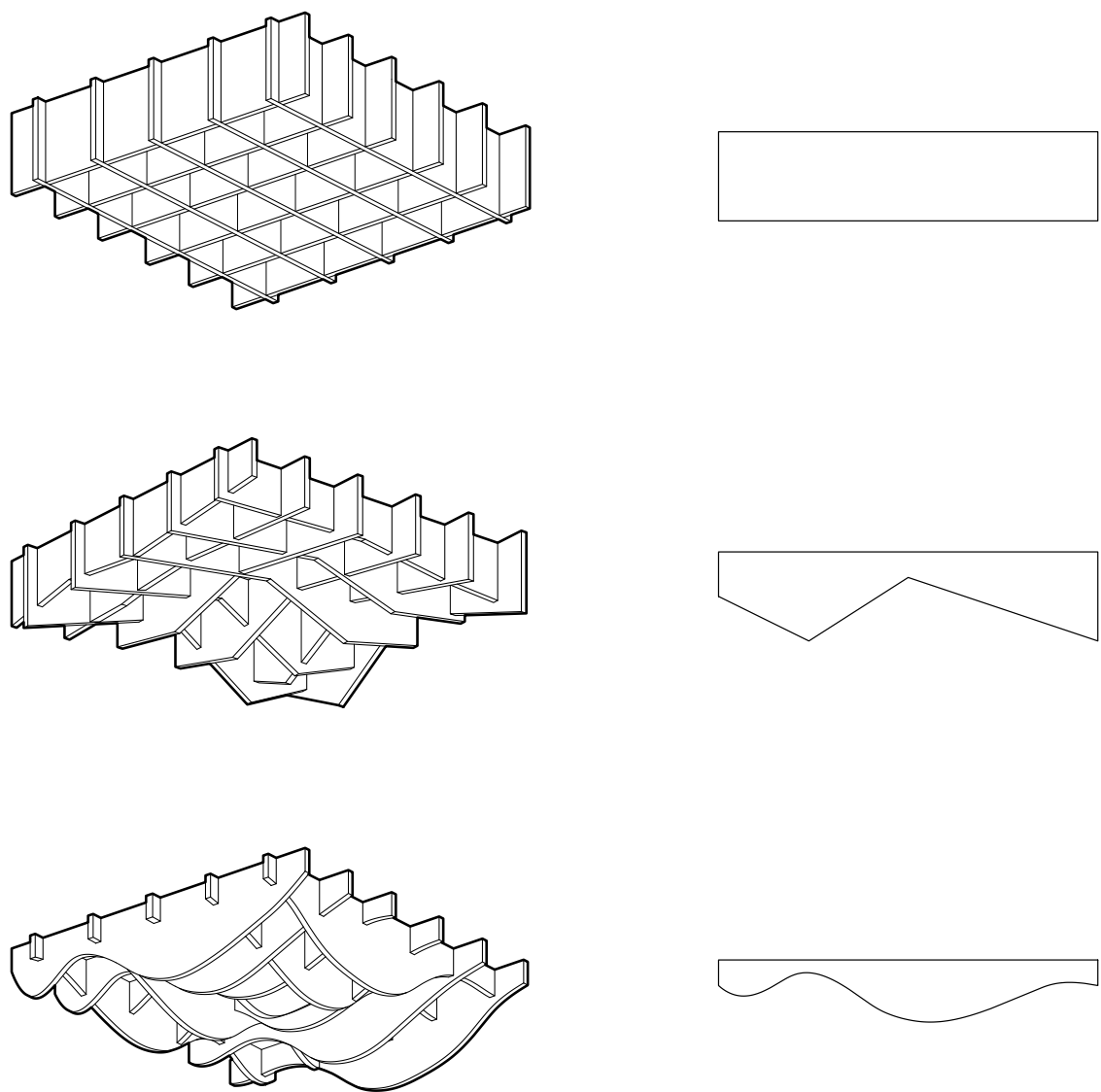


figure 4. understory customization

The modular assemblage of panels allows their geometries to be easily customized by the user(s) to produce a variety of understory effects. The ends of each panel should be kept at a fixed width and the tops flat to ensure consistency across modules (if the user desires to extend the canopy in the future). Shown above are three examples of arbitrary panel cuts that produce diverse understories.

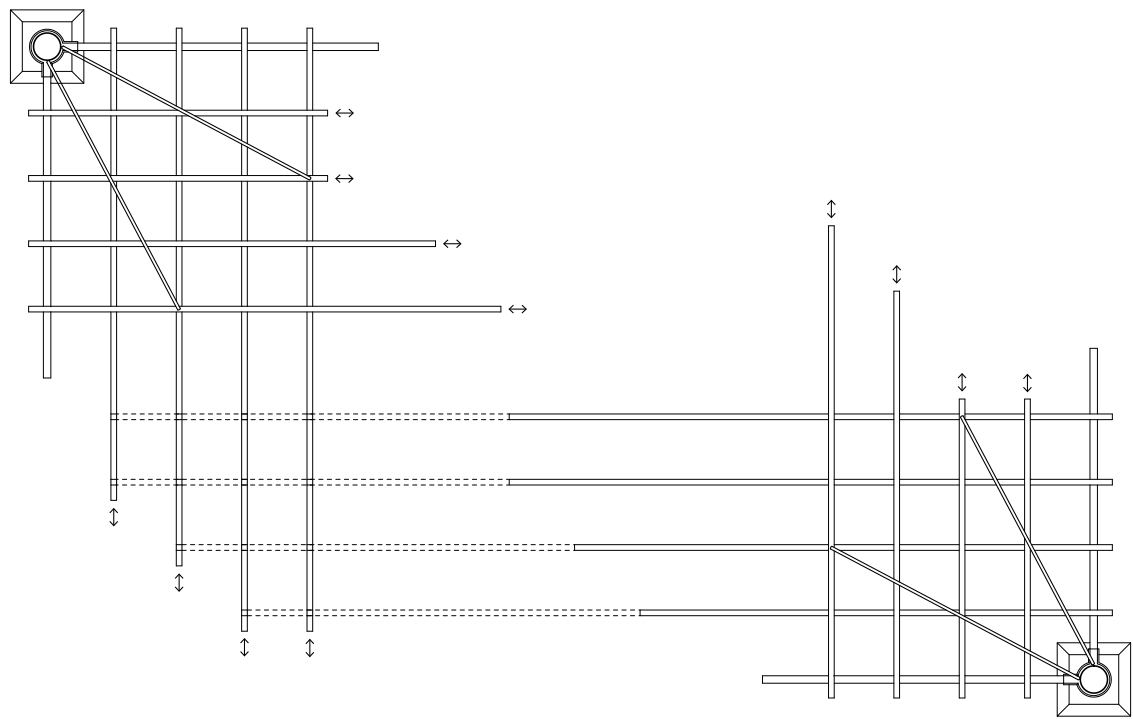


figure 5. canopy 3 assembly

Figure 5 shows how Canopy 2 may be used to cover a street corner where two poles are present. The ends of panels may be extended depending on the distance between poles.