

Concept Statement



BEAM offers new **B**eginnings for the **E**nvironment, the **A**rts and **M**arkets in the Exchange District. Inspired by the illuminating power of light, BEAM is a lively, radiant, welcoming creative hub for the diverse people of Winnipeg and its visitors. The holistic design incorporates sustainability, seasonality, vibrancy, and connectivity to create a public platform for the advancement of art, food, and culture in the community.

The urban design strategy for BEAM reflects the evolution of the site as a place of convergence. Long-lots, the meandering Red River, the historic Brown's creek, early Indigenous trails, historic street patterns, and the old market all overlap on the site and represent the cultural heritage of exchange. Continuing this narrative, BEAM integrates into the Winnipeg's urban fabric and forges strong relationships with the local landmarks of the Exchange: City Hall, Red River College, and Old Market Square. Rich, textured building materials and the coloured facade pattern invoke warmth, light and tactility. Massing transitions in scale gently northwards creating unique terraces, green roofs, and elevated views to the south, while the east-west orientation takes advantage of optimum solar access and buffers prevailing winter winds, creating a comfortable microclimate for year-round use. The Ribbon, inspired by lost rivers and past canoe routes, acts as a wayfinding and art paving feature that winds through the city block, guiding visitors through connecting complementary elements: Market Hall, Spectrum Commons, Daybreak Hall, Spectrum Passage, Urban Shaman Gallery, Market Lane, and to the future mixed-use developments on the north parcel.

The interior configuration of BEAM is designed to maximise connectivity and accessibility between the arts and their audience, food merchants and foodies, residents and their city. Ground floor public spaces powerfully address the street and winter sun to create engaging, radiating indoor/outdoor spaces that are useful year-round for a wide range of activities. The bustling Market Hall allows vendors to occupy and customize a range of spaces, showcasing the cultural diversity of the community. Daybreak Hall acts as an informal lounge, gathering space and event venue. In the summer it opens to the public plaza, Spectrum Commons, and in winter visitors can gather around the central fireplace providing respite from the cold. Both Halls are encased in a wood scrim with integrated programmable LED lighting, creating infinite opportunities for dynamic, glowing public art that draws people into BEAM. The rest of the creative hub, anchored by live/work studios, galleries and a woodworking shop, is connected to the Daybreak and Market Halls by Spectrum Passage, a spine of day lit pedestrian circulation where additional exhibition display and public amenities are accommodated. Above this, the affordable housing offers inclusive, family-friendly, healthy living with amenities for communal cooking, gardening, and more.

Designed to Passive House standards with photovoltaics on the roof and geothermal systems below that achieve net-zero energy and net-zero carbon targets, BEAM is as environmentally and economically sustainable as it is socially and culturally. As a new beacon of light and creativity, BEAM acts as an urban catalyst and inspires continued growth in the community.