

Tiny Victories

location Austin, Texas
size 200 sf



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Community First! Village is a 51-acre planned community, providing permanent housing for people coming out of chronic homelessness. Our firm was selected to design and build a 200 sf micro-home prototype for the village.

Our client for this project was a formerly homeless man currently working in the Community First! Village. By working closely with the future resident and hearing about his lived experiences, our preconceived ideas of contemporary housing design were upended.

For him, the feeling of home, comfort, and respite meant being wrapped within an armor-like enclosure, inward facing privacy far outweighing the importance of outward views, spatial expansion or even daylight.

To make the enclosed interior feel spacious and inviting, we lofted the ceilings over the central living space, selecting warm Baltic Birch plywood panels for both wall and ceiling finish materials. This had the added benefit of durability and ease of maintenance.

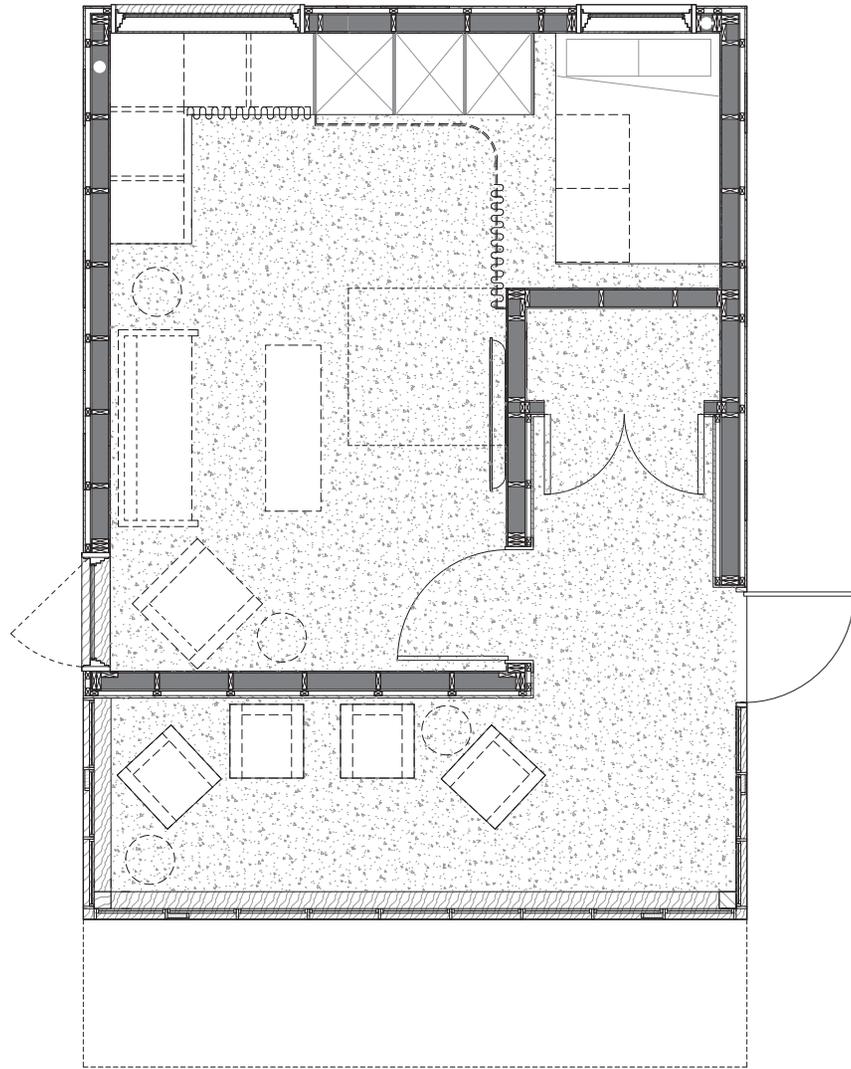
The ceiling culminates in the distinctive glass cupola which brings direct natural light into the interior while maintaining privacy. At night, its warm lantern-like light becomes a beacon communicating quietly with the rest of the village.

Given the minimal footprint, defining distinct living, eating, and sleeping zones while maintaining maximum open floor area became the primary organizing principle. A built-in storage wall accommodates necessities, fine-tuned to efficiently house clothes, shoes and toiletries together with pantry staples, cleaning tools and essential appliances. A built-in desk come utility counter doubles as a dining table. To further divide the space, the interior ceiling height is lowered dramatically within the sleeping zone - the size of a standard queen bed.

Capturing exterior space beneath the hipped roof canopy, the screened-in porch gave the home a second more open and social living space, welcoming all year round, where the resident could sit with friends and connect to the community.

Sustainable Strategies:

- Durable materiality
- Economy of space
- Daylighting
- Screened porch and hipped roof for comfort
- Social equity



1 Floor Plan
1/4" = 1'-0"



