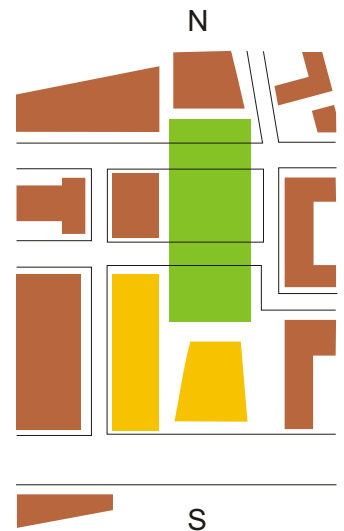


## Urban Objectives

Given that the Bakri building north of the competition site presents with an open courtyard, it seems fitting to provide a complimentary open space at the competition site. This lends to the maintenance of continuous open urban space which is also gestured south of the Landmark tower's setback. (see green rectangle in diagram @ right - full build-out). This open urban space becomes the front yard of the competition site, it allows for out door gatherings and becomes a point of reference to two well identified functions; one, Reception & Information, second Cafeteria and Commercial Spaces.

This leads to the Spatial Organization in full and the Architectural Objective in part.



## Architectural Objectives

In support of the greater urban objective and in keeping with the context of Beirut's downtown, it was appropriate to recognize and apply the City's predominant massing, materials, and building color palette. This is done by using stone cladding of a golden warm color and revealing the thicknesses of the primary walls. On the other hand, a more recent history of architecture in Lebanon allows us to recall large panes of glass and irregular Modern forms and object like architecture. Examples are the ESCWA building two blocks to the east just north of the Khalil Jibrán Garden which combines large panes glass and stone, the Radio City Center by Joseph Philip Karam three blocks to the east and much farther but still in the Lebanese Modern movement spirit, the Defense Ministry by Wogenscky and Hindieh which doesn't shy from irregular geometry.

In the case of our proposal, the building mass at the west property line recalls the warm stone textures and color of the old city while as it wraps the program but allows for the insertion of glass on the entire eastern facade, while the main performance hall recognizes Lebanon's more Modern precedent in that it is object like, set off from the ground and curved in section. Its exterior finish on the other hand is consistent with the old city's warm palette.



## Functional & Spatial Organization

Relative and in compliment to the Urban Objective in the immediate context, the architectural response is directed toward the project plaza, Ghalghoul Street, and the Bakri Plaza.

The site is organized into two parts: *incubation & dissemination*.

This incubation refers to all the activities that precede the presentation of final work. While the dissemination part refers to the activities that share the final product. For example, a person preparing a piece of art in a studio is incubation, and exhibiting that work to the public is dissemination.

The incubation program is located at the west most portion of the site and south of the Bakri building. Projecting the datums of the potential build-out at the adjacent property to the west and the Bakri building to the north produces the footprint of the incubation building. The dissemination portions of that building block are oriented toward the project plaza and are glazed in order to reveal the people's motion within. On the other hand, we considered the ultimate dissemination piece of the program to be the large hall. This 800 seat hall/theater is singled out in terms of its siting and architectural posture. It is centered on the project plaza and on axis with the northwardly projected open urban space. This orientation reinforces the dissemination factor of the program. It takes on the sectional quality of its function and tilts its non reflective glass wall towards the pedestrians below, sharing a hint at the activity within. This also happens at southern end of the large hall where passers by are offered a glimpse at the workings of a back stage.

## Suggested Technical & Building Solutions

Technical solutions that respond to the architectural and urban objectives, and also to the functional and spatial relationships include the use of prevalent materials and traditional building systems reflected in the context of down town Beirut, coupled with the juxtaposition of large planes of glass, and the use of less conventional building systems to house the volume of the large performance hall and its "floating" presence addressing the plaza.

These technical challenges will be examined in the context of a research and design process that is grounded in the goal of ecological responsibility in all aspects of design, construction and use of the facility. This process is highly interactive, involving a collaborative effort with all parties; professionals, civic leaders, community representatives, builders, administrators, anyone that has a stake in the project and a commitment to the city and a belief in the ideas set forth above.

