Reconnect the Aging:
Residential Assisted Living for the Elders in a Great Plains Small Town.

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Can design decisions help reconnect disconnected, forgotten and unnoticed residents within their community?
**Typology:** Assisted Living Facility

**Location:** Brooking, South Dakota

**Premises:**
The elderly population is growing older and much larger. Older people are in need of more care because of chronic conditions and disabilities that require different levels of long term assistance (Lisbon and Stone, 2011, pg 5). These limitations can cause a disconnect from their surroundings. With a large amount of our population near retirement age, the need for senior housing and assisted living for the elderly will also increase.

By creating a place of vibrance for the elderly to live, the negatives of old age can become less evident in their lives. The elderly can enjoy life and feel independent while living in a healthy and secure atmosphere suited for their needs.

An Assisted Living Facility should be integrated into the community and its surrounding neighborhoods. This can help foster the creation of a revitalized life for the elderly and make them feel a part of the community.

**Theoretical Premise/ Unifying Idea**
In past decades the elderly population went unnoticed because limitations due to old age causing them to be seen as a burden. A demand for change is being made for senior housing. By creating a place that does not feel institutional the independent senior population can connect and feel cared about within the larger community. Implementation of universal design strategies can help to reconnect elders to the world around them.
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“Health care improvements are allowing elderly populations to experience a greater number of fulfilling years of life. Medical science is striving for successful aging with low chance of disease, high physical and cognitive functions and living an actively engaging life.” (Dychtwald, 1990, pg 27).

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“a special combination of housing support services, personalized assistance and health care design to respond to individual needs” (Regnier, 2002, pg3).

“Residential character, be small in size, provide privacy and completeness, have unique qualities for each individual, create stimulation, allow for family and friend involvement, serve the frail and to connect to the surrounding communities” (Regnier, 2002, pg4).
“Universal design creates places that are suited for the special needs of users of all ages of users in a facility. This approach is human centered.”
Site Location

Wyoming
Montana
North Dakota
South Dakota
Nebraska
Minnesota
Wisconsin
Brookings
Living in rural area for the elderly have greater disadvantages, they are smaller scale, low density and healthcare facilities have limited scopes (Pil Yoon, 2006, p61).

Senior citizens lack social stimulation in rural areas. Providing opportunities of quality care and assisted living in rural areas can help to improve the insecurities that the elderly have about aging (Bull, 1993).
Near by Amenities: downtown shops and businesses, banks, health services, restaurants, activities center, event center, library, several churches, parks and a children’s museum.
Originally on the site was St. Thomas More Catholic Church, a rectory and a catechetical. 1999 the congregation was moved to a different location within the city (History of Old Sanctuary, 2012).

The site is currently a paved parking lot. Several old buildings that were once a functioning church are now used as rental space (“Old Sanctuary Offices,” 2012).
Relocation Map for existing buildings.

Site Location
Views Around the Site

NORTH - 4th St.

SOUTH - Back Alley
Views Around the Site

EAST - Medary Ave.

WEST - 9th Ave.
The National Register of Historic Places defines the area as a “Central Residential Historic District.”
"Understanding needs of building users... "

"Creation of social stimulation..."

"Assisted Living Facilities are a link... "

"Should allow elders to live with dignity & create a setting that resemble a home... "
“Understanding needs of building users... “

Space should be friendly, accommodating comfortable and address assisted living guidelines: Residential in character, small in size, create stimulation, family involvement, connect to communities.
Design Concept & Process
“Creation of social stimulation... “

Stimulating activities, mental challenges, community engagement, provide amenities and physical activities.
Floor Plan: Public Spaces
“Should allow elders to live with dignity & create setting the resemble a home... “

Create independence, personal spaces, be self-sustaining and have qualities of a home.
“Assisted Living Facilities are a link... “
Creation of connective pathways between private & public, interior & exterior, visual & physical and community connectivity
Building Structure & Systems

Gutter
Roof Drainage

Roof Drainage System

Water Drainage Direction
Gutter
Vertical Drains

Roof Skylight
Building Lobby


