Due to the regional and continental scale, the generous right-of-way, and its singular modality, the U.S. interstate system represents an underutilized opportunity ripe for architectural invention. Projecting an alternative future for transportation infrastructure and the U.S. interstate system, this project explores the spatial potentials of integrating high-speed rail services along the length of the I-95 corridor and the new role of rest-stops as intermodal transportation hubs.

The Rest-Stop

As an intermodal transportation hub within the new interstate system, the rest-stop links the diverse participants across different scales of mobility and within regional landscapes. For this particular proposal, a conventional parking circulation diagram is pulled apart to create a meandering path fed with parking that weaves across the site. By elevating the rail lines and platforms, this meandering path defines an expansive pedestrian median that flows beneath the rail lines and re-connects the formerly isolated sides of the interstate. Taking advantage of the requisite structure of the elevated rail lines and platforms, the supporting commuter and traveler amenities are consolidated within this central band. To reconcile the monumental scale of infrastructure with the embedded programs—ticketing booths, holding rooms, restaurants, a traveler’s hostel, trucker bungalows, & fueling stations—a light structural skin wraps the platforms and cradles these supporting programs. More importantly, this consolidation within a central band opens up the surrounding landscape, the islands within the dispersed median, to host a variety of environments, recreational amenities, and routes for different visitors. These include paths and greenspace linking parking to the platforms, thematic park-scapes, picnic areas, RV parking, an outdoor theatre, and swimming pools. In doing this, the proposal collapses the diverse experiences of the American road and highlights the relationships between expansive infrastructure, recreation, and modern mobility.