In the Motor Row Historic District, a prime location for adaptive reuse and rehabilitation, AltusWorks was engaged by Windy City Real Estate to assist with adapting several automobile industry oriented buildings to house office, retail, and restaurants. Each building held unique challenges whether they were life safety related or programmatic. Our team’s design solutions upheld historic character while providing Windy City with flexible spaces.
Given the challenge of creating a multifunctional seat which sustains itself through the use of a single material and strong fabrication connections, our team designed this cardboard chair. By articulating the ways in which each of us preferred to sit we were able to solidify multi-functionality as well as the versatile form. After some drawn and modeled tests, a tab system was created to ensure a strong chair that could hold the weight of a person in any of its positions.
Challenged to design a multi-family housing structure which might encourage social interactions between tenants this project was executed through a highly iterative process of testing programmatic agencies, site affinities, and representation-al techniques. The design creates a distinct separation of public and private versus shared spaces with public space at the first floor shops, shared balcony space at the second and third levels, and private balconies for the apartments in the tower. The shared balconies activate the site for residents and allow for some interaction with the street if desired. The private balconies and perforated metal facade screen of the tower contribute to privacy and mystery of the apartments beyond.
As part of the Design/Build project team led by Kiewit Infrastructure, AltusWorks provided comprehensive documentation for the rehabilitation of the circa 1943 Harrison Station on the CTA Red Line. We addressed life safety and aesthetic issues so as to enhance riders’ experience and further strengthen the redevelopment of the South Loop neighborhood.

Through the innovative technology of tapping the train system’s Third Rail to power life safety systems, creative process and design solution for the entrance kiosks, and efficient construction scheduling AltusWorks and the Design/Build team were able to create a renovation model strongly embraced by the CTA.
With the guidance of professional and collegiate mentors, seventeen junior and senior high school students designed and built this rain collection object over a seven week program and a budget of $7,000. The rain collection system doubles as a seating and work area for the Children’s Garden of Hope on the Westside of Chicago. A great learning process of schematic design, design development, product research, prefabrication, and construction culminated in a beautiful new fixture in the West Humbolt Park neighborhood.