Trash for Use
Municipal center for harvesting utility from waste, New York, NY, USA

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Summary by the jury
As waste removal becomes increasingly difficult to handle and landfill space ever more scarce, cities such as New York must become more resourceful in the manner in which they address their refuse. Confronting this problem, the project proposes a building in the midst of the metropolis for waste collection and processing, a “machine for turning trash into treasure”. The municipal Center for Harvesting Utility from Waste (CHUW) recognizes an opportunity to locally treat collected waste, breaking it down into its constituent components – organic substances, metal, paper, plastic, glass, and so forth – in order to exploit its content.

Appraisal by the jury
Greatly appreciated by the jury is the idea to conceive a new type of urban infrastructure that offers an answer to the problematic interplay of material flows in urban environments. In this regard, the project proposes to close a gap in the chain that reaches from material extraction and processing to consumption and disposal. Applauded is the notion to propose an infrastructure building devised to mine the city, an important node within the metabolic system of a fragile urban ecology. Lastly, the jury commended the clarity and beauty of the drawings and models presented in the submission.

Project data

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Further authors
Image 3: 50 tons of household waste is collected daily and processed into raw material per category.

Image 4: Economic and environmental benefits of waste recovery via renewable energy and material resource.

Image 5: Employee lounge and public community garden sit above the collection/drop-off floor on street level.

Image 6: Aluminum processing and manufacturing floors, paper processing and manufacturing floors.

Image 7: Exploded model view from 14th St & 1st Ave, sectional view showing programmatic stacking.

Image 8: Truck drop-off and sorting prep, sorting and manufacturing spaces behind storage façade.

Image 9: Plasma gasification and compost rooftop, all non-recyclable material is gasified into energy.

Image 10: Truck and pedestrian drop-off on ground floor, picking conveyors lead to vertical conveyor core.

More at www.holcimawards.org/projects/trash-for-use