

## Aptum / Landscape Intelligence Gownaus Competition Entry

**(f)lowline** proposes a responsive, adaptive, strategic approach to the environmental and social reclamation of the Gowanus Canal. This is achieved through the creation of a synthetic infrastructural system comprised of three **'eco-zones.'** These zones – colloquially labeled as **pleats, pools, and partitions** – are designed and engineered to tackle the complex environmental conditions of the Gowanus, while simultaneously providing a unique public realm for residents and visitors to the area. Existing programs are selectively highlighted and amplified or screened and dampened as deemed necessary by the canal's diverse constituencies. Such strategies are achieved through a series of **'local' tactics** such as sound and storage walls which benefit existing industrial sites while on the flipside contributing to the ambience and atmosphere of the new public realm created along the canal. Barges and other industrial relics and materials are seamlessly incorporated into the strategy and repurposed for **environmental remediation** activities such as soil and water cleansing as well as more surreal programs such as public baths, canoe launches, and floating forests.

The Gowanus **(f)lowline strategy** is flexible in its ability to take on the challenges of the Gowanus and forceful in its ability to provide a renewed legibility for the canal and its context. Formally and programmatically the design mediates between the often disjunct conditions found between the canal and its surroundings. This **hybrid infrastructure** fuses the pure function of infrastructure with the adaptive intelligence of ecology in order to create new assemblages, which are socio-culturally and **environmentally performative.**

**(f)lowline** is **opportunistically phased** through a reclamation process of **dredging** the canal and implementing a series of tactical insertions over time. First, toxic soil and waste material are dredged from the bottom of the canal. The EPA estimates that the northern end of the canal must be dredged to achieve acceptable water quality levels. Waste material is transported via Barge to the future **'Pooling Parks'** where it will be landfilled while serving as a new geology for the Gowanus Canal Park System. Second, a series of barges will be retrofitted with public programs such as clubhouses, public toilets, canoe rental stations, etc. Additionally, these **Floating Forest Barges** will be strategically placed to create a system of programmatic icons visible from multiple vantage points in the neighborhood. Third, a series of multi-use **Surface Partitions** buffer the park from adjacent industry while simultaneously aiding in the detoxification and aeration of canal water. These elements contribute to the experiential conditions of the canal landscape. Finally, a cohesive surface system of pedestrian walkways, planting beds, and water quality pools will unify the water's edge between the private and public realm. This surface will 'float' atop a **thickened 2D section** engineered to improve water quality through bio-remediative measures as well as provide additional capacity for stormwater runoff and infiltration.

The Gowanus Canal is a prototypical 21st century urban landscape best understood as a multi-layered or **'thick' landscape** - a by-product of near ceaseless shifts of social and ecological priorities and values throughout its history. (f)lowline is conceived as yet another shift in this value system and differs from its predecessors by embracing change over time as a fundamental requirement of any robust urban strategy. The mere fact of the continuing existence of the Gowanus, along with the groundswell of support it now receives from various community organizations point to its resiliency as an urban landscape and lays the groundwork for its future reclamation.