In 2007, the police department of Stockton, California contacted Public Architecture about developing a Day Labor Station to address the residents' complaints while also improving the conditions of the hiring site and building trust with the workers. The police department in partnership with the Mayor’s office and Proyecto Voz, an immigrant advocacy group called commissioned a Day Labor Station in Stockton.

Each day, over 110,000 people search for day labor work in the United States. Given the lack of formal work facilities, they have reappropriated underused open spaces in cities like street corners and home improvement store parking lots as hiring sites. Since the spaces were designed for other uses, they often lack the basic amenities of a work site like shelter, restrooms. The issue of day laborers' poor work conditions is particularly prominent in the Bay Area so the architects at Public Architecture witnessed the challenge of the day laborers first hand. Between 2004 - 2009, Public Architecture conducted interviews with the day laborers in California, specifically Los Angeles, Bay area and Central Valley, as well as in Texas and the Washington, DC metropolitan area to learn more about the day laborers' needs and aspirations.

The Day Labor Station was created as an innovative design and advocacy tool that provides a flexible structure for day laborer across the country. It also provides a sheltered space for the day laborers to wait for work in addition to kitchen and restroom. The project aims to improve the quality of life for those at the margins of the American Dream. The design proposal includes a community garden at the neighborhood level. Though never built, the project proved to be an effective advocacy tool for the National Day Labor Organizing Network. The project was awarded the 2009 Global Innovation Prize by the Holcim Foundation.
INJUSTICE

79% of day labor hiring sites are informal with 24% of these workers standing in front of businesses, 22% at home improvement stores, 10% at gas stations and 8% on busy streets.

83% of day laborers rely on day-labor work as their sole source of income.

Nearly 50% were denied food/water or breaks while on the job.

1 in 5 day laborers has suffered a work-related injury and more than half of those who were injured do not receive medical care.

VALUES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
Providing visibility to the day laborers by creating a formal, comfortable, and respectable space

RESPECT
Demonstrating respect for the day labor community and humanizing a too often faceless community

BEAUTY
Realizing the right for everyone to have the right to beautiful architecture

DIGNITY
Creating a place where day laborers and local residents can stand on equal footing

COLLABORATION
Creating opportunity for local residents to engage with the day laborer community

INSPIRATION
Inspiring designers to engage in creative problem-solving to address challenges faced by marginalized communities

WE UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER WE HAVE TO SHOW SOMEONE THAT WE SEE THEM. PEOPLE AT THE BOTTOM RARELY FEEL SEEN.”
LIZ OGBU, FOUNDER & PRINCIPAL OF STUDIO O AND FORMER DESIGN DIRECTOR AT PUBLIC ARCHITECTURE

“ARCHITECTURE SHOULD NOT A LUXURY. EVERYONE DESERVES GOOD ARCHITECTURE. IT SHOULD BE A BASIC RIGHT CONNECTED TO ISSUES OF DIGNITY.”
LIZ OGBU, FOUNDER & PRINCIPAL OF STUDIO O AND FORMER DESIGN DIRECTOR AT PUBLIC ARCHITECTURE

**PROGRAM**

**OFFICE** provides a private meeting room and space to organize work-related materials or equipment.

**RESTROOM** serves a basic but critical infrastructure need for the day labor community.

**KITCHEN** functions as a food business and encouraging social interaction between local residents and day laborers.

**MAKING THE INVISIBLE VISIBLE**