

Michelle Liu

647-530-6905 | michelle.jh.liu@gmail.com

September 16, 2025

375 Pearl Street, 31st Floor
New York, NY 10038

Re: Application for Architectural Designer (NYC)

Dear Hiring Team,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Michelle, and I recently completed my Master of Architecture at the University of Toronto. I am writing to express interest in the Designer position at Rafael Viñoly Architects' New York office.

I am particularly inspired by the National Medal of Honor Museum, which demonstrates the firm's ability to combine bold formal clarity with cultural resonance. The project's massing and structural expression communicate strength and dignity, while its public spaces create moments for reflection and connection. This balance of monumentality and human experience aligns with my own interest in shaping civic architecture that honors history while engaging meaningfully with its community.

My professional experience includes a work term at Annum Architects in Boston (formerly Ann Beha Architects), where I contributed to the renovation of the Smithsonian National Museum of American History. I supported the project from pre-design through design development, preparing Revit models, design studies, and presentation materials for client workshops. I also worked at Steven Fong Architect, a Toronto-based practice, where I focused on interiors for commercial and small-scale residential projects, gaining experience in finish selection, millwork detailing, and construction documentation using both AutoCAD and Vectorworks. These roles developed my ability to move between conceptual ideas and technical detailing while working closely with consultants and clients.

I am currently pursuing licensure through NCARB and am motivated to continue developing within a practice that emphasizes design excellence, structural clarity, and cultural meaning. Thank you for your time and consideration, and I hope you hear from you soon.

Kind regards,



Michelle Liu

Michelle Liu

647-530-6905 | michelle.jh.liu@gmail.com
portfolio: www.mjhlui.github.io/mjhl_2025.pdf

Education

University of Toronto, Master of Architecture

JUN. 2025

University of Toronto, B.A. Architectural Studies

JUN. 2020

Architectural Design Specialist
Urban Studies Minor

Skills

Languages

English (Native)
Cantonese (Fluent, Speaking)

CAD

Rhino3D, Revit, Vectorworks

Tools

Sketchup, Illustrator, InDesign,
Photoshop, Premiere Pro,
Processing, Grasshopper,
Figma, ArcGIS, Microsoft Office

Development

HTML/CSS

Model Experience

3D printing (FDM & Binder Jet),
Laser cutting, Woodshop

Awards

John and Myrna Daniels
Foundation Opportunity Award
Summer 2019 | Fall 2024

References

John Turnbull
Annum Architects
Architect, AIA
617.226.1618
jturnbull@annumarchitects.com

Ashley Merchant
Annum Architects
Associate, AIA
617.226.1655
amerchant@annumarchitects.com

Work Experience

University of Toronto Faculty of Architecture, Teaching Assistant

Sep. 2024 TO APR. 2025 | Toronto, ON

+ ARC2047: Building Science, Materials, and Construction III | Instructor: Daniel Chung
Facilitated weekly lab sessions, administered quizzes, and held office hours to support student learning.

+ ARC362: Architecture Studio IV | Instructor: Chloe Town

Provided constructive design feedback during desk critiques and reviews, and supported the coordination of studio deliverables and presentations.

Annum Architects (f.k.a. Ann Beha Architects), Architectural Intern

MAY 2023 TO AUG. 2024 | Boston, MA

+ Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American History (PD SD DD)

+ Chestnut Hill Benevolent Association (MP)

+ Temple Israel of Boston (SD)

Assisted in the preparation of design presentations and reports for clients, including renders, diagrams, and other materials to effectively communicate design concepts.

Created detailed architectural drawings, plans, and specifications using Revit, Sketchup, Rhino3D, and Climate Studio.

Steven Fong Architect, Architecture Student

MAY 2022 TO MAY 2023 | Toronto, ON

Prepared IFC and shop drawings for multiple residential and commercial projects.

Maintained construction and permit drawings, documents, and records for past and current projects; performed other duties as assigned.

University of Toronto Faculty of Architecture, IT Plotter Specialist

OCT. 2019 TO APR. 2020 | Toronto, ON

Provided technical support for large-format printing and plotter maintenance with minimal supervision.

Managed computer labs, printers, and supply inventory; resolved printing and software issues during high-demand periods for students and faculty.

Community Involvement

On Canada Project, Design Associate

NOV. 2020 TO AUG. 2021

Google DSC, University of Toronto Scarborough, Lead Graphic Designer

SEP. 2019 TO APR. 2020

cafe059, University of Toronto Faculty of Architecture, Barista + Cashier

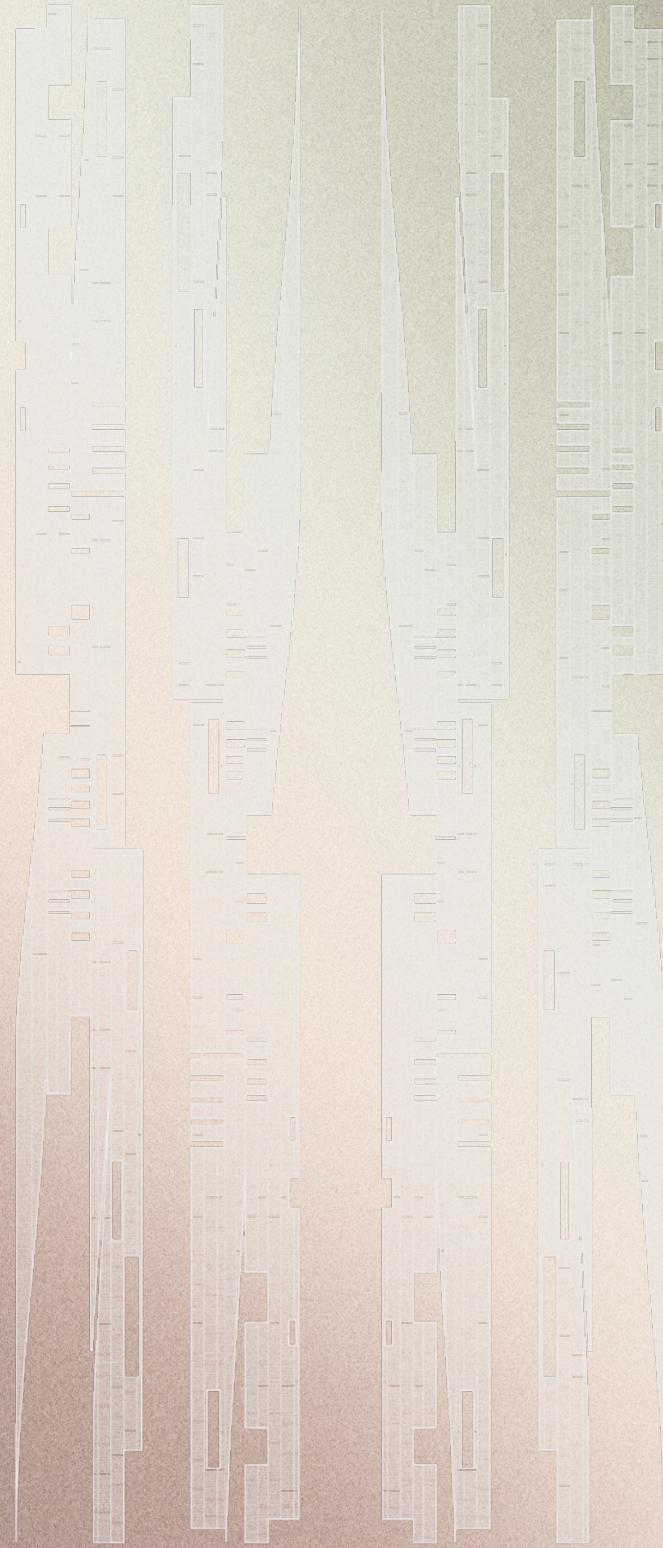
SEP. 2019 TO MAR. 2020

Maker Society, University of Toronto Scarborough, Director of Design

SEP. 2017 TO SEP. 2019

DA Mentorship, University of Toronto Faculty of Architecture, Mentee / Mentor

SEP. 2016 TO APR. 2017 / SEP. 2019 TO APR. 2020 / SEP. 2021 TO APR. 2022



Portfolio

Michelle Liu
2025 Selected Works

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Academic
Fall 2022 |
| 5 | P33 | Church of Community
Academic
Fall 2021 |
| 6 | P37 | Annum Architects
2023 - 2024 |

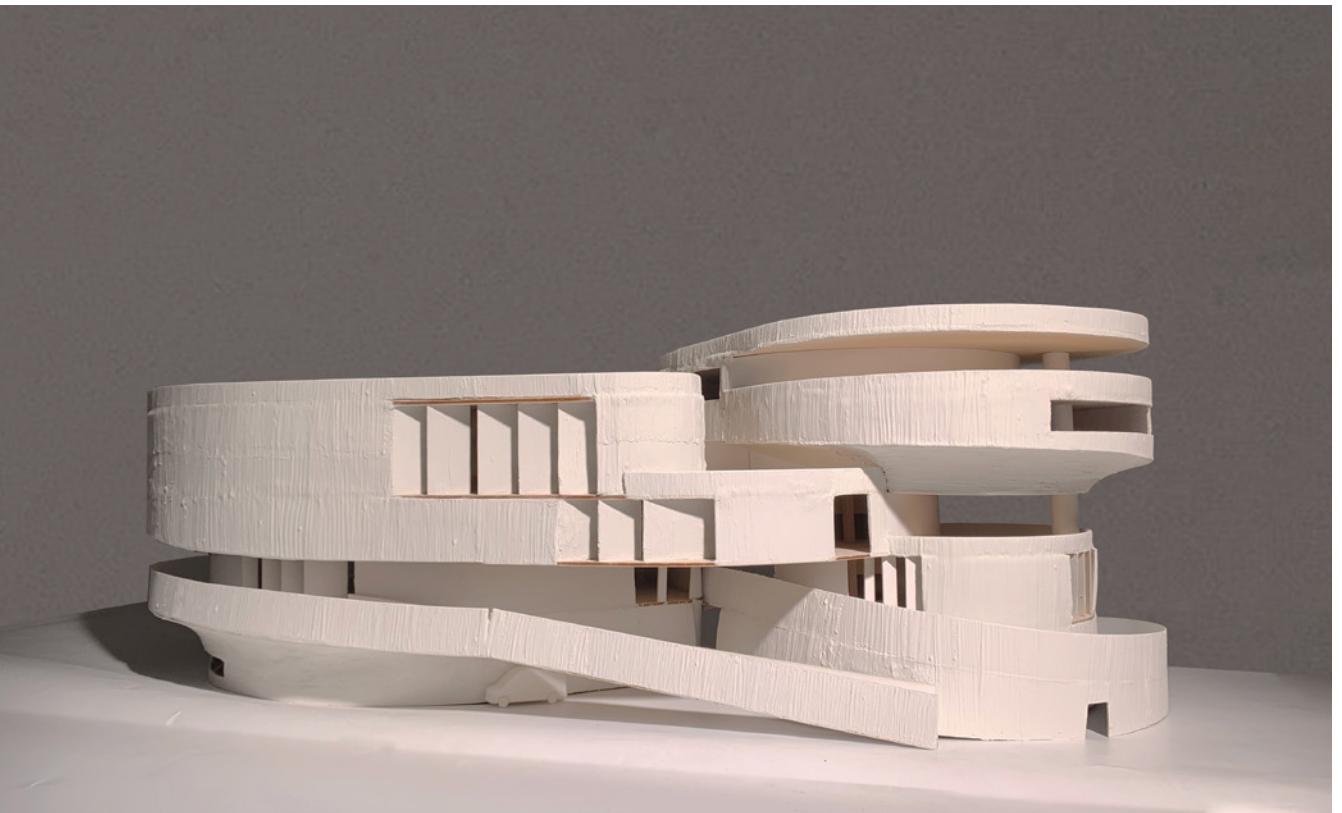
01. Soft Entwine

Course: ARC2014 - Design Studio IV
Instructor: Chris Cornecelli

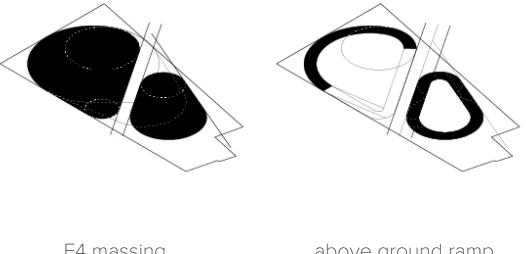
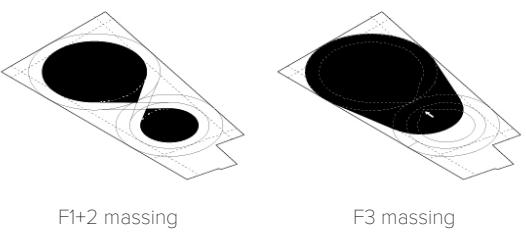
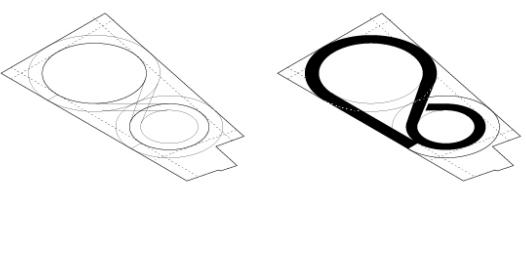
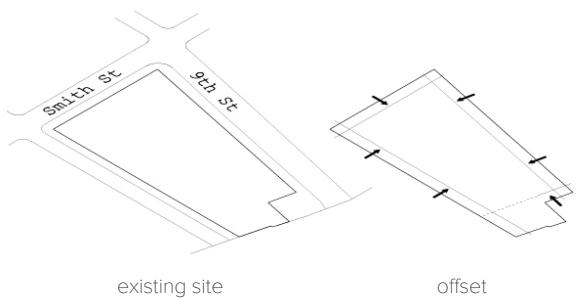
Continuity invites curiosity. Bridging together art and community through continuous circulation as program, users are brought together to experience the various production stages of creation. Through the weaving of spaces, Soft Entwine proposes an architecture of circulation that is both playful and multifaceted.

Located in Brooklyn, New York at 503 Smith Street, the site along the Gowanus canal embodies the magnitude and urgency of the climate threat in an area transitioning away from a heavy industrial past into an eco-industrial and mixed use future. The project aims to reimagine the social and material dimensions of buildings to define the urgent transition of the industry into a low carbon and circular economy. It is a social infrastructure for the neighborhood anchored around a library of things, a reuse factory and also an exhibition and workspace space for the local artists' community.

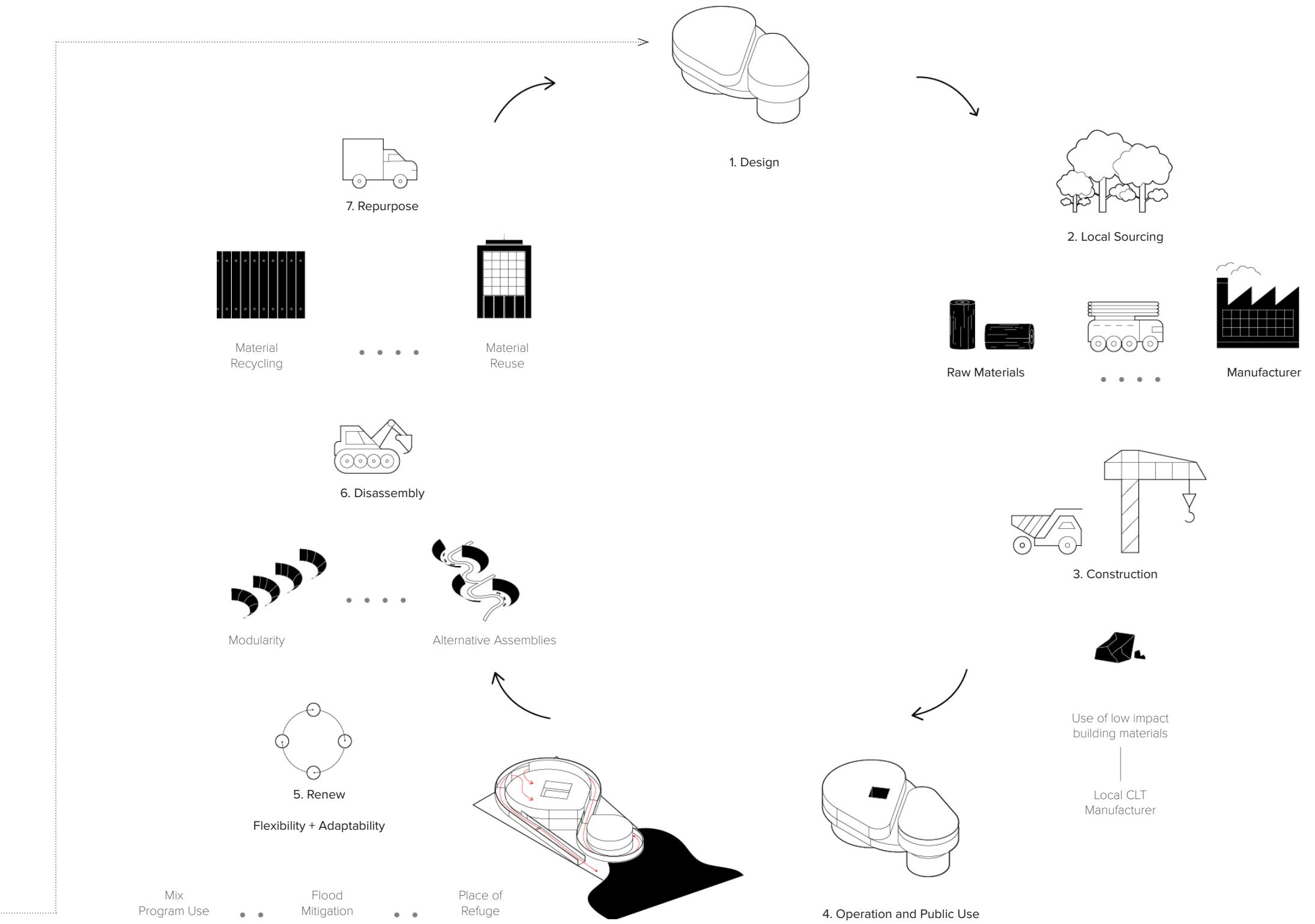
Collaborator: Amelia Chung



1:100 Model

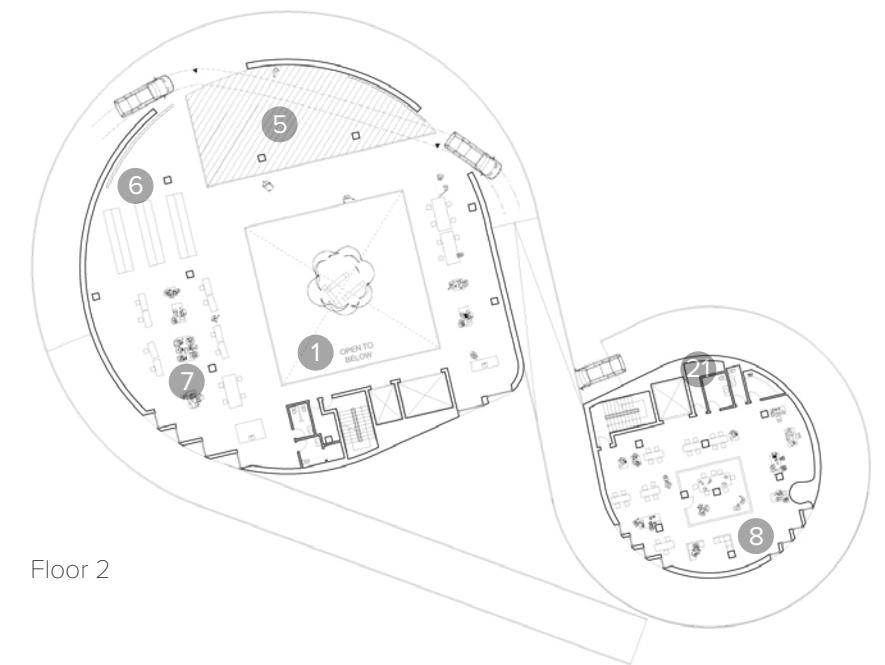
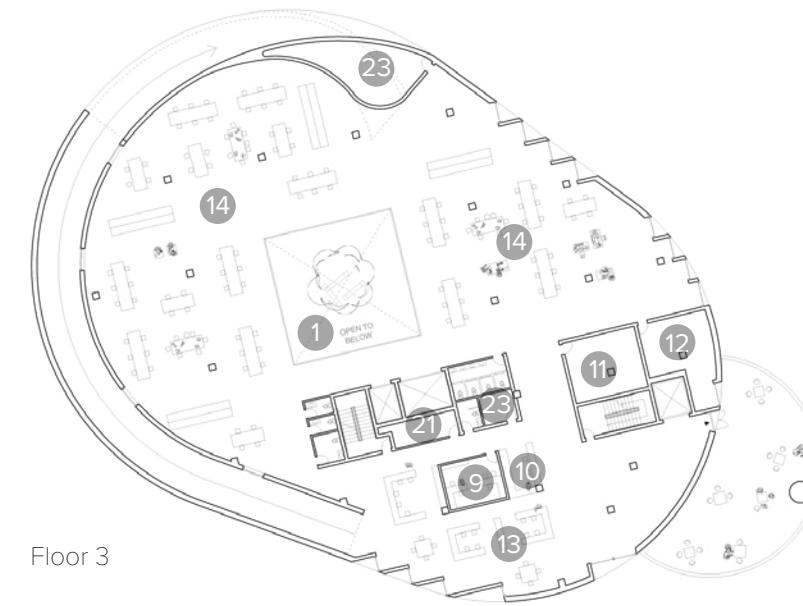
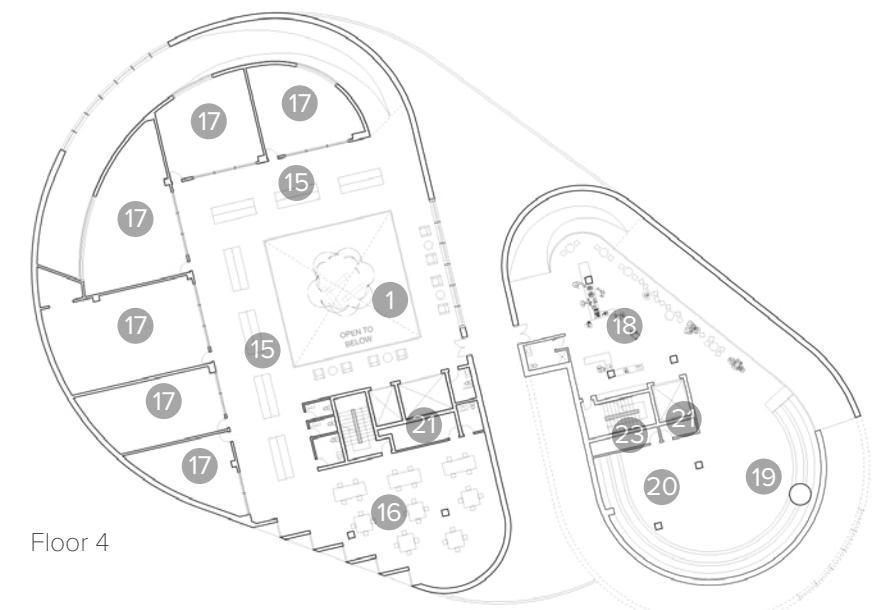
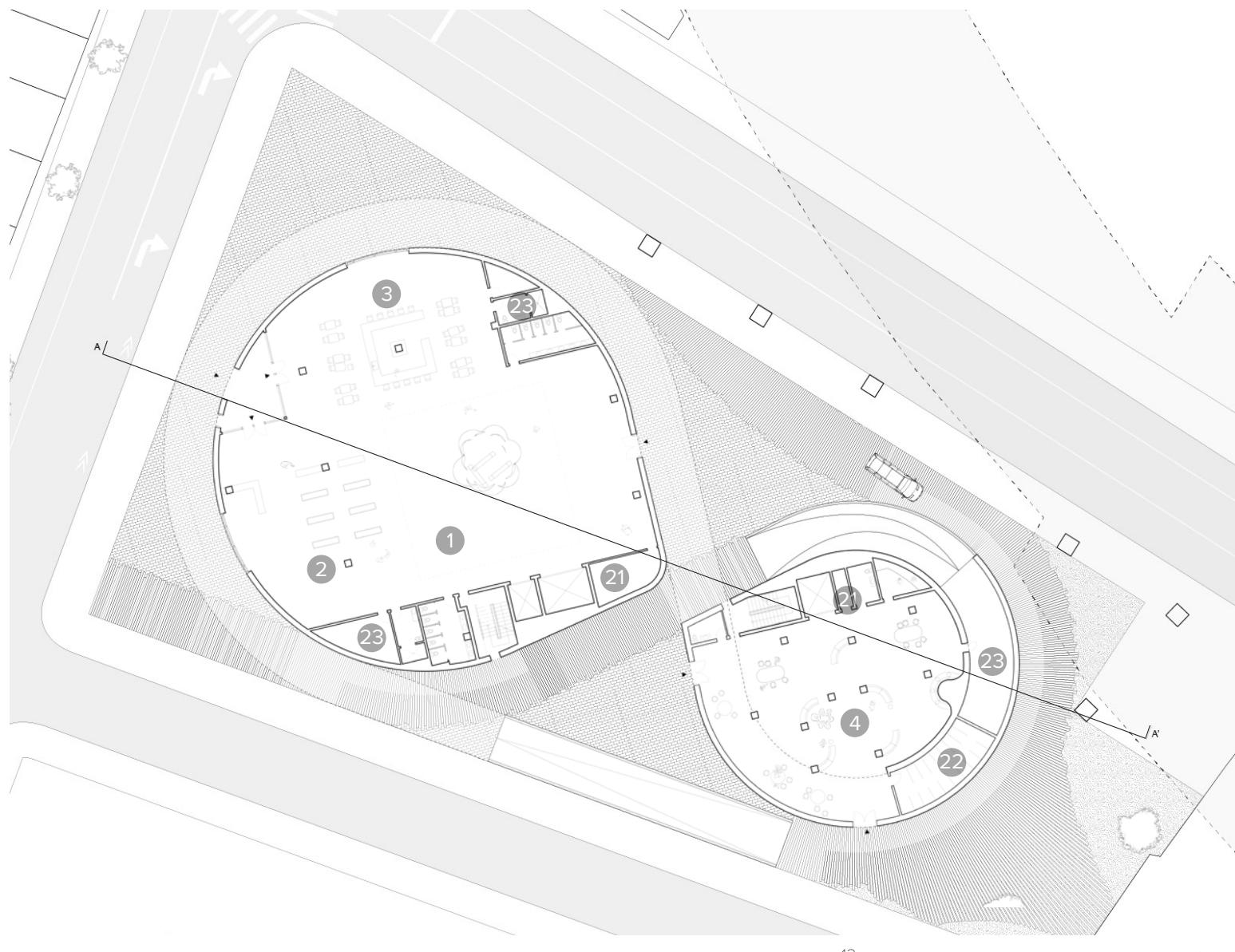


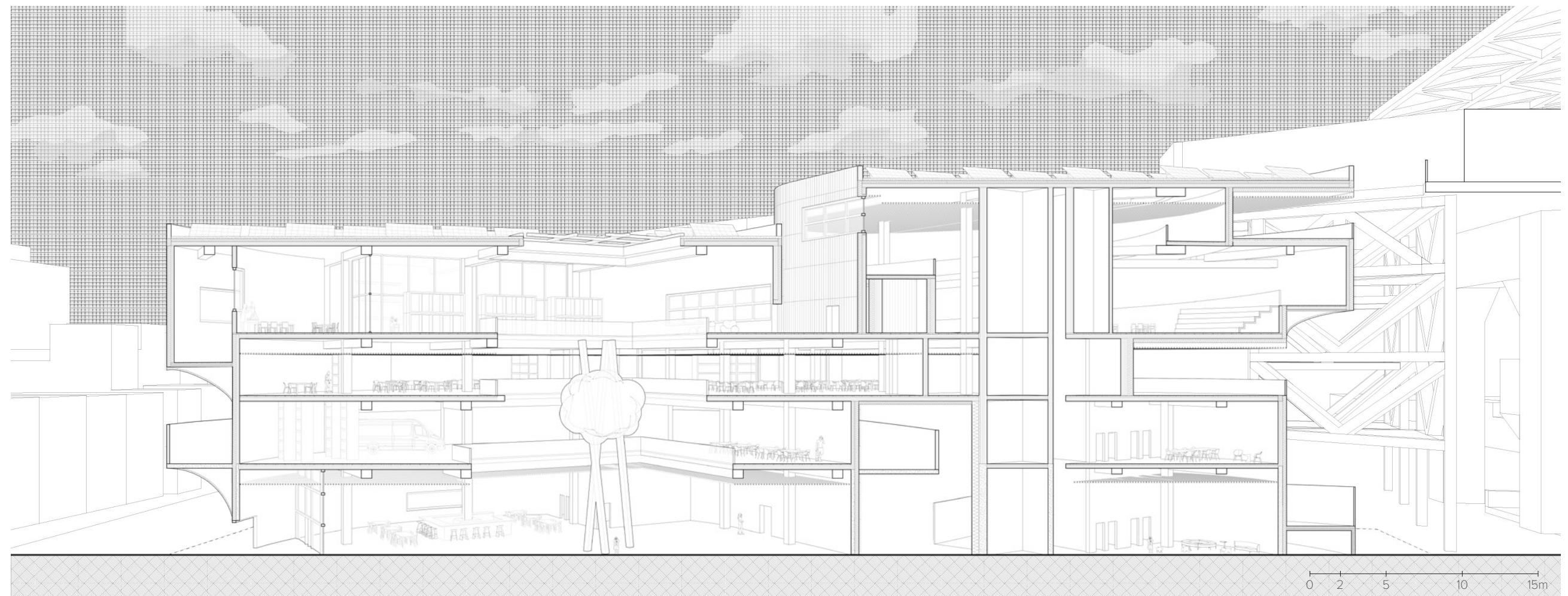
Design Development



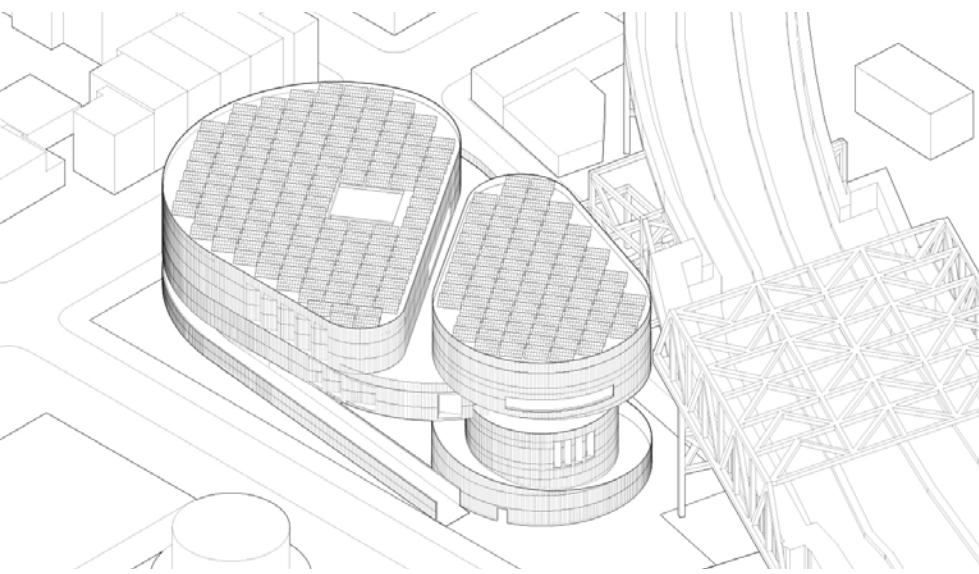
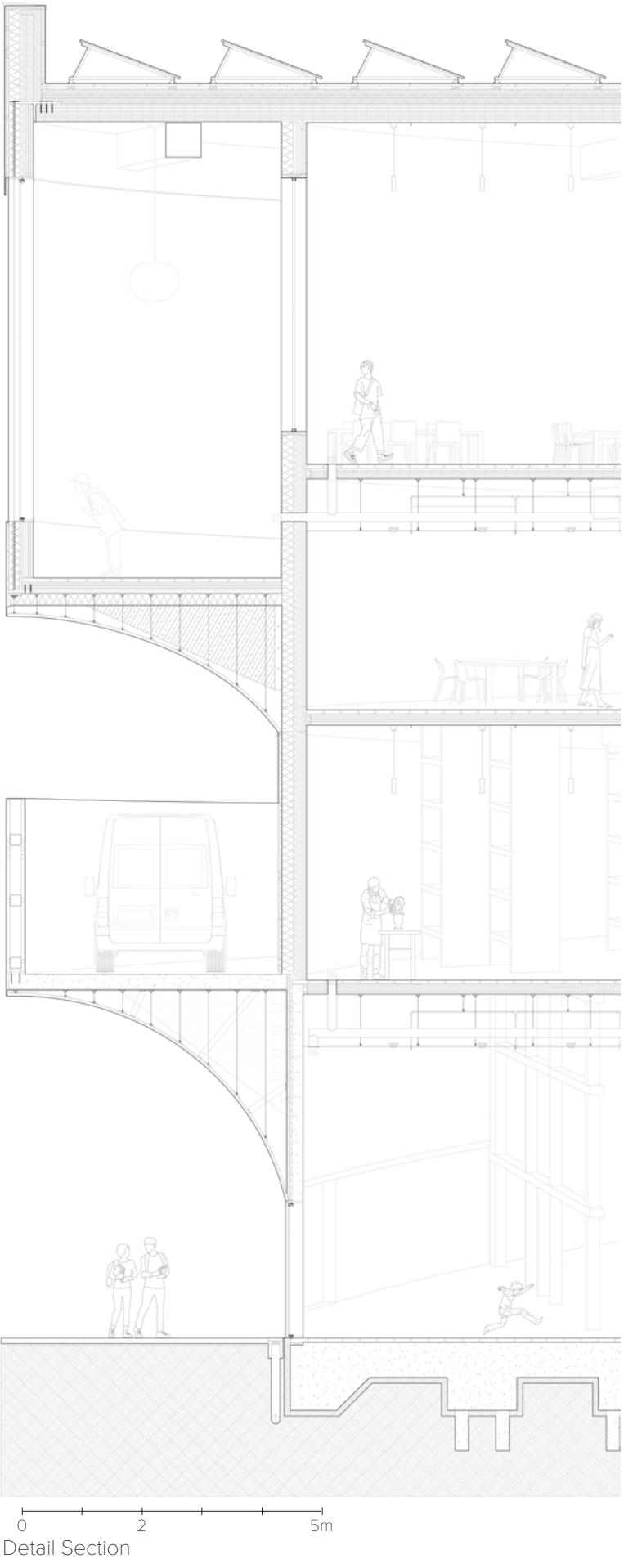
Life Cycle Manifesto

- | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 Art Exhibition | 9 Librarian Office | 17 Training, Making, Repair Workshops |
| 2 Cafe / Restaurant | 10 Reference Desk | 18 Community Kitchen / Catering |
| 3 Circular Store | 11 Staff Refurbishing Shop | 19 Auditorium / Multi-Purpose Space |
| 4 Play Area | 12 Staff Area | 20 Main Stage |
| 5 Loading Area | 13 Sharing Depot | 21 MEP |
| 6 Material Storage | 14 Workshop Area | 22 Bike Storage |
| 7 Artist Studio | 15 Artist Space Lockers | 23 Storage |
| 8 Start-Up Office | 16 Repair Cafe | |

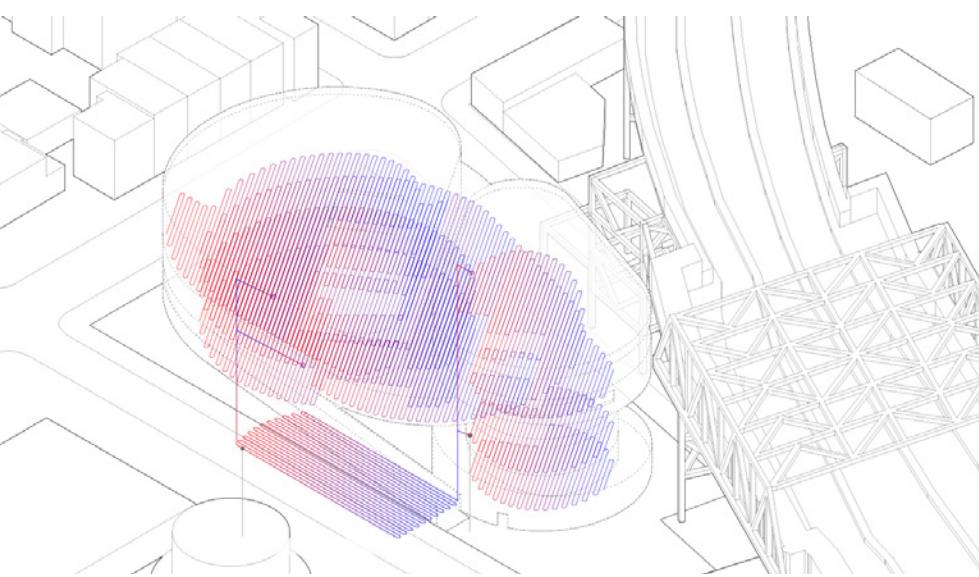




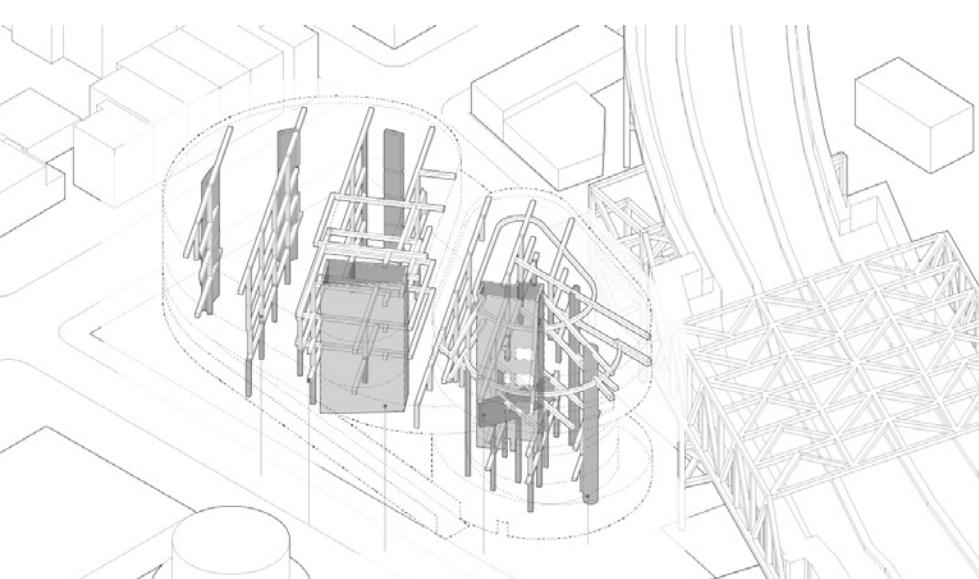
Section A-A'



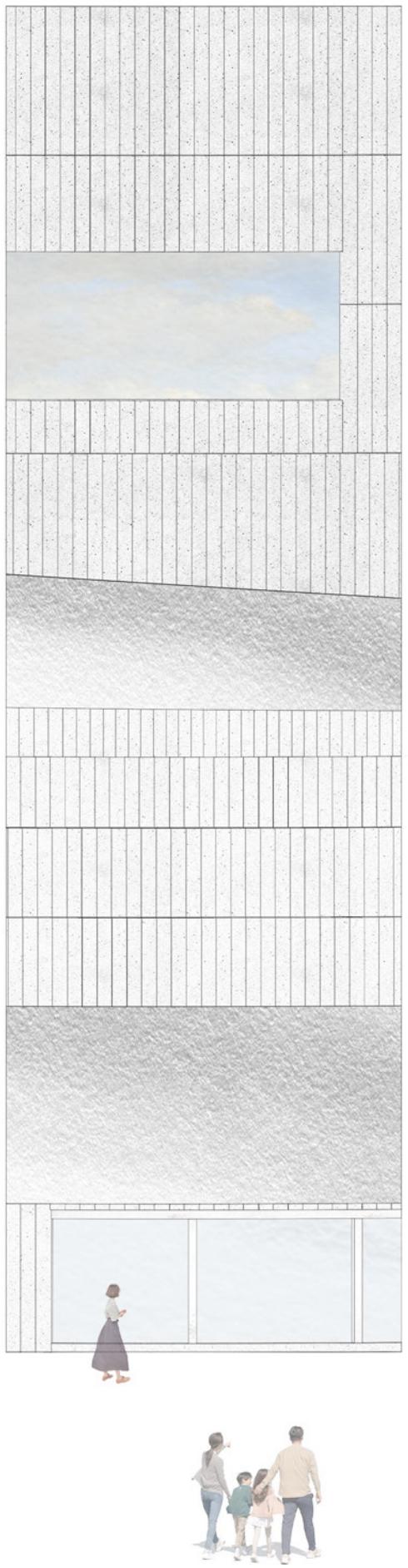
Renewable Energy Sources - Roof Mounted PV Panels



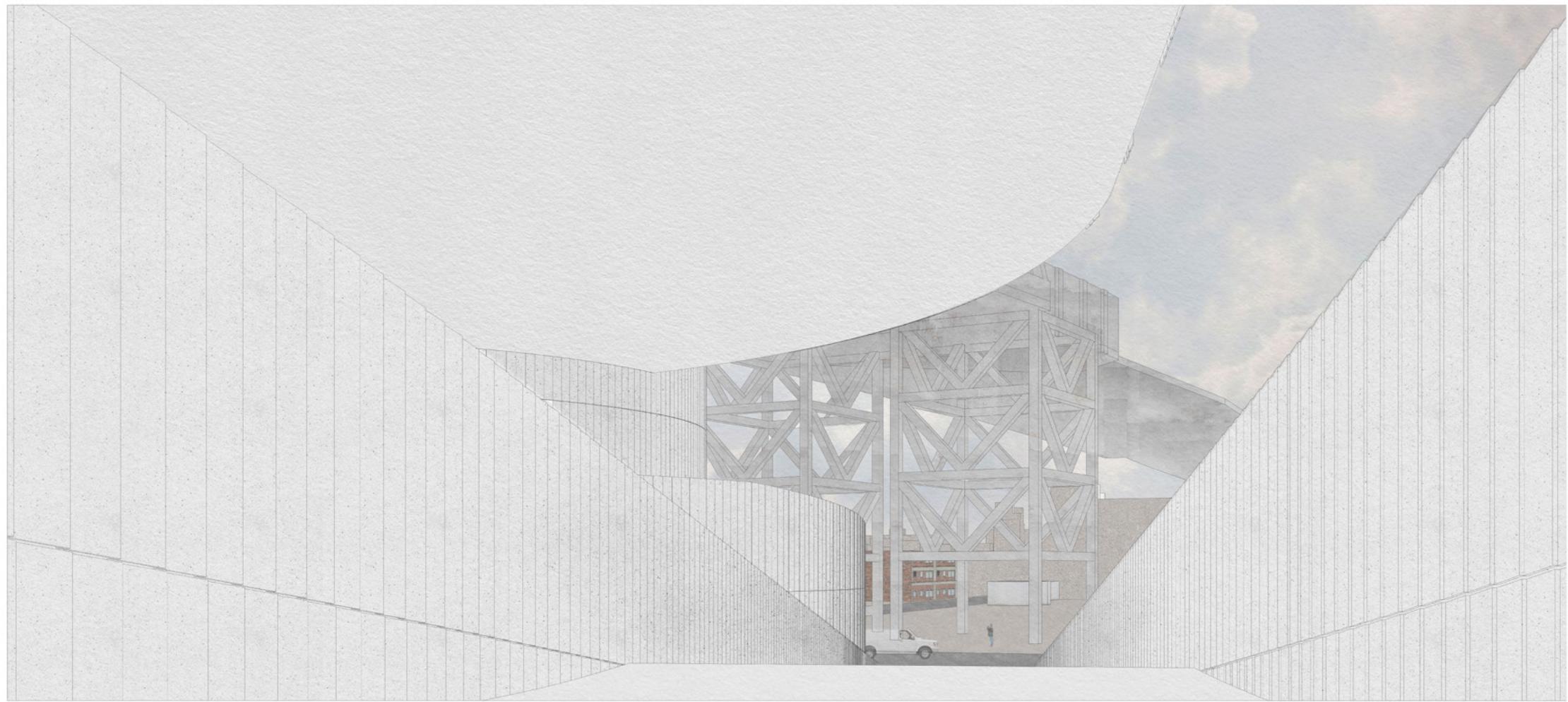
Renewable Energy Sources - Hydronic Radiant Heating and Cooling



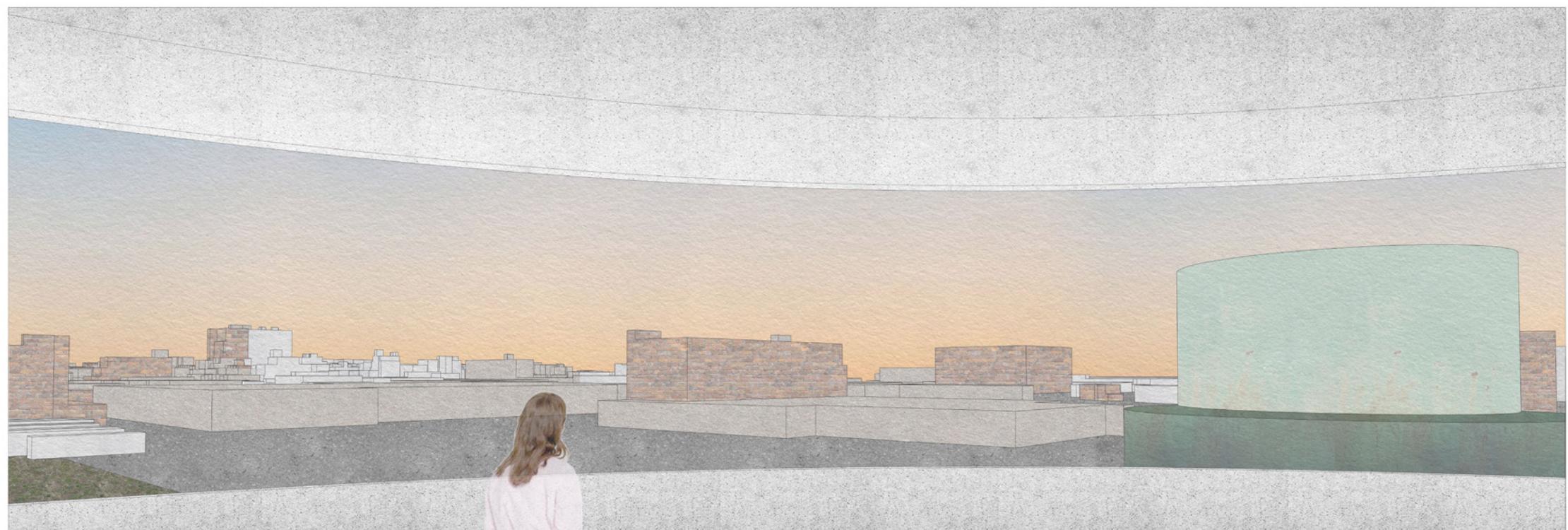
Structural System - Mass Timber & Concrete Core



North Entrance - Collage



Auto Ramp Entrance - Collage



South Balcony - Collage

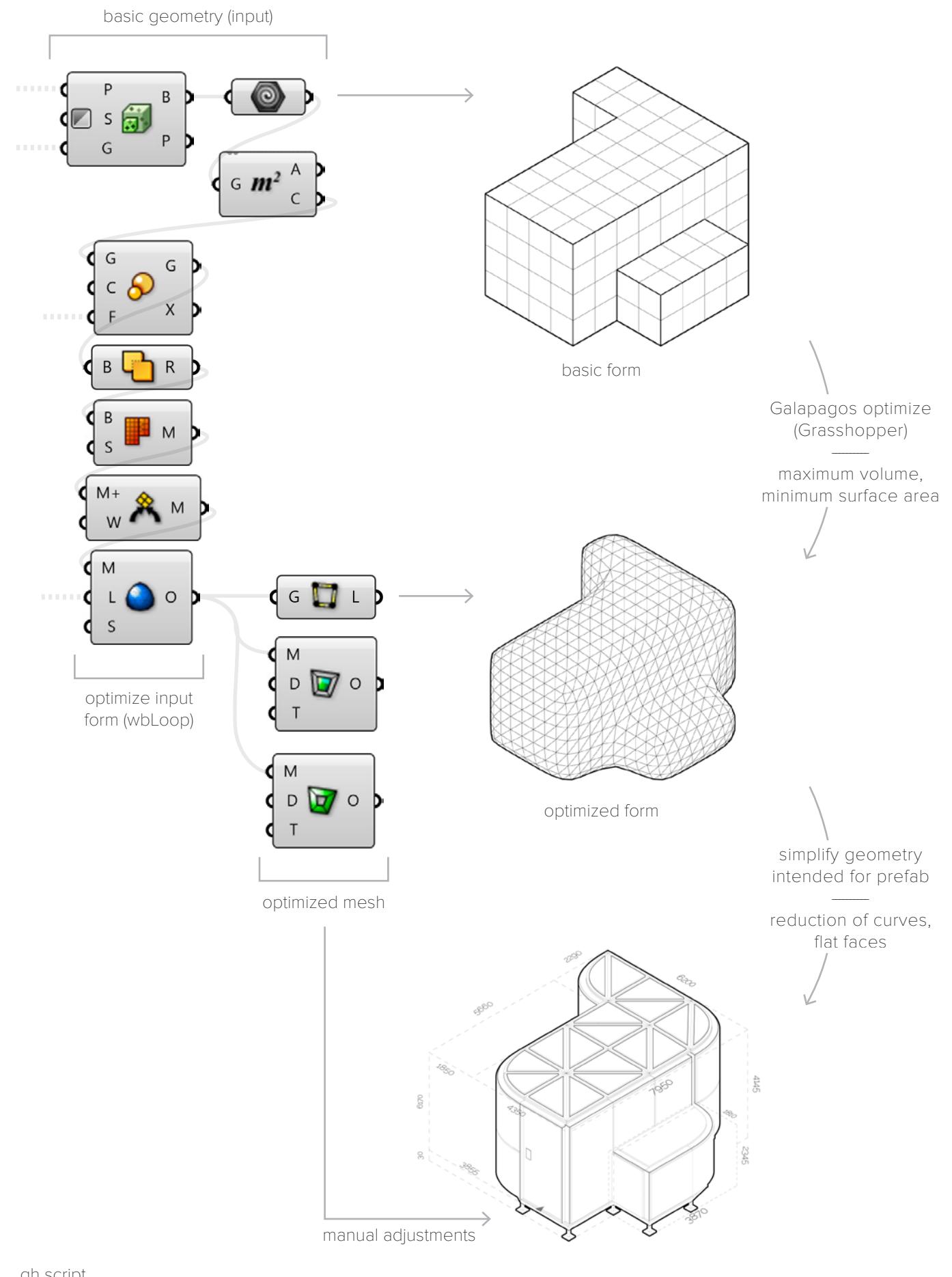
02. Autonomous Housing Pods

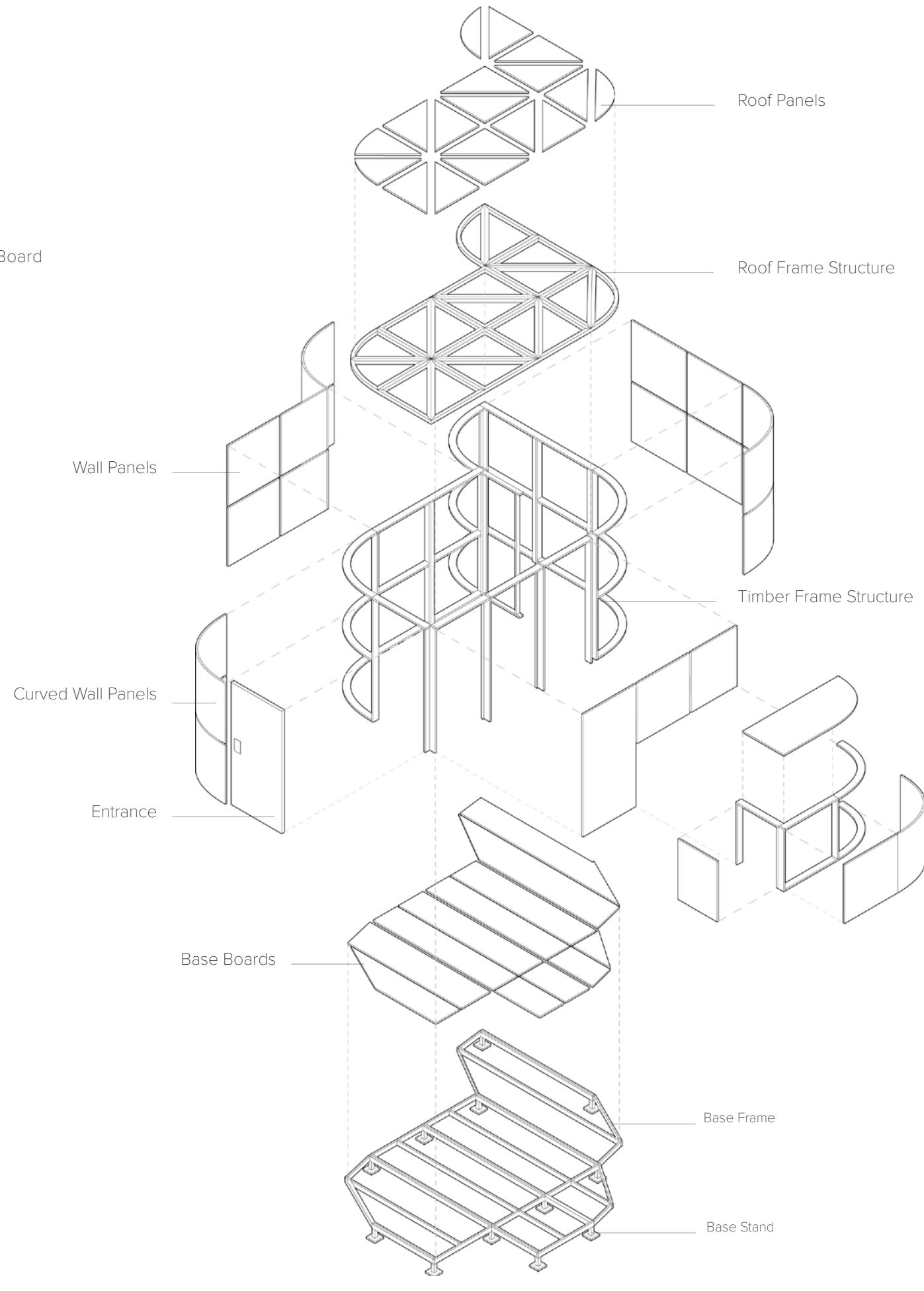
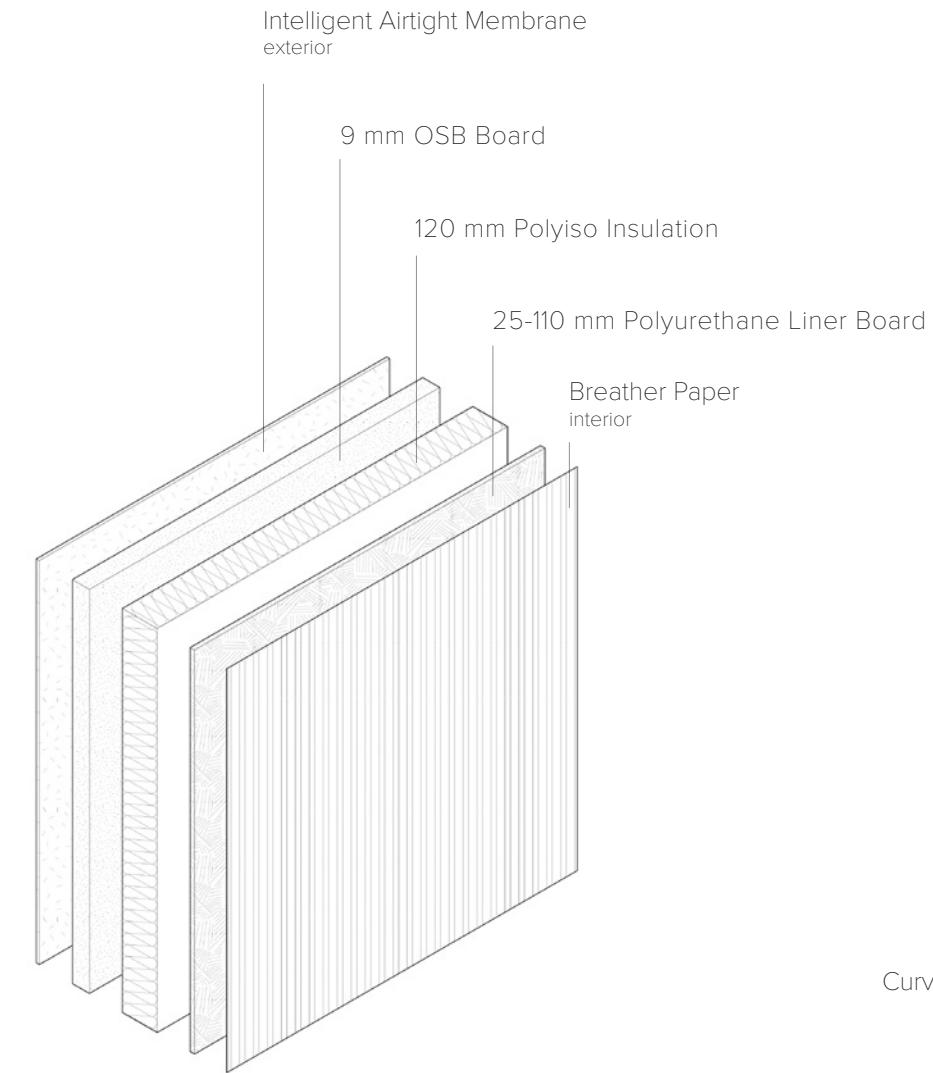
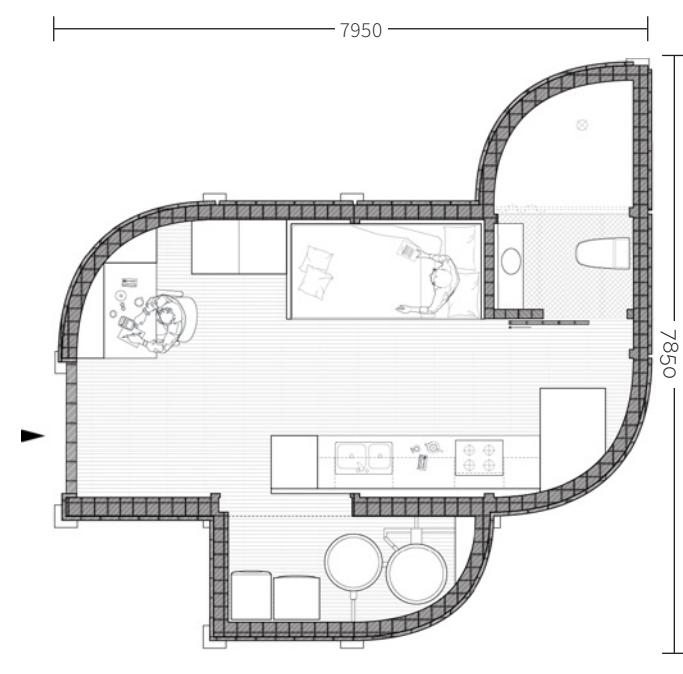
Course: ARC480 - Advanced Topics in the Technology of Architecture
Instructor: Tom Bessai

The pod is designed for deployability, optimization, and autonomy—key qualities informed by extensive precedent research on automobiles, boats, and bicycles. Borrowing fabrication techniques from each, the final design ensures adaptability to any flat terrain while maintaining a streamlined, efficient structure.

The form generation began with a series of boxes, which were then optimized using Galapagos, a Grasshopper plugin that maximizes volume while minimizing surface area. The resulting geometry—a fusion of the rigid input boxes and the smooth, optimized output—produced a curvilinear, structurally efficient form. This framework, explored through modular framing techniques, allows the pod to duplicate, expand, and aggregate, offering scalable possibilities for deployment.

Collaborators: Christian Paez Diaz, Reem Khalifeh, Jo-Lynn Yen, Mina Yip, Pengfei Zhao





Exploded Construction Axonometric

03. Big Little Village

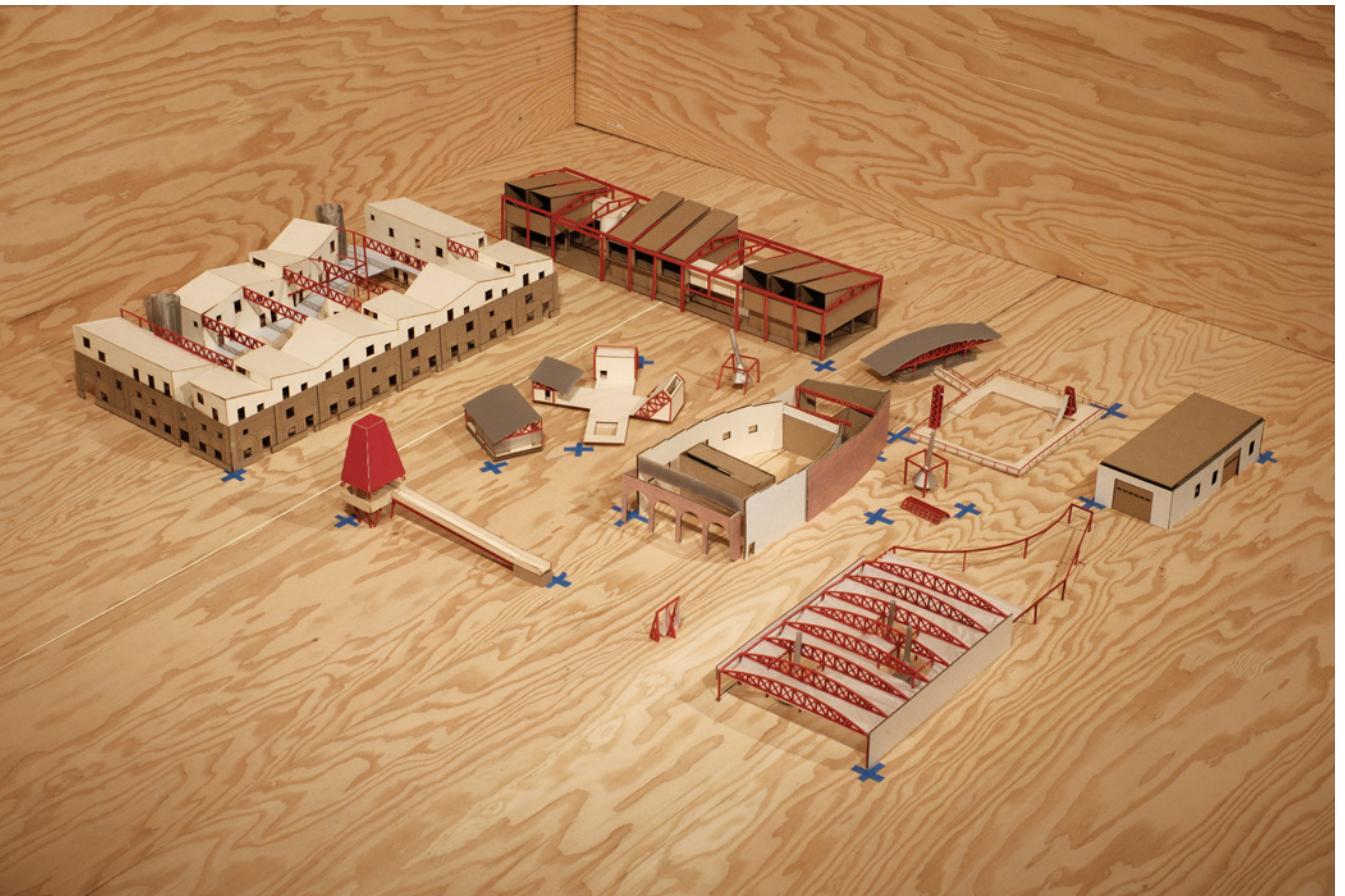
Course: ARC3015 - Option Studio
Instructor: Florian Idenburg and Jing Liu of SO-IL

Big Little Village reimagines a strip of land in Detroit, between Jefferson Avenue and the Detroit River, as a site of care, repair, and transformation. Rooted in the city's ethos of resilience and resourcefulness, the project catalogues all existing materials on site—buildings, surfaces, and found objects—as a foundation for design. By celebrating what's already there, it proposes adaptive reuse strategies that prioritize repair over demolition and evolution over replacement, repairing memory through architecture and honoring the histories embedded in place.

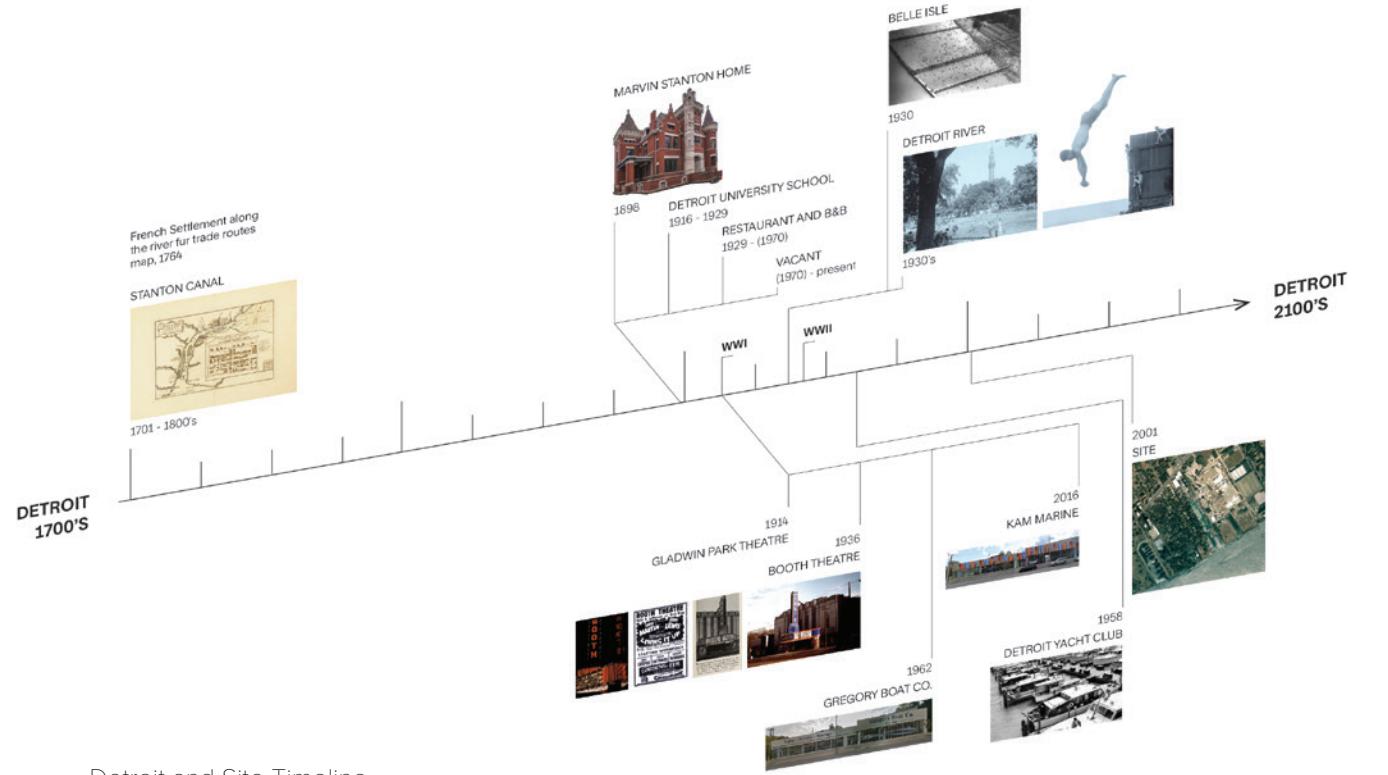
Framed around three “states of being”—Tending, Invitation, and Becoming—the project resists linear development in favor of temporal shifts that respond to changing community needs. Each building operates as an autonomous yet interconnected entity, supporting acts of play, creation, rest, and gathering in structures that once served as a theatre, boat storage, and navy yard.

A key focus is the site's reconnection to the larger community, inviting public interaction with water through improved riverfront access. This gesture addresses historical inequities while reaffirming Detroit's deep ties to its waterfront. Balancing preservation with progress, the project becomes a slow, collective act of making—a living archive that grows with its people. It is a vision rooted in resilience, committed to care, and unapologetically Detroit.

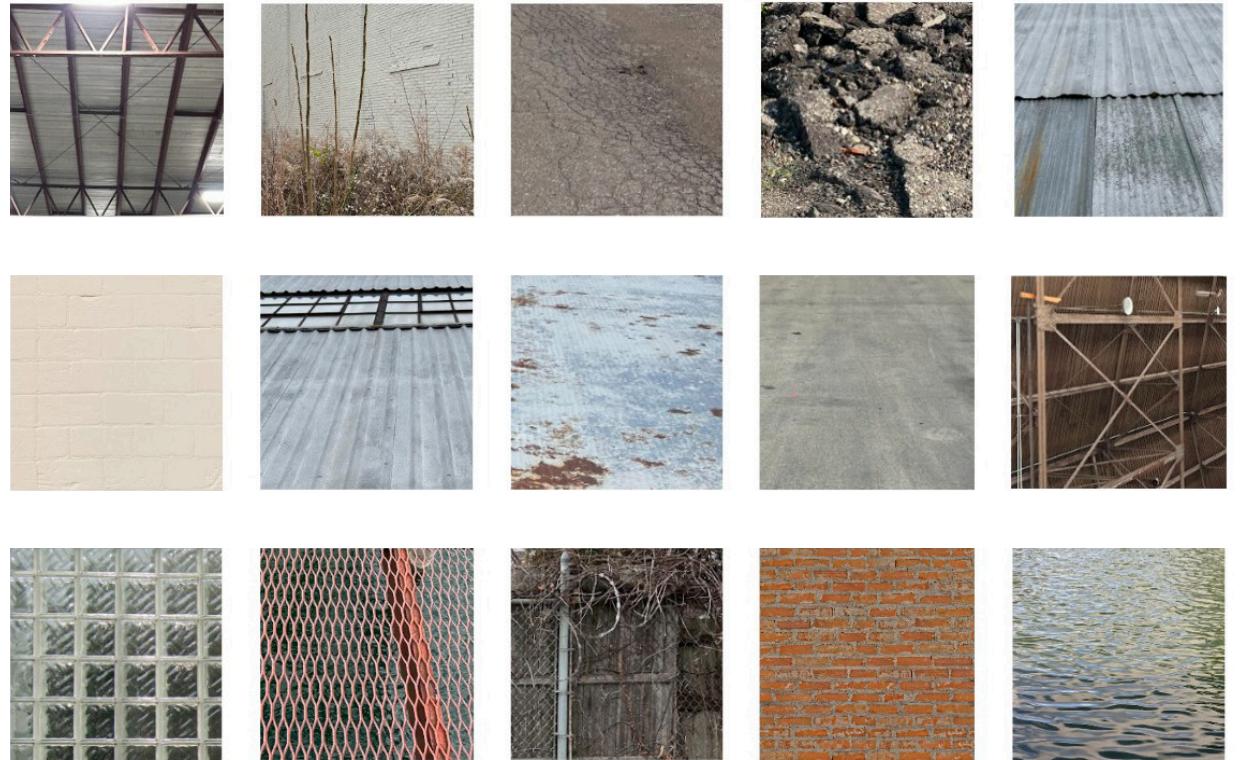
Collaborators: Nichola Basford, Ariana Fernandez Chesquin, Declan Roberts



1:100 Models Captured at Various States of Being

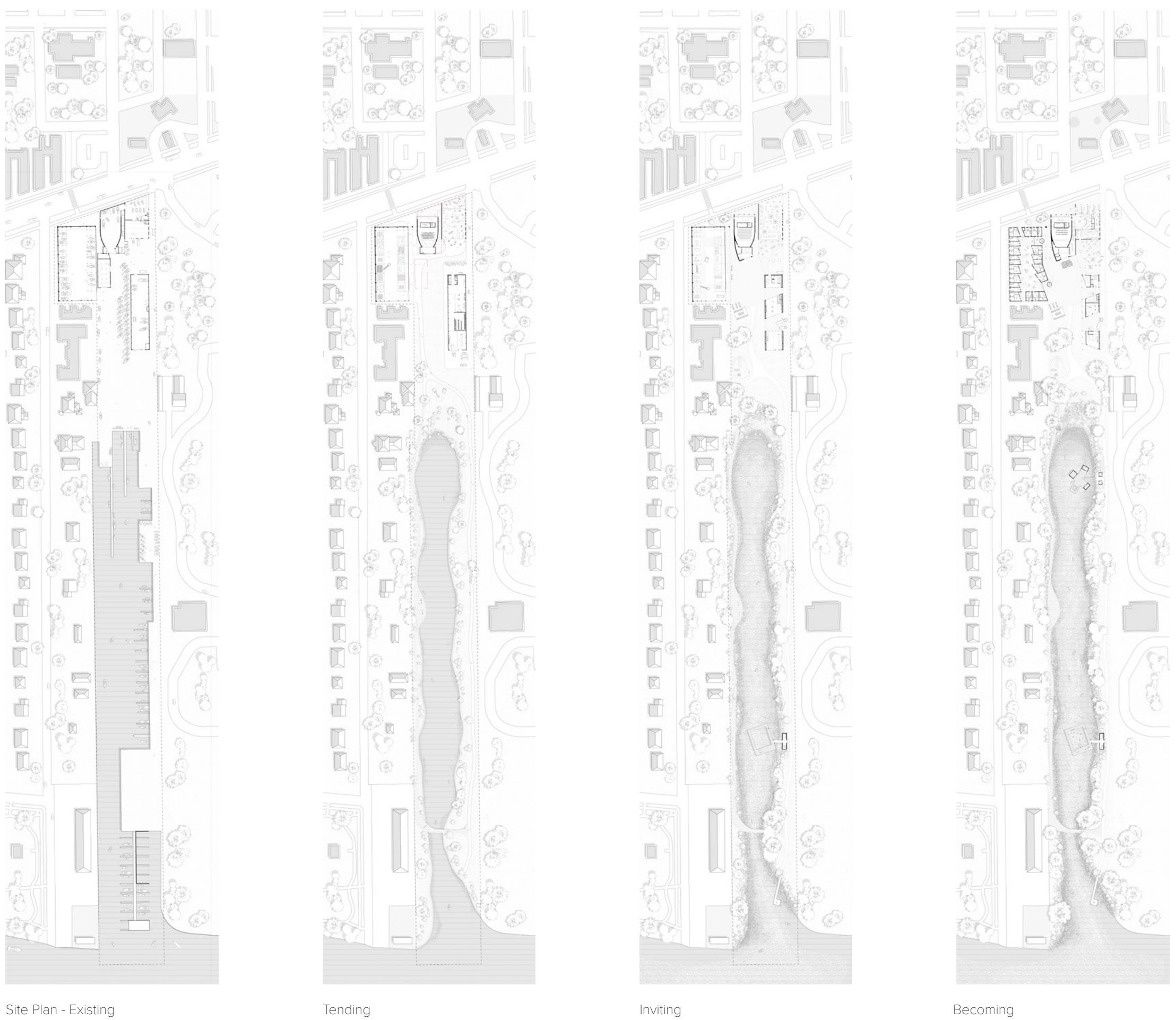


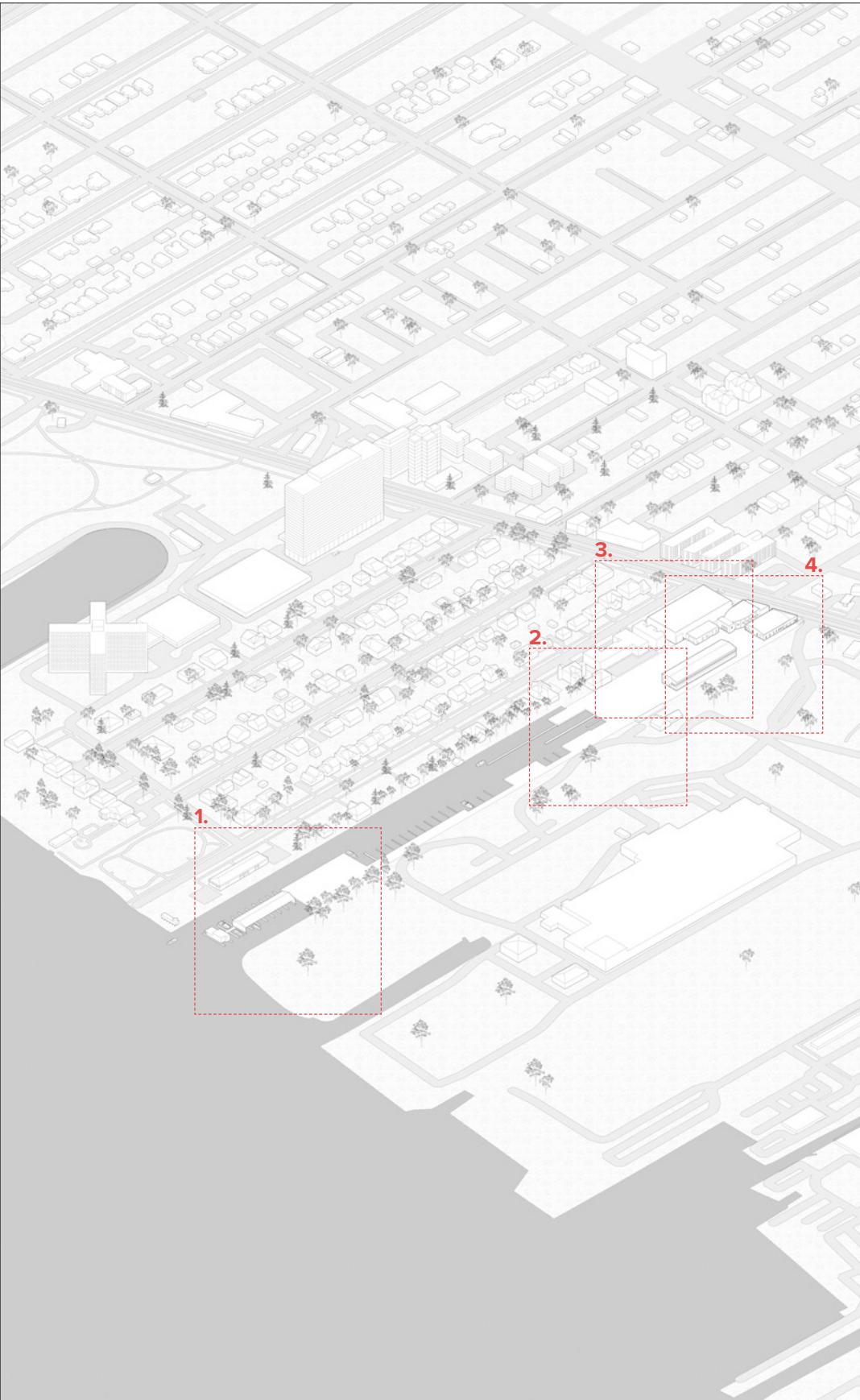
Detroit and Site Timeline



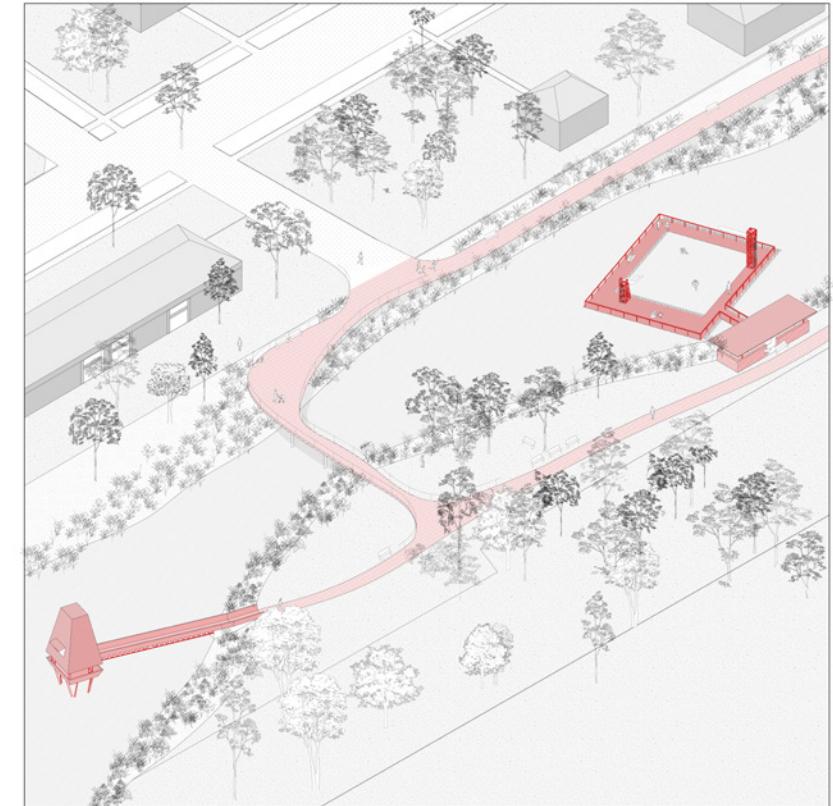
Existing Material on Site

ITEM CODE	ITEM DESCRIPTION	CROSS	UNITS	QUANTITY	LOCATION	Lifespan (years)
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3	Brick Beams	Brick Beams	Blk	1000	Roof	50-100
4	Steel Columns	Steel Columns	Blk	1000	Roof	50-100
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7	Steel Foundations	Steel Foundations	Blk	1000	Roof	50-100
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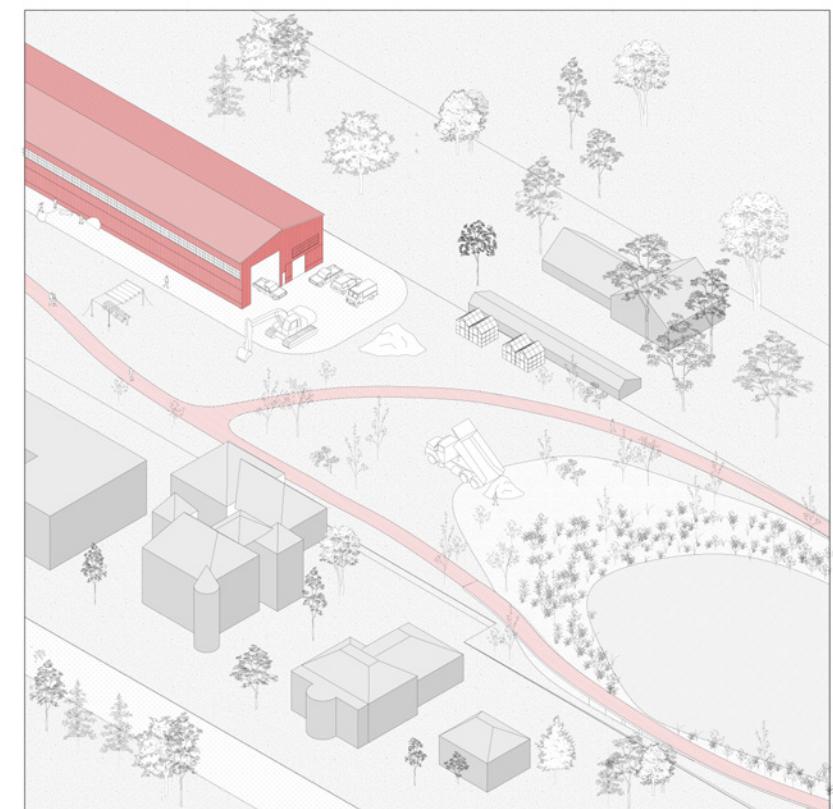




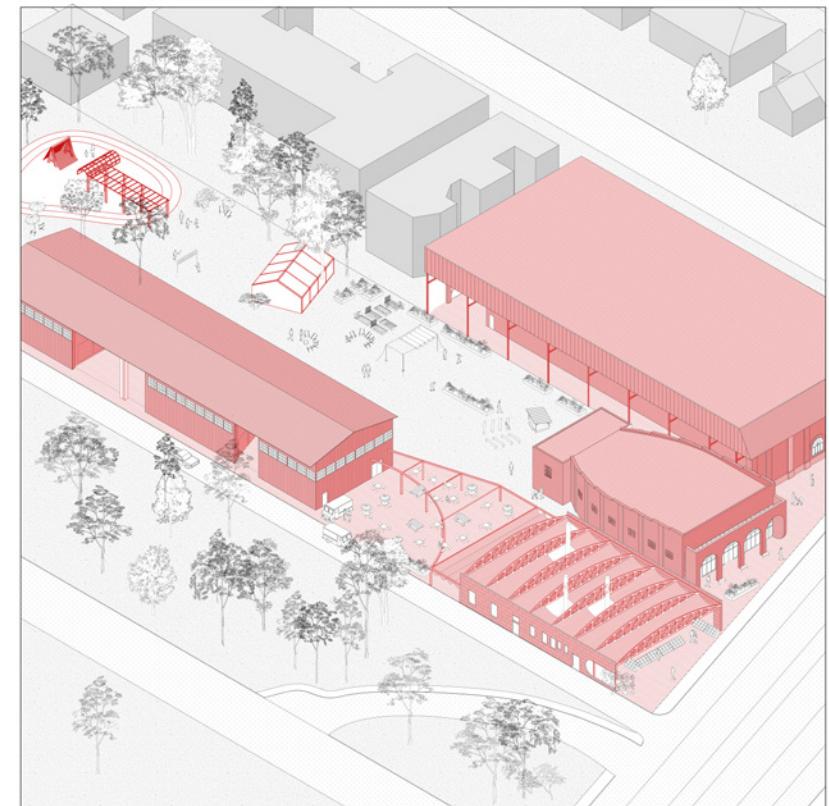
Axo



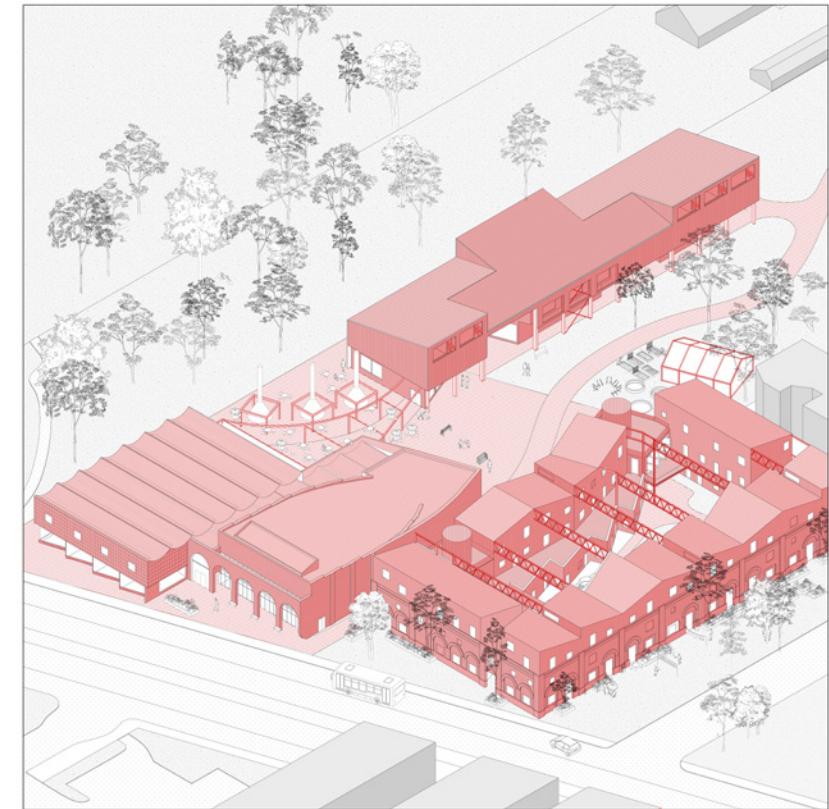
1. Inviting - Bird House + Community Pool Addition



2. Tending - Site Remediation + Material Processing



3. Inviting - Market Hall and Workshop Hub + Playground Addition



4. Becoming - Formal Housing, Theatre, and Restaurants

04. Grounds in Flux

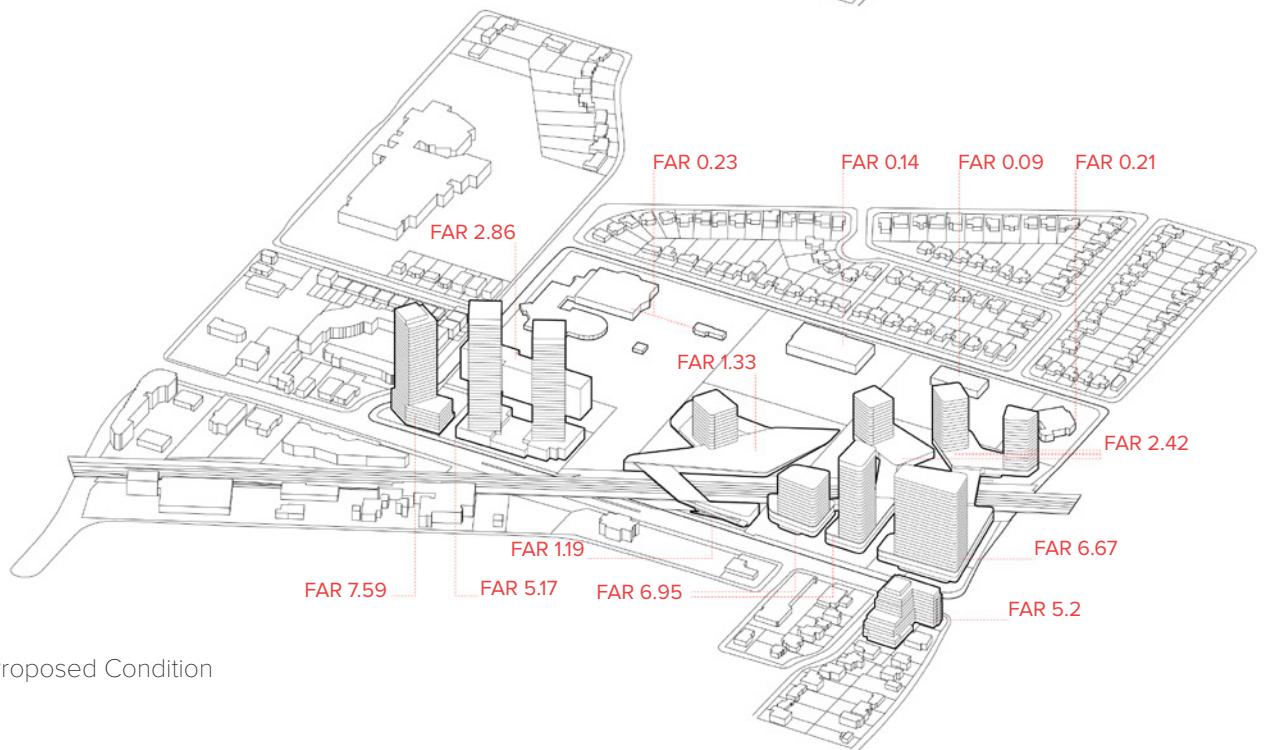
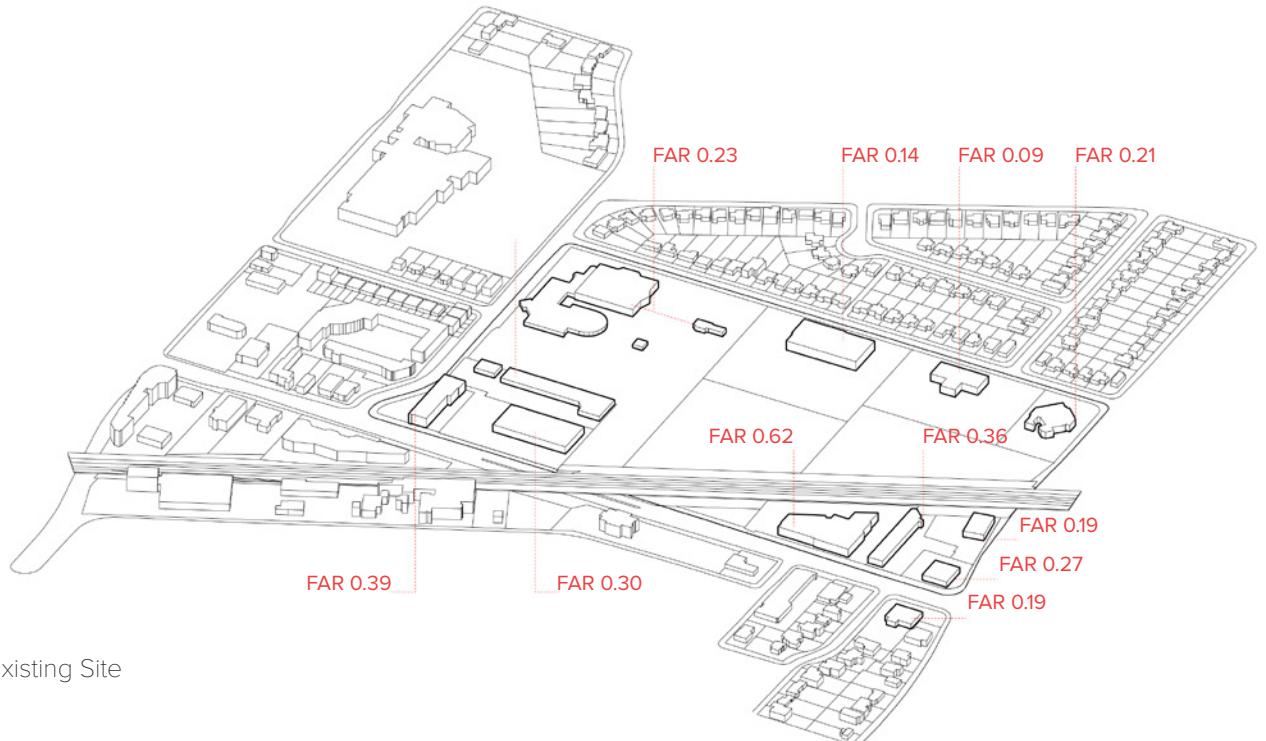
Course: ARC2013 - Design Studio III
Instructor: Roberto Damiani

Grounds in Flux is a community hub with purpose-built rentals in the core of Scarborough, Toronto. In response to rapid population growth and a shortage of acceptable, affordable housing, the project introduces increased density while strengthening connections to community resources, public transit, and nearby employment zones.

A train rail currently divides the site, isolating the commercial street corner from the institutions to the north. The design actively bridges this separation by introducing elevated podiums that stretch across the rail, creating new circulation routes and public gathering spaces.

The proposed massings are structured in three parts: a commercial and institutional ground floor that activates the street, an elevated podium fostering commercial and community activity, and rental towers above. Through inclusionary zoning, the design integrates affordable housing within the tower's lower levels while ensuring social connectivity through shared amenity spaces, reinforcing a sense of community across all residents.

Collaborator (research): Emilie Tamlik

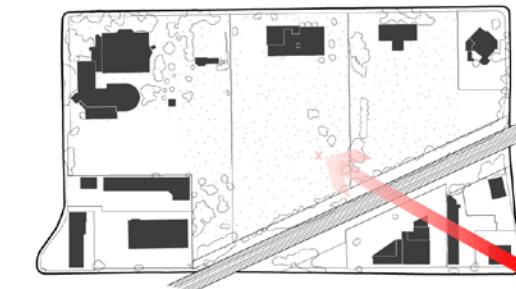




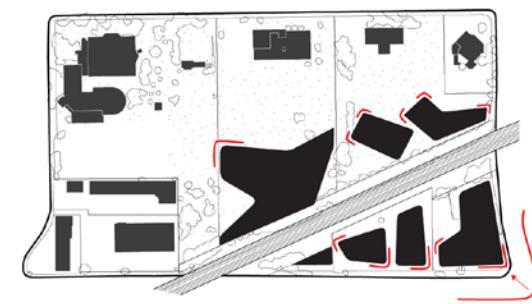
1. existing site conditions



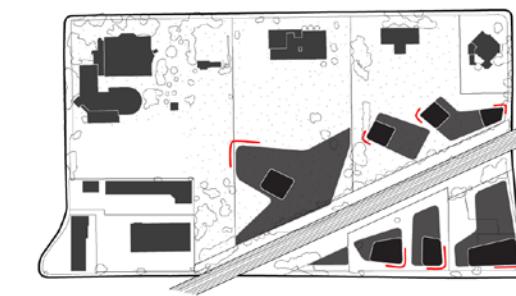
2. site shadow considerations



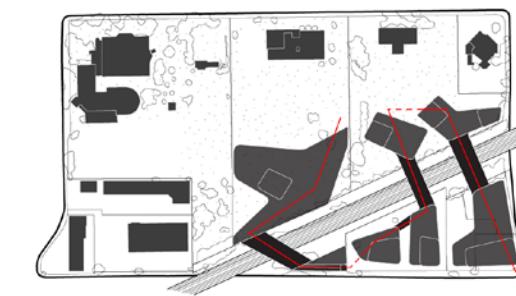
3. massing proposal height consideration



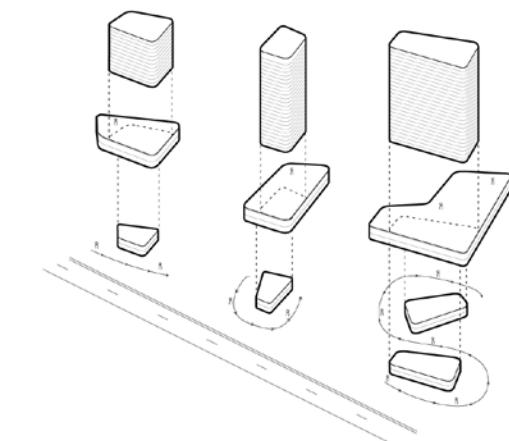
4. podium



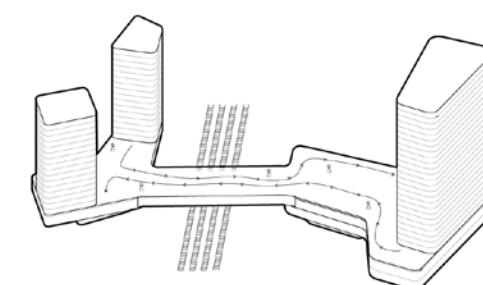
5. residential towers



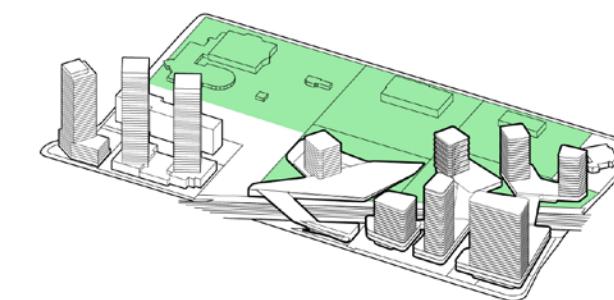
6. weaving circulation



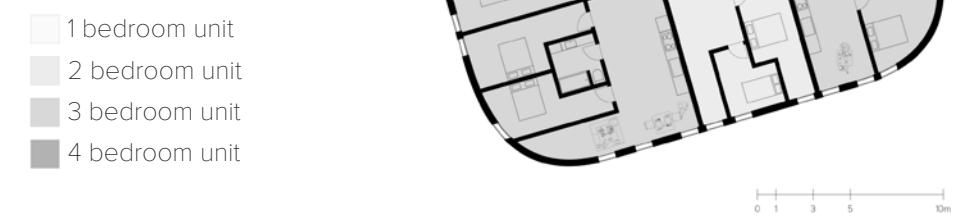
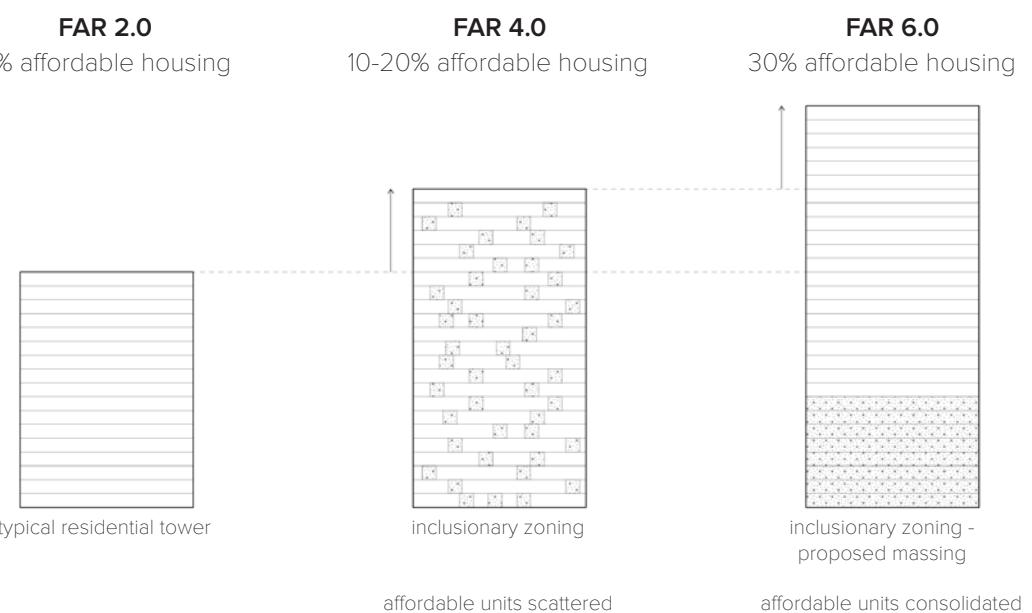
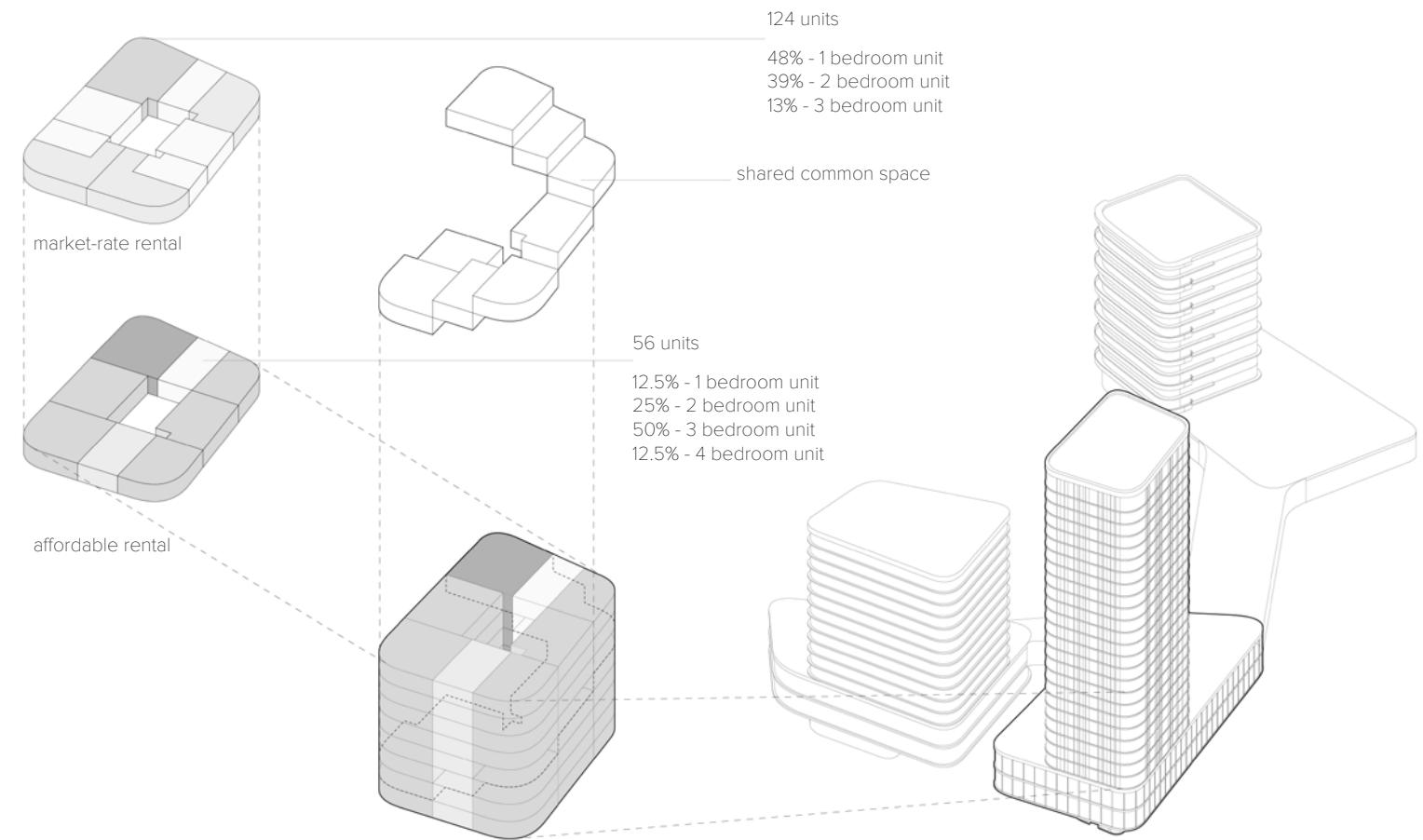
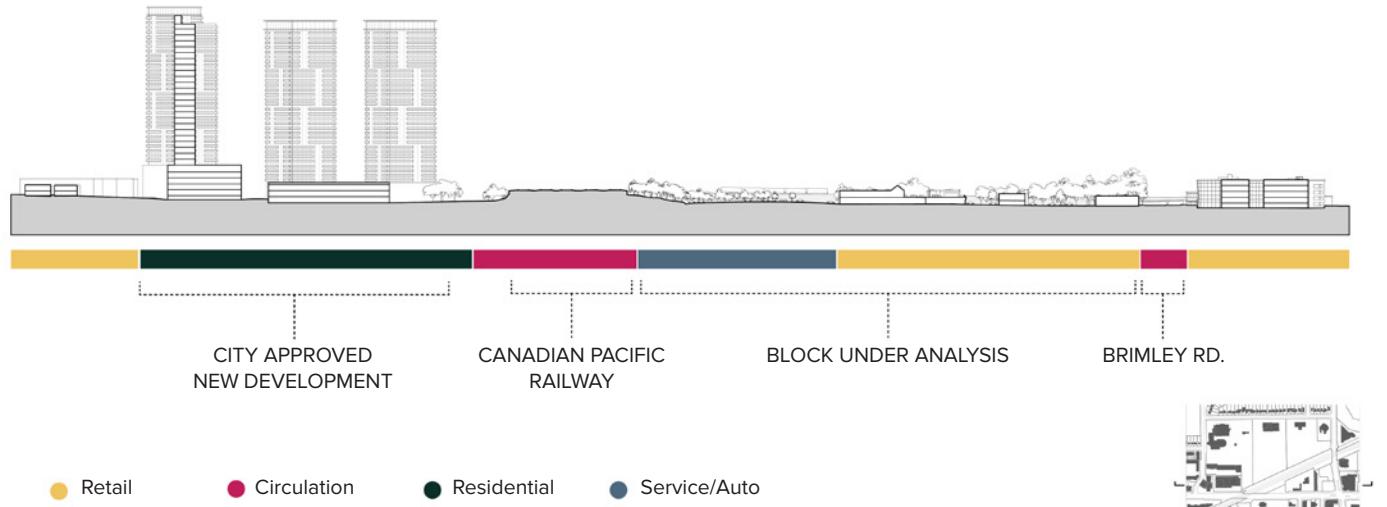
7. walkable ground condition



8. elevated podiums as bridges



9. proposed massings





Sheppard Ave. Streetfront Collage

05. Church of Community

Course: ARC1041 - Building Science I
Instructor: Ted Kesik

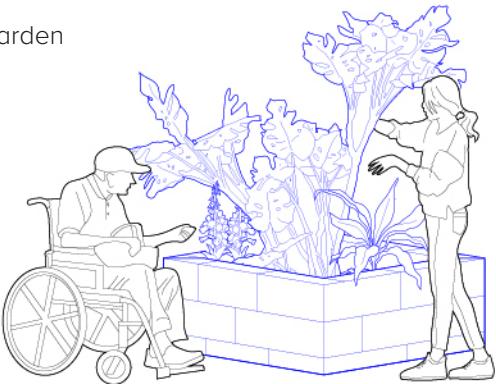
Historically, churches have served as communal gathering spaces, but with declining attendance, many have become underutilized or abandoned. This project repurposes Headford United Church in Richmond Hill, Ontario, transforming it into a community hub that fosters inclusivity and shared resources.

By introducing an urban garden, sanitation facility, tool-sharing workshop, and communal kitchen, the design provides essential services that bridge generational and socio-economic gaps. These programs create accessible spaces for learning, working, and gathering, reinforcing a support network within the community. As a replicable model for adaptive reuse, the project demonstrates how abandoned buildings can be revitalized into active, community-driven spaces.

These programs are necessary to create affordable community-based initiatives for the public to have access to shared spaces, tools, and food. The proposed new typologies within this project can be replicated and adapted to other underutilized or abandoned buildings and serve as a precedent for future projects of similar size.

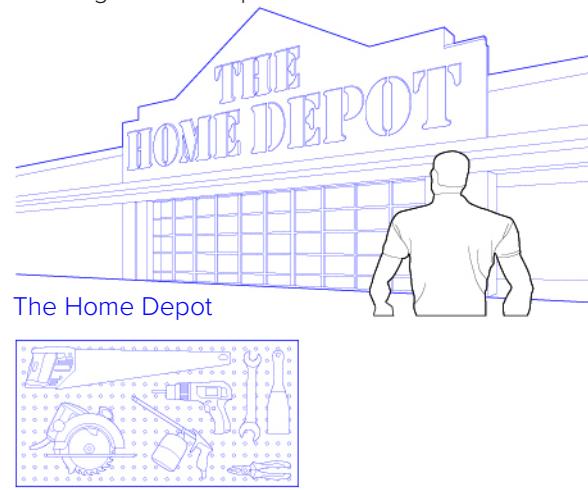
Collaborators: Jessica Babe, Amelia Chung, Larissa Ho, Rachel Sau

1.0 Urban Garden

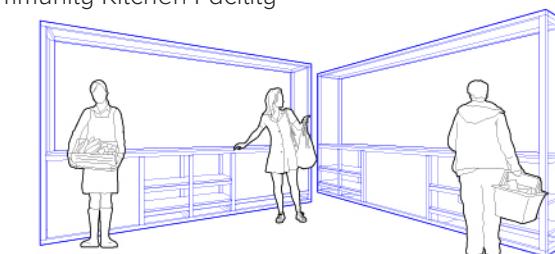


Accessible raised garden beds

2.0 Tool Sharing & Workshop

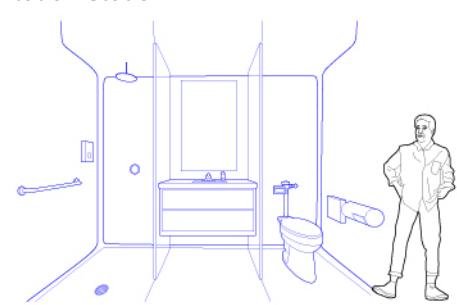


3.0 Community Kitchen Facility



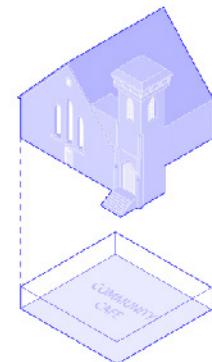
Co-kitchen design by Himani Harikrishna Ravuri

4.0 Sanitation Station

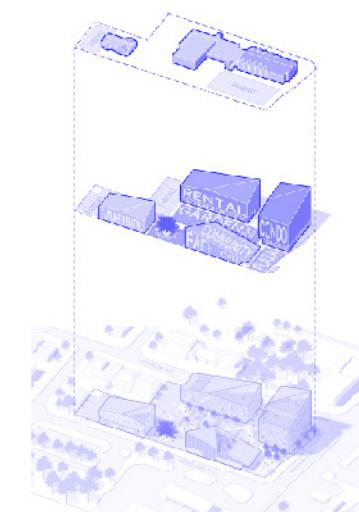


StudioAC mobile shower facility design

1.0 St. John's Anglican Church
Chapleau, ON

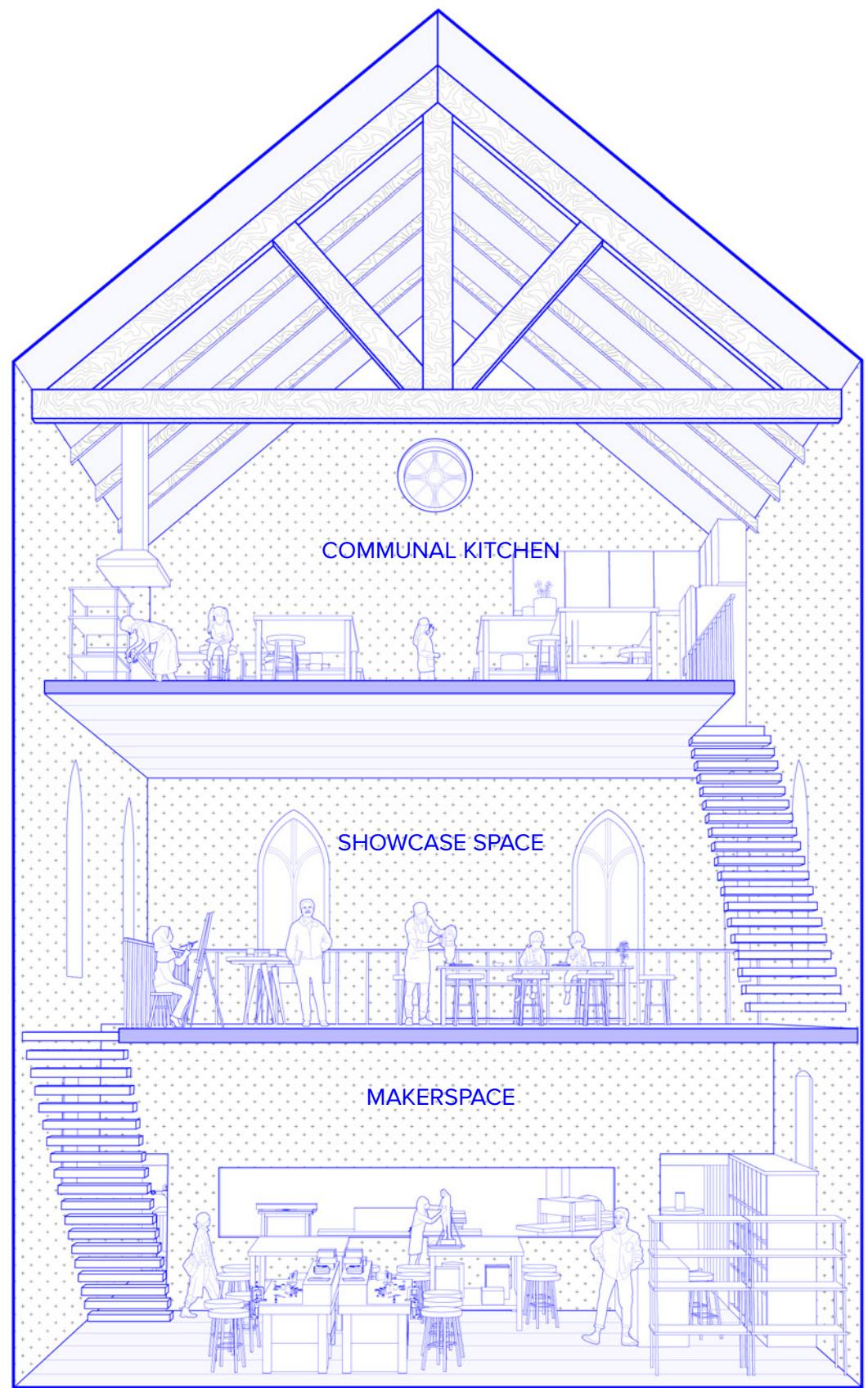


2.0 St. Julian of Norwich Church
Ottawa, ON

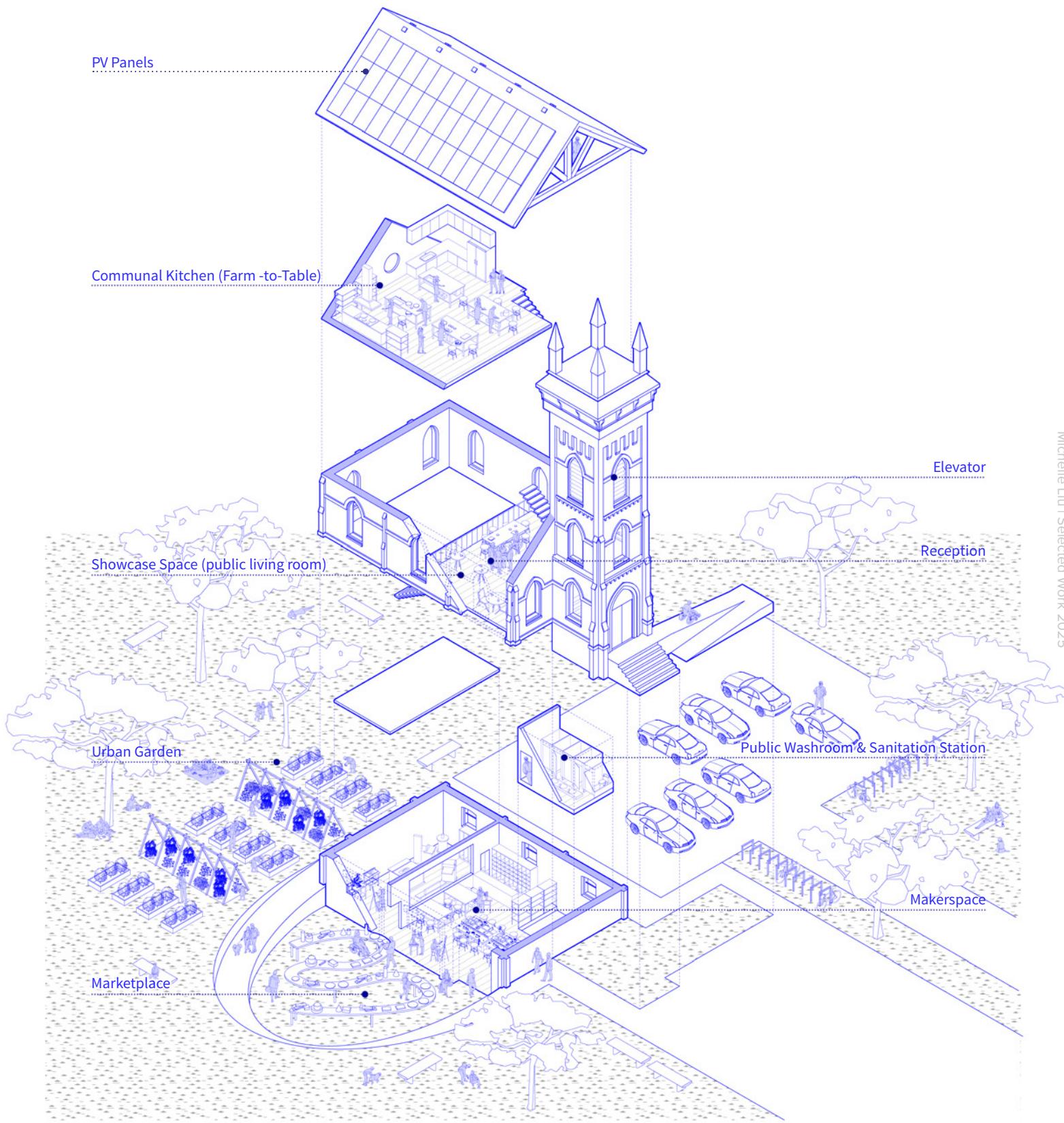


3.0 Cecil Community Centre
Toronto, ON





Interior Perspective



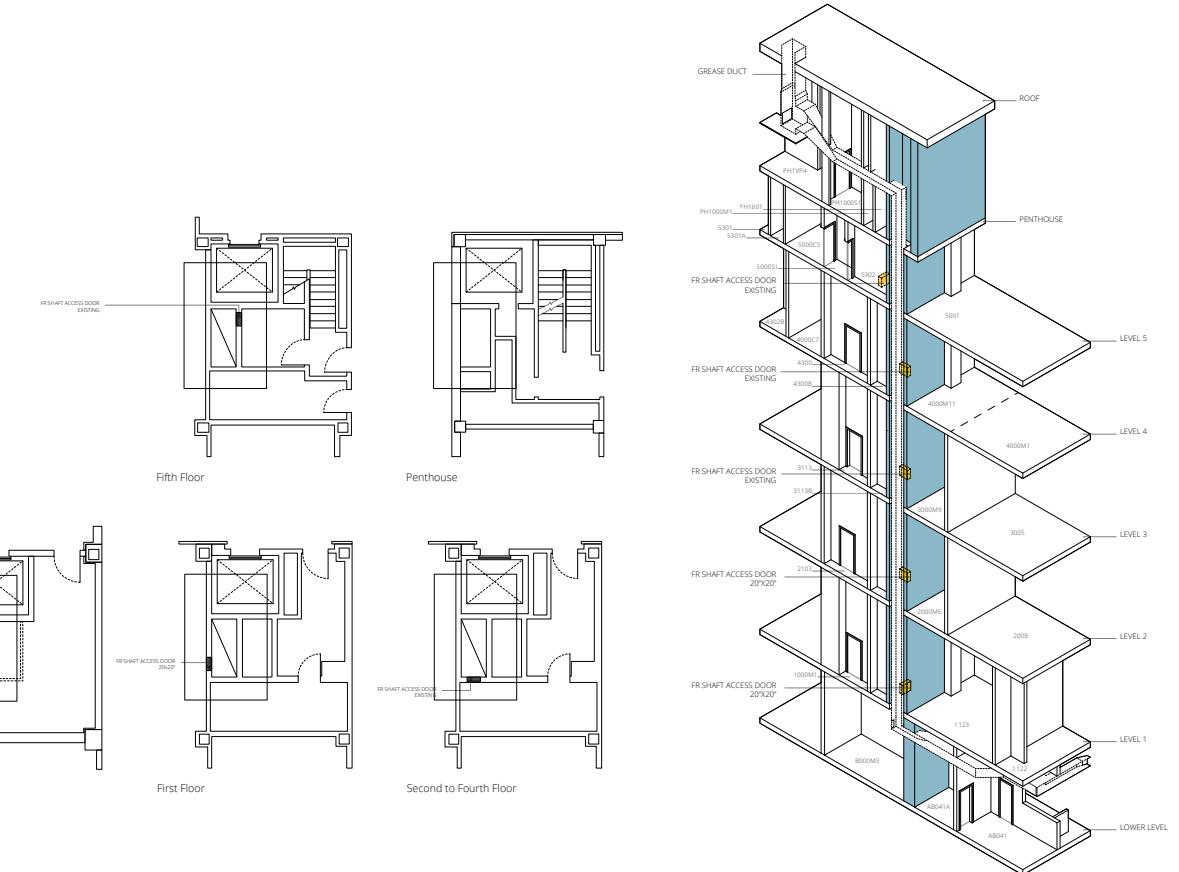
Exploded Program Diagram

06. Annum Architects

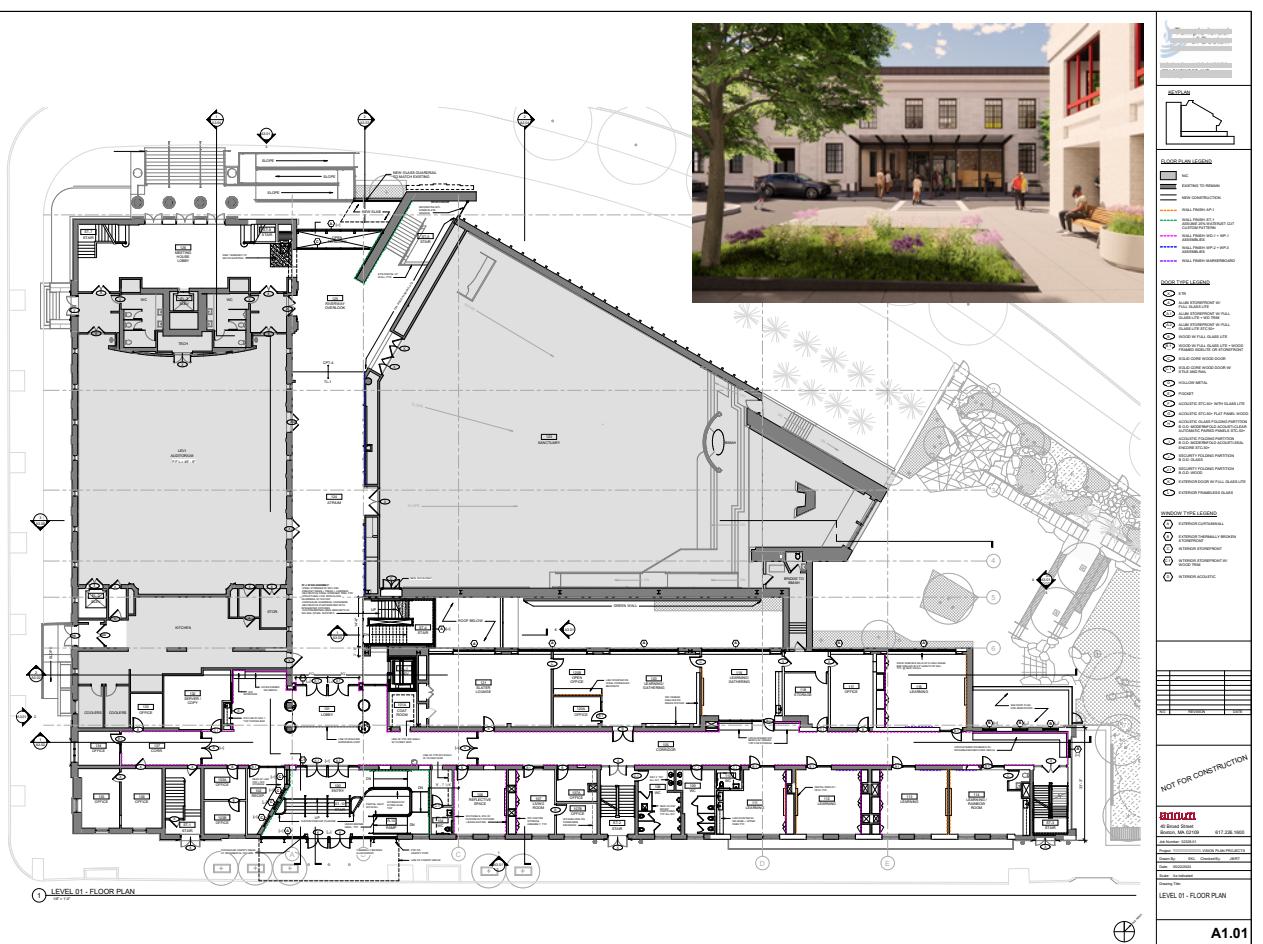
Annum Architects, formerly known as Ann Beha Architects, is a prominent architectural firm based in Boston, MA renowned for its innovative and sustainable design solutions for its work in educational institutions, cultural institutions, and historic preservation. With a commitment to integrating modern design principles with a deep respect for historical context, Annum Architects has successfully executed numerous projects that reflect a balance between contemporary aesthetics and preservation of cultural heritage.

While on my 16-month internship, I had the chance to work on part of the schematic design package and renders for a reform synagogue project in Boston, MA.

I also had the opportunity to work on pre-design, schematic design, and design development phases on the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C. In addition, a few enabling projects including a grease duct riser feasibility study, emergency generator project in CD, flood strategy in CD, and AHU project in CA.



Smithsonian NMAH: Grease Duct Riser Feasibility Study - Shaft Diagrams



Reform Synagogue in Boston: SD Set and Entrance Render

thank you ☺