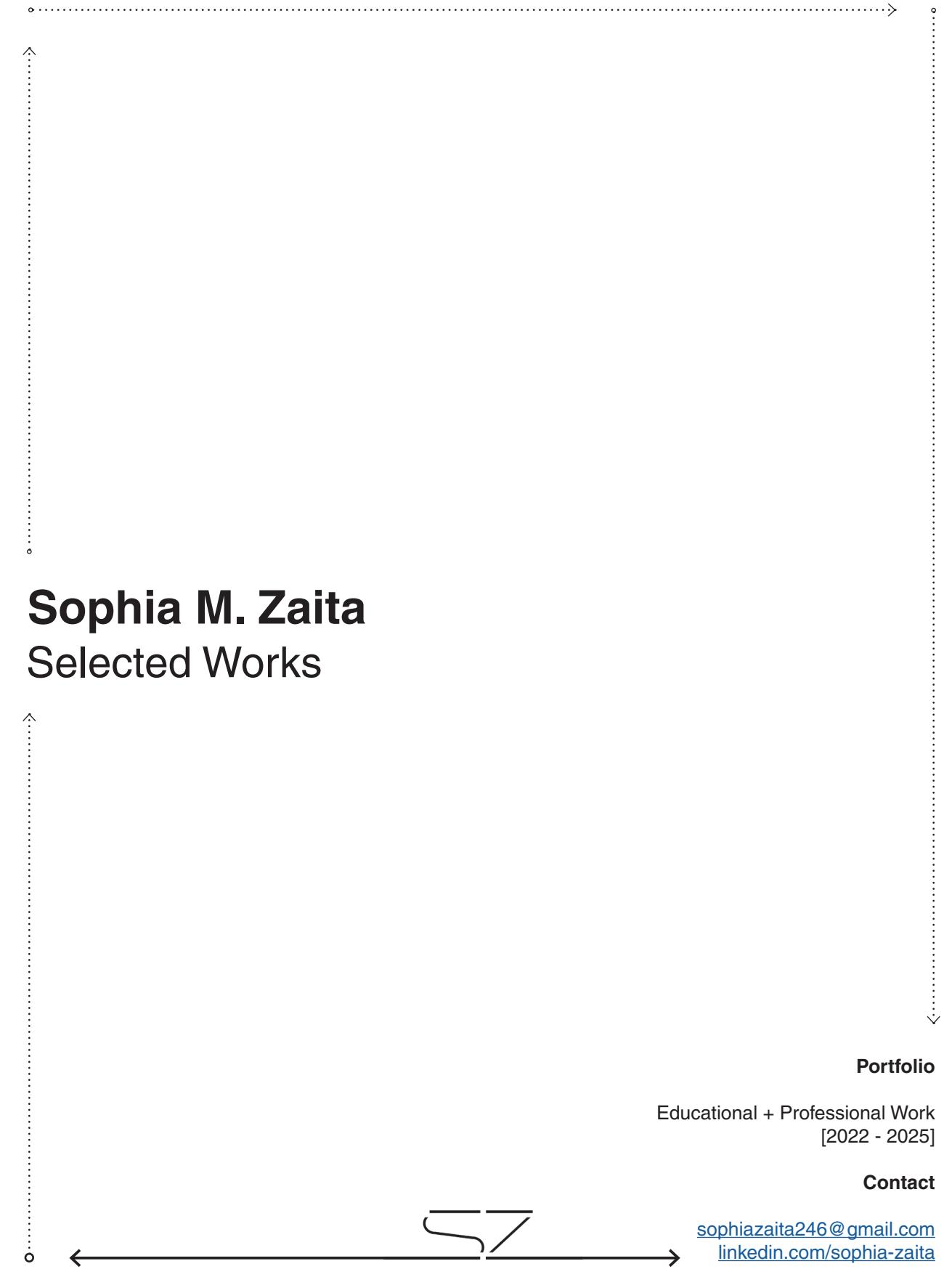


PORTFOLIO 2022 - 2025



# **Sophia M. Zaita**

## Selected Works

**Portfolio**

Educational + Professional Work  
[2022 - 2025]

**Contact**

[sophiazaita246@gmail.com](mailto:sophiazaita246@gmail.com)  
[linkedin.com/sophia-zaita](https://linkedin.com/sophia-zaita)

# INDEX

## 2022 - 2025

EDUCATION. **THE CHERRY FARM**  
CORE STUDIO III  
FALL 2025  
CORNELL UNIVERSITY

08 - 25



**REGENERATION**  
CORE STUDIO II  
SPRING 2025  
CORNELL UNIVERSITY

26 - 37



**MOVEMENT AS HEALING**  
DESIGN STUDIO 5  
FALL 2023  
PARSONS SCHOOL OF DESIGN

38 - 49



WORK. **KS COMPETITION**  
GRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANT  
SPRING 2025  
CORNELL UNIVERSITY

50 - 55



**PARSONS DESIGN WORKSHOP**  
CO-DESIGNER, CONSTRUCTION CREW  
SUMMER 2022  
PARSONS SCHOOL OF DESIGN

56 - 61



## ABOUT SZ.

### Master of Architecture

*Cornell University*

December 2027

### Bachelor of Fine Arts in Architectural Design

*Parsons School of Design*

May 2024



## housing, first to last

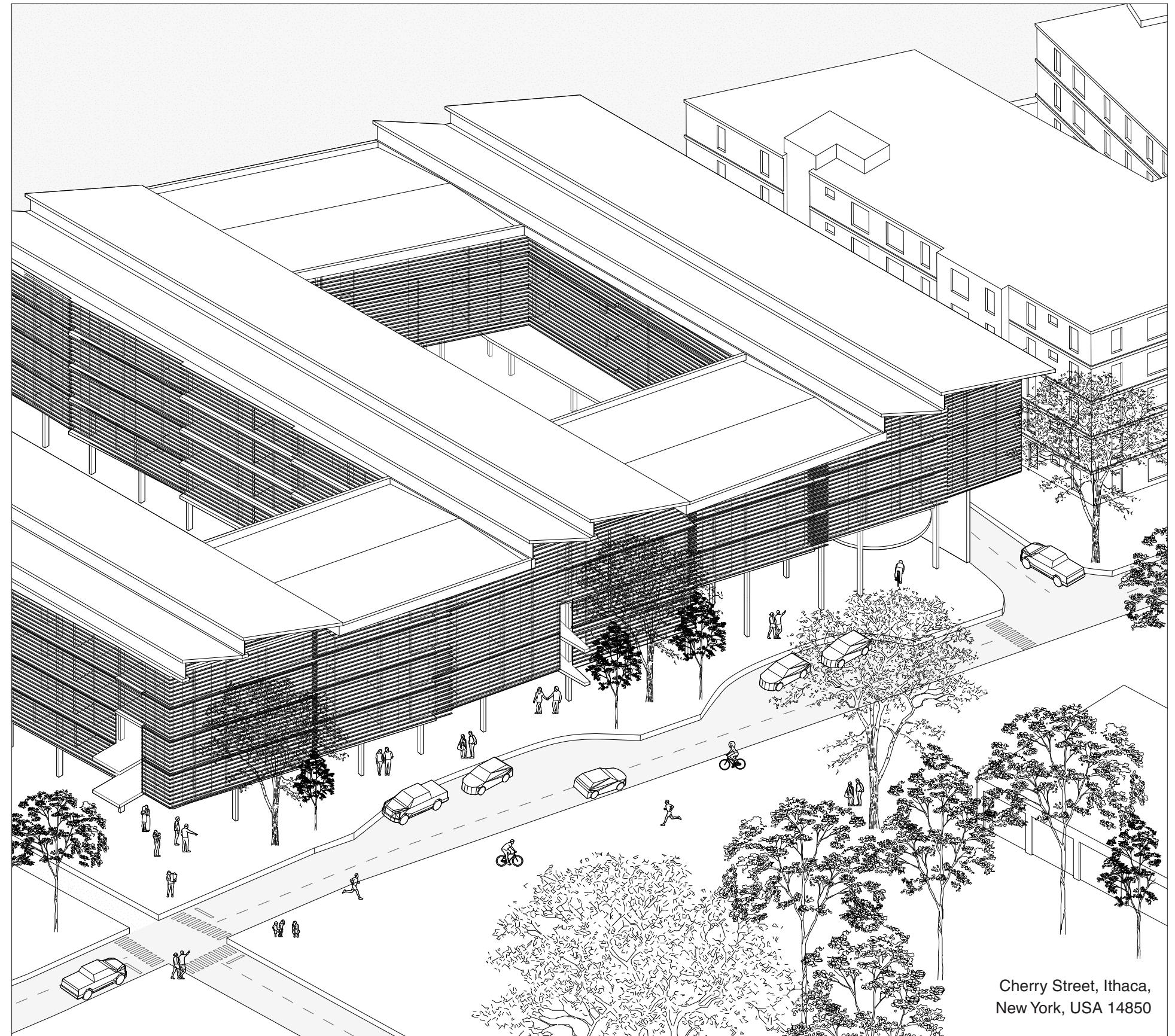
Led by Professors Lily Chi +  
Emma Silverblatt

ARCH 5113, M.Arch Core III  
Cornell University, Fall 2025

## Community Destination with Local Flavor: Farm to Table and Educational Campus

Within our Fall 2025 Engaged Practices studio, we examined the role of housing in today's context, emphasizing the challenges of affordable housing insecurity, rising construction costs, and the limitations of current housing models. These models often fail to meet residents' needs and lack the flexibility required for long-term adaptability + resilience.

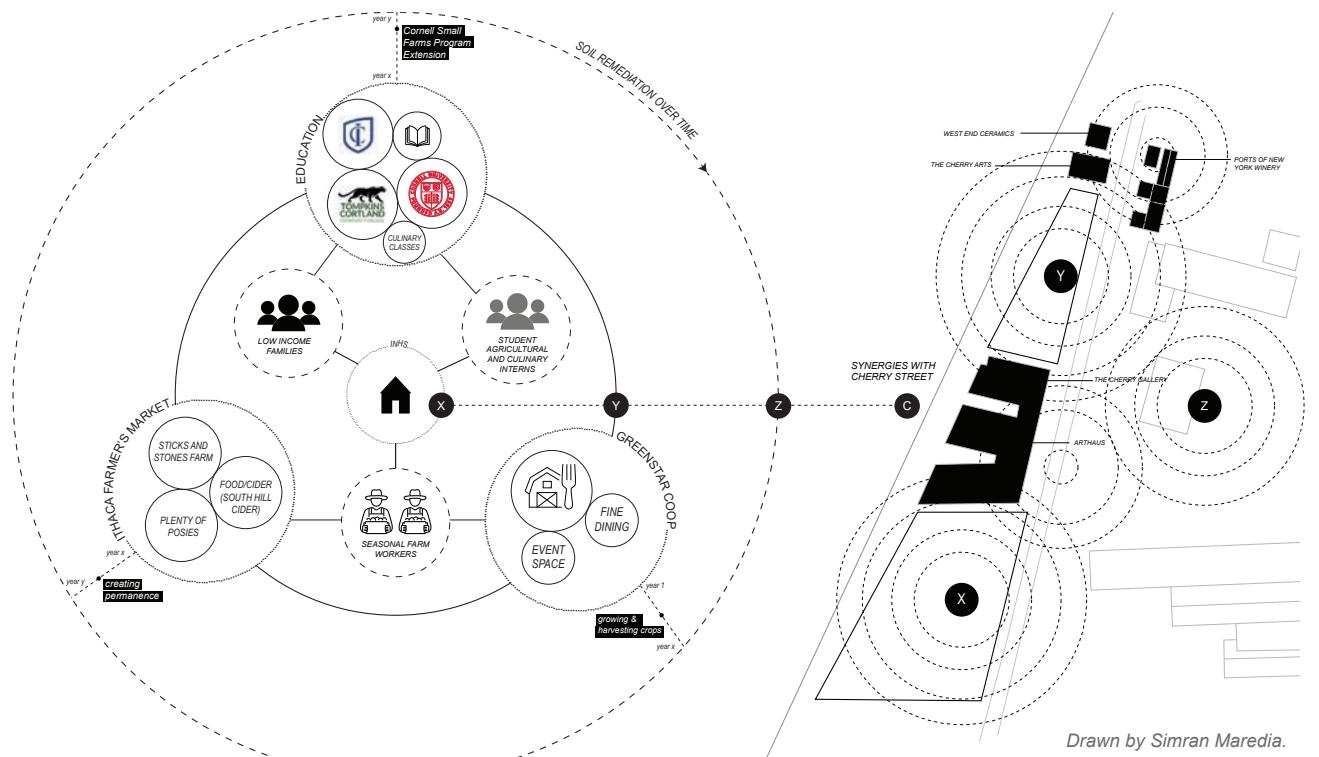
Cherry Street began as an industrial site, marked by hardscapes and contaminated soil. Today it remains a desolate corridor in Ithaca, utilized as a place to pass through rather than a destination. By prioritizing soil remediation and urban agriculture, we see an opportunity to restore ecological health while reactivating community life. Grounded in earth-centered design, our vision reimagines Cherry Street as a resilient, vibrant hub where working families, farm interns, Cherry Arts patrons, outdoor enthusiasts, and long-term Ithacans come together around farm-fresh food and creative community life.



## The Cherry Farm

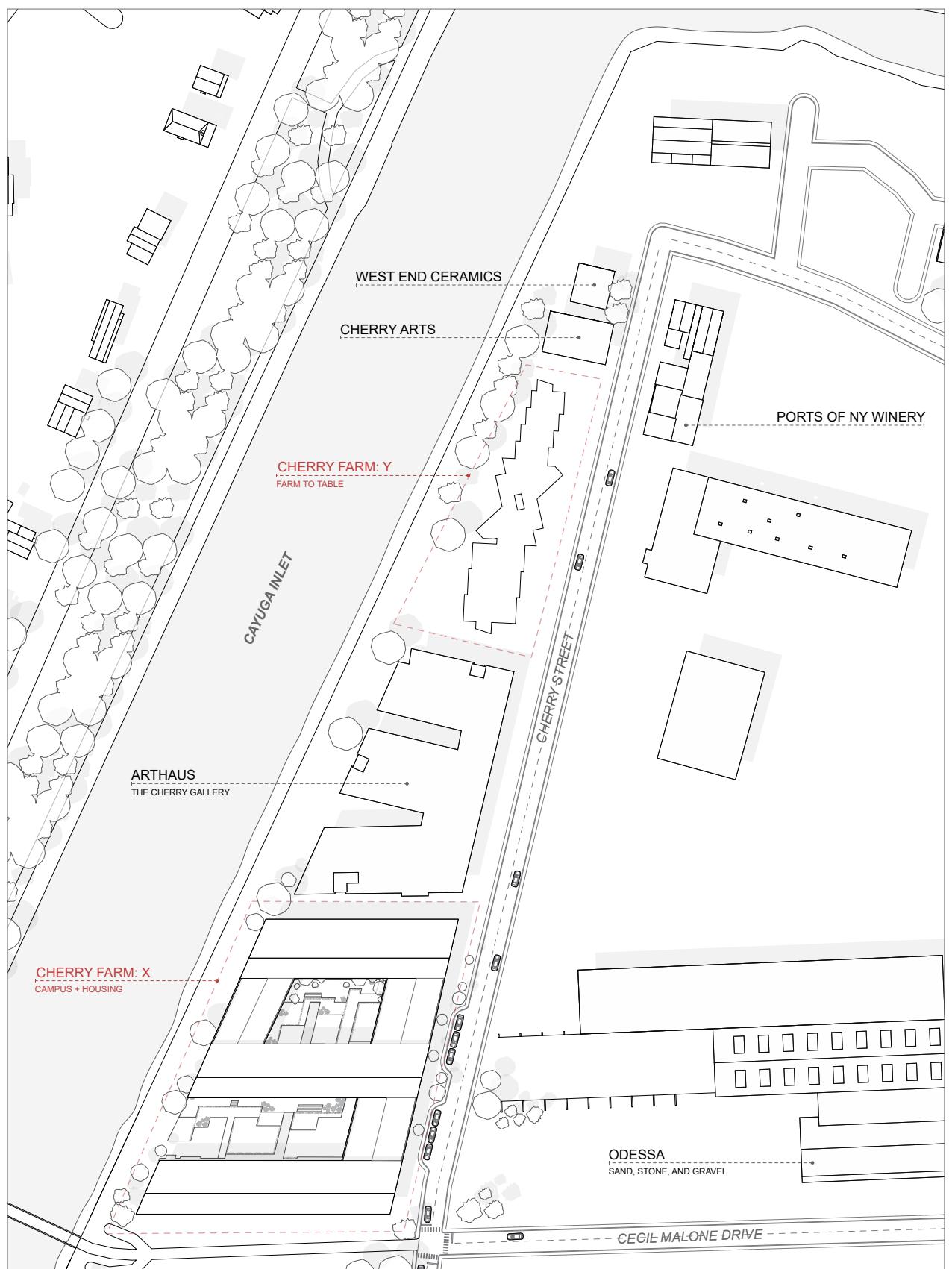
Campus for Cooking, Creating, and Growing

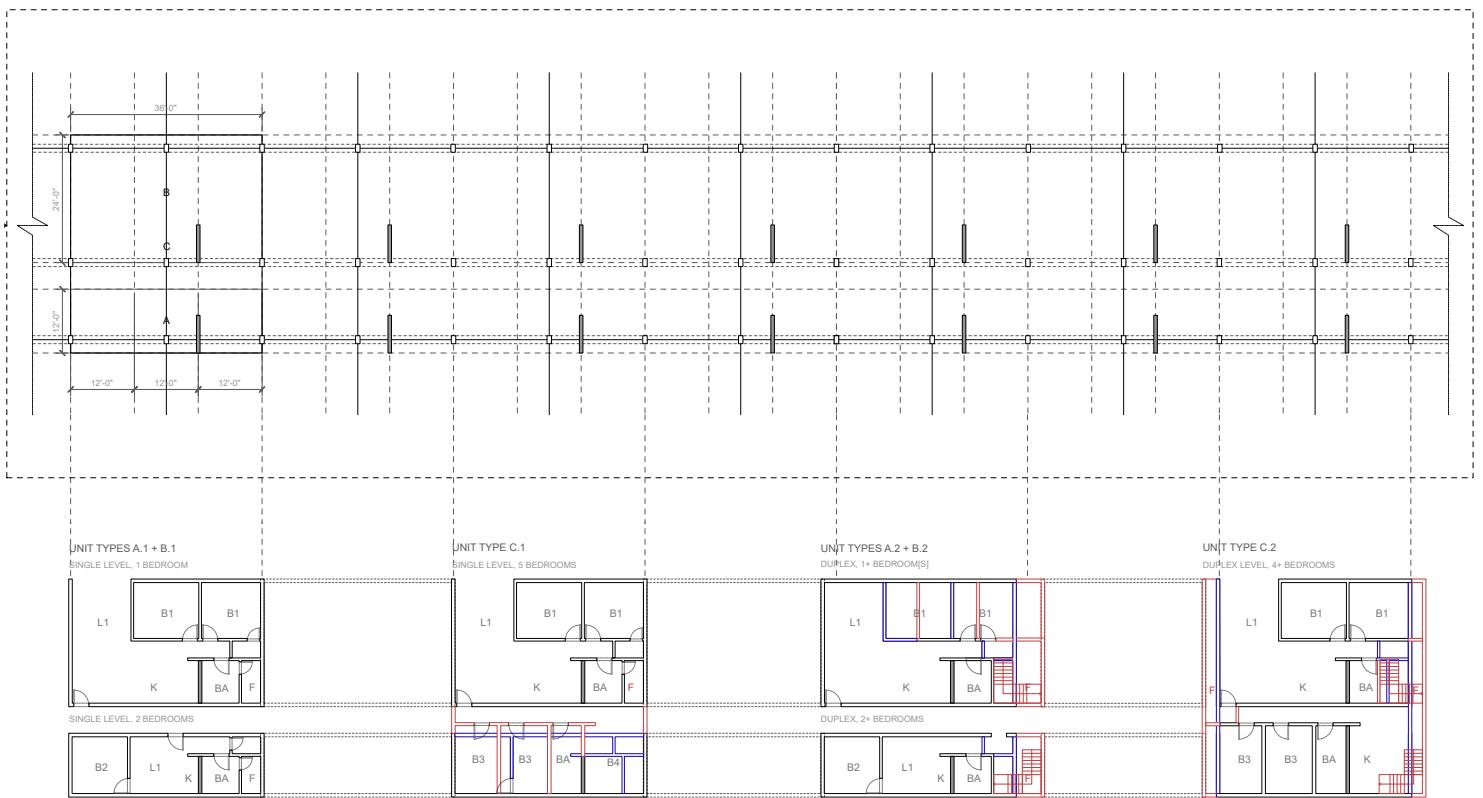
The farm-to-table model welcomes environmental stewards, supports regional farms, and fills a gap in Ithaca's current food scene by introducing a restaurant style popular across upstate New York. This approach not only strengthens neighborhood connections but also creates opportunities for education in culinary arts, agricultural practices, and workforce development.



Drawn by Simran Maredia.

As a satellite site for GreenStar Food Co+op and the Ithaca Farmers Market, the project expands access to local produce, culinary experiences, and cooperative education. Revenue is supported by restaurant sales, fresh food distribution, workshops, events, community space rentals, and an alternative space for the farmers market in the winter months. Partnerships with Cornell, TC3, Ithaca College, Cherry Arts, and local artisans help anchor ongoing agricultural programming, cultural activities, and tourism.





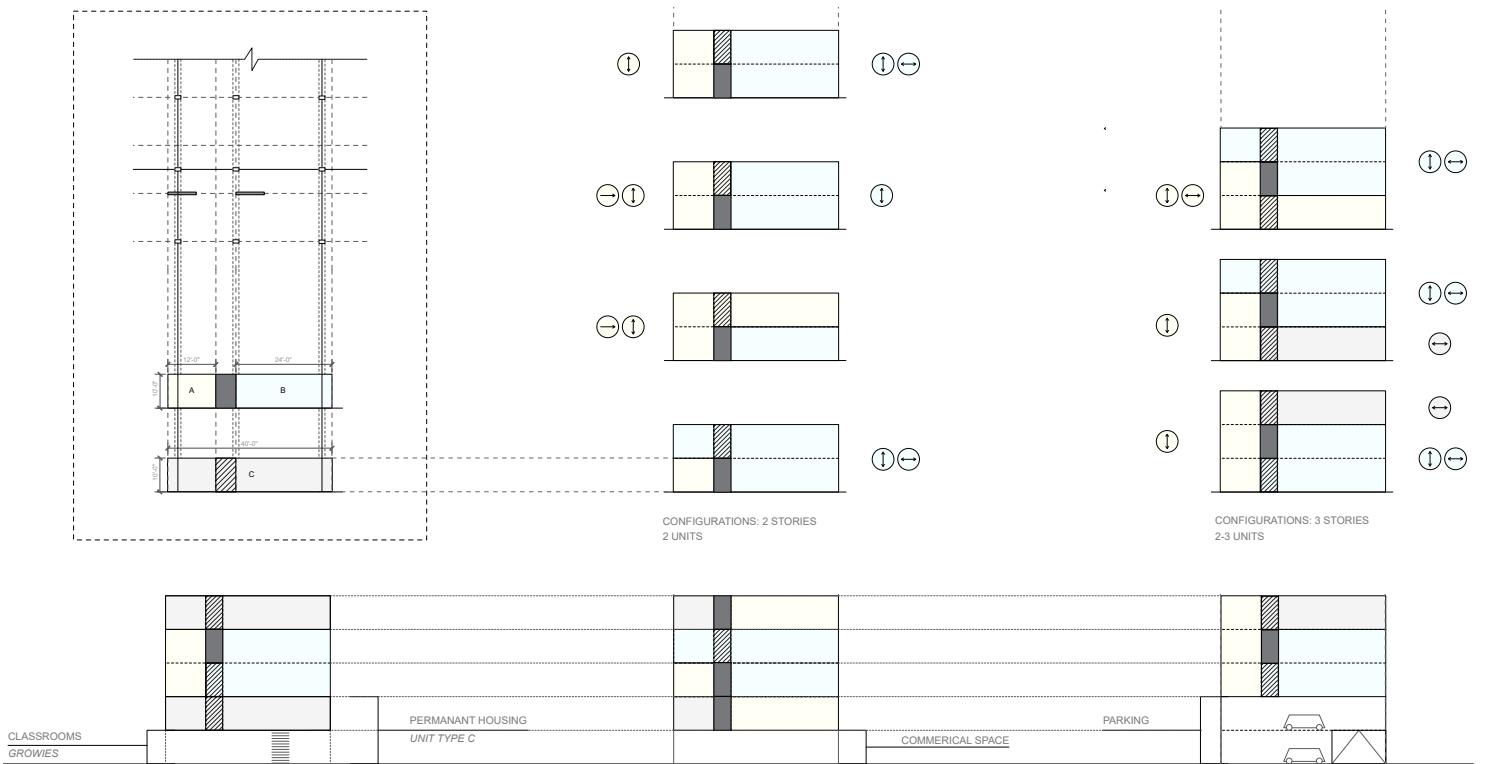
## Unit Underlay

### Through Plan + Section

After closely analyzing SUMMACUMFEMMER's *San Riemo Housing* in plan and Le Corbusier's *Unité d'Habitation* in section, this project adopts organizational strategies rooted in the unit configurations of these precedents.

In plan, the building is arranged as two parallel bars, a narrower bar to the south and a wider bar to the north, separated by a central corridor accessible to all residents. Wet cores are positioned along this corridor, consolidating services within the darker zone while reserving perimeter areas for naturally lit living spaces. This layout allows for flexible unit configurations that can be subdivided or expanded, including the possibility of privatizing portions of the corridor to form larger shared units and introduce a skip-stop condition reflected in section.

In section, the project explores the spatial opportunities created through this unit negotiation. The skip-stop strategy enables multiple configurations, ranging from fully open corridors on every floor to selectively closed corridors that support duplex units and varied residential arrangements.



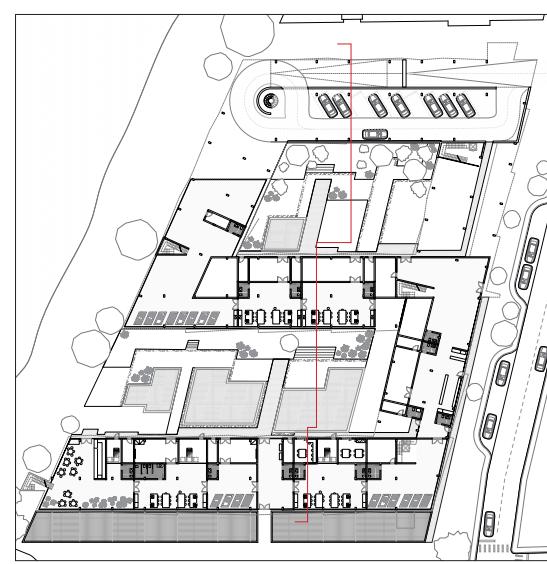
Skip-Stop Floor  
Plan 03



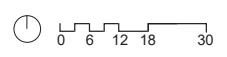
Main Floor  
Plan 01



Ground Floor  
Plan 00

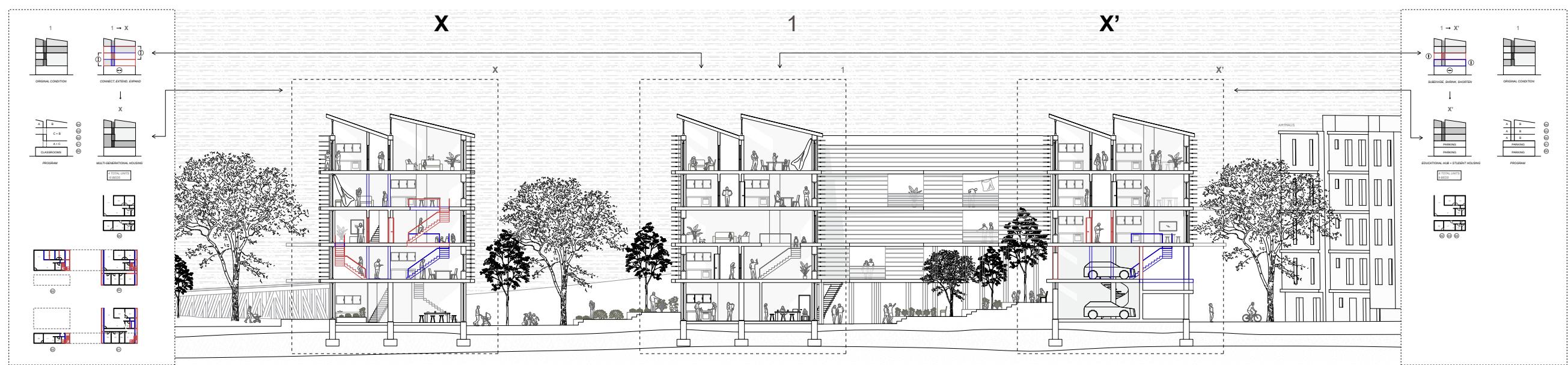


Corridor Floor  
Plan 02

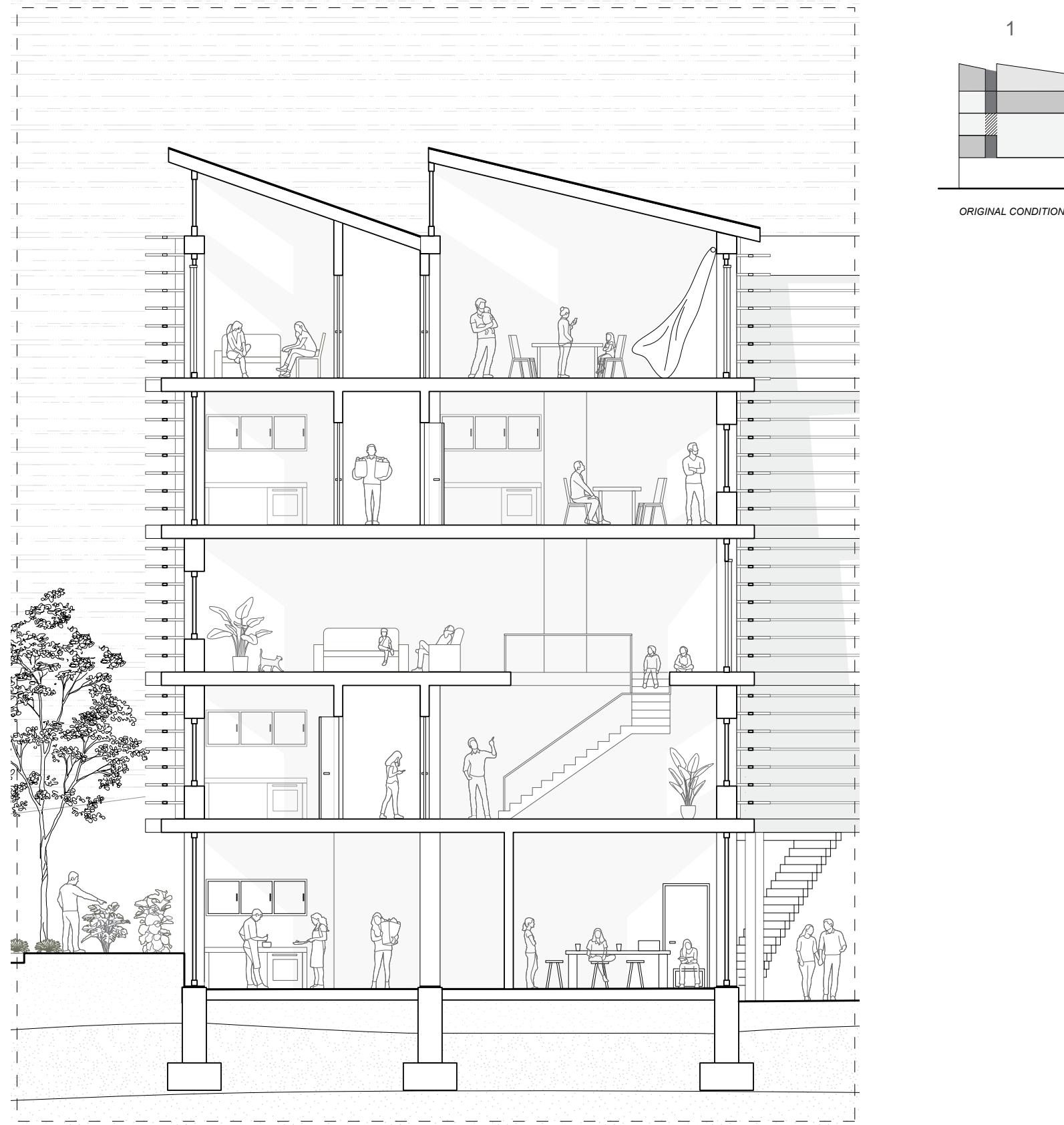


## Adaptability in X + X'

## *Long Section*



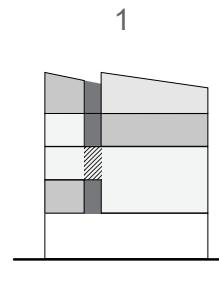
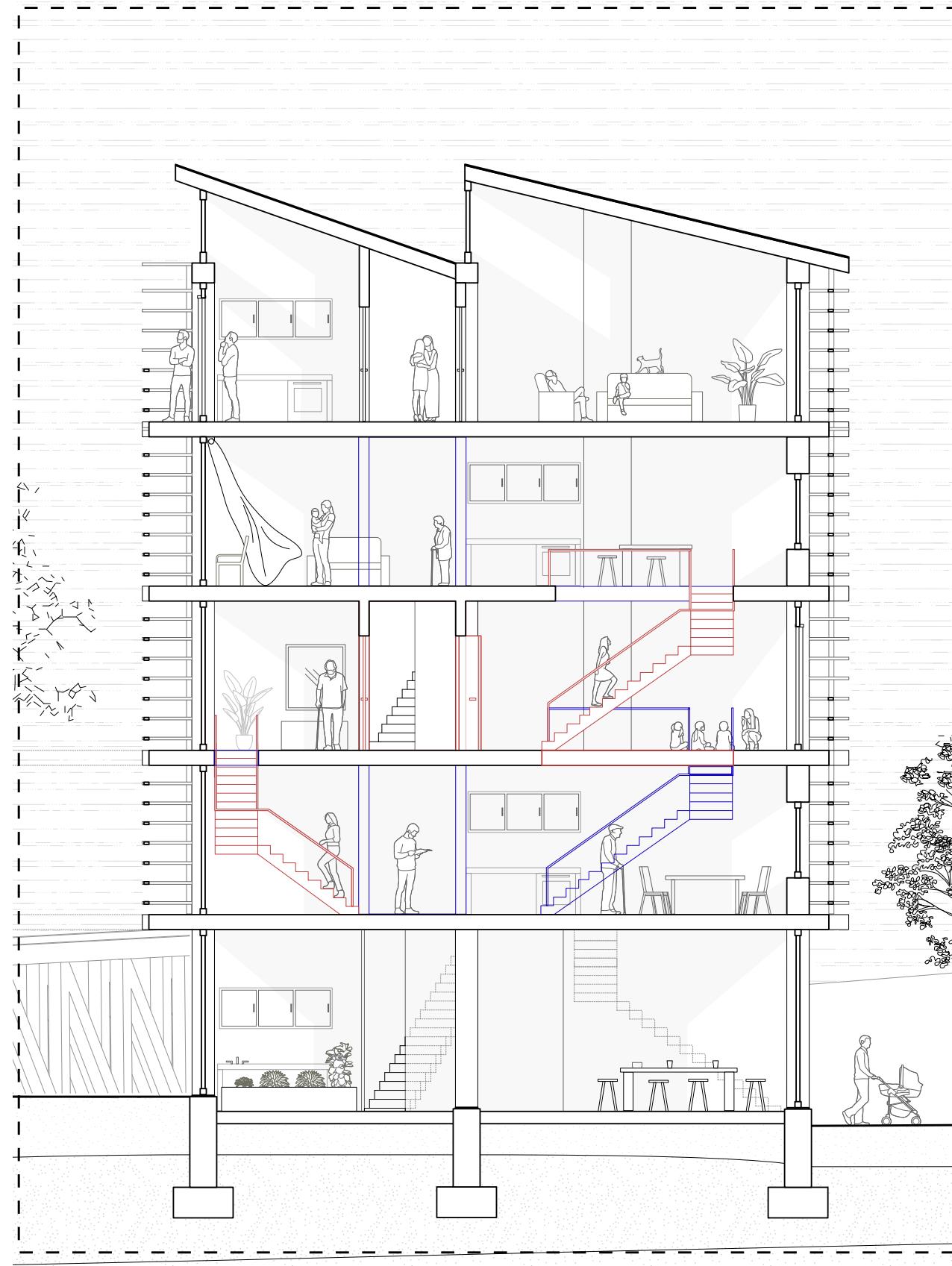
## Conditions of Year 1



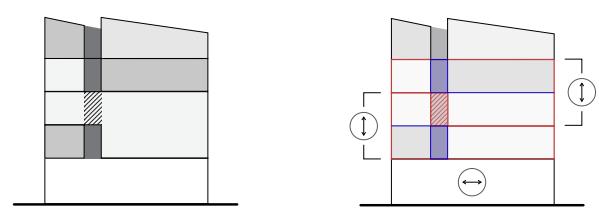
0 5 10 15

## Post Occupancy

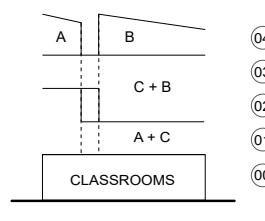
Year X



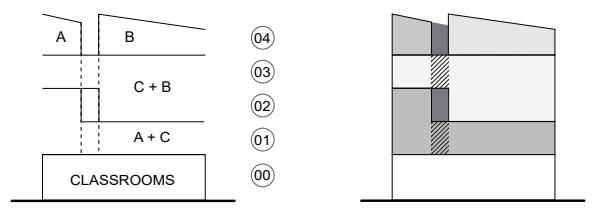
ORIGINAL CONDITION



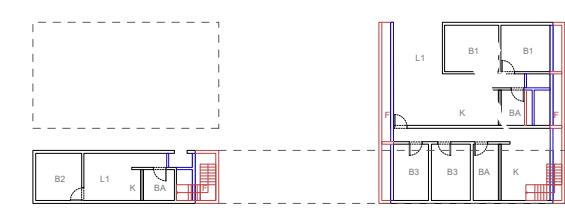
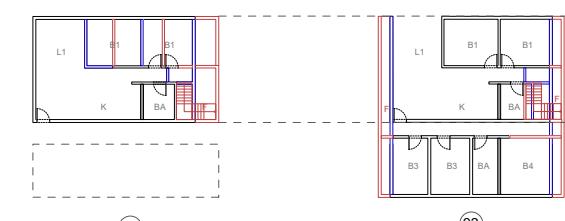
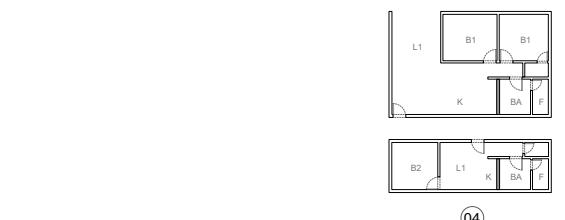
CONNECT, EXTEND, EXPAND



PROGRAM



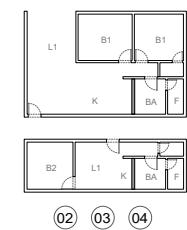
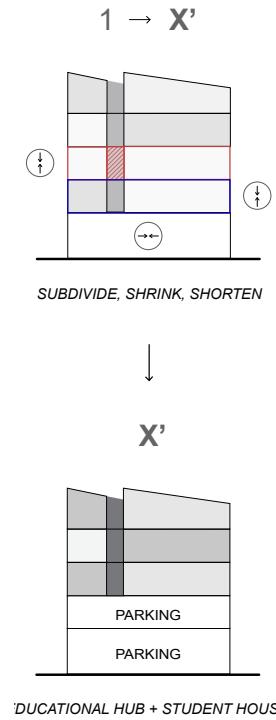
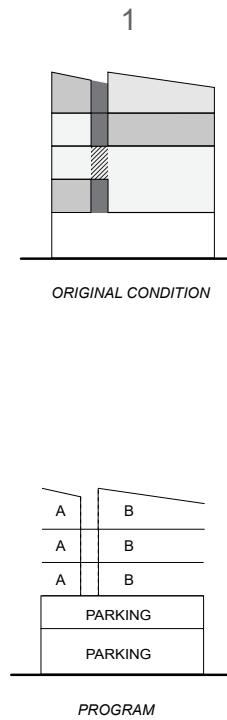
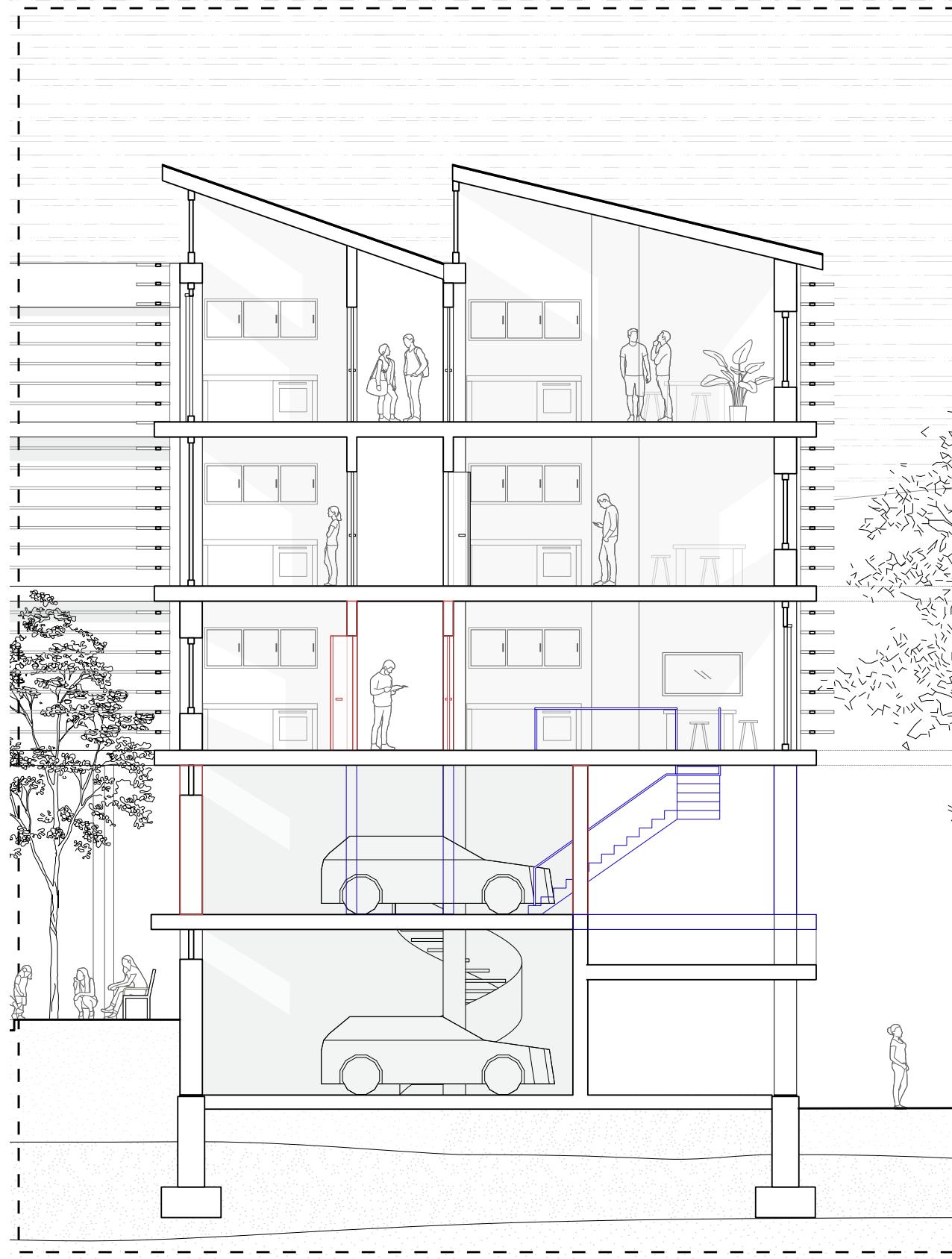
4 TOTAL UNITS  
15 BEDS



Blue is Removal. Red is Addition.

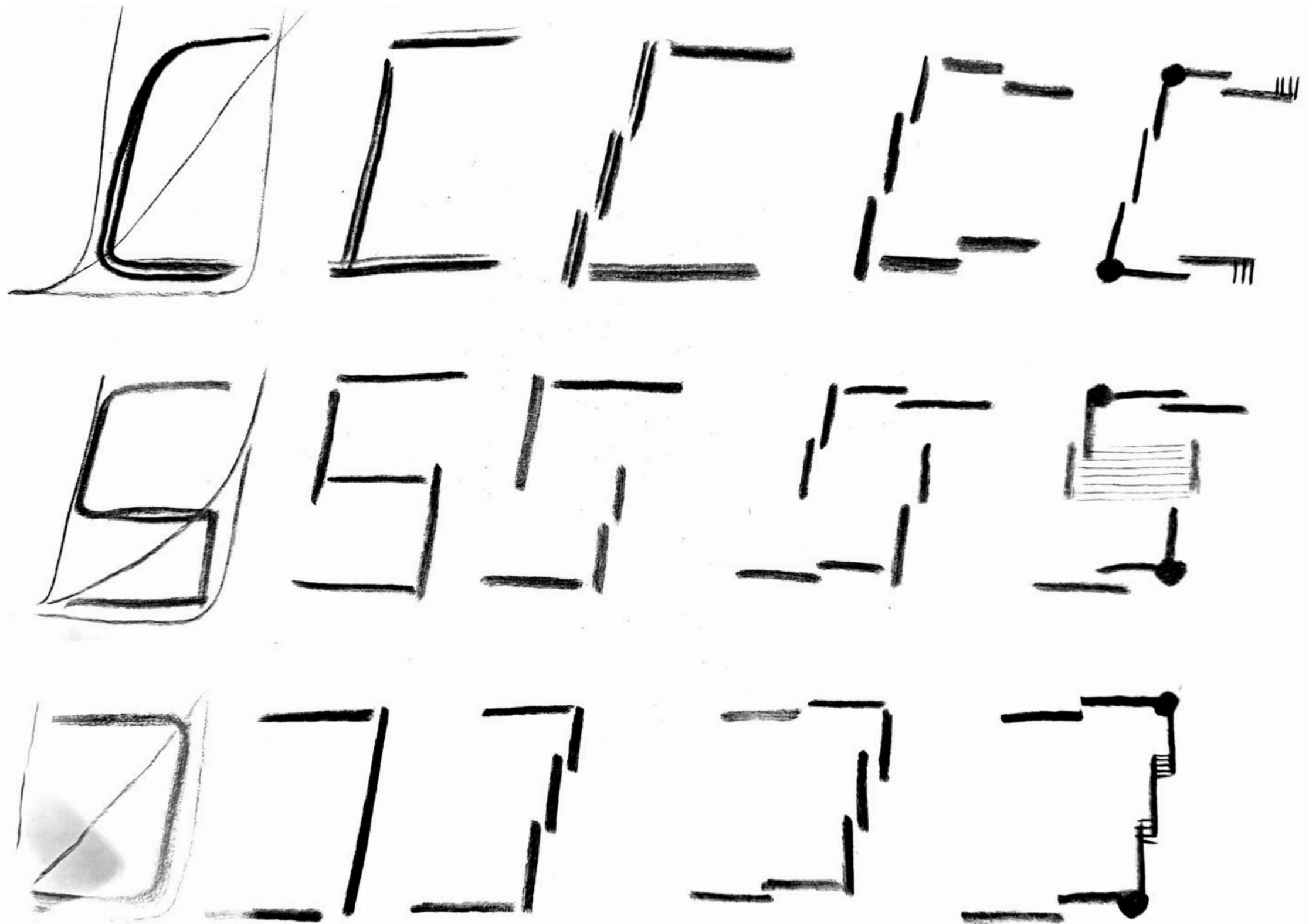
## Post Occupancy

Year X'



0 5 10 15

Blue is Removal. Red is Addition.



## INITIAL GESTURAL STUDIES



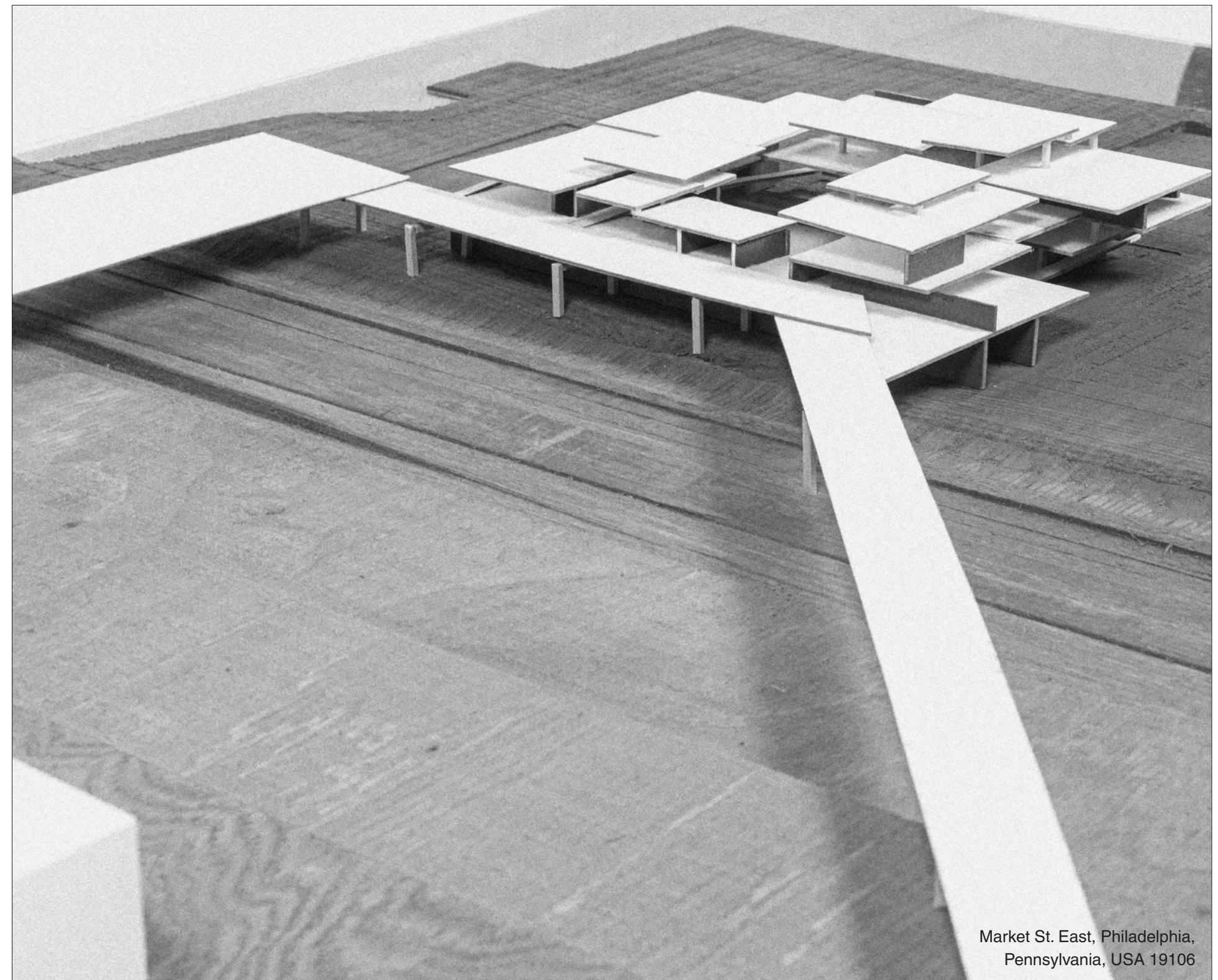
## adAAPtations

Led by Professors Iroha Ito,  
Andrew Lucia, Martin Miller

ARCH 5112, M.Arch Core II  
Cornell University, Spring 2025

### Stitching Time: Weaving History into the Modern Fabric

Philadelphia stands as a cornerstone of American history, a city where the nation's founding ideals were drafted and signed into being. Today, with a population exceeding 1.55 million (as of 2023) and a steady influx of tourists drawn to its historical landmarks, Philadelphia remains a vibrant and complex urban center. It's a city defined not only by its past but by the rich tapestry of cultures, communities, and daily life that converge within its shared public spaces. This dynamic interplay of movement, memory, and identity shapes a uniquely layered urban experience.



IN COLLABORATION WITH  
Meghan Palmer, M. Arch '27  
Colleen Zeugin, M. Arch '27

## Regeneration Station

Research in Collaboration with Meghan Palmer + Colleen Zeugin

In our Core Studio II, adAAPtations, we were tasked with researching, analyzing, and designing a train station for one of several proposed sites. Each location is defined by a lack of sufficient public transit and limited pedestrian access. From the list of seven potential locations, we were asked to select the one that stood out most through critical research and identify further programmatic interventions to inform our design approach.



INFORMATION COLLECTED FROM PHILADELPHIA DATABASES BY TEAM. MAP COLLAGE DRAWING BY MEGHAN PALMER.

Our team chose **Market Street East**. A site located in the City Center, in close proximity to some of Philadelphia's most iconic and historically significant landmarks. Its strategic location and untapped potential made it a compelling foundation for architectural intervention.

REGENERATION in the context of Philadelphia will attempt to revitalize underused areas to create thriving, sustainable communities with the goal of benefiting the local population and minimizing displacement.

***This can be defined on a multitude of scales:***

MACRO ————— MICRO

01  
THE CITY

02  
URBAN FABRIC

03  
COMMUNITY

04  
INDIVIDUAL

RESOURCE REGENERATION   PHYSICAL REGENERATION   MENTAL REGENERATION   FLOW REGENERATION

Power Generation  
Flood Zone  
Transit Layout

Philly's Landmarks  
Running + Biking  
Parks + Rec Infrastructure

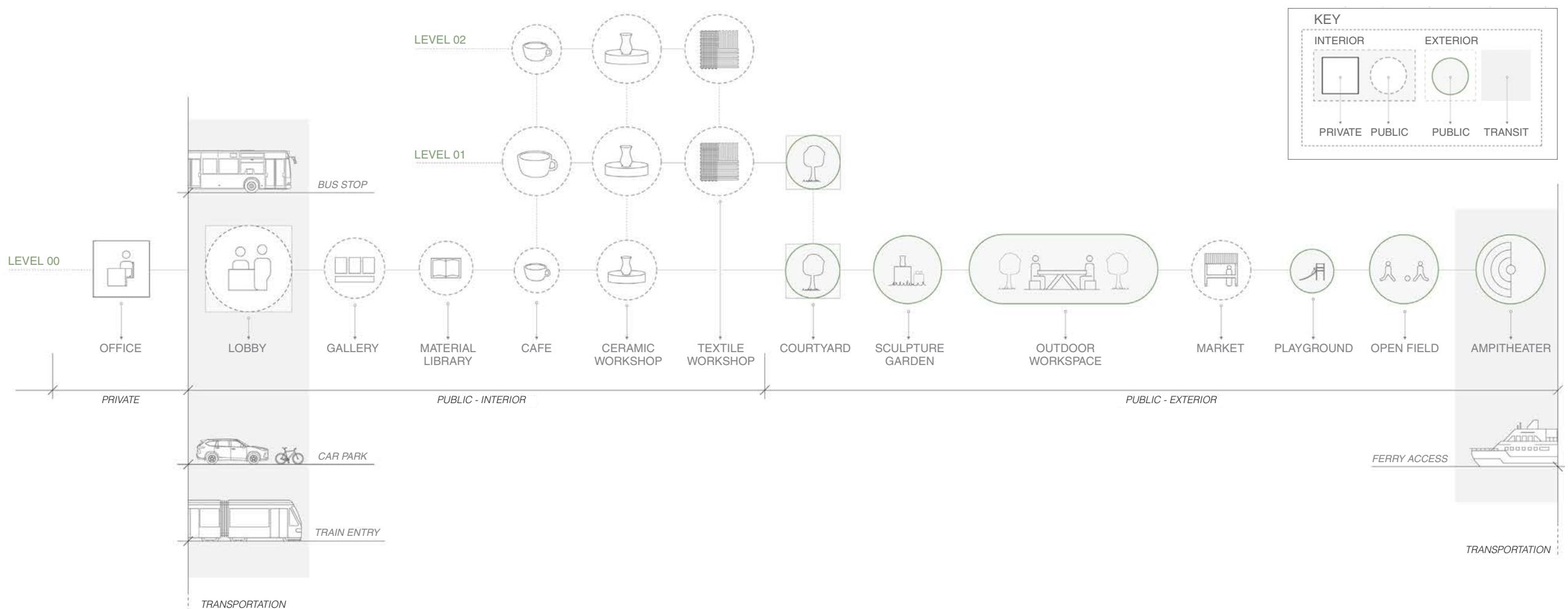
The Water Front  
Yayclay!  
The Fabric Workshop + Museum

Commuters  
Philly Locals  
Tourists

## Re-Definition Through Program

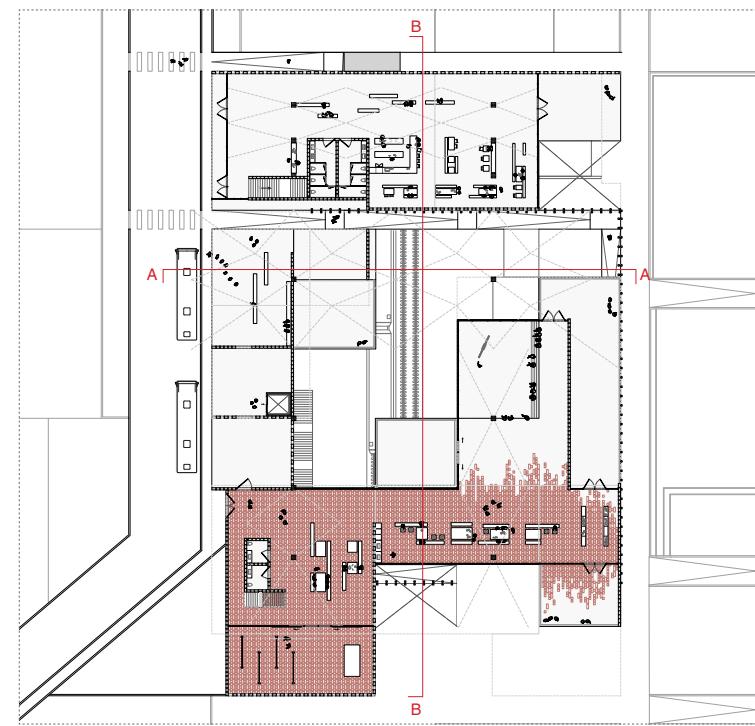
Necessities Based on Urban Data Research

- 01. Communal ..... → *Place of Belonging*
- 02. Recreational ..... → *Physical Regeneration*
- 03. Educational ..... → *Mental Regeneration*
- 04. Agricultural ..... → *Environmental Regeneration*
- 05. Adaptable ..... → *Longevity + Lifecycle*
- 06. Local Resources ..... → *Material Systems*

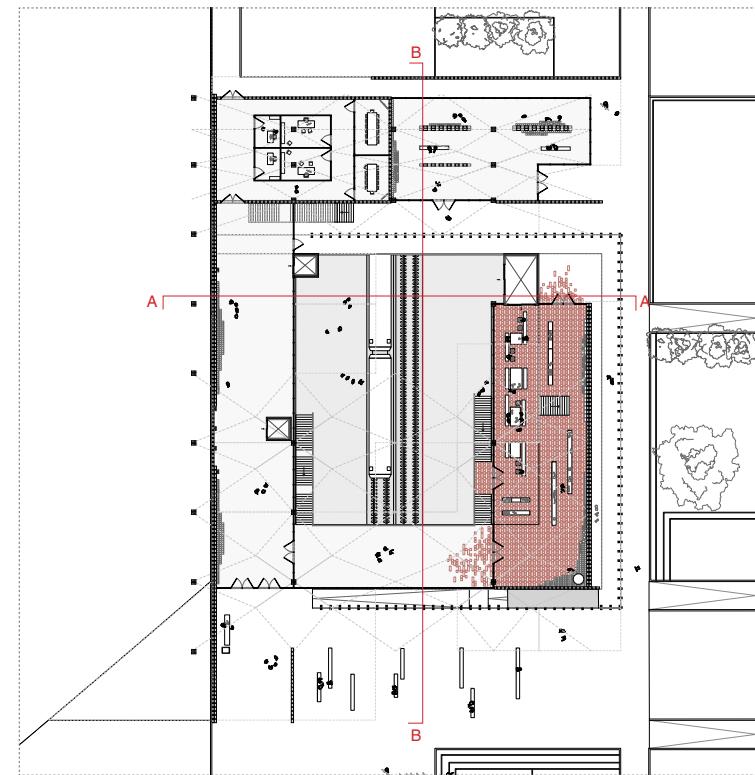


# Philadelphia Market St. East

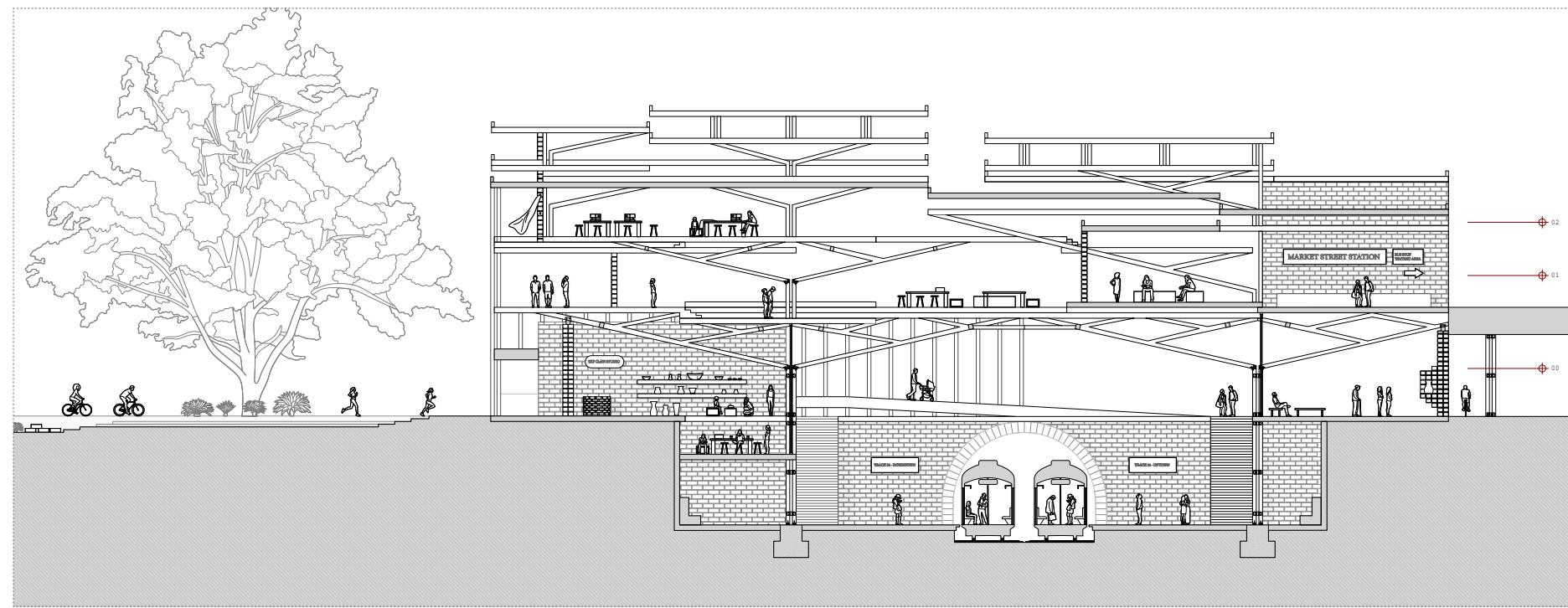
Transit Hub, Workshops, Gathering Place



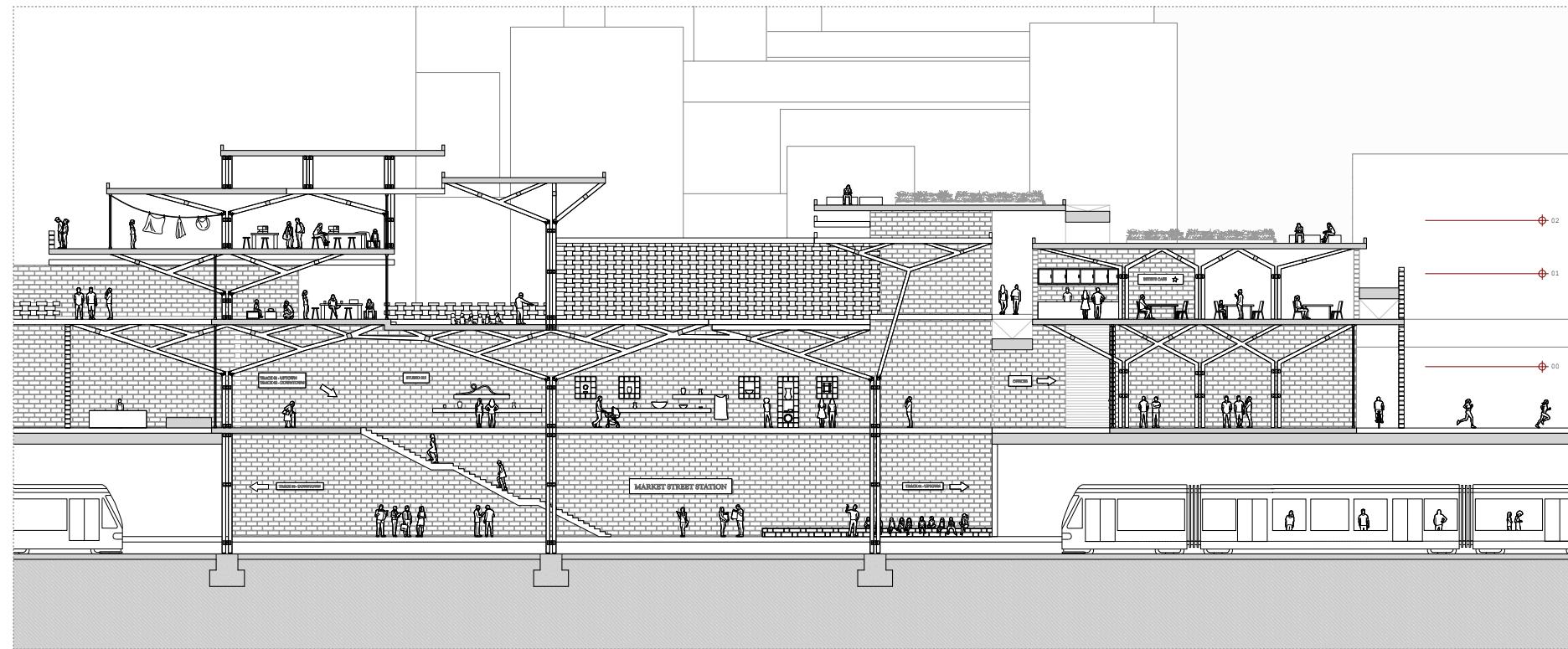
○ Main Floor 01



○ Floor Plan 00



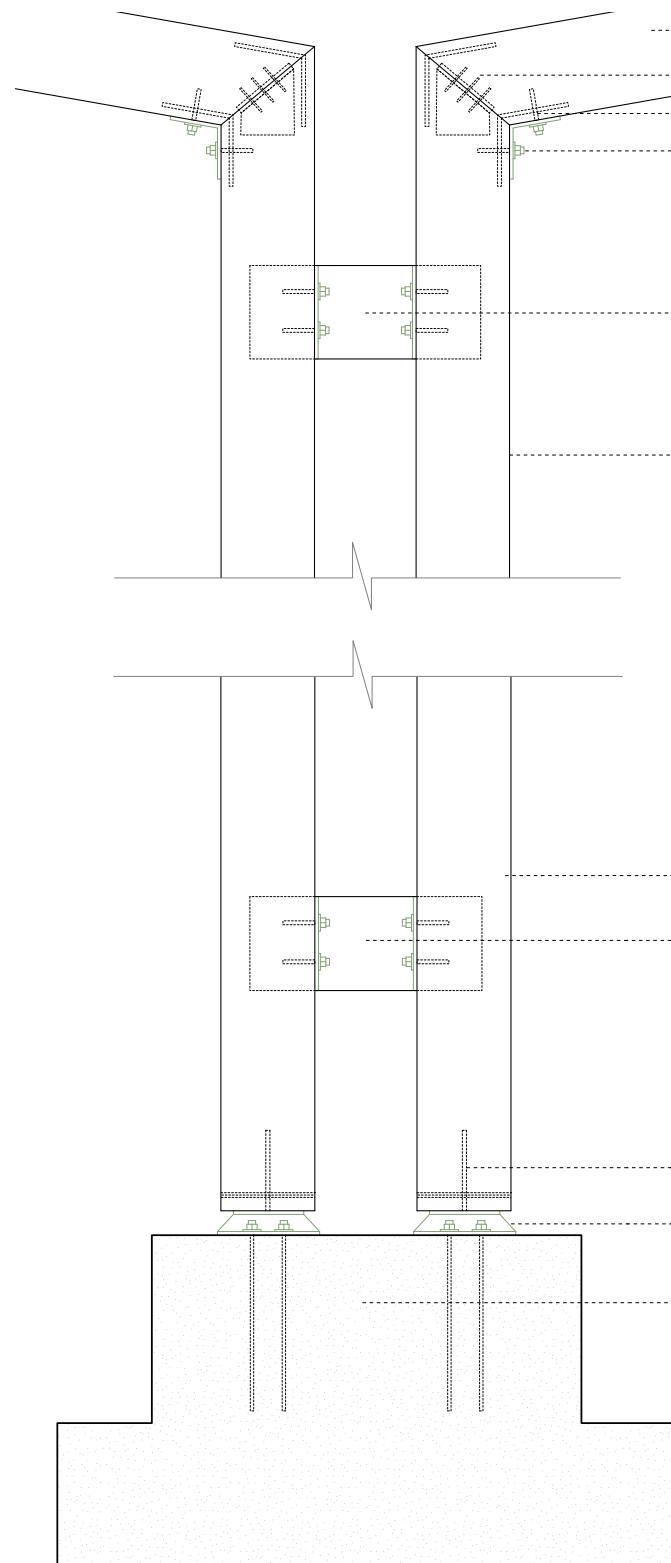
Section A



Section B

## Facade Systems

### Brick Configuration + Beam Connections



**Column to Beam**  
Elevation

MASS TIMBER BEAM  
EMBEDDED STEEL PLATES  
BOLTED CONNECTION  
REINFORCING BAR  
STEEL ANGLE  
BOLTED CONNECTION

WOOD INTERNAL BRACING SECURING THE POSTS (X4)

TIMBER POST (12"X12")

**Column to Foundation**  
Elevation

TIMBER POST (12"X12")

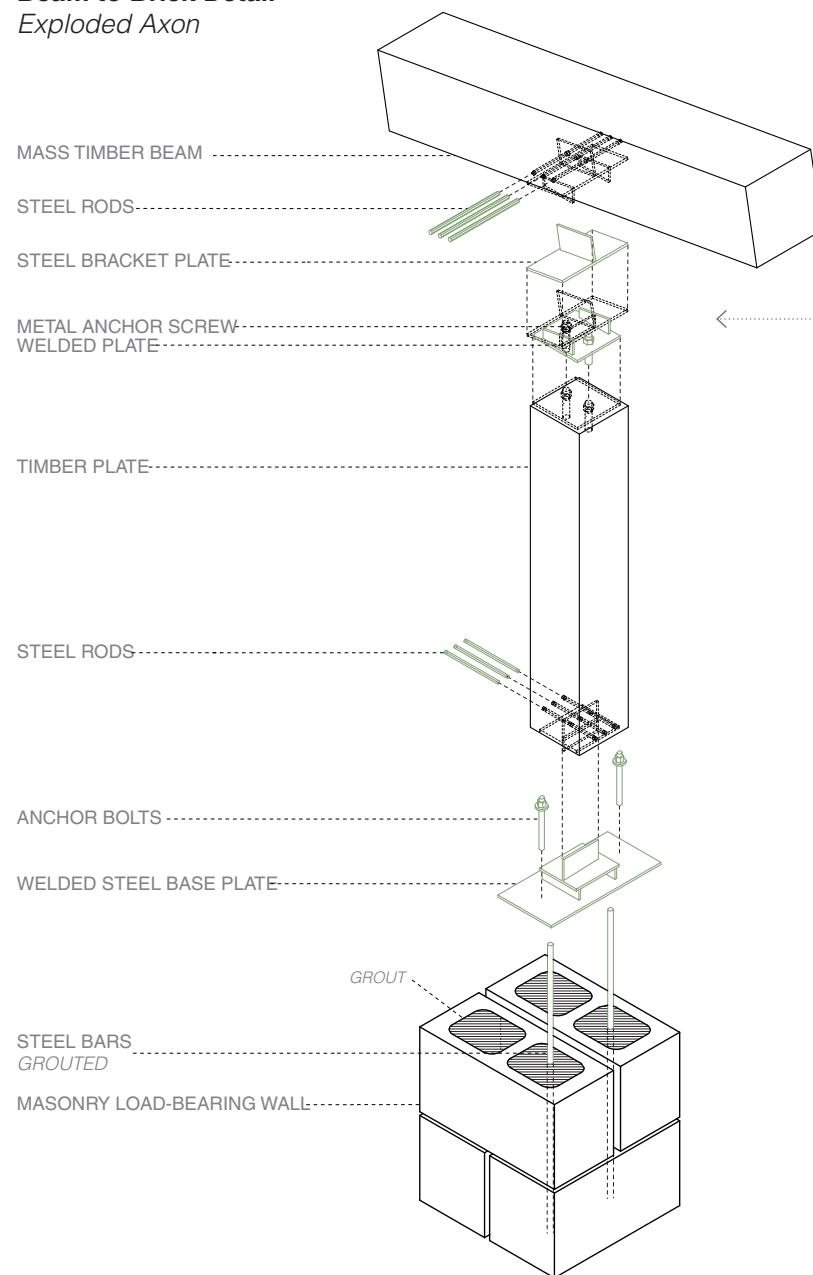
WOOD INTERNAL BRACING SECURING THE POSTS (X4)

PLAN

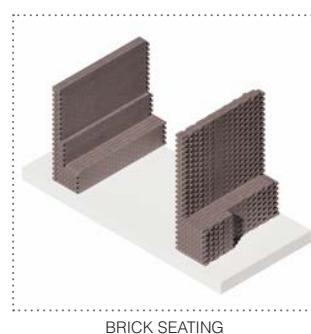
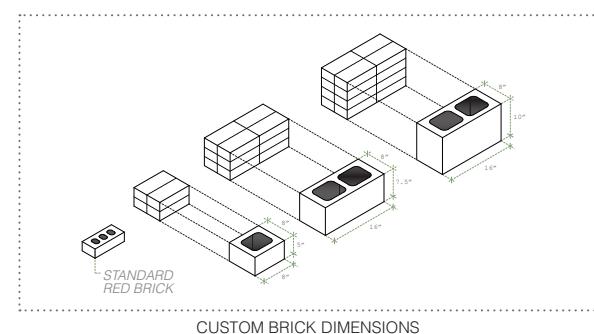
EMBEDDED STEEL PLATES  
BOLTED CONNECTION  
STEEL BASE PLATE  
BOLTED CONNECTION

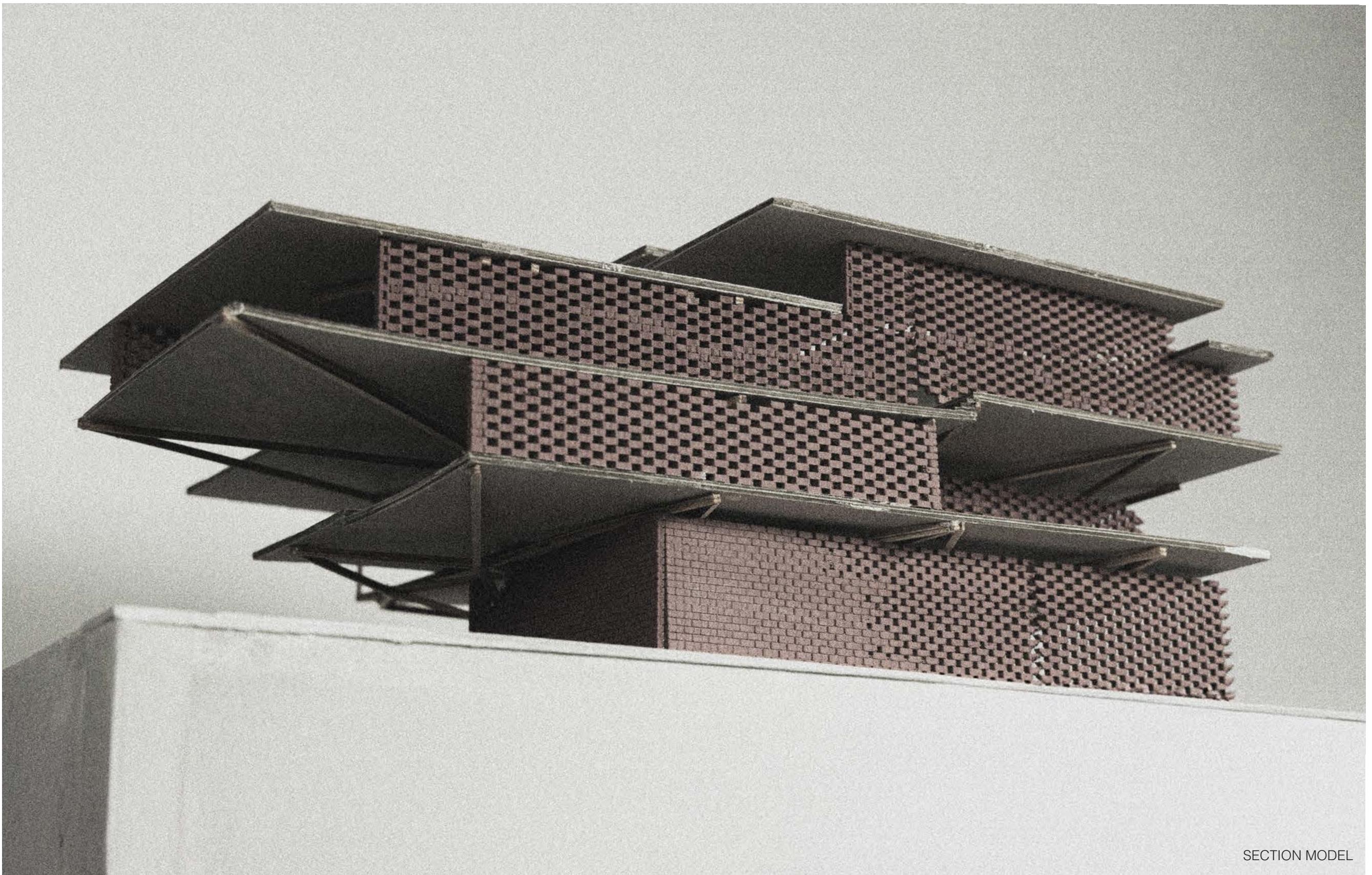
CONCRETE ISOLATED FOOTING

**Beam to Brick Detail**  
Exploded Axon



**Brick Modules**  
Adaptation to Program





SECTION MODEL





## The Heumann Campus

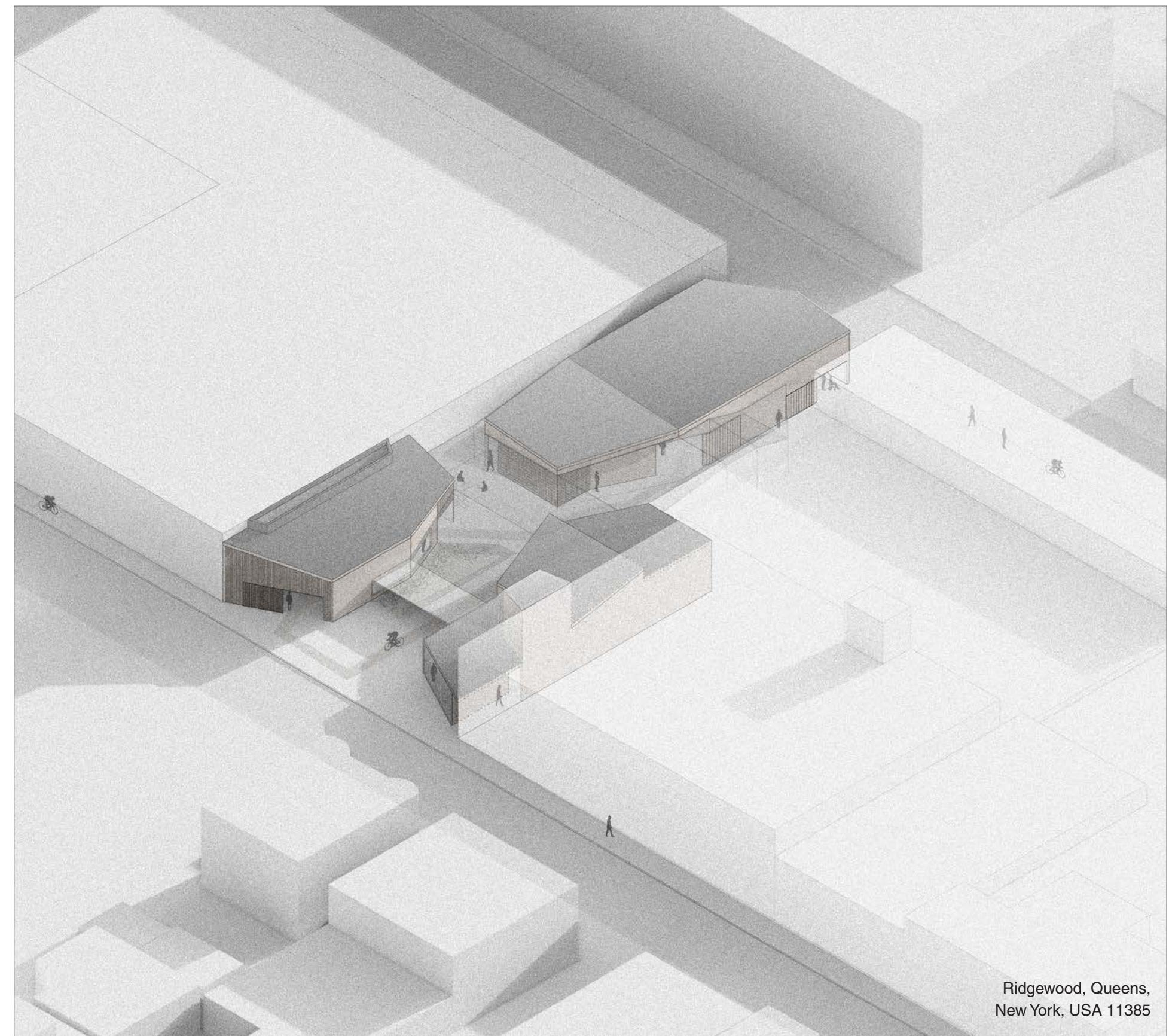
Led by Professor David Gissen

PUAD 4010, Design Studio 5  
Parsons SCE, Fall 2023

### Designing an Urban Framework for a Disabled Future

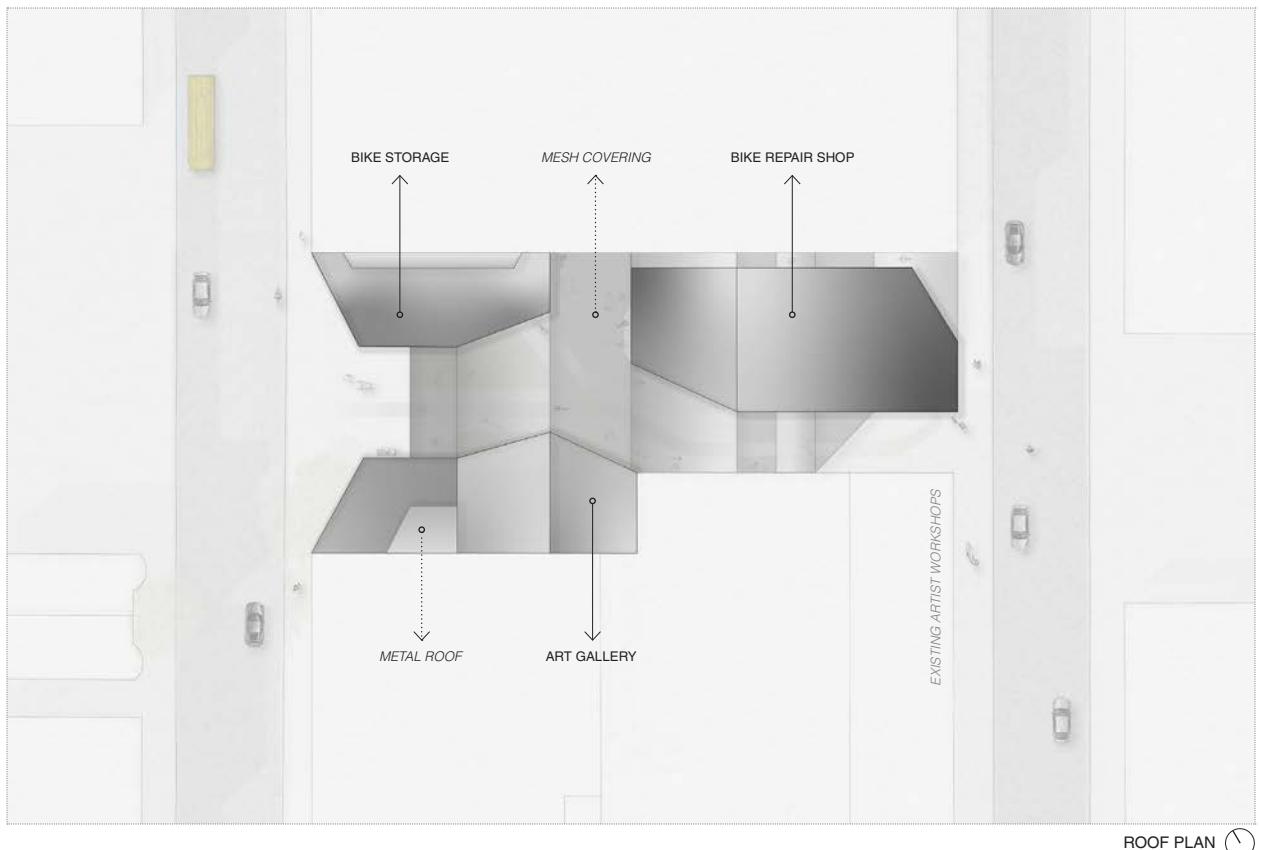
"The Heumann Community Campus of New York City," named after disability activist and New Yorker Judith Heumann. The campus is reimagining urban planning in order to ease the daily struggles of the disabled population and provide new offices and storefronts for active disability organizations and neighborhood businesses.

The proposed sites for the campus are in an almost continuous line across four narrow lots on four city blocks, lined by residential, commercial, and educational facilities.

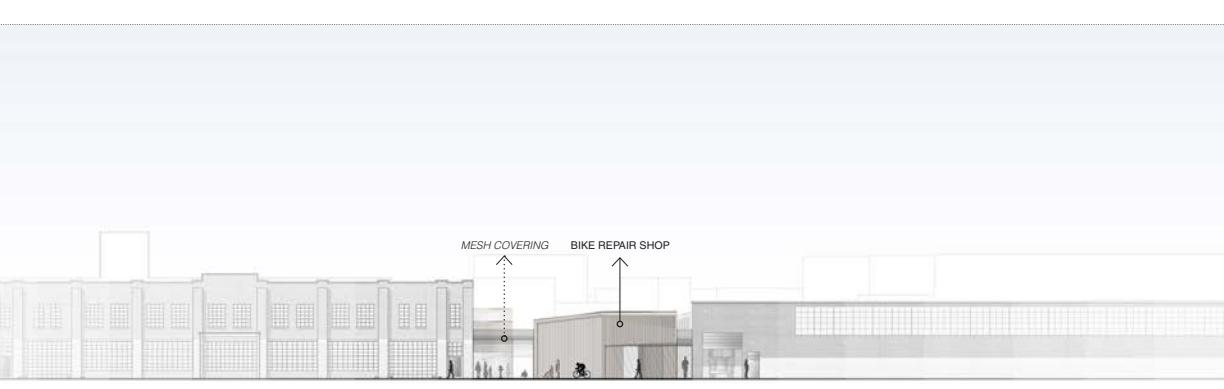
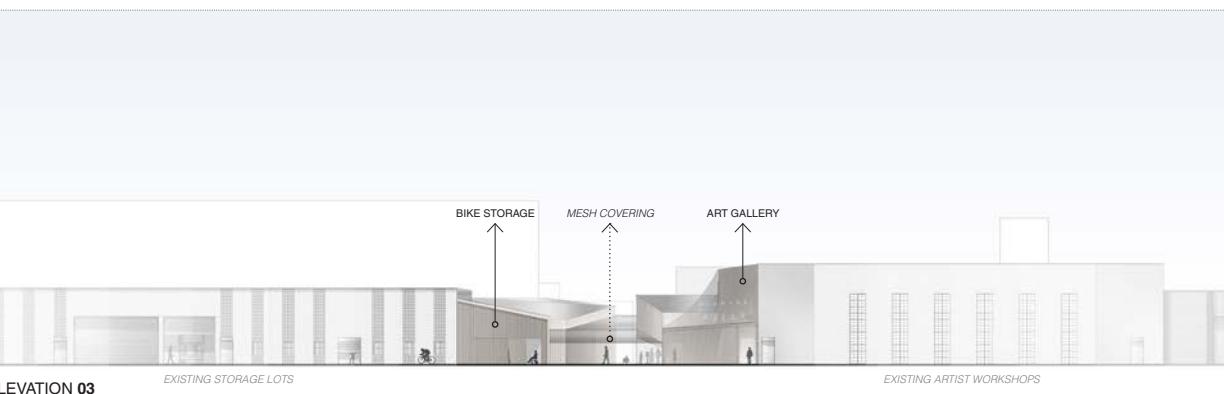
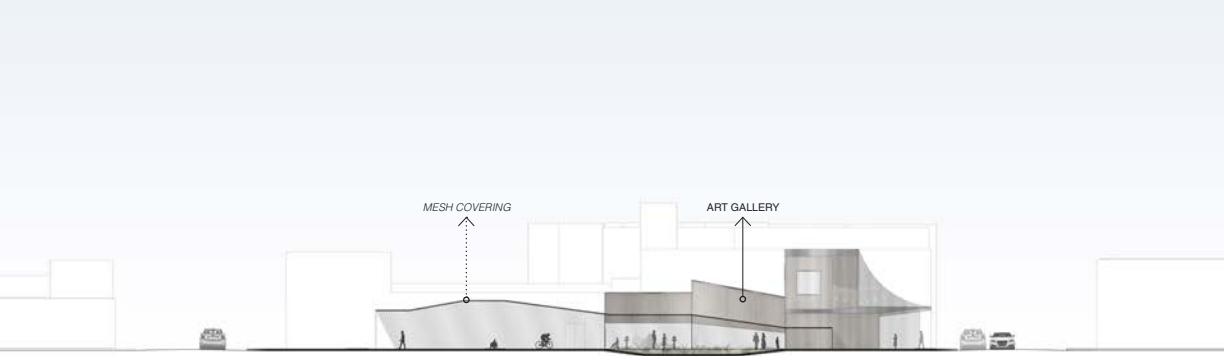


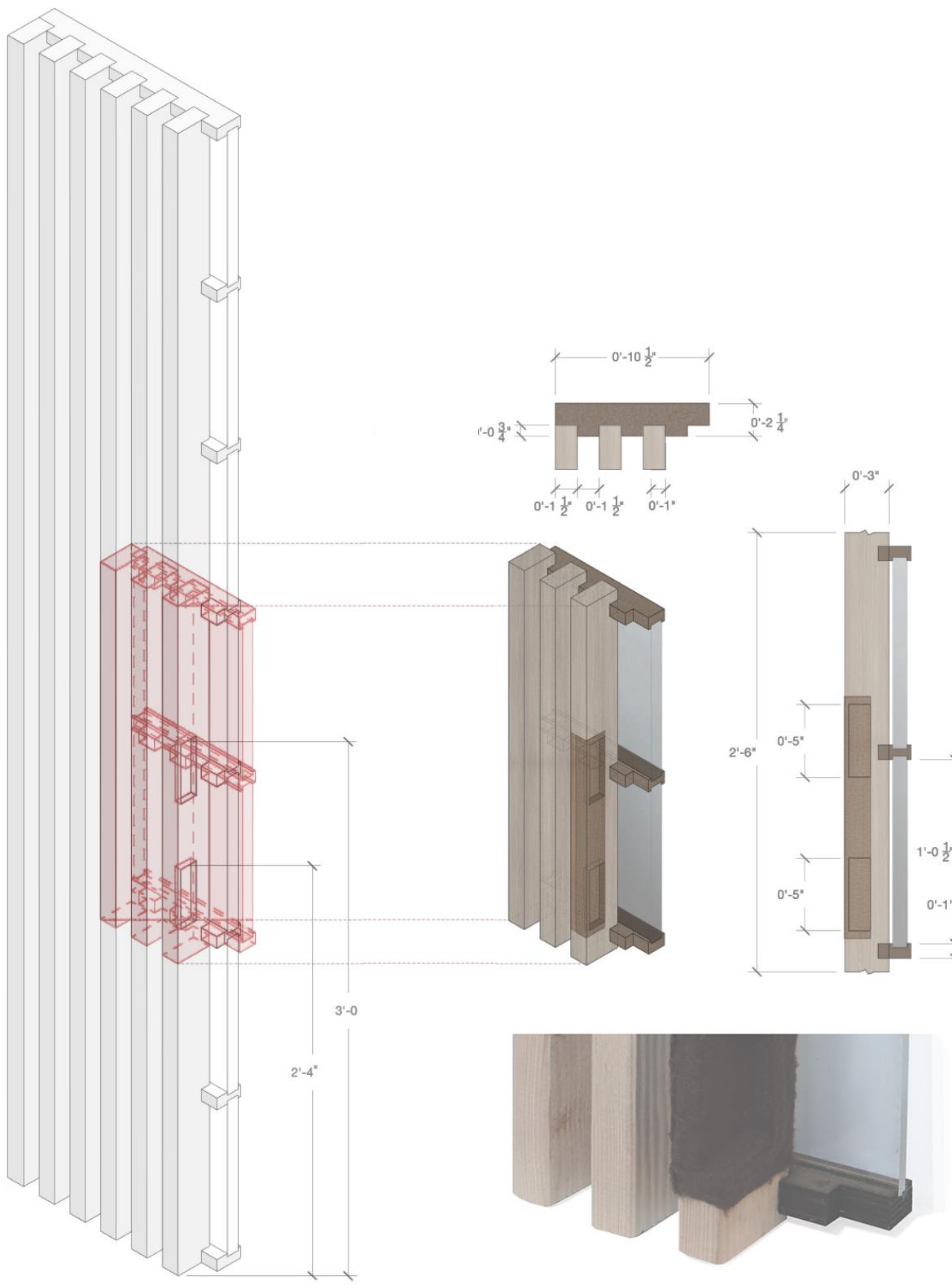
Ridgewood, Queens,  
New York, USA 11385





Workshop space and exterior circulation is where the bike shop and gallery are able to physically connect with one another. This interaction is intentional in order to create a space for creative endeavors to increase the quality of life for all individuals that interact with it, creating unforgettable memories.



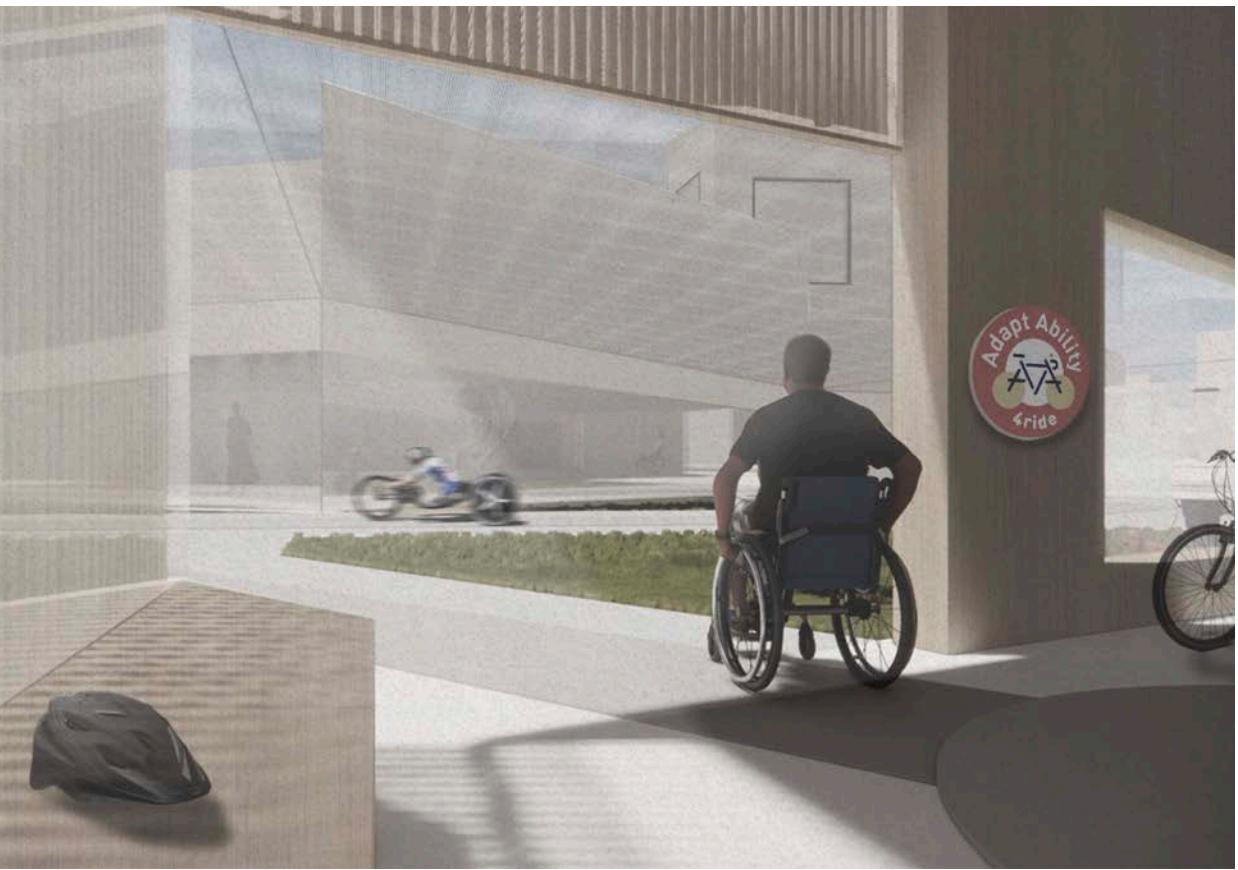


### 1:1 Tactile Model

Within the bike repair shop and bike storage, there are five large and one small sliding garage door to provide a direct connection between the interior and exterior spaces. Interior glazing and wooden 2x4s were used in the construction of these horizontal doors. Every door's handle is positioned to accommodate both the average height of a person standing (3'-0" from the ground) and a person who uses a wheelchair (2'-4" from the ground). The front and side facade of the handle element is wrapped with a fur like texture for those with sight blindness to easily locate the entry handle through touch.



THE HUEMANN GALLERY



EXITING THE BIKE STORAGE



ALONG THE BIKE PATH

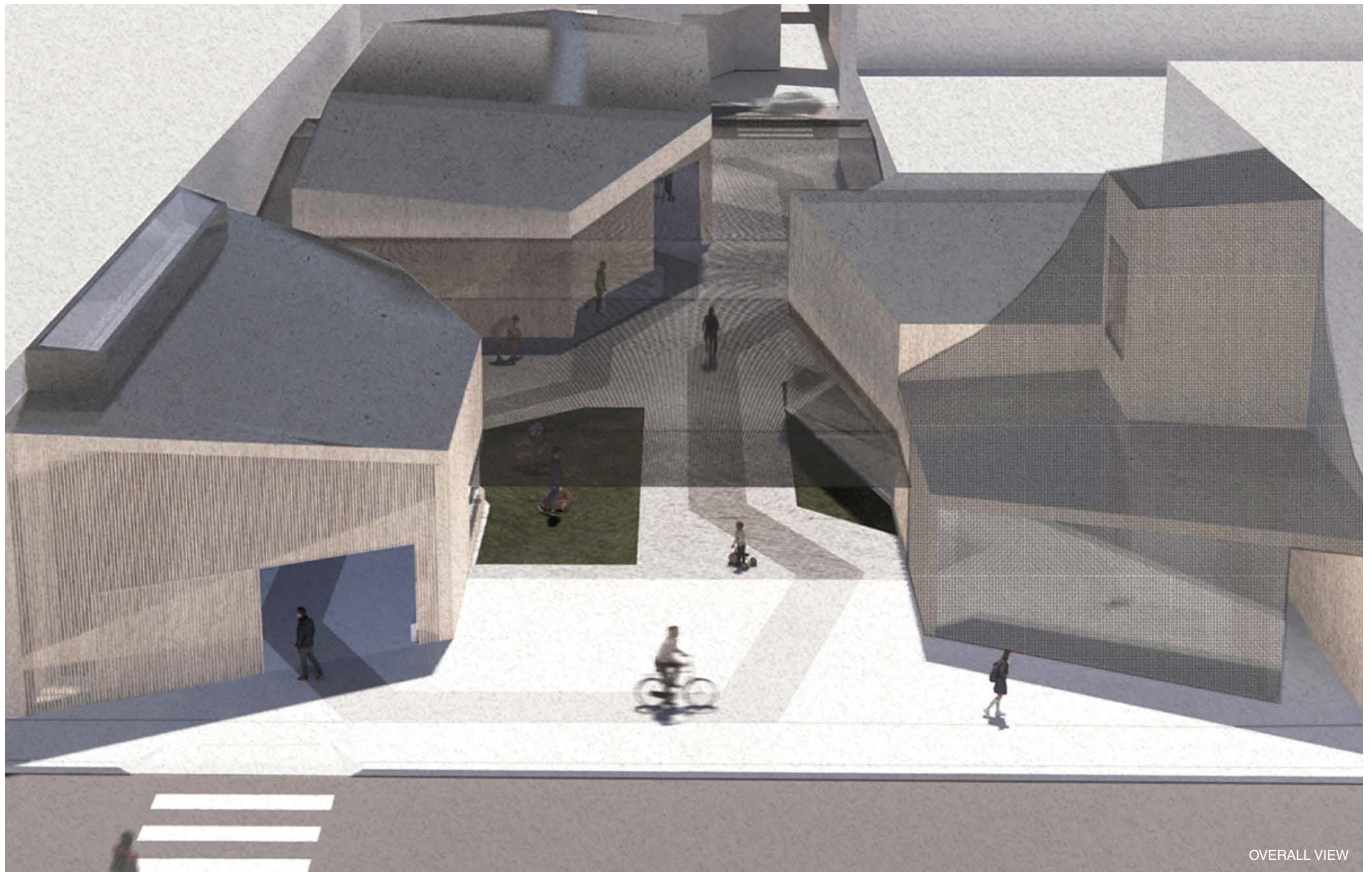


BIKE STORAGE STREET ENTRY

## Moments Of Intersection

Each building's roofscape and geometrical carving are carefully designed to allow height fluctuation, generating comfortable areas suitable for individuals with varying heights.

When people are riding, running, or strolling through the area, the tactile elements -- such as the gradient bike route and the green areas in the lot courtyard -- help them navigate.



## OVERALL VIEW



## Kinderspace Competition

Employed by Professor Catherine Wilmes

Graduate Research Assistant  
Cornell University, Summer 2025

*Shortlisted for an Ideas Competition*

## Connecting Education Through Regional Rail

*Learning on the Line* is a rail-integrated kindergarten prototype that reimagines early childhood education as a mobile, city-wide network. Serving up to 15,000 children, ages 3 - 6, across 25 sq. miles of Chicago's South Side, the project transforms underused train infrastructure into dynamic learning environments. Anchored by a fixed facility beside an abandoned school site, the system includes mobile teaching cars, self-learning pods, and faculty support units that travel between schools, libraries, and cultural hubs. In response to widespread school closures and disinvestment, this model embeds education into the city's mobility systems by expanding access, sustaining peer learning, and reconnecting young learners with the broader urban fabric.

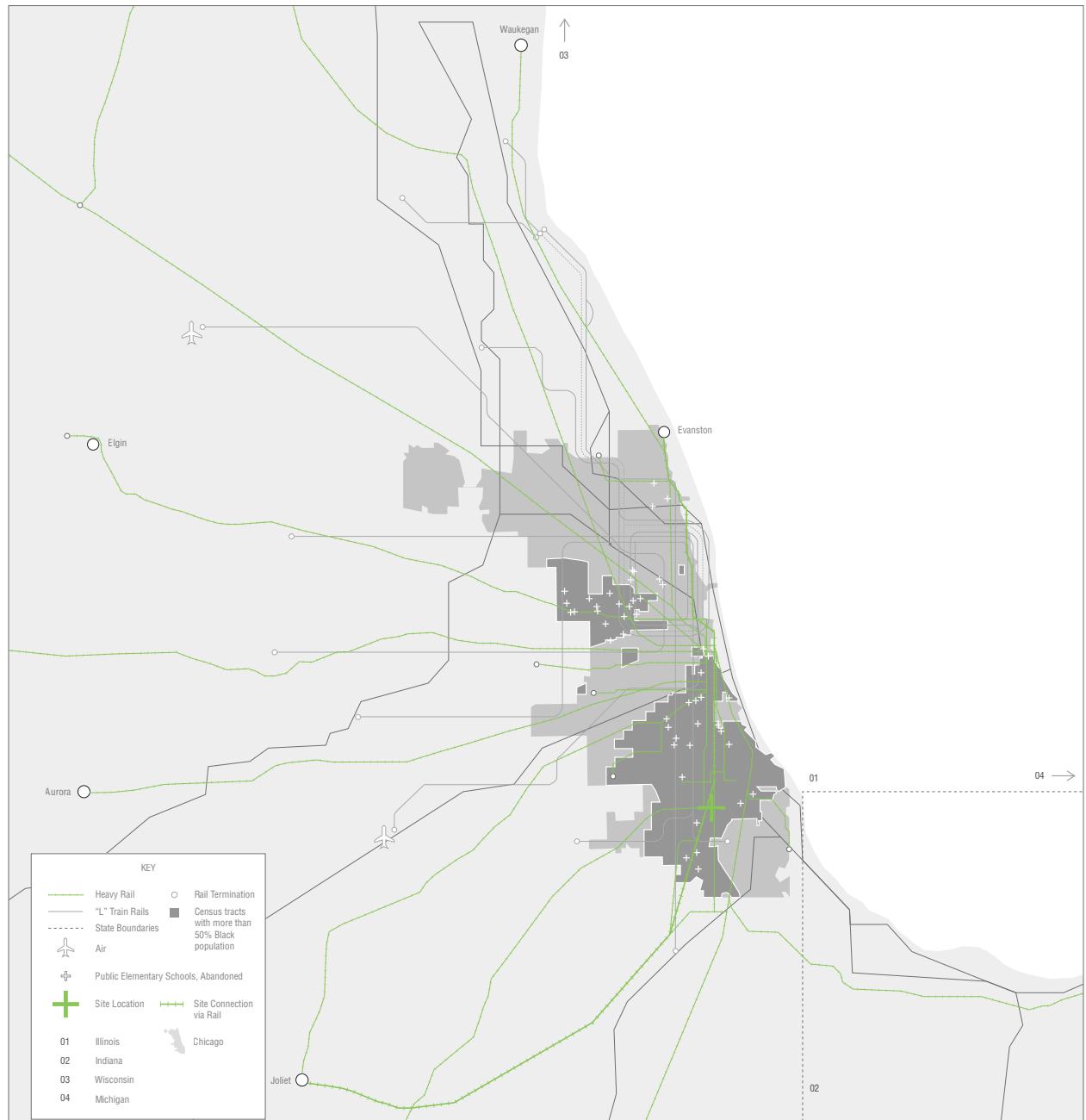


Photograph by Cat Wilmes  
Model Built by KS Competition Team

Southside, Chicago,  
Illinois, USA 60619

IN COLLABORATION WITH  
KS Competition Team

In 2013, Chicago closed 46 school buildings. A decade later, more than half remain unused. Of the 46, only 20 have been repurposed, while 26 remain dormant; 16 of those are publicly owned and vacant, and 10 have been sold but sit unused. This ongoing vacancy has shaped the core of our design intent: to reimagine and revitalize these abandoned schools and rail lines through innovative reuse.

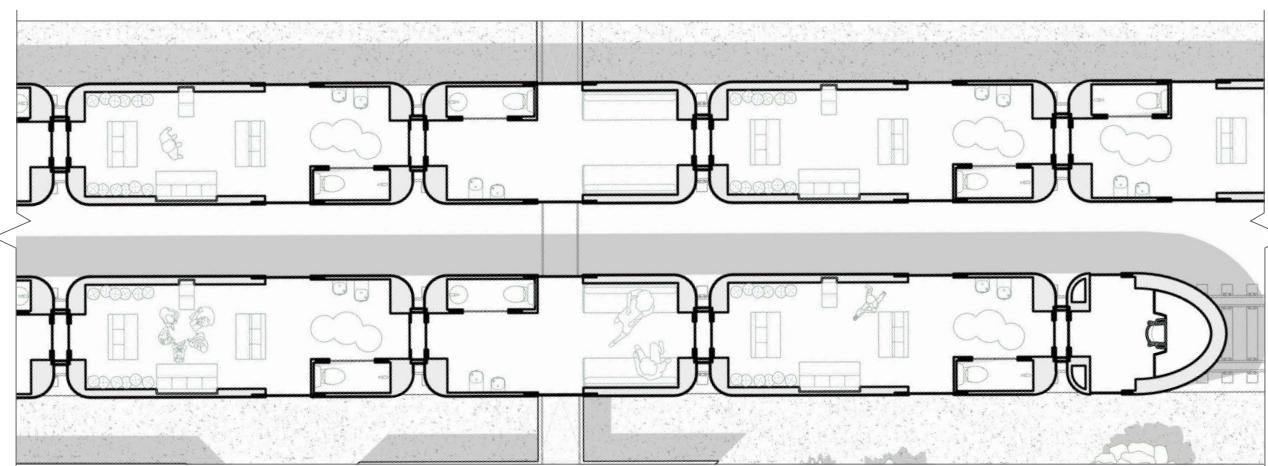


CONTEXTUAL PLAN

Each train car operates as a fully equipped mobile classroom, mirroring the design and amenities of the main facility. Centrally oriented seating fosters collaboration, while keeping peer groups intact. The cars effectively extend the learning environment beyond the school building, connecting seamlessly to other schools, libraries, and cultural institutions.

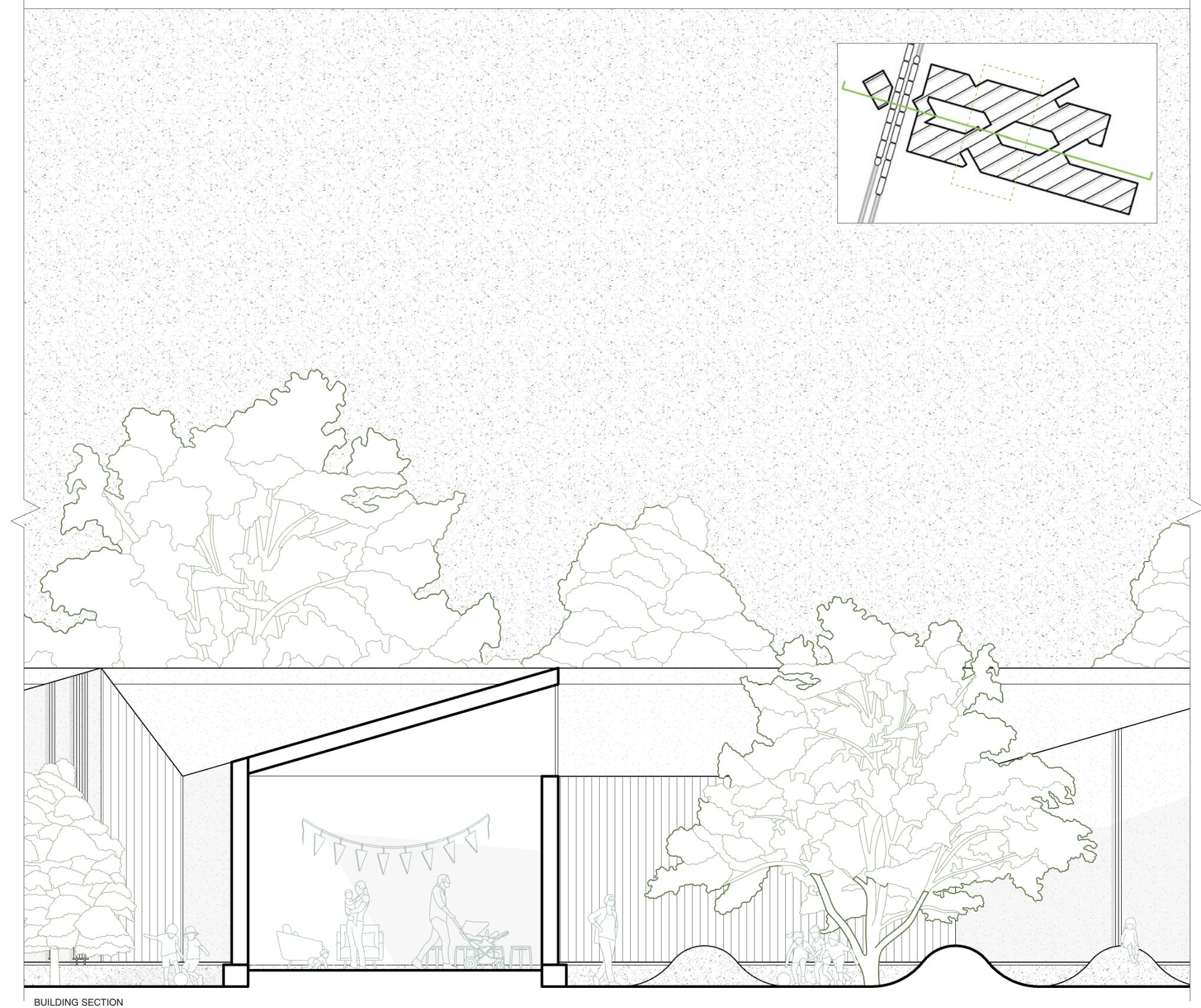
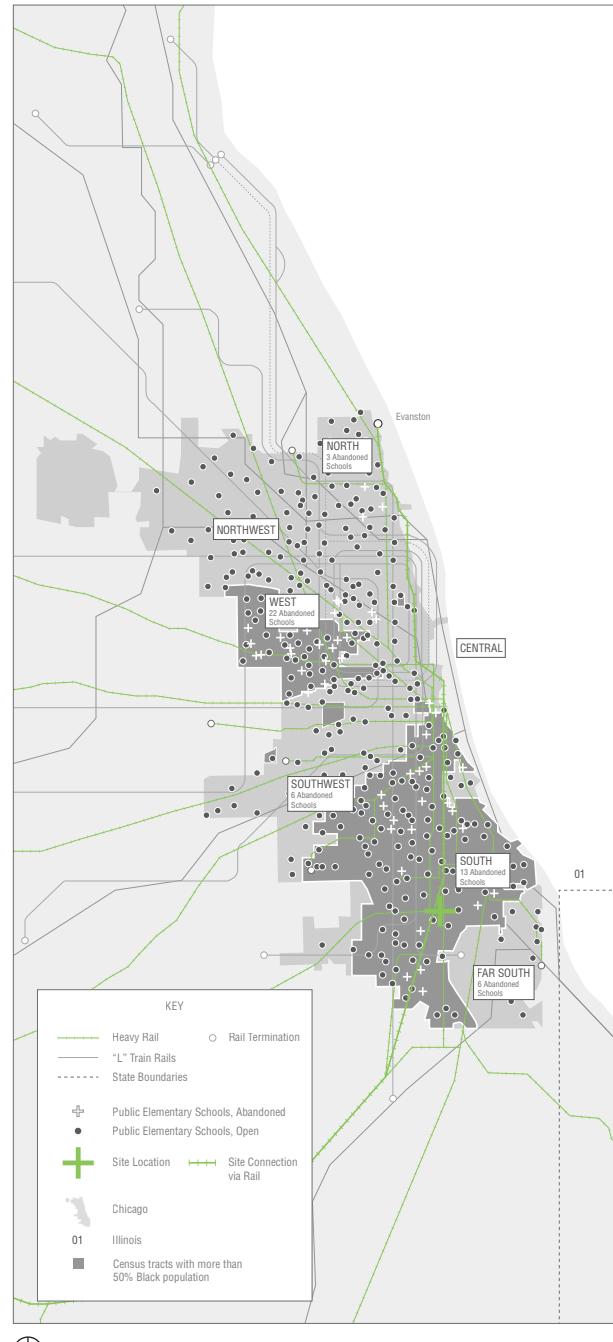


GROUND PLAN



ZOOM-IN TRAIN PLAN

Constructed primarily from renewable mass timber, the building features exposed wood interiors that create a warm, tactile environment ideal for young learners while revealing the structure's logic. Built-in, child-scaled furniture minimizes the need for movable partitions, reducing material waste and reinforcing a cohesive, sustainable design.





## GROWNYC's Teaching Pavilion

Led by Ross Myren + Maya McGlynn

Parsons Design Build  
Parsons SCE, Summer 2022

### The Entryway

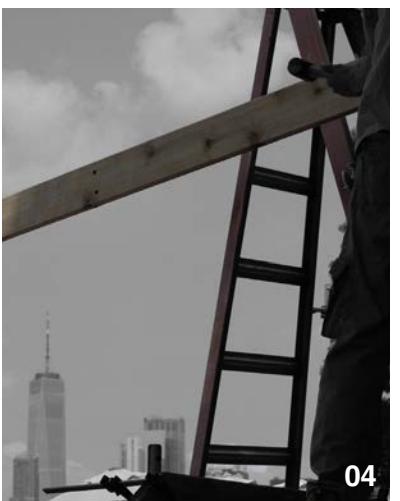
The Parsons Design Workshop builds upon the semester long project developed during the Spring 2022 term in the M. Arch program. Over the summer, our team refined the design in preparation for the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) approval process, constructed the Teaching Garden's Entryway on the existing GrowNYC site, and engaged the public through community design workshops on Governors Island, among other initiatives.

Summer 2022 was a hands-on experience involving full prefabrication + construction. Our responsibilities included sourcing + ordering materials, milling timber, site excavation, mixing + pouring concrete, sewing canvas components, + assembling the structure, all within tight deadlines.



Photograph by Sophia Zaita

IN COLLABORATION WITH  
Parsons Design Workshop Team

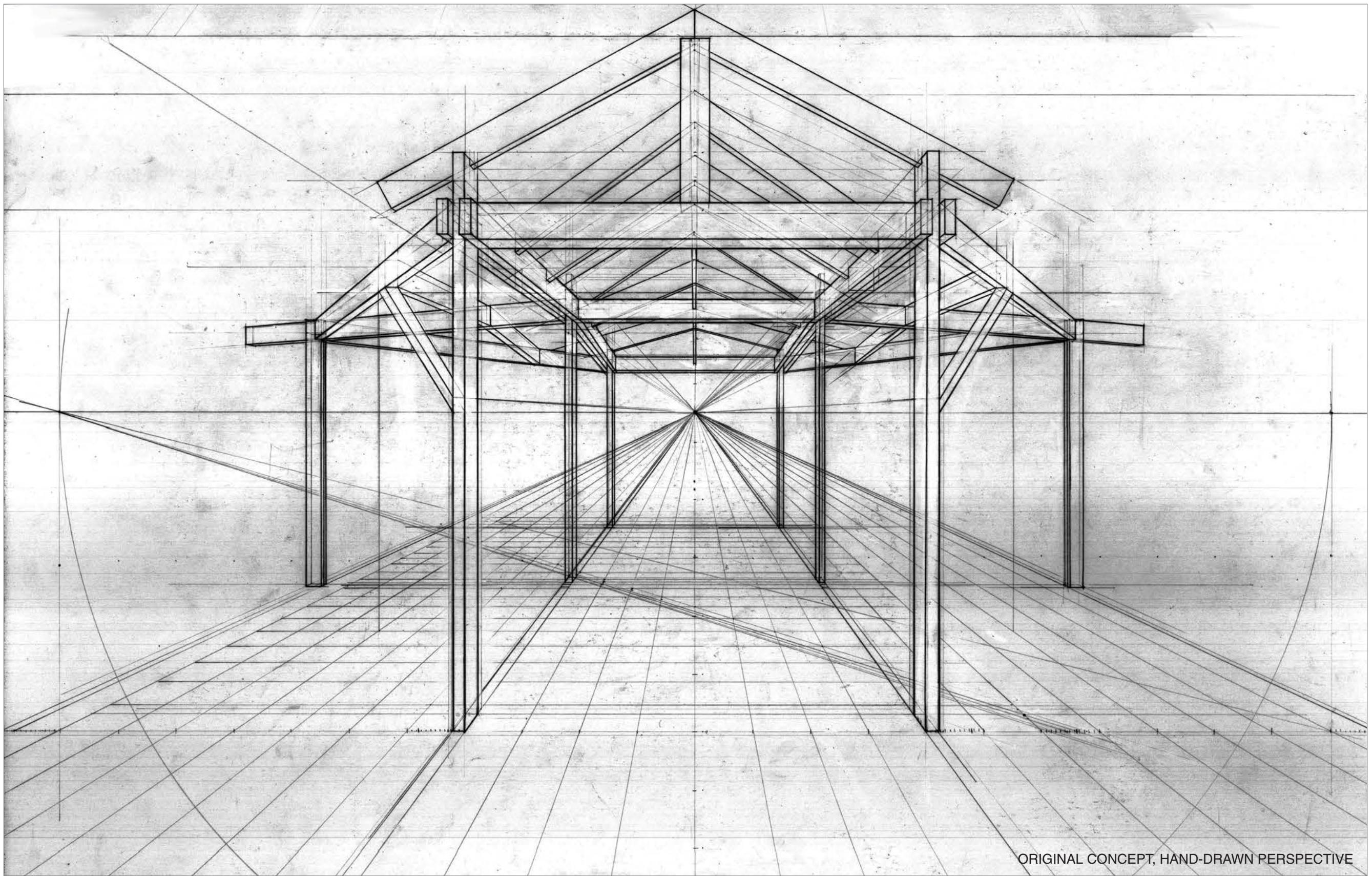


## The Installation *Image Descriptions*

01. Wood Pre-fabrication
02. Wood Pre-fabrication
03. Post to Footing Connection
04. Assembly on Site
05. Assembly on Site
06. Assembly on Site
07. Final Construction
08. Interior Corner Connection
09. Exterior Corner Connection

CONSTRUCTION HIGHLIGHTS





ORIGINAL CONCEPT, HAND-DRAWN PERSPECTIVE





[sophiazaita246@gmail.com](mailto:sophiazaita246@gmail.com)  
[linkedin.com/sophia-zaita](https://linkedin.com/sophia-zaita)

## Portfolio

Additional Work:  
[sophiazaita.com](http://sophiazaita.com)

## Contact